SUPPLEMENTAL ONLINE CHAPTERS

to

Henry James's Europe: Heritage and Transfer

Edited by

Dennis Tredy, Annick Duperray and

Adrian Harding

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Supplemental Online Chapters

Contents

Introduction

Dennis Tredy

The eight chapters included in this supplemental section of the online edition of *Henry James's Europe: Heritage and Transfer* were all peer-reviewed and short-listed for publication along with the twenty-four others included in the print edition. However, they fall slightly outside the scope of the main edition. Nonetheless they do offer a broader perspective on the way James sought to work or rework his International Theme, how he sought to define and redefine his own literary contribution and legacy, and how others since James have sought to interpret and represent that same legacy.

Thus, Part I, entitled "Re-Readings and Re-Workings of the International Theme," focuses on the Jamesian art of fiction before, during and well after he attempted to move away from his initial success with stories of bewildered Americans in a jaded or sophisticated European setting. The first chapter in this section, by H.K. Riikonen, focuses on the stereotypes of European people and places that James may have borrowed from Beadekers and from other popular travel books of the time when writing the early novels commonly associated with the famed International Theme. Then, two Jamesian scholars deal with ways in which James, in the mid- to late-1880's, tried to redefine himself and dissociate himself with that same International Theme. Thus, David Davies focuses on the way in which James may have attempted to emulate or appropriate the work of French realists and naturalists, and he does so by specifically dealing with the possible influence that Emile Zola's *L'Assommoir* may have had on Jame's

The Princess Casamassima. Then, Larry Gray deals with the same transitional period in James's career and shows how James attempted to use a new focus on short-story writing as another avenue by which to distance himself from his earlier International Theme. Thus, Gray shows how an often overlooked short story by James, "Louisa Pallant" (1888), is both a pivotal work in the author's career and his attempt to write, as it were, an anti-*Daisy Miller*, by this time focusing on American sophistication and manipulation abroad. Finally, Leman Giresunlu focuses on a key work from James's 'Late Phase' in which the theme of the American abroad is so deeply embroidered into the fabric of the complex work that the threads are difficult to see. Her focus is on *The Golden Bowl*, and on the way in which James turns material objects into "replaceable virtualities," on how material and aesthetic objects are designed, under James's pen, to replace each other and shift both their own value and the values of those characters around them.

In Part II, entitled "Beyond Biography," four other Jamesian scholars explore complex matters concerning the representation of the author himself both before and after his death. The first two chapters focus on the convoluted pathways of self-representation taken by James as he penned the autobiographies of his last years. Thus, Mhairi Pooler focuses on James's *Notes of a Son and Brother*, demonstrating how the author recreates a father-son and elder-brother-younger-brother relationship between the older James revisiting his past and the younger James being reminisced. Then, Isobel Waters focuses on a particular passage of that same autobiographical work, one in which James recounts his problems with mathematics during his youth, in order to unearth a fascination that James had with the mathematical approach to problem-solving and the way in which he successively staged that approach within his works of fiction throughout his lifetime, thus drawing a studied parallel between James and Poe. The last two works of this section, however, take us far beyond James's late attempts at self-representation by indeed taking us beyond his death and focusing on twentieth- and even twenty-first-century representations of James. Thus, Erik Roraback, leaning heavily on Deleuze and Lacan, draws together Henry James, Walter Benjamin and Maurice Blanchot, whose writing careers form an unbroken 160-year chain of literary creation and criticism, to create a unifying 'monad' or 'constellation' of shared talent, sensibility and persona. Finally, Madeleine Danova focuses on the great number of fictional representations of James that have cropped up in the last ten years. By first drawing a parallel between this recent literary fad of

resurrecting James and popular notions of 'life after death' from the turn of the previous century, Danova focuses on two particular works that have recently brought James back from the dead, as it were: Michiel Heyn's *The Typewriter's Tale* (2005) and Cynthia Ozick's *Dictation* (2008). How fitting to end our excursion into representational dilemmas for Henry James with new matters of re-appropriation and re-interpretation of episodes of his life nearly a century after his death.

Contributors

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Larry A. Gray is Assistant Professor of English at Jacksonville State University in Alabama. His numerous conference papers indicate his several scholarly interests, including the tales of Henry James, British literature and culture between the World Wars, Post–WWII American literature, and film adaptation in the broadest sense. His articles have appeared in the *Henry James Review*, *Notes on Contemporary Literature*, and are forthcoming in *All the King's Men* (Dialogue Series, Rodopi Press) and *Adaptation* (Oxford Journals, Oxford University Press).

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I.
RE-READINGS AND
RE-WORKINGS OF THE
INTERNATIONAL THEME

1. Tourist Attractions, Stereotypes and Physiognomies in *The American*

H. K. Riikonen

1. Generating stereotypes: guidebooks and popular novels

The nineteenth century witnessed a considerable growth of tourism. As a consequence of this development, there was a great demand for guides and guidebooks for people travelling abroad. On the very first page of Henry James's early novel *The American* (1877), we find the name of the most famous of all guidebooks for travellers, Baedeker, created by Karl Baedeker, who established his company in 1827. The Baedekers and other guidebooks offered useful information for travellers about travel routes, accommodation, the history of the country and its cities, places worth visiting, etc. (see Buzard 65-79).

This chapter will give some examples of how Henry James had taken into account stereotypical notions about places and countries which were common in the nineteenth century and how his characters follow the guidebooks and how they react to tourist attractions abroad. On the other hand, notions of the physiognomies of peoples and nations are often stereotypical by nature, and all three—stereotypes, physiognomies and tourist attractions—are in many respects conned with each other. This chapter concentrates on *The American*, with the occasional reference to

James's other novels. Henry James himself was an experienced traveller whose works include travel writings. His personal experiences in or impressions of different countries are outside the scope of this paper.

In *The American*, there are some passages which reveal how a traveller, in this case Christopher Newman, follows routes and visits places, which were recommended in the guidebooks. It is no longer a question of the traditional *Grand Tour* from the north of Europe to Italy. Newman says: "[...] I went to Switzerland—to Geneva, and Zermatt, and Zürich, and all those places, you know; and down to Venice, and all through Germany, and down the Rhine, and into Holland and Belgium—the regular round" (James 131). In England, he visits, among other places, the cathedral of Canterbury, the Tower of London and Madame Tussaud's exhibition, which are tourist attractions even today.

However useful the travel books might be, their influence was not altogether positive. According to Sirpa Salenius, who has studied Florence and Italy in the works of American writers, the travel books offered a narrow vision of the country, a single interpretation based on superficial, exclusively personal observations by these travel book writers, whose authoritarian tone goes as far as to give advice on the emotions to be felt on seeing the sights (Salenius 61). The guidebooks were often very conservative in their instructions and descriptions and created and offered stereotypical images about attractive places and buildings.

Of course, along with travel books, famous and widely read novels often generated stereotypes. Dickens, for instance, was very influential by giving a picture of England and London that was fascinating to foreigners. This was also noted by Henry James. In *The Portrait of a Lady*, Isabel Archer thinks about her visit to England and London, seeing the country in her imagination through the eyes of Dickens: "They [Isabel Archer and Henrietta Stackpole] would stay at some picturesque old inn—one of the inns described by Dickens—and drive over the town in those delightful hansoms. Henrietta was a literary woman; the great advantage of being a literary woman was that you could go everywhere and do everything. They would dine at a coffee-house and go afterwards to the play; they would frequent the Abbey and the British Museum and find out where Doctor Johnson had lived, and Goldsmith and Addison" (James 125). In other words, James's travellers, like numerous other travellers at that time, wanted to see examples of British cultural and literary heritage. The word "picturesque" is very typical here. In nineteenth-century fiction, landscapes

and old buildings were often described using this word, which combines a visual impression with a notion of old-fashioned things (On the picturesque in James's works, see Buzard 192-216).

Along with Dickens, another nineteenth-century British writer referred to by Henry James is Edward Bulwer. In *The Princess Casamassima*, we read about Hyacinth Robinson: "he wanted to talk about the Captain's [life] and to elicit information that would be in harmony with his romantic chambers, which reminded somehow of certain of Bulwer's novels" (James 185-86). In the tourists' eyes, "romantic" is often not very far from "picturesque" or "old-fashioned."

The idea of Americans' image of Englishness and its old-fashioned nature became widespread and can be found especially in popular novels. In one of Agatha Christie's Miss Marple novels, *At Bertram's Hotel*, Mr. Humphries, the hotel manager, speaks about his customers:

> [...] there are a lot of people who come abroad at rare intervals and who expect this country to be—well, I won't go back as far as Dickens, but they've read *Cranford* and Henry James, and they don't want to find this country just the same as their own! So they go back home afterwards and say: "There's a wonderful place in London; Bertram's Hotel, it's called. It's just like stepping back a hundred year. It just *is* old England! And the people who stay there! People you'd never come across anywhere else. Wonderful old Duchesses. They serve all the old English dishes, there's a marvellous old-fashioned beefsteak pudding! You've never tasted anything like it: and great sirloins of beef and saddles of mutton, and an old-fashioned English tea and a wonderful English breakfast. And of course all the usual things as well. And it's wonderfully comfortable. And warm. Great log fires (13-14).

The passage quoted reveals several important aspects. First, it shows, how some great nineteenth-century novelists, Henry James included, have created images and stereotypes which have dominated later views about nations and places. Secondly, the passage—as well as the whole first chapter in Christie's novel—stresses the table manners and dishes as indicators of the nature of Englishness. Thirdly, in tourism there is often a kind of conservative attitude present, the tourists seeking everything which relates to the glory of the past. In this quotation, the word "old" occurs three times, and "old-fashioned" twice. Of course, we should remember that in Christie's novel the hotel with its duchesses and dishes was a kind of a *mise-en-scène* and a cover-up for criminal activity.

The supposed image of Englishness as described by the manager of Bertram's hotel brings to mind the dinner party in Book Fourth in *The Wings*

of the Dove, where Milly Theale feels herself "surrounded [...] with every English accessory" (147) and where she for the first time in her life sees a real bishop "with a complicated costume, a voice like an old-fashioned wind instrument, and a face all the portrait of a prelate" (148).

2. The fascination of the Roman monuments

One of the tasks of the guidebooks was to present famous monuments. When such presentations were repeated often, the monuments became stereotypical symbols of historic cities. One of the most important of these monuments was the Colosseum, or Amphitheatrum Flavium, in Rome. A very interesting description of the ruins of this amphitheatre can be found in Alexandre Dumas's classic novel *The Count of Monte Cristo* (Chapter "The Colosseum"). Even at that time the guides, who eagerly offered their services, could be a public nuisance, as we can see from Dumas's ironic reference to the Italian guides around the Colosseum. According to Dumas, it is impossible to avoid guides in Rome, where, along with general guides, every monument has its own guide (Dumas 318). In describing the Colosseum, Dumas also quotes classical literature, Martial's famous epigram (1.1) on the amphitheatre (not included in every edition or translation). The colossal monument itself is seen romantically in the moonlight: "amid the darkness and ruined grandeur of the Colosseum" (323).

In *The Portrait of a Lady*, we also find a description of the Colosseum. In the novel, we meet Countess Gemini, who was not familiar with the antiquities of Rome. When offered an opportunity to see Roman monuments, she was willing to see them, but only from her carriage. At last she obeys her companion's wish to take a closer look at the monuments. Isabel, for her part, had often ascended to the highest ledges, from which, as the narrator says, "the Roman crowd used to bellow applause and where now the wild flowers [...] bloom in the deep crevices" (525-526). The image of the Roman crowd bellowing applause reminds us of some famous Victorian paintings depicting the spectators in the amphitheatre.

But Rome is not only the city of the Colosseum. In Chapter XLIV of *The Portrait of a Lady*, Rome's typical features are enumerated: ruins, catacombs, monuments, museums and the ceremonies of the church. However, Rome was not only a place of monuments, but also a city of high society, and Countess Gemini is convinced that the society of Rome is far more interesting than that of Florence, where she comes from. Although

the Countess is not so interested in the antiquities of Rome, she, however, justifies her wish to visit Rome by saying that Rome is the Eternal City. The idea of Rome as the Eternal City is one of the stereotypes connected with Rome, and certainly one of the oldest. As early as the first century B.C., the Roman poet Tibullus called Rome *Urbs aeterna*. There are also proverbs about Rome, some of which are used even today. One of them can be found in *The American*: "Rome was not built in a day" (49).

In nineteenth-century literature, Rome is usually seen as a city, — and Italy as a country—that is full of memories and monuments of classical antiquity or the Renaissance. In *The Portrait of a Lady* there is, however, an interesting reference to medieval Italy: in a room in Florence there are "those angular specimens of pictorial art in frames as pedantically primitive, those perverse-looking relics of medieval brass and pottery, of which Italy has long been the not quite exhausted storehouse" (226). The Middle Ages are, again, seen as inferior to antiquity or the Renaissance.

In the stereotypical image of Rome in *The Portrait*, only a few respectable things, like Roman antiquities, are mentioned. Of course, in world literature there are opposing images, which can also be regarded as stereotypes. Rome has been called the city of the six *P*'s—Pope, priests, princes, prostitutes, parasites and the poor. It is also worth referring to the famous statement by James Joyce: "Rome reminds me of a man who lives by exhibiting his grandmother's corpse" (Ellmann 225). Joyce was also critical of Henry James's view of Rome, which in his opinion "ignored [the city's] funerary reality" (Ellmann 225; on Henry James's image of Rome, see also Buzard 205-08).

An interesting reference to the lower classes and the poor is in *The Princess Casamassima* (James 193), where the lower orders and poor people, the London mob, are referred to in the Italian language, *basso popolo* and *povera gente*, indicating that the speaker, Italian by birth, is aware of the existence of such people in her country but is capable only of feeling some weak pity for them.

3. European countries and people in an American's eyes

Writing about people on the both sides of the Atlantic, Henry James's novels offer material for the study of literary stereotypes and national characteristics. He also continues the physiognomic traditions of the

nineteenth century. Of special interest in this respect is his novel *The American*, which also contains some comparisons between America and Europe, not to mention some references to the Orient.

The American includes brief references to the following European countries and/or their cities: Denmark (Copenhagen), Italy (Rome, Sardinia), Switzerland, Germany (Baden-Baden), Poland, Ireland (Dublin), France (Gallia/Gallic), Spain, England and the Netherlands. Apart from America, three countries outside Europe are mentioned: Syria (Damascus), Turkey (or the Ottoman Empire) and China. It is understandable that the most of these references concern the three great nations: France, Germany and England.

It is easy to find examples of the stereotypes by which these countries are described in *The American*. It should be noted that most of these characterizations of different countries and nationalities are seen through the eyes of the American, Christopher Newman, whose namesake, St. Christopher, was the patron of travellers (see Buzard 277).

In *The American*, there are some interesting references to France and French characters, not to mention that phrases in French occur frequently, French being really a *lingua franca* among cultured people at that time, as we can see for example in the novels of Leo Tolstoy. When Valentin had said, in French, that he is sad, the speaker adds, that this was said "with Gallic simplicity" (184). Another utterance is said to be "neatly enveloped in the gilt paper of a happy Gallicism" (303), while Mademoiselle Nioche is admired for "the Parisian perfection of her toilet" (310).

Along with such stereotypical details emphasizing the elegance of French culture, there are some descriptions of the physiognomy of French characters. Monsieur Nioche represents French civilization, *clarté* and rationality—with a hint at decadence as a result of M. Nioche's unlucky business: "As a Frenchman [...] M. Nioche loved conversation, and even in his decay his urbanity had not grown rusty. As a Frenchman, too, he could give a clear account of things, and—still as a Frenchman—when his knowledge was fault he could supply its lapses with the most convenient and ingenious hypotheses" (46). The repetition of "as a Frenchman" gives the image of M. Nioche an ironic touch, which becomes even more obvious, when his pronunciation is described:

> He pronounced his words with great distinctness and sonority, and Newman assured him that his way of dealing with the French tongue was very superior to the bewildering chatter that he heard in other mouths. Upon

this M. Nioche's accent became more finely trenchant than ever; he offered to read extracts from Lamartine, and he protested that, although he did endeavour according to his feeble lights to cultivate refinement of diction, monsieur, if he wanted the real thing, should go to the Théâtre Français (47).

In the narrator's eyes the Frenchmen may also appear quite peculiar. A typical example is M. Ledoux, the nephew of a distinguished ultramontane bishop: "M. Ledoux was a great Catholic, and Newman thought him a queer mixture. His countenance, by daylight, had a sort of amiably saturnine cast; he had a very large thin nose, and looked like a Spanish picture" (232). Another type of French character is represented by M. de Grosjoyaux, who is of a more jovial nature.

Very often the Frenchmen in James's novels are enthusiastic figures and idealistic supporters of some great ideas or movements. In *The Princess Casamassima*, we read about Hyacinth Robinson's acquaintance, a French refugee in England, M. Eustache Poupin: "He was a Republican of the old-fashioned sort, of the note of 1848, humanitary and idealistic, infinitely addicted to fraternity and equality and inexhaustibly surprised and exasperated at finding so little enthusiasm for them in the land of his exile" (78).

The contrast between the American Christopher Newman and the French aristocracy is underlined for instance, when Newman comes across a duchess, whose most obvious characteristic is her talkativeness. She talks about flowers, books and theatres as well as the humidity of Paris and the "pretty complexions of the American ladies" (302). She and her discourse are thus characterized by the narrator: "All this was a brilliant monologue, on the part of the duchess, who, like many of her countrywomen, was a person of an affirmative rather than an interrogative cast of mind, who made *mots* and put them herself into circulation, and who was apt to offer you a present of a convenient little opinion, neatly enveloped in the gilt paper of a happy Gallicism" (302-03). The monologue of the duchess includes also a more or less comical enumeration of Italian matters, revealing her own stereotypes of another nation. The duchess is interrupted by the prince, but Newman himself is out of conversation; however, the duchess "frequently looked at him with a smile, as if to intimate, in the charming manner of her nation, that it lay only with him to say something very much to the point" (305). Again the characteristics of a nation are deduced from the behavior of an individual ("the charming manner of her nation").

The Germans, on the other hand, are quite different. In *The American*, the narrator of the novel gives an example of what he calls Germanic physiognomy. The person in question is "a tall robust man with a thick nose, a prominent blue eye, a Germanic physiognomy, and a massive watch-chain" (212). This characterization is not without irony when a reference to the massive watch-chain is added to the physiognomic traits.

