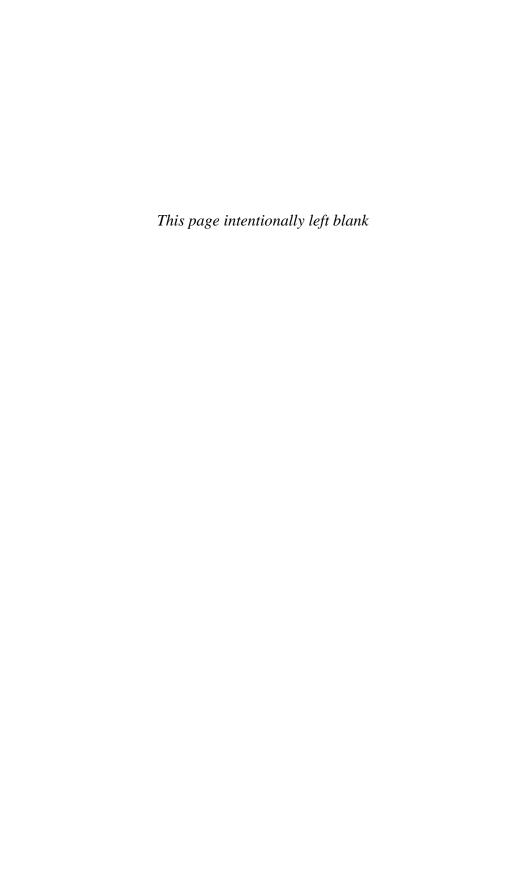# The Avant-Garde in Interwar England: Medieval Modernism and the London Underground

Michael T. Saler

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THE AVANT-GARDE IN INTERWAR ENGLAND

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\\\\ THE ///// AVANT-GARDE IN INTERWAR ENGLAND

MEDIEVAL MODERNISM AND THE LONDON UNDERGROUND

Michael T. Saler

To Benson and Joyce

And in memory of Roland Marchand

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PREFACE

It is at least provocative, and it may be historically illuminating, to regard modernism provincially, as it were—to set modernist culture back in its context and to see it as a limited and local enterprise.

<div align="right">LOUIS MENAND[1]</div>

THIS BOOK TRACES THE RECEPTION AND assimilation of modern visual art in England during the interwar period and examines the implications such a local, contextual study has for the broader histories of European modernism and of modern England. It focuses on a debate about the nature of art between modernist "formalists" who sought to define art as autonomous and self-reflexive, and avant-garde "functionalists" who reacted against this definition by arguing that art had direct social, economic, and spiritual functions. The debate set the terms by which visual modernism was to be legitimated to a bewildered and often suspicious public. The formalist conception of art was indebted to the writings of Roger Fry and Clive Bell, members of London's Bloomsbury Group; the functionalist conception of art was propounded by an informal network of individuals, many from the industrial North, whom I have called "medieval modernists."

When it comes to the visual arts, "English modernism" might seem like a contradiction in terms, particularly when one considers the country's veneration of the past, as well as its Protestant bias against images, which continued well into the early twentieth century. In England, however, it was precisely cultural standards like the past (especially the "medieval" past as concocted by nineteenth-century romantics like John Ruskin and William Morris) and the Protestant ethic of service that were drawn upon in order to legitimate visual modernism. I will argue that the formalist aesthetic was strongly challenged throughout the interwar period and that the reception and assimilation of modern art through the late 1930s owed as much to the romantic medievalism of Ruskin and Morris as it did to the formalism of Fry and Bell.

The continued influence of Ruskin and Morris's ideals in interwar England is itself surprising: it is usually thought that the arts and crafts movement inspired by the two faded into a feeble antiquarianism after Morris's

death in 1896. Morris's craft revival was intended to restore a common art "by the people and for the people," but the elegant handicrafts he and his followers created were simply too expensive for most consumers. The influence of Morris's aesthetic on modern design and architecture has been noted, but histories of painting and sculpture usually present Ruskin and Morris's Victorian social aesthetic as being eclipsed by modernism's formalist aesthetic.[2] This perception has only been reinforced by influential arguments that nineteenth-century romantic medievalism itself was shattered by the impact of the First World War, which transformed prewar expressions of chivalric idealism into postwar statements of ironic disillusion.[3] Thus a recent history of modernism in interwar England implies modernism was antithetical to nineteenth-century romantic medievalism: "*Modernism* means many things, but it is most fundamentally the forms that . . . artists found for their sense of modern history: history seen as discontinuous, the past remote and unavailable, or available only as the ruins of itself, and the present a formless space emptied of values."[4]

These views neglect the aesthetic of the Victorian romantic medievalists, which was reinvigorated in the twentieth century by the medieval modernists and affected the reception and assimilation of visual modernism in England. Unlike many of their nineteenth-century predecessors, however, the interwar medieval modernists did not spurn modernity as they embraced the medieval ideal. Rather, they sought to spiritualize capitalism, infuse mass commodities with soul, and reshape an increasingly fragmented and secular culture into an organically integrated community of the faithful. In pursuing these aims, English medieval modernists were instrumental in introducing modern visual art to the nation. They also made a substantial contribution toward establishing the visual arts on a par with the literary arts in a country that had, since the Reformation, privileged the word over the image.

And just as such quintessentially "English" cultural shibboleths as the past, Protestantism, and utilitarianism were used by the medieval modernists to legitimate modern art in the interwar period, modern art and the medieval ideal were themselves associated with broader questions of English national and regional identity, economic direction, educational philosophy, and social planning. Arguments that claim the arts and crafts movement remained mired in the past and had little influence on twentieth-century England need to be rethought.[5] From its inception, the arts and crafts movement was complex, consisting of both antiquarians and progressives; it continued to adapt and thrive in the interwar period as medieval modernism. The term should be understood as referring to a specific discourse in which ideas about aesthetics, society, science, and religion were interfused, a conceptual framework about art and its relations to life espoused by an informal network of individuals at a discrete historical moment. It was a distinctive formulation of modernism— one among the many "modernisms" in Europe and America identified by scholars—which associated the new art with venerable national traditions as well as with contemporary social concerns.

Thus, while this narrative focuses on the ways in which visual modernism was defined and legitimated in interwar England, it intersects with broader questions of twentieth-century English history, including contested concep-

tions of national identity between London and the provinces, ongoing processes of secularization, and conflicting attitudes toward commerce and the "industrial spirit." The story of English medieval modernism attests that aesthetic theories are historically specific and provisional: that definitions of art reveal as much about their time and place as the artifacts they attempt to circumscribe.

In order to analyze this critical historical debate about the social role of art—one whose central tension between formalism and functionalism continues to be felt today—I use the life and thought of Frank Pick as a touchstone. A visionary businessman who managed the London Underground, Pick was the most significant member of the avant-garde network of medieval modernists who sought to integrate modern art with modern life during the twenties and thirties. The London Underground was known as the "people's picture gallery" due to his patronage of modern artists for the Underground's posters; Pick also used the transport system to introduce the public to modern architecture, sculpture, and design. Through his work as a chief executive with the London Underground, as chairman and president of the Design and Industries Association (DIA), and as chairman of the government's Council for Art and Industry (CAI), Pick's projects often converged with those of other medieval modernists (notably those of his Yorkshire compatriots William Rothenstein and Herbert Read, who also receive extended treatment). His thought and activities were central to both the formulation and the dissolution of medieval modernism.

While this is the first study to examine Pick's influential aesthetic views and activities within the wider context of English modernism, it is not strictly a biography. I am interested in Pick primarily as a conduit for the narrative of medieval modernism. The course of his life provides the thread for the broader story of the cultural contest over the definition of modern art in interwar England, and of how the English avant-garde distinguished itself from its continental counterparts. Writing about medieval modernism through the life of one of its foremost proponents has presented some organizational challenges, however, as my narrative focus shifts from close-ups of Pick's specific ideas and activities to wider-angle views of the medieval modern movement they illuminate. I've tried to strike a balance whenever possible by alternating between the general and the particular. Chapter 1 presents an overview of the themes and issues of "medieval modernism." Chapter 2 examines the influence of the provincial North on Pick's views of art and life; chapter 3 enlarges the focus to explore why the North was specifically associated with aesthetic modernism in the interwar period. Chapter 4 details the evolution of the aesthetic of medieval modernism through the 1920s, paying particular attention to the important role played by the DIA, of which Pick was an influential member. Chapter 5 then focuses on the ways Pick and his colleagues at the DIA transformed the London Underground into a concrete embodiment of this aesthetic. Chapter 6 examines the development of the medieval modern discourse in the 1930s, detailing Pick's contribution to its evolution through his activities as chairman of the CAI. Chapter 7 focuses more specifically on Pick's repudiation of the medieval modern project in the later 1930s, and chapter 8 examines the broader social, economic, and intellectual reasons for the collapse of

medieval modernism by 1945. Frank Pick, however, gets the last word(s), as he so often did in his own lifetime.

There are two caveats I should make at the outset. As an intellectual historian, I tend to focus on the discursive constructions of "art" proferred during this period, rather than on the art objects themselves. In so doing I do not mean to reduce aesthetically complex works to antecedent cultural conditions, nor do I mean to ignore the artifacts entirely. Rather, I am guided by the reception and legitimation of visual modernism in England during the interwar period, which was a process that depended greatly on cultural discourses, institutions, and patronage networks.[6] I am particularly interested in following the discursive shifts in the definitions of *art* and *design.* During the interwar period, art became broadly redefined as "design," thereby fulfilling the nineteenth-century arts and crafts' aim of abolishing the hierarchical distinction between the "fine arts" and the "industrial arts" or crafts. The equation of "art" and "design" in public rhetoric during this period can easily be missed if one treats the history of "art" and the history of "industrial design" as distinct subjects. The distinction was often used by contemporaries before 1910 and after 1939, but during the interwar period this very distinction was challenged, and thus the disciplinary demarcations between art history and design history can blind us to the temporary blurring and effacing of such boundaries between 1910–39. Indeed, most histories of English art and industrial design written after 1945 anachronistically separate the history of "art" from "design," a practice counter to the terms used by contemporaries during the interwar period. (While the term *industrial design* was sometimes used in the twenties and thirties, the more prevalent term was *industrial art.*) This is one reason why the story of the interwar union of the arts under the broad rubric "design," as well as the role that Ruskin and Morris played in the legitimation of visual modernism in England, have been overlooked.

Finally, the conceptions of art treated herein were discussed primarily within an English, rather than a British, context. At times there will be an inevitable slippage between these terms, as contemporaries often used the two synonymously, but on the whole the individuals I discuss were preoccupied with the relations between London and the provinces, "England" and the Continent.

Ruskin, Morris, and their epigones set high ideals that continue to inspire, even if they are difficult to approximate, let alone attain. Perhaps my close friends will adopt Ruskin's words and call this essay "a thing of beauty and a joy forever"; perhaps not. But I hope it approaches one of Morris's ideals: that it be as pleasurable to the user as it was to the maker.

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  on this list
(As do Bruce Thompson, Laura Mayhall, Muriel McClendon, and Michael
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An American in Paris could not have been shown the kindness
Of this American in England, despite his cultural blindness.
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Davis, California   M. T. S.
May 1998

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THE AVANT-GARDE IN INTERWAR ENGLAND

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FRAMING THE PICTURE

> *Discourse analysis is always in a sense, unfair to authors. It is interested not in what they have to say or feel as subjects, but is concerned merely with statements as related to other statements in a field.*
>
> JAMES CLIFFORD[1]

THIS IS THE STORY OF HOW THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY English arts and crafts merged with the twentieth-century avant-garde, romantic medievalism with visual modernism, "functionalism" with "formalism." It is the story of how the London Underground—one of the largest and most respected public transport systems in the world in the interwar period—conjoined with England's artistic underground during these years; it is the story of how this modern and mechanized transport system paradoxically became the culminating project of the English arts and crafts movement. It is also the story of how a network of prominent individuals in England, inspired by the ideals of John Ruskin and William Morris, attempted to integrate modern art with modern life: an attempt that corresponded in some respects to the well-documented efforts of continental avant-garde groups like the Italian futurists, the French surrealists, and the Russian constructivists. The English version of this narrative has yet to be told, even though it was in interwar England that the avant-garde aim of abolishing the distinction between art and everyday life attained its widest realization.[2]

I start from the premise that there were many modernisms. "Modernism" is often associated with stylistic innovations, but it also encompassed numerous conceptions about the nature and purpose of art, many of them antithetical. Two such antithetical conceptions, formalism and functionalism, were arrayed against one another in early twentieth-century Europe and America—and particularly in England. In a phrase made famous by Virginia Woolf, it was "on or about December, 1910" that members of London's Bloomsbury Group promulgated a formalist conception of art, which in turn provoked a response from an informal network of individuals, many of them from the North, who advocated a more functionalist conception of art. While the English "avant-garde" has often been associated with Bloomsbury, the opposing network of "medieval

modernists" claimed, with some justification, that their views about the relationship between art and life were closer to traditional English attitudes than those of Bloomsbury. For this reason, as well as for the critical role they played in introducing and legitimating the new art to the public, I believe the medieval modernists, rather than Bloomsbury, ought to be considered as England's foremost avant-garde in the interwar period. Their story foregrounds the nation's long-standing association of art with everyday life, ranging from industrial commodities in the eighteenth century to mass culture in the twentieth. It is thus not surprising that the term *pop art*—meaning popular art—was first coined in London by the Independent Group in the nineteen-fifties; what is surprising is how traditional this group's seemingly radical challenge to aesthetic hierarchies actually was.

This chapter presents an overview of some of the key discursive terms and themes that will be discussed in more detail in the chronological narrative to follow: a map for our subsequent trip through London's artistic underground. First, I will examine some of the dominant conceptions of aesthetic "modernism" and the "avant-garde." Then I will relate these ideas to more particular discussions of English modernism and argue for the existence of an informal yet recognizable avant-garde network in England during the interwar period, one that espoused a "medieval modern" conception of art.

MODERNISM, THE "AVANT-GARDE," AND ENGLAND

In a 1983 essay tellingly entitled "The Poverty of Modernism," Roger Shattuck imagined a conversation between a professor and a graduate student about scholarly attempts to define modernism.[3] The student, disillusioned by the repeated academic efforts to corral protean aesthetic works into procrustean intellectual models, concludes that "modernism" as a term is ultimately "a feather bed for critics and professors, an endlessly renewable pretext for scholars to hold conferences, devise special numbers, and gloss one another's works into powder."

The professor is not offended—indeed, he shares some of the student's skepticism. He acknowledges that

> Modernism is not a period, like the Victorian era. It's not a proper school or movement, like Surrealism. It has no geographic character or associations, like *Der Blaue Reiter*. It serves no heuristic purpose, like the Enlightenment or Romanticism. It suggests no stylistic practice, like Baroque or Imagism. It's the weakest term we've had since Symbolism, which even Verlaine mocked by spelling it with a *c* and an *a*.

And yet the professor—martini in hand, stylishly dressed, on his way to the MLA from his summer home in Vermont—tries gamely to defend his life's work: "We know modernism is a makeshift. But feather bed—that goes too far. We all need handles on things. . . . Students especially. They get desperate without clear reference points."[4]

One is sympathetic with this response: even if the study of modernism is a

"feather bed," it is a difficult one to make and nearly an impossible one to lie in, at least for any length of time. Given the shifting, slippery nature of the term, "water bed" is a better analogy. The search for clear reference points concerning visual modernism, for example, has been ongoing for at least the past century, as contemporaries struggled to assimilate the new styles and subject matter of the impressionists and their successors through the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. One recent critic argues that for both modern artists and the public in the early 1900s, "the dominant aesthetic condition of the period" was, essentially, that of "incomprehension."[5] And over the years mere incomprehension has given way to sheer complexity, particularly during the last two decades when definitions of modernism began to be refracted through the oblique prism of "postmodernism" and its attendant deconstructionist, feminist, and historicist methods of analysis.

Nevertheless, studies of modernism continue to flourish. The traditional students of modernism within the literary and art-historical fields have been joined in recent decades by cultural historians, who have attempted to ground modernism within specific national, social, and cultural contexts. Interesting historical work has been done on continental modernism; less attention, however, has been devoted to England.[6] The sum of these scholarly efforts has made it clear that modernism as an aesthetic phenomenon was both cosmopolitan and provincial, comprising a series of artistic expressions, movements, and opinions that were received, contested, and legitimated within local milieus. As one commentator observed, "the cultural constellation identified as modernism . . . discloses a number of modernisms, with commonalities and differences appropriate to their historical and interpretive context."[7]

For most of the twentieth century, however, there has been a dominant definition of aesthetic modernism that has been applied to all the local variants, one that remains influential today despite the many recent critical approaches that have substantially modified it, or even abandoned it altogether. This is the definition of modernism as formalist.[8] Modern art is often understood as rejecting the mimetic conventions of the past in favor of exploring its own disciplinary techniques or subjective perceptions, eschewing any wider social or historical meanings in its quest for self-sufficiency. The formalist conception of art was developed by Kant and other German philosophers in the eighteenth century. It became explicitly associated with new artistic styles and aims in the late nineteenth century by French symbolists and English aesthetes, and in the twentieth century by Roger Fry and Clive Bell in England, as well as by Alfred Barr, Clement Greenberg, and the "New Critics" in the United States.[9] "Art-as-Such" is the term used by M. H. Abrams to refer to the formalist conception of art as an object that is detached from utility or social context and experienced through the disinterested contemplation of the viewer:

> A work of art is . . . described as an object that is self-sufficient, autonomous, independent. It is asserted to be an end in itself, not a means to an external end, and its artistic value is said to be intrinsic, not extrinsic, to its own being. The work, in other words, is conceived as an entity that exists simply in order to be looked at or read or listened to with an absorbed, exclusive, and disinterested attention.[10]

In recent decades, however, more nuanced definitions of modernism as a general phenomenon have arisen, challenging the elegant simplicity of the formalist paradigm. These acknowledge modernism's contradictory impulses: that modernism could embrace such antinomies as primitivism and futurism, objectivism and subjectivism, expressionism and rationalism, classicism and romanticism, elitism and populism, progressivism and degeneration, and so on.[11] Perhaps the earliest, and certainly the most well-known, formulation of this "antinomic" definition of modernism was that of Charles Baudelaire, who in 1859 defined the modern as "the ephemeral, the fugitive, the contingent, the half of art whose other half is the eternal and the immutable."[12] Like Shattuck's professor, we should be wary of imposing an artificial unity on something as complex as what has come to be called modernism. On the other hand, if modernism was fundamentally "about" anything, it was about problematizing the concept of art and its relationship to everyday life. The antinomies explored by modernists made such self-reflexive questions unavoidable. Having raised these questions, many modernists answered them by attempting to reconcile modernism's contradictory impulses, either in works of art or in theories about the nature of art.

Baudelaire's definition, touching on the antinomic pair of the contingent and the eternal, points to another fundamental aspect of modernism that is also gaining increased acceptance among scholars: a recognition that modernism tended toward idealism; that modernists sought a new metaphysics, a new source of the "eternal and immutable," in art.[13] Despite the diversity of modern movements in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many modernists were united in a common quest for underlying essences that could restore harmony, stability, and spirituality to a "modern" world that appeared increasingly fragmentary, transitory, and secular. Whereas the early romantics often expressed faith in an underlying foundation to existence, modernists confronted a world in which such certainties were increasingly questioned. Numerous modernists hoped to restore a sense of order in the wake of this intellectual shift toward "ontological discontinuity," turning to idealist philosophies, occultist metaphysics, vitalist sciences, and other essentialist systems of thought.[14]

Not all modernists were idealists, of course, but many were; and arguably it is this pronounced strain of idealism in modernism that distinguishes it from postmodernism. Those modernists who attempted to reconcile antinomies did so because they yearned for a totality in which all oppositions were harmonized within a higher synthesis. One critic, for example, has noted how Ezra Pound struggled to bring together "the antinomies of coercive unity and unconstrained diversity" in the *Cantos*; others have been intrigued by the philosopher Walter Benjamin's concerted efforts to bring together Marxism and mysticism, commodities and the Kabbalah.[15] As we shall see, by mid-century many modernists had become disillusioned with the possibility of harmonizing antinomies, opening the way for the postmodern interrogation of all such totalizing projects. Postmodernism certainly shares modernism's exploration of antinomies but rejects its romantic quest for the holistic grail of underlying essences or unifying metanarratives.[16]

The recent emphasis on the antinomic disposition of modernism thus re-

dresses the one-sided emphasis on formalism of the earlier modernist para-digm. Indeed, one of the most striking antinomies within early twentieth century modernism was that represented by modernists who embraced formalism and those who advocated more instrumental, "social" roles for art. Peter Bürger's influential *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (1984) presented the most explicit exposition of these two trends.[17] Bürger argued for a distinction between modern formalists and those who adhered to a more functional conception of art, the "historic avant-garde." By the early twentieth century, he argues, the formalists had been successful at institutionalizing the definition of art as self-reflexive, independent of all moral or utilitarian concerns; the avant-garde, such as the futurists, Dadaists, and surrealists, arose to challenge this definition and reintegrate art with everyday life and social praxis. Bürger argues that the formalists won the contest by assimilating the avant-garde to their own institutionalized definition of Art-as-Such, thereby effacing art's social possibilities in favor of its aesthetic properties. It has only been in recent decades that formalism has once again come under attack by postmodern theorists who refute its distinction between art and life.

 Bürger does show convincingly that the conflict between aesthetic formalists and those who held more social, "functional" conceptions of art became explicit in the early twentieth century. While the debate about the social role of art has a long provenance in the Western intellectual tradition, the early twentieth-century clash between formalists and the avant-garde was one of the most focused and self-reflexive instances of this debate. However, Bürger's dialectical opposition of modern formalists with the avant-garde is problematic: it has been criticized for being too stark,[18] and it does conflate modernism with formalism, rather than presenting formalism and functionalism as antinomic aspects within modernism itself. If we modify his sharp antithesis to include the conflict between formalists and the avant-garde functionalists within modernism, his theory would better approximate the intricacy of modernism.

 Bürger's theory, so modified, provides us with new ways of thinking about the history of visual modernism in England. English visual modernism has often been portrayed as being at once a genuine success in terms of theory and a relative failure in terms of art. The formalist theory of modernism in the twentieth century owed much to the efforts of two Englishmen, Roger Fry and Clive Bell. They emphasized the priority of "significant form" over representative content in the visual arts between 1910 and 1914 in their writings, lectures, and the 1910 and 1912 postimpressionist exhibitions they staged in London. As Bell stressed in *Art* (1914), "to appreciate a work of art we need bring with us nothing from life, no knowledge of its ideas and affairs, no familiarity with its emotions. Art transports us from the world of man's activity to a world of aesthetic exaltation."[19] Historians of English modernism continue to argue that formalism remained the dominant aesthetic in interwar England, despite challenges from more socially engaged conceptions of art in the thirties such as social realism, surrealism, and constructivism.[20] The aesthetic practice of English modernists, on the other hand, is often seen as being marginal to the more innovative and transgressive stylistic experiments taking place on the Continent, especially in France—the English, it is said, "domesticated" modernism.[21] Hence the relative neglect of England among historians of European

modernism. One went so far as to state "that Britain showed on the whole comparatively little interest in the manifestations of modern culture does not require extensive documentation."[22]

If visual modernism is discussed in such normative terms as "stylistic breakthroughs" or "transgressive import," than the English may indeed lose pride of place to the Continent. But if modernism is also understood to be concerned with problematizing the relationship between art and life, as Bürger's theory indicates, then the story of English modernism during the interwar period assumes a centrality hitherto denied it. Debates about modern visual art in England between 1910 and 1945 certainly dealt with issues of aesthetic style and content, but they revolved primarily around the social function of art— whether art ought to be defined in formalist or more socially engaged terms.

Indeed, the story of English modernism has significant homologies with Bürger's theory. The "English avant-garde" of the early twentieth century is often associated reflexively with the Bloomsbury Group, which forthrightly challenged certain Victorian strictures (notably those concerning sexuality and aesthetics).[23] In this general understanding of the term as connoting both the opposition and subversion of established bourgeois norms, Bloomsbury was clearly "avant-garde" in many respects. But if one adopts Bürger's more focused definition, this identification becomes less viable: as we shall see, Fry, Bell, and other members of the Bloomsbury Group were highly ambivalent about the social function of art and are more accurately seen as aesthetic formalists.

I believe there was an avant-garde in interwar England that corresponded to Bürger's definition of that term: one that challenged Fry and Bell's formalist conception of art and sought to integrate modern art and modern life.[24] This English avant-garde of "medieval modernists" (a term discussed more fully below) redefined "art" to include artifacts containing both significant forms and utilitarian functions. Unlike the formalists, they believed that modern art was compatible with modern commerce and that its nonrepresentational forms did convey moral messages, just as traditional narrative art had done.

Indeed, during the interwar period the English avant-garde were arguably more effective than any other in Europe or America at eclipsing the formalist definition of art and in promulgating their own conception of modern art as being both formal and functional. This is not to say they should be considered as the "model" avant-garde in any normative sense; the overall avant-garde project of integrating art and life contained many individual variations that ought to be evaluated on their own terms. Figures like Bertolt Brecht, Marcel Duchamp, Filippo Marinetti, Vladimir Tatlin, and Frank Pick had diverse conceptions of what such a project entailed and of what ends it was meant to serve. But the English avant-garde can be acclaimed as being the most successful in terms of breaking down the distinction between art and life at the level of public rhetoric during the interwar period. Their conception of modern art as socially engaged was echoed by a broad spectrum of English society to an extent unprecedented on the Continent.

In part, the English avant-garde were successful in widely legitimizing their understanding of the new art because they deliberately associated modernism with national traditions. Even if we set aside Bürger's definition as being too theoretical or restricting, the network of medieval modernists I am

identifying as the quintessential "English avant-garde" can lay claim to this title because they defined modern art in customary terms and consciously opposed their aesthetic to the "cosmopolitanism" of Bloomsbury. They argued that Fry and Bell's formalism was excessively "French" and elitist; in turn they assimilated the new art to familiar Victorian conceptions of the functional and moral purposes of art. In England, aesthetic modernism could seem threatening when formalists claimed it had no social or ethical functions, as such a conception of art was foreign to a nation schooled in Evangelical and utilitarian values. The English avant-garde, however, reassuringly associated the new art with native Protestantism and practicality. Nonrepresentational art was praised for eschewing the transient world of appearances in favor of transmitting the eternal rhythms and universal forms underlying existence that in turn would spiritualize the nation. This Protestant Aesthetic also merged nicely with the Spirit of Capitalism: when united with industry, modern art both served man and served as man's appreciative contribution to the divine creation.

Aesthetic modernism could also seem threatening when championed by those who also embraced anarchism, communism, or even fascism: but the English avant-garde, many of whom were "new" liberals or "ethical" socialists, associated modernism with a social democratic order. They desired an integrated nation, but felt that a collective community that also respected individuality could best be fostered through art, which itself expressed the individual and the universal. Like the continental avant-garde, they linked art with politics—but the English avant-garde promoted a very "English," gradualist vision of social change, in which art, allied to commerce, would permeate life, subtly transforming society into an organic and harmonious community. They tended to associate art more with the "improving" forces of commerce than with partisan politics, a tradition that extended back to the eighteenth century.[25] Commerce, a defining strength of the nation, would diffuse art as well as prosperity once art became integrated with industry. Art would spiritualize capitalism, humanizing its more calculating aspects, and capitalism, the new "religion" of the modern world, would restore a social function to art, just as Christianity had guided art and artists in the Middle Ages.

In fact the Middle Ages, no less than commerce, recurs as an important—and comforting—trope in the interwar discussions of art. The nineteenth-century idealization of the Middle Ages as a time of aesthetic, social, and spiritual harmony was another patrimonial aspect of the culture that the English avant-garde used to legitimate the new art. They were especially indebted for their conceptions of art and society to the writings of nineteenth-century romantic medievalists such as John Ruskin and William Morris, which they adapted to meet the new conditions of the twentieth century. Like their romantic-medieval predecessors, the English avant-garde repudiated the separation of "art" from "craft" or "design" that had occurred during the Renaissance, and sought to restore the classical and medieval definition of art as simply a well-constructed artifact that was fit for its purpose.[26] This inclusive definition of art became commonplace during the interwar period, realizing, at least at the rhetorical level, the avant-garde aim of effacing the formalist distinction between art and life. The sculptor Eric Gill was only one of many who argued that

"Art is not just a few pictures in museums and picture galleries. . . . Art is all the things made in our time."[27] S. F. Markham, a director of Sotheby's, attested to the wide dissemination of this definition as he recorded approvingly "the general recognition that the distinction between fine and applied arts is out of date."[28] Appreciative references to Ruskin and Morris were also common in the interwar period. "Ruskin's thought saturates this generation through and through," asserted the architect W. R. Lethaby in 1919, and the art critic Anthony Bertram observed in 1938 that "it was Morris who took art out of the academies and brought it again into everyday life . . . [but] it has taken nearly half a century for these ideas to percolate into the ideology of our times."[29]

The English avant-garde were not unique in associating modern art and the Middle Ages. Similar ideas can be found among modernists on the Continent, reminding us that modernism never represented a complete repudiation of the Western past in favor of the "primitivism" of the non-West.[30] While modernists tended to reject many aspects of nineteenth-century thought, the conception of the Middle Ages conjured by Victorian romantics remained an important model of the integrated spiritual community that numerous European artists and writers hoped to recreate in the early decades of the new century. Many sought unifying mythic and spiritual values that would remedy the perceived excesses of bourgeois liberalism, rationalism, industrialism, urbanism, and secularism—of "modernity." Walter Gropius, for example, intended the Bauhaus to emulate the medieval workshop traditions in which there was no invidious distinction between the arts and crafts and artists labored to express the common spiritual ideals of an organically integrated community. ("Bauhaus" is derived from *Bauhütten*, the medieval craft lodges for artisans working on the cathedrals.)[31] The young Georg Lukács also associated postimpressionism with a revitalization of medieval corporate and spiritual ideals, as did certain French cubists, such as Albert Gleizes.[32] But the attempt to associate modernism with the past may have been most pronounced in England, where the more things change the more they are made to appear to remain the same.[33]

In addition to realizing the arts and crafts' dream of redefining art broadly to include the "industrial" as well as the "fine" arts, the English avant-garde played a central role in introducing the new art to the public. They recognized that few had access to the small number of galleries and museums that exhibited modernist works and took it upon themselves to promote visual modernism. Members of the English avant-garde organized modern art exhibitions for the provinces, reproduced and explained modernist works in mass circulation magazines, broadcast lectures on modernism on the BBC, and incorporated modern art into educational curricula. Many of them were raised in the North, where they had felt culturally isolated in relation to cosmopolitan London; such memories galvanized them to extend visual modernism as widely as possible.

The English avant-garde's efforts to redefine art and to educate the public were part of their wider goal of transforming the country into a spiritually integrated and harmonious community, a modern "Earthly Paradise" similar to that which supposedly existed in the Middle Ages. Their faith that art could be the catalyst of such a change was not entirely new. In the eighteenth century,

the third Earl of Shaftesbury had maintained that art quickened the "moral sense" and thus should be used to redress the fissiparous aspects of modern society. His ideas about the integrative potential of art were to have their greatest influence among German romantics during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, although the German model of the harmonious "Aesthetic State" can be found in the writings of English romantics like Coleridge, Carlyle, Ruskin, and Morris.[34] The wider English art world also defined art largely in moral and functional terms through 1910, influenced by Evangelical, utilitarian, and romantic currents of thought. Even the English decadents and aesthetes of the 1880s and 1890s shared this "social" bias, in contrast to the more aestheticist bias of the French during the fin de siècle or the idealist bias of the Germans.[35] Indeed, Fry and Bell's formalist views were a conscious reaction to this social bias, and they borrowed liberally from French and German aesthetic theories.

The English avant-garde differed, however, from many of their predecessors in the English "Aesthetic State" tradition by extolling the visual arts rather than literature as the primary agent of social change. Protestant England had congratulated itself on being preeminently a literary culture, openly ceding pride of place in the visual arts to the Continent, especially France. Carlyle's "The Hero as Man of Letters" expresses this wider cultural bias; Matthew Arnold's definition of culture as "the best which has been thought and said in this world" pointedly left out the best that has been seen and arranged. While nineteenth-century aesthetic theories often privileged the eye as the organ of truth,[36] it was a truth mediated by the word: paintings were expected to be legible as narratives, preferably with a ready moral or inspiriting message.[37]

This bias toward the literary was also evident when the concept of "Englishness" became more formally defined in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[38] Visual illiteracy could be praised as a national trait, one of many that distinguished the hardy and practical English from the effete and sybaritic French.[39] English national identity depended to a large degree on such binary oppositions between England and France: the English were a nation of Protestants, a people of the Word, an island of iconoclasts; the French were a nation of Catholics, their love of the visual arts reflecting papist superstition and abetting effeminate luxury. Englishness enabled *philistinism* to be construed as a positive term, the opposite of French sophistication. Rudyard Kipling boasted that "it is entirely right that the English should distrust and disregard all the Arts . . . for on that indifference rests their moral grandeur."[40] Others, however, deplored this alleged peculiarity of the English. The art critic Herbert Read blamed "puritanism" for the fact that "our national indifference to the arts is not superficial, it is fundamental,"[41] and Roger Fry maintained that "the English indifference to art is really pathological."[42] Foreign visitors often concurred. Writing from London, Karel Čapek tried to strike a charitable note in wondering if, "after all, it is only Protestantism which has drained this country dry in an artistic respect."[43] However, G. J. Renier, author of *The English: Are They Human?* (1934), pulled no punches: "To write about the English attitude towards art is a painful task for a lover of the English people. For their attitude towards art is that of the philistine: puerile, reactionary, uninspired, unenlightened—in short, ghastly."[44] For Kipling, a complement.

Such rhetoric captures a widespread perception, although it obviously does not do justice to the history of the visual arts in modern England. The pervasive opinion both at home and abroad that English philistinism was ingrained could obscure the genuine achievements of modern English artists, to say nothing of a heritage that included Hogarth, Blake, Constable, Turner, and the Pre-Raphaelites. Nevertheless, it is true that until the First World War the educated English middle class favored literature as a means to limn the national character, inspire altruism, and maintain ethical values in a secularizing age.[45]

During the interwar period, however, the English avant-garde aggressively promoted the visual arts as the central means to attain these moral aims. By integrating modern art with industry and education, they hoped to create an "Aesthetic State" that would unify the individual psyche with the social polity and the social polity with the spiritual realm. While Ruskin and Morris had maintained that the fundamental political and economic structures of society would have to be changed radically before any genuine art could flourish, their avant-garde successors believed that visual art itself would be the means toward establishing an organic and spiritual community. In a 1919 publication of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, W. A. S. Benson stated that while a few society members still followed Morris in envisaging political revolution as "a condition precedent to real improvement in the position of the arts . . . the procedure of the Society really implied a basis now recognized as more truly scientific, that the arts were likely to be, not the result, but the means of bringing about better conditions of life."[46]

The English avant-garde recognized that it would not be enough to convince the public of the value of the new visual art merely by stressing its moral and spiritual functions; after all, even the formalists acknowledged art's transcendent qualities. Because government patronage of the visual arts was usually limited to projects that would improve the state of the "industrial arts" for the home and export markets, the English avant-garde were careful to argue that visual modernism had economic as well as spiritual benefits for the nation. Their definition encompassed formalism and functionalism, the spiritual and the utilitarian—and this was a critical reason for its wide acceptance during the interwar period, as modernism's utility had to be made explicit in a country whose dominant values underscored industry and practicality. The formalists decried this attitude as philistine, an all-too-ready accommodation with bourgeois materialism, but many in England argued that such a bottom-line approach had an illustrious tradition extending back to the wonderful medieval period. "The merchant princes in Europe," noted Sir Frederick Ponsonby, "have been responsible for bringing into being some of the greatest works of art and the most beautiful cities have been built by commercial men. There is, therefore, no reason why commerce and art should not go hand in hand together as they did in the Middle Ages, and the sooner the public is made to understand that ugly things are no cheaper to produce than beautiful things, the better."[47] And at the opening of an exhibit of postimpressionist art at the Manchester Art Gallery in 1911, Robert Ross assured his middle-class audience that at the very least modern art was an ideal long-term investment,

as its emphasis on nonrepresentational forms rather than traditional narrative subjects meant it would never depreciate in value:

> Don't believe any nonsense about the evils of commercialism in art. There can be no art without commercialism. The art of Flanders and Holland and Italy decayed with their commerce. English painting has steadily developed synchronously with our commerce. Only, just as you have to buy the right cotton and coal and wheat and flour, you must buy the right kind of pictures that will retain their commercial value because their aesthetic value is eternal.[48]

While the English avant-garde upheld this long-standing association between art and commerce in order to legitimate the new art, they were more interested in elevating minds than in elevating profits. They hoped to spiritualize the capitalist social order by disseminating modern "art"—now defined to include mass commodities—that emanated the transcendent rhythms and forms underlying creation. When designed by artists, "household goods would be transformed into household gods,"[49] thereby reconciling Morris's medieval utopian vision, *A Dream of John Ball* (1888), with the economic dream of John Bull. Like their associations between modernism and medievalism, their animistic attitude toward commodity culture was shared by other continental and American modernists who attempted to reconcile the antinomies of the ephemeral and the eternal.[50] Walter Benjamin, for example, believed that mass commodities contained "divine sparks" of transcendence awaiting liberation, and other interwar modernists expressed similar animistic views.[51]

Thus, whereas Ruskin had denied and Morris had doubted that industrial products could be art, many of their interwar followers accepted—even celebrated—commodities as art and the machine as simply another artisanal tool, one capable of great spiritual and economic benefits to society if used properly. The transmission of the uniquely human spirit need not be limited to transmission through the hand, as Ruskin and Morris had believed; it could be expressed in the designer's conceptual schemes that were subsequently executed by the machine. An object that was designed according to right reason would be in accord with the cosmic design of the Divine Artificer, whose rules applied to art as well as nature. As Sir Charles Waldstein remarked in 1914, "art has nothing to fear from the simplification and economy of the processes in producing works, so long as the taste and the feeling for form and design are true, noble and highly developed in those who originate the works pioneered by manufacture."[52] A work of industrial art emanated the same spiritual aura as a work of "fine art," provided that both adhered to the pre-Renaissance aesthetic standard of "fitness for purpose."[53] Once modern artists trained in the principle of fitness for purpose were integrated into industry, there would no longer be a split between the material world of commodities and the transcendent realm of the spirit. As Frank Pick said, "We think of ourselves as vessels of the spirit of God, so things, we may say, are receptacles of the spirit of man. When they are full of the spirit, things have souls—God's gift to us, man's gift to them."[54]

Such well-designed commodities, affordable to all, would in time become

diffused throughout the nation, emanating the rhythms and harmonies of the cosmos, eliciting a spiritual transformation of the populace. Industrial products would serve as the new "common art" of the democratic age, comparable to the medieval "common art" that the English avant-garde believed had fostered the spiritual, corporate solidarity of the Middle Ages. Inexpensive yet aesthetic cutlery would grace ordinary homes, just as paintings and sculptures had ornamented the dwellings of princes and prelates in the past. As one interwar critic reminded his readers, "the difference between a well-designed fork and Botticelli's *Primavera* is one of degree and not kind."[55]

While the English avant-garde were clearly romantics, they were not reactionaries—they tended to be pragmatic idealists who hoped to transform the country into a modern Earthly Paradise, a merry mechanized England. And although they were unable to realize their more grandiose schemes, they did make significant headway in integrating art with everyday life. Their efforts to redefine art and to associate it with industry and education are central to this narrative, linking the lives and activities of Frank Pick, William Rothenstein (principal of the Royal College of Art), Herbert Read (author of *Art and Industry* and *Education Through Art*), and many others.

As we shall see, the activities of the English avant-garde bore concrete results. Through their efforts, modern painting, sculpture, architecture, and "industrial art" were no longer distinguished hierarchically in public rhetoric, but rather were seen as existing within an aesthetic continuum; they were also understood as being directly relevant to the economic, social, and spiritual welfare of the nation. Despite the efforts of many formalists to efface the social role of art after 1910, the English avant-garde's tactic of assimilating modernism into a traditional framework prevented art from abandoning its social moorings through the interwar period. In 1913 James Bone, London editor of *The Manchester Guardian*, articulated the widespread perception that while visual modernism consisted of significant forms, it must also adhere to the social functions long expected of literature:

> Can pictorial art live apart from its association content like music, or will it become gibberish, as poetry does when the poet seeks to use words for their rhythmic value apart from their meaning? Can it give up ethics and cease to have the responsibility of poetry without lowering its whole value to the human race? The answer surely is that it cannot; that although works of art have in common the language of significant form, a work of art to be great must have a moral value that can be expressed in that form. . . . What the future may hold for English art is more than ever an enigma; but of one thing we may be sure: Post-Impressionism, either as a poison or as a medicine, will never be taken here in its purity. . . . None of our national bogeys are really dangerous. No anarchists, Jesuits, or Post-Impressionists can ever have their will of us. South Kensington and Hammersmith can sleep safe o' nights, well guarded by the Spirit of Compromise, formidable to Art as to Anarchy.[56]

This "spirit of compromise" between the formalist and the functionalist conception of art maintained by the English avant-garde lasted until the late

1930s, when their dream of abolishing the distinction between the so called fine and useful arts had become widely accepted, at least at the rhetorical level. Inherent tensions within this conception of art, however, exacerbated by external factors, made the compromise untenable; by 1945 the distinction between the fine arts and the industrial arts became reestablished once again. Herbert Read, one of the few members of the avant-garde network who survived into the postwar period, found himself increasingly isolated after the war and in 1962 wrote "I despair when I think of John Ruskin, for he was a man . . . who throughout a long life-time fought for the values I have fought for with eloquence and passionate clarity, and in the end was utterly defeated. The younger generations no longer read him and their elders no longer teach them to read him."[57]

But Read's sense of retrospective defeat should not obscure the genuine achievements of the interwar English avant-garde. They established, albeit temporarily, a broad definition of art that included the objects of everyday life within its ambit; they persuaded many that visual art was relevant to education, industry, and the lives of ordinary people; and they made modern art more accessible to those who traditionally had little access to visual art at all, let alone modernist works shunned by most galleries and museums. Through the fervor of reformers reared on Ruskin and Morris, the visual arts attained a more prominent place in popular English culture. Despite its rapid collapse, the English avant-garde had played a pivotal role in the reception and legitimation of visual modernism in England. The story of its rise and fall reminds us that a central debate about modernism in interwar England revolved around modern art's social functions as well as its significant forms and that many of the terms of this debate were derived from nineteenth-century romantic medievalism.

MEDIEVAL MODERNISM

Who comprised this English avant-garde? It is time to be more specific, at the risk of reiterating a few of the points made earlier, albeit from a different angle. Documents from the period provide links disclosing an informal network of individuals who espoused a similar conception of art, one that arose in reaction to the formalist aesthetic promulgated by Fry and Bell during and after the 1910 and 1912 London postimpressionist exhibitions. To take one set of such links: in his 1947 autobiography, the sculptor Eric Gill reminisced about how twentieth-century English modernists revolted against earlier conceptions of art. Gill, however, thought of "revolution" in its original meaning as a cyclical restoration of antecedent conditions, rather than as a break with the past: "Following William Morris, following [John] Ruskin . . . we were in revolt against the whole [Victorian] conception of art as being irrational. Without knowing it we were Thomistic and Aristotelian."[58] In 1929 his sculpture was integrated onto the new London Underground headquarters, together with modernist works by Henry Moore and Jacob Epstein, among others. These had been commissioned by the architect of the headquarters, Charles Holden, an ardent Ruskinian whose buildings were among the few executed in the modern style in England during the interwar years. Holden in turn had been com-

missioned by Frank Pick, whose devotion to the ideas of Ruskin and Morris led him to use the transport system to promote the new art. His public pronouncements on the unity of art and life led Kenneth Clark to write "in a different age he might have become a sort of Thomas Aquinas."[59]

Contemporary reviewers were quick to associate the new Underground headquarters with both modernism and medievalism. *The Observer* dubbed it "A Cathedral of Modernity,"[60] and *The Architectural Review* praised several of the sculptors for choosing to follow the medieval practice of chiseling their works directly onto the building rather than the contemporary practice of fashioning them within the studio: "For some months, in one small but significant spot of her vast sprawling anatomy, London has been constituted a Gothic workshop. In Westminster seven good men have been hacking and chipping stone; creating images in the way this sort of thing was done up and down England from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries."[61] Arthur Greenwood, the minister of health, told a reporter that the headquarter's union of the arts of architecture and sculpture represented the thinking of a new generation: "The nineteenth century was adaptable economically but not spiritually. Now we are catching up and [I am] trying to be a medieval modern."[62]

I have applied Greenwood's apt phrase to the discourse espoused by this informal network of individuals whose common influences, associations, and views about the unity of art and life qualify them in hindsight as a recognizable avant-garde. "Medieval modern" views were expressed by government officials at the Boards of Trade and Education, critics, educators, artists, businessmen, and media organizations as divergent as *The Times*, the *Manchester Guardian*, the BBC, and London art-world publications. Many of these medieval modernists welcomed the new styles in art and associated them with their idealized vision of the Middle Ages, when art had both social and spiritual functions. Thus in 1913 the critic Huntly Carter compared the "New Spirit in Drama and Art" to the art of the Middle Ages and asked "what is modernism but bringing old things up to date?"[63] And the critic J. E. Barton reassured his listeners during his six-part series on modern art broadcast by the BBC in 1933 that "Our modern architects, sculptors, painters and designers generally, are often described as 'breaking away from tradition'. It would be far more accurate to say that they are trying to get back to tradition."[64] In England, before there was postmodernism, there was past-modernism.

Many of the medieval modernists held prominent positions and were able to promote their conception of art through concrete examples, like the Underground, as well as through more traditional institutions, including the media, schools, and the government. Unlike continental avant-garde groups such as the German Dadaists and French surrealists, which cherished their oppositional role to the dominant culture, the English medieval modernists were as much a part of the Establishment as they were critical of it—a reflection of the relative integration of English intellectuals with the political nation.[65] The lack of severe polarization between the "governing" and the "chattering" classes in England helps to explain why debates about modern art were not as closely associated with politics as they were on the Continent; compared to the reception of modern art in Germany and France, for example, the English discussions were quite moderate.[66]

The medieval modern conception of art espoused by this network emerged between 1910 and the 1930s, a concatenation of shared terms and ideas drawn from overlapping social, religious, scientific, economic, and artistic arenas. It is difficult to separate the various components without losing sight of the whole, or to insist on adhering rigorously to an "ideal type" of a given discourse when the historical actors themselves often used terms imprecisely or in contradictory ways. There were strong and weak expressions of medieval modernism: it was not a rigid set of terms governed by internally consistent rules, as would be the case for certain legal, medical, or scientific discourses that become explicitly codified within professions. Medieval modernism was closer to a "language game" of kindred terms, conceptions, aims, and ideals, whose formation and diffusion can be traced over time. While individual versions might vary to some extent, an overall family resemblance existed among the articulations of a variety of individuals.

There were those who shared some of the medieval modernists' views, but who departed sufficiently from the tradition to be excluded from it. James Joyce, for example, maintained an interest in scholastic aesthetics with other medieval modernists, but he did not share their transcendental cosmology; instead Joyce reinterpreted the aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas to underscore the contingent, open-ended nature of the modern "chaosmos."[67] Wyndham Lewis "blasted" the years 1837–1901, but he, like the medieval modernists, rejected the immediate past in order to commend the communal values associated with the classical and medieval periods. Lewis shared similarities with the medieval modernists in several respects, notably in his belief in the unity of the arts and in the social role of the artist as designer. But he departed from the tradition in his sharp distinction between art and nature and in his denigration of democracy.[68] While T. S. Eliot might be called a medieval modernist because of his admiration for the organic and spiritual community of the Middle Ages together with its "impersonal" conception of art, his elitist and formalist views isolate him from several of the central terms of the tradition as I have defined it; similarly, Clive Bell's elitism and uncompromising formalism also place him outside of the tradition. As we shall see, however, his colleague Roger Fry, while championing formalism and repudiating Ruskin and Morris, retained closer sympathies to the tradition than he cared to admit. Janus-like, Fry extolled the aesthetic values of the French symbolist movement while simultaneously furthering the arts and crafts' goal of abolishing the distinction between fine art and craft. He vacillated between ascribing a social function to art and defining art as formal and autotelic.[69]

Some aspects of the tradition are removed from "medievalism" altogether, but fall within the spectrum of medieval modernism because they were clearly associated with the works of Ruskin, Morris, or other progenitors of the discourse. To take one example, many of the medieval modernists were raised in the North of England. They resented the cultural centralization of London that had been reestablished by the end of the nineteenth century and extolled England's provincial towns and cities as innovative and independent cultural centers that embodied the fundamental virtues of "Englishness." They tried to wrest the definition of art away from the Bloomsbury formalists and give it a functionalist emphasis more in keeping with the utilitarian and populist

values they associated with both "England" and the North. Bradford-born William Rothenstein, for instance, campaigned for the employment of local artists in civic projects as a way to integrate art with everyday life, and was himself appointed to the first University Chair in Civic Art in England, established at Sheffield University in 1917. For much of the interwar period he was Roger Fry's most vehement critic, arguing that Fry's formalist views were elitist and more "cosmopolitan" than English. Rothenstein's brother Charles inherited their father's business in Bradford; part of his income went into establishing a significant collection of modern art which he arranged to tour the West Riding in order to expose the local population to art that had been restricted to London galleries. Such civic pride in local creative endeavors and faith in local industrial-magnates as the modern patrons of art had been preached by John Ruskin, whose lectures on art and industry in the northern towns were vital to the formation of the tradition. Medieval modernists from the North echoed Ruskin's remarks of 1884: "All great art, in the great times of art, is *provincial*, showing its energy in the capital, but educated . . . in its own country town. . . . Further,—the tendency to centralization, which has been fatal to art in all times, is at *this* time, pernicious in totally unprecedented degree."[70] This association of the North with native values that were under threat by the centralizing tendencies of London was an important strand in the discourse; although it had little to do with "medievalism" per se, it was influenced by Ruskin and associated with other aspects of the tradition.

In its most typical form, medieval modernism reiterated conceptions of art and society found in the writings of Ruskin, Morris, and other nineteenth-century romantic medievalists. These writers contrasted the modern industrial world to the spiritual, communal, and harmonious world that supposedly existed in ages preceding the Renaissance. They looked back nostalgically to a time when art was simply "right-making," when common items no less than paintings and statues were created with devotion and valued as expressions of the divine spirit, when the everyday was emblematic of a universal order, when all was a divine creation. While recognizing that the modern world could not be wholly restored to the medieval world of their imagination, they desired to revive the spirit of the Middle Ages: to restore the conditions in which there would be no "dissociation of sensibility" but rather the organic integration of the individual within a temporal and spiritual community. As Morris wrote in 1884, "It is a strange view to take of historical knowledge and insight, that it should set us on the adventure of trying to retrace our steps toward the past, rather than give us some glimmer of insight into the future."[71]

While they tended toward a cultural paternalism, insisting that their standards were universal standards, medieval modernists actively worked to bring art to the people, to achieve a "democratization of the sublime."[72] They believed that the seemingly natural distinction between "fine art" and the crafts or the "industrial arts" was class-based: in actuality, all art was simply the expression of joy in creation and inhered in any thing or in any activity that was done with thought, love, and sincerity. (Some accepted a gradation of skill and talent within this encompassing notion of "art," as Ruskin did.) Like their romantic-medieval predecessors, medieval modernists adhered to a classical and medieval definition of art as simply an artifact that genuinely fulfilled its pur-

pose, just as the natural world fulfilled the purposes of the Divine Artificer. Thus a medieval modernist at the Board of Trade, Hubert Llewellyn Smith, could claim in 1929 that "Art is essentially a thing of action, the practical means of accomplishing some purpose. If that purpose is a fine purpose, the art is a fine art; if it is mean and ignoble the art is mean and ignoble. But it is always concrete and practical."[73]

Medieval modernists worked to restore the medieval integration of art and life in several ways: by challenging the prevailing definition of art, by integrating modern artists into industry, and by extending art education and appreciation to a wide public. A significant number were born in the last third of the nineteenth century, reared in the North, raised as nonconformists, and embraced the ethical socialism of Ruskin and Morris. Whether they identified themselves as "new" liberals or "ethical" socialists, however, medieval modernists tended to accord primacy to the aesthetic and commercial rather than the political. They had faith that an Aesthetic State would resolve the antinomies between capitalism and socialism, individualism and collectivism; that the integrative power of art would transform society into an organic whole.

Medieval modernists not only hoped to reintegrate art with life—they intended to integrate modern art with modern life. There were those, like W. R. Lethaby or D. S. MacColl, who remained skeptical about postimpressionist art, but many prominent medieval moderns, like Frank Pick, Michael Sadler, Herbert Read, and William Rothenstein, were among the central exponents, collectors, and patrons of the new. They believed postimpressionism could be assimilated to romantic medievalism, especially as Ruskin and Morris's writings on art left wide latitude for interpretation. One might argue—and a number in interwar England did—that Ruskin would have hated abstract art, given his demand that all art be "true to nature" and his vehement dislike of Whistler's Nocturnes and Symphonies. Yet medieval modernists argued that "truth to nature" could encompass abstract art, given the complex understandings of nature being advanced by the "new physics" at the turn of the century. They also cited William Morris to legitimate the new art, as he had favored a simple and decorative style that they believed was the fundamental attribute linking the disparate expressions of the postimpressionists. Morris had even seemed to anticipate the modernist explosion of earlier artistic conventions. He had argued that the nineteenth century was a transitional period for the arts and had looked forward to a time when a "common art" would reemerge:

> All worthy art must be in the future, as in the past, the outcome of the aspirations of the people towards the beauty and the true pleasure of life. . . . It is true that the blossom of it I shall not see; yet we are even now seeing the seed of it beginning to germinate. No one can tell now what form that art will take; but it is certain that it will not depend on the whim of a few persons, but on the will of all.[74]

To many medieval modernists, the variety of artistic styles collected under Fry's umbrella term of *postimpressionism* seemed to exemplify the very art Morris had anticipated. Postimpressionism was interpreted as meeting Morris's criteria. Many maintained that in its abstractions from nature the new art was simple and direct. They also argued that it could be useful as well as beau-

tiful, as numerous postimpressionist works seemed to be characterized by pure colors and two-dimensional, clearly defined forms that were ideally suited to the requirements of modern advertising and machine reproduction. While critics derisively compared postimpressionism to the art of children and "primitives" because it seemed to lack academic technique, medieval modernists asserted that it was precisely the intuitive and expressive aspects of the new art that indicated it could be produced by ordinary individuals—just as art had been in the Middle Ages—rather than be restricted to academically trained "fine artists." Postimpressionism, in their view, was not elitist, decadent, or degenerate: it was the modern equivalent of the "common art" of the medieval craftsmen extolled by Ruskin and Morris.

The romantic medievalists had argued that medieval art was not only a "common art;" it was also a "living art," expressing the spirit of the age. Many medieval modernists welcomed postimpressionism as a manifestation of this living art that would express the new, "collective" values of the age of the masses and of social planning. Postimpressionism was defined as an art that connoted organization, integration, "architectonic design"—holistic attributes that also were hallmarks of late Victorian and Edwardian social thought.[75] Medieval modernists often distinguished the new art from impressionism on the grounds that postimpressionist art tended to have clearly delineated forms that comprised an intelligible arrangement, in contrast to the vaporous fluidity conveyed by many impressionist works. The impressionists' interest in individual flecks of color and light was appropriate for an earlier period of laissez-faire liberalism, but not for the more centralized social polity that was clearly emerging, which required an art exemplifying synthesis. Postimpressionist works met this requirement: they expressed order, clarity, structure, form, and a sense of permanence—"classical" qualities of art that appealed no less to romantics seeking intimations of an ideal spiritual order and models for a corporate social order.[76] As one art critic maintained, "Post Impressionism . . . seeks synthesis in the soul of man, and in the substance of things; it lifts mere craftsmanship into the region of mysticism, and proclaims that art may be a stimulation as well as a solace."[77] In the interwar period, postimpressionism was cited as the visual analogue for both the designed, collective society medieval modernists sought to create and the noncontingent cosmic order to which this society should correspond.

Indeed, for many medieval modernists the new art was inseparable from metaphysics: visual art both revealed and expressed the existence of transcendental laws uniting nature, art, and society. This conception of art, like the conception of the Aesthetic State, continued from the nineteenth century. The early English romantics had been influenced both by German *Naturphilosophie*, which gave art an ontological status by associating its forms with those of the natural world, and by natural theology, which viewed nature as the expression of divine design. Natural theology, no less than natural eccentricity, helps to explain why John Ruskin could turn from a discussion of paintings to lengthy excurses on geologic formations in *Modern Painters*. Ruskin had been raised in an Evangelical household and was as interested in geology and biology as he was in art: they all expressed the divine. He defined "Vital Beauty" as the perfect adaption of a creature to its purpose[78] and also insisted that "all

the greatest art which the world has produced is thus fitted for a place and sub-ordinated to a purpose."[79] Like his medieval modernist followers, he maintained that "wise Art was the shadow, or visible reflection of wise Science."[80]

Darwinism challenged natural theology in the mid nineteenth century, but the argument linking aesthetic design to the invariant laws of universal design continued through the early twentieth century. Darwin's own emphasis on chance in the evolutionary process was often overlooked, misunderstood, or rejected by those seeking to reconcile evolutionary theory with some form of providentialism. Many late Victorian and Edwardian thinkers continued to believe in teleological explanations for organic evolution, substituting concepts of nature or of vital forces for the now-suspect conception of a Divine Artificer.[81] The vitalist evolutionary ideas of Herbert Spencer, Samuel Butler, George Bernard Shaw, and Henri Bergson, among many others, contributed to the widespread perception that society and art ought to be modeled after organic nature as revealed by science.[82] Design educators and urban planners insisted on the existence of such underlying, vital "forces" and laws that linked art and nature.[83] Vitalist currents of thought such as these were reinforced by other trends of thought in the latter half of the century, such as philosophic idealism, incarnational theology, and spiritualism.[84] Although some fin de siècle artists rejected these links between art and nature, many others continued to associate art with the laws and forms of nature rather than with artifice.[85]

The association between art and organic nature had led many nineteenth-century romantics to call for the end of the distinction between art and life. Nevertheless, Wordsworth, Carlyle, Ruskin, and Morris were minority voices in a society that continued to distinguish artists from artisans, the "fine arts" from the crafts or industrial arts. It was only in the interwar period that their views, reformulated by medieval modernists to address pressing economic issues, scientific discoveries, and spiritual concerns, attained wider acceptance. Herbert Read's spoke for many at this time when he stated "Art is a *natural* activity. Its rules are the proportions and rhythms inherent in our universe, and the instinctive observation of these rules, which come about in the creative industry of the arts, brings the individual without effort into sympathetic harmony with his environment."[86]

Continental modernists also tended to associate modernism with metaphysics, echoing Baudelaire's contention that modern art expressed the eternal as well as the ephemeral.[87] In England, however, this quasi-religious understanding of modern visual art often went beyond a vague transcendentalism: it was directly associated with Protestantism, yet another way in which the new art was legitimated to the public in national terms. We expect any artistic avant-garde to be nonconformist, but in England religious nonconformity played a significant role in the legitimation of modern art. Quakers, Unitarians, and Evangelicals were heavily represented among the "intellectual aristocracy" of Victorian and Edwardian England,[88] and they also comprised, to a great extent, the legitimators of visual modernism. From Ruskin's defense of Turner and the Pre-Raphaelites to advocates of modernism like Fry, Pick, Holden, Roland Penrose, Samuel Courtauld, and many others, nonconformists with their independent outlook and sense of social duty helped shape the reception of the new visual art.

There is a certain irony in this, as commentators often blamed English philistinism on its puritan heritage. Perhaps the Protestant embrace of visual art represented a return of the repressed. (Although in most other respects the English avant-garde remained buttoned-downed and sober, the most repressed avant-garde in Europe.) Ruskin's strict Evangelical upbringing only intensified his hunger for art, which he then justified in Protestant terms; Roger Fry's passion for art stemmed from similar roots, as his friend C. R. Ashbee observed in 1934: "though it is not incorrect to say that he was 'Ruskin's opposite' because he sought to 'extricate art from its subject-matter', the two men sprang from the same stock, a tough English Protestantism."[89] Discussions about visual modernism resounded with Protestant terms and analogies. In *Art* (1914), Clive Bell presented postimpressionism as a nonconforming movement that was returning to the "first principles" of primitive art, away from the "superstitions" imposed upon art by the Renaissance emphasis on technique. Bell's language echoed nineteenth-century theological debates in England concerning the superstitions imposed by Roman Catholicism on the authentic primitive church. Protestant readers of *Art* could take reassurance from Bell's assertion that if art is a religion, "it is a religion without a priesthood."[90] Similarly, Frank Pick criticized the papist implications of the term *fine arts*: "The term 'art' has got into disrepute, and Art itself is to blame for this. It has allowed itself to be isolated, cut off from the common life. . . . It is as if religion were a matter of bishops and archimandrites and priests and not of the people themselves."[91]

This theme of religious nonconformity overlaps with other themes of the tradition. It can be seen in the role played by the nonconformist North in the legitimation of modern art and in the romantic belief in a vitalistic spirit that conjoined the natural and supernatural realms, similar in some respects to the "inner light" of the nonconformists. It can also be found in the spiritual attitude toward everyday life, including commodities, fostered by Protestant incarnational theology in the second half of the century. William Rothenstein, for example, contended that Protestantism (i.e., England) integrated art and life, whereas Catholicism (i.e., France) separated them.[92] Further, nonrepresentational art possessed many qualities that might appeal to nonconformists: it was "pure," simple, and austere, connoting eternal forms and rhythms rather than imitating the transient fashions of the temporal world.

English critics often noted the convergence of nonconformism and postimpressionism, particularly as one of the most visible exponents of the new art, Roger Fry, came from one of the most visible Quaker families in England. The futurist artist C. R. W. Nevinson loathed Fry, whom he blamed for ruining his career, and anything associated with Fry, including postimpressionism: "In England, where the seventh commandment is most reverenced, many of the greatest lovers of this de-humanized art were either Quakers or Methodists by birth, and they were always suspicious of the flesh or any sensual appeal. This suspicion is ever-present in the Englishman and is one of the many fruits of the Reformation and the later excesses of Oliver Cromwell."[93] Frank Pick, raised as a Congregationalist, was so moralistic his few friends dubbed him "Jonah."[94] Even northern medieval modernists not raised as Protestants adopted the mannerisms of their compatriots. Herbert Read affected the puritan sobriety found so often among his Yorkshire countrymen, al-

though he himself had been raised within the Church of England. Osbert Sitwell once remarked that Read was "like a Roundhead; he is extravagant only in the lengths to which austerity carries him."[95] And William Rothenstein, brought up in Bradford by his German-Jewish parents, could be so sanctimonious that Whistler nicknamed him "the Parson."[96]

An eclectic mix of religion, science, and aesthetics can be found throughout the writings of many who welcomed the new art, formalists as well as functionalists. Roger Fry's aesthetic essays, for example, often reflect his upbringing as a Quaker, his training as a biologist at Cambridge in the 1880s, and his quest for an acceptable metaphysics. A contemporary recalled that "Fry's little foible was to shroud his aesthetic activities in a discrete mysticism well set off by his appearance, always reminiscent of a medieval monk, which in later years became impressive."[97] Similar spiritual yearnings abound in the writings of Rothenstein, Pick, and Read, all of whom turned to art as a new religion to replace the more traditional creeds of their childhood.

These individuals exemplified the widespread search among Europeans for alternative sources of transcendental belief in the post-Darwinian age. Modernism appealed to those on the political right and left because it addressed their common desire for a spiritual collectivity that would alleviate the sense of social isolation and religious desolation engendered by liberalism and positivism. Thus Frank Pick, who adhered to the Enlightenment faith in reason, individualism, and progress, nevertheless admired aspects of fascism alongside more conservative modernists like Ezra Pound, Wyndham Lewis, T. S. Eliot, and W. B. Yeats, and largely for the same reason: the fascists' attempt to create a corporate society of faith and action, an "integral nation."[98]

In the interwar years it appeared to many that advances in modern science, art, and politics were indeed converging and would replace the secularism, individualism, and materialism of the past century with a new communal and spiritual integration: a modern medievalism. As one art critic wrote in 1917,

> We cannot go back to the age of simple faith and the effortless unity of life that proceeded from it, but we can bring back our more accomplished art into closer relations with our infinitely more complex conditions; and apparently we are doing so with better success than at any time since the Middle Ages. What was done then in the spirit of the day's work we are doing now in the spirit of chastened understanding. We may not yet believe, but we have learnt the lessons of unbelief, and we have exploded most of the intellectual fallacies that kept religion and science and art in separate compartments. We are finding our synthesis.[99]

Medieval modernists could maintain their faith in objective laws uniting the aesthetic, social, natural, and spiritual realms at this time because relativistic views in science and philosophy were still new and coexisted alongside earlier positivistic and foundationalist views more familiar to the general public. But as relativistic currents of thought became more prominent, the medieval modern project became less tenable.

Of course medieval modernism was not the only way in which modern vi-

sual art was interpreted in England between 1910–1945. Besides the medieval modernists who combined formalism and functionalism, there were purely formal critics (like Clive Bell) and "medieval antimodernists" who disliked modern art while seeking to restore the arts and crafts ideal (like A. J. Penty).[100] In this period there were also influential critics who inclined more to formalism then to the social aesthetic, like Sir Kenneth Clark; there were Marxist critics like Anthony Blunt who were skeptical of both formalism and medievalism. But the ideas and activities of Pick, Rothenstein, Read, and other medieval modernists dominated the twenties and thirties. Their linkage of modern art, commerce, and national traditions had wide appeal. They had the vision, energy, ambition, and social standing to enact their projects; they knew how to invoke tradition to incorporate the untraditional.

The language of medieval modernism was used to legitimate modern visual art in England, but modern artistic expressions were incapable of being contained within the Victorian terms of the tradition. Many twentieth-century works of art affirm the unique, subjective expression of the individual, often to the point of ignoring, challenging, or denying the sort of shared cultural values the medieval modernists hoped to restore. Like many other modernists in the first half of this century, medieval modernists sought an underlying totality that reconciled such antinomies as the personal and the universal, the transient and the permanent, the expressive and the rational. They searched for, and consequently found, intimations of stability and order in the mercurial art, science, and technology of the new century. They tried to define the modern era in the idealist and utilitarian terms of their youth. But by the end of the Second World War medieval modernism had collapsed. Many of those who were brought up on the writings of Ruskin and Morris had passed away. The year 1945 did not just mark the end of the medieval dream: it marked the end of the Victorian age.

\\\ 2 ////

A "WARRIOR OF THE KINGDOM"

Frank Pick's City of Dreams, 1878–1915

Even those who operate fully within commercial civilization, who run their lives by disengaged, instrumental reason, want to have some part in the epiphanies of the creative imagination. These must be confined; they cannot be allowed to break out and realize their full, often anti-moral and usually anti-instrumental, intent. But they must be there.

CHARLES TAYLOR[1]

Frank Pick was not a nudist.

MILNER GRAY[2]

NO SINGLE INDIVIDUAL DID MORE TO realize, and then to undo, Ruskin and Morris's dream of restoring the unity and the social function of art during the interwar period than Frank Pick. (Figure 2.1) Known to contemporaries as "the Maecenas of our time"[3] as well as the "virtual dictator"[4] of the London Underground, Pick's thought and career demonstrate the centrality of the arts and crafts tradition to the reception and assimilation of modern art in England, as well as the tensions inherent within this pairing that contributed to the breakdown of the matrix of medieval modernism. Like his fellow Yorkshiremen Sir William Rothenstein, Sir Herbert Read, and Sir Michael Sadler, Frank Pick was one of the few to patronize and promote modern art and artists in the interwar period, but he never secured a knighthood despite the significance of his contributions.

Pick exerted great influence while purposely shunning the public spotlight, which helps to explain his relative obscurity; The *Manchester Guardian* dubbed him the "Khalif of London," whose "attractive, idiosyncratic, and very forceful personality is little known to the public except by results."[5] Yet when he is discussed, his affinity with other modern *khalifs* has not been missed:

FIGURE 2.1. Frank Pick (left) and Lord Ashfield, circa 1923. Reproduced by permission of the London Transport Musuem.

