
The Presencing Tendency: French and American Avant-Garde Strategies under the Formal Subsumption of Art

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Abstract: Whether what we call the avant-garde in literature ended sometime in the last century or, conversely, persists to this day is an open question. But rather than coming down on one side or another of the issue, this essay concerns itself with what the avant-garde looks like when, in Bourdieusian terms, it feels its very position to be at stake in the field's struggle for domination, both internally and externally, with the field of power. Either by historical coincidence or, more intriguingly, by something as nefarious as influence, both the French and the American avant-gardes of the 1950s and 60s witnessed the development of a similar aesthetic tendency in response to encroachments upon the restricted production of their respective literary fields by external forces. This tendency, which I call a "poetics of presence," is a gambit for textual immediacy—what Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht terms "presence effects," as opposed to "meaning effects." Through readings of theoretical works by Alain Robbe-Grillet, on the one hand, and poems by Frank O'Hara and John Ashbery, on the other, I demonstrate the character of the poetics of presence in the French and American contexts, concluding ultimately that in both cases such strategies function to preserve a formal subsumption of artistic labor under conditions of restricted production, as against the threading incursions of the real subsumption of that labor to which external forces—capital, politics—would subject it.

Keywords: avant-garde, *nouveau roman*, presence, poetics, New York School, Pierre Bourdieu, Theodor A. Adorno

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Whether what we call the avant-garde in literature ended sometime in the last century or, conversely, persists to this day is an open question about which many capable scholars have written. The Jamesonian account claims more or less that a modernist notion of avant-gardism has evaporated with what Nicholas Brown calls "the real subsumption of art under capital." As Jameson writes, "What has happened is that aesthetic production today has become integrated into commodity production generally" (4). If, for David Lehman and Renato Poggioli, what the avant-garde needs is some official discourse, some authority-backed obstacle of taste against which it can struggle and claim its own independence, then our late capitalist reality is the structural precondition for its demise—for, to put it succinctly, nothing is unassimilable into capital.

There are, conversely, various flavors of Bourdieusians (and I might count myself among them) who believe that the autonomy to which avant-gardists have laid claim has itself always been a *relative* autonomy, in so far as the autonomy of the literary field as such is relative, with respect to the heteronomy to which the “field of power” would subject it (Bourdieu 215). For these critics, the literary field has quite obviously not disappeared and can indeed still sustain various positions that set themselves against the accumulation of economic capital in a bid to accumulate capital of another kind. Within this field of “restricted” economy, those who occupy the various anticommmercial positions accrue capital via the recognition of their peers—either those within their coterie or those belonging to another, sometimes rival, coterie. So long as the literary field still exists, more or less as Flaubert structured it, per Bourdieu’s account, then an avant-garde is always possible.

And lastly there are Marxists of the more Adornian kind who believe that artistic autonomy is a matter of having one’s labor resist or avoid being subject to “real subsumption,” and thus to remain either unsubsumed or only “formally subsumed,” to use Brown’s helpful distinction. This critical account prefers to think that capital, in its unrelenting rampage, has yet left behind certain unscathed pockets—state institutions, autonomous communities, and so on—in which artistic autonomy can be preserved and asserted. As Brown puts it: “In order for formal subsumption in a given corner of industry to obtain with any permanence, it must be afforded some degree of protection: professional guilds, research-based tenure, Adorno’s well-funded state cultural institutions” (web). This protection from the organizing logics of the market allows artists working in such a state of “restricted production,” per Bourdieu, to maintain an unalienated relationship with their own conditions of labor, even as they produce goods that will ultimately be tested on the market in terms of exchange-value.

