Moderne Erzählliteratur I: International Modernism

1. Henry James, *The Ambassadors* (1903), Kap. 2.1

Lambert Strether; Chad Newsome; Marie de Vionnet; Maria Gostrey; Waymarsh; Woollett

It befell him that in the drama precisely there was a bad woman in a yellow frock who made a pleasant weak good-looking young man in perpetual evening dress do the most dreadful things. Strether felt himself on the whole not afraid of the yellow frock, but he was vaguely anxious over a certain kindness into which he found himself drifting for its victim. He hadn’t come out, he reminded himself, to be too kind, or indeed to be kind at all to Chadwick Newsome.

‘I seem with this freedom, you see, to have guessed Mr. Chad. He’s a young man on whose head high hopes are placed at Woollett; a young man a wicked woman has got hold of and whom his family over there have sent you out to rescue. You’ve accepted the mission of separating him from the wicked woman. Are you quite sure she’s very bad for him?’

Something in his manner showed it as quite pulling him up. ‘Of course we are. Wouldn’t you be?’

‘Oh I don’t know. One never does – does one? – beforehand. One can only judge on the facts. Yours are quite new to me; I’m really not in the least, as you see, in possession of them: so it will be awfully interesting to have them from you. If you’re satisfied, that’s all that’s required. I mean if you’re sure you are sure: sure it won’t do.’

‘That he should lead such a life? Rather!’

‘Oh but I don’t know, you see, about his life; you’ve not told me about his life. She may be charming – his life!’

‘Charming?’ – Strether stared before him. ‘She’s base, venal – out of the streets.’

2. Gertrude Stein, *Tender Buttons* (1914)

A CARAFE, THAT IS A BLIND GLASS: A kind glass and a cousin, a spectacle and nothing strange a single hurt color and an arrangement in a system to pointing. All this and not ordinary, not unordered in not resembling. The difference is spreading.

Act so that there is no use in a centre. A wide action is not a width. A preparation is given to the ones preparing. They do not eat who mention silver and sweet. There was an occupation.

3. F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* (1925), Kap. 6

Jay Gatsby (James Gatz); Nick Carraway; Tom und Daisy Buchanan; Meyer Wolfshiem

He wanted nothing less of Daisy than that she should go to Tom and say: ‘I never loved you.’ After she had obliterated four years with that sentence they could decide upon the more practical measures to be taken. One of them was that, after she was free, they were to go back to Louisville and be married from her house – just as if it were five years ago.

‘And she doesn’t understand,’ he said. ‘She used to be able to understand. We’d sit for hours – ’

He broke off and began to walk up and down a desolate path of fruit rinds and discarded favours and crushed flowers.

‘I wouldn’t ask too much of her,’ I ventured. ‘You can’t repeat the past.’

‘Can’t repeat the past?’ he cried incredulously. ‘Why of course you can!’
4. Ernest Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* (1926)

Jake Barnes; Brett Ashley; Robert Cohn; Pedro Romero; Burguete

During the morning I usually sat in the café and read the Madrid papers and then walked in the town or out into the country. Sometimes Bill went along. Sometimes he wrote in his room. Robert Cohn spent the mornings studying Spanish or trying to get a shave at the barber-shop. Brett and Mike never got up until noon. We all had a vermouth at the café. It was a quiet life and no one was drunk. I went to church a couple of times, once with Brett. She said she wanted to hear me go to confession, but I told her that not only was it impossible but it was not as interesting as it sounded, and, besides, it would be in a language she did not know. We met Cohn as we came out of church, and although it was obvious he had followed us, yet he was very pleasant and nice, and we all three went for a walk out to the gypsy camp, and Brett had her fortune told.

It was a good morning, there were high white clouds above the mountains. It had rained a little in the night and it was fresh and cool on the plateau, and there was a wonderful view. We all felt good and we felt healthy, and I felt quite friendly to Cohn. You could not be upset about anything on a day like that.

That was the last day before the fiesta. (Kap. 14)

Pedro Romero had the greatness. He loved bull-fighting, and I think he loved the bulls, and I think he loved Brett. Everything of which he could control the locality he did in front of her all that afternoon. Never once did he look up. He made it stronger that way, and did it for himself, too, as well as for her. Because he did not look up to ask if it pleased he did it all for himself inside, and it strengthened him, and yet he did it for her, too. But he did not do it for her at any loss to himself. He gained by it all through the afternoon. (Kap. 18)

5. Ernest Hemingway, “In Another Country” (1927)

In the fall the war was always there, but we did not go to it any more. It was cold in the fall in Milan and the dark came very early. Then the electric lights came on, and it was pleasant along the streets looking in the windows. There was much game hanging outside the shops, and the snow powdered in the fur of the foxes and the wind blew their tails. The deer hung stiff and heavy and empty, and small birds blew in the wind and the wind turned their feathers. It was a cold fall and the wind came down from the mountains.

When he came back into the room, I was sitting in another machine. He was wearing his cape and had his cap on, and he came directly toward my machine and put his arm on my shoulder.

‘I am so sorry,’ he said, and patted me on the shoulder with his good hand. ‘I would not be rude. My wife has just died. You must forgive me.’

‘Oh—’ I said, feeling sick for him. ‘I am so sorry.’

He stood there biting his lower lip. ‘It is very difficult,’ he said. ‘I cannot resign myself.’

He looked straight past me and through the window. Then he began to cry. ‘I am utterly unable to resign myself,’ he said and choked. And then crying, his head up looking at nothing, carrying himself straight and soldierly, with tears on both his cheeks and biting his lip, he walked past the machines and out the door.

**Literaturhinweise**


