



1 Man Ray, *Tristan Tzara*, 1921. Gelatin silver print, 10.3 × 7.2 cm. Private Collection. Photo: reproduced with the permission of SODRAC.

FAIRE DE SON HISTOIRE UNE BOUCLE (NOIRE): WAYS OF LOOKING AT TRISTAN TZARA

ELIZABETH LEGGE

The young, self-centred and noisy, will shock you. Moreover, how are we to pick them? The leading lights among these children quickly explode and vanish. Then again, your interests and theirs, backfire while identical, get in the way of one another.¹

Maurice Barrès, 1922

If Marcel Duchamp has become a kind of universal donor whom we can put to use in any intellectual situation, then Tristan Tzara is more like a universal antigen. The ataxic poetics of his manifestos seems to break apart against André Breton's plangent prose, and indeed, there was a time at the dissolution of dada when the furious Breton tried to steer posterity precisely toward Tzara as a mere writer of manifestos, not a poet.² Tzara's identity hinged not only on his call for an historical, sweeping work of negation directed at all social and cultural institutions, but also entailed hyperbolic and farcical self-negations that got in the way of his long-term capacity to take overtly history-effecting or history-effacing positions, particularly within Paris dada; yet his historical effects depended precisely on his seeming resistance to playing to history, understood as yet another dreary inhibition.³ The *boucle* of this title refers to the literal lock of hair that flopped onto Tristan Tzara's face when he laughed, transforming his appearance (according to Louis Aragon) from attractive delicacy to an abrasive ugliness.⁴ A *boucle*, however, has the figurative sense of a digression or narrative loop, in that sense it can be used to trace some of the ways that Tzara operates in his own history. Sounding some of the 'portraits' of Tzara, pictorial and verbal, by himself and others, yields versions of Tzara, often clichés – the melancholic poet, the Jew – that, like deep-sea creatures, disintegrate once brought to the surface from the pressures of the ocean. Nevertheless, attention to these portraits can refine Tzara's relative position and impact, and lead us to imagine that within Paris dada, Tzara, who ended up being so decisively routed, was often more annoyed than annoying.



2 Hans Arp, *Portrait of Tzara: The Entombment of Birds and Butterflies* (*La Mise au tombeau des oiseaux et papillons*), 1916–17. Painted wood relief, 40 × 32.5 cm. Zürich: Kunsthaus Zürich (Gift of Georges and Jenny Bloch-Stiftung, 1991). Photo: reproduced with the permission of SODRAC.

To begin at the beginning of dada in Zurich: a painted wooden relief called a ‘portrait’, *The Entombment of Birds and Butterflies: Portrait of Tzara*, 1916–17 (plate 2), was made by a rare and durable friend, Hans Arp (who gave a second, smaller, version to a doctor with suitably abject specialties, the urologist and dermatologist Hans Koch).⁵ Five years later, this portrait was exhibited in Paris at the Tzara-organized ‘Salon dada’ of June 1921.⁶ The exhibition of this relief as a ‘portrait’ was both a calling card on the part of Arp (who was trying to get out of Switzerland to Paris), and a frame for the ways Tzara might be taken. Re-contextualized in Paris, it spoke to Tzara’s history as founder and importer of Germanic urdada. Arp’s relief was burnished with the prestige of Tzara’s history, putting him at the scene of dada’s invention in Zurich, and thus obliquely attesting to his paternity of dada at the very time that it was being cast in doubt.

One framework for the Paris Tzara was the Tzara established in Zurich, the reputation, implications and characterizations of whom spilled over into Paris. While in Zurich, Tzara had been courted by Breton’s correspondence, but, once in Paris, struggles soon set in over the relative vision of dada. The novelty that had accrued to Tzara as inventor of dada, the exigencies of perpetual innovation, became stale. Early in 1921 Christian Schad, who had been on the outskirts of Zurich dada, came to Paris, and, wound up by the graciously spiteful Francis Picabia, spread the news that Tzara had stolen the idea, name and content of the 1918 dada manifesto from Walter Serner, thus framing Tzara as a devious huckster.⁷ Both Picabia and Breton took advantage of Schad’s report to diminish Tzara. One should always look down, wrote Picabia in a polemic on the topic, in order to



3 Hans Arp, *dada Relief*, c. 1917. Painted wood relief, 24 × 18.5 cm. Basel: Kunstmuseum Basel (Gift of Marguerite Arp-Hagenbach, 1968). Photo: reproduced with the permission of SODRAC.

increase one's vertigo – a dig at Tzara's diminutive height. Picabia counter-claimed that 'dada' was a *state of mind* invented by Duchamp and himself in 1912, adding that Richard Huelsenbeck or Tzara or Hugo Ball could as easily have found the name, implying that the name was a minor detail in any event.⁸ Although Arp and Ernst came to his defence with a defusing comical tone, the notion of Tzara's being a fraud was firmly established.⁹

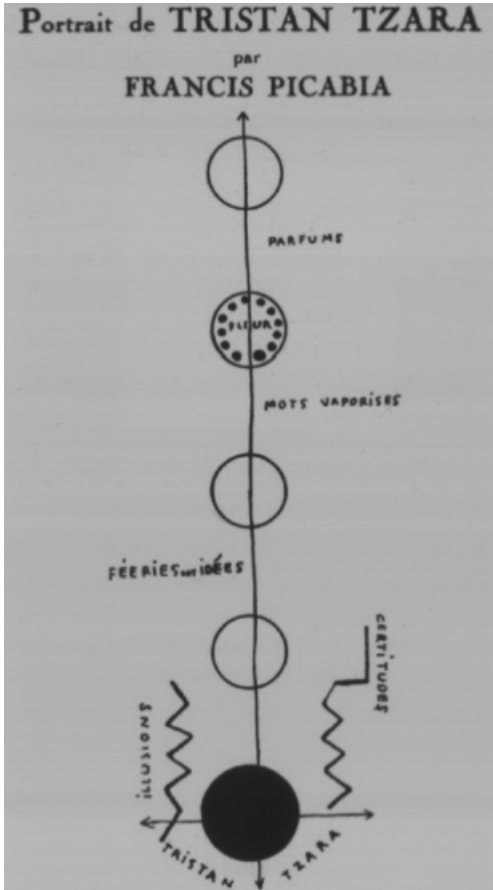
The ways that Arp's 'Portrait of Tzara' represented Tzara, both in 1916 and in 1921, are witty and observant. The charcoal ground spattered with dull metallic paint creates a crude *faux* finish, as if granite – the tombstone or tomb lid? – giving the piece a tragicomic pretension of having greater physical weight than it possesses in reality: it might slide down the wall, pressing down on the birds and butterflies in their *mise au tombeau*. While some of Arp's Zurich wood reliefs have bright animating colour, in this piece a flat greyish orange (close to the colour that used to be marketed in children's wax crayons as 'flesh colour'), adds to the overall effect of a dead ground note in the manner of Kandinsky's descriptions of blackness as a funeral pyre, in which Arp entombs his own metamorphic syllabic formal vocabulary, meant to invoke organic life.¹⁰

In a kind of reciprocal portrait, Tzara later wrote a preface for *De nos oiseaux*, a collection of Tzara's poems illustrated by Arp's woodcuts. In an Arp-like reconfiguration of forms, Tzara writes in terms that reinforce the notion that Arp's wood reliefs are portraits: 'a head flattened out on a plate has no further need of making its existence known to us.'¹¹ And in a passage of quicksilver mutations he takes on Arp's pervasive umbilicus imagery, writing that, just as drops roll down a

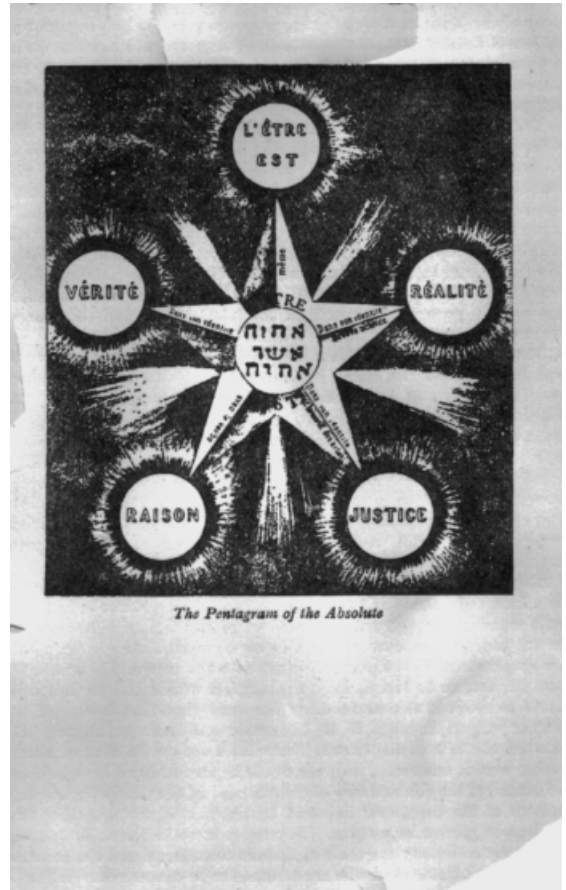
windowpane in apparently parallel lines yet ultimately join together, so might a head slide down the torso to gnaw on its own brain.¹² In the light of this image the *Portrait of Tzara* and the related *dada Relief* (plate 3) could be taken as a head folded down onto the torso, like a foetal Prometheus gnawing at his own liver. This melancholy image reminds us that Arp and Tzara collaborated on the assembly of *De nos oiseaux* late in 1922, at the height of the reaction against the dada that Tzara represented, as a kind of defiant reassertion of Tzara's poetic authority.¹³ The blackness of Arp's *Portrait of Tzara* and *Dada Relief* may generally embody the Africanism of Zurich dada (as in Marcel Iancu's 1916 charcoal sketch for the announcement of an evening of dada performance, in which a pair of carved African figures are apparently animate, losing bits of their limbs in the intensity of their dance), and particularly Tzara's work with the sounds, rhythms and slightly unmoored meanings of African texts, produced by the friction of their translation from languages and cultures whose codes and syntaxes are unknown. As a 'portrait', Arp's relief – on the scale of a human head – works as a kind of mask made in the shadow of Carl Einstein's influential study of African art, *Negerplastik* (1915), its austerity suited to Tzara's African chant-derived poetic incantations.¹⁴ The Zurich dadas attended to Einstein's presentation of African masks and carvings as being somehow powerfully self-evident both formally and spiritually: in *Negerplastik* the plates are presented without any information about dimensions, materials, places of origin, or the particular object's cultural function. Einstein's 'neger' implies not only a vague racial identifier but a larger metaphor for his claims about the works' power, as in black magic. The black elements in Arp's reliefs merge the artist as producer of powerful 'negro' objects with the traditional face of Melancholy, darkened by black bile.

Arp's recognition of Tzara's dark aspect assumed a particular currency at the end of dada. In 1923, after Breton's scathing erasures of Tzara from Paris dada history in *Littérature*, Tzara wrote his autobiography, 'Faites vos jeux', in *Les Feuilles Libres* (because, in part, it was a journal despised by Breton).¹⁵ Philippe Soupault gave a poignantly heroic portrait of the Tzara of that post-dada period, marching to the twin drums of glory and contempt, jeered by the toad-like anonymous hacks who had denounced him: 'But he likes this din, and I think that this dark halo suits him very well.'¹⁶ In *Faites vos jeux* Tzara clarifies and dramatizes his own unreliable character, bad faith, depressive morbidity and 'melancholy thirst', which had been aggravated while he was a student in Zurich by the sense that he was not only an outsider but an object of mockery,¹⁷ always estranged from others: from his provincial family in Moinesti, from his self-satisfied fellow students in Zurich. In spite of his 'desire for assimilation' he remained a stranger to them, and by trying to fit in, became a stranger to himself.¹⁸ The real Tzara, he has us understand, has a character of black combustibility driven by his acknowledged ambition to be an intellectual force and pivot. His head became swollen – so full of prodigious energy that he refers to it as tentacular – pulsing with its own growth, not amenable to pruning.¹⁹

If this hyperanimate description owes something in turn to Arp's wood reliefs read as vegetable Laocoöns,²⁰ then in Picabia's *Portrait of Tzara* (plate 4), published in *Cannibale* in April 1920 during the relative honeymoon period of Paris dada, this energy is expressed as a Sephirot-like diagram of the tree of life whose spiritual paths are arranged in a battery-like circuit. The zig-zag *lines of resistance* at



4 Francis Picabia, *Portrait of Tzara*, 1920. Ink on paper, 24.1 × 16.1 cm. Kiel: Kunsthalle zu Kiel. Photo: reproduced with the permission of SODRAC.



5 Eliphas Lévi, 'Pentagram of the Absolute', in *The History of Magic*, trans. A. E. Waite, London, 1913.

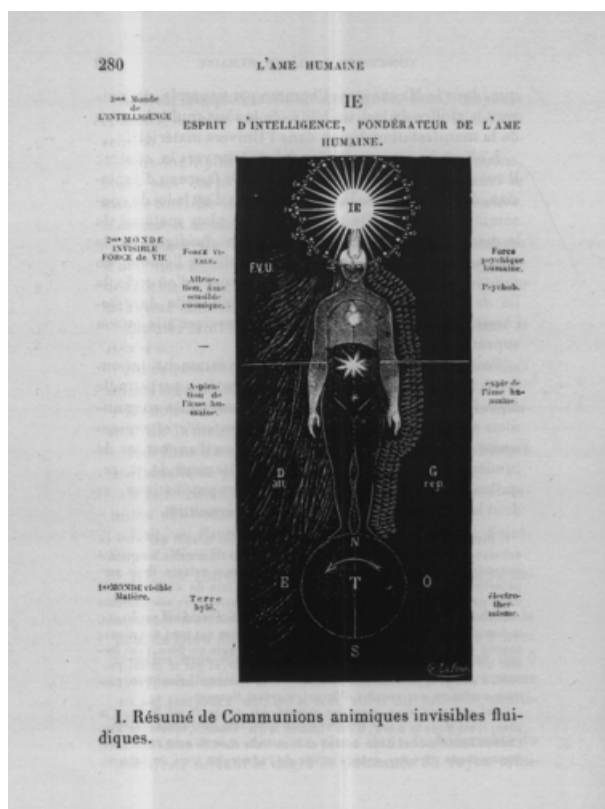
the bottom seem to sum up Tzara's depressive humours. Sephirot imagery, identified with the heavenly likeness of man and his organs and with the Tarot, was known especially through the publications of the nineteenth-century popularizer of the unknowable, Eliphas Lévi (plate 5). 'Spirit photographers', who professed to capture actual auratic emanations, had added another layer of aura to Sephirot diagrams (plate 6). In Picabia's phatic poetry, however, spiritual states are turned to magical ideas – and these more likely in the sense elaborated by Marcel Mauss, in which the magician is allied with the child or primitive (and Freud would later add, neurotic) in believing that thoughts can control outside events – vaporized around a predictable and anticlimactic polarity of certitudes and illusions.²¹ This cynical dada harmony of 1920 would soon dissipate.

