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CONTENTS

Foreword i
◎**Li-hsin Hsu** (National Chengchi University, Taiwan) and **Andrew Taylor** (University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom)

E. M. Forster, Lionel Trilling, and the Transatlantic Turn to America, 1942-1953 1
◎**Stuart Christie** (Hong Kong Baptist University, China)

Towards a Bigger Picture: Transatlantic Ekphrasis in William B. Patrick's "The Slave Ship" 27
◎**Carl Plasa** (Cardiff University, United Kingdom)

"To shut our eyes is Travel": Nineteenth-Century Imaginary Journeys and Dickinson's Virtual Europe 61
◎**Páraic Finnerty** (University of Portsmouth, United Kingdom)

"Speaking Distance": Fantasies of Immediacy and the Transatlantic Telegraph 97
◎**Dorothy Butchard** (University of Birmingham, United Kingdom)

Literary & Cultural Criticism

Nigerian Literature: Issues Then and Now 121
◎**Abiodun Adeniji** (University of Lagos, Nigeria)

Men, the Roles They Play and the Making of a Gentleman in Tobias Smollett's *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* 143
◎**Di-feng Chueh** (Feng-Chia University, Taiwan)

德昆西亞洲書寫中「能」的論述 167
Aspects of "Ability" in De Quincey's Writings about Asia
◎**Bo-Yuan Huang** (National Chi Nan University, Taiwan)

Book Reviews

Leslie Elizabeth Eckel and Clare Frances Elliott's *The Edinburgh Companion to Atlantic Literary Studies* and Linda K. Hughes and Sarah R. Robbins' *Teaching Transatlanticism: Resources for Teaching Nineteenth-Century Anglo-American Print Culture* reviewed by 189
◎**Robert Morace** (Daemen College, United States)

J. Michelle Coghlan's *Sensational Internationalism: The Paris Commune and the Remapping of American Memory in the Long Nineteenth Century* reviewed by 193
◎**Woody Brown** (State University of New York at Buffalo, United States)

Notes on Contributors

Call for Papers

FOREWORD

This special issue aims to seek new ways to read and write across and beyond assumptions about national allegiance through a transnational lens and comparative practice. The four essays and two book reviews in the issue investigate various forms of encountering and competing "locations of culture," to borrow the term from Homi K. Bhabha, based upon an explicitly inter-relational and interdisciplinary framework. Rethinking questions of national identity, racial politics, material culture, and aesthetic affiliation, the collection presents an exciting array of scholarly conversations engaged in discussions around a number of historical, literary, cultural and technological issues across the Atlantic Ocean. The authors navigate through the seemingly opaque, intricately enmeshed networks of Atlantic exchange and their permeable borders with insight. This wide-ranging presentation displays much of the latest research being conducted in this dynamic and rich field. The thematic diversity, methodological variety and theoretical heterogeneity here exemplify the renewing vigour and creative stimulation in the current criticism of Transatlantic Studies.

The disciplinary divide between literatures in English on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean has been a long-standing practice within modern academic institutions and communities. I can still recall the difficulties I experienced as a postgraduate student in determining whether the focus of my future career should be more "British" or "American." Later I had the pleasure of attending numerous transatlantic seminars created by Andrew Taylor and Susan Manning, both of whom I had the privilege of working with as my PhD supervisors at the University of Edinburgh. Their scholarship provided me a paradigm to reconsider my own role as a researcher growing up on a Pacific island, experiencing constant existential and political dilemma about split national identities, which are, as Oscar Wilde and George Bernard Shaw might say, "divided by a common language." I benefitted from transatlantic literary studies in terms of its preoccupation with the crossing of people and objects, and its theoretical focus on the translation and transmission of cultural convention and intellectual heritage. Interdisciplinary by nature, it assisted scholars in rethinking such an existential duality with heightened sensitivity towards complicated historical issues about national division and racial

identity.

Etymologically the Latin prefix *trans-* is a preposition that describes positions or movements of crossing, moving beyond or going through. Its translation in Chinese 跨, alternatively, is used more often as a verb. Its sematic usage is perhaps closer to the English word "straddle," an act that literally involves the bodily movement of one's legs in order to make a stride, to cross a boundary, or to straddle the in-between. This special issue demonstrates how this "in-between" space of the Atlantic Ocean is embodied in and intimately linked to the physical and metaphoric movements of people and ideas, subjects and texts. It further looks at how the current Transatlantic Studies informs our understanding of globalization as an entangled and rhizomic network, rife with disruptive forces and unintended consequences.

The concept of the transatlantic draws attention to the ways in which literary scholars can examine and theorise, reframe and question the formulation and assertion of national narratives from transnational and comparative perspectives. As is amply shown in the essays and reviews here, research in transatlantic literary relations involves contextualisation of various local or national paradigms and exploration and exposure of their ideological limitations. While recent literary theories and criticism about transnationalism and cosmopolitanism have been complicated by uncertain political and economic consequences of globalization, the issue's essays show how the call for a broader, more nuanced and multilayered methodological framework and cultural practice remains imperative.

The four essays here cover the period from the mid-nineteenth century to the late-twentieth century, examining literary works by authors, including Emily Dickinson, Edith Warton, Henry James, E. M. Forster, Lionel Trilling, and William B. Patrick, who, consciously or not, participate in the ongoing transatlantic dialogue of their time from aesthetic and critical angles. The first two essays highlight the possibilities of expanding the scope of Atlantic interchange through their examinations of global literary circulation and production. Stuart Christie's essay explores the symbiotic literary and personal relationship between E. M. Forster and Lionel Trilling in post-war US and Europe. It sheds light on a picture of how the complex interaction between the transatlantic pair is shaped not just by "language and cultural affinity" but also by "transnational debt and structural interdependence". Christie convincingly shows how Trilling's "American Americanist" criticism

looks for intellectual nourishment for his American liberal imagination beyond the US by repackaging, re-exporting and "deterritorializing" Forster's work for transatlantic readers. Then, Carl Plasa's essay tackles the invested and vexed historical issue of the Atlantic slave trade by focusing on the overlooked poem "The Slave Ship" by William B. Patrick as a contemporary ekphrasic response to J. M. W. Turner's well-known painting *The Slave Ship* (1840). Plasa reminds readers that the institution of the transatlantic slave trade belongs to "a part of a white European" as much as "an African diasporic history."

The third and fourth essays investigate specifically how literary texts in an Atlantic context respond to the technological development of their time. Páraic Finnerty's essay charts new scholarly territory for transatlantic literary relations by exploring nineteenth-century developments in multimedia representations of Europe that "facilitated virtual travel" and their impacts on the works of Dickinson and her American contemporaries, including Ik Marvel and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Linking the US and Europe together "through virtual tropes," Finnerty demonstrates how Dickinson's poems about virtual travel and their associations with "disruptive, erratic, and shifting viewpoints" challenge narratives of "personal, national, or topographical exceptionalism." Dorothy Butchard's essay deals with the "fantasies of technological immediacy" by looking at the influence of transatlantic telegraphy on interpersonal communications in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Butchard investigates how the novels by Edith Wharton and Henry James draw on a tension between the promises of telegraphic closeness and the realities of transatlantic telegraphy's "economic cost and expressive limitations" to reveal "inherent flaws and uncertainties" associated with technological progress in the Atlantic world. In short, the four authors in various intellectual and imaginative ways think transatlantically by reading these literary texts as multifaceted palimpsests of intercultural (or inter-racial) positioning and overlapping, intersection and convergence.

With these four essays' diverse approaches and fresh topics, this special issue opens up cross-cultural dialogues in which alternative models of reading "across" and "beyond" are allowed to emerge. The two book reviews by Robert Morace and Woody Brown draw further attention to three recent books on transatlantic literary studies and their significance to current American

political discourse. The Edinburgh Critical Studies in Atlantic Literatures and Cultures speaks to a consistent scholarly interest in and demand for a broader intercultural perspective. The relevance of these recent research endeavours to contemporary literary issues and the wider social and political contexts illuminates the persistence and resilience of Transatlantic Studies and its necessity in an increasingly parochial political climate in our time.

Li-hsin Hsu and Andrew Taylor
Editors

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E. M. Forster, Lionel Trilling, and the American Turn, 1942-1953

Stuart Christie[*]

ABSTRACT

Drawing upon previously unpublished correspondence, my essay documents how the transatlantic crossing of E. M. Forster's literary corpus, from a Europe devastated by war to America, challenges one of Perry Anderson's key claims about the postwar "contraflow" between the United States and England: that the sea change "modified Anglo more than American culture" (*English Questions* 204). Rather, the New York intellectual and literary critic, Lionel Trilling, succeeded in resituating Forster's fiction cogently in terms of exigencies recognizable to a mass American readership in wartime and after, thereby securing Forster's after-life in the American academy. Additionally, Trilling's success imparted scale to the transatlantic turn, by making Forster's newly transformed body of work amenable to ideological re-export, back again across the Atlantic, to England. As such, the pairing offered a historically significant corrective, during the decade following Pearl Harbor, to more reactionary critical formations within literary Modernism, at a time when both T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound had returned to nationalist bases when endorsing literature as a vehicle for culture. I conclude by affirming that the Forster-Trilling transatlantic combination served uniquely sociohistorical, interpretively occasional, and yet critically significant scalars beyond the nationalizing function of English literature and its criticism at that time.

KEYWORDS: E. M. Forster, Lionel Trilling, liberal humanism, scale

[*] Received: June 23, 2017; Accepted: October 31, 2017
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> But for your book on me, I should have had no revival in the States.[1]
>
> —E. M. Forster

> [I]t will perhaps seem strange, even perverse, to have involved Mr Forster in polemic, but I did just that—I had a quarrel with American literature as at that time it was established, and against what seemed to me its dullness and its pious social simplicities.
>
> —Lionel Trilling (*E. M. Forster* 4)

By the time E. M. Forster arrived, for the very first time, in the United States in May 1947—it was only his second-ever journey on an airplane—the timing could not have been any better.[2] He was already famous in the American academy, probably more so than in his own country. Lionel Trilling's *E. M. Forster* (1943) had already (and fairly recently) re-established Forster's reputation in America in the form of a somewhat equivocating, if also masterful, rebuttal of the pre-war crisis within European liberalism. Similarly re-minted for the postwar order, Forster's canon offered, at least as far as Trilling saw it, the best prognosis for bourgeois liberalism's renewal abroad in those many nations recently liberated from totalitarianism.

Attending the Harvard Symposium on Music Criticism that late spring of 1947, Forster came to embody, from the perspective of his North American audience at least, the philosophy of postwar "liberal imagination" Trilling had invented for him. The term had been coined as part of the title of the introductory chapter in Trilling's monograph, *E. M. Forster*; the concept would be broadened (and diversified in application) in Trilling's subsequent and successful popular collection of essays, *The Liberal Imagination* (1950).[3]

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[1] E. M. Forster to Lionel Trilling, 9 November 1948. *Lionel Trilling Papers* (MS# 1256) Box 6, Folder 5; Series: II (Undated, 1927 Mar.-1974 Aug.). Reproduced by kind permission of the Trustees of the Estate of E. M. Forster (King's College, Cambridge).

[2] The first time had been in a biplane in the skies over Alexandria, Egypt, where Forster had been stationed as a volunteer "Searcher" for the British Red Cross during the First World War. Forster's account of his first flight appears in one of his occasional contributions (signed "Pharos") to the *Egyptian Mail* (5 May. 1918: 2), "Alexandria Vignettes: Higher Aspects." See Kirkpatrick 115.

[3] Quoting Kirsch's data, Collini reports that *The Liberal Imagination* "sold 70,000 copies in hardback" and another "100,000 in paperback" (Collini 101; Kirsch 14). Such sales, for a work of literary criticism no less, constituted a hugely successful impact for a genre "most mainstream publishers and booksellers now regard as virtually unsaleable" and "hardly credible" today (Collini 101, 103).

Having achieved an altogether different kind of fame than that *A Passage to India* had given him a generation earlier, in 1924, and in no small part due to Trilling's efforts, Forster's brief career in the United States (also following upon his second, and final, visit to the US in 1949) was a notable success. The man D. H. Lawrence had once referred to as "the last Englishman" emerged as an exemplary figure of the postwar, transatlantic traffic in literary personality.[4]

I. Forster in Flight

In what follows, I cite previously unpublished correspondence between Trilling and Forster to document how Forster's crossing from a devastated Europe back to America challenges one of Perry Anderson's key claims about the postwar "contraflow" between the United States and England: which is, "in the standard hyphenation," that the sea-change "modified Anglo more than American culture" (*English Questions* 204). Of course, Anderson's overall project in *English Questions* nuances the "standard hyphenation," too; but I will suggest here not only (as Anderson does) that there was an "increasing erosion" of boundaries between the two cultures formerly held, at least to some extent, as distinct; or, that the mutual impacts were clearly "asymmetrical" (204). Rather, I suggest that at origin the Trilling-Forster tandem presents a clear instance of how a particularly well-crafted and scholarly caricature of Englishness not only demonstrated forms and functions of the transatlantic trade in letters and culture then becoming prevalent, but also capably anchored characteristic features—tolerance, humanism, freedom of thought and action—as determining features of an American centrist, liberal philosophy at the dawn of a globalized age.[5]

Trilling's illustration of specific, ruling ideologies by means of literary rhetoric or filigree was hardly new. But his popularization of literary culture in wartime, by the means of "branding" foreign literary celebrity and propounding the battle for hearts and minds, was most certainly original.[6] By

[4] See Moffatt, Chapter 11; and Jaffe, "Introduction."

[5] My use of a transatlantic tandem or "dyptich" of historical figures approximates the method pioneered by Paul Giles in his foundational study, *Transatlantic Insurrections* (2001). Of course, any given pairing also offers, by implicature, a spatial triangulation—the transatlantic—which is revisionist of "nation-centripetal literary criticism" (See Buell 66, 68-69).

[6] See Jaffe, "Introduction." Once applied in the United States, Trilling's theory enabled mainstream critics to redirect and sublimate, in the arena of social critique, still alarming tendencies that had

citing Forster's literary example as the welcome corrective to pressing exigencies within the domain of American political ideology, Trilling aimed to stabilize the political center at home. He did so effectively—during the dark days of early 1942 he had written *E. M. Forster* "in a concentrated rush . . . benefited by the special energies that attend a polemical purpose" (3)—especially because the eventual outcome of the war against fascism was far from decided. Partially an exercise in wish-fulfillment, partially an astute reading of the collective psychology of the American polity, Trilling's reinvention of Forster as a celebrity icon of public intellectualism also provided a new outlet for university-based academics seeking to redefine and rejuvenate their own roles as stakeholders in a broader, more relevant struggle for the future of the humanities and its canons (Christie 1-2).[7]

E. M. Forster's new-found status as a "literary modernist" man of letters—as the English exemplar of an *American* liberal imagination—raises interesting questions about the critical-canonizing operations Trilling performed as that modernizing critic who first ensconced Forster in the American literary canon without any apparent dissonance. Trilling's literary-critical exegesis imparted scale to the transatlantic turn, by resituating Forster's canon beyond the confines of *belles lettres*, and by making it amenable to ideological re-export, back again across the Atlantic, to Europe. Once Americanized, Forsterian ideology, now re-packaged as "liberal humanism," became a potent force in the emerging global struggle with those nations, particularly in Europe, facing the threat of the Warsaw Pact. As such, the Trilling-Forster transatlantic tandem was an historically significant corrective, during the decade following Pearl Harbor, to even more reactionary critical formations within literary modernism, at a time when both T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound had turned "back" to nationalist bases (English Anglicanism and Italian fascism, respectively) when reaffirming literature as a vehicle for culture (Kirsch 45).

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culminated in Stalinism and other extremist ideologies.

[7] By the time of the publication, in paperback, of the second edition of *E. M. Forster* in 1965 Trilling could claim, quite rightly, that Forster's popularization was "especially marked in America" where his works had become "required reading for educated people" and one of the "approved subjects for the university scholar of literature" (1-2).

II. Celebrity

As early as 1942, Trilling's good offices had resulted in Forster's work and criticism achieving a foothold in the American literary academy during the darkest days of the war. Philip Blair Rice, managing editor at *The Kenyon Review*, had accepted Trilling's article on Forster, "The Liberal Imagination," for publication in March 1942—the essay that eventually became the introduction to *E. M. Forster*—with the grim (and, as it turned out, unfounded) prediction that "This issue will very likely be our last, unless a god hops out of the machine waving several grand."[8] That Trilling's famous "liberal imagination" moniker, like the theory that evolved from it, was originally subsumed within Forster studies is not sufficiently acknowledged by Americanists who tend to minimize Trilling's reach beyond the United States; or, for that matter, Forster's reach into American literary consciousness. In an interesting reversal, John Lehmann (then with Leonard Woolf's Hogarth Press) had to apply to James Laughlin at New Directions in March 1944 to acquire republication rights to Trilling's *E. M. Forster*, in order to repatriate to England a newly Americanized property only by then better known to the English: namely, the significance and impact of Mr. E. M. Forster's canon. Forster's legacy had not only achieved the passage to India but, even more importantly for the consolidation of transatlantic literary consciousness, to America. And now, via Lehmann's good offices, it was travelling back again, re-packaged anew as a commodity in postwar transatlantic literary discourse.

In February 1943, Trilling also received a letter from his colleague at Columbia University, the economist Harold Barger who, like Forster, was a graduate of Kings' College, Cambridge, and the nephew of Forster's close friend, life-long correspondent, and confidante, Florence Barger. In his letter to Trilling, Harold Barger transcribed portions of a second letter he had recently received from Forster thanking him (Barger) for "Trilling's interesting and gratifying [*The Kenyon Review*] article on self. . . . Literary criticism, anyhow, has gone to your side of the Atlantic now: Edmund Wilson is another instance of it. Indeed, I think that most things have gone."[9] Clearly, Forster was not oblivious to the increasingly one-way traffic between British

[8] Philip Blair Rice to Lionel Trilling, 3 March 1942. Columbia University Libraries, *Lionel Trilling Papers* (MS# 1256)**.** Box 11, Folder 2; Subseries: II.2 (Undated, 1941 Jan.-1942 Jun.).

[9] Harold Barger to Lionel Trilling, 21 February 1943. Columbia University Libraries, *Lionel Trilling Papers* (MS# 1256)**.** Box 11, Folder 3; Subseries: II.2 (Undated, 1942 Jul.-1943 Mar.).

and American literary critics, reversing the cultural flow Henry James, Ezra Pound, and T. S. Eliot had made paradigmatic in previous generations. One has the impression that Forster witnessed the exodus to America wryly, now knowing that he too was a part of it, just as his *erstwhile protégés*, W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood, had done some years prior.

Upon first arriving in New York in May 1947, Forster arranged a visit to the offices of Harcourt Brace and Jovanovich, the publisher handling the American portfolio for his London publisher, Edward Arnold. (He was also following up a lead on how to place his biography of Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson for the American market).[10] In 2000, the publisher Robert Giroux recalled for George Plimpton in the pages of *The Paris Review* that:

> [Forster] turned up at the Harcourt Brace office one day in 1947, just off a plane. He had never been in the United States. Harvard had invited him to do a lecture in a series they were doing. Very affable. I took him to lunch at the Marguery Hotel on Park Avenue. We sat out under the canopy, in a sort of courtyard. He was wearing a backpack, which he never took off. When I asked him about his bags, he touched the backpack and said, I travel light. I never check baggage if it can be avoided. . . . Suddenly there was a terrific rumble of a train coming down under Park Avenue. I didn't really notice it, but he sat up. Earthquake? I said, that's the train coming into Grand Central Station. He was relieved. He talked about how he always wanted to visit America. Harcourt Brace gave him a big cocktail party at the Ritz Carlton. Forster had said, I must meet Mr. Lionel Trilling. Trilling had published a new book for New Directions, a little book about Forster, which sort of revived his reputation. When I introduced them, Forster said, This is the man who made me famous! (Giroux n. pag.)

[10] In an interesting twist, Trilling lobbied for Columbia University Press to publish the Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson biography, Harcourt Brace apparently having cooled on the Forster list. (See Giroux). Forster agreed to the idea, and invited Trilling to write the preface on the grounds that what the book needed was "a preface from an American. Pointing out that although G.L.D. was an English don who has been dead for fifteen years he has nevertheless something to say to Americans" (E. M. Forster to Lionel Trilling [26 Oct. 1947]. *Lionel Trilling Papers* [MS# 1256] Box 6, Folder 5; Series: II [Undated, 1927 Mar.-1974 Aug.]. Reproduced by kind permission of the Trustees of the Estate of E. M. Forster [King's College, Cambridge]).

Forster's acknowledgement of his debt to Trilling was just: not since the critical success of *A Passage to India* across 1924-25 had he known such acclaim; and this time, it was attributable to the advent of literary transnationalism, on behalf of a newly resurgent anglophone culture, which bridged national differences rather than accentuated them. Notably, Trilling and Forster had a love for Matthew Arnold in common: by the end of 1947, it was clear that a newly-minted "Forsterian" criticism of culture (in terms and vocabulary Trilling had usefully provided) could be counted upon to challenge the anarchy of a new world order. And was not the new world order being ushered in by Forster's American critical patrons, Trilling chief among them, and a potentially vast new domain of readers? Constituting the demand side of such an emerging readership, the American market for English novels represented an important after-life, if not a life-line, for British writers such as Forster (Giles, *Global Remapping* 12). The promise this emerging readership supplied was psychologically bracing, as well as potentially remunerative in practical terms, even for long-standing titles on the back catalogue such as *A Passage to India* and *Abinger Harvest* which, by the late 1950s, had been in print for over twenty-five years.

III. Scarcity

Forster was keenly aware of the economy of scale America represented by the light of his new-found fame. He astutely leveraged one American publisher against another in the effort to capitalize upon the race to reprint his works. This point was made clear to Harcourt Brace when its new director, Spencer Scott, errantly sent Forster a form letter asking for a reduction in royalty payments. Giroux recalls:

> I almost lost Forster as an author. Harcourt Brace got a new president in the late 1940s, the late Spencer Scott, who not only looked like a banker but thought like one. . . . He came into my office one day after his promotion looking unhappy, and laid on my desk a letter in English mandarin handwriting—which I recognized as E. M. Forster's—and said, 'Tell me what I should do about this', and quickly left the room. Written on King's College letterhead, it read,

> My dear Mr. Scott:
>
> I do not know who you are, because I've dealt only with Donald Brace since 1924 and more recently with Robert Giroux, but I cannot accept your suggestion of reducing my royalty on *A Passage to India* and *Abinger Harvest* to ten percent in order to keep them in print. The books have been selling steadily for over twenty years at a royalty of fifteen percent. If you feel that you cannot continue to reprint them under the original terms, I'll arrange to transfer them to another publisher in America.
>
> Faithfully yours,
>
> E. M. Forster. (n. pag.)

The tetchy tone of the letter reveals Forster's own awareness of the enlarged capacity he now possessed. Among the earliest supporters of the Society of Authors back in Britain, Forster had for many years established himself as a ferocious defender of any author's inherent prerogatives, legal or otherwise, against the business interests of publishers deemed predatory.

Clearly, Forster is leveraging against his present publisher the threat of a "quick out" the large, American readership presented by playing Harcourt Brace off against another (probably still notional) American publisher, one who might offer more generous contractual terms. Even so, the exchange cues more deeply rooted assumptions about postwar "America" Forster shared with his fellow Britons, including fecundity and "supply," philistinism, as well as anxieties about the impact of mass culture as epitomized by the large-scale influx of films made in Hollywood which, by 1947, had resulted in the British imposing a 75% import tax (Pells 217-18). Alongside his fellow countrymen and women, Forster had faced real privation during the Blitz and after, as a consequence of extensive commodity rationing which, to the surprise of some, not only extended but tightened for years after the war had ended. Strict rationing was exacerbated, at times to Britons' great frustration, by the repayment terms of the Lend Lease act.[11] British debt to the Americans after

[11] Consisting of legislation entitled "An Act to Promote the Defense of the United States" (Pub. L. 77–11, H.R. 1776, 55 Stat. 31), the Lend Lease Act was enacted by the United States Congress and signed by President Roosevelt on 11 March 1941 in support of its beleaguered European allies, Britain and unoccupied France. It provided essential commodities such as food, oil, and other materiel including armaments. (Eventually, Lend-Lease also sought to provide aid to unoccupied China and the Soviet Union after Hitler's invasion in 1942). Viewed at the time by the Churchill cabinet as timely and necessary assistance, everyday Britons eventually came to view the

the war put the pinch on British government, which was forced to curtail amenities for its citizens, even as the welfare state was in the process of being planned.[12]

Americans not presently in uniform (or recently demobilized) were hardly aware of such privations of the peace facing Britons of all classes. Petrol rationing was firmly in place, everyday food items were newly discovered as luxuries—dairy, fresh fruit and other daily commodities were particularly scarce—with food rationing not being formally suspended until July 1954, nearly a decade after the end of the war. Even when rightly supposing that Forster needed convertible cash far less than other, less-well-heeled Britons, he also felt the impact of rationing and contemplated the happier prospect of American supply.

Shortly following his return to England, upon the conclusion of his first American trip, in July 1947, Forster had moved into his chambers at King's College, Cambridge. (He had been appointed to a life-tenure fellowship and would stay there, more or less continuously, until the very last years of his life.) Still, as the letter to Spencer above indicates, he was willing to fight for his margins where he could. And he was also hit meaningfully by the rationing—especially cheeses—as his letter to the Trillings (dated 15 January 1953), thanking them for their posted care package, attests:

> The wonderful present arrived the day after my birthday [1 January], and I have been eating it almost always since. On the whole, food here is much easier, but *every* single item in the parcel is a local difficulty. The score of eggs made me gasp: some of them went to invalids but the rest I had for lunch in my room: I ate the last yesterday. The cheese I am still having for lunch. The bacon, tinned ham, and some of the butter are waiting a little. The sugar has released some inferior sugar which I give to the wives of dons. Knowing no better, they receive it with of delight, making it into jam, and then they give me presents of jam. So this way and that it goes.[13]

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repayment of Lend-Lease as onerous and even impeding the pace of postwar recovery.

[12] See Sked. The Lend-Lease package, consolidated along with postwar recovery loans, was repaid by the British government in fifty annual installments, combining outstanding balances and compounded interest. The debt was not fully discharged by the British government until 2006.

[13] Emphasis in orig. E. M. Forster to Lionel Trilling, 15 January 1953. *Lionel Trilling Papers* (MS#

The Trillings' gift of a "score" of eggs, presumably sent via air freight, rests quaintly against the backdrop of a much more intractable and complex relationship existing between the two powerful literary economies, always linked by language and cultural affinity; but now, for the first time in history, by transnational debt and structural interdependence.

British privation, American supply: the personal exchange between Forster and Trilling instantiates the macroeconomic developments which required fulfillment of the obligations incurred under the Lend Lease Act. Unlocking the promise of American munificence, British and American economies merged to deploy economic liberalism across the Atlantic. Their literary cultures, private informing public, also occasioned a degree of correlation by way of exigency. Paul Giles cites Trilling's contributions, in particular, to the globalization ("deterritorialization") of American culture and literature after the war, his "liberal imagination" ideally suited for export, at once local and global, flexible and tolerant.[14] Still, if Trilling was only too happy to serve as Forster's patron (in order to co-opt for American culture the liberal premise both men had inherited from Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy*: "the best that has been thought and known" [70]) there were others among Britain's literary-critical elite who were more resentful of the seeming dissipation of British cultural capital outward.[15] By contrast, Forster, like many other Britons of his class, happily obliged "Americanization" in exchange for a degree of celebrity and all (or most) expenses paid.

The Trilling repackaging of Forster that began in 1942, and which was fully achieved by 1950, was in line with the generally affirming liberal critique of democracy victors usually propound. (Forster had famously coined the credo that democracy was still worth two cheers, if not three, in his anti-Nazi propaganda piece, "What I Believe," aired on the BBC during the war). Trilling's ideological wrapper on Forster's critique, now theorized for an American audience as "liberal humanism," capably served the Allied victory over fascism, as well as symbolically guaranteed the postwar order in peacetime under the global custodianship of American capitalism. Largely the

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1256) Box 6, Folder 5; Series: II (Undated, 1927 Mar.-1974 Aug.). Reproduced by kind permission of the Trustees of the Estate of E. M. Forster (King's College, Cambridge).

[14] See Giles, *Global Remapping* 256, 300. Giles overlooks the essentially British basis, via Forster, of Trilling's newly globalized "American" liberalism.

[15] In *Americanizing Britain*, Genevieve Abravanel has argued persuasively that F. R. Leavis's anti-American viewpoints, in particular, were inevitably conditioned by "twin processes" of Americanization and the advent of the transatlantic (110-11).

result of Trilling's own efforts and increasing prominence as a critic, Forster emerged as the unlikely champion and icon of the mainstream, post-1945 transatlantic literary establishment. Arguing for tolerance and centrism, his writerly example served to deconstruct polarizing tendencies, totalitarian red versus Anglo-American blue.[16] Before turning to a closer analysis of Trilling's *E. M. Forster*, a brief review of Americanist criticism about the transatlantic turn bears further scrutiny, including Trilling's role in its formation which, although seldom addressed, bears the weight of my analysis here.

IV. The (Neo)Liberal Transatlantic

The bilateral origins of transatlantic literary modernism, prefigured at least since Hawthorne, Emerson, and Whitman, have been the source of on-going debate. In a helpful overview of this bilateral relation, Marietta Messmer has suggested the importance of geographically centrist, European (primarily British, French, and German) literary discourses. These provided a discernible counter-weight to polarizing tendencies impacting otherwise unobstructed traffic between Anglo- and American literary modernisms. Messmer notes that the resulting wobble was of considerable interest to Americanists after 1920, who sought to refute contrasts between this or that anglophone modernism in favor of more integrative and spatiotemporal models—including Europe, ex-England, as a crucial and yet neglected part of the overall dynamic (47-50). Such a decentered genealogy for the transatlantic, as well as the narratives of "interdependence" Messmer extracts from it, likewise have informed Kadir's rejection of an "American American studies"—literary production, that is, produced by and for the ruling American literary establishment in a kind of white echo chamber. For Kadir, the "American American studies" has persisted in countering a presumably more salutary American literary "translocality," responsive to different kinds of Americans, with these persons and their stories to a great extent excluded from institutions of power (13). Giles concurs in arguing the debt the transatlantic frame owes to the period of globalization of Americanist

[16] In the art deco-influenced dust jacket of Lionel Trilling's *E. M. Forster*, published by New Directions in 1943, Alvin Lustig's image of the writer's hand occupies the center of a bifurcated field, red and blue halves joined in the same creative gesture.

ideology which imposed "liberal uniformity" upon all other dissenting spaces and positions within the American and European Atlantic and beyond its perimeter (Giles, "Transnationalism" 73). In the era of Trump, John Carlos Rowe's interesting adjective for contemporary Americanist literary-critical discourses of the transatlantic, "neonationalist," offers an almost prescient warning about how extreme ideologies may also be seeded in reaction to the mere fact of literary values exchanging and crossing (82). Sounding the voice of collective caution, Messmer, Kadir, Giles, and Rowe all admonish us not to lose sight of the ways in which the discourses of transatlantic interdependence have also served capably when securing the hegemony and institutional violence of elites wherever British and American literary interests were established.

Kadir's argument targets Trilling, in particular, as betraying the contradictions within an ascendant American postwar political ideology filling the vacuum left by the demise of the British empire. Kadir argues convincingly that Trilling's rhetoric argued on behalf of a fictive, liberal consensus of democracy, even as his work has capably achieved the reification of dissent within the American polity across the decades:

> [A]t a point of America's headlong careening into the ideological battles of the cold war, [*The Liberal Imagination*] sought to delineate a *divide* between ideology and imagination, once again seeking to exorcise ideological sectarianism from the Americanness of American culture, literary culture especially, thereby disassociating liberality and imagination from the fray of ideological commitments that might compromise national imagination, the myth of consensus, and the capacity of America to continue on its perennial course of self-engenderment as the unique and unitary conception of its own mythogony. (13-14, emphasis in orig.)

Kadir focuses here upon *The Liberal Imagination* (1950) as instrumental in severing the liberal imagination from ideological critique, and particularly effective at laying the groundwork for the more general silencing of "translocal" dissent within America at the dawn of a post-war order. In these terms, the evolving Trilling and Forster relationship (Forster had read the

published version of Trilling's dissertation, *Matthew Arnold*, as early as 1939) would seem to offer ready evidence for the advent of liberal quietism Kadir deplores, all under the guise of championing transnational, global capitalism after the Second World War.

Kadir's claim should be taken seriously, particularly with regard to Eisenhower-era attempts by the American right to co-opt key tenets of liberalism—autonomy, imaginative freedom, individualism—in the fight against communism. Post-dated still further, Kadir's underlying assertion that Trilling was instrumental when dividing a socially-activist liberal imagination from its now quietest political ideology finds an echo in Giles who, astride his own contemporary position embracing divergent, "transnational" literary formations, makes the argument that Trilling's work made the Fukuyama thesis declaring the end of history at the conclusion of the Cold War possible. For Giles, Trilling's work serves (perhaps somewhat conveniently) as liberal prophecy for the eventual fact of American-sponsored globalization (read "Americanization") and its many sorry consequences. As we have seen, Giles equates "liberal uniformity" with the "intellectual unwillingness to move laterally" ("Transnationalism" 73). If Kadir and Giles are right, then the implication of their revisionist narrative is to elevate Trilling as the seer, if not outright proponent, of contemporary neoliberalism as a driver for contemporary neocolonialism.[17]

While persuasive, these various critiques benefit considerably from hindsight. They do not give adequate account of the personal affinities Forster and Trilling shared with a felt regard for the girding literature and philosophy provided in times of mutually recognized peril. Amanda Anderson rightly points out, for example, that the tropological "bleakness" of classical liberalism, Dickensian in origin, persisted as far as Forster's Edwardian fictions, and beyond, in keen witness to the types of nearly cyclical

[17] Kirsch points out that Trilling's construction of the term "liberal" was ideologically elastic over time (11). Trilling's initial adherence to a conflict-driven dialectic in the 1920s and 1930s gave way to his critique of the "illiberality" of anti-Communist uses of liberalism ("narrow, single-minded, and bellicose") during the 1950s (62). Giles' claim about Trilling's unwillingness to transculturate American liberalism as laterally, or as liberally, onto other shores in the 1960s may accordingly be attributed to the "hardening" of Trilling's later style, as the refusal to mimic global anti-Communism. His later stance became more "adversarial" and defensive; and also responded, at least in part, to attacks on the literary establishment from the left. See Amanda Anderson for a convincing treatment of how Trilling's association with the New York Intellectuals was uneven and at times discrepant (23-29), even as younger thinkers in his circle, like Irving Kristol, tacked decisively toward neoliberalism and its successor, neoconservativism.

catastrophe global economic liberalism at once invited and dispersed in the run-up to each of the world wars. As Amanda Anderson would have it more generally, and as I am arguing here, the Forster-Trilling tandem confirms liberalism's willingness to rise up to face "enduring challenges, often born of crisis, that exerted their pressure on the internal dynamics of liberal thought" (2).

