wolf has died without making a sound and the hunter comments:

When one thinks what one leaves in the world
when one dies,
Only silence is strong,—all the rest is but lies.[8]

In a part of the poem that Adams does not quote, the hunter then imagines the wolf enjoining him to keep to the 'high degree of stoic dignity' ('haut degré de stoïque fierté') that the animal has shown in its death.[9] In Tate's poem 'The Wolves', however, this stoic creed or 'epitaph' of 'dog silence' shows the limitations of de Vigny's neo-classical humanism. It is true that when measured by this creed men are able to show 'a little dignity', although they show 'less patience' than that of the wolf. But from the point of view of Tate's Catholic dualism this stoic philosophy has insufficient metaphysical penetration because it stays at the level of an immanent continuity between the human and the animal. Its teaching is only possible if nature is ventriloquized so as to give voice to a credo that is extraneous to its strict impersonality in the same way that the wolf is made to speak in the poem (in fact de Vigny's wolf impossibly voices its own epitaph, its speech emerging out of its own annihilation). Such 'meditations' belong 'to other times' because they spell out an inhuman truth which can only be true in another world from that which the speaker of 'The Wolves' inhabits.

'The Wolves' concludes with the speaker overcoming his particular phantasmagoria and facing the wolves: 'Now remember courage, go to the door'. At this point the power of the wolves—or of the demonic element within the natural world—suddenly shrivels up: 'coiled on the bed / Or cringing by the wall' (54). Tate once said that insofar as humans are social they are inherently religious and the conclusion of the poem is that 'man can never be alone' (54).[10] Tate's two sources in his use of the wolf figure, Rousseau and de Vigny, can be seen as representatives of the French Enlightenment (with Adams as a remoter, disillusioned American descendent of this era). Tate, as a traditionalist modernist who patterned himself on T. S. Eliot, sought to build up his Agrarian and potentially Catholic version of a Counter-Enlightenment by subsuming and re-modelling the images and arguments of French rationalism.

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THE HISTORY OF *TRANSHUMANISM* (CONT.)

In an article entitled 'The History of *Transhumanism*', published in *Notes & Queries* in July 2015, Peter Harrison and Joseph Wolyniak[1] rightly point out a common error found in standard academic articles and on the Internet—particularly Wikipedia, which cites these academic sources in good faith—according to which the word *transhumanism* was 'invented' by Julian Huxley in 1957 (or even in 1927, certain sources claim). Referring to the use of the term by the Canadian essayist W. D. Lighthall (1857–1954)—who evokes 'St Paul's transhumanism'—the authors draw a connection between this religious use of the term (transhumanism as man's capacity to transcend the human condition in his encounter with God) and Dante's use of the term in *The Divine Comedy* (through the Italian verb he coined, *trasumanar*, which Carey, the English translator of Dante, translated in 1814 as *transhuman change*).

As the authors suggest, tracing the history of the word *transhumanism* is an important matter given the contemporary upsurge in the use of the term. The fact that the term is practically identical in the Latin and Anglo-Saxon[2]

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8 Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams*, ed. Ernest Samuels (Boston, 1973), 358.

9 Alfred de Vigny, *Poésies Complètes* (Paris, 1893), 264.

10 Tate wrote in his essay 'The Hovering Fly' (1943) that 'man…is…after he achieves society, primarily religious'. See Allen Tate, *Essays of Four Decades* (Chicago, 1968), 122.

1 Wolyniak had made the same point in his article in the collectively authored *Religion and Transhumanism: The Unknown Future of Human Enhancement*, ed. Calvin Mercer and Tracy J. Trothen (Santa Barbara, 2015). Independently of Wolyniak, we had noted the same inconsistencies in the dating of the first use of the word.

2 For example, *transhumanisme* in French, *transhumanismus* in German, and *transumanismo* in Spanish.

languages facilitates this research and makes it all the more useful. Indeed, understanding how the word made its (re)appearance in the evolutionist discourses of the 1930s to the 1960s sheds light on contemporary usage of the term. After correctly noting that Julian Huxley used the term in a lecture of 1951, Harrison and Wolyniak suggest that he may have read the word in Lighthall when he was looking for an alternative to *evolutionary humanism* to describe his own scientific utopia. This is a plausible hypothesis, but we would like to introduce another to the debate.

