**Music, Noise, and the First World War in Ford Madox Ford’s *Parade’s End***

**Gemma Moss**

*Parade’s End registers the potential and necessity for a transition in conceptions of music informed by new sounds experienced during the First World War. In the trenches, Tietjens interprets a bombardment as a Wagnerian orchestra, encouraging contemplation of where and why demarcation lines between music and noise are drawn, as well as reflection on the utopian project of Wagner’s Total Art-Work. Ford’s tetralogy has a significant contribution to make towards understanding how writers were navigating the impact of noise on music in the early twentieth century.*

**Keywords:** Ford Madox Ford / modernism / music / Wagner / First World War

*Parade’s End*explores a shift in how music is conceptualised that is shaped by sonic experiences during the First World War. Music has a history of being considered an aesthetic paradigm, exemplified in Walter Pater’s claim that it is the ‘highest’ form of art because it seems to create meaning without reference to the material world.[[1]](#endnote-1) The battlefield in *Parade’s End* is music’s antithesis – ‘a perfect hell of noise’.[[2]](#endnote-2) The sounds of the First World War provided new levels of contrast with music’s supposed heavenly transcendence: noises of technology and machinery that had been altering modern soundscapes took on different proportions. During a bombardment on the front line Christopher Tietjens hears gunfire and shells as Wagnerian opera, and trench warfare shifts from being experienced as a sonic assault to being understood in musical terms. By considering the significance of Wagner in *Parade’s End*, this article explores how the First World War affects ideas about what music is, and what it is for. Music is invoked as a way of coping with an event, but its association with violence during the war means that it cannot be considered a separate, transcendent, or humane realm.

Ford’s significance in shaping British literary modernism is now widely recognized.[[3]](#endnote-3) In addition to his own novels, he edited the *English Review* and *Transatlantic Review,* and mentored Joseph Conrad and Ezra Pound.[[4]](#endnote-4) Modernism has long been approached as a decisive break or rupture with nineteenth-century aesthetic forms, but this is no longer the case. For Andrzej Gasiorek, claims about modernism’s newness often relied on monolithic or vaguely defined notions of ‘tradition’, while looking at specific aesthetic traditions shows that modernism’s engagement with these is often fraught and complex, rather than a clean break.[[5]](#endnote-5) Ford had a comprehensive education in the arts and became deeply musically knowledgeable in his own right, which makes his writing rich ground for analysing how it references and engages with other artworks. Sondra Stang and Carl Smith have discussed the depth of Ford’s knowledge and his compositional skill,[[6]](#endnote-6) while Ford’s grandfather was the pre-Raphaelite painter Ford Madox Brown, and his father, Francis Hueffer, was an expert music critic and author of a book on Wagner.[[7]](#endnote-7) References to music and Wagner in Ford’s work should thus be approached as exceptionally well-informed.

*Parade’s End* is absent from books that have been shaping the field of music and modernism. Brad Bucknell, Daniel Albright, Emma Sutton, and Peter Dayan[[8]](#endnote-8) have investigated modernist literature’s close engagement with the musical, building on earlier explorations of words and music by Werner Wolf and Eric Prieto.[[9]](#endnote-9) For Prieto, ‘music offers a set of formal, expressive and referential principles that can be used in the attempt to better represent the inner space of consciousness’.[[10]](#endnote-10) This approach is echoed by Bucknell, who notes that in the face of a crisis of language, modernists drew on music as a model ‘to represent conscious and unconscious levels of emotion’ of ‘deeper significance’.[[11]](#endnote-11) Music’s non-referential capacity for communication and emotional stimulation was related to perceptions of it as transcendent of material concerns. For early twentieth-century writers, the immediate history of these ideas is in British Aestheticism, exemplified in Pater’s claim that ‘all art constantly aspires to the condition of music’ because he considered it to refer to nothing outside itself.[[12]](#endnote-12) Pater was informed by the German Romantics,[[13]](#endnote-13) such as Shopenhauer’s[[14]](#endnote-14) writing about music’s capacity to express the thing-in-itself, which influenced Wagner, Brahms and Mahler.[[15]](#endnote-15) Similar concepts can be found in the writing of the French symbolists, especially Baudelaire and Mallarmé.[[16]](#endnote-16) All these ideas are connected – Raymond Furness has illuminated Wagner’s influence on literature,[[17]](#endnote-17) while French symbolism was a significant influence on modernism’s preoccupation with music’s aesthetic potential[[18]](#endnote-18) – and go back even further. Ezra Pound’s efforts to compose poetry ‘in the sequence of the musical phrase’ were informed by twelfth- and thirteenth-century troubadours Arnaut Daniel and Guido Cavalcante.[[19]](#endnote-19) Earlier still, Neoplatonists had appropriated Pythagorean observations about the relationship between pitch and ratio as evidence of divine order in nature.[[20]](#endnote-20) As such, some of the most formally innovative modernist writing that is considered especially ‘musical’ – such as that of James Joyce, Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein and Virginia Woolf – works with notions of musical transcendence that are rooted in centuries of philosophical tradition. Ford’s use of music is different. *Parade’s End* explores how noise during the First World War alters relationships with sound, including music.

In the trenches in *Parade’s End* there is ‘solid noise that swept you off your feet’.[[21]](#endnote-21) Sound has physical effects and vibrates the body. The phrase ‘swept you off your feet’ is literal. Usually a metaphor for something pleasurable (if extreme), instead it describes wartime experiences that provided new scales of sound and force, to which music relates as antithesis. Josh Epstein has investigated modernist writers’ negotiations with the sounds of modernity, exploring how writers responded to ‘new rhythms, dissonances and noises’[[22]](#endnote-22) produced by technology, machinery and war. ‘Modernists’, Epstein says, ‘imagined music as a mediation of noise: an effort to interpret, orchestrate, sublimate, amplify, or critique the sounds and the affective shocks of industrialization, urbanisation, warfare, publicity, and mechanical reproducability’.[[23]](#endnote-23) In other words, to have an idea of what music is requires an understanding of what it is not: sounds, noises, dins, are all ways of describing what is distinct from music. Epstein builds on Jacques Attali’s contemplation of the material, political and economic history of music. For Attali, the entry of noise in to the music of the early twenty first century was related to ‘a world in which brutal noise was omnipresent’.[[24]](#endnote-24) (Aldous Huxley dubbed the early twentieth century the ‘Age of Noise’.[[25]](#endnote-25)) The *Parade’s End* tetralogy has a significant contribution to make towards understanding how writers were navigating the impact of noise on music. By placing Wagner and battle noise in close proximity, *Parade’s End* explores where and why demarcation lines between music and sound are drawn, and how these boundaries are affected by political and material concerns.