Most of the stereotypical references in the end of *The American* deal with the aspects of life in England and Englishmen. English industry is mentioned, as well as the English climate and the "undying English twilight" (317). In a way, England is in harmony with the melancholy state of Newman's mind. His days in the English countryside remind us of the landscape of English Romantic poets and wanderers in the Lake District:

> "He remained in England till midsummer, and spent a month in the country, wandering about among the cathedrals, castles and ruins. Several times, taking a walk from his inn into meadows and parks, he stopped by a well-worn stile, looked across through the early evening at a grey church tower, with its dusky nimbus of thick-circling swallows, and remembered that this might have been part of the entertainment of his honeymoon" (317).

A typical country which often has been seen in romantic light is Switzerland. As the country of the Alps, Switzerland became a literary topos in the age of Romanticism. The country's romantic nature was also noted by Mademoiselle Noémi in *The American*. After learning about Christopher Newman's plans to go to Switzerland, she characterizes Switzerland as a fine country, where there are "lakes and mountains, romantic valleys and icy peaks" (53). As in this case, it is typical of the stereotypical image that only a very limited number of features is given to characterize a larger or more complex phenomenon.

Conclusion

It would be easy to give many more examples of short stereotypical statements about people and places in Henry James's novels, although they are not so numerous or straightforward as, for example, in Dumas's *The Count of Monte Cristo*. It is part of James's realism that he has abundantly drawn from common views, stereotypes, sayings and even prejudices which we find, for example, in guidebooks for travellers and in widely read novels. Among other things, Henry James has accurately observed common views which his fictional characters have assumed and which

were also a part of nineteenth-century culture. The Jamesian narrator has also observed how handy these stereotypes may be in characterizing people. The characters' stereotypical views can also be used to put the characters in an ironic light. While James's characters travel all over Europe and meet people of different nationalities, the close and sometimes ironic attention to tourist attractions, stereotypes and physiognomic features contribute effectively to the fascination his novels have for the reader.

2. 'Haunting and Penetrating the City': The Influence of Emile Zola's *L'Assommoir* on James's *The Princess Casamassima*

David Davies

There has been considerable controversy over the extent to which James was influenced by Zola in his attraction to social themes in his novels of the 1880's, *The Bostonians*, *The Princess Casamassima* and *The Tragic Muse*. Three books on the subject (*Henry James and the Experimental Novel* by Sergio Perosa, *Henry James and the French Novel* by Philip Grover and *Henry James and the Naturalist Movement* by Lyall H. Powers) have each argued that James was greatly influenced by Zola at this time, although Grover lays more stress on the influence of Flaubert. James's preparatory visit to Millbank Prison for background material before writing *The Princess Casamassima* is cited as an example of James emulating the Naturalist tradition of note-taking, as is his statement in a letter to Thomas Sargeant Perry, written at the same time, in which he comments on the same visit, adding "[...] you see, I am quite the Naturalist." (Edel III 61). However, in reality Zola was not a purely 'realistic' novelist while James is far more accurate in his 'realism' than he has previously been given credit for. In this chapter I will aim to show that Zola gives a far more poetic and impressionistic representation of Paris in *L'Assommoir* than his supposedly 'scientific' approach suggests, while James makes a much greater conscious effort in *The Princess Casamassima* to be factually accurate in his representation of London than has previously been recognised.

James's appreciation of the techniques of Zola in depicting 'realism' in fiction increased gradually after his first meeting with the novelist at one of Flaubert's regular gatherings in Paris during the 1870's. James was already strongly influenced by French writers. Cordelia Kelly, in *The Early Development of Henry James*, points out in particular his debt to Prosper Merimée, while it would be a straightforward task to show how much James owes to Balzac and Gautier in a novel such as *Roderick Hudson*. James's closest link as an author is probably to Flaubert in their common search for a unified language with no break between narration, dialogue and inner monologue.

However, after the publication of his "Art of Fiction" in 1884, James distanced himself from these early influences and his subsequent 'social novels' (*The Bostonians*, *The Princess Casamassima* and *The Tragic Muse*) are in a different vein. Zola interested him most then so that, although he criticised him for "thinking that there are certain things that people ought to like and that they can be made to like," he gave qualified praise to his "prodigious effort, an extraordinary effort, vitiated by a spirit of pessimism." In a letter to Thomas Sargeant Perry, he clarified his views even further: "Zola's Naturalism is ugly and dirty, but he seems to be doing something— which surely (in the imaginative line) no one in England and the U.S. is and no one here" (2 November 1879, qtd. in Harlow, 304). And he added, in the same letter: "The literature is painfully thin. Il n'y a que Zola" (304; *There is only Zola*). This consideration, combined with the need to find a new source of inspiration, led to his decision to write realistically about London in *The Princess Casamassima*.

Not all critics have agreed that James was strongly influenced by Zola when he wrote *The Princess Casamassima*. Charles R. Anderson attempted to refute this notion comprehensively in an article published in the *Revue de Littérature Comparée*, in which he claimed that there is little evidence of 'Naturalistic' note-taking to be found in James's *Notebooks*, and that James's claim that he was "quite the Naturalist" was intended as an ironic comment (Anderson 343-357). Yet W.H. Tilley has shown in his study of *The Background of The Princess Casamassima* that James made considerable use of contemporary periodicals, and that consequently he took more interest in social matters than has generally been assumed by critics (Tilley 18-33). James called the reports he read of anarchism in *The Times* newspaper "mealy-mouthed," viewing these reports ironically as "the sentiment of the majority." Bombings had begun in England in March 1883, and, as *The*

Times remarked when the Local Government Board offices were blown up in 1883, it "marked the end of an era of self-deception." London felt the waves from the coronation of Alexander III in Russia in 1882, which was postponed out of the fear of assassination, and the 1886 Demonstration of the Unemployed led to street disorders in London.

It is certainly true that the germs of James's fictional ideas were generally more likely to be derived from conversations at dinner parties than from a developing interest in social reform. Nevertheless, for an intellect such as James's, it would hardly be necessary for ideas and descriptions to be continually jotted down *in situ*; it would seem far more typical for him to simply take in the evidence of his eyes, and elaborate his ideas at leisure. The essays on London in James's *English Hours* provide ample evidence of his ability to describe London in minute detail when he wishes to do so.

A summary of Zola's influence on James is given by Peter Brooks in his recent book *Henry James Goes to Paris* where, in his chapter on "Zola, Sex and the Improper," Brooks describes James's first impression of Zola, when he first went to live in Paris in the 1870's, as of his being betrayed by the fact that it was "as if *Rougon-Macquart* (Zola's series of novels about France in the Second Empire) had written him," as if, like John Marcher in James's "The Beast in the Jungle," Zola's fate was to have nothing happen to him. In his 1903 essay on Zola in *Notes on Novelists*, however, James, as Brooks says, "strikes a note of reconciliation and even reparation" (Brooks 161). He has not forgiven the impropriety in the novels but, taking into account his admiration for Zola's stance in the Dreyfus Affair, James is now ready to dismiss criticism of the improper which blinds judgment on other aspects of realism. Brooks's key point is that James misunderstood the writing of the French authors he met in Paris in the 1870's but their influence on his writing was strong, even if it was not manifested in some cases for another twenty years or more. In his essay James singles out *L'Assommoir* as Zola's finest work, focusing his praise in particular on Gervaise and Coupeau's marriage and the birthday feast, which, he said, "appeared to mark a date in the portrayal of manners." He describes the pair's "fantastical processional pilgrimage through the streets" and concludes, "I have said enough of the mechanical in Zola; here in truth is, given the elements, almost insupportably the sense of life" (James *Notes on Novelists* 63).

Consequently, even if James's comment to Perry is accepted as being partly ironic in intention, this does not invalidate the fact that James was adapting Zola's methodology for his own purposes. In addition, it was

certainly true that James was looking for a replacement for his 'international theme' at this time and that he found it for a while in writing novels with an emphasis on social interest in the 1880's, even if he was later to abandon this theme in turn for others. Amanda Claybaugh has shown in *The Novel of Purpose: Literature and Social Reform in the Anglo-American World* that, after the relative commercial failure of *The Portrait of a Lady*, James had written to Grace Norton in 1884 of planning to start a "new era in my career." This new era would consist of two novels, *The Bostonians* and *The Princess Casamassima*, both of which were realist in form and both of which took up the subject of social reform, although she believes, as other critics have commented, that the latter novel owes more to Turgenev's *Virgin Soil* than to the work of Zola.

One further point that emphasises the influence of Zola on James is the comment made by Ezra Pound in one of the essays in *Make it New*:

> Indeed, but for these autobiographical details pointing to his growth out of Balzac, all James would seem but a corollary to one passage in a Goncourt preface: [...]

> (''Le jour où l'analyse cruelle que mon ami, M. Zola. et peut-être moi-même avons apportée dans la peinture du bas de la société sera reprise par un écrivain du talent, et employée à la reproduction des hommes et des femmes du monde, dans les milieu d'éducation et de distinction- ce jour-là seulement le classicisme et sa queue seront tués [...]'' (Goncourt 25) (*The day when the analysis which my friend, M.Zola, and perhaps I have devoted to the portrayal of the lower classes is taken up by a talented writer and employed in showing men and women of the higher classes, in terms of education and distinction—only then will classicism and its remnants be destroyed.*)

> [...] If ever one man's career was foreshadowed in a few sentences of another, Henry James's is to be found in this paragraph (Pound 269-70).

If there is a dispute over the extent of Zola's influence on James's fiction, there can be no doubt that James's critical thinking was strongly influenced by Zola. James wrote about Zola on many occasions, and his comments reveal an increasing growth in respect for his work. His early references to Zola were not always complimentary—he began by describing in a letter to Perry how he had heard Zola describe the work of the writer Gustave Droz as "merde à la vanilla" and added, "I send you by post Zola's own last—'merde au naturel'" (Edel II 44). However, when he came to write *The Princess Casamassima*, James had developed a genuine admiration for Zola's thoroughness and energy, even if he continued to deplore his frankness of expression.

Until *The Princess Casamassima*, James had been more circumspect than Zola in relying on atmosphere rather than in making use of actuality in his novels. In this novel, however, he makes a conscious effort to bring the setting of the action to life in the same way that Zola does in *L'Assommoir*, and in doing so, to treat place as an entity, a full part of the plot.

James pictured his hero, Hyacinth, as created by the very streets of the city, imagining him looking at the same avenues as he himself did, but with an important difference. Whereas all doors were open to James as an accepted member of society, his protagonist finds at first that all doors are shut to him, and when he manages to get inside, the pressure of his divided inheritance is too great for him and ultimately destroys him. In a comparable way, when the wedding party in Zola's *L'Assommoir* breaks out of the working class ghetto of the Goutte D'Or district of Paris, they find themselves in an alien world which emphasises their own isolation. As M.C. Banquart points out in *Images littéraires de Paris 'Fin-de-siècle'*:

> Dans L'Assommoir en effet, le peuple parisien du quartier de la Goutte d'Or est uni par une langue. Uni, et séparé des autres. Le roman dit l'histoire d'un ghetto. Ailleurs, on parle autrement. (Banquart 73). (*In L'Assommoir the Parisian people of the Goutte D'Or are unifed by a language. Unified and separated from others. The novel tells the story of a ghetto. Elsewhere they speak differently.*)

The importance of the city of London itself to *The Princess Casamassima* was acknowledged fully by James: "It is a fact that, as I look back the attentive exploration of London, the assault directly made by the great city upon an imagination quick to react, fully explains a large part of it" (James *Princess* 7). His use of the phrase "an imagination quick to react" is significant here in that it is reminiscent of the statement in his essay, "The Art of Fiction," in which he refuted Walter Besant's claim that writers should only use their own experiences in fiction: "The young lady living in a village has only to be a damsel on whom nothing is lost to make it quite unfair (as it seems to me) to declare that she shall have nothing to say about the military" (James 397).

Those critics who have accused James of knowing little, other than what he read in the newspapers, about anarchism, for example, have missed the point that in *The Princess Casamassima* James makes a deliberate attempt to penetrate working-class areas of London and to create characters that exist within and attempt to cross its literal and metaphorical boundaries.

No other novel by James presents a city in such personalised detail as *The Princess Casamassima*. This was partly because James was making a

conscious effort to reproduce the methods of French naturalism (possibly in an effort to boost his flagging sales) and partly because he had tired of his 'international' theme which he had exploited thoroughly and which never took his heroes or heroines out of their drawing rooms. The use of the topic of anarchism in the novel is, as Mark Seltzer observes in *Henry James and the Art of Power*, an opportunity for James to examine issues relating to social control. As he says, "realism and reform are both discourses of social control" (Seltzer 145). This theme is resonant in the novel: "In silence, in darkness, but under the feet of each one of us, the revolution lives and walks. It is a wonderful, immeasurable trap on the lip of which society performs its antics" (James 291). It is social control, its perceived limitations and an attempt to end them which lead to Hyacinth's downfall in the novel.

To emphasise this point, Edwin Sill Fussell tells us that: "It is the worst kind of mistake to read *The Princess Casamassima* as a frustrated, frustrating exposé of something going on below the surface; what is going on is, precisely, the surface" (Fussell 79). James describes the surface of working-class London clearly; it is precisely because the social control of the city is so forceful that Hyacinth feels unable to break free of it by any means other than suicide.

In the novel James follows the guidelines he had set out in "The Art of Fiction" of "life without rearrangement" in order to give an air of reality, and combined this with Zola's technique of note-taking in order to give more freedom to his imagination:

> To have adopted the scheme was to have met the question of one's notes [...] notes were a gathered impression, to haunt the great city and by this habit to penetrate it, imaginatively, in as many places as possible [...] imagination is needed or you are a fool in the very presence of the revealed and assured (James *Princess* Preface 21-23).

James uses his imagination to penetrate London in order to reveal its underlying reality. He therefore walked through the working-class areas of Camberwell and Cheapside in order to extract the working-class atmosphere of those districts, noting people's sayings, and also making the famous visit to Millbank Prison. James's use of working class expressions in the novel such as "he cuts it fine" is reminiscent of the use by Zola of Denis Poulot's compilation of Parisian workers' slang in *Question Social. Le Sublime, ou Le Traivailleur comme il est en 1870 et ce qu'il peut être,* a work in which Poulot carefully lists the different types of workers, indicates how vital their role is to the life of the city and urges his readers to forget about the faults of

individual workers themselves. In his 1903 essay on Zola, James refers to Zola announcing at one of Flaubert's meetings that he was engaged on a study of the *moeurs* of the people for which he was making a collection of the "gros mots" (bad words) of the language, and it is clear that James has attempted to emulate, albeit in a more refined manner, this task in his novel.

The Princess Casamassima begins, by a deliberate effort on the part of James, with a dismal description which attempts to emulate the opening pages of *L'Assommoir*, insisting upon narrowness, confined space and an impression of tiny forecourts and dirty passageways. James had claimed: "I arrived so at the history of little Hyacinth Robinson—he sprang up for me out of the London pavement." (James *Princess* Preface 8). The overall feeling is not, however, as in *L'Assommoir*, one of tragedy and foreboding, but more of shabbiness and mediocrity. We first see Hyacinth in *The Princess Casamassima* as a child engrossed in stories about high-born ladies and gentlemen in a sweet shop window: ''When he had a penny he spent only a fraction of it on stale sugar-candy; for the remaining halfpenny he always bought a ballad with a vivid woodcut at the top''(27).

L'Assommoir, on the other hand, opens dramatically with a contrast between a crowd scene and a lonely face at a window, which, according to Naomi Schor and Angus Wilson, are recurring themes in Zola's work. The heroine, Gervaise, is wondering when her lover, Lantier, will return after being out all night. Until recently, they had lived well, and even now, although staying at the relatively shabby Hotel Boncoeur, boulevard de la Chapelle, they are at least in the best room on the first floor, overlooking the boulevard. From her window Gervaise can hear the workers on their way to the factories:

> Il y avait là un piétinement de troupeau, une foule que de brusques arrêts étalaient en masse sur la chaussée, un défilé sans fin d'ouvriers allant au travail, leurs outils sur le dos, leur pain sur le bras; et la cohue s'engouffrait dans Paris où elle se noyait, continuellement. (Zola *L'Asssommoir* 21). (*It was like the trampling of a herd, a mob spreading out over the roadway whenever there was a sudden stoppage, an endless procession of men going to work, toolbags slung on their backs and loaves of bread under their arms, and the throng flowed on into Paris to be continually soaked up.*)

The image of these men being drowned one after another as they enter Paris, which builds upon Gervaise's fear for the safety of her lover—she has already imagined him stabbed somewhere at night—establishes an atmosphere of foreboding, reminiscent of the opening of Zola's earlier novel *Thérèse Raquin*.

The characters in *The Princess Casamassima* have strong, well-defined personalities, more so even than the characters in *L'Assommoir* Indeed, R.L. Stevenson, in a letter to James, asserts: "As for your young lady (Millicent Henning) she is all there; yes, sir, you can do low life, I believe!" (Stevenson, qtd. in Powers 102). Millicent provides a link to a world which is to destroy Hynacinth, a world in which he already has a stake due to his mixed parentage. His anomalous position in society is a reflection of hers, and, having contemplated the splendours of high society and fallen in love with them, he can no longer accept his place in life.

The first half of *The Princess Casamassima* prepares the reader for switches in scene from Lomax Place, Audley Court and Lisson Grove in Marylebone, the home of the Poupins, while Millicent, as the shop girl in Buckingham Place Road, is practically across the social boundary. The area, although well defined, is not as claustrophobic as Zola's Goutte d'Or. A number of characters move freely across this social boundary even if Millicent does not quite manage to bridge the gap. Captain Sholto straddles the divide between Mayfair and the meeting place of the anarchists, the Sun and Moon public house. One of the reasons for the ill-defined way in which the anarchists' meeting place is presented is undoubtedly James's lack of personal knowledge of such places. He found most of his documentation from what he read in *The Times*, which is not the way in which Zola worked but which leads to comparable results.

James uses symbolism to illustrate the themes of the novel, using a technique similar to Zola's. The Strand Theatre, for instance, is the perfect setting for what is theatrical, artificial, as well as being a place where all worlds can meet. The Princess, seen for the first time there, takes part in the symbolic play-acting, imagining that she wishes to get to know better the lower echelons of society. What she offers Hyacinth is make-believe, and the theatre then becomes an obvious symbol for the illusions of grandeur, those of happiness and of overwhelming generosity, and above all for the illusory but powerful structures of society.

