Virginia Woolf, Fashion and Literary Modernity
R. S. Koppen

September 2009
Hb  978 0 7486 3872 7   £60.00
208pp  234 x 156 mm
9 b&w illustrations

Description

Virginia Woolf, Fashion and Literary Modernity places Woolf’s writing in the context of sartorial practice from the Victorian period to the 1930s, and theories of dress and fashion from Thomas Carlyle to Walter Benjamin, Wyndham Lewis and J.C. Flugel. Bringing together studies in fashion, body culture and modernism, the book explores the modern fascination with sartorial fashion as well as with clothes as objects, signs, things, and embodied practice. Fashion was deeply implicated with the nineteenth-century modern and remained in focus for the modernities that continued to be proclaimed in the early decades of the following century. Clothing connects with the modernist topoi of the threshold, the trace and the interface it is the place where character becomes image and where relations between subject and object, organic and inorganic play themselves out in a series of encounters and ruptures. Clothes also facilitate explorations in modern materialism, for instance as informing surrealist attempts to think the materiality of things outside the system of commodities and their fetishisation. Woolf’s work as cultural analyst and writer of fiction provides illuminating illustrations of all of these aspects, ‘thinking through clothes’ in representations of the present, investigations of the archives of the past, and projections for the future.

Key Features

• Contributes new research to Woolf and Modernism studies
• Explores the significance of textual representations of dress and sartorial fashion in modernist literature
• Interdisciplinary approach which brings together studies of fashion, culture and literature
• Adds a specific author focused analysis to current work on cultural embodiment and performance

The Author

R.S. Koppen is Associate Professor in British literature in the Department of Foreign Languages in the University of Bergen. Dr. Koppen has published articles on modern literature and drama in New Literary History and Modern Drama, and a monograph on contemporary feminist theatre (Scenes of Infidelity: Feminism in the Theatre, Oslo: Solum, 1997). She has also published on the topic of fashion in the Selected Papers of the Annual International Virginia Woolf Conference (2006 and 2007). Current book projects include a collection of essays on Literature and Science, of which she is a co-editor.

Readership

Academics, postgraduates and senior undergraduates of English and Comparative Literature, Cultural Studies, Visual Culture and Fashion.