Indeed Trilling arrived at Forster fortuitously, responding to the European crisis of the late 1930s, primarily by virtue of their shared interest in Arnoldian criticism. Trilling's effective repackaging of Forster upon the American scene indicates the relative permeability, at least with regard to English and continental influences, of the "American Americanist" position in the years of its earliest formation. Trilling repurposed Forster's philosophy in defense of a transatlantic liberality that had—at least not yet—lost its imagination, in reaching back to as-yet restorative British influences in the face of the "pious social simplicities" of a still provincial American mindset. The urgency and tone of *E. M. Forster* breaks upon that simplicity like a storm.

V. Relaxed Champion

Trilling begins *E. M. Forster* not with the imposition of historical context as conventional or obligatory, but imperative: "It gives me special satisfaction to write about him now, for a consideration of Forster's work is, I think, useful in a time of war" (7). From the outset, Trilling sets himself the task of correcting scholars who misread Forster's art as diffidence, otherworldliness or timorousness. Already, then, one sees how the "Americanization" of Forster occurs exegetically: as giving backbone and cogency, in the context of war, to a softer critical tendency. Trilling applies this lacquer, this veneer, via his own tendency—equal parts combative, equal parts aloofness—to enter the fray on behalf of a resurgent moralist criticism militating against the baser tendencies of an emerging popular culture, a position he would perfect, by the mid-1960s, as a leading theorist of the adversarial culture.[18]

[18] In 1965, Trilling published *Beyond Culture* (1965) which made current the notion of an "adversarial culture" serviceable, incidentally, to both Left and Right critiques of prevailing cultural orthodoxies. Much as his *E. M. Forster* over one generation earlier, *Beyond Culture* proved singularly adept at synthesizing and propounding, rather than originating, tendencies of reaction found in the wider culture: "It seems to me that the characteristic element of modern literature . . . is the bitter line of

Trilling's deep-rooted ambivalence about popular culture, with its capacity to exalt and to throw down ephemeral movements and personalities in equal measure, matched Forster's own. Both were students and admirers of the corpus of Matthew Arnold as well as the eternal verities projected from its residual neo-Platonism; both appreciated, as Arnold had taught, that the battle for "sweetness and light" muscular (Christian) liberalism wages in its struggle with modernity was far from milk and honey. To this Arnoldian scaffold Trilling fixes one crux of his unfolding argument (the first among several) he calls "moral realism": "not the awareness of morality itself but of the contradictions, paradoxes and dangers of living the moral life" (*E. M. Forster* 11-12). And, suddenly, long before he formalized adversarial culture for the humanities and culture wars of the 1960s, Trilling here ensconces Forster as liberalism's best champion because he is ambivalent in its critique: "For all his long commitment to the doctrines of liberalism, Forster is at war with the liberal imagination . . . [because of its] inadequacy of imagination: liberalism is always being surprised" (13). Ultimately, Forster the novelist must ride to the rescue of liberalism because it cannot fend for itself adequately on merely an imaginary—ideological—battlefield.

In Trilling's redescription, Forster's step toward adversarial iconicity is resolute: Forster is waging the struggle, no more and no less, for truth in narrative form (Kirsch 49, 51). Forster's lack of surprise concerning liberalism's inherent weakness constitutes, in turn, a martial posture and war-readiness in defense of art as transcending politics. If Forster is diffident about whichever political posture, he is also profoundly protective of the right to dream, of aesthetic autonomy, as art inevitably engages with worldly realities. (Liberalism is accordingly worth two, not three, cheers; it is the preferable alternative to extremism but also unreliable). Trilling's great gift to Forster criticism was precisely this identification: of the latter's commitment to the co-optation of political will to artistic freedom, in whichever measure or scope, as the best means of attenuating lurking extremist tendencies *within liberalism itself.*

For all its brilliance, Trilling's caricature is nonetheless odd. Forster emerges as liberalism's revenant, the incarnation of Matthew Arnold minus the piety, waging battle triumphant during America's darkest hour by virtue of never being surprised by humanity's failure to meet its better nature.

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hostility to civilization which runs through it" (qtd. in Kirsch 34).

Unseemly and small, the owlish and "donnish" (*E. M. Forster* 21) novelist from Abinger Hammer is neither weak nor spinsterly (as Leavis had once called him [186]). In Trilling's rendering he is, rather, a hero of the adversarial culture whose diffident posture Trilling believes to be a highly effective put on; even as Forster, revealing his true colors, refuses to play the binaristic game the public culture all too often imposes whereby "if one of two opposed principles is wrong, the other is necessarily right. Forster will not play this game; or, rather, he plays it only to mock it" (15). Forster is a better moralist because he is a realist; he is a better champion of the American way because he is never surprised by liberalism's failure. And yet, still, Forster champions on.[19]

Following on from the founding equivocation Forster's "moral realism" presents to his readers, Trilling presents another even more curious and challenging one: that of the "relaxed will." The strain manifest in this paradoxical combination is, in fact, tensile. Being neither fully willful nor fully relaxed, the "relaxed will" disperses tension along the substantive middle of whichever continuum Trilling claims to be treating. Such a "middling" of force is inherently constitutive, Trilling argues, of Forster's ideologically centrist enterprise; it also wreaks havoc upon any extreme interpretation—any terminal narrative or creed—on the verges of reality:

> [A]ttachment to tradition [forms Forster's] . . . belief in the present. He has learned not to be what most of us are—eschatological. . . . [For us] the past has been a weary failure, the present cannot matter, for it is but a step forward to the final judgment . . . in the name of a superior and contemptuous posterity, we express our self-hatred—and our desire for power. (*E. M. Forster* 22)

In Trilling's formulation, the "relaxed will" conveys Forster's corrective to the "desire for power." Its impulse towards distension is modified by its perpetual enemy, the ardent will. Mediating both types of will is lassitude, which asserts "the order of art set against the order of force" (179) to the point of

[19] Collini's otherwise fine and thoughtful analysis of Trilling overlooks Forster entirely as a pivotal influence. See Collini 106. The term "moral realism" was created by Trilling for Forster in particular, and prior to its more supple diversification in application to the broader ideology of liberal humanism in *The Liberal Imagination*.

conundrum; or, again, that "where the will is not everything it will be a better and a more effective will" (181).[20]

Hence the plasticity of Forster's commitment: to the narrative "middle" of life (and its characteristic muddles). Such plasticity inveighs, equally, against prurient beginnings inherited from the past and the idealist positing of alternative futures, utopias, which all too readily harden into tyrannical ends. Committed to the attenuation of narrative middles, Forster's novels are famously characterized by the implausible casualties attending improbable circumstances—the death of Harriet and Gino's baby (*Where Angels Fear to Tread*), the murder in the piazza which awakens Lucy's desire (*A Room with a View*), the off-stage expiry of Ruth Wilcox (*Howards End*). With particular reference to *A Passage to India*, Trilling notes the eschewing of teleological commitments, otherwise conveyed by standard plot, as a hallmark of Forster's style (*E. M. Forster* 147). According to Trilling, even the tried and trusty *Bildungsroman* fails Forster because, as with Stendahl's characters, only the unplotted brutality and suddenness of actual experience can ennoble humanity:

> The life that Forster provides for Rickie [Elliot in *The Longest Journey*] is not a school; it is the real thing, like the life Stendahl provides for Julien [Sorel in *The Red and the Black*]. We know that life for these two young men is real and serious if only because it kills them both. For both authors have said: Experience be damned—life either pays or you die. And pays in hard, tangible coin. (*E. M. Forster* 79)

Of course, Forster's brutal unplotting is a kind of plotting, too. This, then, is Forster's relaxed militancy on behalf of the middle of life—even a killing life—rather than the quaint and cosseted coziness of a teacherly *Bildungsroman* we all, really, ought to learn from.[21]

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[20] A riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma, Trilling's definition of Forster's "relaxed will" delights in attenuating its object: "The paradox is greater still: in Forster's belief in the relaxed will, in the deep suspiciousness of the rigid exercise of the intellect, there lies the deepest faith in the will and the intellect" (E. M. Forster 180).

[21] In a novel pairing—in the field of Forster criticism unique—Trilling attributes Forster's (anti)heroism, his rallying imperative to defeat willfulness, to the influence of P. B. Shelley. Trilling is most certainly right when noting that the title of *The Longest Journey* (1906) is culled from Shelley's *Epipsychidion* (1821) and that its theme to some extent informs Forster's treatment of

In the exegesis of Forster's "moral realism" and the "relaxed will," we encounter signature Trilling touches at once adumbrating and clarifying the Forster corpus as it was reminted for its American audience. Adumbrating, because—and long before the advent of poststructuralism—Trilling is all too clearly using deconstructive method; clarifying, because Trilling equivocates in order to anchor centrist moral philosophy (and its muddle) for an otherwise barbaric age that had already produced Auschwitz and, in a few short years, nuclear weaponry. For example, Trilling is clearly being deconstructive when he refers to Forster's "double turn": that is "the something else that lies behind, is sometimes taken for 'tolerance' but . . . it almost as often makes the severest judgments. And even when it suggests forgiveness it does not spring so much from gentleness of heart as from respect for two facts coexisting" (*E. M. Forster* 16-17).

Accordingly, the final chapter of *E. M. Forster* amounts to Trilling's summa concerning the necessity of the deconstructive Forsterian example for the American mind; and, with its provision of masterful rhetoric, indicates how the function of American literary criticism, as it made the transatlantic turn, extended and transformed the canonical credentials of British writers:

> Forster, then, is a critic with no drive to consistency, no desire to find an architectonic for his impressions. We might say of him that he is a critic without any desire for *success*. . . . Forster [in contrast to T. S. Eliot] asks us to relax. (165, emphasis in orig.)

I might disagree, at least in part, with Trilling's asserting Forster's aversion to structure ("architectonics")—a key claim of this essay has been that Forster and Trilling constituted an historically significant tandem enabling scholars of subsequent generations to better understand one such structure or heuristic, the literary transatlantic, as it emerged. Indeed, as the 1940s came to a close the transatlantic absorbed tension productively—equally relaxed and willful—as part of its expanding mandate. Such was the case when Forster took issue with Trilling, his great rehabilitator, when defending the Master

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Romantic subjectivity in the novel (*E. M. Forster* 81-82). Also implicit in Trilling's treatment of Shelley's influence, perhaps, is Forster's critique of the Shelleyean stance in the novel along the lines Trilling's own vocabulary of the "relaxed will" provides. Forster's posture reliably militates against the nobility of despair.

himself, Henry James, that great pioneer of the transatlantic's Angleward tilt.

VI. A Return to James

After his rediscovery by an American readership in the 1940s, Forster continued to be surprised by America and provoked by American literary criticism. Most surprising of all, Forster eventually changed his mind about Henry James. Forster had famously irked an entire distinguished lineage of Jamesian critics, from Percy Lubbock to Sir Frank Kermode, when, in *Aspects of the Novel* (1927), he had described the Master's use of pattern as "Beauty has arrived, but in too tyrannous a guise" (210). And, in the present context, it is important to recognize that it was Trilling's famous essay, "*The Princess Casamassima*" (1948) which had prodded Forster initially toward his rereading of James's work and a more positive reassessment. Initially, however, Forster's own view of Trilling's particular essay was averse:

> I have let myself go to [Lionel] Trilling on the subject [of *The Princess Casamassima*]. I wish that I had kept a copy of my letter to him, but his wrong-headed article in *Horizon* will remind me of my points.[22] It is an avenue which H. J. ought to have pursued. It would have done him no harm to develop the journalist in him, and to get up scenes and characters from the life. Imitating Balzac, disastrous to most authors, would have benefited him. (*Commonplace Book* 178)

Here, in fact, was a signal instance of the transatlantic literary formation reorganizing the thinking of its otherwise diverse constituents. For Forster, the emerging transatlantic offered a double turn: not only back toward a new-found appreciation for James; but, also, toward his sudden recognition of the power of quality literary criticism, like Trilling's, to connect the inspired knowledge of academic specialists in the universities to the living canons of actual novelists. This emerging distinction, between the academic specialist and writer-practitioner, didn't necessarily grate: Forster appreciated being viewed as a writer more than he did being viewed as a critic. There remained a "lurking nervousness" in his mind about the advent of the "academic"

[22] As reproduced in part below, Forster's original letter to Trilling survives.

criticism, even as he rightly perceived that Trilling possessed its gifts.[23]

There's more to be said about Forster's exchange of letters with Trilling on Henry James, but before doing so it's noteworthy that Forster rises to the defense of James's novel *in principle* against Trilling's contrary (or wayward) interpretation as Forster viewed it. In the *Commonplace Book* entry above, Forster recuperates James's interest in "journalism": not as a basis for critique—as he had done, via the contrast with H. G. Wells in *Aspects* twenty years earlier—but, rather, as evidence for the effective application of realism in the interest of depicting Victorian social issues that matter. As such, Forster's preference for *Casamassima* amounts to his endorsement of James's one-off experiment in the socially-inflected school of Balzac, an experiment James never repeated.[24]

Among the least critically subscribed of James's novels, *The Princess Casamassima* was, by far, Forster's favorite.[25] Describing it as "startling and attractive" (*Commonplace Book* 178), Forster allowed that this James novel achieved for him what no James novel had ever done before: it had caught him off his guard. So inspired, Forster read early James at a clip during the early months of 1948, a burst of interest which occasioned his reading (or re-reading) of a significant number of James's earlier novels—*Roderick Hudson* (1875), *The American* (1877), *Washington Square* (1880), and *The Bostonians* (1886) along with *Casamassima* (1886)—all in one batch.[26] What seems clear is that Forster set himself the task of revisiting James honestly, and that he did so with the brief of seeing what comparisons might be drawn between the earlier novels (which he knew less well) and James's later, more magisterial, style which, presumably, had soured him on James as a whole. To this end, Forster drew up a reading list.

As Forster's biographer, P. N. Furbank, rightly pointed out, Forster's worldview allowed for such salutary surprises. Indeed, he welcomed them. Furbank elaborates:

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[23] Personal correspondence, P. N. Furbank to S. Christie (letter, dated 3 May. 2011).

[24] Following H. G. Wells, Forster's reading of *The Princess Casamassima* as "journalism" is, at least, an oversimplification. Citing *The Art of Criticism*, Reid argues that such techniques, influenced by the philosophies of Taine and Sainte-Beuve, imparted greater confidence to James's fiction in the effort to convey a "statistical worldview" ("Jamesian Naturalism" 112).

[25] Wayne C. Booth cites the example of *The Princess Casamassima* as conveying a notable and different kind of "intensity" apart from scene, an "ironic tragedy" uncharacteristic of "late" James (*Rhetoric of Fiction* 47).

[26] Several pages of Forster's *Commonplace Book* are filled with passages transcribed directly from these novels, plot summaries, under the heading of "*Princess Casamassima* and the people" (177).

> [Forster] would write James off as a futile cobweb-spinner; then he would pick up a new [edition of a] novel of his and be astonished at its marvelous power and solidity. The thing [James's variability] seemed a great mystery to him; it never occurred to him that James might have wanted to do one thing in one novel and another in another. ("Personality" 66)

The advent of being surprised by James was not perhaps in itself a surprise for those familiar with the turn of Forster's mind. Rather, the willingness to keep one's mind open about the Master (via the provocation of an American critic) suggests evidence of Forster's trademark discernment, his own willful version of imposing order on the worldly chaos around him. For Alan Wilde, like Trilling, the oscillation in Forster between joyful surprise and the corresponding urge to order is dialectical (*Art and Order* 13-14); for Furbank, Forster's discernment in the interests of a moral is decisively and finally undone by virtue of the pleasure of the surprise itself.

So, in the context of the transatlantic turn, it is perhaps surprising to see Forster take a stab at Trilling's interpretation of James's *The Princess Casamassima* in a polite, if nevertheless feisty, letter dated 18 April 1948:

> Dear Trilling,
>
> I had just been reading *The Princess Casamassima* but how differently.
>
> "Some may remember she was Christina Light" you say. Some indeed do, and much of my excitement in the novel arose from her new experiment of being serious. She never gives herself wholly to the cause—her gloves keep good, some of her things are warehoused . . . she learns some . . . truths about herself and will chew them over when she resumes domestic life with the Prince. Her hatefulness to Hyacinth is in key with her treatment of Roderick [Hudson]: he had shown her all he could so [she turns to Paul Muniment] and commits her second murder.
>
> This doesn't invalidate your fascinating article, but I do put the stresses differently. Hyacinth dies simply and humanly,

> as we all might, because the two people he loves let him down. . . .
>
> The part that moved me most—again not mentioned by you—was the early scene in the prison. Here James is for once writing with the skin off and oh how well he does it and oh that he had continued to do it: towards the end start the gloving and fumbling, which so qualify my pleasure in him. . . .
>
> I must read your article again—it *was* a good experience—and I must read again in the book: whose title, I must point out, is *not Hyacinth Robinson*![27]

Apart from the astuteness of its reading of James's novel, Forster's letter (as corroborated by the cattier *Commonplace Book* entry cited above) takes issue with the substance, and perceived omissions, found in Trilling's treatment as it was published in Cyril Connolly's *Horizon*. Forster's critique is more or less collegial, however, unlike his frustration at the "spit and shit" of the emerging Leavis school at Cambridge upon which he also reports in the same letter.

The correspondence between Forster and Lionel Trilling on Henry James may seem slight, or of a merely private and disputatious sort. Nevertheless, calling it so privileges biography (or personality) at the expense of the larger gesture the exchange actually represents, as one particular node of a more engaging and emergent transnational criticism, its newly bilateral assessment of canonicity linking American critics to British writers as they made the transatlantic turn together. Such jointly conducted, or collaborative, reinterpretive acts constituted what one may think of as an increasingly vigorous critical occasionalism. In aggregate, such acts of occasionalism energized the role of modernist literary criticism as more elite modes of interaction shifted toward the more popular and geographically expansive. Trilling's "American Americanist" criticism may not have moved as laterally as the critics of subsequent decades might have preferred, but it did look beyond the United States to reinvent itself.

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[27] Emphasis in orig. E. M. Forster to Lionel Trilling, 18 April 1948. *Lionel Trilling Papers* (MS# 1256) Box 6, Folder 5; Series: II (Undated, 1927 Mar.-1974 Aug.). Reproduced by kind permission of the Trustees of the Estate of E. M. Forster (King's College, Cambridge).

VII. The Minor Transatlantic

In closing, I turn to an anecdote. Some years ago, I recall that a senior colleague of mine, prolific and proud, referred to E. M. Forster as a "minor" writer. I reacted equivocally to the comment, with equal parts pique and equal parts understanding what he meant. But for Lionel Trilling's having revisited Forster's corpus in a time of war, Forster's career might well not have achieved its transatlantic crossing. That Trilling did so, and that Forster's corpus crossed back to England again, reinvigorated, and of greater ideological consequence a second time, suggests not only how the transatlantic frame served the exigencies and contingencies of its own historical moment. Rather, the advent of the postwar transatlantic also demonstrated how a purportedly "minor" writer like Forster could achieve a major repurposing for American thought and culture, as the belletristic aims of literary achievement found renewed purchase in a wider domain for public and transnational thought. By virtue of its sustained after-life in the United States, such "deterritorialization" of Forster's work, and the renewed fame it brought him, also signals, perhaps, a significant pivot in the history of the globalized emergence of "world" (anglophone) letters overall, as the privileged canon of English literature threatened to become displaced by the advent of decolonized literatures.[28]

In this essay, I have documented briefly how the transatlantic turn in modernist letters served uniquely sociohistorical, interpretively occasional, and yet critically significant functions of literary criticism beyond the national frame. If so, and occurring as it did at the dawn of a newly globalized purview for English literature, such depreciation of an otherwise proprietary national tradition might well mean its re-appreciation and effective reapplication elsewhere. The transatlantic turn has only continued to expand into the twenty-first century, aided and abetted by newer disseminating technologies, as all of the major "world" literatures (written and enjoyed in any powerful

[28] In an insightful and widely overlooked essay, Deleuze and Guattari argue that "the first characteristic of minor literature . . . is that in it language is affected with a high coefficient of deterritorialization" (16). Presumably, they mean to signify specific histories of language shift: as Kafka's Czech-influenced (Bohemian) German inches closer to *hoch Deutsch*; or, indeed, as American English formalized eighteenth-century usages absent from modern usage in England. Still, the "deterritorialization" globalization imposes upon any language would also seem to derive from any major language its minor key, travelling through attenuating space and time and reaching far more readers thereby.

language) arrive at a deterritorialized "minor" status. Much as Forster's example seems to suggest, such may actually have served to increase the volume of readership. Within such an expanding frame, global literary production loses nationalist focus, at scalars still expanding, as it is drawn along a deterritorialized perimeter. Acts of original or authorial creation become outstripped, in time and space, by the translations attending critical genius, in whichever language, and absorbing the interpretive faculties of any one good critic. All are subsumed. The essays of Lionel Trilling, the writings of Forster, and perhaps any canon anywhere become fully immersed in the global metadata revolution, fighting for air and time, mere motes floating among the massive dataflow.

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Towards a Bigger Picture: Transatlantic Ekphrasis in William B. Patrick's "The Slave Ship"

Carl Plasa[*]

ABSTRACT

David Dabydeen's "Turner" (1994) is well-known as an ekphrastic response to J. M. W. Turner's *Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying—Typhon Coming On* (1840) and firmly established as an important achievement in the field of postcolonial Caribbean poetry. While such a status is wholly justified, it is the premise of this essay that the critical privileging of Dabydeen's text as the horizon for *The Slave Ship*'s poetic legacy is not without its drawbacks. The most serious of these is that it has resulted in a certain blindness towards another long and complex ekphrastic poem on Turner's masterpiece that emanates from an American rather than a Caribbean literary context and that was published in the same year as Dabydeen's—William B. Patrick's "The Slave Ship." It is not this essay's purpose to speculate on why "Turner," written by a black Caribbean author, has enjoyed such critical prestige while "The Slave Ship," written by an author who is a white American, has been rendered critically invisible, nor is the concern to adjudicate between the aesthetic merits of the two poems, which would seem to have been composed entirely independently of one another. The aim, rather, is to bring the transatlantic encounter between Patrick's text and Turner's painting into critical view for the first time and demonstrate the ways in which it extends and enriches the current understanding of contemporary ekphrastic poetry that takes the Middle Passage as its subject.

KEYWORDS: William B. Patrick's "The Slave Ship," ekphrastic poetry, Turner's *The Slave Ship*; *Zong* atrocity, Middle Passage; transatlantic exchange

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I. Introduction: Turning from "Turner"

The mid-1990s was a particularly dynamic time for Black Atlantic poets reflecting on the historical trauma of the Middle Passage, as evidenced by the appearance of three long works produced within a two-year period: David Dabydeen's "Turner" (1994), Clarence Major's "The Slave Trade: View from the Middle Passage" (also 1994) and Kwame Dawes's *Requiem: A Lament for the Dead* (1996). What these works have in common—besides their length, subject-matter and concurrence—is that they are all written using the technique of ekphrasis, the "*verbal representation of visual representation*," in James A. W. Heffernan's disarmingly straightforward definition (3). Major's poem surveys, engages and takes issue with a range of Western images of black subjects from the Renaissance to the abolitionist era, while Dawes's book-length text is inspired by Tom Feelings's *The Middle Passage: White Ships / Black Cargo* (1995) and the "story in pictures" (Feelings n. pag.) that it tells. In Dabydeen's case, by contrast, ekphrastic range is exchanged for depth, as his poem enters into dialogue with art of the early Victorian period and focuses on just one work, J. M. W. Turner's *Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying—Typhon Coming On* (1840), more commonly and succinctly known as *The Slave Ship* (Fig. 1).

In an additional contrast to the works by Major and Dawes, Dabydeen's text has elicited far more critical attention and is now firmly established as an important achievement in the field of postcolonial Caribbean poetry. While there is no doubt that such a status is wholly justified, it is the premise of this essay that the concentration on Dabydeen's poem as an ekphrastic response to the call of Turner's masterpiece is not without its drawbacks.[1] The most serious of these is that it has resulted in a certain blindness towards another long and complex ekphrastic poem on Turner's famous and dramatic picture

[1] For work which reads "Turner" along such ekphrastic lines, see, in particular, Gravendyk, Härting, Slapkauskaite and Wallart. Dabydeen's own comments on his poem's relationship to Turner's picture are also worth consulting, as they appear in the course of interviews with Eckstein and Raney collected in Macedo 163-72 and 184-97. The interactions between poem and painting, it should be noted, are not always the central focus in readings of "Turner," with some critics preferring, for example, to emphasize the poem's intertextual rather than intermedial dimensions, as in Boeninger's exploration of the text in terms of its negotiation and revision of Derek Walcott's *Omeros* (1990). For the most recent instance of this critical emphasis, see Plasa, who argues that Dabydeen's poem can be construed as a work in dialogue not just with Turner's painting but other non-visual texts, especially William Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (1606) and Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987).

that emanates from an American rather than a Caribbean literary context—William B. Patrick's "The Slave Ship." By a curious coincidence, this thirteen-page text first appeared in *The Southern Review* in the same year as "Turner" and was subsequently incorporated into Patrick's *These Upraised Hands* (1995). This collection not only places "The Slave Ship" at its mid-point and uses a repeated line from the text as its title but also bears the image of Turner's violent seascape on its front cover, creative and editorial decisions which combine, ironically, to advertise the poem's preeminence within the volume overall, if not within the wider spheres of critical reception and debate.[2]

It is not this essay's purpose to speculate on why "Turner," written by a black Caribbean author, has enjoyed such critical prestige while "The Slave Ship," written by an author who is a white American, has been rendered critically invisible, nor is the concern to adjudicate between the aesthetic merits of the two texts, which would seem to have been composed entirely independently of one another. The aim, rather, is to bring the transatlantic encounter between Patrick's text and Turner's painting into critical view for the first time and demonstrate the ways in which it extends and enriches the current understanding of contemporary ekphrastic poetry that takes the Middle Passage as its subject. In so doing, the essay also serves as a reminder that the institution of the transatlantic slave trade with which both poets deal via Turner is just as much a part of a white European as an African diasporic history.

[2] The critical oversight of "The Slave Ship" comes to seem further ironic when it is recalled that "Turner" is driven by a desire to retrieve that which is marginal, overlooked or set at naught, transmuting absence into presence, silence into voice. Such a desire is quite typical of other texts, whether poetic or fictional, in which Dabydeen uses ekphrasis as a technique with which to negotiate the visual memory of slavery. In "Dependence, or the Ballad of the Little Black Boy," the final poem in *Coolie Odyssey* (1988), Dabydeen renarrates Francis Wheatley's *A Family Group in a Landscape* (c. 1775) in the first-person voice of the silhouetted slave looking in from the left-hand edge of a domestic gathering which includes and excludes him at one and the same time. Similarly, in *A Harlot's Progress* (1999), the personage endowed with new centrality is the young black page occupying the lower right-hand corner of the second Plate in the 1733 series of Hogarthian engravings from which Dabydeen's novel derives its title. In "Turner" itself, to complete the catalogue of instances, Dabydeen again recovers and subjectifies a peripheral figure. In this case, however, the figure in question, taken from *The Slave Ship*, is not the finely turbaned prostitute's attendant we find in Hogarth, but an African slave, whose narrative, as Dabydeen puts it, "has been drowned in Turner's (and other artists') sea for centuries" (*Turner* ix).

II. Transition on the *Zong*: From "Conduct so Shocking" to "Poetical Language"

Before embarking on a reading of "The Slave Ship," it is useful briefly to reprise the historical incident widely thought to have provided the catalyst for the painting on which Patrick's poem (like Dabydeen's) is based. The incident in question occurred aboard the British slave ship, the *Zong*, in 1781 and is generally regarded as one of the most important episodes in the slave trade's four-hundred-year history.[3]

Events began on 18 August, when the *Zong*, captained by Luke Collingwood, set sail from Accra, on the coast of Africa, for Black River, Jamaica, carrying a cargo of some 442 slaves and a crew of seventeen, together with Collingwood's first mate, James Kelsall and one passenger, Robert Stubbs, erstwhile governor of the slave-fort at Anomabu. Although Collingwood had made several previous slave-trading voyages as ship's surgeon, this was his first assignment as ship's master and his inexperience in such a capacity, coupled with his ill-health (which, according to some accounts, even included bouts of delirium), resulted in a state of generalized mismanagement—of the *Zong*'s course, provisions and chain of command alike. By 27-28 November, more than three months into its journey, the *Zong* had lost its bearings: it was at this point sailing away from Jamaica (which it had mistaken for Saint-Domingue, then rival Caribbean territory held by France) and was in a state of distress, with sixty-two African captives already dead and many more struggling with disease and illness. Under the era's marine insurance law, owners who lost slaves from such causes during the Middle Passage were not eligible to receive financial compensation, but could be so remunerated if it could be proven that their slaves' deaths were in some way necessary. Aware of this protocol, Collingwood duly ordered the drowning of 132 of the sickest Africans under his charge, dispatching them into the Atlantic in parcels of fifty-four, forty-two and thirty-six across a period of several days beginning on 29 November. The Captain legitimated his actions by claiming that they were carried out in order to protect the

[3] According to Baucom, "art historians agree" on the role this incident plays in shaping *The Slave Ship* (268), but, as Slapkauskaite notes, they are "unable to fully substantiate their claims" (318), a point similarly made by McCoubrey (321-22). Whatever the exact truth of the matter, it is abundantly clear that, within the imaginative framework of Patrick's poem, the *Zong* episode and Turner's painting are fully intervolved.

slaver's water supplies, which were allegedly running perilously low, a claim later exposed as false. This murderous subterfuge prepared the ground for the *Zong*'s owners (the Liverpool-based Gregson syndicate) to seek indemnities from the ship's underwriters at a rate of £30 *per capita*. In addition to those whom Collingwood deliberately drowned, the final death-toll included a further ten slaves who refused the role of victim allotted them by choosing to drown themselves.

The owners' case eventually came to court on 6 March 1783 at London's Guildhall, where proceedings were attended by an anonymous eyewitness who reported on the trial in a letter addressed "To the Printer of *The Morning Chronicle*" and published in that newspaper some twelve days later. As the letter recounts, "The narrative" of the shipboard massacre "seemed to make every person" present at the hearing "shudder," even as its sensational horrors were evidently insufficient to prevent the "Jury, without going out of Court," from finding against the insurers. This decision (against which the insurers appealed in a motion for a new trial) leaves the letter-writer both scandalized and more broadly fearful for the corrupting effects it is likely to have upon the British nation at large, as it threatens to "sink" even "the most flourishing kingdom in anarchy and ruin" ("To the Printer").

As the letter continues, however, the sense of moral outrage and national anxiety is overtaken by a different mood. Struck by the courage of one of the slaves who ends his suffering in suicide, the letter's author becomes gripped by his own desire for compensation, though this is of a type altogether different from and more refined than that desired by Gregson and company:

> I wish some man of feeling and genius would give poetical language to one of those brave fellow's thoughts, whose indignation made him voluntarily share death with his countrymen. . . . With what noble disdain would he animate his sentiments, with what resignation would he consider himself, when plunging into the ocean, as escaping from brutes in human shape, to throw himself on the unsearchable mercy of his Creator. What a tender adieu would he bid his family and country! What a parting look would he cast on a glorious world, on the sun and heavens, disgraced by such a scene. What dreadful imprecations would he utter against such monsters,

> and against the barbarous, unfeeling country that sent them out, or wished to profit by their trade. ("To the Printer")

Here the compensation sought is not pecuniary but imaginative, as the letter-writer longs for "some man of feeling and genius" capable of not only salvaging the desperate "thoughts" of a self-destructive slave but also articulating them in "poetical language." In one sense, the wish for the advent of a poet who can function as empathetic spokesman for the suicidal slave, who in turn represents his "countrymen," is something the epistolary author himself fulfils, as his own text fleetingly assumes a suitable elevation of tone and becomes populated with "tender adieu[s]," "parting look[s]" and Biblical evocations of the "unsearchable mercy of [the] Creator."

As critics have noted, this document is important from a historical perspective, for two reasons. First, as Seymour Drescher points out, it is something of a rarity, being the only account of the trial to have been carried by the London press of the day (576). Secondly, as James Walvin argues, it was to have "profound and unexpected consequences" (104): it drew to light the monstrous truth of the slave trade in a way that was harnessed by prominent antislavery figures, including Olaudah Equiano and Granville Sharp, as part of their efforts to bring the barbarous traffic to an end (104-06). Ultimately, indeed, it was a factor in the formation, in 1787, of the Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade, of which Sharp was one of twelve founding members.[4]

What has not been critically observed about the letter, however, is that it also has a literary significance, broadly looking forward to the responses to the *Zong* affair, as it came to be called, that Dabydeen and Patrick have elaborated and which implicitly share the letter-writer's faith in poetry as a resource for reckoning with atrocity. In contrast to the letter-writer's own high-flown outburst, those responses are neither direct nor spontaneous, nor, importantly, do they articulate the inner "thoughts" of any of the *Zong*'s suicides (though slave suicide is a recurrent theme in Patrick's text). Rather, they are mediated by the visual recollection of those who are the *Zong*'s murdered victims, as embodied in *The Slave Ship*, that great work of another

[4] For a more detailed account of the *Zong* massacre, together with its legal, social and historical significance, see the symposium of articles in *Journal of Legal History* and Walvin. For a useful collocation of legal and other documents pertaining to the *Zong* case and, especially, the insurers' petition for the second trial (thought never to have taken place), see Lyall 239-374.

"man of feeling and genius." The question of how Patrick's poem engages with that painting is the subject of the rest of this essay.

III. Setting the Scene: Conflicting Visions in "The Slave Ship"

As well as being written from a white rather than black perspective, Patrick's poem offers an approach to *The Slave Ship* quite different from Dabydeen's, particularly in terms of structure. "Turner" is a posthumous utterance, spoken by the drowned slave whom Dabydeen magically rescues and revives from the tumult of the artist's Atlantic—the "salt splash burning [his] eyes / Awake" ("Turner" 11)—but Patrick's text has a more intricate arrangement, juxtaposing two figures who could hardly be further apart from one another—historically, geographically, ideologically and linguistically.

