The Man Without Qualities Robert Musil

Posthumous Papers of a Living Author

The Enthusiasts

Subject Without Nation

Positions Robert Musil's theory and writings within recent critical accounts of modernism and brings him into dialogue with continental philosophy.

Electra after Freud

The Man Without Qualities - Robert Musil

A landmark work of Modernist fiction, Robert Musil's novel was largely forgotten until a new translation appeared in 1996.

The Man Without Qualities

Two erotic novellas by one of the masters of high modernism. First published in 1911, Intimate Ties is Robert Musil's second book,
consisting of two novellas, "The Culmination of Love" and "The Temptation of Silent Veronica." Each revolves around a troubled woman in the throes of her sexual and romantic woes, as their memories of the past return to influence their present desires. Musil tracks the psyche of his protagonists in a blurring of impressions that is reflected in his experimental prose. Intimate Ties offers the reader an early glimpse of the high modernist style Musil would perfect in his magnum opus The Man Without Qualities.

Selected Writings

The Man Without Qualities

Greed

In a pluralistic society without absolute standards of judgment, how can an individual live a moral life? This is the question Robert Musil (1880-1942), an Austrian-born engineer and mathematician turned writer, asked in essays, plays, and fiction that grapple with the moral ambivalence of modern life. Though unfinished, his monumental novel of Vienna in the febrile days before World War I, The Man without Qualities, is identified by German scholars as the most important literary work of the twentieth century. In a fresh examination of his essays, notebooks, and fiction, Patrizia McBride reconstructs Musil's understanding of ethics as a realm of experience that eludes language and thought. After situating Musil's work within its contemporary cultural-philosophical horizon, as well as the historical background of rising National Socialism, McBride shows how the writer's notion of ethics as a void can be understood as a coherent and innovative response to the crises haunting Europe after World War I. She explores how Musil rejected the outdated, rationalistic morality of humanism, while simultaneously critiquing the irrationalism of contemporary art movements, including symbolism, impressionism, and expressionism. Her work reveals Musil's remarkable relevance today—particularly those aspects of his thought that made him unfashionable in his own time: a commitment to fighting ethical fundamentalism and a literary imagination that validates the pluralistic character of modern life.

The Man Without Qualities: The like of it now happens (II)

George Haskel, a retired professor of German literature, decides to found an institute to promote dullness, as a counterpoint to the hustling celebrity culture of contemporary America. The venture soon attracts a number of brilliant misfits, who transform the project into a political movement, the Authentic Party, that ultimately swells to 8 million members. Events begin to overtake George and his merry band, as luminaries such as Bill Maher, Woody Allen, and Jerry Brown get on board. The final showdown with the White House threatens a coup d'état: Will America undertake a radical shift in the direction of authenticity, or will it remain committed to business as usual? -Amazon.

Precision and Soul

Three Women, a new translation, is a major book of stories by the great Austrian writer, Robert Musil.
A Companion to the Works of Robert Musil

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Three Women

A major new study of Robert Musil by one of the world's leading Musil scholars. Musil's extraordinary works, the study reveals, emerged from the problem of the "two cultures."

The Man Without Qualities

Robert Musil's 'The Man Without Qualities'

The first study to utilize the Klagenfurt Edition of Musil's Nachlass offers a close reading of textual variations, emphasizing Musil's commitment to the artist's role in re-creating the world.

Five Women

"Electra's story is essentially a tale of murder, revenge, and violence. In the ancient myth of Atreus, Agamemnon returns home from battle and receives no hero's welcome. Instead, he is greeted with an ax, murdered in his bath by his wife, Clytemnestra, and her lover-accomplice, Aegisthus. Electra chooses anger over sorrow and stops at nothing to ensure that her mother pays. In revenge, Electra, with the help of her brother, orchestrates a brutal and bloody matricide, and her reward is the restitution of her father's good name. Amid all this chaos, Electra, Agamemnon's princess daughter, must bear the humiliation of being treated as a slave girl and labeled a madwoman."—from the Introduction