Tzara's physical appearance had been the subject of interested speculation before his arrival in Paris: Breton had asked him to send a photo of himself in 1919, and, as encouragement, had sent Tzara a photograph of himself.²² Picabia's mistress Germaine Everling and the writer Louis Aragon described the actual

Tzara who arrived in Paris in 1920, and these accounts vividly conjure up his smallness, his mechanical gestures, his manner of holding his elbows to his sides and flapping out his hands like a bird, his implicitly feminine dimpled hands, his pale waxy skin, his myopic unfocused gaze, his affected monocle, his raucous laugh, his awkwardness, his accent (so ridiculous to Parisian ears).²³ Everling said he resembled an Arp woodcut, and Aragon doodled a cartoon of Tzara as an amoebic hybrid of Picabia's recently published ink blot *La Sainte Vierge* (1920) and Arp's illustrations for *Vingt-cinq poems*.²⁴ In these affectionate and comical descriptions there is at least a partial filter of the stock expectations and Orientalist terms for describing an Eastern European Jew: an 'oriental delicacy', says Everling, 'a young Japanese with the intensity of Rimbaud', says Aragon.²⁵ Tzara's palpable aura of self-conscious embarrassment, acknowledged in the opening pages of *Faites vos jeux*²⁶ and noted by Everling, seems to have been, for a variety of reasons – his smallness, his foreignness, his mannerisms – perfectly justified.²⁷

Tzara anticipated the deleterious effect he created, writing pre-emptively to Breton from Zurich that he had eliminated all elegance and charm from his manner,²⁸ cuing his audience to see him through Baudelaire's touchstone confection of *ennui* and ugliness addressed to the audience as '*hypocrite lecteur, mon semblable, mon frère*': 'Look at me carefully! I am ugly. My face is devoid of expression, I am short. I am like all of you.'²⁹ The small and mannered Tzara, however much Aragon remarked that he would never have imagined him 'de ce format', could have functioned like another 'Charlot' among the *dadas*; in fact, it is supposed that it was Tzara who, shortly after his arrival in Paris, issued a press release saying that Charlie Chaplin would be talking about *dada* at the next *dada* *matinée*.³⁰ That he may have wished to be Chaplinesque, but that he could not be, has much to do with the fact that Chaplin, unlike Tzara, had the luxury of performing his appearance while remaining silent.

Here is the Tzara of 1921, as photographed by Man Ray, already at odds with Breton, having already had his legitimacy as the inventor of *dada* questioned,³¹ but before his decisive alienation (see plate 1). Perched like Poe's raven on a ledge at the top of a mason's ladder, he broods over the set for the *dada* *Soirée* in June 1921, which he had organized at a time of ruptures with Breton.³² The low angle makes little Tzara into a dominant, brooding force condensed as melancholic lead weight against the expansive gelatinous cloud of the nude, befitting his ability to turn airy imagining into something gloomy and pendant, and vice versa ('heavy necklaces of light/black/thin/surface/stone').³³ Beside Tzara, the superimposed nude materializes out of the wall like a medium's ghost, and indeed the picture resembles the kind of 'spirit photography' in which the 'ghost' was produced by superimposed negatives, that had been known to be trickery for fifty years, making Man Ray's photograph a harbinger of the late 1922 *dada* 'saison de sommeils', which consolidates the fascination with mediums and trances.³⁴ Perhaps, as with the documentation of hysteria, part of the traction of mediumism and spirit photography had to do with the fact that – precisely because it had been proven false from a scientific point of view – it could be provocatively, poetically, revelatory: and indeed, this conversion of debunked or sham science to sheer poetry would prove foundational for Breton's surrealism.³⁵ The theatrics of spirit photography are sombrelly converted in Man Ray's dramatic portrait (plate 7).³⁶ The ladder rises as if siphoning blackness out of a pool at the bottom of the



6 Hippolyte Baraduc, 'Résumé des Communions animiques invisibles fluidiques', in *L'Âme humaine, ses mouvements, ses lumières, et l'iconographie de l'invisible fluidique*, Paris, 1896.

photograph, only assuming material, dimensional, form at the top. The darkness flows upwards to engulf the perched Tzara, as if he closed a circuit of darkness against the bright flare beneath the nude. Man Ray's enigmatic inscription, 'But above all, Tristan, avoid the abyss of shoes', may signal the potentially comic aspects of the drama, as if Tzara were sparing his shoes by perching up so high; or it may refer to the uses of this same balcony and ladder at the dada soirée, as the dancer Valentin Parnak had descended as a giant chicken with tennis-shoe wings, waving a large metal shoe form.³⁷ Or, Man Ray may be showing us Tzara as literally occupying that 'dada platform' declared in 'The first celestial adventure of M. Antipyrene', toughing out his precarious position under the dual dooms of clock and axe hanging over his head like swords of Damocles, a reminder of the perils attached even or especially to any dada form of kingship.³⁸

If Man Ray gives a persuasive dignity to the technique of superimposing images used in fraudulent spirit photographs, there is another connection between the techniques of Man Ray and spiritism.³⁹ A more fundamental version of spirit photography relied on the claim that the psychic aura or living energies of flesh or objects, of leaves or hands, could be captured on the photographic plate without the intervention of a camera. Hippolyte Baraduc and Louis Darget would press a photographic plate to the subject's forehead to record projected thoughts or capture auratic emanations, for example, the energies drawn out of a young man's forehead in the form of a black blot.⁴⁰ These experiments resonate in Tzara's corrosive exhortation: 'Put the photographic plate of your face into the



7 William H. Mumler, 'Moses A. Dow with Spirit of Mabel Warren', 1871. Spirit photograph from James Coates, *Photographing the Invisible*, London, 1911.

acid bath. The disturbances that sensitized it will become visible and will astonish you.⁴¹ A version of this advice, and variation on the devices of spirit photography, were borne out in 1921 by Man Ray's 'rayograph' experiments, of which Tzara was an excited observer (although Man Ray gently extricated himself from Tzara's proposal for a collaborative project).⁴² Tzara did write a striking text for the first exhibition of rayographs that seems to invert the primacy of light in photography.⁴³ For Tzara, Man Ray's work had powers exceeding those of conventional painting because the photographic paper gradually absorbs the *blackness* cut out by ordinary objects (rather as the aura was precipitated out of objects onto the photographic plate in spirit photographs).⁴⁴

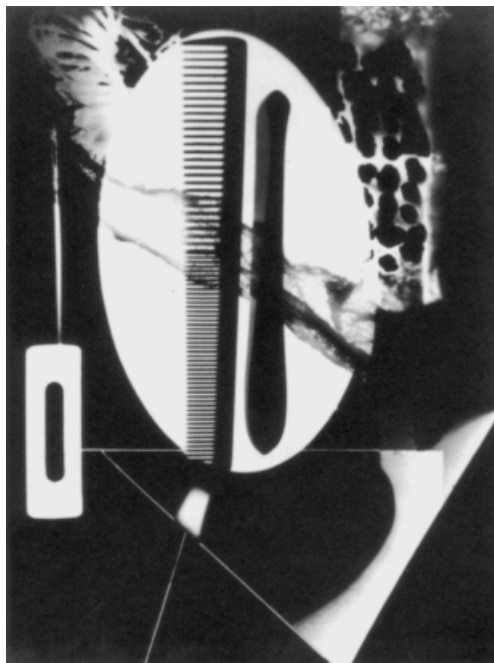
When, a decade later, Breton proposed a Mallarméan 'whiteness' as the ground of automatic production, in analogy with the whiteness of the page and photographic paper, he was responding to the foundational darkness of Tzara's earlier analysis.⁴⁵ The terms of Tzara's praise of Man Ray recapitulate those he had used to praise African art, always invested for Tzara with the power that Carl Einstein had attributed to it: 'No one has seen so clearly as I have this night milling the white.'⁴⁶ The rayographs, for Tzara, fix darkness 'as a lock of hair drawn through comb of light' (plate 8).⁴⁷ We could imagine this darkness as a kind of self-recognition on Tzara's part, of his own dark melancholy and what Aragon called his 'black and very beautiful gaze'.⁴⁸

With respect to this, one Tzara who was for a long time left out of dada history is the Samuéli Rosenstock of his birth certificate.⁴⁹ Tom Sanqvist's *Dada East* has recently offered a compelling counter-narrative, tracing the dada production of Tzara and Marcel Iancu to the ambient rituals and festivals and misrule of Romanian Jewish culture,⁵⁰ to Hassidic prayers and ecstasies, Yiddish songs, stock characters and masks.⁵¹ It is possible to imagine Tzara in the context of this account as a parodic *Tzaddik*, a Hassidic spiritual leader whose selfhood is ecstatically dissolved into the impersonality of the divine. Tzara indeed wrote of his dream of becoming impersonal.⁵² Yet it has to be acknowledged that similar quasi-mystical terms are found in the thinking of dadas of a different formation; Hans Arp, Hugo Ball and Raoul Hausmann. Iancu's masks are also filters for *Negerplastik*, in which the mask is understood as embodying an impersonal 'fixed ecstasy', dissolving the individual self into the impersonality of the god or tribe.⁵³ Iancu's Zurich dada 'mask' of 'Tzara' is not an individual likeness; elongated and crumpled, only a crudely sketched monocle identifies it with Tzara.⁵⁴ When

Einstein explains that the African mask does not symbolize but, rather, is the god, and that consequently it 'signifies nothing', we could imagine the Jewish mysticism of the transfixing but unknowable divinity displaced into avant-garde Africanism, and into the ecumenical agreement amongst the dadas that dada too 'signifies nothing'.⁵⁵ In fact, after dada turned gangrenous, Tzara invoked Taoism in discussing the meanings of 'nothing' at the Weimar Constructivist Congress in 1922,⁵⁶ but that may have been in part because Taoism could be used to mask any attribution of specifically Jewish mysticism through the rhetoric of an impersonal dissolution of the self. Jewish mysticism, Einstein's understanding of African sculpture, Taoism and dada, could mask, frame, or allegorize one another.

To return to Tzara's arrival in Paris: Everling, in whose apartment he stayed, remarked upon his proliferation of papers, his endless sending and receiving of mail, to the point that the police were tipped off by the post office and made enquiries, suspecting espionage. This, too, seemed absurd. Of course Tzara's tactic of sending dada material to everyone of influence or interest everywhere has left him susceptible to the charge of being a mere self-promoter, rather than the high-minded *seeker of like-minded men* he claimed to Breton in their early correspondence.⁵⁷ Indeed, Everling specifically remarked on Tzara's harnessing of a supple and tenacious intelligence to an 'adaptive Semitic mentality' devoted to the furthering of his cause as a 'virus'.⁵⁸ Troublingly, this *adaptive Semitic mentality* was a truism otherwise set out in the infamous *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, translated into French in 1920 and referring to the supposed Jewish strategy of concealment by adaptation to the mores of the larger culture, particularly in order to manipulate the press.⁵⁹ Tzara's proliferating papers also serve as a prolix demonic double to Breton's elegant romance of 'leaving no trace' (for which courage Breton was specifically applauded by Jacques Rivière, implicitly against Tzara, when NRF was trying to make dada an indigenous, French, literary form).⁶⁰ By 1922 Tzara ended up exiled from his own dada. Thrilling in print and letters, a giant at a remove – 'I think about you as I've never before thought of anyone', Breton had once written – Tzara was a disappointing mail-order bride.⁶¹

When Tzara was first unveiled at the dada *Matinée* of 23 January 1920, he read in a grating voice. Anticipating the embarrassment of his accent, he had it masked by offstage electric bells manned by Breton and Aragon.⁶² But his flam-



8 Man Ray, *Untitled rayograph*, in *Les Champs Délicieux*, Paris, 1922. Gelatin silver print, 22.2 × 17.2 cm. Photo: reproduced with the permission of SODRAC.

boyant rolling of 'r's seemed to sum him up:⁶³ his fricatives clacked like false teeth and he made self-portraits out of sibilants, as the very fabric of his name, suitably abbreviated by Aragon into 'Trtz'⁶⁴: 'Monsieur tzacatzac parasol casse casée glace glisse monsieur.'⁶⁵ In 'Pélamide' Tzara gives Rimbaud's 'Voyelles' a Slavic waterlogging, thickening them with 'th' sounds: 'a o u ith a o u ath'.⁶⁶ Germaine Everling reported that Breton would flee to an adjoining room with grated teeth whenever Tzara started to recite,⁶⁷ and Aragon said that Tzara had to be taught to say even 'dada' in a French way.⁶⁸ A paradox of this is that the raucous sounds of dada were to be, in Paris, pronounced correctly. Something of Tzara's being wrong-footed in Paris dada relied on the fact that, by being foreign, his subversions of language were not first grounded in an inviolable French.⁶⁹ For his first Paris performance, Tzara came on to the stage reading one of Léon Daudet's speeches to the Chamber of Deputies.⁷⁰ While there is an clear irony to the recitation of any politician's speech in a dada context, there was a particular irony to the choice of Daudet (whoever made the choice), as Daudet as editor of *Action Française* had notoriously promoted a *Protocols-of-Zion*-inflected fear of Jewish infiltration of economic, political and cultural institutions, and the press.⁷¹ That is, Daudet provided a perfectly negative frame for Tzara's debut.

