

Early Twentieth-Century Fiction

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November 17, 2025. Anand, concluded; Barnes (1).

1905	Mulk Raj Anand b. Peshawar, Punjab (now Pakistan)
1924	BA University of the Punjab, Amritsar; student activism
1925	moves to London, begins graduate studies in philosophy
1926	travels to Moscow
1929(?)	visits Gandhi's ashram in Ahmedabad
1929	PhD, University College, London; works at Woolfs' Hogarth Press
1932	<i>Curries and Other Indian Dishes</i> (London: Desmond Harmsworth)
1935	<i>Untouchable</i> (London: Wishart) after 19 rejections (feces): E.M. Forster's help
	founding president, Indian Progressive Writers' Assoc. (London)
1936	founding member, All-Indian Progressive Writers' Assoc. (Lucknow)
	<i>Coolie</i> (London: Wishart)
1945	leaves England for good, returning to India
1946	founds <i>MARG</i> art/architecture magazine, Bombay
	more novels and stories, non-fiction writing, autobiography
2004	d.

Sources: Alastair Niven, "[Anand, Mulk Raj](#)," *DNB*, 2004; Talat Ahmed, "Mulk Raj Anand, Novelist and Fighter," *International Socialism* 105 (Winter 2005), isj.org.uk.

review

- ▶ Gandhi as intertext and in the text
 - ▶ Gandhi gets a full hearing
 - ▶ and Bakha gets to respond
 - ▶ ...but not directly
- ▶ debate form: Bashir vs. Iqbal
 - ▶ what should modernity be, in India?
 - ▶ Bakha gets to respond
 - ▶ ...but not directly

He felt that the poet [Iqbal] would have been answering the most intimate questions in his (Bakha's) soul, if he had not used such big words. (137)

The caste system in India is not only a structure of cultural values but also embodies a certain pattern of inequitable distribution of power and wealth of different kinds along the lines of caste hierarchy. Hence, one who appreciates the spiritual beauty of the revolt against the caste system should also accept the horror of materialist demands. Gandhiji could respond deeply to the spiritual beauty of the revolt, but he recoiled in utter embarrassment when confronted with its material form. Even to this day, such a fragmented response to the injustices of the caste system continues to affect liberal supporters of the Dalit movement.

D.R. Nagaraj, "Self-Purification vs. Self-Respect," in *The Flaming Feet and Other Essays: The Dalit Movement in India* (Ranikhet, India: Permanent Black, 2010), 29.

revolutionary potential

He stood lost for a moment, confused in the shimmering rays, feeling as though there were nothing but the sun, the sun, everywhere, in him, on him, before him and behind him....As he emerged from the world of that rare, translucent lustre into which he had been lifted, he stumbled over a stone and muttered a curse. (26)

His wealth of unconscious experience, however, was extraordinary. It was a kind of crude sense of the world, in the round, such as the peasant has who can do the job while the laboratory agriculturalist is scratching his head. (81)

A superb specimen of humanity he seemed whenever he made the high resolve to say something, to go and do something, his fine form rising like a tiger at bay. (54)

A murderer might have advanced like that [into the temple], one confident in his consummate mastery of the art of killing. (48)

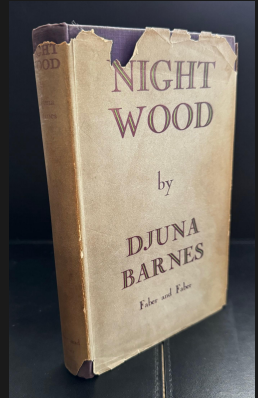
salon des refusés

Barnes had a final typescript and two carbons [by mid-1935]: the ribbon typescript went to Clifton Fadiman of Simon and Schuster, who responded on 25 July that "no standard publishing house could take it."

Cheryl J. Plumb, introduction to *Nightwood: The Original Version and Related Drafts* (Normal, IL: Dalkey Archive, 1995), xvi.

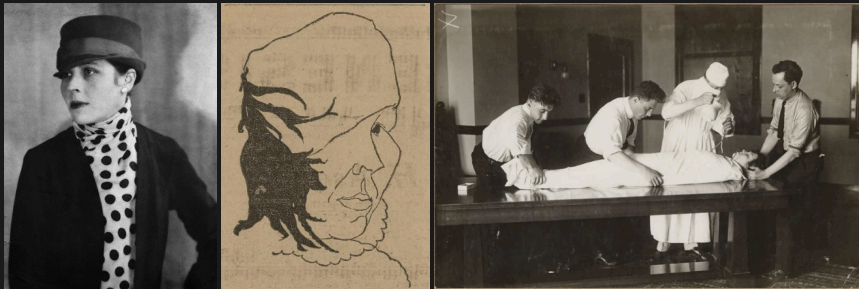
To say that *Nightwood* will appeal primarily to readers of poetry does not mean that it is not a novel, but that it is so good a novel that only sensibilities trained on poetry can wholly appreciate it.