The first of these, located at the start of the abolitionist era, is an officer of the Royal Navy whose three-year sojourn in Africa affords him direct experience of the slave trade. Although he does not personally participate in or profit from it financially, the naval officer firmly supports the institution, outlining his observations and opinions in a letter, addressed to a "dear friend" (Patrick 51) domiciled in England, that takes up just eighty-five of the poem's 376 lines—less than a quarter of the space available. The second and textually dominant figure of "The Slave Ship," by contrast, is situated in the end-of-millennium period when the poem was published and spends his time exploring and commenting on Turner's painting as he gazes at it in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, where it is currently housed. Thus cast in the role of art-critic or art-expert, he adds another chapter to the chequered history of the reviews *The Slave Ship* has stimulated ever since it was first exhibited at London's Royal Academy in 1840. The discourses of these two figures are each split into six sections presented alternately, with the art-critic interrupting the naval officer and vice versa in a series of stops and starts that spans the historical divide between them. This patterning creates a sense of textual discontinuity commensurate with the scene of violent bodily disintegration Turner's painting so powerfully sets forth.

Alongside the historical and geographical differences between naval officer and art-critic, there are ideological conflicts too, with the latter disturbed and repelled by an institution the former condones. This radical antipathy has its curious and striking correlate in the different types of

grammatical dispensation characterizing the two figures' respective contributions to the text. In the shorter epistolary pro-slave trade parts of the poem belonging to the naval officer, punctuation is conventional and syntax unremarkable and no sentences go beyond six lines in length, with the majority not exceeding three. This preferred pattern of bite-sized grammatical units lends an air of order to these parts of the poem and is designed to make the buying and selling of slaves seem innocuous and banal—something that passes without notice—while also being tailored to the "childish heart" (Patrick 51) the naval figure condescendingly ascribes to his (probably female) correspondent. In the anti-slave trade ekphrasisthat takes up the lion's share of the poem, conversely, the laws of grammar are all but abandoned: all commas and full stops take flight, together with other routine marks of punctuation, such that it is only possible to identify where sentences begin and end by virtue of the capitalized words that appear sporadically at the start of particular lines. These devices work as improvised orientation-points for an otherwise potentially flummoxed reader, just as italics are used to demarcate the places where a voice other than that of the art-critic occasionally enters the text. Such a disturbance of grammatical norms can be read as a kind of linguistic signature for the poem's art-expert, while also providing an empathetic textual acknowledgement of the visual disorder that marks *The Slave Ship*. At the same time, it seems well-suited to the dystopian value-system governing the *Zong*, where the act of jettisoning slaves is indistinguishable from the discarding of a civilized morality.

As the allocation of textual space implies, Patrick's poem is much more engaged by the art-critic's fluid commentary than the slavish orthodoxies of thought and expression that regulate the naval officer's letter and this imaginative weighting is reflected accordingly in the ensuing discussion. This begins with a brief overview of the epistolary sections of the poem, before going on to a much more detailed analysis of its more challenging and substantial ekphrastic elements.

IV. African Apologia

As the poem's headnote indicates, the letter composed by the officer-figure of "The Slave Ship" is not wholly of Patrick's own invention but a pastiche of an archival document, in the relatively obscure shape of

Lieutenant John Matthews's *A Voyage to the River Sierra-Leone, on the Coast of Africa* (1788) and it works, like the colonial memoir it recalls, to endorse the slave trading "methods" (Patrick 51) used by "European coastal / dealers" (56), extolling them as providential.[5] Because they are "much less severe / than the natives' own" benighted system of "slavery" (51), the letter claims, such methods leave the Africans whom their "greedy" "tribal kings" (56) sell to white traders in a condition that is "in the end, / . . . more fortunate than most comprehend" (51).

Along with recalling Matthews, the naval figure in "The Slave Ship" might remind us of the anonymous reporter at the *Zong* trial, who is also the author of an eyewitness account, but such a resemblance is momentary and superficial, given the profound degree to which they are at odds with one another with regard to the slave trade's moral status. More pertinently, the poem's officer-figure is eventually and ironically revealed also to have been all along at odds with the close acquaintance to whom he writes. This implicit tension becomes explicit in the closing paragraph of the officer's letter, in which he expresses a sarcastic gratitude for the anti-slave trade "essays" (Patrick 61) his friend has thoughtfully sent him and which are the original stimulus to what the officer calls his "last response" (51): "I daresay you favor the brand of writer / who harps on the grave inhumanity / of our Slave Trade, while summering near Dover" (61), he testily remarks, using a trope that, in this context, has an unsettling connotation. By selecting the term "brand," the officer obliquely signals his animosity towards the new-fangled abolitionist texts the friend so pointedly prefers to read. He perhaps even hints at an exasperated desire to subject those texts' vacationing authors to the same suffering as is inflicted upon the slaves for whom they campaign and which he has regularly observed with such cool detachment during his tropical posting: "When sales are through, buyers mark the [slaves] / they own, scalding each owner's unique mark / into chests or backs with an incandescent iron" (59).

In a final twist, it could even be said that the officer is at odds with himself, as his argument is marred by internal contradiction. In the same valedictory paragraph, he gruffly complains that "slaves" are no better than "beasts" (Patrick 61)—"links in Nature's / chain, at best" (61-62)—and that

[5] The engagement with the archive of colonial history that Patrick's use of this particular source represents is also evident in the two poems appearing in *These Upraised Hands* on either side of "The Slave Ship"—"In the New World" (37-50) and "The Island of Birds" (64-71).

the slave trade "save[s] these creatures from certain death in their [own] country" (62). Yet such claims do not pass muster when set against earlier disclosures which suggest that induction into the slave trade, far from enabling captured Africans to avoid death, in fact makes such a fate more likely:

> Then [the slavers] beat [the slaves] toward the beach
> with hide whips and most, glimpsing an ocean
> for the first time, will beseech
> the slavers to kill them there, or will clutch
> howling at the sand until the native Krumen
> drag them to the transport boats. Inasmuch
> as the slaves think whites are new kings, who would sell
> them to cannibals, they will jump
> to waiting sharks or, with their chains, try to strangle
> themselves. Some captains report that Ibos
> have hanged themselves at their first sight of Barbados. (59)

V. In and out of the Frame: "The Slave Ship" as Augmented Ekphrasis

As noted earlier, punctuation is reduced to a vestigial presence in the poem's six ekphrastic sections, but reappears as an ingenious if equally residual part of the picture they describe. In the second section, for example, the art-critic at one point trains his eye upon the mysteriously buoyant shackles located in the middle foreground of *The Slave Ship* and likens the "disembodied / iron loops" he beholds there to "magenta question marks" (Patrick 54).

In being drawn to these dubious shackles "that float . . . / for no reason / in the / quiet center" (Patrick 54) of Turner's painting, the picture's late twentieth-century respondent follows *The Slave Ship*'s nineteenth-century reviewers in both Britain and America, several of whom also directed attention to these particular and peculiar items, which they regarded, like the painting as a whole, as artistically questionable—and derisively so at that. One of the first to note and mock these fetters as anomalous was William Makepeace Thackeray, after viewing Turner's painting on its Academy debut. Writing in *Fraser's Magazine* for June 1840 under the improbable soubriquet

of Michael Angelo Titmarsh, Thackeray identifies these "chains that will not sink" as part of a painting that itself seems to float irresolutely somewhere between the "sublime" and the "ridiculous," leading him to exclaim: "Ye gods, what a 'middle passage!'" (731). Mark Twain, satirizing *The Slave Ship* in *A Tramp Aboard*, some eight years after the work was sold to John Taylor Johnston and brought to America, similarly dismisses "The most of the picture" as a "manifest impossibility," partly supporting his argument by reference, once again, to those "iron cable-chains." These, as the errant Turner must surely know, belong with other "unfloatable things" and not atop a sea that looks like "glaring yellow mud" (Twain 157).[6]

For the anonymous reviewer writing in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* in September 1840, some three months on from Thackeray, *The Slave Ship* is a fanciful achievement too: it is a "dream of the colour pots" and an "unaccountable performance" "out of all rule and measure" and the "floating" chains themselves are "quite miraculous" ("Royal Academy Exhibition" 380). Yet even as this reviewer's interpretation of these objects is in line with that of Thackeray and Twain, he ends his commentary by suggesting a more sympathetic reading, in which the unsinkable chains assume a tentative symbolic value. Is Turner's treatment of these things that "water wouldn't swallow" intended to be "poetical," the reviewer wonders—a metaphor, in other words, for how the memory of slavery remains difficult to digest and simply "won't go down" (380).

This symbolic interpretation of what the contributor to *Blackwood*'s calls "slavery's chains" ("Royal Academy Exhibition" 380) implies a potential for serious reflection on the historical substance of Turner's painting, but it should be clear from the foregoing examples that nineteenth-century reviewers were primarily interested in the technical flaws of the work and that

[6] The complicated sequence of events resulting in the sale of *The Slave Ship* (which Ruskin's father originally purchased for his son as a New Year's gift in 1844) is documented in May 156-85. May also devotes some space to the painting's American reception—which largely mirrors the puzzlement and mockery of the earlier British response—but for more detail see Walker and McCoubrey 349-52. Although Twain's low opinion of *The Slave Ship* did not change, it should be seen in the context of a larger appreciation of Turner's almost supernatural artistic power, which seems to hold him captive. As Twain comments, in his own footnote to his encounter with the painting: "Months after this was written, I happened into the National Gallery in London, and soon became so fascinated with the Turner pictures that I could hardly get away from the place. I went there often, afterward, meaning to see the rest of the gallery, but the Turner spell was too strong; it could not be shaken off. However, the Turners which attracted me most did not remind me of the *Slave Ship*" (158).

it was these, rather than *The Slave Ship*'s troubling content, that defined the source of their outrage. The emphasis on artistic technique rather than the pressing matter of history is also evident in the most famous nineteenth-century assessment of the picture, formulated by John Ruskin in the first volume of *Modern Painters* (1843). Although Ruskin extravagantly praises rather than condemns Turner's artistry, his own ekphrastic account of *The Slave Ship* has nonetheless been considered problematic for that very reason—at least from a postcolonial perspective. As Dabydeen argues, Ruskin's obsession with technique leaves little space for him to address the painting's subject—the "shackling and drowning of Africans" (*Turner* ix)—such that it can only be fleetingly acknowledged in a footnote: "She is a slaver, throwing her slaves overboard. The near sea is encumbered with corpses" (Ruskin 572). For Dabydeen, that is, Ruskin's investment in technique is a strategy of deflection and distraction, a means of seeing one thing in order not to see something else and the same may also be the case for the painting's other (less enthusiastic) reviewers.[7]

By contrast, no one could accuse the art-critic in Patrick's poem of trying to block out the violent realities of Turner's painting—at first glance, at least. He plunges into them with the very first words he utters in the text, dragging the reader with him:

These upraised hands
and this one leg
upside down in the right foreground
the one exposed
mid-thigh to toe
as it slides down surrounded
by white fish
with bulging black eyes
and perfect hunger in their eager
upturned tails
these few extremities
easily mistaken for fish or waves

[7] While Dabydeen's critique of Ruskin's reading of *The Slave Ship* has exerted a strong influence on numerous critics, it has also been challenged, most notably by Frost, who sees Ruskin's response as in fact morally engaged by the picture's subject-matter rather than blind to it. See Frost 382-86.

and caught
for this one instant
between the onrushing diagonal rain
and the torrential sea
that accepts
everyone
even this ship on the left
with its blood-red empty masts
tipping back
these evanescent strokes
are people
already almost completely under
the burnt umber and white-lead foam
flecked with hovering gulls
(52)

Here the death-laden "near sea" from which Ruskin so carefully distances himself by consigning it to the safe haven of his footnote is brought back into close-up, with the focus falling on the slaves' "extremities"—a word well-chosen in the light of their extreme predicament.

This opening excerpt from the first segment of the art-critic's discourse reverses the privileging of technique over content defining nineteenth-century responses to *The Slave Ship*, but possesses technical features of its own (aside from the down-swirling syntax) that are worthy of comment and designed to reflect rather than avoid the atrocious scene Turner depicts. If the poem's figuration of the "iron loops" as "question marks" briefly textualizes Turner's image, so here Patrick's text assumes a more permanent visual quality: its lines are organized in a mutually centred pattern and varied in length in such a way as to approximate the shape of that topsy-turvy leg, as it "slides down" into Turner's "torrential sea," its inflated size causing the "eyes" of the "fish" encircling it to become gleefully enlarged in response, as they "bulg[e]" with surprise and delight.

Perhaps what is most notable about these lines, however, is that while they may be centred relative to one another, they are manifestly off-centre relative to the page on which they are printed in the original, giving the appearance of having been pulled towards the page's right, with the three

longest lines in fact stretching far enough to touch the margin. This typographical displacement (or slip*page*, if the pun can be borne) occurs across all the ekphrastic segments of the poem and serves as a concrete reminder of the art-critic's sympathy towards the black figure in the early stages of being devoured by that company of monstrous fish crowding into the "right foreground" of Turner's canvas. It also operates as a visual articulation of his ideological distance from the naval officer, whose pro-slave trade letter is delivered, throughout the poem, in verse conventionally aligned with the margin on the page's left.

The lines just cited clearly demonstrate that the art-critic in Patrick's poem is much more willing and able than his nineteenth-century predecessors to face and embrace the terrible history *The Slave Ship* recollects, yet, as a closer look at his portions of the poem reveals, the situation is not quite as straightforward as that, as he too is at times driven to disavow the truth of what he sees. Such a denial is evident, for example, in the contradictory trajectories involved in his description of that flamboyantly protrusive object, the slave's leg: even as the art-critic attests to how the limb is descending into the Atlantic, his eye traces a line that moves in the opposite direction, from "mid-thigh to toe." Similarly, although he begins his account of *The Slave Ship* by immediately confronting the reader with a vision of the flotsam and jetsam of the slaves' body-parts, it is not until much later that this anatomical detritus is resolved into the form of "people," as if he cannot countenance the drastic depersonalization to which the slave trade reduces its victims.

Considered in this light, it would appear that the art-critic has a little more in common with *The Slave Ship*'s earlier reviewers than we might at first have supposed, an impression strengthened when his own recurrent emphasis on Turner's painterly techniques is taken into account. Before the slaves' randomized and broken bodies emerge as "people," for example, they are, after all, just "evanescent strokes" administered by the painter's brush, just as the "foam" that has almost submerged them is an effect compounded from "burnt umber" and "white-lead." Later on in the poem, the "waves" of Turner's sea are described, comparably, in terms of the technique that produces them—they have been "knife-smoothed" (Patrick 54) by the artist—and "painting" itself is defined, later still, as an abstract rather than a representational pursuit: "a continuous inquiry / into relationships / between form / light / [and] color" (60). It is as if, in these textual moments, the

art-critic of "The Slave Ship" raises up his own metaphorical hands against Turner's picture in a bid to shield himself from its terrifying visual assault.

Even at such points, however, the story *The Slave Ship* wants to tell cannot be drowned out, demanding recognition, appropriately enough, in linguistic bits and pieces. The "white-lead" that is part of the poem's description of Turner's "foam" is borrowed directly from Thackeray ("Yonder is the slaver rocking in the midst of a flashing foam of white-lead" [731]), while "burnt umber" echoes Ruskin, for whom Turner's Atlantic is "enc*umber*ed with corpses" (italics added). Finally, as the poem concedes, in a reversal of its own argument, the seemingly nonrepresentational interplay between painting's internal elements—form, light and colour—cannot avoid "suggest[ing] / . . . / fragments of sky ship sea or human body" (Patrick 60).

As he strives to come to terms with these miscellaneous "fragments," the art-critic also mixes them with his own visions, augmenting what is commonly visible to the naked eye in Turner's painting with sights that are not—and even imagining voices and sounds that, by definition, cannot be apprehended by the act of looking. In so doing, he starts to draw his silent companion (and the reader) back into the time before the "one instant" the painting captures—that of "sunset on the Atlantic" (Ruskin 571)—endowing the slaves on the point of disappearing into Turner's ocean with a short history just as oppressive as their imperilled and crepuscular present. This process begins in the lines that complete the first part of the art-critic's ekphrasis:

These bodies
you cannot see
were chained sideways
ass to face
alive or dead this morning
in the slippery hold you also won't see here
The blood
squeezed from their bodies
steamed up through
gratings
and became this swollen sky
that sweeps up here
to the left

upper corner
Before the first ominous red of morning
a small boy
who dreamed of the moon
over his empty village
woke up
crying
Kickeraboo Kickeraboo
We are dying
We are dying

(52-53)

As his insistent claims—"you cannot see" and "you also won't see"—would suggest, the art-critic seems privileged (or burdened) with a capacity for imaginative vision that is lacking in his less gifted companion, who can only "see" the "blood / squeezed from [the slaves'] bodies" when it is viscerally and vicariously transformed into the paint on Turner's canvas. Yet in one sense, the fearful vision into which the art-critic voyages is not a private one somehow unique to him, since the "bodies" he claims to see "chained sideways" in the "hold" recall those featured in the well-known diagram of the Liverpool slave ship, the *Brooks* (Fig. 2). This print was created in 1788 as part of the abolitionist campaign and rapidly became a kind of public property, appearing, in different versions, on both sides of the Atlantic, in pamphlets, books and newspapers, as well as on posters put up in taverns and coffee houses.[8]

But if it is the image of the *Brooks* that informs the art-critic's vision in the first six lines of this passage, it is eyewitness accounts of conditions aboard that iconic slaver that become important in the last nine, as the vision first shifts to the figure of the "small boy," "dream[ing] of the moon / over his empty village" and then takes on a hauntingly auditory element, as the moonstruck child awakens into the nightmare of his overcrowded Atlantic dungeon. Here the boy's cry of "*Kickeraboo Kickeraboo*," translated by the art-critic as "We are dying / We are dying," repeats not only itself but also the testimony of Thomas Trotter, surgeon aboard the *Brooks* during one of its

[8] For a thorough analysis of the evolution of the image of the *Brooks* and the part it played during the political struggles of the abolitionist era, see Rediker 308-42.

voyages in 1783. Appalled by the black suffering he witnessed on this trip, Trotter became a fervent abolitionist and gave an account of his experiences before a Parliamentary Select Committee, set up in 1790 to gather information about the slave trade. In the course of this statement, Trotter recalls how, during the voyage, he had:

> seen the slaves drawing their breath with all those laborious and anxious efforts for life, which is observed [sic] in expiring animals, subjected by experiment to foul air, or in the exhausted receiver of an air pump; [and] also seen them, when the tarpawlings [sic] have inadvertently been thrown over the gratings, attempting to heave them up, crying out, "Kickeraboo, kickeraboo," i.e. "We are dying." (*Abridgment* 37)

The strange word that so catches Trotter's ear and echoes in Patrick's poem (sometimes also spelt with an "a" as "kickaraboo") is "presumed to be a black pronunciation of the phrase 'kick the bucket'" (Green 317). The word appears in fledgling traditions of blackface minstrelsy, as, for example, in a song composed and originally published by the theatre manager and writer, Charles Dibdin the Younger, in his *Christmas Gambols*, just five years after Trotter gave his evidence. This is the song's first verse, as reproduced in George Hogarth's *The Songs of Charles Dibdin* (1848):

> Poor negro say one ting—you no take offence,
> Black and white be one colour a hundred years hence;
> For when massa Death kick him into the grave,
> He no spare negro, buckra, nor massa, nor slave.
> Then dance, and then sing, and the banjer thrum thrum,
> He foolish to tink what to-morrow may come;
> Lily laugh and be fat, do best ting you can do,—
> Time enough to be sad when you kickaraboo. (113-14)

As W. T. Lhamon, Jr. points out, this song provides "an early instance of the slave's meditation on the master's death, and its meaning. . . . [It] appeared many times in Atlantic songsters" (486).

Together with providing a helpful gloss on Dibdin's song, Lhamon's

brief comments can be brought usefully to bear on the significance of "Kickeraboo" as it features in the Atlantic soundscape that Patrick's text evokes.[9] Although the word sounds plaintive and despairing enough at first (as it does in Trotter's report), Dibdin's song suggests that it is not just a slaves' lament for their own mortality, but a celebratory recognition of how, in the end, both slave and master, "negro" and "buckra," are subject to the higher power of "massa Death," who blindly overrides the hierarchical differences created by the artifice of race. Such a reading expands the first-person plural of "We are dying," transforming it into an unsegregated grammatical "grave" which can happily accommodate "white" as well as "Black" and, like Turner's sea, "accepts / everyone."

In the second and longest section of his commentary on *The Slave Ship*, the art-critic's temporal retreat from the murderous Atlantic sunset depicted in Turner's painting extends beyond the fateful morning on which the boy's cry is heard to encompass earlier phases in his voyage. In such periods, the ship on which the boy is captive follows the grim rhythms of grim routines, starting by bringing its slaves up from hold to deck:

Most mornings
they were danced on deck
in ankle chains
like this one in the right foreground
still attached
to flesh
. . . . . .
Some would order the men in irons up
Jump
some would shout
or
move your feet
though those with swollen ankles
might bleed to death
from dancing

[9] As Danielle Skeehan argues, such a "soundscape" is composed not only from the sounds made by slaves' voices (and bodies) but also "the material conditions of their imprisonment—instruments of labor, chains, and the ship itself." As well as necessarily eluding the written record of the slave trade, it is invariably linked, she argues, to slaves' strategies of resistance to their oppression.

and the sailor with the cat-o'-nine-tails
be flogged then
A toothless woman might bang
an upturned kettle
and the fool who signed on at Liverpool
to play bagpipes
on the Guinea slaver
for a quarter-percent share
might try a reel
to make the crew forget what they all do
as the dancers
sing their own words for
sorrow
for child
. . . . . .
and the sea would sing
on quieter mornings
to the dancers
silently
across these purple waves
Come home
I am the way home
Come home

(54-55)

The ritual of "Dancing the slave" (Fabre 36) that these lines dramatize (and whose passive construction tells its own story of compulsion) is widely documented in eyewitness reports on the Middle Passage.[10] As Geneviève Fabre explains, the official purpose of this euphemistic measure was to provide African captives with exercise after the cramped conditions they would have endured in the hold overnight, although, as she notes, it is, in effect, just "another kind of confinement" (35) and part, moreover, of a "deliberate scheme to ensure subordination by destroying former practices, to

[10] These include the account by Trotter, which notes that, although the practice is "general in the trade," it was only "used" on the *Brooks* when "exercise became absolutely necessary for [slaves'] health" (*Abridgment* 38).

curb any attempt at recovering freedom of movement, action, or thought" (36).

In addition to creating a torturesome disciplinary theatre for slaves' physical activity, these dance-routines provided an important means of entertaining the crew, to such an extent indeed that, to cite Daniel P. Mannix and Malcolm Cowley, on whom Patrick here directly draws, "Slaving captains . . . advertised for 'A person that can play on the Bagpipes, for a Guinea ship'" (114). In Patrick's poem, however, the "slave ship dance" (Fabre 34)—complete with that "upturned kettle" that Patrick also borrows from Mannix and Cowley—is not just a form of amusement for bored sailors, but also carries out a collective psychological function. Specifically, it enables them briefly "to forget what they all do," a phrase whose catch-all imprecision seems to enact the very oblivion to which it refers, effacing, in particular, the sexual violation perpetrated upon female slaves—"the women they wanted" (Patrick 54)—which was also a routine part of the slave trade.[11] For the "dancers" themselves, conversely, it is recollection rather than forgetting that is paramount, as the slaves combine enforced movement with vocal expression, "sing[ing] their own words for / sorrow / for child" as a way of preserving the memory of the land from which they have been exiled.

As Fabre further explains, in these shipboard rituals, "the basic principles of many performances to come were set: the blending and interplay of dance, song, and music; the call-and-response pattern between dance and music, between voice and instrument, body and song, and mostly between leader-caller and the assembly of dancers" (40). Yet here that pattern is reversed, as it is the dancers brought together on the deck who launch the initial call and the solitary sea that hearkens to and answers their sorrow songs with its seductive "*Come home . . . Come home*." Such a Siren-like appeal is one some slaves were all too willing to answer, choosing (like the ten on the *Zong*) to commit suicide not only in order both to end their suffering and regain control over their bodies but also in the belief that such an act would secure a jubilant return to Africa (Piersen 151). From this perspective, the crew's command to "*Jump*" takes on a new and ironic resonance, unwittingly

[11] This is an aspect of the Middle Passage that is itself recognized in *The Slave Ship*. As Dabydeen observes, the upended slave featured "in the right foreground" of Turner's picture is female and the fish that congregate around her are male: "sexual, phallic, monstrous" (Macedo 194). For other readings of Turner's painting sensitive to the slave's female identity see Costello 209, May 112 and McCoubrey 344-45.

sounding less like a dance-instruction than a more abrupt and abrasive version of the sea's homecoming chant.[12]

The third and fourth ekphrastic sections of "The Slave Ship" switch the focus back to the morning immediately preceding the massacre Turner's painting depicts, while at the same time developing the suicidal theme by connecting it to that of bodily consumption. In section three, the poem also makes a spatial return from the dancing deck to the "slippery hold," following the slave ship's enigmatic "surgeon" as he is "sent down / amidships" (Patrick 56) to fulfil his daily medical programme. This infernal descent into "heat / [and] noxious vapors," "blood and mucous," prompts the surgeon to "[remember] / a slaughterhouse / he had worked in as a boy" (57), even as it is itself an intertextual recollection of *An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa* (1788), written by Alexander Falconbridge, who, like Trotter, was a slave ship surgeon turned abolitionist. But as well as recalling this text—an important source for these middle sequences of the art-critic's discourse, in particular—"The Slave Ship" significantly revises it: written under the auspices of the abolitionists, Falconbridge's *Account* is sympathetically disposed to his African charges, describing them as "poor sufferers" (28) and regretfully conceding that "[a]lmost the only means by which [a] surgeon can render himself useful to the slaves, is, by seeing that their food is properly cooked, and distributed among them" (29). In Patrick's poem, however, the scene is very different, as the surgeon "force-feed[s]" the slaves, starting with the "tallest men," assisted in his endeavours by "Two cutlass-armed sailors" (56). These menacing if ambiguous figures—armed with cutlasses or with cutlasses for arms?—thrust "moldy plantains / awash in palm oil / or mashed yams filled with maggots / into whatever could still move / but resisted / eating" (56-57).

Whether the surgeon performs his actions willingly or under duress is unclear, but, either way, they end in irony when he begins to suffer the ill-effects of the insanitary atmosphere to which his duties expose him: "Just before / the surgeon . . . fainted / by the ladder / and had to be dragged up / the

[12] The sailors' rough command perhaps also carries an echo of "Jump Jim Crow," a blackface song-and-dance routine whose composition is credited to Thomas Dartmouth "Daddy" Rice in the late 1820s. As Olson notes, Rice's choreography for this act "borrowed heavily from African American dancing" and this was a feature that "distinguished [it] from previous blackface routines and probably accounted for [the] act's great popularity," on both sides of the Atlantic. It is thus, as Olson adds, an "early example of the exploitation of African American culture by Anglo American popular entertainers" (399).

slave closest / bit into his foot and held on so hard / a toe came away" (Patrick 57). Yet if the surgeon here becomes an object of consumption and dismemberment for the slaves who otherwise will not eat, the irony of the irony is that they themselves are destined to be devoured piecemeal by the pop-eyed fish that swish towards us much earlier, with "perfect hunger in their eager / upturned tails."

In the course of his observations on slaves' diet, Falconbridge addresses the claim, made in "favour of the captains in this trade, that the sick slaves are usually fed from their tables," but dismisses it by pointing out that the typical number ill at any one time is far too great to make such a custom practicable, even were "a captain *disposed*" to adopt it, stating that just "Two or three perhaps may be fed" (29) in this way. This latter remark provides the cue for the grotesque breakfast laid out before the reader in the short fourth instalment of the art-critic's ekphrasis, in which Collingwood, previously introduced to us as simply "the Captain" (Patrick 54), is now properly named, along with his first mate, Kelsall:

On this morning
Collingwood is awake
sitting at his carved table
easing pork chops down with English brandy
Two slaves
a woman
he remembers giving beads to afterwards
and a strong Fulani
with a nose broken the first day out
for trying suicide
both weak
from dysentery or scurvy
bound to chairs
are being fed from the Captain's table
Note this
he is saying to Kelsall
as a sailor
drains a tankard of rum into the man's mouth
held open

with a pair of hot tongs
Jamaican rum
Collingwood goes on
what we reserve for dashing Susu kings
Nothing
is too good
for our guests on the Zong
(58-59)

In this vignette, Collingwood's homely ability to "eas[e] pork chops down with English brandy" sets him in stark opposition to the "strong Fulani," who continues the quest for his own death (begun "the first day out") by refusing to drink, such that his "mouth" has to be kept open by "a pair of hot tongs" while "*Jamaican rum*" is "drain[ed]" into it—a coercive scenario similar to one sketched out in Falconbridge, where "coals of fire, glowing hot" are "put on a shovel, and placed so near [slaves'] lips, as to scorch and burn them" (23). The broken-nosed Fulani's resistance to the rum that is offered him is significant as the sign of a spirit that is precisely unbroken, but accrues additional meaning given the role the beverage plays in sustaining the transatlantic economy: manufactured as a by-product of slave-grown sugar on the plantations of the Caribbean, rum finds its way to the African coast, where it is used, as Collingwood tells us, for the purpose of "*dashing Susu kings*," who in turn furnish more slaves for the plantation, as the cycle of supply and demand perpetuates itself.

In each of the four ekphrastic sections considered so far, the art-critic exhibits an imaginative ability to enter narrative worlds located beyond the picture's immediate temporal frame that his silent auditor cannot emulate—watching the slaves being "danced on deck," following the surgeon into the carceral spaces of the ship's hold and observing Collingwood at his macabre breakfast, where even the "carved table" appears to be a victim of violence (albeit an aesthetic one). In the penultimate part of his discourse, however, the art-critic returns to the time of the painting itself, but only in order, once again, to veer off towards the things that are "not shown" in the picture and may or not in fact be present at all amid the deliberate indistinctness of Turner's "mist and vapor and symbolic blood" (Patrick 60). The most significant of these invisible presences are the slaves gathered for

jettison from the ship: "somewhere in here then / perhaps / in a huddled line / starting at the stern rail / and coiling along the foam-battered / starboard side / are what remain of / 135 pairs / of open eyes / we have simply not found yet" (61).[13] Given their starboard positioning, it is difficult to see how these remaining "eyes" could ever be reached by any means other than the vehicle of imaginative surmise, but what is noticeable here is how, though "open," the eyes do their best to avoid the sights around, or rather beneath them. They "try not to notice / the swirling vortical curves / waiting below," just as, in a synaesthetic shift quite typical of the art-critic's discourse from here on, they "try" also "not to hear / the half-finished / screams" of their companions as they are "swallowed up in frenzied splashing" (61).

As the art-critic moves into the final section of his discourse, his increasing concern, by contrast, is not to supplement what can be seen in Turner's painting with his own visionary or speculative flights but, in another approach, to transform it. Addressing his companion and focusing squarely on the visible, he declares:

What you can see here
is the dream
beginning
the dream of the living
left on board
the ship
. . . . . .
You can see
these upraised hands
straining still
in the vaporous air and ochre light
leaving one final sign
Look
there is nothing hidden now

[13] In setting the number of the drowned at 135, Patrick adds three victims to the more usually cited but not necessarily more accurate figure of 132, which itself conflicts dramatically with the figure of "one hundred and fifty . . . negro slaves" (Lyall 242) given during the King's Bench hearings, held in May 1783, to consider the insurers' request for the retrial. This deadly uncertainty in the mathematics of the archive is compounded by the fact that "some time after the ship arrived in Jamaica in December 1781, the *Zong*'s logbook went missing" (Walvin 140).

Look
they are waving
calling
to the ones
left listening on deck
or floating in the dark hold
They are waving
to the gathering mist of jib
and skewed masts
reeling off sideways
They are waving
to Collingwood and Kelsall
Go ahead
these hands say
cross into the white foam of your future
Go ahead
you will be left with
yourselves
and the full memory of our eyes
burning
in all of our
children's
eyes
They are waving
to us
They are waving
as they start home
(62-63)

As much as they look back to the beginning of the art-critic's observations on *The Slave Ship*, "these upraised hands" that wave and call in the selfsame synaesthetic gesture resonate also with the evocation of the singing sea at the end of the poem's second ekphrastic fragment, echoing the watery inducement to the dancing slaves to "*Come home*" via the bittersweet routes of suicide. Yet the critical difference is that the hand-waving slaves in Turner's sea have not heroically willed or chosen their own demise but, if not dead already, are

dying as a result of having been thrown overboard, as the full title of the painting reminds us. The art-critic claims "there is nothing hidden now," but the opposite is the case, as his reading of the "final sign" left by the gesticulating slaves works to mask the atrocious truth of Turner's painting. That truth is itself underwritten by the manuscript-verse Turner attached to his picture when it first went on display. Here the artist-cum-poet's lines ironically link the hands in the sea with those of the sailors on board the ship, themselves "straining" to secure the vessel against destruction:

> Aloft all hands, strike the top-masts and belay;
> Yon angry setting sun and fierce-edged clouds
> Declare the Typhon's coming.
> Before it sweep your decks, throw overboard
> The dead and dying—ne'er heed their chains.
> Hope, Hope, fallacious Hope!
> Where is thy market now?
> (qtd. in Ziff 341)

In reading the slaves' hands in the tendentious way he does, the art-critic aligns himself with other evasive figures, from the slaves not-yet-jettisoned to the historically unanchored Ruskin. Equally, though, the vigour with which he asserts the veracity of his own reading, with his "What you can see here," "You can see" and double "Look," lends him a certain resemblance to the naval officer from the poem's epistolary sections, similarly bent upon imposing his pro-slave trade views upon his "dear" but sceptical "friend." Ultimately, though, it would appear that the art-critic himself is unpersuaded by his own interpretative sleight-of-hand—the hermeneutic transformation of Turner's painting that he attempts—describing it, after all, as a "dream" and even attributing it not to himself but to the "living / left on board / the ship." The dream in the sense of the ideal (in this case, a triumphant return to Africa) is also a dream in the sense that it is an illusion, a death-wish, or, to use the terms of Turner's verse, a pathetic and "fallacious Hope."

