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| Modernist organicism emphasizes the interrelatedness between the natural world and society and links socio-cultural changes with nature, biology, and aesthetic forms in imagining the human and society as an organic form. Modernist organicist aesthetics follows the organic artistic principle of ‘form follows function’ formulated by the modernist architect Frank Lloyd Wright in defining an organic form of architecture. Crucial to the theory of modernist organicism are theories of biology and life such as those of Charles Darwin, Henri Bergson, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Herbert Spencer. Importantly, modernist organicist aesthetics emphasizes a sense of place or region and ecological consciousness (e.g., the Garden City movement in Britain in the early 20th century and the cultural or anthropological turn of the 1930s). Some modernist organicists are D. H. Lawrence, Virginia Woolf (her later works, especially), E. M. Forster, Patrick Geddes, Ebenezer Howard, Richard Llewellyn, Lewis Grassic Gibbon, Lewis Mumford, Willa Cather, Mina Loy, Gertrude Stein, William Carlos Williams, and Louis Zukofsky, to name only a few. These organicists viewed nature as a living force and showed the interdependence between nature and human-beings.  Organicism originated and flourished in the Romantic Movement in Germany, Britain, and America in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. S. T. Coleridge first used the term ‘organic form’ in an 1808 lecture on Shakespeare, and expanded on the term in his *Biographia Literaria* (1817) (Coleridge, in fact, borrowed this term from German Romanticism). Distinguishing the organic from the mechanical, imagination from fancy, he underscored the organic form of art that operates immanently or synthetically from within. The conception of organicism changed significantly in Victorian and modernist periods, but some of its underlying ideas persisted. |
| Further reading:  A. I. Botar, Oliver. “Defining Biocentrism.” *Biocentrism and Modernism.* Eds. Oliver A. I. Botar and Isabel Wünsche. Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2011.  A. I. Botar, Oliver and Isabel Wünsche. *Biocentrism and Modernism.* Eds. Oliver A. I. Botar and Isabel Wünsche. Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2011.  Coleridge, S. T. (1817). ‘Chapter XIV’ *Biographia Literari*a (1817). Accessed July 25, 2012  <<http://www.english.upenn.edu/~mgamer/Etexts/biographia.html>>  Esty, Jed. *A Shrinking Island: Modernism and National Culture in England*,  Princeton and Oxford: Princeton UP, 2004.  Marx, Leo. *Lewis Mumford: Prophet of Organicism*, *Working Paper Number 2* (n.d). Accessed on July 25, 2012  <<http://web.mit.edu/sts/pubs/pdfs/MIT_STS_WorkingPaper_2_Marx.pdf>>  Schuster, Joshua. (2007) *Modernist Biotopias:* *Organicism and Vitalism in Early Twentieth-Century American Poetry*. (Doctoral dissertation). ProQuest/UMI. (Publication No. 3260986)  Shamim Us-Saher, Ansari. (2008) *Aesthetic and Environmentalist Organicism in Willa Cather’s Death Comes for the Archbishop and Shadows on the Rock.* Doctoral dissertation. University of Denver. ProQuest/UMI. (Publication No. 3308686) |