Pick's efforts to shape London through his commanding positions within the London Underground and the London Passenger Transport Board (LPTB) have led one urban historian to compare him to New York City's equally autocratic Robert Moses; another argues that Pick "had as much influence on London's development in the twentieth century as Haussmann had on that of Paris in the nineteenth."[6] A more immediate comparison would be with John Reith, the interwar director-general of the BBC. Both men were nonconformists who conflated culture and spirituality; both represented the triumph, by the early twentieth century, of the middle classes and corporations as England's new patrons of the arts; and both devoted their lives to public service and the democratization of culture.[7]

From an early age Pick set out to realize Ruskin and Morris's dream of in-

tegrating art with the fabric of everyday life and of making commerce subservient to the needs of society. While much of his thought was indebted to the influence of romantics, Christian socialists, theologians, and evolutionary biologists (whose writings he excerpted into several commonplace books and hundreds of note cards), it was shaped equally by his upbringing among lower middle-class nonconformists in the industrial North, which is explored in this chapter. Pick was raised in York, and like Rothenstein and Read he attempted to graft the progressive, populist, and industrial values of the North to the more genteel, "aristocratic" values of London society. He did not believe that educators should distinguish between the practical and the contemplative, and he argued that design and commerce ought to be included within the traditional liberal arts. Pick opposed Roger Fry's cosmopolitanism and Clive Bell's elitism; the English artisanal tradition, he believed, proved that the English "common people" had the capacity to appreciate art and to express themselves artistically. He knew that he was a romantic dreamer, but congratulated himself on being a very English, pragmatic utopian: like Ruskin and Morris, and later Rothenstein and Read, Pick believed that art could change society, provided that the public was raised in an aesthetic environment and educated in aesthetic appreciation. By diffusing modern art among the populace and promoting a unified architectural style, he hoped to recreate a spiritual community such as that which had supposedly existed during the Middle Ages.

Like John Ruskin, Pick broke with his nonconformist upbringing and turned to art as a revelation of the eternal spirit. From his earliest essays written for the Salem Chapel Guild in York to his last lecture before he died, "Re-Energizing Religion," Pick hoped to recover the spiritual bonds of a religious community. He believed that the formal harmonies of art ought to be paradigmatic for a modern world lacking spiritual direction, arguing that "both [art and religion] are out of touch with life. Now I think art might be converted and become a religion of society. It is a social bond and that is what religion means."[8] Shy and puritanical, Pick was a lonely man. His life was devoted to creating a community that he had rarely experienced beyond the isolated confines of his own imagination. No less than the eponymous hero of Morris's *A Dream of John Ball*, Pick understood only too well that "Fellowship is heaven, and lack of fellowship is hell."

Since his formative years in York, Pick had dreamed of establishing Morris's Earthly Paradise, and when he became a leader of one of the largest corporations in the country, he seized the opportunity to turn his dreams into reality: the Underground would be a model of aesthetic integration and communal service, a catalyst for a more harmonious London of the future. Pick has been properly acclaimed for his central role in creating a corporate identity for the London Underground, but this scarcely does justice to his own ambition, which was to create a corporate identity for London. A high-ranking executive of the Underground Group of companies from 1909 and vice-chairman of the LPTB from 1933–40, he commissioned modern artists to fashion a unified style for the Underground, from the design of its waste bins to the architecture of its stations. The Underground's intelligible architectural style would replace the eclectic fashions of the Victorian and Edwardian periods with a "living" and cohesive aesthetic that would serve as a public exemplar; and the physical lay-

out of the system itself would help give the metropolis a coherent shape, transforming sprawling, "impressionist" London into a bounded, "postimpressionist" work of art.

Pick stated that the management of the system "is or will be a work of art,"[9] and a colleague believed that the transport network that emerged during the interwar period was, to a large extent, a manifestation of Pick's "self-expression."[10] He turned the Underground into the culminating project of the arts and crafts movement—a work of public art that united modern painting, sculpture, and architecture into a glorious *Gesamtkunstwerk*, a thing of joy to its makers and its users. Many of the posters Pick commissioned for the Underground incorporated the latest artistic styles during the interwar period, ranging from fauvism to cubism to surrealism. The art historian Anthony Blunt expressed the widely held view that Pick's patronage of young modern artists was crucial to the legitimation of modern art in England: "by this means he has familiarized a very wide public with the conventions of modern painting and has greatly increased the chances which modern painters, who are not involved in publicity, have of being appreciated and widely enjoyed."[11]

The use of such striking works of art for commercial purposes also helped to abolish the hierarchy of the arts that distinguished "fine art" from "applied art" and proved that postimpressionism could perform a utilitarian function and grace more mundane settings than a West-End gallery or a modern museum. Like many of his contemporaries during the interwar period, the artist C. R. W. Nevinson refused to distinguish between the fine and the useful arts, citing the work of Underground artists as his justification:

> The term 'commercial artist' is one I will never admit. The portrait painter or mural decorator who accepts commissions to enhance the drawing-room of a rich man is every bit as commercial as the man who accepts a commission to do a girl's head for a magazine cover or a decoration for a hoarding. I consider such men as MacKnight [*sic*] Kauffer and Colin to be fine artists. The distinction between a statue on the Underground and a poster on the same railway is beyond me.[12]

Arguably it was the London Underground, rather than any single work by the continental futurists, surrealists, or constructivists, that was the most successful embodiment of the early twentieth-century avant-garde's aim of integrating modern art with modern life.

Pick's desire to create an Earthly Paradise governed many of his activities, his vision providing him with the energy to take on extensive commitments beyond his already daunting duties at the Underground. As a founding member and later president of the Design and Industries Association (DIA), and as chairman of the government's Council for Art and Industry (CAI) from 1934–39, he attempted to educate the public in the principles of artistic design and to force the Board of Education into giving greater emphasis to the teaching of art and crafts in the primary and secondary schools. Pick, like other medieval modernists, believed that the public's demand for aesthetic commodities would force producers to hire artists to design inexpensive and seemly products, and these products in turn would grace the land and spiritualize the populace. The nascent mass-commodity culture of the interwar period would be a central fac-

tor in the creation of a decorous society, provided that the public used their power of purchase responsibly. He and his fellow medieval modernists did not decry consumption as a passive and passifying activity, in contrast to many of the cultural pessimists of the interwar (and postwar) periods.[13] For the medieval modernists, consumption could be equated with production—the production of an Earthly Paradise, which just happened to dominate the world's export markets through the sale of its "soulful" commodities.

Pick owed many of his ideas on the role of art in society to romantics like Ruskin, and especially to William Morris. He frequently cited Morris in his notes, diaries, and speeches, and took Morris's favorite color, green, as his signature mark: he usually wrote in green ink, had a green desk board, and was chauffeured around in a long green Daimler.[14] Nikolaus Pevsner has chronicled Morris's influence on the pioneers of modern industrial design and architecture; Frank Pick's career is a vivid illustration of how Morris also inspired those who welcomed the new developments in painting and sculpture. Like Morris, Pick attempted to combine business and art; like Morris, Pick's intense activity and frequent mood swings may have contributed to his death while still in his early sixties.[15]

In the late 1930s, Pick expressed his disillusion from the aims he and other medieval modernists had worked for. His initial advocacy and later repudiation of modern art represent a sharply defined instance of how medieval modernism nurtured the seeds of artistic modernism in England, but was in turn exhausted by modernism's unpredictable exfoliations, industry's specialized demands, and the gradual shift in intellectual perspective from idealism to relativism.

THE CITY OF DREAMS

> *Every man in his lifetime needs to thank his faults. . . . Has he a defect of temperament that unfits him to live in society? Thereby he is driven to entertain himself alone, and acquire habits of self-help; and thus, like the wounded oyster, he mends his shell with pearl.*
>
> RALPH WALDO EMERSON[16]

By the time of his death in 1941, Frank Pick considered himself a failure. His activities had been directed toward the modernist project of harmonizing antinomies: he yearned to reconcile modernity with tradition; individuality with community; freedom with discipline; spontaneity with order. These aims can be traced not only to the intellectual aspirations of his generation, but also to Pick's social background and personal development. That he was unable to reconcile the apparently irreconcilable should not be held against him—and no one did, except himself. His tendency toward critical severity was formed early, as were many of the views and goals he adhered to throughout his life.

Pick's provincial upbringing in Yorkshire profoundly influenced his conceptions of society, art, and relationships temporal and spiritual. He was born on 23 November 1878, in Spalding, Lincolnshire, the son of a draper. His

family moved to York in 1883; the physical layout of York, with its towering cathedral and ancient Roman wall encircling the city, left an indelible impression on him. York could be grasped as a civic community: the whole was more than the sum of its parts, which Pick did not find to be true for London. After moving to London in 1906, he continued to view the metropolis from the vantage of a provincial both awed and appalled by the exuberant anarchy of the big city. He loved London for its amenities and its energy, but hated its unplanned growth. When he came to London, he wanted to combine the vitality and resources of the great metropolis with the communal atmosphere of the provincial towns and cities. Unlike many in interwar England, Pick and other medieval modernists from the provinces did not associate the essence of England with the agricultural South but rather with the industrial North.[17]

Bounded by its circular wall, York was the model for the integrated civic life that Pick hoped could be reestablished in all communities, especially London. He told a Leicester audience in 1916 that London was an unmanageable city, "a hundred towns divided one against the other," and he hoped Leicester would avoid such unmanageable growth. York's circular wall must not have been far from his mind when he argued that the citizens of Leicester could retain the orderliness of their own community by setting up boundary stones, a "sacred circle."[18] He was delighted with the 1935 London County Council (LCC) proposal to set up a green belt that would demarcate London and put an end to urban sprawl. The green belt would be the modern version of the "sacred circle" of the York city wall. Together with the social engineering of the London Passenger Transport Board, it would help transform London from its current cosmopolitan chaos to the "provincial" cosmos of Pick's desire:

> The Board looks confidently forward to a London of 12,000,000 people disposed in the London Transport Area, not inefficiently and wastefully as now, but according to some plan or conception of London which ensures its unity amid diversity which makes it a true metropolis of specialized and, on this account, centralized activities worthy of a metropolis. The Board has no fear of a better adjustment of homes and workplaces for industry; it has no fear of the development of dispersed centers of commercial life. What it may lose in traffic on these accounts, it will more than make up in such a London as is envisaged in increased and intensified activities in pursuit of the arts of life, of sports, of education, of social solidarity.[19]

"Social solidarity"—the binding ties of family, community, art, and religion—was to be Pick's lifelong obsession, the principal motive force behind so many of his activities in the worlds of art and commerce. He sought social integration to compensate for his own personal isolation: his years in York appear to have lacked a sense of familial or social cohesion. The many references in his later writings to the importance of family and community signal his own yearnings as well as the wider Edwardian preoccupation with the new "collectivity." When Pick supervised the poster production of the Empire Marketing Board (EMB) during the mid-1920s, many of the poster captions undoubtedly reflected his own personal preoccupations as well as the imperialist aims of

the EMB: "The Empire is One Large Family"; "Keep Trade in the Family"; "Remember the Empire, Filled With Your Cousins."[20]

Pick was raised in a lower-middle-class Congregationalist family, and he may have been envious of the Anglican middle class securely established in the cathedral town. Some of Pick's reforming zeal stemmed from his desire to belong to the Establishment, albeit on his own terms. As the son of a tradesman, he spent much of his life defending commerce as a "liberal art," in an attempt to elevate its status. As far as he was concerned, the world of commerce was comparable to the world of gentility: "Industry is an alternative mode of association to the public school."[21] In this he could draw inspiration from Ruskin, who had told a Manchester audience that "I believe tradesmen may be, ought to be—often are, more gentlemen than idle and useless people."[22] Pick experienced both social worlds as a scholarship boy at St. Peter's School in York. He was unhappy there,[23] and in his later life he would continue to feel out of place as he straddled the subtle borders between the upper and lower-middle classes, provincialism and cosmopolitanism. Pick's liminal social position helps to explain his seemingly paradoxical endorsement of change while simultaneously insisting on the existence of absolute norms. Lacking secure boundaries himself, he acknowledged the facts of change and instability, while on a less conscious level he sought firm foundations to escape from the painful uncertainty this awareness produced.

There is little in his surviving papers that reveals any close family ties. He was the eldest of five children, and while his biographer claims that he was close to one sister,[24] his puritanical temperament distanced him from relatives no less than from most of his associates. "Dear Frank," begins a testy letter from his brother Sisson, "I am sorry you are still worried about my morals."[25] His chronic habit of study and preference for solitude were established early in his childhood, when he would choose to read rather than to play with other children.[26] A journal entry from 1900 refers to his fear of "soul solitude," a lifelong condition that he tried to keep at bay through incessant work.[27] In later years he liked to quote admonitory phrases from Samuel Smiles's *Self-Help* to his colleagues, although he also admitted that overwork had its drawbacks: "I have always been busy, too busy sometimes for happiness."[28]

His blunt manner often helped him get his way, but also led him to be feared rather than liked by many of his colleagues. One associate recalled that "it required great courage and resolution to stand up to Pick, and most of us could not do it."[29] Pick traced the origins of his brusque temper to his unhappy childhood, although self-knowledge did little to alleviate his shyness and loneliness. "I am a bad hand at the gracious word or the casual congratulation. My life has been hard and I have hardened myself against both praise and blame."[30] A few of his associates recognized a more romantic, idealistic, and even childlike side to his temperament. He loved to collect small toys and give them as gifts, and he often copied nursery rhymes and passages from children's stories into his commonplace books. But these aspects of his personality were frequently overshadowed by the domineering, moralistic traits that led some to dub him "Jonah." His sanctimonious nature and lack of social skills contributed to his relative neglect by the Establishment no less than by colleagues. Harold Nicolson related an unfortunate meeting Pick had with Prime

Minister Churchill during the Second World War, when Pick served briefly as director of the Ministry of Information: "[Pick] announced that he would never countenance any form of propaganda which was not in accordance with the strict truth and his own conscience. Winston replied, 'I am indeed flattered and proud to find myself at luncheon with so exceptional a man.' This left Pick guessing."[31] After Pick's death, one associate wrote that "he had a great and gentle nature, but rarely seemed to be 'understood' by his fellow men. As a result he always impressed one as a rather 'lonely' soul. . . . It was thus that he gained more respect than regard from the majority of people he met—yet, his intimates always knew, it was regard for which he yearned."[32]

Pick tried to alleviate his loneliness by allying himself with a greater spiritual totality. He always insisted that "religion as a bond of the spirit must survive. The spirit of man may not thrive in isolation."[33] His maternal grandfather had been a Wesleyan lay preacher, but Pick did not subscribe to any denominational system of belief. He formed his own version of "Christian agnosticism"[34] that had its roots in rationalism, romanticism, contemporary science, Western and Eastern religions, and traditional moral codes. In many respects, he remained eminently Victorian even as he entertained some of the latest developments in early twentieth-century thought and culture.[35]

He joined the Salem Chapel Guild in York as a youth, and surviving papers he wrote for its meetings during the late 1890s express many of the spiritual and social beliefs that he retained throughout his life. The period between his involvement with the guild to the founding of the Design and Industries Association in 1915—a more secular but no less spiritual guild with its own "creed" and mission—forms an important stage in Pick's development. Through the DIA, the Underground, and later the Council for Art and Industry, Pick attempted to realize his youthful quest for an integrated community, a harmonious family writ large, a "City of Dreams": "It is a city. Around stretches the vast expanse of a world, field of adventure and commerce. But within a narrow bound where each knows each passer-by, rests all the greatness."[36]

These early essays trace the development of Pick's "Christian agnosticism." They reveal a romantically inclined yet puritanically driven individual set upon a spiritual quest to reform the world, and they anticipate his later writings when he actually had the power and influence to implement his ideals. His essays for the Salem Chapel Guild are worth examining, for they mark the boundaries of the straight and narrow path from which he rarely deviated, even when it took him through territories of culture that less adventuresome critics considered dangerously heterodox. They also reveal Pick's lifelong struggles to reconcile the antinomies of his liberal faith in reason and universal laws accessible to inquiry with his romantic faith in individuality, spontaneity, and the power of the imagination. In 1936 he noted that he had always hoped "to integrate the outer world of perception to some inner world of intuition."[37]

Certain themes and influences recur in these early essays. Several stress the importance of Christian socialism, of improving the condition of mankind so that it approaches the perfection of God's design. Like many others of his generation, Pick was influenced by Protestant incarnational theology, which was similar to early romanticism in its optimistic outlook and belief in the immanence of the spiritual realm.[38] He viewed Christ as an exemplar: his was a

rational Christ who worked to awaken humanity to the spirit that pervades and orders the universe. Pick believed that the universe was constructed according to an intelligible design, and the individual's rational powers were to be used to further the evolution of this divine plan. Christ did not teach a doctrine but instead embodied the principle of radical inquiry into the ultimate purpose of existence: "Christ's gift to the world was himself as the exponent of a new ideal, a new method or theory of life, a fresh point of view, which he left for us to adopt and develop." Christ also exemplified the spirit of the nonconforming conscience, the inner light or living spirit within the individual that was open to new possibilities and critical of old stances. As Pick stated in another essay, "Christ. Who has followed him? Atheists & agnostics are nearest followers. High morality & hope. Sacrifice even Christ."[39]

In this view, Christ examined the world critically in the manner of the ancient Greeks, whose aesthetic achievements and rational inquiries into first principles also inspired Pick. His essays express his admiration for the Greeks' seeming ability to live harmoniously within nature; he also admired their emphasis on reason, citing the neoclassical revival of the eighteenth century as proof that the integrated life achieved by the Greeks could be restored in later ages. This conception was shared by other Edwardian intellectuals: Alfred Zimmern's popular *The Greek Commonwealth* (1911) portrayed the polis as an organic community worthy of contemporary emulation.[40] It was a romantic reading of the classical world, compatible with the romantic interpretation of the Middle Ages as a period of organic harmony and aesthetic creativity. Zimmern was cited by Pick and other medieval moderns who believed that the classical and medieval worlds expressed similar conceptions of art and society. For example, Gordon Forsythe, the principal of the Stoke-on-Trent Schools of Art, cited the following passage from *The Greek Commonwealth* to support his contention that "the greatest artists who have ever lived never considered themselves to be more than good, honest workmen": "The craftsman lived in close touch with the public for whom he performed services, not separated, like the modern workman, by a host of distributors and intermediaries."[41]

As Raymond Williams notes, this veneration of classical Greece by those who also espoused a romantic medievalism was not as contradictory as it might first appear. Pick and others who admired the classical proportions and rational symmetries of Greek art could also admire the spontaneous and imperfect work of the medieval craftsman because both the "classic" and the "romantic" views shared an underlying idealism:

> The tendency of Romanticism is towards a vehement rejection of dogmas of method in art, but it is also, very clearly, towards a claim which all good classical theory would have recognized: the claim that the artist's business is to 'read the open secret of the universe'. A 'romantic' critic like Ruskin, for example, bases his whole theory of art on just this 'classicist' doctrine. The artist perceives and represents Essential Reality, and he does so by virtue of his master faculty Imagination. In fact, the doctrines of 'the genius' (the autonomous creative artist) and of 'the superior reality of art' (penetration to a sphere of universal truth) were in Romantic thinking two sides of the same

claim. Both Romanticism and Classicism are in this sense idealist theories of art; they are really opposed not so much by each other as by naturalism.[42]

Thus for Pick, classical Greece, the Middle Ages, and the eighteenth century were the exemplary periods of aesthetic and social integration.[43] He hoped that a similar inward grace and external equipoise could be attained in the modern world through the work of Christian agnostics like himself. Rational inquiry would reveal the integrated nature of the universe, the evolutionary "pattern" of nature that biology and the new physics were gradually unveiling: "The researches of science shall drive us back to an immanent God."[44] Darwinian evolution affirmed his faith in the gradual progress toward a more perfect moral order, and he continued throughout his life to believe in "a power which impels us to seek harmony. It is, as it were, a hidden pattern to which all life must conform. . . . It is revealed in the godlike upward-tending force that evolution has discovered to us."[45] Quoting from Morris's *The Earthly Paradise*, Pick argued that the motive force behind all such progress was Love, the expression of the vital spirit that permeated the universe.[46]

These universal standards found through rational inquiry would in turn be internalized as morality, permitting a self-regulating, organic civilization to emerge. To bring about the kingdom of heaven on earth, reformers would have to be self-sacrificing and single-minded in their quest to establish Aristotelian first principles for action: "We want one ideal only and not any more, one method to be pertinaciously adhered to."[47] The Christian agnostic would be among the worldly but not of them; he must be prepared to fight, sacrifice, and suffer in order to attain the Earthly Paradise:

> It is only the morally strong who, while wearing the cloke of worldliness in times of peace, can put on the armour of righteousness, in moments of trial and step forth spiritual giants, the warriors of the kingdom. . . . We must deny ourselves, mortify our members, pluck out our eye or cut off our hand that our moral life may be preserved in however minute a part. . . . All material wealth & pleasures must be sacrificed to keep sweet & wholesome that which is of far greater worth—spiritual wealth and pleasures.[48]

By dedicating his energies to establishing the kingdom of heaven on earth, Pick compensated for his difficulty in forming close personal relations. He spent his time alone, trying to create a community. As he wrote in 1920, "Bring heaven here. We want a heaven here and now. One far off will wait a little while."[49]

Pick adhered to the conventional romantic view that the individual and nature were pervaded by a transcendent spirit accessible to the imagination. In his early writings, he argued that poetry disclosed this "revelation of God," citing in particular the works of Wordsworth, Browning, and Emerson.[50] Unlike the French symbolists, Pick did not stress the ineffable nature of poetry but instead emphasized its practical utility in developing the individual's moral nature: "poetry has an ethical, a moral effect . . . the deep purpose of poetry is the education & development of the soul of man and there can be nothing that

can concern us more than this."[51] He never relinquished this conception of art as at once spiritual and practical, a conception shared by many of his generation and one central to medieval modernism.

While Pick agreed with Matthew Arnold's contention in *Culture and Anarchy* that English society needed to counterbalance puritan severity with the liberalizing benefits of culture,[52] he himself remained more of a Hebraist than a Hellenist—indeed his quest for wholeness was a tacit admission of his own lack of balance. He was often prudish and priggish. Certain words recur in his writings: honesty, discipline, service, sacrifice, plain, good. Audiences who took the Underground to attend his public lectures would be dazzled by the bold, futurist-inspired posters of E. McKnight Kauffer that Pick had commissioned, only to hear Pick himself admonish them to "be content with plain and homely clothes and avoid the vagaries and extravagances of fashion."[53]

Although a believer in reason, scientific progress, and the potential perfectibility of mankind, Pick maintained firmly that freedom came from a submissive adherence to the divine will. An individual might challenge the conventions of society, but not those of Nature, which were ordained by God. The highest form of freedom was to be in accord with the laws of the universe, and thus Pick's rigid insistence on the existence of standards is not incompatible with his interest in the freedom and spontaneity evinced in the new art. For most of the interwar period he would maintain that modern artists were expressing the universal spirit—their seemingly subjective expressions actually revealed universal conditions and adhered to universal standards.

Pick himself excelled at being an innovative and productive administrator by trusting his own intuitive sense of "right reason." He chafed whenever he had to compromise with committees. He told a gathering of transport administrators in 1935 that "a spice of vice, a spark of irrationality, a fondness for inconsistency, a flash of genius—are they not desirable, even essential to the good conduct of administration. Yet the yoke of the 'lowest common denominator' order are always opposed to them."[54] In following his conscience, however, the individual is merely obeying the dictates of a higher power that compels his ultimate allegiance: "In the preciousness of individuality, the pricelessness of the pattern and type must not be forgotten"; "Truth is the compulsion to obedience."[55]

He admired the "anarchism" of Morris—"just men made perfect. Above Law. Right and beauty instinctive"—but thought that such an instinctively harmonious society required a minimum standard of education and leisure for it to be actualized. All individuals must be guaranteed not only the basic necessities of life, but an additional "surplus" to bring out their full creative potential: "Bare living not life. Everyone entitled to something more. Public institutions: Museums[,] art galleries. Higher education. The ascendancy of effort. Art and life."[56] A social-democratic society that alleviated want and provided its citizens with the "surpluses" of art and education would facilitate the emergence of behavior that was at once spontaneous and in accord with universal norms.[57]

While Pick was progressive and at times radical in some of his social and aesthetic views, he always emphasized that tradition was integral to the further development of society and the arts. Like other medieval modernists, he would

have rejected any definition of modernism as an art that severed ties with the past. Although personally idiosyncratic in his extreme puritanism and bold modernism, Pick was in other respects a typical English progressive, marrying innovation to established conventions. He understood that in England Burkean conservatism could be an effective cloak for Painite radicalism: "A great and good tradition is most precious. It is the safeguard of progress. It alone can list and modify change to secure the best. No one therefore should be more keen to build up and keep healthy tradition than the reformer—paradoxical."[58]

Pick's emphasis on tradition and on universal standards had important consequences for his conception of art and of the role of the artist in society. From his earliest writings, he conceived of the artist as a medium who revealed transcendent truths, just as medieval artists had done. He did not believe in artistic "originality"—all artists built on tradition and expressed the eternal spirit.[59] Art itself both expressed and was subject to the limitations imposed by the laws of the cosmos.[60] By working within these limitations and ensuring that their work was fit for its purpose, artists acknowledged their humble position within, and reverence for, the divine order of nature. Art was both the refashioning of nature for the improvement of human existence and the individual's expression of the holy spirit of creation with which he or she was endowed as a being formed in God's image. As Pick was to put it years later: "If God made us creatures and saw that we were good, why should not Man in his turn look at his creation and see that it is good. Indeed, no one can escape from this duty if ever we are to have a fair world to live in."[61]

His insistence on the necessity of self-sacrifice for a higher cause found its political expression in an idiosyncratic, ethical socialism. He followed Ruskin's dictum in *Unto This Last* that "there is no wealth but life" and felt that commerce existed to provide a service to the community, for which entrepreneurs deserved in turn a just recompense. Like other "New Liberals," Pick inveighed against a purely acquisitive capitalism but felt that competition itself was not a complete evil; it promoted the evolution of society when it was directed toward improving the commonweal and not toward furthering exclusive self-interest.[62] For Pick the highest form of self-realization was that expressed for centuries by English nonconformists: "the seeking of one's true place in a conception of life as a whole—Service."[63] His views may have been influenced by the economist Alfred Marshall, a contemporary who argued for an "economic chivalry" that fostered moral and social evolution through the actions of altruistic entrepreneurs working within a free market. Marshall believed that capitalism provided a social service and that businessmen were the modern equivalent of medieval knights, praising "the marvelous growth in recent times of a spirit of honesty and uprightness in commercial matters."[64]

Pick perceived himself to be just such a modern knight of commerce, although in his later years he believed that his true calling had been that of a student rather than a businessman.[65] But at the turn of the century, he had failed to win a scholarship to Oxford and turned to the law. This career was short-lived: according to one account, Pick decided not to be a lawyer when he discovered that he had to defend the guilty as well as the innocent.[66] He took a job with the North Eastern Railway in 1902; this was the start of his lifelong career in transport, and it may also have been the beginning of his exposure to

the commercial and environmental effects of poster art. The North Eastern was renowned for its restrained, orderly advertising, which was in marked contrast to the chaotic panoply of posters that spattered the hoardings at the turn of the century. (Figure 2.2) Members of the arts and crafts movement had singled out the hoardings as a particularly atrocious example of urban blight—W. R. Lethaby thought that railway stations had become one large advertisement— and Morris, C. R. Ashbee, and W. H. Hunt were among the members of the So- ciety for Checking Abuses of Public Advertising (SCAPA), founded in 1893.[67] Pick was probably aware of their efforts and brought the North Eastern's con- cern for orderly advertising with him when he joined the Underground Group of companies in 1906. (Figure 2.3)

In addition to his new career in transport, two other important events in Pick's life occurred within the first years of the new century: his marriage to Mabel Woodhouse in 1901 and their move from York to London in 1906. Pick often expressed his ambivalent feelings about London and clearly had a love/hate relationship with his adopted city; the nature of his relationship with Mabel is more difficult to fathom, given the paucity of evidence, but ap- pears to have been no less ambivalent. The early days of their courtship were conventionally romantic—"This is a sort of day to note. I went down the river with Mabel Woodhouse and I believe she is capable of stealing my heart,"[68]— and in the early years of their marriage, he referred fondly to "Pickwick" in his journal. As he became more involved in work for the Underground, however, he spent less time at home. In 1929 he purchased Langmoor Manor in Char- mouth, Dorset, and often spent the entire week in the city, commuting to Dorset on weekends. Beryl Valentine, who was Pick's secretary between 1928–36 and one of his few confidantes, believed that his marriage was an un- happy one, as the couple's interests became increasingly dissimilar.[69] Others who knew the Picks indicated that if Mabel shared anything in common with her husband, aside from a compatibility in spiritual outlook (she was a Quaker), it would be the extreme shyness and brooding intensity that crippled Pick. According to a colleague at the DIA, she had a "pronounced distaste for the normal customs of conviviality," and one of Pick's correspondents warned him that Mabel was only exacerbating his own tendency toward severity: "Mabel builds on you, but she takes herself and life and probably you also, too seriously."[70] Near the end of his life, Pick despondently confessed in a note- book that "every relationship with woman gone wrong—never a complete or satisfactory one. Always thwarted & held back, never encouraged and ad- vanced. Life one long succession of failures in relation to women. A horrible record in retrospect as age comes on. Makes the heart sick."[71]

London, on the other hand, fired Pick's reformist impulses. When he vis- ited London in the late 1890s, the city inflamed his romantic dreams of being a knight in the service of a holy quest, one of those who assumed the "armour of righteousness, in moments of trial and step forth spiritual giants, the warriors of the kingdom." He contrasted the heterogeneous confusion of London unfa- vorably with the harmony found in nature. He was disgusted by the city's sharp division between rich and poor, between those who could afford to plant trees in their wide streets ("and all streets, whether for poor or rich, should be wide enough") and those who were condemned to live in sunless tenements.[72]

FIGURE 2.2. Advertising at a railway station. Reproduced by permission of the London Transport Musuem.

FIGURE 2.3. Advertising at St. James' Park Station, 1933. Reproduced by permission of the London Transport Museum.

The cultural amenities and intellectual ferment of London appealed to him, but he felt these advantages were offset by the city's centripetal chaos. London was impossible to grasp or classify, making a mockery of any natural order and rendering each individual a stranger to his own surroundings:

> No one can long be unconscious of his being in a place always full and always in a terrible hurry. The hurry kills, you can observe that. The first thing it kills is the faculty of observation itself and in this, it is constantly assisted by the very largeness of the place, for space is equally destructive of capabilities of observation.[73]

Observation and criticism were crucial to Pick, for without them rational inquiry into the telos of a city was impossible: to build the New Jerusalem one must have a purpose and a plan. "The need is of an idea simple enough to belong to everyone and real enough to be practicable. . . . Plan and design would grow plain with promise of completeness. It would be set before all citizens, and it would go before a guide and a protection."[74]

By "plan" Pick did not mean a schematic blueprint, and in the interwar period, he criticized American cities for implementing a mechanical, gridiron pattern.[75] He meant a spiritual plan, a moral conception shared by the populace of what a civilization should be. He argued in "The City of Dreams" (1904) that the immanent laws of natural design would be revealed through rational reflection, his version of Platonic anamnesis. The city would evolve naturally like an organism, tended and fostered in its growth by its inhabitants' powers of critical inquiry. Utopian schemes that sketched out this growth in advance were destined to fail, as one could not dictate in advance the workings of "natural law."[76] The inner light available to each individual would contribute to the organic process of the city's evolution, rather than a purely rational plan sketched out a priori: "A lively mind may guess at truth and beauty, but before the guess changes to act, a moral quality intervenes. . . . Indeed this is the refinement of the intellectual, all so much on the way to a solution of the infinite moral Enigma, God. This ultimate and universal morality cannot be produced by machinery."[77] Thus Pick managed to combine his own need for order and stability with his dislike of a priori regimentation. Like a flower in nature, the city would slowly unfold according to its telos, an inner design gradually revealed to the individual's conscience. Once one put oneself in accord with this natural plan, the city would blossom with the adornment of art—the expressions created by individuals out of a surplus of reverent joy, "a mask of love."[78] The ideal city would never be fully realized, but would remain a goal that could be successfully approximated through small and practical steps allied to a larger vision: "It is never ended, but from fancy to fancy, as by steps, it climbs upward."[79] Such a city was at once spontaneous, "living," as well as rational and purposed. These were the qualities Pick was later to admire in postimpressionism, qualities he most desired in himself.

Pick's views on social and spiritual reform remained consistent between the late 1890s and 1906, when he transferred from the North Eastern Railway to the Underground Electric Railways Company (which came to be known as the Underground Group of companies) in London. His writings were idealistic and romantic, written in a florid Victorian style ("Today has witnessed the last rites

over the untenanted body of our late and honoured Queen Victoria. Brilliant as was the Court she left and noble, nobler and more brilliant far is the court which awaits her in another realm").[80] They expressed vague aspirations but lacked practical applicability. When he joined the Underground Group, he gradually acquired opportunities to implement his ideals for a more ordered environment. He had been assigned to work as a statistical analyst under Albert Stanley, the new general manager of the company, who was to become Lord Ashfield in 1920. Ashfield recognized Pick's ability and his loyalty and, during the years of their collaboration, gave Pick wide latitude in his decisions.

Pick has been properly identified as a major patron of the arts, but he could not have done it without Ashfield's backing. Their personalities were complementary: Ashfield was expansive, convivial, and adroit at political machinations; Pick was shy, headstrong, and impatient, a compulsive worker who insisted on overseeing everything. Thus Ashfield concentrated on dealing with the wider worlds of finance and politics, whereas Pick was put in charge of day-to-day management. Both men were imaginative and were not reluctant to follow their intuitions when it came to running a major corporation. Both were mavericks, a quality that may have stemmed from their nonestablishment backgrounds. Ashfield was born in Derby; his father, a coach painter, got a job in America and the future Lord Ashfield grew up in the streets of Detroit and New Jersey, returning to London to manage the Underground in 1907. Pick and Ashfield had their personal conflicts, but these were not to prove serious until the 1930s, when the relative independence both enjoyed under the Underground Group was circumscribed by new economic challenges and the creation of the London Passenger Transport Board.[81]

Pick did not have any specific plan of social or aesthetic reform when he joined the Underground in 1906. He was only to develop a clearer set of aims as a member of the DIA during the interwar period. But his youthful interest in the arts and crafts, and his exposure to the advertising policy of the North Eastern railway, led him to scrutinize the Underground's advertising schemes. The keen interest he took in publicity led Ashfield to appoint him head of the new Traffic, Development, and Advertising Department in 1909. The two hoped to give the system a distinctive visual identity—Ashfield himself may have contributed to the eventual shape of the Underground's trademark, the omnipresent red and white "bull's-eye"—and Pick began to organize the Underground's advertising displays and to hire contemporary artists to design the posters.[82]

Pick's goals were not only to advertise the Underground's services and to give the system a cohesive corporate persona, but to help travelers comprehend London as a whole and to familiarize them with its numerous amenities. He complained that few were aware of all the advantages the city had to offer, a "stupid" state of affairs. "When I lived in York or Newcastle I was much better able to know what was giving in things than I am now when I am in the middle of it. There a new book or a new idea or a new movement got into focus and one could know of it and see it, and now one can't."[83] Pick decided he would rectify the matter. As a young corporate executive from the North, he had begun to follow Ruskin's exhortation to the businessmen of Bradford in 1859: "You may literally become more influential for all kinds of good than many lecturers on art, or many treatise-writers on morality."[84]

FIGURE 2.4. Underground Poster: "Winter Sales" (1924), E. Mc-Knight Kauffer. Reproduced by permission of the London Transport Museum.

At this time he found it difficult to persuade "fine artists" to engage in commercial work. Fry and Bell's new aesthetic of significant form redefined art as "design," thereby making commercial design a respectable career option for such artists, but this reconceptualization did not take effect until after the start of the war. Pick was forced to quarry his contacts in the arts and crafts community. Through Ernest Jackson, a lithographer and coeditor of the design journal *Imprint,* Pick met the typographer Edward Johnston, himself a member of the Art Workers' Guild. In 1913 Pick commissioned Johnston to design a special typeface that would be used to imbue the system with a coherent visual identity. He asked Johnston for a design that retained connections to the great lettering traditions of the past, but that would also express the living spirit of the twentieth century.[85] Johnston was the ideal person for the job: not only did he share the medieval modernists' desire to reconcile modern expressions with tradition; he also shared the belief held by many of them that art expressed the spirit of God. Johnston maintained that the artist's duty was to create things with reverence, thereby augmenting as well as celebrating God's work.[86] His new typeface appeared in 1916, becoming the standard for all station signage on the Underground. The Underground's distinctive commitment to a new "living art" continued when Pick commissioned the young E. McKnight Kauffer to design posters for the system in 1915. Kauffer was among the most "modern" of the Underground poster artists, many of his abstract designs influenced by cubism and fauvism. (Figure 2.4)

Thus by 1915 Pick's vague reformist aspirations were being translated into concrete achievements. With the foundation of the DIA in May of that year, Pick gradually developed a more focused program of social and aesthetic reform designed to transform the metropolis. But while his activities in the DIA marked a new stage in his career, Pick did not depart greatly from his aim of being a "warrior of the kingdom" that he expressed in his writings for the Salem Chapel Guild in the provincial city of York.

\\\ 3 ////

MAKING IT NEW

Modernism and the
North of England

The light, [*Fry*] *pointed out, was full of vapour. Nothing was clear. There was no structure in the hills, no meaning in the lines of the landscape; all* [*in England*] *was smug, pretty, and small.*

VIRGINIA WOOLF[1]

NOT ALL MEDIEVAL MODERNISTS WERE FROM the North, but many were. The formative influence of York on Frank Pick's views on art and life highlights the important role played by individuals from the northern manufacturing provinces—especially Yorkshire—in nurturing and legitimating modern art throughout England. When we turn to the native English producers and promoters of modern art in the interwar period, it is striking how many were from the "North" (London writers used the term to encompass the midlands as well). Contemporaries noted this convergence: the media frequently associated visual modernism with the North rather than the South, encouraged in their views by the activities and assertions of numerous modernist supporters from the North.

While aspects of this interwar "myth of the North" were not entirely accurate, it may have made the new art more acceptable by linking it to native values supposedly exemplified by the provinces. Certainly Frank Pick, William Rothenstein, Herbert Read, and many others worked to legitimate visual modernism by identifying it not only with romantic medievalism, but with the utilitarian, populist, Protestant, and progressive tradition they associated with the North—and hence with "England"—in contrast to the cosmopolitanism, elitism, and conservatism they associated with London.[2] As Robert Ross of the Contemporary Art Society told a Manchester audience in 1911, modern art was "either very partially recognized or wholly unrecognized by officialism, particularly London officialism. There is some reason for us to make our *debut* in Manchester. For what Manchester thinks to-day about a good many things besides art England is apt to think to-morrow, or at least the day after to-morrow."[3]

In the interwar period both modernism and the North were construed as sharing a common spirit of dynamism and independence; "provincial" and "modernism" did not make an incongruous fit in the popular imagination. In addition to being a center of religious nonconformity, the North had been frequently characterized as a center of cultural nonconformity in the late nineteenth century. Northern civic pride, for example, reflected both a celebration of local avant-gardism in industry and a reaction against the centralizing tendency of London that surged during this period.[4] In the early decades of the twentieth century, northerners continued to assert that they represented the vital qualities of the nation—that they were the ones to "Make It New" in England. Pick's friend Harry Peach, a cofounder of the Design and Industries Association, contrasted the innovative spirit of the manufacturing provinces with the more staid traditions of London society:

> Leicester does not contain a leisured class. We are all in business or engaged in some form of work. We cannot claim to be an intellectual community in the general acceptance of the term . . . but we have a tradition behind us for pioneering new ideas, which I feel is as much alive to-day as it was when our forefathers purchased trial by jury, or when the Lollards preached and suffered for their gospel of freedom and thought in religion.[5]

It is thus not surprising that certain individuals from the North would embrace the cultural avant-garde that challenged the orthodoxy and social exclusivity of London's Royal Academy, or that they would associate the new art with industry and commerce. The medieval modern definition of art as utilitarian, populist, progressive, and spiritual linked visual modernism with the values of the nation's "heartland," in contrast to the formalist definition promoted by Bloomsbury's Fry and Bell, which was widely characterized as being unduly elitist and unpalatably "French."

 The interwar association of modernism with the North not only helped legitimate modernism in national terms: it also was used by northerners to perpetuate the image of the North as innovative at a time when the provinces were experiencing chronic economic setbacks and unsettling cultural challenges. Many provincial industries had fallen into relative economic decline by this period, and aspects of provincial "popular" culture—ranging from indigenous theater societies and music halls to local newspapers—were being threatened by an apparently homogeneous "mass" culture emanating from London no less than Hollywood.[6] In reaction, northerners anxiously reasserted the earlier images of the North as dynamic and diverse, pioneering and independent. By associating modernism with the North, they hoped to buttress the perception of the provinces as a progressive force in national life, one that would maintain the "English" values of individuality and liberty against the malignant growth of the centralizing and "cosmopolitan" metropolis.

Thus interwar debates about modernism were not simply about aesthetic style, content, or function, but were also closely associated with broader questions of national identity and regional autonomy. As northern industrial competitiveness flagged, and as provincial cultures confronted the ongoing encroachments of a more homogeneous mass culture, the North continued to be

acclaimed for simultaneously "Making It New" while upholding the best of the English past.

THE MYTH OF THE NORTH

"It is habitual in our island state," wrote a commentator in 1924, "for the provinces to bestow upon London most of the art brains which they produce."[7] If this was so, then Yorkshire was the London art world's brains trust. Yorkshire has been known as the birthplace of several of England's finest modern artists, like Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, and Edward Wadsworth; perhaps even more remarkable is the number of prominent patrons and proselytizers of modern art who came from the romantic milieu of Wordsworth and the Brontë sisters. These included Frank Pick, William Rothenstein, Herbert Read, Michael Sadler, Charles Holme, Raymond Unwin, Charles Rothenstein, Percy Jowett, A. R. Orage, Jack Beddington, Holbrook Jackson, and the art publishing firm of Lund Humphries. Jacob Epstein, whose modern sculptures provoked outrage and even vandalism in London, found his main London supporters were originally from Yorkshire or its vicinity: Bradford's Fred Jowett and William Rothenstein, and Bolton's Charles Holden all fought to get him work despite opposition from most cultural authorities in London. "Who would suspect," intoned a writer for Holme's the *Studio*, "that from out of the smoke, the northern mists, the discoloured, unsightly and illimitable ranks of unbeautiful houses of the rich and poor, which we call 'Bradford, Yorks' there could rise so many personalities which have left—and still leave—footprints in the sands of art."[8] Indeed, prior to World War One, Leeds was arguably the modern art capital of England. The Leeds Art Club (founded by A. R. Orage and Holbrook Jackson), Leeds University (under the vice-chancellorship of Michael Sadler), and the Leeds Art Gallery (during the curatorship of Frank Rutter) were influential in bringing modern art and modern artists to the North of England, where impressionable students like Herbert Read and Henry Moore were exposed to the latest artistic currents.

However, while the *Evening Advertiser* believed that "there seems to be some foundation to the theory that the provincial towns are more modern in their tastes than London,"[9] it remained only a theory—indeed, a myth based on general impressions rather than empirical investigations. The evidence and explanations proferred for the putative affinities between modernism and the North that appeared in the media were largely anecdotal. "Race and milieu," the twin explanatory criteria of nineteenth-century naturalists, continued to be invoked in the interwar period to explain the numbers of modernist partisans from the North. Such explanations were indebted to Ruskin's assertion that all great art was provincial, emerging from a particular people and locale. Herbert Read, like many others in the interwar period, merely echoed Ruskin in stating that the power of art stemmed "from [a region's] physical physiognomy and racial collectivity."[10]

London commentators often portrayed northerners as a race apart. Provincials were characterized as being less affected than metropolitan sophisticates, and consequently more independent in their aesthetic judgments. In the nine-

teenth century, northern collectors had embraced the Pre-Raphaelites and the English impressionists; it seemed natural to assume that they would continue to support artistic styles that had yet to win the imprimatur of respectability from a more self-conscious London society. Northerners were also understood to embrace culture as a way to counter images of themselves as gradgrinds—Protestant, hard-working, no-fun members of the English middle classes—interested solely in "getting on" rather than "sweetness and light"; as examples contemporaries instanced the nineteenth-century foundation of mechanics' institutes and scientific societies, the erection of magnificent town halls and exchanges, and the establishment of museums, galleries, and civic rituals. The northern middle classes appeared to have money and energy to burn, and a desire to distinguish themselves through their cultural activities. In a BBC discussion summarized in the *Listener* in 1932, one commentator asserted that "there was in the North of England a far more solid body of artistic appreciation than in the South—less articulate, less influenced by fashion, but more sincere—and in addition a greater body of creative energy in the arts, as witness the innumerable choral and orchestral societies, amateur dramatic societies, etc."[11]

Other types of circumstantial evidence from the interwar period were adduced to bolster this image. The public survey organization Mass-Observation, for example, conducted an experiment in which they showed a variety of paintings, ranging from academic works to cubist compositions, to ordinary individuals in a typically "ugly" northern town. The authors of the study claimed that "the picture that evoked strongest and most excited reaction was one by Picasso, and in general all the most modern, imaginative, non-photographic painters aroused the greatest interest, often hostile, but often delighted and nearly always positive, whereas the more academic works (one should say Royal Academic)—aroused the most negative interest, and in general none at all."[12]

In addition to northern race or "character," contemporaries also cited "milieu," or geography, as a factor explaining the apparent conjuncture of modernism and the North. The evident contrast between the scenic natural surroundings of the North and its hideous industrial settings was often invoked as an explanation for why northerners gravitated toward art. Art inspectors for the Board of Education believed that industrial areas supported local art schools as a "form of recompense—some means of studying and perhaps creating beauty" in the face of pervasive industrial blight. For this reason, the inspectors argued, the industrial areas of Lancashire and Yorkshire established several art schools, "and it is therefore not surprising to find that a very large proportion of our national artists, designers, and artist craftsmen come from those areas."[13] Similarly, Herbert Read believed that the "organic" sculptures of Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth reflected their upbringing in Yorkshire, "with its extreme contrasts of romantic beauty and industrial ugliness."[14]

While the contrast between nature and industry might make northerners more sensitive to art, others cited the varied northern landscape itself as a source of aesthetic inspiration. Henry Moore stated that "perhaps what influenced me most over wanting to do sculpture in the open air and to relate my sculpture to landscape comes from my youth in Yorkshire, seeing the Yorkshire

moors."[15] William Rothenstein also recalled the aesthetic inspiration he de-
rived from the stark beauty of the Yorkshire dales and moors and maintained
that the best students he encountered at the Royal College of Art (RCA) were
from Lancashire and Yorkshire.[16] Industry no less than nature could be sublime
for artists: the vorticist paintings of northerners like Edward Wadsworth (born
in Yorkshire) and Frederick Etchells (born in Newcastle) captured the dy-
namism of machines and factories. And common to northern cities and land-
scape alike were the scattered remnants of castles, abbeys, monasteries, and
cathedrals, a constant if subliminal reminder of the medieval heritage that in
turn was used by medieval modernists to link nature, industry, and art.[17]

These explanations for the large number of northern modernists were part
of the interwar effort to legitimate visual modernism to a wary public by stress-
ing its "English" as well as "medieval" affiliations. They have a superficial ap-
peal but are also tenuous. While there were numerous producers and support-
ers of modernism from the North, there were many from the South as well.
And as we shall see, although pockets of the North (such as Leeds) might be
modernist heavens, most locales were traditionalist havens. Nevertheless, the
fact that so many notable modernists and their supporters were from the North
must be reckoned with in any account of English modernism. The foregoing ar-
guments by contemporaries, while anecdotal, have a certain persuasive power,
but other reasons can be advanced to explain the numbers of modernists from
the North. The influx of middle-class immigrants from central Europe to York-
shire in the mid-nineteenth century may have made it more open to new artis-
tic currents.[18] The Yorkshire author J. B. Priestley recalled that prior to the
Great War, "one of the best-known clubs in Bradford was the *Schillerverein*.
. . . Bradford was determinedly Yorkshire and provincial, yet some of its sub-
urbs reached as far as Frankfurt and Leipzig."[19] To take one example, William
Rothenstein's parents were German-Jewish immigrants who settled in Brad-
ford in 1859, joining the group of central European families that had already
established themselves in the local textile trade and formed a cultural elite.[20]
William's decision to become an artist was supported by the family, and his
brother Albert also became a painter. While Charles, the eldest brother, duti-
fully went into the family wool firm, he too was devoted to art and became a
notable collector of modern paintings.

Northerners would have been particularly comfortable with the interwar
definition of art as encompassing everyday items as well as the so-called fine
arts, as this conception had deep roots in the North. Attempts to integrate art
and industry were pursued by provincial mechanics' institutes in the first half
of the nineteenth century and by many local municipalities in the second. The
arts and crafts movement had a very strong presence as well. Ruskin and Mor-
ris lectured throughout the North, hectoring the consciences of local manufac-
turers, and provincial art schools were, for the most part, administered by arts
and crafts enthusiasts.[21] The arts and crafts' utopianism was reinforced by the
predominance of Protestant nonconformity; incarnational theology led many
to believe that this world could be the New Jerusalem. Faith in the immanence
of the Holy Spirit in all of material creation was so pervasive in the North that
Michael Sadler felt impelled to comment on the "animism plus methodism" of

the moorland people.[22] Many northerners transplanted to London continued to maintain this animistic outlook and challenged those who believed industrial products could not be art.

While contemporaries construed the North as a birthplace of the aesthetic as well as industrial "avant-garde," they also noted that many of its children ended up in London, leaving the provinces barren of modern art. Some viewed this as but one aspect of the increasing political and cultural influence of London since the late nineteenth century. J. B. Priestley spent much of his *English Journey* (1934) bemoaning the erosion of provincial autonomy in the face of London centralization: "The inhabitants of provincial towns, these days, are losing the habit of acting for themselves; they grumble but do nothing."[23] There were northerners, however, who took this threat seriously and campaigned for the creation of indigenous civic-arts movements. They hoped to forestall the imposition of a homogeneous national culture dominated by London by convincing provincial municipalities to employ local artists to create works of public art. Citing classical Greece, medieval Europe, and Renaissance Italy as examples, they argued that if municipalities supported their native talent there would be an efflorescence of local aesthetic movements that would contribute to an aesthetically diverse yet spiritually unified English culture. As the Yorkshire playwright Gordon Bottomley told the *Yorkshire Observer*, "I want to see Yorkshire painters able to live in Yorkshire and Yorkshire musicians able to get their operas and symphonies performed in Yorkshire and Yorkshire poets and playwrights able to have their verse published and their plays performed in Yorkshire, because all that will add to the riches of Yorkshire. If . . . Will Rothenstein and [his brother] Albert . . . had been born in Florence in the fifteenth century Florence would not have let them go elsewhere."[24]

Herbert Read echoed these sentiments, arguing that if local civic arts movements were established then municipalities would compete with one another, the sum of their efforts contributing to the aestheticization of the nation. Provincial civic-arts movements would preserve individuality within the integrated "Aesthetic State" the medieval modernists aspired to create: "The cultural unity we all desire as the basis of political unity, will be artificial and insecure unless it is the focus of the diversity and multiplicity of local and individual forces. Unity is not the spiritual counterpart of uniformity".[25] An ardent regionalist, Read was born in North Yorkshire in 1893, the son of a farmer, and was educated in Halifax and Leeds. Although for much of his adult life he lived in London, he felt out of place; like an exile he idealized the land of his childhood, and in 1949 he moved back to Yorkshire, "tired of London & its committees & sophistication."[26]

Read had already developed a distaste for London "sophistication" as early as 1922, when he dreamed of creating a Yorkshire modernist movement that would restore the civic pride northern municipalities had exhibited in the nineteenth century. He wrote excitedly to a friend in Yorkshire outlining his ideas for a new modernist program that would galvanize the North, ensuring that English modernism would have utilitarian functions, remaining "artisanal" (i.e., English) rather than "sophisticated" (i.e., French) in character:

We must definitely turn our backs on London & all its erudite sophistications. We must start afresh and without in any way demeaning our intelligence, we must address ourselves to a fresh & uncontaminated audience. . . . My idea is to neglect & ignore the London clique & critics entirely. To address ourselves solely to the local audience of artisans, clerks, [and] schoolmasters, . . . I think it would be a good idea to start a series of tracts or booklets on social, ethical & aesthetic problems—not merely tracts, but plays, short stories & sketches. . . . [I]f once we establish a provincial school, others will follow. It is our only chance of a renaissance: art only exists where there is a virile people; and our first virility is in the northern counties.[27]

Proponents of local civic arts movements, however, realized that their goal was largely quixotic. Read had to admit that the cultural attractions of London usually outweighed whatever incentives localities might offer to their artists—he himself had succumbed to the allure of the metropolis. "Who among us," he asked, "blessed, or it may be, cursed with creative aspirations but born in the provinces, does not remember a sick and desperate yearning to get to 'the centre of things'?"[28] And William Rothenstein acknowledged that it was unlikely the provinces would offer incentives at all, as most northern municipalities were uninterested in patronizing local artists. He recalled ruefully that he had executed over 1,000 canvases before his native Bradford commissioned one: "Bradford has had plenty of brilliant people, but it has made very little use of them. It is a dreary town in a magnificent setting, and when it might have made some use of some of its artists . . . for work of public decoration, it has usually left it to other people to encourage them and has more or less driven them out of the place."[29]

Thus the North was widely perceived as aesthetically avant-garde because of the progressive tastes of certain provincial collectors and municipalities in the nineteenth century and because of the concerted activities of a small group of individuals from the provinces who established themselves in London in the twenties and thirties, forming a distinctly visible (and, given the regional accents, distinctly audible) network. But although the myth of the North rightly extolled the significant number of modern artists and supporters from the provinces, this does not mean that the North as a whole was as receptive to modern art as the myth maintained. To the contrary: most northern municipalities were no more responsive to visual modernism than were London museums in the early decades of the century. One study of the arts in England issued in 1946 stated that "municipal collections as a whole are of a very low standard," a finding confirmed by Sir Kenneth Clark in his memoirs: "Provincial museums in my youth were the most dismal spots on earth."[30] While the numbers of museums and galleries in the provinces increased between 1880–1920, many remained overcrowded and disorganized repositories of works by Royal Academicians; some areas had no museums and galleries at all.[31] Visual modernism was difficult enough to view in London—until the Tate Gallery opened its modern foreign gallery in 1926, there was no collection of continental modernism on public view, and the Tate itself owned few twentieth-century works until it received a substantial bequest in 1933.[32] But modern art was even less in evidence outside of London.

Northerners who believed in the spiritual and social functions of modern art tried to compensate for the lack of municipal interest by circulating the new art on their own, their well-publicized efforts paradoxically reinforcing the myth that the North was an axis of modernist activity. Thus Rothenstein's brother Charles donated his impressive modern art collection to Manchester in 1925, on the condition that it be available for loans to northern museums. According to a reporter from the *Yorkshire Observer*, he "is not so much an idealist as to imagine that in the near future the art of Mr. Wyndham Lewis will find appreciation in as wide a circle as does that of Sir Frank Dicksee, but he believes that the capacity to enjoy and create true works of art can be awakened in many with whom it now lies dormant, and it is an article of faith with him that aesthetic emotion, which so seldom finds an outlet under the conditions of modern industrial civilisation, is essential to individual and communal well-being."[33] Organizations like Art for the People and the British Institute of Adult Education also circulated collections of modern art through the country; under the helm of Herbert Read, the modern art collective Unit One made a special point of displaying their modernist works in the North, reflecting their commitment to diffusing the new art throughout the nation. (According to *The Yorkshire Post*, the group intended to bring their exhibition "to the North, where the public are less well prepared to resist with Bloomsbury phraseology ['Nicholson is so academic'] a determined attack by a group movement.")[34] Frank Pick donated copies of modernist posters from the London Underground to northern art schools in order to expose provincial students to the latest artistic styles readily available to London commuters.

One notable exception to the relative neglect of modern art by municipalities was Leeds, although those who promoted the myth of the "modernist" North neglected to mention that it was the exception rather than the rule. Leeds owed its peculiar status to the prewar conjuncture of the Leeds Art Club, the presence of Frank Rutter as Curator of the Leeds Art Gallery, and the accessibility of modernist works (including nonrepresentational paintings by Kandinsky) amassed by Sir Michael Sadler, the vice-chancellor of Leeds University between 1911–23. The paths and careers of many northern medieval modernists crossed in Leeds before they crossed again in London (often at the DIA, as we shall see in the next chapter)—underscoring the fact that medieval modernism was a loose network as well as a discourse about the nature and functions of art. To cite one example of this shadow "intellectual aristocracy": Arthur Greenwood, the Labour minister who claimed he was a "medieval modern," taught economics at the University of Leeds when Sadler was vice-chancellor; attending his course was Herbert Read, whom Greenwood would later help to get a job at the Treasury in 1919.[35]

The Leeds Art Club, founded in 1903 by Alfred Orage, was a bastion of medieval modernist thought. Orage, who became founder and editor of the influential *The New Age* in 1907, was interested in Platonism, spiritualism, medievalism, the arts and crafts, guild socialism, and questions concerning the social and political function of art, particularly abstract art. (He and other members expressed contempt for academic art.) The club had over one hundred members, and Bradford and Hull formed their own branches.[36] Tom Heron, a manufacturer who employed modern artists, recalled that he and

other members drew connections between medievalism and modernism, conversations at the club ranging over the nonrepresentational work of Kandinsky, guild socialism, the Middle Ages, and the inspiring figure of William Morris: "Yes, a lot of us were very keen indeed on *News From Nowhere*, and as a matter of fact, one of Morris's pupils, Simpson of Kendal, made all of my furniture."[37] A young Herbert Read was a member, and one of his associates in the English surrealist movement, Hugh Sykes Davies, claimed that all of Read's seemingly diverse interests "were remarkably coherent, closely related with each other right from the start. And that start was in the Leeds Art Club during the First World War, where politics, literature, art and design were all being talked about together."[38]

Read was also introduced to modern art by Frank Rutter (1876–1937), who left London temporarily to become the curator of the Leeds Art Gallery from 1912–17. Rutter acknowledged his admiration of Ruskin, staged modern art exhibitions, and also promoted the new art in his capacity as art critic for the *Sunday Times* as well as the *Financial Times*.[39] He and Read were reunited in London in 1917 when they coedited the modernist journal *Arts and Letters*. The journal merged art and politics in the medieval modern manner: as Read stated at the time, "we intend to insist upon the primacy of beauty—even in economics. And hence a return to the socialism of Morris in preference to that of Karl Marx."[40] In his writings on modern art throughout the interwar period, Rutter himself expressed typically "medieval modern" attitudes, often stressing the new art's spiritual, "rhythmic," aspects and potential social functions.

In addition to the presence of the Leeds Art Club and Frank Rutter, the work of Sir Michael Sadler was instrumental in introducing modernism to Leeds and other northern towns. Sadler had been born in Barnsley, Yorkshire, in 1861. As a student at Oxford, he became a passionate admirer of Ruskin, whose writings on the social function of art continued to influence Sadler's thoughts about art and society throughout his life.[41] Sadler began to collect modern art avidly in 1911 and soon acquired some of the most advanced works of the time, including abstract pieces by Kandinsky, then an unknown within English art circles. (Sadler's son translated Kandinsky's *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* in 1914.) While at Leeds, Sadler made his modern art collection available to the public as part of a wider educational mission to diffuse art throughout the nation. Writing to Rothenstein in 1916, he explained that "most of our possessions are lent—which is a good use for them as more people see them. . . . In a town like this, the young men & women of great promise but slender means have too few opportunities of getting to know the masterpieces of modern painting. It is a great happiness to us that, living here, we can lend more of our pictures."[42]

Like other medieval modernists, Sadler believed that art—especially modern art—captured the spiritual rhythms undergirding the universe, placing spectators in correspondence with the eternal order of things. (He was also an enthusiastic proponent of the concurrent "Eurythmic" school of Jacques Dalcroze, which sought to put people into rhythmic equilibrium through dance and physical movement.) Sadler also promoted public arts projects because he wanted to assist young artists and have the public appreciate their work.[43] He collaborated with William Rothenstein on various "civic arts" projects for

northern towns, and when Sadler left Leeds in 1923 to become master of University College, Oxford, he continued to lobby his friends at the Boards of Trade and Education for the integration of art and everyday life. A friend recalled that Sadler was "a dreamer of dreams but of dreams capable of being realized"—a pragmatic utopianism he shared with Pick, Read, Rothenstein, and other medieval modernists.[44]

During Sadler's tenure at the University of Leeds he introduced modern poetry and literature as well as modern visual art to the community. Even Roger Fry was impressed with Sadler's achievements, although Fry's form of praise—"he had civilized a whole population"—was not calculated to flatter the provinces.[45] Read also recalled that Sadler transformed the university, giving it "breadth and scope and [making] it the cultural centre of that grim city. . . . [I] found that a new world was open to my adolescent sensibility. Exhibitions of modern painting, concerts and recitals of modern poetry provided just what I then most hungered for; and I for one must record a deep debt to Sir Michael's inspiration and teaching."[46] Sadler continued to keep in contact with Read, assisting him in the composition of *Education Through Art* because Sadler too believed that art was the means to "integrate body, mind, and emotions."[47] In a letter to Read, he enumerated their common concerns, which were consonant with those of other medieval modernists: the social function of art, education, evolutionary biology, and citizenship.[48] Together with his associates in Leeds, Sadler diffused the new art through the provinces, thereby contributing to the popular association of the North with visual modernism during the interwar period.

While a central component of the myth was the linkage of the North with the "nation" and the new, an equally important component was the corresponding association of London with cosmopolitanism and elitism. This charge was often levied by those who disliked the formalist conception of art promoted by Bloomsbury's Fry and Bell. Among the most acrimonious exchanges of this nature were those between Fry and Bradford's William Rothenstein, to which we shall now turn. The rapid estrangement between the two men following the 1910 postimpressionist exhibition contributed to their opposed aesthetic stances, and these in turn helped to shape the broad parameters of the debate between the formalists and the functionalists in the interwar period. Aesthetics as a subject connotes a certain loftiness, but when it came to Fry and Rothenstein discussions about art were conducted with clean hands and discomposure.

WILL AND REPRESENTATION

William Rothenstein, painter and principal of the Royal College of Art between 1920–34, was an influential Yorkshireman who linked progressive art with the North and championed the provinces against London. Born in Bradford in 1872, Rothenstein became one of the most prominent medieval modernists living in London during the interwar period. Yet his tirades against Roger Fry and the aesthetic of significant form were so bitter, and his praise of representative content in painting so fulsome, he could be easily mistaken as an opponent of

visual modernism.[49] This was manifestly not the case, especially when one considers his generous personal support of controversial modernists like Jacob Epstein, Henry Moore, Wyndham Lewis, and Paul Nash.

The contrast between Rothenstein's public rhetoric and private actions can be explained in terms of the 1910 postimpressionist exhibition: on or about that year human character may not have changed, despite Virginia Woolf's famous remark,[50] but Rothenstein's views about art—and about Roger Fry—certainly did.[51] Conversely, Fry's more extreme formulation of his aesthetic in the years after the two exhibitions had much to do with his estrangement from Rothenstein by 1912. The two radicalized each other: Rothenstein aligned himself more closely with John Ruskin, advocating the social function of modern art and the importance of representative content; Fry adhered more stridently to a French symbolist aesthetic, insisting on art's autonomy from questions of utility and mimesis.

Rothenstein and Fry's charged public interchanges in the interwar period contributed to the myth that distinguished the populist, "English" North from the elitist, "cosmopolitan" South. But neither was as absolutist in practice as some of their more extreme statements implied, and by the late twenties and early thirties each reestablished a more balanced aesthetic that acknowledged the importance of both form and content. An examination of Rothenstein's changing rhetoric about modern visual art thus resolves the apparent contradiction between his words and his actions and sheds light on the construction of the myth of the North. It also reminds us that Fry was ambivalent about his own formalist rhetoric—in some important ways he was a medieval modernist manqué.[52] Without their dialectical interchange, neither man might have held such extreme positions after 1912.

Rothenstein was widely identified as the leading proponent of the northern civic arts movement, having been appointed to the first professorship of Civic Art at the University of Sheffield in 1917. He was also closely identified with the arts and crafts movement: in addition to his own invocations of Ruskin and Morris in speeches and essays, he was chosen to be the guest of honor at the Ruskin Society in 1932 and to unveil the Walthamstow memorial to William Morris at the centennial of Morris's birth in 1934. He adhered to virtually all of the terms of the medieval modernist discourse as I have outlined them: he promoted the careers and works of modern artists like Paul Nash, Jacob Epstein, Wyndham Lewis, Henry Moore, Vanessa Bell, Duncan Grant, Edward Wadsworth, Eric Gill, and many others; he argued vigorously for the integration of art and industry, as well as art and education, as steps toward the creation of an organic and aesthetic society; he believed that art expressed a vital, spiritual force that was tapped by physics and suggested by biology; he opposed the formalist aesthetic with the broader, "medieval" definition of art as an artifact fit for its purpose, encompassing mass-produced commodities as well as "significant forms."

Yet many of Rothenstein's own pronouncements about visual art in the interwar years could make him seem reactionary, and they contradicted his own evident support for English modern artists. These pronouncements are even more striking because until 1910, Rothenstein had been considered a progressive within the English art world, a potential leader of the "young men," many

of whom turned to him for support. Prior to 1910, he spoke in favor of "living art" and abstract art, of "design" and "expression" over "technique," and defended contemporary artists.[53] In the interwar period, however, he appeared to backtrack by advocating representational art and the importance of technique and by expressly condemning Fry's emphasis on form over content and intuitive expression over painstaking draughtsmanship. He now seemed to favor nineteenth-century art, especially that of the Pre-Raphaelites, over much contemporary art. In 1932 one student at the RCA thought Rothenstein's teaching style so regressive that he interrupted a college meeting, shouting that Rothenstein taught drawing "by means of a plumb line." The outburst was deemed sufficiently scandalous to make the papers.[54]

This paradox was more apparent than real, however. On the whole, Rothenstein was a proponent of modern art, not an adversary. In addition to his generous support of modern English artists in the interwar period, he continued to cite the merits of nonrepresentational art, even though he now situated himself firmly on the side of aesthetic realism: "We all agree that there is a vivid reality in early painting and sculpture which is absent from the more complex representation of later painting. Nevertheless, it is right that we should rediscover truth for ourselves, and the ardent enthusiasm the more gifted among younger men get from the knowledge that there is an acute inner conception of reality which depends on something other than outside phenomena has in fact given a new value and certain qualities to contemporary art."[55] He argued that nonrepresentational art was particularly fit for the purposes of modern design and as a background to modern life; while Picasso's abstract canvases did not move him, for example, he was enthusiastic about Picasso's cubist theater designs.[56] In the interwar period Rothenstein certainly reiterated the importance of technique—hence the plumb line—but he remained open to modern art that met his criteria for technical proficiency. He defended cubism in lectures delivered at Sheffield in 1917,[57] and as late as 1939 he confessed that "some hope I see in surrealism; for the surrealists are showing, together with much silliness and indecency, a renewed respect for their materials, for some beauty of surface, and a return to inventiveness in their paintings."[58]

Rothenstein's more conservative rhetoric in the interwar years, despite his continued personal support of modern artists, can be explained by his break with Roger Fry over the postimpressionist exhibitions of 1910 and 1912. Their estrangement after years of close friendship owed more to personal factors than philosophical ones, although they conducted their public feud under the guise of aesthetic differences. They had met when both were art students at the Academie Julian in Paris in 1892, and their friendship continued to develop when they returned to London. Rothenstein was introduced to his future bride, Alice Knewstub, by Fry's wife, Helen Coombe; their children played together; and when both couples experienced marital difficulties in the 1900s, the two men felt sufficient intimacy to confide in one another.[59] They supported each other professionally as well: Fry reviewed Rothenstein's exhibitions favorably in the 1900s, going so far as to dub Rothenstein "the English Cézanne,"[60] and when each was under consideration for the Slade Professorship at Oxford early in 1910, Rothenstein withdrew so as not to compete with

Fry. (The position ultimately went to Selwyn Image.) Both collaborated in 1910 in forming the India Society, dedicated to the study of Indian art.