VI. Conclusion: Looking beyond "The Slave Ship"

Just as the art-critic urges his companion, in this flurry of departures and

farewells, to "Look" at and interpret the slaves' "hands" before they vanish altogether, so this essay concludes by proposing that looking at "The Slave Ship"—a poem currently hovering on the verge of its own critical extinction—is a valuable project. This is so not only in terms of what such a project tells us about the text itself but also with regard to how recognition of Patrick's poem helps us circumvent the prevailing critical assumption that Dabydeen's "Turner" is the only poetic work in which the legacy of *The Slave Ship* lives on. Study of "The Slave Ship" is of still wider benefit and significance when the relative infrequency with which contemporary white writers have tackled the subject of the Middle Passage (ekphrastically or otherwise) is borne in mind.[14]

Yet to posit the somewhat daring and unusual adventure of Patrick's poem as a new horizon or resting-place for the intermedial legacy of Turner's *The Slave Ship* is inadequate. It would, in short, only repeat in different form the restriction the essay sets out to overcome, screening off other and more recent poetic engagements with Turner's enthralling vision that have to date gone all but unnoticed. The most critically rewarding of these occur in the shape of two much shorter texts, Douglas Kearney's "SWIMCHANT FOR NIGGER MER-FOLK (AN AQUABOOGIE SET IN LAPIS)" (2009) and R. T. Smith's "Turner's *Slave Ship*" (2014).[15] While both texts lie well beyond the scope of this essay, they are certainly worth noting as markers of the future direction in which the critical inquiry into *The Slave Ship*'s translation from visual to poetic forms might develop, leading us beyond Patrick's poem in the same way as the latter leads us beyond Dabydeen's. For the moment, however, all four texts need only be drawn together and affirmed as testament to the imaginative resources that come into play when poetry and art encounter one another in the baleful waters of the Middle Passage.

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[14] The key exception to this pattern, in the decade when Patrick's poem appeared, is, of course, Barry Unsworth's *Sacred Hunger* (1992), an epically scaled historical novel which is itself inspired by the story of the *Zong*.

[15] While critical ink is yet to be expended on Smith's poem, Kearney's text has been discussed by Shockley (796-806). Although she compares this poem with the more sustained (and radical) experimentation of Marlene NourbeSe Philip's *Zong!* (2008), Shockley does not go so far as to read it ekphrastically, even as Kearney himself has suggested both its affinities with the ekphrastic genre and its recourse to a visual poetics. See "MAST," Kearney's blogpost for 24 January 2011. Kearney does not name *The Slave Ship* as a source or stimulus for "SWIMCHANT," but there are many connections between poem and painting.

Figures

Fig. 1: J. M. W. Turner, *Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying—Typhon Coming On* (1840)

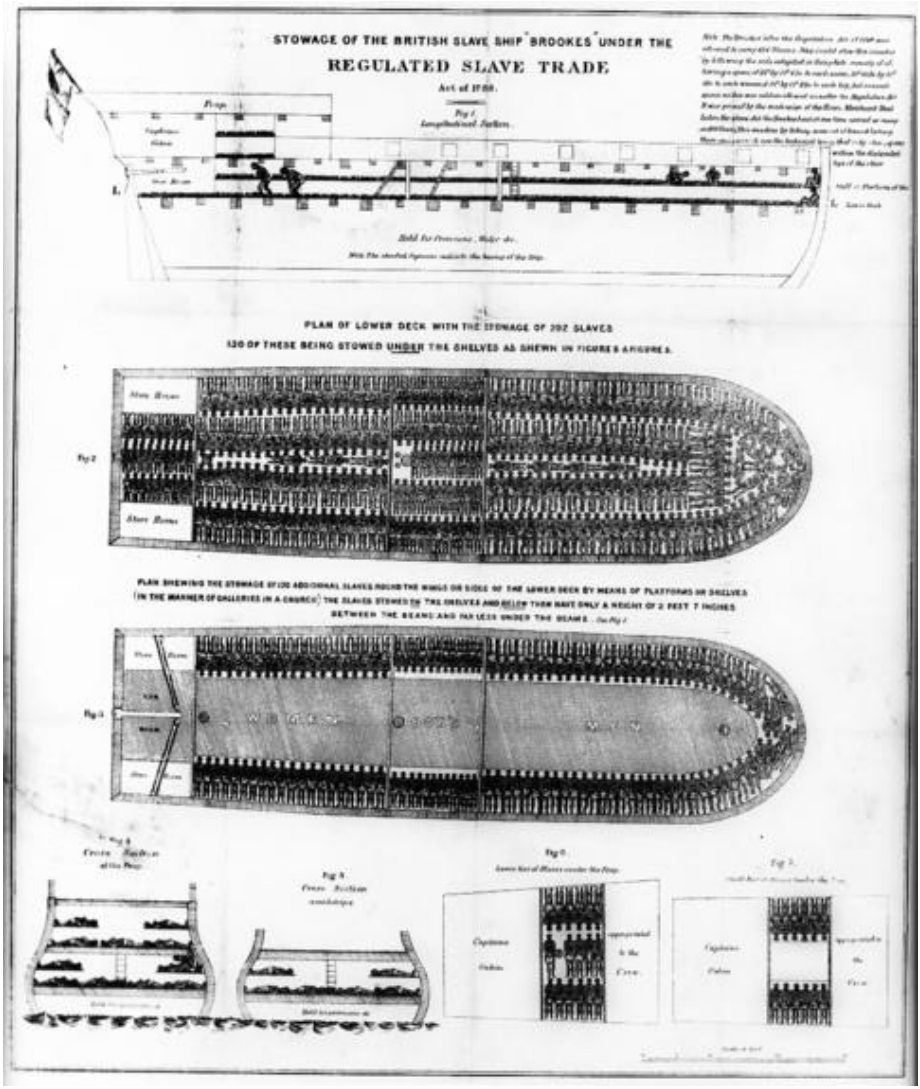

Fig. 2: ***Stowage of the British Slave Ship "Brookes" under the Regulated Slave Trade Act of 1788*** **(c. 1788)**

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"To shut our eyes is Travel": Nineteenth-Century Imaginary Journeys and Dickinson's Virtual Europe

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ABSTRACT

In an October 1870 letter Emily Dickinson told her friend Elizabeth Holland: "To shut our eyes is Travel" (L354). As Dickinson is usually a figure associated with reclusive confinement rather than worldly travel, this aphoristic comment has not received much attention, even though travel and geographical imagery pervades her writings. Recent scholarship on nineteenth-century virtual travel provides a new approach to the function and frequency of global references and the travel motif in Dickinson's work as a recurrent means of representing psychological complexity, imaginational scope, and nature's inexplicability. Drawing on this research, this essay focuses primarily on the regularity and specificity of Dickinson's references to Europe or to journeying there. Dickinson's European imagery is interpreted as evidence of her participation in a broader nineteenth-century US cultural representation of transatlantic experience through conceptions of the virtual. Two examples of nineteenth-century armchair or fireside travel to Europe by Ik Marvel and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow exemplify how relations between the US and Europe are established through virtual tropes of being neither here nor there, being both outside and inside a specific location or situation, and occupying an objective and subjective position simultaneously. Like her contemporaries, Dickinson uses nineteenth-century notions of virtuality to construct topographical and experiential spaces that are transatlantic ones of duality and liminality. Dickinson's virtual Europe unsettles her era's discourses of nationalism and exceptionalism; it demonstrates that sets of relations between presence and absence, actual and imagined, and local and foreign fundamentally inform daily life and identity in the US.

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The title of this essay comes from an October 1870 letter that Emily Dickinson sent to her friend Elizabeth Holland shortly after Elizabeth and her husband, Josiah, had returned home from a visit to the Dickinsons in Amherst. The letter provocatively begins by indicating how quickly one's perceptions can change and make belated their written representation: "I guess I wont send that note now, for the mind is such a new place, last night feels obsolete."[1] Dickinson comments on her friend's possible speculation about the unsent, out-of-date note: "Perhaps you thought dear Sister, I wanted to elope with you and feared a vicious Father. It was not quite that." This statement evokes and then forecloses an erotic conspiracy of flight and Dickinson also mentions that Josiah wrote to her implying some degree of perceived disreputability in her behavior: "The Doctor's sweet reply makes me infamous." Without revealing the contents of the previous night's note, Dickinson explains that she is writing now because she has read in the papers that Josiah is often in New York. She wants to know who will read to Elizabeth in his absence.

The remainder of the letter connects the enigmatic, discarded note and unexpected events such as the Hollands' recent visit not with scandalous secrets but with the mystery and sublimity of universal human existence:

> Life is the finest secret.
> So long as that remains, we must all whisper.
> With that sublime exception I had no clandestineness.
> It was lovely to see you and I hope it may happen again. These beloved accidents must become more frequent. (L354)

"Beloved accidents" are then connected with the unpredictability of the natural world and the power of human beings to escape their sensory locatedness:

> We are by September and yet my flowers are bold as June.
> Amherst has gone to Eden.
> To shut our eyes is Travel.

[1] Dickinson, Emily. *The Letters of Emily Dickinson*. Eds. Thomas H. Johnson and Theodora Ward. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1958, letter 354. All further references to Dickinson's letters will be to this edition, cited as L followed by the letter number.

> The Seasons understand this.
> How lonesome to be an Article! I mean - to have no soul.
> An Apple fell in the night and a Wagon stopped.
> I suppose the Wagon ate the Apple and resumed it's way.
> How fine it is to talk. What Miracles the News is!
> Not Bismark but ourselves.
>
> The Life we have is very great.
> The Life that we shall see
> Surpasses it, we know, because
> It is Infinity.
> But when all Space has been beheld
> And all Dominion shown
> The smallest Human Heart's extent
> Reduces it to none. (L354)

Dickinson's flowers defy human categories that establish seasonal protocol and species designation by boldly blooming in September as if it were June. The flowers' alteration of her garden is used to signify the multifaceted nature of human experience—both mental and emotional—and accordingly the profundity of daily life. Dickinson contrasts the audacious possibilities of organic life with the soullessness of "Article[s]" such as the fallen apple and the wagon; they are just themselves and nothing else. Such objects can be given incredible signification by the imagination which can, as Dickinson shows, anthropomorphize the wagon into an apple-eating being. The poem at the end of the letter reinforces her point that the complicated events of an inner life render quotidian existence and the "smallest Human Heart" more newsworthy than the Franco-Prussian war. The "Infinity" and global reach of human interiority involves spaces more immense than "all Dominion shown." "The [very great] Life we have" may not be surpassed or even reduced by "The Life that we shall see."

The historical turn in Dickinson studies has firmly located the poet within her New England culture and emphasized the importance of a historical and material framework for the discussion of Dickinson and her manuscript-based writings (see Richards). What has been increasingly sidelined is her often-stated orientation towards the intangible, metaphysical, and imaginary and her representation of this proclivity. This letter as a whole

emphatically shows that while language can immerse a reader in a writer's worldview and material, domestic, and political location, words must play catch-up with the changeability of perceptions, the rapidity of the imagination, and the unpredictability of the environment. Travel and geographical imagery, as this essay will argue, are some of the key metaphorical devices Dickinson uses to try to communicate the mercuriality and enormity of interior life.

The flowers' Edenic rebellion against probability transports Amherst to paradise, unexpectedly changing a familiar location into an unfamiliar one. Such metamorphosis is linked to the concept of travel, imagined or actual, which inextricably changes the experience of an immediate location by establishing its comparative relations with far-flung places. Travel symbolizes the complexity of the human mind and its power to go beyond corporeality, disrupt its own temporal and spatial grounding of reality, and make surprising, quick associations. At any one moment, as she puts it, "the mind [can become] such a new place" (L354). Although usually a poet associated with confinement and reclusiveness, Dickinson, in this letter, inimitably participates in a world in which letters, telegrams, and newspapers facilitated increasingly rapid communication between individuals within the US and swift information exchange across the Atlantic. Dickinson's letter summons up an era in which travel had become more accessible and travel writing more ubiquitous. She implies, however, that these opportunities and technologies associated with modernity and progress stem from an attempt to match the much more potent celerity of the human mind.

Recent scholarship on nineteenth-century virtual travel affords a new way of understanding how the travel motif and global references function in Dickinson's writings as a recurrent means of representing psychological range, imaginational scope, and nature's immensity. As the majority of Dickinson's geographical references are to Europe, this essay will focus on the specificity and nuances of these allusions as her participation in a broader nineteenth-century US tendency to represent transatlantic entanglements through conceptions of the virtual (see Giles, *Virtual Americas*). Two examples of nineteenth-century armchair or fireside travel to Europe by Ik Marvel and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow exemplify how relations between the US and Europe are established through virtual tropes. Marvel's *Reveries of a Bachelor* (1850) and Longfellow's "Travels by the Fireside" (1875) are self-reflective celebrations of virtual travel that help explicate the ways in

which Dickinson unexpectedly situates European countries, regions, cities, mountains, volcanoes, rivers, and seas within her depictions of local phenomena or presents illusionary journeys to or within Europe. Viewed as her contribution to her culture's popularization of imagined travel while staying at home, Dickinson's poems deploy nineteenth-century associations of virtuality with duality, dislocation, and disorientation. In so doing, her writings transform native spaces into strange, transatlantic ones and create personae whose comparative perspectives position them as neither here nor there, both out of and yet inside a specific location, and inhabitants of two places at once. Dickinson's virtual Europe adds nuances to recent work on her transatlantic literary and cultural relations by firmly locating her writings within a nineteenth-century US literature and culture shaped in multiple ways by transnational and global elements (see Voelz).

I. Nineteenth-Century Virtual Travel

Dickinson never uses the word "virtual" in her extant poems and correspondence. Her edition of Noah Webster's *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (1844) defined the word as "Potential; having the power of acting or of invisible efficacy without the material or sensible part" and "Being in essence or effect, not in fact; as, the virtual presence of a man in his agent or substitute" ("Virtual"). This term's contemporary meanings tap into long recognized elements and emphases in Dickinson's work. Dickinson repeatedly thematizes the significance of forms of experience that prioritize the impending, absent, and desired rather than the actual, present, and possessed. She presents poetry as synonymous with potential, with the ability to "dwell in Possibility" and to explore epistemological, emotional, and imaginative limits.[2] Her thinking shows the influence of Romanticism, which, as Richard Menke puts it, liberated perception and experience "from the constraints of time and place" and made the creative imagination "the ultimate virtual reality system" (23). Dickinson's ideas also stem from a nineteenth-century view of poetry as quintessentially related to "the 'as if'

[2] Dickinson, Emily. *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*. Ed. R. W. Franklin. 3 vols. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1998, poem 466. All further references to Dickinson's poems will be to this edition, cited as Fr followed by the poem number.

spirit of the virtual" and as specializing in constructions of hypothetical, imaginary, or unreal worlds (Stauffer 1).

Recent scholarship on nineteenth-century virtuality confirms that the period's literature, technologies, and media provided opportunities for immersion and involvement in simulated worlds and this altered the way Dickinson and her contemporaries conceived and imagined reality and themselves. Such research reveals the complicated relationship between advancements in literature and aesthetics across the long nineteenth century and developments in visual and textual media such as panoramas, dioramas, and travel guidebooks that facilitated virtual travel. Ralph O'Connor argues that the public appetite for contact with and information about distant times and exotic places was first "met by travel writing and topographical poetry" and that these "cradled the seeds of Victorian virtual tourism" (266). The Romantic wanderings in the poetry of William Wordsworth and the travel poems of Lord Bryon were central to the evolution of and were frequently referenced in nineteenth-century travel writing and tourist guidebooks (Buzard 115-30). Such associations explain Dickinson's connection of poetry with mobility and her routine depictions of imagined journeys (Eberwein, *Dickinson* 17; Peel 207-28). As Cristanne Miller puts it, there are a "staggering" number of Dickinson poems, particularly from the early 1860s, which "contain some mention of travel, escape, or of foreign places, language, or people"; these features show that Dickinson regarded "travel as the exemplary instance of both education and poetry" (139-40).

New visual technologies such as the panorama, developed in the late eighteenth century, appropriated poetry's peculiar power of immersing audiences in alternative realities through images, illusions, and stimuli and of showcasing the "instantaneous viewability" of the "sights of the world" (Wood 106). Panoramas were "enormous circumferential paintings, hung in specially designed rotundas, [which] appropriated the elite academic genres of landscape and history painting to create a spectacular new form of visual entertainment for a mass audience" (9). This visual medium commodified natural and urban landscapes, offering an "all-embracing view" of familiar and unfamiliar places and historical and contemporary events (101). Like the poetry of Wordsworth or Byron, panoramas supplied those excluded from "picturesque sightseeing and the Grand Tour . . . with exotic sights and breath

-taking scenery cheaply and conveniently" (103). The panorama's facility for allowing viewers to imagine being in and moving between different foreign locations immensely affected the nineteenth-century imagination. There is no evidence that Dickinson ever saw a panorama; however, she could have encountered visual displays and exhibitions that similarly facilitated an "imaginative journey through time as well as to distant lands" during her time at the Chinese Museum in Boston in 1851 or by visiting the Amherst College Cabinet (Peel 202). The panorama had a profound influence on landscape painting, and she would have got a sense of what a panoramic view entailed from her known appreciation of the US painter Thomas Cole (Farr 74). Her poetic representations of objects and landscapes tend to replicate the panorama's proffering of a "complete or entire view," which Dickinson frequently achieves by bringing together local and exotic within her compacted poetic form ("Panorama").

That textual and visual forms of virtual travel could immerse viewers or readers in alternative realities meant that these media were associated in the nineteenth century with the destabilization and disorientation of the self. Virtual travel promoted a "sense of dual citizenship, of belonging to two worlds" (Byerly 10) and necessitated a "double vision," of moving back and forth between one's actual and imagined location, between indigenous objects and foreign phenomena (O'Connor 316-17). As well as facilitating imagined travel, some texts foregrounded the cognitive dissonance and perceptual discontinuity associated with virtuality. Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun* (1860) offers "minute descriptions of famous works of art and historical sites throughout Italy [that] turned readers into travelers" (Jarenski 130), but draws attention to the way forms of virtuality made it

> possible for someone to have an experience without really having it because it is so filtered through prior representations, and that it is possible to be in a place without really being there because you've already been there through someone else's poetry. (Jarenski 143)

In Dickinson's era, imaginary travel connotes a disconnection between one's perceptions and one's environment; it highlights forms of mediation that forestall and prevent direct experience. Nineteenth-century associations of

virtual travel with a "bifurcated vision" (Colligan and Linley 5-6) indicate why Dickinson, as in her letter to Holland, uses "travel as a metaphor for the imaginative displacement of self" (Byerly 2). It also explains why she uses global imagery to evoke the mind's ability to separate itself from its corporeal context and be stimulated most by that which is immaterial or absent. This scholarship explicates Richard Wilbur's earlier insight that Dickinson's work is energized by a "huge world of delectable distances," in which "Far-off words like 'Brazil' or 'Circassian' appear continually in her poems as symbols of things distanced by loss or renunciation, yet infinitely prized and yearned-for" (133). Her use of transnational imagery to conceptualize her signature theme of self-division shows the internalization of nineteenth-century globalization and its bifurcating effects on New England experience and imagination.

II. European Travel by Fireside or Armchair

Many scholars have traced aspects of Dickinson's European connections, particularly her British literary heritage. Much more could be said about the function of European travel and geography in her writings. As Cynthia L. Hallen and Malina Nielson point out, "Dickinson's poems contain more references to Europe than to any other continent, both in unique place names and overall occurrences": although she "never made the grand tour, she traveled Europe poetically, rhetorically, and philologically from her home base in Amherst" (7). Rebecca Patterson argues that Dickinson's conception of Europe was derived from her study of its history and geography during her schooling, her subsequent reading about this continent in US newspapers and periodicals, and from information she would have gleaned from family and friends who traveled there. For Dickinson, Europe was "the realm of art, of high fashion and social rank" a place associated with "fine manufacture," learning, cultivation, and historical sites and artifacts (Hallen and Nielson 5). As well as reading literature set in Europe, Dickinson would have been exposed to US travel writing, in which her countrymen and women recorded their visits to this continent. These texts established the convention of placing American standards, traits, values, and ideals in comparative relations with European ones (Eberwein, "Siren Alps" 176-78). The popularity of European travel writing in Dickinson's era owes much to the fact that "crossing out of

one's own culture into another culture (not just place) to the end of living another way of life" and "a habit of mental acquisitiveness" were "highly developed in the nineteenth-century leisure class" (Brodhead 133). While allowing such cross-cultural acquisitiveness and interchange, travel writing underscores points of crossover between the US and Europe that unsettle discourses of personal, national, or topographical exceptionalism.

As far as European travel was concerned "the sights that [travelers] were expected to see, and even the thoughts and feelings they were expected to have, were passed down in guidebooks and travel accounts" (Stowe 17). The availability of detailed written descriptions and illustrations of travel to Europe in nineteenth-century US print culture meant readers could participate "vicariously in travel" while remaining on US soil (3). The British poet William Cowper termed this phenomenon "armchair traveler." He coined the term to describe his experience of reading James Cook's *A Voyage Towards the South Pole and Round the World* (1777):

> My imagination is so captivated upon these occasions, that I seem to partake with the navigators in all the dangers they encountered. I lose my anchor; my main-sail is rent into shreds; I kill a shark, and by signs converse with a Patagonian, and all this without moving from the fire-side. (qtd. in Holmes 55)

Reading travel writing contradictorily connected the stillness, contemplativeness, and comfort of a domestic activity with geographical crossings and encounters with the far, foreign, and unfamiliar (see Byerly 26). A subgenre of nineteenth-century travel writing emerged that was written from the point of view of such an armchair or fireside traveler. Works of this type drew their rationale from the paradox of moving while remaining still and promoted the idea of containing that which was alien safely within the homely space. These texts often conceptualized the illusionary and captivating nature of imaginary journeys in ways that anticipate recent scholarship on virtual travel. While some readers of armchair travel may have been inspired to go abroad, works such as Marvel's *Reveries of a Bachelor* and Longfellow's "Travels by the Fireside" stressed the benefits of journeying through the mind to other parts of the world and becoming immersed there. Marvel and Longfellow use European travel imagery to celebrate the

immaterial over the material, the deferred over the possessed, and to acclaim the power of the human mind. Their aesthetic strategies are vital for our understanding of comparable, recurring tropes in Dickinson's writing. They also provide examples of how to, in Paul Giles's words, create a "transatlantic imaginary" to virtualize Europe for US readers (*Virtual Americas* 5). Their works blur reassuring distinctions between native and foreign identities and landscapes and create defamiliarizing and alienating effects.

Dickinson's early letters indicate her admiration of Marvel (Donald G. Mitchell) and particularly his *Reveries of a Bachelor*, in which a cultivated unmarried man sits by his fireside and begins a series of daydreams. Even though her father regarded Reveries to be "very ridiculous" (L113), Dickinson, on October 9, 1851, wrote to her beloved friend and soon-to-be sister-in-law Susan Gilbert: "Dont you hope [Ik Marvel] will live as long as you and I do – and keep on having dreams and writing them to us" (L56). Lisa Spiro explains that the popularity of Reveries for women such as Dickinson and Sue was because it permitted them "to imagine themselves beyond the gendered spheres of work and domesticity, so that men embraced leisure, home, and feeling, while women dreamed about traveling across the ocean, engaging in a wild romance, or creating works of art" (62). Helpfully, Marvel contrasts the pleasures of a cerebral life and a "brilliant-working imagination" with the "trials" of real-world experience (Marvel 7, 18). The book makes the case that the thoughts and feelings inspired by fantasy are as powerful as and even difficult to distinguish from those derived from reality. Through reveries, Marvel's bachelor-narrator vicariously experiences the restrictions, pleasures, and pains of love, marriage, and family life. He imagines the loss and death of his wife and children; life with a "coquette"; the joys of young love; and a lifetime with one specific woman called Isabel or Bella.

In his fourth and final reverie, the narrator, despite his love for Isabel, envisages leaving her and traveling across the sea to Europe. Throughout the simulated Grand Tour of Europe in Reveries, the experience of being abroad is interrupted by moments in which the bachelor thinks about, hears from, and even imagines seeing Isabel. He thinks he sees the "sweet face of Bella" in both London and Paris and sends her many letters describing all of his experiences, as well as treasuring the one letter she sent him (Marvel 90, 116). Committed to and delighting in his European adventures and his freedom from domestic life, the narrator reflects: "how pleasant it would be to sit under

the trees by [Isabel's] father's house, and listen to her tender voice going through that record of her thoughts and fears" (116). Such occurrences correspond to similar passages in other contemporary US travel writing in which there is a need to balance the appreciation of Europe with national loyalty (Eberwein, "Siren Alps" 176). They also point to virtual travel as involving the disorienting idea of occupying two locations simultaneously. The visions of and references to Isabel or his home during his European fantasy emphasize that he is not really in Europe and hasn't left his native land. The bachelor is describing Europe and his life there, but his travels are through the "quick wing of thought" (Marvel 97). He can move effortlessly across geographical space without stirring from the location of his meditation:

> One moment my thought ran to my little parlor, and to that fairy figure, and to that charming face; and then like lightning it traversed oceans, and fed upon the old ideal of home, and brought images to my eye of lost, dead ones, who seemed to be stirring on heavenly wings, in that soft Roman atmosphere, with greeting and with beckoning. (95)

This shifting of scenes and experiences is bound up with the text's depictions of the cerebral speed of moving between domestic and foreign settings and the bachelor's need to negotiate between virtual and actual experiences.

In the final section of the fourth reverie, "New Travel," the bachelor imagines traveling from Switzerland to Italy and then home. The text draws attention to other forms of duality and points of opposition as the narrator describes specific differences between Northern and Southern Europe and between his actual US location and his imagined European one. Drawing on national stereotypes of the time, he aligns a New England temperament with a restrained Northern European sensibility. In contrast, Italy and its people are associated with "passionate sympathies which are bred by this atmosphere and their scenes," but also with a form of passion that "is not the material to build domestic happiness upon" (Marvel 94). The "cold valleys of Switzerland" are differentiated from Italy's "soft, warm air, its ruins, its pictures and temples": he describes "trembling upon the Alpine paths" before "rolling along under the chestnuts and lindens that skirt the banks of Como" (133).

Even before he reaches Venice, he considers how it is envisaged by and related to other countries, including his own:

> [Venice's] water-streets and palaces have long floated in [our] visions. In the bustling activity of our own country, and in the quiet fields of England, that strange, half-deserted capital lying in the Adriatic has taken the strongest hold upon [our] fancy. (Marvel 133)

Italy and especially Venice are places of fantasy and reverie, and associated with that which is excluded and repressed from US and British identity and experience. They are counterpoints to the "changeful, bustling American life of ours" (67) and to "old England['s]" "cottage-homes, her green fields, her castles, her blazing firesides, her church-spires . . . as old as song" (86). The enchanting description of journeying into Venice depicts it as a ghost-like, alluring place that haunts the Anglo-Saxon imagination. Even if only experienced through virtual travel, Venice becomes a constitutive part of nineteenth-century US identity:

> [A]s we ride up swiftly under the deep, broad shadows of palaces, and see plainly the play of the sea—water in the crevices of the masonry, and turn into narrow rivers shaded darkly by overhanging walls, hearing no sound but of voices, or the swaying of the water against the houses, we feel the presence of the place. And the mystic fingers of the past, grappling our spirits, lead them away, willing and rejoicing captives, through the long vista of the ages that are gone. (134)

Venice is described in detail, including famous locations such as the Bridge of Sighs and the palace of St Mark. However, Venice's "treasures of thought and fancy" dissolve as he "wander[s] to Rome" (135). Underlining the swiftness of imaginary travel, his paragraph on Rome is succinct, and he is suddenly home:

> But beyond the Campagna, and beyond the huge hulk of St. Peter's, heaving into the sky from the middle waste, we see, or

> fancy we see, a glimpse of the waters which stretch out and on to the land we love better than Rome. And in fancy we build up that home which shall be to us on the return, a home that has slumbered long in the future, and which, now that the future has come, lies fairly before me. (135-36)

The effect of reading Marvel's text is evident in the virtual orientation of Dickinson's writings. Like Marvel's text, Dickinson's poems involve similar instant transatlantic passage coordinated by brief European allusions. Her writings speedily lead readers on virtual journeys from a local scene (in Holland's letter, Amherst) to a foreign setting (in Holland's letter, the Garden of Eden and the Franco-Prussian War). She represents, as Marvel does, the multifaceted nature of inner experience (in Holland's letter, the vast dominions of the human mind and heart) through virtual travel. Dickinson's illustrations of virtual experience, even more so than Marvel's, emphasize its associations with psychological division and doubleness. Her poems highlight US identities and locations established through refraction and virtualization of Europe that interconnect home and away, the tangible and the intangible, the absent and the present, the real and the unreal (see Giles, *Virtual Americas* 1-5).

Nineteenth-century American poetry supplies many instances of virtual travel, often focusing, as Marvel does, on European locations such as Switzerland, Germany, and Italy (see Larcom 192-94, 207-08). Longfellow, who was much admired by Dickinson, was the nineteenth-century US poet best known for his cosmopolitan outlook (Miller 9-10, 23-26). Longfellow championed comparative literature and argued that American literature would only advance if US writers engaged with world literature and the composite and multicultural makeup of their nation. Emphasizing his country's international and intercultural relations, Longfellow saw the development of "transnational poetry and poetics . . . [as] commensurate for a country of immigrants from many nations" (Frank and Maas 130). Longfellow's work highlights the ways nineteenth-century globalization shaped US literature (Giles, *Global* 77-90). As part of his commitment to transnationalism, he edited a multivolume anthology of topographical poems written in English or translated into English, *Poetry of Places* (1876-79). This collection showcases the various ways poets have represented journeys to or the landscapes of a

range of locations: England, Ireland, Scotland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden, France and Savoy, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Belgium and Holland, Switzerland and Austria, Germany, Greece and Turkey, Russia, Asia, Africa, America, Americas, and Oceanica. Appropriately written while he was working on this project and printed in the first volume, Longfellow's poem "Travels by the Fireside" illustrates the value of traveling through the medium of poetry.

"Travels by the Fireside" begins with the speaker describing days of "ceaseless rain" that have "drive[n] me in upon myself / And to the fireside gleams, / To pleasant books that crowd my shelf, / And still more pleasant dreams" (Longfellow 13). This inward movement on rainy days becomes, through the stimulus of reading poetry, an expansive journey that relocates the speaker to "lands beyond the sea" (14). The poem is not about memories of a tangible visit to Europe but about a re-encounter with poems that had previously, in the speaker's youth, facilitated an imagined trip there: "And the bright days when I was young / Come thronging back to me" (14). Re-reading this poetry allows the speaker again to have the sensory experience of being in Europe. Longfellow's poem then is a record of the speaker's virtual return journey to Europe through re-performing earlier reading practices. His reading of this poetry transports Europe into the speakers' domestic space. Through brief European references the speaker allows readers to participate virtually in this imaginary journey back:

> In fancy I can hear again
> The Alpine torrent's roar,
> The mule-bells on the hills of Spain,
> The sea at Elsinore.
>
> I see the convent's gleaming wall
> Rise from its groves of pine,
> And towers of old cathedrals tall,
> And castles by the Rhine.
>
> I journey on by park and spire,
> Beneath centennial trees,
> Through fields with poppies all on fire,
> And gleams of distant seas.

> I fear no more the dust and heat,
> No more I feel fatigue,
> While journeying with another's feet
> O'er many a lengthening league. (Longfellow 14)

Like the effortless journeys in Marvel's prose from one continent, nation, or city to another, Longfellow's poem compactly uses countries, towns, rivers, and mountains as shorthand for and touchstones to fast-paced passage across Europe and the experience of being there. Like Marvel's narrator, Longfellow's speaker designates virtual travel as a journey "with another's feet" that avoids the fatigue, "dust and heat" of actual travel. Of course, readers of Marvel's and Longfellow's texts, like their respective narrator and speaker, go anywhere.

The self-division between real and virtual experience at the poem's beginning is further emphasized at the end. While celebrating the human mind's facility for imagined travel, the poem stresses the speaker's dependence on the stimulus of poetry. Going even further, the final stanzas do not merely denigrate the "toil" of actual journeys, they imply the authority of a poet's vision of global environments over a non-poet's:

> Let others traverse sea and land,
> And toil through various climes,
> I turn the world round with my hand
> Reading these poets' rhymes.
>
> From them I learn whatever lies
> Beneath each changing zone,
> And see, when looking with their eyes,
> Better than with mine own. (Longfellow 14)

The sovereignty of the poet's visualization of the world is a result of its identification of "whatever lies" beneath cultural variation. What is contained and compressed within poetry is that which is invariable and universal across "changing zones." The poem normalizes and leaves unquestioned the way poetry's ideal mediation of life eclipses the possibility of direct experience. The effortless transition from looking through one's own eyes to looking

through the poet's belies a disorientation of perception and subjectivity that this form of virtual travel must inevitably cause.

Dickinson's "There is no Frigate like a Book" (Fr1286), written two years earlier, reiterates Longfellow's notion that reading poetry offers a better and more affordable form of travel:

> There is no Frigate like a Book
> To take us Lands away
> Nor any Coursers like a Page
> Of prancing Poetry -
> This Travel may the poorest take
> Without offence of Toll -
> How frugal is the Chariot
> That bears the Human Soul -

Dickinson's poem, like Longfellow's, celebrates poetry as the most powerful vehicle for imagined journeys. As she indicates in other poems, the poet has the ability to distill "amazing sense / From ordinary Meanings" (Fr446) and with a few words "Comprehend the Whole" (Fr533). If as Longfellow claims and Dickinson acclaims poets provide readers with a loftier means of imagined travel, then it is because of their ability to encapsulate their visionary powers comprehensively and succinctly through language and imagery. Like Marvel's and Longfellow's texts, Dickinson's poems emphasize prompt, effortless traffic between US and European locations and entities and the incorporation of that which is foreign into the domestic space. Like her contemporaries, she creates transatlantic landscapes and virtual European journeys that foreground levels of duality and self-division as central features of everyday US experience. Dickinson's poems are examples of what Wai Chee Dimock and Giles have identified as the pervasiveness of international lookouts and global aesthetics within much nineteenth-century US literature (see Dimock; Giles, *Global*).

III. Dickinson's Panoramic Landscapes

Recent scholarship has internationalized the study of Dickinson and proposed important frameworks in which to discuss her geographical allusions as evidence of her "global consciousness" (Giles, "The Earth reversed" 9). Giles demonstrates that Dickinson "situate[s] her poetry self-consciously between the local and the global" (8); her poetry highlights "transnational perspectives" and "reinscribe[s] New England within a global circuit, where the rotation of the Earth renders all vantage points equally refractory" (17, 18). Although Dickinson frequently refers to Asia, Latin and Central America, and Africa in her writings, the sheer number of references to Europe indicates this continent's great significance for her (see "Resources"). Like Marvel and Longfellow, Dickinson uses transatlantic and travel imagery to show that what constitutes home is inseparable from what signifies abroad. Her images of Europe help her approximate the natural world's magnitude and mystery and human subjectivity's instability and extent. Her transportation of European singularities into her delineations of local phenomena give her depictions of provincial occurrences a panoramic dimension.

