does not mean we're caught in a trap; it just means we can't help thinking about the future. Carly Simon still puts it best: We can never know about the days to come, but we think about them anyway.

## Notes

1. Terry Eagleton, *The Illusions of Postmodernism* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 108.
2. Jesse Rosenthal, *Good Form: The Ethical Experience of the Victorian Novel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017).
3. Caroline Levine, *Forms: Whole, Rhythm, Hierarchy, Network* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015); Paul K. Saint-Amour, *Tense Future: Modernism, Total War, Encyclopedic Form* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). Fredric Jameson has famously argued that we are unable to imagine a better world, and that science fiction confronts the impossibility of imagining the future in *Archaeologies of the Future: The Desire Called Utopia and Other Science Fictions* (New York: Verso, 2005). To this, Kim Stanley Robinson responds, "We can imagine utopia; it's easy as pie"—it's imagining how to get there that's the dilemma —but "we have come to a moment of utopia or catastrophe; there is no middle ground. . . . utopia is no longer a nice idea but, rather, a survival necessity" ("Remarks on Utopia in the Age of Climate Change," *Utopian Studies* 27, no. 1 [2016]: 7, 10).
4. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, "Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading, Or, You're So Paranoid, You Probably Think This Introduction Is about You," in *Novel Gazing: Queer Readings in Fiction* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 4.
5. Sedgwick, "Paranoid Reading," 4.
6. Rita Felski, "Suspicious Minds," *Poetics Today* 32, no. 2 (2011): 215–34, 225.

# Temporality

JACOB JEWUSIAK

WHEN Gerard Manley Hopkins reflects on the "grandeur of God," he claims that it "will flame out, like shining from shook foil"

https://doi.org/10.1017/S106015031800116X Published online by Cambridge University Press

and gather "to a greatness, like the ooze of oil."[1] These modalities of Godly power exemplify competing temporalities: the flashing, electric moment and a slow, encompassing duration. God's combination of these temporalities serves as proof of his greatness—a divine simultaneity that brings together times that, for humans, remain epistemologically distinct. The sonnet then presents a bifurcated image of the world: one where generations of humanity have "seared" the soil with trade and another of a resilient nature "never spent."[2] By opposing the world of humanity's finite scarcity against that of the Holy Ghost's eternal abundance, these lines create an alternative temporal binary. The sonnet entwines these different ways of thinking about time—the moment/duration and the finite/eternal—through the envelope rhyme of its octave and the cross rhyming of its sestet. These configurations of rhyme attest to the poem's uneven mapping of one system of time onto another. The analysis of duration, for example, not only derives meaning from its opposition to the moment, but also bears the residue of tangential and tendentious ways of thinking about time, such as finitude and infinitude.

By drawing together different vectors of time, "God's Grandeur" reminds the critic of Victorian literature of the temporal complexity that has fallen out of current debates about historicism and formalism. Recently, critics such as John Bowen and Rita Felski have attacked the historicist position as edging out the innovation of new critical approaches; Tom Eyers memorably refers to this as the "strangulating hegemony of historicism in the literary disciplines."[3] In response to this frustration, some scholars have pushed the pendulum of scholarship to form. Following Caroline Levine's influential book *Forms* and Sandra Macpherson's call to imagine "a genuinely formalist critical practice . . . that would turn one away from history without shame or apology," a series of recent books in Victorian criticism have featured "form" in their titles.[4] In what follows, I argue that the turn away from history to form often privileges spatial arrangements, such as structural patterns (Levine) or description (surface reading), over time's passage. I propose that renewed engagement with temporality offers polemic opportunities that the debate between historicism and formalism obscures.

While critics such as Catherine Gallagher and Pearl Brilmyer have recently called for injecting formalism with new temporal possibilities, they stop short of providing concrete models for what this might look like.[5] Hopkins's "God's Grandeur" provides one possible model by setting duration and the moment alongside the finite and the infinite as a way of expanding the dimensions of temporal experience. Drawing

https://doi.org/10.1017/S106015031800116X Published online by Cambridge University Press

these systems into new configurations also challenges the temporal commitments of historicism and formalism. In their strongest expressions, the formalist freezes the literary text to reveal timeless structures that transcend contextual specificity, while the historicist reads the text as a product of the historical contingencies that surround its production. Though many critics now work somewhere at the intersection of history and form, the terms resonate with a polemic opposition that continues to inform scholarly debates.

Yet the normalization of this methodological opposition has resulted in a critical myopia that privileges spatial concerns over the temporal—in arguments that require a firm grounding in space before entering the conversation. Many of the most influential pieces in Victorian studies focus upon institutional or domestic spaces—such as the prison, the workhouse, the factory, or the home—and even studies of time in the nineteenth century often examine the way clocks and trains reconfigure social spaces. Rather than accuse historicism as narrowing our field and positing formalism as the cure, a turn to temporality can open new methodological coordinates.[6] By bracketing the well-worn tracks of historicism and formalism, we might clear an opening for new critical positions, a richer continuum for polemic based on the interaction—rather than opposition—of different time systems.

