

“YOUR THORNS ARE THE BEST PART OF YOU”: THE FEMALE POET  
AND THE QUESTION OF NON-CONFORMITY IN THE POETRY OF  
MARIANNE MOORE AND GERTRUDE STEIN

PAULINA AMBROŻY-LIS

*Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań*

*I wish to dedicate this essay to the memory of Professor Andrzej Kopcewicz. I was fortunate to have him as the ‘Over-Soul’ of my early academic pursuits, benefiting from his ineffable kindness, patience, and support. Emily Dickinson says in a poem that words are too small to thank a Friend, nevertheless this is the only way I can now express my gratitude and my deep sorrow at the painful loss.*

ABSTRACT

Marianne Moore and Gertrude Stein can be located at the heart of the avant-garde that engendered new literary forms and modes of expression in the first half of the twentieth century. This article will explore both similarities and differences in the poets’ methods of disrupting the dominant discourses, with a special emphasis on the use of language and conventions of representation and signification. The subtle and elusive subversiveness of Marianne Moore’s poem “Marriage” will be juxtaposed with Gertrude Stein’s violent deconstructive assaults in her “Patriarchal poetry”. Stein’s and Moore’s works share an impulse towards non-centrism and non-finality of meaning, plasticity and flexibility of form, and a conviction that a poem is a self-conscious process challenging the boundaries of logic, categorization, and the reader’s own expectations.

In her 1975 essay “The laugh of the Medusa”, Hélène Cixous writes about a need to disrupt the male domination over language and literary tradition: “If woman has always functioned ‘within’ the discourse of man, ... it is time for her to dislocate this ‘within,’ to explode it, turn it around, and seize it, to make it hers ...” (Cixous 1981: 257). Long before *feminine écriture* became the subject of critical interest, women poets had begun working towards the disruption and dislocation of the dominant patriarchal tradition and the limiting conventions of the Victorian feminine writing. As observed by Ostriker (1989: 49), “[a]

set of women with the advent of modernism, strove to escape the ghetto of feminine poetry by the leaps and bounds of undisguised intelligence. Amy Lowell, Gertrude Stein are the shock troops here, followed by Mina Loy, H.D., and Marianne Moore”.

Referring to her work as the editor of *The Dial*, Moore (quoted in Molesworth 1976: 208) wrote: “I think that individuality was the great thing. We were not conforming to anything. We certainly didn’t have a policy, except I remember hearing the word ‘intensity’ very often”. The criterion of “intensity” defines the poetic practice of both Moore and Stein. As will be shown here, these two leading members of Ostriker’s modernist “shock troops”, perhaps more than any other women poets of that period, shared confidence in their abilities as independent poets working beyond gender limitations. As participants in the modernist movement and as women, they defied tradition to bend language and their poetic imagination to a more intense and meaningful relationship with reality. Aware of the existing gender constructions and stereotypes, they moved away from the authoritarian voice and masculine self-centeredness of the dominant poetic models. Although their challenge to the traditional authority eventually took different directions and articulations, their commitment to redefining gender expectations and the relationship of the woman artist to the predominantly masculine world of writing brings these two seemingly dissimilar poets into a close relationship.

Moore’s life-long interest in feminist issues has been well documented by her biographers and critics. As Gilbert (1990: 41-42) notes, Moore’s famous public costume – a bizarre combination of a skirt, a tricorne hat and a cloak a la *Washington crossing the Delaware* – was chosen deliberately “to dramatize the artifice of female poetic identity” and to gloss her self-conscious questioning of the stereotyped heterosexual ideal of femininity. Miller (1995: 105) and Molesworth (1990: 45-48) point out that the poet’s committed feminism can be traced back to her college years at Bryn Mawr, where feminist concerns and activities were commonplace and where her fellow students frequently chose careers and financial independence over marriage and family life. The ideological discussions at the college deepened the young women’s awareness of the limitations imposed by late-Victorian ideals of femininity. Moore herself became a devoted member of the Woman Suffrage Party of Pennsylvania, eagerly participated in the networks of female friendships and professional support created by her fellow graduates, attended lectures, wrote suffrage articles for the Carlisle newspaper (Molesworth 1990: 106) and frequently expressed in letters and conversations her concern about women rights (Miller 1995: 100-105).

Interestingly, however, Miller (1995: 105) observes that although Moore’s biography testifies to her deep and conscious engagement in feminist and suffragist movements, her poetry poses certain problems when one tries to situate it

within the discourse of the feminist ideology.<sup>1</sup> Examining Moore's ambiguous focus on gender in her poetic practice, Miller (1995: 104) quotes several feminist critics: Sandra Gilbert who points out Moore's "parodically spinsterish asexuality", Susanne Juhasz who similarly asserts that seeking critical recognition the poet "had to play by the boys rules" and "opted for nonsexuality", or Jeanne Heuving who argues against treating Moore as neuter and sexless, and who claims at the same time that she "did not make gender an important part of her public identity as a writer ... engender[ing] difference primarily through the subtleness of the poetic medium itself". Also, Moore's male peers and critics disclose a certain degree of uneasiness over the question of her femininity. Randall Jarrell places the poet outside the concerns of sexuality (Tomlinson 1969: 122); T. S. Eliot, who contributed to her fetishization as a woman poet (Gilbert 1990: 31), somewhat ambiguously sees her poetry "as 'feminine' as Christina's Rossetti's" – "one never forgets that it is written by a woman; but with both one never thinks of this as anything but a positive virtue" (Tomlinson 1969: 32); John Crowe Ransom praises Moore for being less "deficient in masculinity" and "intellectual interest" than other writing women, again denying the relevance of gender to her poetic achievement (Tomlinson 1969: 86).

Gertrude Stein's case is equally problematic, although with her the problem lies elsewhere. As Taylor (2001: 87) points out, she "explicitly distanced herself from her female contemporaries; most of her close relationships and friendships were with men, and she perceived herself as an isolated genius rather than part of a network through which ideas could be generated". Her fame as an over-sexed scandalist, her "monumental personality" (Gould 1980: 83) and a continuous habit of associating her name with such artistic giants as Matisse, Picasso, Fitzgerald, Hemingway and Anderson, have weighed heavily on the critical reception of her works. Hoffmann (1976: 16) aptly notes that "it hardly mattered whether readers read her or not, for she was an almost mythical literary force whose magnitude surpassed anything she ever wrote". The writer herself complained that the American public was more interested in her than in her work, a complaint grounded also in the extreme popularity of her two gossipy autobiographies, *The autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* and *The autobiography of everybody*, which Stein categorized as "outside" or "audience" writing as against her "inside", experimental, and much more obscure writing from *Tender*

---

<sup>1</sup> Miller (1995: 104-105) aptly observes that the critical difficulties with establishing Moore's stance on gender issues stem from the use of the wrong categories in the feminist interpretations of her works. Neither the nineteenth-century notions of separate spheres nor late-twentieth-century feminist theories, argues the critic, can do full justice to the specificity of Moore's gender-conscious aesthetic practice. What Moore opts for is "a poetic position of idiosyncratic and fluid rather than conventional and fixed gender boundaries", with "the speaker not gendered, while the poetry indirectly comments on the limitations of gender stereotypes" (Miller 1995: 114).

