



# Varieties of Modernism

Edited by **Paul Wood**

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Cover: Fernand Léger, *Study for The Constructors: The Team at Rest*, 1950, oil on canvas, 162 x 130 cm. (Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh. © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2004.)

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## Varieties of Modernism

*Varieties of Modernism* discusses the art of the middle third of the twentieth century. It consists of a short general introduction and four parts, each concentrating on a key aspect of the art of the period. With the rise of the European dictatorships of the 1930s, Paris regained its position at the forefront of the modern movement. Accordingly, the first part looks at developments in French art: abstraction, the figurative tradition and Surrealism, in the years leading up to the Second World War. In the next two parts, the focus moves across the Atlantic, charting the shift from the widespread social realism of the Depression years to the triumphant modernist abstraction of the postwar period. The final part discusses the challenge posed to canonical modernism by various new approaches ranging from 'combine paintings' to Pop Art, 'happenings' and the Situationist International.

*Varieties of Modernism* is the third in a series of four books about twentieth-century art. Each book can be read independently and is accessible to the general reader. However, as a series they form the main texts of an Open University third-level course, *Art of the Twentieth Century*, which examines the fundamental changes that took place in the concepts and practices of art during the twentieth century.



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