The two also shared a common enthusiasm for the social and political ideals of the arts and crafts movement in the 1890s and 1900s, although Fry had always insisted that art had an autonomous as well as social dimension, and in the 1890s he rejected Ruskin's doctrine of "truth to nature" in favor of more formalist analyses of art.[61] Nevertheless, Fry engaged in arts and crafts projects such as mural decorations, book illustrations, furniture construction, and curtain design in the 1890s.[62] Through 1910 both he and Rothenstein argued for the mutual importance of form and content in art. For example, Rothenstein's statement in 1900 that Goya restored "the old architectural sense and squareness of proportion and design, which the artists of the last century had allowed to dwindle into the vignette" matched Fry's more formalist statements of the interwar period;[63] Fry's statement in 1901 praising the social functions of medieval art matched those of Rothenstein in the interwar period:

> In marked contradistinction to the present view, that painting is a luxury of the wealthy, and that creation is a fanciful or capricious activity on the artist's part, the medieval citizens of an Italian town regarded it as a preeminently necessary and practical craft, which enabled them to realize through the medium of a well-understood symbolism their municipal or parochial unity and their religious communion.[64]

Both were members of arts and crafts organizations (Fry did not resign from the Art Workers' Guild until 1910), as well as the New English Art Club, which had been founded in 1886 to support new artistic styles (primarily impressionism) against the traditionalism of the Royal Academy. Both were unsuccessful at making a living as painters and supplemented their incomes through writing and lecturing on art. And both were extremely ambitious to succeed in the English art world. One of Rothenstein's friends acknowledged "we were all fond of a little Rothenstein, intelligent and artistic, but . . . a larger, commercial, and much less agreeable Rothenstein was hidden underneath."[65] As for Fry, Leonard Woolf found him at times "dictatorial and ruthless," and Fry himself confessed to wrestling with "the envies and anxieties of appetite and ambition."[66]

Rothenstein and Fry's lives and aesthetic views were in these ways symmetrical until 1910. Their relative positions within the English art world were asymmetrical, however. Early in the 1890s Fry began to study the art of the Italian Renaissance and came to prefer firmly ordered classical compositions over the more fluid style of many impressionists. "The more I study the Old Masters," he wrote his father in 1893, "the more terrible does the chaos of modern art seem to me."[67] His classical preferences distanced him from the more progressive members of the New English Art Club. Rothenstein, on the other hand, skillfully established himself as the bridge between the Pre-Raphaelites and the "modernists" by the turn of the century, a respected figure in both camps whose support could give social éclat to younger artists.[68] While Fry became known in the 1900s as an expert on the art of the quattrocento, as well as a consultant to international collectors like J. P. Morgan, Rothenstein was identified as the champion of the "younger men" of the En-

glish art world, not only through his defense of the aesthetic integrity of their works, but also by his demand that they be employed by industries and for civic arts projects (several of which he instigated). Before the first postimpressionist exhibition of November 1910, no one would have imagined that Roger Fry would supplant William Rothenstein as the Eminence Grise of English modernism. But it happened, and quickly, in what seemed like the twinkling of an eye—as Fry wrote to Virginia Woolf in 1920, still twinkling: "I've seen so many generations of artists shoot past me into fame and fizzle out. I remember I used to be jealous of Prof. Rothenstein, who came along about four years after me and at once got a great reputation, but I wouldn't change places with him now."[69]

For Rothenstein, 1910 was a bad year. An exhibition of his works in May was received poorly, although Fry wrote a favorable review of it. He was in India when Fry mounted his exhibition at the Grafton Gallery in November of that year; always sensitive and suspicious, in later years he acted as if he had been the victim of a coup. The exhibition attracted immense notoriety, but within months Fry's neologism "postimpressionism" had become widely accepted, and Fry began to prepare for a second exhibition that would highlight the work of modern English artists as well as those from the Continent. He invited Rothenstein to submit work, but Rothenstein refused to take part in a show that was under Fry's jurisdiction rather than that of a committee—presumably one that would have included Rothenstein. By the opening of the second exhibition at the Grafton in October 1912, the two had exchanged heated letters about the exhibitions; the few notes they exchanged after 1912 were brief and coldly cordial.[70]

Between 1910 and 1912, both men's aesthetic views changed as each positioned himself against the other. Fry's formalism became more extreme; he repudiated his earlier belief that the interchange of form and content generated aesthetic responses in viewers, substituting purely formal relations as the stimulus to aesthetic exaltation.[71] Evidently, he did not feel this was sufficient to distinguish his position from that of Rothenstein: whereas he had shared Rothenstein's enthusiasm for Indian art in 1910, when they helped establish the India Society, only three years later Fry characterized "Hindu" art and architecture as "abominable" and "beneath contempt."[72] Rothenstein had already established a reputation as a connoisseur of Indian art, so Fry decided to endorse Chinese art, claiming that Indian art was too "literal" and lacked "structure."[73]

He also increased his usual rhetoric against the "philistine English," particularly those from the North. Fry had always been critical of English culture, often comparing it unfavorably to that of France. In 1916, for example, he gave a lecture to the Club Français of London University in which he asserted that when it came to art, "there has been for a very long time one home, one centre, one capital—Paris. The art of all other countries is a provincial art . . . in default of that self-subsisting tradition of a central art the provincial artists are bound from time to time to renew this art by contact with the capital."[74] "Provinciality" of any sort was anathema to Fry; on the whole he remained an elitist who distrusted the masses. As he wrote to Arnold Bennett in 1919, "people have the world the average man likes. I don't understand the animal and can't hope to manage him."[75] Thus it is not surprising that he tended to

single out the "provincial" North for particular opprobrium. As early as 1887 he had written to his mother that "my contempt for the people of the North was fairly strong before, but now they are worse."[76] And soon after his bitter estrangement from Rothenstein, he wrote his father "I find the people in the North too vindictive and violent for my taste."[77]

For his part, Rothenstein not only placed a greater emphasis on representation and technique than he had before, but took nearly every opportunity to defend English culture against Fry's denunciations and to castigate "cosmopolitan" art not in accord with native traditions. His criticisms tended to focus less on the new art (much of which he himself continued to support) than on Fry's apparent role as self-anointed pope of postimpressionism:

> Interest in pure form has never distinguished English painting. The English genius early expressed itself through poetry, and English painters have usually given to their objective vision a poetical quality. It would be wanton to throw away a natural inheritance. Every artist has something which he and no other can give; yet we have artistic pedants who would forbid the play of unusual minds, and clerico-aesthetes who would impose a single dogma throughout the studios. Not through his own spirit must a man approach his God, but through the intermediary, forsooth, of some Anglo-French confessor. Having won political and religious freedom, we are now plagued with aesthetic heresy hunters.[78]

He never forgave Fry. Shortly after Fry's death, Rothenstein wrote to a friend "honest differences, yes; but I could not regard Fry as a quite honest opponent: it is this which sticks."[79]

While the two were never reconciled personally, their aesthetic views became less polarized in the late twenties and thirties, as each had become established and no longer needed to jockey for position. In a 1934 lecture, for example, Rothenstein acknowledged the importance of both *Form and Content in English Painting*—although he could not resist taking a jab at unnamed individuals who "act as *Führers* in the field of the intellect, dismissing this to the concentration camp, promoting that other to high office."[80]

Fry's oscillating aesthetic views are even more remarkable, as they highlight his lifelong struggles with the legacy of the arts and crafts movement. His extreme formalist positions after 1912 through the mid-twenties seem forced and artificial, the result of his need to identify himself as the leader of a new art movement and to differentiate himself from potential competitors within the New English Art Club like Rothenstein. As late as 1912, he had written an essay entitled "Art and Socialism" in which he praised Ruskin's views on the social foundations of art and argued that the greatest art had always been communal.[81] But in 1913, when he formed his own crafts workshop—the Omega Workshops, Ltd.—he went to extremes to distinguish it from the arts and crafts' emphasis on social utility. He presented the Omega as an "autonomous" workshop that created aesthetic artifacts that just happened to be useful; "Purposive Without Purpose" would have served as an ideal motto for the firm. Fry claimed that the Omega was formed primarily to give modern artists part-time employment, and that the functionality of the craft objects was secondary to

more formalist concerns: "The Omega Workshops Limited is a group of artists who are working with the object of allowing free play to the delight in creation in the making of objects for common life."[82] This attitude might explain why Omega products tended to fall apart.[83]

Contemporaries understood that the Omega Workshop had little to do with the arts and crafts workshops it superficially resembled. Writing in the *Observer*, the critic P. G. Konody noted that Fry's schemes had nothing to do with Ruskin and Morris's emphasis on "fitness for purpose": "One seeks in vain for any dominating idea or central motive in the decoration or furnishing of these rooms. The impression derived from all of them is merely surface decoration—often superfluous—and not substance or structure. Things are not decorated, but disguised; they are to be looked at, not to be used. . . . [T]ables are heavily laden with formless wriggles of paint which disturb the eye and serve no useful purpose."[84] The Omega remained financially insolvent, and Fry dissolved it in 1920.

Even as he tried to disassociate his beliefs and activities from the traditional English "social aesthetic," in his unguarded moments Fry continued to express concern over the social function of art. He wanted to increase the public's appreciation of art and to beautify their surroundings, just as he had in the 1890s and 1900s.[85] And his ambivalence about the aesthetic formalism he and Bell were promoting became more pronounced in the later twenties, perhaps in response to the medieval modernists' concerted attempts to reconcile the concept of "significant form" with the social aesthetic of Ruskin and Morris.[86] In 1925 Fry welcomed Frank Pick's patronage of modern artists and noted "perhaps we could save ourselves a good deal of painful and unnecessary emotion if we were less exacting in our ideals, if we recognized that the real and pressing needs of society are not even in what are called works of art concerned with the higher spiritual adventures."[87] In 1928 he wrote of "the strain" his own formalist views were under and that they would have to be modified: "One runs a theory as long as one can and then too many difficulties in its application—too many strained explanations accumulate and you have to break the mould and start afresh."[88]

By his 1933 lecture "The Double Nature of Painting," Fry had returned to a position similar to that which he held prior to 1910: representation and form interact to produce aesthetic emotions. "I see I'm in danger of getting shockingly 'literary,'" he admitted.[89] He also became more active in national efforts to integrate art and everyday life, serving as a member of the Gorell Committee on Art and Industry, which had been appointed by the government in 1931. Nevertheless, in a memorandum appended to the committee's report of 1932, Fry continued to balk at the medieval modernist emphasis on "fitness for purpose": while he conceded that "the best designs often take the functional purpose of an object as a point of departure," he still insisted that "the aesthetic satisfaction given by a beautiful design is quite distinct from the pleasure of recognizing functional adaptation."[90] Fry's repudiation of functionalism always set him apart from the arts and crafts tradition.

Fry was not a medieval modernist. As we shall see in the next chapter, the discourse of medieval modernism was, in large degree, a rejoinder to both his and Bell's deliberately provocative aesthetic views as they were developed be-

tween 1910–14. To contemporaries, the heated public interchange between Fry and Rothenstein exemplified the apparent conflict between "cosmopolitan" London society and the "English" industrial North, elitist formalism and populist functionalism. But Fry also sympathized with many aspects of the medieval modernist discourse he inadvertently helped to shape. To some degree he should be included among the many modernists who attempted to reconcile antinomies rather than with those, like Bell, who were content to champion a single side.

Fry's attempts to associate postimpressionism chiefly with formalism and France backfired: his views led to a response by those who associated the new with functionalism, functionalism with industry, industry with the North, the North with England. In addition to the reasons already cited to explain the numerous interwar associations between modernism and the North, we can include Fry's incessant francophile rhetoric and the patriotic reactions it provoked—particularly by those from the North. In Manchester, Robert Ross was undoubtedly preaching to the converted many when he told his audience that "a national accent in art is everything. Collectors soon tire of art that is mere imitation of the French. . . . The strength of the younger artists is their national strength, and their weakness, if I may say so, is their cosmopolitanism."[91]

Fry belittled England; Pick, Read, Rothenstein, and other northerners were proud of their Little England, with its values firmly rooted in the industrial, Protestant, and populist North. For them English modernism would be a native modernism, one that contributed to the economic as well as the spiritual well-being of the nation, an artisanal modernism that stressed art's "fitness for purpose" no less than its "significant forms." For Pick and his northern cohorts, there was no shame in a modernism that was "provincial" in every sense of the word.

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MORRIS, THE MACHINE,
AND MODERNISM, 1915–1934

*I must ask you to extend the word art beyond those matters
which are consciously works of art, to take in not only paint-
ing and sculpture, and architecture, but the shapes and
colours of all household goods, nay, even the arrangement of
the fields for tillage and pasture, the management of towns
and of our highways of all kinds; in a word, to extend it to the
aspect of all the externals of our life.*

<div align="right">WILLIAM MORRIS[1]</div>

THIS CHAPTER EXAMINES HOW THE DISCOURSE of medieval modernism
emerged during the First World War and developed in the 1920s, particu-
larly through the influence of the Design and Industries Association. Estab-
lished in 1915, the DIA set out to reconcile the ideas of Ruskin and Morris to
the machine age by integrating art with industry, commerce, and education.
Their aesthetic combined Fry and Bell's emphasis on "significant form" with
the nineteenth-century romantic medievalists' stress on "fitness for purpose,"
uniting formalism with functionalism. While small numerically, the DIA's
membership was prominent socially, and the organization's ideas concerning
the social function of modern art were widely disseminated as well as appro-
priated by artists, teachers, government officials, and the media. Frank Pick
was one of the earliest and most prominent members; we shall see in the next
chapter how he and his associates at the DIA went beyond rhetoric by using
the Underground to demonstrate the viability of integrating modern art with
modern life. Through the efforts of the medieval modernists, the London Un-
derground became the culminating project of the arts and crafts movement.

THE GREAT WAR AND MEDIEVAL MEMORY

The unprecedented horrors of the Great War may have stimulated a reaction
against romanticism among some interwar modernists, but it also imparted a

renewed life to the moribund arts and crafts tradition: the war was critical to the transformation of nineteenth-century romantic medievalism into twentieth-century medieval modernism. This transformation was fostered by Fry and Bell's emphasis on the aesthetic importance of design between 1910 and 1914, and the Design and Industry Association's emphasis on the economic importance of design beginning in 1915. The 1910 and 1912 postimpressionist exhibitions and their accompanying formalist aesthetic instigated discussions about the nature and purposes of art; the war with Germany provoked decisive answers, couched in terms derived from Ruskin, Morris, and other nineteenth-century romantic medievalists.

This is not surprising, since it was largely adherents of the arts and crafts movement—recent apostates like Fry and revisionists like the DIA—who raised the questions and proffered the answers. But it is unlikely that the social function of modern art would have become a national preoccupation, involving the government, teachers, artists, and media pundits, without the onset of war. Germany's apparent success in integrating art with industry, as well as the increased importance of exports to England's postwar economy, directed the nation's attention to art's utilitarian functions and economic possibilities no less than to its significant forms. As a result, in the interwar years many no longer distinguished the "fine" arts from the "applied" or "industrial" arts, but instead encompassed both under the single term "design"—thereby returning to a practice common before the separation of the "fine arts" from the "crafts" during the Renaissance.

The Design and Industries Association was formed in May 1915. The date is significant: at the height of anti-German sentiment in England, the DIA intended to rescue the legacy of Ruskin and Morris from both the Germans and the more staid English arts and crafts enthusiasts. The charter members of the DIA believed that many of the English design reformers had lost sight of Ruskin and Morris's social aims and had retreated into an ineffectual antiquarianism. DIA members also contended that the Germans had effectively capitalized on the English design reform movement, turning it to economic account. (As a writer for the Ministry of Reconstruction was to observe dryly in 1919, "this sort of combination of English research and German enterprise is a very unsatisfactory state of things.")[2] It was a tempest over well-designed teapots, fueled in part by the competition between the two countries for military and economic superiority in the years preceding the Great War. As early as 1901 *The Studio* had noted ominously that "German manufactures are determined, if at all possible, to wrest from British craftsmen and designers the initiative in the applied art campaign. Should they succeed in doing this . . . then a fair fight will have gone against England."[3]

But it was not exactly a fair fight, as the two contestants were unequally matched when it came to combining art with industry. In fact, in the years preceding the war, England was hardly prepared to fight at all. Through 1914, the English arts and crafts movement, unlike the German, had maintained an anti-industrial bias inherited from Ruskin and Morris. In the nineteenth century, both men had become frustrated with the possibility of meliorative social change and demanded more radical alterations in society that would have severely limited the role of industry. By the turn of the century, many of their followers were imbued with this anti-industrial prejudice.

It is true that there were a few within the English arts and craft movement who were less antagonistic toward mass-production prior to 1914 and who believed that art could remain viable only if it were associated with modern industry. These were the "progressives" within the movement, whose views would attain much wider currency in the interwar period. J. R. Sedding, Halsey Ricardo, Walter Crane, William Rothenstein, and W. R. Lethaby, for example, maintained that society could be improved morally, economically, and aesthetically if artists were integrated into industry. At the 1888 Conference of the Art Workers' Guild, J. R. Sedding went well beyond calling for a Morris chair in every home, to calling for a William Morris in every factory: "Fancy what a year of grace it were for England, if our industries were placed under the guidance of 'one vast Morris'! Fancy a Morris installed in every factory. . . . The battle of the industries were half won!"[4]

The government also attempted to integrate art with industry in the nineteenth century, primarily to improve the quality of British goods for export markets. But the government's aims were often antithetical to the aims of Morris and his more progressive followers. Members of the arts and crafts movement had a moral as well as economic purpose in eliminating the hierarchical distinction between fine artist and the designer. They argued that this distinction was not natural but rather class-based, privileging the "contemplative" arts over the arts of use. They also objected to the distinction for the very practical reason that few "fine artists" would design for industry if being designated a designer meant a diminution of their status as artists. The government, on the other hand, reinforced this distinction between fine artists and designers by directing its industrial art instruction and facilities toward the training of artisans rather than artists. Both the Royal College of Art and the Victoria and Albert Museum had originally been established to train artisans to "apply" art to industry: in effect, to slap curlicues, angel's wings, or other stock forms onto industrial products. Industries tended to be unimpressed by designers trained in this fashion and found it less expensive to copy popular patterns from the Continent themselves than to hire artists trained in copying classical casts. In addition, most industrialists remained indifferent to the whole issue of industrial design, complacently assuming that assured sales within the empire would maintain their profits from exports.

Thus, prior to 1914, the fine arts remained distinguished from design or "industrial art" in popular discourse, and few artists had been integrated into industry. In Germany, however, the aims of the progressive members of the arts and crafts seemed to be realized, thanks to the energetic efforts of Hermann Muthesius. In 1896 the Prussian Board of Trade sent Muthesius to England to report on the arts and crafts movement. Muthesius returned to Germany in 1903 brimming with enthusiasm for what he had seen, particularly at London's Central School of Arts and Crafts under the direction of W. R. Lethaby. Muthesius assiduously applied the lessons of the progressives within the English arts and crafts movement to the Deutsche Werkbund, which he co-founded in 1907. The Werkbund was an alliance of artists, industrialists, and educators dedicated to creating mass-produced objects that were simple, beautiful, and affordable. The Prussian Board of Trade supported the Werkbund in bringing these disparate groups together, whereas prior to 1914 English design

reformers like Lethaby were unable to persuade the government or industrialists of the economic and moral importance of well-designed objects. As one English design reformer recalled, "we changed not only the face but the direction of German industry. And in all those prewar years, those of us who were interested could make very much less impression on British industry."[5]

German art education was also subject to a greater degree of state control than English art education, facilitating the training of German industrial designers. In England the Board of Education could make suggestions and provide financial grants to compliant local education authorities but was usually unable to persuade these authorities to integrate art and technical instruction.[6] Thus the Germans were able to pursue a concerted program in training designers for industry that was notably lacking in England.

German industries were also willing to hire artists to work with technicians in order to design for the new light-metal industries.[7] In England, on the other hand, industrial design was oriented toward the craft-based industries. Designers concentrated principally in fields such as pottery, textiles, furniture, hosiery, and jewelry. The two main schools of design training, the Royal College of Art and the Central School, were located in London, far from the centers of heavy or light industries in the North and midlands, and until 1945 these schools were run by arts and crafts adherents. There was negligible training for industrial designers in light metals and plastics until after the Second World War, with the notable exception of a few courses offered in Birmingham in the late 1930s.[8] Many English industrialists complained that artists emerging from the Royal College of Art were not even able to fulfill the basic technical requirements of industrial design for the craft-based industries. Would-be designers retorted that industries preferred to copy patterns from abroad or commission a worker to dash off a new pattern rather than employ trained designers. Thus artists and industries remained at a stalemate, and most students who entered the RCA became art teachers rather than designers.

Nationalist pride also served as a greater goad to design reformers in Germany than in England prior to the war. Through 1914 German industrialists and state officials claimed that the quality of their industrial design reflected the superiority of German culture and that industrial design would contribute toward German dominance in overseas markets. In England few characterized industrial design in such patriotic terms prior to the war. Many within the government and industry were too conservative or too complacent to be concerned about design as an important selling factor. The First World War jolted many in England out of their complacency, but until then the Germans were alone in successfully combining Ruskin with *Realpolitik*. As one member of the Werkbund stated, "we must again recover joy in work, which is synonymous with a raising of quality. And so art is not only an aesthetic, but at the same time, a moral power, both however, leading to the most important of powers: economic power."[9]

Between 1910 and 1914, however, several significant developments galvanized the English industrial art movement, leading to the creation of the DIA as well as establishing the essential parameters for the emergence of the medieval modernist outlook during the interwar period. One of the most important developments was the introduction of postimpressionism, together with

the controversial aesthetic of "significant form" developed by Roger Fry and Clive Bell. The two intended to distinguish art from functional concerns, but their aesthetic was to have the opposite effect in the interwar period.

In 1910 Fry organized the notorious London exhibition "Manet and the Post-Impressionists," coining the latter phrase to cover the variety of works by artists who succeeded the impressionists, ranging from Cézanne to Picasso. Together with his Bloomsbury associate Bell, Fry defined art in formalist terms, in a deliberate attempt to divorce it from the Victorians' moral and utilitarian conception of art. The two men did not always hold identical aesthetic views. As was noted in the previous chapter, Fry felt a deep ambivalence toward the arts and crafts tradition and wavered in his estimation of the autotelic nature of art more than Bell. But between 1910–14, the two did agree that the disparate works included under the rubric of postimpressionism cohered in their emphasis on the formal relations of shapes and colors that elicited "aesthetic emotions" from sensitive viewers. Art was concerned with "significant form" rather than with literary content or utilitarian function. Fry denied that art had any direct connection with morality, and Bell praised it for repudiating the social: "Art transports us from the world of man's activity to a world of aesthetic exaltation."[10] Yet although Fry and Bell intended to distance art from the functionalist emphasis of the arts and crafts movement, postimpressionist styles and the aesthetic of significant form rapidly became associated with industrial design, for several reasons.

First, Fry had redefined art as "design," promoting this redefinition through the exhibitions and in a series of lectures and essays (some of which were published in 1920 under the title *Vision and Design*). These, together with Bell's *Art* (1914), maintained that design was the underlying factor common to all forms of art, from paintings to pots. The postimpressionists were to be distinguished from other contemporary artists in their affirmation of design over representation. According to the catalog for the first postimpressionist exhibition, which was written by Desmond MacCarthy under Fry's direction, the postimpressionist "aims at *synthesis* in design; that is to say, he is prepared to subordinate consciously his power of representing the parts of his picture as plausibly as possible, to the expressiveness of his whole design."[11] Fry repeatedly expounded his equation of art with design. In a 1912 article for the *Nation* he reminded his readers that "by affirming the paramount importance of design, [postimpressionism] necessarily places the imitative side of art in a secondary place. . . . So far from this art being lawless and anarchic, it is revolutionary only in the vehemence of its return to the strict laws of design."[12]

In their lectures, exhibitions, and essays, Fry and Bell also abolished the hierarchical distinctions between a work of so-called fine art and a work of craft, focusing instead on the artifact's qualities of design—its "significant forms." Fry still retained the arts and crafts' faith in the essential unity of the arts, a belief only reinforced by his own expertise in pre-Renaissance art. Like Ruskin, he intended to break down the modern hierarchy among the arts and to revive the medieval conception of the designer as an artist. He stated that it was wrong to apply the terms "art and artist almost exclusively to the art of painting, when artist should be a word of general application to anyone who constructs with a view to aesthetic satisfaction."[13] The new aesthetic he and

Bell propounded expanded the inclusiveness of the term "art"; establishing such a more inclusive definition had long been a central aim of the arts and crafts movement.

However, while Fry believed that the designer was essentially an artist, he pointedly ignored the element of functionality in design: the artist/designer was concerned with "aesthetic satisfaction," not "fitness for purpose." Few in England accepted this formalism unalloyed. Fry and Bell's contention that art and design were synonymous was widely accepted—even those, like the art critic D. S. MacColl, who disagreed with their repudiation of the representational function of art came to accept "design" as the defining characteristic of a work of art.[14] Nevertheless, many disagreed with Fry and Bell's notion that aesthetic satisfaction was the sole purpose of a successful design. Prominent artists, educators, civil servants, and critics argued that functionality was as important to a successful design as aesthetic value—indeed, that aesthetic value depended on a design being fit for its purpose. Fry and Bell defined art as "disinterested," formal, and autonomous, but the new emphasis on design as the essence of art made it much easier for others to associate art with utilitarian purposes. It enabled artists, for example, to consider industrial design as a respectable artistic profession, rather than as a vocation limited to artisans. The modernist painter Paul Nash, for example, felt that "the new type of professional artist," concerned with the relations of abstract forms and colors, should embrace proudly the title of "designer": "Because of the architectonic quality of his art its expression naturally carries him beyond the limits of easel painting. As a designer preeminently, he is equipped for new problems, and many of these belong to the province of the industrial world—now gradually opening under his hand."[15]

In addition to promoting the more encompassing definition of art as design, Fry and Bell's aesthetic provided the public with a new way of looking at visual art, which design reformers in turn adopted to discuss the appropriate design of mass commodities. The Victorian public had been trained to perceive art in terms of mimetic accuracy and artistic technique, but Fry and Bell's emphasis on an artifact's formal attributes—its "rhythm," "plasticity," "line," "architecture," "color," "volume," etc.—instructed viewers to understand how such elements contributed to the success of the overall aesthetic design. Fry and Bell were uninterested in the direct utility of an artifact, but they were interested in how it "worked" as art—in how all of its parts fit together into a satisfying whole that generated aesthetic emotions. This perspective, rather than the Victorian one that stressed art's narrative content, could also be applied to assess the functionality of industrial products: from the perspective of design reformers, a public trained in the vocabulary of significant form would learn to reject poorly designed items and demand more functional ones from manufacturers. For example, a Victorian might accept a clock with angel's wings because it generated a moral narrative: "beware the flight of time," perhaps. But with the formalist vocabulary, angel's wings could now be read in terms of how they promoted or detracted from the functionality of an artifact designed for a specific use and place: did their "masses" or "volumes" contribute to the clock's primary purpose of displaying the time? In ways such as this, Fry and Bell's formalist aesthetic translated easily into the more utilitarian questions pursued by design reformers.

Thus, while Fry and Bell emphasized "form" over "content," design re-formers made form into content—form must be congruent with the purpose of the artifact. Because abstract art privileged the fundamental aspects of design over traditional narrative, design reformers argued that modern paintings and sculptures were not just art objects eliciting "aesthetic emotions" through rapt contemplation, as Fry and Bell maintained: modern art educated the consumer about product design, influencing his or her choice of the fittest teakettle or water closet. The Arts League of Service, which had been founded in 1919 "To Bring the Arts into Everyday Life," explained that everyday items were often purchased on the basis of their abstract qualities of design. Modern art empha-sized precisely these formal qualities, and therefore it was vital that the public be exposed to paintings as often as possible: "[These formal qualities] are the fundamentals of a work of art, and the measure in which we respond to them determines our choice in the things of everyday life. Therefore, the importance of pictures."[16] And Beresford Pite, the professor of Architecture at the Royal College of Art, stated optimistically in 1914 that the new aesthetic was draw-ing attention to the whole issue of design in everyday life, resulting in a new era of industrial art: "The economic outlook for Industrial artists is now, in my opinion, especially favorable, as probably there has never been before so gen-eral a recognition of the value of Form and originality of Design in the many trades which cater for the public taste."[17]

Postimpressionism also became associated with industrial design because contemporaries defined it as emphasizing "flatness" and simple, geometrical forms—precisely those qualities most suitable to machine reproduction. In much of his art criticism, Fry emphasized the importance of two-dimensional design for the postimpressionists and often criticized the prevailing conven-tions of chiaroscuro and perspective. Flat decoration, as found in primitive, Byzantine, and medieval art, rather than the pictorial illusion of depth as found in Western art since the Renaissance, was a hallmark of the new aesthetic.[18] This formalist emphasis on simplicity and flatness proved to be a useful way of categorizing many of the new works of art, which otherwise seemed to have lit-tle in common. But it also fit the mechanical requirements of mass production, enabling postimpressionist artists to appear ideally qualified to be industrial artists. As one 1929 book on *The New Interior Decoration* stated, "A painter of good pictures, since he conceives them primarily in terms of design, is likely to show more aptitude in planning textiles than a painter who conceives his pic-tures as representations of nature."[19]

Thus the integration of "fine art" and "industrial art" under the rubric "de-sign" was strengthened, albeit unintentionally, by Fry and Bell's introduction of postimpressionism and its accompanying aesthetic. The conflation of "artist" with "designer" was also reinforced prior to the war by the public at-tention given to the Royal College of Art between 1909–11, culminating in the 1911 *Report on the Royal College of Art* by a departmental committee of the Board of Education. While Fry and Bell had emphasized the aesthetic signifi-cance of design, the 1911 *Report* focused on design's economic significance.

The 1911 *Report* was eagerly anticipated, because the educational policy of the college had been in constant flux since its founding as the Government School of Design in 1837. At its inception, the school had been expressly in-

tended to train artisans rather than "fine" artists. Instruction often consisted in repetitious copying of geometric forms from pattern books. But as the school also took on the function of training teachers for the provincial art schools, and as more middle-class fee payers enrolled in its art classes, the curriculum of the school gradually began to incorporate a more academic, "fine art" form of instruction that involved copying from casts and models. With the appointment of Sir Edward Poynter, R.A., as principal in 1875, the emphasis of the school's training shifted from industrial art to fine art. This shift was emphasized in the new name given to the School of Design in 1895: the Royal College of Art. The college's mission ostensibly remained that of training designers for industry, although in reality it had become a finishing school for "fine" artists and a training school for art teachers and principals.

Morris's associate Walter Crane attempted to restore the RCA to its original purpose as a training school for industrial designers when he was appointed the college's principal in 1898. He also attempted to end the pejorative distinction between designer and artist by abolishing the distinction between the fine arts and the applied arts in the curriculum of the school. Crane resigned a year later, frustrated by bureaucratic impediments, but his goals were instituted within the school in 1901 through the recommendations of the college's Council of Advice for Art. The council had been formed in 1900 and was made up of members of the Art Workers' Guild, a prominent arts and crafts society. The council's belief in the unity of the arts and the fundamental importance of design led to the reorganization of the RCA into four schools, including a school of design. All students were required to take a term course in architecture, which emphasized the unity of the arts.

While instruction at the RCA in the early years of the new century continued to stress craft-based designs rather than designs intended for light and heavy industries, the curriculum had a more practical emphasis than in previous years. Earlier instruction consisted of the copying of patterns onto paper; the new approach introduced by Crane and W. R. Lethaby (the RCA's professor of design) followed Ruskin's dictum of "truth to nature." Crane and Lethaby emphasized copying forms from nature so that students could see how organic objects were naturally fit for their purpose. By following this cardinal design rule of "fitness for purpose," students would create designs based on the purpose of the object and the limitations of the materials. It was assumed that with this general form of training designers could enter industry and learn the more technical requirements "on the job."

The RCA's renewed emphasis on design at the turn of the century was an early and significant step toward the widespread redefinition of both art and craft as "design" that occurred after 1914. The art master of Harrow observed in 1900 that "painting and sculpture no longer arrogate to themselves the whole of the kingdom of Art. Design is re-asserting its supremacy."[20] But broadening the conception of art as design was one thing; developing appropriate strategies to train effective industrial designers was another. By 1909 it was clear that industrial design movements in Germany and several other countries had been more successful at integrating artists into industry than was the case in England, and that their products could threaten the viability of English exports. That year Augustus Spencer, principal of the RCA, reported to

the Board of Education that "it is a well-known fact that trade is leaving the country and falling into the hands of the Germans and Dutch."[21] Other instructors at the RCA demanded that industrial art instruction at the college and throughout the country be made more compatible with industrial requirements. They stated that art education should focus on both the unity and the essentially decorative character of the arts. This public discussion concerning the RCA curriculum between 1909–10 may have influenced Fry's developing aesthetic: during the next three years he defined the nature and the purposes of postimpressionism in similar terms.[22]

In 1911 a deputation of artists, sensing the possibility of increased government support for artists if art was to be allied with industry as it was in Germany, wrote a letter to *The Times* calling for a royal commission to investigate the issue of the nation's industrial art training. Artists as diverse as Walter Crane, Luke Fildes, L. Alma-Tadema, and John Singer Sargent noted that British manufacturers were being challenged by the newly industrializing countries, and therefore "success must, in future, mainly depend upon the tasteful use to which machinery can be put."[23] Similarly, representatives from chambers of commerce in the North and midlands and prominent London merchants such as Arthur Liberty and Ambrose Heal wrote to the Treasury that year to support the artists' demands. They also wanted to see a closer connection between art instruction and the needs of industry, insisting that local art schools minister "to the artistic development of local industries" owing to the "urgent needs of the country."[24]

The 1911 *Report* by the Board of Education, issued several months after the closing of the first postimpressionist exhibition, contributed to the momentum associating artist with designer that had been stimulated by the exhibition—but it did little to improve the technical level of instruction for industrial designers. The *Report* suggested that the RCA place greater emphasis on industrial design, but refused to articulate different forms of training for industrial artists and fine artists. Instead, it acknowledged both the unity of the arts and the essentially formal or "decorative" character of the arts, just as Fry and Bell were attempting to do between 1910–14:

> There might be profit for the future if a closer approximation rather than a sharper division of the ideals of fine and of decorative art could be brought about, so that the academic painter might learn to attach more value to the decorative qualities of his composition, while the decorator might brace himself by the closer discipline which proceeds from prolonged and unremitting attention to the model.[25]

The *Report* did suggest that provincial art schools located near industries direct their training to meet the needs of those industries, in effect forming monotechnics on the continental model. But this suggestion was ignored by most local education authorities.[26] Monotechnics had proven effective on the Continent, but the autonomous jurisdictions of numerous local education authorities in England limited what the board could accomplish on its own.

Thus, between 1910 and 1914 both the introduction of postimpressionism and the public debate over the direction of the RCA contributed to the effacing of the distinction between "fine" art and "industrial" art. With the outbreak of

the war, the issue of industrial art took on an even greater significance, and the hierarchical division of art into categories of "fine art" and "craft" or "industrial art" began to be replaced increasingly with the more encompassing and egalitarian definition of art as "design." The onset of hostilities meant that the integration of art and industry was not merely an economic or moral issue, but an economic weapon to be levied against Germany—while remaining for its earlier proponents the magic solution that would rejuvenate England's dowdy exports and dingy urban environments. The war provided art and artists with a patriotic function; modern visual art was bestowed with a defined and respectable social role.

During and after 1914, more government officials joined design reformers in calling for an end to the distinction between art and "craft," or "industrial art," in the hope that the nation would be awoken to the fact that art was not a mere pastime but had a vital economic function. Sir Leo Chiozza Money visited the Deutsche Werkbund Exhibition in 1914, warning upon his return that "the time is rapidly approaching when there will be only one way by which the United Kingdom will be able to sustain the imports without which she would dwindle to insignificance, and that is by the devoted application to industry of Science and Art—of Art no less than of Science, as was so clearly shown at the recent Cologne Exhibition of Applied Industrial Art."[27] Hubert Llewellyn Smith, a lifelong admirer of Ruskin and Morris who became a senior official at the Board of Trade, was also concerned about the evident success of the Werkbund. In order to stimulate English designers, he proposed the creation of a museum of industrial art early in 1914. His suggestion was enthusiastically welcomed by Cecil Harcourt Smith, the director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, as a move that would break down the distinctions between artist and designer/craftsman: "The very terminology of to-day which discriminates between 'Fine Art' (as embracing Painting, Sculpture and, possibly, Architecture) and 'Decorative' or 'Industrial' art, is an unfortunate misnomer of purely modern origin."[28] This project was interrupted by the war, but was revived in 1919 and led to the creation of the British Institute of Industrial Art in 1921. And in 1919 the Ministry of Reconstruction published a pamphlet entitled "Art and Industry" that appeared to make the views of Ruskin and Morris into national policy:

> Art has become limited in meaning. It is generally understood to be a thing apart. . . . It is 'applied' or 'fine' (two of the most ignorant and misleading terms ever invented) according as it is useful or not. . . . We must work for the restoration of the broader meaning of art, for the reunion of the many subdivisions of Art into art—one and indivisible in its association with life and work.[29]

It is important to note, however, that while the reconceptualization of the artist as designer became paradigmatic following 1914 and would remain so until the late 1930s, there were those who continued to maintain that the artist and the industrial designer were distinct and required different forms of training. Lewis Day, an influential writer on design and a member of several arts and crafts societies, typified this position. In a report to the Board of Education in 1910, Day stated that "Right or wrong in theory, in practice the distinction

between 'Fine' and 'Applied' Art has to be recognized."[30] Day's general cri-
tique of the RCA garnered a sympathetic response during the war among sev-
eral members of the Board of Education who had become restive with the lack
of progress at the RCA and were concerned about England's export position
following the war. According to one member, the board had received com-
plaints from employers that designers from the RCA were unemployable be-
cause they lacked practical training.[31] These board members hoped to reorga-
nize the RCA after the war to specialize in the training of industrial designers
exclusively, but they also noted that the prevailing trend was to identify artists
with designers rather than to distinguish them through separate forms of train-
ing. Recognizing this, members of the board decided in 1916 to wait until "the
lapse of time has removed those whose sullen or unwilling acquiescence or ac-
tive opposition to the new scheme would mar its efficiency."[32]

But the redefinition of art as design was not a temporary fad, as these
members of the board had hoped. Instead, the conception of the artist as de-
signer became widely accepted after the war; the distinction between "fine"
and "applied" art would not be restored until after the Second World War. The
Board of Education's own policy changed when Herbert A. Fisher became min-
ister of education in 1916. Fisher believed in the unity of the arts and consid-
ered the integration of art and industry to be a national priority. He told a
deputation of art teachers in 1917 that "it would be essential that art should
play a greater part than hitherto in our national industries, and for this reason
. . . art education should be reorganized throughout the kingdom."[33] Fisher
helped his friend William Rothenstein to secure a newly established chair in
civic art at the University of Sheffield in 1917; in 1920 he appointed Rothen-
stein to head the RCA. Rothenstein, following Ruskin, believed that students at
the RCA should receive a broad, "liberal" training in the arts rather than a vo-
cational training for industrial design. As he told the BBC in 1932, "my col-
leagues want to link education with industry: good. But there is a danger in the
limited objective. If a man is to design cotton prints, he has a right to a com-
plete education in the arts first."[34] During his tenure the RCA became famous
as a school for painters and sculptors, and Rothenstein hired artists like Henry
Moore as tutors—even its department of design was headed for several years
by the painters Paul and John Nash.

The Board of Education supported Rothenstein's policy in the 1920's de-
spite continued complaints from industrialists that RCA students were not
being adequately trained to design for machine production. In 1928 the presi-
dent of the board, Eustace Percy, was sufficiently concerned about these
charges to call a meeting with the Royal Academy to discuss how training for
industrial art could be improved. Nevertheless, Percy wrote to the president of
the Royal Academy that the solution lay in the continued integration of the
artist and designer rather than with a more specialized form of training: "It
seems to me evident that training in Design or Industrial Art cannot be di-
vorced from training in the Fine Arts, and it would probably be generally ad-
mitted that the best teaching of Industrial Art is being done in institutions
which also teach the Fine Arts, like the Royal College of Art."[35]

The merging of "fine art" and "crafts" or applied art thus continued to be
the rule rather than the exception during the twenties and thirties. The Hadow

Report on Adolescent Education of 1927 recommended the integration of fine art and applied art instruction in the schools, arguing that the art room should be seen as a "workshop"; in 1928 the City and Guilds added the category "Arts-Crafts" to its examination lists.[36] As one of the Board of Education's school inspectors noted in 1928, "Art and handicraft which started in the schools as disconnected subjects of instruction are now everywhere in contact, and even overlapping. . . . The teachers of craft in a school must be something of an artist, the teacher of art something of a craftsman."[37] A 1929 report by the Board of Education found that more art schools were providing training for artists who intended to design for industry, although such training tended to be general, rather than being targeted toward specific industries.[38] In 1937 the Board of Education rewrote their "Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers in Elementary Schools" to include a single chapter on "Art and Craft," combining the two separate chapters on "Drawing" and "Handwork" of the 1927 edition. The new handbook emphasized the "fundamental unity of art" and the fact that "Art and Handicraft are not two separate sections of the curriculum which imply different outlooks: they should properly be regarded as part and parcel of one important branch of teaching."[39] While Lewis Day's distinction between the artist and the industrial designer was shared by others during the interwar years—including some influential members of the Royal Academy, the DIA, and the Industrial Art Committee of the Federation of British Industries—the idea that the artist and the designer were distinct remained a minority position until the Second World War.

THE AESTHETIC OF MEDIEVAL MODERNISM: "FITNESS FOR PURPOSE" AND "SIGNIFICANT FORM"

The Design and Industries Association was established during the war, and contributed to the upsurge of enthusiasm for the integration of art and industry as an economic weapon against Germany. The organization had been conceived of prior to the war by several arts and crafts enthusiasts who felt that the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society had been mistaken in its rejection of the machine and modern industry. Its establishment in 1915, however, made the DIA appear to be a weapon in the war effort. Writing in the *Journal of the Imperial Arts League*, W. G. Paulson-Townsend expressed the general bellicose spirit of the times with his claim that the DIA's establishment was "in furtherance of a scheme for an attack upon the German art industries."[40] But this would hardly be in the DIA spirit of ethical socialism. As art critic A. Clutton-Brock stated in the DIA's first manifesto, "The regeneration of English industry and art must be based, not on a fear or hatred of Germany, a motive transient and in itself evil, but upon a desire for good work, a motive lasting and in itself good."[41] The DIA retained this sense of high spiritual commitment throughout the interwar years. Improving England's position in the export markets was certainly an aim of its members, but their primary concern was to create a more aesthetic civilization by working with—and thereby transforming—the ineluctable forces of modern commerce and industry that had horrified Ruskin and Morris.

The DIA was deliberately modeled on the Werkbund's alliance of artists,

industrialists, and educators, but its members saw themselves as the authentic heirs of Ruskin and Morris. They undertook to rescue the arts and crafts' ideals from faddish antiquarians who made expensive knickknacks for Liberty's, and to apply it to the modern world of mass production. Harry Peach, a founding member, emphasized during the DIA's planning stage that "Morris & Ruskin each in their own way laid the foundation, and the Arts and Crafts people failed to join it up with everyday conditions. Our job is to do that."[42] The DIA sought to broaden the definition of art to encompass mass-produced items, as well as to demystify the concept of art in order to make it public and democratic. They hoped to transform industrial commodities into the "common art" that Morris had insisted was the necessary precondition for any great art or civilization to arise. The term "fine art" was anathema to the DIA, because it implied that art was too refined to be part of ordinary life, a luxury available only to the rich. As Pick stated in 1916, "Art must come down from her pedestal and frame and work for her living."[43] Some, like W. R. Lethaby, wanted to do away with the word "art" entirely. By persuading industry to hire artists as designers, and by educating the public in the principles of sound design so that they would purchase only quality items (thereby forcing industrialists to manufacture these at a price affordable to the majority), the DIA believed that England would be transformed into an Earthly Paradise within a few generations. And by fulfilling the demands of a public trained in aesthetic appreciation, the artist in turn would be reintegrated into the community and would fulfill a social function, as had been the case in the Middle Ages.

Although the DIA was not the only organization to pursue the avant-garde aim of challenging formalism and reintegrating art with life, and while many of those who did advocate this reintegration were not members of the DIA, what could be called the "DIA point of view" about the social role of art permeated discussions about art during the interwar period.[44] DIA membership was relatively small,[45] but many of its members were prominent in their fields and zealous in their proselytizing efforts.[46] (The DIA also established branch offices in the provinces to disseminate their aesthetic beyond London.) Frank Pick and the architect Charles Holden made the principles of the DIA concrete in the Portland stone buildings of the Underground; Ambrose Heal ran exhibitions of modern design (including modern paintings) at his prestigious shop, and Herbert Read's *Art and Industry* (1934) became the "bible" for young industrial artists.[47] Statements critical of Bloomsbury formalism, like the following from the *Listener*, appeared frequently, attesting to the wide dissemination of views consonant with DIA principles:

> It is necessary first to convince the public that art is an integral part of life, and not a mere ornamental excrescence upon its surface, and secondly to remind artists of their own responsibilities to the public. . . . [The artist] must be disabused of the notion that great works of art are produced by the aesthetic emotion alone. This has never happened in the past, and it is not likely to happen now. . . . The best art of our day is certainly what used to be called 'applied' art.[48]

The DIA formulated the "medieval modern" aesthetic by combining Fry and Bell's emphasis on significant form with their own emphasis on "fitness

for purpose," the functionalist definition of art that extended back to Aristotle and Aquinas.[49] This definition had been revived in early-nineteenth-century England by the romantic medievalist A. W. N. Pugin, who wrote in 1836 that "the great test of architectural beauty is the fitness of the design to the purpose for which it was intended."[50] The slogan was soon adopted by Henry Cole, the administrator of the government's program to train industrial artists, as well as by design reformers like Ruskin (who otherwise disliked Cole's educational views).[51] The DIA took the phrase as its motto in 1915; their aggressive proselytizing campaign in the interwar period made "fitness for purpose" such a common evaluative measure for industrial art that even the Prince of Wales invoked it during the early 1930s.[52]

"Fitness for purpose" had the advantage of being vague enough to include fine art as well as industrial art within its ambit, while still providing a critical standard by which art could be evaluated. The introduction of postimpressionism in 1910, with its bewildering variety of styles, had called all the established criteria of aesthetic appraisal into question. The normative value of the DIA's creed was part of its appeal, and it became widely disseminated as an aesthetic yardstick during the interwar period. One member thought that fitness for purpose should be emphasized as often as possible in DIA publicity "as the public could understand that, and we are all asking for some test on which to judge things by."[53]

In addition to providing a concrete measure for aesthetic evaluation, the slogan indicated that art was created within norms and limitations—it could not be equated solely with artistic self-expression, as Fry and Bell argued. Indeed, "fitness for purpose" signified that art had a social responsibility and was part of a universal moral order, which is one reason why it appealed to Pugin, Ruskin, and other Victorian design reformers.[54] The classical and medieval conception of art as craftsmanship, of the right making of an object according to its function, had linked the production of art with the natural laws governing the universe: William of Conches stated that "every work is either the work of the Creator, or a work of Nature, or the work of an artificer imitating nature."[55] Nineteenth-century romantic medievalism affirmed this normative association of natural and artistic forms, a variant of natural theology. Ruskin's statements that genuine art must be both fit for its purpose and true to nature reflected a devotion equal to that of Conches: "I have had but one steady aim in all that I have ever tried to teach, namely—to declare that whatever was great in human art was the expression of man's delight in God's work."[56]

The DIA gave renewed life to this idea that an art fit for its purpose embodied a moral stance as well as fulfilling practical needs. As Frank Pick put the DIA position: "Fitness for purpose must transcend the merely practical and serve a moral and spiritual order as well. There is moral and spiritual fitness to be satisfied. We know it sure enough when we see it."[57] His colleague B. J. Fletcher, director of the Municipal Art Schools in Birmingham, told an audience at the London School of Economics that the slogan corresponded to the natural laws of nature: "From the simple shapes of leaves or seeds, to the complex and beautiful shapes and modelling of bones, we must conclude that the inevitable rightness of design is due to the insistent claims of use and purpose."[58] Fitness for purpose expressed their faith in an underlying teleology

that governed artistic creation as well as the natural order, eliding the demarcations among art, science, and morality that had characterized modern thought since the Enlightenment, and of which aesthetic formalism was one prominent expression. Medieval modernists like Pick and Read often cited other contemporary thinkers whom they believed shared their transcendental views concerning nature, science, and art, including Henri Bergson, Alfred North Whitehead, I. A. Richards, and D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson.[59]

By linking "significant form" with "fitness for purpose," DIA members thus refuted Fry and Bell's definition of postimpressionism as primarily an "expressive" art that liberated artists from the Victorian emphasis on "technique."[60] The formalists' emphasis on aesthetic self-expression evoked a strong reaction through the interwar period. Readers taken by Ruskin and Morris's conception of art as essentially a skilled craft practiced by a devout and humble artificer were often disturbed by the idea that art was the free expression of individual genius unencumbered by universal norms, or at least by the Victorian ethic of service and duty. The *Daily Sketch*, for example, objected to the emphasis on originality in modern art: "The modern artist has every sense but that of communal discipline and self-subordination, and lacking that he achieves a personal success, perhaps, but not an artistic success."[61] The freewheeling, individualistic expressionism of postimpressionism appeared to challenge the Protestant work ethic and therefore had to be contained within a rhetoric of duty, self-abnegation, and service. Cecil Smith told a gathering of the Art Teachers' Guild in 1920 that

> To William Morris the very word 'art' meant a combination, a fusion of the highest imagination with the most common employment. . . . Self-consciousness in the pursuit of art leads us, both as cause and effect, to a debasing search for novelty, so that 'design' connotes some strange originality, whereas it should indicate the appropriate shaping and finishing of the thing required.[62]

Medieval modernists were not unsympathetic to Bloomsbury's emphasis on the "intuitive," spontaneous qualities of postimpressionism; they simply rejected the idea that the new art highlighted personal sensibility at the expense of communal and spiritual norms. Many of them couched their critique of expressivism in the religious and moral rhetoric of the Victorians. Arthur Clutton-Brock, the art critic for *The Times* and a founding member of the DIA, was an early advocate of postimpressionism and praised Cézanne for attempting to disclose the Platonic essences underlying appearances.[63] But he was less satisfied with later examples of modern art, which appeared to him as self-indulgent: "Man, if he tries to be a god in his art, makes a fool of himself. He becomes like God, he makes beauty like God, when he is too much aware of God to be aware of himself."[64] In a generally favorable review of the avant-garde group Unit One in 1934, the architect H. S. Goodhart-Rendel cautioned that "the artist that keeps his art only as a partner in his self-expression condemns it to the infertility of a harlot. The expression of his precious self should never be his object, it should be the least conscious part of his labour in some definite task."[65]

"Fitness for purpose," however, seemed to contain the new art within a

rhetoric of impersonal duty and service. It appealed to those who were trying to reconcile the antinomies of the personal and the universal, the subjective and the objective, Protestant sobriety and the exuberant works of many modernists.[66] By linking modern art with fitness for purpose and industrial production, visual modernism seemed less egotistical and anarchical, and more socially beneficial and comprehensible.

The DIA's credo clearly struck a responsive cord among many in England. The International Style on the Continent and in America shared aspects of this ascetic aesthetic, such as its emphasis on form following function.[67] But in England "fitness for purpose" appeared to embody the Protestant temper of a nation schooled in the virtues of utility and plain common sense; it was an efficacious antidote to the suspiciously French aestheticism of Bloomsbury. Fry and Bell's cavalier references to the "plastic" and formal qualities of art could seem as recondite as the nonrepresentational works they described. C. R. Ashbee recalled Fry mystifying an audience with his byzantine description of a Byzantine work of art: Fry described it as "an ideated world of three dimensional space peopled by clearly realized volumes."[68] As the editor of the *Studio* thundered, "the jargon that has been invented to embody the modern theory of painting has merely added to the barriers between artist and public."[69] Many suspected that the aesthetic of significant form was intended to preserve the new art for the leisured elite, who could afford to define art as a disinterested, "contemplative" activity divorced from the utilitarian sphere of labor confronted by the majority.[70] W. R. Lethaby, a disciple of Ruskin and Morris and a central formulator of DIA principles, contrasted the egalitarian medieval aesthetic championed by Morris to what he regarded as Bloomsbury elitism:

> A proper function of criticism should be to foster our national arts and not to frighten timid people off with high-pitched definitions and far-fetched metaphors mixed with a flood of (as Morris said) 'sham technical twaddle.' It is a pity to make a mystery of what should most easily be understood. There is nothing occult about the thought that all things may be made well or made ill. A work of art is a well made thing, that is all. It may be a well-made statue or a well-made chair, or a well-made book. . . . Most simply and generally art may be thought of as THE WELL DOING OF WHAT NEEDS DOING.[71]

Many others contrasted the DIA's "medieval modernist" aesthetic, combining significant form with fitness for purpose, with the pure "Bloomsbury" formalist aesthetic in the twenties. The art journal *Colour* ("The Most Fascinating Magazine in the World") called for "critics like Ruskin, who, with all his faults of exuberance and theological rhetoric, did at least try to make the artist part and parcel of the social system," and criticized Bloomsbury aestheticism: "This metaphysical business can be overdone. Art is made of sterner stuff, of more substantial matter. It can and does exist in lower regions, where common mortals dwell and earn their living and where even 'trade' winds cannot extinguish the Flame of Genius. Leonardo invented a sausage machine."[72] An art teacher concurred, arguing in 1920 that "we cannot separate the aesthetic side and treat it as a thing apart. We cannot shut off the material from the spiritual,

and we ought not to try. Rather let us approach the spiritual through the material. . . . [I]n short, let us act with plain common sense."[73]

Fitness for purpose appealed to the culture's "common sense," which was one reason for its rapid acceptance during the interwar period—although there were those who acknowledged that it could be too reductive and narrow. Hubert Llewellyn Smith embraced the DIA's creed, but he noted in 1933 that "it has both the strength and perhaps some of the limitations of the Puritan outlook."[74] This was an acute observation, for puritanism, no less than commonsense, gave a distinctive cast to the membership of the DIA. Many of its founders came from nonconformist backgrounds and found a channel for their spiritual yearnings in the ethical socialism of Ruskin and Morris. Like Frank Pick, W. R. Lethaby was raised within a nonconformist household but preferred to call himself an agnostic who sought salvation in this world. Lethaby too yearned for an integrated society where fellowship replaced competition and individual isolation: "One time I heard Morris speak of the immediate need for a citizen religion. . . . The Socialism of Morris . . . was a necessary part of a religion of righteousness."[75] Harold Curwen, founder of the Curwen Press, had a similar religious background and argued that work should not be for personal gain but rather for the service of the community. He promoted the idea that there was no distinction between fine art and industrial or commercial art at his Press, hiring modern artists like Paul Nash and E. McKnight Kauffer to do book designs and illustrations.[76] Charles Holden was a Quaker who hoped that his ethos of service to others would be reflected in his architectural works; he had been influenced by the writings of Ruskin in his youth and was a forthright proponent of the "living art" of Jacob Epstein and Henry Moore, two controversial sculptors in the interwar period. Harry Peach, a supporter of the Labour Party, married a Quaker and followed an ethic of service and cultural egalitarianism: "We have had too much high art in the past, and too little putting right of the everyday things of life."[77]

It is not surprising, therefore, that when members of the DIA wrote about art they did so in the romantic and Protestant terms that Pick used in his early writings for the Salem Chapel Guild: Pick and his colleagues shared common roots in Ruskin, romanticism, evolutionary biology, and nonconformity. DIA member Harold Speed, who welcomed postimpressionism but worried about its tendencies to affirm self-expression at the expense of universal truths, expressed the prevailing Protestant "incarnational" sentiment that "art is an expression of the creative-life spirit within us and within all things, the expression of a more perfect rhythm, the secret of which lies deep within us, impelling us onwards."[78] For medieval modernists, there was always a fine line between those modernist works that somehow expressed universal "rhythms" and those works that appeared to purvey a purely personal vision. This distinction in itself was of course subjective, but medieval modernists did not think it was: if a work in their eyes appeared to be fit for its purpose, it was abiding by natural laws and hence worthy. They universalized their individual impressions; "fitness for purpose" (like its opposite, "degeneration") was used to transform individual taste into a seemingly objective judgment confirmed by evidence from nature.

This association between art and universal values was linked to interwar

discussions concerning the need for new sources of spiritual affiliation in a secular age. Even the improvement of industrial design was tied to the moral health of the nation—John Betjeman among others believed that "there is one hope only for the improvement in design and that is, odd as it may seem, a spiritual change in the people."[79] Ruskin and Morris had also argued this, although in their later writings they insisted that such a spiritual change could not occur without a radical alteration of the social and economic structures of modern capitalist societies. But the DIA and other design reformers returned to Ruskin and Morris's earlier writings, in which art itself was often held to be the catalyst for spiritual change. As will be discussed below, many argued that postimpressionism expressed the universal forms, rhythms, and harmonies underlying existence, rather than concerning itself with the representation of transient surface phenomena. Through exposure to modern art, the public would align themselves with the eternal order that could easily be lost sight of in the modern world. These formal properties were also to be found in well-designed industrial products, transforming them from mere commodities to a "common art" expressive of a universal ontology. The Earthly Paradise would emerge gradually from the dissemination of significant forms fit for their purposes.

FROM "JOY IN LABOR" TO "JOY IN SERVICE"

Members of the DIA had two central obstacles to overcome in their attempt to make the thought of Ruskin and Morris relevant to the conditions of the early twentieth century: modern art's apparent propensity toward personal expression at the expense of communal meaning and the ineluctably industrial character of modern society. The latter was easier to address in some ways, because Morris himself had conceded that machines could be useful in relieving workers from more onerous forms of labor. Several of his most prominent followers, like Lethaby, J. R. Sedding, Halsey Ricardo, and C. R. Ashbee, accepted that modern craftsmen would have to accommodate themselves to industrial mass production. The DIA continued to promote the views of this "progressive" branch of the arts and crafts movement in order to sustain the movement's aim of recreating a spiritual and corporate community in the twentieth century.

The core of the DIA's leadership came from the industrial provinces, where local art schools had been set up to train designers for industry and where the impact of Ruskin and Morris's lectures on the social importance of art continued to reverberate. They believed that the fundamental aims of the arts and crafts movement had been co-opted by aesthetes from London who did not understand that modern industrial designs had to be improved in order to create an Earthly Paradise. Harry Peach, a DIA member from the North, wrote to fellow DIA member Cecil Brewer that the arts and crafts enthusiasts from the South misread the first principles underlying Ruskin and Morris's thought, principles that were self-evident to those "who are actually working in similar positions to what we are in the provinces, not living in a literary or artistic set, as one does in London."[80] Their colleague B. J. Fletcher had worked to place his students from the Leicester College of Art in local in-

dustries and contrasted his practical experience with the dilettantism he attributed to other members of the arts and crafts. In 1925 he told an audience at the London School of Economics that

> We live in a great industrial era, and it is no good trying to go back and pretend we are Jacobean or Baroque or Elizabethan. Mass production will in the end have to secure its own designs, and if arts and crafts are to help to guide it, they must wake up and get out of their medievalism. It is sad that Morris, who in his lectures and preachments was so sound on design, should yet have followers who use and carry on his medievalism, but without real appreciation of his precept.[81]

The DIA intended to replace the romantic medievalism of the arts and crafts with a modern medievalism that embraced industry, commerce, and mass-commodities: artisanry was not incompatible with modern technology. Taking their lead from organizations like the DIA, many writers during the interwar period characterized the machine as an artisan's tool that simply needed to be mastered by the modern craftsman. G. D. H. Cole felt that Morris had been "blind, for the most part, to the pleasure which a man can take in a machine that he helps to do its intricate work well. . . . There is no fixed line between the spheres of handcraft and machinework."[82] And while there were those like Fry who followed Ruskin in distinguishing art from the products of industry, many denied the distinction. F. Morley Fletcher, the principal of Edinburgh College of Art, queried, "Is not the machine only man's newer instrument of Art, and no less subject to his purposes than the chisel or the pencil in his hand? Within its own scope it is capable of perfectly artistic work."[83] Herbert Read was to take the analogy one step farther and show that the precision and regularity of machines did not make their products inferior to the individual nature of handicraft, but rather established machine products as a living art for the industrial age: "Machines are more than scavengers and coal-heavers. Properly conceived, they are tools of a precision and power never dreamt of in the days of handicraft . . . and using them intelligently we may yet produce a truthful and original style."[84] Indeed, many argued that Ruskin and Morris's dream of the democratization of art could materialize only with the aid of the machine, guided by the artist. Walter G. Raffe, associate of the RCA, expressed a common view: "Art has changed from the luxury of the autocrat to the necessity of the democracy, and for them science will satisfy all peoples with the aid of machine power, used and controlled by artists who understand them."[85]

But simply redefining machines as artisanal tools was not enough to reconcile the arts and crafts ideal to the modern age. Ruskin and Morris had stressed that "joy in labor" was the redeeming aspect of craftsmanship, the very essence of art, and they had denounced modern industry precisely because it alienated the worker from the product of his labor. As Harry Peach realized while trying to formulate the principles of the DIA, "It is a difficult matter where the machine comes in, and it is one that has got to be faced in some sort of way."[86]

Morris had conceded that the machine was useful in reducing the time

spent on burdensome labor; his successors at the DIA went further and argued that the machine enabled workers to spend more time after work pursuing elevating activities. Medieval modernists attempted to resolve this dilemma in two additional ways. First, they argued that in an industrialized, communal society "joy in service" could equal the benefits of "joy in labor": If the worker took pride in the products of his factory, if he knew that they were well-designed and served his fellow citizens, then he would derive satisfaction from his employment even if he was not exclusively involved with the manufacture of the entire article.[87] Pride in the merits of the work would be extended to all phases of its production, rather than being restricted to the phase of creation. As John A. Milne of the Royal Society of Art stated, "If a thing of beauty is a joy for ever, there is no reason why that joy should not be extended to the making and selling of it."[88] The archbishop of Canterbury spoke in similar terms, arguing that if factory owners and workers would "believe that even beauty could have a marketable value, they would have some consolation for living in an industrial age."[89]

Thus industrial workers would derive pride from working for the common good of a new, organic society free of the worst abuses of capitalism and laissez-faire liberalism. Marjorie and C. H. B. Quennell, authors of a best-selling series of textbooks for children, were among those who tried to groom the next generation for the joys of factory labor. They hoped that their young readership would be able to find enjoyable work. But even factory work, while monotonous, could be enjoyable if done in the spirit of serving others. In the modern world "work becomes more mechanical and less interesting. Still, need this be so? If you regard it as a duty to treat your neighbor as yourself, this would seem to carry with it the obligation to make work not only profitable, but pleasant."[90] Ruskin and Morris might have shuddered at the way their trenchant critiques of industrialization were adapted by many of their admirers to make the division of labor acceptable, but it was done in the best spirit of English compromise: industry was here to stay, and one had to learn to stop worrying and love the machine.

Producers and sellers would not be alone in deriving joy from the propagation of well-designed items: consumers, trained in primary and secondary schools to distinguish good design from bad, would contribute to a more aesthetic civilization by purchasing quality products and criticizing constructively the world around them. The public would not be a passive consumer of goods retailed by the "culture industry," as several contemporary members of the Frankfurt School maintained, but instead would have a significant voice in the creation of their culture through their power of purchase.[91] Members of the DIA, no less than members of the Frankfurt School, were critical of industrial capitalism, but the DIA intended to transform commerce into an agency of public service by transforming the public into critical consumers.[92] By ensuring that the goods they purchased were fit for their purposes, consumers would force producers to create items dependent upon their use-value rather than upon a more spurious exchange value. Consumers would thereby become producers of a better society. The DIA directed their efforts toward the chain of consumers, retailers, and manufacturers in the hope that each link would reinforce the production and consumption of inexpensive, well-designed products

that would contribute to the creation of the Earthly Paradise: "The Association urges that by inducing manufacturers to produce the best, and by stimulating the public to purchase the best, we shall make a distinctive gesture towards restoring that deep joy in serving the community which marked the days of the guilds and handicrafts, and which has been imperiled by the advent of machinery. By this means we shall assuredly alleviate much of our present industrial discontent."[93]

But would "joy in service" be enough to impart to machine-made products the spiritual aura that Ruskin and Morris discerned in the unique products of the contented craftsman? Several writers agreed with Fry that the machine's precise and unvarying forms bestowed upon its products a cold, inhuman quality that contrasted markedly with the sensitive tremor of the human hand. During the ongoing debate in the interwar period over whether machine products were works of art, May Morris defended her father's position: "There is a quality in the work done in the craftsman's workshop that the machine with its impersonal regularity can never give."[94] But members of the DIA countered this position by arguing that a well-designed industrial product had its own aura: it expressed the spirit of the designer, who had imparted to the object thoughtful care and attention, even love. The spiritual essence of art was expressed through thought no less than through the hand.[95] W. R. Lethaby's famous dictum, "Art is thoughtful workmanship," was used by others to support this idea; Pick often cited it.[96] In a series of broadcasts about design on the BBC, DIA member Noel Carrington explained how industrial products could be a thing of joy to makers and users: "If the original design be right, then there can be joy in its every product. . . . [T]he principles of good design are exactly the same to-day as they were for Phidias, Wren, or any other great artist. It is only the materials and methods of expression which have changed."[97]

The idea that designers could impart their unique spiritual signatures to machine-produced items became widespread during the interwar period, justifying the call for artists to enter industry and permitting well-designed industrial products to be considered art. As Winifred Stamp stated in *The Nation* in 1920, "It is not as if machinery were incapable of producing beautiful things. 'Machine-made' is not in its very essence a condemnation. True, the machine does not spontaneously turn out admirable products, but neither does the human hand. Both call for expert guidance."[98] "All forms of experts, except artists," pronounced the Prince of Wales in 1933, "have been employed because manufacturers have not recognized how the artist can help in the design and consequent sale of the commodity."[99]

But if Ruskin and Morris's conception of a "common art" could be adapted to encompass industrial products, could their moral and communitarian conception of art be accommodated to the frequently enigmatic, expressivist manifestations of modern visual art? Certainly members of the DIA varied in their attitudes toward the art of the postimpressionists and their successors. W. R. Lethaby disliked modern art, for example, whereas Harry Peach was interested in it as a contemporary "living art"[100] and Herbert Read seemed never to have met a modernist he didn't like.[101] But it was not difficult for admirers of both the arts and crafts tradition and the new art to challenge Fry's anti-Ruskinian, francophile rhetoric and define postimpressionism in terms of a

distinctly English tradition.[102] Writers who liked modern art, or who were willing to give it the benefit of the doubt, argued that Ruskin and Morris, had they been born at the turn of the century, would have been sympathetic to the new forms of artistic expression. T. Sturge Moore, a member of the DIA, told a gathering of art students in 1916, "Morris? But do you think the young Morris would accept today what the old Morris preached? Ruskin would be in revolt against Ruskin to-day."[103] In 1934 Herbert Read argued, "Morris, for his day, was as extreme as any modern artist; and though the Morris of 1850 would have little sympathy with the art of to-day, Morris to-day would be by the side of Le Corbusier in architecture, Picasso in painting, and probably Stalin in politics. The spirit of the man was fundamentally revolutionary."[104] And Laurence Binyon, a keeper at the British Museum, cited Ruskin's argument that art was spontaneous expression in order to establish Ruskin as a precursor of the postimpressionist aesthetic: "[Ruskin's] recognition that all great art is imperfect, that imperfection is the condition of all that is not dead; the admittance of the unskilled craftsman, so long as his mind is given free expression; these are ideas that are germinating in the younger generation now."[105]

Detractors of postimpressionism often complained that the new art violated Ruskin's principle of "truth to nature," but this objection was not an obstacle to those who sought to legitimate nonrepresentational art with the imprimatur of Ruskin's cultural authority. The art critic Charles Marriott, for example, ingeniously argued that so long as an artist did not violate the nature of the material he was working in, or his own natural capacities, he was being true to nature.[106] Like so many interwar critics, he combined Fry and Bell's formalist conception of art as emphasizing design with the DIA's definition of art as being fit for a purpose:

> Broadly speaking, the pictures in any modern exhibition can be divided into two categories: a majority that, whatever their merits in craftsmanship, really stand or fall by their likeness to nature, and a minority that from their first conception are exercises in paint for some decorative and emotional end in connection with the needs of daily life; leaving the degree of likeness to nature to be determined entirely by the sympathetic and characteristic use of the materials employed in them, and their final application to the purpose for which they were designed.[107]

Another art critic who supported modern art (and who wrote a sympathetic biography of Ruskin), R. H. Wilenski, tried to reconcile Ruskin's preference for natural or "organic" art with modern abstract art by arguing that the geometrical forms depicted in modern works were part of the natural world: "Science has shown more and more the amazing formality of nature in the weed and the tree, the mollusk and the man; and the modern artists look upon geometric form as symbolic of this formality in organic life."[108] Wilenski also employed Ruskin's moral criteria for judging works of art, an aspect that he felt transcended the post-1910 debates about whether art ought to be representational or nonrepresentational: "I judge the objects valuable if they seem to me evident of good activity, and I judge them worthless if they seem to me evidence of trivial activity or bad activity."[109]

In addition to these arguments, modern art's apparent emphasis on "design" over representation made it especially tractable to Ruskin and Morris's project of aestheticizing everyday life. Several writers noted that the simple forms, bright colors, and rhythmic patterns that characterized many modernist works made modern art an ideal form of interior decoration. The new art was welcomed as a decorative appurtenance for the great number of new homes constructed during the interwar period: visual modernism was effectively domesticated by rendering it indistinguishable from wallpaper. The readership of *Good Housekeeping* was informed in 1932 that "the plain, light-coloured modern wall often lays traps for those who possess old pictures. . . . [W]hat is wanted is . . . a picture bright in colour and composed of simple, pleasing shapes welded together into a harmonious design. In a word, modern walls require modern pictures."[110] Modern artists like Paul Nash, Ben Nicholson, and Barbara Hepworth had broken down the hierarchy of the arts by designing furniture and rugs as well as paintings for room decorations, enabling Anthony Bertram to argue that their works combined aesthetic formalism with social utility. Their abstract paintings were "inanimate servants of man fulfilling a social function, parts of the room, like the bookcase or the radiogram." When these paintings were combined with the rugs and furniture the artists had designed, the entire interior design scheme itself became a form of nonrepresentational art, the democratic equivalent of Whistler's Peacock Room: "These artists, in short, have created especially with the room in view, the room which is a non-figurative arrangement."[111]

Modern artists who designed for industry were often hailed by the media as the equivalent of medieval craftsmen who worked for the greater good of the community. Frank Rutter argued that artists did not demean their status by engaging in commercial art; even Giotto could be included among the great commercial artists in history because he accepted commissions. Ruskin had praised the degree of freedom that medieval artists had to improvise as they worked, but Rutter countered this nostalgic view by arguing that modern industrial artists had even more creative freedom than medieval artists: "No modern artist employed by a big advertiser has to work within such narrow limitations as those usually imposed by the Church on the medieval craftsman."[112]

Modern art's emphasis on formal design also seemed to reinforce, at the visual level, Ruskin and Morris's dream of an integrated society that would replace the unnatural order of competitive individualism. During the interwar period "planning" became an increasingly popular concept, as the efficacy of state intervention had been demonstrated by the government during the war and appeared to be succeeding in the Soviet Union. Medieval modernists associated social "planning" with aesthetic "design": the new art mirrored and reinforced the new politics. For this reason, many believed that the postimpressionist emphasis on design was consonant with contemporary social collectivism, which in turn had been anticipated by the arts and crafts movement. As Francis Meynell argued in 1934, "Morris believed in design. He wanted society to be designed, he wanted economics to be designed, just as he wanted chairs, curtains, books to be designed—not to be left to haphazard competition and greed."[113] By implication, then, Morris and Ruskin would have approved of this new art whose cardinal feature was design.