*buttons*, through *Stanzas in meditation*, to *The making of Americans* and *Mrs. Reynolds*.<sup>2</sup> The prevailing interest in the autobiographical and the erotic input in Stein's texts, the belated publication of her works and the notorious difficulty of her experimental writing had initially prevented full appreciation of her stylistic strategies and experiments. Although the development of feminist theories and scholarship resulted in an increased concern with the relationship between Stein's gender consciousness and her formal innovations, it revealed at the same time the complexity of this relationship. Secor (1982: 32), for example, saw Stein's experimental style as entirely escaping "the net of gender"; Stimpson (1977) wrote of the ambivalence of her sexual identification obfuscating her style; Fifer (1992: 17-19) emphasized the unstable and multidimensional nature of Stein's texts and her desire to both conceal and reveal her sexual identity as well as the inner conflicts of her emotions, and to censor and enjoy lesbian erotic experience through her coded and duplicitous style. Even DeKoven, whose insightful interpretations of Stein's work disclosed the writer's feminist concerns, when faced with the interpretative uncertainty of her "Patriarchal poetry", argues that the poem is unreadable and that it contains "no interpretable feminist thematic content" (1983: 128).

Extending these doubts to all feminine writing, Cixous (1981: 24) offers: "It is impossible to *define* a feminine practice of writing, and this is an impossibility that will remain, for this practice can never be theorized, enclosed, coded – which doesn't mean that it doesn't exist". Aware of these difficulties, but striving nevertheless to work towards defining the impossible, I am going to compare two poems that are quite explicit about the relationship between gender and forms of representation and thought. Moore's "Marriage" (1924) and Stein's prose poem "Patriarchal poetry" (1927) are openly revisionist, directed at the dominant poetic tradition with its master narratives, myths and conventions, and both are playfully duplicitous. The poems lend themselves to a parallel reading also because they beautifully reveal the subversiveness of their authors' minds, showing both analogies in their approach to form and gender categorization and the peculiarities of their individual styles and techniques.

In a review of the poetry of her friend, H.D., Moore (1987: 82) wrote: "Women are regarded as belonging necessarily to either of two classes – that of intellectual freelance or that of the eternally sleeping beauty". The woman who rejects these alternatives is forced to exist outside the empirical world of personal female experience. In "Roses only" (1924), Moore questions this narrow view by employing the rose, associated traditionally with delicate feminine beauty and sub-

---

<sup>2</sup> Perloff (1988: 96, 108) distinguishes six basic variations of Stein's style: "straight" reportage, autobiographical narrative, narrative-as-permutation of phrasal repetitions, abstract repetition of words and phonemes, the synechdochic riddling poetry of *Tender buttons*, and sound poetry.

missiveness: "You do not seem to realize that beauty is a liability rather than / An asset" (Moore 2002a: 83). The poem's rose is a woman pressed into the masculine ideal reducing her to the object of man's desire, deprived of thorns and sublimated, awaiting to be "plucked" by "the predatory hand" of man. Exploring the duplicitous nature of the word "brilliant" that signifies, as Slatin (1986: 65) observes, both the outer form and the inner resources of the mind, Moore reminds us that it is "the spirit that creates form", and that the rose's surface beauty "must have brains" (Moore 2002a: 83). "Thorns are the best part of you", for they manifest and guard "the infinitesimal pieces" and the subversive potential of the woman's mind. They are the visible marks of the rose's self-dependence, preventing us from thinking of the rose as just "a delightful happen so" that can be easily dismissed or appropriated (Moore 2002a: 83).<sup>3</sup>

The intention of the present analysis is to expose the thorns and brilliance of Moore's and Stein's "infinitesimal minds" in their approach to language and literary tradition. It will be shown that their concerns and experiments with form raise questions about a poetics of gender and investigate the issue of woman's participation in the modernization of poetry. Since it is impossible to do justice to the whole richness of the ingenuity and prickliness of Moore's and Stein's aesthetics, this discussion has been narrowed down to the role of dialogue, the notions of intensity, insistence, and the split of the subject.

### 1. Dialogue, exchange and the perilous chasms of female consciousness

Both "Marriage" and "Patriarchal poetry" are duplicitous in that they subversively encode female identities through a playful use and abuse of the man-made ideology of language. Referring to women's entrapment within the phallographic tradition, Irigaray in *This sex which is not one* (1977: 122) argues that it is impossible to "simply leap outside that discourse"; a possible solution is "to situate [oneself] at its borders and to move continuously from the inside to the outside". To meditate on the institution of marriage, Moore's poem moves skillfully within two

---

<sup>3</sup> As shown by Slatin (1986: 66), the very form and argument of Moore's poem testifies to the author's reluctance to appropriate and succumb to the rose's beauty and its surface brilliance. The name of the rose is mentioned only once in the poem as if the poet was afraid of locking the spiritual force of beauty within the material form of language and its conventionality. Moore's ideal is an imaginary possession, composition as observation liberated from a masculine desire to "pluck" the rose and make it into one's own. Interestingly, Stein's notorious sentence "rose is a rose is a rose is a rose" similarly assaults conventions and stereotypes, but it does so by foregrounding language and its physical and phonic surface qualities. Stein escapes the trap of rose-as-worn-out-metaphor and refreshes its somewhat withered charm by 'arousing' the reader to enjoy the plastic potential of words. While Moore aims at retaining the Emersonian connection between the physical and the spiritual, Stein encourages us to look *at* language rather than *through* it.

prevailing discourses: the biblical master-narrative of the Fall and the ordering, narrowing and prescriptive form of a dictionary. From the first lines of “Marriage”, Moore foregrounds the figure of Eve by presenting her as a writer and the main acting force in the mythical narrative. Debased, submissive, objectified and powerless in the book of *Genesis*, in Moore’s poem Eve is the dominant and empowering force, capable of embracing and growing in the poem’s multiplicity of language, including the masculine discourse, while the Adamic myth dwindles and loses its supremacy. It is not Adam but Eve who utters the first sentence in the dialogic exchange of the poem: “*I* should like to be alone” (Moore 1967a: 62).<sup>4</sup> The sentence serves to empower the speaker and further frustrates our expectations concerning the unifying content of the title, as it expresses woman’s wish for separation and independence, strengthened, as noted by Durham (1989: 239), by Moore’s use of the italicized pronoun *I* to indicate Eve’s difference and her refusal to be swallowed up by the masculine desire and by Adam’s crude and presumptuous offer “why not be alone together?” (M: 62).