In the American case, if you are David Lehman you might believe that the New York School was the end of the road for avant-gardism, and that everything that came after was a form of self-indulgent, self-deluded practice that opened itself up to institutionalization, even as it proclaimed its own radical possibilities. If you hold other theoretical principles, you might draw a neat line through veritable American avant-garde movements up to our present time. Scholars such as Jasper Bernes and Barrett Watten, for example, have explored the possible autonomies of American poetry through the end of the last century. In *The Work of Art in the Age of Deindustrialization*, Bernes argues that it is by means of capturing a pervading “structure of feeling” endemic to the postwar American years—a mood that emerges from and reflects “the alienation of modern work”—that artists and writers are capable of pursuing the avant-gardist position (10). In “tak[ing] the vast, impersonal world of 1950s Manhattan and mak[ing] it familiar” (Bernes 25), O’Hara not only expresses but in fact enacts that which is demanded of service workers in that period. This is, in other words, a vision of the literary field that understands *really subsumed* labor to have somehow infiltrated and been metabolized within the field’s restricted production. Watten, taking a different tack, seeks to preserve what is salvageable from the Adornian position, noting in *The Constructivist Moment* that Adorno “remains limited by the Hegelian task of solving the contradiction (not antinomy) between the agency of the avant-garde and its higher synthesis” (290). Rather than presuming the infiltration of really subsumed labor into the once-sheltered space of formally subsumed artistic production, Watten provokingly asks that we “hold open the spontaneity, instability, and evanescence of the avant-garde as a limit situation with a contradictory horizon of totality”—that is, that we not seek the strict Hegelian solution to contradiction, but rather hold up the kinesis of the contradiction itself in a kind of dialectical image

(290).

I am not going to come down on one side of the issue or the other, but will rather concern myself with what the avant-garde looks like when, in Bourdieusian terms, it feels its very position to be at stake in the field's struggle for domination, both internally and externally, with the field of power. I have subtitled this paper "French and American Avant-Garde Strategies under the Formal Subsumption of Art," despite my better judgement because, for what are surely complex and possibly unrelated historical reasons, the same such behaviors can be observed in both France and the United States at around the same time—that is to say, throughout the 1950s and 60s.

Broadly speaking what I believe to be happening among dominant strands of the avant-garde during this period and in both countries is usefully reducible to what we could call—and here I am surely stealing someone's term—a "poetics of presence." I take this term to cover both those explicit, theoretical refusals of something like a hermeneutics of art, and those more implicit but not less notable gravitations toward what Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, in *Production of Presence: What Meaning Cannot Convey*, has called "presence effects" as against "meaning effects."¹ In Gumbrecht's account, we conceive of aesthetic experience as an oscillation (and sometimes as an interference) between these two "effects" (2). Correspondingly, artworks themselves are always encountered as some ratio of a productive tension between presence effects and meaning effects, where the former refers to the substance and materiality of the work—the manner in which it strikes the senses and occupies space—and the latter refers to the work's significance, its multifarious signification. The presence effect requires "substance in play," and, in turn, "substance in order to be perceived needs a form," with the result that form itself is often what transmits the presence effect to us (111). Importantly, "the meaning-dimension will always be dominant when we are reading a text," whereas the opposite might be true when we are standing before statuary (109). It is key, in order to understand this more implicit move toward presence via poetic practice, to acknowledge the above point that literature, poetry included, is by its nature weighted toward meaning effects (whereas the same might not be true of music), and that therefore the poet's striving toward presence is often quite tangible to us, always asymptotic, and usually apparent as a kind of straining, rather than as an accomplishment of this desire.

But I will come back to this. The issue will be most clear if we approach it from its explicit entryways, that is, from its French aspect. We begin, then, with the *Nouveau Roman*, that initially loose collectivity of French writers, most of them born between the wars, who came together more coherently as they were named from without (the same is true, as has been argued many times over, of the *Nouvelle Vague* filmmakers of the same period and generation).² For twenty to thirty years, from the early 50s until possibly the 80s, the "New Novelists" comprised the most salient literary avant-garde in France since the heyday of Existentialism.

Beginning with Nathalie Sarraute's *The Age of Suspicion*, these writers marked their distinction by rejecting the two-headed Hydra of the French literary field at that time (what Bourdieu would call a "double rupture"): these were the writers of socialist realism, which remained relevant so long as the French Communist party retained its cultural capital—that is, until the Hungarian Revolution in 1956, or again the events of May 1968; and the writers of *la littérature engagée*, those who held a healthy Sartrean skepticism of the socialist novel but who nevertheless believed in the metaphysics of a content-form distinction, and who sought, like the socialists, to subordinate the latter to the former. The New Novelists, like any proper artistic movement, sought to invent their own tradition, invoking

a pantheon of recent forefathers and compatriots—Joyce, Kafka, Proust, Roussel, Beckett, sometimes Flaubert—over against the French lineage running from Balzac, to Anatole France, to Champfleury, to (some would argue, with his turn toward the French Communist Party) Aragon, and through to Sartre.