In *Parade’s End* Sylvia Tietjens and Christopher Tietjens think about Wagner’s operas during highly stressful wartime experiences, bringing art and the violent materiality of war into dialogue. References to Wagner reach back to a prominent aesthetic tradition that has had sustained influence throughout the twentieth century: the Gesamtkunstwerk or Total Artwork which combined music, words, dance, drama, set design.[[26]](#endnote-26) Wagner has long been associated with nineteenth-century decadence,[[27]](#endnote-27) but recently Juliet Koss and David Roberts have explored the impact of the Wagnerian Total Art-Work in European modernism, from architecture and theatre to its engagement with abstraction and intermediality.[[28]](#endnote-28) Wagner’s Gesamtkunstwerk was a utopian artistic project that sought to create a better society by providing its audience with an aesthetic and moral education.For Wagner, society and artworks had been in decline since the high point of Ancient Greek drama, but both might be redeemed through a return to a unifying art form.[[29]](#endnote-29) A symptom of this decline was the commodification of art: in *The Art-Work of the Future* Wagner refers repeatedly to transient ‘fashions’ and luxuries that have no relation to real wants and necessities, claiming that art has become ‘private property’ rather than a communal activity.[[30]](#endnote-30) The Gesamtkunstwerk was intended to be ‘the great and universal Art-work of the future’:[[31]](#endnote-31) a completely immersive aesthetic experience, liberating humanity by unifying disparate art forms to abolish the distinction between the separate spheres of religion, politics and art, and allowing access to a fuller form of life.

Ford shares with Wagner a sense that there is much wrong with the world, but in *Parade’s End* nineteenth-century art and philosophy are partially complicit in events leading up to the First World War. The experiences during the war – of disaffection, alienation and disillusionment – are related to the wider problems in society that Ford examines in the first book of the tetralogy, *Some Do Not. . .* . As Andrew Frayn notes, the ‘adapted saga form’ of *Parade’s End* ‘allows an extended, nuanced engagement with the conflict’.[[32]](#endnote-32) Ford charts Tietjens’s experiences before, during, and after the war, showing how combat conditions intensify the alienation and isolation that is produced by the rise of the administrative class and the decline of the values embodied by Tietjens, who is a benevolent benefactor with a strong belief in conservative institutions. A soldier in *No More Parades* sees rottenness, not just in the war or Germans, but in the English and the whole world:

Yes, the world’s certainly pretty rotten. But that’s not its particular line of rottenness as far as we’re concerned. . . . We’re tangled up, not because we’ve got Huns in our orderly rooms, but just because we’ve got English. That’s the bat in our belfry. . . . That Hun plane is presumably coming back. Half a dozen of them. . . .’

The young man, his mind eased by having got off his chest a confounded lot of semi-nonsensical ravings considered the return of the Hun planes with gloomy indifference. His problem really was: could he stand the bloody noise that would probably accompany their return?[[33]](#endnote-33)

Even with the knowledge of a broken and worsening world, in which the best possible outcome is to get back to an English society that is fundamentally damaged, the noise is his immediate concern. One of the wider issues considered in *Parade’s End* is how Englishness is changing, and whether – like Tietjens’s memory after his shell shock induced amnesia – it can be recuperated or relearned as something positive. These broader concerns come up against immediate dangers in this scene: the pressures of the war on English national identity are placed beside the physical affects of the war and technology on individuals at the front line. Sound is particularly distressing. The soldier’s indifference to danger implies that the aural bombardment is worse than death. Such noises provide the basis for a conceptual alteration of music. As Jacques Attali notes, musical forms change – ‘primitive polyphony’ is very different to ‘twelve tone serial music’ – but what they have ‘in common is the principle of giving form to noise’.[[34]](#endnote-34) New technologies in the unprecedented environment of *Parade’s End* create a newly loud and traumatic opposition for music to be defined against.

*Parade’s End* is often read as a text that explores literary-musical relations or analysed for examples of intermediality (uniting different artistic disciplines).[[35]](#endnote-35) Rebekah Lockyer argues that Ford shares Wagnerian aesthetic goals, adding Ford to the list of high modernists who appropriate musical forms by demonstrating the ‘Wagnerian characteristics of his Great War tetralogy, *Parade’s End*’.[[36]](#endnote-36) For Alexandra Becquet *Parade’s End* incorporates ‘the performing arts as well as music’ and creates ‘a unified, composite, single, and singular, artwork’.[[37]](#endnote-37) Readings of Ford that look for intermediality and unity are informed by his assumed Wagnerism (in the sense of a high regard for Wagner’s music) and an implicitly nineteenth-century understanding of music as a transcendent aesthetic paradigm. These are the same ideas that I have traced above as informing many modernists’ experiments with musical aesthetics, specifically music’s capacity to ‘go beyond the mere rationality of language’, as Bucknell says.[[38]](#endnote-38) Lockyer appropriately cites Pater, whose *Renaissance* was a central work informing aesthetic theory in the late nineteenth-century, as emblematic of the artistic effect she argues Ford tries to achieve. Music, she says, represents the ‘truest form of purity in art’[[39]](#endnote-39) for Pater, for whom it achieves the ‘perfect identification of matter and form’.[[40]](#endnote-40) Yet Ford’s tetralogy also addresses issues of fragmentation, and is not solely about wholeness and unity. *Parade’s End* does seek ways of finding these things (although it does not provide them, not even in *Last Post*), but the tetralogy calls for a reappraisal of how we think about art under new, historically specific social conditions. Such themes set it apart from the perceived wholeness and unity of some nineteenth-century art forms stemming from a German Romantic, particularly Hegelian, aesthetic that came to be exemplified in the Wagnerian Gesamtkunstwerk.

Ford’s relationship with aesthetic traditions was critical and complex, precluding a straightforward replication of Wagnerian aesthetics. So too was his relationship with his German heritage, as Sara Haslam explains in the introduction to the Carcanet edition of *A Man Could Stand Up-.*[[41]](#endnote-41) Ford critiques the past as complicit in producing the world of *Parade’s End*, in which things have gone wrong. In *The Critical Attitude,* Ford wrote that **‘**We have to watch modern life sweeping away the traditions that we love, the places that we considered hallowed, we have to consider that it is blowing away us ourselves as if we were no more than a little dust.’[[42]](#endnote-42) Ford’s response to change and modernity was often ambivalent and nostalgic, but he certainly recognised a shift in lived experience that required a new aesthetic approach, as Andrzej Gasiorek has highlighted.[[43]](#endnote-43) In *Parade’s End* Tietjens rejects the recent past and its art forms: he critiques the nineteenth century, affiliating himself with a more distant past that is (as he sees it) less complicit with current problems, declaring that ‘He was eighteenth century’.[[44]](#endnote-44) He is nostalgic about the distant past, while recent events seem more responsible for the problems of the present. (Tietjens’s particular brand of generous Toryism is not without its problems, of course.) In *A Man Could Stand Up–* Ford explores the impact of the war on Tietjens’s relationship with nineteenth-century poetry and his capacity for musical appreciation.