The nineteenth-century panorama gave viewers the opportunity to become immersed in and transported to other parts of the world, to experience an alternative, international standpoint that made theirs contingent and provisional. Dickinson's depictions of New England scenes are truly panoramic in that they, like panoramas, fuse "local with the global" and create "a simultaneity of spaces" (Plunkett 7). As panoramas did, her poems exhibit differences and exoticize everyday US experience by showcasing European peoples, places, features, or objects. Her readers, like panorama viewers, are offered unfamiliar or remote phenomena for their controlling gaze, but these images of alterity may also be overwhelming or alienating (see Jarenski 74-85). Dickinson's transatlantic imagery highlights the effortless acquisition and appropriation of European marvels and stereotypes, as well as a US culture inescapably shaped by European standards, values, and biases. Her poems demonstrate the realities of nineteenth-century globalization by normalizing the way regional spectacles and innermost experiences have become internationally conceptualized.

Dickinson integrates references to Athens (Fr1606), Birmingham (Fr1407), Ghent (Fr20) Sevres (Fr706), Denmark (Fr1118), Greece (Fr1023), Westminster (Fr1019), St James (Fr602), Gibraltar (Fr1531), and Geneva (Fr259) into her descriptions of local phenomena or people, giving a provincial outlook a more expansive, transnational import. Her European tropes are central to her belief that, as one of her poems begins, "We see - Comparatively -" (Fr580). In this poem, Dickinson's speaker gives the example of looking at "The Thing" one day and it seeming so "towering high" that it "could not be grasp[ed]"; however, then the situation alters:

> This Morning's finer Verdict -
> Makes scarcely worth the toil -
> A furrow - Our Cordillera -
> Our Appenine - a knoll -

Exemplifying Dickinson's typical use of geographical imagery, the poem connects the local "knoll" and "furrow" with vast European and Southern American mountain ranges. What was insurmountable can become insignificant, the poem implies, when it is given a larger, global context. This international background confirms Dickinson's point that perceptions are partial, relative, and changeable. The poem goes on to unsettle further the notion of a unified perspective or identity. As her speaker notes, our "striding spirits" mean our vision is alternately diminutive and vast: we find ourselves waking in a "Gnat's [home]" or "embracing - / Our Giants - further one".

Presuming a reader's shared engagement with the ubiquity of nineteenth-century travel writing, the poem, like Marvel's and Longfellow's texts, uses topographical shorthand to proffer a journey from New England to South America to Europe and back to New England. Such poems summon up the panorama's shifting scenes and infinite scope. Through brief allusion Dickinson makes "Himmaleh . . . stand - / [and then] Gibraltar's everlasting Shoe" appear (Fr352). The expansive and worldwide reach of Dickinson's poetic movement counters any attempt to narrow her concern to topics of interiority and self-autonomy. Instead, her poetry is about a movement out into a world of comparison, duality, and relations, in which words can have different connotations; as she explains: "'Morning' means 'Milking' to the Farmer, / Dawn to the Apennines" (Fr191). Using travel imagery, her poems

endeavor to replicate the mind and imagination in a state of associative flux. These features of her work underscore the experience of alternative positions, of private and provincial judgments locked in the mechanisms of global cultural exchange. The poetry's compressed form accentuates the inevitable proximity of a local matter or measure to its transnational complication or reimagining.

Like many of Dickinson's European poems, "The robin's my criterion for tune" (Fr256) establishes and then problematizes a reassuring or patriotic relationship between location and identity. The initial claim is that the things we are most familiar with—robins, cuckoos, daisies, buttercups—ratify our experiential criteria or values. The poem then emphasizes the inescapability of transatlantic connections and virtual experiences that complicate regional standards. Her speaker stresses the comparative nature of experience, pointing to the human mind's ability to dwell in two worldviews simultaneously. The speaker thinks about how different she would be "were I Britain born." She admits that she "see[s] - New Englandly -," but her vision is complicated by her ability to imagine another's perspective, a "Queen['s]," who "discerns like me - / Provincially -." Implicit in this poem is the idea that a comparative and transnational position shapes conceptions of self and environment. The broad cultural popularization of visual and textual forms of virtuality facilitates and normalizes the conjuring up of and immersion in alternative standpoints.

Offering a form of virtual travel, other Dickinson poems interconnect and compare US and European peculiarities in fast-moving transatlantic scenes. For example, in "Pigmy seraphs gone astray" (Fr96), the stylish "local" rose is compared to "Velvet people from Vevay -," but then the speaker makes it clear that "Paris could not lay the fold / Belted down with Emerald! / Venice could not show a cheek / Of a tint more lustrous meek." In light of the rose's unparalleled beauty, the speaker prefers to "dwell like her / Than be Duke of Exeter -." Such poems could be read as favoring the indigenous rather than the exotic. Alternatively, these imagistic journeys to and fro across the Atlantic show that Europe is central to Dickinson's nation's creative and conceptual repertoire. As in Marvel's and Longfellow's texts, in her poem locations such as Vevey, Venice, Paris, and Exeter are brought into the parochial setting to stress the composite nature of US life. Something similar happens in "Of Brussels - it was not -" (Fr510) where the natural terrain created by winds and woods is described as a floor covering "Of small and

spicy Yards - / In hue - a mellow Dun - / Of Sunshine - and of Sere - / Composed - But, principally - of Sun -." The grassy carpet is something "The poorest - could afford -" and is "within the frugal purse / Of Beggar - or of Bird -." The speaker downgrades the manufacture of and vogue for expensive carpets associated with Brussels and Kidderminster in favor of nature's own covering of its "floors." Dickinson's vision of a native scene is bifurcated, however, by these albeit brief allusions that carry readers to European soil, while also bringing global markets into this rural setting.

In her representations of regional landscapes, her fleeting European allusions suggest the panorama's juxtaposition of nearby and remote as well as its associations with a widening scope, an empowering vision, and the involvement of viewers in far-flung scenes and events. Her poetics bring together distinct cultures to create points of estrangement that for her encapsulate a perpetually surprising and enigmatic natural world. For example, in two poems Dickinson summons up the panorama through reference to European artists. In "The trees like tassels hit and swung" (Fr523), the speaker depicts the intricacies of a summer's day by specifying its sounds (the tune of "Miniature Creatures" "Enamouring the Ear") and sights (the changing light, clouds, birds, orchards, a snake and flowers). The poem ends by contrasting this natural scene with the paintings of Antony Van Dykes (1599-1614), who was a portraiturist in the court of Charles I. Dickinson may be alluding to Van Dykes' very few landscape paintings or to the landscapes that formed the background to his portraits. In either case, his work does not measure up to hers: "'Twas more - I cannot mention - / How mean - to those that see - / Vandykes Delineation / Of Nature's - Summer Day!" While explicitly suggesting that European art cannot capture, as her poem does, the wonders, reverberations, and activities of this summer's day, she is also inextricably relating European landscapes and their representations to her imagining of a local environment. Dickinson gives a New England scene topographical grandeur and transatlantic reach by virtually including within her picture the landscapes of a European artistic tradition.

In "How the old mountains drip with sunset" (Fr327), the transformation of dusk into night is presented through color imagery associated with burning "Hemlocks," "lip of Flamingo," fire, "Sapphire," and "Flambeau." The poem ends

These are the Visions flitted Guido -
Titian - never told -
Domenichino dropped his pencil -
Paralyzed, with Gold

Dickinson refers to these three highly significant Italian artists—Guido Reni (1575-1642), Titian (1488-1576) and Domenichino (1581-1641)—to underline their failure to capture the sunset as well as her poem has. Again, while stressing the preeminence of her poetry's depiction of natural marvels, Dickinson's insertion of these artists and by implication their "flawed" masterpieces in the totality of her poetic sketch gives it a majesty and expansiveness despite its condensed form.

In "They called me to the window, for" (Fr589), Dickinson summons up the panorama not through reference to paintings, but by acknowledging its commercial side and connections with entertainment. Dickinson's speaker is offering her poetic vision of a sunset, allowing readers to see, as she does, a "Single Herd" on a "Sapphire Farm," a herd of "Opal Cattle" feeding on a hill. However, this image dissolves into an apparition of ships on the Mediterranean, which is then "rubbed away" by the "Showman":

They called me to the Window, for
"'Twas Sunset" - Some one said -
I only saw a Sapphire Farm -
And just a Single Herd -

Of Opal Cattle - feeding far
Opon so vain a Hill -
As even while I looked - dissolved -
Nor Cattle were - nor Soil -

But in their Room - a Sea - displayed -
And Ships - of such a size
As Crew of Mountains - could afford -
And Decks - to seat the Skies -

This - too - the Showman rubbed away -

And when I looked again -
Nor Farm - nor Opal Herd - was there -
Nor Mediterranean -

The ease of changeover from one virtual scene to another recalls a similar alteration and dissolution of imagined places in Marvel's and Longfellow's texts. The reference to the showman and the disposable, mobile nature of this spectacle summon up the painted panorama's transferable quality and the fact that panoramas were shipped around the world to give different audiences the illusion of and immersion within spectacles of otherness. Dickinson's poem, simultaneously local and global, is trying to capture, as a panorama does, the idea of a boundless view but also one that is artificial, ever-changing, and transitory.

In all of these landscape poems, Dickinson displays poetry's ability to shift and change direction and make inexplicable turns or associations. The poems connote forms of transformation associated with virtual travel but also with the human mind and imagination as sites of constant mutability. The poems' assertions of US particularity and uniqueness are undercut by their ambitious exhibition of all-encompassing views that must of necessity include European antecedents. In these poems what is perceived as an American scene becomes something else, a vision of coexisting worldviews. Europe's simulated presence means the speaker and reader are both within an American location and at a distance from it. For example, in "These are the days that Reindeer love" (Fr1705) a snowy American landscape is the one "that Reindeer love" and a vista that represents the "Finland of the year." Here and in the other poems discussed, European landscapes are being virtually mapped onto American ones.

Dickinson's specialization in compact transatlantic crisscrossing brings depth and convolutedness to her depictions of nature and the subjectivity of her speakers. Concomitantly, her poems identify levels of disorientation and faultlines within conceptions and perceptions of localities and nationalities. Her poem "The wind drew off" (Fr1703) is most explicit in its use of European imagery to connote estrangement and terror. Dickinson portrays a wild landscape ravaged by wind and illuminated by lightning. The poem ends by associating the savagery of the natural world with the harsh Austrian climate:

> The trees held up
> Their mangled limbs
> Like animals in pain
> When Nature falls upon herself
> Beware an Austrian.

Dickinson may also be alluding to Austria's political brutality. Dickinson's beloved Elizabeth Barrett Browning explicitly addressed the tyranny of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, particularly in its treatment of Italy, in her poem *Casa Guidi Windows* (1851). As with her depictions of beautiful scenes, Dickinson's representations of nature's threatening side are given a larger scope through her European reference. Her allusion to Austrians summons up horrific scenes of torture, murder, and imprisonment associated with the European Gothic tradition and imperialism. While celebrating the power of the human imagination, her geographical imagery also points to the mind's capability of accentuating nature's ferocity.

IV Dickinson's Virtual Europe

As well as incorporating Europe into her visualization of native landscapes, Dickinson creates speakers who journey to or within Europe. The speaker of "All overgrown by cunning moss" (Fr146) goes to Charlotte Brontë's grave at Haworth, while the speaker of "I went to thank her" (Fr637) journeys to Elizabeth Barrett Browning's home in Florence. Both poems present US admirers who travel to Europe to do homage to their literary idols; however, these records of actual journeys across the Atlantic lead to disappointment and failure. Most of Dickinson's other poems depicting travel to Europe describe an imagined or prospective journey there. In "I'm saying every day" (Fr575A), a self-divided speaker occupied a liminal state between their current situation and a future one. The speaker daily fantasizes about going to Europe and becoming one of its monarchs:

> I'm saying every day
> "If I should be a Queen, Tomorrow" -
> I'd do this way -
> And so I deck, a little,

If it be, I wake a Bourbon,
None on me - bend supercilious -
With "This was she -
Begged in the Market place -
Yesterday."

She foresees what it will be like when she is queen and that no one will dare allude to her earlier status as a beggar in the marketplace. This "beggar" speaker, despite her lowly status, is already preparing for her future Bourbon grandeur. Her idea is to make the transition to royalty smooth and beyond suspicious. Aware of the conventions of "Court" she seeks to "qualify" in her present state by "looping [her] apron - against the Majesty / With bright Pins of Buttercup -" and putting her "simple speech / all plain word - / Take other accents, as such I heard." The speaker exists in an imaginary state of anticipation and planning; she is the virtual queen inhabiting the threshold position between actual beggary and impending royalty. In this poem, a change in rank is figured as a movement in space and time, as virtual travel to and within Europe:

Better to be ready -
Than did next Morn
Meet me in Arragon -
My old Gown - on -
And the surprised Air
Rustics - wear -
Summoned - unexpectedly -
To Exeter -

The poem stages the attractions of Europe's locations and royal families. Virtuality is a means of testing alternative viewpoints and vicariously living beyond one's existing circumstances. The poem, however, also highlights virtuality's associations with a divided perspective, of inhabiting two different realms at once.

In a series of poems that refers to the Rhine or Frankfurt, Dickinson connotes the experience of imagined travel and the supremacy of internal forms of conveyance. In "We - bee and I - live by the quaffing" (Fr244), the

unwed speaker (a figure not unlike Marvel's bachelor) and a married Bee transcend the domestic space. The poem presents a world of male-bonding and freedom associated with various forms of alcohol and getting drunk among the "jolly clover." The poem implies both an actual journey along the Rhine that involves the consumption of alcohol and virtual travel through inebriation:

> While runs the Rhine -
> He and I - revel -
> First - at the Vat - and
> Latest at the Vine.
> Noon - our last Cup
> "Found dead" - "of Nectar" -

In this poem, as in Marvel's text, the speaker experiences imaginatively everything from bachelorhood to European travel to death. Interestingly, the poem echoes one section of William Cowper's poem *The Task* (1785), in which the poet imagines traveling virtually through reading Cook's adventures; in the following stanzas, Cowper draws an analogy between travel, actual or imagined, and the idea of a bee journeying from flower to flower:

> He travels and expatiates, as the bee
> From flower to flower, so he from land to land;
> The manners, customs, policy of all
> Pay contribution to the store he gleans;
> He sucks intelligence in every clime,
> And spreads the honey of his deep research
> At his return, a rich repast for me.
>
> He travels, and I too. I tread his deck,
> Ascend his topmast, through his peering eyes
> Discover countries, with a kindred heart
> Suffer his woes, and share in his escapes;
> While fancy, like the finger of a clock,
> Runs the great circuit, and is still at home. (qtd. in Holmes 51)

In both poems, the bee signifies the effortless freedom and pleasure of imagined travel, but also of the human mind and imagination to wander naturally from one idea to another.

In a more explicit reference to Marvel's cigar-smoking bachelor, Dickinson, in "Many cross the Rhine" (Fr107), shows alcohol along with a cigar as facilitating vicarious travel:

> Many cross the Rhine
> In this cup of mine.
> Sip old Frankfort air
> From my brown Cigar.

In "Exhiliration is within" (Fr645), the journey to the Rhine is definitely an interior one associated with personal bliss. The travel motif and European reference summon up the notion of a "diviner Brand," an "Ample Rhine," a form of sumptuousness or joy, brewed internally within the soul and opposed to actual travel:

> Exhiliration - is within -
> There can no Outer Wine
> So royally intoxicate
> As that diviner Brand
>
> The Soul achieves - Herself -
> To drink - or set away
> For Visiter - or Sacrament -
> 'Tis not of Holiday
>
> To stimulate a Man
> Who hath the Ample Rhine
> Within his Closet - Best you can
> Exhale in offering -

Such a poem makes clear that Dickinson is most interested in using travel and exotic locations to demonstrate internal powers of stimulation and their associations with gratification and addiction.

The Rhine comes to signify the supremacy of the inner life, which in "A toad can die of light" (Fr419) is called the "Bare Rhine" "Naked of Flask - / Naked of Cask -." As in armchair or fireside travel, such journeys and their metaphors represent the ability of the mind to transcend locality and become immersed in otherness. Similarly, in "I taste a liquor never brewed -" (Fr207) Dickinson presents the idea of consuming and being consumed by a superior beverage becoming consumed by this substance:

> I taste a liquor never brewed -
> From Tankards scooped in Pearl -
> Not all the Frankfort Berries
> Yield such an Alcohol!

This exceptional liquor is brewed internally not externally and offers extraordinary sustenance. As in the other poems discussed, her interconnecting images of transatlantic journeying and intemperance are endeavors to articulate the pleasures and dangers she associates with the imagination. The metaphor of drunkenness reinforces virtuality's connection with divided subjectivity and the risks posed by a dissimilarity between imagined and actual life.

Dickinson's theme of self-division is repeatedly related to her exploration of the human being's ability imaginatively to live elsewhere or exist otherwise. Her writings often present the possibility of switching places or identities with another person. This form of role play is connected with the notion of a European journey in "In lands I never saw - they say" (Fr108):

> In lands I never saw - they say
> Immortal Alps look down -
> Whose Bonnets touch the firmament -
> Whose sandals touch the town;
>
> Meek at whose everlasting feet
> A myriad Daisy play -
> Which, Sir, are you, and which am I -
> Opon an August day?

This speaker draws on the ubiquity of accounts of European travel writing to go virtually to "lands [she] never saw." However, she brings her addressee to an uncanny scene in which the "Immortal Alps" are not sublime entities but as a feminine figure, with bonnets and sandals, who looks down while a group of daisies plays at its feet. With the assumption that this pair swaps parts regularly, the speaker wants to know, given this illusory choice, whether her addressee identifies with the Alps or the daisies, and accordingly which role she should take. Virtual travel and the ability to envisage another's worldview provide an interesting slant from which Dickinson can challenge the notion of fixed gender roles and problematize normative power relations between the sexes.

While imagining being in Europe, some Dickinson speakers, like Marvel's narrator, juxtapose a Northern and Southern European way of life. Domhnall Mitchell notes the trend for Northern European culture in the second half of the nineteenth century "when people with Dickinson's class heritage and ethnic background sought new ways of distinguishing themselves from members of other classes whose money began to make them uncomfortably adjacent" (77). In "I think the Hemlock likes to stand" (Fr400), "'The Hemlock' represents enduring intellect against sudden passion; austerity against indulgence; the mind in control of the senses and the sensual" (Mitchell 79). A Northern European temperament is associated with triumph in the face of austerity and difficulty and is sharply contrasted with the carefree and sensual lives and "play" of "satin Races" who live near the rivers Don and Dnieper.

If Dickinson uses European stereotypes of the time to align Northern European with New England temperaments and lifestyles, she also interconnects both with their Mediterranean equivalent. In other references to Southern Europe, for example to the volcanoes of Italy, Dickinson explores the idea that volcanic depths lie dormant beneath seemingly cooler, innocuous surfaces (see Finnerty 115, 121). Buried inside a Northern European or New England front is Southern or Latin American passion, characterized by Mount Etna (Fr415, 1161), Vesuvius (Fr764, 1691) and Chimborazo (Fr452). Her work suggests that it is "Travellers" who tell those who "have never seen 'Volcanoes'" about "those old - phlegmatic mountains / Usually so still -" (Fr165). Elsewhere it is reading or studying geography that enables the prospect of a virtual tour of the world's volcanoes:

Volcanoes be in Sicily
And South America
I judge from my Geography
Volcano nearer here
A Lava step at any time
Am I inclined to climb
A Crater I may contemplate
Vesuvius at Home. (Fr1691)

Dickinson uses the concept of imagined travel to warn of the existence of New England volcanoes that contain a hidden and reserved force which could at any moment erupt.

The idea that virtual travel provides a way of experiencing different ways of life or repressed or unrealized sides of identity is succinctly highlighted in "Our lives are Swiss" (Fr169). The poem compares the Swiss or New England way of life to an Italian one. It focuses on a moment of transnational contact that complicates the stability and rigidity of regional characteristics and categories:

Our lives are Swiss -
So still - so cool -
Till some odd afternoon
The Alps neglect their curtains
And we look further on.
Italy stands the other side.
While like a guard between -
The solemn Alps -
The siren Alps
Forever intervene -

Like Marvel's text which sharply distinguishes Switzerland from Italy, this poem juxtaposes the regularity of a "still" and "cool" Swiss existence with a passionate, exuberant, and artistic life enjoyed in Italy. The poem is not about a journey to Italy, but rather about a fleeting glance into Italy one "odd afternoon," when the restricting clouds give way. The imagery here recalls

other Dickinson poems in which the Alps signify unyieldingness (Fr977) or the Apennines are "more distinctly seen" when "Mists" partially cover them (Fr203). In this poem, the "solemn," "siren" Alps maintain differences between but also teasingly connect the two countries.

Recalling Marvel's Venetian imagery, here Italy is a specter of otherness, present in its absence, desired at a distance. Even if never seen or only occasionally looked on, Italy is a constitutive part of Swiss routine and identity. For Dickinson and her contemporaries, as Marvel implies, this is the country that epitomizes and inspires reverie and creativity. The looking "further on" into Italy denotes virtual travel's threshold moment, as Swiss or New England gazers imaginatively experience Italian life, while remaining within their country's borders. It is fitting that Dickinson does not say anything about Italy. Italy cannot be fully presented or fully conceptualized; it is merely glimpsed at from an ideological, epistemological distance. The poem encapsulates the conception of virtual travel as an "experience that is not fully realized, but aspirational. It is a state of almost being, of tending towards realization" (Byerly 6-7). Interestingly, whereas her poems of actual travel (Fr146, 637) end in disenchantment, imagined travel offers involuted experiences in which opposing ideas, locations, and peoples can be "virtually" brought together. These poems of virtual travel, in form and theme, normalize transcultural movement and spaces. The intricate subjective positions of their speakers express virtuality's associations with mobility and freedom on the one hand and with duality and self-division on the other. While drawing on European stereotypes, Dickinson also complicates the notion of unyielding identities, whether national or regional.

V. "Some Transatlantic Morn"

Nineteenth-century formulations and examples of virtual travel provide a fresh schema for considering her use of European and travel imagery. While showcasing poetry's strange powers of creating illusion and simulated experience, Dickinson also underlines virtuality's associations with disruptive, erratic, and shifting viewpoints. The key motifs of armchair and fireside travel and the workings of panoramas illuminate Dickinson's juxtapositions of local and global within her economy of desire and theme of self-division. The virtual context explains why as, Wilbur notes, "not only are the objects of

[Dickinson's] desire distant; they are also very often moving away, their sweetness increasing in proportion to their remoteness. 'To disappear enhances' one of the poems begins" (133). While her poems indicate a connection between character and habitation and celebrate native over foreign phenomena, imagined travel means she can also chart movement outwards towards a broadening of vista, standpoint, and identity. Her poems showcase the viability of the mind and imagination, but reflect on the possible implications of their immersion in spectacles of otherness. Dickinson's virtual Europe emphasizes the intricacy and contradictory nature of nineteenth-century US national identity and its tangled relationship with and internalization of that which lay beyond its deceptively porous national and cultural boundaries.

Helpfully bringing together the themes of this essay is one final example of Dickinson's use of European and virtual imagery:

> The lonesome for they know not What -
> The Eastern Exiles - be -
> Who strayed beyond the Amber line
> Some madder Holiday -
>
> And ever since - the purple Moat
> They strive to climb - in vain -
> As Birds - that tumble from the clouds
> Do fumble at the strain -
>
> The Blessed Ether - taught them -
> Some Transatlantic Morn -
> When Heaven - was too
> common - to miss -
> Too sure - to dote opon! (Fr326)

In "The lonesome for they know not what" travel symbolizes a form of self-division that prevents the possibility of a return to psychological unity. This typical Dickinson speaker exists in a liminal state in which "the pain of abstinence" is related to earlier "moments of infinite joy" that can be possessed again only through the imagination (Wilbur 133). The inexplicably

lonely, according to the speaker, are exiles who have carelessly left their beloved "Heaven," having "strayed beyond the Amber line / Some madder Holiday." The poem mentions their endless but fruitless struggles to return to their native land by climbing the "purple Moat." They remember, however, "Some Transatlantic Morn" being taught about (rather than experiencing) the division between home and abroad. At this moment, "Heaven" was "too common - to miss," "Too sure - to dote upon." These self-divided individuals, the poem implies, constantly imagine traveling back to their earlier state of bliss and are the characteristic figures of virtual travel.

Although stressing points of separation and opposition, the poem is really about the existence of two interrelated states, identities, ways of life. It is the lonely exiles who see both sides, recognizing the connection between bliss and loss, past and present, imagined and actual. In this poem, transatlantic captures this virtual position, of imagining oneself from the position of the other and vice versa. The idea aligns with Webster's definition of this word as "Lying or being beyond the Atlantic. When used by a person in Europe or Africa, transatlantic signifies being in America; when by a person in America, it denotes being or lying in Europe or Africa. We apply it chiefly to something in Europe" ("Transatlantic"). This poem, like the other Dickinson poems discussed in this essay, demonstrates that her aesthetic and existential outlook is marked, as she explained in her letter to Mrs. Holland, by the immaterial, the distant, and the virtual. While increasingly committed to her home in Amherst, Dickinson in her poetry also charts journeys across time and space, which bring Europe especially into her locality and make this continent across the Atlantic one of the places she visited when she shut her eyes.

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"Speaking Distance": Fantasies of Immediacy and the Transatlantic Telegraph

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ABSTRACT

This article examines literary responses to transatlantic telegraphy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The successful laying of the Atlantic cable in the mid-nineteenth century spurred hopes that the telegraph would bring political and personal union across transatlantic distances, and I begin by showing how popular responses to the 1858 and 1866 Atlantic cables used imagery of "face-to-face" communication to represent political union. I then turn to examine how these "fantasies of technological immediacy" were reconfigured in striking ways by literary accounts of transatlantic telegraphy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Focusing on novels by Edith Wharton and Henry James, I show how these authors draw on earlier fantasies of telegraphic "immediacy" to question assumptions about the telegraph's capacity to bring people together across the expanse of the Atlantic. By doing so, they expose inherent flaws and uncertainties associated with long-distance, cross-oceanic telegraphy.

KEYWORDS: Transatlantic, Atlantic Cable, technologies, communication, nineteenth century.

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I. Introduction: The Telegraph's "Golden Age"

The successful laying of the Atlantic cable in the mid-nineteenth century was an era-defining moment in what historian David Nickles terms "the golden age of the telegraph" (5). Nickles dates this "golden age" to the years 1850-1914, and literary representations of the Atlantic cable during this time offer fascinating insights into perceptions of travel and communication across the Atlantic region. This article demonstrates the significance of transatlantic telegraphy in the novels of Henry James and Edith Wharton, whose wealthy protagonists make regular use of the Atlantic cable, sometimes with troubling or unexpected consequences. James and Wharton's privileged characters trace the cable's transition from "eighth wonder of the world" to practical communications device, capturing the effects of telegraphy's transition "from marvel to routine" (Menke, *Telegraphic Realism* 196). The novels I discuss here challenge mid-century assumptions and speculations about the cable's impact on transatlantic communication, while offering new approaches to the potential—and problems—of telegraphic contact in the Atlantic region.

Simone Müller argues that "on a *personal level*, the cable's influence changed people's perceptions of time, distance, and the relationships between nations and continents" ("Cabling" 509, emphasis added). Both James and Wharton illustrate shifting perceptions of time and distance by exposing specific challenges of transatlantic telegraphy for interpersonal communications. The examples I discuss here demonstrate the pitfalls and failings of the long-distance telegraph, in order to deconstruct the kind of "fantasies of technological immediacy" celebrated in the early years of the transatlantic telegraph (Pettitt 611). I begin by examining popular responses to the Atlantic cable in the mid-nineteenth century, analysing how contemporary media accounts used imagery of individuals brought "face-to-face" across a transatlantic gulf to represent the cable as a symbolic union between Britain and America. I then turn to show how this impetus is reconfigured in James and Wharton's portrayal of *personal* uses of transatlantic telegraphy in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, focusing on the effects of telegraphy's relative speed and urgency. Finally, I show how the fictional accounts I discuss here are fraught with awareness of complicating factors in the use of telegraphy, as Wharton and James reveal the transatlantic telegram's potential to both exaggerate and subvert illusions of closeness

across the Atlantic.

II. Fantasies of Immediacy

In 1858, newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic ocean celebrated the successful connection of the first transatlantic telegraph cable. Picker describes the transatlantic telegraph as "a new phenomenon altogether, in scope, in cost, in effort, and as a spark for what might be called the Victorian material imagination" (34), and the scale of imaginative impact is evident in contemporary responses to the cable. Many commentators hailed the cable's completion as an opportunity to dissolve the effects of geographical distance, while media representations were jubilant about its potential to usher in new relations between America and the United Kingdom. Claire Pettitt argues that mid-century accounts of the effort to lay a successful Atlantic cable reveal increasing public awareness of "a powerful fantasy about the mediation of all distance" (611), hailing the telegraph as an opportunity to break down the challenges of oceanic distance. As Pettitt notes, the idealised view of the cable's capacity to collapse distance was quickly challenged by the realities of lived experience. However, although the first Atlantic cable malfunctioned after less than a month, the emphasis on unity and connection in 1858 set the tone for the more successful 1866 cable. The continuing tension between "fantasy" and "lived experience" is evident in the representations I discuss here, particularly where authors deploy fictional scenarios to both advocate and repudiate fantasies of technological immediacy in the context of transatlantic telecommunications.

A cartoon published to celebrate the 1858 Atlantic cable's initial success captures the kind of transatlantic immediacy celebrated in the popular press at this time. Titled "The Laying of the Cable: John and Jonathan Joining Hands," the image depicts a transatlantic handshake, where Brother Jonathan, emblem of New England, grasps the hand of Britain's John Bull across the figuratively diminished gulf of the Atlantic ocean. On paper, the distance between these transatlantic representatives has been reduced to arm's length, and the image's visual dismissal of a vast geographical distance is corroborated by a speech bubble that contains Brother Jonathan's pledge of unifying "Friendship" across the ocean:

> May the feeling of Friendship which comes from my heart, and tingles to the very end of my fingers, be like the electric current which now unites our lands, and links our destiny with yours! (W & P)

Fig. 1: ***The Laying of the Cable—John and Jonathan Joining Hands*** **(1858)**

The greeting reworks the electric connectivity of the telegraph cable as a potent symbol of transatlantic connection. Its reference to tingling fingertips and insistence that the "electric current" of the cable both "unites" and "links" the two nations deliberately draws attention to the impression of physical contact between the two men. This use of sensory imagery is echoed in John's response, which implies physical proximity in the announcement "happy to *see* and greet you, Jonathan!" (Baker and Godwin, emphasis added). John's declaration that "You *feel* like bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh!" invokes both familial connection and bodily closeness (Baker & Godwin, emphasis added). Expressed through imagery of touch and sight, the prospect

of an oceanic expanse reduced to the length of a man's arm conjures the impression that technological advances might figuratively dissolve the distance between both nations and individuals. The emphasis on friendship, unity and connectivity in this response to the prospect of a transatlantic cable speaks to the telegraph's capacity to present an illusion of a distance effectively collapsed by technological innovations.

The idea of an oceanic expanse diminished by new communication technologies is pervasive in much of the popular rhetoric that greeted the 1858 and 1866 cables. It is striking how many depictions use imagery of physical proximity to emphasise the Atlantic cable's capacity to provide a new communicative "immediacy." For example, Walt Whitman argued that "it is the sentiment of *union* that makes the popular heart beat and quiver" and illustrated his argument with imagery of physical union, promising that the cable "will link together nations that in heart and feeling are hereafter to be one" (Whitman 104-05). A contemporary account in an American illustrated newspaper used similar imagery to celebrate two nations brought "face to face" by the cable:

> We can truly say that there is no longer an Atlantic to divide the Old and New Worlds; and when two great nations, are thus brought within speaking distance, the bold broad facts of national policy are more easily comprehended. ("The Atlantic Cable" 192)

As in the case of "John and Jonathan Joining Hands," this account emphasises the transatlantic greeting via imagery of physical proximity, imagining nations "within speaking distance" and therefore—the author hopes—less politically volatile and more open to commercial exchange.[1] Even following the 1858 cable's failure, this triumphant tone reappears in media accounts; the *Spectator* deemed the cable's eventual breakdown a waste of "a success which has startled the world," and ruefully mourned "the grand enterprise of the

[1] The hyperbolic enthusiasm for the Atlantic cable is well documented. Sofia Ahlberg's *Atlantic Afterlives* offers a helpful summary of enthusiastic responses in the popular media on both sides of the ocean, with more examples of imagery of embodied proximity: "The New York *Evening Post* predicted that the Atlantic cable would 'make the great heart of humanity beat with a single pulse.' Also from the other side of the Atlantic, commentators referred to the cable as 'that strong cord of love.' London's *The Times* announced the end of an ocean: 'The Atlantic is dried up, and we become in reality as well as in wish one country'" (2). See also Gordon.

day" after the 1858 cable was confirmed inoperable ("The Atlantic Telegraph" 7). Such commentaries indicate a hyperbolic insistence on the cable as emblem of progress, with its potential to increase speed and ease of communication across the Atlantic ocean overshadowing the practical faults and challenges I discuss later in this article.

The pledges of friendship, unity and connectivity detailed above emphasise the cable's capacity to cross dividing lines and collapse experiences of distance. They also position transatlantic telegraphy as a signifier of progress and futurity, as exemplified by the *Spectator*'s celebration of the cable as "grand enterprise of the day." Like many subsequent developments in transatlantic telecommunications, the project of the Atlantic cable was firmly entwined with the demands of commerce and empire. As Glen O'Hara puts it, the project of laying international telegraph wires across oceanic dividing lines "would come to be seen as an Imperial and global communications revolution," whose impact eventually "altered how Britons perceived the vast distances that separated them from colonies and Dominions" (O'Hara 610, 612). The short speeches in "The Laying of the Cable: John and Jonathan Joining Hands" echo rhetoric of imperial expansion. They emphasise the collapse of global distances in terms designed to suggest that this new communications technology may fundamentally alter socio-political relations between nations. In "The Laying of the Cable," fantasies of immediacy are conveyed by the prospect of a colonising language imposed across the world; Jonathan hopes that "we yet shall see *all nations* speaking our language." This casts the transatlantic link between America and Britain as a starting-point for global influence, just as John Bull pledges "unity" for "all the world and the rest of Mankind." Such accounts use individual human figures brought "face-to-face" or "within speaking distance" to present the transatlantic cable as an opportunity to abandon the divisions of geographical distance in favour of global "unity." The next section of this article considers the kind of personal interactions enabled by the Atlantic cable, to interrogate how imagery of transatlantic proximity works in depictions of personal, rather than political, communications.