This reparative approach to temporality can help us identify examples of marginality that a more spatially oriented polemic might miss. How do the characters who do not have a "place" in the Victorian novel's major plots—such as the bildungsroman or the marriage plot—make ethical demands on the reader's attention through the way time shapes the narrative? By thinking in a temporal idiom beyond the formalist/historicist binary, we can attend to mixtures of dilation and compression, diuturnity and eventfulness, that the linear narrative of development pushes aside in its focus on the singular protagonist. Marginal characters do not just compete for limited space, but also inhabit temporal zones that intersect, overlay, and parallel the represented world shared in the text.[7] For example, a temporal context that has received relatively little critical attention is aging. The intersection of the biological and cultural rhythms of growing older as it occurs in a poem or novel provides a rich site for interrogating the politics of representation—of who counts as worthy of attention and who does not. Thomas Hardy, in "I Look Into My Glass," reflects on the way time writes itself into his face: the "wasting skin" he views in the mirror contrasts with the youthful feeling in his heart, and gives rise to a sense of alienation from "hearts grown cold

https://doi.org/10.1017/S106015031800116X Published online by Cambridge University Press

to me."[8] The coming of age creates dissonance on two temporal planes—the poet's relation to himself, where his appearance does not correspond to his inner feeling, and society, which excludes the poet based on ageist expectations about growing older.

While temporalities such as aging tend to be associated with marginalization, this is not always the case, nor is this the most compelling avenue of inquiry. Instead, we should ask how authors used temporality as a way of escaping, critiquing, lamenting, or celebrating the spatial contexts that appear so much more unforgivably solid and inescapably real. Enabling an inventive inquiry about how literature holds together sometimes irreconcilable combinations of time involves thinking beyond a reductive opposition of terms like history and form, to the overlooked and undiscovered temporal interstices of a future criticism.

## Notes

1. Gerard Manley Hopkins, "God's Grandeur," in *Poems and Prose* (New York: Penguin, 1985), 27, lines 1–3.
2. Hopkins, "God's Grandeur," lines 6, 9.
3. Tom Eyers, "Theory Over Method, or In Defense of Polemic," *Critical Inquiry* 44, no. 1 (2017): 136–43, 139. Bowen laments "how deeply (or, rather, how shallowly) historicist most Victorian studies is" ("Time for Victorian Studies?" *Journal of Victorian Culture* 14, no. 1 [2009]: 282–93, 284). In a wider context, Felski urges that "We cannot close our eyes to the historicity of art works, and yet we sorely need alternatives to seeing them as transcendentally timeless on the one hand and imprisoned in their moment of origin on the other" (*The Limits of Critique* [Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2015], 154).
4. Sandra Macpherson, "A Little Formalism," *ELH* 82, no. 2 (2015): 384–405, 385. See recent volumes such as Nathan K. Hensley, *Forms of Empire: The Poetics of Victorian Sovereignty* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016); Jesse Rosenthal, *Good Form: The Ethical Experience of the Victorian Novel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017); Claire Jarvis, *Exquisite Masochism: Marriage, Sex, and the Novel Form* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2016).
5. Identifying a tendency for criticism to extract the timeless from the momentary, Gallagher calls for "analytic insights into the temporal nature of narrative" that address what is left out of the "partialness and inadequacy of stop-action formal analyses" ("Formalism and Time," *MLQ* 61, no. 1 [2000]: 229–51, 251). More recently, Brilmyer

https://doi.org/10.1017/S106015031800116X Published online by Cambridge University Press

uses Ruskin to reflect upon the duration of literary form: "Let us imagine new ways of accounting for the temporality of both social and literary forms, structures which are neither unchanging outlines nor historical moments entirely past" ("Durations of Presents Past: Ruskin and the Accretive Quality of Time," *Victorian Studies* 59, no. 1 [2016]: 94–97, 96–97).

6. Sue Zemka's *Time and the Moment in Victorian Literature and Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012) provides a compelling example of using temporality as the basis for a larger account of hermeneutics, modernity, and the novel.
7. Alex Woloch theorizes characters in the novel as "jostl[ing] for limited space within the same fictive universe" (*The One vs. The Many: Minor Characters and the Space of the Protagonist in the Novel* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003], 13).
8. Thomas Hardy, "I Look Into My Glass," in *Thomas Hardy: The Complete Poems*, ed. James Gibson (London: Palgrave, 2001), 81, lines 2, 6.

# Theatricality

SHARON ARONOFSKY WELTMAN

DURING its first season, the hit television series *Glee* aired an episode named "Theatricality," in which the talented glee club kids pay homage to Lady Gaga and Kiss.[1] They wear homemade versions of the stars' hyperextravagant costumes in their high school's hallways as well as on stage, using their wild (and wildly creative) outfits for defiant self-expression, braving harsh reactions from bullies and the school principal. Beyond the students' personal flair, the title draws attention to the episode as exuberant performance rather than as a mimetic approximation of real life.

Because "theatricality" denotes knowingness about the medium's effect, it is also defined negatively: "the quality of being exaggerated and excessively dramatic."[2] This is how Thomas Carlyle uses the term in its oldest recorded instance (which is Victorian): *The French Revolution* (1837) opposes theatricality to sincerity.[3] Here Carlyle displays the antitheatricality that Jonas Barish chronicles in *The Anti-theatrical*

https://doi.org/10.1017/S106015031800116X Published online by Cambridge University Press