Eve brings difference, complexity and obscurity into the clear and uncomplicated vision represented by Adam. The poem shows how her creative approach to the available linguistic material grants her access to the diverse possibilities of communication. Eve, as Hadas (1977: 145) observes, is a busy and modern writer, “able to write simultaneously / in three languages – / English, German and French – / and talk in the meantime; / equally positive in demanding a commotion / and in stipulating quiet”. Her openness, and the “threatening potential of multiple consciousness” (Hadas 1977: 145), including silence, dispersal and polyglossia, is reinforced through Moore’s own method of collage. The whole text is woven out of various quotations simultaneously retaining and losing their identities under the poet’s controlled manipulations. The lines showing Eve’s mental agility take their energy from fragments of an authentic article on the mind’s multiple abilities that Moore trimmed for her own purposes from the *Scientific American*. Notably, all the quoted fragments come from male authors, including such disparate names as Francis Bacon, Richard Baxter, Edward Thomas, Anthony Trollope, Ezra Pound, Edmund Burke and Daniel Webster, but Moore’s peculiar method of appropriation and decontextualization, as shown by Bonnie Costello and Alicia Ostriker (Parisi 1990: 121), dissolves the boundaries between linguistic identities, often modifying and reversing their intended meaning. Although partaking of the very rhetoric and ideology she wants to reject, through her intricate collages the poet in fact obscures the sources of authority and restores the original meaning of the very word ‘discourse’ that signifies exchange and dialogue, and invites difference of opinion.

---

<sup>4</sup> All subsequent quotations from the poem refer to this edition and are marked as M, followed by page number.

Cixous (1984: 56) identifies the idea of exchange as a characteristic feature of feminine writing:

And then, there is exchange. As soon as you simply touch the other, you alter the other and you are altered by the other, an alteration that may be positive or negative. It is negative if there is compromise, if you are incorporated by the other, etc. Yet there are modalities of exchange that are respectful modalities, where you let yourself be sufficiently altered to feel the other of the other – not too much, because then you destroy yourself.

The masculine type of exchange involves incorporation, appropriation, ownership and transformation, while the feminine type is shown to respect the other’s freedom, separateness and difference. That Moore is interested in the politics and poetics of exchange rather than in monolithic linear argumentation becomes evident in her playful adoption of the discourse of economics in the first part of the poem. On the one hand, the rhetoric of the man-dominated field of business exposes the lack of equilibrium between men’s and women’s position in marriage (Heuving 1992: 124). On the other hand, the poet uses it to disclose the post-Edenic marriage as “([t]his) institution, / perhaps one should say enterprise” (M: 62), an element of the social order in which women are products of economic, sexual and cultural exchange. Moore skillfully shows, however, that a familiarity with the manipulative nature of the language of mediation and power can support women in entering into these exchanges not only as objects of transactions, but as subjects capable of negotiating their independence. According to Heuving (1992: 122), exchanging the notion of marriage as institution for that of enterprise fulfills a similar duplicitous function; it simultaneously gives words a negotiable value and emphasizes uncertainty, risk and unpredictability that the word enterprise implies.

Moore negotiates the female poet’s freedom by drawing the reader into her play with language and form. Her commitment to dialogue and exchange manifests itself in the rejection of the linearity of the dominant representational orders. Exposing the peculiar nature of feminine economy, which in Cixous’ words will “tolerate all kinds of freedom” (1984: 57), “Marriage” prevents a centered reading. It disperses meaning and unsettles the logical development of ideas on several levels. As a text of feminine exchange that will not “delimit itself” with a goal of becoming a “text of territory with neat borders, with chapters, with beginnings, and endings” (Cixous 1984: 57), it flaunts its “cycloid inclusiveness” (the footnotes to the poem provide the sources for no fewer than 28 citations), and its intricate quotational tapestries<sup>5</sup>, described by Hartman

---

<sup>5</sup> Moore herself used this expression in reference to Eliot’s *The waste land* and Pound’s *Cantos*. However, speaking of Pound, Moore (1961: 149) saw his poem as “epic farings of the mind” and Eliot’s *Ash Wednesday* appeared to her as an expression of the poet’s preference for “stillness, intellectual beauty and the wholeness of personality” (Moore 1961: 146).

(1980: 131) as “a crazyquilt of thoughts, quotations and sounds” and by Moore herself as “a hybrid method of composition” (quoted in Parisi 1990: 121). John Hollander and Robert Pinsky note that the poem refuses to adopt a unifying perspective and authoritative position toward marriage since they would suppress the proliferation of viewpoints necessary for a dialogue (Parisi 1990: 121). The result is necessarily “a little disquieting”; the reader feels lost in a text that “doe[s] not feel the arrest, the edge” (Cixous 1984: 57). We must wade here through logical and quotational meanderings, complicated further by convoluted sentences with their meaning diluted in infinite enjambments, as in the opening lines of the poem: “This institution, / perhaps one should say enterprise / out of respect for which / one says one need not change one’s mind / about a thin one has believed in, / requiring public promises / of one’s intention / to fulfill a private obligation” (M: 62). Such a sentence structure keeps this bizarre definition of marriage open. Through the multiplicity of voices and views, it undermines “circular traditions and impostures” (M: 62) and the non-dialogic imperatives of marriage. Moore’s hybridization forces the reader to abandon a logical and linear hold on the text and embrace instead proliferation of ideas and non-conclusive flow of verse.

Similarly, Gertrude Stein attempts to undo the logic of patriarchal poetry through employing the poetics of dialogue, and she also pulls the reader into a space of exchange and collaboration. One of Stein’s critics argues that the poetics of dialogue opens the text for participation in its reading as a “coming together”, reconsidering the “patriarchal authority implicit in monologue” (Chessman 1989: 3). The demand of participation and reciprocity posed by Stein’s text not only unsettles the logic of hierarchies and anti-collaborative argumentation of the monologue but also creates a meeting plane for the writer, the text, and the reader. The apparent unreadability of her poem further suggests that we should “relinquish a position of mastery ... and give ourselves to language” (Berry quoted in Neel 1999: 90).

