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Food and Culture in the Works of Ford Madox Ford, Gertrude Stein, and Virginia Woolf: Culinary Civilization.

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Introduction
From Food and Culture in the Works of Ford Madox Ford, Gertrude Stein, and Virginia Woolf: Culinary Civilization by Nanette O'Brien (2024, OUP)

In the early twentieth century, changes to food in Britain and the United States were part of sweeping, broader technological and social developments. All pointed towards swiftness and urbanization. The speeding up of agricultural and processed food production led to the proliferation of cafés and restaurants in cities. This correlated with the increased number of women working, walking, driving and shopping in towns, the decline of the family meal eaten at home, and, in Britain, the Victorian tradition of tea-time. All of these changed the way British and American individuals and writers related to food. Modernist writers found that these changes in food preparation and consumption provided an opportunity to reflect on societal ideals of civilization with regards to identity, history and authorial creativity.

Using close reading, cultural theory, historiography and biography, I explore the life and work of three authors whose writing about food illuminates their understanding of society, giving special weight to the terms civilization and barbarism. For Ford Madox Ford (1873-1939), Gertrude Stein (1874-1946) and Virginia Woolf (1882-1941), representations of food provide an occasion to consider how the culinary arts of peacetime (the privations of both World Wars strained the food supply in Britain, America and France) influence early twentieth-century attitudes. Examining works by Ford, Stein and Woolf, I show that time and again it is food—its growing, preparing, serving and eating— that shapes their discussions about civilization and barbarism in relation to nationhood, domesticity, aesthetics and gender in England, France and America.

In this introduction, I briefly outline the contributions of my four chapters and I explore the critical and theoretical background for my argument as it spreads across them. Examining definitions of civilization and barbarism through the lens of history and sociology I show how these concepts are interlinked with food behaviours and associations. For the German sociologist Norbert Elias, the regulation of the body is the basis for the discussion of civilization. Elias's *The Civilizing Process* describes how 'manners' books from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century transform the rules for bodily habits in society. Charting the development of manners demonstrates the connection between food, the body, and our understanding of the operations of social norms and behaviours over time.

A related idea, of modernist primitivism, derives in part from modernist ideas about expression and authenticity, and also from early anthropological studies. Primitivism as an aesthetic movement strives for access to the state of so-called 'primitive' man and all the liberating potential of that unrestricted state. It manifests itself in breaking social taboos against the transgression of boundaries and arrangement of the body: who sees it, what is done with it, and what it consumes. Mary Douglas's anthropological work, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (1966), explores what is put away or kept out from the body and the home, for the sake of social nicety or hygiene. Writing from a mid-century, Euro-centric perspective, Douglas argues that the rejection or re-ordering of dirt or 'matter out of place' is actually a creative act, noting the ambiguities and overlaps between the sacred and profane, the clean and the unhygienic, with regards to dietary laws practiced by different so-called 'primitive' communities.¹ For Douglas, this positive aesthetic reorganization is part of the establishment of the culture of these societies. Whether in reference to other cultures or in modernist

representations of primitivism in the adoption of tribal art and sculpture, the body's boundaries also play a role in the modernist conception of civilization and eating.

Finally, the concept of nationhood is an intrinsic part of my discussion about culinary civilization in Ford, Stein and Woolf's work. Food and national character are connected with ideas of technological and sociological progress. Food helps Ford, Stein, and Woolf to form their notions of civilization with regards to industrialism, agriculture, domesticity, education and gender within their ideas of national history and tradition.

The introduction is followed by my first chapter, 'Cultures of Food and Eating', which establishes the contextual background of food culture and food history in early twentieth-century England, France and America. The remaining three chapters are divided by author and theme: 'Culinary Impressionism: Ford Madox Ford's Agrarianism and Cookery', 'Serving the meals: Gertrude Stein and Domesticity' and 'Apples and Kitchens: The Aesthetics and Politics of Modern Dining in Virginia Woolf'. I have chosen to focus on Ford, Stein and Woolf because their work demonstrates three different and productive ways of thinking about food and modernism in relation to twentieth century conceptions of civilization, culture and society. Each of these three authors is concerned with the historicity of food and its social effects. Over time, they represent that generation of modernist figures who embody the evolution from the Victorian period into the twentieth century. Like many modernist writers, they grew up at the end of the nineteenth century, and 'were very aware of themselves as "transitional"', being in-between centuries and the periods which encompass such diverse movements as Aestheticism, Decadence and Modernism.²

Of the three authors, Ford is most embedded in the practice of agriculture and cookery. He grew his own produce and cooked his own food whenever he could. He correlated this

culinary labour with his literary power. Ford is also the most explicitly transnational in his culinary and political outlook. An Englishman of German heritage who idealized, and lived in, France and the United States, Ford identifies more with French culinary practices than those of the English. He lambasts the model of restrained, upper-middle-class English masculinity symbolized in the undercooked English roast beef dishes which feature in *The Good Soldier* and the *Parade's End* tetralogy. Yet personal, communal and national redemption can be found through instances of sharing food during the war and in his travels across the United States in the 1930s. His passion for local produce is also the foundation for the idea of a shared culture of food as it is transported around the world on what Ford saw as a modern version of the Great Trade Route.

A Francophile like Ford, Stein never cooked herself, but she did closely observe her hired cooks. She helped her partner Alice B. Toklas in sketching out an early draft, titled 'We Eat', of what later became the *Alice B. Toklas Cookbook* (published in 1954, eight years after Stein's death). Through her writing about cooks and servants in *Three Lives*, *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* and *Everybody's Autobiography*, Stein uses domestic cookery to reframe her own modernist authority. For Stein, traditional roles of cooks and servants played a pivotal role in the ostensible civilization of her countries of residence and she adapts the language of cookery into her writing about nations, history and art.

Woolf, too, considers the aesthetic, social and political associations of cooking and eating and its impact on women. In 'Sketch of the Past', she looks back at the tea-time serving rituals she participated in during her Victorian childhood. She considers how this reserved behaviour crystallized itself in some of her early writing, aspects of which remain with her throughout her life. Food politics emerge in Woolf's discussion of the role of private and institutional meals in

establishing commensality or the exclusion of women from participating fully in society in *A Room of One's Own* and *Three Guineas*, leading to her understanding that food is a part of what 'civilization' means for women.

In addition, these authors also employ a diversity of forms through which they represent food, from Ford's literary and culinary Impressionism, journalism and travel-writing to Woolf's realist and polemical emphasis on the social and gendered aspects of food in Britain to Stein's abstract poetry and experiments with unreliable narrative autobiography. In my chapter on Ford, I demonstrate how Ford's literary Impressionism can be seen in a different light, through his technique of what I call 'culinary Impressionism', which amplifies the role of food in Ford's writing. Ford's Impressionism, a subjective attempt to capture sensations and impressions as they occur, is made synesthetic, incorporating fragments of recipes, memories of meals, and is used throughout the different genres of his work. With literary analysis and biographical reading I show how Ford's culinary Impressionism is based on both practical and idealistic theories of cookery, agriculture and story-telling. In the case of Stein, I draw critical attention to her collaborative participation in culinary writing in an almost entirely overlooked unpublished cookbook draft, 'We Eat,' written with Toklas. Thirdly, for Woolf, I have carried out archival research which shows that the inequality of institutional food at a men's and a women's college at the University of Cambridge was even worse than previously suspected. I use this material to argue that Woolf employs her derogatory description of this food in *A Room of One's Own* to provoke women into critiquing the culinary and practical conditions of their education.