Against a literature of realism would be asserted a literature of textual immediacy. As Alain Robbe-Grillet puts it in *For a New Novel*, the work of art which strives to be *engagée* or to arrive at socialist truths is by its nature heteronomous, because subordinated to external concerns. He goes so far as to say that any literature which tries to signify facts not represented in the work itself is a feeble, non-autonomous literature. Against this, he invokes a literature of presence:

Instead of this universe of ‘signification’ (psychological, social, functional), we must try, then, to construct a world both more solid and more immediate. Let it be first of all by their *presence* that objects and gestures establish themselves, and let this presence continue to prevail over whatever explanatory theory that may try to enclose them in a system of references, whether emotional, sociological, Freudian or metaphysical. In this future universe of the novel, gestures and objects will be *there* before being *something*. (21)

We would do well to take note of the requisite deixis in this formulation: this is a literature that strives toward a *there-ness*, a quality of collapsing the space of signification and interpretation inherent to the act of reading, and of meeting the reader as co-collaborator of the text. This gets bound up with Robbe-Grillet’s idea that writing is a form of production like any other work, and that the text is a material product, a tangible presence, with nothing above, within, or behind it.³

Certainly, the output of the New Novelists is heterogeneous. But, as Lynn Higgins has pointed out, it achieves some homogeneity in the fact that the works of Robbe-Grillet, Sarraute, Marguerite Duras, Robert Pinget, Claude Simon, Michel Butor, and others of this period are openly evasive of politics, history, and social commentary, and were indeed criticized for precisely this (4). As Robbe-Grillet notes elsewhere in his book of essays, if the writer is to be *engagée*, then it is to be not with the problems of Man but with those of language. Anyone who knows these novels will know that, of course, language is often explicitly or implicitly their subject of choice—how and what can language produce, where and how does it refer, and so on. Put differently, because it disavows any attempt to signify beyond itself, the New Novel is condemned to signify only itself, as Robbe-Grillet makes clear: “Instead of being of a political nature, commitment is, for the writers, the full awareness of the present problems of his own language” (*New Novel* 41).

I should note here that it should matter little whether the New Novel in any of its iterations achieves such a refusal of signification (and indeed, by the 80s many of these writers disavowed these attempts as outmoded).⁴ What matters is that *this claim* became central to the representative strategy of the French avant-garde at that time. In Bourdieusian terms, a poetics of presence in Gumbrecht’s sense, not as embodied but as *textual* immediacy, was the representative strategy that defined and distinguished the avant-gardist position within the literary field.

This, I think, is interesting per se, and we will be tempted to ask *why* it is the case. But first I want to raise the level of intrigue by noting that this strategy gained currency in the United States at precisely the same time, either because it travelled or because of a homegrown coincidence. The claim that it travelled—that is, that there might be something as nefarious as influence at play here—is more

tantalizing, and so I will venture a few provocative remarks so as to draw the bridge between France and the United States at this moment. The point won't be to posit cause and effect so much as it will be to posit that the French articulation of this strategy met with a ready reception in certain American circles, and thereby fanned some extant flames, as it were.

There are good reasons to suspect Susan Sontag, for example, as an important conduit for the transmission of the Nouveau Roman and its ideas to the American cultural sphere. Her essay "Against Interpretation," with its call for an "erotics" rather than a "hermeneutics" of art, is a neat reverberation of Sarraute and Robbe-Grillet's theoretical excursions on the novel, even down to the polemical tone (10). Against the approach of an Elia Kazan, who is driven to fix meaning where the latter is multiplicitous in order to adapt *A Streetcar Named Desire* for Hollywood tastes, Sontag wants a critic who can understand Tennessee Williams or Samuel Beckett in precisely their evasion of meaning, in their sheer presence, in their being "cutoff" from the outlets of interpretation (15). More than this, she wants artists whose work is so antihermeneutic that to interpret it would in fact be nigh impossible.

Here she is thinking of *Last Year at Marienbad*, directed by Alain Resnais and, importantly, written by Robbe-Grillet. One might, with good reason, ignore as uninteresting Sontag saying that she had read interviews—no doubt in French—with those men about the movie (16). When this fact finally seized my attention was after I had just reread *For a New Novel*. Returning to "Against Interpretation," I knew there was something familiar about her comments on Beckett and Kafka in particular. And now it seemed quite obvious to me that, of course, Sontag had read *Pour un nouveau roman* when it was published in France the year before she wrote this essay, and that—it is impossible to unsee this—"Against Interpretation" is quite simply and quite ingeniously the metabolization of *For a New Novel* for an American audience. Sontag registered those novelists' complaints with their tradition, and saw several great reasons to carry it over to her own tradition. Only, in her eyes, there were no New Novelists yet in America. And the manifesto-like quality of her essay becomes all the more clear in light of this: she wants a *Last Year at Marienbad for America*, in other words, "the pure, untranslatable, sensuous immediacy" of an art which rejects meaning and instead strives toward presence.⁵