Someone once wrote:

A myriad larks in unison sang o’er her, soaring out of sight!

That was imbecile really. Larks cannot sing in unison. They make a heartless noise like that produced by the rubbing of two corks one on the other. . . . There came into his mind an image. Years ago; years and years ago, probably having watched that gunner torment the fat Hun, […] [[45]](#endnote-45)

The War, Ford tells us through Tietjens’s unenthusiastic response to Mathilde Blind’s nineteenth-century verse about larks, takes the poetry and music out of everything.[[46]](#endnote-46) Birds are often referred to as positive albeit painful ‘reminder of life beyond war’[[47]](#endnote-47) – as for Willoughby Weaving, for whom they are ‘Small parleyers of peace where no peace is’ [[48]](#endnote-48) – but this is not the case for Tietjens. That which had been musical or poetic now appears ‘imbecile’, and the experience of aesthetic beauty is replaced with a practical way of thinking: birdsong, for Tietjens, is only sound that could be produced another way, by ‘the rubbing of two corks’. The ellipsis indicates the gap after this thought, registering the hollow absence when birdsong is considered ‘heartless noise’ instead of pleasing. As he registers his inability to find the birdsong beautiful, a memory of combat fills the gap in Tietjens’s train of thought. The image that comes into his mind is one from ‘Years ago;’ but it intrudes specifically into that moment and fills the void left by hearing the birdsong as noise, leading his thoughts back to the violence he has experienced during the war. Ford’s writing is, as Becquet notes, ‘saturated with images and sounds, which reveal as many subjective perceptions and so correspond to states of mind, disclosing the impact of war on the soldier’s psyche’.[[49]](#endnote-49) Ford is considering the place of nineteenth-century forms of art and aesthetic appreciation, questioning the extent of their relevance for contemporary subjectivities. The unavailability of the type of aesthetic appreciation in Blind’s poetry is connected with the violence of the war, although this is not consciously acknowledged by Tietjens.

\*\*\*

Two of the moments in *Parade’s End* when music is particularly prominent are instances of extreme or heightened emotion: first, during Sylvia’s internal monologue when she arrives at the barracks at Rouen and dances with Christopher, hoping to end their estrangement; then when Tietejsn is caught in a strafe on the front line. Wagner is referenced in each case, functioning as a framework to structure the characters’ thoughts. Rather than showing us positive and socially cohesive aesthetic experiences, however, Ford creates an ironic distance between the disastrous situations described, and what we know to be the utopian aims of the Gesamtkunstwerk.

Sylvia arrives unannounced at the military camp at which Christopher is based, hoping to end their estrangement. She hums the ‘Venusberg music’ from Wagner’s *Tannhäuser* opera.[[50]](#endnote-50) Invoking Wagner in a novel about the First World War is significant, especially considering Ford’s German lineage. The environment in which Sylvia thinks about *Tannhäuser* is politically charged: in a British military camp at Rouen, she is in close proximity to the front line. Sylvia’s and Tietjens’s relationship is affected by her Catholic guilt that contributes to her difficult relationship with love and sex, making this a moment where the political, personal, aesthetic and religious come into close proximity. Since these reflect the separate spheres that Wagner wished to unify through the *Gesamtkunstwerk*,[[51]](#endnote-51) Ford gestures towards the utopian potential of music, and especially references Wagner’s aim of unifying these separate spheres of life through art: Sylvia’s use of German music as a frame of reference during the War gestures to art’s potential to transcend issues of nationality or political difference. We are told that Sylvia ‘knew music, if she knew nothing else’, so that although Sylvia appears to be in a state of confusion, music offers her a way of making sense her situation.[[52]](#endnote-52)

Sylvia, however, lacks the capacity to interpret the opera in a way that is beneficial to her. Tannhäuser struggles to choose between two lovers, and Sylvia references the opera to bring up the love triangle comprising her, Christopher and Valentine. At the start of the opera, Tannhäuser has abandoned his human lover, Elisabeth, after being seduced by the goddess Venusburg. Knowing that Christopher is familiar with the opera and its storyline, she communicates her suspicions that he is hiding Valentine near his station at by humming a melody from *Tannhäuser*.[[53]](#endnote-53) As Sylvia contemplates her situation she attempts to position herself within the opera’s narrative.

She said: “You call the compounds where you keep the W.A.A.C.’s Venusberg’s, don’t you? Isn’t it queer that Venus should be your own? . . . Think of poor Elisabeth! The room where they were dancing was very dark. . . . It was queer to be in his arms. . . . She had known better dancers. . . . He had looked ill. . . . Perhaps he was. . . . Oh, poor Valentine-Elisabeth. . . . What a funny position! . . . The good gramophone played. . . . Destiny! . . . You see father! . . . In his arms! Of course, dancing is not really. . . . But so near the real thing! So near! . . . “Good luck to the special intention! . . .” She had almost kissed him on the lips. . . . All but! . . . *Effleurer*, the French call it. . . . But she was not as humble. . . .He had pressed her tighter. . . . All these months without. . . My lord did me honour. . . Good for Malbrouk’s *s’en va-t-en guerre*. . . . He knew she had almost kissed him on the lips. . . . And that his lips had almost responded. . .[[54]](#endnote-54)

The ‘Venusburg’ is where Sylvia suspects Valentine is hiding, so Sylvia initially positions herself as Christopher’s rightful lover, asking him to ‘Think of poor Elisabeth!’ But she also thinks of herself as Venus, the goddess-temptress, saying Venus is in fact Christopher’s ‘own’ wife. Thus, at another moment she thinks of Valentine as Christopher’s human lover: ‘Oh, poor Valentine-Elisabeth. . . . ’. She contemplates the intrigue that she and Valentine can occupy each other’s roles: ‘What a funny position!. . .’. In Sylvia’s fragmented interior monologue, both she and Valentine are ‘poor Elisabeth’.