For Stein, it is the anti-collaborative character of narrative linearity and the hierarchic and binary logic of patriarchal poetry that annihilates differences and limits the poet’s possibilities. The poet’s vision should embrace the non-representational and the nonsensical. In her poem that just like Moore’s “Marriage” is an extended meditation and an attempt at formulating a definition, Stein tries to define patriarchal poetry. She also uses several strategies to subvert and disclose the boundaries and flaws of the linear structures of thought. One of them is borrowing the very structure of patriarchal thinking and turning it against itself, as in the following fragment: “How can patriarchal poetry be often praised often praised. / To get away from me. / She came in / Wishes. / She went in / Fishes. / She sat in the room / Yes she did. / Patriarchal poetry. / She was where they had it be nearly as nicely in arrangement. / In arrangement / To be sure” (Stein [1927]



1998a: 579).<sup>6</sup> Patriarchal poetry for Stein means renouncing woman's own identity also through adopting the sequential order of presentation. In the quoted lines, the poet entrenches herself in the traditional narrative order and steals into a male objectifying gaze, where the personal "me" is abandoned for the absent "she". The "she" is easily ordered about the space of patriarchal poetry – this "territory with neat borders" (Cixous 1984: 57) – and her movements and their sequence are controlled and predictable: She "came in / went in / she sat in the room" – the actions enclose the woman, delimit her within a neat narrative arrangement, fix and immobilize her inside a controllable spatial and temporal frame. The order of events reflects the male notion of temporality, identified by Kristeva in her essay "Women's time" (1981: 17) as "project, teleology, linear and prospective unfolding: time as departure, progression, and arrival". Stein ruptures and undoes the security and predictability of the pattern, its "which when where" (PP: 567), by inserting into the narrative flow apparent illogicalities, such as the slightly chit-chatty "wishes" and "fishes" that have uncertain grammatical status and can function both as verbs and nouns. With their relation to other structural elements unspecified and fluid, their presence within the coherent temporal paradigm defies understanding, asking us to reach beyond the boundaries of linear logic, to unveil the locus of women's displacement in this scheme and revise our complacent habits of reading. Stein's strategies in "Patriarchal poetry" exhibit a strong desire for an alternative temporality, with room for disruption, persistence, immobility, repetition and circularity. "It was eventually to be poetry which would have to deal with everything that was not movement in space" (Stein 1999: 243).

To undermine the representational conventions, Stein often constructs her sentences in such a way that they seem grammatical and create an illusion of intended meaning, but the randomized words and their scattering between passages of greater or lesser clarity prevents their disambiguation: "Patriarchal Poetry surplus if rather admittedly in repercussion instance and glance separating letting dwindling be in knife to be which is not wound wound entirely white wool white will white change white see" (PP: 576). Through explanation that does not explain, lack of punctuation that could aid us in making connections between individual parts of a sentence or a larger structures of meaning, and free-associational relationships between words, the poet mocks and destroys the traditional organization of a literary work and draws our attention to the fluid nature of language and human consciousness – that "white see/sea" (PP: 576) of sensations, perceptions and thoughts, whose abundance and simultaneity is reduced and curbed by the separating and arresting edge of words and sentences.

---

<sup>6</sup> All references to "Patriarchal poetry" are to this edition and will be subsequently marked as PP followed by page number.

Stein's strategies of "surplus", "pleasurable overload" or "the just-one-more" of sound and sense (Neel 1999: 93) work also against the tyranny of binary thinking, as shown in the dense and repetitive "Once threes letting two sees letting two three threes letting it be after these two these three can be to near threes in threes twos letting to in two twos slower twos choose twos threes never came twos two twos relieve threes twos threes" (PP: 568), in which "twos" are both released and embraced by more inclusive and non-binary "threes". While the "twos", as noted by Neel (1999: 93) "hold open the possibility that identity is something more, something other than, an oscillation between 'one'(s) who are isolated and therefore unproductive", number three signals the surplus and overabundance of feminine thinking. It breaks the dichotomous and reductive structure of communication between two selves and makes room for a more productive multiple identity. A poetry which "is putting three together all the time" (PP: 569) resists the trap of comfortable definitiveness, of easy 'oneness' and appropriative 'twoness'. In order to expose the reductionist patriarchal thinking, Stein employs also a mock-list of apparent opposites capitalized into solemn-looking categories: "Best and Most / Long and Short / Left and Right / There and More / Near and Far / Gone and Come / Light and Fair / Here and There" (PP: 600). Binary logic, as the poet offers playfully, serves the mind to "be shelled from almond" (PP: 600), as its narrowly oppositional categories remove us from the vital essence of life and language, from the almond part of experience which escapes symmetrical patterns, the overwhelming squareness, coherence and rigidity of frames. The poet breaks this stifling design by knitting into it nonsensical or asymmetrical combinations, often bound only by the requirement of rhyme: "This and Now / Felt and How; Which and Felt / By and Well" (PP: 600). Rhyme in this case does not serve to bind the rhyming words and lines but rather to sever the bond of binary opposition and to let the mind move forward, across and beyond its constraints.

Clearly more radical in her experiments than Moore, through her poetics of asymmetrical listing, verbal surplus, phonic fluidity, syntactic strangeness and fragmentation, Stein postulates a similar kind of artistic freedom. Both poets avail themselves of the dialogic discursiveness and irresolution of language, leading to the celebration of complex and inclusive identities and the rejection of ideological boundaries limiting the female poet.