These authors' representations of cooking, dining, of meals eaten by people of all classes, whether at home with friends and family or alone on a bus, are all crucial scenes in the

development of twentieth-century modernist experimentation with interiority, impressionism and abstraction.

The range of modernist writing about food is necessarily broader than this book alone can cover. Many other modernist and avant-garde authors, such as F. T. Marinetti, James Joyce, Katherine Mansfield, D. H. Lawrence, Ezra Pound, George Orwell, H.G. Wells and T. S. Eliot, also write about food, but because their work on food either does not address questions of civilization and barbarism or does so to a lesser degree, I do not discuss them in detail here.

The literary history of food is intertwined with and reflective of the cultural history of food because food is an expression of culture. Literature, culture and food intersect in discussions of taste and this is particularly heightened in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

As Denise Gigante remarks:

All the major Enlightenment philosophers of taste were involved in the civilizing process of sublimating the tasteful essence of selfhood from its own matter and motions, appetites and aversion, passions and physical sensibilities. Above all, what the culture of taste energetically resisted was the idea that human beings were propelled not by natural cravings for virtue, beauty, and truth, but by appetites that could not be civilized or distinguished from those of brutes.³

Gigante believes that nineteenth-century literature represents the point when widespread middle-class consumerism led to an overturning of ‘the philosophical hierarchy of the senses, and even philosophy itself, through a self-conscious mode of expression that takes place through the consumer objects—food, clothes, china—that fill the pages of Victorian fiction’.⁴ Themes of appetite and consumption dominate literary food studies, and Ford, Stein and Woolf also see food as defining social patterns.

In the relatively new field of literature and food studies, the popular surge in commodity histories⁵ and recent critical work on what has been termed ‘critical eating studies’ in literature

touches on the relation or subjection of the body to the dominant culture.⁶ Kyla Tompkins coined the term for this focus, which she argues contains a dark underside:

[C]ritical eating studies theorizes a flexible and circular relation between the self and the social world in order to imagine a dialogic in which we—reader and text, self and other, animal and human—recognize our bodies as vulnerable to each other in ways that are terrible—that is full of terror—and, at other times, politically productive.⁷

In the nineteenth-century United States, which was undergoing challenges to conceptions of national and racial identity, literary representations of eating dissolve social, biological and racial boundaries, as Tompkins argues.⁸ Jennifer Fleissner, in a close reading of Henry James's 1898 novella *In the Cage*, argues that James, traditionally considered to be more interested in aesthetic taste than food, can show us 'ways in which the two forms of taste [the bodily and the aesthetic] interact rather than opposing one another'. James, in 'transforming more valorized human activities—most notably, art itself—into instances of gustation', creates opportunities for exploring both the aesthetic and the body's need for eating.⁹ These critical works are specifically relevant to the sociology and aesthetics of the nineteenth century. They have a bearing on my work, since Ford, Stein and Woolf inherited and drew on nineteenth-century ideologies in their twentieth-century writing.

Further developing Tompkins's work on critical food studies and embodiment is Catherine Keyser's *Artificial Color: Modern Food and Racial Fictions* (2019). Addressing work by U.S. modernist writers from the Harlem Renaissance and the Lost Generation whose reflections and consumption of ideas about food are connected to American exceptionalism and biological racism, Keyser argues that food is 'an imaginative vehicle for racial transformation'.¹⁰ She examines the relationship between the early twentieth century's 'heightened classification and enforcement of racial categories' and the biological racism inherent in the categories of black and white.¹¹ For Keyser, Gertrude Stein's interest in gathering mushrooms, labelling

herself as a ‘mushroom hunter’, is part of a modernist adoption of ‘terroir, or taste of place’, especially localised in France.¹² The idea that consuming the fruits of the earth linked the consumer to the land is integral to culinary nationalism which I discuss further in relation to Ford, Stein’s and Woolf’s feelings of being in between places and their mutual appreciation of France. All three authors seek ways to create new culinary spheres for themselves when their critical views of their places of birth fall short. Aspects of these arguments about embodiment, location and food will be relevant to my later discussions about conceptions of the rules for and boundaries of the body in relation to ideas about what makes something ‘civilized’ or ‘barbaric’.

Jessica Martell’s *Farm to Form: Modernist Literature and Ecologies of Food in the British Empire* (2020) examines the ecologies of modernism and food, underlining the way an increasingly industrial, colonial-global food market driven by British appetites transforms agriculture and attitudes to food. Martell argues that ‘imperial foodways made the natural world “modernist”... stylistically: disorienting, unfamiliar and artificial; but also exhilarating, prone to excess and above all, new.’¹³ Martell especially hones in on the parallels between modernist reimaginings of chronological time and the way imperial foodways distort a sense of time by bringing enormous quantities of food to British markets, from industrial dairy products in Britain to frozen meats shipped from Australasia creating a sense of abundance and eliminating seasonality, yet only altering the nutritional intakes of the social classes who could afford this abundance and at the expense of the colonial and agricultural/rural workers. While Martell’s argument centres on authors whose engagement with industrial and agricultural production of food in the imperial context, through the lens of modernist defamiliarization, Keyser’s work on Stein shows an even earlier pre-capital agrarian world of gleaning and gathering, where marginal figures, which persist into the twentieth century, maintain a sense of agency and creativity. Stein

identifies with these figures and their rural French context, and it is both their marginality and historical persistence which influences Stein's view of history, "Latinity" and French civilization. My focus lands in between these two approaches, with more emphasis on the role of eating manners, the body's digestive capacities as a signifier for moral and even national character, and inclusion of perspectives from those who prepare food for others as building blocks for modernist reimaginings of civilization.

Aspects of food and form in British and American modernism have also been addressed in recent work by Alison Carruth on U.S. food and power, Aimee Gaston on Katherine Mansfield, Scott McCracken on Dorothy Richardson and tea-rooms, and Sandra Gilbert's broader overview of the history of food in literature, which contains a section on modernism.¹⁴ Maria Christou's *Eating Otherwise: the Philosophy of Food in Twentieth-Century Literature* (2017) considers the philosophical equivalent of culinary determinism, asking how being and subjectivity are related to the food one eats, and whether the conception of being can be rooted in the material reality of food in modernism and post-modernism. Nicola Humble's *The Literature of Food* (2020) takes a cross-period, transatlantic focus, with interest in the everyday, gender, class and the significance of bodily experience of food. Early in her book Humble asks, 'how do we read textual food, and how do these readings intersect with the many complexities of real-world food culture?'¹⁵ Humble's approach, which she describes as having a 'rhizomatic logic', is to bring disparate literary and cookbook texts together across time periods from 1830 to the present.¹⁶ For Humble, 'food is always paradoxical—both absolutely ordinary yet also strange and fugitive'. However as much as it is a represented object or thing, food is an ongoing 'process' that incorporates stages of preparation, consumption, digestion and waste.¹⁷

My work differs from these, in that, although I do address food and identity through specific national and sociological histories, I also show how a broader, transatlantic understanding of food's role developed for modernists thinking about the cultural practices and understandings of civilization and barbarism in peacetime. Reflecting on food involves an author making connections between subjective experience, and the agricultural, domestic and gendered aspects of modern life as represented in their written work.