While Sylvia tries to position herself as a character, she does not see the deeper level on which *Tannhäuser* is relevant to her situation. Her oscillation between rebellious flirtatiousness and piety relates to the subject matter of the opera, where Tannhäuser struggles to decide between sexual pleasure with Venusburg or social morality and acceptance with Elisabeth. In Act 2, as Simon Williams notes, ‘it becomes apparent that Tannhäuser is torn between two ideals of love, the sexually promiscuous and the chaste, and between two realms of experience: sensual indulgence, symbolised in the Venusberg, and the moralistic world of social convention, materialised in the Wartburg.’[[55]](#endnote-55) Sylvia’s sexuality, too, is complex. She is sometimes sexually motivated, sometimes reticent about sex, experiences intense feelings of jealousy, and much guilt and remorse connected to her Catholicism. (After her elopement and affair during her marriage to Christopher, she removes herself to a convent and takes advice from Father Consett, who advises her to reconcile. He is obliquely in her thoughts at Rouen. She inwardly demonstrates her attempts to reconcile with Christopher to him, thinking ‘You see father! . . . In his arms!’) Ultimately, as Williams identifies, ‘Because Tannhäuser is unable to resolve his inner conflicts and his relationship with the social world, his life ends in apparent devastation.’[[56]](#endnote-56) Sylvia’s cruel treatment of Christopher is designed to attract his attention, but it shows how her desire is also unstable. She makes a skewed value judgement about the relationship between her life and Wagner’s *Tannhäuser*. She misses the significance of the dichotomy and separate spheres of life that result in Tannhäuser being left entirely alone, and unsuccessfully tries to place herself as either Venus or Elisabeth. (This also encourages critique of the limited range of female roles available in the opera: abandoned temptress-goddess or dead, pious mortal is a poor choice of characters with whom to identify.) As Koss notes, the kind of ‘psychological and emotional intoxication’ that Wagner aimed for could produce either positive or negative results.[[57]](#endnote-57) Sylvia replicates Tannhäuser’s lack of self-knowledge, rather than coming to a greater understanding of herself through the music, so that the effect of her engagement with the music does not fulfil Wagner’s ambitions for opera’s positive social functions. She continues to be unable to express her love as love, and remains unhappy.

There is material from Ford’s own experiences to suggest that before the First World War, he registered the need for a change: either in music itself, or critical approaches to it. He enrolled on a course at ‘one of the British royal institutions for education in music’ but quickly abandoned his studies.[[58]](#endnote-58) There were two reasons for this. Firstly, he only wanted to study composition, but he was also expected to study the piano, which he described as ‘the most soulless of instruments’ pointing further to an emotional distance from the piano.[[59]](#endnote-59) Secondly, after witnessing the ‘acridities’ of musicians he had met through his father, he decided that there must be something ‘so unbalancing in a musical career’ that he could not pursue it.[[60]](#endnote-60) Still, Ford thought music very important: in the ‘Music and Masters’ chapter of *Ancient Lights* Ford expresses disappointment at the diminishing passion for and understanding of music among the general public. The significance of this diminishing understanding of music is demonstrated in Sylvia’s limited surface engagement with *Tannhäuser*. Like Tietjens, Sylvia belongs to an era that is disappearing: her aristocratic elegance is associated with an older form of beauty compared with Valentine, who (although from an ancient family) is more modern: she is a suffragette and instead of a domestic or sedentary lifestyle she is physically active and works as a sports teacher. [[61]](#endnote-61) Sylvia’s inability to decipher *Tannhäuser* in a way that provides her with a better understanding of her situation says much about the capacity of the late nineteenth-century subject, whom for Ford is complicit in the problems of the early twentieth century.

\*\*\*

Ford’s writing can and should be linked with a shift in musical culture occurring at start of the twentieth century. This shift has been comprehensively noted by Epstein’s *Sublime Noise*. Citing composers such as Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg, Igor Stravinsky, and the appearance of ‘noise’ in Dadaist sound poetry, as well as Luigi Russolo’s *Art of Noises*, and the reproduction of mechanical sounds in George Antheil’s ‘Ballet Mechanique’, Epstein comments that ‘For these composers, and for the writers listening to them, it became a principal project of modern art to figure out what would “count” as music or noise, and what was aesthetically or culturally at stake in pressing that question.’[[62]](#endnote-62) Understandings of music were shifting, and Ford takes part in this discussion by showing that Sylvia cannot usefully engage with the music of the previous century, echoing Seigfried Sassoon’s poem ‘Dead Musicians’ in which he laments that the music ‘Beethoven, Mozart, Bach’ no longer speaks to him: ‘Your fugues and symphonies have brought / No memory of my friends who died.’[[63]](#endnote-63) By placing Sylvia’s (mis)interpretation of *Tannhäuser* in close proximity to the front line, Ford puts music and the war in dialogue and highlights that the art of the nineteenth-century no longer speaks to contemporary experience, and has failed to produce in a world in which people can understand each other: instead, the nineteenth-century’s legacy is violence, misunderstanding and inadequate communication. Ford’s writing also extends Epstein’s argument about how artistic production is registering the impact of modernity by exploring how the war forces a reconsideration of the demarcation line between sound and music.

Ford’s first-hand experience of the First World War informed *Parade’s End*.[[64]](#endnote-64) The centrality of sound to his wartime experiences is clear from his letters and post-war writing, where references to sound appear alongside the more frequently investigated themes of sight and memory. In *The Marsden Case* (1923) Ford writes of the desire to ‘wipe out of my mind every sight that I saw, every sound that I heard, every memory in my brain’: ‘the eyes, the ears, the brain and the fibres of every soul […] have been profoundly seared by those dreadful wickednesses of embattled humanity.’[[65]](#endnote-65) Sound is as central here as the visual and mental impact of war. The ears are listed with the eyes and brain as the key receptors of sensory onslaughts during the war. For Sara Haslam, this means that ‘we need to refocus attention on the ways that the experience of war, and therefore the development of modernism, were mediated through sound.’[[66]](#endnote-66)

During a strafe in *A Man Could Stand Up–,* Tietjens interprets the noise of the battlefield as orchestral music. In this scene, Ford’s writing participates in the same line of enquiry that Epstein identifies: it questions what ‘counts’ as music or noise, and what is at stake in this interpretation.

Noise increased. The orchestra was bringing in all the brass, all the strings, all the wood-wind, all the percussion instruments. The performers threw about biscuit tins filled with horse-shoes; they emptied sacks of coal on cracked gongs, they threw down forty-story iron houses. It was comic to the extent that an operatic orchestra’s crescendo is comic. Crescendo! . . . C r e s c e n d o! C R R R R R E S C. . . . The Hero must be coming! He didn’t![[67]](#endnote-67)

Tietjens is unable to comprehend the experience raw, and interprets the noise with an orchestral metaphor. The sounds of warfare and music are placed in close proximity: the terseness of the sentence ‘Noise increased’ accentuates its emphasis, and straight after the description shifts to the metaphor of ‘The orchestra’. The capitalisation of ‘C R R R R R E S C. . . .’ denotes loudness, and also largeness of scale: this is an experience too extreme to be put into words, so that the word being used to describe the sound disintegrates into an ellipsis. Words also start to have a visual function in this passage, which is part of the attempt to communicate sonic extremity. The scene that is being communicated is enormous on an acoustic, spatial and physical scale, which is reflected by the spaces between the letters in the second ‘C r e s c e n d o!’ that increase the physical presence of the word. Tietjens is unable to make sense of the situation. He cannot easily register the profundity of the experience, and the insufficiency of the frames of reference on which he can draw are revealed.

