This year's issue of the Humanities Review started with a large, umbrella-type theme of Modernism in the arts and culture. This theme took form mainly from purely selfish reasons of my own (and as Editor-in-Chief, you are entitled to be selfish), as I hesitantly say that the focus of my English studies has been on Modernism, specifically Modernist poetry. However, as Wallace Stevens once said, "One cannot spend one's time in being modern when there are so many more important things to be." The theme took on a life of its own and became more than just modern, embracing something "more important" in globalization. Obviously, there is a direct connection between modernization and globalization; both deal with common problems and concerns of loss of identity, of feeling, and search for something to believe in. After reviewing the submissions, I was struck by how coherent this issue is—unifying the two themes into a broader examination of issues and problems with identity, language and the constant search for a deeper Truth.

We start the journal off, rather fittingly I believe, with Professor Paul Fabozzi's piece, "Il Tempo di Corviale." Professor Fabozzi also designed the cover for this year's HR, and in this piece, he discusses the context behind the cover and where it came from—one of the many photographs he took at Corviale. In his piece, Fabozzi says: "Buildings have a way of revealing political, cultural, and philosophical ideas that are then
experienced as physical entities existing in the world. Architecture, like literature, represents certain ways of feeling, and we can clearly see this in the short piece. At the Corviale, Professor Fabozzi experienced emotions of isolation and loneliness through the building itself; the building, a physical manifestation of experiences and lived moments, is more effective in bringing about emotions than any brochure of historical facts. Examining the photographs, these feelings of isolation and emptiness come across, bringing to life the experiences Fabozzi discusses in his piece. The cover (one of my favorite aspects about this HR) is one of Fabozzi’s images of Corviale itself; through this cover art, we can see how much of the artist is in the painting—we are not just getting an image of Corviale, we are also receiving the feelings and experiences Professor Fabozzi had while being at Corviale. This piece is a beautiful unification of both modernization and globalization and an excellent starting point for the journal.

Lawrence Joseph’s “A Few Reflections On Poetry and Language” is a provocative reflective essay of a poet writing on other Modernist poets. This piece gives a wonderful overview of many different Modernist poets and what language itself can and cannot do. Joseph writes [in regards to Modernist writing], “Although the subject is dissolved into the text’s language—into the formal process itself, onto a new and aesthetic plane—modernism does not eliminate subjectivity.” This quote aptly describes Joseph’s own writing, particularly in this essay. Joseph incorporates so many different quotes and analyzes so many different Modernist writings, that there is almost a sense of dissolution and dislocation: one almost forgets the subject of the piece because of Joseph’s extensive knowledge on the Modernist poets and his remarkable ability to incorporate such fascinating and integral quotes into his work. However, it is clear what Joseph’s goal is in this essay: to create some shared understanding of what poetry, particularly Modernist poetry, is and what does, especially to and with language. We are honored and grateful to have a piece by a poet whose own poetry I value.

Stephen Sicari’s “Restating Romance for the Modern World” examines the poetry of Wallace Stevens, specifically Stevens’s own personal understanding of what romance is and what romance can do. As Editor-in-Chief this year, I am pleased that Professor Sicari, my father, decided to make his first contribution to the Humanities Review; not only do I respect and value him as my father, but he is a constant source of inspiration to me as an instructor. My own understanding of Modernist poetry would be much amiss if not for him and thus I appreciate his contribution—to help make clear a poetry that is often unclear. In this essay, Professor Sicari examines Stevens’s version of Romanticism and shows how Romanticism, and nature, is very much alive in Modernist poetry. Modernist poetry, and particularly Stevens, attempts to achieve being “one with nature” differently; Stevens’s poetry shows that perhaps it is through separation and alienation that nature and the self can understand one another, which would eventually allow for unification. Stevens’ outlook on the world is not one of doom but of hope: he places hope in his poetry and believes we one day will hear music again. In a journal whose theme is of Modernization and Globalization, I find it necessary to have a piece that suggests hope—both Wallace Stevens and Professor Sicari successfully and convincingly do this.

Any journal that is showcasing Modernist work must include something on James Joyce; thus, it is with extra pleasure to receive such an articulate and innovative essay on Joyce and his use of time and space. Stephen Pasqualina’s “The Angel of the Possible: Joyce’s Spatial Forms of History” examines the cinematic narrative of Ulysses and the emerging conditions that accompanied the cinema and how the novel can offer different models for understanding history. This essay effectively analyzes different episodes of Ulysses, in particular “Ithaca” and shows how Joyce’s spatialization of time is almost photographic; the way memory is represented in Ulysses in a “flash-like” form, disregarding linear time in order to create an image of both past and present. This essay highlights the importance of technology (particularly technology regarding time and space) and the impact it had on Modernist writing; we can see that these issues are still very much present today, especially regarding modernization and globalization.

I am honored to have a submission by Peter Nicholls in this year’s Humanities Review; his book, Modernisms, is one of the most influential and “stand-out” books among recent modernist studies. His book, George Oppen and the Fate of Modernism, provides both excellent informative and analytical discourse on the poet. Thus, I was greatly excited to receive an article by him titled, “Numerousness and Its Discontents: George Oppen and Lynn Hejinian.” This article explores the influence Oppen had on the poet Hejinian and how they both investigated many of the same problems. This essay represents a form of modernism-meets-postmodernism that shows how much influence the one has on the other, perhaps even suggesting a blurring of the two. As all of Peter Nicholls work, it is both illuminating in autobiographical information on both poets as well as insightful in his theoretical analysis and argument.

Paul Devlin, one of the founders of The Humanities Review, provides an excellent review of a new book, Ethnic Modernism by Werner Sollos. This book examines how and why recent immigrants (the emergence of modernism in the United
States was right around the time of immigration) adopted or refused modernist forms of art and literature. We can see through this review, and the book, that the issues of modernism are directly connected to issues of globalization.

Tegan Zimmerman provides the Humanities Review with an important piece on Mme de Staël’s literary work; work that regrettably has been ignored by the literary canon. The article, "Cosmopolitan or Globalization?: Mme de Staël’s Feminist Comparative Literature for Fredric Jameson," argues that most of the questions and concerns Fredric Jameson raises were first expressed by Mme de Staël. This article does an excellent job in providing noteworthy background and contextual information on Staël while putting forth a greater claim that perhaps Staël’s feminist views on globalization kept her in the dark.

Sarah Bonnie’s "Narrative Fiction and Covert Colonialism: Linguistic and Cultural Control through Education in the Colonists" does an excellent job in examining how language is powerful and perhaps dangerous. In this piece, we see that the role education plays in colonialism, specifically in teaching language (the English language especially), instructs the students not only in school subjects but in ways of speaking, acting, and thinking through "the mindset of their colonial subjugators." This essay highlights the significance of literature in globalization – both as a tool of colonialism and as a weapon against it.

We conclude the journal with a poem titled, "Rereading Heart of Darkness" by Dr. Daniel R. Schwarz of Cornell University; an eminent scholar of modernism whose poem is a wonderful coda to the issue. A great teacher and a great reader, Schwarz expresses the experience of reading one of the hallmarks of modernism, Conrad’s Heart of Darkness, as a personal journey of self-discovery in the act of reading. I invite all of you readers to, "Like Gulliver…return shadowed, checked, yet enlightened by experience. We readers, too."

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And because I never seem to eloquently put to words how much you’ve helped me grow, not only as a student of literature but as an individual, this is dedicated to you, dad.

Anna Sicari
New York, 2011