One can only attribute it to Sontag being a better reader of novels than of poems that she neglects to mention the New York School poets in this essay collection and, generally speaking, in her writings from those decades. For, if she had, she would surely have noticed what I have been saying is a similar phenomenon, a similar move toward a poetics of presence, in the sense used here, among that loosely defined school's practitioners.

Reminding us once more that, as Gumbrecht says, such a poetics can only ever be an aspiration, a straining after an ephemeral achievement—and indeed, this is also what Jonathan Culler says about Keats's use of apostrophe in "this living hand," though in different terms—I would like now to run roughshod over some examples from two of these poets to reinforce my point. I do not claim that it is invented from whole cloth among these poets—indeed you could track its development through Gertrude Stein, William Carlos Williams, and others, but suffice it to say that its relevance is truer at this time than at any point prior in American poetry. Let us begin with O'Hara's famous "For Grace, After a Party," just the first few lines:

You do not always know what I am feeling.

Last night in the warm spring air while I was
 blazing my tirade against someone who doesn't
 interest
 me, it was love for you that set me
 afire,
 and isn't it odd? for in rooms full of
 strangers my most tender feelings
 writhe and
 bear the fruit of screaming. Put out your hand,
 isn't there
 an ashtray, suddenly, there? Beside
 the bed? (79)

We might begin here with this “you,” which inaugurates the poem. The New York School poets use it liberally, and—not coincidentally—it is also the hallmark of many New Novels, especially works by Sarraute and Duras, that oneself is being addressed by the speaker, even as one knows that he must really be addressing someone else. It does not help to know that “you” might indeed be a real person, a Grace, whom O’Hara knows. The “you” always carries with it the finger that points directly at he or she who sits at the other end of it. The effect is indeed some kind of vividness. But it is also more than that—the very spacetime of the poem, if the reader herself is being addressed, merges with that of the reader. We might refer here to Culler’s comments on apostrophe:

The vocative of apostrophe is a device which the poetic voice uses to establish with an object a relationship which helps to constitute him. The object is treated as a subject, an I which implies a certain type of you in its turn. One who successfully invokes nature is one to whom nature might, in its turn, speak. (63)

The principle is the same, only the speaker, in the case of O’Hara’s poetry, is addressing not an object but another subject: the reader. The speaker, in other words, is attempting (asymptotically, of course) to become co-present with the reader.⁶ It is a sense of presence that is being sought.

There is something similar that is achieved by the use of the present tense and deixis in the poem. The speaker’s utterances are not only co-present but also co-temporal with the reader, insofar as the latter must be present in order to read. Thus the question that is offered on lines 11 and 12 are, in some way, being asked in real time: “Put out your hand, / isn’t there / an ashtray, suddenly, there?” The use of deixis (“there”), coupled with the flattening of the poem’s temporality, puts this question directly to the reader. True, one could argue that the line is being addressed to a “Grace,” asking her whether there is not an ashtray beside her. But once again, the straining toward co-temporal co-presence forces upon the reader the very same question, only the context which gives “there” its signification is presumably different. It is as if the speaker is asking us to reach out our hands, and to confirm whether what he says is *there*, is in fact *there*. And in a way, it is. There is an ashtray there—if not one made of glass or aluminum, then one which nevertheless exists as a typographical arrangement of letters on the page. Thus, this poetics of presence also involves a collapse of the poem’s content into its own

materiality as paper (or as lights within a screen). This is the Gumbrechtian straining towards presence effect, visible in the jarring enjambment at the very location on the page where the speaker uses deixis to call forth the reader's own spacetime: "Isn't there / and ashtray, suddenly, there?..."