Within Paris dada Tzara ultimately came up against this generic set of xenophobic and anti-Semitic predispositions. When the literary arbiters André Gide and Jacques Rivière praised dada in *NRF*, it was the dada of those 'legitimate heirs' of French culture – Aragon and Breton – whose work in language they found admirable or even mentionable. The dada project was the necessary ruin of 'notre Verbe'; the 'notre' signifying 'French'.⁷² When Gide acidulously found that the two syllables of 'dada' had a 'sonorous inanity' and 'absolute insignificance' he could attribute the origins of this distasteful term to those 'strangers' who import mediocrity and stagnation into French culture. These strangers include 'the inventor of dada': young, charming, a foreigner, a – Jew! ('I knew it,' Gide assures the reader, signalling that such a character could only be a Jew). Worse: 'They tell me he doesn't sign with his real name, and I'd easily believe that dada too is nothing but a pseudonym.'⁷³ Dada too is a Jew with an assumed name. The Gide point of view raises the problem that dada as avant-gardism could be allegorized by reference to that pernicious fraudulent account of international Jewish conspiracy, the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*: dada as a programme of demoralization and as subversion of all social institutions, relying on deliberate disinformation and a hidden, parasitic, use of the press. Such spurious precepts attributed to the Elders of Zion, as 'no morality in politics', 'one must sow anarchy amongst the masses', 'power and hypocrisy', and 'a senseless, dirty, and disgusting literature',⁷⁴ could be aligned with Tzara's dada manifestos' excoriations of morality, sense and logic.⁷⁵

On 1 September 1919 an anonymous note (immediately understood to be the editor Jacques Rivière's) appeared in *Nouvelle Revue Française* [*NRF*], emphasizing the 'German origins' of dada. This was a familiar echo of the rightist French nationalist rhetoric crucial to Maurice Barrès, who lumped the Jew with the Hun.⁷⁶ Breton immediately informed Tzara of the note.⁷⁷ Tzara was apparently too weary, or too familiar, with this kind of rhetoric, to respond directly to Rivière's dig directly ('I ordinarily never reply, out of laziness, to such stuff'),⁷⁸ but in a long letter to Breton, on 21 September, he outlined his views: 'Today one does

not write anymore with race, but with blood (what a banality).⁷⁹ Breton gracefully refined and re-crafted Tzara's letter, publishing it as Tzara's response to Jacques Rivière in *Littérature*.⁸⁰ Tzara's letter is interesting, however, in that the views set out in it seem not only to be Tzara's response to Rivière's attack, but to Breton's questioning him about whether he had read, and what he thought of, the writer Maurice Barrès.⁸¹ That Breton asked Tzara about Barrès in the same letter that he advised him of NRF's dig, suggests that Breton's line of thought went quite naturally from NRF to Barrès, a chief rhetorician of xenophobia.⁸² Tzara writes that he finds variations of race to be 'insignificant', and 'intensity' to be 'the same everywhere', as if parrying the typically Barrèsian French nationalist attribution of variable intensities of emotion (patriotic and other) to the French, German and Jew. That Tzara's remarks had also been a veiled response to the Barrès line of questioning seems not to have struck Breton, who focused on the literary Barrès: the youthful radical of *Un Homme libre* and *L'Ennemi des lois*, and still the writer he and Soupault wanted to write a preface to their edition of the letters of the fascinatingly *sui generis* dandy suicide, Jacques Vaché (in spite of the fact that Breton also acknowledged that Barrès had literary diarrhoea brought on by taking himself seriously).⁸³

This takes us to a crucial incident in the disasters of Paris dada. Tzara was famously uncooperative over the mock trial of Barrès in May 1921, so rigorously set up by Breton in the format of a proper trial. One might imagine some reasons for Tzara's lack of interest in the 'Procès Barrès', beyond the sense that such a systematic show trial was a far cry from his own dada theatre. Breton's accusation during the trial emphasized the failure of Barrès's prose, and his supposed shift from the radical individualism of his youth to a pompous nationalism. The trial of Barrès was likely triggered by Albert Thibaudet's recent book on Barrès, with its bleak evaluation of his writing as clichéd, arid, outmoded and, ironically, deteriorating into just the kind of repetitive mechanical automatism that Barrès himself had always associated with German culture.⁸⁴ But, even if Breton was capitalizing on the contemporary re-evaluation of Barrès in Paris literary circles, why bother to try a man for being 'unreadable'⁸⁵ when he had long been anointed an honorary chief of the tribe of windbags in the satirical journal *Le Canard Enchaîné*?⁸⁶ And why should Barrès be taken to task by Breton for being 'unreadable' when that was both a staple of the criticism levelled at dada, and part of its professed anti-literary ambition?⁸⁷ In 1919, in his nasty anonymous note on dada in NRF, Jacques Rivière had referred to dada materials as frivolous nonsense: 'It is truly infuriating that Paris seems to welcome nonsense of this kind, which comes to us straight from Berlin.'⁸⁸ Rivière also, in 'Reconnaissance à dada', dismissed most dada poems as 'incomprehensible' and 'unreadable', not worth much attention from author or reader.⁸⁹ During the trial Breton converts the familiar dismissal of dada as 'unreadable' into a weapon against Barrès, turning unreadability from being a matter of dada pride back into something deplorable, thereby throwing the dada baby out with the bath water.

While it is true that moral positions were at stake in the mock trial, both Barrès's and dada's, any notion that Barrès had 'changed his ideas during World War 1 to suit the times', is only partly true. While Barrès had abandoned his earlier project of seemingly radical liberation that had so impressed Aragon and Breton's generation, in exchange for a moribund cult of 'la terre et les morts', he

had been consistent both with respect to 'the land and the dead' and to the instrumental uses of populist anti-Semitism, for most of Breton's life.⁹⁰ In the litany of Barrès's shifting positions as writer and propagandist to be found in Breton's speech of accusation at the trial, are Barrès's as anti-Dreyfusard and as agitator about the Panama scandal, both of which had provided opportunities for Barrès to excoriate Jews. Breton does not mention the anti-Semitism that was part and parcel of Barrès's 'League of French Patriots' as such; Breton, married to Simone Kahn, may have known that to have accorded more explicit attention to vulgar anti-Semitism would backfire rhetorically.⁹¹ While Barrès's rhetoric about Jews, foreigners and cosmopolitans who sap the authentic 'children of Gaul', the French government and economy is a dreary rehearsal of commonplaces, his particular hostility to naturalizing foreigners framed a peculiar predicament for Tzara.⁹²

The hook of Breton's speech at the trial is the bifurcated life: he aligns and compares the lives of Barrès and Rimbaud to the benefit of Rimbaud. For Breton, Rimbaud's later career as a businessman has a bitter integrity in its feigned cynicism, reflecting the consistency of his desire and freedom;⁹³ whereas Barrès's mutation from inspirational radical to fusty nationalist is just plain failure, with no mitigating self-awareness or despair.⁹⁴ It could be argued that Tzara, once anticipated in Paris as the new Rimbaud, is also implicitly compared, through a faulty syllogism, to Barrès: Tzara is like Barrès because both are the opposite of Rimbaud. When Ribemont-Dessaignes as prosecutor sneers at Tzara as the 'defender of commercial virtue', it is implicitly in the context of Breton's account of Rimbaud as cynical and magnificent 'commercial traveller',⁹⁵ conflated with the anti-Semitic cliché that Jews' only values are commercial.⁹⁶

With respect to language, Breton observes that even Barrès's former nihilism is compromised by an opportunistically picturesque 'contemplative' tone, and, arguably that *failed* nihilism serves as the demonic double of Tzara's dada negations.⁹⁷ Breton quotes Barrès to drive home his point: 'The main thing for the generations that came before us was the passage from certainty to doubt; today it's a matter of passing from doubt to negation, *without losing all moral standards in the process*.'⁹⁸ Breton singles out as contemptible this final, pacifying, qualifying phrase.⁹⁹ Curiously, when, in the 1918 dada Manifesto, Tzara set out his policy of political and philosophical *je m'enfoutisme*, in which each individual looks out for himself, he added, with a similar (but ironic) nod to conventional pieties, the need to be mindful of the need to respect other individualisms – a set-up for his cynical qualification: 'except when the need arises to defend oneself...'¹⁰⁰ That qualifying passage, that flicks off any bourgeois lip service paid to concern for others, is very like the tic of Barrès's prose that Breton would single out for contempt in the trial.

When called upon as a witness, Tristan Tzara chose to be antic, his tone veering from world-weary dismissiveness to profanity to disingenuously childlike song. He could, of course, be seen as having preposterously tried to sabotage Breton's effort to introduce some moral seriousness and an historical long view into dada, or, more basely, simply to have tried to undermine Breton's putative leadership.¹⁰¹ At the same time, we sense that Tzara's performance was as prepared as the testimonies of the other ostensibly seriously engaged dadas. He ended his testimony with the cheerful 'Song of the Lift', in which an ascension scene turns into a literal ride up, as if any dada who could engage in high moral

positions was aspiring to a kind of intellectual social climbing. But Tzara, it could be argued, had, in fact, taken the most principled ground possible in assuming this pose, in the manner of the antic Hamlet.

When Tzara finally dismisses Justice ('I have no confidence in justice, even if this justice is done by dada'), he calls *both* Barrès and the dadas 'a bunch of bastards', and he persistently returns to that epithet, reminding the court that he said it.¹⁰² A provocation indeed. But, in fact, this is not simply Breton's putative moral and political positions being held up by Tzara's silly amorality and 'vulgar invective'.¹⁰³ Tzara had every reason not to have confidence in Justice: for one thing, it had legally always left him – defined at his birth in Rumania as an alien not subject to the protection of the state – out of its purview.¹⁰⁴ While Tzara has us believe that he left home simply out of frustration with his family and the Rumanian backwater, the reality is that there were other elements of intellectual survival at play.¹⁰⁵ Just before Tzara left Rumania to become a student in Zurich, new and aggressive laws for the 'control of foreigners' were brought into being and abusively applied to Jews.¹⁰⁶ 'Tzara' means 'patrie' or homeland, the very thing that Tzara's birth certificate had denied him.¹⁰⁷ That Tzara's change of name was important to him is indicated by the fact that it was done legally, and recorded in the margin of his birth certificate.¹⁰⁸

Tzara's career and itinerary and values could be understood, in the harsh light of the Barrès trial, as a parody of Barrès's Jew as intellectual cosmopolitan nomad, incompatible with the rootedness and energies of France. Tzara's agonistic nonsense, 'howl, howl, howl', repeated two hundred times, could be held up to Barrès's characterization of Dreyfus as a dog howling in a trap,¹⁰⁹ or to the Jewish 'taste' for drawn-out lamentation.¹¹⁰ Tzara, in fact, could not afford to act as witness at Breton's show trial at all without reminding everyone, by his very voice, of the racism integral to Barrès's view that foreigners should be exempt from the civil liberties guaranteed by France.¹¹¹ No wonder that Tzara, so pervasively implicated, grandly declares in his testimony that Barrès is the greatest scoundrel that he has ever met in his poetic career and the greatest pig that he has ever encountered in his *political* career. In response to the set question posed to all the witnesses about whether they find Barrès sympathetic, Tzara offers caustic and dismissive dialectic: whatever the minor distinctions that must be made between sympathy and antipathy, we are all 'bastards'.

Although Tzara declared at the trial that he knew nothing of Barrès – setting aside the possibility that Tzara might be telling the truth when his own dada position would make him honour-bound to lie – in some sense there was no need for him to have read Barrès, as Barrès's positions were so ubiquitous. (Ribemont-Dessaignes as prosecutor could disingenuously enquire how the witness Tzara could possibly know that Barrès had become a nationalist for reasons of 'squalid glory and base demagoguery', when he had specified at the beginning of his deposition that he knew nothing at all about Barrès.)¹¹² If, in 1911, Barrès could characterize the Jew as a decomposing cadaver and poison,¹¹³ by 1917 this had been tempered by the war; now the Jew had a capacity for an intellectual, but not spiritual, *association* (rather than profound connection) with his country.¹¹⁴ After all, the war had been raised in the course of the trial, the very war that had gone a long way to justify Barrèsian rhetoric: 'And you, were you wounded at Verdun?' This, of course, shifted attention to Tzara's foreign-ness, and, in answering, Tzara used

the only device he had available, shifting things back to dada terms of engagement: 'Since I do not shrink from any lie: yes, of course, at the Verdun of dadaism.'¹¹⁵

Given the press dismissals of dada as German-Jewish subversion, Tzara, conspicuously, could take no position that could not be turned against him. Indeed, the press responses to the Barrès affair assumed a form that he would have predicted: they allude heavily to Tzara as a possibly illegal alien.¹¹⁶ Tzara's pose at the Barrès trial, that of the truculent fool issuing the occasional schoolboy profanity and singing a little childlike song, may owe something to the farcical trial scene in Aragon's *Anicet*, published a few months earlier, which similarly concluded that a trial has nothing to do with justice.¹¹⁷

This is not the course of justice. This is the course of life. I know that it's a waste of time, I know that no one is watching the real show that's being put on here.¹¹⁸

Tzara's irritating pose sent up smoke screen, returning matters to the relative safety and candour of dada *terra infirma*. Tzara testified in the only voice he had.

By the time of his lecture at Weimar in September 1922, dada's '*je m'en foutisme*' was connected by Tzara to a quasi-Buddhist indifference.¹¹⁹ If, Tzara says in that lecture, invoking Barrèsian terms, you say the reason that you exist is to create your children's happiness or to *safeguard your country from barbarian invasions*, you know these are untrue and insufficient reasons.¹²⁰ In mitigation of this Barrèsian remnant, Tzara emphasizes that he had been the first to withdraw from dada, once he had understood 'the real meaning of nothing'.¹²¹ This claim is meant to trump Breton's foundational 'dada only survives in ceasing to exist', and Picabia's post-dada declaration that 'I understand everything since there's nothing to understand!'¹²² Tzara invokes the Taoist master Zhuang Zi's principles of pure detachment, emptiness and radical non-action (as a rectification of the insufficient or sentimental detachment professed by the Barrèsian *moi*),¹²³ and these are mirrored in Tzara's rejection of the possibility of any pictorial, moral, poetic or social projects of 'renovation'.¹²⁴ One can only try to maintain one's individual solitude in 'a flat, calm frame of mind in which everything is equal and without importance'.¹²⁵ Hence, Tzara's rejection of all justice including, or especially, dada justice.