Almost everyone knows about Oedipus and his mother, and many readers would put the Oedipus myth at the forefront of Western collective mythology. In Electra after Freud, Jill Scott leaves that couple behind and argues convincingly for the primacy of the countermyth of Agamemnon and his daughter. Through a lens of Freudian and feminist psychoanalysis, this book views renderings of the Electra myth in twentieth-century literature and culture. Scott reads several pivotal texts featuring Electra to demonstrate what she calls "a narrative revolt" against the dominance of Oedipus as archetype. Situating the Electra myth within a framework of psychoanalysis, medicine, opera, and dance, Scott investigates the heroine's role at the intersections of history and the feminine, eros and thanatos, hysteria and melancholia. Scott analyzes Electra adaptations by H.D., Hofmannsthal and Strauss, Musil, and Plath and highlights key moments in the telling and reception of the Electra myth in the modern imagination.

Young Törless

From the author of 'A Man without Qualities,' a novel about spirituality in the modern world. Agathe is the sister of Ulrich, the restless and
elusive “man without qualities” at the center of Robert Musil’s great, unfinished novel of the same name. For years Agathe and Ulrich have ignored each other, but when brother and sister find themselves reunited over the bier of their dead father, they are electrified. Each is the other’s spitting image, and Agathe, who has just separated from her husband, is even more defiant and inquiring than Ulrich. Beginning with a series of increasingly intense “holy conversations,” the two gradually enlarge the boundaries of sexuality, sensuality, identity, and understanding in pursuit of a new, true form of being that they are seeking to discover. Robert Musil’s The Man Without Qualities is perhaps the most profoundly exploratory and unsettling masterpiece of twentieth-century fiction. Agathe, or, The Forgotten Sister reveals with new clarity a particular dimension of this multidimensional book—the dimension that meant the most to Musil himself and that inspired some of his most searching writing. The outstanding translator Joel Agee captures the acuity, audacity, and unsettling poetry of a book that is meant to be nothing short of life-changing.

The Critical Response to Robert Musil's The Man Without Qualities

The Curtain

Wildly comic and bitterly satiric, Imaginative Qualities of Actual Things is Gilbert Sorrentino's ruthless, and timeless, attack on the New York art world of the 1950s and ‘60s. Among the best of Sorrentino's novels, Imaginative Qualities is also, quite simply, the best American novel ever written about writers and artists.

Robert Musil's The Man Without Qualities

Kurt Janisch is an ambitious, but frustrated country policeman. Things are not going right in his life - at least not fast enough. But a country policeman gets talking to a lot of people in the line of duty - particularly women. Lonely, middle-aged women, women with a bit of property perhaps Matters go from bad to worse: for Kurt Janisch, for the women who fall for him. Someone sees too much, knows too much. Soon there's a body in a lake and a murderer to be caught. A thriller set amid the mountains and small towns of southern Austria, Greed is Elfriede Jelinek's most accessible novel since The Piano Teacher. But as always Jelinek gives the reader a lot more to think about: the ecological costs of affluence, the inescapable burden and inadequacy of our everyday words, the exploitative nature of relations between men and women, the impossibility of life without relationships. A meditative reflection on ageing, Greed is another chapter in Jelinek's chronicling of her love/hate relationship with Austria.

Robert Musil's the Man Without Qualities

Scientist, seducer and sceptic, Ulrich is the man without qualities, disdaining the morals of old Europe as he yearns for something to replace them. In 1913 in Vienna he finds what he is looking for in his sister. Volume two comprises Into The Millennium and From The Posthumous Papers.
The Metropolis Case

Writings: Young Torless, Three Women, The Perfecting of a Love and other Writings, by Musil by Robert Musil