The idea that mankind is capable of transcending the human condition to attain a state of 'transhumanism' is pervasive in the utopias of the New Man of the 1930s. These utopias tend in two ostensibly different directions. The first is religious; it is concerned with the encounter between man and God and can be found in Lighthall, writing in 1940, as well as in the work of the French Jesuit palaeontologist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881–1955). The second is secular and scientific. It is concerned with mankind transcending the human condition through science and technology. This is the transhumanism of Julian Huxley, among others: a *Religion without Revelation*;[3] indeed, a religion of mankind. It is this latter conception that one finds among transhumanist movements today, which, aside from a few rare exceptions, no longer invoke religion (in a revelatory sense). Yet at one time, indeed until the 1960s, the two conceptions coexisted and were compatible. Although its ends were different, religious transhumanism itself drew extensively on science, in particular evolutionist biology (in Teilhard) and cosmology (in Lighthall).

As Harrison and Wolyniak emphasize, although Lighthall's 'Pauline transhumanism' is apparently distinct from Huxley's vision, in reality the two conceptions could not be entirely removed from one another, for they shared a strong scientific foundation. Although Lighthall uses the term in the first context, it is in the second (non-religious) context that one finds the word *transhumanisme*

being used in the work of the French engineer Jean Coutrot (1895–1941) in the 1930s. The life and work of this polytechnician and pioneer of technocracy have long been forgotten: he was both a theorist and a 'prophet' of the rational organization of the economy and of human society in France in the 1930s.[4]

The word *transhumanisme* appears in a lecture that Coutrot delivered on Sunday 28 May 1939 at the Entretiens de Pontigny (Yonne), which he himself organized.[5] True to form, his reasoning was sweeping yet vague, paying little heed to precise definitions. Assuming a prophetic role, he frequently looks forward to the next stage in the evolution of the New Man. Indeed, it is a 'transhumanist précis' [*précis de transhumanisme*] that he delivers.[6]

According to Coutrot, *transhumanisme* was an ideology in which various human types (the sensorial, conformist, intuitive, and rationalist types—Coutrot was keen on psychology) would 'come together around Truth'. Here the prefix -*trans* is used in the sense of the traversal and grouping of various categories. But Coutrot also uses -*trans* in the sense of an evolution through time. This is closer to the current meaning of the term and similar to Huxley's notion of *evolutionary humanism*: the human race has changed, is able to change, and will change again; the future 'human sciences' in which humanity places its hopes—which will call more upon the spirit of geometry (i.e. mathematics) than the spirit of finesse—should provide us with a better understanding of this evolution from humanism to transhumanism. Although his understanding of the term is still in flux in the lecture of May 1939, Coutrot also alludes to an overarching -*trans* presiding over various humanisms (and not various human types). This is the conclusion of his lecture: 'Taken together, the different aspects of these various humanisms make up what one might call transhumanism'

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3 Julian Huxley, *Religion without Revelation* (London, 1927).

4 Olivier Dard, *Jean Coutrot. De l'Ingénieur au Prophète* (Besançon, 1999).

5 It is possible that this word appears a little earlier in the writings of Coutrot, because in May 1939 a commentator evoked Coutrot's 'schémas transhumanistes' (Pierre Aubé, 'Faisons le point', *La Semaine céphéenne*, iii (15 May 1939), cited in Dard, *Jean Coutrot*, 359).

6 Dard, *Jean Coutrot*, 379.

[*L'ensemble de tous ces aspects d'humanismes divers constituent ce que nous pouvons appeler le transhumanisme*].