James had altered, as we have seen, Zola's painstaking technique involving extensive gathering of facts, in order to give more place to the imagination of the writer. Similarly, he endows his characters with the kind of imagination which is comparable with but goes much further than poor Gervaise's dream of being in the country when she finds herself on a spot of wasteland between two factories towards the end of *L'Assommoir*.

When he wrote *The Princess Casamassima* in 1886, James was conscious of writing a social novel. He set out to express the atmosphere of the city and to describe the social and political situation in 1886. Similarly, in *L'Assommoir,* Zola was determined to produce a precise account of life in a single area of Paris at a certain time in during the Second Empire. It is however, noticeable that, neither for Zola, nor for James, did the didacticism override the poetic description. They did not allow the power of the social protest they wished to make to submerge the artistic presentation of the work. Both James and Zola recognised that the balance of social forces would have to change if the lives of people like Hyacinth Robinson, Gervaise Macquart, and countless others, were to acquire meaning instead of being at the mercy of events and situations beyond their control, from evils such as alcoholism or the fallacy of anarchism.

The relevance of both novels to their times can be shown in many ways: for instance, the demonstration of the unemployed in London in 1886, the French Temperance League, or the furor that greeted the publication of *L'Assommoir*. Both authors depict working-class characters at the mercy of a predatory city which reduces them to a helpless state and eventually condemns them to death, and both do it, not from the standpoint of the characters themselves, but by placing the city itself at the centre of the novel. Although Zola claimed to use a 'scientific' method to reflect reality, in *L'Assommoir* the poetic power of the novel exceeds its intended purposes. James, on the other hand, makes a far more realistic—if haunted—presentation of the streets of London in *The Princess Casamasssima* than he had in his earlier works.

In a letter to T.S. Perry, James wrote that the dream of his life was to go to London. In writing *The Princess Casamassima,* James fulfilled that dream in fictional form and made a contribution to the literature of the city which was comparable in scope if not achievement to Zola's in *L'Assommoir*.

3. The Mother as Artist in "Louisa Pallant": Re-casting the International Scene

Larry A. Gray

"Louisa Pallant," published ten years after *Daisy Miller: A Study* (1878), significantly reverses James's definitive and popular early tale. Featuring a clever American mother and her reserved, circumspect daughter—both masterful, like the author, at controlled ambiguity—"Louisa Pallant" constitutes the "anti-*Daisy Miller*." Specifically, this later story emphasizes the American mother rather than the American girl; further, the mother's narration within the story dominates both the plot and the interpretation of that plot, marginalizing the male, first-person narrator into a much-diminished version of Winterbourne. Beyond these basic variations on *Daisy Miller*, "Louisa Pallant" also dramatizes the moment when Henry James reinvented himself as an author, deliberately revising his position as a literary artist of the international situation. After the publication of this tale in 1888, he would become increasingly adept at narrative ambiguity, deriving that quality from the international theme rather than exploiting this subject matter as a profitable niche. The major phase novels of the early 1900s represent the fullest flowering of what "Louisa Pallant" already promises, mainly through the title character's ability to devise separate stories to suit distinct audiences within the narrative as a whole. Louisa's versatility as a storyteller within a single tale anticipates James's authorial project during the rest of his career.

 Although "Louisa Pallant" has never been located among the dozen or so tales that are regularly anthologized and discussed in literary journals, it

demands closer attention as a watershed work in James's long career. Before 1888, Henry James considered himself a novelist who sometimes still wrote short fiction, as he had done more regularly in his apprenticeship before the success of *Daisy Miller*. After 1888—and "Louisa Pallant" was the first tale published in that year—James consistently produced short fiction, even during hiatuses from novel-writing and throughout the dramatic phase. Further, the novels he wrote in the latter half of his career tend to resemble his tales, aesthetically: their deliberate structure bolsters a smaller cast of central characters, each of which is developed in depth (as in *The Golden Bowl*). If "Louisa Pallant" was not necessarily the cause of this major shift in James's career, the story does signal the change. And even as it reverses *Daisy Miller* by characterizing American women as socially adept in the European marriage market, "Louisa Pallant" also shows James returning to the international scene made popular by Daisy—but now as the site for the reinvention of his later career. He achieves this result by transforming Mrs. Miller of 1878—who does not know if her daughter Daisy is engaged to an Italian or not—into Mrs. Louisa Pallant, a mother whose narrative creativity, sense of audience, and astute characterizations within a life of social maneuvers begin to parallel the skills of James, the reinvented literary artist.

A summary of "Louisa Pallant" reveals its basic differences from *Daisy Miller*. The unnamed narrator, age fifty when the events occur, offers his first-person memoir of a particular experience of ten years earlier as the confirmation of a thesis, now that further reflection only confirms his summation of events. His thesis, contained in the tale's sententious opening line, warns the reader against complacency about even the most familiar persons in one's life: "Never say you know the last word about any human heart!" (192). His evidence for this assertion is Louisa Pallant, a woman whom he once believed he knew thoroughly because he had loved her in their youth. She rejected him in order to marry a wealthier man, only to become, soon after, a widow with a daughter to raise and with her erstwhile financial hopes disappointed. The narrator has remained a bachelor for more than twenty years, and he blames Louisa's treatment of him for this fact, though he also believes he is "glad to have lost her" (193). Having met her several times in the decades between their youthful break-up and the tale's action, the narrator has never detected a sign that she regrets her choice to marry Henry Pallant instead of himself: yet the narrator has always interpreted her complacency as a pretense. The tale's

main action reunites them in Europe when Louisa's daughter (Linda) is twenty-two, and at a time when the narrator has been charged with showing his nephew Archie—an unassuming nineteen year-old American with good financial prospects—the best of the continent during the young man's first visit. The narrator meets Louisa and Linda first by chance in Homburg, and soon Archie joins them to form a symmetrical foursome of older and younger couples. An ongoing acquaintanceship develops, along with a possible romance between Archie and Linda, but the first half of the story abruptly ends when Louisa takes her daughter away without notice and with no encouragement to continue the relationships begun in Homburg.

The novelty of the tale for readers has usually depended upon an unexpected betrayal, according to the narrator: in its second half, Louisa claims she will prevent (rather than encourage) a marriage between her daughter and the wealthy young Archie. The Pallants, mother and daughter, have lived frugally in Europe for years; if Louisa was mercenary in her youth, as the narrator believes, then she would presumably now secure a lucrative marriage for Linda that would restore the financial status of the women. In fact, the second half of the story chronicles the mother's persuasive efforts (in private dialogues with the narrator) to save his nephew from the allegedly predatory Linda. The departure from Homburg and consequent separation are remedied within weeks when Archie receives a note from Linda, indicating that the Pallants are now in the Italian lake country. The narrator is quick to rejoin the women in order to watch the situation's further development: he is fascinated by the possibility that Louisa has become nobly regretful of past misdeeds against himself, wondering if Louisa believes that her own past sins are now reflected in the daughter's secret motives. As will become increasingly characteristic of James's later fiction, such moral questions are raised by the narrator but are never answered in a definitive way. As readers, we recognize the makings of a psychological insight without experiencing the certainty of one. After the familial couples reunite in Italy, Louisa pleads with the narrator to take Archie away; in a scene of private, tormented confession, she asserts that Linda is indeed a predatory and mercenary husband-seeker who will "gobble [Archie] down" (205) mostly just for the sport, since the young man makes for easy prey. The narrator, persuaded and fascinated, passively allows Louisa to stage-manage matters: she speaks privately to the nephew, and Archie departs from his uncle immediately and never meets the Pallants again.

Within a year, meanwhile, Linda marries a wealthy Englishman. As the tale concludes, it is now ten years after the main action, and Archie continues to be a bachelor, suggesting that he might replicate the pattern of the narrator's life based on a parallel disappointment by Louisa's daughter.

This tale represents a significant, Janus-faced moment in the Henry James's career. While revisiting and reversing *Daisy Miller*—with its two-setting structure ending in Italy, and a man's puzzling over American women in the European marriage market—the tale anticipates the future in its controlled ambiguity and selectively reliable narration. James would publish "The Aspern Papers" later the same year, and would go on to produce the quintessential example of the ambiguous and the unreliable in "The Turn of the Screw" a decade after "Louisa," which thus stands midway between *Daisy* and "Turn." A precise degree of bewilderment coexisting with a high degree of discernment—issues James would describe still later in his New York Edition Preface to *The Princess Casamassima*—are realized best for the first time in this narrator who aptly titles the story with its dominant narrating figure, Louisa Pallant. In his actions as a character, the narrator becomes Louisa's pawn, even if we cannot know her precise motives for manipulating his movements in the story; meanwhile, the narrator obsessively sketches many shades of Louisa's ambiguous character, accurately reporting what she says and does, while also subtly simplifying her character according to the long-standing grudge he feels toward her. The result for us as readers is a story that can be appreciated on many levels of both incident and irony. Above all, the tale establishes the aesthetic basis on which James would build his fiction for the rest of his career: he would allow discerning but limited central characters to raise valid questions, while also leaving the reader with a variety of possible interpretations. James's stories—like the ones Louisa Pallant tells or claims to tell to other characters throughout this narrative—would be constructed for multiple readers. James both defines his reader's limitations and encourages his interest to defy these limits by making him believe—even more than the story's narrator believes—that you can never know the last word about any human heart.

"Louisa Pallant" was published at a transitional phase in James's career—a moment when he felt some doubts about which direction to follow as a writer. He confessed in a January 2, 1888, letter to William Dean Howells that his two long novels of the mid-1880s had "reduced the desire, & the demand, for [his] productions to zero" (Horne 196). In fact, however,

this despondent remark foretold positive action and results. James would soon hire a literary agent to deal with editors, with tales and novels soon after appearing in print; almost immediately, for example, "Louisa Pallant" appeared in the February 1888 issue of *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*. The ice was broken, and the flood of published tales followed in this important middle year of James's long career.

Beyond the fortuitous timing of its appearance, "Louisa Pallant" also signals a subtle shift in the author's aesthetic sympathies—indicated by the tale's emphasis on Louisa as ambiguous artist rather than on the Winterbourne-esque narrator. While casual readers might assume that the unnamed bachelor, who writes the memoir and addresses the reader directly, stands in for James the author, in fact this narrator becomes just one of the audiences that Louisa addresses and ultimately controls in the latter half of the story. When uncle and nephew reunite with the Pallants in Italy, Archie immediately takes Linda boating on Lago Maggiore and Louisa is left to practice her narrative skills on the narrator. Always ambiguous, she scolds him for having rejoined them, though she admits having allowed Linda to write the catalyzing note to Archie; she says she will persuade Archie that Linda is an immoral creature, but demands that the narrator be absent from this proposed interview (even though he is the young man's guardian). Such contradictions surprise the narrator—most notably that a mother would condemn her daughter so thoroughly—and yet he submits to her request, thus abdicating his own parental role in dealing with Archie. The narrator permits this usurpation of his authority because Louisa tells him a story specifically crafted for him as an audience—namely, that she has raised an evil daughter, after having made the poor choices in her youth that alienated the confirmed bachelor. Ironically enough, Louisa's persuasive, artistic coup—her bolstering of his moral superiority, a quality he already takes for granted—is accomplished by replacing him as Archie's moral adviser. In short, she dismisses the narrator in the present just as she has done in the past, but she now accomplishes this result with his own confused approval.

All of the evidence supporting Louisa's sincerity toward the narrator, however, amounts to hearsay. Having placated him with her apparent expiation, Louisa usurps his guardian's privilege and speaks to Archie alone; as readers, we share the narrator's spectator role, mere witnesses to the results of Louisa's action rather than to her actual interview with the young man. Archie's subsequent avoidance of the narrator and his

almost immediate departure from Stresa by himself demonstrate the effect that Louisa has wrought. Meanwhile the daughter perhaps shares in the creation of this effective fiction; fully consistent, at least, Linda confirms the next day that her mother "'was so vexed that she took him apart and gave him a scolding . . . [a]nd to punish *me* she sent me straight to bed. She has very old-fashioned ideas—haven't you, mamma?' she added, looking over my head at Mrs. Pallant, who had just come in behind me" (225). The subtly carnivorous phrase "took him apart" and the girl's gesture of looking over the narrator's head to communicate with her mother imply a community of understanding between the women that combine to seem more conspiratorial than "old-fashioned."

Precisely realized gestures such as this one are central to the story's success. James includes a similarly telling instance of social maneuvering during a private conversation between Louisa and the narrator. As they discuss Louisa's sacrificial plan to save Archie from Linda, while standing in the hotel garden, there is a brief interruption:

> At the same moment, two ladies, apparently English, came toward us (scattered groups had been sitting there and the inmates of the hotel were moving to and fro), and I observed the immediate charming transition (it seemed to me to show such years of social practice), by which, as they greeted us, [Louisa] exchanged her excited, almost fevered expression for an air of recognition and pleasure. They stopped to speak to her and she asked with eagerness whether their mother were better (214).

Louisa's ability to address this unexpected audience of English ladies with a completely different demeanor at an instant's notice anticipates her daughter's smooth transition in addressing her mother's interruption, discussed above. In both cases the narrator can only admire the women's social ease, becoming a mere spectator of these persons who treat him as an item needing an occasional rearrangement within their landscape. The two English ladies disappear from the story, appearing only in this passage, and yet one might wonder if they have any connection to the wealthy Englishman Linda marries within a year. And if Mrs. Pallant considers her daughter so predatory, why does she not prevent this Englishman, Mr. Gimingham, from marrying Linda, saving him as she has allegedly saved young Archie?

Louisa never identifies specific, immoral actions committed by her daughter; at most, she denounces the girl's silent, mercenary intentions. Further, the mother only implies that Linda is immoral by condemning

herself as the source of Linda's tendencies. None of the mother's evidence can be investigated; all is her own testimony. As an apparently reluctant confession, however, it satisfies the narrator's assumption that Louisa harbors secret guilt over her treatment of himself. Yet if Louisa and Linda share the same ambitions, which seems likely, then the mother can remain consistent to their mercenary goals and still confess almost any melodramatic possibility to the narrator in private, so long as her accusations are speculative and nonspecific, as in the following private admission to the narrator:

> "To arrive at a brilliant social position, if it were necessary, [Linda] would see me drown in this lake without lifting a finger, she would stand there and see it—she would push me in—and never feel a pang. […] She would lie for it, she would steal for it, she would kill for it! […] God has let me see it in time, in his mercy," she continued, "but his ways are strange, that he has let me see it in my daughter. It is myself he has let me see, myself as I was for years" (217).

Louisa appoints herself as God's spokesperson, here, identifying a positive effect or even a divine purpose in Linda's badness. Her assumption of God-like omniscience on this point is a function of knowing what the narrator wants to hear and of coddling his unshaken belief about her mistreatment of him. To persuade him of her sincerity, she phrases her self-condemnation in religious terms that he is less likely to question.

Archie, however, poses a different kind of problem as an audience. If he loves or is infatuated with the perfectly accomplished Linda, he will not simply accept hearsay about her potential evil as the narrator does. The young man would likely argue the point, or seek other opinions, or discuss the matter with Linda herself. All of these possibilities would be a challenge to the mother's control of the situation; therefore, Louisa's course of action must convince Archie to give up Linda while simultaneously ensuring his unbroken silence. As we know from the story, Louisa achieves exactly this result: when Archie meets the narrator a few months after the story's main action, he never reveals what Louisa said to him in private. In the ten following years, Archie never marries—a fact which implies he still loves or is obsessed with Linda. Somehow his youthful feelings for the girl have been raised to a higher level than simple attraction to her beauty. Yet if he considered the girl morally bad, he would not be so reluctant to speak of her. She has not jilted him, as the narrator felt jilted by the mother. Instead, Louisa has persuaded Archie that Linda is specifically inaccessible to his

love, though otherwise blameless and even admirable.

Although James's narrative resists single explanations and definitive evidence, an interpretation of this ending demands adequate acknowledgment of the mother's status as supreme artificer. Because the limited critical discussion of the tale has so far neglected this aspect of the story, the following explanation identifies the mother's implied, central role in achieving this particular ending. When Louisa spoke to Archie alone, we may assume that she defamed not her daughter but the narrator. In order to secure Archie's silence, she falsely confided that Linda is in fact her illegitimate child with the narrator. There are significant precedents in James's fiction for such a manipulative stroke: the beautiful and accomplished Pansy in *The Portrait of a Lady* is a blameless but illegitimate daughter of Gilbert Osmond and Serena Merle; Christina Light in *Roderick Hudson* is compelled to marry the Prince Casamassima against her will, after her mother threatens to reveal the daughter's illegitimacy and ruin her chances at any other marriage of note. In "Louisa Pallant," of course, the story of illegitimacy would be a fiction about Linda, created by her mother for Archie alone, her thereafter-silenced audience. Louisa would simply convince Archie that the narrator's obsession with herself and Linda has a secret explanation, and that Archie must "save" Linda by remaining quiet about this matter—thus allowing the blameless girl he loves to live a happy life, though a life necessarily separated from him. The boy would also need to keep the secret from anyone else, to maintain his uncle's and thus his own family's honor.

Archie's avoidance of the narrator and his unbroken silence about Louisa's private talk with him are to be expected, if he believes the narrator has hidden this dark secret of paternity for twenty-two years. Archie's mother in America lacks all the details, since her son would never reveal such a family secret to her, but she concludes nevertheless that Louisa has somehow meddled with her son's happiness. Yet the narrator dismisses Mrs. Pringle's anger at Louisa with a parenthetically sweeping "(such is the inconsequence of women)" (227). Even without knowing exactly what Louisa has done, or why, we as readers can detect the narrator's mistake in dismissing his sister's outrage; Archie's mother seems intuitively correct in suspecting that Louisa has usurped parental control and misguided her son. Louisa Pallant has directed her own daughter's path to success—most likely in full agreement with the girl—and has also played the persuasive storyteller in making "interested" readers of both Archie and the narrator.

Meanwhile, while we see the results described in the plot's development, we must be more imaginative than the narrator when "looking at the explanations of things" (201) in order to comprehend the story's characters. Although we can never say the last word about Louisa's heart, James invites us to be better readers than the narrator. Without moralizing, the author asks his implied readers to follow the spirit rather than the rhetorical posturing of the tale's opening sentence.