The ethics of Tzara's polemical and promotional energies could be wryly and even admiringly viewed, even in the ill winds of 1922. In Aragon's *Les Aventures de Télémaque*, a re-allegorization or de-moralization of Fénelon's seventeenth-century political allegory,¹²⁶ attending to the 'mortal doubt' and 'great disqualification' of values of the postwar world,¹²⁷ Tzara's traits seem to be dispersed through various characters linked by 'black hair and a shady character',¹²⁸ particularly Telemachus's libidinous and shape-shifting guide, Mentor, at once the tedious voice of received wisdom, the solitary weathercock indifferent to public opinion and the street huckster. Mentor pitches the 'System DD', a dada version of the colloquial 'système D' for getting around any impediment or red tape by means of pragmatic cunning ('D' for *débrouiller*, or more dadaistically, *démerder*).¹²⁹ Any given figure in allegory is traditionally pliable, amenable to being made to mean several things. The adaptably duplicitous Système DD has, accordingly, 'two letters ... two fronts ... two backs', engaging with Tzara's aphorism, 'The absence of a system is just another system, but the most sympathetic.'¹³⁰

It is possible to accept the critical view of Tzara as self-promoter who, while ‘keen to make a lasting mark’, felt that historical appreciation should be ‘articulated by an admiring critical apparatus, not by the dadaists themselves’.¹³¹ that is, that Tzara preferred to adopt a tactic of external advertising rather than to follow Breton’s historicizing inscription within *Littérature*, or, to put it otherwise, did not accept the peer review of his Paris dada colleagues. Tzara, on this account, ‘energetically protected his own version of the “dada story”’, ‘promoting it to the press and soliciting compatible accounts from other participants for his journals’.¹³² But to reprimand Tzara for self-promotion is to reprimand him in the accepted terms for reprimanding Jews, from the *Protocols of Zion* to Barrès: that is, that he acts above all in his own self-interest, rather than directing himself toward a greater good, whether that good is construed as the ethics of an imagined international modernism, or as France.¹³³

This re-emerged early in 1922, when Tzara in an ostensibly gracious way refused to take part in Breton’s proposed ‘Congrès international pour la détermination des directives et la défense de l’esprit moderne’ (‘International Congress for the determination of guidelines and defense of the Modern Spirit’), meant to sort through the proliferation of movements in art, literature and music, with an eye to working out a larger question of modernism, working towards what Breton, with a deft use of reassuring cliché, called ‘the creation of a new intellectual family’.¹³⁴ This could have been construed either as a difficult and constructive step forward out of the miasmatic brawls of dada, or as an opportunistically fogeyish collaboration with conventional art and literary ‘isms’. Tzara replied simply that such an enterprise would be harmful to his own manner of ‘research’ into the new, which, he devastatingly reminded Breton, took the form of indifference – an implicitly higher, Vachéan, ground. Still, this is a restrained response to what Tzara could presumably see as Breton’s betrayal of dada by drawing it into the cultural mainstream, and indeed by aligning it with government-approved tendencies to make the ‘modern’ the house style of French manufacture, made manifest in the 1921 congress that brought together the furniture-makers’ union, manufacturers and designers to come up with unifying stylistic strategies in anticipation of the 1925 International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts.¹³⁵

In declining to participate in the Congress, Tzara further wrote to Breton:

But I think that the current doldrums, the result of a mixture of tendencies, of confusion of genres, and of the substitution of groups for personalities, is more dangerous than reaction. You well know how much I have suffered because of this myself.¹³⁶

Yet his letter was infuriating: Tzara was turning down Breton publicly. In fact, Breton’s own proposal, first published in *Comoedia*, had surely contained a barb intended for Tzara: it announced that the Congress would not restrict ‘the modern spirit’ in any way, especially not ‘for the profit of some people’. Tzara is implied in the last phrase, pluralized into a self-interested conspiracy.¹³⁷ Certainly, Tzara’s wry acknowledgement of his own vulnerability to deprecatory generalizations seems to have suggested an effective way for Breton to attack him.

The events of January and February 1922, the full account of Breton’s counter-attack and the deployment of the entire organizing Committee of the Congress, is detailed in Michel Sanouillet’s *Dada à Paris*.¹³⁸ But both the fact and manner of

Breton's published response still surprises, and bears some further attention. Breton might have adopted an ostensibly high-minded or 'never mind' tone in responding to Tzara's intransigence, in keeping with the forward-looking ecumenism of the Congress; yet Breton was alarmed by the idea of Tzara staying outside its ranks. In the management manner prescribed by Machiavelli, Breton, having not won over his enemy, set out to destroy him, raising the alarm, warning against the machinations and malevolent insinuations of a 'personage' known as the 'promoter of a "movement" come from Zurich' which bears, he says, no actual relationship to any current reality.¹³⁹ Breton's terms everywhere imply imposture and the fraudulently *soi disant*. Not only is there not a real movement, there is no real head of it, only someone who pretends to represent that fake movement, and that fake movement is out of date anyway. Such a 'personage' is portrayed as the enemy of freedom, the enemy of the congress's open and fair-minded guarantees that any and all movements will be permitted an equal voice. (This somehow begins to be a disingenuous inversion of, and therefore allusion to, the Barrèsian notion that foreigners should be exempt from the civil liberties guaranteed by France: dada set out to be generously inclusive of foreigners, runs this subtext, only to be betrayed by them.) Breton derides Tzara as self-promoting impostor.¹⁴⁰ Tzara had pre-emptively taken on the mantle of imposture at the beginning of his testimony in the Barrès trial, bearing in mind Gide's stinging attention to his pseudonym: 'Do you know why you were asked to be a witness?' 'Of course, because I am Tristan Tzara. Even though I'm still not entirely convinced of that.'¹⁴¹ Tzara, thuddingly alluded to by Breton as a 'personage' or 'some people' who cannot be named, is promoted to being that nameless pervasive thing at the very core of anti-Semitic myth, a conspiracy against the established good.¹⁴² This is Breton's summarizing portrait of Tzara in Paris dada: he is turned into a tissue of cliché. Tzara's supposedly setting the police on Breton and Eluard during their violent disruption of *Coeur à Gaz* in 1923, has – whether he actually did so or not – mythic stature in narratives of what ended dada, and was surely an end-game move in the competition of readymade slurs. What could more readily transform high-stake intellectual combat into a cliché than calling the police?

The difficulty with Breton's choice of terms was that they adapted wholesale the right-wing press's postwar racist attacks on 'dadaism, negroes and wogs'.¹⁴³ It makes it clear that that particular set of commonplaces had been on reserve within Paris dada – withheld for a time, but always potentially in mind, or to hand whenever dominance needed to be asserted. There is, in any event, an irony to any argument that Breton's Congress was motivated in part by the need to overcome the taint conferred by the slurring of dada as a German-Jewish conspiracy, so that the Congress marked Breton's efforts to redeem dada by relocating it as an historical and ethical player.¹⁴⁴ Any narrative of Breton's efforts to redeem dada from such xenophobic dismissals by acting as a collaborative public intellectual, any idea that Breton wanted dada to become an outward-reaching engagement rather than introverted 'conspiracy', is surely compromised by his preparedness to resort to shorthand insults, even, or especially, as a way of distancing himself from Tzara in public perception. Perhaps Breton thought to occupy a xenophobic Barrèsian high ground, in spite of having so recently found it barren. The *ad hominem* insult, as deployed in dada and then surrealism, was an essential rhetorical tool, posed against the understatement

and circumlocutions that are the norm of academic style and formal debate. But Breton's co-option of the unmodified generic slurs of the nationalist right was not easily understood as thereby re-contextualized or converted into some salutary, ironized, recognition.¹⁴⁵ That it was Breton who finally resorted to 'vulgar invective', capitalizing on xenophobic commonplaces to gain the upper hand, suggests that his actual concern was to legitimize his own leadership by any illegitimate means. What kind of interlocutors, which 'likeminded' men, was he seeking now? Around the Congress, Breton ended up trying to play to a conventional audience from an unconventional position burnished by the fearlessness of dada, and to an unconventional audience (Picabia, Tzara) in a conventional way; and consequently, his supposedly serious, authentically 'committed' turn to the portmanteau 'modern spirit' was not really any of those things.

A few months later, in *Comoedia*, Picabia made Breton's innuendos into an explicit rejection of dada as the necessary effort to expel a parasitical, burdensome, Jewish presence. But, as always with Picabia, there are vitriolic ingenuities, which, while not tempering his viciousness, do enhance his ambiguity.¹⁴⁶ Picabia declares his preference for Léon Bloy (provocatively, a Catholic writer who had lamely 'defended' Jews against Edouard Drumont's vicious anti-Semitism by describing them as an abject but inescapable presence to be put up with).¹⁴⁷ Stealing Tzara's own ironic self-description, Picabia then pronounces Maurice Barrès (who had been a Drumont admirer) to be most 'sympathetic', adding, 'even though he himself has never written that he's sympathetic', thus presenting Tzara's famous self-description as if it had not been ironic in the first place.¹⁴⁸ Picabia metamorphoses the 'oriental delicacy' remarked by Germaine Everling¹⁴⁹ or 'the oriental delicacy of a pale face, like that of a dead man from whom all the flame of life has retreated into a very black and very beautiful gaze' remarked by Aragon,¹⁵⁰ into something greasy haired and pasty faced.¹⁵¹ But this is not merely a rebarbative attack on Tzara as Jew, but also a slyly deft embarrassment directed at Breton. While ostensibly siding with Breton against Tzara, Picabia, by sneering at the 'modernistes' with whom Tzara was now spending his time, gets at Breton's own ambitions for the 'Congress on the Modern Spirit'.¹⁵² Moreover, by referring to Bloy and Barrès, and by using the stock character of the caricatural Jew, Picabia turns Breton's arch evocation of anti-Semitism into its articulation in the crudest explicit terms, having the fun of exposing Breton's genteel evasion. When he disingenuously adds, 'Above all, don't read an anti-Semitic attitude into my article',¹⁵³ he is pulling Breton into his snare, implying that Breton should have said what he meant, or at least have had the courage of his cowardice in the Picabia manner. The dada use of clichés and readymade rhetoric as a kind of communicative contraband is always a possibility here, but for Picabia to declare that he actually *meant* something was far too banal a currency. These parries by Breton and Picabia are construable as a knowingly insincere shorthand form of communication, self-exculpating because transparently clichéd, not to be taken at face value. Yet any unreliable ironies flicker alarmingly between being durably meant, and seemingly, merely, experimentally, temporarily, perhaps not.

A final portrait of Tzara emerges from his own histrionic use of metaphors of disease. While we could imagine a mutual contagion of pox metaphors amongst the various dadas in Paris – Picabia comparing dada to a new form of measles –¹⁵⁴

Tzara's self-dramatization as blemish, flaw and fault, through metaphors of suppurating disease and microbial infestation is particularly sustaining, and may owe something to the commonplace of the Jew as infection in the body politic.¹⁵⁵ Later, as dada had festered, Tzara, ironically acknowledging himself to be an 'arriviste', pointed out that impurities and disease could be as beneficial as microbes were to the digestive system.¹⁵⁶ Tzara's manifesto vocabulary of putridity¹⁵⁷ plunders the rich inventories of disgust available in his Symbolist youth. In *Vingt-cinq poèmes* (1918) the poet is a feverish, rotten and broken traveller-cadaver in a strange country, climbing towards the 'other astronomies' of Nostradamus's prophecies: setting out a delicately ecstatic quasi-mysticism as a web that traps the imagery of bed bugs, leprosy, tumours, the excremental, visceral and microbial (including typographical errors).¹⁵⁸ These shifts from evasive mysticism to evanescent putrescence set the cadence of his work. In 'Sainte' we find typhoid fever and a wonderfully named 'lithotomiste' (a surgeon who takes out kidney stones by breaking them up), and Tzara's words, in an Arp-like way, break into stone like sounds: 'les sons tous les sons et les sons imperceptibles et tous les sons se coagulent.'¹⁵⁹ Tzara, like Arp, knew that meaning, such as it was, was sounds.

The permutation of sounds, as in Duchamp's or Desnos's aphorisms, was a commonplace of Paris dada. This form of dada wordplay is allied to certain techniques of Cabbala, especially the medieval cabbalist Abraham Abulafia's permutations of the component sounds of words, an exercise believed to encode the divine.¹⁶⁰ Another antiphilosopher, another 'Monsieur Aa'?¹⁶¹ Tzara's 'Monsieur Aa' is both 'dada' and 'Tzara' with the consonants left out, a parody and inversion of the Hebrew inscription of the divine name without vowels, complementing Aragon's 'Système Dd'.¹⁶² Usefully for dada, the occultist popularist Eliphas Lévi had summarized the cabbalistic premise: 'A single word comprehends all things, and this word consists of four letters . . . but he only can use it who understands the necessity of never revealing it.'¹⁶³ While Tzara could assure that 'we look for the central essence and we are happy to be able to hide it',¹⁶⁴ yet dada exasperation with both clichés and higher meanings has constantly to fumigate any such overriding metaphysical or quasi-divine presence. Consequently, Tzara says, 'thought is made in the mouth', perhaps bringing into play the mitigating fakery of Albert Schrenk-Notzing's photographs of the medium Eva C. pulling gobs of 'ectoplasm' out of her mouth.¹⁶⁵ The 'great secret' at the core of the foundational cabbalist 'Book of Splendours', the *Zohar*, was the tautology that 'the world does not exist except through the secret.'¹⁶⁶ The *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* converted this mystical secret into a political method, harping on secrecy and hiddenness as the Jewish system for usurping power. The secret of the great secret of the cabbalists is that it is only communicable in being unarticulated; but, in a dada context, these hidden mysteries are inflected by the devious 'système D' of getting around systems. Tzara takes on the role of cabbalist, appropriating the 'Great Secret' for the double threat of its mystical prestige and its taint of conspiracy, declaring that while the great mystery may be a secret, it is nevertheless 'known by some people' who 'will never say what dada is'.¹⁶⁷

Given the ways that Tzara was variably typecast – sham mystic, self-promoter, dada usurper – how might he have been represented, how might he have other-



9 Raoul Hausmann, *Mechanical Head: Spirit of Our Time*, 1919. Wigmaker's dummy, wallet, ruler, pocket-watch mechanism and case, bronze device for raising a camera, typewriter cylinder, segment of measuring tape, collapsible cup, nails, bolt, 32.5 × 21 × 20 cm. Paris: Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne (Centre de création industrielle). Photo: reproduced with the permission of SODRAC.

wise been represented? As a *boucle*, Raoul Hausmann's *Mechanical Head: Spirit of Our Time* (1919–20, plate 9), while not specifically a portrait of Tzara,¹⁶⁸ is a manifesto object which, in setting out the terms and possibilities of dada portraiture,

functions nevertheless as kind of portrait of him. The iconography of the *Mechanical Head* serves both the intense Africanism of Einstein's *Negerplastik*, and a more local, dadaist anthropology directed at the German bourgeoisie (plates 10 and 11). The dummy can be seen as emanating the things that would make its environment, as a literal model of exteriorized and extensible sensations pervading the environment, on the models of perception proposed by the philosophy of Ernst Marcus and Ernst Mach, pervasive in the Berlin avant garde.¹⁶⁹ In particular, in his *Science of Mechanics* Mach gives a cautionary account of the mutual contamination of science and theology, totemism, fetishism and witchcraft, which leads both to the historical persecution of scientific empiricism by religion,¹⁷⁰ and to an equally deleterious post-Enlightenment 'mechanical mythology'.¹⁷¹ Both positions, Mach says, are distortions borne of incomplete perception: the only responsible scientific or philosophical view acknowledges its 'incomplete conception of the world'. The *Mechanical Head*, with its attachments of ruler and a camera-raising apparatus, suggests both positions as 'incomplete conceptions', resembling, as it does, both sacramental fetish object and a rational apparatus, roughly arcing between Carl Einstein's account of African masks and European modernity.¹⁷²

In the context of provisional positions, Hausmann's iconography, it could be argued, works out his connections to Jewish intellectuals,¹⁷³ in an array of the stereotypical attributes and roles of Jews.¹⁷⁴ One feature of the catastrophic instability of all political and social givens at the end of the 1914–18 war in Germany was an aggravated hostility towards Jews, caricaturally perceived as either profiteers or revolutionaries. In December 1919 *Der blutige Ernst* ran a special issue indicting the anti-Semitism pervasive even among the 'international' Left.¹⁷⁵ John Hoxeter points out that the most ordinary, narrow, dull bourgeois can only conceive of even the most elevated foreigner as a 'comic' figure.¹⁷⁶ Given Hausmann's interest in clothing as both clichéd class identifier and potential liberation,¹⁷⁷ a starting point for extrapolating the *Mechanical Head's* associations is that the dummy head, used either by a wig-maker or milliner, suggests not only the ability to change one's appearance with change of hair or hat; but also works as a particular allusion to the prescribed head covering – wig or hat – of an orthodox Jewish woman or man. Shifted into this context, the soldier's field cup on the head resembles a beaker type of *kiddush* cup, the typographic cylinder and pipe stem suggest prayer scrolls contained in a *tefillin* box strapped to the head; the wallet on the back of the head becomes a *kipa*. But these allusions operate in a complex way, as a collage of readymades that serves as a celebration of Hausmann's new man as mobile flux. The mechanical head serves two idioms. On the one hand, it reflects back the readymade Jew as projected by bourgeois cliché – the 'economic Jew' as banker or moneylender (the wallet *kipa*), jeweller or pawnbroker (the jewel-box ear), or *tefillin* sporting mystic – and this is played against a vacant-eyed, wooden-headed, debased Apollo as bourgeois norm of beauty. The head extrudes its environment, a set piece of ritual objects as cultural readymades animated by ambivalence.