Tietjens then uses a more specific musical framework to map the increasing sound, appearing to refer to Wagnerian opera, specifically the arrival of the Hero at the climactic moment of the music, thinking ‘The Hero music be coming!’ and yet, ‘He didn’t!’ Judging by the increasing tension and loudness he experiences, Tietjens anticipates the arrival of the Wagnerian ‘Hero’, who does not arrive at the expected moment. Lockyer has convincingly explained why the hero-figure here is the Wagnerian hero.[[68]](#endnote-68) She goes on to extend Tietjens’s interpretation of the noise as music by treating the literature like music, and examining the connection between the two: ‘The concept of the Wagnerian ‘Hero’ figure, anticipated at the height of the dynamic level of the music, fits with an operatic world in which the lines between literature and music are blurred, and are preferably to be obliterated together’. [[69]](#endnote-69) For Lockyer, this association between the composer and Ford’s experimental writing, means that Ford, too, was trying to blur the lines between music and literature: that Ford refers ‘to music united with and communicated through words hints at the tradition of the total art work which the young Ford’s musical hero espoused.’[[70]](#endnote-70) Yet what an increase in loudness means in the world of the music is not what it means in Tietjens’s world. The hero may well arrive in the music, his absence and his eventual arrival – as an enemy ‘Hun’[[71]](#endnote-71) – shows the impossibility of heroism during the First World War. The music does not map onto the situation, and the difference rather than the unity between the two is emphasised.

Judging a narrative text positively on the extent to which it manages to ‘be like music’ relies on the appropriateness of discourses of wholeness and unity, but the aesthetic ideal is not reinforced in this scene: it is placed in a context whereby its analysis and examination is required. Further, it is not (or not only) the demarcation line between music and literature that is blurred here, but also the boundary between music and noise. The literature does not only try to communicate music, but a horrendous experience of ear-splitting sound, which Tietjens attempts to make sense of through music. The tension between the two can be seen in Lockyer’s phrasing: she notes the lengthening of ‘the associated ellipsis to attempt the communication of noise’ and calls the same point the ‘height of the dynamic level of the music’.[[72]](#endnote-72) Is this part about noise, or is it about music? The scene encourages contemplation of what is at stake in how music is conceptualised, and why it is called upon as a frame of reference. Wagnerian opera is put into direct conflict with a new experience, and the association between music as a totalising artwork or aesthetic paradigm, and the contrasting violent materiality of war means that both things are altered by their connection with each other, being provided with new extremes of opposition to define themselves against.

Wagner’s *The* *Art-Work of the Future* declares the end of Hegelian philosophy – in other words, philosophies that look for synthesis – in that he anticipates the ultimate, unifying and redeeming work of art, after which philosophies of synthesis will be redundant.[[73]](#endnote-73) As Roberts puts it, Wagner anticipates ‘philosophy’s coming redemption in human emancipation, crowned by the unitary work of art’.[[74]](#endnote-74) Wagner began to think of all forms of life as alienated, because of the estranging capacities of separate social spheres. Art, confined to one sphere, could only reflected an alienated society.[[75]](#endnote-75) Uniting different aesthetic forms would provide an immersive experience that in turn unified the disparate spheres of life: ‘the public, that representative of daily life, forgets the confines of the auditorium, and lives and breathes now only in the artwork which seems to it as Life itself, and on the stage which seems the wide expanse of the whole World.’ [[76]](#endnote-76) Art as we know it will end, he says, because it will reunite with politics and also serve as religion, rather than acting in the services of the existing social order and the market. Thus, in Wagner’s redeemed future there should be no distinction between life and art.

During the strafe, Ford shows the opposite of this because the separation between art and politics is emphasised. When Tietjens tries to use music to understand the present, art intrudes into war and the political sphere. But art is overcome and becomes everyday noises. The sound turns into an orchestral swell, but this quickly appears an insufficient analogy, since another is required: ‘The performers threw about biscuit tins filled with horse-shoes; the emptied sacks of coal on cracked gongs, they threw down forty-storey iron houses’.[[77]](#endnote-77) Music becomes everyday objects that are percussive, broken and non-functional. The distinction between different spheres is not obliterated by art here: art is obliterated by its association with the noise of the First World War. There is an absence of appropriate language and metaphor to describe the strafe, so music’s contrast illuminates the incomprehensibility of the noise. This is not the only instance in *Parade’s End* in which the extremity of noise is described by comparison with its opposite. After a bombardment, the ensuing silence takes on new proportions, sounding different due to a heightened awareness of the body owing to adrenaline, shock, and trauma: ‘An enormous crashing sound said things of an intolerable intimacy to each of those men, and to all of them as a body. After its mortal vomiting all the other sounds appeared a rushing silence, painful to ears in which the blood audibly coursed.’[[78]](#endnote-78) Noise affects the silence that follows it by providing a new level of contrast for it to be defined against. The collective is also experienced not through a positive unifying experience, but through horror and pain. ‘[E]ach of those men’ becomes a collective ‘body’ whose ‘mortal vomiting’ is lethal. The collective is coming apart here: sound annihilates bodies, and unites people in mutual experiences of noise, destruction, and pain. Tietjens tries to use art to cope with the situation, but only the incongruity of art and the strafe are emphasised.

*Parade’s End* shows us that because of the First World War, heavenly and transcendent music no longer speaks to lived experience. Modernists, as Epstein argues, were beginning to recognise that music cannot express all experiences: it is not universal, and cannot express the violence or loudness of this particular war. Epstein quotes musicologist Cecil Barber when arguing that in the twentieth century, artists begin to contemplate music as expensive noise: ‘this intuitive knowledge—that music is just noise, except fancier—has been repressed in favour of the pure aesthetic ideal’.[[79]](#endnote-79) Since Wagner is shown to be an unsuitable framework for Tietjens to map the strafe, what Epstein comments on is one aspect of what is dramatised in *Parade’s End*. But there is another side to this, since in *Parade’s End* Wagner seems to help Tietjens to cope, even if that music represents an ideal that is becoming destabilised. Since Tietjens makes sense of the sound by relating it to music, it is not just that music is insufficient now that there is war. It provides a way of coping with the horror, irrationality, and the noise that it is impossible to fully comprehend. As Vincent Sherry and David Weir have shown, modernist artworks continue to draw on traditions associated with decadence and aestheticism at the same time as asserting their newness and difference.[[80]](#endnote-80) It is not only that nineteenth-century art forms are losing their hold: artistic tradition and aesthetic experience take part in handling the horror of wartime experience. The Wagnerian references in *Parade’s End* suggest something about the function of art: that in the face of the new, the awful, and the unintelligible, ways of thinking about the world informed by past aesthetic experiences can help to structure the unprecedented.