Critics such as Liesl Olson and Bryony Randall have included food in their discussions of the ordinary and the everyday, as part of their appreciation of daily time and narrative temporality in Joyce's, Woolf's and Stein's work.¹⁸ While there has recently been some focus on the relationship of modernism to civilization, a space remains for discussing food with regards to this subject. Lucy McDiarmid's *Saving Civilization: Yeats, Eliot and Auden Between the Wars* (1984), Brian Shaffer's *The Blinding Torch: Modern British Fiction and the Discourse of Civilization* (1993), and Christine Froula's *Virginia Woolf and the Bloomsbury Avant-Garde: War, Civilization, Modernity* (2005) all centre on modernism's representation of, and vision for, civilization. Hazel Hutchison's *The War That Used Up Words: American Writers and the First World War* (2015), and Mark Greif's *The Age of the Crisis of Man* (2015) examine the sense of decline of civilization in American attitudes to the First World War and the late interwar and post-Second World War period. However, these works have not examined the political and aesthetic implications of agriculture, domesticity, aesthetics, gender and food in relation to modernist conceptions of civilization. Some of my arguments will draw on the work of these critics, as well as the established tradition of thinking about food that lies in anthropology and cultural studies. Going beyond this in my study of modernism and food, this project considers

the twentieth-century aesthetic, sociological and political conceptions of civilization, barbarism and primitivism through the lens of food.

Civilization, barbarism and history

There is no objective way to define civilization and barbarism; they are terms shaped and affected by other sociological and aesthetic ideas of the time. I acknowledge the difficulty and slippery nature of the terms ‘civilization’ and ‘barbarism’, which are embedded within perspectives of cultural relativism, imperialism and what we would now call racism. Using the terms civilization and barbarism, terms that are symptomatic of their time, requires historicizing, which I attempt to do throughout this book. I seek to ask what Ford, Stein and Woolf made of how food cultures informed, served and affected their sense of community, value and place in the world. In the process we learn some unpleasant things about the views of all three of these authors whose work is studied regularly in many curricula. Taking into account a broader picture of their work and its context, in addition to their views, helps us to form a picture of their oeuvres that reveals flaws and complexities that lead us to better and deeper understanding. Sometimes these authors got part way there to challenging terms themselves – as Woolf does in re-thinking what ‘civilization’ means for women of a certain class (leaving out any other classes below the middle); and Ford finds the Nazi attack on Jews abhorrent while revealing his anti-Black bigotry in the American South. Gertrude Stein’s ostensibly sympathetic portrait of black women in her short story ‘Melanctha’, drew the attention of notable Black figures but of course in today’s context she seems impossibly bigoted herself. Limited by their western European-centric perspectives, it is possible to think of these authors’ works as encompassing a dualism that aspires to create a vision of civilization that nourishes their ideals while at the same time excludes others; proving to be both productive and cruel. These aspects of the authors’ outlooks

can be disappointing to those who champion their work, yet it is also important not to read them solely anachronistically and to situate their understandings of civilization, barbarism, and also ‘primitivism’ in their historical moments.

Civilization generally refers both to the collective of humanity in a certain time and place, and the idea of an evolving, ever-progressing set of social, technological and cultural practices, determined by an elite. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, European philosophers and historians began to doubt the received Hegelian idea of Western history as a continually developing line of progress. In philosophy, history and anthropology the idea of the cyclical progress and regress of societies over time was making headway. Following Nietzsche’s argument that history was cyclical and violence inevitable, the German historian Oswald Spengler contended in *The Decline of the West* that civilizations progressed or declined in a pre-determined set of cycles.¹⁹ Spengler’s ideas were further developed and popularized by the British historian Arnold Toynbee in *A Study of History* (1934-9), which predicted the imminent end of Western civilization, a powerfully suggestive idea that appeared to many to be confirmed by the rise of fascism across Europe.²⁰ The interwar period in America saw a similar development in reaction against American pragmatism and progressivism. The influx of refugees from Nazi persecution and the publication of works like Lewis Mumford’s *Renewal of Life* series, beginning with *Technics and Civilization* (1934), stimulated consideration of the moral outcomes of the current state of political and technological development.

In early twentieth-century Europe and America, many of the discussions about civilization, barbarism and primitivism are connected by questions about rules governing behaviour and the body. Elias’s *The Civilizing Process* shows how throughout western European history, the body has gradually been eliminated from polite discussion and behaviours.

According to Elias, bodily habits become the signifiers of status within human society and self-constraint of the body is the utmost indicator of social prestige. The physical impulses to smell and touch are transmuted into pleasure from seeing:

It has been shown elsewhere how the use of the sense of smell, the tendency to sniff at food or other things, has come to be restricted as something animal-like. [...] In a similar way to the ear, and perhaps even more so, [the eye] has become a mediator of pleasure, precisely because the direct satisfaction of the desire for pleasure has been hemmed in by a multitude of barriers and prohibitions. 21

The body's relationship with food can be understood as a means of coming to terms with its destructive and creative powers. Outside of Ford, Stein and Woolf, this is also seen in Knut Hamsun's expression of the agony of malnutrition in *Hunger* to the emphasis on physical violence and efficiency in F. T. Marinetti's *Futurist Cookbook* to the consumption of Marcel Proust's memory-triggering madeleine in *In Search of Lost Time*. In these works too food stimulates perceptions of the world in physical and aesthetic terms.

I use term civilization most often to refer to a subjective and idealized vision of how it is believed a group of people should or do live in any given period of time. This vision depends on the perspective of the dominant social group. Etymologically, as Raymond Williams points out, this definition of civilization is based on Enlightenment ideas about human progress: encompassing both the 'sense of historical process' and celebrating 'the associated sense of modernity: an achieved condition of refinement and order'.²² Civilization is thus defined both by positive attributes, and also by what it is not: the rudeness and chaos associated with barbarism. Barbarism, too, is defined by what it is not: it is uncivilized. In this sense barbarism is understood within anthropological contexts to relate to the sociological and technological progression of developing societies; barbarism is perceived as a more advanced stage than savagery. Williams notes that 'in 1871 the American Lewis Morgan, a pioneer in linguistic

studies of kinship, influentially defined three stages as exemplified in the title of his work: *Ancient Society; or Researches in the Line of Human Progress from Savagery through Barbarism to Civilization*'.²³

For writers in the early twentieth century, barbarism in the sense of political and social violence encapsulated both an internal, psychological threat—the barbaric element that exists within all of us—and the external threat posed to society by political forces seeking to destroy the world order. Freud wrote that 'The inclination to aggression is an original, self-subsisting instinctual disposition in man, and [...] it constitutes the greatest impediment to civilization'.²⁴ Yet as Maria Boletsi argues, there are potentially generative aspects to the powerful, primal terms barbarism and barbarians, reading them as 'carry[ing] a performative force with a transgressive potential'.²⁵ Nietzsche saw the potential barbarians of the twentieth century as 'a stronger species' than European men (whom he compares to 'intelligent slave animals'), 'capable of the greatest severity towards themselves' and possessing enormous will power.²⁶

Walter Benjamin's aphorism that 'there is no document of civilization that is not also a document of barbarism' has become a commonplace of modernist thinking about history and legacies.²⁷ The modernist interpretation of history tends to subvert historical greatness, uncovering the abuses of power and agonies and labour that contribute to great things. Yet, as Brett Nielson argues, Benjamin could only make this observation from his specifically modern perspective. Barbarism disrupts narratives of progress and 'generates a different set of fantasies, involving not projections of origin or closure but anxieties of violence and social upheaval'.²⁸ These anxieties are best represented in the incoherence of barbarism itself. Neilson notes the etymology of barbarism is derived from 'the ancient Greek βαρβαρος, meaning foreign, or

literally “stuttering”, a name given by the Greeks to express the sound of foreign languages’.²⁹