4. James's Romantic Promises: *The Golden Bowl* and the Virtual

Leman Giresunlu

In Henry James's *The Golden Bowl*, despite their deemed immanent value, artifacts of aesthetic variations enable the protagonist's self-transformation and transcendence. Artifacts as material entities appear as replaceable virtualities for one another in Henry James's novel. Jules David Prown describes the artifact in the following words:

> Objects made or modified by humans are clumped together under the term "artifact." That word connects two words—*art* and *fact*—reflecting its double Latin root. The word art derives from *ars*, *artis* (skill in joining), and *fact* derives through *factum* (deed or act), from *facere* (to make or to do), emphasizing the utilitarian meaning already implicit in the word art; thus, skill or knowledge is applied to the making of a thing. […] the term art refers to objects whose primary initial purpose has been to represent, to memorialize, to induce veneration, elevation or contemplation, to provide access to or influence supernatural forces, to delight the eye, or otherwise to affect human thought or behavior through visual means (Jules David Prown 12).

In Prown's definition, artifacts' ability to "represent, to memorialize, and to induce veneration, elevation and contemplation, to provide access to or influence supernatural forces, to delight the eye, or otherwise to affect human thought or behavior through visual means," find venue in Henry James's novel. To be able to understand James's use of artifacts in his novel, it is important to clarify both the nature of the artifact as a material entity and its transformative meaning.

To conceptualize the artifact's transformative quality, traditional and current definitions of the term "virtual" deserve reconsideration. The term

"virtual" derives from the root *virtus*. According to Dani Cavallaro, the virtual "would seem to stand on the side of moral excellence, for as John Wood notes, the Latin word 'combined the semantic idea of *truth* with the ethical idea of *worth*'" (31). According to Dani Cavallaro the word *virtus* acquired further meanings in the Renaissance, in terms of "fame" and its Machiavellian "notoriety," through its synonyms such as: "expedience, opportunism, dissimulation and secretiveness" (31). Cavallaro recalls "Plato's association of the virtual being with the ideal realm of Pure Forms, in contrast with the actual as the natural domain of the copy." He further adds "the virtual," to be "in Platonic terms […] imperceptible and eternal" (32). Therefore he asks, "[H]ow are human beings to grasp it, let alone fulfill it, in *this* world?" He especially poses this question in terms of the virtual quality in cybernetics. At this point it is necessary to mention Mark Poster's understanding of the word virtual in terms of the multiplication of realities in a world wrought with simulations:

> The term 'virtual' was used in computer jargon to refer to situations that were near substitutes. For example, virtual memory means the use of a section of a hard disk to act as something else, in this case, random access memory. […] The terms 'virtual reality' and 'real time' attest to the force of the second media age in constituting a simulational culture. The mediation has become so intense that the things mediated can no longer even pretend to be unaffected. The culture is increasingly simulational in the sense that the media often changes the things that it treats, transforming the identity of originals and referentialities. In the second media age 'reality' becomes multiple (Mark Poster 85).

In its current definition, the simulational aspect of virtualities, which manifests as multiplicity, allows for interchangeability to come to the fore as a condition—that is, "situations that were near substitutes," the conditions of acting "as something else." This current definition of the "virtual" places Henry James's earlier use of artifacts in his novel *The Golden Bowl* into perspective, in a fashion similar to the current understanding of the virtual as multiplicity and interchangeability.

Works of art as virtual multiplicities abound in form and content in *The Golden Bowl*. Henry James's achievement in the novel is to have the protagonist reach for self-transformation through gradual exposure to works of art, where each work in turn leaves its place to the other. However these artworks appear to be mere ephemera. That is, they are esteemed but devalued of their meanings simultaneously; they are denigrated or broken to pieces; they can generate a flighty influence in dreams, while they are just

left to fade away, allowing the next artwork to replace the previous one in a subtle manner throughout the novel. During transitions from one artwork to the other the protagonist gradually gains consciousness of the ultimate truth. The multiplicity of works of art, their substitution for each other, and their denigration may remind us of artwork's loss of "aura," which Walter Benjamin lamented over in his famed article "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1935). The reader, while viewing James playfully juggle with works of art and replacing one for another until the protagonist gains consciousness, may share Benjamin's anxiety. However, James, while alternating one art piece for the other, does not feel sad over any of those he denigrates or makes use of interchangeably: with the exception of Prince Amerigo who grieves over the fractured golden bowl (*The Golden Bowl* 345). Pressured with the enigmatic presence of the unknown, the protagonist's innocence gives way to knowledge and adulthood while transforming into a work of art wrought in ironies and ambiguities. Meanwhile the rest of the characters' equivocal manners edge into the sublime and further add to the protagonist's transformation and to the novel's aesthetic ambiguity: "It was the present so much briefer interval, in a situation, possibly in a relation, so changed—it was the new terms of her problem that would tax Charlotte's art" (*The Golden Bowl* 312); "It all fell in beautifully, moreover; so that, as hard, at this time, in spite of her fever, as a little pointed diamond the Princess showed something of the glitter of consciously possessing the constructive, the creative hand" (*The Golden Bowl* 316). Foremost, it is the process of the protagonist's transformation which matters. The sublime, according to Edmund Burke, highlights the following:

> Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the sublime; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling. I say the strongest emotion, because I am satisfied the ideas of pain are much more powerful than those which enter on the part of pleasure (Edmund Burke, *Of the Sublime*).

Experiences of pain and pleasure abound in James's novel. Maggie's contemplation in the aftermath of Prince Amerigo and Charlotte's excursion to the Matchams constitute an example. She gradually realizes that something may have happened between her husband and Charlotte. During a dream–like sequence, Maggie reflects her sentiments back and forth upon the images of a "pagoda" and a "Mohametan mosque":

This situation had been occupying, for months and months, the very centre of the garden of her life, but it had reared itself there like some strange, tall tower of ivory, or perhaps rather some wonderful beautiful, but outlandish pagoda, a structure plated with hard, bright porcelain, coloured and figured and adorned, at the overhanging eaves, with silver bells that tinkled, ever so charmingly, when stirred by chance airs. She had walked round and round it—that was what she felt; she had carried on her existence in the space left her for circulation, a space that sometimes seemed ample and sometimes narrow; looking up, all the while, at the fair structure that spread itself so amply and rose so high, but never quite making out, as yet, where she might have entered had she wished. […]. The pagoda in her blooming garden figured the arrangement—how otherwise was it to be named?—by which, so strikingly, she had been able to marry without breaking, as she liked to put it, with her past. She had surrendered herself to her husband without the shadow of a reserve or a condition, and yet she had not, all the while, given up her father by the least little inch (*The Golden Bowl* 233, 234).

Much as the pagoda is "beautiful," it is also "outlandish," which qualifies it for the sublime. The quotation relates to Maggie's distress in response to her husband and Charlotte's delayed arrival from the Matchams, as well as the nature of her relationship to her husband and her continuing relationship to her father. Later in this episode, Maggie's insight superimposes the pagoda on the "Mahometan mosque" (*The Golden Bowl* 234). James provides a detailed view of these buildings focusing on their texture and adornments: the pagoda's "hard, bright porcelain" and "silver bells" with the mosque's "rare porcelain plates":

[…] she had caught herself distinctly in the act of pausing, then in that of lingering, and finally in that of stepping unprecedentedly near. The thing might have been, by the distance at which it kept her, a Mahometan mosque, with which no base heretic could take a liberty; there so hung about it the vision of one's putting off one's shoes to enter, and even, verily, of one's paying with one's life if found there as an interloper. She had not, certainly, arrived at the conception of paying with her life for anything she might do; but it was nevertheless quite as if she had sounded with a tap or two one of the rare porcelain plates. (*The Golden Bowl* 234).

During this dream-like sequence the pagoda and the mosque exist interchangeably in Maggie's imagination. James connects the two different temples by means of their porcelain decorations. Despite Maggie's difficulty in discerning the buildings from one another during her dream-like stance, James clearly defines the artifacts which identify these buildings: the pagoda's "hard, bright porcelain, coloured and figured and adorned, at the overhanging eaves, with silver bells that tinkled, ever so charmingly"

(*The Golden Bowl* 233), and the mosque's "rare porcelain plates" (*The Golden Bowl* 234). Where Maggie's dream-like sequence generates the ambiguity needed to blur the transition from one belief system to the other, James maintains the irrevocable duality of idealism and materialism connected in the artifacts. While the belief systems intersect, the porcelain plates of the mosque speak back to Maggie:

> […] as if she had sounded with a tap or two one of the rare porcelain plates. She had knocked, in short—though she could scarce have said whether for admission or for that; she had applied her hand to a cool, smooth spot, and had waited to see what could happen. Something *had* happened; it was as if a sound, at her touch, after a little, had come back to her from within; a sound sufficiently suggesting that her approach had been noted (*The Golden Bowl* 234).

Strangely enough Maggie receives a response from the tiles. They speak back to her as if alive. James describes this sound to "represent our young woman's consciousness of a recent change in her life—a change now but a few days old—it must at the same time be observed that she both sought and found in renewed circulation […] a measure of relief from the idea of having perhaps to answer for what she had done" (*The Golden Bowl* 234). This consciousness over the change that occurred in Maggie's life relates to the new addition to the family, Charlotte, a former friend who is becoming her foster mother, and to Amerigo and Charlotte's intimacy. Therefore Maggie's introspection reveals an overview of the liberties the couples had taken, and their reverberations on their entourage:

> There were plenty of singular things they were not enamoured of— flights of brilliancy, of audacity, of originality, that speaking at least for the dear man and herself, were not at all in their line; but they liked to think they had given their life this unusual extension and this liberal form, which many families, many couples, and still more many pairs of couples, would not have been workable. That last truth had been distinctly brought home to them by the bright testimony, the quite explicit envy, of most of their friends, who had remarked to them again and again that they must, on all the showing, to keep on such terms, be people of the highest amiability—equally including in the praise, of course, Amerigo and Charlotte (*The Golden Bowl* 235).

This quote emphasizes the liberties the couples had taken, and the praise they had received over the harmonious lives they had led. However, Prince Amerigo and Charlotte's delayed arrival from the Matchams induces these thoughts in Maggie, which are a clear reflection of her doubts for the praise they had received earlier. In short, Maggie becomes conscious

of the underlying irony behind these moments of praise. Where exquisite representations of artistry coincide with images of horror—whether these constitute a golden bowl with a crack, the tombs of the kings, or porcelain tiles of the pagoda superimposed with those of the mosque which speak back to her—James brings together contrasts. Similarly, Maggie's conventional marriage contrasts with the daring lifestyle she realizes she is leading. Here James emphasizes Maggie's anxiety over possible punishment regarding the liberties they had taken. Therefore Maggie imagines how one pays with one's life if found to be an "interloper" in a mosque, a place "with which no base heretic could take a liberty" (*The Golden Bowl* 234). James makes use of this misconception in order to create that sense of horror to highlight the liberties for which Maggie thinks she is about to pay. Briefly Maggie feels like a heretic who has worked against the conventions of the society in which she is living. Yet she does not pronounce her anxiety openly, but she rather projects it over misconceptions. For that purpose James interchangeably ascribes these horrific misconceptions over distant belief systems and their temples welded in beautiful and sound artifacts that echo Maggie's own conscience back to her:

> …a Mahometan mosque, with which no base heretic could take a liberty; there so hung about it the vision of one's putting off one's shoes to enter, and even, verily, of one's paying with one's life if found there as an interloper. She had not, certainly, arrived at the conception of paying with her life for anything she might do; but it was nevertheless quite as if she had sounded with a tap or two one of the rare porcelain plates (*The Golden Bowl* 234).

These contradictions foster harmonious and pleasurable representations that are wrought in stereotypical misconceptions that induce pain. This particular sequence in *The Golden Bowl* is an example of the inspirations the protagonist received from all ephemera she was exposed to in her lifetime. In this respect just as works of art can initiate the protagonist's transformation, individuals of excessive quality can achieve their transformative potential in a Machiavellian spirit. Mrs. Assingham, for example, although a friend of the Ververs, introduces Maggie to Prince Amerigo, and, despite his former relationship with Charlotte, she hides this information from Maggie; Charlotte, although Maggie's close friend, rekindles her former relationship with Maggie's husband Prince Amerigo. Mrs. Assingham is not that different from Charlotte in terms of her level of sincerity with Maggie. These personas are varieties of a similar type masquerading in disguise and adding to the protagonist's self-development. Such maneuvers

of personas call back to the origins of the word virtual, the Latin *virtus*, which, as quoted earlier, had "gained further meanings in the Renaissance, in terms of 'fame' and its Machiavellian 'notoriety' in its synonyms such as: 'expedience, opportunism, dissimulation and secretiveness'" (Cavallaro 32). In this regard, the term virtual in *The Golden Bowl* finds its application in quite diverse manners—that is, virtualities are made up not only of artifacts and works of art which manifest in multiplicities and which are used as substitutes for each other, but also of a selection of diverse personas with typical manners, who act as replaceable entities among themselves.

In addition to artifacts, works of art and interchangeable personas acting as multiple virtualities, imagination, which is the primary tenet of romantic literary tradition, adds to the protagonist's transformation. Maggie praises Charlotte for possessing a "great imagination," which refers to Maggie's perception, and eventual practice of it (*The Golden Bowl* 106). Although called Margaret by birth, the name 'Maggie' reminds us of the word 'magic'. While the text borders on the fantastic in the sound of the tiles which speak back to Maggie, not unlike a magical manifestation, she discovers the truth about her marriage, ironically, by means of imagination and reasoning. Eventually, in reference to Charlotte, Maggie realizes her own interchangeable position within the system which generates her: a mere tool aspiring for a role that would allow her to transform and be transformed. This is what I claim to be Henry James's romantic promise: his ability to have his protagonist transform and help others to transform by means of keen observation, and a capacity to make inferences through exposure to artistic creations and life experiences of excessive quality.

Maggie's recollections of specific details corresponding to artifacts intermingle with a blurred memory of her knowledge of them, as in the example of the pagoda and the mosque. James makes use of works of art and any symbolic reference to them to initiate the protagonist's transformation. In this respect the golden bowl has a religious reference to *Ecclesiastes* 12:6, which pronounces the following demand: "Remember Him before the silver cord is broken and the golden bowl is crushed, the pitcher by the well is shattered and the wheel at the cistern is crushed" (*Biblos, New American Standard Bible*). Religious commentaries explain these words as a need to remember one's duties to God before old age and death approaches.

However, the existence of sin accompanied with that of the beautiful add to the formation of the sublime. In Henry James's novel, sin translates into the golden bowl's crack—metonymy for Charlotte and Amerigo's

transgression. However this mediated knowledge of underlying imperfection brings Maggie to an understanding of good and evil. Where the actual act of sin is experienced by others, Prince Amerigo and Charlotte, Maggie acquires knowledge by way of mediation—that is, through observation and imagination experienced in an enigmatic milieu, which provides pressure on her everyday life experience in a combination of terror and aesthetic beauty.

Although art objects gain quite negative attributes, they are vessels of meaning working at a higher level in *The Golden Bowl*. For this reason, the intertextual link to the Bible, with the "golden bowl" standing for the human body, expresses the finiteness of life and the recognition of a higher belief system in which sin constitutes an inevitable intervention in one's life. In this way, James holds up the human body as a measure of his art, and Charlotte and Amerigo's transgression as the ultimate moral dilemma and the stylistic point of conflict of his work. The domestic condition epitomized in the "ménage-à-trois" constitutes the novel's utmost link to human experience, and therefore to reality, where the work of art, as a virtual representation, can only signify an incomplete replica. Such a complex relationship for the couple is founded upon the unfulfilled and repressed natural desires of two lovers. The fact that money is the primary reason for their interrupted union is yet another marvel, as it is an artifact ruling over human condition.

However, the repression of true love brings forth transgression. That is, the irrepressible and truly passionate love affair regains its expression this time in a clandestine relationship, where deception inevitably rules. Despite Prince Amerigo's marriage to Maggie, Charlotte rekindles their former lustful relationship, since she tends to let herself be ruled by her natural self. Meanwhile, James generates an emphasis over the process of making fiction, which is partly the ultimate outcome of repressing sentiments or desires because of simple human vanities, in denial of one's true preferences.

In Charlotte and Amerigo's disloyalty and Maggie's discovery of it, certain characters—including Adam Verver, Charlotte, Amerigo, Maggie, and Mrs. Assingham—are transformed into melodramatic players manipulating their silences. They unscrupulously take revenge on or punish each other while suffering from guilt and a lack of love in their lives that is due to the choices they have made. Maggie, an "abjectly simple" person (*The Golden Bowl* 344), is first in line to be transformed by adapting

herself to the behaviors she was exposed to. That is, she responds to her best friend Charlotte's deception and hypocritical attitude as well as to her husband's in the very same way: through silence and manipulation. That is, she keeps quiet and ignores Charlotte's treachery. Not only Maggie but also, later, Charlotte changes her attitude. She pretends not to be affected negatively by Adam Verver's decision to take her to the United States. She behaves as if it was her decision to move to the United States with Adam in the establishment of the museum The American City. Not to let others pity her, to keep her moral and aesthetic posture upright and intact, Charlotte decides to behave so, which involves extensive role play and creativity, generating yet a new work of art to be carried into the museum awaiting them: "I mean immediately. And—I may as well tell you now—I mean from my own time. I want," Charlotte said, 'to have him at last a little to myself; I want, strange as it may seem to you'—and she gave it all its weight—'to keep the man I've married. And to do so, I see, I must act'" (*The Golden Bowl* 414).

Therefore the protagonist's self-transformation in the *Golden Bowl* is an interactive and interchangeable act, much like the rest of the virtualities which impact all parties involved. During Maggie's awakening to truth the rest of the participating personas are transformed from their primal and authentic states of being into an altered state of mind. There is a Machiavellian notoriety of the word 'virtue', and its synonyms, specified earlier as "expedience, opportunism, dissimulation and secretiveness," which are sunk deep into history and are sucked out of their vaults and into Maggie's consciousness as acquired knowledge through observance of actual experiences. As such, Maggie pragmatically moulds her current state of mind based on her exposure to the riches of the Old World, as well as through observation of her peers' culture during her stay in Europe. Maggie's acquired self-transformation is based on her perception and reflects back on her opponents. Normally her opponents' "expedience, opportunism, dissimulation and secretiveness," which were foreign behaviors to her once, are acquired in a mediated manner leading her towards self-transformation. Therefore, in Henry James's *The Golden Bowl*, although works of art, as embodiments of the "sublime" and the "beautiful," seem to be denigrated, they do help to generate that chaotic void which gives birth to hybrid multiplicities of meaning that are generated as an interchangeable fusion of differences. The outcome is a new consciousness, a new continent, and a celebration of similarities and differences.