Intimate Ties

"We do not have too much intellect and too little soul, but too little precision in matters of the soul."—Robert Musil Best known as author of the novel The Man without Qualities, Robert Musil wrote these essays in Vienna and Berlin between 1911 and 1937. Offering a perspective on modern society and intellectual life, they are concerned with the crisis of modern culture as it manifests itself in science and mathematics, capitalism and nationalism, the changing roles of women and writers, and more. Writing to find his way in a world where moral systems everywhere were seemingly in decay, Musil strives to reconcile the ongoing conflict between functional relativism and the passionate search for ethical values. Robert Musil was born in 1880 and died in 1942. His first novel, Young Törless, is available in English. A new two-volume translation by Burton Pike and Sophie Wilkins of The Man without Qualities is forthcoming from Alfred A. Knopf. "Now we have these thirty-one invaluable and entertaining pieces, from an article on 'The Obscene and Pathological in Art' to the equally provocative talk 'On Stupidity,' which, with a new translation of The Man without Qualities forthcoming . . . amount to a literary event for the reader of English comparable to Constance Garnett's massive translation of Chekhov's stories."—Joseph Coates, Chicago Tribune "Musil is one of the few great moderns, one of the handful who ventured to confront the issues that shape and define our time. . . . He has a range and a striking capacity every bit as great as that of Mann, Joyce, or Beckett."—Boston Review "These essays are crucial in understanding a writer and critic whose lifelong task was an attempt to resolve the dichotomy between the precision of scientific form and the soul—the matter of life and art."—Choice

Robert Musil and the NonModern

Phenomenology and Social Reality

This collection of exploratory pieces, short stories, and reflections was originally published in Zurich in 1936. It was the last volume Robert Musil published before his sudden death in 1942. Musil had begun to fathom the impossibility of completing his monumental masterpiece The Man Without Qualities and this volume reveals a radically different aspect of his work. Musil observes a fly's tragic struggle with flypaper, the laughter of a horse; he peers through microscopes and telescopes, dissecting both large and small. Musil's quest for the essential is a voyage into the minute.

The Man Without Qualities

Alfred Schutz was born in Vienna on April 13, 1899, and died in New York City on May 20, 1959. The year 1969, then, marks the seventieth anniversary of his birth and the tenth year of his death. The essays which follow are offered not only as a tribute to an irreplaceable friend,
colleague, and teacher, but as evidence of the contributors’ conviction of the eminence of his work. No special pleading is needed here to support that claim, for it is widely acknowledged that his ideas have had a significant impact on present-day philosophy and phenomenology of the social sciences. In place of either argument or evaluation, I choose to restrict myself to some biographical information and a fragmentary memoir. * The only child of Johanna and Otto Schutz (an executive in a private bank in Vienna), Alfred attended the Esterhazy Gymnasium in Vienna, an academic high school whose curriculum included eight years of Latin and Greek. He graduated at seventeen - in time to spend one year of service in the Austrian army in the First World War. For bravery at the front on the battlefield in Italy, he was decorated by his country. After the war ended, he entered the University of Vienna, completing a four year curriculum in only two and one half years and receiving his doctorate in Law.

The Void of Ethics

Robert Musil and the Question of Science

With his epic trilogy, The Sleepwalkers, Hermann Broch established himself as one of the great innovators of modern literature, a visionary writer-philosopher the equal of James Joyce, Thomas Mann, or Robert Musil. Even as he grounded his narratives in the intimate daily life of Germany, Broch was identifying the oceanic changes that would shortly sweep that life into the abyss. Whether he is writing about a neurotic army officer (The Romantic), a disgruntled bookkeeper and would-be assassin (The Anarchist), or an opportunistic war-deserter (The Relaist), Broch immerses himself in the twists of his characters’ psyches, and at the same time soars above them, to produce a prophetic portrait of a world tormented by its loss of faith, morals, and reason.

Edge of Irony

Among the brilliant writers and thinkers who emerged from the multicultural and polyglot world of the Austro-Hungarian Empire were Sigmund Freud, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Franz Kafka, and Paul Celan. For them, the trauma of the First World War included the sudden dissolution of the geographical entity into which they were born. Austria, the small, fragile republic that emerged from the Empire in 1918, became in Karl Kraus s words the research laboratory for world destruction. In this major reconsideration of European modernism, Marjorie Perloff identifies and explores the aesthetic world that emerged from the rubble of WWI Vienna and other former Hapsburg territoriesan Austro-Modernist ethos that strangely anticipates the darkness and cynicism of our own disillusionsed twenty-first-century culture. Perloff introduces works in a variety of genresdrama (Kraus s Last Days of Mankind ), the novel (Roth s The Radetzky March ), the essay (central to Robert Musil s The Man without Qualities ), the memoir (Elias Canetti s The Tongue Set Free ), the lyric poem (Celan s love poetry), and the philosophical notebook (Wittgenstein)so as to give even non-specialists a sense of the complex and troubled literary scene created in the shadow of empire and war. These writers created a deeply skeptical and resolutely individualistic modernismone much less ideologically charged, for example, than its counterpart in Germany. Austro-Modernism was not avant-garde in the usual senses, Perloff shows. But its savage and grotesquely comic irony, its conviction, most memorably expressed by Wittgenstein, that argumentation was best conveyed through aphorism, its fondness for paradox and contradiction as modes of understanding, and its early embrace of an aesthetics of documentation and appropriationthese may well be the most lasting legacies of any modernist movement. Austro-Modernism emerges here
as a vital alternative, not only to the French and Anglo-American modernisms that have largely defined the period, but also to Weimar and the Frankfurt School, so central to Anglo-American cultural studies."