## 2. Stein's poetics of insistence and Moore's aesthetic of intensity

Foregrounding rhyme and rhythm at the cost of meaning and comprehensibility is not without significance in Stein. By drawing our attention to the phonic potential of language, this makes her poetry not only conspicuously physical but, just like her preference for asymmetry, it calls for a new type of reader and a

different type of reading. “The essence of that expression is insistence, and if you insist you must each time use emphasis and if you use emphasis it is not possible while anybody is alive that they should use exactly the same emphasis” (Stein 1999: 167). In *Tender buttons*, Stein postulates an emotional value to repetition, arguing that “in recurrence there is feeling” (Stein [1914] 1998b: 327). As observed by Neel (1999: 91), the creative potential of insistence becomes evident in the following fragment of “Patriarchal poetry”<sup>7</sup>: “As to as to not to as to and such a pretty bird and to as such a pretty bird and to not to as such a pretty bird and to as to not to and to not to as such a pretty bird” (PP: 570). Built almost entirely of non-referential prepositions and particles in slightly varying combinations, interrupted now and then by a more substantial but decontextualized phrase “such a pretty bird”, the passage can be practically read in an infinite number of ways. Lack of other denominators anchoring attention, absence of punctuation and the dissolution of sense discourage us from reading deeply into the text. Instead, we are faced with verbal figurations that “generate a field of sound” (Neel 1999: 91). To enter this field and enjoy the dizzying sequence (and Stein wants us to enjoy it, to feel rather than understand)<sup>8</sup>, the reader must let go of “such a pretty bird” which signals our desire for comprehension and progress. As noted by Neel (1991: 91), the choice of a dense, non-descriptive, and staccato-pulsating prepositional sequence clearly privileges the ear and releases the vocative music of the printed word, allowing language to play its incantatory rhythm, in which words become objects in themselves apart from their function as instruments of communication. Stein’s chant-like poetics is propelled by a desire to detach words from their clichéd functions in sentence form in order “to express the rhythm of the visible world” (Stein [1922] 1999c: 111-112). “That is not a disclosure. That is not the way for all of them who are looking to refuse to see” (Stein 1999c: 161). This is offering poetry to an unbiased reader capable of entering the text without conventional expectations of lucidity, resolution, and closure, prepared to yield to the ostensibly phonic insistence and “maddeningly polysemic” variability of the sentence (Hoffmann

---

<sup>7</sup> Referring to the same passage in Stein’s poem, Neel (1999: 93) observes that for the poet “identity is something more, something more than, an oscillation between ‘one’(s) who are isolated and therefore unproductive”. The whole poem yields the sentence logic to the “logic of improvisation”.

<sup>8</sup> Stein’s interest in the relational elements of speech can be traced back to her Radcliff years when she was a devoted student and admirer of William James and his psychological theories of language. *Principles of psychology* draws our attention to the creative and emotive potential of prepositions in the following words: “We ought to say a feeling of *and*, a feeling of *if*, a feeling of *but*, and a feeling of *by*, quite as readily as we say a feeling of *blue* or a feeling of *cold*. Yet we do not: so inveterate has our habit become of recognizing the existence of the substantive parts alone, that language almost refuses to lend itself to any other use” (James [1890] 1981: 241).

1976: 65).<sup>9</sup> In “Patriarchal poetry” Stein explains her method of repetition with change as follows: “These words containing as they do neither reproaches nor satisfaction may be finally very nearly rearranged and why, because they mean to be partly left alone,” (PP: 578). This method is her way of “questioning of a mode of history, of identity, and of language” (Neel 1999: 98), as well as her rejection of the ‘script’ that attempts to reproduce the real, rather than creating a new reality. “Patriarchal Poetry at peace. / Patriarchal Poetry a piece. / Patriarchal Poetry in peace. / Patriarchal Poetry in pieces” (PP: 594). This passage projects an alternative mode of using language, a mode that foregrounds performance, physicality, resonance and the acoustic qualities of words – drawing attention to hearing and sight, appealing primarily to senses and emotions. The meaning-making potential of this method becomes apparent when one looks at Stein’s playful use of prepositions combined with the semantic plentitude of the homophones of the word ‘peace’. The playfulness embraces also the anaphoric structure of the quoted sequence, echoing Whitman’s expansive and multiple catalogues – here employed both to expose and to shake the stabilizing and unifying meaning of repetition. Stein’s witty phonic manipulations and her variations of prepositions dismantle the solid and static noun, foregrounding the relational elements of language and their dynamic and horizontal interconnectedness.

The phonic sensuality of Stein’s poetics of insistence finds its equivalent in the visual intensity of Moore’s designs. Like Stein, Moore delights in lists and catalogues that force the reader out of complacency through their baroque excess, unexpected combinations of bizarre and extremely sensual elements and subjects. A catalogue enables the poet to include and at the same time separate things and to group them non-hierarchically. The method involves combining apparently unrelated elements, as in the following passage from *Tender buttons*: “A damp cloth, an oyster, a single mirror, a manikin, a student, a silent star, a single spark, a little movement and the bed is made” (Stein 1998a: 501). The poet “revises the meaning of the center” as she asserts that it is free associational play that “shows more likeness than anything else, it shows the single mind that directs an apple” (Dickie 1997: 25). Disorder leads thus to a different way of selecting and positioning, destabilizing the idea of the authoritarian center, replacing it with the singularity of the mind. In “Marriage” Moore uses this decentralized perspective to expose the emptiness and false glitter of the marital discourse: “the ritual of marriage, / augmenting all its lavishness; / its fiddlehead ferns, / lotus flowrrs,

---

<sup>9</sup> In one of the poem’s efforts at defining and subverting the patriarchal mode of writing Stein uses her method of insistence to disclose the desire for meaning, coherence and closure: “Patriarchal means suppose patriarchal means and close patriarchal means and chose chose Monday Patriarchal means in close some day patriarchal means and chose chose Sunday patriarchal means and chose chose one day patriarchal means and close close Tuesday” (PP: 571).

opuntias, white dromedaries, / its hippopotamus– / nose and mouth combined / in one magnificent hopper– / its snake and the potent apple” (M: 65-66). Farther on, the poet exposes men as “monopolists of ‘stars, garters, buttons / and other shining baubles’– / unfit to be the guardians / of another person’s happiness” (M: 67). Adam’s power and sexual attractiveness is diminished even more when Moore envisions him as “a crouching mythological monster / in that Persian miniature of emerald mines, / raw silk–ivory white, snow white / oyster white, and six others– / that paddock full of leopards and giraffes– / long lemon-yellow bodies / sown with trapezoids of blue” (M: 63-64). The miniaturization fulfills a protective function against the seductive beauty of Adam and his appropriative discourse, but the great perceptual intensity and the anti-mimetic nature of the ensuing catalogue of materials, shades of color and of creatures, confronts male attractiveness with the gorgeousness and swiftness of the feminine mind, “the inner paradise of the woman’s imagination” (Hadas 1991: 153), capable of enriching and surpassing the beauty of experience through attention to heterogeneous detail and nuances of meaning.