Further, many contemporaries argued that abstract art was not merely au-
tonomous or self-reflexive, but instead conveyed overt moral messages in a
manner that Ruskin and Morris would have admired. Like medieval paintings
and stained-glass windows, the new art had a didactic purpose: with its em-
phasis on forms and rhythms, it called the viewer's attention to the integrated
and harmonic order of the universe, which had been lost sight of in the mod-
ern world. A writer to the *Art Teachers' Guild Record* stated in 1921 that

> However strange and repellent this newer art may appear to those of
> us brought up and educated to the safe paths of tradition I cannot help
> welcoming the new vision as an indication of the spirit of the younger
> generation's demand for a more ordered and permanent aspect of life.
> At present we are in the wood and do not see it because of the trees.
> The study of the meaning behind these modern experiments in all the
> arts, has brought to me the comforting hope that the coming genera-
> tion will understand the meaning of life and reality and will therefore
> be wiser than the generations which brought Europe to the catastro-
> phe of 1914.[114]

The art critic Frank Rutter also argued that many modern works had a di-
rect social utility and relevance through their emphasis on abstract design. The
new art might not provide an exact depiction of "reality" as it appeared to the
naked eye, but modern art's emphasis on form and design did follow the dic-
tates of "certain natural laws, such as gravity and equilibrium." Modern artists
made these laws accessible and assimilable to the public through their works,
thereby contributing to the gradual creation of a harmonic social order. For
Rutter, the modern artist both served and conveyed the most fundamental form
of reality: "It is by his obedience to these laws, though possibly in an unex-
pected and surprising manner, that the artist produces a pattern that pleases
the eye, and, since these universal laws of Gravity and Equilibrium rule the
right building up of a picture as well as the movements of the stars, it is
through them that we can trace the direct relation between Life and De-
sign."[115] Postimpressionism thus embodied the new political and social ideals
of the modern world and also depicted the essence of "reality" more accurately
than traditional forms of representational art.

As formulated by the DIA and others, the medieval modern aesthetic as-
similated modern art and modern industry to the communitarian, spiritual,
and artisanal ideals of the arts and crafts movement. Having established an
aesthetic that combined formalism and functionalism, and that associated
mass-produced commodities with the "common art" extolled by Ruskin and
Morris, design reformers worked to institutionalize their views in order to ac-
tualize the Earthly Paradise. They were largely successful in redefining art as
"design" through much of the interwar period, as well as in making the visual
arts more accessible in a country that had long privileged the lexical over the
iconographic. As we shall see in the next section, they argued that in the new
age of mass democracy and mass consumption, the visual was as important to
the welfare of the nation as the literary. Artists, educators, and others joined
them in trying to persuade the nation about the social functions of modern vi-
sual art.

SPREADING THE WORD: MODERN ART AS POPULAR ART

The general acceptance of this social and egalitarian aesthetic stemmed in part from a growing perception that the future of the nation's culture rested with the public rather than with traditional patrons like the aristocracy or the state.[116] While cultural critics like T. S. Eliot and the Leavises feared that the increasing democratization of culture would inevitably lead to its banalization, many in England concurred with the DIA's insistence that the public must be groomed for its new role as patron of the arts. The public had come into its own in the interwar years, most having secured both the franchise and a higher level of disposable income than in the prewar years. The future of the arts and of the quality of industrial products would depend on their demands—the influential voice of the loyal, consuming "public"—especially as the government extended minimal patronage to the arts and was unable to persuade industries to hire designers trained in its institutions. While there were occasional calls for the government to extend its patronage of the arts through a "Ministry of Fine Arts," this option was usually opposed on laissez-faire principles. The editor of the *Listener*, R. S. Lambert, lamented that "in Britain art is married to individualism, and in its collective aspect is cared for only by big business and semi-commercial 'public utilities.'"[117] The government was also unable to coordinate the industrial design programs of the numerous art schools, which were under the control of local education authorities. Thus design reformers from Henry Cole to Frank Pick looked to an educated public to patronize artists and to exert economic pressure on industries in order to secure more attractive products. Henry Cole's nineteenth-century liberal faith in the power of education was echoed by the interwar design reformers: "First teach the public to know what good art is, and the Schools of Design will soon learn how to provide it."[118]

But individual reformers and private organizations like the DIA had to engage in a heroic degree of missionary work to educate the public in aesthetic appreciation because the visual arts had a near-invisible status for most of the population during the early decades of the twentieth century. The small number of public art galleries in the provinces tended to be cold and cluttered, with eclectic collections assembled largely out of bequests of works that had originally been purchased from the Royal Academy during the nineteenth century. Nearly all exhibitions of contemporary art took place in London, and although West End galleries may have been open to the public, they were most frequently patronized by art connoisseurs from the middle and upper classes. Members of the working class were likely to feel, or to be made to feel, out of place.

The visual arts also received little attention within the national educational system. In primary schools, art was viewed as a skill that trained the hand and eye and art education consisted of mechanical copying of patterns and casts. Secondary school students' interest in visual art was usually not encouraged, in part because art was not a required subject for the school certificate examinations.[119] Adult education classes neglected art as well, concentrating more on vocational or literary subjects.[120]

Nor did universities devote much attention to the visual arts. The Slade

professors of art at the universities of Cambridge, Oxford, and London had little impact on the general awareness of the visual arts, with the possible exceptions of Ruskin and Fry.[121] There was no institution in England devoted to the study of art history in England until Samuel Courtauld, a nonconformist manufacturer, established the Courtauld Institute at the University of London in 1931. Thus the educated elite who staffed the central political and cultural institutions of English life tended to have a solid education in classical literature and to know little about the visual arts. The cultural bias in favor of the literary arts was self-perpetuating, perhaps effecting painting itself: Roger Fry maintained that "as a nation our aptitudes for literature are developed out of all proportion to our aptitude for the other arts. And so we find that the English have cultivated almost exclusively the illustrational aspects of painting in defiance of the great plastic tradition of European art."[122]

The DIA's efforts to educate the public in aesthetic appreciation were premised on the rapid reconceptualization of art that took place between 1910–14. As we have seen, by redefining art as design, Fry and Bell's formalist aesthetic significantly expanded the compass of art to include items formerly categorized as craft or "industrial art." Art could be part of the fabric of everyday life, provided that the nation was trained to distinguish good design from bad and to demand from manufacturers significant forms fit for their purposes.

For these reasons selected aspects of Fry and Bell's formalist aesthetic became popular among the egalitarian design reformers, and numerous small groups like the DIA were formed to spread the new aesthetic gospel. These included the Imperial Arts League, the Civic Arts Society, the British Confederation of the Arts, the British Institute of Industrial Art, and the Arts League of Service. Such groups shared the DIA's goals of abolishing the hierarchy among the arts and of reintegrating art with life. The Arts League of Service, for example, held an "Exhibition of Practical Arts" in London in 1919, featuring works by such modern artists as Edward Wadsworth, Paul Nash, and E. McKnight Kauffer, among others. The catalog noted that

> The Artists whose work is being shown at this Exhibition are mostly well-known exhibitors at the New English, the Friday Club or the London Group, but they are seen here under a new phase. Landscape and portrait painters, sculptors, and searchers of the Abstract, have turned their hands to delicate craftwork, to designs for furniture, textiles and fittings, to models for architecture and interior decoration. . . . [T]hey are evident of what the Artist—called to exercise his gifts for the things of everyday life—could do, and they give an idea of what might be accomplished should there exist an organized and persistent demand for this side of their work.[123]

Many art journals also accepted both the union of the arts and the new emphasis on "design." The *Burlington Magazine* under Fry's editorship covered textiles and pottery no less than painting and sculpture; the *Studio* aggressively promoted the integration of the artist with industry; and *The Architectural Review* advertised itself as containing "Superbly illustrated Articles on Architecture with the kindred Arts of Decoration, Furniture, Craftsmanship, Painting, and Sculpture."[124]

The DIA's efforts to adapt Fry and Bell's formalist aesthetic to more utilitarian and moral ends were especially welcomed by art teachers, who made significant contributions in this direction on their own in the twenties. The new emphasis on design, form, color, and rhythm rather than narrative content provided them with a comprehensible way to discuss works of art that no longer engaged in the mimetic representation of the world. The new emphasis on formal relations and thoughtful expression rather than on rote copying and mechanical technique also appeared to offer a fresh way to train painters and sculptors to create items for industry as well as for museums. Gerald Moira, a professor of painting at the RCA, was adamantly opposed to separating the training of industrial artists from that of fine artists, as had been proposed by Lewis Day: "The disassociation of Fine Art from Decorative Art is an idea that cannot be taken seriously. Sculpture and Painting treated 'Decoratively' are undoubtedly a great educative asset; the student is encouraged to think and design instead of merely employing the hands and eyes, i.e. copy."[125] The formalist aesthetic associated with Bloomsbury was intended to remove art from everyday life and utilitarian considerations, but educators no less than design reformers redefined it to encompass the mundane and the practical as well as the transcendental and ineffable.

Art educators also welcomed the new, modified aesthetic because it offered their profession an enhanced social status. Many art teachers in the primary and secondary schools were lower middle-class women who were poorly paid, undervalued, and overworked. But with the fresh emphasis on the social function of visual art they would contribute to the aestheticization of everyday life in their role as tutors to the new modern patron of the arts: the people. Art appreciation and expression were no longer matters of mastering the techniques of the "fine arts," which required advanced training at an art college, but could be made available to anyone. Any person could be an artist, just as any thing could be a work of art. At the 1928 International Art Congress, H. J. R. Murray, inspector of schools, underscored this more egalitarian shift in attitude toward art education: "It has become orthodox to believe that drawing is a natural form of expression or language and as such is the heritage of every child. In other words drawing is not an accomplishment to be permitted to a talented few, but an integral and necessary part of any complete system of education."[126]

Supported by this new, egalitarian conception of art, elementary and secondary-school art teachers could now claim that they played a vital role in the creation of a more aesthetic England that would dominate the world in trade. Art education was as important to England's moral and economic development as a solid grounding in classical languages and an understanding of fair play in athletics. A member of the National Society of Art Masters expressed the attitude of many in the profession following World War One:

> The permeation of the nation with art must begin from below if at all, for the upper social classes themselves have not been permeated. . . . The greatest patron of all would be a public able to feel joy in a thing of beauty and a disgust for ugliness. Such a public can only grow into being gradually, from beginnings in schools of art and of art in other schools.[127]

Similarly, the president of the Art Teachers' Guild proclaimed "the great func-tion of the Art Teachers' Guild should be to make art popular. . . . Without such popularity, the ethical value of art as a great spiritual inspiration to right thinking and right doing of our time is non-existent. If art is to be national its ethical value must become a social part of the fabric of our life."[128] And at the 1928 International Congress for Art Education, educators stressed that without training new generations to appreciate visual art, England would be unlikely to improve its industrial design: "Many of the amenities of life have been lost during the transition from hand to machine production and can only be regained by the control of industry by an aesthetically educated public opinion."[129]

Thus many believed that the integration of visual art into education was a crucial step toward the gradual reconciliation of art and everyday life. Roger Fry was taken with the formal and expressive possibilities of "children's art" and supported the efforts of noted "child-art" teacher Marion Richardson,[130] but medieval modernists were equally interested in the moral and economic benefits of encouraging children and adults to express themselves aestheti-cally. The DIA became more involved in instilling art into all facets of educa-tion in the early thirties, following Harry Peach's urgings—as he wrote to W. R. Lethaby in 1929, "I keep telling the DIA they must get at the schools . . . all the spadework of fitness for purpose and right use of materials . . . has got to become the ordinary man's way of looking at things before you are going to get your appreciation of arts and crafts or any other decent things."[131] Similarly, William Rothenstein's attempt to infuse art into the teaching of more tradi-tional academic subjects,[132] Frank Pick's demand that art education become the "fourth R" in schools,[133] and Herbert Read's theory that only a public trained in artistic self-expression could retain its human sensibilities in an in-dustrial world[134] were all part of the medieval modernist aim of heightening the nation's receptivity to the visual. They confronted the residues of Protes-tant iconoclasm by showing how images were as important to the welfare of the country as words. They helped to "visualize" the nation.

By accepting Fry and Bell's redefinition of art as design but by rejecting their contention that art lacked social utility or morality, by equating good design with fitness for purpose, by redefining the machine as an artist's tool, and by changing "joy in labor" to "joy in service," members of the DIA and other writ-ers were able to associate modern industrial products with Ruskin and Mor-ris's "common art." This is why W. R. Lethaby could observe accurately in 1919 that Ruskin's thought "saturates this generation through and through,"[135] and Morris's biographer J. W. Mackail could contend correctly in 1934 that "Morris and his work are thus alive now."[136]

While terms like *fine art* (more commonly referred to as "so-called fine art"), *industrial art, commercial art,* and *applied art* continued to be used, and while there were writers like Lewis Day who maintained that fine art and ap-plied art were distinct, the vertical hierarchy that previously distinguished or elevated one branch above another had been severely challenged. For the most part, public rhetoric presented art as egalitarian, all of its forms existing on a horizontal continuum. During the interwar period, *design* was often used to

encompass all the different branches of art, fine as well as applied, paintings as well as pots. A. Percy Frien wrote to the *Listener* in 1933 to express a common view: "As an art master, I realize that effective art teaching in school cannot be complete unless it tackles this question of the relationship between art and life outside the school walls. And by art, I mean design in its broadest sense."[137] Similarly, in *The Caliph's Design* (1919), Wyndham Lewis queried, "Why does not the Architect . . . —why does not this strange absentee, this shadow, this Ghost of the great Trinity, Sculpture, Painting, and Architecture—for which I have substituted Design . . . *why does he not cheer us up by Building a New Arena?*"[138] This widespread substitution of *design* for *art* was praised by Anthony Bertram in 1934: "The recent extension of the word 'design' is one of the most interesting and significant indications of the whole trend of good modern thought. It is fast becoming one of the most inclusive words in the vocabulary, the symbol of a noble abstract conception."[139]

When fine and applied arts were distinguished, it was often due to force of habit: *design* as a term encompassing both was still a relatively new and unfamiliar convention and was also unsuitable for describing the "art" of everyday activities like cooking or sports. Charles Marriott, an art critic and advocate of modern art, indicated the conceptual difficulties individuals sometimes faced in using the term *art* while trying to argue that art and life were synonymous:

> It will be enough for our purpose to say that art is a persistent human activity, in some degree almost universal, with consequences that range from cottage furniture to poems, pictures and statues. For convenience we may make a distinction between domestic and fine arts, between work and play; but that distinction is only a convenience, and last year's game of cricket is as much a work of art as to-day's picture.[140]

The 1936 report of the government's Committee on Advanced Art Education in London even apologized for resorting to terms that clearly appeared outdated during the interwar period: "For lack of a better nomenclature we have been obliged throughout this report to make use of the conventional terms 'Fine Art' and 'Applied Art' to indicate the broad distinction between the art of the painter and sculptor on the one hand and that of the designer, the decorator and the craftsman on the other, though we realize that Art is in fact one and indivisible and that there is no line of demarcation between the two."[141]

Others followed Ruskin and Morris's belief that "fine art" was merely the most accomplished form of expression that emerged out of the wide continuum of "common art"—artifacts were to be distinguished by their overall caliber rather than by the medium in which they were created. Hubert Llewellyn Smith, for example, argued that the so-called fine art of painting was no different from the crafts or applied art; both had to work within the limitations imposed by the material used for their execution and by the requirements of the function they were meant to fulfill. Distinctions should be made on the grounds of quality rather than on whether or not the object was free and unconditioned: "Thus the distinction between 'fine art' . . . and 'common' or 'lessor' or 'minor art' is not a distinction of technical process or purpose, but rather one of quality and energy."[142] Using Ruskinian logic, C. F. A. Voysey de-

fined the fine arts broadly to include those items of everyday life that had been designed by a moral individual, for "that which makes art fine is fine thoughts and feelings."[143] Percy Nobbs maintained a similar position in his 1937 *Design*, in which he argued that all art was simply right making, done with style: "With the snobbery that seeks to make distinctions between the fine arts and the industrial arts one can have no patience. The true distinction is between the artificer and the Artificer who is artist as well."[144]

Thus, while postimpressionism and its accompanying formalist aesthetic had been stridently criticized in the prewar years, with the foundation of the DIA during World War One "significant form" gradually became linked with "fitness for purpose" and fine art and applied art were frequently equated in the term "design." The variety of artistic styles covered by postimpressionism was often seen as the manifestation of the "living art" anticipated by William Morris, reflecting a democratic and increasingly collective age in which scientists were tapping into the elemental forces that permeated the cosmos. Medieval modernists contributed to the institutional redefinition of art: influential civil servants, critics, artists, and educators discussed art in terms of its moral and economic utility rather than in terms of its autonomy from the social realm. The avant-garde aim of reintegrating art and life appeared to be attained, at least at the discursive level.

But before this discourse could take firm hold within the culture, three requirements had to be met. First, the redefinition of "art" as "design" had to seem completely natural, less of a novelty. And in order for this to happen a second requirement was necessary: artists had to be made acceptable to industry as designers. This raised the question of how a course of artistic and technical training could be created that would strike a balance between the artist's demand for autonomy and industry's demand for technical competence. The tension between the image of the artist as inspired genius and that of the artist as salaried employee was unresolved. The interwar conundrum was captured succinctly in D. H. Lawrence's *Women in Love* (1920), in a conversation between the art teacher Gudrun Brangwen and Loerke, a sculptor and occasional industrial artist:

> "And do you think then," said Gudrun, "that art should serve industry?"
> "Art should *interpret* industry, as art once interpreted religion," he said.[145]

The final requirement for the institutionalization of the medieval modernist aesthetic involved an equally fine balance between the antinomies of artistic freedom and individual restraint. Medieval modernism's redefinition of art contained a metaphysical component that assumed the artist expressed the universal forms and relations underlying appearances. It was this spiritual dimension that motivated individuals like Frank Pick and Herbert Read to support controversial styles of art in a culture largely indifferent to the visual arts and often hostile to aesthetic innovations. For this spiritual formulation to remain viable, artists would have to appear to be maintaining an equilibrium between personal expression on the one hand and the voluntary subordination of the self to a higher purpose on the other. According to medieval modernists like Pick, self-

expression had to be counterbalanced by self-discipline; artistic spontaneity and originality were restricted by the existence of universal laws and limitations. Modernism's potential for hedonistic self-expression was to be contained within Protestant parameters of work, service, and self-abnegation.

It could not have been easy for medieval modernists to insist on balances like these while being confronted by unanticipated forms of artistic expression, by artists who valued their individual autonomy even as they promoted their social utility, by industrialists who required designers with technical knowledge as well as artistic skill, and by the growing skepticism toward the metaphysical idealism underpinning the discourse. But as we shall see in the next chapter, Pick and his cohorts felt they were making headway in integrating modern art and modern life. Only in the late thirties did Pick himself express deep misgivings over the possibility of maintaining the medieval modernist balance.

\\\ 5 ////

THE EARTHLY PARADISE
OF THE LONDON UNDERGROUND

> *After all, there is one thing about art which is perhaps one of the reasons why it is a joy for ever, namely, that we can dispute about it endlessly and get a good deal of liveliness from its study.*

<div align="right">

FRANK PICK, 1919[1]

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FRANK PICK WAS ONE OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL members of the DIA, and the London Underground was to become the most persuasive embodiment of medieval modern principles in the interwar period. The aims expressed in Pick's earlier writings for the Salem Chapel Guild were clarified and reinforced through his membership in this society of like-minded individuals: the DIA was in some respects a replacement for the guild, with its own spiritual mission and reformist creed.[2] Pick was indebted to the support of a number of its members, many of whom came from a similar nonconformist, provincial background and shared Pick's enthusiasm for Ruskin and Morris. His social aims and spiritual outlook remained essentially the same as they had in York but were now influenced by the terms and activities of his new associates in London. He shucked the elaborate Victorian mannerisms of his writing style and began to compose in the spare, "efficient" style favored by Edwardian writers.[3] Whether or not the DIA directly affected his writing, making it more fit for its purpose, is hard to know, but the organization did have profound effects in other ways: as we shall see in this chapter, Pick's new colleagues at the DIA helped him to transform the Underground into the crowning project of the arts and crafts movement during the twenties.

Encouraged by members of the DIA like W. R. Lethaby and Charles Holden, Pick boldly envisioned the expanding transport system as the modern equivalent of a medieval cathedral, an integrated work of art that would be a joy to both makers and users. Like the cathedrals, the transport system would provide a unifying function for society.[4] Transport would serve as the organizing framework for the modern organic community desired by the medieval modernists: "We have to establish a new social synthesis. We have to make the

warring, conflicting interests of the people serve some commonweal, work in some common fashion. We cannot neglect one great aid to this, which is a city laid out and constructed to embody this end, to encourage this fashion."[5]

Reconciling romantic corporatism with corporate business interests was just one of the many paradoxical goals Pick set for himself in the twenties. As a businessman he was certainly concerned about the Underground's profits, and he monitored company records with the same obsessive attention to detail he lavished on aesthetic design. (He also kept detailed records of his own personal expenditures, down to the pence he spent on sweets.) But Pick always maintained the Protestant belief that capitalism was the means to higher ends and expressed concern that commerce overshadowed religion as the principal bond among people in the modern world.[6] By restoring a moral dimension to commerce, he believed that industrial capitalism would not be inimicable to corporate solidarity. He proposed to spiritualize commerce by infusing it with art and by insisting that exchange relations existed for purposes of service rather than simply for profit. "I seek behind commerce, art and I know that behind art there must be good custom. Morality, we call it."[7]

Admittedly, he had a very romantic notion of commerce as it had existed prior to the industrial revolution, imagining merchant adventurers who "learnt their marks and signs and in them found a fund of romance that gave gladness to their chatterings and dealings."[8] Under modern industrial conditions, Pick argued, this romantic aspect of work still existed; he cited the rounds of the night track inspectors, who read the signs on the tracks just as ancient woodsmen examined trails for signs of animals.[9] He acknowledged that technological developments resulted in the termination of some types of unskilled labor, but while regretting any increase in unemployment he also welcomed the eradication of demeaning menial jobs.[10] And while industrialism did lead to the subdivision of labor so repugnant to Ruskin and Morris, Pick felt that this was compensated by shorter hours of work; workers could engage in more creative activities during their increased leisure time.[11] He believed that by giving the worker a say in the operation of the company even the most monotonous job might be redeemed—workers would at least have joy in service if not joy in labor—and noted the success of the Underground's Suggestion Bureau, which rewarded useful ideas submitted by employees.[12]

Pick, then, was no mere apologist for the corporate system, rationalizing its abuses. Instead he was an entrepreneur who combined a romantic love of nature and social-democratic sympathies with an awareness of the potentials and pitfalls of industrial capitalism. He can be accused of glossing over the inequities too hastily, but he at least demonstrated an awareness of them and attempted to ameliorate those he could. Like other medieval modernists, he was a visionary who did not divert his sight from the realities of industrialism, but rather sought to shape ineluctable facts and forces to match human desires: "Can we found a culture on trade and commerce and manufacture? I hope so. . . . Unless we can, civilization will soon be without form."[13] Indeed, Pick's complex allegiances could surprise those who assumed that all corporate executives placed profit ahead of the commonweal. Herbert Read, who worked with Pick at the DIA, knew otherwise. After reading one of Pick's essays, Read wrote to express his continued delight in the number of views they held in common:

Obviously the writer was no complacent servant of capitalism, no pillar of our iniquitous social system. He was as much a socialist as I was, and what was more, he was almost the peculiar kind of socialist I was. He had respect for the individual; he believed in voluntary organizations and regional and local units; . . . he saw the essential conflict between bureaucracy and democracy; he found some place for religious and spiritual values—all the very points upon which I myself diverge from the orthodox theory of state socialism and collectivism.[14]

Read neglected to mention that he and Pick also shared a faith in art as the agent that would revivify the modern individual's awareness of the spiritual forces integrating the material with the spiritual, community with cosmos. Pick's conception of art as an expression of the transcendental energy coursing through existence continued from his early writings for the Salem Chapel Guild, but became more programmatic through the common aims that he shared with his associates at the DIA. His writings about art in the twenties and early thirties now addressed directly the antinomies he and other medieval modernists hoped to reconcile. Could modern art express simultaneously a personal vision and a collective meaning? Could modernism address both formal issues and practical problems? Could the modern artist be understood at once in romantic terms as inspired genius and in Protestant terms as servant to a higher cause? Could mass commodities be considered works of art if they were designed by an artist but manufactured by a machine?

In what follows I will first examine Pick's responses to these questions and then see how he attempted to make them self-evident to the public by applying them to the transport system. He and his colleagues at the DIA audaciously linked the "Victorian" view of art as a moral narrative, and the "formalist" view of art as autonomous, into the medieval modern hybrid joining past with present, significant form with fitness for purpose. This was not accomplished without controversy: as we shall see, the unveiling of the Underground Headquarters in 1929, with its provocative sculptures by Jacob Epstein, caused almost as much public furor as the original postimpressionist exhibition of 1910. In Michael Sadler's opinion the 1929 controversy was comparable to "the epoch when Ruskin was teaching the British public to appreciate a new kind of beauty in the work of the much abused Turner."[15] The 1929 debate over the nature of modern art is a reminder that Pick and his fellow medieval modernists, no less than Roger Fry and Clive Bell, were critical to the introduction and assimilation of the new art to a perplexed public.

Pick's views about modernism were to change by the late thirties; but until then postimpressionism elicited from him not merely "aesthetic emotions," but also aesthetic transports.

ART IN THEORY: PICK'S AESTHETIC VIEWS IN THE TWENTIES

As we saw in the last chapter, medieval modernists grappled with the question of whether industrial products could be considered works of art. For Ruskin

and Morris, as well as Fry and Bell, a distinguishing aspect of art was its "human" quality, which was expressed in material form through the combined efforts of the artist's head, heart, and hand, all working in concert. Pick and other medieval modernists, on the other hand, argued that the transcendent spirit of art was first and foremost conceptual: if the artist's design tapped into the "living spirit" of art, it did not matter if the actual execution of the design was carried out by hand or machine. As Pick put it in a DIA lecture, "there can be no art without design, which is thought."[16] In this view common items of everyday life, no less than paintings and sculptures, could be called art: "things are, or ought to be, the receptacles of the spirit of man, and in so far as they are filled with this spirit, they tend to be alive."[17]

An object imbued with this spirit radiated its own aura, from which it derived its status as art. While such an object might be produced by a machine, it nonetheless expressed the spirit of its designer.[18] Pick's contemporary, the German critic Walter Benjamin, argued that objects of art lost their unique aura when they were reproduced mechanically, but Pick did not see mass production as obviating the spiritual dimension of its products.[19] In the age of mechanical reproduction, art retained its connections with metaphysical truth because it followed and expressed the fundamental laws of the universe, as exemplified in the workings of nature. Pick, like other medieval modernists, argued that contemporary mathematics and science indicated that natural forms conformed to certain universal patterns of rhythm, proportion, and harmony; these patterns, when expressed in works of art, elicited feelings of aesthetic appreciation in the viewer. Industrial art, no less than unique works of hand-craftsmanship, could be aesthetically beautiful and spiritually expressive provided the industrial artist adhered to certain fundamental standards: "I fancy that behind all our judgment is the determination born of mathematics and physics and chemistry. Just as Nature was beautiful on this account, so modern design in its simplest, directest form is beautiful, and for the same reasons—a close regard for the governing conditions, acceptance of them, obedience to them."[20]

The medieval modernists' faith in the universal standards and limitations embodied in nature and expressed in the phrase "fitness for purpose" raised another important question—whether such a "universal" art could ever express an individual point of view. In the early twentieth century many modernists struggled to reconcile the antinomies of the universal and the personal, the collective and the individual. T. S. Eliot called for an "objective" and "impersonal" poetry, while writing expressive works indebted to Romanticism, and critics like Maurice Denis and Roger Fry defined postimpressionism as at once instinctive and classical.[21] In his 1913 book on the "new spirit" in art, Huntly Carter observed the convergence of such antinomies in contemporary modernism:

> [Artists] are working in complete harmony with a system that . . . emphasizes the belief that the individual must be completely himself and be allowed at all times to be completely himself, yet must express that corporate life of which he is but a part; which accordingly demands conscious intuition, clarity of suggestion, simple and direct

expression, and withal a tremendous analysis, but not the analysis of academical logic.[22]

Interwar discussions of modern art teem with these antitheses, which often stemmed from an implicit faith in or yearning for the existence of a larger spiritual totality capable of harmonizing all oppositions. The historian Jerrold Seigel has observed that "our vocabulary of styles and movements has no term that captures the attempt of many modernist figures . . . to put subjectivity and objectivity into a mutually nourishing relationship and cultivate their reciprocal dependence."[23]

Pick was not a philosopher—nor was he even a particularly profound or original thinker. But in the twenties and early thirties, he did attempt to define how art could embody the universal and the personal simultaneously, and his efforts are instructive for historians seeking to understand how the modernists could uphold such seemingly contradictory positions. Pick called for an impersonal, collective art that would express the "living spirit," but he also wanted to preserve his liberal faith in the unique expressive capabilities of the individual. Thus, while he admired some of the mythic, communal ideals being advanced by the Italian Fascists during the twenties, he was repelled by their rejection of the freedom of the individual—as he was by Soviet communism, despite its otherwise salutary emphasis on communality. For his Earthly Paradise, Pick hoped to find "the happy mean" between community and individuality.[24]

Genuine "living art," he believed, attained this happy mean, indicating that the search was not naive. For him as for early German idealists like Schiller, art's apparent harmonizing of opposites offered the promise that a similar harmony could be established in the social realm. Because living art embodied eternal standards accessible to reason as well as the unique expressive capabilities of the individual, it affirmed the existence of a fundamental unity underlying diversity. According to his logic, genuine art reflected universal laws when it was fit for its purpose and true to its materials. "Throughout all of nature there is this inevitableness of beauty born of fitness for purpose,"[25] Pick stated, and this natural law of beauty held true for art no less than nature: "Art at large is speedily no art. Art straitened by the fulfillment of conditions, restrained by the presence of difficulties to be overcome, alone endures."[26]

In order to follow this natural law of beauty borne from functionality, however, the artist must turn inward and reflect rationally on how his design will be fit for its particular purpose. By turning inward, the artist comes upon an individual solution, his work registering a unique point of view. Thus design was thought, but it was "also expression. It means an individuality of treatment of a problem because thought sums up the knowledge and experience of the thinker."[27] By expressing this unique solution according to the governing law of fitness for purpose, the artist expresses not only his personality but also the universal spirit binding the individual and nature into a preestablished harmony accessible to inner reflection.

Such a belief in universal standards available to human reason was common among Enlightenment philosophers and their liberal successors in the

nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[28] The early Romantics similarly believed in a universal spirit accessible to each individual's imagination.[29] Pick, raised in the liberal and romantic-idealist traditions of the late nineteenth century, promulgated this dual allegiance to the individual and the universal. He told a gathering of the Society of Industrial Artists that their organization must "stand behind the individual expressing himself individually as he must," while simultaneously enjoining them to restrain their fancy and to found a common school through this inward turn: "You will need all your sense to be aware of the spirit."[30]

The inner spirit, accessed through disciplined self-reflection, provided the regulatory foundation for individual behavior and social norms as well as for the creation of genuine art. This foundation would assure the coexistence of individuality with organic community. In the twenties Pick cited contemporary science to support his belief that this underlying spiritual foundation guaranteed a progressive evolution according to immanent principles of entelechy.[31] Creatures in nature followed the natural laws of design unconsciously; and until the disruption of life's natural rhythms by the industrial revolution, this was true for the individual and society as well: the evolution of towns and cities was "a natural growth slow, orderly, unconscious, always adjusting itself like the growth of Nature."[32]

Pick maintained that the industrial revolution had artificially accelerated this natural growth, resulting in a cancerous expansion of towns fueled by unrestrained individualism. During the course of the nineteenth century, individuals had become alienated from the rational pursuit of organic form and spiritual cohesion. Only through a return to conscious design following the pattern of organic evolution could a community of individuals be restored, united in the common pursuit of common ends. While the artist was privileged to express these universal truths, they were intuitively accessible to all who undertook the effort to scrutinize their conscience and adhere to its promptings. Maintaining the martial spirit and "armour of righteousness" of his Salem Chapel Guild years, Pick stated in 1923 that

> We lack discipline. Discipline is of two kinds. That which results from outward compulsion and we are too stiff-necked a people to produce any good effect from that. And that which results from an inner acceptance of an ideal. . . . Once we grasp this, we shall speedily be able to give expression to it and we shall readily criticize and condemn those who hinder or mar it.[33]

Because art was both the expression of the spirit and the means whereby individuals could reestablish contact with the spirit, Pick emphasized the importance of exposing the public to art and of establishing a more aesthetic environment. He had fewer qualms than either Fry or Bell as to whether or not the public could appreciate and create art: "By nature we are all designers. It is only a matter of using our brains, of bringing thought to bear upon the making and fashioning of things for everyday use."[34] Nor did he share Bloomsbury's antiutilitarian stance, stating that all genuine art was "applied" art that served concrete purposes in everyday life. At best, so-called fine art was the most sophisticated form of this common art; at worst the term was a class-based dis-

tinction that annexed art to the refined tastes of the wealthy.[35] Paraphrasing Morris, he insisted that art, as an expression of the eternal spirit, was the common and necessary possession of all: "There must no longer be things apart. Art must be rediscovered in life, in common life. . . . There must be an art of the people, by the people, for the people, so that beauty shall not perish from this earth."[36] These views are similar to those we saw expressed by other medieval modernists, although many of them did not articulate their ideas as thoroughly as did Pick. They simply presented their claims as if they were self-evident, an aspect of the culture's "common sense"—an indirect indication that the discourse itself was tacitly assumed and widely shared.

What of modern art, which the Bloomsbury formalists had represented as an art of self-expression rather than a source of communal meaning? For Pick, even the more subjective manifestations of modern art need not challenge the organic cohesion of a community, provided that the artist exercised a responsible self-discipline and did not succumb to immediate impulses or fads. Reason could winnow the individualistic impurities from the ore of intuitive truths:

> As [the artist] explores the secret recesses of his mind or the hidden world of his senses he must bring whatever he finds there ultimately to the test of reason, and place it under the control of reason. The alternative is madness, which is no alternative at all but a disease. I said 'ultimately' for I realize that the creative spirit and purpose still works intuitively through the artist. He cannot always explain why and what he does, but when it is done its validity depends upon its finding a place within the Kingdom of reason. If it fails there then it fails altogether and must eventually perish.[37]

The artist must be free to express his spirit, but as a consequence he must also acknowledge his wider duties to the community and maintain strict self-discipline and self-vigilance. "The artist is compelled to live dangerously and to walk in strange paths, therefore for him it is even more important that he should have a clear understanding of right and wrong, of beauty and ugliness, of truth and falseness, for his guidance must come from within."[38] Because art formed the environment and the environment shaped individual character, Pick insisted that artists had an enormous social responsibility.[39]

Thus Pick welcomed the new styles in art and architecture as expressions of the modern spirit, provided that they met certain fundamental criteria that would ensure their moral probity: fitness for purpose, utility, and universality. Art could be either representative or abstract, as long as it was "living"—slavishly adhering to earlier styles impeded the evolution of the living spirit.[40] A work of art that did not meet these standards was sterile, counter to nature, detrimental to character, deserving of harsh condemnation. Pick noted that the public was often baffled by modern art,[41] and just as often their bafflement was justified. Many modern works revealed nothing more than the artist's moral laxity: "It is lack of thought that seems to be the despoiler of our modern attempts at art."[42] Or the prevailing system of artistic patronage forced artists to abjure their responsibilities to the wider public: "One reason why modern art is poor and lacking in meaning and direction is that it is largely created for private consumption and represents the idle and odd fancies likely to please its purchasers."[43]

On the other hand, Pick was not bothered by modern art being baffling or difficult upon first encounter, as long as it did not lack "meaning or direction." Thus in 1923 he praised E. McKnight Kauffer's more abstract posters, often fashioned in cubist or futurist styles, for the purposeful way they conveyed ideas symbolically: "[Kauffer] brings to the designing of a poster a great deal of thought. He asks himself what is the idea to be conveyed rather than what is the object to be illustrated. He asks himself with how little, boldly and bravely executed, will the public be satisfied and convinced."[44]

In seeking the fittest way to accomplish their artistic purposes, artists like Kauffer ought to experiment and innovate, just as Pick was doing with the overall design schemes of the expanding transport system. We must progress or die, he argued, for evolution was at the heart of the natural order;[45] the thing he feared most during his vigorous years in the twenties was stagnation.[46] Progress clearly required new ways of seeing and interpreting the world: this was one purpose for which modern art was particularly fit.

Modernism, then, seemed to embody temporal progress as well as eternal norms, intuitive gleanings and rational meanings. Its practical as well as spiritual possibilities genuinely excited Pick in the twenties. At this time the "warrior of the kingdom" felt himself to be energetic, iconoclastic, fit for his purposes; he saw the new art in similar terms. Together they would remake the metropolis.

ART IN PRACTICE: THE POSTERS, ARCHITECTURE, AND SCULPTURES OF THE UNDERGROUND

One of the earliest steps Pick took to educate the public about the new art was to commission posters for the Underground in the latest postimpressionist styles, such as fauvism, cubism, and expressionism. He hoped the Underground posters would extend the transformative potential of modern art beyond the small circles who patronized progressive galleries, as well as serve as an effective medium of advertising and public relations for the corporation. The Underground had no major competitors at this time, enabling Pick to take risks that many other commercial enterprises could not afford.[47] Nevertheless, modernism remained controversial even after the two postimpressionist exhibitions, and initially a number of advertisers criticized the direction of the Underground's posters. The advertising manager of Pear's—famous for its use of representational paintings by Royal Academicians in its ads—wrote to the *London Mercury* in 1921 that

> Impossible ducks, futurist trees, vermilion grass, and such like absurdities may appeal to what, as I have no wish to be offensive, I will call the 'higher thought', but believe me, Sir, those people who live their lives in the ordinary conventional way, as do the bulk of the general public, need nothing more subtle in a poster than a straightforward appeal to their sense of pleasure, duty, or whatever it may be. They don't understand, and have no wish to understand, the essentially unacademic.[48]

But Pick had faith in the public's ability to appreciate the new spirit of art when it was directed toward specific ends:

> Those who decry posters which for their understanding require pains and thought underrate the attractiveness of a puzzle, underrate the urge to stretch the mind a bit more than usual, underrate indeed the intellectual level of the urban population. It is foolish to descend to an elementary treatment of a subject on the grounds that there should be nothing above the heads of the public. The public like something above their heads, if only it is attainable.[49]

Indeed, he felt that modernism was particularly applicable to the purposes of poster advertising. Modern art's strength, he argued, was conveying abstract ideas through formal means; this also was the function of the poster, which presented its messages most effectively when it deployed arresting images rather than words.[50] By using the stylistic hallmarks of the postimpressionists, such as simple, two-dimensional designs made up of sharp outlines and bold colors, posters could telegraph their messages rapidly, unencumbered by the mediation of narrative. (Figure 2.4) Pick argued that posters utilizing such techniques were more effective in transmitting information than the traditional advertising emphasis on figurative art, including the ubiquitous "bathing beauty."[51]

While he demanded that the artist exercise reason and self-control, Pick also felt that part of modernism's appeal rested in its audacious rejection of conventionality, which in turn could further the practical aims of advertising by seizing the commuter's attention. Modernism could be simultaneously "undisciplined" and "purposeful": he praised a German poster for its "violent subject in violent colours. Typical of the anarchical undisciplined achievements of modern art. Strong and purposeful."[52] In addition to conveying commercial and public-service messages (and Pick did not think the two were necessarily distinct), he hoped that the posters he commissioned from young artists would accomplish the transformative function traditionally claimed for the "highest" forms of art:

> There is a conventional way of looking at things which it is hard to disturb. There is a protective habit in city dwellers of not looking at things at all which is fortunate otherwise they could hardly go on living in some cities. Posters come to disturb and destroy such habit or convention. To visit a picture show and to come out again into the streets ought to mean that for the moment at least the eye sees things anew, if there has been any value in the picture show. So it is with the poster.[53]

Not all of the posters Pick commissioned were nonrepresentational; he preferred to present a diversity of styles in order to distinguish each poster from its neighbor: "if all posters were Kauffer posters, the attractiveness of them would be lessened."[54] However, many of the posters bore the impress of the simple designs and bright colors of the postimpressionists. And more "advanced" styles of the period, such as cubism and later surrealism, tended to be favored by Pick's "stable of stars": Kauffer, Paul Nash, Graham Sutherland, and Edward Wadsworth were among those whose works appeared in the exterior

display cases of the stations, whereas less established artists' posters were displayed within the station.[55] (Figure 5.1) Pick was known to allow some artists more freedom than others,[56] but he was closely involved in all phases of poster production.

The Underground posters were the first to deploy the new styles in art and appear to have exercised a broad and possibly profound impact on all levels of society following the war. Many accounts in the press praised the Underground for bringing modern art to the people, turning the system into "the people's picture-gallery." Roger Fry admired the modernistic posters of Pick's protege E. McKnight Kauffer, noting "the alacrity and intelligence people can show in front of a poster which if it had been a picture in a gallery would have been roundly declared unintelligible."[57] And the art critic Frank Rutter observed that the Underground had become in effect one of the largest and most influential art galleries in the country: "The whole nation is much less affected

FIGURE 5.1. Posters by E. McKnight Kauffer and others displayed at the exterior of an Underground station, 1931. Reproduced by permission of the London Transport Museum.

by what pictures are shown in the Royal Academy than by what posters are put up on the hoardings. A few thousand see the first, but the second are seen by millions. The art galleries of the People are not in Bond Street, but are to be found in every railway station."[58]

In the early 1920s advertisers debated the merits of Pick's experiment, and resistance to the new styles continued to be strong, but by the end of the decade many were using modernist styles in their ads.[59] (One advertiser, in a 1924 statement that would have pleased Pick and his fellow medieval modernists, maintained that "the conditions under which a poster were seen were similar to those which produced the heraldry of the Middle Ages, and [I am] inclined to believe that the heraldic poster was the most effective of all.")[60] Pick's daring experiment proved so successful that it was emulated by other large corporate undertakings like Shell-Mex, the General Post Office, the Empire Marketing Board, and Cunard liners. Their aesthetic approach to advertising fostered the medieval modernists' hope that businesses would be the modern Medici and contemporary commerce the bearer of beauty. As one writer enthused, "the wealth that was once in the hands of the ecclesiastics and aristocrats is now in the possession of men of business. . . . [They] are at last beginning to learn that art means balance of design, beauty of line, harmony of colour, and that these things can be powerful servants of commerce if properly harnessed to their task."[61] The Underground received a wealth of free, favorable publicity from Pick's venture, undoubtedly pleasing Lord Ashfield, who was willing to allow Pick his head in design issues in compensation for Pick's dogged pursuit of the minutiae of management.[62]

In addition to introducing visual modernism to the public, Pick's experiment may have encouraged young artists to continue to pursue modernist experiments in a culture known for its conservatism. He was able to provide a few with employment and recognition, but he may have inspired many others simply by legitimating modern art as a "living style" worthy of patronage by a major corporation. Students at the Royal College of Art purchased reproductions of the Kauffer posters sold by the Underground (as did Sebastian Flyte in Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited*),[63] and in 1926 the Victoria and Albert Museum enthusiastically welcomed Pick's idea of circulating reproductions of the posters to provincial art schools.[64] Two years later a representative of the museum noted the success of the project: "The poster movement . . . is so progressive, and the demand for this kind of work in provincial Schools is so great, that a gift of drawings of this nature is greatly appreciated by us."[65] Posters intended for display in the London transport system traveled themselves to the provinces, thereby extending Pick's efforts to legitimate modern art far beyond London. And in the capital, for those who wanted to "contemplate" the posters in a more traditional artistic setting than a tube station, an exhibition of the Underground posters was held at Burlington House in 1929. Despite being seen in an orthodox "fine art" venue, Pick ensured that the functional purpose of the art on display was not forgotten: instead of an exhibition catalog available for patrons at the entrance, there was a sign stating simply "There is no Catalogue. A good Poster explains itself."

While pundits maintained that the public were affected positively by the modern posters, it is difficult for the historian to assess this empirically. De-

spite Fry's assertion that modern art was often more acceptable to the public in poster form than when framed in a gallery, a 1923 list of best-selling posters issued by the Underground indicated that the more "representational" posters were among the most popular.[66] But regardless of whether segments of the public liked or disliked the new art initially, it is likely that the posters had a significant effect in acclimating them to the range of new aesthetic styles heretofore confined to small galleries and private collections.[67] "It can be generally recognized that the public has got beyond the 'bathing girl' and 'chocolate box' type of poster," noted an Underground official with satisfaction in 1923; "this is an advancement for which we can all be grateful."[68] One might question this statement, given its self-interested source, but it was reiterated by many other commentators. The authors of *The New Interior Decoration* (1929), for example, believed that "persons who would never enter an exhibition of pictures have become habituated to the manifestations of contemporary art, and those who demand verisimilitude in an oil-painting have welcomed decors from which verisimilitude is absent."[69]

Thus Pick was among the first to demonstrate that modern visual art could be used as the means toward directly utilitarian ends, undermining the formalist aestheticism of Fry and Bell. His poster campaign not only exposed the public to the new art, but also demonstrated that modernism and the philosophy of the arts and crafts' movement were not irreconcilable. Through the posters, Pick showed that modernism could be subordinated to functional demands without vitally compromising artistic autonomy or innovation. The artists in Fry's Omega Workshop merely applied the new styles to objects according to the whims of the artists, which was in keeping with the post-Renaissance conception of art as unconstrained, Kant's "purposiveness without purpose." But for Pick this was a false conception of art that had been accepted for too long: "The workshop that we want is the alpha workshop, with apologies to Mr. Roger Fry. . . . The past is behind us but it must not govern us. We are to think things out again from the beginning."[70] He welcomed postimpressionism as long as it fulfilled some integral use or function, and his patronage of modern visual artists helped promote the idea that they were regaining a social function that they had not had since the Renaissance.

In addition to encouraging modern painters through his poster campaigns, Pick used the Underground to promote modern architecture and sculpture as well. In these areas, he owed a greater debt to the views of fellow DIA members then in his promotion of modern painters. Pick had commissioned modern posters on his own initiative, but in his architectural aims he was decisively influenced by W. R. Lethaby, and the architect Charles Holden helped Pick realize these aims. The London Underground of the interwar period thus became a visible embodiment of DIA principles. As Pick wrote to Harry Peach during the construction of Holden's modernist stations in 1925, "We are going to represent the DIA gone mad."[71] It is worth examining the indirect as well as direct contributions Pick's colleagues at the DIA, like Lethaby and Holden, made toward the development of London's artistic Underground, as they were pivotal in helping him transform the public transport system into a work of public art.

W. R. Lethaby resembled Pick in terms of his social background and personality: the son of a craftsman, quiet, shy, devout, and at times mystical,

Lethaby was the most influential of Ruskin and Morris's apostles in the early years of the new century. He led nearly every movement devoted to eliminating the distinction between the fine arts and crafts, insisting that "any attempt to draw an acceptable distinction between designers and Fine Artists must fail. . . . It would put any hack portrait painter or architect into the class of Fine Artists while a great artist like Morris, it would class as a designer for manufacture. It is essentially a social distinction rather than an artistic one."[72] Through his activities in the Art Workers' Guild, the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, and the DIA, Lethaby propagated Ruskin's definition of art as the joyful expression of the individual's spirit. He helped restore the medieval workshop tradition, with its emphasis on fitness for purpose and truth to nature, to contemporary art education in London through his work as first art inspector for the London County Council (1894), first principal of the Central School of Arts and Crafts (1896), professor of design at the Royal College of Art (1900–18), as well as through a series of influential books on architecture and design. Like Morris, Lethaby had a deep knowledge of the medieval period— he served as surveyor of fabric at Westminster Abbey—but was not an antiquarian. He was one of the earliest exponents of the use of modern materials in architecture, and his own attempts to train designers for modern industry at the Central School became the model for the more successful German industrial design movement.

Lethaby promoted Ruskin and Morris's definition of architecture as the master art, "the harmonious association of all the crafts"[73] that expressed the spirit of its makers and users. While this spirit had unfolded spontaneously in the past, Lethaby encouraged architects to establish a common style following the First World War, in the hopes that this would restore a communal order and civic spirit among the people in a less integrated and devout age.[74] He called for "some sense of town sweetness and worship," claimed "an atmosphere of civic spirit must be fostered from the elementary school onward,"[75] and included town planning within his wide definition of art: "[Art] is order, tidiness, the right way of making things, of doing things, especially the public things of our cities."[76] In a 1915 essay he singled out the Underground stations as one form of architecture among many that required greater order and stylistic unity, which Pick almost certainly read.[77] And in 1922 Lethaby published a collection of essays that Pick did read, *Form in Civilisation*, to promote his ideal of an integrated and "tidy" civilization; he also founded the Modern Architecture Constructive Group in order to instigate a common architectural program.

Lethaby's ideas appealed to Pick, who had been thinking along similar lines about the necessity for an environmental catalyst that would promote the integration of society. Pick shared Lethaby's environmental determinism and his desire for a new spiritual communality and felt that the transport system could provide a foundation for "a higher form of corporate life":

> I see quite clearly transport, the foundation of success in its realization. . . . I see quite clearly too that a religion must be another of the foundations. . . . It is a new religion, however, or a fresh blossoming, at any rate, of the old. It is a religion for city dwellers. There are still other foundations which must be laid, if we are to build a habitable

city; habitable both for the body and the mind of man. Our most griev-
ous drawback is that we lack the prophetic fervor of John in thinking
of London.[78]

The retiring Lethaby certainly lacked John's fervor, but his writings helped
shape Pick's more utopian schemes for the inevitable expansion of the London
transport system. Quoting from Lethaby's *Form in Civilisation*, Pick called for
a modern "school of architecture" in a 1923 address, the year that the Under-
ground received permission to extend southward to Morden.[79] He intended to
depart radically from the quaint neo-Georgian stations that had been designed
after the war by the Underground's staff architect Stanley Heaps.[80] Writing to
Harry Peach, Pick expressed his ambition to implement an architectural style
that would be in "the most modern pattern," similar to the functionalist archi-
tecture being developed on the Continent.[81]

Pick believed that this rational, "living" style of architecture would be in-
strumental in shaping the harmonious, thoughtful society of the future, as
such a style would convey symbolically the community's ideals and aspira-
tions. While public styles had evolved unconsciously in the past, some degree
of conscious evolution was now required to offset the centrapetal tendencies
of a modern industrial and democratic society. Pick followed Lethaby in be-
lieving that the modern world required the imposition of a new style as a way
to recall an atomistic populace back to their natural state of communal soli-
darity as exemplified by the medieval world. "Imposition," however, may be
too strong a word, for Pick genuinely believed that the new style he intended
to promote would be the natural choice of any reflective individual; it was
simply that the conditions of modern living distracted most individuals from
reflecting: "Are we tidy naturally? I hope so. I hope all the loose ends of civi-
lization are due to hustle, congestion, parsimony."[82] The Underground, with
its cohesive, rational style, would promote communal solidarity and right rea-
son among an individualistic populace: "It must be evident what the purpose
is, if the citizens, with their varying ability and discernment, are to remember
and serve this purpose. There is nothing more difficult than to ensure that a
heterogeneous crowd of people become a homogeneous army."[83]

In 1924 Pick hired Charles Holden, whom he had met at the DIA, to design
new exteriors for several stations that were being reconstructed; he was
pleased with the results and involved Holden with all the new stations on the
Morden Line extension. Holden developed a simple, functionalist design, aus-
terely classical in its Portland stone facing. (Figure 5.2) Holden was fond of
Portland stone, which had also been used by Wren: if much of his interwar
work for the Underground fell within the "International Style," it nonetheless
contained a nationalistic allusion.[84] In addition to its association with English
tradition, Holden claimed that he chose the light stone to accentuate the
evening floodlighting of the stations and to better integrate the posters into the
architectural scheme: "The architectural treatment of the stations [was] carried
out in subdued or neutral colours in order to give the poster its maximum
decorative value, a fact which incidentally added to the commercial value of
the poster display."[85] Profit may have been "incidental" to the ultimate aim of
unifying and democratizing the arts, but it was gratifying nevertheless.

FIGURE 5.2. Holden's Balham Station, 1926—part of the Morden Line extension. Reproduced by permission of the London Transport Museum.

The classical elements in Holden's designs were important to Pick, whose own romantic conception of classical Greece as a model of organic unity nurtured his belief in the possibility of restoring "orderliness and proportion in all things" while still permitting the expression of individual diversity.[86] Holden's designs also encompassed the universal and the particular in another way: the stations' exteriors consisted of folding-screen facades in Portland stone, giving the stations a uniform appearance, yet the angles of the facades could be adjusted to meet the specific space requirements of each locale, thereby rendering each station unique. Excited by the prospect of establishing a cohesive architectural design that might serve as the exemplar and catalyst for the tidy, integrated city of the future, Pick demanded that no effort be spared in the construction of the stations: "We cannot risk making a failure of our new idea. The matter is urgent."[87]

The expansion of the Underground in the twenties provided Pick with his opportunity to realize the utopian ambitions that he had nourished since the Salem Chapel Guild years and now shared with other members of the DIA. His position in the Underground Group enabled him to be "a warrior of the kingdom," or at least an influential social engineer. He intended to use the expanding transport system to shape a new urban community. He was delighted with statistics showing that attendance at museums and zoos increased whenever Underground stations were opened within their vicinity, as these figures reaffirmed his faith in the Underground's civilizing potential.[88] And like Holden, Pick considered profit as "incidental" to aesthetic and social aims, although as a diligent businessman he

never could, and never did, take this attitude too far. Nevertheless, in a 1926 letter concerning the architectural plans for one of the new stations, he told Holden that "if in any instance you think the design could be improved by withholding some of our advertisements, we are always willing to consider the point."[89]

Buoyed by the prospect of the continued expansion of the transport system, Pick now began to lecture on the necessity for town planning, emphasizing the importance of organizing the city into separate zones devoted to specific functions. The city, like a postimpressionist painting by Cézanne, ought to be comprised of clearly demarcated elements arranged harmoniously within an intelligible design. In addition to the writings of Lethaby, Pick cited the ideas of Raymond Unwin and Patrick Geddes, two influential leaders of the town-planning movement. Unwin and Geddes themselves were influenced by Ruskin and Morris and argued that town planning must be organic, following contemporary investigations by biologists that revealed the interdependence of all things in nature.[90] Pick appreciated Unwin's insistence that city planning required a special attentiveness to the environment and to the customs of the populace, precluding abstract and rigid formulas that ignored the peculiar individuality of each milieu. This conception cohered with Pick's own romantic belief in the possible reconciliation of diversity within a totality and his hope that an organic unfolding of society could coexist with the modern necessity for urban planning.

Since he shared this ideal with other members of the DIA, Pick was able to present his own dreams in terms of a common program in a speech to the London School of Economics in 1925. The speech distilled nicely the brazenly utopian and soberly puritan rhetoric of many of the medieval modernists and is worth quoting at length:

> [The DIA believes] that fitness for purpose is at the root of enduring beauty; that the city which we build must be fit for trade, for government, for traffic, for social intercourse; second that soundness in workmanship and materials will compel beauty out of a craftsman, that a city of good bricks or good stone well laid and well dressed will be a shell which will attract the graces of ornament; third, that ornament shall cost effort and money, and so shall be of value; that a city shall not be covered with cheap ornament, anymore than a person with cheap jewelry; that the ornament shall be employed sparingly to emphasize that which is worth emphasis, and not to set up a competition of building with building which eventually destroys all emphasis and with it all meaning; fourth, that the material shall be respected and be rightly treated, that the city shall choose an architecture of brick or stone or steel and concrete which will announce itself, which will allow of the right handling of the material; fifth, that there shall be orderliness and proportion in all things, that the parts of the city shall fit together, that one part shall not conflict with another part. It is useless to seek for beauty, but if you seek after these principles, we believe beauty will be added unto you, the beauty that is truly yours, and not the beauty that is borrowed or copied from another.[91]

These ideals were enthusiastically supported by Holden, who continued to work closely with Pick in the twenties and early thirties. Born in the northern town of Bolton in 1875, governed by Quaker convictions, and steeped in

the romantic medievalism of Ruskin, Holden insisted that architecture should never be less than a service to the community and an adventure in expressing living beliefs. "The first duty of the architect is to render to the Community the same sort of service as the farmer & the baker," he wrote.[92] Like the baker, the provender of the architect must never be stale: "All art is adventure and without it the artist would cease to exist. And adventure implies movement and movement is better than stagnation."[93]

Holden was one of the members of the DIA who shared Pick's interest in modern visual art—indeed, his taste in sculpture was more radical than Pick's, as Pick did not share Holden's enthusiasm for the work of Jacob Epstein or Henry Moore. Holden was well-connected to an artistic circle: at an evening school in Manchester, he had become close friends with the painters Francis Dodd and Henry Lamb; his sister married James Bone, brother of the artist Muirhead Bone and himself a prominent medieval modernist. (James Bone was an early member of the DIA and enthusiastically defended modern art and "fitness for purpose" in his capacity as London editor of the *Manchester Guardian*.)

Holden defined modern architecture and sculpture to the public in terms shared by his fellow medieval modernists. He followed Ruskin's belief that architecture was a form of sculpture and sought to incorporate modern sculpture into his architectural designs, beginning with the British Medical Association Building in 1907–08. Holden insisted that the sculptor carve directly into the stone of the building rather than use plaster casts. The *Daily Express* was quick to note the original model for this practice: "Mr. Holden's view is that the artist's imaginative conception is frequently destroyed in the course of the mechanical carving—a theory which seems to be borne out by the glories of antique and medieval sculpture, which was, of course, done directly in the stone."[94]

Holden consciously attempted to revive the artistic spontaneity and communal solidarity of the medieval world as delineated by Ruskin and Morris. He stated that the best modern work displayed the vitality of medieval work, and he made explicit connections between medievalism and modernism in his remarks. He defended Epstein's *Day,* a controversial work he commissioned for the new Underground headquarters, because it was "alive and vigorous like much Medieval sculpture and that is what I most value."[95] Several of Holden's buildings, with their looming towers illuminated by clerestory windows, have been likened to English cathedrals; perhaps the most obvious example is the Uxbridge station of 1938, which has a stained-glass window above the booking hall.[96] (Figure 5.3)

Similarly, Holden invoked "fitness for purpose" as his "creed," claiming it as a central reason for his affiliation with the DIA: "a society which holds fast to that slogan will never stray far from the true path."[97] Like other medieval modernists, Holden accepted the new formalist aesthetic of Fry and Bell, but modified it to include a direct utilitarian emphasis. Art pertained to the realm of necessity as much as to the realm of freedom. As he remarked to a gathering of civil engineers, "I do not think I can do better than end this lecture by my definition of 'significant form': Form which is purposeful in all its parts arising from the play of imagination on hard facts and natural forces rather than from free and uncontrolled fantasy."[98]

Pick and Holden's initial architectural experiment on the Morden line had been a success. While some critics may have complained that Holden's functional buildings, with their sparing use of ornamentation and emphasis on the

FIGURE **5.3**. Uxbridge Station, with stained-glass window. (Photo taken in 1958.) Reproduced by permission of the London Transport Museum.

horizontal line, were a form of "packing-box architecture," Pick was pleased with the inauguration of a unified and rational style that departed from the eclecticism of previous styles.[99] He promised an audience in 1926 that "A new style of architectural decoration will arise" and that it would herald "Modern London—modern not garbled classic or Renaissance."[100] He commissioned Holden to renovate the Piccadilly Circus station in 1925, with the aim of making "the station level beneath the Piccadilly Circus as bright and attractive as the circus itself."[101] When the renovations were completed in 1928, these aims seem to have been realized: a reporter for the *New York Times* claimed that the station had been "utterly transformed by modern architecture and modern art into a scene that would make a perfect setting for the finale, or indeed, the opening chorus of an opera."[102] (Figures 5.4, 5.5) The showcases within the station were made of bronze, the booking office was finished in Travertine marble imported from Italy (the same marble, an Underground publicity brochure announced proudly, that had been used in the Roman Coliseum and the Temple of Vespasian), the telephone cabinets were of polished teak.[103] DIA members other than Pick and Holden made prominent contributions. Harold Stabler crafted many of the tiles, Margaret Alexander did much of the interior lettering, and Stephen Bone painted a large map of the world.[104] Pick had the map displayed prominently, with the British Empire highlighted to remind

FIGURE 5.4. Piccadilly Station booking hall, prior to renovation, 1928. Reproduced by permission of the London Transport Museum.

FIGURE 5.5. Piccadilly Station booking hall after renovation—"a scene that would make a perfect setting for the finale, or indeed, the opening chorus of an opera." Reproduced by permission of the London Transport Museum.

travelers of the larger family to which many of them belonged. The Victorian cult of the family was used to legitimate imperialism as a domesticating, "civilizing" enterprise,[105] and Pick had used the family theme before in posters for the Empire Marketing Board. But his interest in wider families stemmed as much from personal desires as it did from imperial allegiances.