Edith Hall writes:

The Greek term *barbaros*, by the fifth century used both as a noun and an adjective, was ironically oriental in origin, and formed by reduplicative onomatopoeia. Originally it was simply an adjective representing the sound of incomprehensible speech.³⁰

Hall also notes the emphasis on the barbarian as other: ‘There are similar words in several early oriental languages, especially the Babylonian-Sumerian *barbaru*, ‘foreigner’.³¹ Both Ford and Woolf were well aware of the political threat to civilization, as they understood it, in the 1930s and 1940s. It became all the more urgent to discuss civilization and its principles which were under threat from, as Leonard Woolf put it in the title of his 1939 book on the state of western civilization, *Barbarians Within and Without*.³²

In aesthetics, the rise of primitivism in European art, embraced by Gauguin, Matisse and Picasso among others, spread across the arts into music, dance, drama and literature. The modernist interest in primitivism is intrinsically linked to twentieth-century anthropological studies. And in some cases, modernists conceptualize the more anthropological term ‘primitive’ as interchangeable with ‘barbaric’, with its associations of the danger of consumption of raw meat, or even of human sacrifice.

In modernist aesthetics, primitivism draws attention to the body through the distortion and nakedness associated with African tribal art. However, many modernists were interested in accessing the primitive as a form of original expression that might provide some return to a primal aesthetic or state of being, inspired by and incorporating images of the human form and daily life from Africa and the Caribbean. Audiences at the first Post-Impressionist exhibition in London 1910 were struck by the anti-realist, abstract nature of some of this art. A riot broke out in the horrified audience at the 1913 Paris premiere of Igor Stravinsky’s ballet *The Rite of Spring*

with choreography by Vaslav Nijinsky, which depicted scenes of tribal rituals, concluding with a young girl dancing herself to death. Yet anthropology and sociology's identification of food as deeply interconnected with human culture from the earliest moments of hunting, gathering and cooking in human history is relevant to modernist interpretations of 'primitive' life and art.

Defining civilization and the hierarchies of taste

Like barbarism, the problem with civilization is that it depends on the perspective of the observer. Elias's 'The History of Manners,' the first volume of *The Civilizing Process*, begins with a differentiation between two common meanings of 'civilization', the first a kind of cataloguing of 'a wide variety of facts: from the level of technology, to the type of manners, to the development of scientific knowledge, to religious ideas and customs' in different societies.³³ The second meaning is thornier, and, as Elias implies, is weighted with the sense of superiority of Western civilizations (in the sense of objectively categorized societies) to other more ostensibly 'primitive' ones:

But when one examines what the general function of the concept of civilization really is [...] one starts with a very simple discovery: this concept expresses the self-consciousness of the West. One could even say: the national consciousness. It sums up everything in which Western society of the last two or three centuries believes itself superior to earlier societies or 'more primitive' contemporary ones. By this term Western society seeks to describe what constitutes its special character and what it is proud of: the level of *its* technology, the nature of *its* manners, the development of *its* scientific knowledge or view of the world, and much more.³⁴

Thus 'civilization', in the modernist period, is an especially difficult term to pin down because it was a term in transition. It is not always clear which usage is intended and even if one usage is intended, another may be understood. In Elias's view, the very self-awareness that comes from education and sociality is often a characteristic of being 'civilized'.

In any discussion of civilization, barbarism and primitivism there is an underlying dichotomy of 'us' versus 'them'; the hierarchical understanding that 'our' civilization is the

‘best’ civilization, as the French historian Lucien Febvre’s essay, ‘*Civilisation: Evolution of a Word and a Group of Ideas*’, suggests. Febvre writes: ‘when we are talking about the progress, failures, greatness and weakness of civilization we do have a value judgment in mind’. The judgment is that our civilization ‘is in itself something great and beautiful [...] better, both morally and materially speaking, than anything outside it—savagery, barbarity, or semi-civilization’.³⁵ Christine Froula calls this second, value-oriented judgment, ‘ethnocentric’.³⁶ Froula argues that ‘Bloomsbury registers a convergence of ethnocentric self-critique with the ethnographic recognition of civilizations plural’.³⁷ The constant blurring between the ethnographic and the ethnocentric aspects makes discussion of the usage of the term difficult, particularly in regard to food, which is often found at the junction of descriptive social acts and moral judgments about the type, preparation and consumption of food.

Discussions about civilized and barbaric behaviour describe the regulation of the body’s interaction with the world. For the philosopher Merleau-Ponty, who calls into question the Cartesian duality of body and mind in the *Phenomenology of Perception* (1945), it is through the body that humans encounter knowledge and the world. The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu would agree. Bourdieu argued that a hierarchy of taste serves merely to reinforce class hierarchies; all distinctions contain value judgements meant to differentiate between classes, and ultimately erase the body. As he writes in *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement [sic] of Taste*, it is essential to return to the body’s consumption of food:

One cannot fully understand cultural practices unless ‘culture’, in the restricted, sense of ordinary usage, is brought back into ‘culture’ in the anthropological sense, and the elaborate taste for the most refined objects is reconnected with the elementary taste for the flavours of food.³⁸

Like ‘culture’, taste must also be brought back to the body in order to understand it. Both in the gustatory sense and in the aesthetic sense, taste requires the ability to deploy one’s education and

judgment about the most ordinary, everyday things, exercising sensibility and sensation. Both kinds of tastes also become internalized and repeated throughout class and cultural distinctions. Gustatory taste also involves another level of subjectivity in the more intimate sensations of consumption. To pay attention to the physical processes of the taste buds and the nose inhaling scents requires sensitivity: the payoff is experiencing a complexity of flavours and textures. Yet physical taste draws on the aesthetic realm as well because humans do not all taste and smell with the same degree of sensitivity and discernment—this leads to the art of gastronomy and to the gourmand who practices this art. Gourmands acquire cultural distinction, but gustatory taste requires only ingredients and a discerning palate.

In eighteenth-century France, following the upheaval of the Revolution, there followed a transformation of taste. With the development of restaurants and eating outside of the home that was to spread to Britain and the United States also came the rise of gastronomy. One of the most celebrated French gourmands and scholars of gastronomy, Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin (1755-1826), a lawyer by profession, describes the sensations of taste and explores definitions of *gourmandism* in his celebrated collection of anecdotes and musings, *Physiologie du gout*, or in English: *The Physiology of Taste: or Meditations on Transcendental Gastronomy* (1825). For Brillat-Savarin, *gourmandism* ‘unites an Attic elegance with Roman luxury and French subtlety’: it ‘is an impassioned, considered, and habitual preference for whatever pleases the taste’ and ‘is the enemy of overindulgence’.³⁹ Brillat-Savarin witnessed the shift in French culinary culture. As Bill Buford puts it, in between the 1754 birth of Antoine Beauvilliers, the inventor of the restaurant, and the 1833 publication of one of the most influential books of French cookery, Antonin Carême’s *L’Art de la cuisine française*, ‘there was Brillat, tasting, making notes, reading, attending chemistry lectures, reflecting, trying to make sense of it all’.⁴⁰

Brillat-Savarin is also a notable figure in the life of Stein and Toklas, who enjoyed their vacations in Belley, a small town in southeastern France that was his birthplace. In an anecdote from *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, Toklas and Stein find their hotel in Belley so pleasant that they decide against joining the Picassos at Antibes as originally planned:

In the meanwhile the Picassos wanted to know what had become of us. We replied that we were in Belley. We found that Belley was the birthplace of Brillat-Savarin. We now in Bilignin are enjoying using the furniture from the house in Brillat-Savarin which house belongs to the owner of this house.⁴¹

Brillat-Savarin was a local hero in Belley: he also served as its mayor for a time. In September 1927, a monument to him was erected in the town. Stein facetiously wrote of this event to Carl Van Vechten:

I do wish you would come over and see us [*sic*] do come we are putting up a bust for Brillat Savarin [*sic*] on the 15 of September you could just make it, it is a nice little town Belley almost as nice as New York and quite as peaceful.⁴²

They liked Belley so much that they secured a lease on a house in 1929. Though they moved away to the Bugey in 1939, traces of Brillat-Savarin remained in their lives. In 1943, Stein and Toklas considered translating a manuscript cookbook by Lucien Tendret, who was the nephew of Brillat-Savarin and the author of *La Table au Pays de Brillat-Savarin* (1882), although the project was dropped because it was impractical. According to Toklas: ‘The recipes are exciting to read but are not useful even today’.⁴³ Thus it is highly likely that Toklas at least was familiar with Brillat-Savarin’s work, as well as with many other significant French cookbooks. Toklas reports in her *Cook Book* that every Christmas Stein would give her a major cookbook, even during the Second World War: ‘When all communication with Paris was forbidden, the 1,479 pages of Montagne’s and Salle’s *The Great Book of the Kitchen* passed across the line with more intelligence than is usually credited to inanimate objects’.⁴⁴

Brillat-Savarin's book is full of diverse writings, from the famous aphorism, 'tell me what you eat, and I shall tell you what you are' to the less well-known, but more vivid, 'A dinner which ends without cheese is like a beautiful woman with only one eye'.⁴⁵ In his 'Analysis of the Sensation of Tasting', Brillat-Savarin describes the physiological elements of taste, from 'the direct sensation' 'produced from the immediate operations of the organs of the mouth' to the 'complete sensation': 'which arises when the food leaves its original position, passes to the back of the mouth, and attacks the whole organ with its taste and aroma' and the 'reflective sensation' 'which one's spirit forms from the impressions which have been transmitted to it by the mouth'.⁴⁶ He goes on to reflect synesthetically:

Taste can be double, and even multiple, in succession, so that in a single mouthful a second and sometimes a third sensation can be realized; they fade gradually, and are called aftertaste, perfume, or aroma. It is the same way as, when a basic note is sounded, an attentive ear distinguishes in it one or more series of other consonant tones, whose number has not yet been correctly estimated.⁴⁷

Ford was also very familiar with Brillat-Savarin, citing the latter's perfect meal in his memoir *Return to Yesterday* (1931) as consisting of a small slice of *turbot au gratin*, bread and butter and a glass of sherry. Brillat-Savarin's cross-sensory description in *The Physiology of Taste* prefigures Ford's more complex metaphor of tasting resembling fugal music, which appeared in his posthumously-published article in American *Vogue*, 'Dinner with Turbot' (1939), where Brillat-Savarin's ideal meal appears again. In his article Ford also perceives flavours as variations of a single theme that are played over each other, overlapping and layering their tones, leading to that transcendent feeling of pleasure evoked both by beautiful music and food.

While affect and pleasure are dominant themes in discussions of taste, it is clear that both in the nineteenth- and twentieth-centuries an attentive, descriptive focus on taste has links to Ford's literary Impressionism and to the philosophical method of phenomenology. Philosophy,

from Descartes to Hume to Kant, dominates taste discourse because it evaluates how humans perceive their various senses and encounters with the world. Thus Brillat-Savarin's aphorism, 'tell me what you eat and I'll tell you what you are' is explicitly linked to a Cartesian interpretation of the world through subjective reflection, 'I think therefore I am'.

Phenomenology, originating with Edmund Husserl, can be summarized as a method to describe phenomena, bracketing out the emotional and sentimental associations of objects, and focusing purely on sensation in order to better understand experience. This can clearly be practised on any food object and phenomenology's precision can be linked to attentiveness to taste, texture, smell, temperature and so on in Ford's and Brillat-Savarin's writing.

Jessie Matz also sees some overlapping elements between phenomenology and Impressionism that are relevant to my discussion of Ford's culinary Impressionism in its connections to memory. Matz articulates the association between the two methods:

Impressionism seeks generally to suggest atmosphere and mood; it subordinates plot, fixes moments, fragments form, and intensifies affective response; it fuses subject and object, finds truth in appearances, and evokes the dynamic feeling – the 'flow, energy, vibrancy' – of life itself. Comparing these powers to aspects of the philosophies of William James, Henri Bergson, and Edmund Husserl, critics have called Impressionism a literary phenomenology, attributing to it the advent of modernism, the *nouveau roman*, and ultimately the style we read most often today.⁴⁸

Though he believes Impressionist writers like James, Conrad and Woolf and philosophers like Merleau-Ponty and Husserl 'share the mediatory impulse summed up in the impression', Matz rejects the idea that Impressionism can be somehow be equated with phenomenology. He argues, 'the Impressionist writer [...] could never aspire to transcend error in the manner of his or philosophical counterpart', but also views phenomenology's distinction between subject and the world with ambivalence.⁴⁹ What is relevant here is that Ford's and Woolf's approach to taste can be categorized by that same ambivalence about the objectivity of the body's sensory apparatus

and the development of taste as an aesthetic category. Because phenomenology lets us down in this instance, Norbert Elias's and Pierre Bourdieu's sociological work on 'the civilizing process' and on French notions of 'distinction' are more relevant to my study in the context of the exchange of culture between three countries, especially because Britain and the United States borrow their idea of high culture and sophisticated cuisine so readily from France in the modern period. Ford and Stein lived in and loved France and French food, and Woolf, often visiting France, also sent her cook Nellie to learn French cooking from the celebrity chef Marcel Boulestin when he set up courses in Fortnum and Mason's department store in London.⁵⁰

In Britain, French cuisine served as a cultural marker both for aesthetic taste and ostentation, playing a large part in the evolution of social snobbery in upholding the importance of aesthetic tradition. As Gigante writes: 'ostentation was the sign of the snob, and in the Victorian novel snobs abound'.⁵¹ She chronicles the reversal of the term's etymology in the nineteenth century – where it moved from meaning, originally, a socially inferior person, to a middle-class person who looks down on those seen as inferior: 'this semantic inversion is epitomized in the middle-class snob of the nineteenth-century novel, who pretends to a higher social status, or apes a more sophisticated taste, than he or she can economically afford'.⁵² These anxieties then led to competitive material consumption and display and the writing of cookbooks and guidebooks aimed at those in the middle classes competing in the new social framework of dinner parties and servants. Gigante sees this competition in the dinner parties in Thackeray's 1848 novel *Book of Snobs* and Dickens's 1865 *Our Mutual Friend*.⁵³ Gigante captures the delicate balance between consumption and anxiety about ignorance and display in matters of taste in Victorian Britain:

The *ancient regime* of taste based on the aristocratic *je ne sais quoi* of French neoclassicism, and adapted to the British discourse of taste by way of the connoisseur,

transforms into its antithetical horizon: the benighted don't-know-don't-care philistinism of Victorian England. In the nineteenth-century aesthetic of snobbery, in other words, the auratic *je ne sais quoi* of the aesthetic connoisseur yields to the truly befuddled condition of the middle-class snob. Taste had always been an appropriate metaphor for a kind of subjective pleasure that does not submit to objective laws, and in the end these Dickensian snobs find that it cannot be packaged, exchanged, or bought. Taste is ever on the wind from middle-class consumers of the nineteenth-century novel, who cling to the language of the commodity as their best means of self-expression. In a sea of unbounded consumption, they not only do not know what genuinely counts as tasteful: they don't even know that they don't know. As a result, they adopt the only solution left, which is snobbery.⁵⁴

This ignorance and panicked snobbery is part of the nineteenth-century legacy of taste and history that Ford, Stein and Woolf inherit, sometimes by upholding and internalizing traditional ideas, sometimes by lampooning these in their work. Often they venture into new realms of culinary and aesthetic literary experimentation by paying attention to the body's encounters with food in domestic spaces and in the world in ways that are affected by changing social and technological norms.