II.
BEYOND BIOGRAPHY

5. Father and Son: The Divided Self in James's *Notes of a Son and Brother*

Mhairi Pooler

In *Notes of a Son and Brother*, a motif of the father-son relationship is prominent in the encounter between the mature author and his young self, in James's remembered relations with his father—more particularly his father's ideas—and figuratively in the very act of creating the self anew through language—much like Zeus fathering the goddess Athena out of his own head. The identification between the act of writing the self and the content of that writing emphasises a concept of 'fathering the self', which, I want to suggest, serves as a prism that refracts genre issues and personal issues concerning the very knowableness of identity. The generational tension inherent in any father-son relationship, both figuratively and literally, is echoed in the experimental style of James's 'creative autobiography'—to use Adeline Tintner's term (121)—expressing the striving for a new and different direction from the patriarchal tradition of his father's theological ideas and of a generation of Victorian autobiographers.

James selects particular episodes to recount in his autobiographies that for him fortify his identity, "stringing their apparently dispersed and disordered parts upon a fine silver thread" (*Notes* 344). And, much like the "renovating virtue" of Wordsworth's "spots of time"—he looks at his selected memories of the past as a key to the present. The encounter between the self remembering and writing in the present, and the young self recalled, or rather, discovered anew within this creative selection, essentially re-constructs the past in order to fix the author's perspective and his current self-image. Again echoing Wordsworth, James's review of his past would seem to concede that "the child is" indeed "father of the man."

In *Notes of a Son and Brother* the development of his inner life and his sense of identity is portrayed in relation to his father and brother, against whom he measures himself. The very title defines its author in relation to his family. In this narrative of artistic growth the trope of the divided self is revealed as a symptom of artistic self-consciousness and the search for identity. In the following, I want to suggest that autobiography in the 'portrait of the artist' tradition typically harnesses the myth of bringing another self—the artist—into being by rebelling against generational tradition. Much like the control exerted over his oeuvre by the careful editing of his work for the New York Edition, Henry James's autobiographical writing reveals the purposeful construction of authorship. Through the parallels he traces throughout *A Small Boy and Others* and *Notes of a Son and Brother*, between his childhood temperament and experiences and the type of author he has become, James attempts to establish a unified identity contrary to the divided self initiated by the very act of self- consciousness. Furthermore, the ontological conflict born of the discovery that he is both man and artist, would seem to be the very basis for the search for a continuous sense of self which memory can provide.

The narrative point of view that James adopts in *Notes of a Son and Brother* emphasises the gap between his two selves, the current author and his younger self, even as the narrating older self is "living over the spent experiences"—that is, reliving them, and thus identifying with his earlier self. While most of the remembered episodes are recorded in the first person, James, it seems, cannot live over the past without hinting at the experiential distance he has travelled over the intervening years, frequently inserting an "I think" or a "seemed to," which suggest a hesitancy to assert memory as fact, or language as fully capable of rendering the felt truth of experience.

Notably, a separate "other self" referred to in the third person, occurs in James's discussion of his intention to record the "personal history" of his imagination, during which he describes his recognition of the artist—"the man of imagination"—whom he had to draw forth from within himself: "It happened for me that he was belatedly to come, but that he was to turn up then in a shape almost too familiar at first for recognition" (*Notes* 345). This description not only shows that the artistic self is experienced as a separate entity, but also that he is in fact a part of the narrator's self, who "had been with me all the while," and in order to encounter him James had had "to turn nothing less than myself inside out" (345). The

divided self of the traditional artist figure stands before us, that which the retrospective text is attempting to unify through the continuous sense of identity bestowed by memory. Towards the end of *Notes of a Son and Brother* James writes:

> Particular hours and old (that is young!) ineffable reactions come back to me; it's like putting one's ear, doctor fashion, to the breast of time [...] and catching at its start some vibratory hum that has been going on more or less for the fifty years since (387-88).

The sense of a steady pulse, a continuousness, which memory bestows to the outline of a life, and an attendant sense of self, would seem to transcend the conceptual gap between old age and the youthfulness preserved separately in, James calls elsewhere, the "apparitional" past.

Current research into so-called "autobiographical memory" refers to the phenomenon of the present's altering effect on our memories of the past as "retrospective bias." Significantly, autobiographical memory is defined as a personal representation of events and personal facts (Cohen 50-52). Studies have established that "there is no such thing as an immutable, comprehensive, or objective memory" (Lau 676); rather, as Daniel Schacter states: "we reconstruct the past to make it consistent with what we know in the present" (146). Such determinations are significant for the study of autobiography as a literary genre not least because of the issue of the unreliability of memory frequently addressed by theorists and defended by autobiographers. Contrary to the Freudian perspective that considers memory distortion a form of neurosis, current researchers have shown the benefits of memory alteration or loss for the operation of a healthy mind and sense of self, reporting that

> No coherent sense of self would emerge from a mass of remembered details, and we therefore encode, rehearse and recall the information that fits certain themes and re-enforces our self-images and preferred interpretation of our lives (Lau 682).

Thus, James's textual re-creation of his younger self demonstrates an awareness of memory's function that strikes a particularly modern note in comparison to the Victorian autobiographers' protestations of truthfulness, a point I will return to in a moment.

Written in the years following William's death and with a world war looming, a veil of nostalgia no doubt shades James's retrospective view in *Notes of a Son and Brother*; as he writes: "The fruit of golden youth is all and always golden—it touches to gold what it gathers" (386-87).

Nonetheless, the emotionally problematic aspect of his relationship with his father, namely his sense of inferiority—both as regards his father's thought and his high opinion of William—shines through the veil. The differentiation provided by feeling like "a small vague outsider" assists in the process of individuation central to finding a unique artistic point of view, the documentation of which seems to drive James's retrospection. The extensive portions of *Notes of a Son and Brother* dedicated to his "father's ideas," the inclusion of examples of Henry James Sr.'s letters outlining his beliefs and demonstrating his character indicate, even without explanation, the central role his father plays in the development of James's sense of self. In explaining his own view of his father's ideas, James highlights aspects of his own thought, which, in turn, emphasises the very "otherness" that distinguishes the artist from his environment, a central feature of the construction of the artist's self highlighted by the German critic Herbert Marcuse in his definition of the artist-novel—to which James's portrait of himself as a young man is remarkably similar.

Henry James Sr.'s ideology—which stood, his son says, as "a temple" in the centre of family life—is shown to be as concrete a part of James's youthful environment as any of the numerous locations in which the family lived. James notes: "'Father's Ideas' […] pervaded and supported his existence, and very considerably our own" (*Notes* 146). I am not concerned here with what these ideas entail so much as James's rendering of his reaction to them. His portrayal shows that the things which caught his imagination were precisely the things his father's "scheme of importances seemed virtually to do without" (160). James's "esthetic sense" meant that he "gaped imaginatively […] to such a different set of relations" (160). Significantly, James observes that, as a result of this essential dissimilarity, he felt "a kind of implied snub" to the worth of his own ideas (160), thereby hinting at a feeling of inferiority connected to the very nature of his individuality. In chapter six, James notes his own lack of interest in his father's thought with a tinge of guilt, as "something not to the credit of [his own] aspiring 'intellectual life'" (150). His "small uneasy mind, bulging and tightening in the wrong, or at least in unnatural and unexpected, places" attached its attention to "frivolities […] compared to whatever manifestations of the serious" (158) he apprehended in his father's thought. The choice of words in this description of his own perspective ("wrong," "unnatural," "frivolities") accentuates James's youthful sense of inadequacy where his own thought was concerned.

Such recognition of the differences of interest is not to say that James had to struggle to make his identity as a novelist accepted in a philistine world—as Marcuse establishes as a feature typical of the Romantic artist's self-representation—on the contrary, James takes pains to emphasise the importance of imagination and the freedom of direction offered to his children by James Sr. Nevertheless, the awareness of difference in itself indicates the tension of ideological alienation, and, more significantly, inferiority, that manifested itself not only in this division from his father's ideas but in the motivation of his own creative life. Fred Kaplan has noted that James Sr. "thought of novel writing as a narrowing occupation" (42), thereby indicating a fundamental source of his son's early sense of inferiority. The well-intentioned contradictions in James's record of the pervasive but elusive patriarchal ideas demonstrate a two-fold gap in his narrative: in his memory between independent thought and filial feeling and in his narrative representation of the same. Thus the contradictions arise out of the distance in perspective between the young self's struggle for individuality and the mature author's nostalgia, as seen by such comments about his father as: "It was a luxury, I today see, to have all the benefit of his intellectual and spiritual […] passion" (*Notes* 147).

In a similar way to Edmund Gosse's portrayal in *Father and Son*, read and admired by James a few years before he wrote the story of his own early life, the father-son relationship in James's autobiography is attended by, and indeed connected to, a process of individuation through differentiation. James's protestation at the occasional extremity of Gosse's animosity towards his father's religious dogmatism, as noted in his letter to Gosse from November 10th 1907, is revealing. He notes that it goes "too far," not for truth but "for filiality, or at least for tenderness" (*Selected Letters* 231). The generational conflict for which Gosse's autobiography is known is nonetheless not all that dissimilar from that of James's own narrative.

The issue of memory's authenticity, that is, the degree of retrospective bias, is a particularly significant topic for the analysis of James's narrative voice in his autobiographies because of the vast Victorian tradition of autobiographical writing that, when he began work on the first volume, was still snapping at his heels. The respectability of the genre increased over the 19th century, praised as being the highest form of truth, as Phyllis Grosskurth writes: "because in this medium alone could lives be revealed by 'the only persons who could tell them with absolute truthfulness'" (30). Most autobiographers make some statement as to the truthfulness of their

account early on in their text. Anthony Trollope begins his autobiography, for example, by stating: "That I, or any man, should tell everything of himself, I hold to be impossible. Who could endure to own the doing of a mean thing? Who is there that has done none? But this I protest—that nothing I say shall be untrue" (14-15). Even Edmund Gosse, writing in 1907, feels the need to assert in the preface to *Father and Son* that "the following narrative, so far as the punctilious attention of the writer has been able to keep it so, is scrupulously true" (33). His statement, however, reveals the position Gosse's autobiography assumes spanning the fissure between the Victorian penchant for public discourse and the 20th-century interest in intimate revelation; because, not only does Gosse assert the need for authenticity, he parenthetically recognises that any such truthfulness can only be pursued within the confines of the author's subjectivity. The agony of the Victorian age, as Gosse himself identified it in his evaluations of Lytton Strachey's *Eminent Victorians*, resided in a rupture between public and private, "between the large formal gesture and the intimate actuality" (Abbs 12). While Gosse's stated intention for *Father and Son* evokes both the Victorian and the Modern sensibility, viewed from the Modernist perspective it still belongs in spirit to the decorum of the nineteenth century. Virginia Woolf writes: "if Gosse's masterpiece and his portraits suffer from his innate regard for caution, much of the fault must be laid upon his age" (84). The divided consciousness of the Victorian autobiographer between his public and private selves is a division that James seems to overcome through a narrative style more akin to the multitude of personal autobiographical fiction that it precedes, aligning *Notes of a Son and Brother* with the Modernist age rather than the historical documentation of the Victorian. If Harold Nicholson in *The Development of English Biography* can call *Father and Son* "something entirely original" (146), surely James's *Notes of a Son and Brother*, with its far more introverted and self-reflexive tone, would attract a similar description.

Nonetheless, the sense of a generational struggle between the sensibilities of the Victorian and the Modernist ages is represented in the juxtaposition of relatively experimental narrative technique and tone and the tendency to end on a note of what Peter Abbs calls "the Victorian panegyric to the eminent patriarch: unique and noble" (29). In addition, the generational struggle is a personal one for both James and Gosse. As Gosse writes, he is recording: "a struggle between two temperaments, two consciences and almost two epochs" (35). The very word "generation"

implies a filial link even while it suggests the tension and revolt arising from the gap between the ages (Johnson 11). The generational conflict in Gosse and James's autobiographical writing between son and father—religious or philosophical—is essentially creative, giving birth to a new "secular" thought and, most importantly, to a distinctive sense of individuality. The dual relationship of antithesis and continuity contained in the concept of generational movement is represented by a fruitful process of dialectic, that in turn suggests the generating of something new, a third option, a figurative child perhaps that is both offspring and parent.[1]

Andrew Taylor has noted that similarly to James's 1879 story "The Diary of a Man of Fifty," memory in James's autobiographies reencounters the past in a form different from that in which it was lived the first time. He writes:

> The idea of "living over again," in the sense of not merely recalling the past as a museum piece […] but encountering it anew in different ways and for different purposes, is central to the epistemological process at work in the Jamesian autobiography […] (25).

Both James Olney and Paul John Eakin see autobiography as "a metaphorically active rendition of selfhood—as a text whose very 'making' allows us to see how 'the autobiographer constructs a self that would otherwise not exist'" (Renza 269). James's God-like fathering of the self results, in part, through the careful choice and ordering of select events and episodes strung onto the narrative string. The "spots of time" structure emphasises James's artistic manipulation of the past, contrary to the impression left by Theodora Bosanquet's description of James diving straight into the past with no need for preliminary preparation (37-38). Equally revealing are remarks inserted in a transcript of an early draft of *A Small Boy and Others* and *Notes of a Son and Brother* that suggest the assembly of his memories for artistic impact. The aside directs: "Get straight from this to the few memories of our going to the theatre—do a little vivid rapid justice to these— […] and then break straight away and drop down into our return to Paris."[2] The creativity of revising the past for present purposes, of constructing a narrative around the outline provided by autobiographical memory, would seem in itself to transcend the felt divisions between past and present, self and other, youth and old age.

1 Johnson notes in relation to his discussion of Hegel and Marx's dialectic that 'the dialectical movement can also be expressed in language which is biological […] The child as parent can be son and father', p. 12
2 TS, The Houghton Library, Harvard, numberless page between p. 392 and p. 427

A concept of *revising* the past, of aligning it with the self-image and artistic mastery of the present, underlies the self-representation of James's autobiographical narrative. Similarly to the paternal imagery employed in the preface to *The Golden Bowl*, the writing self exerts its dominance over the remembered youthful self to all intents like a nursery nurse adjusting and tidying the "progeny" to be viewed and judged under "the searching radiance of drawing-room lamps as compared with nursery candles" (*Art of the Novel* 337). The metaphorical equivalence of authorship and parenthood suggests that, much like the revision of his earlier productions for the New York Edition, the autobiographies construct, through a revision of the past, a persona of the author Henry James that supports the artistic aims of the mature master.

6. "Fond Calculations": The Triumph of James's Mathematical Failure

Isobel Waters

In *The Man Without Qualities*, Robert Musil calls the soul that which "curls up and hides… [at] any mention of an algebraic series" (118). The 16-year-old Henry James must have experienced just such a recoil upon his incarceration at Geneva's Institution Rochette, dubbed by Habegger a "cram school for polytechnic aspirants" (412). Arguably the most puzzling episode in James's eclectic education, it was sufficiently crucial to be foregrounded in *Notes of a Son and Brother*.[3] James's letters of the time betray his discomfiture. To T. S. Perry, he writes that he's "work[ing] harder than I have ever done before" (*Complete Letters* I 18) and bravely maintains the pretense that the choice was his alone. But his diction telegraphs his empathy with the inmates of the adjacent prison:

> Perhaps you would like to know about my school. […] It is a dilapidated old stone house in the most triste quarter of the town. […] Beside it is the prison and opposite the Cathedral [...] It seems to me that none but the most harmless and meekest men are incarcerated in the former building. While at my lesson […], I have once in a while seen an offender brought up to his doom (27-28).

James's sentence proved mercifully short, and he was soon withdrawn,

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3 The poet and journalist Joyce Kilmer's 1914 review of *Notes of a Son and Brother* highlights its centrality with amusingly appropriate diction: "M. Rochette was troubled about one of his pupils, an American boy named Henry James. Henry made no progress in mathematics. He would not state promptly and without circumlocution that twice two was four. He took no delight in the knowledge that a straight line was the shortest distance between two points; either he doubted this, or at any rate he thought that a curved line was more interesting."

"an obscure, a deeply hushed failure" (*Notes* 241). Compared with the other "obscure hurt" (415) James suffered soon after in Newport, his Geneva adventure has received little attention. Carol Holly, who does so much with the James family motif of shame and failure in *Intensely Family*, barely mentions it. Yet mathematical images persist throughout his work; and I argue that by heeding the family mantra to "convert, convert" (*Notes* 123), James re-appropriates the Rochette fiasco into his art.

It was not the first time James had endured "the dreadful blight of arithmetic" (127). In 1854, he and William attended the Forrest and Quackenboss bookkeeping school in New York, where his classmates were "uncanny and monstrous though their possession, cultivation…of… tall pages of figures…oblique ruled lines that weirdly 'balanced',… and other like horrors" (128). That school's business associations explain some of James's distaste, given the family pact to "never in a single case… [be] guilty of a stroke of business" (109). But Geneva was Europe, the mecca for which James had yearned, and to be banished to the Rochette while William attended the prestigious Geneva Academy surely aggravated James's dismay. Biographers interpret both experiences as at worst inflicting a "severe injury" on James's self-esteem (Habegger 315), at best encouraging James's retreat into an alternate imaginative universe. I argue for a more specific impact. As James describes in his autobiography, there is an "inward perversity" (122) at work here, which by "converting to its uses things vain and unintended" achieves a kind of inverse mastery. Like James's famous Galerie d'Apollon dream in which he makes his pursuer turn tail, James transforms his mathematical torments into unlikely triumphs.

The re-appropriation begins in James's first acknowledged story, "The Story of a Year," in which the protagonist asks, "Did you ever study algebra? I always have an eye on the unknown quantity" (29). James was similarly susceptible to the urge to analyze; and despite counseling Grace Norton to consider only her own "terrible algebra" [*Letters* (Edel) 2: 424], he repeatedly employed mathematics as a trope for solving for unknowns in a complicated moral universe. As Philip Cavalier documents, Christopher Newman determines to solve the puzzle of Europe as he would a sum in his business ledger. "Combien" is, after all, the first French word he acquires. This simple accounting model is superseded by the abstract algebraic formulations of *Washington Square*, wherein Morris Townsend faces off against Dr. Sloper's superior calculating skills. But whereas Cavalier argues that James denigrates the mathematical as a mode of

understanding, I contend that James elaborates a subtler version. My paper contrasts mathematics as a failed way of knowing in "Professor Fargo" with the restless analyst's endeavors in *The American Scene*. Reprising his schoolboy persona, James employs a probability metaphor for perceiving America through a scatter-plot of impressionistic data. By abandoning certainty, James redeems his mathematical debacles via a fusion of intellect and emotion that Tony Tanner, referring to Thomas Pynchon's *Mason & Dixon*, describes as the merging of "[m]easurement and dream" (*Mystery* 225). James never comes to love what he once hated, but by retaining a fascination for what had so defeated him, he achieves yet another triumph of failure.