Even though the meanings he invokes are rather varied, Coutrot is conscious of the scope of his new word. In a letter dated 28 August 1939 to the famous doctor Alexis Carrel (1873–1944, Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine 1912), with whom he corresponded, he writes: 'Please accept, dear doctor, the expression of my kindest and most "transhumanist" sentiments (you will find the explanation of this indispensable neologism in my texts).'[7]

Yet surprisingly—or not, as the case may be—Coutrot and Huxley's paths were intertwined. Coutrot knew Aldous Huxley (1894–1963), Julian's brother, very well; the two men were the same age and they and their wives were friends.[8] Did Coutrot mention the term to Aldous before the war (he died in 1941), and did Aldous in turn mention it to his brother, Julian, who would himself use it in a lecture delivered in 1951? Or was the opposite true? Might Julian Huxley have already had the term in mind and discussed it with Aldous, who in turn mentioned it to Coutrot—who was quick to seize upon anything new? We will probably never know for sure.

The issue of the early uses of the term *transhumanism* from the 1930s onwards therefore remains open to debate. This is also true of the ways in which the term was reused by later authors, namely Julian Huxley in 1951, but also Teilhard de Chardin in 1949, who writes: 'Liberty: that is to say, the chance offered to every man (by removing obstacles and placing the appropriate means at his disposal) of "trans-humanizing" himself.'[9] We cite the

Jesuit Teilhard de Chardin because he himself was a central figure in this debate in the 1930s and 1940s.[10] Although he did not participate in Coutrot's Entretiens de Pontigny, he was notable in his absence; indeed, he was constantly 'evoked and invoked'.[11] Furthermore, Julian Huxley wrote the preface to the English translation (published in 1959) of Teilhard's authoritative work, *Le Phénomène humain* (1955).[12] This goes to show that the boundary between (Teilhard's) Christian transhumanism and (Huxley's) 'religion (of man) without revelation'—the two contexts evoked above—is not an easy one to map.

To conclude, this brief study also hints at the fact that, above and beyond the word itself, these concepts remain polysemic or even vague (notably in Coutrot, and to a lesser extent in Huxley). The precise definition of terms has never been one of the characteristics of utopias—from Saint-Simon to the 1930s utopias of the New Man. In the realm of vocabulary, as elsewhere, any departure from ambiguity is often detrimental to one's cause. It is possible that, even in the contemporary transhumanist utopia, the term remains hazy. Although its definition may sharpen with every technical advance, so does the imaginative freight it carries in tow! The word therefore becomes a marker of a *perpetually* ulterior state, 'making constant appeals to the

7 Cited by Alain Drouard, 'La Fondation pour l'étude des problèmes humains et l'organisation de la recherche en sciences sociales en France', *Cahiers pour l'histoire du CNRS*, ix (1990) (online).

8 'The Coutrots had known Aldous and Maria Huxley since the 1920s. Even after their move to California, the Huxleys remained in touch with the Coutrots. Maria Huxley wrote to them: 'We so often think about you both...'' [*Le couple Coutrot connaît Aldous et Maria Huxley depuis les années vingt. Installés en Californie, les Huxley restent fidèles aux Coutrot. Maria Huxley leur écrivant: « Nous pensons tant à vous deux ...»*], in Dard, *Jean Coutrot*, 113.

9 Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, 'The Essence of the Democratic Idea: A Biological Approach', in *The Future of Mankind*, trans. Norman Denny (New York and Evanston, 1959) [French orig. *L'Avenir de l'Homme* (Paris, 1959), 360]. Later on Teilhard would use the (more Latin and less Anglo-Saxon) word *ultra-humain*, which has subsequently been taken up by his many commentators. It is possible that Teilhard wished to distance himself from the term *transhuman*—which had been 'pre-empted' by Coutrot before the war—particularly because his own purposes were rather different.

10 The philosopher Eric Steinhart (William Paterson University) has stressed Teilhard's historical importance in the study of transhumanism ('Teilhard de Chardin and Transhumanism', *Journal of Evolution and Technology,* xx (December 2008), 1–22).

11 For more on the 'coincidences and convergences' between Teilhard and Coutrot, see the detailed discussion of this topic in Dard, *Jean Coutrot*, 371–6.