Such non-categorizable catalogues belong also to Moore’s methods of defamiliarization that draw our attention to the gap between traditional concepts and woman’s mental qualities. Needing both similarity and difference, the poet loosens the symbolic strictures of language and keeps us suspended between metaphoric and literal levels of her unusual and opaque combinations, opening up a space for new relationships between words and images. The surreal and the fantastic in the Persian miniature portraying Adam trigger the “fresh waves of consciousness” that “poison” (M: 63) the integrity of the male’s imposing vision, adding a degree of uncertainty and delightful confusion to the straightforwardness of the Edenic myth. A few lines on, the poet directly juxtaposes the female mind’s flexibility with the homogenic and unicursal thinking of man:

“Treading chasms  
on the uncertain footing of a spear,”  
forgetting that there is in woman  
a quality of mind  
which as an instinctive manifestation  
is unsafe,  
he goes on speaking  
in a formal customary strain,  
of “past states, the present state,  
seals, promises  
the evil one suffered,  
the good one enjoys,  
hell, heaven,  
everything convenient  
to promote one’s joy.”

(M: 64)

Adam ignores the chasms and cross-currents of woman's mental flexibility and "goes on speaking / in a formal, customary strain" (M: 64), ceasing to communicate with Eve. Moore exposes his mind as moving in the space of binary thinking, attempting to seal the past and the present, heaven and hell, good and evil under a comfortable notion of convenience. Man's rhetoric, suggests Moore – like the steamroller from one of her poems – smoothes the rough edges of experience, glides through the chasms of women's multiple levels of consciousness by reducing everything to the images of his own desire and the stasis of definite assertions. The female mind, in turn, refuses to rest in simple oppositions, remains impervious to the desire of man's seductive binary discourse, thus sustaining the world's physical and conceptual variety, its dynamic tensions and diverse forms. This is how Cixous (1984: 63) defines the task of feminine writing: "To respect strangeness, otherness ... to catch the most of what is going to remain preciously incomprehensible ... that I like, that I can admit, that I can tolerate, because really there is always a mystery of the other". Out of respect for mystery and in an attempt at "preserving an enigmatic kernel of the other" (Cixous 1984: 62), Moore writes herself out of the overconceptual order and strongly mimetic drive of masculine writing through the intense sensuality and surrealism of her imagery.

### 3. The broken mirror and the shattered self

With both poets, the integrity of man's self-image, consciousness and desires and "the narcissistic specularity" of masculine discourse (Irigaray 1985: 56) are confronted with woman's non-conformist and anti-specular poetics. The fluidity and opacity of the female consciousness becomes evident especially in Moore's and Stein's assault on the notion of subjectivity. The self is being continuously split and disjointed in both poems. The assembly of various pronouns moves the reader between uncertain identities, revealing the multiple guises of the speaker and frustrating the notion of definite denomination and of the self as a universal subject.

In "Marriage" the masculine narcissist subject is exposed at the very outset: "Eve: beautiful woman – I have seen her / when she was so handsome / she gave me a start" (M: 62) – where the speaker defines himself through objectifying Eve. Seeking a "refuge from egocentricity / and its propensity to bisect, / mis-state, misunderstand" (Moore 1967b: 231), the poet breaks the mirroring gaze by destabilizing the speaker's identity in frequent pronoun shifts. The shifts serve a double function: to weaken the conformity and stability of the marital bond or any other structure that absorbs the separate selves in the idea of submission or union, and to include the multivalent, contradictory and unrepresentable perspective of woman desiring to escape the trap of self-mirroring and

the narrow masculine projections of her self. "She cannot see herself enough" (M: 66) implies both Eve's attempt to represent herself and her failure to establish a unified identity in Adam's egotistical order that cannot contain her otherness. To expose and escape this narrow self-referential frame and narcissistic gratification, Moore deliberately undercuts the specular possibilities of representation, as her speaker moves (M: 66-67) between the impersonal 'one' ("One must not call him ruffian"), the curious 'I' of the poet ("I wonder what Adam and Eve / think of it by this time"), the slanted 'I' of Eve ("I would like to be alone"), and the weakened voice of Adam ("I should like to be alone why not be alone together?") – all of whom are later relegated to the position of absent and anonymous speakers marked with the pronouns 'she' and 'he' ("She loves herself so much, she cannot see herself enough / he loves himself so much, he can permit himself / no rival in that love"), and finally the more democratic 'we' ("We Occidentals are so unemotional") which, however, does not refer to the wedded couple, but introduces another perspective, inviting the communal experience into the poem's heteroglot network.<sup>10</sup> Moore deliberately refuses to blend the 'I' and 'you', opting rather for a fluid trans-categorical and destabilized self that goes beyond the oppositional and the egocentric perspective. Her speakers "are not concerned with constructing an identity through others, but rather encountering otherness of others" (Heuving 1992: 31). 'Encounter' seems indeed a perfect term to describe Moore's poetic practice in "Marriage". There are no smooth transitions between the poem's diverse identities; the shifts are as abrupt as the jagged edges of the quoted material and the changes in the adopted views. However, the shattered subjectivity is not, as shown by Heuving (1992: 42-43), a reason for despair, as in Eliot's *The waste land*, or Pound's *Cantos*, where the 'I' also suffers from dispersal and fragmentation into masks and personas. Not haunted by the ghosts of center and wholeness, Moore's identity shifts indicate "fresh waves of consciousness" (M: 64). They continuously reintroduce and shuffle the separate voices of the difficult dialogue, exposing also the confrontational nature of the heterosexual union in the ever-renewed efforts of communication.

One of Stein's methods is using the gender neutral and ambiguous 'it', as in "*It* made that be alike and with *it* and indefinable reconciliation with roads and better not to be not as much as felt to be as well very well as the looking like not only little pieces there" (PP: 570). The pronoun not only replaces here a more concrete noun, but as we are never given its nominal antecedent, it makes the subject matter vague and non-referential. In her essay "Poetry and grammar", Stein explains: "Now that was a thing that I too felt in me the need of making it

---

<sup>10</sup> See Heuving (1992: 124) for more observations on the shifting pronouns and Moore's rejection of specularly.

be a thing that could be named without using its name. After all one had known its name anything's name for so long, and so the name was not new but the thing being alive was always new" (Stein [1935] 1999a: 236-237), pointing to the revitalizing and creative potential of a text cleansed of nominal specifics and explicit referentiality. To intensify her non-mimetic method, Stein employs also abrupt swings from one pronoun to another:

She might be let it be let it be here as soon. ...  
 They might be by by they might by by which might by which they might by, ...  
 Let it be which is it it be which is it ...  
 If he is not used to he is not used to it ...  
 Next to vast which is which I be behind the chair ...  
 We to be. Once. We to be. Once.

(PP: 574 –575).

