



# A Genealogy of Modernism: A Study of English Literary Doctrine 1908-1922

*Michael Levenson*

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A Genealogy of Modernism is a study of literary transition in the first two decades of the twentieth-century, a period of extraordinary ferment and great accomplishment, during which the avant-garde gradually consolidated a secure place within English culture. Michael Levenson analyses that complex process by following the successive phases of a literary movement - Impressionist, Imagist, Vorticist, Classicist - as it attempted to formulate the principles on which a new aesthetic might be founded. The emphasis here falls on the ideology of modernism, but throughout the book the ideological question is tied on the one hand to specific literary works and on the other to general movements in philosophy and the fine arts. The major figures under discussion, Joseph Conrad, Ford Madox Ford, Ezra Pound, Wyndham Lewis, and T. S. Elliot, are placed in relation to thinkers who have been largely neglected in the history of modernism: Max Stirner, Wilhelm Worringer, Pierre Lasserre, Allen Upward, and Hilaire Belloc. Levenson thus situates the emergence of a modernist aesthetic within the context of literary theory, literary practice, and cultural history.



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