III. Speed and Commerce

In *How We Think*, N. Katherine Hayles associates telegraphy with a "regime of speed," in an era when "messages and bodies travelled at unprecedented speeds" (124). The telegraph's provision of high-speed contact across intervening distances is a crucial aspect of its impact on transatlantic relations and communications. Richard Menke illustrates the practical implications of telegraphy's speed by quoting a mid-nineteenth century remark that "a person standing in London might hold a conversation with another at Edinburgh, put questions and receive answers, just as if they were seated together in one room" (*Telegraphic Realism* 173).[2] Discussing Henry James's 1898 novella *In the Cage*, Menke notes the use of telegraphy for "virtually instantaneous communication," placing telegraph apparatus at the centre of "rapid information flows that signal and perform the commerce of modern life" (192, 206). The "virtually instantaneous" telegrams depicted in James's novella are sent across short distances, used by a London elite to exchange "extravagant chatter over their extravagant pleasures and sins" (*In the Cage* 129). This association of telegraphy with back-and-forth "chatter" introduces a key theme for depictions of transatlantic telegraphy: the speed of telegrams in comparison to letters for long-distance communication. *In the Cage* depicts an urgent telegram sent "as sharp as possible," which "flashed straight away" (188) from the telegraph office; the Atlantic cable offered a comparable promise to exchange information at high speed and across previously formidable distances.

The speed of transfer enabled by the transatlantic telegraph is a crucial ingredient for the transatlantic "face-to-face" encounters imagined by mid-century responses to the Atlantic Cable; as David Nye observes, "before the telegraph, information travelled no faster than a horse or a sailing ship; afterwards it moved at the speed of light" (1073). James Carey's comment that "the telegraph freed communication from the constraints of geography" is particularly significant for transatlantic communication (205), where the geographical constraints of the Atlantic ocean had long limited the speed and methods of contact. Christopher Hoag compares the telegraph's high-speed

[2] Menke discusses protagonists who "use the telegraph for secret, virtually instantaneous communication" ("Telegraphic Realism" 975). As Menke demonstrates in his analysis of James's novella, both the speed and seeming instantaneity of the telegram are reliant on the interceding figure of the telegraph operator—another way that impressions of "immediacy" are broken down.

connection with the inconveniences of mail carried by shipping vessels across the Atlantic:

> Before the telegraphic connection, information transfer was limited to vessels that carried mail over the Atlantic. The speed of the information transmission depended on the speed of the steamship, which could vary due to the vessel's design or the weather. . . . The average eastbound travel time, based on about 70 voyages of two steamship lines, was 11.9 days; westbound travel time was 13.2 days. . . . The fastest westbound steamers proceeded in about nine or ten days. (Hoag 346, 352)

Hoag offers a detailed study of the Atlantic cable's impact on transatlantic commerce, drawing attention to the revolutionary potential of the telegraph in terms of transatlantic commerce and exchange. Telegraphy avoided the vagaries of transatlantic shipping, and promised to overcome the instability of a communications network dependent on "design or the weather" (Hoag 346). As I show in the final section of this article, this speed came at a high cost, and regular use of transatlantic telegraphy remained the preserve of institutions, commercial enterprises, and very wealthy individuals. Nevertheless, the Atlantic Cable reduced the need to rely on mail carried on transatlantic crossings of between nine and thirteen days, and offered those who could afford it the opportunity to exchange information at speeds that had previously been impossible.

Descriptions of transatlantic telegraphy in Henry James's early works reaffirm its speed and efficiency. In *The American*, first serialised in 1876 and published in 1877, the telegraph features as a convenient way to spread news quickly. The American protagonist Christopher Newman infuriates the traditionalist sensibilities of his prospective Parisian mother-in-law by using the Atlantic Cable to broadcast news of his engagement across the United States, proudly declaring that "I haven't yet announced it here, but I cabled it this morning to America" (James, *The American* 195). Newman is determined that "the more people who know it the better" and treats the Atlantic Cable as a communication network to achieve the fast and extensive spread of his news. The message is wired to multiple destinations—"New York, to Saint Louis and to San Francisco"—which he helpfully glosses as "the principal cities"

(195). When Newman boasts about the "principal cities" his telegrams have reached, his words draw attention to the remarkable speed of delivery. They also reflect the transatlantic telegraph's association with commerce and profit. To capture Newman's enthusiasm at the fast responses he receives from America, James uses terms carefully designed to draw attention to the telegraph's associations with commercial profit as well as its efficiency. Newman's missives are "answered promptly and with interest," punning on the business properties of "interest" to cast the messages in deliberately commercial terms. When three telegrams gather the "interest" of eight in reply, Newman is delighted to receive "no less than eight electrical outpourings, all concisely humorous," and refers to them as the "fruit of his investment" (195).

The deliberately commercial language in Newman's reference to the "fruit of his investment" draws an overt association between telegraphy and commercial exchange. Indeed, James edited the 1907 version of his text to increase the acerbic commercial tone of his references to the medium of the telegraph. The account in the 1879 Macmillan edition links telegraphy with the language of commerce and investment, describing Newman's telegrams as "received with interest . . . no less than eight gratulatory bulletins in return," but lacks the emphasis of Newman's own reference to the telegrams as "investment." The later version has been edited to exaggerate and amplify the commercial overtones and references to speed and convenience. The seeming immediacy of Newman's contact with America, the alacrity with which he receives multiple responses, and the use of deliberately commercial language to describe them, all draw attention to qualities of speed and profitability associated with use of the Atlantic cable.

The association of transatlantic telegraphy with profit and speed plays into conventional assumptions around the "Old" world of Europe and the "New" world of the US. In *The American*, Newman's use of the telegraph is cast as a specifically American habit; indeed, he boasts that in the US he preferred to correspond "altogether by telegrams" (82). Newman's addiction to the telegraph implies a dogged reluctance to adjust to his Parisian surroundings; it is one of several elements in the novel which depict a clash of brash New World futurism with sophisticated Old World conservatism. His enthusiasm for the telegraph, and insistence on spreading news of his engagement quickly, is set up in direct contrast with the approach of the Parisian Bellegarde family. Mark Goble reads this as "another way in which

Newman is ill-suited for the communicatively gothic Bellegardes, with their secretive letters and hand-written confessions" (Goble 207). The 1879 Macmillan edition draws attention to this telegraphy addict's inability to recognise the intricacies of tenor and inflection in face-to-face conversation, noting the Marquise's use of "a tone of which I am afraid that Newman but partly measured the impertinence" (James, *The American* 195). Newman's naïve exchange with the Marquise Bellegarde, who drily queries whether he has "many" friends in Paris and assures him that her own acquaintances "won't use the telegraph" suggests an eagerness for instant communication that partially blinds him to the complex emotions at work in the family he plans to marry into.

In Edith Wharton's 1913 novel *The Custom of the Country*, transatlantic telegraphy continues to be used by wealthy American expatriates, both to spread news and to issue summons across the ocean. Whereas Newman's telegraphy addiction features as a way of boasting of his new connection with the "Old World" of Paris, Wharton depicts a telegram sent from America as an urgent summons back to the responsibilities of life in New York. After escaping a dissatisfying marriage for the excitement of Paris, the American protagonist Undine Spragg finds herself summoned home to New York by letters from her husband, Ralph, and his sister Laura. She ignores these without compunction. However, in the midst of entertaining her extravagant admirer Peter Van Degen, Undine is interrupted by an urgent telegram from America, calling for her "immediate return" since her husband is "suddenly ill" (Wharton 152). The intervention reflects the telegram's role as an urgent, more authoritative supplement to letters sent by the slower transatlantic steamships. Its intrusion on Undine's circumstances provokes her to fury:

> An angry suspicion flashed across her: what if the cable were a device of the Marvell women to bring her back? Perhaps it had been sent with Ralph's connivance! . . . Yes, the cable was clearly an echo of Laura's letter—mother and daughter had cooked it up to spoil her pleasure. Once the thought had occurred to her it struck root in her mind and began to throw out giant branches. (152)

The expansive infrastructure of the telegraph is echoed in the language used

here to describe Undine's response: its electric current in her "flash" of anger, its wired network in the "giant branches" of her suspicions. Undine hastily decides to ignore the news about her husband's health, discards the telegram and pledges herself to Van Degen. In this case, the speed of telegraphic communications reveals her lie. Undine later learns that her sister-in-law has cabled Van Degen with similar urgency, alerting him to Undine's unsentimental dismissal of her husband's illness. Wharton uses the telegraph's speed to indict her protagonist's self-serving dismissal of the transatlantic missive.

The examples discussed so far show how perceptions of transatlantic telegraphy can shift from the convenience enjoyed by Christopher Newman to the oppressive "device" or "connivance" that infuriates Undine. Henry James's novel *The Ambassadors* (1903) explores a transition between these two stances. *The Ambassadors* features a protagonist who is initially reassured by the idea of high-speed contact with America. The American Lambert Strether has been dispatched to Paris from the small Midwestern town of Woollett, instructed by his fiancée to find and return with her errant son. James captures the marvellous speed and immediacy of transatlantic telegraphy when Strether imagines fast communications with America:

> Again and again as the days passed he had had a sense of the pertinence of communicating quickly with Woollett—communicating with a quickness with which telegraphy alone would rhyme: the fruit really of a fine fancy in him for keeping things straight, for the happy forestalment of error. . . . The sweat of one's brow was just what one might buy one's self off from by keeping the ground free of the wild weed of delusion. It easily grew too fast, and the Atlantic cable now alone could race with it. (100)

Here, the references to "quickness," "communicating quickly," a delusion that "grew too fast," all indicate the telegram's potential for prompting swift contact across the Atlantic. James's description expresses a comparable sentiment, emphasising the notion that the cable can "race with" men's thoughts, in this case keeping time with the "wild weed of delusion." The cable is directly associated with spreading and expanding communicative

networks, and this imagery of speed and rhizomatic spread helps to imply the Atlantic cable's success as a means of communication.[3]In this moment, Strether finds himself caught up in, and reassured by, the possibility of swift telegraphic contact with Woollett.

At first in *The Ambassadors*, the telegraph's "quickness" appears to offer an opportunity to head off doubt and delusion. When Strether considers the cable's potential for "the happy forestalment of error" (100), he echoes a popular mid-century view that the telegraph's speed might help to prevent international misunderstandings. In 1858, the author of "The Atlantic Cable" argued that, on a national scale, the telegraph's speed and convenience would mean that "the bold broad facts of national policy are more easily comprehended," adding that the telegraph could also help to avoid errors or misapprehensions, since "if misunderstood, the error can be immediately corrected" ("The Atlantic Cable"). At first, *The Ambassadors* implies that this hope for political communication can work in similarly transformative ways in the personal sphere. However, although Strether contemplates the importance of telegraphing Woollett "again and again," he becomes increasingly enthralled by his new life in Paris, and simultaneously less willing to communicate with his fiancée across the Atlantic. Throughout the novel Strether composes, but often fails to send, communications and clarifications to his fiancée, and *The Ambassadors* traces the ways in which the telegraph's speed and efficiency can have unexpected and unwelcome consequences.

Like Undine in *The Custom of the Country*, Lemuel Strether eventually receives a peremptory summons back to America, which he describes as "the *loudest possible call* for me . . . a 'Come back by the first ship'" (*The Ambassadors* 231). The use of a telegram to utter the "loudest possible call" across the expanse of the Atlantic takes the mid-nineteenth century idea of individuals brought "within speaking distance" ("The Atlantic Cable") across the ocean and amplifies it to an urgent summons. Whereas the media responses discussed at the start of this article celebrate the prospect of

[3] At this point the Atlantic cable was by no means "alone" in its capacity for swift transatlantic communication. By the time James published *The Ambassadors*, the Atlantic cable of 1866 had been joined by a growing network of communication routes across the ocean floor, described by John Steele Gordon as "a cat's cradle of submarine cables" (212), with fifteen transatlantic telegraph cables in place by 1900.

increased transatlantic contact on a national level, James uses the character of Lemuel Strether to convey significant anxieties about the role of the telegraph in monitoring personal behaviour and activities across the Atlantic. Strether suspects that his fiancée, Mrs. Newsome, may have been in frequent contact with his friend Waymarsh, speculating that "Yes—Waymarsh just *did* know about Mrs. Newsome's cables" (*The Ambassadors* 341). At this moment, Strether pictures himself at the mercy of an interconnected web of missives:

> Strether almost felt for the instant that it was to Mrs. Newsome herself the dinner had been given; and, for that matter, quite felt how she must have known about it and, as he might think, protected and consecrated it. He had a quick blurred view of daily cables, questions, answers, signals: clear enough was his vision of the expense that, when so wound up, the lady at home was prepared to incur. (341)

This account offers a new perspective on understandings of transatlantic speed and "immediacy". The impression of Mrs. Newsome's constant contact with representatives in Paris is expressed via Strether's imagining her physical presence in Paris; the realities of transatlantic distance momentarily collapse as he acknowledges her overwhelming place in, and awareness of, events in Paris. This is a power play in which Strether's fiancée uses the telegraph's speed and convenience to make herself "powerfully felt in her absence . . . through her manipulative use of the telegrammed message" (Greenslade 105). The Atlantic Cable figuratively transports Mrs. Newsome across the Atlantic, while Strether's "blurred view" of daily transatlantic communications draws attention to his lack of control over this web of communication. In both *The Ambassadors* and *The Custom of the Country*, the telegraph's convenience and speed makes it difficult for characters to evade the responsibilities they might have hoped to abandon through transatlantic distance. Far from presenting a fantasy of immediacy, this is a nightmare of telegraphic intrusion.

IV. Cost and Uncertainty

Although fictional and popular responses to telegraphy often emphasised its speed, convenience, and "virtually instantaneous communication" (Menke,

Telegraphic Realism 173), this is by no means the full story. The final section of this article turns to consider how the transatlantic context exposes specific problems and challenges in personal use of the telegraph, contradicting representations of the Atlantic cable bringing nations "face-to-face" and perceptions of telegraphy as a seamless experience of "virtually instantaneous communication." The vagaries and inconsistencies of telegraphy are well-documented; Katherine Hayles observes that "telegraphy was extraordinarily vulnerable to the resistant materialities of physically embodied communication, with constant breakdown of instruments and transmission lines and persistent human error" (124). Claire Pettitt draws attention to the specific difficulties of the Atlantic cables, finding that "the fantasy of technological immediacy was repeatedly contradicted . . . by the failures of obdurate material" (611).[4] Even when this "obdurate material" did function reliably, use of the telegraph for transatlantic communications was fraught with challenges and complexities brought about by cost and infrastructure. These are explored in direct ways by James and Wharton, whose representations of long-distance telegraphy draw attention to complications in the "fantasies of immediacy" detailed in the first section of this article. They do so by acknowledging the practical implications of cost and infrastructure, as when Lemuel Strether has a clear "vision of the expense" paid out by his fiancée in order to keep track of his activities (*The Ambassadors* 341). The final section of this article shows how both James and Wharton deliberately exploit a conflict between ideals of "virtually instantaneous communication" and the realities of telegraphy's economic cost and expressive limitations.

The prohibitive expense of telegraphy is a crucial factor in its use and representation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In Edith Wharton's 1912 novel *The Reef*, the aspiring actress Sophy Viner offers a vivid illustration of telegraphy's inaccessibility for swathes of the population. After waiting in Paris for a message from friends she has hoped to visit, Sophy confesses to her wealthy companion George Darrow that they—and she—cannot afford to send a telegram:

[4] The fragility of transatlantic telecommunications is evident in the aftermath of the 1858 cable's initial success. The first message took sixteen hours to arrive, the cable "proved unreliable from the start" and had failed entirely within a month of its completion (O'Hara 619).

> "But when I wrote yesterday I asked them to telegraph. I suppose they're horribly hard up, the poor dears, and they thought a letter would do as well as a telegram." The colour had risen to her face. "That's why I wrote instead of telegraphing: I haven't a penny to spare myself!" . . . She may have interpreted his change of colour as an involuntary protest at being initiated into such shabby details, for she went on with a laugh: "I suppose you can hardly understand what it means to have to stop and think whether one can afford a telegram?" (Wharton, *The Reef* 53)

Sophy's blushing confession reiterates the telegraph's status as a high-speed means of communication, but also draws attention to its association with wealth and prestige. Stranded in precarious circumstances, she has asked her friends to telegraph because a letter certainly will not "do as well as a telegram" where an urgent response is required (53). Sophy's predicament neatly exposes the economic component in access to telegraphy. Her embarrassment reveals acute awareness that the inability to afford a telegram separates her from the conveniences of a more affluent world she aspires to join. The divisions of wealth and class implicit in Sophy's admission are reaffirmed in the suggestion that she interprets Darrow's "change of colour" as a response to her unveiling of these "shabby details", where the shabbiness of relative poverty contrasts with Darrow's own ease in the world. When she speculates that Darrow can't conceive of having to "stop and think" before affording a telegram, Sophy captures a significant divide between her own circumstances and the small percentage of individuals, like Darrow, for whom the telegram has become a regular means of communication.

Sophy Viner's confession that she cannot afford to send a telegram occurs in the relatively affordable context of land-based telegraphy. The implications for access to transatlantic telegraphy are stark, since for an individual in Sophy's situation, a transatlantic telegram would be an almost unimaginable expense. Simone Müller draws attention to the high cost of sending long-distance telegrams, observing that "extra-European cable tariffs in particular were so exorbitantly high that only about three percent of the world's population… could afford to send a telegram around the globe" ("Beyond the Means" 441). In the case of transatlantic communications, the

affluent cosmopolitan characters who populate the novels of Edith Wharton and Henry James—representing the "three percent" identified by Müller—refer frequently to the prohibitive expense of transatlantic telegraphy. Whereas Sophy Viner rightly speculates that Darrow has never had to "stop and think" about sending a land-based telegram, the more exorbitant transatlantic context introduces clear concerns about cost even among the most privileged characters. In *The Portrait of a Lady*, Lydia Touchett refers outright to the cost of transatlantic telegraphy, when she claims that "I never know what I mean in my telegrams—especially those I send from America. Clearness is too expensive" (57). The reference to clarity as an expense, combined with the declaration that telegraphs from America must be "especially" unclear, undermines the kind of fantasies of immediacy that characterise earlier speculations about the Atlantic cable. Rather than bring individuals "within speaking distance," fictional accounts of the transatlantic telegraph draw attention to the practicalities, costs and frustrations of this mode of contact.

Lydia Touchett's claim that "clearness is too expensive" captures the ramifications of telegraphy's cost for the way in which transatlantic telegrams could be composed, received and interpreted. David Hochfelder finds that the considerable expense of long-distance telegrams, charged by the character, enforced "stricter brevity":

> Ocean cables were much more expensive to install and operate than landlines. They also had far less message-carrying capacity because of signal distortion and attenuation. Until the development of inductively loaded cables in the 1920s, transmission speeds rarely exceeded twenty words per minute. Thus the economics of cable telegraphy enforced much stricter brevity. . . . High rates over the cables, initially $100 for twenty words, encouraged maximum linguistic compression. (81)

The impact of this need for "maximum linguistic compression" on interpersonal communications is neatly illustrated in *The Ambassadors*. As he contemplates how to share news of his encounter with his fiancée's son Chad, Lemuel Strether plans out the "brief missive" he might dispatch back to Woollett. He first settles on an eight-word statement "Have at last seen him,

but oh dear!", before reflecting that he might express this sentiment "more luminously and cheaply" by choosing to "tick out in four words" an even more truncated message: "Awfully old—grey hair" (100). Strether's determination to condense a complex emotional response into a cheaper four-word sentence captures the tensions inherent to telegraphy's status as a compressed medium. The moment draws attention to the abstract obscurity of the telegram and its failure as a means of conveying personal emotion. Strether's feelings on meeting Chad are complex and multifarious; they are in no way captured by either the eight-word or the four-word message. The telegram's ineffectiveness for conveying emotional complexity recurs in the work of both James and Wharton, and its particular qualities proves a significant tool for these authors' efforts to represent instances of uncertainty and misunderstanding in transatlantic relations.

Both Wharton and James frequently depict telegrams as paltry or inscrutable messages. In James's 1871 short story "A Passionate Pilgrim," a three-word command to "Keep the American" is conveyed with "telegraphic curtness" (*Selected Tales* 575). In Wharton's writing, the telegraph is often used for long-distance commands. *The House of Mirth* (1905) has a "telegraphic reply" that "consisted simply in the injunction: 'Assume that everything is as usual'" (Wharton 204); in *The Children* (1928), Mrs. Wheater issues a telegraphic summons: "You must come to Paris immediately . . . do not disobey me" (130). The "vague phrasing" (130) of this latter telegram prompts its recipients to wonder at its meaning, reflecting a recurring situation in which characters are frequently troubled by the peremptory tone and lack of detail in the telegrams they receive. The narrator of James's "Guest's Confession" in 1872 is upset by "the telegrammatic brevity of my step-brother's missive" (*Selected Tales* 669), while 1874's "Madame de Mauves" has a servant puzzled by a cryptic telegram consisting of "the single word, 'Impossible'" (*Selected Tales* 901). In each of these instances, the perfunctory form of the telegram prompts a lack of explanation, caused in part by its expense and the insistence on a short-form format, and this in turn leads to puzzlement, uncertainty, or upset.

The "linguistic compression" of the telegram is a crucial plot point in Edith Wharton's novel *The Reef*, which explores the emotional consequences of "telegraphic curtness." *The Reef*'s opening line is a seemingly curt and peremptory telegram dispatched by the recently widowed Anna Leath to delay

the visit of her former lover, the American diplomat George Darrow. On the point of departing England to meet Anna in France, Darrow receives a brief missive: "Unexpected obstacle. Please don't come till thirtieth. Anna" (5). As in the examples detailed above, the telegram's inherent lack of detail causes consternation and alarm for its recipient. The apparent emotional reticence inherent to the telegram's format prompts Darrow to speculate that it reveals a complete lack of care, as he bemoans the telegram's curtness:

> Not the shadow of an excuse or a regret; not even the perfunctory "have written" with which it is usual to soften such blows . . . she didn't want him, and had taken the shortest way to tell him so. (10)

The consequences of this perceived indifference reverberate throughout the novel, as Anna's perfunctory "telegraphic curtness" proves a toxic combination with Darrow's impatience. As these two American expatriates struggle to re-establish a relationship on the other side of the Atlantic, Anna's failure to follow up immediately with more detail prompts "humiliation" in Darrow. Just as James works the language of commerce into his account of Christopher Newman's profligate telegraphy, Wharton invokes the economics of telegraphy to depict Darrow's excess of emotions, contrasting Anna's "frugal silence" with Darrow's "prodigality of hopes and fears" (39). In this case, telegraphy's potential for speed sits uncomfortably alongside the telegram's lack of detail; Darrow has become so accustomed to fast responses and near-instant communications that a day seems too long to wait, and he impatiently berates Anna's failure to have "followed up" her telegram "within twenty-four hours" (45). Anna's explanatory letter eventually arrives, but only after a combination of humiliation and temptation have prompted Darrow to enter another, ill-advised assignation. Having waited impatiently for a telegram and burned Anna's explanatory letter, Darrow later claims that "the only thing that matters is that we're sitting here together" (90). In this moment, Darrow implies that a misunderstanding caused by "linguistic compression" can only be resolved by physical proximity.

The example of telegraphic curtness that opens *The Reef* is accidental on the part of the sender, and Anna is surprised when Darrow later queries her unexplained "obstacle" with sardonic bitterness. Elsewhere in Wharton's

fiction, however, telegraphic compression functions as a means of actively establishing and maintaining emotional unavailability across a transatlantic distance. In *The Custom of the Country*, Ralph Marvell, the unfortunate husband of Undine Spragg, yearns for a letter from his wife across the Atlantic. He hopes for news in each "foreign mail," before eventually succumbing to the telegraph as a last resort:

> Week after week he swung between the extremes of hope and dejection, and at last, when the strain had become unbearable, he cabled her. The answer ran: "Very well best love writing"; but the promised letter never came . . . . (157)

Here, Undine uses the compressed form of the telegram to deliberately establish and maintain emotional distance, while appearing to respond in proper terms. Ralph Marvell's cable *does* elicit a response from his wife, and her reply performs a promise of emotional connection, with its statement of "best love" and the promise of further "writing." Undine's pledge of a further letter fulfils the hope George Darrow had wished for in *The Reef*, the perfunctory "have written" used the "soften" the blow of a rejection by telegram (4). However, Undine's five-word telegram only functions as a placeholder for further information, a quick pledge of continuing devotion.

Undine's use of telegraphy turns "telegraphic curtness" into an art of careful distancing. Describing Lydia Touchett's inscrutable telegrams in James's *A Portrait of a Lady*, Richard Menke finds that telegraphy "figures as a technology of inscription and compressive encryption, perfectly suited to the peremptory but mystifying messages Mrs Touchett send[s]" (*Telegraphic Realism* 195). In the case of Undine, Wharton takes this manipulation of the telegraphic style still further, to show how its compressed form can function as a kind of deliberate emotional encryption. Undine uses the perfunctory short-format of the transatlantic telegram as a way of maintaining a relationship at a distance, intentionally using the telegram to forestall and avoid any lengthy connection with her husband, while preserving his hope for future communications. In this instance, emotional reticence is mapped onto the constraints of the telegram itself, since "best love" requires no further elaboration or expression of affection in this format, and the "promised letter" is never written. The telegram's necessarily short format becomes a means of

avoiding interpersonal entanglements, and a way of facilitating emotional inaccessibility.

The Custom of the Country draws an unfavourable contrast between the short form of the telegram and the expressiveness allowed by a letter. Undine's use of the telegram functions as a direct refutation of the letter, whose role is implied to be a longer, more emotionally complex form of discourse. When Undine fears she has lost the devotion of her second husband, she is partly alerted because his telegrams have become "brief and perfunctory" (250). Late in the novel, readers learn that Undine's neglected son Paul "did not even know that there was any method of communication between mothers and sons less laconic than that of the electric wire," and his naïve acceptance of the telegraphic form is contrasted unfavourably with letters sent by more devoted mothers (293). *The Custom of the Country* lambasts the abruptly "laconic" telegram as a medium insufficient to convey full depths of emotion, undermining suggestions of telegraphic "immediacy" by emphasising the truncated and restricted realities of telegraphic communication. Far from bringing individuals "face-to-face" or "within speaking distance", the enforced brevity and linguistic compression of messages sent across the ocean are shown to prompt rifts and frustration, undermining the much-vaunted hopes for "immediacy" in transatlantic relations celebrated in the mid-nineteenth century.

V. Conclusion

For the authors I have discussed in this article, telegrams feature as a swift and convenient means of communicating across long distances, and for many this is a cause for celebration, which is expressed using language and imagery chosen to emphasise the telegraph's capacity to convey information at high speed and overcome the obstacle of oceanic distance. However, authorial responses to transatlantic telegraphy also draw attention to complicating factors that contradict assumptions about immediacy, proximity and the perceived collapse of Atlantic distance. Close analysis of literary representations of transatlantic telegraphy reveals a multifaceted nexus of concerns, including the intertwining of commerce with ideas of technological progress, attention to the prohibitive cost of transmitting messages, and fears about a loss of expressive potential in the truncated form of the telegram. As a

result, fictional accounts of transatlantic telegraphy can offer significant insights into the social and cultural implications of messages transmitted across the distance of the Atlantic ocean. Thinking telegraphically in the Atlantic context brings issues around transatlantic movement and communications into sharp relief, as the idealisation of technologies that might bring individuals and nations "face-to-face" or "within speaking distance" contrast with practical experiences of long-distance movement and communication.

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Nigerian Literature: Issues Then and Now*

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ABSTRACT

The sheer volume of texts, prose, poetry and drama, which constitutes Nigerian literature today is enough to intimidate and dissuade the faint-hearted from the historical necessity and critical responsibility of coming to grips with the major issues that have agitated the minds of Nigerian creative writers in the last five decades and more. Judging by the number of novels published since Tutuola's *The Palm-Wine Drinkard* (1952) caught the eye of the reading public, it could be inferred that Nigerian Literature (in English) deals with a myriad of concerns too hydra-headed to fathom. This paper argues, however, that the multi-faceted concerns in Nigerian literature revolve around some major issues whose recurrence brings to the fore the "progressive-regressive" cycle of banalities that has so far defined the nation's experience in statehood. It posits further that until this cycle is broken, deliberately by forces within, the journey of Nigeria from "a mere geographical expression" to a solid nation-state may be a mirage on the horizon.

KEYWORDS: Nigeria, literature, issues, reminder, recorder, prophet

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I. Introduction

Chinua Achebe fired the first salvo at the bastion of "art for art's sake" when he legislates that it is the duty of the African writer to re-educate his people that their past did not begin when the first white man intruded into their communal space (*Hopes and Impediments* 30). It is with this educative function in mind that his prescription that the novelist (writers, in short) must be a teacher makes a lot of sense. He declares: "I would be quite satisfied if my novels (especially the ones I set in the past) did no more than teach my readers that their past—with all its imperfections—was not one long night of savagery from which the first European acting on God's behalf delivered them" (30). Niyi Osundare advances Achebe's thesis on the pedagogical role of art in society when he says: "For in the intricate dialectics of human living, looking back is looking forward; the visionary artist is not only a rememberer, he is also a reminder" (xiii). In other words, the African creative writer is not just a recorder ("rememberer") of historical moments in verse, prose, and drama, but also a reminder of the consequences of past actions or inactions on the present moment and a prophet of his people's future based on his knowledge of the events gone and those on-going. Achebe and Osundare are just a few examples of Nigerian writers and critics who have insisted that African writers must engage with the big socio-political issues of their day if they are to be relevant to their immediate societies and generations to come. In other words, by fictionalising the major issues of their day, writers build a bridge between them and their readers and set in motion a public debate which could lead to the resolution of such problems. It is in this spirit that this paper examines the relevance of Nigerian literature to the reading public in its primary responsibility as "recorder," "reminder" and "prophet" although the three sections will not be equally weighted. The reason for such an imbalance is not unconnected with the Nigerian writers' postcolonial project of writing back to the metropolitan centre through their recuperation of historical/ cultural artefacts that proof to the ex-colonial masters that they have a past and a culture predating the colonial intervention in Nigerian history. Also given the influence of the oral tradition on Nigerian literature, Nigerian writers intuitively serve as "recorders" of their historical moments in literary form like the ancient griots in African cultures who preserve the history of their peoples through storytelling, poetry, and music. It should also be noted from the outset that the three sections are in reality not separable because in

the texts under consideration, a writer could operate as "recorder," "reminder" and "prophet" all in the same text without erecting any marker to signal his movement from one role to another. Thus, it is only for the purpose of analysis that these concepts are separated in this paper; in the literary works, they are not mutually exclusive. It is also important to state that our primary focus in this paper will be on creative works written in English because these are the texts that have wider/international accessibility and, therefore, serve our purpose which is to examine the major issues in Nigerian literature for the benefit of those at home and abroad. And to accomplish this task realism will serve as the analytical tool, considering its demands that the writer must observe certain fidelities pertaining to characterisation, subject, setting, and language.

Realism has been adopted in this study because of its insistence that the writer must display fidelity in his fictional world to the workaday experiences of ordinary people in society in terms of its particularities of experiential focus, character, setting, and language. Ian Watt expounds that:

> Formal realism . . . is the narrative embodiment of a premise . . . or primary convention, that the novel is a full and authentic report of human experience, and is therefore under an obligation to satisfy its reader with such details of the story as the individuality of the actors concerned the particularities of the times and the places of their actions, details which are presented through a more largely referential use of language than is common in other literary forms. (32)

This means that the author of a realistic work must clearly individuate his characters to a degree that the reader perceives them as flesh-and-blood "persons." The actions must also take place in a particularised historical context instead of the temporally indeterminate period in fables, myths, and legends. The actions should as well take place in specific geographical locations (town, street, sitting-room, etc.) to which the average reader can relate. All these must be executed in a language that is close to the kind spoken by the average man or the man in the street who does not speak in rhymes or in iambic pentameter.

Although the works analysed in this paper are not confined to the novel genre, the issues that have engaged Nigerian writers over the years are no

doubt peculiar to the Nigerian experience, even if not exclusive to them; the characters in these fictional works are mimetic of ordinary Nigerians whose names, manner of dressing, actions, inactions, hopes, and disappointments bear an unmistakable Nigerian temper; the setting, both the temporal and the geographical coordinates, relate to the peoples and cultures of the political entity called Nigeria; and even though the language of the works analysed in this study is English, the language of the former colonisers, it has sojourned in the Nigerian nation for more than a century and, in our opinion, might as well be regarded as the "step-mother tongue" of most educated Nigerians today. With specific reference to the object of this study, realism is appropriate because of its demand that the issues fictionalised by a realistic writer must reflect the experiences of the average man in the society the work is set in: issues relating to power, politics, love, economics, religion, etc. This buttresses the observation of M. H. Abrams that:

> The realist . . . is deliberately selective in his material and prefers the average, the commonplace, and the everyday over the rarer aspects of the contemporary scene. His characters, therefore, are usually of the middle class or (less frequently) the working class—people without highly exceptional endowments, who live through ordinary experiences of childhood, adolescence, love, marriage, parenthood, infidelity, and death; who find life rather dull and often unhappy, though it may be brightened by touches of beauty and joy; but who may, under special circumstances, display something akin to heroism. (153)

In "Transformations of the Hero Archetype in Nigerian Literature" (2016), Abiodun Adeniji demonstrates that many of the heroes in Nigerian literature-in-English belong to "the middle class or (less frequently) the working class" in line with the observations of Abrams above. In sum, realism is appropriate as an analytical tool in this paper because the major issues discussed concern the average Nigerian, issues relating to power, dictatorship, colonialism, corruption, etc.

II. Nigerian Literature as "Rememberer" or Recorder

Any good national literature must be a recorder in verse, prose, and poetry of the historical moments in the nation's history, events that stand out as the defining moments in the people's peregrinations towards statehood and being. Colonialism is one such factor that has defined and is still defining the history of Nigeria. Even though Nigeria got her independence from Britain in 1960, all her national institutions—the legal system, the political system, the police, the educational system, Christianity, the use of English as one of the official languages of the country, the commercial and banking sectors, etc.—were all built upon the models established by the former colonial masters. Hence the partial truism in the assertion that Nigerian literature is still fixated on the colonial engagement. The biggest issue that has dominated Nigerian literature from inception, therefore, is the issue of colonialism, most especially anti-colonial sentiments.