Holden and Pick worked well together. As Pick explained, the two shared "this common aim of trying to find a proper solution for the problems of everyday life."[106] Their mission to democratize art and aestheticize civilization extended from large architectural and transportation schemes to the smallest symbolic details—even the foundation stones for the new Underground headquarters were laid by "the people," bearing chiseled inscriptions such as "laid by Walter Wakely, foreman stonemason," and "Thomas Auton, housekeeper."[107] (Figure 5.6) In their partnership Pick played the role of producer,

FIGURE 5.6. Underground headquarters at 55 Broadway. (Photo taken in 1962.) Reproduced by permission of the London Transport Museum.

deferring to Holden's skills as an architect and his knowledge of modern sculpture while reserving final approval of Holden's schemes. Holden recalled the decisiveness with which Pick acted upon Holden's plans for the new Underground headquarters, which opened in 1929: "a telephone call, a meeting with him the same afternoon, a board meeting later on the same afternoon and then a message 'Right, carry on'. Quick work: but Pick was like that, he knew there was always time to correct a false move."[108]

Pick was also willing to accept Holden's daring proposal to promote modern sculpture through commissioning young sculptors like Jacob Epstein, Eric Gill, and Henry Moore to decorate the new corporate headquarters, despite his own personal misgivings about Epstein. Epstein's public sculptures had always caused enormous controversies, but it was not controversy Pick feared: he simply disliked Epstein's sculptures, perhaps because some of them were sexually explicit. Initially he had refused Holden permission to hire Epstein, but Holden insisted that Pick view Epstein's models for the statues *Night* and *Day,* and after inspecting them, Pick acquiesced. (Figures 5.7, 5.8) When Epstein's first sculpture *Day* was unveiled in 1929, the predicted public outcry occurred. Pick tried gamely to defend an artist whose work he himself disliked before the Underground Board and the public. He told a reporter for the *Evening Standard* that "I have only seen pictures of it, and in these I must say it looks awful. But you cannot get the right perspective by taking it by itself. It must be judged in relation to the whole building, and then I think people will not find fault with it. If they will wait until the whole building is finished, they will consider, I believe, that both ['Day'] and 'Night' are quite all right."[109] The episode revealed how far Pick was willing to risk his reputation to defend modern art in the 1920s, despite his own reservations about some of its manifestations. He never learned to like Epstein's work, complaining on one occasion about "Epstein's inflictions on our aesthetic sense."[110]

The Epstein episode of 1929 also underscores the important role that a few private individuals in the medieval modernist mold had in legitimizing modern art, as well as the still uneasy coexistence of Victorian conceptions of art with the more recent formalist language of art criticism. From the beginning of his artistic career in England, Epstein was frequently maligned among art critics and the public—some of his public sculptures were even vandalized—while being enthusiastically supported by several medieval modernists from the provinces who had attained influential positions within the London Establishment. They empathized with Epstein's status as an unprivileged newcomer to the city and sympathized with his desire to shatter the genteel code of art represented by the Royal Academy; they were excited by the unconventionality of his work and shared his dedication to art as a spiritual commitment that disavowed compromise or security. These medieval modernists would have concurred with his statement that "every imaginative work is religious, and art is one of the most sacred things in existence."[111]

Bradford's William Rothenstein, for example, assisted Epstein soon after his arrival in London, helping him to secure contacts and financial support, and in 1920 Rothenstein attempted unsuccessfully to get Epstein appointed as an instructor at the RCA (Sir Amherst Selby-Bigge of the Board of Education vetoed the appointment because of Epstein's "character").[112] Epstein owed the

FIGURE 5.7. Jacob Epstein standing before his sculpture *Night,* carved directly onto the building. Reproduced by permission of the London Transport Museum.

approval for the placement in Hyde Park of his memorial to W. H. Hudson, *Rima,* to another Bradfordian, Fred Jowett. Jowett was a Ruskin enthusiast and first commissioner of works for the 1924 Labour government; he reversed the decision by the preceding Conservative government to reject *Rima.*[113] And Epstein's public reputation derived primarily from the sculptures he was commissioned to create for the British Medical Association building by yet another northerner, Charles Holden. The sustained public opposition to Epstein's work between 1908–29 signals the debt he owed to the tenacity and faith of his medieval modernist patrons. Indeed, following his sculptures for the Underground headquarters, Epstein did not receive another public commission for twenty years—Holden wanted to commission him to create a figure for the

FIGURE 5.8. Jacob Epstein's *Day*. Reproduced by permission of the London Transport Museum.

base of Senate House in the early 1930s, but university authorities would not allow it.[114]

The 1929 controversy over Epstein's sculptures for the Underground re-opened many of the arguments for and against modern art that had been presented during the two postimpressionist exhibitions of 1910 and 1912. The furor over *Day* and *Night* revealed that neither visual modernism nor Fry and Bell's formalist discourse had been entirely assimilated among the press and the public. Pick and Holden, as much as Fry and Bell, forced a recalcitrant public to come to terms with visual modernism, a point that was recognized by contemporaries. A writer for *Country Life* was certain that Epstein's sculptures would cause a scandal, but speculated rhetorically "Or has the Underground educated Londoners to appreciate modern art?"[115]

The controversy was conducted in and revolved around the two forms of discourse used to describe the sculptures—the "Victorian" and the "formalist"—

as each had its own distinct moral ramifications. Epstein's sculptures depicted "primitive," totemistic figures executed in a style combining expressionism and classicism. Those critics who analyzed them in terms of the new formalist vocabulary were able to focus on the overall formal elements of the sculptures and how they contributed to the design of the building, without having to deal explicitly with the issue of content or moral purpose. Thus the *Daily Mail* praised *Night* for being "architectonic" and "rhythmic," and the *Manchester Guardian* found that its formal relations to the building were "serious and sonorous"; the *Observer* admired it for its design and rhythm.[116] The *Daily Telegraph* believed that Epstein's work was beyond the descriptive powers of language, attaining the condition of music: "Epstein's sculptures cannot be explained, only felt."[117] The *New Leader* claimed that they were beautiful not because of the content of their forms, but because of the fundamental relationships among the forms: "certain forms and designs and relationships have been found universally satisfactory, and we can base our present demands on them, while admitting that they may be subject to alteration as the mind of man alters."[118]

To other critics, however, such formalist interpretations were elitist and irresponsible, an attempt to conduct the discussion of art above the heads of the people and to evade the issue of content and morality. A writer for the *Evening News* disliked the way that the formalist discourse tended to separate art from everyday life:

> But what is [the man in the street] to think when an eminent critic defends 'Night' by declaring that 'its beauty lies, apart from its appropriateness, in the abstract quality of rhythmic formal relations'? He says to himself, 'This jargon means nothing to me. Are 'rhythmic formal relations' an abstract quality that a work of art can possess but that is necessarily lacking in a simple thing like a plate of soup or a sock?'[119]

Medieval modernists attempted to address this criticism precisely by associating formalist terminology with everyday life—by equating the formalist emphasis on "forms" and "rhythms" with the universal forms and rhythms inherent in all things. But while their simultaneous insistence on "fitness for purpose" always associated art with a moral purpose, other critics felt that the new formalist language was a myopic evasion of morality, a refusal to come to grips with a work's ethical ramifications. The *Daily Sketch* saw nothing architectonic, sonorous, or rhythmic about *Night:* instead the sculpture represented a creature, half-buddha, half-mummy, bearing a corpselike child.[120] Epstein's work, in other words, was consciously transgressing the Victorian conception of art as the search for beauty and the expression of ennobling values. The architect Reginald Blomfield was not alone in feeling that Epstein's work was socially counterproductive: "Bestiality still lurks below the surface of our civilization, but . . . why parade it in the open, why not leave it to wallow in its own primeval slime?"[121]

To many the existence of the debate itself, rather than the positions taken, was the most distressing aspect of this particular cultural moment. Both camps were vying for a common standard for art, thereby underscoring the very lack of shared cultural meaning. To understand the medieval modernists' attempt to contain the new "living art" within moral parameters, it is important to recall how menacing the alternative threat of cultural anarchy was to those raised

within the conventions of the late Victorian period. Epstein, a Jew born in America, and his sculptures—"primitive," sexual, flamboyantly disregarding Victorian notions of decorum—symbolized modernism's potential to undermine all sources of societal cohesion instead of functioning as a revivifying "living art." Writing in *The Architect*, A. Trystan Edwards feared that with Epstein public sculpture had lost its traditional role of conveying social beliefs: "Modern sculpture can work as decoration, and Epstein's work does work that way—but why can't it please the viewer with some agreed meaning?"[122] In addition, *Day* and *Night* appeared at a time that new conceptions of time and space had begun to seep into public consciousness, further challenging those Victorian views that had survived into the interwar period. Perhaps the most plaintive lament was expressed by the dean of Worcester, Dr. Moore Ede, at a school ceremony:

> We Victorians lived in a state of society in which there was general agreement as to the conduct of life. Now nothing seems to be stable or fixed. You don't know where you are in all sorts of directions. When I went to school a straight line was a straight line, and no one questioned it. Now I understand a man comes along and says it is not always straight: it depends upon where you stand. When I was young we had certain ideas as to what was beautiful and what was not. Now Epstein comes along and erects Night and Day over a railway station in London. I don't know what you think of it, but to me everything seems topsy turvy. If they call that beautiful where am I? I don't know what to think about it.[123]

Medieval modernists struggled to define the new art in terms that would be comprehensible to their fellow Victorians like Dr. Ede. Pick and Holden, for example, accepted that the transition from one form of art to another would be unsettling to some, but they did not believe that genuine living art expressed an absolute break with the past—rather, it developed organically from native traditions and expressed enduring spiritual values. Thus, when both men examined the new architectural styles emerging in Germany, Sweden, Holland, and Denmark in 1930, they rejected the starkly functional architecture of Germany as being too "cosmopolitan," severing its links with national history and custom.[124] Purely functional architecture of this sort was little more than "engineering," mechanical rather than organic: it might be fit for its purpose, but it did not express the spirit of its people or milieu, which was the purpose of architecture according to Ruskin. Pick would later criticize Le Corbusier's statement that a house was a machine for living in as a "wicked doctrine" and argue that purely functional architecture "abandons all taste in favour of a strictly unadorned fulfillment of purpose—a purpose often narrowed to physical well-being in which the spiritual and imaginative sides of life are shrivelled up."[125] In 1941 he wrote to Herbert Read suggesting that "fitness for purpose" itself be replaced with "beauty in fitness," in order to accentuate the organic and spiritual aspects of their "functionalist" motto. Read concurred: "What I think we need is more emphasis on the organic aspect of function, and generally on organic needs. What was wrong with the machine to live in was that no one could *live* in it. A bird's nest would have been a better analogy—fitness for function, all right, and beauty in fitness. . . . [W]hat you call 'spiritual content' comes as a matter of course if we get the right way of doing and making things."[126]

On the other hand, Pick and Holden did admire much of the modern ar-

chitecture they saw in Denmark, Holland, and Sweden, in which traditional styles were merged with the new architectural forms and a slight amount of ornamentation was used to express the function of the building. This was the sort of modernism redolent both of national traditions and new ways of life that the two men intended to bring to the transport system during the interwar period. "Tradition must have claims at all times," declared Pick. "The point at issue is whether tradition should prevent us from experimenting with new forms of building to suit new materials and new circumstances, and the extent to which traditional features can be embodied, having regard to new materials and new circumstances."[127] For Pick and Holden, modernism could embody continuity as much as it did change. They were certain that, given enough time and reflection, others would see the rightness of their views.

The Underground continued its expansion in the 1930s, and Holden designed many of the new stations in a tempered version of the International Style. He included inspired touches of ornamentation to his otherwise stark and functional buildings, like decorated vent grilles and fluted bronze strips,[128] to establish the essentially humane, "English" character of the modern, "rational" edifices. A review of Holden's Sudbury Town station noted that its functionalism "is of an unprovocative and genially inviting nature. The further objection may be foreseen that it is un-English. True, its constituent elements are as international as concrete and cantilevers, but the spirit in which they are assembled is wholly English."[129] (Figures 5.9, 5.10) To assure that the system would be unified by a single style, Holden designed many of the fixtures, including platform seats, clocks, ticket machines, sign posts, telephone

FIGURE 5.9. Sudbury Town station, 1916. Reproduced by permission of the London Transport Museum.

FIGURE 5.10. Sudbury Town station after being rebuilt, 1934. Reproduced by permission of the London Transport Museum.

cabinets, and the furniture and map cases in Pick's office—thereby fulfilling the arts and crafts ideal of the architect as master craftsman.[130] (Figure 5.11)

The results were impressive. Holden's modernist stations influenced the design of other public buildings at the time,[131] and the Underground was widely hailed as one of London's great achievements. Pick took pride in witnessing the translation of Ruskin and Morris's principles of art, architecture, and civilization into reality under his direction. And with the passage of the London Passenger Transport Act in 1933, he looked forward to reconfiguring and coordinating London through the expansion of the newly unified London transport system. The London Passenger Transport Board created by the act brought together ninety-two different undertakings within a single nongovernmental authority, under public inspection; it had been created to coordinate transport and to raise the massive capital necessary for further expansions of the system. Ashfield was chairman of the seven-member board and Pick was vice-chairman and chief executive officer.

Pick expected that he would command the new system with the same autocratic approach that he had used with the Underground Group. Perhaps this explains why his writings of this period are full of lofty pronouncements about the fundamental importance of transport to modern life and the immediate need for town planning. He had expressed such thoughts since his youth, but they now became more strident, at times grandiose, as when he insisted in 1931 that "the metropolitan city is the creature of transport and the measure of London's growth is the measure of progress which has been made in transportation."[132]

Counterbalancing such high hopes, however, was a strain of pessimism foreign to his writings about transport and society in the 1920s but not foreign to Pick's temperament. In the twenties he had written about the inevitability of progress and evolution; he was in the prime of his life and energetically capitalized on every opportunity to turn the Underground's expansion into the realization of his own dreams. His greatest fear had been of stagnation, not only within society but also within himself. The buoyant optimism of his writings and his obsessive attention to work in those years enabled him to fend off his own self-doubts and insecurities. He avoided confronting why entropy was so fearful to him or why style, order, discipline, proportion, and moderation were so important to him—a somewhat ungainly and moralistic loner in London who had an explosive temper, few close friends, and an unhappy marriage. He wanted people to look more critically at the world around them, but his own minute scrutiny of the tiniest external details served, for a time, to distract him from more painful self-observation.

In the 1930s, however, he could no longer continue to lose himself in work: work itself was becoming a problem. He had passed fifty; his energies

FIGURE 5.11. Underground fixture designed by Holden, 1933. Reproduced by permission of the London Transport Museum.

were diminishing at a time when his duties were expanding. In 1936 he described a typical week at the helm of a public undertaking that had 80,000 employees and was engaged in an expansion program that cost £40,000,000. Monday was his day to supervise engineering, including the new works projects. On Tuesday he oversaw accounts; at times this involved complex negotiations with unions concerning salaries and potential strikes. Wednesday was devoted to "traffic" issues, including the delicate question of the fare structure for public transport operations. Pick struggled to find ways to raise the £3,000,000 that the LPTB needed to fulfill its obligations, while still maintaining fares that would be affordable to all: Wednesday, he admitted, was "not a good day." Thursdays alternated with either Claims and Services or Publicity—this was a good day for Pick, as it was a time "not to forget that we are in being to perform service and service and service. . . . [O]n Thursdays I am subject to review myself." Friday was reserved for personal inspections of the transport system; he described Friday as a day of shocks. He admitted that he rested on Sunday, but he may well have worked on Saturdays; he was born on a Saturday and liked to quote from a nursery rhyme that "Saturday's child must work hard for its living."[133] Between his duties for the LPTB and those for the Council for Art and Industry (which will be discussed in the next chapter), Pick began to suffer from the strains of overwork. He confided to a colleague that he felt "quite depressed. . . . The weariness of the world and of age begins to beset me."[134]

In addition to his enormously increased workload, the autonomy of action that he had been accustomed to at the Underground was substantially curtailed with the formation of the LPTB in 1933. He found it more difficult to impose his own visions upon the new organization. Furthermore, the crucial integrating function he attributed to public transport was being imperiled by the increased use of private automobiles, the financial constraints of the board, and the lack of a common planning authority in London. He experienced similar frustrations when he was appointed chairman of the Council for Art and Industry in 1934: he could not make changes by fiat, but had to fight for his positions with the two governmental sponsoring bodies, the Board of Education and the Board of Trade.

Pick also became increasingly disillusioned with modern art during the 1930s. Once it had appeared to be the manifestation of a new "living art" anticipated by William Morris, an art that both expressed and engendered a modern spiritual totality. But as the years went by, Pick could not reconcile modernism's variety of artistic styles and subjects with his demand for a national and rational art that expressed a spiritual vision and adhered to the standard of fitness for purpose: the antinomies would not cohere. Surrealism was the last straw for Pick. He interpreted it as expressing everything he abhorred in art: it was nothing more than the "shocking self-advertisement" of artists whose works lacked a spiritual or moral dimension, purposeful design, or social applicability. The surrealists would have challenged some of these assertions, but Pick felt that their work was simply irrational and hence immoral, an affront to his lifelong effort at integrating art and society into a new rational order. Unlike Herbert Read, who initially welcomed surrealism for tapping into the universal spirit, breaking down the barriers between art and life, and

expressing an essentially English romantic sensibility,[135] Pick rejected the dream imagery of the surrealists as a further assault on the realizations of his own dreams.

His fears of societal decay and personal isolation, of the lack of an overriding and common purpose to life that would include him within its ambit, began to be reflected in his writings about society and art during the early years of the decade. In notes for a 1932 speech he stated that "city life not a good life. City life consumes men. . . . Energies flag or die out." After asserting, as he had throughout the 1920s, that cities followed a generally progressive form of evolution that his own work in transport was intended to augment, he abruptly reversed himself: "Or do we deceive ourselves. Is only scale raised all round? More speed of movement. More appeal of sensation. More emphasis. No fundamental change. . . . Cycles of nervous excitement then the return."[136]

At times his talks bordered on the bizarre. His notes for a 1932 speech given before the Institute of Locomotive Engineers accuses "locomotion" of destroying the countryside, facilitating the mass slaughter of the last war, and creating the conditions for a new and imminent conflagration: "Look to the future. Dark. Hordes of aeroplanes. Deluges of parachutes. A new migration of the peoples. The Dark ages return. Another civilization. All with the aid of locomotion." This speech was not the typical paean to the "ringing grooves of change" that the Institute of Locomotive Engineers probably expected, but at least Pick offered an apology for his negative views at the conclusion of the speech: "Your chairman did not seek this. A beef."[137] Such was his mood at the beginning of the 1930s, the decade in which his work to abolish the distinction between fine and applied art reached its fullest fruition. But the distinction was to be reestablished once again, thanks in part to his own indefatigable labors.

\\\\ 6 ////

EDUCATING THE CONSUMER

> *No one would dispute that the legislator must busy himself especially about the education of the young. . . . Since the whole city has one goal, it is evident that there must also be one and the same education for everyone, and that the superintendence of this should be public and not private.*
>
> **ARISTOTLE**[1]

> *It is hardly an exaggeration to say that at the moment the initiative in administration of art education seems to be passing from the hands of the Board [of Education] into the hands of Mr. Pick.*
>
> **BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMO, 1936**[2]

THE DISCOURSE OF MEDIEVAL MODERNISM GAINED momentum in the early 1930s, and Frank Pick continued to play a significant role in defining its terms. The decade marked a high point for the medieval modernists' dream of reintegrating art with life: by the middle of the decade the DIA's message that art was a thing of use as well as beauty had become widely accepted among civil servants, critics, artists, and educators, and perhaps among many of the public (who remain the "silent majority" to historians). But just as the interwar rhetoric calling for the union of the arts under the rubric of "design" appeared to reach a crescendo, Pick began to redefine anew the relationship between artist and designer, which in turn had important consequences for the viability of medieval modernism.

Pick had been at the forefront of the private initiatives to integrate art with everyday life in the 1920s, and in 1934 he took charge of the government's own efforts to improve industrial art and art education when he became chairman of the newly established Council for Art and Industry. The CAI in effect replaced the DIA as the nation's most prominent body dedicated to the integration of art and industry. Pick's new position bolstered his already considerable influence over the debates about the nature and purposes of art in the thirties.

Pick dominated the council, as he had the DIA and the Underground. He used it initially to further the medieval modern aim of transforming England

through art and of redefining "art" as a universal activity. Through the DIA and the Underground he had attempted to instruct the public in the absolute principles of good design; he believed that the council now gave him the opportunity to redefine and extend art education throughout the country, both for designers and for the public. The Underground had provided him with the means to influence the growth and shape of London; now the CAI would provide him with the possibility of inscribing his conception of art onto the impressionable minds of the next generation. He bridled, however, at the suggestion that under his chairmanship the CAI would be an "arbiter of taste." The CAI would simply educate the public in the absolute standards underlying life and art, allowing the public to make its own decisions in light of the Truth: "Quite clearly there are things that are good and things that are bad, and in choosing between those things the Committee will be most valuable. They must not attempt to establish a style or a tradition. . . . That must be done by the people themselves, we can only direct their minds to the proper channels in making their own decisions."[3] He intended that the council should "establish or re-establish what I will call the English tradition in design."[4] His idealist and nationalist conception of art was not uncommon in the thirties, but his autocratic method of pursuing his goals did bring him into repeated conflict with other government authorities. As an embattled member of the Board of Education complained, "The trouble with Mr. Pick is not so much what he wants to do as the way he sets about doing it."[5]

Pick was able to determine the aims of the CAI because the council's terms of reference had been left vague at its inception under the Board of Trade. In part this was because the government, despite nearly a century's worth of experience, felt no closer to understanding the appropriate relations between art and industry and hoped that the council would find its own way toward a solution. This confusion worked to the advantage of someone as ambitious as Pick, and he could barely restrain his enthusiasm as he boasted about the CAI's wide latitude: "Their terms of reference were put in a vague way because no one really knew what those relations were. At any rate, the council had power to draft its own terms of reference so widely that they would deal with all aspects of the problem."[6] Pick's decision to use the council to further the medieval modern agenda caught the government by surprise. Even more surprising to his associates, however, was Pick's own sudden repudiation of medieval modernism by the later thirties.

THE DISCURSIVE UNION OF ART AND LIFE IN THE THIRTIES

Widespread demands for the integration of art and everyday life had begun during the First World War, but the cascading national and international crises of the thirties gave the issue an increased urgency. "Art and Industry" now became a mantra that was repeated in the press and at the highest levels of state, a talisman invoked against economic decline, social polarization, and political chaos. The phrase was repeated so often it seemed to take on a life of its own. "Fine art" and "industrial art," many now claimed, had finally been conjoined, the desires of the arts and crafts happily consummated, the birth of the Coun-

cil for Art and Industry in 1934 being but the first issue of a fruitful partner-
ship. There were those who noted that this optimistic view concerning the
union of art with industry did not entirely accord with actual experience, but
their misgivings tended to be downplayed in a decade now infamous for its
credulity.

The CAI had been created as a result of several investigations and reports
by the Department of Overseas Trade and the Boards of Education and Trade
that had begun in 1930. The government was concerned about the relative de-
cline of England's position in the export market, a chronic process that had
been sharply exacerbated by the economic slump of the early 1930s. Although
government officials lacked statistics to support assertions that product design
was a significant factor in export sales, this was simply assumed to be the case.
A. A. Longden of the British Institute of Industrial Art told one interdepart-
mental committee in 1930 that "art is the deciding factor in all luxury goods
. . . with the result that we are being cut out by such nations as France, Swe-
den, Austria, and Czechoslovakia who are quick to realize the importance of
fine design combined with fine workmanship."[7] A well-received exhibition of
Swedish industrial art at Dorland Hall in 1930 provided an object lesson on
how a small country could successfully combine traditional craftsmanship
and machine production. The investigations of both the government's Crowe
Committee of 1930 and the Gorell Committee of 1932 focused on the question,
plaintively expressed in one report, of "how it comes about that an artistic na-
tion which is the proud parent of generations of fine artists and craftsmen now
finds itself handicapped in the world market by the lack of artistic quality in so
many of its manufactures."[8]

Both committees noted the same social and economic circumstances miti-
gating against the integration of art and industry that had been noted in earlier
investigations: the lack of centralized control or a standard curricula for art
schools; the lack of cooperation between art schools and technical schools on
the one hand, and art schools and local industries on the other; the unwilling-
ness of industry to hire or adequately compensate industrial artists because
of its complacent belief that sales to the markets of the Empire and domin-
ions were assured; the inability of the public to distinguish good design from
bad because of inadequate (or nonexistent) education in aesthetic apprecia-
tion.[9] On the Continent, industrial art training often took place within state-
supported monotechnics, which integrated artistic and technical education
within a single institution. These schools were usually well-equipped and
were run by state-appointed teachers knowledgeable about industrial design.
In addition, many industries took an active interest in the training of industrial
artists, cooperating with the schools and the state.[10] It was hard to praise En-
gland's more anarchic educational system when compared with those on the
Continent, although a member of the Board of Education did try to find at least
something good to say on England's behalf: "The advantage of our own system
seems to be that when something is done on the initiative of a local authority it
comes from the heart."[11]

While authorities seemed to recognize that the more specialized training
of industrial artists on the Continent was a factor in successful industrial de-
sign, the decentralized nature of English art and technical training made it dif-

ficult for the government to emulate continental models. Nor did the English become involved in training designers for newer areas such as light-metal and engineering products until late in the decade, unlike the Americans and the Germans. The focus in England for most of the thirties remained on how to improve design in the traditional craft industries, such as textiles, pottery, clothing, furniture, gold, and silver-smithing. This was an important enabling factor in the recurrent refrain that artists could be designers for industry: certainly it was easier for a painter or a sculptor to design for a craft-based industry than one based on new technologies requiring detailed knowledge of the techniques of engineering and metallurgy.

The government argued that it was unable to follow the examples of continental industrial art education, despite the apparent efficacy of continental methods. English local authorities would be reluctant to bear the costs of transforming their multipurpose, or polytechnic, art schools into monotechnics specializing in industrial design. In addition, full-time instruction in industrial design would be a wasted effort, given industry's unwillingness to expend money on hiring trained designers.[12] The government thus felt compelled to find solutions for the integration of art and industry that did not violate the autonomy of the local education authorities or require industry's participation.

One approach was to educate the consumer to desire better designs. The Crowe and Gorell Committees, as well as the Hambledon Committee Report of 1936, reiterated the familiar argument that public demand would force industry to hire and adequately compensate trained industrial designers and this in turn would impel local education authorities to provide better education in industrial design. As the Crowe Committee stated, the aesthetic education of the public rather than the technical training of the designer was the fundamental first step toward improving England's lagging position in overseas trade: "It was agreed that education in appreciation of industrial aesthetics must be carried on before there is to be any perceptible upward trend in the quality of British industrial design."[13] Government officials also urged that local art and technical schools be brought into closer cooperation with each other in order to meet the demands of local industries.[14]

As a result of these investigations, the government did take several steps toward improving the training of industrial artists and the aesthetic appreciation of the public. For example, the Board of Education issued Circular 1432 in September 1933, which suggested that the local education authorities in industrial regions pool their resources in order to establish regional colleges of art that would be responsive to the needs of local industries.[15] The board also decided to refashion the Royal College of Art into a school that emphasized training for industrial designers, returning it to its original purpose. Sir William Rothenstein disliked the vocational direction the college appeared to be taking under the new policy of the board and resigned in 1934, providing the board with the opportunity to appoint a new principal who would be in accord with its aims.

Finally, following the recommendations of the Gorell Committee on Art and Industry in 1932, the Board of Trade established the Council for Art and Industry. It was hoped that as a government-funded, centralized body, the CAI could affect a wider appreciation of industrial art among the public and a

closer integration of art with industry than had been accomplished by the independent design-reform organizations during the 1920s. The CAI was to follow the aims already pursued by Pick and the DIA.

While these new efforts by the government to improve industrial design might appear to distinguish the "liberal" fine artist from the "vocational" designer, in actuality the opposite trend toward equating artists with designers that we saw in the twenties continued and was intensified during the early years of the thirties. The Gorell Report on Art and Industry of 1932 was representative in its insistence on the fundamental unity of the arts and the importance of securing modern artists to design for industry:

> Steps should be taken to bring to an end the existing divorce between 'fine' and 'industrial' Art, and to secure that numbers of the leading and most promising artists and craftsmen of the day should be encouraged to turn their energies into the industrial manufacturing field, and that they find there as secure, remunerative and honoured a career as in painting and sculpture. Unless first-rate industrial work by artists receive national recognition in future to the same extent as the best work in the field of painting and sculpture, many of the ablest artists will continue to avoid an industrial career.[16]

As chairman of the Council for Art and Industry, Pick also continued to advocate the union of the arts between 1934 and 1937. His colleague from the DIA, B. J. Fletcher, believed in the distinction between fine art and industrial art and hoped that Pick would use his new powers to ensure that the Royal College of Art was reformulated as a school devoted exclusively to industrial art. Fletcher thought he could persuade Pick to change his mind about the union of the arts; after all, Pick had been instrumental in convincing William Rothenstein that Rothenstein's "liberal arts" approach to industrial design was ineffective.[17] Pick, however, came to believe that while the RCA should offer a more focused course in training industrial artists than it had under Rothenstein's administration, it should not divorce such training from training in the "fine arts." As he wrote to Fletcher at the end of 1934, "I do not agree with you about the need to create a division between fine and applied art, using these terms in a conventional sense, for I am satisfied that it is due to bad organization of the school that the fine art side claims a preponderance of attention."[18]

Indeed, contrary to Fletcher's request, Pick took steps to ensure that the new principal of the RCA would continue to promote the union of the arts at the college. He and the CAI gave substantial advice to the governmental committee formed in 1935 to chart the future of the RCA. Pick drafted lengthy memoranda to the committee, and their final report in 1936 garnered Pick's approval. The report concluded that: "The creative designer must be a finished artist and drawing, painting and sculpture are the backbone of an artistic education. . . . The designer must be first and foremost an artist."[19] Pick continued to exert influence on the future of the RCA as a member of the committee that selected Rothenstein's successor. He had wanted Herbert Read to be appointed to the position, but the post ultimately went to Percy Jowett, a painter (from Yorkshire) who had been head of London's Central School. Despite the expressed intention of the government to transform the RCA into a school spe-

cializing in industrial art, the selection committee's choice indicated that the college would continue to emphasize the union of the arts rather than become a vocational school. Rothenstein, in fact, was delighted with Jowett's appointment: "No better choice could have been made. He started with the confidence of the Board; under his able guidance the College was unlikely to become industrialized."[20]

The government's renewed commitment to the issue of art and industry in the early thirties spurred a spate of articles, books, broadcasts, and exhibitions advocating the union of the arts and the social function of the modern artist. The arguments were variations on the concepts that had been elaborated by the medieval modernists during and after the war. But the economic slump elicited even more impassioned claims from indigent artists, teachers, and design reformers about the practical value of modern art to society. The depression of the thirties, coupled with the positive example set by continental efforts at merging art and industry, the creation of the CAI, and the reassessment of the purposes of the Royal College of Art galvanized the English movement.

To judge from the extensive media coverage devoted to the concept of artists as designers and the publicized activities of certain prominent artists and businesses in these years, it seemed as if modern artists had succeeded— or were on the verge of succeeding—in establishing themselves as designers for industry. Newspapers, magazines, journals, and radio shows contended frequently that artists were designers and that objects of everyday life could be considered "art"—or that "art" was synonymous with "design," "decoration," or "the well-doing of what needs doing." There were certainly those who argued that modern art created an even greater divide between artist and public than had existed prior to the advent of postimpressionism,[21] and there continued to be artists and critics who maintained that fine art and industrial art were distinct.[22] On the whole, however, the media hailed those artists who did engage in industrial art as pioneers of a new aesthetic age in which the boundaries between art and life were being effaced. A 1932 editorial in the *Listener* noted with approval the extended circumference of art's sphere, echoing the views long propounded by the medieval modernists:

> To the modern artist art is not just a painted oblong of canvas to be strung on a drawing-room wall, but an impulse which can equally well be expressed in a bowl, a table, a finely printed-book, a theatrical curtain. We have artists of the stature of Henry Moore, Vanessa Bell and John Nash turning quite naturally from painting a picture or carving a statue to designing a lampstand or a wall paper or a book cover.[23]

The idea that the artist could serve a useful social role as a designer for industry even received the imprimatur of royal respectability when the Prince of Wales, perhaps emulating his nineteenth-century predecessor Prince Albert, called for the integration of art and industry in 1934:

> I think that we are creating a wonderful opportunity for our young artists. They should go abroad and study the demand which this machine age has evolved in foreign countries as regards tastes, fashion,

design, convenience, practicability, etc. Having studied these charac-
teristics, they should then settle down and produce ideas combining
the best details which they have discovered abroad with what, for
want of a better term, I will call 'a new British art in industry.'[24]

The Prince appeared to be well-versed, or well-coached, in the artistic discus-
sions of the past decade, stating that "the simplest thing, if it fills its purpose,
is the right thing and the beautiful thing."[25]

Several prominent businesses and cultural institutions supported the
union of the arts in the thirties. The Society of Industrial Artists was formed in
1930 to advance the integration of artists with industry, and in its early years
was led by artists like Paul Nash, Frank Dobson, Allan Walton, and Graham
Sutherland. In a letter to *The Times* in 1933, Nash was quick to insist that they
were not "fine artists," at least not in the old-fashioned sense of the term: "the
professional artist of the future would be a professional designer."[26] Nash
helped to found Unit One in 1933, an organization of modern painters, sculp-
tors, and architects established to express the modern spirit of art. He had
compared Unit One to the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, leading *The Times* to
recommend to the fledgling group that they adapt the model of medieval
guilds for contemporary purposes: "We feel that the best hope for Unit One is
not to think too much about expression, but to collaborate as architects,
painters, and sculptors in something like the medieval organization plus the
formidable fact of machinery."[27] Businesses such as Cadbury's, Shell-Mex, Im-
perial Airlines, the Cunard and Orient Lines, Cresta Silks, Foley China, Walton
Fabrics, and the Edinburgh Weavers (producers of a "Constructivist Fabric"
line with designs by Ben Nicholson and Barbara Hepworth) quickly joined the
bandwagon by hiring modern artists. Such corporate art was not considered
inferior to fine art because it was commercial or designed for utilitarian pur-
poses, as would have been the case only a generation earlier. Many critics now
maintained that such a distinction was arbitrary and that a new conception of
art had replaced the old—or rather that an "older," pre-Renaissance concep-
tion of art had returned. A writer for *The Spectator* who attended the 1934
"Pictures in Advertising" exhibition at the New Burlington Gallery stated that
"By far the most interesting and delightful art-exhibitions this week have noth-
ing to do with oil painting, deceased artists, or what is usually considered seri-
ous art. . . . The fact is, serious art is rather changing its ground. Everyone
knows it. It is not that it is getting less serious; it is that the seriousness is of a
different kind."[28]

Numerous museums, galleries, and artists exhibited works of "fine" and
"applied" art under the same roof, helping to efface the distinction between
these terms. In 1932 the Zwemmer Gallery in London held an exhibition of
textiles, paintings, furniture, pottery, and sculpture to coincide with the publi-
cation of Paul Nash's treatise on the union of the arts, *Room and Book*.[29] The
Unit One exhibition, which consisted of similar mixed media, was sent to sev-
eral northern towns and cities in 1934 and received generally favorable notices
(although, as the *Yorkshire Post* noted, civic pride may have had some influ-
ence: "The fact that three of the leading spirits of Unit One . . . are Yorkshire
people, as well as their distinguished sponsor Mr. Read, should ensure a

friendly welcome for their work").[30] The dean of the Liverpool Cathedral delivered a sermon on the exhibition, in which he praised the integration of modern art with modern life in medieval modernist terms, especially welcoming the influx of modernism's Platonic "rhythms." He hoped that the public would adopt a more reverent attitude toward the new art, which he believed spoke to the viewer's soul—although his plea for tolerance was expressed somewhat intolerantly:

> You can see how all you have noticed in the paintings is taking its shape in buildings and gardens. The rhythm is already passing into the everyday activity. I want to stop you from looking at anything which is moving in a new way and condemning it, or thinking you can say whether it is good or bad—you can't—you are not qualified. Look again and again, until your own subconscious self can make its contact with the artist.[31]

The *Derbyshire Advertiser* concurred with this view when the Unit One exhibition trundled into town: "Whether we like it or not, there is a great change taking place in our ideas of design, and not a town or village in the country is escaping it. One has only to look at new shop fronts and some of the newly-erected houses to realize that we are in the midst of a new movement. Least of all can those in business, manufacture or trade afford to ignore modern art."[32] While Birmingham was not on Unit One's itinerary, a DIA "Exhibition of Midland Industrial Art" was shown at the Birmingham Art Gallery in 1934, attracting over 28,000 spectators.[33] By displaying industrial art together with more traditional offerings like paintings and sculptures, these art institutions helped to broaden the parameters of "art" as well as to introduce visual modernism to those outside of London.

Mixed-media exhibitions such as these may also have made modern paintings and sculptures more accessible to the public by juxtaposing abstract works with common items that bore similar designs, enabling viewers to associate formalist art with the everyday, domestic forms in their own lives. Reviewing a show featuring the works of Ben Nicholson and Barbara Hepworth in 1933, a reporter noted that "Miss Hepworth carves stones into shapes that I enjoy, and it is curious to think that many who will appreciate the delightful rugs and fabrics designed by these two artists will take exception to the framing as pictures of precisely similar arrangements of line and colour. Where, indeed, does art end and decoration begin?"[34] For many, modern art and decoration had become indistinguishable. Amelia Defries, the author of *The Arts in France*, explained how she interpreted nonrepresentational paintings in a 1932 issue of the *Listener*: "Personally, I have always seen them as decorative: I immediately transfer them in my mind's eye to silk hangings."[35]

Some art institutions were unable to accept this redefinition of art and clung to more traditional views. When Pick attempted to send a CAI exhibition of well-designed furniture to provincial museums, the curator of the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery objected because "possibly the Museum and Art Gallery is not the most suitable place for such an exhibition." But objections of this nature were also overruled by local councils on the grounds that they were elitist and outmoded, as happened when Councillor Randall of Northampton

tried to prevent the furniture exhibition from appearing at the Northampton Art Gallery: "Councillor Randall said he did not think an art gallery the appropriate place for a display of furniture." But Councillor Lee urged the town council to accept the exhibition, predicting that "the attendance at this exhibition would be greater than at any exhibition of fine paintings, for a display of furniture would be nearer the lives of most people." Councillor Lee won.[36]

In addition to businesses, museums, and galleries, independent design reform organizations continued their efforts to bring art in all its manifestations to the public, energized by the increased media attention devoted to the issue of art as the economic and spiritual panacea for a nation mired in the slump. In 1935 the British Institute of Adult Education sent exhibitions of modern paintings to small provincial towns that lacked museum or gallery facilities. Lectures on the new art were given in conjunction with the exhibitions, and at each exhibition site "observers" (also called "animated catalogues") were strategically positioned "to keep an eye on people who were puzzled or who seemed at a loss about how to look at the pictures. They were to instigate an interest without forcing it." The BIAE believed that there was an increased popular interest in art, due to the recent "reconciliation between art and everyday life which was absent from the nineteenth century." They acknowledged that the "false antithesis between art and daily life still survives in some measure," but that the distinction was fading due to recent changes in art education as well as increased government concern and media attention.[37] The DIA also continued to send small loan exhibitions of industrial art to provincial museums, galleries, and schools, and to have exhibitions at the Charing Cross Underground station. They began to hold exhibitions of "industrial art" at department stores, drawn from the stock at hand. The stores may have lacked the tranquil atmosphere of more traditional exhibition venues, but did offer the advantage that "well-designed goods seen and admired can be bought at the time, which is impossible at exhibitions held in art galleries, etc."[38]

Visual art also became part of everyday life in the thirties through hire-purchase schemes and lending libraries for paintings. Tooth's Gallery in London, for example, inaugurated the hire-purchase scheme in which the initial and monthly fees for paintings were listed in the catalog "just as for wireless sets or washing machines."[39] Paintings were no longer to be set apart or to be restricted to the wealthy: art was now to be considered a normal fixture rather than a hieratic artifact privileged through its placement in museums or in the dwellings of the elite.

These renewed efforts to abolish the distinction among the arts and integrate them with everyday life were furthered by several widely publicized books on industrial art that appeared in the mid-thirties, the most influential being Herbert Read's *Art and Industry* (1934). Read had joined the DIA in the early years of the decade and members soon considered him to be the "mentor capable of giving [the DIA] a coherent philosophy to replace or rather to bring up to date the teaching of Lethaby."[40] *Art and Industry* advocated the medieval modern combination of formalism and functionalism, arguing that abstract artists could transform industrial products into works of art: "Whenever the final product of the machine is designed or determined by anyone sensitive to formal values, that product can and does become an abstract work of art in the

subtle sense of the term. . . . Our real need is therefore a fuller recognition of the abstract artist in industry."[41] In this work, which was called "the bible" of the industrial art movement,[42] Read concurred with Pick and Rothenstein that artists ought to be employed in all walks of life:

> In every practical activity the artist is necessary, to give form to material. An artist must plan the distribution of cities within a region; an artist must plan the distribution of buildings within a city; an artist must plan the houses themselves, the halls and factories and all that makes up the city; an artist must plan the interiors of such buildings—the shapes of the rooms and their lighting and colour; the artist must plan the furniture of those rooms, down to the smallest detail, the knives and forks, the cups and saucers and the door-handles. And at every stage we need the abstract artist, the artist who orders materials till they combine the highest degree of practical economy with the greatest measure of spiritual freedom.[43]

He maintained this belief through the 1930s and early 1940s. Read had flirted with aesthetic formalism in the 1920s, when he associated with T. S. Eliot and members of Bloomsbury, at times echoing their disdain for the romantic medievalists of the nineteenth century. But he later admitted that he was easily swayed by different ideas, which led him to contradict himself from one essay or book to another; fundamentally, however, he believed that his conceptions of art and life were beholden to those of Ruskin and Morris. As he told a gathering of Staffordshire artists in 1942,

> Though I may have sinned with the rest of my colleagues, in that I inhabited that artificial world [of London and the Eliot set], and accepted many of its conventions, yet I was daily conscious of the indissoluble link between art and industry. I knew that what Ruskin had said, what William Morris had said, and what Eric Gill was saying, was the fundamental truth—that there was no world of art apart from the world of work, and that the regeneration of our culture had to be achieved in the workshops and our factories, and not in our studios and drawing rooms.[44]

Other books on industrial art reinforced this conceptualization of the modern artist as designer rather than dilettante, and of everyday objects as works of art. John Gloag's *Industrial Art Explained* (1934) stated that the artist "could give an unforgettable splendour of direction to industrial art, and could be as great a master of the new materials and processes as medieval masons were masters of stone and of the tools with which they shaped it."[45] Noel Carrington, in *Design and a Changing Civilisation* (1935), called for artists to design everyday objects and insisted on redefining art as "design": "The word *Design* is used generally throughout this book rather than *Art* because the latter has acquired a limited sense in popular usage. To most people Art means painting, sculpture and what are sometimes described as the Fine Arts. . . . I have judged it better to keep to a word which embraces art as generally understood, but which has less limited associations."[46]

Magazines and journals that had argued for the integration of the arts in

the twenties continued to do so in the thirties, but were now joined by the powerful medium of mass broadcasting. The BBC propagated the new, inclusive definition of art, publishing articles on and reproductions of modern works in the *Listener*, which had a circulation between 40,000–50,000 in the interwar period. Among the frequent contributors on the subject of art were Herbert Read, Paul Nash, and Eric Newton (who, like the others, argued that "Nowadays one sounds old fashioned if one uses the word Artist as a synonym for a painter of pictures. Art really means anything that can be designed by man to be made beautiful as well as useful").[47] The *Listener*, like the Underground, was influential in bringing modern art to a public that lacked easy access to it: as one grateful correspondent wrote in 1937, "For people who live in the provinces, and have neither time nor money for the more eclectic art-journals, the *Listener* is the only contact with pioneer art of today."[48] The BBC also devoted frequent broadcasts to modern art, including several that featured members of the DIA. In February–March 1933, DIA member J. E. Barton gave a series of talks on "Modern Art," which he defined from the medieval modernist perspective:

> A work of art is any made thing, however unpretending, which conveys to us, in a clear way, the joy and interest of its maker in the act of making. . . . Nobody can get a sound understanding of art unless he sweeps away the false distinction . . . between the arts and the useful manual trades. . . . Modern art is practical. . . . Beauty in art comes indirectly, from the passionately complete adaptation of means to ends.[49]

In April–June of that year, the BBC ran a series of talks on "Design in Daily Life," several of which were given by DIA members and later published as a book. And in 1938 Anthony Bertram gave a further series of talks on "Design," published the next year as a Penguin paperback, in which he stated that "only those whose idea of art is narrowly 'arty' have failed to recognize those great works of art that man has recently produced in his aeroplanes, cars, locomotives, buses and coaches. Popular speech is evidence that the majority has recognized this, has become conscious of a new form-language."[50]

As they had in the twenties, art teachers continued to lobby for the union of the arts and for the integration of art, industry, and everyday life during this decade. Evidence taken by the CAI for its report on the future of the Royal College of Art in 1935 revealed that many teachers' organizations demanded the integration of the arts. The National Society of Art Masters believed that the RCA should continue to teach the "fine arts" as part of its industrial art curriculum.[51] The National Union of Teachers insisted that art education at the elementary and secondary school level was vital to the economic as well as aesthetic well-being of the country, because it would create a public capable of choosing well-designed commodities: "There is undoubtedly a conscious effort being made in the schools today to develop good taste . . . and to use the standards developed in school as a measure of the artistic value of the everyday things of life." Students were being taught that art was not only expressive, as Fry and Bell maintained, but also functional: "Nothing but good can accrue to art in the true sense if the utilitarian element which is so important

in the modern world is duly emphasized."[52] A 1934 report by a joint commit-
tee of the Training College Association and Council of Principals, representing
over one hundred training colleges that educated over 18,000 students, also ar-
gued in favor of combining formalism and functionalism, the arts and the
crafts: "The best training colleges recognize the need for linking art and handi-
craft. . . . They are getting away from the notion that there can be any such
thing as abstract design or decoration apart from fitness for a particular pur-
pose and a particular material."[53]

In their efforts to promote the idea that modern art had a social function,
these art educators helped train the nation to recognize the formal as well as
functional aspects of the new art. Art education in primary and secondary
schools in the thirties now emphasized the medieval modern definition of art
as intuitive expression as well as technique, in contrast to the earlier nine-
teenth-century emphasis on art exclusively as technique. Testimony by educa-
tors to the CAI in 1935 affirmed this shift in attitude toward modern art in the
years following the 1910 postimpressionist exhibition. In 1910 modern art had
often been derisively compared to the scribbles of children: after attending the
first postimpressionist exhibition, Wilfred Blunt confided to his diary that
"The drawing is on the level of an untaught child of seven or eight years old
. . . the method that of a school-boy who wipes his fingers on a slate after spit-
ting on them."[54] By the thirties, however, children's art was being praised for
its likeness to modern art. The Local Education Authority in Kent testified that
"the emphasis is changing in the teaching of art in schools from representa-
tional technique to an attempt to get children to sum up the essential character
of an object. There is an increased use of memory drawing and imaginative
drawing, and a good deal of attention is paid to colour, composition, and de-
sign."[55] Another educator noted that "Modern art in all its phases is always
popular and it is noticeable that the boy of to-day takes readily to abstract art,
e.g. the design of shapes merely as shapes."[56]

This shift was influenced by the medieval modern aesthetic as well as by
the new art instruction for children made popular in England by Marion
Richardson. Richardson's career illustrates how arts and crafts functionalism
and Bloomsbury formalism intersected and became influential among educa-
tors in the interwar period: she herself followed the apostolic succession from
Morris to modernity. She had attended the Birmingham Art School and stud-
ied with its headmaster R. Catterson Smith, a prominent figure in the arts and
crafts societies (he had been an assistant to Morris and Burne-Jones). As a
teacher at the Dudley High School, Richardson had been struck by the simi-
larity of her students' expressive works to those that appeared at the postim-
pressionist exhibitions. She contacted Fry, who enthusiastically agreed with
her and held an exhibition of children's art in 1917. Richardson continued to
exhibit the art work of children and to write, lecture, and teach about chil-
dren's art in the idealist terms common to medieval modernists. She spoke of
art as an expression of the spirit that promoted harmony and integration, and
of the need for art appreciation to be taught widely in order to restore an or-
ganic community attuned to the rhythmic patterns of the universe.[57]

Perhaps the most important symbolic expression of the breakdown of the
hierarchy of the arts sought by the medieval modernists was the 1935 "Art in

Industry" exhibition held at the Royal Academy. The Royal Academy was the last bastion of the "fine arts." Its refusal to display craftworks at its annual exhibitions had compelled arts and crafts leaders to form the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society in 1888. Thus the academy's decision in 1934 to join with the Royal Society of Arts in an industrial art exhibition was a complete reversal of its policy, as the academy's president, Sir William Llewellyn admitted: "It was entirely against their constitution, but they were doing it for the sake of the country. They had not a selfish thought about it."[58] The exhibition thus marked the belated victory of the arts and crafts' project of breaking down the distinctions among the arts and recognizing art's social function, just as the London Underground represented the culmination of the arts and crafts' ideal of an integrated work of art that would be a joy to both makers and users. The conceptual breakthrough represented by the capitulation of the Royal Academy was widely discussed. Gordon M. Forsythe noted that

> A common interest in good work breaks down all unreal distinctions, and the authorities of the Royal Academy and the Royal Society of Arts have, in organizing this Exhibition, broken down all the artificial barriers that have hitherto separated the Fine Arts from the Industrial Arts. This, in itself, is no small achievement, even if it was inevitable and bound to happen some day because of the economic exigencies of the times and the educational development in post-war years.[59]

Economic concerns were indeed behind the Royal Academy's decision to support the union of the arts, despite Sir William's profession of noblesse oblige. He paid the standard obeisance to the moral influence of aesthetic commodities: "Many common evils would recede or disappear if people were in constant contact with things that were as beautiful as they were ordinary. Industry, with its elaborate organization and all-pervading energy, is today the most effective means of spreading the primal influences of art among the people, if it chooses the right method for its own welfare."[60] But he was not above referring to the prospect of increased employment for artists should industry decide to choose the "right method" and take product design seriously. He himself was convinced that in the future the traditional definition of "fine art" that the Royal Academy had once defended would disappear: "The art of the future would be very much more in the direction of industry than of picture painting. Most of the students who went to school with the idea of becoming eminent painters would do better to give up that idea and become designers . . . much of the talent of the country would have to be directed to industrial pursuits."[61]

The exhibition itself received poor reviews—the items on display were considered too expensive and self-consciously "arty," in contrast to the simple, functional, and inexpensive industrial art that design reformers hoped to see produced. But as C. G. Holme remarked, the exhibition's true importance remained on the symbolic level: "Even if the Exhibition merited all the criticism offered, the mere fact that it was held at what is regarded by the general public as the holy of holies in the matter of art—the Royal Academy—is in itself an achievement."[62] A less-publicized convergence in the opposite direction occurred at this time when the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society's Sixteenth Exhibition included a section devoted to works of "mass production."[63]

Despite such symbolic victories, however, the actual merger of art and life in the thirties had not progressed much farther than it had in the twenties. While the government, the media, artists, educators, and design reformers spoke as if the integration of art with industry was imminent if not already immanent, the extensive attention devoted to the subject actually reflected the absence of such an integration. The numerous books, articles, broadcasts, exhibitions, and lectures were signs that a problem continued to exist; if artists had been integrated into industry, there would be no need to discuss the matter so obsessively. In public discourse the definition of art was broadened to encompass everyday items, artists were redefined as designers, and the new conception of art did affect approaches to art education and appreciation. But in other areas of mundane "reality"—on the retail shelves, for example, or on the industrial shop floor—art and artists were scarcely visible. In his report on the state of industrial art in England in 1936, Nikolaus Pevsner had to admit that "things are extremely bad. When I say that 90 per cent of British industrial art is devoid of any aesthetic merit, I am not exaggerating."[64] Pevsner's opinion was echoed by others and was buttressed by the fact that out of over 60,000 students attending art schools in 1935, only a handful designed for industry.[65] Art schools, in effect if not in intention, ended up training future art school teachers.[66] Whenever the media cited the names of industrial artists, they tended to be the same set of prominent artists—the exceptions rather than the rule, as Wyndham Lewis noted sardonically:

> A handful of modernist villas have been run up; a few big factories have gone cubist. Women's dress has been affected more than most things. . . . Yet one swallower of the new forms of expression does not make a summer—for the artist! . . . In this country architects like Etchells, Holden, Connell and Ward, Tecton, Emberton, Tait, Wells Coates, Chermayeff, McGrath, Fry; painters and sculptors like Henry Moore, Epstein, Kauffer, and the Nashes are in the nature of paregoric or codliver oil to the over-sweet Anglo-Saxon palate; about that there is no question.[67]

The same charges and countercharges continued to be made in the thirties as before. Pevsner and many of his contemporaries blamed industry for its lack of interest in industrial design,[68] which resulted in few openings for industrial artists; industrialists responded that art students were inadequately trained for the needs of industry.[69] Both outlooks contained a measure of truth. Many artists agreed with Ruskin's view, institutionalized in the twenties at the Royal College of Art by William Rothenstein, that a broad artistic education was preferable to a narrow vocational training directed toward a particular industry and that whatever technical knowledge an artist needed could be picked up on the job. Paul Nash insisted that "students must have a sense of the properties of different media but allowing a certain sensibility, and average intelligence, they should be able to design with more or less equal freedom in several industries."[70] Industries, artists, and art schools thus remained at a stalemate.

But there was an additional factor complicating attempts to improve industrial design in England. The very term *design,* as it was used throughout most of the interwar period, was broad and ambiguous, embracing potentially

conflicting cultural and economic goals. On the one hand, it now included fine art within its purview, enabling painters and sculptors to be considered as designers without diminishing their social status. Design was thus a "liberal art" rather than a narrowly focused specialty. On the other hand, it implied technical proficiency; industries expected designers to have some knowledge of the material conditions of production. Design was thus a specialized vocation. As Pick confessed in 1935, "Even to-day I do not think all of us have arrived at any common conception of what it is we are aiming at in regard to design in industry. . . . [T]here is still much to be done before we can define it for ourselves and before we can have a definite aim which we can proceed to realize."[71]

The confusion was exacerbated by the fact that design was seen not only as an economic issue but also as a moral issue: the designer was to create works of art that would appeal to consumers and also transform the world. The moral conception of design implied that the designer was a special type of industrial employee, one who was in the world of commerce but not of it. The designer's job was to "civilize" commerce and to spiritualize industrial commodities, to create works of art in the age of mass production. While individuals like Lewis Day or B. J. Fletcher did not think this exalted role was incompatible with a solid vocational training, many others did: the job could be fulfilled only through the gifts of an artist, rather than through the narrow training of a technician. The nineteenth-century Romantic ideal of the artist as divinely inspired legislator was inextricably linked to the interwar discussion about art and industry; the very concept of "artist" seemed to preclude too specific or overly technical forms of industrial design training. Similarly, the Victorian ideal of gentility, with its suspicion of the specialist and its denigration of "mere trade," also determined the terms of the discourse, affecting even those who supported modern industry like Rothenstein and Pick. They certainly remained loyal to the northern world of industry and commerce in which they were raised, but they also wanted to elevate commerce to the world of gentility and respectability to which they aspired. They desired to "liberalize" commerce and industry by infusing them with the transcendent values of art, while democratizing art by integrating it with articles of mass consumption.

While design reformers argued that Britain's economic future depended on industrial design, many of them were less concerned about export figures than about diffusing the healing properties of art throughout the country. Pick argued that "the industrial future of the United Kingdom must to a large and increasing extent be bound up with the development of design."[72] But like most interwar design reformers he wanted to see that the "right" types of design were available to the public, especially designs that somehow fostered the national tradition. Moral judgments rather than market research governed the evaluation of design in interwar England. Pick had the CAI concentrate on "typical" English industries like sporting goods, pottery, furniture, silverwork, and clothing as a way to "escape, if we can, from what I would call the Continental influences which now seek to pervade certain branches of industry. I do not think we can hope to be successful unless we build up a tradition for ourselves and make our English design of international reputation."[73]

This paternalistic approach contrasted markedly with the more consumer-oriented design profession in America, which used market research methods to determine what the public wanted.[74] In England, Ruskin and Morris's conception of art as the touchstone of a society's spiritual health continued to affect attitudes toward design and industry, as the designer Gordon Russell recalled:

> An American super-stylist stated some time ago that he was surprised to find in England that people talked of aesthetics in connection with industrial design: aesthetics, he said, had nothing to do with it, the only test was a beautiful sales curve shooting upwards. I know there are some knaves and morons in industry, but such nonsense presupposes that there is no one else. . . . [T]he problem is a social one, as William Morris saw. Good design is one aspect of a good pattern of life and unless the foundations are sound the superstructure will not last.[75]

While several English industrialists shared this moral reformist attitude, many others may have been reluctant to hire industrial artists precisely because the English design movement seemed overly idealistic and utopian. Thus in England the "designer" was caught between the cultural demand that he be an artist and the industrial demand that he be a specialist.

In the interwar period the cultural imperative prevailed. In part this was because those who had been raised in the arts and crafts tradition obtained positions of power that allowed them to perpetuate this view. In addition, the issue of art in industry derived its conceptual foundations from nearly a century's worth of experience with the traditional "craft-based" industries, for which "fine" artists could create designs without having had extensive technical training. British investment continued to be focused on these staple industries, rather than on the new light-metal industries. The latter were being developed during the interwar period, particularly in the South and midlands, but were overshadowed by continued capital and labor investment in more traditional industries such as shipbuilding, textiles, cotton, coal, and other heavy engineering concerns.[76]

Thus discussions on improving the training of designers tended to focus on how artists could learn the technical, material, and industrial requirements of such traditional industries as textiles, pottery, furniture, clothing, and jewelry. Design training for the new light industries required greater technical knowledge on the part of the designer, but design education for these industries was overlooked for most of this period, making it easier to envision the designer as artist rather than technician. As late as 1936, Pick himself believed that the Council for Art and Industry did not need to investigate engineering industries because he felt that they did not depend on design for sales in the way that more traditional craft-based industries did.[77] In the interwar period, industrial design as it was practiced in America simply was not a conceptual possibility in England.

As chairman of the CAI, Pick had the difficult task of trying to harmonize the demand by industry for a more technical form of training for designers with the wider cultural conception of the designer as an artist. When he ac-

cepted the leadership of the CAI he thought he could accommodate both positions, that he could reconcile antinomies. For him the artist was both gifted individual and servant to a higher cause: artistic autonomy consisted in the willed adherence to the universal laws of fitness for purpose, proportion, and organic unity. He saw no reason why artists could not work within the limitations imposed by industry and still retain their integrity, for art and life were governed by the same laws. Pick had followed this philosophy in creating the Underground as an aesthetic artifact fit for its purpose. The question he now faced at the CAI was whether he could convince artists, industrialists, the government, and the public to allow him to apply his own aesthetic beliefs to the national education of consumers and the training of designers.

FROM RHETORIC TO REALITY:
PICK AND THE COUNCIL FOR ART AND INDUSTRY

While the government created the Council for Art and Industry to break the impasse that separated art from industry, it was not prepared for the decisive actions that Pick took as chairman. He did not play by the genteel rules of the civil service and disliked the dilatory procedures of Whitehall. The secretary of the Board of Education recalled an uncomfortable meeting with Pick in 1936: "We both agreed that schools, and particularly Secondary Schools, cared too little about Art and such matters, and he asked me what we proposed to do about it. Indeed, Mr. Pick's chief concern is always just that—'What are you going to do about it?'"[78] When the Board of Education did not act to his liking, Pick simply ignored them and started to implement his own programs. This caused some consternation among civil servants, who resented Pick's "readiness to disregard or ride roughshod over the Board."[79] "Intolerable!" was a common adjective applied to Pick's latest activities in several of the board's minutes.

Although the Council for Art and Industry was initially comprised of twenty-nine members, Pick dominated it as he had the Underground. He set the agenda that the CAI was to pursue, drafted many of the reports, and on occasion took independent action that angered other council members. The Gorell Committee had recommended that the new government body focus on maintaining both permanent and traveling collections of industrial art, but Pick had larger ambitions. He insisted that the CAI was not limited to covering "industrial art" narrowly defined, but that they would cover all issues pertaining to art broadly defined.[80] He announced at the council's first meeting that the CAI would direct its attention toward educating consumers in their new function as patrons of modern art, as well as educating designers and industrialists, strengthening the ties between art schools and technical schools, and reestablishing an "English" tradition of design to counter the influences of the Continent.[81]

The council's first project was to formulate a new conception of art education at the primary and secondary school levels. In order to create the Earthly Paradise, one had to capture the rising generation and set them upon the right path. As a youth Pick had imagined himself a "warrior of the kingdom," and

he now demanded that school children become "little warriors" in the battle for "A new England. A beautiful England again."[82]

Education for the Consumer, the CAI's first report, was published by the Board of Trade in 1935 in an edition of 5,000 copies. It expressed many of the views that Pick and other medieval modernists had been advocating for years, but these views now had the imprimatur of a government agency. The report criticized the separation of drawing and handicraft education in primary and secondary schools and criticized the Board of Education for maintaining separate inspectors for "art" and "craft."[83] It argued for the union of the arts, defining art as "the creation of beautiful things in any material or by any process or tools."[84] The report went further than these familiar admonitions, however. Pick and the council argued that art as an academic subject was as important as any other academic subject and should be considered as the "fourth R." Just as art was integral to life, so too should art be integral to all forms of education: "Art is not an isolated subject in the curriculum but has a bearing on them all. . . . Art should cease to be a thing apart, and should permeate all the activities of the school."[85]

The report's insistence on the integration of art with all academic disciplines was reminiscent of William Rothenstein's earlier call for an expansion of art education into other academic areas. Rothenstein believed that art education would enable students to recognize the aesthetic aspects of everyday life and to be more critical of the world around them.[86] The council's proposal also anticipated the intent of Herbert Read's *Education Through Art* (1943), which argued that "life itself, in its most secret and essential sources, is aesthetic" and thus art should be part of the entire educational process in order to produce, not more works of art, but "better persons and better societies"—a view advocated by Ruskin and Morris.[87] The CAI wanted educators to teach children in primary and secondary schools to see the world around them as an aesthetic construct that could be changed for the better by informed criticism, creation, and consumption. The report contained some practical suggestions for how some of these goals could be implemented: besides integrating art and craft education, the environment of the school ought to be designed more aesthetically (attention was drawn to the persistent use of drab colors and the cramped quarters in many schools); everyday objects should be used to teach aesthetic appreciation, including objects from loan exhibitions of retail products; teacher training colleges ought to make art a compulsory subject; and students should be allowed to concentrate in art if they wished. These were radical proposals—the *Nottingham Guardian* called the report "revolutionary"—but perhaps the most challenging aspect of the report, from the beleaguered Board of Education's point of view, was the demand that its recommendations be implemented immediately.[88]

The press praised the report's call for educating the public in the aesthetic standard of fitness for purpose, reflecting the widespread belief that such an artistic standard existed and could be taught to all. Art was neither a subject reserved for the leisured elite nor a matter of purely personal preference. The *Schoolmaster* admired the populist slant of the report, noting that the CAI ought to be renamed "The Council for Raising the Standards of Taste of the British Public"; similarly the *Birmingham Post* endorsed the democratization

of art: "Miners, engineers, agricultural labourers, clerks, grocers, professional men, must all have their art training."[89] *The Times* compared the report favorably with Plato's *Republic*, which also argued that good citizens should be raised in an aesthetic environment.[90] The *Builder* supported Pick's aim of integrating the country through the promotion of common cultural standards, including that of fitness for purpose:

> What is needed is nothing less than the gradual reestablishment of the agreed basis of criticism and appreciation founded on something more solid than shifting aesthetic whims and fashions. . . . Nowadays a common tradition can only be developed through a well-grounded national system of education. . . . Appreciation, if it is to be an effective criticism, must be founded not on mere caprice, nor yet on any abstract theory of form, but on insight into the practical considerations of utility and on the right use of materials on which design is based.[91]

These responses concurred with Pick's belief that design was important for cultural as well as for economic reasons. The *Daily Telegraph* noted accurately that the government would not have published *Education for the Consumer* if there had not been "substantial economic advantages [that] can be discerned in the background of the Council's report," but cultural advantages were clearly in the foreground.[92]

While the press response was favorable, members of the Board of Education disliked Pick's incursion into their territory. He was characterized as an interloper by R. S. Wood, who contended that had the CAI report been written by someone more qualified in the field of education "some things in it would not have been said at all, others would have been said differently, and anything that was said would have been said with more authority."[93] E. G. Savage felt that Pick's entire approach was misguided. Savage represented precisely the traditional English attitude toward art and the public that Pick and other medieval modernists were crusading against. Savage did not believe that art appreciation could be taught in elementary and secondary schools and disliked the report's call for compulsory changes at the local authority level. He was diametrically opposed to other assertions made by the council, including its insistence on the unity of the arts: "it is unforgivable to attempt to get away with an impossible programme by confusing art with crafts. . . . [T]here is little metaphysical or psychological clarity behind the arguments advanced by the Council, and this leads to many similar confusions in the Report." The way to teach aesthetic appreciation, Savage argued, was through the study of literature, not the visual arts. He also wondered why the council did not focus on the public schools, as it was their graduates who set the standards of fashion and taste. Savage argued that since public schools offered less art education than state-sponsored secondary schools, it followed that visual-art education could not be that important.[94]

Pick was not interested in Savage's opinions, however, and made up a list of "the practical points upon which we should expect action by the Board of Education, and I will see Mr. Savage and endeavor to persuade him to take that action."[95] This was the beginning of a series of confrontations between Pick and

the board. The board did respond to the report by revising their manual of "Suggestions for Teachers"; as noted earlier, the separate chapters on "Art" and "Craft" of the 1927 edition were combined into a single chapter on "Art and Handicraft" in the 1937 edition. In addition, the board issued a pamphlet on elementary school buildings that recommended integrating art and craft rooms, acquiring more equipment, and establishing a brighter and cleaner environment for students. The board's art inspector, R. S. Wood, believed that new senior schools were complying with the recommendations of the report by providing special rooms for art and craft education and that in general "more time and attention is increasingly being given to these subjects."[96] Pick and his council were having an affect on national education, but he wanted more than suggestions and recommendations. He wanted results—immediately.

Pick found that the London County Council, which was controlled by the Labour party, was far more hospitable to his ideas than the more conservative Board of Education, and he turned to the LCC as a patron of his projects. The LCC was interested in educational innovation and counted two experts on children's art—Marion Richardson and R. R. Tomlinson—among its educational staff. In order to demonstrate the feasibility of the proposals in *Education for the Consumer*, Pick suggested to Herbert Morrison that the LCC commission the CAI to design and equip an elementary central school.[97] The LCC was willing to finance the project, even though the proposed new school would cost more than other schools.

Pick commissioned Oliver Hill, an architect and member of the CAI, to design the building. Like Charles Holden, Hill was versed in the arts and crafts tradition and had helped to introduce the modern style of architecture to England. He believed in the union of the arts; in his design for the Midland Hotel in Morecombe in the mid-thirties he incorporated works by Eric Gill, Eric Ravilious, Marion Dorn, and Duncan Grant (and he himself designed many of the fixtures, including the piano).[98] He had been the architect for the Dorland Hall Exhibition of Industrial Art arranged by Pick and the DIA in 1933, and Pick had been impressed with Hill's commitment to the medieval modernist project of integrating art with life, consumption with conscience. Hill was very excited by the opportunity to demonstrate how future schools ought to be constructed, just as Holden had enthused over the opportunity to create a new style of architecture that would integrate London visually. Hill wrote enthusiastically to Pick in October 1935 that "Nothing, in the course of my career, has thrilled me as much as the opportunity this School offers, of far reaching implications, and I look upon it as a gift from Heaven."[99] He hoped that within a year the CAI would be asked to take on similar pathbreaking architectural projects, such as a Children's Museum in the East End and "many other concerns bearing upon our ultimate aim, the Education of the Public."[100]

The Board of Education tried to quash Pick and Hill's enthusiasm by querying if the CAI was qualified to take on such a task,[101] but they could not interfere with the LCC's decision. Pick and Hill agreed that the school should be, in Hill's paraphrase of Le Corbusier, "an essentially practical machine for teaching in" and that its beauty should emerge from its fitness for purpose.[102] Hill planned a school that would have plenty of natural light and ventilation; there would be ramps instead of stairs so that children would not hurt them-

selves on sharp edges if they fell. To complement the modern urbanity of the architecture each child would be assigned a garden plot, with the aim of fostering the child's love of nature and sense of personal responsibility: the school would be a garden city in miniature.[103] Unfortunately, the LCC could not secure the proposed site of the school because part of it had been leased to the Southern Railroad, which would not grant permission for construction. The LCC found a new location for the school by the end of December 1937, but the entire project seems to have fallen through, perhaps because of more stringent economies implemented in the face of war.[104]

Pick continued to work with the LCC to publicize the CAI's suggestions for educational reform. In January 1937 the CAI and the LCC presented an exhibition of "Design in Education" at the county hall. It attracted 10,600 visitors (many of them teachers).[105] Pick's introduction to the exhibition catalog stressed both the moral function of art education—exposure to beautiful things at an early age will create virtuous citizens—and the positive economic consequences resulting from an educated public demanding well-designed products from English industry. The catalog, like the exhibition, was intended to demonstrate that art and life were integral and to show how each academic subject could be used to inculcate aesthetic principles in young minds. Marion Richardson wrote on penmanship as a form of art; Walter Gropius explained how mathematics taught an appreciation for form, proportion, and harmony; an essay on science showed how fitness for purpose could be taught by using natural organisms as examples, and an essay on geography suggested that students be instructed that much of the environment was man-made and subject to human improvement or despoilation.[106] Later that year the LCC summarized the recommendations of *Education for the Consumer* and distributed it to their teachers.[107] Thus, while the council's report did not lead to the mandated changes in education throughout the country that Pick had demanded, it did affect the educational recommendations of the Board of Education and the LCC, and it probably influenced the education practices of numerous teachers and institutions. One teacher may have spoken for many in praising *Education for the Consumer* for its emphasis on the social function of art: "I felt when I read it that Art teaching had been lifted out of its academic niche and given a place in the world of affairs."[108]

Pick pressed for more educational reforms, to the considerable annoyance of members of the Board of Education. When the board, early in 1935, set up an interdepartmental committee under Lord Hambledon to explore how the RCA could be changed to meet the needs of industry, Pick immediately formed his own committee on design training to supply the Hambledon Committee with information and, more importantly, suggestions on how these changes could be implemented immediately. To explore ways in which the RCA might be changed, Pick met with Walter Gropius in January 1935. Gropius had emigrated to England in 1934 to escape the Nazis, and Pick, who had been enormously impressed with Gropius's work at the Bauhaus, wanted to know "how Dr. Gropius converted the skilled craftsman into the designer."[109] Despite the fact that Gropius spoke little English, Pick did learn that the Bauhaus combined "fine art" training with more technical training for industry within a single school (a monotechnic), unlike the English trend of separating art schools from technical schools.

