

## *British Poetry Revival*

proletariat'. Lenin reinterpreted MARXIST teaching to fit the socio-economic backwardness of Russia at the turn of the twentieth century, and it is in this split from the Mensheviks and his preference for a small, centralised, radical elite that traces of his practical reworking of Marxist philosophy, a theory that would later become known as Leninism, can be discerned.

Later in the twentieth century Bolshevism became synonymous with a paranoid politics and rhetoric – Winston Churchill considered Bolshevism to be a 'disease' – that reached its hysterical zenith with Joseph McCarthy and the witch hunts perpetrated by the House of Un-American Activities Committee.

### READING

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## **BRITISH POETRY REVIVAL**

The British Poetry Revival was a loosely associated set of developments in late twentieth-century British poetry, mainly during the 1950s–1970s, which indicated a newfound interest in early twentieth-century modernism and its subsequent evolution worldwide, notably in mid-century North American poetry. The term was first used in 1974 by the poet and academic Eric Mottram, who subsequently limited the Revival's time frame to 1960–75, though by many accounts its origins stretch further back and its later manifestations extend beyond the mid-1970s (Mottram 1993). The Revival partly defined itself against the control exerted over post-World War II British poetry, especially English poetry, by writers, critics and editors associated with the so-called Movement, some of whom expressed an aversion to modernist techniques. The modernist poetic traditions of Scotland and Wales, the most striking manifestations of which often appeared years after the heyday of Anglo-American modernism, notably in the work of Hugh MacDiarmid, W. S. Graham, David Jones, Lynette Roberts and Dylan Thomas, were an important British precedent for the Revival, as was the overlapping development of British SURREALISM in the 1930s–1940s. The resurgent 1960s work of the Northumbrian modernist poet Basil Bunting also became a lodestar for some Revival poets. Internationally, the ongoing

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adaptation of modernist poetics, including the Poundian long-form poem, in mid-century North American OBJECTIVISM, notably in the work of Louis Zukofsky, Charles Reznikoff and Lorine Niedecker, was a vital influence; so too was the poetry associated with BLACK MOUNTAIN COLLEGE, including that of Robert Creeley and Charles Olson, and the NEW YORK SCHOOL and BEAT poetry, notably the work of John Ashbery and Allen Ginsberg. In many cases, these poets were in direct communication and collaboration with Revival poets, while the international SOUND POETRY and CONCRETE POETRY movements of the 1950s–1970s performed a similar function for other poets. The Revival can be traced both in the development of a large, heterogeneous body of literature and in the establishment of cultural projects such as small presses, LITTLE MAGAZINES, reading series, exhibitions, festivals and collectives. In the first case, early manifestations of Revival poetics can be found in the 1950s and early 1960s work of Charles Tomlinson and Roy Fisher, among the first British poets to register the influence of William Carlos Williams. Poets subsequently associated with the Revival include J. H. Prynne, a sometime associate of the Black Mountain poet Ed Dorn, Bob Cobbing, an innovator in Concrete and Sound Poetry, and Tom Raworth, whose early poetry channels the influence of Beat, Black Mountain and New York School poetry. Considered as a cultural phenomenon, an important early episode in the Revival was the establishment of the transatlantic small press Migrant by the Scottish poet Gael Turnbull in 1957. The Revival's subsequent manifestation comprised a number of loosely connected nodes of activity in locations throughout Britain, including London, Cambridge, Brighton, Bristol, Cardiff, Nottingham, Newcastle, Edinburgh and Glasgow. In most of these locations, small presses, journals, independent galleries and reading series were in operation throughout much of the 1950s–1970s. Iconic cultural expressions of the Revival include the International Poetry Incarnation staged at the Royal Albert Hall in 1965 and the takeover of the Poetry Society by pro-modernist figures in the early 1970s.

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## Bureaucracy

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### BUREAUCRACY

The increasing scale of industry and commercialisation in the nineteenth century required the rapid expansion of government administration. In US and British usage, the terms 'public service' or 'civil service' are used in order to imply impartiality and professionalism, whereas the foreign term 'bureaucracy' has more negative connotations, suggesting the excessive use of power. In *Economy and Society* (1922) the German sociologist Max Weber argues every bureaucracy guards its power against all rivals. In order to do so it carefully controls the flow of information. The concept of 'official secrets' conceals the interests of the bureaucracy itself. Bureaucracy is not limited to the nation state; it also extends into private and commercial institutions and corporations.

The intrusion of bureaucracy into EVERYDAY life is a key theme in the work of Franz Kafka. Kafka's employment in the 'Workers' Accident Insurance Institute for the Kingdom of Bohemia' gave him insights into how bureaucracy works. His major texts depict individuals caught in the wheels of institutional MACHINERY. In *Metamorphosis* (*Die Verwandlung*, 1915) Gregor Samsa is a commercial traveller. When he discovers that he has transformed into a verminous insect, his initial reaction is to worry about missing the train for work. In *The Trial* (*Der Process*, 1925) Josef K. is subject to proceedings by a mysterious court, whose authority he implicitly accepts, even as he protests against it. K., the main protagonist of *The Castle* (*Das Schloss*, 1926), confronts an advanced bureaucratic administration which, despite its apparent incompetence, exerts a magnetic hold over a village community. The quasi-supernatural power of bureaucracy in Kafka's fiction can be linked to other modern forms of authority such as hypnosis and CHARISMA. Other modern representations of bureaucratic regimes include George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) and Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* (1961).