Consider how the Rochette debacle is re-presented *Notes of a Son and Brother*. Envious of William's lot, James launches an all-out vent:

> I so feared and abhorred mathematics that the simplest arithmetical operation had always found and kept me helpless and blank […] and mathematics unmitigated were at the Institution Rochette the air we breathed. […] [I]t was hard and bitter fruit all and turned to ashes in my mouth. More extraordinary however than my good parents' belief […] was my own failure to protest with a frankness proportioned to my horror. […] It had come to me by I know not what perversity that if I couldn't tackle the smallest problem in mechanics or face without dismay at the blackboard the simplest geometric challenge I ought somehow in decency to make myself over, oughtn't really to be so inferior to almost everyone else (240).

Allowing for James's hyperbole, shame predominates, and from two sources: first, his failure to keep pace with the "meanest minds and the vulgarest types" (241); second, his pained knowledge of his parents' "flattering misconception of my aptitudes" (240). But rather than fixating on his mortification by the "paralysing chalk" (243) at the dreaded blackboard, James determines to "make himself over." Granted, it's not long before this "attempt not […] to remain abnormal wholly broke down" (241). Yet despite his "rapture" upon release, despite "how grotesquely little [his incarceration] had done for me," he insists that "almost anything, however disagreeable, had been worthwhile" and that he "couldn't […] really believe [he] had picked up nothing" (241-42).

As unconventional as Henry Sr. purported to be, placing Henry at the Rochette reflected the educational tenor of the times. Mathematics was very much in the air in the mid-nineteenth century. Nor was interest confined to its role as the handmaid of the new sciences about which Henry Sr. was so conflicted. The new algebra, and its extension into the "algebra of the

infinite," as Morris Kline describes calculus (Irwin 334), was a hot topic, spurring an educational revolution that was rapidly toppling traditional curricula (338-39). Following Laplace, probability theory was also making huge advances. However misguided, Henry Sr. was thus positioning his son in the educational mainstream, as Henry Adams attests with rueful references to his own mathematical shortcomings in *The Education of Henry Adams*. Neither James nor Adams would ever share the passion evinced by mathematically gifted writers like Poe, and later by Musil, Pynchon, and Stoppard.[4] But an antipathy as fierce as James's was bound to leave its mark; and whereas Adams laments—if ironically—his "fatal handicap of ignorance in mathematics" (241), James turns it to good use. By depicting the Rochette as his parents' antidote to his "vice" of reading too many novels, James sets up an apparent opposition between the mathematical and the imaginative as modes of relating to experience.

This opposition is stark enough in the early fiction, wherein the mathematical represents a flawed, overly cerebral approach to understanding. Cavalier restricts his treatment to *The American* and *Washington Square*, but examples are legion. In *The Europeans*, Robert Acton is "extremely fond of mathematics" (138) and finds Eugenia's "words and motions…as interesting as the factors in an algebraic problem." On the opening page of *The Bostonians*, Mrs. Luna appraises Basil "as if he had been a long sum in arithmetic," declaring him "hard and discouraging, like a column of figures" (5-6). In *Confidence*, Gordon Wright enlists Bernard to evaluate his intended in the same spirit as Wright conducts his "arithmetic calculations of probabilities" (1071). What's significant here is not merely that this approach is inadequate, but that the characters espousing it are unsympathetic, or at least deficient in some vital human dimension. James assigns guilt by mathematical association; if a character is good at math, they lack the imaginative capability that would serve them better in human relations. In contrast, characters with whom he does empathize share his antipathy. Catherine Condit in "The Impressions of a Cousin" likens New York to "a tall sum in addition, and the streets are like columns of figures.

4 Unlike James, Musil uses complex mathematical concepts such as imaginary and irrational numbers as symbols, as does Yann Martel in *The Life of Pi* (2001)—the latter inspired in part by Poe's *Narrative of A. Gordon Pym*. Yet Musil's own account of schoolboy shame, *The Confusions of Young Törless*, is driven by a desire akin to James's to intercalate the analytical with the imaginative. In stressing math as a mode of knowing, Pynchon is arguably closer to James in spirit. That Pynchon has a sympathetic dog-character, Pugnax, reading *The Princess Casamassima* at the opening of *Against the Day* suggests James is on Pynchon's radar.

What a place for me to live, who hate arithmetic!" (654). This opposition between unsympathetic characters who obey a calculating impulse and sympathetic characters who foreswear it was too simplistic to suit for long; but rather than abandon mathematical tropes, James invokes a more sophisticated version.

In "Professor Fargo," mathematics not only functions as a trope but also supplies much of the story's plot. Colonel Gifford, a down-on-his-luck scientist, has entered into an unholy alliance with Fargo, billed as "THE INFALLIBLE WALKING MEDIUM, MAGICIAN, CLAIRVOYANT, PROPHET, AND SEER!" (2). Their traveling exhibit features the unlikely "'moral and scientific combination'" (14) of Fargo's mesmerist antics with the feats of Gifford, the "FAMOUS LIGHTNING CALCULATOR AND MATHEMATICAL REFORMER!" (2). Houses are thin, and, with an eye to increasing the take, Fargo persuades Gifford to include his daughter in the act. With its echoes of Hawthorne's *Blithedale Romance*, "Fargo" clearly anticipates Verena Terrant's verbal antics. But while many have noted the link between *The Bostonians* and *Blithedale*, few acknowledge James's earlier take in "Fargo."[5] A deaf mute thanks to injuries sustained to her mother in Gifford's "curious chemical researches" (18), the daughter, whom the charmed narrator calls an "arithmetical fairy" (12), performs her mental gymnastics on the blackboard before an audience—a scene that recapitulates James's worst childhood agonies as surely as it renders mathematics "as pretty as a game of billiards" (4). But the skeptical narrator is equally drawn to the "charm of pure intellectual passion" (30) exuded by Miss Gifford's tormented father.

A failed idealist likened to "Don Quixote in the flesh" (9), Gifford is enamored of the "divine harmonies of the infinite science of numbers" (19). So immersed is this self-proclaimed "devotee of the exact sciences" (18) in the "mists of the higher mathematics" (11) that he sits at breakfast "cutting his dry toast into geometrical figures" (13). He fervently believes that his invention—a calculating system reminiscent of Charles Babbage's celebrated failed enterprise of the 1840s—will "effect a revolution in the whole science of accounts" (11) and prove the "salvation of the misguided world" (17). Invoking Archimedes, Gifford at last exclaims "Eureka!... I've found it!" (30), promising to reveal "the solution of the incalculable" at that night's performance. But when his daughter chooses Fargo over him,

5 Critical interest in the story focuses on the triumph of Fargo's mesmeric powers over Gifford's daughter, in the context of James's ghost stories and his views on psychic phenomena (see Geoffroy-Menoux).

Gifford's ascendancy crumbles before the power of his partner's "spiritual magnetism" (25) to enthrall a damaged human heart. With a "howl of rage and grief" (34), Gifford descends into madness, and is last seen "covering little square sheets of paper with algebraic signs, but I am assured by his superintendent, … that they represent no coherent mathematical operation" (35). Once again, the mathematical model has proved bankrupt, but the character it is associated with is sympathetically if ironically drawn. Gifford is, as Tanner describes Samuel Clemens, "living in a symbolic universe to which man has lost the interpretative key" (*Nature* 88) — a failed quest-hero who could have retained his sanity only by not braving the truth of his human situation. Yet the narrator's ironic voice can't entirely dispel the poignancy of Gifford's doomed romantic devotion to the "ripe, sweet fruit of true science!" ("Fargo" 22). Indeed, Gifford, in his appreciation of the beauty, the aesthetics of mathematics, embodies Poe's poet-mathematician: a figure that embraces two ways of interpreting the world that are not opposed but rather interpenetrating, if to no viable end in this remarkable story.

"Professor Fargo," then, is a harbinger of James's eventual re-appropriation of the cerebral mathematical impulse into a new, emotionally charged calculus—a re-appropriation predicated, I argue, on his nuanced attitude to failure. As Paul Armstrong claims, James thrived on the "challenge of bewilderment": the ability to transmute disconcerting negative experiences, particularly those burdened with uncertainty and shame, into opportunities for imaginative re-assimilation. Armstrong is concerned with James's epistemology, but the triumph of failure was also a pattern in James's life. The Newport fire, the Harvard moot court, his Civil War non-participation, and forays into journalism and the theatre— all were subject to the "terrible law…by which everything is grist to [my] mill," (Notebooks 111). Capitalizing on failure was nothing new to the James children, who were well versed in the notion of the liberating failure (Holly 11). But whereas James Sr. flitted from failure to failure, James Jr. was determined to convert failure into triumph. He had a way of making everything pay, rather than depleting his intellectual capital. And so James's mathematical misadventures generate interest—not via the simplistic dichotomy of sterile intellect versus fertile imagination of his early fiction, but in the more sophisticated mode of *The American Scene*'s "restless analyst."

As Tony Tanner documents, "analyst" had a distinctly pejorative aura at

the time (*Mystery* 162), and although it figures prominently in Poe's Dupin stories, it seems surprising in James. Yet James was often accused of being overly analytical, at least by his harsher critics. Frank Colby disparaged *The Golden Bowl*'s "elaborate geometry of the heart" (22), calling it "no more enticing than a diagram" from which "adultery follows like a QED." F.R. Leavis characterized James's late metaphors as smacking "more of analysis than of the realizing imagination and the play of poetic perception […] diagrammatic rather than poetic" (193). Indeed, "analysis"—then as now—represented the antithesis of the imaginative spirit. Given James's familiarity with Poe, his use of the analyst label (albeit tempered by "restless") suggests its mathematical associations were a factor influencing his choice. James's particular brand of analysis in *The American Scene* employs two tropes for the acquisition of knowledge. The first involves language, specifically the classic American motif of reading signs. Using what Robin Hoople calls James's "alphabet of impressions," the analyst re-assembles images into a series of "words" that collectively reveal the meaning of America. Admittedly, the analyst's confidence in his ability to decipher the word-images writ in the "vast American sky" (121) waxes and wanes, but both the impetus and *modus operandi* are clear. The second is less predictable for a writer of James's mathematical disinclination. Impressions still figure, but now as data subject to the analyst's emotional assay: his "fond calculations" (367). Although language and math are by no means at odds, the two are often pitted against each other, in the same misguided spirit that prompts Henry Adams to claim that the "alternative to art was arithmetic" (124). Instead, James brings them into dynamic if tense relation. James's data may be "soft" (*Scene* 336) compared with journalism's "hard little facts," but his analyst is bent on confronting the data, determined to bring his imagination to bear on America.

A critical juncture comes in the Baltimore chapter, where we come face-to-face, not with the analyst, but a small boy "ciphering" at his desk:

> [T]here must accordingly have been items and objects, signs and tokens […]; there must have been the little numbers (not necessarily big, if only a tall enough column) for the careful sum on my slate. […] If it was a question of a slate the slate was used, at school, I remembered, for more than one purpose; so that mine, […] instead of a show of neat ciphering, exhibited simply a bold drawn image (308-09).

In Poe, "ciphering" can signify a word-puzzle as well as calculations; and certainly James is bent on puzzling out the national mystery throughout *The*

American Scene. Yet this schoolboy image clearly reprises the mathematical confusions of young Henry as he struggles to compute his American experience. If facts make up the sum of America, it is a sum that proves "mockingly insoluble" (195). Throughout, the analyst's anxiety that America is "beyond calculation" (5) is evinced in images of mathematical failure. The numerical inadequacy of the "compromised slate" is contrasted with the analyst's rich experience: "That accretion may amount to an enormous sum, […] when the figures on the slate are too few and too paltry to mention" (395). The chalk-marks on this "demonstrative American blackboard" (49) taunt the analyst with "items that failed somehow, count and recount them as one would, to […] make up the precious sum" (36). By replacing the numbers with a "bold drawn image," the analyst-*cum*-schoolboy would seem to be casting his numerical demons aside in a gesture of bold defiance signifying yet another rejection of the mathematical impulse in favor of the imaginative.

But is he? I contend that what James rejects is not the mathematical per se but the simplicity of the sum, suggestive as it is of the business-man face and the "2 plus 2 make 4" system he deplores to William [*Letters* (Edel) 4: 23]. Acknowledging that, in the words of *The Sacred Fount* narrator, "[t]hings in the real had a way of not balancing" (182), James invokes in its stead a statistical trope of detecting the "figure" of America through a penumbra of impressions: "These scant handfuls illustrate and typify […] [O]ne takes in the whole piece at a series of points that are after all comparatively few" (*Scene* 367). If the analyst has yet to master this new art of analysis—James's schoolboy insecurities leave that door ajar—the pattern that emerges on his non-fictional slate represents a synthesis of James's documentary impulse with his emotional response. Ross Posnock comments on James's antipathy to statistics, and certainly James objected to journalism's "loud statistical shout" (297), whereby variation is discounted and the margin of possibility destroyed. But modern statistical theory contends that diversity—the cluster of data points depicting variation around the mean—is as important as the mean itself. Its claims are subject to probability, not certainty, allowing, as Posnock champions, "the living of questions, not the answering of them" to assume priority (154).

By seeking Tanner's fusion of "measurement and dream," James's restless analyst recalls Dupin, Poe's poet-mathematician, who must bring both his "creative and […] resolvent" powers (144) to bear on the murders in the Rue Morgue. But was James influenced by Poe's mathematical

musings? James's famously dismissive comment argues to the contrary: "An enthusiasm for Poe is the mark of a decidedly primitive stage of reflection" (qtd. in Pollin 233). Yet it is precisely this "primitive stage of reflection" that James is reanimating, not only in his conjuring of the small boy in the autobiography but also in *The American Scene*; and the enduring power of that stage to intercalate its memory-impressions with the mature reflections of the returning analyst is undeniable. Poe's 1836 essay "Maelzel's Chess-Player" explores the indeterminate, imaginative nature of human reasoning, as contrasted with the "fixed and determinate" process of "arithmetical or algebraic calculations" (423). The context—a celebrated automaton that the author attempts to debunk—suggests the traveling show atmosphere of "Professor Fargo;" and Poe refers specifically to "the calculating machine of Mr. Babbage" (422) as the model for the infallible "*pure machine*" (423) akin to the device Gifford is vainly trying to perfect in James's story. But if "Maelzel's Chess-Player" begins the exploration, the Dupin stories contain Poe's most explicit articulations of his views on the interplay between the creating and the calculating impulse. "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" (1841) opens with a treatise on analysis as opposed to calculation, with the narrative relegated to being a mere "commentary upon the propositions just advanced" (144). The theme is reprised in "The Purloined Letter" (1841), wherein Dupin recognizes in Minister D__ his own intermingling of "both mathematician and poet" (218). Arguing that "there are numerous other mathematical truths which are only truths within the limits of *relation*," Dupin posits a new kind of human algebra "where x^2+px is *not* altogether equal to q."[6]

In a similar vein, "The Mystery of Marie Roget" (1842-3) begins and ends with Poe's musings on the "Calculus of Probabilities" (169). Statistics is ascendant for Poe, by virtue of its application to the unknown and perhaps unknowable: "Now this Calculus is, in its essence, purely mathematical; and thus we have the anomaly of the most rigidly exact in science applied to the shadow and spirituality of the most intangible in speculation." The "most intangible" is also what the analyst strives to make palpable in *The American Scene*; and, like Dupin, his method is the imaginative selection of facts. Poe's admonition that "the necessary knowledge is that of *what* to observe" ("Morgue" 142) anticipates the analyst's credo, as does his comment that "Truth is not always in a well.

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6 Irwin discusses the significance of this equation for solving a quadratic with one unknown.

In fact, as regards the more important knowledge, I do believe that she is invariably superficial" (153). Poe shares, too, the analyst's disdain for the kind of facts piled up by newspapers as they try to solve the mystery, and eschews "the mathematical *formulae* of the schools" ("Roget" 191) in favour of the true analyst's ability to "throw himself into the spirit of his opponent" ("Morgue" 142). Just such an imaginative re-calibration animates James's attempt to solve the American mystery by immersion in Posnock's "more."

Although James enjoyed Poe's self-described "tales of ratiocination" as a boy, a story in which Poe makes less explicit use of math is equally illuminating. By the writing of the autobiography, James's attitude to Poe had softened considerably, and he singles out "The Gold-Bug" (1843) as a childhood favourite. Acknowledging that "small open minds already recognized… that predominant lustre" (36), James attributes to Poe that "golden glow" that Burton Pollin claims to be a "keystone in Poe's influence" on James (232). But while gold is a recurrent Jamesian theme, from the gilded Galerie d'Apollon of his childhood dream to the "golden apples" he harvests in *The American Scene*, the significance of this story lies not so much in the treasure itself but in the means of its discovery. Much of the story's 'action' involves the eccentric scientist William Legrand detailing his unraveling of the cipher encoded in invisible ink on a piece of parchment. Every step of the solution is provided—complete with tables that Legrand has worked through on a slate—whereby the numbers and characters are re-interpreted, as "directed by probabilities" (64), to reveal their hidden meaning. Once deconstructed, the cipher is then imposed on the physical landscape with geometric precision. Poe throws in an inevitable human error in the cipher's application, an error which, when compounded, jeopardizes the discovery. But Legrand's eventual success forces the once skeptical narrator to concede both his sanity and his powers of analysis. Legrand is last seen contemplating, not incoherent algebraic scribblings like the unhinged Gifford of "Professor Fargo," but rather the unhappy fate of the pirate associates who helped Kidd hide his treasure. On the surface a boy's adventure tale, "The Gold-Bug" celebrates the power of the analytical mind to unearth hidden wealth, even as it hints at the risk of a similarly unhappy fate for Legrand's own "coadjutors" (70). Admittedly, Poe's mode is more explicitly cryptogrammic than James, who struggles to make sense of the "word-images" he encounters in the American

scene, but both are concerned to 'figure things out' against a backdrop of human error and cosmic uncertainty.[7]

Whether or not Poe had any direct influence on James, the latter's mode of impressionistic analysis was certainly in concert with contemporaneous probability theory. According to Wendy Graham, "James was far more cognizant of the emerging sciences than has been allowed by scholars who seem to doubt that a figure of unparalleled imagination might also have an insatiable curiosity about matters allegedly outside his ken" (75). Dismissing Edel's claim that James's mind was closed to science, Graham argues that it yielded him many useful metaphors, and that his "deployment of statistical figures of speech […] was informed by […] recent developments" (84). Graham specifies biomechanical theory in reference to *Roderick Hudson*, but the development of Bayesian probability by Pierre-Simon Laplace (1749-1827) was another influential advance. Its take on probability as "represent[ing] a state of knowledge" (Jaynes 292) rather than a frequency of physical events is inherently, unabashedly Jamesian.[8] Nor are Posnock's and Graham's views necessarily at odds; Posnock describes *The American Scene* as James's "culminating act of analysis" (vii), and it's more a question of the kind of statistics his analysis invokes. What James eschews is an analytical mode in which variation is discounted and the margin eliminated: the simplistic statistics of the journalistic page. In contrast, the analysis of *The American Scene* embraces the more, facilitating Posnock's fluidity of non-identity. James's immersion in a cloud-array of impressionistic data demands a Keatsian negative capability wherein mathematical failure—failure to solve for the "x" of America—emerges as the only conceivable solution. For all his antipathy, Van Wyck Brooks had it right; James was an "impassioned geometer" (124) of the human condition.