Direct or subtle condemnation of colonialism is evident in the works of Dennis Osadebe, Gabriel Okara, Amos Tutuola, Chinua Achebe, and Ola Rotimi just to name a few. Anti-colonial sentiment is directly expressed in Osadebe's poem, "Who Buys My Thought?" (1967), in which he concludes that the "restless youth" of Africa are "sorting," "questioning" and "watching" (15) with a fire smouldering in their hearts which will one day burn all over the earth, "Destroying, chastening, cleansing" (16). It does not take any leap of the imagination to know that the colonial masters are the potential objects of destruction when the fire of independence bursts out of the hearts of the African youth. Gabriel Okara, like Osadebe, subtly expresses his anti-colonialism sentiment in "The Snowflakes Sail Gently Down" (1967) through the images of winter and blackbirds in his poem. Winter is symbolised as sterility/death while blackbirds are symbolised as life/fecundity. Winter is peculiar to the temperate region inhabited by the erstwhile colonial masters. Consequently, the death of colonialism is being prophesied in this poem. Birds are symbols of freedom/independence; a bird on the wing is free to go anywhere and do whatever it likes. Black resonates with the Blackman or African, and the compounding of black with birds in "blackbirds" is a subtle reminder to the colonisers that Africans, including Nigerians, cannot be held in bondage forever. Like birds, they are born to be free. Furthermore, the association of the Blackman with life and fertility is a subtle derision of the colonialists as death-dealers in contrast to the Blackman depicted as

life-givers. This connotation comes to the fore in the image of the blackbirds hatching suns and bearing fruits which the spade of the uprooters could not destroy. In other words, no matter how aggressive the colonisers are to Nigerians, they will not succeed in their quest to destroy the traditions and cultures of the people. Their gargantuan effort is nothing but a marvellous waste of time and energy!

Amos Tutuola's *The Palm-Wine Drinkard* with its cornucopia of monsters, ghosts, fairies, gnomes, and fantastic men and women does not immediately strike the average reader as an anti-colonialism prose narrative. But when analysed against the backdrop of the full-blown colonial enterprise in place when the book was published (Nigeria did not gain independence until October 1, 1960) the author's use of myths, legends, and folktales drawn from his native Yoruba (Nigerian) culture emerges as a form of cultural assertion and a subtle reminder to the (then) colonial masters that Nigeria had a worthwhile culture and a stable system of governance before the Whiteman came. And by asserting that the Yoruba had a metaphysics which welds the living, the dead, the unborn, and the innumerable spirits in animals, vegetation, water, earth, rock, and air into an unbroken cycle of existence Tutuola's work challenges the orthodoxy of Christianity, the official religion of the colonisers, as the one and only true religion for all men irrespective of colour and race. In essence, Tutuola's *The Palm-Wine Drinkard* exposes the demagoguery of the Whiteman's civilising mission in Africa by showing that Africans were already civilised before the advent of the West into the continent. This fact is vividly demonstrated in the drinkard's peregrinations which takes him to towns and villages governed by *Oba*s (kings) or *baale*s (village heads), each settlement with its own administrative system as well as peculiar customs and traditions.

Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958) has been given various interpretations by as many critics: the Marxists, the feminists, the psychoanalysts, the sociologists, the culture critics, etc. But stripped down to its essentials, the novel is an anti-colonialism work. It is an indictment of the way colonialism destroyed the fabric of pre-colonial African society symbolised by the Igbo community, Umuofia, a cultured, egalitarian social organism with its own institutions of governance, law, inter-communal relations, religion, interpersonal relationships etc. Achebe accentuates his anti-colonialism stance in his assertion that the Whiteman has put a knife to the things that held us

together and we have fallen apart (127). The same anti-colonialism sentiment runs through Ola Rotimi's *Ovonramwen Nogbaisi* (1974) which dramatizes the physical resistance of a Bini king to colonial subjugation. Even though King Ovonramwen is eventually defeated by the superior fire power of the colonialists, Ola Rotimi's historical play records for posterity his courageous anti-colonialism effort.

Culture-clash and alienation are twin issues that are direct consequences of colonialism. Both issues are graphically depicted and recorded in Nigerian literature. Culture-clash refers to a situation where one culture comes in contact with another through their adherents leading to a crisis, most especially where one culture attempts to dominate or obliterate the other. In the days of direct colonialism, the metropolitan centre represented by the colonialists made spirited efforts to obliterate the culture of the empire, the marginalised colonial subjects, by imposing their own political, legal, educational, economic, and linguistic institutions on them. The ensuing conflict of wills between the home culture and the invading culture often culminated in the partial domination of the more powerful of the two cultures (in this case, the metropolitan culture), and the tragic demise of those at the vanguard of defending the culture of the marginalised or colonised. This explains the tragic end of Okonkwo in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and Ezeulu in his *Arrow of God* (1964). Neither character could come to terms with the changes introduced into their culture by the invading white culture. Okonkwo, for instance, could not ingest the superimposition of another authority higher than the *ndiche*, the council of rulers in his Umuofia community, while Ezeulu regards as an insult Winterbottom's well-meaning appointment of the chief priest as a warrant chief. To the chief priest of Ulu, Winterbottom's offer degrades him to the status of a mere errand boy to the Whiteman. Unfortunately, Ezeulu's refusal to obey the colonial order symbolised by Winterbottom sets in motion the contest of cultures and powers, traditional culture and power versus colonial culture and power, the empire versus the metropolitan centre. Predictably, the invading culture wins and both heroes end up tragically; Okonkwo commits suicide and Ezeulu goes mad.

The unfortunate consequence of the clash of cultures in the Nigerian milieu is the production of alienated subjects, colonial subjects who have been widely exposed to the culture of the colonialists but still operate in a society whose dominated culture refuses to die out. They are, therefore, pulled

centrifugally and centripetally by these two contrary forces and are unwelcome as well as uncomfortable in either. In Nigerian/African literatures, the "been-to" or educated elite returning from a stint of study abroad is the quintessential symbol of alienation. Obi Okonkwo in Achebe's *No Longer at Ease* (1963) is a good example of an alienated character torn between tradition, the Igbo custom that a freeborn should not marry an *osu*, the descendant of slaves, and modernity, the Christian religious credo that all men and women are born free. Oduche in Achebe's *Arrow of God* is another example of alienation. Christopher Okigbo's prodigal in his poem, "Idoto" (1967), is also a good example of such an alienated character in Nigerian literature. Here is a Blackman standing penitent before the river goddess, Mother Idoto, begging for re-immersion/admittance into his traditional roots. The mere suggestion that Okigbo's prodigal stands knocking like a stranger at the door of a house, supposedly his, vividly evidences the degree of his alienation from his cultural roots. His state of alienation is buttressed by the line "SILENT FACES at crossroads" (Okigbo, "The Passage" 5). The bombastic Lakunle in Wole Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel* (1964) whose ill-fitting toga of modernity discourages him from paying Sidi's bride price to secure her hand in marriage as tradition demands is another symbol of alienation. He loses the jewel, Sidi, to the crafty old lion, Baroka, because of the characteristic undecidedness of the alienated who, like the young bird in Okigbo's poem, stands on one leg.

Post-Independence angst is another major issue prevalent in Nigerian literature after 1960. This refers to the myriad of worries, torments, troubles, and disappointments which independence foisted on the peoples of Nigeria. In the days of direct colonialism, it was so facetious to heap on the colonialists the woes of the Nigerian polity. Perhaps the peoples of Nigeria got so carried away by the histrionics of the political actors then fighting for independence that they could not sift through their plethora of Utopian promises to bare the vacuity of their souls. Or the desire to expel the Whiteman from the shores of the nation overrode the people's natural scepticism and sense of caution. No matter the reason, the end result is the same; the governments that ruled the nation after independence have been largely disappointing at all fronts. That is why the fifth largest producer of crude oil in the world is today one of the poorest countries in the world. Chief Nanga in Achebe's *A Man of the People* (1966) represents the failure of the political class from inception till now.

Chief Nanga and his cohorts loot the nation with reckless abandon and would not baulk at intimidation and murder of political opponents to retain their offices. The politicians of today do virtually the same thing. The various unsolved politically motivated assassinations of many prominent politicians including Chief Bola Ige, then sitting minister of Justice, and the on-going investigation into the sharing of US$ 2.1 billion meant for the procurement of arms and ammunition for soldiers to fight the Boko Haram insurgents in the northeast of the country by prominent politicians across the political divide instantiate the continued existence of Chief Nanga in Nigeria. Madame Koto, the Blind Old Man and the politicians of the Party of the Rich and the Party of the Poor in Okri's *The Famished Road* (1991) and *Songs of Enchantment* (1993), Lejoka-Brown in Ola Rotimi's *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again* (1977) are also satiric reincarnations of Chief Nanga. The young men in Soyinka's *Interpreters* (1965) whose idealism to serve their motherland was turned into baleful frustration by the endemic corruption of the Nigerian establishment are the epitome of the debilitating impact of bad governance on the future of the country.

Two other issues associated with post-independence angst are military dictatorship and war. Nigeria has been ruled by more military governments than civilian in her fifty odd years of independence. Unlike in other climes, for example, Taiwan, where prolonged military rule has led to a rapid economic development of the nation, the many military rulers in Nigeria have only succeeded in driving the populace further down the road of unmitigated pauperisation. Consequently, Nigerian literature is rife with a condemnation of military dictatorship. Sam the murderous sit-tight military president in Achebe's novel *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987) is representative of all military regimes in Nigeria, and his fatal end is also symbolic of the artist's consignation of military dictatorship to the dunghill of history. General Basha Bash in Soyinka's play *King Baabu* (2002) is Sam's kindred spirit, his name evocative of late General Sani Abacha whose reign of terror from 1993 to 1998 is unparalleled in the history of military dictatorship in Nigeria. Helon Habila's novel *Waiting for an Angel* (2003) is another record of the suffering of ordinary Nigerians under the military. Like Lomba in the novel, Nigerians lived under a cloud of fear especially under Abacha, waiting daily for the angel of death to strike.

Historically, the Nigeria-Biafra Civil War (1967-70) happened when the

military government of General Yakubu Gowon was in power. Thus, it could be safely averred that war is one of the bitter fruits of Nigeria's military dictatorships. Nigerian literature documents the privations and deaths which the Nigeria-Biafra Civil War engendered in prose, poetry, and drama. In poetry, J. P. Clark-Bekederemo's "The Casualties" (1976) forcefully brings to mind the national impact of the civil war on the psyche of combatants and non-combatants, Biafrans and Nigerians alike. According to the poet, all Nigerians are casualties of the war in one form or the other, noting that those who died may be luckier than those who survived the war. Festus Iyayi's novel, *Heroes* (1986), records the killings, lootings, and sexual assaults that characterised the civil war at the Benin Front, but concludes that in spite of it all, the common soldiers are the heroes of the civil war not the generals who only fed fat on the death of their subordinates. Isidore Okpewho's *The Last Duty* (1986), Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006) and Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's *Roses and Bullets* (2011; to mention just a few) vividly depict the ruinous impact of war on human relationships, hopes, and achievements, while Soyinka's play *Madmen and Specialists* (1971) graphically depicts the mental/psychological disequilibrium that the civil war foisted on Nigerians.

Another type of war which Nigerian literature records has to do with the militancy of the Niger Delta as a result of the massive ecological damage which has attended exploration activities of multi-nationals in the oil-rich region. The extensive destruction of the flora, fauna, and aquatic life of the Niger Delta region by the blow-outs and oil slicks of the oil exploring companies such as Shell British Petroleum, Chevron, and Agip is a shameful part of Nigeria's history. *The Activist* (2006), a novel by Tanure Ojaide, condemns the ecological damage of the region by the oil giants, although the panacea offered by the author is, at best, a dubious one. The decision of the Activist, a university professor, to join forces with the militant leader, Pere, in illegal bunkering of petroleum products in order to have enough money to fight the multinationals makes him a part of the Niger Delta problems; the decision to fight evil with evil makes the Activist wander away from the moral highway he traversed at the beginning of the novel. The poet Obari Gomba also laments the environmental disaster caused by oil exploration in the same region in his collection *Pearls of the Mangrove* (1999). In "Confession of an Oil-Thief" one of the poems in the book, Gomba decries

the unholy alliance of the government and the irresponsible oil giants in the following words: "The Oil-Thief swears to his henchmen. / They must learn that the theft of oil—by the law / Of the gun—is the glory of every chief of state. / The President swears to his henchmen" (13). Tanure Ojaide is also noted for his poems condemning the ecological disaster in the Niger Delta region consequent upon the fact of oil exploration. Kaine Agary's novel *Yellow-Yellow* (2006), too, explores the impact of oil activities in the neglected region but focuses on the moral degeneracy that has become the lot of "born troways" (74), the half-cast children of the Niger Delta abandoned by their white fathers and brought up by their Nigerian mothers alone in the penury of the region. Ahmed Yerima's play *Hard Ground* (1998) documents the destructive effect of militancy on familial/communal relationships.

Three other post-independence issues recorded by Nigerian literature are religious hypocrisy, the rising profile of the female in Nigeria, and the influence of Marxist ideology on Nigerian literature. The misuse of religion as recorded in Nigerian literature almost always comes in the form of satire on the hypocrisy of the priests of such religions. These are portrayed as Janus-faced characters who preach holiness, righteousness, and contentment with little to their congregation but exhibit worldliness, rapacity, and duplicity in their off-the-pulpit dealings with their fellow men and women. The most emblematic of such Rasputins is Prophet Jero in Soyinka's plays, *The Trials of Brother Jero* and *Jero's Metamorphosis* (*The Jero Plays*, 1964), who is not averse to using seductively dressed women, political manipulation, and unjust incarceration of his enemies to increase his affluence and ecclesiastical authority. Afa in Femi Osofisan's *Once Upon Four Robbers* (1991) is Jero's soul-mate in terms of misusing his spiritual powers. Afa, a cleric, gave a powerful charm to a group of armed robbers thereby empowering them to rob with ease. The charm when correctly applied hypnotises their would-be victims and makes them dance insensibly until the robbery is over. The satire on the men of God is that in each instance, they use their religious authority to advance the devil's cause and not the kingdom of God. Christianity preaches that a man should die to self that the life of God may be exhibited in him. But Jero uses his concocted prophecies for self-aggrandisement and not to the glory of God, while Afa who is supposed to convert the robbers from Satan to God more or less becomes their spiritual bulwark. It is noteworthy that the two plays accentuate the need for urgent reformation of the utilitarian essence

of religion in human society.

At inception, Nigerian literature was not very kind to the females in society in its portrayal of women as the devalued other. In the works of the first generation of Nigerian writers, Achebe, Soyinka, J. P. Clark-Bekederemo, et al., women are portrayed as subservient and inferior to men, to be seen, but not to be heard. Feminists have been quick to decry the reification of the "junior" role that patriarchy assigns to women by literary portrayals. Referring to the women in Achebe's works, Rose Ure Mezu, for example, observes that Achebe's women are sandwiched between yam-barns and titles, thereby confirming their subordinate status in the Nigerian society. However, women writers and later male writers have undertaken a counter-portrayal of the female character in such a way as to refurbish the image of women in Nigerian literature. This reformative effort begins with Flora Nwapa's eponymous Efuru and Idu who are portrayed as strong female characters that overshadow their under-achieving male counterparts. Efuru, for instance, helped to pay her own bride price from the profit of her trading ventures with Adizua, her impecunious first husband. Beatrice in Achebe's last novel, *Anthills of the Savannah*, Ifeoma in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* (2006), Olaana and Kainene in her war novel, *Half of a Yellow Sun*, Enitan in Sefi Atta's *Everything Good Will Come* (2005), and the adulterous wives of Baba Segi in Lola Shoneyin's *The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives* (2010) are strong female characters who are the opposite of the subjugated and silent female characters in early Nigerian literature: Okonkwo's mother, the wives of Okonkwo, and other women in Achebe's early works; Nnu Ego in Buchi Emecheta's *The Joys of Motherhood* (1994) and Akunna in her *The Bride Price* (1975), to mention just a few. The point being made here is that just as the profile of females has risen in the Nigerian polity due to their salutary exposure to education, the profile of females as represented in literature has likewise received appreciable uplift. This is not to say that Nigerian women have achieved equality with Nigerian men in life and in fiction, but progress has been and is being made at all fronts.

The last issue to be discussed in this section of the paper is the emergence of works influenced by the Marxist ideology in Nigerian literature. Lois Tyson observes that:

> From a Marxist perspective, differences in socioeconomic class divide people in ways that are much more significant than do

> differences in religion, race, ethnicity and gender. For the real battle lines are drawn, to put the matter simply, between the "haves" and "have-nots," between the bourgeoisie—those who control the world's natural, economic and human resources—and the proletariat, the majority of the global population who live in substandard conditions and who have always performed the manual labor—the mining, the factory work, the ditch-digging, the rail-road building—that fills the coffers of the rich. (50)

Marxist criticism, therefore, endeavours to unravel the capitalist ideology that undergirds literary productions, while celebrating works which espouse the Marxist ethos of conscientising the proletariat on the need to revolt against bourgeois oppressions. Omale Austen-Peters affirms that, "The writers [Marxist writers] . . . consider their literature as a potent weapon in their people's struggle against the oppressive ruling class" (54). In Nigerian literature, Niyi Osundare, Femi Osofisan, and Olu Obafemi are some of the writers whose works manifest Marxist ideology. For instance, in his play *Once Upon Four Robbers*, Osofisan makes his robbers rob the market women and men who represent the bourgeois class which exploits the masses through unjust prices. In fact, Alhaji, the founder of the robbery gang envisions their group as Nigerian Robin Hoods, robbing the rich to feed the poor, thereby expropriating the expropriators. Essentially, therefore, the play is a battle between the haves and the have-nots in line with the classical Marxist conceptualisation. Even the agents of the capitalist Law and Order, the soldiers, are portrayed as robbers who rob robbers. Hence the moral conundrum at the end of the play which the audience is called to resolve: should the soldiers kill the robbers or should they free them?

A. Nigerian Literature as "Reminder"

A reminder is something or someone who makes it his duty to remind others not to forget certain historical moments which represent milestones in the history of the people. The traditional chanter or griot is not only the memory of his tribe, he is also a jogger of memory, reminding the living about the feats of achievements of their progenitors, their failures as well. In that way, the traditional chanter inspires the living to surpass the achievements of

the dead and avoid the pitfalls which caused their downfall. Nigerian literature does virtually the same. Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God* fall into this category. Both are set in a period in Nigerian history when the white man was just intruding into Nigerian society and when he had just established colonial rule. Both vividly counter the hegemonic narrative of the colonisers which portrayed Africans as savages, cannibals without any civilisation or culture by portraying a pre-colonial Nigerian society with a stable egalitarian system of government, its own laws, mores, and judicial systems, its own religious structure and reward system. As Achebe asserts, he would be satisfied if his novels only taught the upcoming generation that their story in time did not begin with the advent of the white man. Nwapa's *Efuru* (1966) also reminds the coming generation that the patriarchal subjugation of women as depicted in male-authored texts has not always been so culturally and historically. As a strong female character, Efuru reminds Nigerian girls and women that their destiny is, ultimately, not in any man's hands but their own. It also inspires them to redefine their lives beyond matrimony and motherhood. Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* not only reminds us of the horrors of the Nigerian-Biafra Civil War but subtly warns against the recrudescence of the social conditions that led to the war. Ola Rotimi's *Kurunmi* (1971), his *Overamwen Nogbaisi* (1974) and Ahmed Yerima's *Attahiru* (1998) are reminders of those glorious moments in our history when we ruled ourselves and even dared the white man's awesome might. The use of features taken from the Nigerian oral tradition also reminds contemporary citizens of the country that there is a rich tradition of orature in Africa which can serve as a worthwhile alternative to the suffocating racialist universe which the Western master-servant narratives project. Examples of such features include the use of translated or transliterated Nigerian proverbs and idioms, especially by Achebe and his numerous literary descendants, the use of myths of the gods, legends, and folktales.

B. Nigerian Literature as "Prophet"

As we bring this paper to a close, it is important to highlight the prophetic role of Nigerian literature in predicting future occurrences in the polity. In general, three such "prophecies" easily come to mind. The first occurs at the end of Achebe's *A Man of the People* where the literary sage

foretells that a coup would end the profligacy of the political class represented by Chief Nanga in the novel. Surprisingly, the first coup in Nigeria, the Major Kaduna Nzeogwu coup (January 1966), took place shortly after the novel's publication, fuelling the suspicion that Achebe had prior knowledge of the coup. The late poet, Christopher Okigbo also predicts the Nigerian Civil War in "Path of Thunder," one of the poems in his book *Labyrinths* (1971). And Soyinka's "Half-Child" in his independence play, *A Dance of the Forest* (1963), accurately predicts the arrested development of the emerging nation-state. The ending of Achebe's 1987 novel *Anthills of the Savannah* in another military coup is a prophetic sword of Damocles hanging over the heads of Nigerians. In a way, it foretells the emergence of another military coup that may truncate the democratic governments that we have been enjoying since 1999. Let us hope that it will end up as an aborted prophecy. Nevertheless, it is a warning to our amnesiac politicians not to sow bad seeds and then begin to pray for crop failure!

C. Progressive-regressive Cycle of Banalities

A careful study of the issues discussed above indicates the recurrence of certain major issues in different forms across genres and historical epochs in Nigerian literature. For example, political irresponsibility which Achebe satirises in *A Man of the People* recurs in Ola Rotimi's *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again* and Ben Okri's *The Famished Road.* Dictatorship (military or civilian) which Soyinka pillories in *Kongi's Harvest* (1967) recurs in, for example, Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*, Habila's *Waiting for an Angel* and Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*. As for the theme of corruption, its ubiquity in many Nigerian literary works is a testimony of its pervasiveness in the Nigerian polity. The obvious cyclic resurgence of these issues mimics the faltering steps of the nation towards social cohesion, unity, and enduring progress. Sometimes the nation moves forward rapidly at political and economic fronts. Shortly after, it seems to regress into an earlier atavistic stage.

At the political front, Nigeria started out with a democratic government in 1960 as well as a fairly robust economy based on agriculture. But two coups in 1966, one in January and another in July, truncated the democratic experiment. The peaceful co-existence of many ethnic groups making up the

nation was further shattered by the Nigerian Civil War (1967-70) during the military regime of General Yakubu Gowon. After restoration of peace, two other coups in 1975 and 1976 brought a new set of military dictators until 1979 when the civilian administration of Alhaji Shehu Shagari brought in the second democratic experiment. Unfortunately, General Muhammadu Buhari's coup terminated the experiment in 1983, while another coup in 1986 ousted Buhari and brought in the self-styled military president, General Ibrahim Babangida, who was in power till 1993. After the June 12 debacle of 1993 which saw the annulment of one of Nigeria's freest presidential elections by the Babandida regime, the Interim government of Chief Earnest Shonekan ruled for a short while until it was toppled by General Sani Abacha in December of 1993. Abacha's death in 1997 enabled General Abdusalam Abubakar to take over the mantle of government and conduct a general election which was won by his former military boss, General Olusegun Obasanjo (rtd.). Since 1999 till now, Nigeria has had uninterrupted successive democratic governments. From the foregoing, it should be obvious that Nigeria has had a chequered political history, a form of regressive-progressive cycle given its instability.

The instability that plagues Nigeria's political terrain also afflicts the economic landscapes of the country. First, each government jettisons the policies and programmes of its predecessor with the effect that continuity is never guaranteed. Secondly, the kleptomania and unbridled corruption of the ruling classes (civilian or military) turned the country's oil-boom into its oil-doom. General Yakubu Gowon (1966-75) once boasted that money was not Nigeria's problem but how to spend it. But by 1983, the Shagari regime had to declare austerity measures due to the parlous state of the Nigerian economy. The military regime of General Buhari (1983-86) instilled some sanity into the system, but the gains of that regime were frittered away by his successor, General Babangida (1986-93). The economic woes of Nigeria were compounded by the reckless looting of the treasury which characterised the Abacha regime. These losses were reversed somewhat by the Obasanjo regime (1999-2007) who ensured that the country got debt-forgiveness from some of its international creditors and left a good reserve for his successor, Alhaji Musa Yar'adua. But as of today, Nigeria is back in debt, and in August 2016, the present government of General Muhammadu Buhari (rtd.) officially declared that the nation has slipped into economic recession, the first in

twenty years.

The scenario above is what is referred to as the "progressive-recessive cycle of banalities" in the abstract as one era of progress seems to usher in a counter-era of regression and vice versa ad infinitum. This is why Ben Okri uses the abiku myth to describe the nation in his works *The Famished Road* and *Songs of Enchantment*. His child narrator in the two novels, Azaro, is an abiku, a child believed to be fated to be born and to die young and be reborn by the same mother only to die young and be reborn again by the same mother in an endless cycle of joyless parturition and subsequent burials. Talking about Nigeria, Azaro declares:

> In his journeys Dad finds that all nations are children. It shocked him that ours too was an abiku nation, a spirit-child nation, one that keeps being reborn and after each birth come blood and betrayals . . . . (Okri, *The Famished Road* 494)

Azaro then concludes that: "Like the spirit-child, it keeps coming and going. One day it will decide to remain. It will become strong" (478). Felicia Oka Moh, commenting on Okri's *The Famished Road*, observes:

> In this satire against society, Okri describes the ineptitude of the predatory rulers who exploit the masses leaving them famished. He is no less angry with the masses who complacently refuse to do anything about their exploitation. So long as the rulers display their insatiable appetite for wealth and so long as the masses are complacent, the original dream of making Nigeria a land of unity (in spite of tribe and tongue) where there will be equitable distribution of resources will never be achieved. (78-79)

In contrast to the somewhat pessimistic tone in the extract above, Okri believes that stability at the political front will inaugurate stability at the economic and social fronts in the Nigerian state. He advises the peoples of Nigeria, rulers and followers alike, to: "Return to the old ways of our ancestors! Take what is good from our way and adapt it to the new times!" (Okri, *Songs of Enchantment* 172). Through his fiction, therefore, Okri suggests that the way out of Nigeria's cycle of banalities is a stable and

focused leadership which is able to creatively combine the best of the old (traditional) way with the best of the new (modern) way. When such a feat is achieved, then Nigerians can finally prove wrong the statement often credited to the late Yoruba political sage, Chief Obafemi Awolowo (1909-87) that Nigeria is a mere geographical expression.

III. Conclusion

In the preceding pages, an attempt has been made to give a panoramic picture of the major issues in Nigerian literature. One of the shortcomings of such a wide-ranging perspective is that a lot of worthy authors and books are not mentioned. This is regrettable but unavoidable. Nonetheless, it is hoped that this approach has been able to give a trenchant summary of the themes of Nigerian literature in the English expression in the last five decades. The recurrence of these issues in different novels across timelines shows that Nigeria has been going round in a cycle of banalities. This calls for a purposeful leadership able to sever the link between the nation and the endemic maladies of corruption and allied evils that have prevented Nigeria from coming into its own. As Achebe observes, the trouble with Nigeria is neither in its climate nor soil, but a failure in its leadership.

Nevertheless, Nigerian literature has the potential to be great if it continues to interrogate its immediate locale and mediates its experiences with the global insights afforded by the diasporic experiences of the new generation of writers. Like Azaro, the spirit-child participant-narrator of Ben Okri's *The Famished Road* and *Songs of Enchantment*, the future of Nigerian literature lies in its willing adaptability to diverse and, sometimes, contradictory experiences. In the light of the preceding sentiment, it is fitting to end this piece with Dennis Osadebe's words in "Young Africa's Plea" (1967):

> Let me play with the Whiteman's ways
> Let me work with the Blackman's brains
> Let my affairs themselves sort out
> Then in sweet rebirth
> I'll rise a better man
> Not ashamed to face the world. (17)

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Men, the Roles They Play and the Making of a Gentleman in Tobias Smollett's *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker*[*]

Di-feng Chueh[**]

ABSTRACT

This paper aims to explore various roles that Matthew Bramble and Humphry Clinker act in their interdependent relationship and then to examine why they need each other in order to respectively become a gentleman in Tobias Smollett's *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (1771). Examinations of Bramble's and Clinker's individual gentleman's lessons will at the same time reveal why Smollett adopts a different naming strategy when it comes to the title of his last novel. Unlike Roderick Random in *The Adventures of Roderick Random* (1748) and Peregrine Pickle in *The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle* (1751), Clinker is never the main narrator of *Humphry Clinker*. As a result, it can be confusing for some readers to find Clinker's name in the title of the novel. Smollett, as I will demonstrate, makes the right decision when naming his last novel in this way due to the fact that Clinker's transformation into a gentleman is arguably the main theme of the novel and the connection between Smollett's three major novels.

KEYWORDS: gentleman's education, oeconomy, interdependent, naming strategy

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The aim of this paper is to look into various roles that Matthew Bramble and Humphry Clinker play and how their two relationships offer different lessons to educate Clinker to become a gentleman in Tobias Smollett's *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (1771). As I will argue, the roles that Bramble and Clinker play in their two relationships, master and servant and father and son, will disclose how Bramble and Clinker are interdependent on each other. I will examine the interdependent relationship between Bramble and Clinker by means of "oeconomy" theory in which responsibilities of different types of men's roles are clearly described.[1] Such examinations will be conducive to the revelation of Clinker's transformation into a gentleman. In order to explore the connection between Bramble and Clinker's two relationships and Clinker's gentleman's education, it is essential to point out an interesting difference between Smollett's *Humphry Clinker* and his two other famous novels.

In *The Adventures of Roderick Random* (1748) and *The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle* (1751), Smollett adopts the names of the respective main narrators to give the title to these two novels. This naming strategy is somehow different from that of *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker*. Instead of being the main narrator of the novel, Clinker makes his first appearance in the novel after almost two-thirds of the first volume. Even after his first appearance, Clinker is hardly granted a right to tell readers what happens in the novel, since the story is mainly unfolded by Bramble and his nephew, Jeremy Melford. If so, why does Smollett prefer the name of Clinker to that of either Bramble or Melford when naming his last novel? As I will argue, this title reveals the ideas of oeconomy theory in the eighteenth century and the different roles that Bramble and Clinker take according to this theory. Because of these different roles, an independent/dependent binary is formed. This, however, does not mean that either Bramble or Clinker is always on a particular side of these two extremes because they may take the opposite role at some point in the novel. No matter which role Bramble and Clinker perform, the binary will not be established until they both carry out their assigned duties. As I will point out, this prerequisite uncovers that the

[1] I choose to use the diphthong "oeconomy" instead of "economy" for several reasons. First of all, in *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker*, it is "oeconomy," not "economy," that Smollett himself uses. Second, the word "oeconomy" had a broader meaning in comparison to that of the modern "economy" in the eighteenth century. As I will argue in the first part of the paper, these meanings are crucial to our understanding of the relationships between Bramble and Clinker.

independent/dependent binary actually has an interdependent nature. The discovery of the interdependent nature of Bramble and Clinker's relationships also discloses why Bramble and Clinker need each other in order to help Clinker complete his gentleman's education in Smollett's *Humphry Clinker*.

In the first part of this paper, I will examine how the word "oeconomy" was conceptualized in the eighteenth century. The examination of the development of oeconomy theory paves the way to unravel what responsibilities are assigned to the roles Bramble and Clinker take in the family. In the second and third parts, I will look into how Smollett's portrayals of Bramble and Clinker respond to oeconomy theory and by that I want to argue that Smollett presents his readers with an ideal couple with whom they can have a glimpse of the possible mutual interdependence between men regardless of the class hierarchy. This possibility not only reveals the complex nature of the traditional notion of a man's necessary independence in the eighteenth century, but also shows the connection between Smollett's *Roderick Random*, *Peregrine Pickle* and *Humphry Clinker*. As I will conclude, Smollett's three novels are all about the title characters' transformation into gentlemen. This is why Smollett adopts Clinker's name instead of Bramble's or Melford's to be the title of this novel.

I. Oeconomy Theory in the Eighteenth Century

In 1751, Robert Dodsley, who was a famous English bookseller, editor and writer, published *The Oeconomy of Human Life* with 142 editions between 1751 and 1800, and 95 more from 1801. Dodsley's *The Oeconomy of Human Life* offers a set of moral precepts for the conduct of men as individuals and in various roles such as husband, father, son and brother. These moral precepts reveal the meaning of the word "oeconomy." With regard to how to behave like a dutiful husband to his wife, Dodsley claims that:

> O cherish her as a blessing sent thee from heaven; let the kindness of thy behaviour endear thee to her heart. . . . Oppose not her inclination without cause; she is the partner of thy cares, make her also the companion of thy pleasures. Reprove her faults with gentleness; exact not her obedience with rigour. (45)

The passage clearly points out that a husband should cherish his wife but at times gently object to her decisions if necessary. These two different types of treatment indicate both the tender and rigorous side of a husband by showing how a man acts differently in various situations with his wife. The multiple attitudes that a husband has to take illustrate how a husband should "manage" his relationship with his wife and by that we can find that the nature of the word oeconomy is associated with the idea of management.

In the first chapter of *The Little Republic: Masculinity and Domestic Authority in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, Karen Harvey gives a thorough examination of the word oeconomy and its relation to the development of the idea of patriarchy in the eighteenth century. Harvey argues that:

> Oeconomy was the practice of *managing* the economic and moral resources of the household for the maintenance of good order. . . . With regard to the house, the most significant gendered distinction was not between the "inside" and the "outside" or even between men's and women's specific household tasks; instead, the most significant gendered distinction existed within the house and between the nature of men's and women's engagement with different levels of task. (24, 32, emphasis added)

If Dodsley's definition of "oeconomy" is related to the personal, emotional management of a man's relationship with other people, Harvey's is closer to the management of a man's household affairs. In the first line of her argument, Harvey makes it clear that oeconomy was a kind of activity referring to good maintenance and management of household affairs in the eighteenth century. This practice was not assigned either to men or to women exclusively. Instead, both men and women were involved in this practice, albeit with differences between the degrees of their engagement in various tasks.[2] The connection

[2] Harvey is not the first critic to notice the different and overlapping roles that men and women had in the family life in the eighteenth century, even though she probably is the first one to use the word "oeconomy" to develop her argument. In *Gender in English Society, 1650-1850: The Emergence of Separate Spheres?*, Robert Shoemaker argues that "[w]hat differentiates prescriptions for male and female social roles is not so much that they were told to inhabit separate spheres of actions defined spatially, but that they had separate duties and were expected to behave differently: both at home and in public, men were to be involved in governing and as the primary breadwinners, while women were

between "oeconomy" and household affairs is not a modern concept. In the eighteenth century, Thomas Sheridan, an influential dictionary editor, actor and educator of the elocution movement, defines the word "oeconomicks" as "[m]anagement of household affairs" (594). Samuel Johnson, Sheridan's contemporary, also arrives at the same definition, "Management of household affairs" (100), in his *A Dictionary of the English Language*.[3] Unlike Harvey's argument, Johnson's and Sheridan's definitions are without definite indication with regard to men's and women's roles in the management of their household affairs. Nevertheless, Harvey, Johnson and Sheridan all clearly point out that "management of the household affairs" is the core value of the word oeconomy. This, however, does not exclude Dodsley's idea about a man's management of his personal relationships with others. In the next two sections, I will examine how both Bramble and Clinker manage their general household affairs and their personal, emotional relationship. Such examinations will unravel the general and personal sides of oeconomy theory and will then help us better understand the interdependent relationship between Bramble and Clinker. At the same time, these examinations will demonstrate how Clinker learns to become a gentleman in his two relationships with Bramble.