All three authors embrace the connection between a person's taste in food and his or her place in the social hierarchy in slightly different ways. For Ford, food is undoubtedly imbued with cultural capital, but also with national, moral, creative and even spiritual capital. It is such a potent factor in one's life that the way it is sourced, locally and humanely, and the way it is cooked, with knowledge and proper seasoning, will affect the life of the individual who consumes it. Ford makes this point again and again across his fiction and memoirs. Stein is equally invested in tradition and social hierarchy in the sense Bourdieu describes. Woolf, however, has more of a sense of how the hierarchical inscription of taste in the body serves to demarcate gender differences. And the hierarchies that determine what is civilized are often internalized and taken for granted. Joseph Litvak writes about distinction and sophistication, the sister of 'civilized' behaviour, in which the darker underside is often missed:

The problem with the concept of distinction is that it is too distinguished, too responsive to the dignity of privilege, and not responsive enough to its risks. To the degree that, as Bourdieu insists, privilege signifies distance from nature, its social elevation simultaneously implies a certain sexual abasement, the indignity embodied, suffered, enjoyed, by those who violate nature's laws. To the degree, in other words, that privilege both estranges and makes strange, *every* gourmet is a strange gourmet [...] The experience of the socially exceptional is marked not merely by the honors of distinction but by the vicissitudes of sophistication, its delicious lows as well as its powerful highs.⁵⁵

The processes of aesthetic taste and the body's sense of taste, as Litvak goes on to explore, are both about internalizing and consuming things and ideas. What Litvak calls 'the question of the mouth', is the problem of looking for empirical truth in the body:

Every student of contemporary theory knows, [that] however, the body is not necessarily the best place to look for unproblematic, irrefutable truth. What it permits instead, is the elaboration of the often surprising, half-submerged logic of the senses implicit in the notion of the aesthetic itself.⁵⁶

Litvak finds Hume and Kant are unhelpful on the question of why gustatory taste is the 'metaphor for aesthetic judgement', instead turning to Brillat-Savarin on the machinations of the mouth in consuming and tasting. The mechanics of biting, chewing, salivating and swallowing lead to a hierarchical distinction between the consumer and what is consumed. And there is inherent violence to both: 'the implicit cannibalism of sophistication'. The bodies 'not just of those lesser animals that ordinarily pass for, or end up as, food, but – symbolically at least – of other consumers' are ingested.⁵⁷ In other words, in order to have *good* taste, one not only rejects the bad, but also consumes the ideology of the good, internalizing the rules, inscribing them within the body. Thus sophistication and what is considered civilized are intrinsically connected both with desire and with snobbery and the emphasis on classification and tradition. These are issues that Ford, Stein and Woolf both embrace and reject in different ways, either knowingly or unknowingly.

Litvak's reading of the gourmet as queer, indulging in the extremes of sensual passions, 'delicious lows as well as its powerful highs' describes Woolf's *Orlando* perfectly. Woolf is aware of the cultural capital of culinary sophistication, as Mrs Ramsay's *boeuf en daube* demonstrates in *To the Lighthouse*, but Woolf is also uneasy about what this sophistication says about gender. With regards to Stein, Litvak's reading of Bourdieu is also helpful, because Stein perfectly embodied this duality: although as a lesbian living with her partner she defied social convention, she was also deeply invested in hierarchical social roles and a conservative view of tradition and nation in her work.

Barbarism and Primitivism: an aesthetics of the body

The aesthetic movement of 'primitivism' sought to convey emotions, ideals and naturalism from tribal art across other arts. Primitivism is epitomized by Rousseau's concept of the 'noble savage', a generalized account of humankind with qualities from non-western cultures. One of the reasons primitivism seemed to appeal to modernist artists and thinkers, then, is that it brings attention back to the body, which, while always a subject for visual art, was something to be avoided in fiction. D. H. Lawrence's bold exploration of masculine and feminine sexuality in *Women in Love* and other works exemplifies this. Daniel Albright writes that in 'Modernist Primitivism' the body as represented in the African sculpture, as seen in *Women in Love*, 'is the source of wonder, and yet is intimate with dung and pus'.⁵⁸ Albright identifies the 'copresence of sexual desire and sexual anxiety' in Lawrence, which takes us back to Freud's *Civilization and its Discontents* and to Elias's *The Civilizing Process*, which both argue that civilizations create a tension between what the society expects of individuals and what they themselves would like to do. The self-restraint with which individuals act is a sign of their

ostensible ‘civility’. Modernist primitivism challenges this definition of civility that denies knowledge of the body’s appetites, both sexual and culinary.

But the body’s appetites present many challenges in society. Taken to the extreme, allowing the body to be totally unregulated would tacitly condone violence, and violent appetites like cannibalism. The idea of the ‘noble savage’ is countered with real, racist, and metaphorical conceptions of cannibalism. Hegel thought that cannibalism represented a kind of materialist view of humanity. He argued it demonstrated the barbaric qualities of so-called African cannibals.⁵⁹ Yet the argument that all humans contain aspects of barbarism within themselves is a dominant theme in Sigmund Freud’s *Civilization and its Discontents*. To consider the body as a kind of food is one of the ultimate taboos, reaching its ultimate conclusion with humanity’s destruction of itself, a parallel that Joseph Conrad makes in *Heart of Darkness*.

This fear of society’s metaphorical capacity to consume itself, to be the cause of its own demise, links to writing about crises in civilization in the interwar period. Woolf explores this anxiety about humans becoming meat and the threat of self-destruction through Rhoda’s visions in *The Waves*. Stein explores the self-destructive instincts of oppressed immigrant cooks and servants in *Three Lives* and her French Indo-Chinese cook in her short story, ‘Butter Will Melt’. For Ford, after his traumatic experience fighting in the First World War, he finds that cookery leads to the stimulation of his creative impulses. Later in the 1930s he argues in several works that a better diet might help moderate some of the violent urges rising across the world.

Culinary nations

The English and American relationship to their own food and their shifting perspectives on French cuisine inform the work of Ford, Stein and Woolf. Ford and Woolf both reflect on themes related to primitivism. But it is more strongly associated with Stein, influenced by her

friendship with Picasso, whose collection of African masks inspired his painting. Ford, Stein and Woolf do not align their work with any specific modernist ‘movement’ or a sole nation. Their thoughts on nationhood and transatlanticism, and on French influence on British and American culture all colour their approach to writing about food. For Ford, Impressionism is his outlet for the creativity inspired by French cookery. He believes that food is the cultural commodity that could unite the world in the 1930s. Stein sees French and American cookery and domestic service as playing pivotal cultural roles in historical cycles of civilizations. And Woolf confronts gender dynamics in the relationship between food and British society, taking an extra-national view of women’s roles in civilization.