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7 Poe's *Narrative of A. Gordon Pym* (1838), while redolent with numbers, particularly dates and geographic coordinates, is less obviously mathematical. It does however pursue Poe's theme of analysis, both in its geometrically precise descriptions of albatross breeding grounds (834-35), as well as its cryptic hieroglyphics involving the shape of the caverns in which the sailors are trapped (871-73). Poe adopts a quasi-scientific style, incorporating numbered figures in the text and an editorial endnote, but ultimately leaves the reader with a famously enigmatic image of a shrouded white figure rising from the sea. James refers to *Pym* not only in his essay on Poe but also in *The Golden Bowl*; and the haunting failure to decode—the final failure of analysis—with which Poe's only novel ends is suggestive of the sense of unfinished business with which James concludes both *The American Scene* and the autobiography.

8 Rowena Fowler pursues the implications of Bayesian thought for Browning, with whom James stands in interesting relation.

His effective if unlikely yoking of analysis and emotion—his "fond calculations"—yields a penetrating study of America even as it redeems the "hushed failure" of his adolescent incarceration at the Institution Rochette.

7. A Multiplicity of Folds of an Unconscious 'Crystal' Monad: James, Benjamin, and Blanchot[9]

Erik S. Roraback

Our whole purpose in this chapter is to illumine a band of semantic "folds" (a generic baroque operation par excellence for Gilles Deleuze) of the dialectical inter-connectedness of the literary-cultural personas and discursive prose of Henry James (1843-1916), of Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) and of Maurice Blanchot (1907-2002). In other words the goal of this study will be to reveal and to form one unconscious monad of our modern and capitalist baroque and neo-baroque occidental culture; here I take on board both Deleuze's understanding of the baroque as instituted by the textual function and strategy of the "fold" in his book *Le pli: Leibniz et le baroque*, as well as Jacques Rancière's notion of a distinction between the aesthetic unconscious and the Freudian unconscious as outlined in his book *L'inconscient esthétique*, even while extending Jacques Lacan's notions of the unconscious that are suffused by his acclaimed return to Freud. In his recent volume, *Subjectivity and Otherness: A Philosophical Reading of*

9 A first version of this contribution was presented as a paper on 12 July 2008, "The Unconscious Monad of James, of Benjamin, & of Blanchot's *The Book to Come* (*Le livre à venir*, 1959)" for "Jamesian Strands," The Fourth International Conference of the Henry James Society, Salve Regina University, Newport, Rhode Island, USA, 9-13 July 2008; a second revised version was delivered as a talk on 4 April 2009, "The Philosophical Baroque; or, James, Benjamin, Blanchot, & the Fold" for "Henry James's Europe: Cultural Reappropriations, Transtextual Relations," The First Annual Conference of the European Henry James Society, The American University of Paris, Paris, France, 3-5 April 2009. The present piece has been revised for publication.

Lacan, Lorenzo Chiesa explains:

> 'The unconscious is structured like a language' [means] 'The unconscious
> is made of signifiers' or […] 'Signifiers form the unconscious': this is [because]
> signifiers transcend the conscious dimension of the signified. Signifiers are
> linked in many *synchronic* unconscious signifying chains, which ultimately
> *are* the unconscious" (49).

The current monadological pattern that the present speculative-
scholarly article proposes of James-Benjamin-Blanchot would then have
both a synchronic structure in regard to the aesthetic space that their works
co-instance in their essential interconnections, and also diachronically as
concerns the temporal unfolding of their compositional careers that work
as if one book end to the other from 1843, James's birth, to 2003, Blanchot's
natural death; or, one-hundred and sixty years: eight chapters of human
time if we take twenty years as one chapter in a human person's life
narrative. All of these observations enable us to think more nuancedly
about the status of the notion 'unconscious' in our present attempt to make
connections where connections have not been made. And while Alexandre
Leupin rightly contends that, "Freud, and more clearly Lacan, makes the
unconscious the locus of a singular desire without form and words; for
Freud and Lacan, there is no collective unconscious" (*Lacan Today* 17), we
nevertheless here propose a tack that while it would not resort to any kind
of collective unconscious in the social body, per se, it does nonetheless
unite our three target authors in their individual creative acts and modes
of reality that made such fictional and theoretical creation possible under
the rubric of what James M. Mellard, Michael Riffaterre and others claim,
building on the insights of psychoanalysis, to be a textual unconscious (e.g.,
Mellard, *Beyond Lacan*). What is more, in our now ongoing sizing up the
status of the unconscious for the reader-interpreter, Véronique Voruz and
Bogdan Wolf argue in a preface to *The Later Lacan*,

> Seminar XX initiates the last stage of Lacan's lifelong formalization of
> psychoanalytic theory […] the unconscious is [now] seen as an apparatus of
> jouissance, and meaning—as a treatment of jouissance—is seen as a means
> of enjoyment and […] the unconscious no longer appears as a repository
> of repressed truths but as an enjoying apparatus whose main purpose is
> to preserve the subject's elective mode of jouissance. This […] makes […]
> analysis more complicated as the analyst has to proceed against the grain of
> the subject's enjoyment. As such […] only a strong transferential bond to the
> analyst will secure the patient's willingness to separate him—or herself from
> the enjoyment procured by the unconscious.

[…] From this point on, Lacan downplays the Oedipus complex, seen as a mythical—and so imaginarized—version of unconscious organization. And it is with the des-imaginarization of the Oedipus that the deciphering of the unconscious becomes less central in the analytic treatment. The relation to meaning and truth is less valued […] the analytic treatment is oriented on a reduction of the symptom. The *symptom* has to be emptied of the jouissance procured through its articulation with the fantasy so that the subject can make use of his *sinthome* to love, work, and desire (*The Later Lacan* x).

In this framework, it would be society that would be the analyst and the writer-figure the analysand, the latter being in need of a better analyst to reduce the symptom, which would be the major literary creations of these notoriously sad if not melancholy writer-warriors: James, Benjamin and Blanchot in their "elective modes of jouissance," to wit, composition-creation.

To move now to Blanchot's (1907-2003) *The Book to Come* (*Le livre à venir*, 1959), which contains essays on authors from Musil to Kafka to Proust to James, the work can only beg for the attention of Henry James Studies, for it distills the unique critical flair that Blanchot possessed. Indeed, of all the leading European and U.S.-American critics of the twentieth-century (the Argentine Jorge Luis Borges here comes to mind as well) Blanchot and James were perhaps, as a cultural pairing, among the closer if not the most homologous in regard to their double capacity to produce both first-class criticism and fiction of a nuanced and soberly passionate turn of mind. For better or worse, this has in turn led to their canonization in some underground traditions and establishmentarian quarters as well-nigh cultic novelists and critic-figures. Indeed, the two italicized sentences that preface the book before the "*Translator's Note*," and that also appear in the original French edition, could arguably in some ways refer to James himself as much as to Blanchot: "*Maurice Blanchot, novelist and critic, was born in 1907. His life is wholly devoted to literature and to the silence unique to it*" (ix). The same could be said of Benjamin, whose exertions in language will have equally much to say to elucidate our triply connective trichotomy of James/Benjamin/Blanchot, and to the notion of the monad that crops up, as commentators have already noted, not only in Leibniz (and in the neo-Platonists), but also in Benjamin himself (cf. Michael Löwy in his *Fire Alarm: Reading Walter Benjamin's 'On the Concept of History'*), a concept that will be fleshed out afresh in the current chapter as a tool to illuminate this trio of cultural figures who share a dramatic sense of aesthetic if not commentative and interventionary value in their creative work.

It would therefore be useful to define what exactly a monad is for the always-interesting writer of philosophical criticism, the critic-flâneur Benjamin; for this purpose I adduce the following three sentences from the above-mentioned scholar at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique-Paris, Löwy, and his work, *Fire Alarm*, in which he comments on Benjamin's thesis number XVIII that, "It is the task of remembrance, in Benjamin's work, to build 'constellations' linking the present and the past. These constellations, these moments wrested from empty historical continuity are monads. That is, they are concentrates of historical totality—'full moments', as [Charles] Péguy would put it" (95). It is the basic contention of the present talk that a trans-individual unconscious monad that would combine and fold James, Benjamin and Blanchot would precisely create the nucleus of a certain kind of constellation or 'full moment' for the critical intellect to think about difficult and taut literary-theoretical texts. This is beyond the scope of the present article, but it is both our main intuition and our basic thesis. Löwy continues:

> Benjamin particularly draws [Gretel Adorno's] attention to the seventeenth [thesis], insofar as it reveals the connection between this document and the method of his earlier researches. Benjamin's works on Baudelaire are a good example of the methodology proposed in this thesis: the aim is to discover in *Les Fleurs du mal* a monad, a crystallized ensemble of tensions that contains a historical totality. In that text, wrested from the homogeneous course of history, is preserved and gathered the whole of the poet's work, in that work the French nineteenth century, and, in this latter, the 'entire course of history' (96).

In a similar way here to in the present piece, the three central bodies of compositional work of James, of Benjamin and of Blanchot combine to make a cultural composite of tensional points between and in-between one another's oeuvre in that they are similar if not identical in heterogeneous ways that highlight this trio and its cognizance of our proposal that they not only constitute a century and more of cultural history (if not 'the entire course of history') but also a line of development and even autopoietic progress in the Niklas Luhmann sense of the term; for Luhmann, "The regeneration of art is autopoietically necessary only for art itself" (*Art as a Social System* 51). International-minded scholars who see literary history in a certain kind of global academic community might agree that a certain logic of successiveness may here be found; for what, as far as their writings go, could better describe our triad of cultural figures as embodiments of the autopoietic self-constitution of the art system and of the autopoietic unfolding nature of language and of meaning than the charged concept of the micro-cosmic

monad of magnificent luminous intensity and cultural concentration?

For a more nuanced sense of this foregoing overall conceptual framework, the astute Benjamin scholar Löwy then goes on to say of Benjamin's thesis number XVIII,

> *Jeztzeit*, 'now-time' or 'the present', is defined in this instance as the 'model' or foreshadowing of messianic time, of the 'eternal lamp', of the true history of mankind. […] The messianic monad is a brief instant of complete possession of history prefiguring the whole, the saved totality, the universal history of liberated—in a word, the history of salvation (*Heilgeshcichte*) to which one of the notes refers.

> As is well-known, the monad—a concept that is Neoplatonist in origin— is, in Leibniz, a reflection of the entire universe. Examining this concept in *The Arcades Project*, Benjamin defines it as 'the crystal of the total event' (99-100).

So then even more exactly here, Benjamin, Blanchot, and James constitute a special structural connectedness of what Benjamin terms 'crystal of the total event'; to turn the wheel of our trio is to complement, to fold, and to prolong their Luhmann-like autopoieticness, their functionally closed operations as part of an aesthetic, self- and auto-referential structure and system as further than all this an intricately engendered monad of capitalist baroque modernity. And all this in spite of more conventional if not nationalist research that might indicate otherwise, given that the only firm association we have between them in a classical sense would be Blanchot's interesting if limited remarks on James, for the covert energy of the unconscious foreordains the wonderfully strange and exorbitant connective value of our three writers as a coherent object of focus.

So then with the foregoing in mind, we may begin to see how James-Benjamin-Blanchot may be said to instance a Benjamin-monad in how in the present piece the critical mind tries to map a certain kind of unconscious framework that would derive in part from the *esprit de serieux* that our three authors would constitute in their shaping cross-complementarizations. In considering our three target writers we may also consider how the literary unconscious monad of which they form a rational whole makes the reader of their texts decidedly part and parcel of a certain mode of being and of reality in the reading situation and of the concomitant force of reading to create novel possibilities of meaning in the world; in this way each could be said to further the work of the other in a different kind of diachronic lineage, synchronic topology or synchronic space or the better theoretical word, spaciosity.

To throw more light on our use of the Benjamin-understanding-of-the-monad, I shall quote this sentence from Carol Jacobs's *In the Language of Walter Benjamin*, where she explains "constellation, shock, monad, standstill, the countermovements to the progressive and recuperative models of historicism" (102) for that would delineate our current constellation of corpuses of texts. Reconnecting the unconscious here means innovating the fresh new monad of James-Benjamin-Blanchot that would both disarticulate nationalist paradigms of literary history and articulate creative inter-disciplinary and genuinely comparativist and internationalist scholarly work on the unthought as the unconscious baroque modern through the strategy of reading as a calculative and creative act of "the fold" in its multiple configurations and operations (including its capacity to outfit the possibility of the classical baroque subjectivity of the mirror and so by extension of that of the reflection).

Further to this, critics time and time again have commented on the singularity of our three target writers. For example, in his use of the labyrinth the neo-baroque Jorge Luis Borges writes,

> I have visited some literatures of the East and West; I have compiled an encyclopedic anthology of fantastic literature; I have translated Kafka, Melville, and Bloy; I know of no stranger work than that of Henry James […] James, before revealing what he is, a resigned and ironic inhabitant of Hell, runs the risk of appearing to be no more than a mundane novelist, less colorful than others (*The Total Library* 248).

As for Blanchot, another writer of labyrinthical complexity, the neo-baroque (i.e., the vertiginously complex), Jacque Derrida has written, "Blanchot waits for us still to come, to be read and re-read…I would say that never as much as today have I pictured him so far ahead of us" (Derrida, back cover). As for Benjamin and his scarce quest for happiness, another neo-baroque writer (in his complexly baroque dialectical sentences), Theodor W. Adorno, writes of a quality "which sheds all semblance when transposed into the realm of theory and assumes incomparable dignity—the promise of happiness […] Anyone who was drawn to him was bound to feel like the child who catches a glimpse of the lighted Christmas tree through a crack in the closed door […]" ("A Portrait of Walter Benjamin" *Prisms* 230). This speaks to the excellent effects of the singular nature of Benjamin's creative oeuvre. To continue this vein of the uncommon, for Ann Smock in her introduction to Blanchot's *The Space of Literature*,

> …to suggest the unusual character of Blanchot's appeal and the unsettling
> force of his writing, we ought to include […] [Geoffrey] Hartman's [words]:
> 'Blanchot's work offers no point of approach whatsoever'; or even this
> remark of Poulet's, which I translate somewhat freely: 'Blanchot is an even
> greater waste of time than Proust.' For […] the significance of a book like
> *L'Espace littéraire* lies in its constant association of literature's purest and
> most authentic grandeur with just such expressions as 'wasted time.' It
> presents the literary work as that which permits no approach other than
> wasted steps; it uninterruptedly expresses the incomparable passion which
> literature commands ("Introduction," *The Space of Literature* 3).

The same attributes ascribed to Blanchot in the foregoing are easily
transposable to James and to Benjamin. There is more to give special mention
here that seems to map precisely on to James and to Benjamin as well, and
it is, truth to tell, 'the incomparable passion which literature commands'
that finds a place in our three chiasmatically inter-related figures in their
dynamic unconscious transnational global-becoming crossings. More than
this, what Smock ascribes to the reading experience of Blanchot's cultural
outputs maps too on to Benjamin and to James:

> They present to the reader difficulties of an unusual sort […] complaints
> about his abstruse qualities express readers' premonition of the eeriest
> limpidity, their foreboding sense of the incredible lightness of the task before
> them […] they are not aimed at experts or connoisseurs, just at readers. And
> reading is the simplest thing, he says. It requires no talent, no gifts, no special
> knowledge, no singular strength at all. But weakness, uncertainty—yes, in
> abundance.
>   It calls upon uncertainty, I was suggesting, about uncertainty itself:
> uncertainty about limits such as those that distinguish the dark and the
> light, the obscurities of the work itself and its elucidation, the inside and the
> outside of the text—literature and criticism (4).

This idea of 'weakness' or of fragility is perhaps fascinating, for it begs
the question of the birth of the emergence of a new sort of force, one that
would expose one's self to uncertainty and to ambivalence in a way that
would endorse and outfit a certain kind of cosmological stance on things
including the foregoing dichotomies and subject areas to which Smock
gives voice.

Now, as for the dangerous if all the same highly useful notion of
authenticity in the cultural figure, something that I want to argue here that
James-Benjamin-Blanchot had in abundance, it is useful to quote Blanchot,
for what he avers surely applies to our trio of writers in a not insignificant
way:

Novalis said that what is important is […] that genius can be learned […] Valéry, apparently very far from the romantics' conception of things […] shares with them an admiration for Leonardo da Vinci, in whom both recognize a model of the true artist because '*he thinks more than he can do,*' and because '*this superiority of intelligence over the power of execution*' is the very sign of authenticity. The great and pure artist is one who '*pursues all the demands of art with the obstinacy of science and the strength of duty*' (*The Infinite Conversation* 354).

Nothing could better describe the textual production of James (especially in his prefaces to the New York Edition of his works wherein his knowledge far exceeds his achievement), of Benjamin (and of the concomitant power of suggestion of his oft-inadequate works with regard to their lucidity) and of Blanchot (whom one may re-read again and again with ever greater appreciation for what he is essaying to do); consider also the major accomplishment of the late-styles and late-products of each of our three target authors, which speaks to their evolutionary development and steadfastness. And what Blanchot writes here of Charles Péguy throws valuable attention on our trio of literary-theoretical composers:

Daniel Halévy compared Péguy's ordeals with those of Nietzsche […] Both lived apart […] Only Péguy drew from this solitude, from these battles, from these forebodings a kind of pure tranquility, all anxiety about his salvation set at peace. His solitude was that of a man who, from the beginning, knows his calling and, all his life, with an extraordinary certainty, responds to this feeling and maintains this faithfulness ("Solitude of Péguy," *Faux Pas* 282).