Pick contemplated changing the English system to monotechnics and hoped that Gropius could be given a position at the RCA or on the board's art inspectorate. The board became alerted to Pick's new foray into national education policy when Pick wrote them on 22 February 1935 about his sense that "[Gropius] certainly might be of use to our Council for Art and Industry when we have got a little further with our notion to set up, say, a central pottery school in Stoke, a central textile school in Manchester, and so forth. He would be just the sort of person to go round and bring all these schools up to some sort of standard."[110] Gropius refused the board's offer to hire him as a visiting lecturer,[111] but this must have been less galling to the board than Pick's offhand revelation about creating a new series of schools on the monotechnic model. On the other hand, Pick had not made any elaborate proposals, so the board may have felt that his interest in creating monotechnics would fade as soon as he recognized the difficulty of changing an entrenched system.

If so, they underestimated his tenacity. On 25 July the board heard once again from Pick, who now expressed dissatisfaction with the separation of technical schools from art schools in Lancashire. He wanted to see a combination of art and technical training in a single institution, like the Bauhaus, and he had decided it was time to make some concrete changes:

> The only way in which we shall make an art school popular will be to bring the technical aspect of design foremost and actually put machinery into the new art school. I am inclined to think that if the manufacturers saw machinery in the art school they would think quite differently of it. They would feel more at home. They look a little lost when they see easels and casts and pictures. They are not happy with such things; but give them a loom or a lathe and they feel quite happy. I had not thought of the problem in this way before but now I am determined to give a different aspect to the art school.[112]

His mention of "looms" and "lathes" indicated that Pick was still thinking in terms of the traditional industries rather than the new light industries, but his proposal for a monotechnic combining art and industrial instruction was nevertheless a significant step toward providing a more specialized and practical training for industrial artists, similar to the stillborn proposal for more directed vocational training embodied in the 1911 report on the RCA.

Eaton of the board cautiously responded that while the board intended to maintain the polytechnic system, it would consider recommending the placement of machines in some art schools, provided that there was no duplication between local art and technical schools.[113] The letter was a tactful rebuff of Pick's scheme, and Pick sent a cool but tactful reply: "As you say, we shall have to come to some decision upon the matter soon."[114] He was using the royal "we."

Pick made his decision in mid-August, after reading the board's proposal for improving the technical education of workers at the potteries in Stoke. He felt that the question of design education had been addressed inadequately, and that the most effective solution would be to have a single institution devoted to both technical and design training: "The more I think about this problem the more difficulty I see in getting any clear line of demarcation between technical

and art education. . . . [T]he proposals for an art school as indicated in the memorandum would be quite inadequate to meet the needs which we have in mind."[115] Eaton pointed out in exasperation that the school Pick wanted to institute "is in substance a Monotechnic on Continental lines." The Board of Education had specifically decided against monotechnics when it had issued Circular 1432 in 1933, which called for a greater regional cooperation between art schools and technical schools to meet the needs of local industries. Eaton stated firmly that he was "not convinced that any widespread development of Monotechnics in this country is either desirable or practicable, or that we have not a satisfactory alternative in the close and effective collaboration of the Technical School and the Art School."[116] Pick, through his secretary this time, responded with a short statement that he would propose to his council that they should form a committee in Stoke consisting of the CAI, the local education authorities, and local industrialists to plan a new type of school.[117]

Thus Pick intended to ignore the plans of the Board of Education and appeal directly to the local authorities. In a minute to his superiors Eaton marveled at Pick's temerity, but did not know what to do about it: "In fact, here we have the Council proposing to frame a scheme of their own for education, Technical as well as Art, for the Pottery industry at Stoke, to which the local education authorities and the Board will then be expected to give effect. It is a novel and sufficiently embarrassing position!"[118]

Pick met with representatives of the pottery industry and Staffordshire education authorities in Stoke-on-Trent on 10 January 1936 to persuade them to adopt his idea of a monotechnic that would specialize in training designers for the pottery industry. He told them he wanted to see instituted "an entirely new type of institution" that would combine art with technics: "Art should be linked with technology; a common and justifiable criticism of the artist is that he runs away from technique, just as the technical man is all too prone to ignore art." This was a significant challenge to the prevailing concept of the industrial artist, as well as a significant step toward professionalizing the artist as designer.

Nevertheless, the traditional suspicion of the specialist still lingered: Pick reassured his audience that the dangers of an artist developing too narrow an outlook at a monotechnic would be mitigated by a finishing course at the Royal College of Art, in which wider issues of design would be addressed. In addition, the stigma of attending a "trade school" would be removed if the local monotechnic were designed to have a university atmosphere, including recreational facilities and a club for old boys. Industrialists would hire the school's graduates and send their own sons to it, as well as cooperate with it in developing new lines of research. Managers, buyers, and travelers would attend to learn principles of design that they would then apply to their own areas of commerce. Pick thought the school should become the National College for Pottery, to which students would come from throughout the country. He may have been appealing to Staffordshire civic pride and made the plan more attractive by indicating that the Stoke school might be the first of many that would be directed to local industries—if the pottery school was a success there could be a monotechnic for the wool industry at Bradford, the cotton and rayon industries at Manchester, and so on.

The Pottery Federation approved Pick's plan. One member expressed particular appreciation that Pick had described a monotechnic that would be liberal rather than "narrow." The local education authorities also liked Pick's plan and agreed to set up a committee with the CAI and the Pottery Federation to discuss how it could be implemented.[119]

Members of the Board of Education were livid. They believed Pick was undermining their credibility and usurping their function. Pick obviously had no idea about "the political difficulties of any scheme such as he had lightheartedly suggested"—to say nothing of the outrage from those who might feel that art education "was being debauched to minister to the needs of employers."[120] Mr. Wood wrote a lengthy report to the president of the board, Oliver Stanley, as "the present position is a source of embarrassment to the Board and is liable to become increasingly so." Wood noted that Pick was taking advantage of the council's wide terms of reference to implement an educational policy that ran counter to the policy of the board, and that more explicit terms and limitations ought to be set for the council to prevent it from encroaching on general educational issues. Wood made it clear that Pick was following his own agenda without even consulting the CAI, let alone the Board of Education. While the CAI had not yet endorsed Pick's proposals,

> The Chairman has formed the strongest personal views as to the steps which should be taken to reorganize Art Schools, at least in areas where there is a local staple industry. . . . He has arrived at this policy without any adequate evidence. . . . Nevertheless, in these circumstances, and knowing also that the Board sees serious difficulties in the way of such a scheme, which cuts right across the existing organization and their whole policy for the organisation of the Art Colleges on a regional basis, Mr. Pick does not scruple to push his policy publicly as Chairman of the Council.[121]

Wood also noted that Pick outlined publicly the direction that the Royal College of Art would take when reconstituted, before the CAI had issued its own report and before the Hambledon Committee had made any recommendations of its own to the Board of Education. Wood demanded that the CAI's role should be limited to advising the board on the requirements of industry, as Pick was creating his own educational policy: "It is intolerable that a definite policy for educational organization should be pursued in this way by the Chairman of the Council in advance of any report from the Council and before the Board have had the opportunity to review the educational position on the side both of Art and technology in the light of such information as the Council can give on the needs of industry in respect of designers."[122]

Pick's ideas might have been less intolerable if he were not turning them into reality, rendering the Board of Education hostage to his own project. Wood noted that several local education authorities had submitted schemes for approval to the board that would bring art and technical colleges into greater regional cooperation, as advocated by the board's Circular 1432. But the board was unable to approve such schemes because Pick was following an alternate policy and the board could not look as if it were disregarding "the 'Council's' deliberations." Indeed, "Mr. Pick has . . . in private conference more or less

indicated that we should hold our hands until he says the way is clear," so the board was forced to suspend action on a policy it had determined to be the most effective way of improving industrial art education. Pick's scheme, on the other hand, would mean an entirely new educational system. Even worse, he was bringing it to pass: "It is hardly an exaggeration to say that at the moment the initiative in administration of art education seems to be passing from the hands of the Board into the hands of Mr. Pick."[123]

Oliver Stanley, the president of the board, met with Pick in February 1936 to work out their differences. While R. S. Wood had felt that the CAI should be limited to giving information to the board on the requirements of industries, Pick insisted that the CAI had a right to look into education as part of its general mandate. Stanley and Pick reached an agreement whereby two members of the Board of Education would be added to the council to provide expert advice.[124] Pick also agreed to work within the board's scheme of coordinating art and technical schools rather than creating an entirely new system of monotechnics, noting in his October 1936 draft report of "Design and the Designer in Industry" that

> It has been suggested to us that the art training provided in schools of this type may tend to develop along rather narrow lines and to be subordinated unduly to trade practice, and that the gain accruing from specialization and concentration might easily be more than offset by the impoverishment resulting from an art training completely separated from other branches of art. . . . It is clear that we must at present attempt to meet the needs of industry by the development of the system of art education as it now exists in this country, rather than attempt to replace that system by one organized on entirely different lines.[125]

The 1936 Hambledon Report followed this policy, with the result that industrial art education in England remained largely unchanged until after the war. Pick later regretted compromising with the board over the matter of monotechnics—the local education authorities had been willing to follow his plan, after all—but in 1936 he still believed that the artist could serve as a designer for industry as long as he or she received technical training alongside artistic training. His compromise with the board indicated that he was still in favor of the broad concept of the artist as craftsman/designer rather than the narrower concept of the designer as a new type of industrial technician. While he was becoming increasingly worried that some examples of modern art were "pathological" in their emphasis on personal expression, he did not dismiss modern art or artists on their account. Instead, he believed that through a more rigorous training in industrial techniques artists would acquire self-discipline and would be better able to express the collective, living spirit of nature rather than their own self-effusions.[126] At this point he believed that the designer should have a similar status and compensation to a trained technician, but he refused to conflate the two. He still had faith in the new "artist-craftsman," trained in "technics," as "the backbone of advance and improvement."[127]

Nevertheless, with his recent insistence on the union of art and technics, and his demand for a higher level of technical training for artists, Pick had

made a crucial step toward the establishment of a new concept of the designer in England. No advocate for the integration of artists into industry had argued as forcibly for artists having modern technical training as had Pick, and no other individual had come as close to creating a system of monotechnics on the continental model: few chairmen of government councils would have circumvented so brazenly their sponsoring board and appealed directly to the local authorities as did Pick. After 1936 he took an even greater step that contributed not only to the creation of a design profession in England, but also contributed to the demise of the medieval modernist enterprise. After 1936 Frank Pick, the staunch proponent of the union of the arts and an influential promoter of the new styles in visual art, called for the conceptual separation of the artist and the professional designer and vehemently disavowed his association with modern art.

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THE RETURN OF THE
BATHING BEAUTIES, 1936–1941

*But to return to the point, the writer says: 'Let Britain be gay'.
Why should Britain be gay? That is not a national character-
istic. The Briton is solid, industrious, careful, sober, at work
and in art.*

FRANK PICK[1]

WE HAVE SEEN THAT PICK HAD AMBIVALENT feelings concerning modern art by the thirties. He had hoped that modern art was the manifestation of a new living spirit that would restore an organic community in a secular age, a new form of religious expression suited to a world in need of contemporary symbols expressing the underlying form, balance, and harmony of existence. As he told the art students at the Central School of Arts and Crafts in 1934, modern physics revealed the "mysterious continuum" of spirit that underlay and conjoined all of nature, and modern art—cubism, pointillism, surrealism—reflected and expressed these new scientific discoveries. Art schools must help usher in the new art and cease pursuing antiquated practices like copying from casts: "Forms of art have changed. Walt Disney and Film. The machine. Not as conscious of it in art schools as we should be."[2] Long before English "pop art" was inaugurated in the 1950s by the Independent Group, which contended that mass culture was a legitimate form of art, Pick was trying to institutionalize the new "living art" of film and animation by having them recognized as such in the nation's art schools.

But Pick always feared that artists could easily lose sight of their moral responsibilities to society and engage thoughtlessly in hedonistic forms of self-expression, rather than work toward the revelation of the higher Self through submission to the law of fitness for purpose. Genuine artistic freedom could only be expressed within the context of purposeful social activity, thereby reconciling the diversity of individual expression with the unity of cosmic law: "This freedom! Right only within some framework of style. How to reach this & realize it. By coordination & cooperation in a common task."[3] Pick turned to education to ensure that the next generation of citizens would be instructed in

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the right principles of art so that they could fulfill the common task of creating an organic community, an Aesthetic State, a new family.

Modern artists would be taught a similar form of self-discipline through being integrated into industry, because they would be forced to adhere to industry's technical requirements. In a report on design and designers in industry drafted in May 1936, Pick argued that designers should have the same status and recognition as technicians, and this required a reconceptualization of design education: designers must be "trained in economic and commercial aspects of design and in technical processes." Design also required teamwork: "Teamwork often not acceptable to the artist as individualist but must be acceptable to industrial designer." Pick cited the testimony of Lenox Lee, an industrialist, for this last point, but he did not agree with Lee's contention that the industrial designer was an artisan rather than an artist.[4] In this report Pick still referred to the industrial designer as an "artist-craftsman" and still welcomed the influx of responsible painters and sculptors into industry, even if they lacked any specific training. Following his brief foray into the creation of monotechnics, however, Pick now wanted to professionalize design and give it the status and rigorous training accorded to professional technicians: "Designers a valuable and necessary class in industry. How to create and establish this class and fill it with reliable and reputable exponents fitted for industry." He wanted designers to be technicians and modern artists: "Art and technology organically one. Both suffer from the divorce. Technology becomes dry and formless. Art becomes loose and useless. Their reunion therefore essential. The artist-craftsman the backbone of advance and improvement."[5]

But after July 1936 Pick dropped the term "artist-craftsman" in favor of "craftsman" (which he used interchangeably with "technician") and abjured his entire involvement with modern art. Until that time he had established a balance in his own mind between the benefits and dangers of modern art and continued to welcome the new "living art" as long as it was expressed in a socially responsible form. What happened, then, in mid-1936 to upset this equilibrium and to cause Pick to decisively reject modern art?

An obvious answer would link Pick's change of heart to the opening of the International Surrealist Exhibition in London in June 1936. Certainly surrealism was to become Pick's bête noire, representing all his fears about the irrational, anarchic potential of the new art. But Pick's secretary Anthony Bull recalled that his comments on the exhibition were fairly moderate. They lacked the embittered hostility he was later to vent against surrealism. He told Bull after returning from the exhibition that some of the artists drew with considerable skill, and he regretted that they did not apply their talents to some fitter purpose.[6] Indeed, Pick had been aware of the French surrealists as early as 1934 and did not fulminate against them at the time, as his remarks about their work to the Central School indicated.[7] Surrealism, then, was a necessary but not a sufficient cause for Pick's sudden repudiation of aesthetic modernism.

The cause, it seems, was more personal. Surrealism became the external symbol and manifestation of several long-held dreams gone sour, a convenient scapegoat upon which Pick projected the many frustrations of his life that had been mounting inexorably in the thirties. He was not just frustrated with the diverse directions taken by modern art. He was frustrated with the limited

progress he was making at the Council for Art and Industry and the London Passenger Transport Board. He was clearly overworked, which might not have had such ill effects on a man of his driven temperament if he had continued to get his way. But Pick could no longer play the benevolent dictator. At the CAI he had to fight and compromise with the Board of Education and other legislative bodies. The new London Passenger Transport Board also prevented him from acting as a romantic "Captain of Industry," as he had been used to doing as a leading executive of the Underground Group. In 1935 he delivered "Some Reflections on the Administration of a Public Utility Undertaking," a talk that expressed his new sense of the inevitability of entropy—"It is indeed a law of death"—rather than the sense of inevitable progress that had characterized his talks in the twenties.[8] He complained that under the new public board he was not able to experiment or take risks, which he had been able to do under private enterprise. He regretted the fact that the new public utility was subject to interference by "inquisitive and irresponsible guardians of the public interest" and wondered aloud if "the freedom and even healthy perversity of private enterprise [could] be sustained. It is questionable."[9] The board was only two years old and was operating at a loss; this was to be expected with a major undertaking that had yet to establish itself, but Pick was already discussing its dissolution: "The London Passenger Transport Board is young indeed but age will come upon it and it must know when to retire if it would be happy and well-remembered."[10] Pick may have been referring unwittingly to his own position; he sensed that he ought to quit while he was ahead. But he was temperamentally incapable of retiring. "Jonah" was like the leviathan: if he ceased to move he would expire.

His feelings of dissatisfaction with his own life continued to be projected onto the board and its operations. In a speech to the board in 1937, Pick feared that declining revenues indicated that the LPTB was heading toward "stasis"— undoubtedly triggering his own terror of stagnation and decay. If the board's revenues did not increase, Pick suggested that the money spent on the system's "appearance values" be cut before fares were raised, for "the price of travel must always be the dominant determination of policy."[11] Pick never placed art ahead of basic needs, but his willingness to sacrifice the Underground as aesthetic exemplar in order to retain affordable fares must have hurt. Much of his self-esteem derived from his work to unify and aestheticize London through the design of the transport system. As his aspirations were challenged in the late thirties by bureaucratic and financial constraints, so too was his own fragile sense of self.

The veneer of order that Pick had built up over the years, and was now trying desperately to keep intact, appears to have been shattered by the clandestine marriage of his personal secretary, Beryl Barker, to one of Pick's assistants, Alec Valentine, early in July 1936.[12] She had worked directly for Pick since 1928, but she had known him since she was thirteen, when he spotted her walking her dog at the Hampstead Garden suburbs where they both lived. Pick was attracted by Barker's exuberance and lack of self-consciousness— "postimpressionist" qualities that he lacked—and he invited her to his house to play tennis. They became friends, and he eventually helped her get a job as his secretary at the Underground. He treated her as both a daughter and as a

platonic companion. He became jealous whenever he saw her talk to another man, Barker recalled, and took her to task when she violated his strict code of morality: he told her she had been wrong to accept free lemonade from one admirer and that it had been a mistake for her to date a pilot from the RAF. (Dashing pilots had reputations.) He once took her on a cruise with his own adopted daughter and kept a vigilant eye on Barker for the duration of the trip.

Barker thought Pick was a genius, with an extraordinary capacity to observe and act upon tiny details; working for him, she recalled, had been one of the greatest privileges of her life. But she also felt very sorry for him. Barker believed that his marriage was an unhappy one and that he did not have any close ties with his family; he often told her how much he envied the closeness of her own family. Although Pick praised "common sense" as one of the highest of virtues, Barker felt it was a quality he lacked in his own life. He would take her out to dinner, but these outings tended to be embarrassing, because he could not refrain from scrupulously examining the cutlery and china, testing them to ensure they were fit for their purpose. He would take her out to the opera—he loved Wagner—and she noted that, for a man who emphasized the importance of appearance, his own clothes never quite fit and his hair usually needed trimming. And while Pick could be very generous, and loved to give away small presents that he acquired during his trips, he could also be cruel to those who did not meet his exacting standards. He fired one secretary simply because he noticed nicotine stains on her fingers; smoking women were immoral women. Once, when Alec Valentine came to visit Barker in the office prior to their marriage, Pick stormed into the room, demanding that such "lolling and smirking" never take place again.

Barker and Valentine understandably kept their relationship a secret. On 9 July, when the two were officially on holiday, Pick received a card from Valentine announcing the wedding, apologizing for "stealing such a fine secretary."[13] Pick was devastated. He immediately sent the couple a large painting by C. R. W. Nevinson as a wedding present and then asked if he could join them during their honeymoon at the Salzburg Music Festival because things were dull at the office. He complained of a loss of "pep and vitality" to a correspondent that month. Perhaps, the correspondent replied, Pick was simply suffering from overwork.[14]

Beryl Barker's unexpected departure in July 1936 appears to have been a major blow to the fragile "community" of work and relationships that Pick had gradually established for himself since the war. The bounded world that he had successfully dominated in the twenties was already under challenge by the new organization of the LPTB and the complex compromises required of the CAI. The marriage in July, in conjunction with the intense publicity given to a school of art that reveled in the irrational and the sensual, underscored Pick's sense that everything he had worked to achieve—an ordered, aesthetic, and rational world of common bonds, the harmonious family he had never had as a child—was suddenly collapsing, or perhaps had been chimerical from the start.

He probably felt betrayed by Barker: this would help explain his sudden and furious reaction against modern art after July 1936 when he accused modern artists of betraying their calling. Modern art no longer embodied universal,

unchanging standards; instead it was fickle and capricious, self-absorbed and irresponsible. It was the antithesis of a new moral and spiritual order, rather than its harbinger. Pick now condemned modern artists for engaging in excessive "freedom" to the detriment of a common morality and community. He had noted the potential for artistic modernism to spin out of control in the past, but after July 1936 the new art was beyond recovery. In July there was a divorce as well as a marriage.

Following Beryl Barker's departure and surrealism's arrival, Pick decided that modern art celebrated solely the subjective and the irrational. The new art was directly to blame for society's ills—and indirectly for his own, as he indicated in a talk that November: "All this laxity and disorderliness and uncritical attitude finds its correspondence in an immorality, breaking up the family as a unit in civilized life. It is easy to condemn the hypocrisy of the Victorians but it should be easy equally to condemn the shamelessness and promiscuity of the Neo-Edwardians."[15] The breakup of the family, hypocrisy, shamelessness, and promiscuity: it is "easy equally" to see Pick unconsciously conflating those two painful events of June–July and harshly rejecting the one because he could not publicly reject the other. His increased references to disease and decay at this time similarly express his own sense of spiritual and physical malaise.

After July 1936 his remarks on modern art grew increasingly vitriolic, with few positive qualifications. Surrealism bore the brunt of his hostility, but he began to reconceptualize all modern movements in the light of surrealism's sins. A striking instance occurred when Pick addressed students of the Royal College of Art in February 1937. He tried to convince his audience not to be swayed by the immoral temptations of the surrealists, who "profess, as I understand it, to shut themselves up in their minds and to set down whatever untutored and unaided responses they find therein. Yet who would dare to say that their work was not sophisticated, artificial, even pathological, or to affirm that it was representative of the creative spirit or purpose."[16] He demanded that the students return to the discipline of reason, which would enable them to find a new constructive order or pattern for the world: "In spite of the surrealist I may claim that progress has been and will be the enlargement of the province of reason. Man represents the reign of reason. It is his distinguishing quality. It is his duty to establish its kingdom."[17]

In earlier talks Pick had argued that modern art had emerged from and evinced this rational approach. Cubism, he had stated in 1934, reflected the new discoveries in modern physics;[18] at other times he had indicated that the modern artist's emphasis on abstract forms revealed the artist's understanding of the Platonic forms underlying nature, in addition to meeting the requirements of modern industry and advertising for "living" forms fit for their particular purposes. But now the man who had done so much to legitimate modern art in England negated what he had said earlier and tried to convince a new generation of art students to avoid the "coteries and cliques" of the new movements:

> Abstract art often denies utterly the common human heritage. Cubist art goes so far as to deny the basic properties and principles of space and matter. Abstruseness makes of art a hieroglyphic and of artists a

priestly caste without the justification that the priests of old . . . may have had. Abstruseness denies common humanity. All these movements deal with forms of art, that is the curious aspect that they have in common. They never deal with the substance of art. Simply to read a list of the names of recent movements in art is surely to scent disease and decay. The mere fact of their number is significant that something is wrong. Can the living art be enshrined in any one of them, or in all of them together for that matter? Impressionism, post-impressionism, primitivism, cubism, futurism, expressionism, abstractionism, dadaism, surrealism—that is still an incomplete list and it were extremely funny if it were not so forbidding. It reads most like a catalogue of ills. I have nothing but contempt for the charlatanism, the self-advertisement, the vulgarity and almost obscenity, the slickness and slackness of much that poses as modern or contemporary art, that insults the common intelligence. Art speaks in one form or another a universal language. It is giving form or substance to something intangible and mystical but it may not speak in hieroglyphs.[19]

Pick still appeared to appreciate some examples of modern art. He praised the surrealist (albeit "classical") work of Giorgio de Chirico, although in the next breath he condemned the "late fatuities" of Paul Klee.[20] On the whole, however, modern art lacked purpose, concentration, perseverance, sincerity, and austerity. Indeed, Pick now appeared to contrast modern art with industrial art, unlike his earlier conception of "design" that integrated modern art and industrial art:

These industrial arts have a great advantage in these days in which we have to purge ourselves of the swarm of '-isms' that have beset and confounded art of the so-called 'fine' category. . . . In these undisciplined days it is good that the artist should have to submit to the discipline of the material, of the process, and within that discipline to find for himself his freedom to express the art that is in him.[21]

In this speech Pick did not explicitly distinguish industrial design from modern art, as he was to do subsequently—he even attempted to assuage those students favorable to modernism by allowing that "constructivism, cubism, abstractionism, may find opportunity for the practice of their principles without falseness or strain in some part of the industrial field."[22] But he did not mean it. The early exponent of modern art had now become its staunch opponent. A month earlier Paul Nash and E. McKnight Kauffer, the two artists on the Council for Art and Industry, retired; Pick did not replace them with other artists, but instead added more representatives from the business community.[23] And three days before this speech, Pick wrote to B. J. Fletcher about a recent disagreement he had had with the Federation of British Industries (FBI) and the Board of Education. The FBI and the board continued to maintain that artists should be integrated with industry, but Pick now believed this was an unwise approach. He had come to agree with Fletcher that industrial designers were different from artists and should receive a different form of training—a point he had been unwilling to concede to Fletcher in 1934.[24] He apologized to

Fletcher for compromising with the FBI and the board in order to secure a unanimous report: "Being of the world one has to temper one's action to the world and, so long as on balance something good results, I seem prepared to do this. I am not of the fierce missionary type which remains recalcitrant, serving an ideal at any length. You will have to forgive me my venial sin. I maybe compromise far too easily and serve expediency too well, alas."[25] In a letter to Fletcher a few months later, Pick decided that any involvement with modern art was more than a venial sin and explicitly repudiated his earlier pioneering efforts at integrating modern art with modern life: "I have come to the conclusion that practically all modernistic methods are bad and that we must go back a long way and build again on the old foundations. I am certainly not going to encourage modern art anymore myself."[26]

By the "old foundations," Pick meant a return to an idea of craftsmanship that emphasized the rigorous adherence to technical and functional demands over individualistic expression. Prior to 1936, Pick loosely used terms like *fine art* (or "so-called 'fine art'"), *industrial art, graphic art, design,* and *craft* as synonyms for the indivisible activity of art. But after 1936, Pick reinstated the distinctions among these terms that he had spent much of his life contesting. He identified modern art as being a "fine esoteric art," individualistic, self-indulgent, elitist, and morally irresponsible. Craftsmanship, on the other hand, was "the true art and not the fine esoteric art."[27] The modern equivalent of the "craftsman" was the professional technician, an expert in the specific rules and limitations of his craft. The industrial designer, then, was—or ought to be—a professional technician and not a modern artist (or "artist-craftsman" or "industrial artist"). The modern artist had a false idea of freedom as the expression of the self, whereas the professional designer, restrained by the discipline of the craft, would come to the understanding that "Freedom is not doing as we like. It is making our own laws and having the courage . . . to honour them while they last. It is surrendering our own personal point of view to share in the common point of view, so as to make it prevail for the benefit of all."[28]

In numerous speeches and articles, Pick now demanded that the designer be trained as a specialist, contrasting the discipline of the professional designer with the hedonism of the artist. Education for the industrial designer should not mix art and design classes, as was currently the case, but should instead focus specifically on materials, industrial processes, and the operation of machines: education must be narrow to be broad.[29] He regretted ever compromising with the Board of Education; it was now absolutely clear to him "that their curricula are wrong, that their aims are wrongly directed, that their examination standards are almost silly and perverse. They know it but they move so tediously towards a new root conception of education."[30] Pick believed there must be "art schools of a new sort in which design and technology are pursued together with the emphasis on design, in which the discipline of technical considerations keeps design from wayward and foolish fancy." In earlier speeches, he had referred to the union of "art and technology"; here it was a union of "design and technology." Now he wanted "a new valuation of design as a contribution to commerce, in a new recognition of the designer as a professional expert."[31] Properly designed objects could be works of art, as art was

the spirit or quality that distinguished good work, but for Pick design and art were no longer synonymous—they could go their separate ways: "But if art may be put aside as something given by grace, design is integral in appearance values. Design is something purposed, fit for its function, economical of material and labour, sound in form and construction. . . . It is intelligence made visible."[32] *Design,* once a more encompassing term than *art,* now was used in a more restricted sense.

Pick's new conception of the designer as a professional technician represented a significant change from the prevailing English tradition of the designer as "artist-craftsman" or "industrial artist." It is true that in England in the thirties there were other attempts to recognize design as a distinct profession: the CAI had made the creation of a national register for designers one of its first priorities in 1935;[33] the Royal Society of Arts established the honorific title of "Royal Designer for Industry" for a select number of designers in 1936, and the CAI formally established its National Register of Industrial Designers in 1937. But, unlike the American industrial design profession, these initial English attempts at establishing design on a professional footing continued to define the designer as an artist rather than as a professional technician. Among the first "industrial designers" included in the National Register were Vanessa Bell, Quentin Bell, Duncan Grant, and Graham Sutherland.[34]

Thus Pick's innovations were twofold, and they were to have far-reaching consequences. He redefined the status of the industrial designer and reinstated the traditional distinction between fine art and design. While he sometimes referred to the designer as a "craftsman," what he now meant was that the designer was a professional technician rather than an "artist." His conception of the designer was closer to the American conception of the design profession as it was established in the 1920s, although he appears unaware of this. "Industrial art" had been largely confined to the traditional craft-based industries: Pick's new emphasis on technics was an important contribution toward making design for the light-metal industries an acceptable conceptual possibility.

True to form, Pick attempted to implement his new conviction immediately. He gave speeches and wrote articles calling for a redefinition of design and the designer; he committed the DIA and the CAI to assist the Royal Society of Arts with its Royal Designer for Industry scheme; he pushed the Board of Trade into establishing the National Register of Industrial Designers and then campaigned for a unification of the diverse design bodies into a single professional organization that would set and monitor design standards.[35] In 1937 he appointed a committee of the CAI to report on "Design and the Designer in the Light Metal Trades": this was the most significant step yet taken in England toward promoting better design and designers in the new light-engineering industries and was a marked change from Pick's earlier lack of interest in design among the more technical industries. The committee completed its report in 1940, echoing the views that Pick had expressed in 1937. They noted that while draughtsmanship was an important skill for the industrial designer, nevertheless

A practical knowledge of all sorts of technics is of the utmost importance to him in the trades under investigation, if the fullest use is to be made of the possibilities which modern science has put at his

disposal. The really successful designer will not only lead the manu-
facturer in matters of appearance but also in the possibilities of the
manufacturing processes and plant.[36]

The report concluded that "the training of the artisan craftsman must be sepa-
rated from that of the designer."[37] Pick approved the committee's findings and
advised the Board of Trade to publish it quickly so that the light industries
could prepare for the renewed export competition that would emerge after the
war. But Pick and the committee's recommendations were still novel in 1940.
The report was not to be published until 1944; in the intervening years its sug-
gestions gradually became the new orthodoxy among government officials,
educationalists, and industrialists, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

   In addition to redefining the status of the industrial designer and reinstat-
ing the distinction between fine art and design, Pick vigorously repudiated
both the prevailing trend toward integrating modern art with modern life and
his own efforts in fostering this trend. Always a spiritual man, he had now un-
dergone a conversion experience. While he continued to maintain that the
spirit of art ought to suffuse industrial products and become an established
feature of the modern world, "modern art" was a source of immorality that
must be exorcised for the good of the community.

   Pick's new perception of modern art was not unlike that of the Nazis, who
premiered their famous "Degenerate Art" exhibition in 1937. Like the me-
dieval modernists, the Nazis applied biologic metaphors to their conceptions
of the nation and art. The medieval modernists, however, had construed mod-
ernism as a healthy, "living art" that expressed the liberal spirit of progress,
whereas the Nazis deemed it degenerate, a "cosmopolitan" infection that
would continue to corrupt the health of the pure Aryan nation unless extir-
pated.[38] Pick had expressed admiration for the Nazis' attempts to create social
solidarity through myths and pageants, as well as the "sense of unity they
brought to a lost and straying people." He may also have been persuaded by
their view of modernism as degenerate rather than vital, as he was used to
thinking about art in evolutionary terms. But one senses that his animus to-
ward modern art was more personal than ideological—especially as he de-
nounced other aspects of fascism.[39]

   Pick's embrace and subsequent dismissal of the new art also superficially
resembled the trajectory of intellectuals on the left who dallied with mod-
ernism before disavowing it for political reasons during the thirties. Georg
Lukács, for example, initially welcomed postimpressionism, only to repudiate
it in favor of a more traditional, "realist" art. Like Pick and so many others,
Lukács had been intrigued by modernism in the years before the First World
War because it seemed to reconcile antinomies within a greater totality. Ac-
cording to Mary Gluck, Lukács construed art as "a unique object of cultural in-
tegration because it embodied at one and the same time the subjective realities
of individuals as well as the coherent value system of a society. Art was the ex-
pression of order and values in the universe, the guarantee of the possibility of
a congruence between inner and outer nature." However, he became disillu-
sioned with the new forms of artistic expression as they proliferated in the in-
terwar period. Rather than expressing the *Weltanschuung* of modern life and

providing new forms that would integrate society, modern art appeared to him to be individualistic and nihilistic, expressing no positive values or direction for action. In the thirties Lukács rejected modernism in favor of more traditional artistic approaches sanctioned by the Communist party, which he believed offered more efficacious responses to modernity.[40] There was also the example of the writers of the "Auden Generation," many of whom tempered their aesthetic experimentalism in the thirties in order to combat the growth of fascism and the seeming paralysis of liberal democracies.[41] Even several of the more apolitical and promodernist aesthetes of the twenties, like Evelyn Waugh, were affected by the changed intellectual tenor of the time and became more conservative in their aesthetic views.[42] Viewed within the wider social context of the decade, then, Pick's own expression of disappointment over modernism's unfulfilled promises might not seem terribly unusual—provided one overlooks how abrupt it was, how total, and how vehement.

Pick's conversion, then, had less to do with the changing fortunes of politics and society in the mid-thirties and more to do with his own declining fortunes. He projected his own personal and professional disappointments on the new art: it was not a God that failed, but a devil that deceived. Prior to 1936 he sometimes criticized what he felt were the excesses of some modernists, but his criticisms were restrained and tolerant, the remarks of a parent trying to channel the energies of a promising but at times too-exuberant child. The unfortunate conjunction of the Surrealist Exhibition and Beryl Barker's marriage had been a tremendous shock: he came to associate surrealism with the destruction of intimacy, of bonds, of a world that could be shaped through reasoned construction, and he then generalized from surrealism to the modern movement as a whole. In 1937 he was diagnosed as suffering from high blood pressure, and from the comments he wrote in the catalog of a modern art exhibition that year, one can almost envision his face flush in anger as he confronted canvas after canvas. Of Matisse's work: "horrible, hasty, vulgar, bad." Rouault: "horrible nasty vulgar. Colour bad." Picasso: "*Willful*[,] prostitutes his talents."[43]

For over twenty years he had promoted modern art and modern artists because he believed the new movement was the "living art" anticipated by William Morris. He now felt he had been deceived and worked to undo his own unwitting deception of the public. Modern art had no place in posters, he told students at the Reimann School for Industrial Art in 1939: "There is nothing to be said in favour of these egregious experiments in modern art. They merely represent the exhausted character of the times and are evidence of the poverty of resource behind the current production of posters. The old ideas are dead; the new ideas have not come to life. We are incapable of the effort to give them birth."[44] In 1934 he had begun to wonder if some of the transport system's advertisements were too abstract to be effective, admitting "sometimes I think we fly much too high over the heads of the passengers."[45] But at the Reimann School he now explicitly criticized the work of his protege E. McKnight Kauffer, whom he had praised so highly a decade earlier.[46] The appropriate style for posters, he now maintained, was the old romantic style of narrative illustration.[47] In another context he welcomed the return of "bathing beauties" in transport posters—they were far more appropriate for conveying information about transport than any statue by Jacob Epstein.[48]

He still hoped that England would be transformed into the Earthly Paradise, but he no longer saw the transformation as imminent. The Periclean Age of his dreams would not be restored within a few generations as he had hoped. But if the public were unlikely to develop a new "living art" or a Grecian grace in the foreseeable future, they could still capitalize on their genius for compromise and achieve sensible social improvements. They were, after all, an eminently practical people who still ruled an empire, no less than the ancient successors to Periclean Athens: "Our best claim will be rather like that of the Romans. Their art was a copy or reflection of the Greek. But they are remembered for their roads and buildings."[49] Pick continued to insist that designers be integrated into industry and that children be taught art in school. But he spent as much time battling the new art as he did in trying to lay the foundations for a new order. The warrior of the kingdom now fought on two fronts, and the strain showed.

While Pick's redefinition of the role of the designer was to contribute to the modernization of England's design industry, his personal antipathy toward modernism and advocacy of more traditional styles contributed to England's isolation from the prevailing international demands for products designed in the modern style. He eschewed the "cosmopolitanism" of the new art and demanded a return to a uniquely English, "provincial" style.[50] He used his power as chairman of the CAI to put his "Little England" views into effect, just as he had ushered in modernism through the Underground.

One of the first casualties of Pick's new policy was the British pavilion at the 1937 International Exhibition in Paris. The CAI was in charge of the pavilion, which meant in effect that Pick was in charge of the pavilion. He once again commissioned Oliver Hill as architect, but made it clear to Hill that the pavilion was to emphasize traditional British design in the arts and crafts.[51] The only contemporary style Pick would countenance was the classical simplicity of modern architecture, provided it was embellished with a modicum of decoration. When Hill wanted to hire the modernist Lazlo Moholy-Nagy to create large photographic murals for the pavilion, Pick adamantly refused:

> With regard to the photographs my only criticism of Mr. Moholy-Nagy is that he is a gentleman with a modernistic tendency who produces pastiches of photographs of a surrealist type, and I am not at all clear that we should fall for this. It is international or at least continental. The pavilion is a British pavilion and Moholy-Nagy has not got the British tradition, I fear. We must not be tempted to copy the latest continental tricks. Let us leave the continent to pursue their own tricks and go our own way traditionally.[52]

The Board of Trade had suggested that the pavilion focus on English clothing, crafts, and sporting goods,[53] and Pick seems not to have demurred from this entirely conventional orientation. Indeed, he boasted that modern furniture had been explicitly rejected in favor of "traditional" British furniture.[54] The pavilion was to celebrate the "common art" of the people praised by Ruskin and Morris, no longer associated by Pick with modernism. He asked Herbert Read for a credo to be displayed at the pavilion entrance, and Read suggested Morris's "Art made by the people and for the people, a joy to the maker and the

user." Pick preferred to paraphrase Ruskin, suggesting "Life without industry is guilt; industry without art is brutality."[55]

Pick succeeded in making the British pavilion a testimony to British conservatism and tradition; it was widely condemned for precisely that reason. The *Studio* politely noted that "although the craftsmanship generally is good and design in many instances is competent, there is little evidence of new inspiration and much of the work is familiar."[56] A young Raymond Williams, cycling through Paris at the time, witnessed "a peculiarly contemptible British pavilion with a large cut-out of Chamberlain and a fishing rod."[57] Kingsley Martin recalled entering the pavilion and viewing displays of golf balls, tennis rackets, polo sets, riding equipment, dinner jackets, photos of the English countryside, and traditional pottery and textiles. "I stared in bewilderment. Could this be England?"[58]

In public, Pick tried to defend the exhibition. It was not drab, conservative, and unimaginative, but rather understated, in contrast to the giant architectural celebrations of nationalist power displayed by the Germans, Italians, and Russians—the British pavilion did not "sound a false, grandiloquent note of aggressive pride."[59] The presence of traditional crafts and the almost complete exclusion of modern styles expressed a democratic spirit: it was better to show "that which is good, if commonplace or everyday-ish" than "that which is unique and extraordinary."[60] He tried to shrug off the negative criticisms, telling Oliver Hill that "another time we shall have to put in some stunt to please the groundlings. This is unfortunate, but I fear not to be avoided."[61] But in private he was hurt and perplexed by the reviews. He had been used to praise for his pioneering efforts, and in these he had followed his "inner light." His new course was just as intensely felt; how could it be a mistake? But he seemed to be stumbling along his newly chosen path. Privately he noted, "Paris a fiasco. Afraid of my other activities. A bit depressing. Even wallpapers [in his office] doubtful."[62]

Pick's conversion puzzled most of his colleagues as well. The vehemence of his reaction against modernism seemed irrational. In addition, he used the CAI to combat modern styles without consulting other members of the council. This was not just a matter of breaching rules or ignoring decorum: Pick's personal campaign to replace contemporary styles of design with "traditional" English styles threatened to diminish the marketability of English exports abroad, where the new modernist styles were clearly in fashion.

A striking example of the new conflicts he provoked in his private war against modern art occurred following the opening in July 1938 of the RCA Art Exhibition of Students' Works in Commercial and Industrial Design. Several of the works were executed in a style Pick considered "surrealist." Without even consulting other members of the council, he fired off a "hot" letter to *The Times*, which had given the exhibition a favorable review, in his capacity as chairman of the council. *The Times* refused to print the letter, advising Pick that his position on the council obliged him to take the matter up privately with the president of the Board of Education, Lord Stanhope.[63] Pick wrote to Stanhope, expressing his "acute disgust" at what he had witnessed at the exhibition: the show represented "a decay of manners and morals." The students were given too much freedom; the teaching at the school obviously lacked

discipline; and since the RCA influenced art teaching throughout the country, the exhibition was clearly a "source of harm and evil. . . . I am not willing that the principal state school should further an art which I deem to be decadent and chaotic, or that under cover of a state school such art should, unchallenged, obtain any support and prestige which it does not deserve."[64] The next day Pick sent a copy of his letter to the members of the council, demanding that they act to change the teaching methods at the RCA "before the present perverse tendencies spread and deterioration sets in the provincial art schools."[65]

Few on the council agreed with Pick; most were astonished and troubled by his outburst and actions.[66] Eric MacLagan wrote to Pick immediately upon receiving the letter, calling it a "bombshell." He praised Pick for all he had done for the reception and legitimation of modern art in the past; "this makes me all the sorrier that in this case I find myself in direct disagreement with you."[67] MacLagan wrote to Lord Stanhope to explain his disagreement with Pick's "rather astonishing communication." "I think I ought to begin by saying that I have a very great appreciation of Pick's services to Art and that in particular I think his courage in employing artists of the more modern school to work for the Transport Board deserves more recognition than it has received." But MacLagan felt that the exhibition was enormously creative and fresh, "the most promising show which has been produced there." Indeed, the students had "shown just those qualities for which there is the greatest demand in the artistic side of industry to-day." Students would not get commissions if they produced the traditional styles Pick desired. He did not understand how Pick could now reject modernism and "suggest that students at a big modern College of Art should work in blinkers." He was dumbfounded by Pick's assertion that some of the work on display was morally objectionable.[68]

MacLagan's views were repeated by others. Percy Jowett, the principal of the RCA, wrote Pick that most reviews of the show were quite positive, including the official report of the College Visitors. Jowett was surprised by Pick's reactionary stance and his "violent" disapproval of the "youthful vitality" on display at the exhibition.[69] Industrialists also supported the show, and two industrialists on the council took Pick to task for his views. Calling the letter a "thunder-clap," H. T. Williams Thomas of the Brierly Hill Glass Works dissociated himself from Pick's views and expressed his anger that Pick did not discuss his letter with other council members before he sent it to the Board of Education.[70] Sir Frederick Marquis delivered a lordly reprimand: "I think the issue really boils down to the extent to which, as Chairman, you are entitled to commit members of the Council without consulting them."[71]

Pick initially tried to rally his friends to support his side of the controversy, but as objections to his position mounted from influential members within the council, industry, and the art world, he made a strategic retreat. He apologized to a member of the RCA council for "the blundering way" he had raised the issue.[72] Recognizing that any full discussion of the exhibition would lead to further censures of his own views, he suggested to the president of the Board of Education that the whole issue be postponed until next year's RCA Student Exhibition.[73]

But from where, and to where, was he retreating? The RCA imbroglio

added to Pick's growing sense of dissociation from the times, of being an out-cast from the kingdom. He told the new president of the Board of Education, Earl de la Warr, that the governors of the RCA clearly did not "speak the same language as I do in this matter, for I find it difficult to relate what they say to what is in my own mind."[74] To B. J. Fletcher he admitted that he no longer had any idea of how to shape the future of industrial and commercial design.[75] Two months later he confessed to Fletcher that he was pessimistic about estab-lishing a community united by shared norms:

> I quite agree with what you say about the drawing of Henry Moore. It is deplorably bad, but somehow the people in charge of the museum do not see that it is deplorably bad. The difficulty in which I am find-ing myself is that I do not have the same understanding or speak the same language as the new generation that is now coming into power. We fail to find a point of contact at which we can intelligently discuss our differences. I am loath to admit that I am wrong and they will cer-tainly not admit that they are wrong and so there we stick.[76]

All his dreams were dissipating. Modern art was not the new source of spiritual integration; nor had the transport system brought unity and a com-mon architectural style to London. Work was becoming less effective in dis-tracting him from feelings of failure and intense loneliness—indeed, every new project affirmed his sense of isolation. Relentless activity could not thwart entropy; a life spent seeking order and harmony was now confronted with the recognition that existence simply could not be made "neat and tidy."

He tried to distract himself by taking trips. In July 1937 he went to Scot-land, but he felt listless and his blood pressure was too high. "My health dis-turbs my peace of mind. Do I live or not? Am I still in active life or not?" The next month he took a cruise, but was temperamentally unable to join in the general conviviality: "At sunset felt foolish & insignificant. What is life? A bit lost owing to a lack of sociability." Additional days of sea and sun did not im-prove his mood. "Lack of spirit & adventure in me. I am worn out & half-dead. My heart will not keep me going."[77] After another trip in 1939 he wrote to his secretary, "I wonder what a holiday is for. It is a disturbing experience when there is so little to do. I almost feel worse for it."[78]

While work remained his only form of escape from self and solitude, now that his dreams were stymied he derived less satisfaction from his activities and took out his frustrations on his coworkers. He wrote to Fletcher in Febru-ary 1939 that "the stupidity of the world seems always before me so that I begin to wonder how to carry on. I find myself always in disagreement with someone. It begins to worry me."[79]

In particular he quarreled with Lord Ashfield over how the London Pas-senger Transport Board should be run. Pick had been willing to sacrifice ex-penditures on art and design to help the financially troubled transport system, because he felt that the LPTB's primary obligation was to provide an affordable and efficient service to the public. He did not want to see fares raised. Late in 1939 the board discussed the issue of how stock dividends were to be paid to public investors during the war. The act that set up the board mandated that "C" stock had to be paid at a fixed rate, although the LPTB had only been able

to pay a fraction of that rate during the thirties. Ashfield felt that the dividend for "C" stocks ought to be limited to that fraction during the war, but Pick objected on moral grounds: such a move would contravene the original act and be unfair to the public stockholders, despite the fact that the new rate would have been confined to wartime. Pick's initial seven-year term was to expire in mid-1940, and he stated in January of that year that if the issue of the stock dividend was not resolved to his satisfaction, he would not offer himself for reappointment. Ashfield rapidly accepted his resignation, commending him for thirty-three years of faithful service: "[the transport system] will stand as a monument to your creative and artistic skills as well as to your tireless energy and enterprise."[80] Pick seems to have been surprised that his threat to resign was so readily accepted. He wrote a letter asking to be reinstated in some capacity, although he requested a less time-consuming job—for Pick, that meant something that would take up only five days of his week. The letter, apparently, was never sent, perhaps as a matter of pride.[81] When Ashfield did offer Pick a job as consultant to the board in March 1940, Pick turned it down.[82] In May, Pick's lengthy career as one of the most influential executives in London was terminated.

The Council for Art and Industry had been suspended late in 1939 due to the outbreak of the war: for the first time in many years, Pick was unemployed. He lived alone in a flat in London, having sent his wife and adopted daughter to their home in Charmouth several months earlier to escape the threat of air attacks on London. He tried to find ways to distract himself from depression. In May 1940 the wartime minister of transport, Sir John Reith, found him a temporary job examining the ports, but Pick continued to mull over a life he felt had been wasted. Christian Barman, his former associate at the LPTB, recalled that Pick talked about throwing himself underneath a train at this time; Pick himself described his world as a "necropolis" in a journal entry written in June 1940: "To look back upon all the follies and shames of one's life. The ills done. The neglects. The carelessness. The mistakes. Death seems a welcome clearing of the slate. . . . To go on with the burden of this life, deplorable and depressing."[83] His life had become the Nightmare of John Ball: lack of fellowship was hell.

His colleagues worried about his health and tried to find him another position. Lord Ashfield used his influence to have Pick appointed as director of the Ministry of Information in August 1940. Pick did not want the job but felt he could not refuse a calling.[84] Predictably, his stint at the MOI was a disaster. He was incapable of compromising with the vast bureaucratic administration of the ministry and would not countenance "immoral" propaganda. He was out of sorts. Harold Nicolson recalled him flying into rages and noted in his diary that "his ideas are right, but his manner is really terrible. Sly and violent he looks, but I daresay that the former is due merely to shyness."[85] Pick was relieved of his post in December 1940. As he ruefully admitted to B. J. Fletcher, "I was beaten by this cumbrous government machine, which is all check and countercheck so that no one has power and everything moves slowly."[86] He had never been dismissed from a post before. Nicolson accurately perceived that he left embittered.[87]

Between February and May 1941, Pick investigated the inland waterways

for the Ministry of Transport. Although the ministry commended his work, Pick continued to feel depressed. His blood pressure was up; his weight fell as his torpor increased.[88] He wrote two tracts on postwar aims for a series that Herbert Read was publishing, but these did not satisfy him. Little did.

In October, he gave a talk on "Re-Energizing Religion," which was later published in the *Congregational Quarterly*. The talk as it was printed does not betray the malaise that Pick complained of to his friends; it is as clear and direct as any of the talks he originally gave at the Salem Chapel Guild. This should not be surprising, because Pick's aims had remained essentially the same since his early years in York. His 1941 talk recapitulated the beliefs of the self-described "warrior of the kingdom" who had ventured from the provincial North in the hopes of founding a harmonious and compassionate community to which he could belong.

Religion, he stated once again, was the binding force that would unite an anomic and fissiparous world. "What then is our plain duty? To reconstitute religion and bring back in some ordered relationship all the parts that have gone astray, to restore its wholeness."[89] This "living" religion must acknowledge the existence of the divine spirit that pervades the universe and provides a foundation to morality and true knowledge. Modern physics, in Pick's view, did not support a relativistic view of the universe but rather underscored an ontological foundationalism:

> The physicists find an all-pervading aether, about which they know almost nothing, but in which all the phenomena which they study must occur. It is unbroken, unbounded, and stands to them for the unity of nature. . . . Each of us is like a radiogram. We can tune in to [this] all-pervading spirit. . . . Contact with its lowest threshold gives us strength, perseverance, direction.[90]

Religion could be reenergized by "putting a religious enthusiasm into daily life."[91] Small groups within towns could form to care for each other's needs. These "families," in effect, could then merge into a larger community that would tend to the needs of the town.[92] Pick had always hoped to find such a community, and twice he had—first at the Salem Chapel Guild, then at the Design and Industries Association.

As much as he stressed the importance of community, however, he also stressed the importance of the individual. For Pick the spiritual order and the individual conscience were not mutually exclusive in theory, although he found that the two were less easy to reconcile in practice. He had hoped that modern art represented the concrete reconciliation of the antinomies of individual self-expression and absolute, impersonal values. At the end of his life, he believed he had been wrong about modern art, but not about the effects of art in general. There were works of art whose unique vision also expressed universal truths. Pick concluded his talk on religion with a discussion of art:

> I often visit picture galleries, and when I come out I always know whether I have seen anything worthwhile. You can come out into the drabbest of streets, but if art has been living anywhere within, you will be conscious that it looks just a little different. There will be some sub-

tle sense of colour you missed before, some grouping of objects or shapes which instantly suggests rhythm or pattern. It is a parable.[93]

An appropriate ending, for in all his writings and activities, art and religion had always been conjoined. Art both expressed and rekindled a reverence for the mundane world. To the Christian agnostic who could truly see, God not only dwelled in Heaven above, but also in the Underground below.

On 7 November, shortly after submitting this talk to the *Congregational Quarterly*, Pick wrote a letter to B. J. Fletcher:

My dear Fletcher,

I am become an idle and useless member of society and so un-well. I suffer from some form of nervous breakdown for want of active life and work.

I write tracts. . . . I feel they are mere fill ups of my time and possibly vanities. I am in a bad way spiritually as well as physically. . . . There is no real living only an existing for a time.[94]

Pick sent the letter. Later that day, he died of a cerebral hemorrhage.

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THE DEMISE OF
MEDIEVAL MODERNISM

*Industrial design tends to be impersonal. It is subject to the
tyranny of function. . . . Beauty—or rather art—is a viola-
tion of functionality. Taken together, these trespasses consti-
tute what we call a style. The ideal of the designer, if he is
consistent, ought to be the absence of style—forms reduced
to their function—whereas the ideal of the artist should be a
style that begins and ends in each of his works.*

OCTAVIO PAZ[1]

THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY DISTINCTION BETWEEN ART and design, which
Frank Pick and other medieval modernists had come close to eradicating
during the interwar period, was restored rapidly between 1939 and 1945—
with Pick, as usual, having been in the vanguard. He had preceded official
opinion in his own reconceptualization of the role of artist and industrial de-
signer in the mid-1930s; it was not until after the outbreak of the war that offi-
cials at the Boards of Trade and Education began to think of the designer as a
technician rather than as an artist. This new conception of the designer, and
the reestablishment of the distinction between "fine art" and "design," then
became institutionalized when the government created the Council of Indus-
trial Design in 1944 and the Arts Council in 1946. Pick had argued that the de-
signer was a technician primarily for moral reasons—he had come to regard
the artist as suspect—but the Board of Trade instituted this redefinition for
economic reasons. This new conception of the designer contributed to the col-
lapse of the medieval modern tradition.

The outbreak of the Second World War, like the outbreak of the First,
forced the government to reconsider their views on the economic and social
function of design. Whereas during the First World War officials and critics
called for the integration of the artist with industry, the industries under ques-
tion had been craft based; now the government was faced with competition for
the sales of light-industry products, particularly from America. Postwar recov-
ery would depend on such export sales to make up for the heavy drain on

overseas investments, new debits incurred during the war, and the loss of ex-
port revenues from countries that had formerly supplied raw materials to
Britain but that were now industrializing themselves. Government officials
were forced to realize that England was severely behind the Continent and
America in two respects: England's designs were, as one official put it, twenty-
five years out of date, and English design education and practice remained
craft based.[2] Pick had begun to introduce the notion of a more advanced tech-
nical training as early as 1935, but for most government officials design for the
light-metal industries was not a conceptual possibility: Dickey of the Board of
Education admitted in 1943 that "this branch of design had not developed in
this country at all. We were hardly aware of it."[3]

Why was the American approach to design, which became established in
the 1920s, virtually ignored by the English until the Second World War? Cer-
tainly the American approach, with its apparent emphasis on consumer fads,
planned obsolescence, and the idea that the customer was always right, can be
broadly contrasted with English paternalism and an emphasis on "quality"
rather than "quantity." Since the growing market for consumer goods in inter-
war England still remained relatively small in comparison to its greater expan-
sion in the fifties, and was significantly smaller than that which existed in
America, this emphasis on quality and durability rather than planned obsoles-
cence made some sense. In addition, to a number of English observers the
American approach was slightly distasteful. They believed that American in-
dustrial designers tended to emphasize the commercial aspects of design and
the ephemerality of the product, over the moral aspects of design so valued by
Pick and others in England.[4] The American design profession emerged in tan-
dem with the development of new light-metal products, such as vacuum
cleaners, washing machines, and automobiles, whereas English designers had
always been oriented toward the craft-based industries of the nineteenth cen-
tury.[5] If in England during most of the interwar period the designer was con-
ceived of as an artist, in America the designer was a combination of profes-
sional technician, advertiser, and social psychologist, with the same status and
many of the same duties as an engineer.

During the war the government projected that America would dominate
the postwar export markets unless the English followed the American model
of industrial design: in order to beat them you had to join them. In 1943 an in-
terdepartmental committee of the Boards of Trade and Education commented
on the "virtual revolution" in industrial design in the United States since the
1920s and called for special design courses for the light-metal industries. De-
sign in England had been overly construed as a moral issue, to the detriment of
the economy: "While we do not disparage cultural and economic reform, we
wish here to emphasize the new, urgent and still largely unsuspected exigen-
cies of commerce."[6]

In 1943 a report on industrial design by Norbert Dutton, submitted to the
Board of Education, praised the American design profession and criticized
contemporary English practice: "No clear distinction is drawn between indus-
try, in the sense of contemporary processes of mass production, and the handi-
crafts." Dutton insisted that the designer was not an artist: "Technological de-
sign is thus intended in a sense both technical and contemporary, and is

clearly distinguished from the fine arts. . . . Both designer and engineer are specialists who must work in the closest collaboration, and the designer must have a sufficient grasp of engineering to make this collaboration possible."[7] Dickey of the Board of Education called Dutton's report "revolutionary," particularly for its novel suggestion that the designer need not be a craftsman. While novel, Dickey perceived that Dutton's revolutionary ideas were not original: "Mr. Dutton has . . . in mind the new 'Industrial Designers' who were making a name for themselves in the USA shortly before the war by drawing large fees for such activities as streamlining railway engines."[8] As Dickey observed, during the war he and other government officials were finding that the term "'industrial designer' has taken on a special meaning."[9]

The rapid breakdown of the interwar equation of artist and designer, and the equally rapid reappearance of the nineteenth-century distinction between fine artist and designer, can therefore be explained partly by the government's decision to adopt and implement the American conception of the designer as technician. Because of the war, officials were forced to examine the issue of design for the new light-metal industries in a manner that challenged their customary association of design with art, and art with moral reform. Frank Pick, William Rothenstein, Herbert Read, and other influential design reformers had argued that improved design would stimulate trade and exports, but they became involved with design reform primarily to establish an Earthly Paradise in which competition would be replaced by cooperation and art would be reintegrated with everyday life. But such aesthetic and moral ideals derived from Ruskin and Morris—recast to fit the modern world of industry and mass-democracy, popularly acclaimed and partially instituted through the 1930s—were no longer viable after 1939.

Governmental committees charged with investigating the issue of industrial design now argued that the arts and crafts' aim of breaking down the distinction between art and design would have to be abandoned in the postwar world. The Weir Committee of 1943 stated "In our view there has been too much emphasis on the words 'art' and 'artists'. Manufacturers, particularly in the more technical industries, are suspicious of the artist and the Art School, and it is a cardinal point in our recommendations that a status and a prestige should be built up around the words 'design' and 'designer.'"[10] Arguing that Morris's ideal of "Man the Maker" was no longer tenable in the postwar world, a 1943 interdepartmental report by the Boards of Trade and Education stated that an increased selection of consumer goods would be the "compensation for the (alleged) fun of being a medieval handworker. This may result in a poorer or a better world, according to your predilections: the urgent thing is to recognize it as a different world, and shape policy accordingly."[11]

In 1944 the Board of Trade established the Council of Industrial Design, thereby institutionalizing the distinction between the artist and the designer. Gordon Russell, the council's chairman, stated in 1949 that "the industrial designer is not expressing an intensely personal point of view like the artist. He is one of a team. He is concerned with the problems of producing in quantities goods for use, not individual works of art." Robin Darwin, a member of the council, became principal of the Royal College of Art in 1949 and turned it away from its interwar emphasis on the union of the arts toward a more tech-

nologically oriented training for the demands of the new light-metal industries. Darwin was born in 1910 and was no medieval modernist. He wrote in 1950, "William Morris's ideas were all confused with the 'dignity of labor' and so on. . . . I think this whole attitude is muddle and bunk."[12]

This separation of fine art and industrial design was further cemented by the creation of the Arts Council between 1945–46. The Arts Council was an outgrowth of the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA), established during the war. CEMA supported the integration of the arts. It had promoted exhibitions of industrial art as well as fine art without making any hierarchical distinctions between them. The designer Misha Black believed in 1944 that "the time seems to have been reached when CEMA could reasonably assume, in industrial design, that position of national leadership which it enjoys in relation to other visual arts."[13] Two of CEMA's staff members, Philip James and Mary Glasgow (who served as secretary), insisted on the unity of the arts, James turning to Glasgow for a sympathetic ear when he found an article in *The Times* in which "the time-honoured and unfortunate distinction between the so-called fine arts and applied arts is here perpetuated."[14]

When members of CEMA began to draft the charter for the Arts Council they found they could be exempted from the rates under the Scientific Societies Act of 1843. The terms of this act applied only to those societies that dealt with "the Fine Arts exclusively"—a clause reflecting the nineteenth century's clear distinction between fine art and industrial art. Mary Glasgow worked with the treasury in trying to come up with a definition of fine art that included industrial art, because "it might often be difficult to draw a line between fine and applied art, a pot and a picture."[15]

But treasury officials and the chairman of CEMA, John Maynard Keynes, worked out a definition of fine art that excluded industrial art. Keynes believed in a hierarchy of the arts rather than in their equivalence. Shortly after he took command of CEMA, he attempted to cut funds allocated to the British Institute of Adult Education, which had been circulating "pots and pictures" to the provinces in their "Art for the People" exhibitions. An official of the BIAE, W. E. Williams, believed this indicated Keynes's disdain for an art by the people and for the people: "There was, alas, in this great scholar and art connoisseur a streak of donnish superiority and a singular ignorance of ordinary people."[16] Similarly, Beatrice Webb believed that Keynes was "contemptuous of common men especially when gathered together in herds. . . . Hence his antipathy to proletarian culture. . . . He dislikes all the common or garden thoughts and emotions that bind men together in bunches."[17] When it came time to define fine art for the charter of the Arts Council, Keynes argued that the term excluded industrial art. In a 1945 letter to Mary Glasgow he wrote,

I am quite happy about using the term 'Fine Arts' in our preamble, etc., so as to increase the prospect of our satisfying the conditions for de-rating. I am clear that the term 'Fine Arts' covers all the activities that we are likely to be interested in. . . . Indeed, it is only to a modern ear that any doubt could possibly arise. In the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries . . . the distinction between the Fine Arts and

the Applied Arts etc. was familiar. . . . In short, the expression 'Fine Arts' is by way of distinction from the technical arts.[18]

Keynes's remark that the idea of the unity of the arts would only occur to "a modern ear" is an acknowledgement of how pervasive the concept of the union of the arts was between 1910–45. But with the establishment of the Council of Industrial Design for the supervision of utilitarian "industrial design" and the Arts Council for the supervision of transcendental "fine art," design and art were cleft once again: the former to be used, the latter to be contemplated.

This essential distinction, although challenged within recent years by the pluralistic and antihierarchical thrust of postmodern theorists, continues to be espoused by some today. For example, in 1986 the London Underground extolled their patronage of spiritually edifying fine art rather than utilitarian commercial design in their new poster campaign. As a curator of the London Transport Museum explained,

> 'Art on the Underground' is a scheme for displaying newly commissioned *fine* art in poster form, and is treated quite separately from the Underground's main advertising and publicity campaigns. It is essentially a means of corporate art sponsorship, whereby London Underground commissions original works of art and reproduces them as posters. The subjects are loosely connected with the Underground as possible destinations, but generating travel is their least important purpose.[19]

Precisely the conception of art that Frank Pick had fought against for most of his life.

The institutionalized distinction between fine art and design following the war fatally compromised the medieval modernist conception of art, but it was not the only factor that caused medieval modernism's demise. Medieval modernism was a conceptual framework in which ideas about art, science, society, and religion were mutually interdependent. It was a discourse shared among certain members of a particular generation and was unlikely to be passed on to subsequent generations if any one of its constituent elements was successfully challenged. Several challenges to the discourse deserve brief mention, because without them it is hard to understand the speed with which the medieval modernist view of art collapsed. It is probable that this sudden eclipse of medieval modernism by 1945 explains why Ruskin and Morris's tremendous influence on the interwar legitimation of modern art has been so thoroughly obscured in favor of the prevailing formalist view stemming from Fry and Bell.

Chance must be included among these factors that undermined the institutionalization of the medieval modernist view. If, for example, Keynes had not been involved with the Arts Council charter, or if the Scientific Societies Act had not specifically covered organizations devoted to the "Fine Arts exclusively," it is possible that the Arts Council could have continued to challenge the distinction between fine art and industrial design in the postwar years.

More important than chance, however, in undermining medieval modernism was that there were few advocates of the medieval modern position

after the war. Many had died—Frank Pick, William Rothenstein, W. R. Lethaby, Michael Sadler, Eric Gill, H. L. Smith, among others—and many of their successors in the art world, raised on the writings of Bernard Berenson and Roger Fry, did not share their Victorian views about the utility of art and the relevance of Ruskin and Morris. Kenneth Clark, for example, was born in 1903 and found Fry's "clear contemporary language" and formalist ideas to be more congenial than Ruskin's "turgid" prose[20] and the medieval moderns' emphasis on the social utility of art. He opposed the trend toward the integration of the arts in the thirties, writing in 1936 that "A great deal which has been written about Art in Industry is contrary to experience. It is not true that beauty and efficiency go hand in hand. Many perfectly efficient objects in everyday life, such as the typewriter, cannot be made beautiful, and almost all the highest forms of beauty are quite useless."[21] Clark's biographer notes that he "was particularly emphatic about the basic, anti-egalitarian notion of art."[22] Clark was to become one of the most influential English art critics of the postwar period to advance the formalist position.

The formalist view that prevailed in Europe and in America following the war was not merely a function of one generation replacing another. The medieval modernist project of integrating life and art was called into question by the efforts of the Soviets to politicize aesthetics and the Nazis to aestheticize politics. To many postwar intellectuals, "mass culture" became associated with totalitarianism and "high art" with an emancipatory critique of the "culture industry."[23] For Theodor Adorno, modern art's self-referentiality was a way of protecting itself from being misused for political ends;[24] Clement Greenberg also argued that modern art was specifically concerned with its own disciplinary methods so as to keep itself from being appropriated by other forms of endeavor.[25]

Greenberg's formalist criticism, together with that of Alfred Barr, proved enormously influential, first in the United States and then internationally when New York replaced Paris as the center of the art world in the 1950s. The association of "fine art" with formalism was also strengthened by the formalist interpretive strategies of the New Critics, which dominated American literary studies in the fifties. Just as Fry and Bell preceded Barr and Greenberg, Fry and Bell's Bloomsbury associate T. S. Eliot inspired the New Critics. When one includes Keynes's influence on the policies of the Arts Council, it is tempting to see formalism as an enduring Bloomsbury legacy, ironically one that inverted E. M. Forster's famous dictum: only disconnect.