When Ford visited American farms along the East Coast and the South in the 1930s, several factors had set into motion America’s pride in its industrial production of food. Ford’s small-producer theory is rooted in a Jeffersonian ideal of the yeoman farmer in America as well as in the English simple life, and the Ruskinian and Morrisian ideals of coming closer to the products of one’s labour. However, in his travels around America in the midst of the Depression, Ford revises his theory into a critique of the agricultural giants that make food too expensive for the farmers of their own land to buy, forcing them to purchase frozen or processed, tinned foods, often from agricultural-company-owned shops.

Before the 1929 stock market crash, the rise of industrial processing and the popularity of thinking about nutrition and vitamins, America’s economic dominance placed food at the centre of many cultural, national and political debates. Allison Carruth’s *Global Appetites: American Power and the Literature of Food* identifies in twentieth-century American literature a charting of ‘the political and economic power that has accrued to those who control the world food supply’ which becomes ‘an indicator of global power writ large’.⁶⁰ In 1925 Calvin Coolidge

addressed the American Farm Bureau Federation, reminding his audience of connections between the American founding fathers and farming: ‘the strength and character and greatness of America has been furnished by the strength and character and greatness of its agriculture’.⁶¹ While the expansion of the interwar period brought technological change, American values did not necessarily progress at the same pace. In their monumental study, *Middletown* (1929), Robert and Helen Lynd emphasize American conservatism and stubbornness with regards to the real problem of social change, and yet their readiness to adapt to technological shifts in material goods:

A citizen has one foot on the relatively solid ground of established institutional habits and the other fast to an escalator erratically moving in several directions at a bewildering variety of speeds.⁶²

In the immediate aftermath of the First World War, in reaction to the expansion of urban cities of the North, the American South saw the return to a Jeffersonian ideology of conservative agrarianism as an attempt to reclaim a cultural heritage. Ford became friendly with the literary part of this movement, which manifested in the group of poets based at Vanderbilt University in Tennessee known as the Fugitives. They included Allen Tate, John Crowe Ransom, Donald Davidson and Robert Penn Warren. Ford was good friends with Tate and his wife Caroline Gordon, visiting them at their home in Tennessee. After the dissolution of the Fugitives, the four poets later joined the Southern Agrarians and they published an anti-industrial, anti-materialist political work entitled *I'll Take My Stand: The South and the Agrarian Tradition* (1930). The essays in the collection, while written in the tradition of Ruskin and Carlyle, uphold the ante-bellum South as an ideal and ignore the historical fact that the South largely managed to balance leisure and profit through the system of slavery. Davidson later wrote that the collection's aim was ‘the cause of civilized society, as we have known it in the Western World, against the new

barbarism of science and technology controlled and directed by the modern power state'.⁶³ While the Agrarian view of civilization and barbarism is different from Ford's, it is against this background that he explored the plight of small truck farmers who could hardly afford to eat. Their produce was legally bound to be sold to industrial conglomerates which would then sell the food back to regional towns at an increased price.

Gertrude Stein was less interested in agriculture, but she may have been as conservative as the Agrarians in her views on what she believed makes a society civilized. Throughout her writing Stein draws on American tropes of independence and adventure while also adapting and admiring conservative French social traditions. Stein's construction of her authorial identity as a genius on par with Picasso and Matisse also emerges from and contains elements of domesticity. Stein's long partnership with Toklas and many years of friendship with and observation of her cooks from America and France led her to adopt some facets of domesticity and cookery in her writing and persona, culminating in the co-authored draft of a cookbook with Toklas.

Although she liked French cookery, she would sing the praises of processed American food when she revisited her home country in 1934-35 to give her lecture tour. The tour, described in *Everybody's Autobiography* (1937) among other writings, takes place against the same industrial landscape that Ford encounters and led Stein to compare French and American food. Stein delights in the novelty of processed American sliced bread (which she found moist in comparison to French bread) and canned fruit cocktail. After thirty years of eating almost exclusively French food in Paris and the French countryside, Stein whole-heartedly embraced American economic expansion, associating American food with national character.

Stein's sense of her identity is also grounded in the support she received from her cooks and servants of many nationalities who influence or appear in her writing. Although Toklas

cooked American food for Stein, their French, Swiss and also French Indo-Chinese cooks would prepare their national dishes or variations on them. However, Stein's approach to history, race and politics was troubling. As I will further outline in my chapter on Stein, she maintained a friendship with the Vichy government official Bernard Faÿ and supported some parts of the Vichy government during the Second World War.

In her polemical work, *Three Guineas*, Virginia Woolf considers the request of an English gentleman inquiring what should be done to avert war. She writes:

When we meet in the flesh we speak with the same accent; use knives and forks in the same way; expect maids to cook dinner and wash up after dinner; and can talk during dinner without much difficulty about politics and people; war and peace; barbarism and civilization.⁶⁴

Woolf ponders what she and the gentleman have in common. She decides that, belonging to the same class, they use their dinner utensils the same way and they both discuss 'politics and people; war and peace; barbarism and civilization' at the dinner table.⁶⁵ Yet, as I will show in my chapter on Woolf, though they discuss the same subjects at the dinner table, their paths to their educated discussion and what is on their plates may not be the same. After establishing these commonalities, Woolf addresses the question of money spent on educating women with the phrase, 'Arthur's Education Fund'. This is a reference to money spent on the titular son in Thackeray's novel *Pendennis*—the pot of money that has gone, over the centuries, into educating the sons of educated men and not their daughters, depriving the latter of countless opportunities afforded to the former over the centuries. Woolf's point, then, is that it is *uncivilized* to deny women's equality of opportunity as a matter of course. And this uncivilized behaviour opens a broad gulf between herself and her correspondent. Thus Woolf's initial use of the term 'civilization', and its implicit antonym, barbarism, gestures towards an ideal that does not yet exist in reality.

Understanding the role of food in these modernist approaches to thinking about the tastes and rules of society is now part of an expanding field within modernist studies, from ecocritical and feminist historical lenses. Food plays a central role for these three authors' expansive conceptions of civilization, barbarism and primitivism outside of wartime. Examining this underexplored connection enriches our knowledge of modernism to encompass a broader cultural understanding of the body, domesticity, gender, and the moral and philosophical implications these aspects play nationally and internationally. Throughout I show that it is the smaller, private sphere – of the home kitchen and garden, of relationships between mistresses and cooks, between families and friends – that helps these authors consider the implications of food in the wider public sphere, in educational and national institutions and in the politics of consumption.

¹ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* [1966] (New York: Routledge, 2001), 36.

² 'Introduction', Laura Marcus, Michèle Mendelssohn and Kirsten Shepherd-Barr, eds. *Late Victorian into Modern* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 3.

³ Denise Gigante, *Taste: A Literary History* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), 2-3.

⁴ Gigante, 161.

⁵ Bruce Robbins notes the trend of single-subject, popular and academic 'Commodity Histories' often making hyperbolic claims for the importance of a single foodstuff like sugar, salt or garlic. Bruce Robbins, 'Commodity Histories', *PMLA* 120 (2005), 454-463.