The anonymity and diversity of the pronouns flout our expectations of discovering the subject's identity, keeping the mystery of the pronouns intact and the subject in a state of mutability and transformation. The final "We to be. Once" signals further that the poet writes with a multiplicity of selves, which includes also the reader. It is a multiplicity that traverses the limitations and enclosures of the single self. It removes the rigidity of the interior-exterior division, enabling the woman poet to break the frame of an individual control of language and to make apparent the drifting and interchangeable nature of subjectivity. Another method of resisting the grasp of masculine subjectivity is the removal of all pronominal or nominal indicators and leaving the textual fabric without authority, as in: "Made a mark remarkable made a remarkable interpretation made a remarkable interpretation made a remarkable interpretation now" (PP: 597). Contained and limited in the conventional notion of textual authority, in Stein's text the unnamed and unspecified subject calls for a re-reading that might allow for a liberation of a mark from their demarcating and limiting constraints.

If, nonetheless, Stein decides to use a personal noun in the poem, it is to suggest the arbitrariness and provisionality of conventional naming, its apartness from the variety and fluidity of experience. "Never have named Helen Jenny never have named Agnes Helen never have named Helen Jenny" (PP: 578). Patriarchal poetry's 'rage for order' and its need for unmistakability, prevent it from a more flexible approach to naming that would allow Helen and Jenny to switch identities and thrive in the plentitude of names. Poetry should be "concerned with using with abusing, with losing with wanting, with denying with avoiding with adoring with replacing the noun"(Stein [1914] 1998a: 325). The aim is to open the poem beyond the limits of any denomination and autonomous self that detaches women from their relation to themselves and to other women. By submerging the self, by dissolving distinction between the subject and object, by employing a multiplicity of decontextual-



ized subjects, the writer signals the female poet's discomfort with the convention of using one fixed and dominant speaker. A woman who is conscious of the self-absorptive tendency of dominant discourse will have to resort to anti-absorptive and anti-specular language to counteract this tendency (Irigaray 1985: 30, 68-80). Stein's strategy of dispersal, nominal unbinding, excess and splitting, is one of possible options. It turns the poem into a fluid realm in which identities and selves are – in Ostriker's words (1992: 64) – "enmeshed in and defined through their relationships with other selves". Irigaray (1985: 133) argues that in the patriarchal culture "women are inevitably exiled from themselves". Continuously facing "the dread of non-existence" (Ostriker 1992: 60),<sup>11</sup> the woman poet asserts her identity by acknowledging its origin in silence, discontinuity, marginalization and self-effacement.<sup>12</sup> Stein notes how patriarchal poetry "nettles nettles her" (PP: 597), with practically no breathing space left. In a page-long appeal, consisting in an incantatory oscillation between the lines "let her be", "let her try" and "let her be shy" (PP: 580-582), the poet tries to break out of this nettle and carve out a space for woman's suppressed voice. The use of the pronoun 'her' fulfills a complex function here: it signals the poet's perspective as that of an outsider speaking from the position of a detached observer who refuses to identify with the subject, thus trying to escape the suffocating nettle.

Stein's "Patriarchal poetry" makes clear that the poetics of excess, split, diversity and playful confusion can "revitalize a calcified literature, create space in an overcrowded literary history, disrupt literary tradition, and restore the excluded feminine to language and literature" (Ford 1997: 114). To see language "reclaimed renamed replaced and gathered together" (PP: 603) is to be sure of her own independence and singularity as a poet and to open poetic language up to a greater mutability.

Moore, through her hybrid method of composition and her non-authoritative approach to the cited texts, makes a similar imprint on the modernist technique of textual appropriation. It is a stance of "an imaginary possessor", ready to "relinquish what one would like to keep" (Moore 1967c: 144). Pound (1954: 25) coined the term *logopoeia* in reference to Moore's poetry, defining it as "a dance of the intelligence among words and ideas and modification of ideas and

<sup>11</sup> Heuving (1992: 34) exposes this threat quoting Pound's "Portrait d'une Femme" where the speaker, addressing a woman, exclaims "No! There is nothing! In the whole and all, / Nothing that's quite your own. Yet this is you".

<sup>12</sup> Employing Lacan's concept of identity construed out of the self's progress from the non-specular, multiple and non-representational Imaginary to the self-mirroring and integrated Symbolic, Irigaray (1985: 30) observes that the dominant masculine tradition excludes a female imaginary, which "puts woman in the position of experiencing herself only fragmentarily, in the little-structured margins of a dominant ideology, as waste, or excess, what is left of a mirror invested by the (masculine) 'subject' to reflect himself, to copy himself".

characters”. The dance, acknowledged by her contemporaries, readers and critics as a real and unique contribution to the modernist movement, celebrates also the flexibility of woman’s mind, with its creative and surprising twists and turns, its affectionate but at the same time critical relationship to the world and literary tradition.

In *A room of one’s own*, Woolf ([1929] 2005: 24) speaks of two forms of the female artist’s exile: “I thought how unpleasant it is to be locked out; and I thought how it is worse perhaps to be locked in”. Both Stein and Moore seem to escape Woolf’s exclusion-entrapment dilemma. By inviting exchange and fusion, sense and nonsense, plurality and unity, transgression and bonding, familiarity and difference – they create an open poetic space of fluid contours and boundaries, amorphous, overabundant and shifting identities, and a fully controlled disorder.

## REFERENCES

### PRIMARY SOURCES

- Moore, Marianne  
 [1924]  
 1967a “Marriage”, in: Marianne Moore 1967, 62-70.
- Stein, Gertrude  
 [1927]  
 1998a “Patriarchal poetry”, in: Gertrude Stein 1998, 567-605.

### SECONDARY SOURCES

- Berg, Temma F. (ed.)  
 1989 *Engendering the word: Feminist essays in psychosexual poetics*. Urbana – Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Berry, Ellen  
 1992 *Curved thought and textual wandering*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Bloom, Harold (ed.).  
 1986 *American women poets*. New York – New Haven – Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers.  
 1987 *Modern critical views: Marianne Moore*. New York – New Haven – Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers.
- Borroff, Marie  
 1986 “Marianne Moore’s promotional prose”, in: Harold Bloom (ed.) 1987, 43-72.
- Chessman, Harriett, Scott.  
 1989 *The public is invited to dance: Representation, the body, and dialogue in Gertrude Stein*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press.