This aptly communicates the profound sense of the calling that James, Benjamin and Blanchot also seemed to receive in regard to their individual missions and vocations as readers and as writers. Also, what Kevin Hart writes in his recent study, *The Dark Gaze: Maurice Blanchot and the Sacred*, tosses light too on the well-nigh sacrosanct artistic and theoretical worlds and overall world not only of Blanchot, but also of James and of Benjamin:

Few people have thought longer or deeper about the relations between literature and the sacred than Maurice Blanchot […] He believes that we have lost the sacred and that this loss is a disaster. Literature now exposes us to the eternal murmuring of the Outside; it points us to a nihilism that is not the destruction of all community but a sociality that is grasped by way of the human relation (*The Dark Gaze* 231).

To think again of Borges's riveting comment on James being an 'ironic inhabitant of hell' (for there is moreover something deeply unearthly about

James) would also be to scotch-tape a certain 'human relation' of our three target writers; in this connective regard, Blanchot's *The Writing of the Disaster* springs to mind, which asks the question of how to engage compositionally the social hells of death camps and of mass deaths of the twentieth-century; moreover, as authors, James, Benjamin and Blanchot all instance in their writing the notion that, as Blanchot himself wrote, "Art is primarily the consciousness of unhappiness, not its consolation" (quoted by Ann Smock, "Introduction," *The Space of Literature*, 5); in addition to this, Hart writes in the acknowledgements to his critical tome on Blanchot, "I remember how [my daughter] Claire would come into my study to kiss me goodnight while I was writing these chapters, and how she would sometimes say as farewell, 'Happy Blanchot dreams!' I recall telling the story to Jacques Derrida who said, smiling, 'But there are no happy Blanchot dreams!'" (*The Dark Gaze* viii). The still more depressing point is that for the late-style Benjamin of *The Arcades Project*, "The 'modern,' [is] the time of hell" (*The Arcades Project* 544). That a contemporaneity would return to James, to Benjamin and to Blanchot might be informed by Luhmann when he writes that "an artwork distinguishes itself by virtue of the *low probability of its emergence*" (*Art as a Social System* 153); in this context, the engagement with James, with Benjamin, and with Blanchot might prove their meaning and value in the very engenderment of this monad as an experiential truth event with the reader as participant-interpreter and folder of meaning and of truth for an exceptional if not rare intellectual space of aesthetic passion, and of the unthought as the unconscious. What is more, if the effective book meaning or text truth is the protean acoustic, semantic, and structural fold, then our three influential if not founding figures for a different literary-critical dynamically cross-fertilizing interdisciplinary internationalist aesthetic global forming function make current conceptions of the unconscious and of the monadic insufficient for critical thinking and understanding, but not for 'the book to come', in the service of which James-Benjamin-Blanchot would be inspiring and prime examples, even more as the backbone of an unconscious monad given to us as a gift of high aesthetic value as concomitant systems of language all in the service of thinking of the labyrinth of the concept of the chiasmatic baroque modern. This ends our becoming global-materialist reading-folding of the monadological pattern of James-Benjamin-Blanchot—one that wishes that the singular monadic unity and disunity that structures this triad for some possible future remembering moment "blows cool like the wind of a coming dawn"

(*The Arcades Project* 474) in its plural unconscious folds, as a place of an unconscious monadic operation that by extension makes experienceable and intelligible a broader theoretical-historical heritage of a capitalist baroque modernity. Concomitantly, as a way to construct, crystallize and emboss the philosophical baroque, the theme of our research demands such inter-disciplinary commerce as that offered up by our objects of investigation.

8. "Life after Death": James and Postmodern Biofiction

Madeleine Danova

More than ten years ago, in 1998, after having explored the museum and the cosmopolitan world of Henry James and before concentrating on his twentieth-century works, Adeline Tintner published her *Henry James's Legacy: The Afterlife of His Figure and Fiction*, which starts with a quote from his essay "Is There a Life after Death?" In this essay published in 1910 in *Harper's Bazaar* Henry James claims that our life after death is pre-conditioned not only by the art we produce but by the traces we have left in the conscious memory others have preserved of us. Tintner rightly observes that "so absorbed is Henry James eighty years after his death that it is possible to find countless instances fitting his own definition of "a life after death" (1). She has probably never imagined what a revival the interest in Henry James as a fictional figure would undergo in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

The most famous examples come from the year 2004 when Colm Toíbin published *The Master*, David Lodge *Author, Author,* Emma Tennant issued in paperback her *Felony*, first published in 2002, and Alan Hollinghurst's *The Line of Beauty*, published in April that same year, won the Booker Prize. It was in 2004 again that the South African writer Michiel Heyns offered to London publishers another book on Henry James entitled *The Typewriter's Tale*, which, refused by a lot of publishers as the last one in this succession of novels, was published in the next year. As an attempt to explain this extraordinary sequence, David Lodge wrote a lengthy essay "The Year of Henry James; or Timing is All: The Story of a Novel" to be included in his book of the same title published in 2007, while Michiel Heyns tried to explain it all in his essay "The Curse of Henry James" not by the intriguing circumstance of James's life but by the fact that he was

the writer's writer. At the same time, as if despairing of finding any final answer to this heightened interest in James, Cynthia Ozick published the hoax "An (Unfortunate) Interview with Henry James" as a reply to this extraordinary interest towards the fictional opportunities James's life has presented. This interest in Henry James's fictional lives has been continued in such critical papers as Max Saunders' "Master Narratives" published in the first issue of *Cambridge Quarterly* from 2008 entirely devoted to Henry James, while in 2008 to the unusually large crop of fictional representations of James have been added two new publications—Joyce Carol Oates's *Wild Nights!* and Cynthia Ozick's *Dictation*.

The present chapter will look more closely at two of these novels, Michiel Heyns' *The Typewriter's Tale* (2005) and Cynthia Ozick's *Dictation* (2008), not only as examples of the postmodern biofiction, but as contemporary re-appropriations of Henry James's forays into the occult and the "life after death" question that vexed the imagination of people from the end of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth.

Henry James's writing has been much discussed within the discourse of the occult by such critics as Martha Banta, Peter Beidler, and T. J. Lustig. The occult, however, presents a lot of problems to scholars in general. For many it seems to be just "an umbrella term," as Susan Gillman suggests:

> [I]ntended primarily to summon forth a specific historical context, the confluence in the early twentieth century of popular occultisms encompassing such varied movements as Theosophy, Rosicrucianism, and the 'Jung cult.' These occultisms represent the Western esoteric tradition, broadly conceived, and derived, according to conventional historical accounts, from Gnosticism, hermetic writings on alchemy and magic, and the cabala (8).

In Europe the attempt to find a reasonable explanation of the supernatural phenomena the 19th-century world witnessed was preconditioned by the Victorians' "enquiring minds, love of organizing knowledge, and religious beliefs (or passionate and high-minded agnosticism)," which "turn[ed] to the relationship between scientific research and life after death" (R.G.O'F. 532), or, in other words, by the classic Victorian confrontation between religion and the emerging power of science.

If we look at the occult from the other side of the Atlantic, it acquires more "flesh." It is, indeed, a well-researched fact that the second half of the nineteenth century, besides witnessing the unprecedented technological and industrial development of the Gilded Age in the United States, saw the rapid and sometimes frightening boom in supernatural occurrences.

More and more people became convinced of the existence of forces beyond rational understanding, and "mediums and spirit-rappers" caught the popular imagination with grip and vehemence. This gave birth to the Modern Spiritualism movement. It started in 1848 with the strange events at John Fox's home in Hydesville, New York, and culminated in the creation of the Learned Society for Psychical Research to investigate all these supernatural occurrences believed by so many to be true. Opposed to the old spiritualism, which treated spirit exclusively within the framework of theology, the new movement concentrated on the scientific possibility of explaining the communication between consciousnesses in a novel way, aptly coherent with the new scientific age, and thus created a borderland where science and popular beliefs met. As Martha Banta observes, "Because of its common focus upon mind and spirit, it [New Spiritualism] could be accused of or praised for being both a pseudo-religion and a pseudo-science" (10).

It should be noted also that some scholars have found an important connection   between   late-nineteenth-century-early-twentieth-century occultism(s) and the development of the social sciences, especially anthropology. As Peter Pelps writes, "anthropology has a far tighter relationship with the occult than most practitioners know" (11). The fact that the occult has actually contributed to the "construction of social scientific epistemology" (Pelps 11) does not prevent the usual association of the occult with one of the so-called pseudo-sciences, Theosophy. It was a movement headed by Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky that drew heavily on the ideas of some of the most popular secret societies, the occultism of ancient Egypt, and on Hinduism, combining them with modern science to produce a "hybrid […] an 'occult synthesis' […] a veritable 'global boom' [that] worked a heterogeneous territory […] combin[ing] overlapping mystical ritual and symbology with a variety of racial, national, and international politics" (Gillman 9).

New Spiritualism drew simultaneously on alchemical ideas of animal magnetism and Swedenborg's anti-materialist notions. In this way, it became, as Werner Sollors points out, "a spiritual response to material culture and technological progress while totally mechanizing the world of the spirits and the conception of man" (476). To a certain extent, it also laid down the foundations of William James' psychology and Henri Bergson's philosophy. Both questioned the possibility of the existence of a harmonious, unified self, based on the traditional concepts of the unity between

memory, consciousness, and the senses (Esteve 196). They both allowed for the existence of double, even plural, selves, a theme that occupied the imagination of many writers of different backgrounds throughout this time, filling their works with ghostly figures and encounters with the Other.

The struggle to give scientific explanation to supernatural phenomena was led by the "Ghost Hunters," William James and his friends and colleagues, William Crookes, William Fletcher Barrett, Edward Gurney, Richard Hodgson, Fred Myers, Henry Sidgwick, James Hyslop and others. In her fascinating story of their brave attempt to find a reasonable answer to matters supernatural and thus risking their reputations, Deborah Blum suggests that despite their failure, they managed to open new vistas for human consciousness at the beginning of the twentieth century. Very significantly she entitles her book, *Ghost Hunters: William James and the Search for Scientific Proof of Life after Death*, re-appropriating Henry James's title for the work of his brother.

Henry James, however, although strongly influenced by these ideas, was very much against the mechanization of the field of human consciousness. His own essay on the afterlife ends very significantly with the question: "And when once such a mental relation to the question as that begins to hover and settle, who shall say over what fields of experience, past and current, and what immensities of perception and yearning, it shall *not* spread the protection of its wings? No, no, no–I reach beyond the laboratory brain" (26).

As Dana J. Ringuette points out:

> In his rejection of the "laboratory-brain," in his resistance to nominalist thinking, James is most specific about his general conception of an afterlife. If it exists, then it can only be "personal;" otherwise it would be concretely evident what happens to all of us at death, and the afterlife would be observable. We would see what happens to others, or we would hear from them, neither of which, of course, happens (160).

The attempt to see life after death in its materiality, on the 'mechanical level' as it were, was nevertheless the preoccupation of many people of that time. To satirize that a whole new genre was created by John Kendrick Bangs, who worked as Editor of the Departments of Humor at *Harper's Magazine, Harper's Bazaar* and *Harper's Young People* at the turn of the century. This genre has become known as the Bangsian fantasy, which sets its stories wholly or partially in the afterlife. A very good example of this is Bangs' own collection of stories *The Enchanted Type-Writer*, written in

1899. I am not interested in the Bangs-James relation, however, but in the fact that both Heyns and Ozick use the wide-spread nineteenth-century belief that all these new mechanical inventions, such as the telephone and the type-writer, could serve as a medium for connecting with the dead. Bangs satirizes exactly this, belief placing his narrator in the company of a type-writer which types messages from Hades, speaking with the voice of Boswell, Shakespeare, and other famous figures from the past and telling their afterlife-stories.

Ozick's novella is set in England at the turn of the 20th-century and fictionalizes the very proper, slightly tense relationship between the novelists Henry James and Joseph Conrad. In the opening scene of *Dictation* the still-aspiring writer Conrad, who has not yet published any of his great works, visits James, already "the Master," in his London flat. There, Conrad is captivated by a strangely impersonal new instrument, the Remington typewriter, through which James writes:

> On a broad surface reserved for it in a far corner […] stood the Machine. It stood headless, armless and legless—brute shoulders merely: it might as well have been the torso of a broken God (5).

As in his real life James had hired an amanuensis or typist, Theodora Bosanquet, "who recorded in shorthand James's dictation and then transcribed it on the Machine; but it soon turned out to be more efficient to speak directly to the thing itself, with [the typist] at the keys" (6). In fact the word "amanuensis" is a French word adopted in various languages, including English, for certain persons performing a function by hand, either writing down the words of another or performing manual labour. The term is derived from a Latin expression which may be literally translated as "manual labourer." The word originated in ancient Rome, for a slave at his master's personal service 'within hand reach', performing any command; later it was specifically applied to an intimately trusted servant (often a freedman) acting as a personal secretary.

A decade later, Conrad would have his own typewriter and hire his own typist, a young woman named Lillian Hallowes, and the two writers, without being aware of it, would both be working on doppelganger tales: Conrad on "The Secret Sharer" and James on "The Jolly Corner," each about a man who confronts the ghost of the person he might have been. Inevitably the circumstances bring the two amanuenses together against the intuitive disapproval of their employers, and Bosanquet, altogether a more forceful character, manages to persuade Hallowes to take part in a

plot to achieve "life after death" or the same immortality as their employers would obviously enjoy.

> "Think, Lily," Theodora urged… In all the past, has there ever been an amanuensis who has earned immortality? Who leaves a distinguishing mark on the unsuspecting future? One who stands as an indelible presence? "Think!" said Theodora. "Everlastingness for such as us! Who? Conciliating, Lillian overreached. "Boswell," she said finally. "Boswell immortal? As an amanuensis? Never! An annoying sycophant. His only occupation was to follow in Dr. Johnson's wake, whether he was wanted or not!" (34-36)

Lillian goes on to suggest Moses only to be rebuked again by Theodora, who offers immortality for the two of them. Lillian answers flatly, "No one can live forever" (37), to which Theodora answers, "The Master will. Doubtless your Mr. Conrad will. And so shall we—we mere amanuenses…" (37). But Lillian gets frightened by what she interprets as insanity and runs away. Theodora, however, does not give up, and finally succeeds in persuading Lillian to carry out her "ingenious but simple" plan to substitute two passages from their employers' writings, and thus dupe both all those who claim to know the 'figure in the carpet', and the creators themselves. Because, as Theodora has it, "What deeper power than the power of covert knowledge?" (46) Thus once Lillian is persuaded, Theodora leaves behind all talk of immortality and admits that what she is after is the power knowledge brings. The plan is carried out, two passages from Conrad's "The Secret Sharer" and James's "The Jolly Corner" are swapped up and posterity is left to puzzle over the riddle left by the two amanuenses. As Socher suggests,

> Ozick has created an elegant hall of mirrors: two authors, two typists, two stories, two passages of prose, one by Conrad that is almost Jamesian and another by James that sounds almost like Conrad. Out of this delirious twinning Miss Bosanquet, who is described at one point as an 'idolatrous healer', contrives her own elegant plot for immortality, something halfway between a literary prank (another bit of secret sharing) and a diabolical usurpation […] The allegory can be decoded—Bosanquet the usurper is to James as James is to God, and so on" (7).

Thus in *Dictation* it seems that the idea of a life after death has been deconstructed in a typically postmodern way, never to be finally pinned down. In fact, in James's final days, as described by Alice (William James's wife) in letters to her sons, after two strokes and in a delirium, he would ask again and again for a pen and paper, or would write in the air (Edel 559). As Sharon Cameron points out, "James assumes the double role of

author and amanuensis. In significantly broader terms, James's magical thinking about a life after death is also inevitably magical thinking about writing" (159).

In *The Typewriter's Tale*, this occult nature of writing acquires a different aspect. The story revolves again around a plot conceived by James's amanuensis who is re-named 'Freda'. She, however, does not want to achieve immortality, but to win Morton Fullerton's love, procuring some compromising letters from him to the Master. The story revolves around the actual loyalty she owns to her employer and the rather imagined love relation she shares with Morton, very much as in "The Aspern Papers." To help her sustain the fantasy of such a relationship the type-writer assumes the powers enjoined by Bangs's typewriter and starts typing out Morton's communications to Freda on its own. Once she manages to steal the letters, however, the communication ceases and the supernatural powers of the typewriter are lost.

Thus, as Heyns puts it in his essay "The Curse of Henry James," "Lamb House, James's retreat from publicity and scandal and inquiry, had become the site of betrayal: the tower of art had been scaled, the enemy was within the walls" (3). This leads to the famous burning of James's correspondence of forty years, a destruction prefigured in his essay on George Sand, in which he imagines the "inquirer" violating the writer's privacy, even after "every track" has been "covered, every paper burnt," because as Heyns points out, "for [James], the author as a person with a private life did not, or should not, exist, and had no critically relevant bearing on the fiction… Perhaps not surprisingly, however, the effect of James's insistence on privacy has been to stimulate interest" (7).

It is obvious that this book exhibits one of the preoccupations of postmodern writing, namely the preoccupation with the role of the biographer, but unlike Julian Barnes's *Flaubert's Parrot* or A. S. Byatt's *The Biographer's Tale*, in Heyns's novel we have another important re-appropriation, that of the discourse of the occult. As in Ozick's novella, it seems to have strengthened what many see as the postmodern zeitgeist, which "approves of the uncertainty, ambiguity, and fragmentation and distrusts the ideas of totality, synthesis, or binary oppositions" (Middeke 44). It also seems to have created collages of factual and fictionalized lives which not only re-shape the field of postmodern biography but also suggest that a life after death is possible. However, the cost would be the risk of carrying for ever a curse that is "not less explicit than Shakespeare's own

on any such as try to move my bones." (Heyns 9)—as Henry James himself is quoted as saying, in Heyns's essay.

Despite this threat, the postmodern preoccupation with the hidden life-histories of great and small men and women, has pushed contemporary writers to dig further and further in the obscure corners of Henry James's life, lending him another lease of a life after death.

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