In addition, the medieval modernists' optimistic faith that technology was simply a new form of craftsman's tool that would be wielded in the construction of a holistic and spiritual world was contested by the inhumanely efficient use of technology in Auschwitz, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki. It is sometimes assumed that intellectuals' faith in technology and the possibility for rational progress was shattered after the First World War, but numerous medieval modernists maintained utopian hopes and goals during the interwar period. It was only after the Second World War that one sees a pronounced reaction against technology and scientific rationalism by many of those who initially welcomed "technics," like Herbert Read and Lewis Mumford.[26] Mumford's recollection about the outlook he shared with many of his colleagues in America

during the interwar period is equally applicable to the sentiments of Pick, Rothenstein, Read, and other English medieval modernists:

> We all had a sense that we were on the verge of translation into a new world, a quite magical translation, in which the best hopes of the American Revolution, the French Revolution, and the Industrial Revolution would all be simultaneously fulfilled. The First World War battered and shattered those hopes, but it took years before the messages received through our eyes or felt at our fingers' ends were effectively conveyed to our brains and could be decoded: for long those ominous messages simply did not make sense. Until well into the 1930's we could always see the bright side of the darkest cloud.[27]

Finally, the metaphysical premises that underlay the medieval modernists' outlook on art, science, and society were also eclipsed in the postwar years. The idea that art must be fit for its purpose, following the example of natural creation, as well as the belief that nonrepresentational art was true to nature because it corresponded to the universal forms and invisible rhythms of the cosmos, developed from the nineteenth-century association of nature and art—in essence, a "natural theology." In the late nineteenth century this theology became secularized, but no less spiritual, through the influence of romanticism, vitalism, idealist philosophy, and science. The Protestant stress on the regulative principle of the "inner light" merged with similar vitalist conceptions of the "universal spirit" advanced by Romantic writers; these in turn were supported by the British idealist school of philosophy, teleological interpretations of Darwinian evolution, and the "new physics" that emerged during the late Victorian period. Absolute idealism had become the predominant school of philosophy in Britain in the 1870s, and despite significant challenges posed by Bertrand Russell and others at the turn of the century, idealism continued to be the leading school of philosophical thought at most British universities until 1945.[28] The existence of the universal spirit appeared to be supported by the findings of physicists at the turn of the century, with their explorations of the apparently noumenal realm of X rays and radio waves.

Medieval modernists were raised in the late Victorian period, when the Newtonian view of an ordered universe coexisted in the popular mind with the new findings of physicists and the philosophical idealism of T. H. Green, F. H. Bradley, and Bernard Bosanquet. In addition, Darwinian evolution was interpreted by Pick and his associates not as the reign of chance over nature red in tooth and claw, but as proof that gradual progress was possible. Both physics and biology appeared to be revealing a world where the conjunction of matter and spirit could be understood by science and revealed by art. The "vital" force promoted by Herbert Spencer, Samuel Butler, and Henri Bergson, and the universal mathematical laws governing all forms in nature as expounded by D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson, were concepts shared to some degree by many writers on art in the early twentieth century. In however debased a manner, idealist metaphysics undergirded the reception and assimilation of modern art in England.

During the interwar period, this "scientific transcendentalism" began to be challenged by more recent discoveries in science and new philosophic schools

of thought. Nevertheless, the esoteric theories of relativity and indeterminacy propounded by physicists, and the challenge to idealism leveled by the logical positivists, coexisted with idealist and mechanistic views and did not supersede them until after 1945. These two conceptions coexisted because of the lag between educated and popular thought, because of the slow pace of institutional change, and because of the tendency of an earlier generation to interpret new cultural expressions in the light of ones they were more familiar with. If certain painters attempted to capture the multiple perspectives of reality extolled by relativists, critics like Fry, Rothenstein, Pick, and Read nonetheless interpreted such paintings as reflecting eternal Platonic forms.

By 1945, physicists' conceptions of relativity and biologists' emphasis on contingency had become more widely diffused, and British departments of philosophy had been captured by analytic philosophers, many of whom were hostile to idealist metaphysics. Popular critiques of idealism, such as those by A. J. Ayer, made the medieval modernists' faith in universal forms and laws seem naive. Herbert Read was one of the few medieval modernists to survive the war, and he fought a rearguard action against the new antimetaphysical tendencies of the postwar period. In a review of A. J. Ayer's *The Problem of Knowledge* (1956), Read attacked the new trends in Anglo-American philosophy:

> It is possible that Professor Ayer presupposes a distinction between philosophy and metaphysics, and that he would dismiss all metaphysics as outmoded Platonism. But finally, as Kant held, the intellect is incapable of anything but Platonising. What we hanker after is some form of integral experience: a mode of knowledge that is not partial or exclusive, but in our human degree, absolute.[29]

Read's own persistent search for Platonic truths led him to embrace Jungian psychology. Following the war, his reputation as a public intellectual declined, in large part because his views had become outmoded. Richard Hamilton, a member of the 1950s Independent Group (which coined the term *pop art*), recalled that "if there was one binding spirit amongst the people at the Independent Group, it was a distaste for Herbert Read's attitudes."[30]

Indeed, the conflict between Read and the Independent Group in the fifties is emblematic of how modernism's search for a metaphysic that would reconcile antinomies was replaced by postmodernism's rejection of this totalizing project in the postwar period. The Independent Group had been formed in the early fifties with the expressed aim of breaking down the distinction between fine art and mass culture that had been reestablished during and after the war.[31] Eradicating this distinction had also been the goal of the interwar medieval modernists, and the two groups shared much in common. Both sought to redefine art as a "continuum" that encompassed everyday commodities as well as so-called fine art in a nonhierarchical way;[32] both defined art as having immediate social functions;[33] both valorized consumption as a form of cultural production.[34]

However, the Independent Group rejected the metaphysical and nationalist beliefs that supported the medieval modernists' conception of a new "common art" and embraced a view of culture that emphasized plurality, ephemerality, and contingency. Read and other interwar medieval modernists had

promoted a domestic, enduring, "Little England" concept of modernism, championing the utilitarian, populist, and Protestant values of the "North" against the cosmopolitanism and elitism they associated with the "South." After the war, however, English attitudes toward modernism became, on the whole, more cosmopolitan.[35] The Independent Group, for example, countered the interwar celebration of "Little England" with a more exasperated sense that "England is Little" and turned to an ever-renewing American popular culture for inspiration. They reveled in the new culture of disposable commodities enabled by the postwar "age of affluence" and technological change, rejecting the interwar emphasis on stability and essences. For the Independent Group, postwar commodity culture was characterized by the "American" attributes of ephemerality and endless flux—an "Expendable Aesthetic"[36]—as opposed to the interwar "English" emphasis on quality, durability, and national tradition. This is the principle reason why they disdained Herbert Read's aesthetic views: his metaphysical and nationalist conceptions of art were less tenable after the war.

The differences between Read and the Independent Group is thus a defined instance of how essentialist conceptions of art and culture in the interwar period were often repudiated in the postwar period, eroding a central foundation of the medieval modern discourse. However, it is equally important to note that the Independent Group shared more in common with Read and his interwar colleagues than they knew or let on. The Independent Group, like the medieval modernists and the arts and crafts movement that preceded them, exemplified the venerable English tradition of ascribing a utilitarian function to art. When a member stated that the Independent Group "tried to see art in terms of human use rather than in terms of philosophic problems,"[37] one is reminded of Read's view as he stated it in 1941:

> Do not let us be deceived by the argument that culture is the same for all time—that art is a unity and beauty an absolute value. If you are going to talk about abstract conceptions like beauty, then we can freely grant that they are absolute and eternal. But abstract conceptions are not works of art. Works of art are things of use—houses and their furniture, for example; and if, like sculpture and poetry, they are not things of immediate use, then they should be things consonant with the things we use—that is to say, part of our daily life, tuned to our daily habits, accessible to our daily needs.[38]

Peter Bürger argued that the "historic avant-garde" of the early twentieth century challenged the formalists' separation of art and life. But the project of integrating art and life, beauty and use, was also a very "English" project from at least the eighteenth through the twentieth centuries, owing to the country's Protestant, utilitarian, and commercial traditions. The Bloomsbury Group was certainly progressive, and thus "avant-garde," in its challenge to established social, moral, and aesthetic conventions. But many contemporaries perceived their formalist views to be more "French" than "English": they were seen to be a beachhead for a continental invasion, not a native avant-garde.

I believe that the genuine English avant-garde of the interwar period were the medieval modernists. They, rather than Bloomsbury, were clearly an avant-

garde in Bürger's definition of that phrase, attacking the formalists' separation of art and life and seeking to reintegrate aesthetic and social practice. But even if we disregard Bürger's theoretical formulation, they were also a genuinely "English" avant-garde because they adhered to the indigenous understanding of art as functional. English "pop art" of the 1950s also adhered to this native emphasis, and despite the Independent Group's criticism of Herbert Read, they shared significant homologies with the medieval modernists who preceded them.

The discourse of medieval modernism largely vanished with its generation of advocates. Anthony Bertram is representative of those few who survived into the postwar era, recanting their prewar credo. In a footnote, easily missed, within his 1955 biography *Paul Nash*, Bertram recalled how many interwar critics promoted what he now believed was an "aesthetic heresy," the "attempt to break down the hierarchy of the arts": "I must intrude here to confess that I was one of them and proclaimed this heresy in various books and articles. What criticism I make of it now, is a criticism of my own discarded beliefs."[39] Nevertheless, in his use of religious terms—"heresy," "confess," "discarded beliefs"—Bertram betrays the accent of medieval modernese. And there remain some of Bertram's contemporaries who appear never to have recanted. For example, in January 1989 a controversy erupted over the definition of art when the Royal Academy mounted an exhibition of the work of Malcolm McClaren, who designed the image of the Sex Pistols. McClaren's work, according to one critic, did not qualify as "art" but rather as "design"—and therefore ought not to be displayed at the Royal Academy: "I would class Mr. McClaren as a designer, who creates style, rather than as an artist." But Frederick Gore, age seventy-five, disagreed: "I am personally dead against any distinction between fine art and all the activities which are its fundamental background and basis. Directly you divorce art from life and think of art as a separate commodity you have met disaster."[40] Gore reached adulthood in the 1930s, the heyday of medieval modernism; unlike Bertram, he continued to preach the interwar English avant-garde's "aesthetic heresy" of the unity and utility of the arts.

The narrative of English medieval modernism is a telling example of the overall shift in this century from the essentialist leanings of the modernists, who hoped to reconcile antinomies within a wider totality, to the antiessentialist leanings of the postmodernists, who tend to acclaim the incommensurable. It also reminds us that in interwar England visual modernism was associated with questions of national and regional identity, economic policy, and educational philosophy. The medieval modernists, no less than formalists like Roger Fry and Clive Bell, were instrumental in the reception and assimilation of modern art in England and of the broader legitimation of the visual in a country that had long privileged the lexical over the iconographic. In the twenties and thirties, art was widely understood to combine formalism and functionalism, "significant form" with "fitness for purpose." Modernism was associated with such "English" values as utilitarianism, populism, and progressivism, which in turn were often said to characterize the industrial North as opposed to the cosmopolitan South. Visual modernism was seen to assuage the Protestant conscience by representing the eternal rather than the transient and by linking art to commerce for the good of the commonweal. In a country that

venerates tradition, aesthetic modernism was understood to link the spiritual past with the secular present, artisanship with technology, medievalism with modernity, the arts and crafts with the avant-garde. Art—broadly redefined as "design"—was seen to be the catalyst for a spiritually integrated, organically unified society in which individuality and freedom would nevertheless thrive.

In interwar England, fine art and everyday life were not as readily distinguished as they had been in the nineteenth century, or as they were to become once again in the immediate postwar period. When we evaluate the early twentieth-century European and American avant-garde's challenge to the nineteenth-century apotheosis of Art and the Artist, and their attempt to restore a more integral vision of art and life, we find that this project may have attained its most visible and widespread expression in interwar England.

Today, in many ways, we have returned to the egalitarian and populist interweaving of art and everyday life promoted by the medieval modernists. "Art" and "design" are still distinguished by some, but are more often conflated within the antihierarchical bent of postmodernism. The critical difference is that the medieval modernists lacked our ironic detachment, while we lack their spiritual assurance.

Frank Pick, like the medieval modernist attitude toward art that he espoused, has all but been forgotten. Pick believed in self-effacement: in this, as in so much else, he was successful. He extended the legacy of Ruskin and Morris into the twentieth century; he was one of this century's most influential patrons of modern artists; he introduced an entire generation to modern art, including those in the provinces and among the lower classes who did not have easy access to the visual arts. He played a critical role in the extension of art appreciation among the English population, just as he played a leading role in the creation of a transport system that was once the envy of the world and the culminating project of the arts and crafts tradition. Pick also began to see the importance of creating an industrial design profession that could address the needs of the light-metal industries years before the government was shaken out of its complacent attitude toward design by the war. In working to create an Aesthetic State, Frank Pick helped to visualize the nation.

Yet for all of his achievements, there is no major public monument to commemorate Pick's audacious attempts to reconcile English traditions with aesthetic modernism, to establish a "living art" for an industrialized age, to "re-energize religion" for a secular, rational, disenchanted culture.

Or is there?

In November 1940, Pick wrote to Charles Holden concerning the bombed city of Coventry. He hoped that Coventry would be the first of many areas, including London, that would be rebuilt according to an organized plan integrating beauty with efficiency, tradition with modernity. But his own recent experiences serving on committees left him doubtful that anything innovative would actually transpire: "There will be a great agitation for instance for rebuilding the [Coventry] Cathedral as a replica of the one that has gone, whereas surely the most inspiring thing would be to build a new Cathedral, which exceeded in beauty the old and which expressed truthfully the design and craftsmanship of our own days."[41]

In 1941 the Coventry Cathedral Council met to plan the rebuilding of the cathedral. The actual building began in 1954, having been sanctioned at the conclusion of the austerity period by Minister of Works Sir David Eccles. Eccles stated that "we cannot tell how many people are waiting in this country and abroad, for this church to rise and prove that English traditions live again after the blitz."[42]

But the new cathedral was no mere replica of the old, as Pick had feared. Instead, the cathedral could be considered an inadvertent monument to medieval modernism and its foremost apostle. The architect, Sir Basil Spence, intentionally built the new cathedral in the modern style, its spare, pink-gray sandstone exterior linked to the ruins of the old cathedral in a symbolic juxtaposition of medievalism with modernism. Upon entering the new edifice, one is dazzled by the array of colors emanating from John Piper's baptistery window, a 64′ by 84′ abstract composition of stained glass. Piper was not the only Underground poster artist to contribute to the "Cathedral of Our Time": Graham Sutherland designed the largest wall tapestry in the world, "Christ in Glory in the Tetramorph." The tapestry is modernist in composition but medieval in execution, having been woven on a 500-year old loom in a French workshop. (The builders hoped to find an English workshop, but there was none that could meet the tapestry's size specifications.)[43]

The cathedral is a medieval modernist work in yet another respect. In the medieval cathedrals, chapels were set aside for craft guilds, and Coventry did not break with this tradition. But the "Chapel of Christ the Servant" is also known as the "industrial chapel," for the "craft" it so honors is modern industry.[44] Pick would have been pleasantly surprised—one can even imagine him smiling. In so many ways, Coventry Cathedral represents the spiritual and social aims of Pick and his fellow medieval modernists, all of whom dreamed of linking the past to the present, modern art to modern faith, England to the Earthly Paradise.

But would Pick have been as pleasantly surprised to see, at the new cathedral's Priory Street entrance, the twenty-five-foot sculpture of St. Michael and the Devil by Jacob Epstein (now Sir Jacob Epstein), or Epstein's 1935 sculpture *Ecce Homo,* now located in the ruins of the old cathedral? After all, he had once dismissed Epstein's works as "inflictions on our aesthetic sense."

Frank Pick would still be smiling. As the self-described "warrior of the kingdom," he was always happiest when there was something to be improved.

NOTES

1. Louis Menand, "Edwardian and Modernist Puzzles," *The Sewanee Review* 2 (Spring 1990), 271.

2. Charles Harrison, *English Art and Modernism 1900–1939* (London: Allan Tate, 1981) and S. K. Tillyard in *The Impact of Modernism 1900–1920: Early Modernism and the Arts and Crafts Movement in Edwardian England* (London: Routledge, 1988) have both discussed the influence of the arts and crafts movement on Roger Fry. Harrison notes some of the affinities between Fry's ideas and those of Ruskin and Morris and then argues that Fry and Bell's "aesthetic" conception of art separated them from Ruskin and Morris's sociological conception. He also maintains that formalism was the dominant aesthetic in England for most of the interwar period (184, 308). Tillyard argues that the "discourse" of the arts and crafts movement shaped Fry's initial explanation of postimpressionism, as well as the public's reception of "Manet and the Post-Impressionists." She then contends that Fry and Bell developed a more specific "language" and "aesthetic" for postimpressionism between 1910–14 that no longer referred to the arts and crafts aesthetic and that this new formalist discourse prevailed following the First World War (199–216, 248–50). Thus, while arguing for continuities through 1910, she also sees the years 1910–12 as marking a decisive break with the past that was firmly established by 1918. I argue that this strictly formalist aesthetic was strongly challenged throughout the interwar period by adherents of the arts and crafts tradition.

In addition to the works of Harrison and Tillyard, see also Frances Borzello, who argues that while William Morris influenced many fields, "of all the fields he influenced, fine art remained untouched." Frances Borzello, *Civilizing Caliban: The Misuse of Art, 1875–1980* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987), 7. As to Morris's wider social impact, Jeffrey Spear writes that "The fact that Morris' specific influence is more often discussed in artistic *rather* than political terms suggests Morris' failure to convince many outside of his class or the world of art that the cause of art was indeed that of the people." This may be a valid assessment for the period while Morris was still alive, but it is not true for the interwar period when Morris's followers did manage to convince many within the worlds of government, industry, education, and art that "the cause of art was indeed that of the people." Jeffrey Spear, *Dreams of an English Eden: Ruskin and His Tradition in Social Criticism* (New York: Co-

lumbia UP, 1984), 238. Similarly, Solomon Fishman argues that Ruskin had lit-
tle influence on art criticism during the interwar period. See Solomon Fish-
man, *The Interpretation of Art: Essays on the Art Criticism of John Ruskin,
Walter Pater, Clive Bell, Roger Fry, and Herbert Read* (Berkeley: U of California
P, 1963), 15.

The connection between the arts and crafts movement and modern indus-
trial design and architecture has been traced by Nikolaus Pevsner in his *Pio-
neers of Modern Design* (London: Penguin Books, 1975 [1936]).

3. The influence of romantic medievalism on the thought and culture of
nineteenth-century England has long been recognized by historians, although
it is usually understood as waning in strength as the century drew to a close
and finally expiring with the turn against romantic medievalism during the
First World War. See Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (New
York: Oxford UP, 1975); Mark Girouard, *The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and
the English Gentleman* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1981); Charles Dellheim, *The
Face of the Past: The Preservation of the Medieval Inheritance in Victorian En-
gland* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1982); Alun Hawkins, "The Discovery of
Rural England," in Robert Colls and Phillip Dodd, ed. *Englishness: Politics and
Culture 1880–1920* (London: Croom Helm, 1986), 62–85; Samuel Hynes, *A War
Imagined: The First World War and English Culture* (London: Bodley Head,
1990); Florence Boos, ed., *History and Community: Essays in Victorian Me-
dievalism* (New York: Garland, 1992); Carl E. Schorske, "Medieval Revival and
Its Modern Content: Coleridge, Pugin and Disraeli," in Ferenc Glatz, ed., *Mod-
ern Age—Modern Historian* (Budapest: Institute of History of the Hungarian
Academy of Sciences, 1990), 179–87. For a work that stresses the cultural con-
tinuities between the prewar and interwar periods, see Jay Winter, *Sites of
Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cam-
bridge: Cambridge UP, 1996).

4. Hynes, *A War Imagined*, 433. Among those writers who have noted as-
pects of continuity with the past in cultural modernism, see Frank Kermode,
Modern Essays (London: Fontana, 1971), 58–61; Malcolm Bradbury and James
McFarlane, "The Name and Nature of Modernism," in Bradbury and McFar-
lane, eds., *Modernism* (Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin Books, 1976), 46; Deb-
ora L. Silverman, *Art Nouveau in Fin-de-Siècle France: Politics, Psychology,
and Style* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1989), 9; Robert Alter, *Necessary Angels:
Tradition and Modernity in Kafka, Benjamin, and Scholem* (Cambridge, MA:
Harvard UP, 1991); Herbert N. Schneidau, *Waking Giants: The Presence of the
Past in Modernism* (New York: Oxford UP, 1991); Winter, *Sites of Memory,
Sites of Mourning*. For the few contemporary critics in England who presented
modern art as a break with the past, see J. B. Bullen, ed., *Post-Impressionists in
England* (London: Routledge, 1988).

5. Peter Mandler, for example, restates a long-held view in his admirable
study of the English country house: "By progressively narrowing and spiritual-
izing its idea of heritage, therefore, the Arts and Crafts movement had indeed
cut itself off from the 'sources of dynamism' in society. Its influence in shaping
either bourgeois taste or public policy was correspondingly restricted. Its im-
pact on artists and architects was more direct, but this at a time when public
opinion of those creative professions was low and dropping." Peter Mandler,
The Fall and Rise of the Stately Home (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1997), 152.

6. For arguments concerning the importance of cultural norms, social
structures, and institutional arrangements in determining definitions of "art,"
usually grouped under "the institutional theory of art," see George Dickie, *Art*

and the Aesthetic: An Institutional Analysis (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1974); Howard S. Becker, *Art Worlds* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1982); Robert J. Yanal, *Institutions of Art: Reconsiderations of George Dickie's Philosophy* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State UP, 1994); Wesley Monroe Shrum, Jr., *Fringe and Fortune: The Role of Critics in High and Popular Art* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1996).

CHAPTER 1

1. James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1988), 270.

2. As I will discuss below, most studies of English modernism tend to highlight the role of Bloomsbury and the formalist views of Roger Fry and Clive Bell. Studies that have examined the English versions of futurism (e.g., William C. Wees, *Vorticism and the English Avant-Garde* [Manchester, Eng.: Manchester UP, 1972]) and surrealism (e.g., Paul C. Ray, *The Surrealist Movement in England* [Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1971]) note their relatively marginal status in relation to the English artworld as a whole, at least in terms of evaluating the success of each group's attempt to integrate art and everyday life. Similarly, while social realism was an important aesthetic trend in 1930s England, the actual discourse and aims of social realist groups like the Artist International Association (AIA) did not have the public prominence of the medieval modernist discourse that will be discussed below. For the AIA, see Lynda Morris and Robert Radford, *AIA* (Oxford: Museum of Modern Art, 1983). For art historical overviews, see Dennis Farr, *English Art 1870–1940* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1971); Harrison, *English Art and Modernism*. For overviews of the history of industrial design, see Noel Carrington, *Industrial Design in Britain* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1976); Fiona MacCarthy, *British Design Since 1880* (London: Lund Humphries, 1982); Richard Stewart, *Design and British Industry* (London: John Murray, 1987); Richard Huygen, *British Design* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1989).

3. "Modernism" has been usefully distinguished from "modernization" and "modernity" by Marshall Berman, among others. Berman defines modernization as those processes of urbanization, democratization, industrialization, secularization, etc., that have taken place in the West during the past two centuries, yielding the inchoate yet identifiable sense of "modernity," a sense that in turn was what "modernism" attempted to capture and express through art. Marshall Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts into Air* (New York: Penguin Books, 1988). I have followed Berman in using "modernism" to refer to aesthetic expressions, as opposed to other variants of "modernism" (e.g., "Catholic Modernism" or "Philosophic Modernism").

4. Roger Shattuck, "The Poverty of Modernism," in *The Innocent Eye: On Modern Literature and the Arts* (New York: Farrar Strauss Girroux, 1984), 338–39.

5. Jeffrey Weiss, *The Popular Culture of Modern Art: Picasso, Duchamp, and Avant-Gardism* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1994), 52.

6. Contextual studies of aesthetic modernism have been proliferating during recent years among art historians and literary critics; for useful overviews, see Keith Moxey, *The Practice of Theory: Post-Structuralism, Cultural Politics, and Art History* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1994); Johanna Drucker, *Theorizing Modernism: Visual Art and the Critical Tradition* (New York: Columbia UP, 1994); Peter Nicholls, *Modernisms: A Literary Guide* (Berkeley: U of California

P, 1995). Historians have also begun to focus on aesthetic modernism within particular European countries as a way to illuminate wider historical issues: see, for example, Peter Paret, *The Berlin Secession: Modernism and Its Enemies in Imperial Germany* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1980); Carl E. Schorske, *Fin-de-Siecle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York: Vintage Books, 1981); Mary Gluck, *Georg Lukács and His Generation, 1900–1918* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1985); Peter Jelavich, *Munich and Theatrical Modernism: Politics, Playwriting, and Performance, 1890–1914* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1985); Jerrold Seigel, *Bohemian Paris: Culture, Politics, and the Boundaries of Bourgeois Life* (New York: Penguin Books, 1987); Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age* (New York: Anchor Books, 1989); Silverman, *Art Nouveau*; Hynes, *A War Imagined*; Walter L. Adamson, *Avant-Garde Florence: From Modernism to Fascism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1993). Among the many works on English literary modernism, see Michael Levenson, *A Genealogy of Modernism: A Study of English Literary Doctrine 1908–1922* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984); Michael Tratner, *Modernism and Mass Politics: Joyce, Woolf, Eliot, Yeats* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1995). For an analysis of modernism and the avant-garde in nineteenth-century England, see Dianne S. Macleod, *Art and the Victorian Middle Class* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996).

7. Dorothy Ross, "Modernism Reconsidered," in Dorothy Ross, ed., *Modernist Impulses in the Human Sciences 1870–1930* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1994), 8.

8. For historical overviews of aesthetic formalism and its recent challengers, see Drucker, *Theorizing Modernism*, 4; Martin Jay, "From Modernism to Post-Modernism," in T. C. W. Blanning, *The Oxford Illustrated History of Modern Europe* (New York: Oxford UP, 1996), 255–78. A number of recent works continue to define modernism as a formalist break with the earlier, utilitarian conceptions of art, a fact noted by Astradur Eysteinsson in his survey of definitions of literary modernism: "That modernist literature has severed ties with society, reality, or history has indeed been a basic assumption behind a great deal of criticism of modernism" (Astradur Eysteinsson, *The Concept of Modernism* [Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1990], 12). See also Renato Poggioli, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1968), 214–15; Daniel Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1976), 51; Frederick R. Karl, *Modern and Modernism: The Sovereignty of the Artist, 1885–1925* (New York: Atheneum, 1985), xii; Matei Calinescu, *Five Faces of Modernity: Modernism, Avant-Garde, Decadence, Kitsch, Postmodernism* (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1987), 95; Norman F. Cantor, *Twentieth-Century Culture: Modernism to Deconstruction* (New York: Peter Lang, 1988), 6–21; Eksteins, *Rites*, 31; O. B. Hardison, Jr., *Disappearing through the Skylight: Culture and Technology in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Viking, 1989), 131.

9. Charles Harrison, "Modernism and the Transatlantic Dialogue," in *Pollock and After: The Critical Debate*, ed. Francis Frascina (London: Harper and Row, 1985), 217–32. This formalist conception of modernism also developed from the Anglo-American school of New Criticism, whose foundations can also be traced back to England.

10. M. H. Abrams, *Doing Things with Texts: Essays in Criticism and Critical Theory*, ed. Michael Fischer (New York: W. W. Norton, 1989), 135–36.

11. Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane, "The Name and Nature of Modernism," in Bradbury and McFarlane, *Modernism*, 46; Roger Shattuck,

"Catching Up with the Avant-garde," *New York Review of Books* (18 December 1986): 66–74; Antoine Compagnon, *The Five Paradoxes of Modernity*, trans. Franklin Philip (New York: Columbia UP, 1994 [1990]), xvii; Jerrold Seigel, *The Private Worlds of Marcel Duchamp: Desire, Liberation, and the Self in Modern Culture* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1995), 47.

It is true that this definition is still frustratingly general. One scholar of modernism, Franco Moretti, acknowledged that for some time he had defined modernism as "a field of contradictions," but that this was ultimately unsatisfying: "Weary of trying to square the circle, I resolved to abandon modernism. . . . Modernism had become unusable because it contained *too many things*." Franco Moretti, *Modern Epic: The World System from Goethe to García Márquez* (London: Verso, 1996), 2–3. I think "modernism" retains validity as a category if we see it not only as a "field of contradictions" or antinomies, but also as an attempt to reconcile these within an overarching ontological order. Modernism predictably foundered in this quixotic attempt, as it simply assumed or posited a metaphysics that would render all goods commensurable. Postmodernism, by retaining modernism's "field of contradictions" but jettisoning its faith in an underlying essence that would reconcile them, has retained—paradoxically—a greater coherence as an enterprise celebrating the lack of any essential coherence.

12. Charles Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1964 [1859]), 12.

13. Jay, "From Modernism to Post-Modernism" in T. W. Blanning, 265.

14. For an interpretation of modernism that emphasizes "ontological discontinuity" over the search for essences, see William R. Everdell, *The First Moderns* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1996).

15. Sanford Schwartz, *The Matrix of Modernism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1985), 128; Mark Lilla, "The Riddle of Walter Benjamin," *New York Review of Books* (25 May 1995): 37–42.

16. See Jean Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 1984); Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism: The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1990); David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1989).

17. Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 1984).

18. For critiques of Bürger, see Shattuck, "Catching Up with the Avant-garde"; Compagnon, *The Five Paradoxes of Modernity*, 60–64; Michael Saler, "The 'Medieval Modern' Underground: Terminus of the Avant-Garde," *Modernism/Modernity* 2,1 (January 1995): 113–44; Weiss, *The Popular Culture of Modern Art*, xvi. Many have found Bürger's thesis to be a useful heuristic. See, for example, Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1986); Russell A. Berman, *Modern Culture and Critical Theory: Art, Politics, and the Legacy of the Frankfurt School* (Madison: Wisconsin UP, 1989); Martin Jay, *Force Fields: Between Intellectual History and Cultural Critique* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 156–57.

19. Clive Bell, *Art* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1958 [1914]), 27.

20. In addition to the works cited in the Preface, note 2, see also Martin Green's account of the Oxford dandy-aesthetes and their associates who were related, in their francophilia and aesthetic formalism, to Bloomsbury in the twenties. In his account Green claims they exercised "hegemony" over the cul-

ture at this time. Martin Green, *Children of the Sun: A Narrative of "Deca-dence" in England after 1918* (New York: Basic Books, 1976).

21. David Solkin, "The British and the Modern," in Brian Allen, ed., *Towards a Modern Art World* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1995), 1–6; "One might argue that the great strength and weakness of England is the domestication of the extreme," Peter Stansky, *On or About December 1910: Early Bloomsbury and Its Intimate World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1996), 95.

22. Eksteins, *Rites of Spring*, 117. Historians of literary modernism, as opposed to visual modernism, have paid more attention to England, although the litany of "English" modernists includes a fair number who were not English, such as T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, W. B. Yeats, James Joyce, and Wyndham Lewis.

23. Wyndham Lewis's Rebel Art Centre, and the Vorticist movement he founded with Ezra Pound, should also be seen as an avant-garde, but both appeared briefly. See Wees, *Vorticism*; Richard Cork, *Vorticism and Abstract Art in the First Machine Age* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1976). For a recent work on Bloomsbury as avant-garde, see Stansky, *On or About December 1910*.

24. I largely concur with D. L. LeMahieu's insightful discussion of interwar English culture, but I disagree with his contention regarding the English avant-garde: "Whatever their political affiliations, Left or Right, the avant-garde in England retained the moral distance, social detachment, and aesthetic superiority characteristic of traditional elite culture." LeMahieu, *A Culture for Democracy: Mass Communication and the Cultural Mind in Britain between the Wars* (New York: Oxford UP, 1988), 207. This does hold true for certain artists and critics at some points in their careers—Herbert Read, for example, switched repeatedly from seeing art as detached and "formalist" to seeing it as a well-made artifact fit for its purpose in common life. On the whole, however, visual modernism in England during the interwar period tended to be interpreted within a utilitarian and moral framework.

25. Janet Minihan, *The Nationalization of Culture: The Development of State Subsidies to the Arts in Great Britain* (New York: New York UP, 1977); Jules Lubbock, *The Tyranny of Taste: The Politics of Architecture and Design in Britain, 1550–1960* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1995).

26. Paul Oscar Kristeller, "The Modern System of the Arts," in *Renaissance Thought and the Arts* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1980), 163–229.

27. *Architect* (24 June 1932), 466.

28. Quoted in G. D. Hobson, *Some Thoughts on the Organisation of Art After the War* (London: B. T. Batsford, 1946), 35.

29. W. R. Lethaby, *Form in Civilisation* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1922), 184; Anthony Bertram, *Design* (Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin Books, 1943 [1938]), v.

30. For discussions of the relations between modernism and "primitivism," see Elazar Barkan and Ronald Bush, ed., *Prehistories of the Future: The Primitivist Project and the Culture of Modernism* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1995).

31. Lee Congdon, *Exile and Social Thought: Hungarian Intellectuals in Germany and Austria, 1919–1933* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1991), 178.

32. Gluck, *Georg Lukács*, 22, 138–73; Mark Antliff, *Inventing Bergson: Cultural Politics and the Parisian Avant-Garde* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1993), 106–34.

33. Romantic medievalism has had a significant impact on modern literature as well as modern visual art in this period, notably in the works of T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, and James Joyce. Joyce's nostalgia for the Middle Ages and

use of scholastic aesthetics has been explored by Umberto Eco, *The Aesthetics of Chaosmos: The Middle Ages of James Joyce* (Tulsa, OK: Tulsa UP, 1982). The strong continuities between Romantic and modernist American poetry (including the works of Eliot and Pound) have been noted by Albert Gelpi: "Modernists, for all their loud inveighing against Romanticism, longed for and adopted positions that are unmistakably, though sometimes covertly, Romantic." A. Gelpi, *A Coherent Splendor: The American Poetic Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1987), 5. Michael Tratner's study of how literary modernists grappled with the politics of collectivism and the "mass unconscious" also highlights the importance of the image of the "organic" and "collective" Middle Ages in the early twentieth century. Tratner, *Modernism and Mass Politics*, 6–7.

34. For a history of this concept of the "Aesthetic State," particularly as it developed in Germany, see Josef Chytry, *The Aesthetic State: A Quest in Modern German Thought* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1989). Linda Dowling has traced the influence of Shaftesbury's thought on nineteenth-century English thinkers in *The Vulgarization of Art: The Victorians and Aesthetic Democracy* (Charlottesville: Virginia UP, 1996), as does Lubbock, *The Tyranny of Taste.*

35. In his 1913 history of the 1890s, for example, Holbrook Jackson asserted that "too many [believe] that the main current of the artistic movement [of the aesthetes and decadents] was solely an extension of the art for art's sake principle; when, as a matter of fact, the renaissance of the Nineties was far more concerned with art for the sake of life than with art for the sake of art." Holbrook Jackson, *The Eighteen Nineties* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1927 [1913]), 33. For other works that stress the "social" aesthetic of the Victorians and Edwardians, see Jerome Hamilton Buckley, *The Victorian Temper: A Study in Literary Culture* (New York: Vintage Books, 1951); M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp* (London: Oxford UP, 1971), 328; Reginia Gagnier, "Is Market Society the *fin* of History?" in Sally Ledger and Scott McCracken, eds., *Cultural Politics at the Fin de Siècle* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995), 290–310.

36. Carol T. Christ and John O. Jordan, "Introduction," in Christ and Jordan, ed., *Victorian Literature and the Victorian Visual Imagination* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1995), 19–20.

37. Macleod, *Art and the Victorian Middle Class*, 248. On the intersections among painting, literature, and the theater in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, see Martin Meisel, *Realizations: Narrative, Pictorial, and Theatrical Arts in Nineteenth-Century England* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1983).

38. Brian Doyle, "The Invention of English," in Colls and Dodd, *Englishness*, 89–115; Stefan Collini, *Public Moralists: Political Thought and Intellectual Life in Britain* (New York: Oxford UP, 1991).

39. Linda Colley makes this point in her discussion of the evolution of "British" nationalism between 1707–1837, but it also holds true for the definition of "Englishness," especially as that became articulated more deliberately in the course of the nineteenth century. See Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1992); John Wolffe, "Evangelicism in Mid-Nineteenth-Century England," in Raphael Samuel, ed., *Patriotism*, vol. 1 (London: Routledge, 1989), 188–200.

40. Quoted in Thomas Bodkin, "Who Cares About Art?" *Listener* 25 (May 1940): 875.

41. Letter from Herbert Read to Naum Gabo, 12 December 1939. TA: TAM 66/142. Copyright 1999 by Benedict Read.

42. Denys Sutton, ed., *Letters of Roger Fry*, vol.2 (London: Chatto and Windus, 1972), 690.

43. Quoted in *Architect's Journal* 66 (22 June 1927): 910.

44. G. J. Renier, "The English Attitude towards Art," *Studio* (November 1934): 222. In his 1955 Reith Lectures on English visual art, Nikolaus Pevsner noted that "none of the other nations of Europe has so abject an inferiority complex about its own aesthetic capabilities as England." Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Englishness of English Art* (London: Architectural Press, 1956), 19.

45. See Collini, *Public Moralists*; Peter Mandler and Susan Pederson, "Introduction," in Susan Pederson and Peter Mandler, ed., *After the Victorians: Private Conscience and Public Duty in Modern Britain* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

46. W. A. S. Benson, "The Aims of the Arts and Crafts Society," Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, *Handicrafts and Reconstruction* (London: John Hogg, 1919), 125.

47. Sir Frederick Ponsonby, "The Furniture and Silver of To-Day," in *Decorative Art, 1926*, ed. C. G. Holme (London: Studio, 1926), 87.

48. "New Manchester Exhibition Opened," *Manchester Daily Guardian*, 8 December 1911.

49. This marvelously apt phrase is from Lubbock, *The Tyranny of Taste*, 186. He used it to describe the nineteenth-century debates about the "applied arts."

50. The traditional historiography has emphasized intellectuals' disdain for the products of mass culture. See, for example, Patrick Brantlinger, *Bread and Circuses: Theories of Mass Culture as Social Decay* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1983); John Carey, *The Intellectuals and the Masses: Pride and Prejudice Among the Literary Intellectuals 1880–1939* (London: Faber and Faber, 1992); Andrew Ross, *No Respect: Intellectuals and Popular Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1989). Yet T. J. Jackson Lears, while similarly tracing the views of "cultural pessimists," has also noted important exceptions to this tradition. T. J. Jackson Lears, *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America* (New York: Basic Books, 1994). George Leonard has also traced an important lineage of artists, extending from the early nineteenth-century English Romantic poets through John Cage, which regarded "art" and the products of everyday life (including industrial commodities) as indistinguishable, as they all were expressions of a transcendent spirit. George J. Leonard, *Into the Light of Things* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1994).

51. Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Cambridge, MA: MIT UP, 1989), 13. Buck-Morss does not believe that Benjamin's utopian attitude toward mass commodities was widely shared—she notes that even the French surrealists, whose own attempts to merge art and the everyday influenced Benjamin, did not view commodity culture specifically as an instrument of progressive change. In fact, she argues that Benjamin's theory "is *unique* in its approach to modern society, because it takes mass culture seriously not merely as the source of the phantasmagoria of false consciousness, but as the source of collective energy to overcome it" (253). But Benjamin's views were not unique, as this book seeks to establish: many among the English avant-garde denied there was a rigid distinction between the sacred sphere of art and the profane realm of utilitarian objects and looked to mass culture as a source of social renewal.

52. Sir Charles Waldstein, "The Relation of Industry to Art," *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* 62 (28 August 1914): 854.

53. Umberto Eco, *The Aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1988), 164–65, 184.

54. Frank Pick, "An Edinburgh Address on Design and Industry," July 1917. RIBA: DIA/123.

55. Wilfred Salter, "The Practical Use of Art," *Studio* 21 (May 1941): 173–76.

56. James Bone, "The Tendencies of Modern Art," *Edinburgh Review* (April 1913): 433–34.

57. Herbert Read, "What Is There Left to Say?" *Encounter* (October 1962): 30.

58. Eric Gill, *Autobiography* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1947), 136–37.

59. Quoted in Christian Barman, *The Man Who Built London Transport* (North Pomfret, VT: David and Charles, 1979), 13.

60. *Observer* (12 January 1929).

61. "The Temple of the Winds," *Architectural Review* 117 (November 1929): 13–14.

62. "A Generation With Drive," *London Observer*, 7 May 1931.

63. Huntly Carter, *The New Spirit in Drama and Art* (London: Mitchell Kennerley, 1913), 5.

64. J. E. Barton, *Modern Art* (London: BBC, 1933), 21. Cf. Roger Fry's remark about postimpressionism: "We are accused of being anarchic and antitraditional, whereas we are really trying to bring back art into what we believe to be the sounder and also the older traditions," *Pall Mall Gazette* 11 April 1913, quoted in Judith Collins, *The Omega Workshop* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1983), 46.

65. Noel Annan, "The Intellectual Aristocracy," in J. H. Plumb, ed., *Studies in Social History* (London: Longmans, Green, 1955), 241–87.

66. In addition to the works of Eksteins, Jelavich, Paret, Schorske, and Silverman, see Stephanie Barron, ed., *Degenerate Art* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1991); Jonathan Petropoulos, *Art as Politics in the Third Reich* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina UP, 1996); Kenneth E. Silver, *Espirit de Corps: The Art of the Parisian Avant-Garde and the First World War, 1914-1925* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1989).

67. Eco, *The Aesthetics of Chaosmos*, 87.

68. Wyndham Lewis, "What is Industrial Art?" *Commercial Art and Industry* (March 1935): 83–86. Lewis admired the writings of W. R. Lethaby, who was an influential proponent of the arts and crafts ideals. See Godfrey Ruben, *W. R. Lethaby* (London: Architectural Press, 1986), 256.

69. For an examination of Fry's debts to the arts and crafts tradition, and his subsequent repudiation of this tradition by 1910, see Tillyard, *The Impact of Modernism*. Christopher Reed argues, as I do, that Fry's arts and crafts leanings continued to some extent even after 1910, despite his own attempts to submerge them. Reed, ed., *The Roger Fry Reader* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1996).

70. Quoted in Malcolm Hardman, *Ruskin and Bradford: An Experiment in Victorian Cultural History* (Manchester, Eng.: Manchester UP, 1986), 182.

71. Quoted in Peter Stansky, *Redesigning the World: William Morris, the 1880s, and the Arts and Crafts* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1985), 45. Romantic medievalism need not be thought of as antithetical to modernity; it was as often used to legitimate the new, such as railway stations, as it was to condemn the excesses of modern industry and capitalism. See Dellheim, *Face of the Past;* John Clive, *Not by Fact Alone: Essays on the Writing and Reading of History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989), 8.

72. Irving Howe's phrase for "the essential Emersonian project" applies to medieval modernists, many of whom admired Emerson, Thoreau, and Whitman. Irving Howe, *The American Newness* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1986), 31.

73. Hubert Llewellyn Smith, *The Place of Economy in Art* (London: British Institute of Industrial Art, 1929), 4.

74. Quoted in J. W. MacKail, "William Morris," *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects* 42 (14 April 1934): 565.

75. Jose Harris, *Private Lives, Public Spirit: A Social History of Britain, 1870–1914* (London: Penguin Books, 1993), 33.

76. Many contemporaries recognized the futility in trying to distinguish rigorously between the apparent "impersonality" and "objectivity" of classicism and the apparent "subjectivity" and "expressivity" of Romanticism. Charles Taylor notes that Romanticism often expressed an order as impersonal and objective as that imputed to classicism: "Most of the great Romantic poets saw themselves as articulating something greater than themselves: the world, nature, being, the word of God. They were not concerned primarily with an expression of their own feelings." Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1989), 427.

77. Quoted in Bullen, *Post-Impressionism in England*, 188.

78. John Rosenberg, *The Darkening Glass: A Portrait of Ruskin's Genius* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), 73.

79. John Ruskin, *The Two Paths* (New York: Chelsea House, 1983 [1859]), 48.

80. Quoted in Hardman, *Ruskin and Bradford*, 252.

81. See Peter J. Bowler, *The Non-Darwinian Revolution: Reinterpreting a Historical Myth* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1988); John Hedley Brooke, *Science and Religion: Some Historical Perspectives* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991), 283–315; R. J. Helmstadter and Bernard Lightman, ed., *Victorian Faith in Crisis: Essays on Continuity and Change in Nineteenth-Century Religious Belief* (London: Macmillan, 1990); Philip Steadman, *The Evolution of Designs: Biological Analogy in Architecture and the Applied Arts* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1979). For an interpretation that argues that this "organic" tradition did not extend into the early twentieth century, at least in terms of architectural theory, see Caroline van Eck, *Organicism in Nineteenth-Century Architecture: An Inquiry into Its Theoretical and Philosophical Background* (Amsterdam: Architectura and Natura Press, 1994).

82. Anna Bramwell has defined this outlook as "biological holism." Anna Bramwell, *Ecology in the Twentieth Century: A History* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1989), 15.

83. Lubbock, *The Tyranny of Taste*, 248–301.

84. For a discussion of incarnational theology, see Boyd Hilton, *The Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evangelicism on Social and Economic Thought, 1795–1865* (New York: Oxford UP, 1991); for spiritualism, see Frank M. Turner, *Between Science and Religion: The Reaction to Scientific Naturalism in Late Victorian England* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1974); Janet Oppenheim, *The Other World: Spiritualism and Psychical Research in England, 1850–1914* (New York: Oxford UP, 1986); Alex Owen, *The Darkened Room: Women, Power, and Spiritualism in Late-Nineteenth-Century England* (London: Virago, 1989).

85. For a discussion of this shift from "nature" to "artifice" during the nineteenth-century, see Carl Woodring, *Nature into Art: Cultural Transforma-*

tions in Nineteenth Century Britain (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1989). He does not emphasize the continuities in the association of art and nature that I am following.

86. UVic Herbert Read, "Art and Crisis," 1944. Copyright 1999 by Benedict Read.

87. Many modernists were influenced by Neoplatonism, spiritualism, Theosophy, and other mystical and occult movements that flourished at the turn of the century. See Mark Cheetham, *The Rhetoric of Purity* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991); Leon Surette, *The Birth of Modernism: Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, W. B. Yeats and the Occult* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 1993).

88. Annan, "The Intellectual Aristocracy."

89. V&A 86 DD10 C. R. Ashbee Memoirs, vol. 3, "Reconstruction?" January 1923–December 1938, 215.

90. Bell, *Art*, 182.

91, LTM B6 "Art in Household Things," 1916.

92. Houghton Library, Harvard bMSeng1148.2, file 42.

93. C. R. W. Nevinson, *Paint and Prejudice* (London: Methuen, 1937), 169.

94. Personal interview with Lady Beryl Valentine, 17 September 1988.

95. Quoted in James King, *The Last Modern: A Life of Herbert Read* (New York: St. Martins Press, 1990), 61.

96. William Rothenstein, *Men and Memories,* vol. 1 (London: Faber and Faber, 1931), 58.

97. Alfred Thornton, *The Diary of an Art Student of the Nineties* (London: Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons, 1938), 48–49.

98. Frank Pick, *Paths to Peace* (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1941), 16, 32. Zeev Sternhell notes that fascists rejected Enlightenment liberalism and rationalism, yet the communal, national, and technological society they sought was also desired by social democratic thinkers like Pick. See Zeev Sternhell, *The Birth of Fascist Ideology: From Cultural Rebellion to Political Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1994). For a discussion of the more conservative modernists, see John R. Harrison, *The Reactionaries: A Study of the Anti-Democratic Intelligentsia* (London: Gollancz, 1967).

99. Quoted in Charles Marriott and "Tis," *Modern Art* (London: Colour Magazine, 1917), 52.

100. For twentieth-century English figures who embraced the Middle Ages as part of their "romantic protest" against aspects of modernity, such as G. D. H. Cole, A. J. Penty, G. K. Chesterton, and Hilaire Belloc, see Meredith Veldman, *Fantasy, the Bomb, and the Greening of Britain: Romantic Protest, 1945–1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994), 24–36. For medieval antimodernists in America, see T. J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880–1920* (New York: Pantheon, 1981).

CHAPTER 2

1. Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 424.

2. Quoted in Stephen Bayley, "Patrons of the Modern Movement," in Gavin Stamp, ed., *Britain in the Thirties* (London: Architectural Design, 1976), 90.

3. Obituary, *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects* 48 (November 1941): 10.

4. Carrington, *Industrial Design in Britain*, 124.

5. "A Khalif of London," *Manchester Guardian*, 17 August 1928.

6. For the comparison of Pick and Moses, see Anthony Sutcliffe, "Introduction," in Sutcliffe, ed., *Metropolis, 1890–1940* (London: Mansell, 1984), 15; for Pick and Haussmann, see Peter Hall, "Challenges and Responses," Ibid., 26. There have been few studies of Pick. Christian Barman, who wrote a general biography, and Nikolaus Pevsner, who wrote the first (and still the best) extended essay on Pick as a patron of the arts, had the advantage of working with him, but they did not have access to the extensive archive on the Council for Art and Industry at the Public Record Office, which contains a great deal of illuminating material by and about Pick. I have consulted this, as well as other archival sources in America, Canada, and England, notably the Pick Archives at the London Transport Museum and the London Transport Corporate Archives, and have connected many of Pick's efforts and views within the broader outlines of "medieval modernism" that I am trying to limn. See Barman, *The Man Who Built London Transport* (North Pomfret, VT.: David and Charles, 1979); Nikolaus Pevsner, "Frank Pick" in *Studies in Art, Architecture and Design*, vol. 2 (New York: Walker, 1968), 190–209. There are brief discussions of Pick in Noel Carrington, *Industrial Design in Britain*; Adrian Forty, *Objects of Desire: Design and Society, 1750–1980* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986), and D. L. LeMahieu, *A Culture for Democracy*.

7. Reith was raised a Presbyterian. For a broad discussion of Pick, Reith, and other middle-class paternalists, see D. L. LeMahieu, *A Culture for Democracy*; for Reith, see D. L. LeMahieu, "John Reith, 1889–1971: Entrepreneur of Collectivism" in Pedersen and Mandler, eds., *After the Victorians*, 189–206.

8. LTM B2 "Art and Commerce," February 1916, 10.

9. Frank Pick, "The Organisation of Transport," *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* 83 (3 January 1936): 219.

10. So remarked F. A. A. Menzler, who also believed that "London Transport, as we know it today, owes more to Frank Pick than to any other single person." F. A. A. Menzler, "Lord Ashfield and the Public Corporation," *Public Administration* 29,2 (1951): 99–111. Of course, Pick did not single-handedly create the transport system in London. But he and the chairman of the Underground, Lord Ashfield, had a great deal of freedom and power in determining the directions in which the transport system would evolve in the interwar period, and both continued to play central roles when the London Passenger Transport Board was set up in 1933. See T. C. Barker and Michael Robbins, *A History of London Transport: Passenger Travel and the Development of the Metropolis,* vol. 2 (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1974).

11. Quoted in Mark Haworth-Booth, *E. McKnight Kauffer: A Designer and His Public* (London: Gordon Fraser, 1979), 66.

12. Nevinson, *Paint and Prejudice*, 50–51.

13. In their emphasis on the important role of consumption, the interwar medieval modernists anticipated current arguments concerning commodity culture, which have attempted to redress earlier discussions that emphasized production instead of consumption. Recent scholarship has sought a better understanding of the constructive role of consumption. See Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1988 [1984]); Daniel Miller, *Material Culture and Mass Consumption* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984); Jean-Christophe Agnew, "Consumer Culture in Historical Perspective," in John Brewer and Roy Porter, eds., *Consumption and the World of Goods* (London: Routledge, 1993), 19–39.

14. Morris preferred a green that was "pure" and subdued in tone: "Such a green is so useful, and so restful to the eyes, that in this matter also we are bound

to follow Nature and make large use of that work-a-day colour green." William Morris, *Collected Works,* vol. 22, *Hopes and Fears for Art: Lectures on Art and Industry*, ed. May Morris (London: Longman Green, 1914), 100. A brief mention of the Daimler is in Barman, *The Man Who Built London Transport*, 227.

15. For an analysis of William Morris's business acumen and activities, see Charles Harvey and Jon Press, *William Morris, Design and Enterprise in Victorian Britain* (Manchester, Eng.: Manchester UP, 1991); among the many biographies of Morris, see Fiona MacCarthy, *William Morris: A Life for Our Time* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995).

16. Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Compensation," *Essays and Lectures* ed. Joel Porte (New York: Library of America, 1983), 297–98.

17. For surveys of the association between "Englishness" and the South, see Hawkins, "The Discovery of Rural England"; Martin J. Wiener, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit, 1850–1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1981).

18. LTM B2 "Art in Commerce and Life," 8 March 1916.

19. Frank Pick, "London Passenger Transport Board, 1933–38," *Journal of the Institute of Transport* 20 (May 1939): 283.

20. Captions quoted in Stephen Constantine, *Buy and Build: The Advertising Posters of the Empire Marketing Board* (London: HMSO, 1986), 12. In one of his essays, Pick described the city of Knossos as "the pattern of the true city as a common family, pursuing a common end and leading a common life, a pattern from which we have signally departed as we have advanced in time." LTM B15 "Growth and Form in Cities," 1926, 2.

21. LTM A21 "Education and Training in the Transportation Service," 1929, 18.

22. John Ruskin, "A Joy Forever," in *The Complete Works of John Ruskin,* vol. 5 (New York: Kelmscott Society, n.d.), 75.

23. LTM F25 Letter from Pick to U.V. Bogaerde, 8 March 1939.

24. Barman, *The Man Who Built London Transport*, 14.

25. LTM F11 Letter from Sisson Pick to Frank Pick, 3 November 1939.

26. Barman, *The Man Who Built London Transport*, 14.

27. LTM C9 "The Paradox of Happiness," 20 June 1900.

28. Frank Pick, "The Administration of Transport Undertakings—Organization," *Journal of the Institute of Transport* 11 (April 1929): 12.

29. Menzler, "Lord Ashfield and the Public Corporation."

30. Letter from Pick to Anthony Bull, 11 September 1939 (copy provided by Mr. Bull).

31. Harold Nicolson, *Diaries and Letters*, vol. 2 (New York: Atheneum, 1967), 116.

32. LTM Obituaries clippings: Anonymous, *Northampton Independent*, 14 November 1941.

33. LTM B39 "The Creative Purpose Leading Up to Art and Industry," February 1937, 6.

34. LTM C21 "Epheseus," February 1901, 45.

35. A colleague who worked with him during the interwar period recalled that "his Puritanical attitude to conventional morality . . . was exceptionally severe even for those days." Carrington, *Industrial Design in Britain*, 127–28.

36. LTM C24 "The City of Dreams," January 1904, 16.

37. LTM D34 "Background to Living," June 1936.

38. Boyd Hilton notes "After 1850 the romantic tradition was increasingly seen as normative" (Hilton, *The Age of Atonement*, 314).

39. LTM, "Essay on Christianity," 1899. In this essay, he listed thinkers whom he found influential. They were predominantly Protestant: Calvin, Cromwell, Milton, Ruskin.

40. Frank M. Turner, *The Greek Heritage in Victorian Britain* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1981), 57.

41. Gordon Forsythe, "British Art in British Pottery," in John de la Valette, ed., *The Conquest of Ugliness* (London: Methuen, 1935), 136–37.

42. Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society, 1780–1950* (New York: Columbia UP, 1983 [1958]), 39. Harold Bloom has also argued that Romanticism was not opposed to reason, but was opposed to a strictly mechanistic worldview. Harold Bloom, *The Ringers in the Tower: Studies in the Romantic Tradition* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1971), 323.

43. LTM B39a "The Creative Impulse in the College of Art," 1936, 8. Pick's Romanticism prevented him from wholeheartedly endorsing the eighteenth-century classical revival, however: "I fancy it was a period sober and dull and perhaps just a bit pretentious, but none the less it had harmony and accomplishment." Ibid.

44. LTM C2 "Essay on Christianity," 1899, 35.

45. RIBA DIA/123, 17.

46. LTM C20 Poems and Poetic Fragments: "The Problem Expounded with a Refutation of Pessimism" [circa 1897–99].

47. LTM C2 "The Early Teachings of Jesus of Nazareth," 32.

48. Ibid., 26–27.

49. LTM C31 "The Well at the World's End," 29.

50. LTM C16 "On Poems & Poetry," 1899, 9.

51. Ibid., "F."

52. LTM 4A "Browning's Cleon," 1897, xlvii.

53. LTM B2 "Art and Commerce," February 1916, 15.

54. LTM A33 "Some Reflections on the Administration of a Public Utility Undertaking," 1935, 16.

55. LTM C21 "Epheseus," 1901, 30; 33.

56. LTM C28, "The Vision Splendid," 1910, 17.

57. Ibid., 62.

58. V&A "An Occasional Journal," 151.

59. LTM C18 "The Burden of Wisdom," 3 [n.d., circa 1900].

60. V&A "An Occasional Journal."

61. H. H. Peach, ed., *Craftsmen All* (Leicester, Eng.: Dryad Press, 1948), iii.

62. LTM C65.

63. Ibid., 5. Adrian Forty has argued that Pick's commitment to design reform during his years with the Underground had as much, if not more, to do with commercial profits than with ethical issues: "that it might have a moral effect on the public was an added bonus." See Adrian Forty, "Lorenzo of the Underground," *London Journal* 5 (May 1979): 114. It appears from his citations that Forty did not look at Pick's private papers, which show that Pick gave priority to moral reform over profits and that his conception of "commerce" owed more to Ruskin than to modern advertising strategists. Forty repeats this argument in his *Objects of Desire*.

64. Quoted in Hilton, *The Age of Atonement*, 332.

65. LTM A34 "Address at First Annual LPTB Conference," November 1936, 34.

66. Carrington, *Industrial Design in Britain*, 124.

67. Lethaby, *Form in Civilisation,* 26; Haworth-Booth, *E. McKnight Kauffer,* 17.

68. LTM Journal entry, 19 July 1901.

69. Conversation with Lady Valentine, 17 September 1988.

70. LTM Letter from M. K. to Pick, 12 January 1937.

71. LTM D32 "'F' or the Realist," June 1940, 10.

72. LTM C20 Poems and Poetic Fragments: "The Words of Erling," *Yorkshire Independent,* 13 May 1898.

73. LTM C19 "On London," 1–2 [circa 1900].

74. LTM C24 "The City of Dreams," 1904, 23.

75. LTM B15 "Growth and Form in Cities," 1926, 17.

76. Ibid., 25.

77. LTM C24 "The City of Dreams," 24.

78. Ibid., 31.

79. Ibid., 42.

80. LTM D7 Diary fragment, n.d. [1901].

81. W. P. N. Edwards, Ashfield's personal secretary, thought that Ashfield felt uncomfortable around Pick. Ashfield used Edwards to relay messages to Pick, rather than talk to him himself. Personal interview with W. P. N. Edwards, 10 March 1989.

82. For Ashfield's possible role, see Oliver Green and Jeremy Rewse-Davies, *Designed for London: 150 Years of Transport Design* (London: Laurence King, 1995), 14–15.

83. Barman, *The Man Who Built London Transport*, 38.

84. John Ruskin, *The Works of John Ruskin,* vol. 16, ed. E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn (London: George Allen, 1905), 344.

85. Barman, *The Man Who Built London Transport*, 43. The date of the commission has also been reported (without attribution) as taking place in 1915 or 1916, but Barman, who worked with Pick, cited the 1913 date in a 1943 essay as well as in his 1967 biography.

86. Robert Speaight, *The Life of Eric Gill* (London: Methuen, 1966), 76.

CHAPTER 3

1. Virginia Woolf, *Roger Fry: A Biography* (London: Hogarth Press, 1940), 164.

2. For cultural distinctions between the "North" and "South," see Patrick Joyce, *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the Question of Class, 1840–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991), 294–331; Charles Dellheim, "Imagining England: Victorian Views of the North," *Northern History* 22 (1986): 216–30.

3. "New Manchester Exhibition Opened," *Manchester Daily Guardian*, 8 December 1911.

4. Frank Musgrove, *The North of England: A History from Roman Times to the Present* (Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1990), 17; Patricia L. Garside, "West End, East End," in Sutcliffe, *Metropolis*, 228–29.

5. RIBA DIAP/1/8, n.d.

6. Peter Clarke, *Hope and Glory: Britain 1900–1990* (New York: Penguin Books, 1996), 113–14. For a contemporary account of the decline of provincial cultures in the interwar period, see J. B. Priestley, *English Journey* (Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin Books, 1979 [1934]).

7. J. W. S., "The Museums Association Circulating Exhibition," *Studio* 87 (May 1924): 271.

8. Sir John Martin-Harvey, "An Impression of Charles Holme," *Studio* 105 (April 1933): 215.

9. *Evening Advertiser*, 16 November 1937.

10. Herbert Read, *The Tenth Muse: Essays in Criticism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957), 71.

11. "Week by Week," *Listener* 9 (13 January 1932).

12. T. Harrison and D. Behrens, "Public Taste and Public Design," in *Four Lectures in Design* (London: Hutchinson, 1943), 19.

13. PRO Ed24/608 "A Brief Report on State-Aided Art Schools in England by the Board of Education's Art Inspectors" [1930?], 1–2.

14. UVic 10/42 Herbert Read, ms. review of J. P. Odin, *Barbara Hepworth.* Copyright 1999 by Benedict Read.

15. Hardman, *Ruskin and Bradford*, 328.

16. Robert Speaight, *William Rothenstein* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1962), 348.

17. Among the reasons Herbert Read cited to explain the number ofprominent artists from Yorkshire were the region's "collective vitality," its natural beauty of landscape, and the continued presence of the remote past in buildings such as Castle Howard and Rievaulx Abbey. UVic, File HR 10/19.

18. Hardman, *Ruskin and Bradford*, 5.

19. J. B. Priestley, *English Journey*, 154–55.

20. Speaight, *William Rothenstein*, 2.

21. Stuart MacDonald, *History and Philosophy of Art Education* (London: London UP, 1970), 292.

22. UVic HR/48/122 Letter from Michael E. Sadler to Herbert Read, 28 November 1939.

23. Priestley, *English Journey*, 37.

24. Houghton Library, Harvard bMSeng 1148.2, File 73 Newspaper clipping, n.p., n.d.

25. UVic HR 41/8, "Contemporary British Art," 1951. Copyright 1999 by Benedict Read.

26. TA TAM 66/161 Letter from Herbert Read to Naum Gabo, 12 June 1949. Copyright 1999 by Benedict Read.

27. UVic 62/4 Letter from Herbert Read to Wilfred Childe, 27 April 1922. Copyright 1999 by Benedict Read.

28. Herbert Read, *The Grass Roots of Art* (London, 1947), 23.

29. Houghton Library, Harvard bMSeng 1148.2 File 73 Newspaper clipping of interview with William Rothenstein, n.p.,n.d.

30. Arts Enquiry, *The Visual Arts: A Report Sponsored by the Dartington Hall Trustees* (London: Geoffrey Cumberlage and Oxford UP, 1946), 23; Kenneth Clark, *Another Part of the Wood: A Self-Portrait* (London: John Murray, 1974), 124.

31. Minihan, *The Nationalization of Culture*, 154, 177.

32. Harrison, *English Art and Modernism*, 233.

33. *Yorkshire Observer*, 7 October 1925.

34. "Unit One," *Yorkshire Post*, 16 April 1934.

35. Herbert Read, *Annals of Innocence and Experience* (London: Faber and Faber, 1940), 161.

36. David S. Thatcher, *Nietzsche in England 1870–1914: The Growth of a Reputation* (Toronto: Toronto UP, 1970), 226.

37. Transcript of a BBC radio program on "The Personality and Ideas of Herbert Read," presented by Hugh Sykes Davies. I am grateful to Dietrich Bertz of the Special Collections Department, University of Victoria, B.C., for providing this to me.

38. Ibid.

39. Frank Rutter, *Since I Was Twenty-Five* (London: Constable, 1927), 151.

40. Herbert Read, *The Contrary Experience* (London: Faber and Faber, 1963), 102.

41. Michael Sadleir, *Michael Earnest Sadler* (London: Constable, 1949), 30.

42. Houghton Library, Harvard bMSeng1148, File 1302 Letter from Michael E. Sadler to William Rothenstein, 21 August 1916.

43. Sadleir, 226.

44. Ibid., 405.

45. Ibid., 333.

46. "Sir Michael Sadler," obituary by Herbert Read, *Athene*, 3:1 (1941?), 31.

47. Sadler quoted in Ibid.

48. UVic HR/48/122 Letter from Michael E. Sadler to Herbert Read, 30 November 1936.

49. This is implied by Peter Stansky, who sees the relationship between Fry and Rothenstein as representing "the differences in England between the previously advanced but still traditional forms of artistic development, and those artists and critics who were heralds of a new artistic movement, which we now know as modernism." Stansky, *On or About December, 1910*, 187. Because his book deals only with 1910, Stansky does not follow Rothenstein's subsequent engagement with modernism—or Fry—beyond that year.

50. Virginia Woolf, "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown," *Collected Essays,* vol. 1 (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1967 [1924]), 320.

51. Rothenstein's son John also believed his father's criticisms of postimpressionist art had more to do with his dislike of Roger Fry than of the art itself. John Rothenstein, *Modern English Painters*, vol. I (London: MacDonald and Jane's, 1976), 131.

52. Christopher Reed and Peter Stansky have both argued that Roger Fry retained many of the social and democratic attitudes toward art and life from his early association with the arts and crafts movement. I recognize Fry's ambivalent relationship toward the arts and crafts, but see him as also consciously distancing himself from the populist and social aesthetic of the arts and crafts movement after 1910. Reed, ed., *The Roger Fry Reader*; Stansky, *On or About December 1910.*

53. Houghton Library, Harvard bMSEng 1148.2, File 29 William Rothenstein, Address to Cambridge University, 1908. For his views on expression and technique, see Speaight, *William Rothenstein*, 207.

54. Houghton Library, Harvard bMSeng1148.3, File 141 Newspaper clipping from the *Bradford Telegraph and Argus*, 28 November 1932.

55. Houghton Library, Harvard bMS Eng 1148.2, File 41 "Whither Painting?" draft, n.p., 1931.

56. William Rothenstein, *Since Fifty: Men and Memories, 1922–1938* (London: Faber and Faber, 1939), 280.

57. Speaight, *William Rothenstein*, 305.

58. Ibid., 74–75.

59. Ibid., 179; Frances Spalding, *Roger Fry* (London: Granada Publishing, 1980), 154–55.

60. Houghton Library, Harvard bmsEng 1148, File 925 letter from D. S. MacColl to William Rothenstein, 17 November 1939.

61. Tillyard, *The Impact of Modernism*, 61–62.

62. Richard Cork, *Art Beyond the Gallery in Early Twentieth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1985), 118.

63. Quoted in Speaight, *William Rothenstein*, 139.

64. Quoted in Spalding, *Roger Fry*, 69–70.

65. Quoted in Speaight, *William Rothenstein*, 51.

66. Woolf, *Roger Fry*, 179, 244.

67. Spalding, *Roger Fry*, 51.

68. As J. C. Squire noted, "in his outlook and standards he is a link between the Ruskins and Morrises and the Beardsley's and Condors, appreciating the great qualities both of the evangelists and the aesthetes, and tolerant towards the drawbacks of both." J. C. Squire, review of William Rothenstein, *Men and Memories*, vol. I, *Observer*, 22 February 1931.

69. Denys Sutton, ed., *The Letters of Roger Fry*, vol. 2 (London: Chatto and Windus, 1972), 486.

70. Houghton Library, Harvard bmsEng1148, File 533 Letters from Roger Fry to William Rothenstein.

71. Denys Sutton, "Introduction," *Letters of Roger Fry*, vol. 1 (London: Chatto and Windus, 1972), 40, 70.

72. Sutton, ed., *Letters of Roger Fry*, vol. 2, 368.

73. Roger Fry, *Last Lectures* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1939), 156.

74. Quoted in Judith Collins, *The Omega Workshops* (London, 1983), 136.

75. Quoted in Collins, *The Omega Workshop*, 172.

76. Kings College Cambridge RF/KC REF/P/v/1–3 Letter from Roger Fry to Margery Fry, 13 February 1887.

77. Kings College, Cambridge RF/KC REF/P/iv/1–3 Letter from Roger Fry to Edward Fry, 14 November 1914.

78. Houghton Library, Harvard bmsEng1148.2, File 41.

79. Speaight, *William Rothenstein*, 380.

80. Houghton Library, Harvard bMS Eng 1148.2, File 48. William Rothenstein, *Form and Content in English Painting*. Page-proofs for the Romanes Lecture (delivered at Oxford on 24 May 1934), 18.