While Epstein has explored the move away from the transcendent and nineteenth-century aesthetic traditions by numerous writers and composers, Ford’s writing shares with these composers an emphasis on the necessity of thinking about music in relation to new sounds in the early twentieth century. Ford’s writing, like many modernist artworks, marks the beginning of a transition – rather than a complete break – in how music is conceptualised that has accelerated throughout the twentieth century.[[81]](#endnote-81) The twentieth- and twenty-first centuries have seen an increase in approaches to music that are empirically grounded: often, musicians and scholars are interested in analysing affective and social responses to music that can be measured and quantified. This is distinct from some nineteenth-century and earlier conceptualisations of music, where its value was often rooted in its capacity to reach beyond signifying language.[[82]](#endnote-82) Since language begins the process of appearing to order nature’s incomprehensibility, there is a sense in which language’s system of signs and signifiers cuts off, or gets in the way of, access to the thing-in-itself. Notions of music’s ‘transcendence’ were rooted in its apparent capacity to sidestep this mediation, and achieve a pure form of communication, since its form and content are the same. Narratives of transcendence and their implication in notions of wholeness and unity came under new pressures from various fronts at the start of the twentieth century: from industrialisation, with the division of labour and atomisation of the workforce; from the spatial disjunction resulting from the scale of the British Empire;[[83]](#endnote-83) from Freudian theories of consciousness that began to replace the idea of unified, whole self that is fully knowable; and of course, the First World War, which not only dismantled the myth of a smoothly advancing and progressing society, but physically took apart matter, bodies, psyches, traditions, and nations. Philosophies of transcendence and unity began to be inappropriate for early twentieth century experience. These issues were theorised during the 1930s and 1940s, leading up to and in the wake of the Second World War, most directly by Frankfurt School philosophers who rewrote the legacies of Hegelian totality for a new, fragmented age.[[84]](#endnote-84)

In *Parade’s End*, in Tietjens’ negotiations with sound, music, and warfare, all these components are already in play. Nineteenth-century aesthetic traditions are coming under pressure and scrutiny: they are no longer entirely appropriate for early twentieth-century experience, but have not quite lost their hold. *Parade’s End* registers that if music is to continue to relate to the human condition in modernity, it must find a way to acknowledge, express, or at least recognise its difference from, the sonic and mental impact of war.