The Marxist scholar Eduard Fuchs, who assembled and published vast collections of caricature, proposed caricature as a valuable tool for the historian in illuminating and critiquing bourgeois mores. Walter Benjamin's quotation of Fuchs is apt:



10 Plate 19 from Carl Einstein, *Negerplastik*, Leipzig, 1915.

11 Raoul Hausmann, *Mechanical Head: Spirit of Our Time*, 1919. Wigmaker's dummy, wallet, ruler, pocket watch mechanism and case, bronze device for raising a camera, typewriter cylinder, segment of measuring tape, collapsible cup, nails, bolt, 32.5 × 21 × 20 cm. Paris: Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne (Centre de création industrielle). Photo: reproduced with the permission of SODRAC.

'Truth lies in extremes', he says somewhere. He goes further: caricature is for him 'to some extent the form from which all objective art arises. One look at the museums of ethnography will vindicate this proposition.'¹⁷⁸

In 1921, given the power of anti-Semitic caricature during and immediately after the war, Fuchs assembled a cultural history of that material, offering a resumé of its stereotypes and commonplaces: parasitic financier, banker, moneylender, jeweller, *parvenu*, sensualist.¹⁷⁹ His project resonates in interesting ways with the work of the Berlin dasdas who, in 1919, were devising new forms of engaged caricature that both clearly communicated contemporary political atrocities, and at same time cued the cheaply manipulative simplifications of conventional political caricature, avoiding its one-liners: the jolting, tangled lines of George Grosz's drawing, whose cross-hatchings can seem like angry efforts to cross themselves out, snarl any effort at glib coherence.¹⁸⁰ In one drawing, *Made in Germany* (1919) Grosz parodied the caricatural slurs parading as 'scientific' physiognomic analysis, morphing the exaggerated features of the cartoon Jew into a fat-lipped, heavy-lidded, bloated, spotty, ill-shaven, *echt* German.¹⁸¹ Hausmann's classicizing *Mechanical Head* analogously could be thought to negate the gross distortions of physiognomy and attributes of the economic Jew in caricature (plates 12 and 13),¹⁸² while deploying certain stereotypes as the tools of an edifying radical ethnography.¹⁸³ As had been the case for Fuchs and Benjamin, caricature for Hausmann could be both an objective reflection



12 Cigarholder: “He’ll soon be blackened”, from *Kikeriki*. Figure 198 in Eduard Fuchs, *Die Juden in der Karikatur: ein Beitrag zur Kulturgeschichte*, Munich, 1921. Photo: University of Toronto Libraries.



13 ‘Circumcision. It adds value, that’s why it’s customary for Jews’. Figure 200 in Eduard Fuchs, *Die Juden in der Karikatur: ein Beitrag zur Kulturgeschichte*, Munich, 1921. Photo: University of Toronto Libraries.

and falsifying projection, illuminating the social construction and constriction of the individual.¹⁸⁴

Hausmann’s dada necessitated penetrating attention to the signs and symbols of the ‘historical present’, however ephemeral or faddish, in opposition to the stale, normative, received signs of the middle class.¹⁸⁵ The task of the artist as Hausmann would set it out in 1922 was to formulate a ‘new conventionality’ of present-day life, stripping it of traditions, historical pretensions, philosophical eccentricities, spiritual romanticism, cultural accretions and false fronts.¹⁸⁶ In this context, the *Mechanical Head* had established an apotropeic as well as parodic conventionality. The new conventions of an art of the present, as Hausmann conceived it, were absolutely fashionable and ‘up to date’, based on hairdressers’ and tailors’ dummies and fashion spreads.¹⁸⁷ But the *Mechanical Head* is clearly shop-worn. It may be another iteration of the old myth of the wandering Jew recast as modern urban ‘Spirit of our Time’, the intellectual nomad operating as what Yuri Slezkine has referred to as the ‘mercurian’ dream within modernism.¹⁸⁸ This Jew, given the vivid resurgence of caricatures of the Jew as revolutionary in the wake of the 1917 Bolshevik revolution,¹⁸⁹ could serve as an antidote to the ‘spiritual and social machinery’ (*Mechanismus*) of the ‘Christian bourgeois world’ that Hausmann so despised.¹⁹⁰ There is an inkling of this in Hausmann’s letter to his future wife Hedwig Mankiewitz, written in 1922: ‘I wish I could come to Seeshaupt, to you, my beautiful beloved, instead of going to damned Hannover, that stronghold of the Goyim.’¹⁹¹

Hausmann’s *Mechanical Head*, for something so blandly inert at its core, is a powerful generator of instability. If, for Fuchs’s materialist historical project, as understood by Benjamin, caricature relies on the technological capacity for cheap mass reproduction and dissemination, then classical antiquity, the noble simplicity and beauty of which were the touchstone of bourgeois taste, was

characterized by a lack of caricature.¹⁹² Hausmann's *Mechanical Head* seems to propose itself as at once bourgeois *Dummkopf* and antithetical Jew, extinct classical remnant and piecemeal modern alien, bust of Apollo and African mask, absurdly and painfully burdened with ordinary objects which, because fragmentary and out of context, are at once ridiculous, enigmatic and exotic, as if the equipment used for unknown rituals or the enigmatic self-adornment of the insane. The screw driven into the right temple evokes the ritual scarification represented on Einstein's African carvings, for example. But the *Mechanical Head* is utterly self-possessed in its incongruities. It seems to propose all at once the point of view of an African self-representation, as illustrated in *Negerplastik* (which, of course, also means an African self-representation as seen by a European Jewish intellectual), or an African vision of a German bourgeois, or a German bourgeois vision of a Jew, or a devout Jewish self-representation, and so on. It is a tragicomic array of received social constructions, inhibitions, revolutionary aspirations, prejudices and ambivalences that constitute an individual as social operator, within and outside dada. It is a quintessential dada portrait, in which constellations of readymade attributes and associations configure shifting identities and points of view glancing off one another, not only recreationally or ironically, as if a Mr Potato Head of radical identity, but as the very guarantee that the accumulated power of stereotypes and the conventional can be used to improvise unforeseen identity; not in the frictionless world of some compromising liberalism, but in necessarily reckless collision.

In the *Mechanical Head* the bourgeois as dummy is stuck with its own phobic perception of alien cultural objects and physiognomies, the African and the outlier Jew, all brought together in giddy recognition by the dada artist. It could be imagined as framing Carl Einstein as Berlin-Jewish-intellectual-as-African, but it is dada in that it is the portrait of the predicament of the individual as seen and projected and reconfigured by the expectations and misconceptions of others.¹⁹³ Inevitably, it, like Arp's reliefs, can serve as a substitution portrait for the predicament that was Tristan Tzara, and as a prototype for a fluid portraiture that would acknowledge the ways one was seen as well as the ways one looked. This is a kind of Sephirothic complexity installed within collaged modernity. While it is not necessary that Tzara or Hausmann actually believed in cabbalist incarnations within language, yet it is useful to consider that the fundamental sounds derived from the twenty-two Hebrew letters, for the cabbalist, and especially for Abulafia, constituted a primal script of the divine in creation.¹⁹⁴ With respect to this magical number, on the forehead of Hausmann's *Mechanical Head* we find – not a *boucle* – but a piece of cardboard with '22' on it. Hausmann said, 'Obviously, the spirit of our time has got a numerical significance'.¹⁹⁵ '22' is also the number of paths of the Sephirot, at the core of all Cabbalist permutations, and, therefore, of meaning. It is perhaps the heuristic device par excellence.¹⁹⁶ Just because we can see something does not mean it is not there.

Tzara was greeted like the Messiah, Breton said, when he came to Paris – the new Vaché, the new Rimbaud¹⁹⁷ – but that is effectively to say that Tzara-as-Messiah could only ever be a stand-in or substitute for those lost geniuses; that he was set up at the outset to become a personification of failed expectations. When Picabia turned on Tzara, he sneered that he preferred Bloy to Tzara, saying that had he been a Jew, he too would be regarded as a god; and he hoped that the

'modernists' around dada would not be long in accompanying this annoying personage up to the sky.¹⁹⁸ Tzara's *Le Géant blanc lepreux du paysage* was read at his Paris début, and, as a presentation piece, it aligns with the Talmudic antitype of the messiah: a leper.¹⁹⁹ At the end of dada, too, Tzara began a lecture given at the international constructivist congress of 1922: 'You already know that for the majority of the public, for you, men of the world, a dadaist is the equivalent of a leper.'²⁰⁰ Of course this is a commonplace, and of course these metaphors of disease operate as and in language, not as magical faith in hidden or higher truths and incarnations, except in so far as they reveal dada as dada, the *reductio ad absurdum* of mysticism. If *tzara* in Hebrew means 'troubles' or 'sorrows',²⁰¹ then in a poetically just, Abulafian permutation of words revealing a great truth, the disease '*tzara'at*', discussed in Leviticus, is associated with leprosy.²⁰² *Tzara'at* was considered to be a punishment for malicious gossip, and, as such, evokes the dynamics of Paris dada and of Tzara's trials within it.²⁰³

The passage that Breton had singled out in Barrès – 'The main thing for the generations that came before us was the passage from certainty to doubt; today it's a matter of passing from doubt to negation, *without losing all moral standards in the process*'²⁰⁴ – is paradoxically close to being the inspirational or vocational core of Breton's dada and his Hegelian surrealist positions (without losing the relentless power of his poetry in the process).²⁰⁵ A decade later, in 1931, in the wars of constituting oneself within surrealism, Tzara would again fight the pernicious 'substitution of groups for personalities' that he had deplored to Breton in 1921, with a call for the dissolution of personalities and groups. Now bourgeois subjectivity, in the form of the individual poet's means of expression, would be entirely dissolved within delirious undirected thought as the solvent of collective life.²⁰⁶ In some sense this call revisits Tzara's dada exhortation to put the photographic plate of your face in the acid bath, as if the individual poet as bourgeois Narcissus must submit his beautiful likeness to something corrosive rather than reflective. In this extreme poetry Tzara is also putting paid to Breton's automatist poet as *poisson soluble*, which had turned out to be just another sentimental poetic metaphor for the culturally sanctioned production of poems.²⁰⁷ Tzara re-dissolves the poet, throwing out the self within whatever fluid it is soluble, or is immiscible.