12 *The Phenomenon of Man*, trans. Bernard Wall, introduction by Sir Julian Huxley (New York, Evanston and London, 1959). A new translation by Sarah Appleton-Weber was published in 1999 under the title *The Human Phenomenon*.

imaginary' [*solliciter constamment l'imaginaire*].[13] In any event, from a strictly historical point of view, it is useful and profitable to examine how the word *transhumanism* was used before the twentieth century, how it underwent a resurgence from the 1930s onwards (or even before), how it was defined at that time, and how it has given rise to various semantic variations.[14]

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13 Michèle Robitaille (Université de Montréal), 'Le transhumanisme comme idéologie technoprophétique', *Futuribles, ccclxx* (January 2011), 57–70.

14 Such as *ultra-humain* in later works by Teilhard (see note 9) or *surhumain* in the work of the French biologist Jean Rostand (1894–1977).

ALLUSIONS AND ECHOES IN PHILIP LARKIN'S LETTERS

Philip Larkin's voluminous correspondence was well-edited by Anthony Thwaite nearly a quarter-century ago. Yet Thwaite's *Selected Letters of Philip Larkin 1940–1985* (1992; rev. ed. 1993)—he also edited Larkin's *Letters to Monica* (2010)—leaves many notable allusions and echoes unremarked. Some of these may have seemed too obvious to require annotation; some, Thwaite says, could not be traced; still others he may simply have missed. While I share Thwaite's stated wish to avoid pedantry, current and future readers may better appreciate Larkin's allusive richness by taking the following items (whose page references are keyed to the 1993 edition) into account:

p. 5. 'I noticed an extract from Ben Jonson the other day which said "the third requisite in our poet, or maker, is *imitation* … to follow him (Auden, in my case) till he grow very He; or so like him that the copy may be mistaken for the principal …"'[1]

1 The ellipses here are Larkin's. When added, they appears thus: […]

Jonson, *Timber, or, Discoveries made upon men and matter* (1640).

p. 6. 'Blake was lucky: "I dare not pretend to be any other than the secretary: the authors are in eternity." And: "I have written this poem from immediate dictation … even against my will …"' From, respectively, Blake's preface to *Jerusalem, the Emanation of the Giant Albion* (1804–20) and a letter to Thomas Butts dated 25 April 1803.

p. 9. 'Present day. Present laughter.' *Twelfth Night*, II.iii.48: 'Present mirth hath present laughter.'

p. 11. '("Where weakness is part of the ordinary landscape …")' From Larkin's own 'The house on the edge of the serious wood', posthumously published in *Complete Poems* (2012), 191–2, with 'is' substituted for the poem's 'was'.

p. 13. 'I'm funny that way […]' Title and refrain of a song first performed by Marion Harris in the sound short *Gems of MGM* (1930).

p. 13. 'As for "the aids to nobler life are all within" […]' Final line of Matthew Arnold's 'Worldly Place', with 'nobler' substituted for the poem's 'noble'.

p. 14. '"Man is a spirit."' A phrase associated with the Swedish scientist, philosopher, theologian, and mystic Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772).

p. 14. '"Ripeness is all."' *King Lear*, V.ii.15.

p. 17. 'Shaw is quite right to say that he is superior as a thinker to Shakespeare.' An assertion in Shaw's preface, entitled 'Better than Shakespear?', to his *Three Plays for Puritans* (1901).

p. 19. 'As [D. H.] Lawrence […] said "The reason the English Middle Classes chew every mouthful 30 times is that a bite any bigger than a pea would cause stoppage in their narrow guts," (or words to that effect).' Paraphrasing a passage in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, chapter 15.

p. 20. 'But such is life, as Somerset Ballocks would say'. The phrase occurs in chapter 7 of Maugham's *The Razor's Edge*.

p. 35. 'But there has been a change in English psyche. The wind is blowing "in a new direction of time" […]' Lawrence's 'Song of a Man Who has Come Through' begins: 'Not I, not I, but the wind that