1. Walter Pater, ‘The School of Giorgione’, in *Studies in the History of the Renaissance,* ed. by Matthew Beaumont (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 126-27. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Ford Madox Ford, *A Man Could Stand Up–*, ed. Sara Haslam (Manchester: Carcanet, 2011), p. 76. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Max Saunders, *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life, Vol. 1* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. v, vi. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Eric Homberger, ‘Ford’s *English Review*: Englishness and its Discontents’, *Agenda: Ford Madox Ford Special Double Issue*,27.4/28.1 (1989/1990), pp. 61-66; Brita Lindberg-Seyersted, ed. *Pound/Ford: The Story of a Literary Friendship* (London: Faber, 1982); Nicholas Delblanco, *Group Portrait: Joseph Conrad, Steven Crane, Ford Madox Ford and H. G. Wells* (London: Faber, 1982). [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Andrzej Gasiorek, ‘Ford Madox Ford’s Modernism and the Question of Tradition’, *English Literature in Transition*, 44.1 (2001), pp. 3-27 (pp. 3-4). [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Sondra J. Stang and Carl Smith, ‘“Music for a while”: Ford’s Compositions for Voice and Piano’, *Contemporary Literature*, 30.2 (1989), pp. 183-223. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Franz Hueffer, *Richard Wagner and the Music of the Future* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1874). [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Daniel Albright, *Untwisting the Serpent: Modernism in Music, Literature, and Other Arts* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2000). Brad Bucknell, *Literary Modernism and Musical Aesthetics: Pater, Pound, Joyce and Stein* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). Peter Dayan, *Music Writing Literature: from Sand via Debussy to Derrida* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006). Emma Sutton, *Virginia Woolf and Classical Music: Aesthetics, Politics, Form* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013). [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Eric Prieto, *Listening In: Music, Mind and the Modernist Narrative* (London: University of Nebraska Press, 2002). Werner Wolff, *The Musicalizataion of Fiction: A Study in the Theory and History of Intermediality* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999). [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Prieto, *Listening In*, p. x. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Bucknell, *Literary Modernism and Musical Aesthetics*, pp. 2, 1. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Pater, ‘The School of Giorgione’, p. 126. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. William F. Shuter, *Rereading Walter Pater* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 61-77. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, vol. 1, ed. by Judith Norman, Alistair Welchman, and Christopher Janaway (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 289. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. Lydia Goehr, ‘Schopenhauer and the musicians’, in *Schopenhauer, Philosophy and the Arts*, ed. by Dale Jacquette (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 200-08. Bryan Magee, *The Philosophy of Schopenhauer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 350-402. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. For Peter Dayan, Baudelaire and Mallarmé exemplify ‘a style of writing that refused to recognise clear boundaries between the literary, the critical, and the musical’ that continues to inform twentieth century writing. Dayan, *Music Writing Literature*, p. ix. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. Raymond Furness, *Wagner and Literature* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1982), pp. 16-17. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. Bucknell, *Literary Modernism and Musical Aesthetics*, p. 17. Dayan, *Music Writing Literature,* p. ix. [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. Ezra Pound, ‘A Retrospect’, in *The Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, ed. by T.S. Eliot (London: Faber, 1954), pp. 3-14 (p. 3). [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. Pauliina Remes, *Neoplatonism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), p. 2. Eli Maor, *The* *Pythagoerean Theorem: A 4,000-year History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), p. 19. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. Ford, *A Man Could Stand Up*–, p. 77. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. Josh Epstein, *Sublime Noise: Musical Culture and the Modernist Writer* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), p*.* xiii, xiv. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. Ibid, p. xv. [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. Jacques Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), p. 136. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. Aldous Huxley, *The Perennial Philosophy* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1974), p. 249. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. Wagner, as Emma Sutton notes, developed ‘two of the most important formal innovations of late nineteenth-century music – namely the leitmotiv […] and the Gesamtkunstwerk (the union of music, words, dance and gesture into one ‘total artwork’). Emma Sutton, *Virginia Woolf and Classical Music: Aesthetics, Politics*, *Form* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), p. 27. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. Nietzsche dedicated *The Birth of Tragedy out of the Spirit of Music* to Wagner in 1872, but later revised his praise of the Gesamtkunstwerk and its philosophy, claiming that Wagner exemplified an intoxicating type of decadence: ‘I am, no less than Wagner, a child of this time; that is, a decadent: but I comprehended this; I resisted it. The philosopher in me resisted.’ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Case of Wagner* (1888) in *The Birth of Tragedy and the Case of Wagner*, trans. by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1967), p. 155. Such readings of Wagner persisted for a century or so, with Susan Sontag declaring that Wagner is ‘just enjoyed as a drug’. Susan Sontag, ‘Wagner’s Fluids’, quoted in John Deathridge, ‘A Brief History of Wagner Research’, in *Wagner Handbook*, ed. by Ulrich Müller and Peter Wapnewski (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 202-23 (p. 216). [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. JulietKoss, *Modernism After Wagner* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), p. xiv*.* David Roberts, *The Total Work of Art in European Modernism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), p. 11. Juliet Koss identifies that the term ‘Gesamtkunstwerk’ did not originate with Wagner and his shifting theorisation of it had many influences. The term itself has been traced back to the 1827 writing of Berlin philosopher Karl Friedrich Eusebius Trahndorff. She shows that Wagner’s particular conception of the Gesamtkunstwerk shares a number of elements in common with those from whom he developed his ideas, and provides examples of writing – by Georg Wilhelm Freidrich Hegel, Friedrich Wilhlem Joseph Schelling and Arthur Schopenhauer, and composer (and Wagner’s predecessor as composer to the Dresden court) Carl Maria von Weber – that contains markedly similar formulations of the value of uniting words, poetry and dance through a return to concepts associated with Greek tragic drama. Koss, *Modernism After Wagner*, pp. 13, 11, 12. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. Wagner refers to the ‘common art of Greece’ as the pinnacle of artistic and social cohesion, claiming that after ‘the shattering of the Greek religion, from the wreck of the Grecian Nature-State, and its resolution into the Political State-, from the splintering of the common Tragic Artwork,- the manhood of world-history begins with measured tread its new gigantic march of evolution, from the fallen natural kinsmanship of national community to the universal fellowship of all mankind.’ Richard Wagner, *The Art-Work of the Future,* in *Richard Wagner’s Prose Works,* vol. 1, *The Art-Work of the Future and other Works*, trans. by William Ashton Ellis (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), pp. 90, 166. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. Wagner, *The Art-Work of the Future,* pp. 84-85, 183. [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
31. Ibid, p. 90. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
32. Andrew Frayn, *Writing Disenchantment: British First World War Prose, 1914–1930* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014), p. 163. [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
33. Ford Madox Ford, *No More Parades*, ed. by Joseph Wiesenfarth (Manchester: Carcanet, 2011), p. 25. [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
34. Attali, *Noise*, p. 10. [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
35. Angus Wrenn has demonstrated the many references to Wagner in ‘Wagner’s *Ring* Cycle and *Parade’s End*’, in *Ford Madox Ford’s Parade’s End: The First World War, Culture, and Modernity*, ed. Ashley Chantler and Rob Hawkes (Amsterdam: Rodpoi, 2014), pp. 67-80.Laura Colombino has explored Ford’s interest in the gaze and how this is related to visual culture. Laura Colombino, *Ford Madox Ford: Vision, Visuality and Writing* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2008). [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