Notes

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- 1 'Les jeunes gens vous choqueront, car personnels et bruyants. Comment d'ailleurs les trier? Parmi eux des enfants dominateurs pétaradent et disparaîtront bientôt. Puis vos intérêts et les leurs, identiques, se contrecarrent.' Maurice Barrès, *Sous l'œil des barbares*, Paris, 1922, 88.
- 2 In Breton's 'Lâchez tout' Tzara is lumped with the respectively annoying and minor manifesto writers, Marinetti and Bajou; *Les Pas Perdus*, Paris, 1969, 104.
- 3 On Tzara's espousal of self-promotion rather than submission to adjudicated history, see Matthew S. Witkovsky, 'Dada Breton', *October*, 105, Summer 2003, 129.
- 4 Michel Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, Paris, 1965, 141. Germaine Everling, *L'Anneau de Saturne*, Paris, 1970, 98, 115.
- 5 See Lothar Fischer, *Otto Dix: Ein Malerleben in Deutschland*, Berlin, 1981, 14.
- 6 June 1921, Galérie Montaigne 'Salon dada'. See Michel Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, Paris, 1965, 277.
- 7 See Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 272. Schad had not been part of Zurich, but he sent some of his innovative 'Schadograms' to Tzara in Paris in 1920, one published in the Paris *Dadaphone* in March 1920. Tzara had announced that he had proposed the name of dada for the Zurich journal in the 'Lettre ouverte à Jacques Rivière', *Littérature*, 10, December 1919, 3.
- 8 Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 272; see Picabia, *L'Esprit Nouveau*, 9, 1059, 13 May 1921, on the Café Certa as a 'lieu de conspirations dadaïstes'.
- 9 Tzara, Arp and Ernst issued *Dada Augrandair*, 16 August 1921: Arp confirms that Tzara had indeed found the word 'dada', but he piles on disqualifying details to signal the necessity of taking the entire question as a joke.
- 10 *The Art of Spiritual Harmony*, trans. Michael T. H. Sadler, London, 1914, 77-8.
- 11 Tristan Tzara, 'Arp', in *Tristan Tzara: Œuvres complètes*, Paris, 1975-1991, ed. Henri Béhar, vol. 2, 402 (hereafter *OC*).
- 12 Tzara, 'Arp', 402.
- 13 *De Nos Oiseaux* was assembled in 1922; *OC*, vol. 1, 671.
- 14 Carl Einstein, *Negerplastik*, Leipzig, 1915; 'Negro sculpture', trans. Sebastian Zeidler and Charles W. Haxthausen, *October*, 107, Winter 2004, 122-38. See Henri Béhar's notes on Tzara's 'Poèmes negres', closely derived from translations of African songs: *OC*, vol. 1, 714-17. 'Ange', published in Hausmann's *Der Dada* (June 1919), was based on an African text. Tzara's serious interest in African visual art was remarked by Emmy Hennings: a handsome piece that he owned was included in a Zurich dada exhibition of modernist work. Emmy Hennings, 'Das Kabaret Voltaire und die Galerie Dada', *Als Dada Began, eine Dada Chronik*, Paris, 1957, 42.
- 15 Breton discredited Tzara in 'Après dada', 'Clairement' and 'Lâchez tout'; rpt. *Les Pas Perdus*.
- 16 Philippe Soupault, *Manomètre*, 49, August 1923, 75-6 (in *OC*, vol. 1, 672). On Tzara's heroic isolation, see also Benjamin Fondane: 'Le destin des héros des révolutions est souvent tragique. Ils inspirent une méfiance absurde, une vague horreur. Cependant Tzara, malgré des ressorts félicins et ses écailles apparentes, marche enveloppé de solitude.' ('Tristan Tzara, *De Nos Oiseaux* chez Kra', *OC*, vol. 1, 674.)
- 17 'Faites vos jeux', in *OC*, vol. 6, 246, 270, 277.
- 18 *OC*, vol. 1, 277.
- 19 *OC*, vol. 1, 285.
- 20 'Dada a donné un clystère à la Vénus de Milo et a permis à Laocoön et ses fils de se soulager, après des milliers d'années de lutte ...', in Jean Arp, *Jours Effeuillés: Poèmes, Essais, Souvenirs 1920-1965*, Paris, 1966, 312.
- 21 Marcel Mauss and Hubert, H., 'Esquisse d'une théorie générale de la magie', *L'Année Sociologique*, 7, 1902. For Mauss, magic was constituted by a community - usefully for dada - and, with particular application to Picabia's machine portraits, was the seed of technology.
- 22 Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 443, 448.
- 23 Germaine Everling, *L'Anneau de Saturne*, Paris, 1970, 98. Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 141.
- 24 Louis Aragon letter to Tzara, summer 1921, in Aragon, *Papiers inédits: de Dada au surréalisme*, eds Lionel Follet and Édouard Ruiz, Paris, 2000, 186.
- 25 Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 141, and Everling, *L'Anneau de Saturne*, 98. See Maurice Barrès, *Amori et dolori Sacrum: La mort de Venise*, Paris, 1921, 72.
- 26 *Faites vos jeux*, 243.
- 27 Everling, *L'Anneau de Saturne*, 98.
- 28 'Je hais les lignes gracieuses et l'élégance extérieure.' Letter Tzara to Breton, 5 March 1919, in Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 442.
- 29 'Regardez-moi bien! Je suis idiot, je suis un farceur, je suis un fumiste. Regardez-moi bien! Je suis laid, mon visage n'a pas d'expression, je suis petit. Je suis comme vous tous!' February 1920 at the Université Populaire de Faubourg Saint-Antoine; in *Littérature*, 2:13, May 1920, 2.
- 30 Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 153.
- 31 See Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 271-2.
- 32 Man Ray did not come to Paris until July 1921; this photograph may be a reconstruction. I am grateful to Steven Manford for discussing the uncertainties of the 1921-22 period.
- 33 'Amer aile soir', *OC*, vol. 1, 107.
- 34 On the fraudulent equivalence of psychic phenomena, hysteria and psychoanalysis, see Marcel Boll, 'La lamentable histoire de la métapsychique', *Mercur de France*, 170, 1924, 112-29. See also James Coates, *Photographing the Invisible*, Chicago, 1911, for a compendium of spirit photographs that Man Ray may have known, William H. Mumler, *The Personal Experiences of William H. Mumler in Spirit Photo-*

- graphy, New York, 1875. This photograph is usually dated 1921, but it is inscribed 1922, the year the Paris dada fascination with mediums and trances would fully effloresce in the 'saison de sommeils'. It should be noted, however, that the inscription seems to have been amended later, in another darker ink: the correction of 'éviter' to 'évitéz', and '1922'.
- 35 See also Raoul Hausmann's gloss on hysteria in 'Schnitt durch die Zeit', 1919: hysteria and neurosis are creative cosmic phenomena symptomatic of the 'dissolution du sentiment endurci du Moi ou de la conscience du Moi'. 'Coupe à travers le temps', 1919, in Michel Giroud, *Raoul Hausmann 1886-1971*, Macon, 1986, 220.
- 36 Michel Poivert has noted, in terms of Breton's writings of the early 1930s, relations amongst automatism, convulsive beauty, the photograph, and Baraduc; but the rayographs established such relations in a tragicomic tone nearly a decade before. See Michel Poivert, *L'Image au service de la révolution: photographie, surréalisme, politique*, Paris, 2006, 62-3.
- 37 'Mais surtout, Tristan, évitez l'abîme des chaussures.' Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 282.
- 38 'Dans le cadre européen des faiblesses, c'est tout de même de la merde.' 'La première aventure céléste de M. Antipyrine', *OC*, vol. 1, 82.
- 39 The spiritist qualities of the rayographs had not escaped the amateur photographer, the Countess Greffuhle: see Man Ray, *Self-Portrait*, London, 1963, 166.
- 40 Hyppolite Baraduc, *L'Âme humaine: ses mouvements, ses lumières et l'iconographie de l'invisible fluïdique*, Paris, 1896.
- 41 'Mettez la plaque photographique du visage dans le bain acide. Les commotions qui l'ont sensibilisée deviendront visibles et vous surprendront.' Tzara, 'M. Aa l'antiphilosophie nous envoie ce manifeste', May 1920, in *OC*, vol. 1, 371-2.
- 42 *Self-Portrait*, 129.
- 43 Promoting Man Ray was at the expense of Christian Schad's photograms of 1919; and a way of retaliating against Schad, who had stirred up trouble for Tzara in Paris in 1921. Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 271-2.
- 44 'La photographie à l'envers de Man Ray', *OC*, vol. 1, 416.
- 45 'Le Message Automatique', *Minotaure*, 3-4, 1933, 56. See Poivert, 62-3.
- 46 'Note sur l'art nègre', *OC*, vol. 1, 394-5 (originally published in 1917).
- 47 'La photographie à l'envers de Man Ray', 415. The cover for Man Ray's first Paris exhibition catalogue at the Librairie Six in December 1921 was a sheet of shiny black paper resembling carbon paper. Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 299.
- 48 '... son regard noir et très beau', Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 141. Baraduc, 76-7.
- 49 Tzara's biographer François Buot argues that his Jewish childhood played no direct role in his formation. François Buot, *Tristan Tzara: L'homme qui inventa Dada*, Paris, 2002, 17. Tzara went to Moinesti's 'Israelite' primary school (Tom Sandqvist, *Dada East: The Romanians of Cabaret Voltaire*, Cambridge, MA, 2006, 160).
- 50 This accords with the array of Orientalist stereotypes associated with Eastern European Jews by the assimilated, secular Jews of the West. See David Brenner, *Marketing Identities: The Invention of Jewish Ethnicity in Ost und West*, Indiana, 1998.
- 51 Sandqvist, *Dada East*, 258, 298, 316.
- 52 'Faites vos jeux', *Les Feuilles Libres*, 262.
- 53 'Die Maske möchte ich die fixierte Ekstase nennen. Darum die Maske hat nur Sinn, wenn sie unmenschlich, unpersönlich ist; das heisst konstruktiv, frei von der Erfahrung des Individuums ...', *Negerplastik*, xxvi ('Consequently, the mask has meaning only when it is inhuman, impersonal, which is to say constructive, free from the lived experience of the individual ...' Zeidler and Haxthausen, 'Negro Sculpture', 137).
- 54 *Untitled (Mask, Portrait of Tzara)*, 1919. Paper, board, burlap, ink, and gouache. 55 × 25 × 7 cm. Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne, Paris. Gift of the artist, 1967.
- 55 '[Das Kunstwerk] bedeutet nichts, es symbolisiert nicht; es ist der Gott ...' Einstein, *Negerplastik*, xv. On 'nothing', see: 'Manifeste du mouvement dada', *Littérature*, 2:13, May 1920, 1; Francis Picabia, 'Manifeste cannibale dada', in *Écrits 1913-1920*, ed. O. Revault d'Allonnes, Paris, 1975, vol. 1, 213; Tristan Tzara, 'Manifeste Dada 1918', in *OC*, vol. 1, 360; Richard Huelsenbeck, 'En avant dada: a history of dadaism', in Robert Motherwell, *The Dada Painters and Poets*, Cambridge, MA and London, 1989, 41, 44.
- 56 'Conférence sur dada', in 'Lampisteries', *OC*, vol. 1, 419-20. Clément Pansaers had written on Chouang-Dsi in *Mercure de France I*, 1921: see Pansaers, *Lettres au Docteur Schuermans*, Paris, 1958, 6-7. See also Raoul Hausmann, 'Dada est plus que dada' ('Pour dada, Dieu ou Tao, identité ou nombre, individu ou cause-en-soi, ne sont pas des questions bien précises, parce que, pour dada tout cela est en même temps existant, et, avec certitude, inexistant.'), *Courrier Dada*, Paris, 1958, 17.
- 57 'On publie pour chercher des hommes et avoir une occupation'. Tzara, letter to Breton, 1919, in Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 449. Drieu La Rochelle wrote about dada as a moral movement: 'faire des personnalités: marquez vos hommes.' See Marguerite Bonnet, *L'Affaire Barrès*, Paris, 1987, 17.
- 58 Everling, *L'Anneau de Saturne*, 100.
- 59 'Protocol 2', in *Protocols: Procès-verbaux de réunions secrètes des sages d'Israël*, Paris, 1920, 21.

- 60 'Pour dada', *Nouvelle revue française* [hereafter NRF], 7, 1 August 1920, 210; in *Pas Perdus*, 75.
- 61 Breton to Tzara, 29 July 1919, in Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 446.
- 62 See Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 147; and Tzara, 'Memoirs of Dadaism', in Edmund Wilson, *Axel's Castle*, New York, 1959, 239.
- 63 See Aragon, *Papiers inédits*, 189.
- 64 Letter to Picabia, 1920, in Aragon, *Papiers inédits*, 190.
- 65 'Danse caoutchouc verre', *OC*, vol. 1, 111.
- 66 'Pélamide', *OC*, vol. 1, 102.
- 67 Everling, *Anneau de Saturne*, 146.
- 68 Aragon, *Papiers inédits*, 345.
- 69 Apollinaire had feared, during the war, to be associated with Tzara's project, implicitly because of the association of Jews with cosmopolitan internationalism. See Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 'Sur Trois Lettres de Guillaume Apollinaire à Tristan Tzara', *La Revue des Lettres Modernes*, 104, 1964, 9. In his first correspondence with Tzara Breton situated himself within a French tradition of poets. See Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 440; and 'Enfers Artificiels', in Marguerite Bonnet, ed., *André Breton: Oeuvres Complètes*, Paris, 1988, 1, 623-30.
- 70 Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 147.
- 71 Léon Daudet, *L'Avant-guerre: Études et Documents sur l'espionnage juif-allemand*, Paris, 1915, ix. Daudet praises Jules Soury as 'the first to situate the Jewish question correctly in terms of the heredity of the nervous system', 44. During the Barrès trial Ribemont-Dessaigues implied recognition of Barrès's indebtedness to Soury: 'He labels one nerve European and another Asian: he practises botany and zoology.' Bonnet, *L'Affaire Barrès*, 70. For a full discussion of anti-Semitism underpinned by supposedly scientific racial neuroscience, see Toby Gelfand, 'Jules Soury, *Le Système Nerveux Central* (Paris, 1899)', *Journal of the History of the Neurosciences*, 8, December 1999, 235-47.
- 72 André Gide, 'Dada' (April 1920), in *Essais Critiques*, Paris, 1999, 277. See also Jacques Rivière, 'Reconnaissance à dada', NRF, 15, 1920, 216-37. Rivière, in dialogue with Breton's 'Pour Dada', published in the same issue of NRF, discusses Saussure on the arbitrariness of words, and Lautréamont (another French origin).
- 73 Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 201.
- 74 A tactic described in 'Protocol 14' of the *Protocols* was the dissemination of 'inanités' through 'allocutions', 'programmes', 'notes' and 'articles': *Protocols*, 53.
- 75 'Manifeste 1918', in Tzara, *OC*, vol. 1, 366.
- 76 See Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 120.
- 77 Letter Breton to Tzara, 5 September 1919, in Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 447-8.
- 78 'Je ne réponds pas, par habitude et par paresse, à de pareils produits ...' Tzara's profession of his own laziness would ironically align with the anti-Semitic cliché of the Jew as 'sterile intellectual whose inability to create had its social counterpart in the unproductive economics of the financier'. See Mark Antliff, 'The Jew as Anti-Artist: Georges Sorel, Anti-Semitism, and the Aesthetics of Class Consciousness', *Oxford Art Journal*, 20:1, 1997, 51.
- 79 'On n'écrit plus aujourd'hui avec la race, mais avec le sang (quelle banalité!). Ce que pour l'autre littérature était le *caractéristique*, est aujourd'hui le *temperament*.' Tzara alludes to the Action Française/Barrès attachment to the rhetoric of the 'blood' (supposedly necessary for a proper bond with *la patrie*), and the theory of racial inherited characteristics. Letter Tzara to Breton, 21 September 1919, Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 448. See Witkovsky's important account of Breton's engagement in 'Dada Breton'; though I would nuance rather differently the account of Breton's forward thinking as opposed to Tzara's triviality: Witkovsky 'Dada Breton', 129.
- 80 Letter Tzara to Breton, 21 September 1919, in Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 448-50. Tristan Tzara, 'Lettre ouverte à Jacques Rivière', 2-4. Breton, letter to Tzara, 7 October 1919, saying that he'd sent Tzara's letter of 21 September to Rivière (Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 451).
- 81 Breton enquires as to whether Tzara has read Barrès (*Un Homme libre, L'Ennemi des lois*), and, if so, what he thinks (5 September 1919). Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 448.
- 82 Breton deplores xenophobic rhetoric: '... vous savez sans doute quel immonde état d'esprit continue à régner en France, après la paix' ('... you doubtless know what a debased state of mind continues to predominate in France even after the peace'.) Letter Breton to Tzara, 5 September 1919, Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 447.
- 83 Letters to Tzara, 29 July 1919, and 12 June 1919. Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 447, 446.
- 84 Albert Thibaudet, *La vie de Maurice Barrès*, Paris, 1920, 307-309, 312.
- 85 Bonnet, *L'Affaire Barrès*, 26.
- 86 See Albert Thibaudet, *Histoire de la littérature française*, 1936, 476; quoting *Le Canard Enchaîné*, 20 June 1917.
- 87 Tactics of manipulating the press and publicity through nonsensical and misleading texts, as set out in the *Protocols*, could be used to allegorize the operations of dada as avant-garde: 'The triumph of unintelligible chatter is the essential role of the press.' *Protocols*, 21.
- 88 'Il est vraiment fâcheux que Paris semble faire accueil à des sornettes de cette espèce, qui nous reviennent directement de Berlin.' NRF 72, 1 September 1919, 636-7.
- 89 'Indéchiffrables' and 'illisible[s]', 'Reconnaissance à Dada', 220.
- 90 See, for example, 'Le 2 novembre en Lorraine', in *Amori et Dolori sacrum* [1903], Paris, 1906, 273-