The effect is amplified by John Ashbery a decade later, when he writes "Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror," which contains the following passage:

But there is in that gaze a combination
Of tenderness, amusement and regret, so powerful
In its restraint that one cannot look for long.
The secret is too plain. The pity of it smarts,
Makes hot tears spurt: that the soul is not a soul,
Has no secret, is small, and it fits
Its hollow perfectly: its room, our moment of attention.
That is the tune but there are no words.
The words are only speculation
(From the Latin *speculum*, mirror):
They seek and cannot find the meaning of the music. (425)

Again, a will to presence is brought before the reader. The plainness of "the secret" is essential, here. The secret, that essence which it is the classical duty of the poet to carry from the source to the reader, is in this case something plain, evident, pure—something not requiring interpretation. It is there. Indeed, "the pity of it smarts, / Makes hot tears spurt," rendering its effect with physiological urgency. And then the thesis-like conclusion: "That is the tune but there are no words. / The words are only speculation / (From the Latin *speculum*, mirror): / They seek and cannot find the meaning of the music." Words here are the equivalent messengers, or spies, or sentries: they are seeking something, standing between one thing (the subject) and another (the object). Here we feel the poet straining to collapse the multimedial distance, to carry over what feeble drop of presence might make it through the filter of each representational remove: artist, mirror, painting, viewer, poem, reader. At the same time, as a philosophical rumination upon these distances, the poem also restages the movements of the fixed-then-demure gaze in the materiality of its own language. Thus, the whole drama *about which* the speaker is speaking is also that *by which* the speech takes place. That Ashbery mentions music is likewise significant: music is the nonmimetic par excellence, it is its own medium, the content and the form come flush against one another.⁷

This aesthetic mode can be found not only across the early careers of O'Hara and Ashbery, but also in those of their closest compatriots: Kenneth Koch and James Schuyler.⁸ Suffice it, though, to say, by way of recapitulation, that this preference for presence and presence-effects is evident throughout this most notable strand of the American literary avant-garde in the 50s and 60s. (I should note the caveat that the Beats, that other notable strand, does not quite fit into this model, though it is beyond the remit of this paper to explore why.) If something is not rotten, then something is at least very *French* in the state of this poetic coterie, at this point in time.

But why? And are they really connected? The modes value of this paper, as I see it, has been to describe a situation which I find difficult to explain succinctly. The closest I can get to an explanation

is to follow a Bourdieusian logic of the literary field. We must ask: against whom do those artists who take the position of avant-garde or autonomous *distinguish themselves*, and *how* do they mark this distinction? In the American case, the *whom* is not explicitly stated by the New York School poets. But the *how* is, as I've argued, via a poetics of presence. Sontag might help us here. In "Against Interpretation," she writes that interpretation "makes art into an article for use, for arrangement into a mental scheme of categories" (16). And the case of Elia Kazan makes clear that by "use" she means, in part, "commodification." So we might say that the New York Poets set themselves in tension with those forms of art that refracted or were subject to market forces, and that their reasons for opting for a poetics of presence were, as Sontag suggests, because to strive toward presence is to collapse the significative distance required to exercise interpretation, to draw meaning from the text, to make it be *about* something. A poetics of presence, in my sense, is an insurance policy (one doomed to fail with time) against a market that would like to co-opt it. For a poetry that, clearly and openly, *signifies* is one which can be construed to have use-value(s), whatever they are (the market does not care; it is the buyer who cares), which allows for its easy conversion into exchange-value. On the other hand, one that resists signification at all costs is one that insists on the importance of use-value at the other end of the equation—at the end that is upheld under conditions of formal subsumption, or of the logics of the literary field: that of the producer. The poet and her poem are envisaged as inalienable thereby.

On the French side, it is all around simpler to answer the questions pertaining to position. The New Novelists set themselves in tension with the social realists and the Sartreans explicitly, and they also chose the strategy of presence.⁹ The *why* is a bit tricky, though. Was it simply because presence was the opposite of the opponents' strategies? You zig, I zag? You say content, we say form? Or was it similarly about shutting down opportunities for use, for instrumentalization, perhaps this time less by the market than by the encroachment of a political culture that demanded artists become leftists or perish, and that leftist artists argue for Zhdanovist truths or be made irrelevant. In other words, perhaps it was a refusal of the merger between artistic and social life, so as to remain free in one and a leftist in the other—which is indeed how most of the New Novelists operated.¹⁰ Were we to consent to this view, we would necessarily entertain the provocative thought that the forces of subsumption, in the French case, are not (only) those of capital; they are those of politics. During the *épuration* of the postwar years, French citizens, officials, and public intellectuals were sorted on either side of the *résistant/collabo* dividing line. For those who survived this mostly nonviolent purge, the question of political affiliation reared its head, with most artists who wanted to claim bona fide leftist credentials needing to swear allegiance to—or at least become a fellow traveler with—the French Communist Party. Was that what this was about: some condition of formal subsumption under political logics, immured to the corresponding real subsumptive forces which would alienate the writer from his text by way of the refracting device of politics?¹¹

Who knows? If we can answer this question we might find the key to much else in our discourses of the avant-garde.