- Cixous, Hélène.  
[1975]  
1981 “The laugh of the Medusa” (translated by Keith Cohen – Paula Cohen), in: Elaine Marks – Isabelle de Courtivron (eds.), 253-268.  
1984 “Voice I ...” Interview with Verena Andermatt Conley, *boundary 2*, 12/2: 50-67.
- Costello, Bonnie  
1986 “The “feminine” language of Marianne Moore”, in: Harold Bloom (ed.) 1987, 89-106.
- DeKoven, Marianne  
1981 *A different language*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.  
1988 “Half in and half out of doors: Gertrude Stein and Literary Tradition”, in: Bruce Kellner (ed.), 75-83.
- Dickie, Margaret.  
1997 *Stein, Bishop and Rich: Lyrics of love, war and place*. Chapel Hill – London: University of North Carolina Press.
- Dubnick, Randa, K.  
1976 “Two types of obscurity in the writings of Gertrude Stein”, in: Harold Bloom (ed.) 1987, 77-96.
- Durham, Carolyn, A.  
1989 “Linguistic and sexual engendering: Moore”, in: Temma F. Berg (ed.), 225-243.
- Ford, Karen.  
1997 *Gender and the poetics of excess: Moments of brocade*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi.
- Gilbert, Sandra.  
1990 “Marianne Moore as female female impersonator”, in: Joseph Parisi (ed.), 27-47.
- Gilmore, Leigh  
1989 “The gaze of the other woman: Beholding and begetting in Dickinson, Moore, and Rich”, in: Temma F. Berg (ed.), 81-102.
- Gould, Jean,  
1980 *American women poets: Pioneers of modern poetry*. New York: Dodd Mead and Company.
- Hadas, Pamela, White  
1977 *Marianne Moore: Poet of affection*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.
- Hartman, Geoffrey  
1980 *Criticism in wilderness: The study of literature today*. New Haven – London: Yale University Press.
- Heuving, Jeanne  
1992 *Omissions are not accidents: Gender in the art of Marianne Moore*. Detroit: Wayne University Press.
- Howard, Richard  
1990 “Marianne Moore and the monkey business of modernism”, in: Joseph Parisi (ed.), 1-12.
- Irigaray, Luce  
1984 *The sex which is not one*. (Translated by Catherine Porter.) Ithaca – New York: Cornell University Press.
- James, William  
[1890]  
1981 *Principles of Psychology*. Vol. 1. Cambridge – Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Joyce, W. Elizabeth

- 1998 *Cultural critique and abstraction: Marianne Moore and the avant-garde*. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, London: Associated University Press.

Juhasz, Susanne

- 1976 *Naked and fiery forms: Modern American poetry by women*. New York: Harper and Row.

Kellner, Bruce (ed.)

- 1988 *A Gertrude Stein companion: Content with the example*. New York: Greenwood Press.

Kristeva, Julia

- 1981 "Woman's time". (translated by Alice Jardine) *Signs: A Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 7: 13-35.

Leavell, Linda

- 1996 *Marianne Moore and the visual arts: Prismatic color*. Baton Rouge – London: Louisiana State University Press.

Marks, Elaine – Isabelle de Courtivron (eds.)

- 1981 *New French feminisms: An anthology*. New York: Schocken Books.

Miller, Christanne

- 1995 *Marianne Moore: Questions of authority*. Cambridge, Massachusetts – London: Harvard University Press.

Molesworth, Charles

- 1990 *Marianne Moore: A literary life*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.

Moore, Marianne.

- 1961 *A Marianne Moore reader: Poems and essays*. New York: The Viking Press.

- 1967 *The complete poems*. New York: The Macmillan Company.

- 1967b "Tell me, tell me," in: Marianne Moore 1967, 230-231.

- 1967c "His shield," in: Marianne Moore 1967, 144.

- 1986 *The complete prose of Marianne Moore*. New York: Elisabeth Sifton Books.

- 2002 *Becoming Marianne Moore: Early poems 1907-1924*. (Edited by Robin G. Schulze.) Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

- 2002a "Roses only", in: Marianne Moore 2002, 83.

Neel, Eric, S.

- 1999 "The talking being listening: Gertrude Stein's 'Patriarchal poetry' and the sound of reading", *Style* 33/1: 88-104.

Ostriker, Alicia

- 1986 *Stealing the language: The emergence of women's poetry in America*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Parisi, Joseph (ed.).

- 1990 *Marianne Moore: The art of a modernist*. Ann Arbor – London: UMI Research Press.

Perloff, Marjorie

- 1987 "Six Stein styles in search of a reader", in: Bruce Kellner (ed.), 96 –108.

Pound, Ezra

[1954]

- 1968 *The literary essays of Ezra Pound*. (Edited by T. S. Eliot.) London: Faber and Faber.

Schulman, Grace

- 1989 *Marianne Moore: The poetry of engagement*. New York: Paragon House.

Slatin, John

- 1986 *The savage's romance: The poetry of Marianne Moore*. University Park – London: The Pennsylvania State University Press.

Stein, Gertrude

1998 *Gertrude Stein: Writings 1903-1932*. (Edited by Catharine R. Stimpson – Harriet Chessman.) New York: Library of America.

[1914]

1998b *Tender buttons*, in: Gertrude Stein 1998, 313-355.

1999 *Gertrude Stein: Writings 1932-1946*. (Edited by Catharine R. Stimpson – Harriet Chessman.) New York: Library of America.

[1935]

1999a “Poetry and grammar”, in: Gertrude Stein 1999, 313-336.

[1935]

1999b “Portraits and repetition”, in: Gertrude Stein 1999, 287-312.

[1922]

1999c *Geography and plays*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, Inc.

Stapleton, Laurence

1978 *Marianne Moore: The poet's advance*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Stimpson, Catherine

1977 “The mind, the body and Gertrude Stein”, *Critical Inquiry* 3/3: 489-506.

Secor, Cynthia.

1982 “Gertrude Stein: The complex force of her femininity”, in: Kenneth Wheeler – Virginia Lee Lussier (eds.), 27-35.

Taffy, Martin

1986 *Marianne Moore: Subversive modernist*, Austin: University of Texas Press.

Taylor, Georgina

2001 *H.D. and the public sphere of modernist women writers 1913-1946*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Tomlinson, Charles (ed.)

1969 *Marianne Moore: A collection of critical essays*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall.

Wheeler, Kenneth W. – Virginia Lee Lussier (eds.)

1982 *Woman, the arts, and the 1920s in Paris and New York*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Willis, C. Patricia

1987 *Marianne Moore: Vision into verse*. Philadelphia: The Rosenbach Museum and Library.

Woolf, Virginia

[1929]

2005 *A room of one's own*. Orlando, Florida: Harcourt Inc.