91. Barrès did shift slightly to allow the Jews as one among the 'many spiritual families of France' during the 1914–18 war, but Jewish allegiance to country was purely intellectual, not that profoundly rooted animal passion that binds the French to the country, as in the love for one's mother. Barrès, *Les diverses familles spirituelles de la France*, Paris, 1917, 77. See Robert Soucy, *Fascism in France: The Case of Maurice Barrès*, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1972, 148.
- 91 Simone Kahn continued to admire Barrès's early trilogy *Le Culte du Moi* well into the 1920s, distinguishing between the greatness of Barrès and the desiccation of his followers. She advises her cousin that Barrès has to be read and re-read: 'start with *Sous l'oeil des barbares*, and, if it puts you off,' she advises, 'then, "reflect on it"'. Simone Breton, letter 17 December 1923, to Denise Lévy, in *Lettres à Denise Lévy, 1919–1929, et autres textes: 1924–1975*, Paris, 2001, 162.
- 92 See Breton's 'Acte d'accusation', Bonnet, *L'Affaire Barrès*, 25.
- 93 In *Anicet*, Aragon also addressed the problem of Rimbaud's bifurcated life, and the paradoxical impossibility of emulating him, as the model was his attitude and *dérèglement*, not his writing: *Anicet ou le Panorama*, Paris, 1921, 1–3.
- 94 Bonnet, *L'Affaire Barrès*, 27–8.
- 95 Ribemont-Dessaignes essentially dismisses Tzara along with Barrès: 'Tais-toi Tristan Tzara, qui va dire: je vous salue, défenseur de la vertu commerciale. Tais-toi, nous n'admirons soudain ni le courage, ni l'honnêteté, mais voulons nous défendre. Il vend des étoiles et vous avez de la viande morte. Nous n'en voulons pas sur notre joue. La race, les morts, la Patrie sont des chandelles, non des soleils. Le tact, le bon goût, le clair génie français, quelle farce. Et mal jouée. Vos morts.' ('Be quiet, Tristan Tzara, who will say: I salute you, defender of commercial values. Be quiet; all of a sudden we admire neither courage nor honesty, but just want to protect ourselves. He sells stars and you get dead meat. We don't want to take it on the chin. Race, the dead, the Fatherland – all candles, not suns. Tact, good taste, lucid French genius, what a farce. And badly acted. Your dead.') Bonnet, *L'Affaire Barrès*, 73.
- 96 For a resumé of anti-Semitic clichés including the Jew as usurer or commercial 'marchand d'hommes ou de biens', see Zeev Sternhell *Maurice Barrès et le nationalisme français*, Paris, 2000, 270.
- 97 Bonnet, *L'Affaire Barrès*, 27, 31.
- 98 'La grande affaire pour les générations qui nous ont précédés a été le passage de la certitude au doute; il s'agit aujourd'hui de passer du doute à la négation, sans y perdre toute valeur morale.' Bonnet, *L'affaire Barrès*, 33.
- 99 I think Witkovsky conflates this objection on the part of Breton with Breton's own belief in the necessity of dada having a moral or political position: the phrase '*sans y perdre toute valeur morale*' is given by Breton as a deplorably evasive qualification on the part of Barrès, that turns something important and congenial to dada – the passage from doubt to negation – into a conventional piety. See Witkovsky, 'Dada Breton', 134.
- 100 'Je nomme je m'enfoutisme l'état d'une vie où chacun garde ses propres conditions, en sachant toutefois respecter les autres individualités, sinon se défendre...' 'Manifeste Dada 1918', in *OC*, vol. 1, 360.
- 101 Witkovsky, 'Dada Breton', 134.
- 102 Bonnet, *L'Affaire Barrès*, 38.
- 103 Witkovsky, 'Dada Breton', 134.
- 104 His birth certificate is published in facsimile in *Aldebaran* 1–4, 2001.
- 105 Carol Iancu, *L'Emancipation du juifs de Roumanie, 1913–1919*, Montpellier, 1992, 95.
- 106 Iancu, *L'Emancipation des juifs*, 90.
- 107 Barrès, *Scènes et Doctrines du Nationalisme* [1911], Paris, 1925, 154, 160–1. On his birth certificate, Tzara's 'Israelite' parents were 'subject to no protection'. See *Aldebaran* 1–4, 2001.
- 108 After this name change, his family begin to address him as 'Tristan' in their letters, further suggesting its fundamental importance. See *Aldebaran* 1–4, 2001, for family letters.
- 109 Barrès's Dreyfus is a 'monster by default', a 'dog in a trap' howling rather than talking: *Scènes and Doctrines du Nationalisme*, 143–4, 147, 163; see also 134–7, 142 and 152, on Dreyfus as Judas with the 'visage of a foreign race', capable only of self-interest, not honour.
- 110 Tzara, 'Dada manifeste sur l'amour faible et l'amour amer', *OC*, vol. 1, 387. Barrès, *La grande pitié des églises de France*, Paris, 1925, 134–7; and *Amori et dolori sacrum*, 72.
- 111 See for example, Barrès's Nancy programme' of 1898: '... we should consider it highly dangerous to allow the Jews the chance of invoking (and so to appear to be defending) the principles of civil liberty promulgated by the Revolution. But they violate these principles by characteristically isolated behaviour, by monopolies, speculation, and cosmopolitanism', in David Thompson, ed, *France: Empire and Republic 1850–1940*, New York, 1968.
- 112 Bonnet, *L'Affaire Barrès*, 40.
- 113 *Leurs Figures* [1911], Paris, 1917, 123.
- 114 *Les diverses familles spirituelles de la France*, 77.
- 115 Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 263.
- 116 One critic urged that the status of the (immigration) papers of the men who tried Barrès be checked, adding that there may not in fact be any French Dadas (*La Justice*, 15 mai 1921, 7); and *Le Matin*, 16 May, enquired: 'le passeport de ce bryant étranger, est-il bien en règle?' Bonnet, *L'Affaire Barrès*, 92.

- 117 'Le procès Barrès' was held on 13 May 1921. See Yvette Gindine, *Aragon: Prosateur Surréaliste*, Genève, 1966, 13.
- 118 'Ce n'est pas ... le procès de la justice. C'est le procès de la vie. Je sais que c'est peine perdue, je sais que personne n'assiste au vrai spectacle qui se donne ici.' Aragon, *Anicet ou le Panorama*, Paris, 1921, 15.
- 119 Tzara launders Picabia's declared post-dada pose of indifferent suspension of conscience and judgement, which regards art as over and done with. Picabia, 'Indifférence immobile', *Comoedia*, 31 March 1922, 1.
- 120 Tzara, 'Conférence sur dada', *OC*, vol. 1, 419.
- 121 '... la véritable portée du rien', 'Conférence sur dada'.
- 122 Breton ('dada ne subsistera qu'en cessant d'être'), 'Pour dada', *NRF*, 7:83, 1 August 1920, 210; in *Les Pas Perdus*, 75. Rivière, in the same issue of *NRF*, flatteringly commends the 'pudeur désespérée' of Breton's expressed ambition of leaving no trace ('Il est inadmissible qu'un homme laisse une trace de son passage sur la terre') in 'Reconnaissance à dada', 235. Picabia, 'Indifférence immobile', 1.
- 123 Barrès's 'shudder of impersonal happiness' ('frissonnement du bonheur impersonnel'), *Sous l'œil des barbares*, 100.
- 124 Tzara, 'Conférence', *OC*, vol. 1, 421-2.
- 125 'Conférence sur dada', *OC*, vol. 1, 419.
- 126 Louis Aragon, *Les Aventures de Télémaque*, Paris, 1922, 27. See also Renée Riese Hubert and David Hubert Judd trans., *The Adventures of Telemachus*, Lincoln Nebraska, 1988, 28 (quoting from Aragon 'Le Ciel étoilé: H. B. par Zéro', *Paris-Journal*, 28 December, 1923).
- 127 'Grande disqualification' and 'doute mortel'. Gindine, *Aragon: Prosateur*, 28.
- 128 *Aventures*, 27. The nymph Eucharis toys with the 'longue boucle noire' that falls onto her forehead as she listens to Telemachus, *Aventures*, 25. Mentor's white hair darkens as he makes love to Calypso, *Aventures*, 37.
- 129 *Aventures*, 30-5. Aragon, 'Système Dd', *Littérature*, 2:15, July-August 1920, 6; see Gindine, *Aragon: Prosateur*, 54.
- 130 *Aventures*, 32. When Aragon's *Anicet* was printed in *NRF* in September 1920 Aragon took Tzara's epigram as an epigraph, underscoring the identification of Tzara with 'Système Dd'; but this was pragmatically left out of the 1921 edition when Tzara was foundering.
- 131 Witkovsky, 'Dada Breton', 129.
- 132 Witkovsky, 'Dada Breton', 129.
- 133 See Barrès, *Scènes et Doctrines*, 162: 'Jews belong to the fatherland where they find their greatest self-interest'. Robert Desnos later ironically adapted the *Protocols*' stereotyping of Jews as capitalist exploiters, usurers and 'anonymous pillars of insurrection' to avant-gardist ends, noting Jews' apparent adaptative submissiveness in the countries in which they live; that is, Desnos promotes the Barrèsian stereotype of the Jew as Dreyfus/Judas. Desnos casts Zionism as sentimental real estate, and his essay works as a bitter parody and corrective to European nationalisms identified with the land, turning diasporic Jewish subversion to a spiritual rectification of Europe. 'Pamphlet contre Jerusalem', *La Révolution Surréaliste*, 3, 15 April 1925, 245-8.
- 134 '... de travailler à la création d'une nouvelle famille intellectuelle ...' Sanouillet, 324.
- 135 In his 'Introduction à 1930', *LRS*, 12, December 1929, 62, Aragon ironically tracked the modern as translated into 'modern style', thanks to 1925 *Exposition des arts décoratifs* in Paris. Quoted as part of an extended and important discussion of the meanings of modernity in surrealism, in Steven Harris, *Surrealist Art and Thought in the 1930s: Art, Politics, and the Psyche*, Cambridge, 2004, 23. Aragon alludes to the government's encouragement of modernist style - a response to postwar economic upheavals and the need to reinstate France as a leader in international design and manufacture - especially with respect to the furniture-making trades of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine: an account was given by E. Sedeyn, 'Le Faubourg St. Antoine', *La Renaissance de l'art française et des Industries de luxe*, special issue, 1921, 615. See Simon Dell, 'The Consumer and the Making of the "Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes, 1907-1925"', *Journal of Design History*, 12: 4, 1999, 316. Breton's questions: 'L'esprit dit moderne a-t-il toujours existé?' and, with a nod to the question of modernist design, 'Entre les objets dits modernes, un chapeau haut-de-forme est-il plus ou moins moderne qu'une locomotive?' Sanouillet, 325.
- 136 Sanouillet wondered why this last sentence was left out of Georges Hugnet's transcription of this letter in *L'Aventure Dada: 1916-1922*; see Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 329, note 1. '... la substitution des groupes aux personnalités' cued the dangers of generalizing the characteristics of any given individual into those of a group; and it certainly seems to mean that, given Breton's immediate adoption of vicious stereotyping. On the legitimacy and ambitions of Breton's engagement, see Witkovsky, 'Dada Breton', 129.
- 137 '... au profit de quelques-uns ...' Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 324.
- 138 Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 319-47.
- 139 Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 329.
- 140 Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 329.
- 141 'Savez-vous pourquoi on vous a demandé de témoigner?' 'Naturellement, parce que je suis Tristan Tzara. Quoique je n'en sois pas encore tout à fait persuadé.' Bonnet, *L'Affaire Barrès*, 39
- 142 See Carol Iancu, *Les Juifs en Roumanie*, 27.
- 143 'Le dadaïsme, les nègres et les métèques', Buot, 139. Tzara was annoyed when Pierre de Massot