⁶ In addition to her book *Artificial Color: Modern Food and Racial Fictions* (2019), Catherine Keyser has edited a 'Modernist Food Studies' cluster of essays in *Modernism/modernity* Print Plus. Vol 4. 1 (2019); and Jessica Martell, Adam Fajardo, and Philip Keel Geheber's edited collection *Modernism and Food Studies: Politics, Aesthetics and the Avant-Garde* (2019) also demonstrate the growing interest in this field.

⁷ Kyla Tompkins, *Racial Indigestion: Eating Bodies in the 19th Century* (New York: NYU Press, 2013), 3.

⁸ The representation of the ethics of eating animals is also a part of this discussion of the body's boundaries. In the field of literature and vegan studies, Emilia Quinn examines the creative and destructive possibilities of the vegan monster in *Reading Veganism: The Monstrous Vegan, 1818 to Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021).

⁹ Jennifer L. Fleissner, 'Henry James's Art of Eating', *ELH* 75 (2008), 28.

¹⁰ Catherine Keyser, *Artificial Color: Modern Food and Racial Fictions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 5.

¹¹ Keyser, *Artificial Color: Modern Food and Racial Fictions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 6.

¹² Keyser, *Artificial Color*, 12.

¹³ Jessica Martell, *Farm to Form: Modernist Ecologies and the Food Politics of Empire* (Reno, University of Nevada Press, 2020), 5.

¹⁴ Allison Carruth, *Global Appetites: American Power and the Literature of Food* (New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), Aimee Gaston, 'Katherine Mansfield's Literary Snack', *Journal of New Zealand Literature* 31.2 (2013), 163-182; Scott McCracken, *Masculinities, Modernist Fiction and the Urban Public Sphere* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007); Sandra Gilbert, *The Culinary Imagination* (New York:

W.W. Norton: 2014). Lisa Angelella's unpublished doctoral dissertation, 'Alimentary Modernism' (University of Iowa, 2009), argues that food moments and scenes present a theory of subjectivity in modernism.

¹⁵ Nicola Humble, *The Literature of Food* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020), 1.

¹⁶ Humble, *Literature of Food*, 2.

¹⁷ Humble, *Literature of Food*, 3.

¹⁸ Michael Sheringham's work on the quotidian surveys a wide range of theoretical approaches to this concept: *Everyday Life: Theories and Practice from Surrealism to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). Liesl Olson, in *Modernism and the Ordinary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) and Bryony Randall in *Modernism, Daily Time and Everyday Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), both argue for the centrality of ordinary or everyday experience in modernist fiction. Michael Sayeau considers ordinariness as part of the 'anti-evental' turn of narrative in modernist fiction: 'In resisting the event, [modernist writers] brought to mimetic light forms of time that were in various ways becoming culturally prevalent during their periods of composition'. Michael Sayeau, *Against the Event: The Everyday and Evolution of Modernist Narrative* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 36.

¹⁹ Spengler's *The Decline of the West* was published in German in 1918 and published in English in 1926-8.

²⁰ It is also relevant to note the rise of popular interest in archaeological research and discoveries of different civilizations in the Middle East in the period 1900-1914 and the discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb in 1922 by English archaeologist Howard Carter. Several books chart modernism's interest in classical civilization including Diana Collecott, *H.D. and Sapphic Modernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Theodore Koulouris, *Hellenism and Loss in the Work of Virginia Woolf*, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011); Katarina Stergiopolou, *Towards a Modernist Hellenism: Ezra Pound, H.D., and the Translation of Greece* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014).

²¹ Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process, vol. I: The History of Manners*, trans. Edmund Jephcott [1939] (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 171.

²² Raymond Williams, 'Civilization', *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, Revised Edition (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 58.

²³ Williams, 'Anthropology', *Keywords*, 39.

²⁴ Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents* [1930] (New York: W. W. Norton & Co, 1961), 69.

²⁵ Maria Boletsi, *Barbarism and its Discontents* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013), 3.

²⁶ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, ed. Walter Kaufmann, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage, 1968), 458, 459.

²⁷ Walter Benjamin, 'Theses on the philosophy of history' [1940], *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zorn (London: Pimlico, 1999), 248.

²⁸ Brett Neilson, 'Barbarism/Modernity: Notes on Barbarism', *Textual Practice* Vol.13 (1999), 3.

²⁹ Neilson, 6.

³⁰ Edith Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition Through Tragedy* (Oxford: Oxford Classical Monographs, 1989), 4.

³¹ Hall, 4, note 5.

³² This is the title of the work published in America by Harcourt Brace & Co. The British title, published by Left Book Club, Victor Gollancz in the same year as *Barbarians at the Gate*.

³³ Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, 5. Emphasis Elias's.

³⁴ Elias, 5.

³⁵ Lucien Febvre, 'Civilisation: Evolution of a Word and a Group of Ideas' in *A New Kind of History: From the Writings of Febvre*, ed. Peter Burke, trans. K. Folca (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973), 220.

³⁶ Christine Froula, *Virginia Woolf and the Bloomsbury Avant-Garde: War, Civilization, Modernity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 327, footnote 7.

³⁷ Froula, 328.

³⁸ Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans.

Richard Nice (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), 1.

³⁹ Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, *The Physiology of Taste: or Meditations on Transcendental Gastronomy*, trans. and ed. by M.F.K. Fisher (New York: Everyman, 2009), 155.

⁴⁰ Bill Buford, Introduction, *The Physiology of Taste*, x.

⁴¹ Gertrude Stein, *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (London: Penguin, 2001), 241. Hereafter cited as *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*.

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- ⁴² Gertrude Stein to Carl Van Vechten, 11 August 1927, *The Letters of Gertrude Stein and Carl Van Vechten 1913-1946*, ed. Edward Burns (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 152. Burns notes that the bust was put up on 11 September 1927, note 1, 153.
- ⁴³ Alice B. Toklas, *The Alice B. Toklas Cook Book* (London: Brilliance Books, 1983), 215-16. Hereafter cited as Toklas, *Cook Book*.
- ⁴⁴ Toklas, *Cook Book*, 215.
- ⁴⁵ Brillat-Savarin, 15-16.
- ⁴⁶ Brillat-Savarin, 50.
- ⁴⁷ Brillat-Savarin, 51-2.
- ⁴⁸ Jesse Matz, *Literary Impressionism and Modernist Aesthetics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 14.
- ⁴⁹ Matz, 27.
- ⁵⁰ Alison Light, *Mrs Woolf and the Servants* (London: Penguin, 2008), 174.
- ⁵¹ Gigante, 176.
- ⁵² Gigante, 176.
- ⁵³ Gigante, 177.
- ⁵⁴ Gigante, 180.
- ⁵⁵ Joseph Litvak, *Strange Gourmets: Sophistication, Theory, and the Novel* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1997), 6.
- ⁵⁶ Litvak, 8.
- ⁵⁷ Litvak, 9.
- ⁵⁸ Daniel Albright, *Putting Modernism Together: Literature, Music, and Painting, 1872-1927* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015), 135.
- ⁵⁹ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, trans. J. Sibree (New York: The Colonial Press, 1900), 95.
- ⁶⁰ Allison Carruth, *Global Appetites: American Power and the Literature of Food* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 4.
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- ⁶³ Donald Davidson, *Southern Writers in the Modern World* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1958), 45.
- ⁶⁴ Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas* in *A Room of One's Own and Three Guineas*, ed. Morag Shiach (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 155. Hereafter cited as *Three Guineas*.
- ⁶⁵ Woolf, *Three Guineas*, 154-5.