**The Man Without Qualities: a Sort of Introduction; The Like of it Now Happens(I)/by Robert Musil**

Ulrich has no qualities in the sense that his self-awareness is completely divorced from his abilities. He is drawn into a project, the "Parallel Campaign", to celebrate the 70th anniversary of Emperor Franz Joseph's coronation in 1918.

**The World as Metaphor in Robert Musil's The Man Without Qualities**

A fresh and extensive look at the works of the great Austrian novelist in the context of the German and Austrian culture of his time.

**The Man Without Qualities**

A story set in 19th-century Europe, 1970s Pittsburgh and present-day New York City follows the experiences of a lawyer in search of a more authentic life, an ostracized teen with an extraordinary operatic voice, a rising star who finds more than she bargained for and a young singer who pushes his boundaries. A first novel. Reprint.

**The Man Without Qualities**

Robert Musil's The Man without Qualities is perhaps the most important novel in German written in the twentieth century - certainly it is among the most brilliant, puzzling and profound. This, the first comprehensive study of the work to appear in English, guides the reader towards Musil's central concerns. It examines how Musil laboured through draft after draft to produce material that would pass his own strict literary 'quality control' and traces major themes through different layers of narrative with the aid of close textual analysis. It details how Musil subjects leading figures of fin-de-siecle Vienna to intense ironic scrutiny and how, by drawing on his extensive knowledge of philosophy, psychology, politics, sociology and science, he works into his novel essayistic statements which record the state of contemporary European civilisation. Through a disturbing and deeply serious liaison with his sister, Musil's hero Ulrich, is shown to struggle through to the brink of self-discovery and enlightenment.

**The Man Without Qualities, Vol 01**

**Imaginative Qualities of Actual Things**

Jonsson analyzes how Musil explains the foundation of modern theories of subjectivity.
A sort of introduction. The like of it now happens (I)

A landmark work of Modernist fiction, Robert Musil's novel was largely forgotten until a new translation appeared in 1996. Since then it has received serious critical attention.

The Man Without Qualities

In this entertaining and always stimulating collection of seven essays, Kundera deftly sketches out his personal view of the history and value of the novel. Too often, he suggests, a novel is thought about only within the confines of the nation of its origin, when in fact the novel's development has always occurred across borders: Laurence Sterne learned from Rabelais, Henry Fielding from Cervantes, Joyce from Flaubert, García Márquez from Kafka. The real work of a novel is not bound up in the specifics of any one language: what makes a novel matter is its ability to reveal some previously unknown aspect of our existence. In The Curtain, Kundera skillfully describes how the best novels do just that.

The Sleepwalkers

The Man Without Qualities, by Robert Musil

With an introduction by Jonathan Lethem It is 1913, and Viennese high society is determined to find an appropriate way of celebrating the seventieth jubilee of the accession of Emperor Franz Josef. But as the aristocracy tries to salvage something illustrious out of the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the ordinary Viennese world is beginning to show signs of more serious rebellion. Caught in the middle of this social labyrinth is Ulrich: youngish, rich, an ex-soldier, seducer and scientist. Unable to deceive himself that the jumble of attributes and values that his world has bestowed on him amounts to anything so innate as a 'character', he is effectively a man 'without qualities', a brilliant, detached observer of the spinning, racing society around him. Part satire, part visionary epic, part intellectual tour de force, The Man Without Qualities by Robert Musil is a work of immeasurable importance.

Agathe

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