who committed suicide in 1942 because he feared the triumph of the Nazis and whose books are now little read in the English-speaking world.

—D. E. Richardson

NEITH BOYCE'S AMERICAN ODYSSEY

The Modern World of Neith Boyce: Autobiography and Diaries
edited by Carol DeBoer-Langworthy
(University of New Mexico Press, 2003. xvi + 360 pages. Illustrated. $34.95.)

On Wednesday, July 29, 1914, when Neith Boyce and Mabel Dodge were inspecting their flea- and bedbug-infested cabins on the *Stampalia*, a "dingy" craft "crowded with Italians," Neith said to Mabel, "Let's get off the boat." Her impulse would prove prophetically bad. Their trip to Florence could not have been timed worse. Once the women arrive in Italy and begin to settle in with their children at the Villa Curonia, they attempt to put the difficulties of their crossing behind them. Neith writes in her diary: "There is something in the papers about Austria and Servia [sic], but we pay no attention." Soon, however, the events of August 1914 have caught up to them, and the two women find themselves stranded in a foreign land, surrounded by suspicious Italians, and pressed by dwindling resources: "Even Am Ex Co checks difficult to cash."

Boyce was in Florence with her young son and daughter accompanying Mabel Dodge and her son. Dodge was arranging a divorce and hoping to rendezvous with the journalist John Reed, her latest lover. Meanwhile Carl Van Vechten arrived from Paris to assume the role of protector for the two women and their children, trying to help them all find passage back to America. Boyce's diary tells the story of the day-to-day anxiety they and other expatriate Americans endure during a time when there was little means of discovering what was actually happening in the next town or country, not to mention around the world.

The World War I diary is the last of the autobiographical pieces in this collection, masterfully edited by Carol DeBoer-Langworthy and beautifully illustrated and produced by the University of New Mexico Press. Neith Boyce (Mrs. Hutchins Hapgood) was a person and an author of some renown early in the last century, but after the publication of her final novel (1923) her reputation began to fade. When she died in 1951 she was hardly known outside her family and a small circle of friends. She appeared destined to be another of many once well-known but now forgotten figures from that time, but for the work of this deter-

mined literary scholar and documentary editor. *The Modern World of Neith Boyce* resurrects a woman and a writer who left behind a remarkable legacy of creative and autobiographical work.

Even had she not been so talented in her own writing, Boyce would deserve mention. She was influential among a group of writers and artists who ushered in the age of modernism. Like many of her friends and artistic contemporaries, Boyce was interested in all things new in art, literature, and life. Among her closest friends and acquaintances were many of the key figures of her era. In addition to Van Vechten and Mabel Dodge Luhan they included Susan Glaspell, Eugene O'Neill, Leo and Gertrude Stein, Bernard Berenson, and still others. From her youth Boyce had been encouraged by her parents to pursue her interest in writing, and she was one of many young women who found a place for themselves in the bustling world of journalism, both newspaper and magazine publishing, early in the twentieth century. In her thorough introduction DeBoer-Langworthy impressively sets the stage for Boyce's autobiographical writing, creating the historical context and explaining the complicated professional and family life that Boyce created and then endured.

Like many of the moderns, Boyce and her husband, Hutchins Hapgood, also a well-known writer and journalist of that time, were both fascinated by the new and were eager to break the constraints of the Victorian past. Although thoroughly smitten with Boyce, Hapgood was at first convinced that she would never marry. Theirs would be an open marriage, confronting with honesty any attractions or liaisons outside the relationship. This proved much more complicated than Boyce would have preferred since their marriage was strained by Hapgood's infidelities. Much of Boyce's fiction confronts the strains of personal relationships, and DeBoer-Langworthy explains matters sufficiently to allow us to read between the lines of Boyce's own version of events. But her autobiographical writing does not dwell on those aspects of her life. Nevertheless she describes with frank detail her impressions of American family life and ways that she and her family were both like and unlike those people whom they knew and associated with.

Boyce seems to have begun writing "Autobiography" sometime in 1939–40. The first section deals with her childhood and early career as a journalist, ending with her marriage to Hapgood. The two later sections, "Diary—Italy, 1903" and "War Diary," were reworked from journals she kept at the time of her visits to Florence. In the longer first part, divided into fourteen chapters, we watch Neith grow from a solitary and introspective child to a very independent and perceptive

young woman. She was obviously under the spell of her strong and handsome father, a forceful man who had uneven success in his various businesses. As the family fortunes wax and wane, young Neith describes her relationship with her parents and extended family with a mixture of detachment and self-absorbed candor. Her descriptions of domestic arrangements on a California fruit farm and in early Los Angeles provide glimpses of late nineteenth-century American life, as well as tensions among Anglo-Americans, Mexicans, and Chinese. Boyce also discusses visits to family in the midwest, to the Columbian Exposition in Chicago, and later moves to Boston and New York. "Autobiography" preserves a young woman's odyssey across an American landscape now nearly lost to memory.

—Michael L. Hall

HEARTS AND MINDS

The End of the Soul: Scientific Modernity, Atheism, and Anthropology in France
by Jennifer Michael Hecht
(Columbia University Press, 2003. Illustrated. 402 pages. $29)

In my experience the Phi Beta Kappa Book Awards are nearly always a reliable guide to worthwhile reading. Often they honor books that have already gained some degree of recognition and even popularity; in other instances they rescue a significant work from neglect or from the arcana of academia. The winner of the Ralph Waldo Emerson Award for 2005 was a book that, along with its central subject, had escaped my attention entirely—and unaccountably. That subject is the group of French freethinkers who, in 1876, formed the Society of Mutual Autopsy, agreeing to give their brains to science after death as well as before. Their hope was that by dissecting each other's remains they would establish, among other things, the nonexistence of the soul. Perhaps the most famous member of the group was Paul Broca, who went on to found the Society of Anthropology of Paris, which evolved into a radical movement dedicated to atheist materialism, anticlericalism, and the deconsecration of the culture. "The only means of not dying entirely," they believed, "was to disperse to the four winds all that one could of the fire of one's heart and the light of one's mind."

Nowadays, outside France, the names of the members of these groups are certainly less known than the names of the Enlightenment philosophes who were their intellectual forebears—and also more obscure than the names of any number of a wide range of later figures whom they considerably influenced in one way or another (Charcot, Freud, Bergson, Zola, Durkheim, Dreiser, Hitler, Conan Doyle, Montessori, Foucault). In addition to Broca,

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