



Terrorist and avant-garde manifesto writing: Cultural modernity and the aesthetic will-to-terror.

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The end of the nineteenth century was a period of widespread cultural upheaval in European society that intruded into almost every aspect of intellectual life. The Fin de Siècle produced many new social, aesthetic and political phenomena, including the notion of cultural modernity and the contemporary conceptualisation of terrorism. The span of time reaching from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth is also notable for being the golden age of manifesto writing within artistic, political and terrorist spheres. This paper traces the impact of terrorist manifesto writers on artistic manifesto writers, delineating a kind of unconscious osmosis of a will-to-terror and adoption of a philosophy that mirrors ‘propaganda by the deed’ in literary and artistic movements at the turn of the century. This will-to-terror in turn bleeds into cultural modernity more broadly; giving rise to an aesthetic that is dedicated to shock and controversy. The parallels and points of contact between the artistic and terrorist manifesto writers of the Fin de Siècle reveal much about the integration of radical revolutionary ideology into the aesthetics of literature, art and music associated with cultural modernity, and the synergy between terrorist violence as performance and artistic performance as violence.