Notes

1. Presence is of course a loaded term, and I take it in Gumbrecht's sense as a corrective to the critique of presence and origin offered by Derrida. Contra the deconstructionist indictment, presence here is not meant metaphysically but as a textual strategy. It is helpful, again, to consider the Bourdieusian understanding of artistic production, which is always

representational—that is, always the representation of a position within the field. To strive toward presence effects in literature is, as I will discuss below, the necessary aesthetic strategy for artists opposing themselves to (and setting themselves in dialectical tension with) market forces, which crave hermeneutic opportunities, i.e., meaning effects. I have not yet determined whether this is the “poetics of presence” that Barrett Watten “does not mean”—that is, the poetics “stemming either from Gertrude Stein’s continuous present and the modernist turn to abstraction”—in his wonderful account of a poetics of “presentism” in Ashbery’s late works, “Ashbery Alpha and Omega.”

2. For an account of the coalescence of the terms New Novel and New Wave, see Higgins, *New Novel, New Wave, New Politics*.
3. For a fuller analysis of the Nouveau Roman’s materialism, see Britton, “Nouveau Roman and *Tel Quel* Marxism.”
4. See Robbe-Grillet, *Ghosts in the Mirror*: “Within the space of a few years [these ideas] have lost any shocking, corrosive, and therefore revolutionary force and have been assimilated as received ideas” (6). See also Watten, *The Constructivist Moment*: “The avant-garde has been characterized as being in a paradoxical historical situation: while it undertakes the overturning of the prior aesthetic order as an irreversible act, it cannot survive a reentry into history, as a form of representation, without losing either creative potential or critical force” (45-46).
5. See also the essay “Nathalie Sarraute and the Novel” (*Essays*), where Sontag remarks that the French criticism of that period—including works by Barthes, Foucault, and all the New Novelists writing critical works on the novel—was “by far, the most interesting literary criticism today. And nothing prevents novelists in the English-speaking world from drawing sustenance from the brilliant reexamination of the premises of the novel expounded by these critics” (103).
6. That the attempt is not literally successful is, as Culler points out, part of the peculiarity of apostrophe, which attains its success not against but *by way of* its fictive nature. From his commentary on Keats’s “This living hand”: “The poem boldly asserts what is false: that a living hand, warm and capable, is being held towards us, that we can see it. . . . [The poem] knows its apostrophic time and the indirectly invoked presence to be a fiction and says so but enforces it as event. ‘See, here it is, I hold it towards you.’ This is the kind of effect which the lyric seeks, one whose successes should be celebrated and explained” (69).
7. I am left wondering whether this mode of presence-seeking is related to what Watten calls the “presentism” of Ashbery’s last collections. As he writes: “The poem itself is a moment of distributed cognition that accesses and lays bare its dispersed organization. Poetry is a social argument about the historical construction and limits of knowledge based on the information available to it. In Ashbery’s late work, the shifting present is an ethics of the limits of what we can know about it: ‘It was pure chaos, or fun. Now it’s time to pray’”; “Ashbery Alpha and Omega,” p. 92. It is tempting to see Ashbery’s play along a “shifting present” as an attempt to collapse another kind of distance—namely, historical distance—in an attempt at historical presentification, which Gumbrecht argues to be the main purpose of historiography (120-125).
8. See, for example, “Some Trees,” in Ashbery, *Collected Poems*, p. 26: “These are amazing”; “The World,” in Kenneth Koch, *Collected Poems*: “Poetry, my enemy! / Why can’t you do everything? / Make me young again. Give me that hand in my hand” (387); and “Poem” in James Schuyler, *Selected Poems*: “I do not always understand what you say” (45).
9. Sarraute goes even further than Robbe-Grillet, singling out Woolf, Joyce, and Proust as deserving scorn for psychologizing the novel.
10. See Higgins, *New Novel, New Wave, New Politics*, pp. 74-75, 98-100.
11. For a thorough and riveting sociological account of the jockeying for position in French literary field after the Second World War, see Gisèle Sapiro, *The French Writers’ War, 1940–1953*. Translated by Doriott Anderson and Dorrit Cohn. Duke UP, 2014.

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