81. Roger Fry, *Vision and Design* (Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin Books, 1961 [1920]), 57–59.

82. V&A Box III 47.LL, Roger Fry, "The Omega Workshops," 4.

83. Woolf, *Roger Fry*, 196.

84. Quoted in Collins, *The Omega Workshop*, 68.

85. Writing to his mother about the formation of Omega, for example, Fry stated that "my problem is now to harness [art] to practical purposes. There's no doubt that it is a difficult thing to do and perhaps that is why almost all manufacturers give it up and go to the patient hack instead of the artist for their designs." Sutton, ed., *Letters of Roger Fry*, vol. 2, 371. Fry insisted that the works be anonymous, like those created in the *botega* or during the Middle Ages. Nevertheless, one should not lose sight of Fry's ingrained elitism, even as he argued that it was the English art establishment rather than he that was elitist in promoting traditional art and deriding postimpressionism. Fry famously remarked in *Vision and Design* that "one's maid" might respond more readily to the direct expressivity of postimpressionist art as opposed to the tangle of allusions found in traditional art; that sensibility, rather than knowledge, was all that was necessary to appreciate art. This is sometimes cited as evidence that Fry believed in a "democracy" of art. But if the quotation is read carefully, one sees the degree to which Fry qualifies this allegedly populist statement: "It was felt that one could only appreciate Amico di Sandro when one had acquired a certain considerable mass of erudition and given a great deal of time and attention, but to admire a Matisse required only a certain sensibility. One could feel fairly sure that one's maid could not rival one in the former case, but *might by a mere haphazard gift of Providence* surpass one in

the second." (Emphasis mine.) This is not populist, it is Calvinist: a few are elected (even one's maid!) but the rest are damned. In Fry's aesthetic, only a sensitive minority will ever appreciate significant forms; the rest must be content with illustrations. Fry, *Vision and Design*, 192–93.

86. Christopher Reed advances an interesting argument that Fry was influenced by the interwar "call to order," during which many continental modernists tempered their more aesthetic innovations and theories and returned to a greater degree of representation in their art. However, I'm not convinced that the *rappel à l'ordre* had as much influence in England, where art was less directly related to politics than it was on the Continent—at least until the early thirties. Reed, ed., *The Roger Fry Reader*, 306.

87. Roger Fry, *Art and Commerce* (London: Hogarth Press, 1926), 23.

88. Spalding, *Roger Fry*, 268.

89. *Ibid.*, 268–269.

90. *Art and Industry: Report of the Committee Appointed by the Board of Trade under the Chairmanship of Lord Gorell on the Production and Exhibition of Articles of Good Design and Everyday Use* (London: HMSO, 1932), 44.

91. "New Manchester Exhibition Opened," *Manchester Daily Guardian*, 8 December 1911.

CHAPTER 4

1. William Morris, "Art Under Plutocracy" (1883), quoted in Alan Lipman and Howard Harris, "Social Architecture: William Morris, Our Contemporary," *William Morris Today* (London: ICA, 1984), 46.

2. RIBA DIA/130 *Reconstruction Problems 17: Art and Industry*, Ministry of Reconstruction, March 1919, 4–5.

3. *Studio* 42 (December 1901), 206.

4. Quoted in Gillian Naylor, *The Arts and Crafts Movement: A Study of its Sources, Ideals, and Influences on Design Theory* (London: Studio Vista, 1971), 165.

5. Noel Rooke, "The Craftsman and Education for Industry," in the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, *Four Lectures* (London: Longmans Green, 1935), 57.

6. PRO ED46/154.

7. John Heskett, *Design in Germany 1870–1918* (London: Trefoil Books, 1986), 46.

8. PRO ED46/154 Letter of 15 November 1943; Dickey memorandum of 22 December 1943; PRO BT64/3478 14 February 1944.

9. Quoted in Heskett, *Design in Germany*, 119.

10. Bell, *Art*, 27.

11. *Manet and the Post-Impressionists* (London: Grafton Galleries, 1910), 12.

12. Roger Fry, "The Grafton Gallery: An Apologia," *Nation* 92 (9 November 1912).

13. Roger Fry, "J. S. Sargent at the Royal Academy," *Nation and the Athenaeum* 38 (23 January 1926): 582.

14. MacColl argued that chiaroscuro and perspective were important aspects of design and disagreed with Fry's apparent dismissal of these qualities in favor of two-dimensional design. D. S. MacColl, *What is Art?* (Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin Books, 1940), 32.

15. V&A 86.x.23 Paul Nash Press Cuttings, Book 2, 79: Paul Nash, letter to the *Times*, n.d.

16. V&A Brochure for the Arts League of Service.

17. PRO ED24/598 Reply from Professor Pite, 6 March 1914.

18. Wees, *Vorticism*, 29.

19. Dorothy Todd and Raymond Mortimer, *The New Interior Decoration* (London: B. T. Batsford, 1929), 12.

20. Quoted in Gordon Sutton, *Artisan or Artist?* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1967), 229.

21. PRO ED24/87 Board of Education Confidential Reports on the RCA, 1909–10, n.p.

22. Ibid. These were common terms of the arts and crafts movement and, as Stella Tillyard has shown, Fry's formalist aesthetic was as indebted to this tradition as it was to other influences, such as French symbolism. See Tillyard, *The Impact of Modernism*.

23. *The Times*, 27 March 1911.

24. PRO ED24/89, 1911.

25. PRO ED24/179 *Report of the Departmental Committee of the Royal College of Art* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1911), 13–14.

26. Christopher Frayling, *The Royal College of Art* (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1987), 84.

27. Sir Leo Chiozza Money, "The War and British Enterprise," *Westminster Gazette*, 16 March 1915, 37–38.

28. PRO ED24/601 Proposals for a Museum & Institute of Modern Industrial Art by Cecil Smith, 29 April 1914.

29. RIBA DIA/130 "Art and Industry," Ministry of Reconstruction, March 1919, 6.

30. PRO ED24/87 Lewis Day, "Report on the Teaching of Ornament and Design at the RCA."

31. PRO ED24/601 Minute to the Board of Education by Mr. Yates, 23 October 1918.

32. PRO ED24/598 Board of Education minute, 12 October 1916.

33. *Drawing and Design*, May 1917, 8.

34. Quoted in Frayling, *The Royal College of Art*, 107. For Ruskin's views, see Naylor, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*, 8.

35. PRO ED24/607.

36. MacDonald, *History and Philosophy of Art Education,* 308–309.

37. *Notes on the International Congress for Art Education, Prague, 1928* (London: HMSO, 1929), 6.

38. PRO ED24/607 "Memorandum of Discussion on Art Education," 24 October 1929.

39. PRO BT57/30/A.570/6 Council 277, 2 February 1938.

40. W. G. Paulson-Townsend, "British Industrial Art," *Journal of the Imperial Arts League* (November 1914): 47.

41. RIBA DIA/123 A. Clutton Brock, "A Modern Creed of Work," 8.

42. RIBA DIAP/10/13 Letter from Harry Peach to Cecil Brewer, 1 January 1915. While Liberty's has served as a symbol of the commercialization of the arts and crafts, its founder Sir Arthur Liberty was one of many men of commerce imbued with the arts and crafts ideal. As one obituary stated, "He always inculcated in his pupils and those manufacturers who came under his influence that the craftsman should be an artist." *Drawing and Design* (June 1917): 31.

43. LTM B2 "Art and Commerce," February 1916, 16.

44. The DIA itself claimed in 1937 that "The thirties have seen the accep-

tance of the DIA creed officially and semi-officially, and also taken into intellectual currency by the Press and the BBC." A large claim for a small organization, and also a self-serving one. Nevertheless, it was essentially accurate. RIBA DIA/96 *DIA News* (January 1937): 2.

45. In 1916 the DIA had 244 members; in 1928 it had 602 members, and in 1935 it had 819 members. Gillian Naylor notes that the German Werkbund had 1,870 members in 1914, and 3,000 members in 1930. Naylor, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*, 186.

46. Among the DIA's members at various times were James Bone, an editor of the *Manchester Guardian*; C. Lewis Hind, the art critic for the *Daily Chronicle* and the *Art Journal*; Arthur Clutton-Brock, art critic of *The Times*; Lawrence Weaver of *Country Life*; Lord Leverhulme; Holbrook Jackson; Herbert Read; Ambrose Heal, proprietor of Heal's; educators Michael E. Sadler, Allen Seaby, and J. E. Barton; painters E. McKnight Kauffer, Charles Sims, Sir John Lavery, William Rothenstein, Albert Rothenstein, Lucien Pissarro; art teachers and critics Henry Tonks and D. S. MacColl; John Gloag, editor of *Cabinet Maker* and managing director of an advertising firm; St. John Hornby of W. H. Smith; Kenneth Anderson of Oriental Steam Navigation Company; Sir James Morton of Morton Sundour; Frank Warner, a silk manufacturer; Gordon Selfridge, of Selfridge and Company.

47. The designer Misha Black recalled that *Art and Industry* "became for me, as it became for all my generation, a kind of bible to which we referred when we wanted succor and help. . . . [I]t's probably the most perceptive book on the whole problem of art and industry that's ever been written." UVic Transcript of BBC radio program on Herbert Read, presented by Hugh Sykes Davies.

48. Roger Hinks, "Patronage in Art Today—I," *Listener*, 4 September 1935, 386–87.

49. Umberto Eco, *The Aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1988), 164–65, 184.

50. A. W. N. Pugin, *Contrasts* (Leicester, Eng.: Leicester UP, 1973 [1836]), 1. Pugin was a fervent Roman Catholic; he undoubtedly was influenced by medieval conceptions of art, notably that of Aquinas. For Aquinas (who, like other medieval writers, was ultimately influenced by Aristotle in his formulation), art was an artifact rightly made for its purpose and true to its material. See Eco, *Aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas.*

51. Fiona MacCarthy, *A History of British Design 1830–1970* (London: George Allan and Unwin, 1979), 11, 18.

52. Lord Gorell, "Design and the Industrial Revolution," *Architectural Review* 121 (July 1933): 3.

53. RIBA DIAP/10/135 Letter from Peach to Cecil Brewer, 31 December 1915.

54. Steadman, *The Evolution of Designs*, 15.

55. Quoted in Umberto Eco, *Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1986), 93. Eco summarized the medieval conception of art: "Art was not expression, but construction, an operation aiming at a certain result." Ibid.

56. John Ruskin, *The Two Paths* (New York: Chelsea House, 1983 [1859]), 79, 48. After he gave up his goal of entering the clergy, Morris did not adver to higher powers, but he too retained the romantic (and medieval) view that art accords with the design of nature: "For . . . everything made by man's hand has a form, which must be either beautiful or ugly; beautiful if it is in accord

with nature, and helps her; ugly if it is discordant with nature, and thwarts her." William Morris, "The Lesser Arts," quoted in Naylor, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*, 108.

57. LTM B23b "The Meaning and Purpose of Design," [1932?], 9.

58. RIBA DIA/141 B. J. Fletcher, "Right Making," lecture to the London School of Economics, 1925.

59. Bergson's metaphysic of the active, evolutionary spirit behind "creative evolution," the *élan vital*, had a wide influence on artists in Europe. See Antliff, *Inventing Bergson*. Alfred North Whitehead desired to formulate a "unified scientific religion" and attempted to relate the mind and the material world in an organic synthesis in *Science and the Modern World* (1925). See Paul Levy, *Moore* (London: Weidenfield and Nicholson, 1979), 97. I. A. Richards also combined idealism with empiricism, arguing for the interdependence of art and science. See John Paul Russo, *I. A. Richards* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1989), 13–40. D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson's first edition of *On Growth and Form* (1917) maintained the Neoplatonic idea that organic forms conformed to absolute physical laws expressed by mathematics. He cited Plato and Pythagoras with approval, stating that "the harmony of the world is made manifest in Form and Number, and the heart and soul of all the poetry of Natural Philosophy are embodied in the concept of mathematical beauty." D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson, *On Growth and Form* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1952 [1942]), 1096–97. Pick and Read would have read his original 1917 edition. For an overview of the conjunctions between art and science in the first half of the twentieth century, see C. H. Waddington, *Behind Appearance* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1968).

60. Fry and Bell's new aesthetic repudiated what they saw as the impressionists' emphasis on technique: "With the new indifference to representation we have become much less interested in skill and not at all interested in knowledge." Fry, *Vision and Design*, 19. Their association of impressionism with technique was common among their contemporaries. R. A. M. Stevenson's *Velasquez* (1895), for example, had argued that impressionism was chiefly about artistic technique, in contrast to the academicians' emphasis on subject genres. See Rutter, *Art in My Time*, 16–17; Kate Flint, ed., *Impressionists in England: The Critical Reception* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984), 17.

61. Candidus, "Originality—At What a Price!" *Daily Sketch*, 25 May 1929.

62. *Art Teachers' Guild Record* 36 (January 1920): 14.

63. A. Clutton-Brock, "The Post-Impressionists," *Burlington Magazine* 19 (January 1911); reprinted in Bullen, *Post-Impressionism in England*, 197.

64. Arthur Clutton-Brock, *Essays on Art* (London: Methuen, 1920), 10.

65. RIBA G-ReH/40/2/19 ms. of review for *Studio* 108 (July 1934).

66. This rhetoric approximates the strand of "antipsychologism" in modernism analyzed by Martin Jay, "Modernism and the Specter of Psychologism," *Modernism/Modernity* 3,2 (May 1996): 93–111.

67. Ruskin's American contemporary Horatio Greenough argued in his influential *Form and Function* (1843) that the link between form and function in nature should be the model for artistic creation. Greenough influenced Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright, among others. See H. W. Jansen, *Form Follows Function—Or Does It?: Modernist Design Theory and the History of Art* (Maarssen, The Netherlands: Gary Schwartz, 1982), 7.

68. V&A 86 DD10 C.R. Ashbee, *Memoirs*, vol. 8, 229.

69. The Editor, "What Is Wrong With Modern Painting II: The Pernicious Influence of Words," *Studio* 103 (March 1932): 164.

70. Critics have noted that the underlying motives behind the formalists' rhetoric may not have been as pure as the art they sought to defend. By defining their art as "authentic" and "sincere," uncontaminated by the gross demands of the market, modern artists and their supporters rendered their work all the more attractive to collectors. See Robert Jensen, *Marketing Modernism in Fin-de-Siècle Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1994), 10–11; Lawrence Rainey, "The Creation of the Avant-Garde: F. T. Marinetti and Ezra Pound," *Modernism/Modernity* 1,3 (September 1994): 195–220. The sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has argued that the formalist disavowal of any utilitarian purpose for art deliberately reinforced the social distinctions between a cultivated elite (who have the time and means to engage in disinterested contemplation) and the broader populace (whose taste is more circumscribed by immediate necessities, and who therefore prefer art associated with everyday life). Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP 1984), 5.

71. RIBA DIA/122 "Art and Workmanship" by W. R. Lethaby, DIA pamphlet, March 1915, 3–4.

72. "'Tis," "The Premier and the Cobbler," *Colour* 1 (April 1926): 3–4.

73. H. Barrett Carpenter, "The True Place of Art in Education," *Art Teachers' Guild Record* 36 (January 1920), 19.

74. Hubert Llewellyn Smith, "Art as an Ally of Industry," *The Times*, 30 December 1933.

75. Rubens, *W. R. Lethaby*, 265–66.

76. Pat Gilmour, *Artists at Curwen: A Celebration of the Gift of Artists' Prints from the Curwen Studio* (London: Tate Gallery, 1977), 10–17.

77. RIBA DIAP/63/2 Letter from H. H. Peach to Oswald White, 15 October 1921.

78. Harold Speed, "Art and the Representation of Visual Nature," *Journal of the Imperial Arts League* (June 1914), 16.

79. John Betjeman, "1837–1937 A Spiritual Change Is the One Hope for Art," *Studio* (January 1937): 72. When T. S. Eliot argued in 1948 that "no culture has appeared or developed except together with a religion" he was merely being as English as the English. T. S. Eliot, *Notes towards the Definition of Culture* (London: Faber and Faber, 1948), 15.

80. RIBA DIAP10/297 Letter from Harry Peach to Cecil Brewer 12 November 1917.

81. *The Manchester Guardian,* "News and Views of the DIA," 23 January 1925.

82. G. D. H. Cole, ed., *William Morris* (London: Nonesuch Press, 1946), xx.

83. *The Times*, 17 May 1915, 31.

84. Herbert Read, *A Coat of Many Colours: Occasional Essays* (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1945), 78.

85. Walter G. Raffe, "The Machine and the Artist," *Drawing and Design* (May 1917), 18. The Worker's Educational Association (WEA) tended to ignore the visual arts, but by the mid-thirties articles arguing for the association of the artist with industry appeared in the pages of the WEA journal *The Highway*. The message for the working classes was the same as that presented in the journals directed at the middle and upper classes: "The design of machine-made goods must be the work of an artist—but of an artist who is thoroughly familiar with the processes of manufacture: he must know what the machine can do and design in accordance with its powers." W. G. Constable, "Art and Daily Life," *Highway* (March 1934): 24.

86. RIBA DIAP/10/135/ Letter from Peach to Brewer, 31 December 1915.

87. RIBA DIA/123 "A Modern Creed of Work" by A. Clutton Brock, 17.

88. John A. Milne, "Beauty in Merchandise," in John de la Valette, ed., *The Conquest of Ugliness* (London: Methuen, 1935), 31.

89. Ibid., 79.

90. Marjorie and C. H. B. Quennell, *A History of Everyday Things in England*, vol. 4 (London: B. T. Batsford, 1934), 211.

91. Of course, few if any of the medieval modernists were intellectuals of the caliber of those in the Frankfurt School, and I am not comparing the validity of each group's insights. But their responses to the relation of modern art to consumer culture are worthy of juxtaposition, as they indicate quite different approaches to this question in the interwar period. Among the many works on the Frankfurt School, see Martin Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research 1923–1950* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973); Susan Buck-Morss, *The Origin of Negative Dialectics: Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, and the Frankfurt Institute* (New York: Free Press, 1977).

92. Not all members of the Frankfurt School held the consumption of modern commodities in such low regard. See Douglas Kellner, *Critical Theory, Marxism and Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989). Michel de Certeau has also argued that consumption is both a productive and a political act: "The tactics of consumption, the ingenious ways in which the weak make use of the strong, thus lends a political dimension to everyday practices." de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, xvii.

93. RIBA DIA/122 "Catalogue of an Exhibition of Household Things," Whitechapel Art Gallery, October to December 1920, 4.

94. Letter from May Morris, *Listener* 10 (12 October 1932): 534.

95. RIBA DIA/18B *Design in Modern Industry: The Year Book of the DIA, 1923–4*, "Introduction," 12. Jeffrey Herf has found that a similar conception of industrial products being infused with "soul" characterized an aspect of the German National Socialists' attempt to reconcile technology with their own irrational, pastoral, and conservative ideology, a tradition that he terms "reactionary modernism." Both reactionary modernism and medieval modernism shared common roots in German and English romanticism. Jeffrey Herf, *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture, and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984), 225.

96. W. R. Lethaby, "Art and Workmanship," 11. It is ironic that while Lethaby's broad definition of art was often quoted to support the view that industrial products could be considered art, Lethaby himself did not believe this. He believed that art could only come from joy in labor; machine products were of a secondary order, but still ought to be designed with great care. Ibid., 7. Harry Peach argued with Lethaby over this, but Lethaby refused to see Peach's point of view: as he wrote to Peach on 6 July 1927, "you seem sometimes to suppose machinery can take the place of art It cant, it is different. Only recognize this difference & go on improving it by all means." RIBA PeH/5/13/18.

97. LTM B25 Noel Carrington, *Design in Modern Life*, BBC Broadcast Talks Pamphlet, April 1933, 2.

98. Winifred Stamp, "Art *Versus* Craft," *Nation* 27 (10 April 1920): 42.

99. Quoted in John Gloag, *Industrial Art Explained* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1945), 134.

100. Peach alerted members of the DIA to the writings of Le Corbusier and to the developments of the Bauhaus in the 1920s. Pat Kirkham, *Harry Peach*

(London: Design Council, 1986), 61. When Lethaby complained to him about the "parasite decadenteries" of many modern works (RIBA PeH/5/5/4), Peach cautiously defended the new art: "Quite agree with you about decadence, but one must be careful about discouraging the younger effort, which sometimes leads to ways the older ones cannot see." RIBA PeH/5/15.

101. Read confessed in a 1946 letter to the constructivist artist Naum Gabo that he indiscriminately promoted modern art in order to legitimate the modern movement as a whole: "I am too tired of the Picasso affair to write about it. . . . But however many reservations one would like to make to oneself, or to the few who understand, one is driven to the *total* defense of this art because any qualification would be interpreted as a confession of weakness." TA TAM 66/133 Letter from Read to Gabo, 13.1.46. Copyright 1999 by Benedict Read.

102. Tillyard notes that reviewers of the first 1910 postimpressionist exhibition invoked Ruskin in their analyses of the new art (88). I disagree with her contention that by the second postimpressionist exhibition in 1912 Fry and Bell's new formalist discourse had become so prevalent that it eclipsed earlier conceptions of art: "Most reviewers, and perhaps many of the audience, however, had by this time abandoned direct reference to the associations between the Arts and Crafts Movement and the language of Post-Impressionism." Tillyard, *The Impact of Modernism*, 199.

103. T. Sturge Moore, *Theory and Practice* (Leicester: Municipal Art School Press, 1916), 8–9.

104. George Roebuck, ed., *William Morris 1834–1934: Some Appreciations* (Walthamstow, Eng.: Walthamstow Antiquarian Society, 1934), 28–29.

105. Laurence Binyon, "John Ruskin," in J. Howard Whitehouse, ed. *Ruskin the Prophet and Other Centenary Studies* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1920), 74–75.

106. Charles Marriott, "Art and Nature," *Nation and the Athenaeum* 31 (20 May 1922): 272–74.

107. Charles Marriott, *Modern Art*, 11.

108. R. H. Wilenski, *John Ruskin: An Introduction to Further Study of His Life and Work* (London: Faber and Faber, 1933), 240.

109. R. H. Wilenski, "The Modern Critic Explains His Creed," *Listener* 15 (13 March 1935): 452.

110. James Laver, "Modern Paintings and Their Place in Modern Rooms," *Good Housekeeping* 94 (May 1932): 35.

111. Anthony Bertram, "Artists Indoors," *Listener* 12 (1 November 1933): 660–61.

112. Rutter, *Art in My Time*, 248.

113. Roebuck, *William Morris*, 27.

114. E. Hartley Wilson, letter to *Art Teachers' Guild Record* 37 (December 1921): 10.

115. Frank Rutter, "Art Without Tears," *Colour Magazine* 1 (January 1926): 2.

116. LeMahieu, *A Culture for Democracy*, 16.

117. R. S. Lambert, "The Philistines Be Upon Thee," *Trend In Design* 2 (Summer 1936): 67.

118. Quoted in Gordon Sutton, *Artisan or Artist?*, 59.

119. Arts Enquiry, *The Visual Arts*, 28–30; MacDonald, *History and Philosophy of Art Education* 157–69, 224.

120. Arts Enquiry, *The Visual Arts*, 28–29. The Workers' Educational Association tended to ignore the visual arts. The British Institute of Adult Education was formed in the 1930s to address this gap in worker education.

121. Farr, *English Art 1870–1940*, 365.

122. Roger Fry, *Transformations: Critical and Speculative Essays on Art* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1926), 26.

123. RIBA DIAP 4/1 Catalogue: Arts League of Service Exhibition of Practical Arts at the Twenty One Gallery, 1919.

124. Advertisement in *Colour* 1 (May 1925).

125. PRO ED24/598.

126. PRO ED121/59 *Notes on the International Congress for Art Education, Prague, 1928* (London: HMSO, 1929), 12.

127. National Society of Art Masters, *Some Aspects of Art Education* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1921), 10.

128. *The Art Teachers' Guild Record* 37 (January 1921): 12.

129. PRO ED121/59 *Notes on the International Congress for Art Education, Prague, 1928*, 32.

130. Fry and Bell's observations between 1910–14 regarding the similarities between postimpressionism and the art of children may have been influenced by the increased interest shown by educators in children's art during the prewar years. Maria Montessori and Franz Cizek, for example, had argued that children should be given greater freedom of expression in their early attempts at drawing; the work of Cizek's "child artists" were exhibited in London in 1908. Cizek, like Fry, had been influenced in his approach to art by Ruskin and Morris: "I like to think of Art colouring all departments of life rather than being a separate profession. The interesting thing is that this idea came over to us from England. It was your William Morris and Ruskin and the rest who first tried to make Art penetrate every corner of life." Quoted in Gordon Sutton, *Artisan or Artist?*, 261.

131. RIBA PeH/5/15/22 Letter from Peach to Lethaby, 27 April 1929.

132. William Rothenstein, "The Encouragement of the Imaginative Spirit in Education," *Art Teachers' Guild Record* 36 (January 1924): 20–30.

133. LTM B36 "The Place of Art in Education," 1935.

134. Herbert Read, *Education through Art* (London: Faber and Faber, 1943), 14.

135. Lethaby, *Form in Civilisation*, 184.

136. Roebuck, ed., *William Morris 1834–1934*, 22.

137. *Listener* 12 (15 November 1933): 761.

138. Wyndham Lewis, *The Caliph's Design: Architects! Where is Your Vortex?* (London: Egoist, 1919), 6.

139. Anthony Bertram, Review of BBC Broadcasts, *Architectural Review* 122 (September 1934): 97, quoted in Robin Kinross, "Herbert Read's *Art and Industry*: A History," *Journal of Design History* 1 (1988): 36.

140. Marriott, *Modern Art*, 8.

141. PRO BT57/12/A.196/35 *Report of the Committee on Advanced Art Education in London*, 1936, 2.

142. H. L. Smith, *The Economic Laws of Art Production: An Essay Towards the Construction of a Missing Chapter of Economics* (London: Oxford UP, H. Milford, 1924), 36.

143. C. F. A. Voysey, "Some Thoughts on Art Training," *Journal of the National Society of Art Masters* (October 1916): 96.

144. Percy E. Nobbs, *Design* (London: Oxford UP, 1937), 35.

145. D. H. Lawrence, *Women in Love* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1987 [1920]), 424.

CHAPTER **5**

1. LTGA ACC/1297/UER4/79 "Traffic and Politics in America, 1919," 13.

2. In a lecture Pick suggested that his listeners join the DIA, "becoming missionaries throughout the length and breadth of the land for the conversion of things from bad to good, or from good to better, or from better to best, if that is possible." LTM B23b, "The Meaning and Purpose of Design," 2.

3. Jonathan Rose, *The Edwardian Temperament, 1895–1919* (Athens: Ohio UP, 1986), 146.

4. LTM A10, "The Objects and Effects of Traffic Control," 15 November 1923, 9; A13 "Community in Relation to Transport," notes, April 1924.

5. LTM B15 "Growth and Form in Cities," January 1926, 26.

6. LTM C33, "The New Creation," 1921, 9.

7. LTM B2 "Art and Commerce," 16.

8. LTM B6, 17.

9. LTM A21 "Education and Training in the Transport Service," July 1929, 9.

10. Ibid., 3.

11. Ibid., 15.

12. Ibid., 17.

13. LTM B15 "Growth and Form in Cities," January 1926, 27.

14. LTM Letter from Herbert Read to Frank Pick, 19 February 1941. Copyright 1999 by Benedict Read.

15. *Daily Herald*, 9 August 1929.

16. Pick, "Art in Modern Life," *Nineteenth Century* (February 1922): 263.

17. LTM B6 "Art in Household Things," 1916, 1.

18. Pick, "Design in Industry," *Design for To-Day* 2 (January 1934): 37–38.

19. Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 221.

20. Pick, "Design in Industry," 37.

21. For T. S. Eliot and romanticism, see Gelpi; for Roger Fry, see Reed, *The Roger Fry Reader*, 124–25. Reed notes that in 1912 Fry defined classic art as the record of a "disinterestedly passionate state of mind".

22. Carter, *New Spirit,* 47–48.

23. Jerrold Seigel, *The Private Worlds of Marcel Duchamp*, 47.

24. LTM C36 "Communism and Careers," October 1925.

25. LTM B15 "Growth and Form in Cities," January 1926, 24.

26. Frank Pick, "Art in Modern Life," 262.

27. LTGA 12/101/3 Frank Pick, "Design in Transport," 7.

28. Isaiah Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty* (London: Oxford UP, 1971), 149.

29. Andrew Cunningham and Nicholas Jardine, eds., *Romanticism and the Sciences* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990), 5.

30. LTM C72 "Notes for a Speech at the Society for Industrial Artists," n.d.

31. LTM C37, "Public Amusements," 20 October 1926, 17.

32. LTM B15 "Growth and Form in Cities," January 1926, 22.

33. LTM B13 "The Art of the Street Mainly Illustrated from London," 9 March 1923, 28.

34. LTM B23b "The Meaning and Purpose of Design," 1932.

35. LTM B1 "Art," 15 February 1916, 1; LTM B6, 1916, 2; Pick, "Art in Modern Life," 264.

36. Pick, "Art in Modern Life," 264.

37. LTM B39 "The Creative Purpose Leading up to Art and Industry," 13 February 1937, 4.

38. Ibid., 18.

39. LTM B1; LTM B6.

40. LTM C37, 21. In an entry in his notebook in 1932, Pick wrote "Get back to the creative atmosphere. Every repetition of a perfunctory kind is a re- move from it—a decadence." LTM D19.

41. LTM C72 "Notes for a Speech."

42. Pick, "Art in Modern Life," 263.

43. LTM C61 "A Living Wage" [circa WWI].

44. LTGA 100 853/1 Frank Pick on Kauffer's DIA lecture, 29 November 1923.

45. LTM A25.

46. LTM A11 "The Value and Scope of London Traffic," 12 December 1923, 20.

47. Green and Rewse-Davies, *Designed for London*, 88.

48. Quoted in Haworth-Booth, *E. McKnight Kauffer*, 36.

49. LTM B6 Box 4, Copy A "Underground Posters" (1927), 4.

50. LTM Letter from Frank Pick to Martin Hardie, 31 August 1925; LTM B6.

51. LTM B11 "The Meaning of Posters," 1922.

52. Ibid.

53. LTM B6, 3.

54. LTGA 100 853/1.

55. Barman, *The Man Who Built London Transport*, 211.

56. At least this seems to have been the case when Pick was in charge of the Empire Marketing Board's Poster Sub-Committee in the 1920s and 1930s. See Stephen Constantine, *Buy and Build* (London: HMSO, 1986), 7–8. Oliver Green, on the other hand, argues that Pick gave his Underground artists great latitude and was concerned primarily with the poster's fitness for its purpose. Oliver Green, *Underground Art* (London: Studio Vista, 1990), 12. Charles Holden also believed that Pick made suggestions but usually did not compro- mise the expressive freedom of the artist: "In his contact with designers he would offer suggestions freely but if these suggestions found no response he, very wisely, would not press the suggestion, he knew that was not the way to get the best work out of an artist." Charles Holden, "Personal," *Architect's Journal* 96 (26 March 1942): 233.

57. Quoted in Haworth-Booth, *E. McKnight Kauffer*, 30.

58. Rutter, *Art in My Time*, 249.

59. LeMahieu, *A Culture for Democracy*, 169, 210–13.

60. T. A. Clarke, "Another Word for the Modern Poster," *Commercial Art* (June 1924): 65.

61. G. Basedon Butt, "Advertising Tends towards the Decorative," *Com- mercial Art* (January 1923): 72.

62. Personal conversation with Anthony Bull, Pick's secretary between 1936–39, 20 September 1988.

63. Green, *Underground Art*, 14. In the televised version of the novel one of Kauffer's posters can be spotted in at least one scene.

64. V&A Underground File. Minute by H. A. K., 9 March 1926, to Martin Hardie: "In visiting Schools of Art up and down the country, one cannot fail to see the great interest taken in poster work, and for some time past I have felt that more good drawings for posters by leading artists in this particular sphere would be most useful."

65. Ibid., Letter from Martin Hardie to A. L. Barber, Publicity, London Underground, 27 July 1928.

66. "The Present-Day Poster: An Interesting Debate," *Commercial Art* (December 1923): 322–23.

67. According to Nikolaus Pevsner, "it can be safely said that no exhibition of modern painting, no lecturing, no school teaching can have had anything like so wide an effect on the educatable masses as the unceasing production and display" of the Underground posters. Pevsner, "Frank Pick," 193.

68. "The Present-Day Poster," 323.

69. Todd and Mortimer, *The New Interior Decoration*, 13.

70. LTM B26, n.p., n.d.

71. Quoted in Barman, *The Man Who Built London Transport*, 118.

72. PRO ED24/598 Statement by W. R. Lethaby, 7 April 1914.

73. Lethaby, *Form in Civilisation*, 205.

74. Rubens, *W. R. Lethaby*, 258.

75. *The Times*, 23 March 1921.

76. Carrington, *Industrial Design in Britain*, 103.

77. *RIBA Journal* 16 (February 1915): 168.

78. LTM A11 "The Value and Scope of London Traffic," 12 December 1923.

79. LTM B13 "The Art of the Street Mainly Illustrated From London," 9 March 1923, 9.

80. Barman, *The Man Who Built London Transport*, 114. Heaps contributed to the actualization of Holden's designs, at times recommending important modifications. See, for example, LTGA 12/4/114. His contributions to the design of Underground architecture merit further study.

81. Ibid., 118.

82. LTM A15 "Progress," 3 November 1926.

83. LTM B15, 26.

84. While it should be noted that Holden's designs for the Morden line in the twenties may have been influenced by some of the unadorned, geometric buildings on display at the 1925 Paris Exposition des Arts Decoratifs, Holden himself had favored this style in earlier buildings he designed. See David Lawrence, *Underground Architecture* (London: Capital Transport, 1994), 54.

85. Holden, "Personal," 233.

86. LTM B15, 21.

87. LTM Morden Extension File, letter from Pick to S. A. Heaps, 8 August 1925.

88. LTM A11, 18.

89. LTGA 12/4/114 Letter from Frank Pick to Charles Holden, 8 November 1926.

90. Patrick Geddes (1854–1932) was a biologist as well as town planner. Raymond Unwin (1863–1940) was a typical medieval modernist: he was born in West Yorkshire, was deeply influenced by the writings of Ruskin and Morris, desired to restore the communality and spirituality of the Middle Ages to the modern world through the implementation of socialism and the acceptance of industry, and believed that art had to be broadly defined as the expression of the human spirit fulfilling a concrete task. As Mark Swenarton notes, this included town planning: "Unwin was extending the borders of the category of art as defined by Ruskin to include the city, giving the city a place alongside the painting, the work of sculpture and the work of architecture as something capable of expressing, and speaking to, the human spirit." Mark

Swenarton, *Artisans and Architects: The Ruskinian Tradition in Architectural Thought* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 163.

91. LTM B18 "Design in Cities," March 1925, 26.

92. RIBA HoC/1/30/1.

93. RIBA HoC/1/13/2, 3 July 1940.

94. *Daily Express*, 24 May 1929.

95. RIBA HoC/5/1 Letter from Charles Holden to Christian Barman, 19 August 1953 (xerox).

96. Lawrence Menear describes both the Cockfosters Station and the Uxbridge Station as resembling cathedrals. Lawrence Menear, *London's Underground Stations: A Social and Architectural Study* (London: Baton Transport, 1985), 82–85.

97. RIBA HoC/1/24.

98. RIBA HoC/1/19 "Aesthetic Aspect of Civil Engineering Design," 26 April, 1944, 16.

99. LTM A15.

100. LTM B16 "Design in Relation to London of the Future," DIA Dinner, 1926.

101. LTM Letter from Frank Pick to James Bone, 26 March 1925.

102. Kathleen Woodward, "Art Descends into the London Subway," *New York Times Magazine* 1929:2 (13 October 1929): 12.

103. LTM B6 Box 1 *The New Piccadilly Circus Station*, 10 December 1928.

104. *DIA Quarterly Journal*, December 1928, 115.

105. Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 36.

106. *Journal of the RIBA* 37 (25 April 1936), 626.

107. *Daily Mail*, Paris, 2 July 1929.

108. RIBA HoC/1/23 "Frank Pick," 3.

109. "Two Views of Colossal Underground Figures," *Evening Standard*, 1 July 1929.

110. LTM F2 "Scraps and Commonplaces," vol. 2, February 1931.

111. *Daily Dispatch*, 1 August 1929.

112. Houghton Library, Harvard bMS1148/1641 letter from William Rothenstein to Sir Lewis Amherst Selby-Bigge, 11 August 1920; Speaight, *William Rothenstein*, 311.

113. Hardman, *Ruskin and Bradford*, 9, 325.

114. Farr, *English Art 1870–1940*, 250; RIBA HoC/1/20 "Exhibition of the Work of Sir Jacob Epstein," 1954.

115. *Country Life* 106 (23 May 1929).

116. *Daily Mail*, 24 May 1929; *Manchester Guardian*, 24 May 1929; *Observer*, 26 May 1929.

117. *Daily Telegraph*, 12 July 1929.

118. *New Leader* 28 (9 August 1929).

119. *Evening News*, 27 May 1929.

120. *Daily Sketch*, 24 May 1929.

121. Sir Reginald Blomfield, "An Architect's Disapproval," *Manchester Guardian*, 27 July 1929, 13.

122. A. Trystan Edwards, "Nocturnalia," *Architect*, 28 June 1929.

123. *Birmingham Gazette*, 31 July 1929.

124. LTGA Acc1297/UET/4/78 "A Note on Contemporary Architecture in Northern Europe," by W. P. N. Edwards, Frank Pick, Charles Holden, 20 June–7 July 1930. Similar sentiments linking tradition with modernity were expressed

by adherents of the interwar rural preservation movement (which included Pick and other members of the DIA). See David Matless, "Ages of English Design: Preservation, Modernism, and Tales of Their History, 1926–1939," *Journal of Design History* 3 (1990): 203–12.

125. Frank Pick, *Britain Must Rebuild: A Pattern for Planning* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1941), 45. In a draft of the CAI Report on the Furnishing and Equipment of a Working Class Dwelling, Le Corbusier's phrase was implicitly criticized in a chapter titled "The Home as a Place to Live in." PRO BT57/30/A.570/40/5, Council 235.

126. UVic 61/158/1 letter from Frank Pick to Herbert Read, 15 February 1941; LTM letter from Herbert Read to Frank Pick, 19 February 1941 (Copyright 1999 by Benedict Read).

127. LTGA 12/101/3 Letter from Frank Pick to M. E. Pheysey, 6 January 1931.

128. For detailed descriptions of the stations, see Menear, *London's Underground Stations*, 73–76; Lawrence, *Underground Architecture*, 81.

129. Baird Dennison, "Architecture at the Royal Academy: ii," *Architect's Journal* 75 (11 May 1932).

130. LTM Holden correspondence, letter from Holden to A. R. Cooper, 13 February 1934.

131. Menear, *London's Underground Station*, 91–92; Lawrence, *Underground Architecture*, 82.

132. Frank Pick, "The Growth of Cities," *Journal of the Institute of Transport* 13 (November 1931): 9.

133. LTM A34 "An Address at the LPTB First Annual Conference," November 1936, 21–34.

134. Barman, *The Man Who Built London Transport*, 146.

135. Herbert Read, ed., *Surrealism* (London: Faber and Faber, 1971 [1936]).

136. Ibid.

137. LTM A29 "Locomotion," 1932, 2.

CHAPTER 6

1. Quoted in Jonathan Barnes, "Aristotle," *Founders of Thought* (New York: Oxford UP, 1991), 174.

2. PRO ED136/11 Memo from Mr. Wood, 29 January 1936.

3. PRO BT57/1/A.11 First Meeting of the CAI, 30 January 1934, 23–24.

4. Ibid., 10.

5. PRO ED136/11 Minute by R. S. Wood, 29 January 1936.

6. *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* 81 (23 March 1934), 530.

7. PRO BT60/24/3.

8. PRO ED24/608 "Third and Final Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Industrial Design and Art Education."

9. Many of these points were expressed in "Notes by the Principal Assistant Secretary on English Art Schools" prepared for the Crowe Committee, 3 February 1930. (PRO BT60/24/3.)

10. E. M. O'R. Dickey, "Industry and Art Education on the Continent," *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* 82 (14 June 1935): 706–17.

11. Ibid., 709.

12. PRO BT60/24/3 "Notes by the Principal Assistant Secretary on English Art Schools," 3 February 1930, 5, 13; BT57/27/A.568/40 "Report by the Industrial Art Commission of the Treasury," 3 September 1930.

13. PRO BT60/24/3 Crowe Committee, Report on Meeting of 22 July 1930.

The Hambledon Report noted that "Both British manufacturers and the British public are, in the main, conservative, and the demand for original design has been small. . . . Once industry is satisfied that there is a public demand for new and improved designs, it will not be slow to employ and to remunerate adequately artists to produce them." PRO BT57/12/A.196/35, "Report of the Committee on Advanced Art Education in London," 1936.

14. PRO BT60/24/3 "Notes by the Principal Assistant Secretary on English Art Schools," 3 February 1930, 16; BT57/27/A.568/40, Report by Mr. Abbott, Industrial Art Committee, No. 2, 1930.

15. MacDonald, *History and Philosophy of Art Education*, 303.

16. *Art and Industry*, 36.

17. Rothenstein, *Since Fifty*, 234–35.

18. V&A Letter from Frank Pick to B. J. Fletcher, 18 December 1934.

19. PRO BT57/12/A.196/35 *Report of the Committee on Advanced Art Education in London* (London: Board of Education, HMSO, 1936). After reading the report Pick wrote to a colleague at the CAI that "It looks as though we were obtaining reasonable consideration from our point of view." Ibid., letter from Frank Pick to G. L. Watkinson, 9 July 1936.

20. Rothenstein, *Since Fifty*, 235.

21. See, for example, Hugh Gordon Porteus, "The Painter Speaks," *Listener*, 4 April 1934.

22. Edward Wadsworth, for example, was a prominent artist (from Yorkshire), known for both his paintings and carpets, who distinguished between the fine and the applied arts. Edward Wadsworth, "The Abstract Painter's Own Explanation," *Studio* (November 1933): 276.

23. "Art and Industry," *Listener* 25,1 (1 June 1932): 780.

24. "The Prince of Wales Calls for the Recognition of the Artist in Industry," *Studio* 107 (January 1934): 3–4.

25. The Prince of Wales, "Forward," in de la Valette, *The Conquest of Ugliness*, vii.

26. Quoted in MacCarthy, *British Design Since 1880*, 43.

27. *The Times,* 12 April 1934.

28. W. W. Winkworth, "Commercial and Serious Art," *Spectator* 152 (29 June 1934): 997.

29. Bertram, *Paul Nash: The Portrait of an Artist* (London: Faber and Faber, 1955), 174.

30. "Unit One," *Yorkshire Post*, 16 April 1934.

31. "'Unit One' Subject of Cathedral Sermon," *Liverpool Post & Mercury*, 4 June 1934.

32. "Colour and Pattern," *Derbyshire Advertiser*, 30 November 1934.

33. *Studio* 108 (October 1934): 211.

34. *Yorkshire Post*, 31 October 1933. In his introduction to a collection of essays about modernism and domesticity, Christopher Reed argues that the "domestic" strain in early modernism (represented in England by both the aestheticist movement and the arts and crafts at the turn of the century) essentially died out by the end of the First World War, to be replaced by an overt hostility toward the domestic by modernists for much of the twentieth century. Christopher Reed, "Introduction," in Reed, ed., *Not at Home: The Suppression of Domesticity in Modern Art and Architecture* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1996), 7–17. This was not the case for England, where modernism continued to be closely associated with the decorative and the domestic through the interwar period.

35. Quoted in *Listener* 9 (16 March 1932): 381.

36. PRO BT57/A.524/39.

37. British Institute for Adult Education, *Art for the People* (1935), 5, 10.

38. RIBA DIA/11 Annual Report, 10 March 1936.

39. "Week by Week," *Listener* 15 (27 March 1935): 519.

40. Carrington, *Industrial Design in Britain*, 148.

41. Herbert Read, *Art and Industry: The Principles of Industrial Design* (London: Faber and Faber, 1934), 37–38.

42. Black, quoted in BBC radio broadcast "The Personality and Ideas of Herbert Read" (UVic). John Gloag called *Art and Industry* "the only book that really mattered." Quoted in Kinross, "Herbert Read's *Art and Industry*," 43.

43. Read, *Art and Industry*, 40.

44. Herbert Read, *The Weathering of Art* (Stoke-on-Trent: Society of Staffordshire Artists, 1942), n.p.

45. John Gloag, *Industrial Art Explained* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1934), 99.

46. Noel Carrington, *Design and a Changing Civilisation* (London: John Lane, 1935), vii, 1.

47. Eric Newton, "Reading a Work of Art," *Art Teachers' Guild Record* 69 (1936): 26.

48. *Listener* 19 (24 February 1937): 374.

49. J. E. Barton, *Modern Art* (London: BBC, 1933), 4–5.

50. Bertram, *Design*, 85.

51. PRO BT57/25/A.492 CAI Paper No. 45.

52. PRO BT57/A.28/570 Council 66, "A Memorandum of Evidence Submitted on Behalf of the National Union of Teachers to the CAI of the Board of Trade"; Council 66A *The Training of Teachers of Art and Of Craft Subjects* by National Union of Teachers.

53. PRO BT57/A.28/570 Council 69, 22 December 1934 "Digest of Evidence Given by Joint Standing Committee of the Training College Association and Council of Principals."

54. Quoted in Janet Malcolm, "A House of One's Own," *New Yorker* 71 (5 June 1995): 73.

55. PRO BT57/A.28/570 Council 87, 5 February 1935.

56. Ibid.

57. Marion Richardson, "Children's Drawings," *Athene* (Summer 1947): 3–5. [Originally published in the *LCC Annual Report*, vol. 5, 1936.]

58. "Collaboration Between Manufacturers and Artists," *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* 81 (23 March 1934): 523. The Royal Academy had broadened their exhibition policy slightly in a 1923 "Exhibition of Decorative Art" by including architecture along with painting and sculpture. See "Decorative Art at the Royal Academy," *Studio* 85 (March 1923): 131–39.

59. de la Vallette, ed., *The Conquest of Ugliness*, 134.

60. Ibid., 18.

61. *Journal of the Royal Society of the Arts* 81 (23 March 1934): 533.

62. Letter from C. G. Holme, *Architectural Review* 77 (April 1935): 166.

63. V&A Archive of Art and Design AAD1/639-1980 Report for Year 1935–36.

64. Nikolaus Pevsner, *An Enquiry into Industrial Art in England* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1937), 12.

65. PRO BT57/30/A.570/40/5 Draft of "Design and the Designer in Industry," October 1936, 43.

66. MacDonald, *History and Philosophy of Art Education*, 304.

67. Wyndham Lewis, "Plain Home-Builder: Where is Your Vorticist?" in *Creatures of Habit and Creatures of Change*, ed. Paul Edwards (Santa Rosa, CA: Black Sparrow Press, 1989), 246.

68. Pevsner, *Enquiry*, 40.

69. British Institute of Industrial Art, *Industrial Art and British Manufacture* (London: BIIA, 1927), 16.

70. PRO BT57/25/A.492 CAI Paper No. 52 Summary of Evidence Given by Mr. Paul Nash to Hambledon Committee on Advanced Art Education in London.

71. "Art in Industry," *Journal of the Royal Society of Art* 82 (20 March 1935): 448.

72. "Art and Industry," *Manchester Guardian Commercial,* 6 September 1935.

73. PRO BT57/1/A.11 First Meeting of the CAI, 30 January 1934.

74. The American designer Norman Bel Geddes observed in the early 1940s that "We approach all problems from the consumer's point of view—wishes, needs and tastes—we determine them and then design to them." Quoted in Penny Sparke, *An Introduction to Design and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1986), 31. Nikolaus Pevsner observed that in England in the 1930s, there was very little market research on design, unlike in America. Pevsner, *Enquiry*, 5.

75. Gordon Russell, *Designer's Trade: Autobiography of Gordon Russell* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1968), 141–42.

76. Harold Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society: England Since 1880* (New York: Routledge, 1989), 222.

77. PRO ED136/9 Board of Education memo regarding a conversation with Frank Pick, 10 January 1936. During the Second World War the government realized that they were far behind other nations in industrial design for light industry products and struggled to find ways to catch up. E. M. O'R. Dickey of the Board of Education admitted in 1943 that design for products of "nontraditional" industries had not been seriously considered for most of the thirties: "The design for appearance of engineering products from machine tools and locomotives to typewriters and sewing machines was not specifically dealt with in Frank Pick's 'Design and the Designer.' We thought this was partly because the topic was hardly in the air at the time the Arts & Industry Council issued that report and partly because Mr. Pick's own scheme for good design in everything to do with London Transport was so satisfactory that he did not need to take the then newly streamlined USA locomotives etc. very seriously." PRO ED46/154, Letter from E. M. O'R. Dickie to Miss Goodfellow, 18 November 1943.

78. PRO ED136/9/2042(1) Minute by Secretary E. G. Savage, 14 May 1936.

79. PRO ED136/11 Memo from R. S. Wood, 14 February 1938.

80. PRO BT57/12/A.200/35 Letter from Frank Pick to G. L. Watkinson, 22 November 1935.

81. PRO BT57/1/A.11 First Meeting of the CAI, 30 January 1934.

82. LTM B36 "The Place of Art in Education," 1935.

83. PRO BT57/A.28/570 Council 95 Draft of "Education for the Consumer," 7.

84. Ibid., 5.

85. Ibid., 8.

86. William Rothenstein, "The Encouragement of the Imaginative Spirit in Education," *Art Teachers' Guild Record* 40 (January 1924).

87. Herbert Read, *Education Through Art* (London: Faber and Faber, 1943), 35, 60.

88. "Art in the Schools," *Nottingham Guardian*, 4 September 1935.

89. "Art and Education," *Schoolmaster*, 12 September 1935; "National Art Training," *Birmingham Post*, 4 September 1935.

90. "Educating the Consumer," *The Times*, 4 September 1935.

91. *Builder* 149 (27 September 1935).

92. "Art in the Schools," *Daily Telegraph*, 4 September 1935.

93. PRO ED136/11 R. S. Wood, memo, 29 January 1936.

94. PRO ED24/609 Minute paper, 17 December 1935.

95. PRO BT57/13/A.221/36 Letter from Frank Pick to G. L. Watkinson, 22 January 1936.

96. PRO BT57/30/A.570/40/5 Council 214 R. S. Wood, Progress Report on "Education for the Consumer," 26 November 1936.

97. RIBA HiO/42/4 Letter from Frank Pick to Oliver Hill, 18 July 1935.

98. Gillian Naylor, "Design and Industry," in *The Cambridge Guide to the Arts in Britain*, vol. 8, ed. Boris Ford (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989), 255–93.

99. RIBA HiO/42/4 Letter from Oliver Hill to Frank Pick, 14 October 1935.

100. Ibid., Letter from Oliver Hill to Frank Pick, 27 January 1936.

101. PRO BT57/29/A.570/3 Council 130 Minutes of 14th Meeting of CAI, 10 October 1935.

102. RIBA HiO/42/4 Letter from Oliver Hill to Frank Pick, 26 March 1936.

103. Ibid., Letter from Oliver Hill to Frank Pick, 6 July 1936.

104. Ibid., Letter from Oliver Hill to Frank Pick, 16 August 1937; Hill to Pick, 23 December 1937.

105. PRO BT57/30/A.570/40/5 Council 238, 8 April 1937.

106. LTM B40 "Design in Education: Being an Exhibition of Material for Use in Elementary Schools," January 1937.

107. PRO BT57/13/A.221/36 Letters from Frank Pick to E. M. Rich and Herbert Morrison, 1937.

108. *Teacher's World*, 25 September 1935.

109. PRO BT57/7 A.107 Notes of Frank Pick's interview with Walter Gropius, 31 January 1935. Gropius shared many of the idealist and spiritual aims of the English medieval modernists. He had been influenced by the writings of Ruskin and Morris, and consciously set up the Bauhaus as a craft guild along medieval lines. In April 1919, Gropius proclaimed the aims of the Bauhaus in terms similar to those used by the English medieval modernists: "Let us therefore fashion a new guild of artisans without the class-divisive arrogance that seeks to erect a proud wall between artisans and artists! Together let us will, devise, and create the new building of the future, which will unite architecture, sculpture, and painting in one form, and which, from the hands of millions of artisans, will rise toward heaven like a crystal symbol of a new and coming faith." Quoted in Congdon, *Exile and Social Thought*, 179.

110. PRO ED46/13 Letter from Frank Pick to E. M. O'R. Dickey, 22 February 1935.

111. PRO ED46/13

112. Ibid., Letter from Frank Pick to W. C. Eaton, 25 July 1935.

113. Ibid., Letter from W. C. Eaton to Frank Pick, 30 July 1935.

114. Ibid., Letter from Frank Pick to W. C. Eaton, 31 July 1935.

115. Ibid., Letter from Frank Pick to W. C. Eaton, 16 August 1935.

116. Ibid., Letter from W. C. Eaton to Frank Pick, 22 August 1935.

117. Ibid., Letter from Mr. Watkinson to E. M. O'R. Dickey, 9 September 1935.

118. Ibid., Minute from W. C. Eaton, 22 August 1935.

119. PRO BT57/29/A.570/4 Council 155; Council No. 155A, 10 January 1936.

120. PRO ED136/9 (2042) Board of Education memo, 10 January 1936.

121. PRO ED136/11 Memo from R. S. Wood, 29 January 1936.

122. Ibid.

123. Ibid.

124. PRO ED136/11 Memo from R. S. Wood, 14 February 1938.

125. PRO BT57/30/A.570/40/5 Draft report, October 1936.

126. Frank Pick, "Design in Industry," *Design for To-Day* 2 (January 1934): 37–39.

127. PRO BT57/29/A.570/4 Council 182 Frank Pick's draft on the Training and Employment of Designers, 7 May 1936.

CHAPTER 7

1. LTM F11 Letter from Frank Pick to James Bone, 12 August 1925.

2. LTM B29 Inaugural Address, LCC Central School of Arts and Crafts, 26 October 1934, 5.

3. LTM B29, 11.

4. PRO BT57/29/A.570/4 Council 170.

5. PRO BT57/29/A.570/4 Council 182, Frank Pick's draft on the Training and Employment of Designers, 7 May 1936.

6. Personal communication from Anthony Bull, 10 October 1988.

7. LTM B29.

8. LTM A33, 13.

9. Ibid., 14.

10. Ibid., 17.

11. LTM A39 Speech to Second Annual Conference of the LPTB, 23.

12. The following account is based on an interview I had with Lady Beryl Valentine on 17 September 1988.

13. LTM F11 Letter from Alec Valentine to Frank Pick, 9 July 1936.

14. Ibid., Letter of 24 July from [?] to Frank Pick.

15. LTM A36 "London and London Transport Fifty Years Hence," 27 November 1936, 20.

16. LTM B39 "The Creative Purpose Leading up to Art and Industry," 13 February 1937, 2.

17. Ibid., 3.

18. LTM B29.

19. LTM B39, 7–8.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid., 14–15.

22. Ibid., 10.

23. PRO BT57/30/A.570/40/5 Minutes of the 28th meeting, 14 January 1937.

24. V&A Letter from Frank Pick to B. J. Fletcher, 18 December 1934.

25. Ibid., Letter from Frank Pick to B. J. Fletcher, 10 February 1937.

26. Ibid., Letter from Frank Pick to B. J. Fletcher, 6 July 1937.

27. LTM B42A "Art and Industry," speech to the Royal Institution, January 1939, 7.

28. LTM A42 Speech to the Federation of Civil Engineering Contractors, 1937, 4.

29. LTM B41 "Education for Industry," notes for speech to the British Association, 22 August 1937, 5, 7.

30. LTM B42A, "Art and Industry," January 1939, 7.

31. Ibid., 14–15.

32. LTM A44 "Appearance Values," Third Annual LPTB Conference, 1938, 44–45.

33. PRO BT57/7/A.111/35 CAI, First General Report, 14 February 1935.

34. PRO BT57/30/A.570/6 Council 273.

35. LTM B42A, 15.

36. *Design and the Designer in the Light Metal Trades* (London: HMSO, 1944), 40.

37. Ibid., 45.

38. See the essays in Barron, ed., *Degenerate Art*. There were a few pro-modernist Nazis, like Goebbels, but Hitler's hatred of aesthetic modernism set official policy. For a consideration of fascism and aesthetics in Italy, see Simonetta Falasca-Zamponi, *Fascist Spectacle: The Aesthetics of Power in Mussolini's Italy* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1997).

39. Pick wrote with admiration about the Nazi's attempt to create communal spirit through public works like swimming baths and requested translations of "The Road into the Reich" and "Song of the Christmas Angel." LTM F11. During the war he deplored German and Italian forms of fascism, but argued that they did contain some positive aspects: "Those who have examined their doctrines and their practices in an objective way, have appreciated the value of the discipline which they taught before it was transformed into a discipline of might and machine; of the social solidarity which they gave to a society verging upon disruption; of that sense of unity which they brought to a lost and straying people. Their notion, too, that a wider basis than politics was essential to the functioning of a nation, that, so to speak, all associations must be associated, was equally important as a lesson for these latter times." Frank Pick, *Paths to Peace: Two Essays in Aims and Methods* (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1941), 16–17.

40. Mary Gluck, "Toward a Historical Definition of Modernism: Georg Lukács and the Avant-Garde," *Journal of Modern History* 58 (December 1986): 845–82.

41. Mary Gluck, *Georg Lukács and His Generation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1985); Samuel Hynes, *The Auden Generation: Literature and Politics in England in the 1930s* (London: Bodley Head, 1976); Valentine Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties* (New York: Oxford UP, 1989).

42. Green, *Children of the Sun*.

43. LTM E17 Catalog, *Les Maîtres de L'Art Indépendent 1895–1937*, with marginalia in Pick's hand.

44. LTM B9 "Posters," 1939, 29–30.

45. LTGA 12/106 Letter from Frank Pick to D. O'Connell, 6 April 1934.

46. LTM B9 "Posters," 1939, 30.

47. Ibid.

48. LTM A44, "Appearance Values," 1938, 46.

49. LTM B39, 12.

50. In notes for a speech concerning an exhibition in Stoke-on-Trent, Pick jotted the following: "Provincialism good. Individual Character Real, not sham international." LTM C72.

51. RIBA HiO/63/1/1 Letter from Frank Pick to Oliver Hill, 7 August 1936.

52. Ibid., Letter from Frank Pick to Oliver Hill, 14 October 1936.

53. Barman, *The Man Who Built London Transport*, 194.

54. Frank Pick, "At the Paris Exhibition," *Listener* (19 May 1937): 972.

55. RIBA HiO/1/1/ Letter from Frank Pick to Oliver Hill, 18 January 1937; Letter from Frank Pick to Oliver Hill, 22 January 1937. Ultimately the credo read "Art the Spirit of Industry/Industry the Spirit of Art." PRO BT57/30/A.570/6, Council No. 276.

56. "Paris International Exhibition," *Studio* 114 (June 1937): 333.

57. Raymond Williams, *Politics and Letters: Interviews with the New Left Review* (London: NLB, 1979), 37.

58. Quoted in Paul Greenhalgh, *Ephemeral Vistas: The Expositions Universelles, Great Exhibitions and World's Fairs, 1851–1939* (Manchester, Eng.: Manchester UP, 1988), 133.

59. LTM B42A "Art and Industry," January 1939, 17.

60. Pick, "At the Paris Exhibition," 973.

61. RIBA HiO/63/1/1 Letter from Frank Pick to Oliver Hill, 1 September 1937.

62. LTM D29 "Trip to Scotland," July 1937.

63. PRO BT57/23A.427/38 Letter from Frank Pick to Harold Stabler, 21 July 1938; Letter from Frank Pick to Harold Stabler, 25 July 1938.

64. Ibid., Letter from Frank Pick to Lord Stanhope, 27 July 1938.

65. Ibid., Notice to members of the CAI from R. C. Bryant, secretary, 28 July 1938 [apparently dictated by Pick—corrections are in his hand].

66. In the file on the controversy, Pick received supportive letters from Harold Stabler, Sydney Lee, and Allison Settle.

67. Ibid., Letter from Eric MacLagan to Frank Pick, 29 July 1938.

68. Ibid., Letter from Eric MacLagan to Lord Stanhope, 29 July 1938.

69. Ibid., Letter from Percy Jowett to Frank Pick, 26 July 1938, upon receipt of Pick's original letter to *The Times*.

70. Ibid., Letter from H. T. Williams Thomas to Frank Pick, 30 July 1938.

71. Ibid., Letter from Sir Frederick Marquis to Frank Pick, 5 August 1938.

72. Ibid., Letter from Frank Pick to Lord Hambledon, RCA Council, 20 August 1938.

73. Ibid., Letter from Frank Pick to Earl de la Warr, 8 November 1938.

74. Ibid.

75. V&A Letter from Frank Pick to B. J. Fletcher, 8 November 1938.

76. Ibid., Letter from Frank Pick to B. J. Fletcher, 18 January 1939.

77. LTM D28 Cruise notes, August 1937.

78. LTM F23 Letter from Frank Pick to Anthony Bull, 29 April 1939.

79. V&A Letter from Frank Pick to B. J. Fletcher, 16 February 1939.

80. LTM F23 Letter from Lord Ashfield to Frank Pick, 16 January 1940.

81. LTM Letter from Frank Pick to Lord Ashfield, 31 January 1940. Had the letter been sent, it is unlikely the original would have ended up in Pick's papers.

82. LTM Letter from Lord Ashfield to Frank Pick, 6 March 1940.

83. Barman, *The Man Who Built London Transport*, 259; LTM D32 "'F' or the Realist," June 1940, n.p.

84. Barman, *The Man Who Built London Transport*, 262.

85. Nicolson, *Diaries and Letters*, 108.

86. V&A Letter from Frank Pick to B. J. Fletcher, 20 January 1941.

87. Nicolson, *Diaries and Letters*, 130.

88. LTM Letter from Harold Stabler to Frank Pick, 24 August 1941; Letter from W. J. Basset-Lowke to Frank Pick, 18 August 1941.

89. Pick, "Re-Energizing Religion," 22.

90. Ibid., 26–27.

91. Ibid., 27.

92. Ibid., 25.

93. Ibid.

94. V&A Letter from Frank Pick to B. J. Fletcher, 7 November 1941.

CHAPTER 8

1. Octavio Paz, *Convergences: Essays on Art and Literature* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1987), 61.

2. PRO ED46/154, Letter from Mr. Hudson, Board of Overseas Trade, to Earl de la Warr, Board of Education, 17 November 1939. A 1943 memorandum by the Society of Industrial Artists complained that "Little distinction is as yet made between the requirements of modern mass production and the handicrafts; the student is still taught to work as an individual craftsman rather than as a member of a team. The rapidly expanding mechanisation in all branches of productive industry, with its demand for a fundamentally different design technique, has been almost completely neglected." PRO ED46/154 SIA Memorandum, 5 September 1943.

3. PRO ED46/154 Notes by Mr. Roehling on a conversation with Mr. Dickey, 22 December 1943.

4. Sparke, *An Introduction to Design and Culture*, 49. Contrary to the medieval modernist view of the American design profession, a number of prominent American designers did maintain a moral as well as commercial outlook on design in the thirties; like the English design reformers they sought to create a harmonious environment for the new machine age. See Jeffrey L. Meikle, *Twentieth-Century Limited: Industrial Design in America, 1925–1939* (Philadelphia: Temple UP, 1979).

5. Sparke, *An Introduction to Design and Culture*, 96.

6. PRO ED46/154 Report by the Interdepartmental Committee, 27 January 1943.

7. Ibid., "Plan for a School of Technical Design," by Norbert Dutton.

8. Ibid., Memo by E. M. O'R. Dickey, 8 June 1943.

9. Ibid., Letter from E. M. O'R. Dickey to Mr. Wallis, 3 November 1943.

10. PRO ED136/8 Appendix to Paper No.49: Post-War Export Trade Committee: Report of the Sub-Committee on Industrial Design and Art in Industry (Weir Report), 23 September 1943.

11. Ibid., Report, 27 January 1943.

12. Quoted in Frayling, *The Royal College of Art*, 135. In the 1959 RCA *Annual Report,* Darwin admitted that there were some drawbacks to the specialization of the RCA he had started a decade before: "the establishment of these departmental splinter groups may have led to undue specialization. It is certainly a fact that without that degree of specialization we could never have made so rapid an impression upon industry for we could not have hoped otherwise to have produced so many students acceptable to it. In the long term interests of education, however, and indeed in the long term interests of industry itself, it is possible that our sights have been too narrow." Ibid.

13. PRO EL1/17 CEMA Paper 178.

14. PRO ED46/154 Minutes between Philip James and Mary Glasgow, May 1943.

15. PRO ED136/196A Letter from Mary Glasgow to E. Hale, 16 October 1945.

16. Quoted in Eric W. White, *The Arts Council of Great Britain* (London: Davis Poynter, 1975), 41–42.

17. Quoted in Ian Britain, *Fabianism and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1982), 44.

18. PRO ED136/196A Letter from J. M. Keynes to Mary Glasgow, 31 December 1945.

19. Green, *Underground Art*, 16.

20. Kenneth Clark, *Another Part of the Wood*, 75.

21. *Trend in Design* (Spring 1936): 3.

22. Meryle Secrest, *Kenneth Clark: A Biography* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1984), 194.

23. Huyssen, *After the Great Divide*, ix; Andrew Ross, *No Respect*, 50.

24. Lunn, *Marxism and Modernism*, 270.

25. Clement Greenberg, "Modernist Painting," in Francis Frascina and Charles Harrison, ed., *Modern Art and Modernism: A Critical Anthology* (London: Harper and Row, 1982), 193–201.

26. In a review of C. P. Snow's *The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution*, Read retracted his earlier faith that machines would improve civilization: "I am, presumably, what Sir Charles calls 'an intellectual Luddite.' With Ruskin and Morris, Thoreau, Emerson and Lawrence and other 'men of feeling' for whom he has nothing but contempt I believe that the technological revolution is a disaster that is likely to end in the extermination of humanity." UVic 41/3, "The Great Debate." Copyright 1999 by Benedict Read.

27. Quoted in Donald Miller, ed., *The Lewis Mumford Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 36.

28. A. M. Quinton, *Absolute Idealism* (London: Oxford UP, 1972), 4.

29. UVic HR35/141. Copyright 1999 by Benedict Read.

30. Quoted in Brian Wallis, "Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow: The Independent Group and Popular Culture," in *Modern Dreams* (Cambridge, MA: MIT UP, 1988), 12.

31. David Robbins, ed., *The Independent Group: Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of Plenty* (Cambridge, MA: MIT UP, 1990), 48. For other histories of the Independent Group, see Anne Massey, *The Independent Group: Modernism and Mass Culture in Britain* (Manchester, Eng.: Manchester UP, 1995); *Modern Dreams*; Lynne Cooke, "The Independent Group: British and American Pop Art, a 'Palimpcestuous Legacy,'" in Kirk Varnedoe and Adam Gopnik, ed., *Modern Art and Popular Culture* (New York: Harry Abrams, 1990), 192–216.

32. Lawrence Alloway of the Independent Group referred to this as the "fine art/pop art continuum." "Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow," 15.

33. See Lawrence Alloway, "Personal Statement," *Ark* 19, 1957, reprinted in Robbins, 165. Another member, Reyner Banham, argued that "aesthetic value is not inherent in any object, but in its human usage." Quoted in Robbins, 169.

34. Members of the Independent Group argued that the postwar mass culture of disposable commodities, Hollywood films, mass circulation magazines, comic books, stylized automobiles, etc., were, like the traditional "fine arts," semiotic systems that individuals utilized to formulate their personal identi-

ties and social worlds. According to Lawrence Alloway, the Independent Group was concerned with the "role of the spectator or consumer, free to move in a society defined by symbols." Quoted in Robbins, 165.

35. Massey, *The Independent Group*, 62–70.

36. Ibid., 83.

37. Quoted in Robbins, *The Independent Group*, 165.

38. Herbert Read, *To Hell with Culture: Democratic Values Are New Values* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Truber, 1941), 46–47.

39. Bertram, *Paul Nash*, 185, fn.1.

40. "Punk Art Plan Divides the Royal Academy," *Daily Telegraph*, 6 January 1989, 4.

41. LTM Letter from Frank Pick to Charles Holden, 22 November 1940.

42. Quoted in E. B. Newbold, *Portrait of Coventry* (London: Robert Hale, 1972), 66. She entitled her chapter on the cathedral "Cathedral of Our Time."

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid., 71, 74.

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