T.S. Eliot, introduction to *Nightwood* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1937), viii.



The first edition.
Nightwood (London:
Faber and Faber, 1936),
[AbeBooks](#).

Djuna Barnes: the image, the look



Barnes, "How It Feels To Be Forcibly Fed," *New York World*, September 6, 1914, UMD; in Paris, photographer unknown, 1921–2, UMD Special Collections; self-caricature, 1923–39, UMD.

a question of style

At this point exact history stopped for Felix who, thirty years later, turned up in the world with these facts, the two portraits and nothing more. What had formed Felix from the date of his birth to his coming to thirty was unknown to the world, for the step of the wandering Jew is in every son. No matter where and when you meet him *you feel that he has come from some place*—no matter from what place he has come—some country that he has devoured rather than resided in, some secret land that he has been nourished on but cannot inherit, for *the Jew seems to be everywhere from nowhere*. When Felix's name was mentioned, three or more persons would swear to having seen him the week before in three different countries simultaneously. (10)

She [the Duchess of Broadback, Frau Mann] seemed to have a skin that was the pattern of her costume: a bodice of lozenges, red and yellow, low in the back and ruffled over and under the arms, faded with the reek of her three-a-day control, red tights, laced boots—one somehow felt they ran through her as the design runs through hard holiday candies, and the bulge in the groin where she took the bar, one foot caught in the flex of the calf, was as solid, specialized and as polished as oak. The stuff of the tights was no longer a covering, it was herself; the span of the tightly stitched crotch was so much her own flesh that she was as unsexed as a doll. (16)

just talking

"Thanks be to my Maker I had her head [the cow] on, and the poor beast trembling on her four legs so I knew all at once that the tragedy of the beast can be two legs more awful than a man's. She was softly dropping her dung at the far end where the thin Celtic voice kept coming up saying, 'Glory be to Jesus!' and I said to myself, 'Can't the morning come now, so I can see what my face is mixed up with?' At that a flash of lightning went by and I saw the cow turning her head straight back so her horns made two moons against her shoulders, the tears soused all over her great black eyes." (26)

meet cute

- ▶ Consider the description of the unconscious Robin Vote (37–38). Describe the features of the prose style as precisely and exhaustively as you can. Then discuss the implications of the language.

meet cute

- ▶ Consider the description of the unconscious Robin Vote (37–38). Describe the features of the prose style as precisely and exhaustively as you can. Then discuss the implications of the language.

Her flesh was the texture of plant life, and beneath it one sensed a frame, broad, porous and sleep-worn, as if sleep were a decay fishing her beneath the visible surface. About her head there was an effulgence as of phosphorus glowing about the circumference of a body of water—as if her life lay through her in ungainly luminous deteriorations—the troubling structure of the born somnambule, who lives in two worlds—meet of child and desperado. (38)

a question of form

Nightwood lacks a narrative structure in the ordinary sense....And these chapters are knit together, not by the progress of any action—either narrative action, or, as in a stream-of-consciousness novel, the flow of experience—but by the continual reference and cross-reference of images and symbols that must be referred to each other spatially throughout the time-act of reading.

Joseph Frank, "Spatial Form in Modern Literature" (1945), in *The Widening Gyre: Crisis and Mastery in Modern Literature* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1963), 31.

Nightwood...is not a minor Modernist masterpiece, a shadow to Joyce's *Ulysses*, but a singular undertaking that addresses woman's place in the patriarchal construct.

Shari Benstock, *Women of the Left Bank: Paris, 1900–1940* (Austin: U. of Texas P., 1986), 266.

sympathy?

Felix...on the phrase "time crawling" broke into uncontrollable laughter....He began waving his hands, saying, "Oh, please! please!" and suddenly he had a notion that he was doing something that wasn't laughing at all, but something much worse, though he kept saying to himself, "I am laughing, really laughing, nothing else whatsoever!" (21–22)

The demonic laugh that he hears comes from somewhere else, a sheer alterity. It is a mirthless laugh, expressing the perplexity of Barnes and her reader, to whom every form of relation to these characters is barred but one, the laughter welling up around Felix. And yet, the position of author and reader is inscribed nowhere else than within Felix himself.

Tyrus Miller, *Late Modernism: Politics, Fiction, and the Arts Between the World Wars* (Berkeley: U. of California P., 1999), 62.

I feel for you

- ▶ How does the narrative direct sympathy? Who does Barnes's writing make us care about? Work together to choose an example passage.

next

- ▶ continue through p. 83