36. Rebekah Lockyer, ‘Ford Madox Ford’s Musical Legacy: *Parade’s End* and Wagner’, *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 50.4 (2014), pp. 426-452 (p. 426). [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
37. Alexandra Becquet, ‘Composing the War and the Mind: Composing Parade’s End’, in *War and the Mind: Ford Madox Ford’s Parade’s End, Modernism and Psychology*, ed. by Ashley Chantler and Rob Hawkes (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), pp. 93-111 (p. 93). See also Helen Borowitz, ‘The Paint beneath the Prose: Ford Madox Brown’s Pre-Raphaelite Ancestry’, *Modern Fiction Studies* 21.4 (1975), pp. 483-98. [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
38. Bucknell, p. 3. [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
39. Lockyer, p. 433. [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
40. Pater, ‘The School of Giorgione’, pp. 126-27. [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
41. Sara Haslam, Introduction to *A Man Could Stand Up-*, pp. xviii-xxi. [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
42. Ford Madox Hueffer, *The Critical Attitude* (London: Duckworth, 1911), p. 9. For consistency the author is referred to throughout as Ford Madox Ford, although this volume was published under his previous name, Ford Madox Hueffer. [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
43. Andrzej Gasiorek, ‘The Politics of Cultural Nostalgia: History and Tradition in Ford Madox Ford’s *Parade’s End*’, *Literature and History*, 11.2 (2002), 52-77. Andrzej Gasiorek, ‘Ford Madox Ford’s Modernism and the Question of Tradition’. [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
44. Ford, *A Man Could Stand Up–*, p. 186. [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
45. Ibid. p. 166. [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
46. Mathilde Blind, ‘Love in Exile’, in *The Poetical Works of Mathilde Blind*, ed. by Arthur Symons (London: T. F. Unwin, 1900), p. 295. [↑](#endnote-ref-46)
47. See Sara Haslam, Introduction to *A Man Could Stand Up–*, p. xxiv, n. 35. [↑](#endnote-ref-47)
48. Willoughby Weaving, ‘Birds in the Trenches’, in *The Muse in Arms: A Collection of War Poems*, ed. by E. B. Osborn (London: John Murray: 1917), p. 64 [↑](#endnote-ref-48)
49. Becquet, ‘Composing the War and the Mind’, p. 93. [↑](#endnote-ref-49)
50. Ford, *No More Parades*, p. 184. [↑](#endnote-ref-50)
51. Roberts, *The Total Work of Art and European Modernism*, p. 73. *Tannhäuser* was originally written in 1845, four years before the publication of *The Art-Work of the Future*, but Wagner considerably revised the opera for the Paris performances in 1861, and the later version incorporates the social, aesthetic and political aims in *The Art-Work of the Future.* Simon Williams writes that ‘The changes that Wagner incorporated between the Dresden [1845] and Paris [1861] version of the music-drama suggest that only after the first performance of *Tannhäuser* in Dresden did he become fully aware of the implications of his dramaturgy.’ Simon Williams, *Wagner and the Romantic Hero* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 51. See also Koss, ‘The Utopian Gesamtkunstwerk’ in *Modernism After Wagner*, pp. 1-24. [↑](#endnote-ref-51)
52. Ford, *No More Parades*, p. 184. [↑](#endnote-ref-52)
53. For the extent to which ‘Wagner’s works were part of the furniture of British musical life’ at the beginning of the twentieth century, see Sutton, *Virginia Woolf and Classical Music*, pp. 27-28. [↑](#endnote-ref-53)
54. Ford, *No More Parades*, p. 184. [↑](#endnote-ref-54)
55. Williams, *Wagner and the Romantic Hero*, p. 51. [↑](#endnote-ref-55)
56. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-56)
57. Koss, *Modernism After Wagner*, p. 203. [↑](#endnote-ref-57)
58. Ford Madox Hueffer, *Ancient Lights and Certain New Reflections, being the Memories of a Young Man* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1911), p. 80. [↑](#endnote-ref-58)
59. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-59)
60. Ibid. pp. 76, 80. [↑](#endnote-ref-60)
61. There are many instances in *Parade’s End* where the nineteenth-century comes up against the twentieth, but another useful example in this context is one raised by Tom Vandevelde: ‘[when] general Campion’s automobile crashes into the horse-cart Christopher and Valentine are driving. This is one of the pivotal scenes of the novel […] representing the – loud! – clash between different eras and their values: the nineteenth-century versus the twentieth, the Victorian against the modern.’ Tom Vandevelde, ‘Mapping the Soundscapes of *Parade’s End*’, in *Ford Madox Ford’s Parade’s End: The First World War, Culture, and Modernity*, ed. by Ashley Chantler and Rob Hawkes (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2014), pp. 53-66 (p. 55). [↑](#endnote-ref-61)
62. Epstein, *Sublime Noise*, p. xv. [↑](#endnote-ref-62)
63. Siegfried Sassoon, *Poems 1916-1935* (London: Faber, 1940). See also Kate Kennedy, ‘British Classical Music and the Armistice’, in *The Silent Morning: Culture and Memory after the Armistice*, ed. by Trudi Tate and Kate Kennedy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 211-234 (p. 231). [↑](#endnote-ref-63)
64. Ashley Chantler and Rob Hawkes usefully summarise Ford’s military experience: ‘Having enlisted in the summer of 1915, Ford Madox Ford, aged forty-two, was sent to France on 13 July 1916 as a second lieutenant with the Welch Regiment (Special Reserve). Attached to the 9th Battalion of the Regiment at Rouen, he was then sent to the Somme, just behind the Front Line.’ Ashley Chantler and Rob Hawkes, Introduction to *War and the Mind: Ford Madox Ford’s Parade’s End, Modernism and Psychology*, ed. by Ashley Chantler and Rob Hawkes (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), p. 1. See Max Saunders, Introduction to Ford Madox Ford, *War Prose*, ed. Max Saunders (Manchester: Carcarnet, 1999), p. 3; Max Saunders, *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life, Vol. 1* and *Vol. 2* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 1: pp. 479-94; 2: pp. 1-15; Ford Madox Ford, *Letters of Ford Madox Ford*, ed. Richard M. Ludwig (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 66. [↑](#endnote-ref-64)
65. Ford Madox Ford, *The Marsden Case*, quoted in *War Prose,* ed. by Max Saunders (Manchester: Carcanet, 1999), pp. 263, 144. [↑](#endnote-ref-65)
66. Sara Haslam, ‘“The moaning of the world” and the “words that bring me peace”: Modernism and the First World War’ in *The Edinburgh Companion to British and American War Literature*, ed. Adam Piette and Mark Rawlinson (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), pp. 47-57 (p. 50). [↑](#endnote-ref-66)
67. Ford Madox Ford, *Parades End* (London: Penguin, 2002), p. 559. In this instance, I quote from the Penguin edition because it retains the spaces between each letter of the second ‘C r e s c e n d o’. These spaces are present in the original typescript of *A Man Could Stand Up-,* held in the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University, p. 83. In the new Carcanet edition referred to in the rest of this article, the second ‘Crescendo’ appears without spaces. Ford, *A Man Could Stand Up–*, p. 79. [↑](#endnote-ref-67)
68. Lockyer, p. 439. [↑](#endnote-ref-68)
69. Ibid, pp. 439-440. [↑](#endnote-ref-69)
70. Ibid, p. 440. [↑](#endnote-ref-70)
71. Ford, *A Man Could Stand Up–*, p. 79. [↑](#endnote-ref-71)
72. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-72)
73. Wagner’s prose style is difficult and bombastic, but as an example he declares that ‘The Art-work, thus conceived as an immediate vital act, is therewith the perfect reconcilement of Science with Life, the laurel-wreath which the vanquished, redeemed by her defeat, reaches in joyous homage to her acknowledged victor.’ *The Art-Work of the Future*, p. 73. [↑](#endnote-ref-73)
74. Roberts, *The Total Work of Art in European Modernism*, p. 72. [↑](#endnote-ref-74)
75. Wagner, *The Art-Work of the Future*, pp.84-85, 183. [↑](#endnote-ref-75)
76. Ibid. p. 186. [↑](#endnote-ref-76)
77. Ford, *A Man Could Stand Up–*, p. 79. [↑](#endnote-ref-77)
78. Ford, *No More Parades*, p. 11. [↑](#endnote-ref-78)
79. Epstein, *Sublime Noise*, p. xvi. [↑](#endnote-ref-79)
80. Vincent Sherry, *Modernism and the Reinvention of Decadence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); David Weir, *Decadence and the Making of Modernism* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995). [↑](#endnote-ref-80)
81. I do not mean to suggest here that Epstein sees this as a complete break. Indeed, he says that ‘new developments [in music] though startling, by no means came out of nowhere […] Schoenberg’s twelve-tone species of atonality was an extension of the intense chromaticism of Mahler, Wagner, and Strauss’. Epstein, *Sublime Noise*, p. xiii. [↑](#endnote-ref-81)
82. This idea does, as I inferred in the introduction to this essay, have a complex history and was not universally agreed upon. See Mark Evans Bonds, *Absolute Music: The History of an Idea* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014). Carl Dahlhaus, *The Idea of Absolute Music*, trans. by Roger Lustig (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991). [↑](#endnote-ref-82)
83. For Fredric Jameson, ‘spatial disjunction’ is produced by the distance between the colonies and imperial “centre”, which makes it impossible ‘to grasp the way the system functions as a whole’. Fredric Jameson, *The Modernist Papers* (London: Verso, 2007), p. 157. [↑](#endnote-ref-83)
84. See T. W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. by John Cumming (1944; London: Verso, 1997). Herbert Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man*, trans. by Douglas Kellner (1964; London: Routledge, 2002). [↑](#endnote-ref-84)