- (who supported Breton in the Congress of Paris affair) referred to him as 'un Juif roumain', ostensibly allowing Tzara paternity of the word 'dada' (as against the claims of Schad and Huelsenbeck); but Massot's conclusion – 'Les circoncis ont toujours des enfants, par erreur, sans le savoir' – uses a dismissively anti-Semitic term (for example, Barrès, 'Le Circoncis de fourmies', in *Le courrier de l'est*, 2 May 1891, quoted in Sternhell, 270). Pierre de Massot, 'Dada', *Ca Ira!*, 16, November 1921, 106.
- 144 Witkovsky, 'Dada Breton', 136.
- 145 Robert Short argues that the 'injure surréaliste' was 'rarely shabby or mean-spirited'; but this is not strictly true of Breton's denunciations, when they could be inserted within a larger, politically threatening, rhetoric. See Short's 'Breton and others: the power of insult', in Ramona Fotiade, ed., *André Breton: The Power of Language*, Exeter, 2000, 73.
- 146 On Picabia's utter reprehensibility, see Yve-Alain Bois and Thomas Repensek, 'Francis Picabia: From Dada to Pétain', *October*, 30, Autumn 1984, 120–7.
- 147 Rémy de Gourmont noted that Bloy, in defending the Jews, 'protects them rather in the manner that one protects a rug against dust' ('... les défend à peu près de la manière qu'on défend les tapis contre la poussière'). 'Le Salut par les Juifs', *Le Figaro*, 20 September 1892.
- 148 'Dada manifeste sur l'amour faible et l'amour amer', 386.
- 149 Everling, *Anneau de Saturne*, 98.
- 150 'Cette finesse orientale du visage pale comme d'un mort dont toute la flamme s'est retirée dans le regard très noir et très beau.' Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 141.
- 151 '... "moderniste" au teint pâle et aux cheveux gras', 'Jusqu'à un certain point' (*Comoedia*, 16 April 1922, 1), in *Picabia Ecrits, 1921–1953*, Olivier Revault d'Allonnes and Dominique Bouissou, eds, Paris, 1978, 67–8. Bloy wrote *Le Salut par les Juifs* (1892).
- 152 Picabia dismisses modernism in terms evoking Breton's collapsed Congress: 'je considère l'évolution actuelle vide d'effort réel, vide d'intérêt, encombrante et faite pour quelques snobs et quelques malades ...' ('I consider current developments to be devoid of real effort, devoid of interest, inept, and made for a few snobs and invalids.'). 'Jusqu'à un certain point', 69. Breton, in November 1922, would deliver a lecture in Barcelona dealing precisely with those current developments ('évolution actuelle') disparaged by Picabia: 'Caractères de l'évolution moderne et ce qui en participe', *Les Pas Perdus*, 181–212.
- 153 'Surtout ne voyez pas dans mon article une attitude anti-Semite', 'Jusqu'à un certain point'.
- 154 Picabia, 'Dada philosophe', *Littérature*, 13, March 1920, 5–6.
- 155 See Yuri Slezkine, *The Jewish Century*, Princeton, 2004, 21, on anti-Semitic rhetoric of contagion and infestation.
- 156 'L'arriviste Tristan Tzara va cultiver ses vices (un interview)', *Merz*, 4, July 1923, 38. Tzara's irony here extends to the common anti-Semitic slur of being parvenu.
- 157 '... la pitié est un sentiment, comme la diarrhée en rapport avec le dégoût qui gêne la santé, l'immonde tâche des charognes de compromettre le soleil.' ('Pity is a sentiment, as diarrhoea in relation to the disgust that ruins health, the vile task of decaying corpses to compromise the sun.') *Manifeste*, 1918, *OC*, vol. 1, 367.
- 158 See Henri Béhar's notes, *OC*, vol. 1, 656–7.
- 159 *OC*, vol. 1, 655.
- 160 At the end of his life Tzara devoted himself to discerning a complex system of anagrams running throughout Villon's poetry, generating a counter-narrative of one unique love, as against Villon's ostensible accounts of his own dissipation: a strange allegorization of both poetic meaning and Tzara's own complications. See 'La signification Anagrammatique du Laïs', and Henri Béhar's comments, *OC*, vol. 6.
- 161 Tzara, 'Monsieur Aa l'antiphilosophie', *OC*, vol. 2, 304.
- 162 Aragon, 'Système Dd', *Littérature*, 4, July–August 1920, 6.
- 163 *Transcendental Magic*, trans. A. E. Waite, New York, 1970, part 2, 16–17.
- 164 'Cependant nous extériorisons la facilité nous cherchons l'essence centrale et nous sommes contents pouvant la cacher', 'La première aventure cèleste de M. Antipyrine', 82.
- 165 'Dada manifeste sur l'amour faible et l'amour amer', *OC*, vol. 1, 329. Schrenk-Notzing, in trying to exculpate Eva C., discussed at length the charges of fraud levelled against her. Albert von Schrenck-Notzing, *Materialisations – Phänomene*, Munich, 1914. For the fame of Eva C. in the dada period, see George Grosz, *An Autobiography*, Berkeley, 1998, 143–4.
- 166 Zohar 3:1228B; Eliphaz Lévi, in *Le Livre des Splendeurs*, Paris, 1894. 'Dada manifeste sur l'amour faible et l'amour amer', 379.
- 167 'Dada manifeste sur l'amour faible et l'amour amer', 379.
- 168 On Hausmann's knowledge of Tzara's manifestos, see Eva Züchner, ed., *Scharfrichter der bürgerlichen Seele: Raoul Hausmann in Berlin 1900–1933: Unveröffentlichte Briefe, Texte, Dokumente aus den Künstler-Archiven der Berlinischen Galerie*, Berlin, 1998, 93–5.
- 169 Ernst Mach, *Analysis of Sensations and the Relation of the Psychical to the Physical*, trans. C. N. Williams, New York, 1959, 139. Ernst Marcus, in *Das Problem der excentrischen Empfindung* had described a 'Weltäther' at the core of the

- human brain, allied to an eccentric synaesthetic perception exceeding bodily boundaries. (This creates a nice dialogue with the permeating fluids imagined by spirit photographers and psychical researchers.) For the influence of the 'Schöpferischen Fluidum' on Hausmann's ambition to be a 'pioneer and engineer of 'Weltemanation', see Eva Züchner, ed., *Scharfrichter der bürgerlichen Seele*, 18; and Timothy Benson, *Raoul Hausmann and Berlin Dada*, Ann Arbor, 1986, 161.
- 170 Ernst Mach, *Science of Mechanics* [1893], trans. Thomas J. McCormack, LaSalle, Illinois, 1974, 541.
- 171 *Science of Mechanics*, 559.
- 172 See Sherwin Simmons's important article, however, 'Men of Nails: Monuments, expressionism, fetishes, Dadaism', *Res*, 40, Autumn 2001, 232, which clarifies Carl Einstein's rejection of fetish objects as undermining the importantly aesthetic functioning of African objects as cubic sculpture as art.
- 173 These include Salomo Friedlander, Ernst Marcus and Carl Einstein. Michael White has suggested Hausmann's crucial relationship to Jewish intellectuals ('Dada in Debate' symposium, Tate Modern, London, 25–6 November 2005). See also Timothy Benson, *Raoul Hausmann and Berlin Dada*, and Eva Züchner, *Scharfrichter der bürgerlichen Seele* for overviews of Hausmann's intellectual interests. To these must be added the powerful El Lissitzky, who included Hebrew letters in his work: see, for example, the black palm with 'pei nun', signifying 'here lies', referring to the end of the old era, in Ilya Ehrenburg, *Shest povestei o legkikh kotsakh*, Moscow and Berlin, 1922. The word 'kosher' in Hebrew letters appears on the cover of Berlin *Der Dada* no. 1, 1919.
- 174 There is a demonic double of the *Mechanical Head* in the contemporary 'Rebbe Barbie' doll proposal: 'Rebbe Barbie comes with tiny satin yarmulke, prayer shawl, tefillin, silver kaddish cup, Torah scrolls. Optional: tiny mezzuzah for doorway of Barbie Townhouse.' <<http://funnies.paco.to/barbies.html>>, accessed 30 May 2007.
- 175 John Hoexter, 'Poletarier aller Länder, vereinigt euch – gegeneinander!', *Der Blutige Ernst*, 2, December 1919. On the complex thematics of anti-Semitism, paranoia, and ascribed Jewish identity in German avant-garde circles, see Michael White, 'The Grosz Case: Paranoia, Self-hatred and Anti-Semitism', *Oxford Art Journal*, 30:3, October 2007, 431–53.
- 176 Hoexter argues that the Jew, forced to abandon traditional garb and mores, is driven to accumulating wealth as the only way of retaining self-respect. John Hoexter, 'Der Weg des Juden', *Der Blutige Ernst*, 2, December 1919.
- 177 See Brigid Doherty, 'Fashionable Ladies, Dada Dandies', *Art Journal*, 54: 1, Spring, 1995, 46–50.
- 178 'Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian' [1937], in *Walter Benjamin: One Way Street and Other Writings*, Edmund Japhcott and Kinsley Shorter transls, London, 1978, 365.
- 179 Eduard Fuchs, *Die Juden in der Karikatur: ein Beitrag zur Kulturgeschichte*, Munich, 1921.
- 180 For a full account of the tropes of caricature in right- and left-wing journals, see Sherwin Simmons, 'War, Revolution, and the Transformation of the German Humor Magazine, 1914–27', *Art Journal*, 52: 1, Spring, 1993, 46–54.
- 181 *Den macht uns keiner nach (Made in Germany)*, 1919. Lithograph, 48.3 × 39.1 cm, in portfolio *Got mit uns*, Berlin, 1920. In the right-wing literary journal, *Auf gut Deutsch*, 1918–21, standard 'Jewish' features were emphasized in the caricatures of socialist leaders: these drawings were pretentiously called 'character heads' by the editor Dietrich Eckhart, rather than caricatures, purporting to offer a kind of scientific observation of physiognomy, as opposed to the merely entertaining distortions of caricatures of socialist leaders. Simmons, 48. On Grosz's being identified as a Jew, see Michael White, 'The Grosz Case', 452–3.
- 182 See 'Lob des Konventionellen', [1922], in *Raoul Hausmann: Texte bis 1933*, Michael Erlhoff ed, Munich, 1982, 2: 50: 'nicht die Venus von Milo in Gips'. Also see Hausmann's complaint about the plagiaristic quest after the standard beauty of the classical, in 'PRÉsentismus: Gegen den Puffkeismus der teutschen Seele', [1921], in *Texte*, vol. 2, 25.
- 183 Hausmann's project of allowing objects to 'liberate themselves from the prison of ordinary usage' extends to cultural commonplaces. 'Matières-collages', in *Raoul Hausmann, autour de 'L'Esprit de notre temps': Assemblages, collages, photomontages*, Paris, 1974, n.p. The Cigarholder caricature (Plate 12) shows the Jew with traditional sidelocks and bourgeois hat: an unstable hybrid.
- 184 See Michael White, 'The Grosz Case', 451, for an incident of Hausmann's ironic play with an anti-Semitic commonplace, the supposed cowardice of Jewish soldiers.
- 185 'PRÉsentismus', 25–6.
- 186 '... neue Konventionalität' 'Lob des Konventionellen', 49–50.
- 187 Benjamin quotes Eduard Fuchs, *Sittengeschichte*, III: 'Fashion announces how people mean to carry on the business of public morality'. *One Way Street*, 379. Fuchs too conceived his project as an attack on bourgeois mores and hypocrisy.
- 188 Gustave Doré's wild-haired 'wandering jew' (1852) is on the cover of *Die Juden in der Karikatur*.
- 189 Fuchs, *Die Juden*, 281.
- 190 '... geistigen und sozialen Mechanismus' of the 'christlich-bürgerliche Welt', in 'Objective Betrachtung', *Texte*, 1, 112.

- 191 'Ich wünschte, ich führe statt nach dem verdammten Hannover, dieser Hochburg der Gojim, nach Seeshaupt, zu Dir, Liebe, Schöne'. Letter of 10 June 1922, in Züchner, *Scharfrichter der bürgerlichen Seele*, 146.
- 192 Walter Benjamin, 'Eduard Fuchs, Collector and Historian'.
- 193 Matthew Biro has argued with respect to Hausmann's 'portraits' of Tatlin that '... precisely because of their anonymity, they can represent Hausmann or the other dada artists as much they do their ostensible subjects. These portraits are thus both individual and collective; they represent particular artists as well as more general prototypes of a new collaborative human - figures constructed out of elements transmitted through the mass media.' 'Raoul Hausmann's Revolutionary Media', *Art History*, 30:1, February 2007, 42.
- 194 In 1933 Tzara coined a cynical word to describe any utopian universal language, presumably including Cabbalism, and the German Romantic notions of an intrinsic language in things accessible to the poet: 'Desesperanto'. (Henri Béhar, *Dada est Tatou*, Paris, 1999, 349, note 71.) Nevertheless, Tzara, like Arp, is often very close to Novalis's notion of a fully expressive language inhering in nature, as 'une langue essentielle de chiffres, gravées sur les cristaux, sur les coquillages, les rails, dans les nuages, dans le verre, à l'intérieur de la neige ...' ('Note 14 sur la poésie', *OC*, vol. 1, 403.)
- 195 Giroud, *Raoul Hausmann*, 30.
- 196 The cryptic lettering on Hausmann's cover for Einstein's *Negerplastik* in 1917 suggests the cabbalist mysticism attached to meditating on black Hebrew letters against the white ground, accessing the hidden white by the written blackness. See Moshe Idel, *Abraham Abulafia: an ecstatic Kabbalist*, Albany, 1988, 55.
- 197 See Breton's letter to Tzara of 29 July 1919, Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 446. See Aragon, *Papiers inédits*, 345.
- 198 'Jusqu'à un certain point ...', 68.
- 199 The leprous giant reappears in 'Droguerie-conscience' in *25 Poems*, and in 'Arp' (1921): 'this remarkable mind doesn't know how to eat meat and quickly becomes leprous'. *OC*, vol. 2, 95, 402.
- 200 'Conférence sur dada', *OC*, vol.1, 419.
- 201 See Moses Maimonides, *Guide to the Perplexed*, part 3, book 12, on the various categories of 'troubles', including those of Job.
- 202 Tzara could have come across that information in connection with his school essay on hygiene, which obliquely shows an awareness of the conflations of health, eugenics and, implicitly, Soury's racial theory concerning the predisposition of Jews to hereditary degeneration (rpt. *Aldebaran* 2-4, 1996, 46-7). Tzara's *at* was discussed in a number of publications in connection with the Dresden Hygiene Exhibition of 1911. See Max Grunwald, *Die Hygiene der Juden, Im Anschluss an die Internationale Hygiene - Ausstellung Dresden 1911*, Dresden, 1911, 184-5; Grunwald provides a further bibliography on German books dealing with 'Zaraath'.
- 203 As only one example of speaking ill (amongst the infinite dada array), during the bitter custody battle over the name of dada Tzara says that he pities Breton who is tortured by false moral torments, but adds that he understands the 'source of his marital troubles'. Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, 340.
- 204 'La grande affaire pour les générations qui nous ont précédés a été le passage de la certitude au doute; il s'agit aujourd'hui de passer du doute à la négation, sans y perdre toute valeur morale.' Bonnet, *L'affaire Barrès*, 33.
- 205 See Breton's account of poetry and morals in 'Artificial Hells': 'Last year, Dada activity remained wholly artistic (or anti-artistic, if one prefers - I don't distinguish between the two). This year, Dada proposes to raise the debate and take the discussion on moral grounds.' Breton, 'Enfers Artificiels', *OC*, ed. Marguerite Bonnet, vol. 1, Paris, 1988, 623-30; 'Artificial Hells', Matthew Witkovsky transl, *October*, 105, Summer 2003, 140.
- 206 See 'Essai sur la situation de la poésie', *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution*, 4, December 1931, 21; and 'Rêve expérimental', *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution*, 6, 15 May 1933.
- 207 See Steven Harris's discussion of automatism's tendency to retain the individual poet producing a poem as artefact, and, hence, tending not to serve revolutionary epistemological method and critique. *Surrealist Art and Thought in the 1930s*, 129-31.