II. Bramble as an In(ter)dependent Oeconomist

If the word "oeconomy" has the connotation of management, Bramble's first and second letters to Dr. Lewis, Bramble's doctor, give us a clue regarding what kind of oeconomist Bramble is. In these two letters, Bramble

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expected to be responsible for caring, 'in ever so humble a way'" (31). When talking about the importance of key in a family, Amanda Vickery, in *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England*, observes that "[k]eys were emblems of authority. Church court cases suggest that ownership of the keys of the house lay with the male head of household. . . . In ordinary marriage, however, even while the master was technically the owner of the keys, the wife carried them. In fact, without these delegations of authority the work and rituals of the household would grind to a halt" (43-44). Harvey, Shoemaker and Vickery similarly indicate how both men and women shared domestic duties in a family in the eighteenth century.

[3] Johnson's *Dictionary* includes not only the entry of "oeconomics," but also that of "economy." According to Johnson's definition, "economy" means "the management of the family," "frugality; discretion of expence," "the disposition or arrangement of any work," and "system of emotions; distribution of everything to its proper place" (363). In comparison with Sheridan's definitions of "oeconomicks" and Dodsley's book, Johnson's definitions show that the meaning of "economy" is similar to that of either "oeconomicks" or "oeconomy." Thus, it is possible that the two words, "economy" and "oeconomy" were used interchangeably in the eighteenth century. Having said this, I choose to stick to the diphthong "oeconomy" with the reasons as I have explained in footnote 1.

talks about three things mainly: his health, family members and tenants. Instead of simply reiterating what has happened to either his family members or to his tenants, Bramble also presents himself to be a powerful and sentimental oeconomist. For example, Bramble tells Dr. Lewis that:

> Tell Barns I am obliged to him for his advice; but don't choose to follow it. If Davis voluntarily offers to give up the farm, the other shall have it; but I will not begin at this time of day to distress my tenant, because they are unfortunate, and cannot make regular payments: I wonder that Barns should think me capable of such oppression. (April 17; 14)[4]

Bramble behaves differently towards his two tenants, Barns and Davis. On the one hand, Bramble is a compassionate landlord who sympathizes with his tenants' distress, while on the other hand, he is dominant in the way of showing his authority to his tenant by refusing to listen to the latter's advice. No matter which position Bramble takes, he is definitely an oeconomist because he is in total control of managing the issues of the household.

When it comes to family members, Bramble behaves like a splenetic head of the family at first sight. Speaking of his sister Tabitha, nephew Jeremy and niece Lydia, Bramble says that:

> [M]y sister Tabby [is] the devil incarnate come to torment me for my sins; and yet I am conscious of no sins that ought to entail such family-plagues upon me—why the devil should not I shake off these torments at once? I an't married to Tabby, thank Heaven! nor did I beget the other two: let them choose another guardian: for my part, I an't in a condition to take care of myself; much less to superintend the conduct of giddy-headed boys and girls. (April 17; 12)

Bramble himself asks an interesting question here and by that question we can be certain about his role in the family. The reason why Bramble cannot shake off these "family-plagues" upon him is that he is the only eligible man to

[4] All the subsequent references, including the letter date and page number, will be made according to the Oxford World's Classics edition.

become the head of the family. As Bramble has mentioned, Tabitha is not married and thus there is no other man in the family who can possibly take on the job that Bramble is doing now. As for Jeremy and Lydia, they are under Bramble's care due to the fact that the brother and sister are without parents. In the letter to her governess Mrs. Jermyn, Lydia says that "Having no mother of my own, I hope you will give me leave to disburthen my poor heart to you, who have always acted the part of a kind parent to me, ever since I was put under your care" (April 6; 9). If the brother and sister are without a mother, where is their father? Neither Lydia nor Jeremy has mentioned in any of their letters about their father. It is thus arguable that Bramble is the only man who can act as the paterfamilias in the family inasmuch as we know nothing about Jeremy and Lydia's father and Tabitha is not married with a husband.

Bramble's complaint should not be interpreted at its face value, since Bramble has the other side of him when it comes to his family members. Peevish as Bramble is regarding his attitudes towards his responsibility to manage these domestic vexations, it is not impossible to find that his feelings of sentiment dominate his heart when it is necessary. Take Bramble's relationship with Lydia as an example. When Bramble discovers that Lydia is in a "dangerous connexion" with a man called Mr. Wilson, he "carried her off the very next day to Bristol" (April 17; 14). This decision attests to Bramble's status as the head in the family since he has a final say in decisions related to family matters. During the journey, Lydia becomes terribly sick due to the family's threats and expostulations. At this moment, Bramble says to Dr. Lewis that "You cannot imagine what I have suffered, partly from the indiscretion of this poor child, but much more from the fear of losing her entirely" (April 17; 14). Rather than being an autocratic decision-maker, Bramble makes it clear that his management is out of his concern for Lydia. In comparison with Bramble's different attitudes towards his tenants, Bramble's behavior towards Lydia makes him an authoritative and sentimental head of the family.

In his reading of the two letters, Michael McKeon contends that "[Bramble's] letters home express a familial and 'feudal' care for his tenants that evokes an organic community hierarchically stratified by relations of personal dependence. Status and gender distinctions are clearly marked, but they are represented as interdependent and inseparable components of a greater domestic economy" (680-81). There are two interesting ideas in

McKeon's argument. First of all, the phrase "domestic economy" echoes the idea that both letters explain how Bramble manages his household matters. This once again reveals the nature of management in the concept of oeconomy in the eighteenth century. Second, as McKeon rightly observes, the patriarchal power that Bramble exercises in the family is hierarchical and the relationship between people with different genders and statuses is both dependent and interdependent in this hierarchy. What is missing in McKeon's argument is that the interdependent nature of these relationships is not fully portrayed. This cannot be done until we look at how and why Bramble needs to become an "independent" man in the family. Before the examination of Smollett's construction of Bramble as an independent head in the family is carried out, I will first of all explain what it means to be independent for eighteenth-century men.

In her examination of how articles published in *The Gentleman's Magazine* offer a way to look into the theorization of masculinity in the eighteenth century,[5] Gillian Williamson argues that:

> British manhood was vindicated and the superior, active male citizen was reconfigured as the "independent" man. His virtue was generated by gendered personal attributes rather than inherited rank, for manly independence meant not only freedom from direct or indirect financial dependence on others but also the condition in which self-mastery, conscience and individual responsibility could be exercised. (2)[6]

[5] *The Gentleman's Magazine* was one of the most influential publications in the eighteenth century. It was founded in London in 1731 by Edward Cave and the magazine ran almost 200 years uninterruptedly until 1922. Its contributors include Mark Akenside, Samuel Johnson, Jonathan Swift, Edward Young and many other famous eighteenth-century writers. It was also the very first publication which adopted the word "magazine" as the title in the eighteenth century. The content of the magazine is mainly related to news and commentary on any topic that the educated public might be interested in. As well as the news and commentary, many of the contributions are advice as to how to become a gentleman, a gentleman's life story and others connected with features of a gentleman.

[6] Compared to Williamson, Matthew McCormack arrives at a similar conclusion by arguing that "[f]undamentally, manliness and independence were within the reach of every man: they had to be earned through inner strength and mastery of one's circumstances" (18). Saying that every man can claim his independence means that a man is not born to be independent but is trained to be so and the training involves managing his life. On the basis of Williamson's and McCormack's arguments, it is possible to say that the examination of a man's independence can be conducted from the perspective of oeconomy theory since the latter is also concerned about a man's management of household affairs. Although McCormack shares a similar conclusion with Williamson in his discussion about the construction of a man's independent status in Georgian England, he mainly pays attention to how an "independent male householder could and should represent the rest of society in the public world.

Williamson's argument is important in two aspects. First, Williamson points out that an independent man was a superior, active male figure in the eighteenth century and by that it was possibly an ideal type of man which eighteenth-century men were desirous of becoming. Second, for an eighteenth-century male, the designation of an "independent man" was not innate or inherited but could be acquired by means of living up to "gendered personal attributes" in which "self-mastery, conscience and individual responsibility" are the key components. Williamson's close reading and examination of articles published in *The Gentleman's Magazine* are not only made at a general level but also are extended to different scenarios among which "family" is the one that I will pay special attention to. As Williamson argues, eighteenth-century men were expected to become "independent heads of households as husbands and fathers" in order to achieve esteem from other men (98). If so, what are the "gendered personal attributes" of an independent head of a household? How will these features reflect the idea of management in the theory of oeconomy? How independent is Smollett's portrayal of Bramble and how will this description reveal the dependent and interdependent implications of the sense of independence? In order to answer all these questions, I will focus on how Clinker becomes a family member to the Bramble family and the master-servant relationship between Bramble and Clinker.

As I have mentioned in the introduction, Clinker makes his first appearance after almost two-thirds of the first volume. In his first appearance, Clinker is described by Melford as follows:

> He seemed to be about twenty years of age, of a middling size, with bandy legs, stooping shoulders, high forehead, sandy locks, pinking eyes, flat nose, and long chin—but his complexion was of a sickly yellow: his looks denoted famine; and the rags that he wore, could hardly conceal what decency requires to be covered. (May 24; 81)

Although relationships between them changed, politics and the family were inseparable in Georgian England" (13). In other words, McCormack takes "independence" to be the prerequisite for a Georgian English man to enter the world of politics.

Clinker, at this moment, is the antithesis of an independent man considering that his physical appearance suggests his financial inability to support himself. Clinker's first appearance, however, reveals Bramble's sentimental feelings and his authority in the family, both of which function as an indicator to Bramble's independent image. After being informed about Clinker's history, Bramble "put[s] a guinea into the hand of the poor fellow" and considers "to take [Clinker] into [his] service" (May 24; 82, 83). Bramble's decision does not come as a surprise since he constantly shows his compassion to people in need, such as his tenants and his niece Lydia. This decision also uncovers Bramble's patriarchal power in the family especially when it is not welcomed by Tabitha.

Clinker is impudent and disagreeable from Tabitha's viewpoint owing to the fact that she is much offended and shocked by Clinker's "shewing [of] his bare posteriors" (May 24; 81) when he is first introduced to the family as the replacement to their previous postilion. This is why Tabitha opposes the proposal to take Clinker into the service of the family even after Clinker's transformation into a decent, well-dressed man with the help of Bramble's money. In the end, Bramble exercises his "authority and resolution [and] a most blessed effect" is achieved when Tabitha agrees to give in (May 29; 90). The dispute between Bramble and his sister Tabitha gives evidence to the gendered and overlapping responsibilities that a man and a woman have in a family. As I have explained in the first part and in footnote 2, men and women were both responsible for household management and their roles were sometimes different from and at times overlapping with each other in the eighteenth century.[7] In Bramble and Tabitha's example, they both have a say regarding whether they want to take Clinker into service or not. It is, nonetheless, far from being true to conclude that Tabitha can always overpower Bramble in relation to household management decisions, since she at some point has to obey her brother's orders such as the decision to take Clinker into the family. It is in fact not surprising to see this as due to the reason that "oeconomy equipped men to instruct wives and other dependents

[7] In the case of Bramble and Tabitha, the sister tells her brother that "[t]his is a bad return for all the services I have done you; for nursing you in your sickness, *managing your family*, and keeping you from ruining yourself by your own impudence" (May 24; 86, emphasis added). Obviously, Bramble is not the only oeconomist in the family, but so is Tabitha. It, nevertheless, will be far-fetched to conclude that Bramble and Tabitha have equal status in the family, since the idea of oeconomy is also gendered, a point which I have explained in footnote 2.

in managing the resources of the household" (Harvey 102). Of course, Tabitha is no wife to Bramble but she is indisputably a subordinate member in the family, whereas Bramble is the head and her subordination is presented in her obedience to Bramble's orders. In this way, the gendered difference, as Harvey terms it, or the "gendered individual attribute" in Williamson's words is presented as the essential authority that a man has. This authority also proves a man's independent status in a family, since a man's authority will enable him to carry out his individual responsibility in a family, a crucial feature of an independent man according to Williamson's argument.

So far, we have seen how Bramble becomes an independent head and an oeconomist of the family by managing his familial and household matters. If Bramble is a master to Clinker, what are his individual responsibilities? In *The Oeconomy of Human Life*, Dodsley talks about the respective responsibilities of master and servant:

> The honour of a servant is his fidelity; his highest virtues are submission and obedience. Be studious of his interests; be diligent in his affairs; and faithful to the trust which he reposeth in thee. And thou who art a master, be just to thy servant, if thou expectest fidelity; be reasonable in thy commands, if thou expectest obedience. (58)

This passage is important in two ways. First, it clearly outlines individual responsibilities of masters and servants. Second, it shows the interdependent nature of the supposedly independent/dependent relationship between the master and servant. As Dodsley argues, a master commands his servant and the servant should submit himself to such a command. In addition, Dodsley also reminds his readers that such a command has to be reasonable and a master has to behave in a just way with the intention of getting his servant's fidelity and obedience. The establishment of a master's independence and authority is thus "dependent on" his servant's obedience to his reasonable and decent orders because failing to live up to these criteria will result in the dissolution of this ideal relationship.[8] These criteria, in this case, account for

[8] *The Oeconomy of Human Life* is a conduct book in which Dodsley offers advice for his readers to emulate in their daily behavior. This advice can only be ideal at some point. For example, it is of course possible for a fair-minded master to encounter a rebellious servant or for a faithful servant to have an absent-minded or vicious master. Since the main concern of this paper is to unravel the

the interdependent nature of the independent/dependent binary, an idea also put forward by McKeon, but that is left unelaborated in his readings of Bramble's first two letters to Dr. Lewis. If a master is within his rights to command in a reasonable and just way, how does Bramble measure up to this criterion and how does Clinker respond to it?

The interdependent nature of the relationship between Bramble and Clinker is best shown in two interesting incidents. In his letter dated June 10, Melford records how his uncle Bramble reacts when they find that Clinker has taken the role of preacher holding forth to a congregation. As Melford says, the first thing that strikes Bramble is "the presumption of his lacquey, whom he commanded to come down, with such an air of authority as Humphry did not think proper to disregard" (June 10; 137). At this moment, Bramble is undoubtedly an independent head of the family to Clinker on account of his unquestionable authority over the latter. However, Bramble's authority does not come as a result of his tyranny but instead because of his sentimental feelings towards his inferior. For after inquiring why Clinker has been preaching, Bramble not only reasons with his footman about the ill consequences of such kind of behavior, but also "promise[s] to take care of him, provided he would mind the business of his place" (June 10; 139). Upon hearing this, Clinker says that "I'm bound to love and obey your honour . . . I will follow you to the world's end, if you don't think me too far gone to be out of confinement" (June 10; 139). Clinker is faithful to his words because in another incident in which he saves Bramble from being drowned. When Bramble decides to reward Clinker for his courage and fidelity, the footman answers:

> God forbid! your honour should excuse me—I am a poor fellow; but I have a heart—O! if your honour did but know how I rejoice to see—Blessed be his holy name, that made me the humble instrument—But as for the lucre of gain, I renounce it—I have done no more than my duty—No more than I would have done for the most worthless of my fellow-creatures. (Oct 4; 315)

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interdependent nature of the relationship between Bramble and Clinker and its relation to Clinker's transformation into a gentleman, I will not go into details regarding the various possible forms within this relationship.

According to Dodsley's theory, it is true for Clinker to claim that what he has done is nothing more than his duty. Besides, from words and phrases such as "poor fellow," "humble instrument" and "worthless," Smollett seems to portray Clinker as a powerless figure. It is in fact arguable to say that Clinker at this moment fits into McCormack's idea with regard to the image of an independent man. In his analysis of the power relationship between the independence and dependence, McCormack contends that:

> Independence/dependence is a two-way relationship, but it is a hierarchical one that does not work the same both ways. According to republican theory, a person who has a dependant is empowered by the relationship, whereas the dependant is disempowered: only the independent person is free enough to pursue the general good, or that of their dependants. (27)

In the case of Bramble and Clinker, this independence/dependence is indeed a two-way relationship seeing that they take both positions at different times. In the preacher scene, Bramble is independent while Clinker is dependent due to the fact that Bramble superintends Clinker's behavior and gives him proper instruction or education when it is necessary. It is thus not wrong to contend that Bramble is empowered and Clinker is disempowered in that situation. This relationship is reversed in the drowning incident. At that moment, Clinker fulfills his duty as a faithful servant by risking his life to save Bramble's and by that he becomes independent owing to the fact that he is in power to prevent his powerless master from dying. These two incidents, thus, reveal how Bramble and Clinker can possibly be empowered or disempowered in different situations even though their roles remain the same. No matter who is in power, both Bramble and Clinker devote themselves to their respective responsibilities and by that the independent/dependent binary will remain intact. This possibility also echoes Williamson's and McCormack's statements that a man's independence is not inherited from his rank but is learnt from his experience. If a man's independence is something he is born with, Clinker will never be an independent man, while Bramble never needs to depend on others. As I have illustrated, this kind of absolute independence is only an illusion since Bramble and Clinker are interdependent

while they can keep their independence at the same time.

It is now obvious to see the importance of Clinker in this novel is firstly to reveal the master/servant relationship between Bramble and Clinker and the interdependent nature of this relationship. In the next section, I will argue that there is more than one kind of relationship between Bramble and Clinker. This relationship, along with the master-servant one, will reveal how Clinker becomes a gentleman by the lessons he learns in it.

III. Father, Son and a Gentleman's Education

Clinker is important to Bramble not only because he is an obedient, faithful servant, but also owing to his other identity, Bramble's bastard son. Soon after the drowning incident, Clinker, surprisingly, proves to be Bramble's biological son by presenting "an old wooden snuff-box" which contains "a small cornelian seal and two scraps of paper" (Oct 4; 317) to his then master Bramble. After examining them, Bramble confirms with the others in the room that "[h]ere is my direction written with my own hand, and a seal which I left at the woman's request; and this is a certificate of the child's baptism, signed by the curate of the parish" (Oct 4; 318). In her examination of a son's importance in a family, Harvey argues in *The Little Republic* that "for men acutely aware of the labour involved in establishing the family, it was imperative that sons continued the line" (167). If it is vital for sons to "continue the line," what are sons supposed to do? What are fathers' responsibilities? What kind of relationship do father and son have? Are father and son independent of, dependent on or interdependent on each other? The answers to these questions will reveal both the different responsibilities that Bramble and Clinker have as father and son and how Clinker can become a gentleman after his identity as Bramble's son is established.

In his last letter to Dr. Lewis, Bramble updates Dr. Lewis on what has happened and what will happen to the family:

> My niece Liddy is now happily settled for life; and captain Lismahago has taken Tabby *off my hands*; so that I have nothing further to do, but to comfort my friend Baynard, and *provide for my son Loyd*, who is also fairly joined to Mrs. Winifred

> Jenkins . . . . What you observe of the vestry-clerk deserves consideration. —I make no doubt but Matthew Loyd [Clinker's real name] is well enough qualified for the office; but, at present, you must find room for him in the house.—His incorruptible honesty and indefatigable care will be serviceable in *superintending the oeconomy of my farm*; tho' I don't mean that he shall interfere with Barns, of whom I have no cause to complain. (Nov. 20; 350, emphases added)

This passage is worth quoting at length for the following reasons. First, the passage once again reveals Bramble's two identities, an oeconomist and a father, in the family because of his management of different family members' matters. For example, the marriage arrangements of Lydia, Tabitha and Clinker are all settled. In addition, Bramble also communicates with Dr. Lewis regarding Clinker's future role in the family. Bramble's decision to replace himself with Clinker to become the oeconomist of his farm renders Bramble an ideal father figure. In *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England, 1500-1800*, Anthony Fletcher argues that "Fathers were expected to provide economic support, authority and discipline, then to take the lead in seeing a child into the world, either through finding a boy work or through involvement in a girl's marriage" (38).[9] Smollett's portrayal of Bramble functions as the best example to respond to both Fletcher's observation regarding responsibilities of a masculine head of a family and to reflect the oeconomic propensity of that head according to Dodsley's and others' oeconomy theory. In this sense, Bramble is without a doubt the best person in Smollett's *Humphry Clinker* to represent and to speak for the Bramble family.

The second significance of Bramble's last letter to Dr. Lewis is related to the interdependent relationship between Bramble and Clinker. Such a relationship can be discovered after we examine another duty that Bramble has. To Bramble and the family, it is important to find another oeconomist of the family inasmuch as Tabitha is going to marry Lismahago soon after the

[9] Dodsley advises his readers in a similar way: "Consider, thou who are a parent, the importance of thy trust; the being thou hast produced, it is thy duty to support" (46). Shoemaker arrives at a similar conclusion in his examination of a father's role in a family: "Fathers saw their primary role as providing economic support, authority, and discipline, and in preparing their children for a career" (124). Based on these arguments, it is obvious to see that an eighteenth-century father was not only entitled to authority over his family members but was also obliged to offer support to them.

expedition returns to Brambleton-hall in Wales. Before this, Tabitha, along with her brother, is an oeconomist in the family and both of them oversee the family management, even though Bramble is the person who is more in control of decisions concerning domestic issues.[10] After her upcoming marriage to Lismahago, Tabitha will not be an appropriate manager of the Bramble family since she will have another family to take care of. It is thus crucial for Clinker to be transformed from a servant into a future oeconomist of the family farm owing to the fact that he is Bramble's biological son. This transformation will probably allow the Bramble family to "continue the family line," a duty which is listed by Harvey in her discussion about a man's responsibility to his family.[11] This task, as I have demonstrated, can only be carried out by Bramble in Smollett's *Humphry Clinker* since he is the only qualified head of the family. Thus, Bramble's exclusive task reveals not only how Clinker needs Bramble's help in order to become a qualified oeconomist to superintend the family property but also shows how Bramble depends on Clinker in order to fulfill his last duty to the family. Other than the respective responsibilities as father and son, the interdependent relationship between Bramble and Clinker also uncovers the essential education that Clinker needs to receive from Bramble before he becomes a gentleman.

An eighteenth-century gentleman, as Williamson shows and as I have

[10] Tabitha's status as another oeconomist of the Bramble family can be discerned in various letters. For example, in her last letter to Mrs. Gwyllim, Tabitha says that "HEAVEN, for wise porpuses [sic], hath ordained that I should change my name and citation in life, so that I am not to be considered any more as *manager of my brother's family*; but as I cannot surrender up my stewardship till I have settled with you and Williams, I desire you will get you accunts [sic] ready for inspection, as we are coming home without further delay" (Nov. 20; 351, emphasis added). This letter clearly indicates that Tabitha shares part of the management duty in the family and by that she, as well as Bramble, is the oeconomist of the family. This is why I am not convinced by Vassiliki Markidou's argument when she contends that Brambleton-hall is under management by "a domineering matriarch" (68). There is no denying that Tabitha helps Bramble manage the family affairs, but I am more of the opinion that this duty is "shared" between the brother and the sister. My argument echoes Harvey's and other critics' observation, as I have explained in footnote 2, that eighteenth-century men and women had different responsibilities in their family. These duties might overlap with each other, but the levels would somehow be different between men and women in the eighteenth century.

[11] In *Man's Estate: Landed Gentry Masculinities, c. 1660-c. 1900*, Henry French and Mark Rothery similarly argue that "[o]ne of the chief responsibilities of fathers to their children was to ensure adequate financial provision for them, with men bolstering their own identity by emphasizing their 'dynastic' concern for the next generation" (220). The word "dynastic" in French and Rothery's argument implies a necessity for a family to continue to develop. Besides, this necessity should and will be carried out by a father figure in the family. If Harvey's target research group is eighteenth-century men without class distinction, French and Rothery focus on upper-class men. Regardless of their different class concerns, Harvey's and French and Rothery's arguments are alike in the way of revealing a male head's responsibility to make his family prosper.

quoted previously, is an independent man, and his independence means "not only freedom from direct or indirect financial dependence on others but also the condition in which self-mastery, conscience and individual responsibility could be exercised" (2). In this sense, Clinker can never become a gentleman until he resolves his economic plight and becomes his own master. By reading Bramble's last letter to Dr. Lewis again, we will find out how Clinker becomes a gentleman by fulfilling these two conditions with Bramble's help.

As I have quoted at the beginning of this section, Bramble makes it clear to Dr. Lewis that he will "provide for [his] son Loyd" by making him a "vestry-clerk" and the man to superintend "the oeconomy of [his] farm" (Nov. 20; 350). In his reading of the same passage, John Zomchick argues that "Clinker-Loyd finds a place on the paternal estate under the eye of a provident father who will 'provide for [his] son' by securing him a sinecure as a vestry clerk. Even the father's choice of occupation suggests that Clinker will be removed from the enthusiastic disturbances of lower-class methodism and placed within the established Anglican institution" (412). Zomchick clearly indicates that Bramble's choice of occupation will help Clinker rise from his current "lower-class" social status to a more "established" one. Besides this, Clinker will stand a better chance to become financially independent after being appointed to be the overseer of Bramble's farm. Once this happens, Clinker is one step closer to his transformation into a gentleman, since financial independence is a criterion for this title.

Clinker's education of self-mastery, conscience and individual responsibility can be best illustrated in his upcoming marriage with Winifred Jenkins. Speaking of marriage, Bramble tells Dr. Lewis that Clinker "is fairly joined to Mrs. Winifred Jenkins" (Nov. 20; 350). The word "fairly" in fact reveals how similar Bramble and Clinker are in terms of one particular masculine attribute and also indicates how Clinker exercises his conscience and individual responsibility. By looking into Clinker's conscientious and responsible side in his arrangement of marriage with Jenkins, we will see in what ways Clinker completes his gentleman's education.

In fact, the marriage between Clinker and Jenkins is initially an unpopular proposal to the family. Bramble tells Dr. Lewis:

> Mr. Clinker Loyd has made humble remonstrance, through the canal of my nephew, setting forth the sincere love and affection

> mutually subsisting between him and Mrs. Winifred, and praying for my consent to their coming together for life. I would have wished that Mr. Clinker had kept out of this scrape; but as the nymph's happiness is at stake, and she has had already some fits in the way of despondence, I, in order to prevent any tragical catastrophe, have given him leave to play the fool, in imitation of his betters. (Oct 26; 345)

Bramble indirectly reveals why he wants to keep Clinker "out of the scrape," meaning Clinker's possible marriage with Jenkins, by saying that "Tabby has consented, with great reluctance, to this match. . . . She declares she cannot think of retaining the wife of Matthew Loyd in the character of a servant" (Oct 26; 345). In other words, both Bramble and Tabitha are at first against this marriage proposal owing to Jenkins's status as a housemaid in the Bramble family, a status which is not compatible with Clinker's. Bramble's later consent to the marriage between Clinker and Jenkins is due to his feelings of sentiment for the despondent bride-to-be. As I have pointed out, Bramble is a sentimental man to his tenants and other family members. The sympathy that Bramble feels for Jenkins once again proves him thus. For Clinker, he does in fact inherit Bramble's compassionate feelings. Clinker's feelings of sentiment for Jenkins are made clear to us when Melford tells that Clinker "owned he had a kindness for the young woman, and had reason to think she looked upon him with a favourable eye; that he considered this mutual manifestation of good will, as an engagement understood, which ought to be binding to the conscience of an honest man" (Oct 14; 334). If social class is the main concern for Bramble and Tabitha when they consider the marriage proposed by Clinker, what matters the most for Clinker in choosing Jenkins to be his wife is the sentimental feelings he and Jenkins share with each other.

Clinker's "sentimental feelings" are important in two ways. First of all, they symbolize another kind of continuation between Bramble and Clinker apart from their consanguinity. Because of this continuation, Bramble behaves like a "provident father," in Zomchick's words, by rendering his son financially independent. Second, acting like a man of feeling by taking Jenkins to be his wife enables Clinker to present himself to readers as a gentleman for he makes such a decision based on the conscience and responsibility he has for a woman who loves him. Also, by insisting on

marrying Jenkins, Clinker proves to readers that he is his own master since he successfully persuades Bramble to accept his request and by that he completes his gentleman's education. This gentleman's education is, however, not without danger. The danger, as I will demonstrate, is related to the problematic side of a man's sentimental feelings.

In an earlier letter, Melford describes Bramble to his friend by saying that "His singularities afford a rich mine of entertainment. . . . He affects misanthropy, in order to conceal the sensibility of a heart, which is tender, even to a degree of weakness" (April 24; 28). Melford's description once again shows that Bramble is definitely a sentimental man, but Bramble's sentimental heart will possibly lead to his frailty at some point. So, how will Bramble's sentimental feelings weaken Bramble in all likelihood? What will be threatened as a result? In fact, Smollett includes portrayals of another two male characters, Dennison and Baynard, to offer his readers answers to these questions.

Both Dennison and Baynard are Bramble's friends and they are both depicted as sentimental men, even though their feelings of sentiment result in an opposite kind of life. While talking about the domestic problems that Baynard faces with his wife, Bramble says that Baynard " endeavoured to recollect himself, and act with vigour of mind on this occasion; but was betrayed by the tenderness of his nature, which was the greatest defect of his constitution" (Sept. 30; 288). As for Dennison, Bramble congratulates his friend on governing a family of happiness given that Dennison " is blessed with a consort, whose disposition is suited to his own in all respects; tender, generous, and benevolent" (Oct. 8; 320-21). Comparing Baynard with Dennison, we can find that their tender feelings similarly qualify them to be sentimental men. On top of that, the different kinds of life that Baynard and Dennison have originated from the same sentimental attribute. In his reading of Baynard's and Dennison's respective relationships with their wives, David Weed argues that:

> The novel's comparison between the Baynards and Dennisons particularly exploits the difference between the virtuous, assertive Mr. Dennison and the weak, passive Mr. Baynard to support the argument that only masculine male control of land and the household economy produces rational order and profit.

> The Baynards' marriage suggests that the husband who does not control his wife's desires invests her with the power to turn his real property into wasteland. (620)

Weed emphasizes the "masculine control" that Baynard and Dennison should have over their wives. This control is performed through Baynard's and Dennison's management of their household affairs, an idea which responds to the oeconomy theory discussed in the first section. The main reason for Weed to conclude that Dennison is a virtuous, assertive oeconomist, while Baynard is a weak, passive counterpart is that the latter loses his control to his wife. The seemingly contradictory roles both come as a result of Dennison's and Baynard's sentimental minds. By using Baynard's miserable life as an example, Weed further argues that "Bramble's own propensity toward sentimentality, then, in some measure explains his statements that he will not marry: an attachment to a wife like Mrs. Baynard could unman him and entail his estate, heart, and health in a similar sickening corruption" (622). I have no opposition to Weed's argument under the condition that it is indeed possible for a man of feeling to become emasculated by his sentimental characteristic. However, Weed overlooks the possibility that a sentimental man can be empowered by the same feature, especially when he consciously knows that Dennison is the best example of this possibility. It is thus not totally convincing for Weed to claim that Bramble's sentimental heart causes him not to marry considering that Bramble may arrive at a happy life as Dennison does.

It is, nevertheless, essential to find that feelings of sentiment are unstable and precarious in terms of the construction of a man's masculinity. As Weed indicates, Smollett is aware of this particular feature and his characterizations of Dennison and Baynard are the proofs.[12] In consequence, by rendering

[12] Smollett's *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* is not the first eighteenth-century novel to reveal how a male character's sentimental feelings can sometimes empower and at times problematize the construction of his masculinity. In Oliver Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766), Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey* (1768) and Henry Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling* (1771), the constructions of the three main male characters' masculinity are reinforced and challenged at different stages in the novel by their sentimental nature. The reinforcement and challenge that Dr. Primrose in Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield*, Yorick in Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey* and Harley in Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling* experience are similar to what Bramble, Dennison and Baynard go through in Smollett's *Humphry Clinker*. The challenges are made clearer by onecontemporary of Goldsmith, Sterne, Mackenzie and Smollett. Anthony Ashley-Cooper, the third Earl of Shaftesbury says in his *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, published in 1711, that a man "must

Bramble and Clinker sentimental, Smollett's *Humphry Clinker* is associated with both characters' "expedition," as shown in the title. By adopting Clinker's name instead of Bramble's to be the title of the novel, Smollett makes it clear that Bramble's expedition ends at the last page of *Humphry Clinker*, while Clinker's is about to begin, since the former has fulfilled most of his responsibility as an oeconomist of the family, while the latter is about to embark on a similar journey. Clinker's journey, however, is an uncertain one due to the fact that readers are not sure whether the fate of Clinker's family will be similar to that of Dennison's or that of Baynard's. It is, however, not far-fetched to conclude that Clinker becomes a gentleman at the end of the novel considering the education he receives throughout the whole journey.

IV. Conclusion

This paper intends to explore how Smollett's characterizations of Bramble and Clinker reveal the different roles that these two men will play according to oeconomy theory, as well as the gentleman's education that Clinker needs to receive. As I have argued, Smollett has already given his readers some hints with regard to the issues I want to look into in this paper by naming this novel *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker*. The self-titled character Clinker is barely the main narrator and the reason he has no power to speak for himself or even for the other family members is that he is not a gentleman when he comes into the novel. Only after learning to behave like a gentleman can Clinker gradually become the focus of the narration in the novel. Clinker's gentleman's education will not begin until the father-son relationship between him and Bramble is verified. In fact, the roles that Bramble and Clinker perform include not only father and son but also master and servant. No matter which roles Bramble and Clinker play, the relationship between them is of an interdependent nature. The lessons that Clinker needs to

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not become a person who has much of goodness and natural rectitude in his temper, but withal so much softness or effeminacy as unfits him to bear poverty or adversity" (95). The concern of becoming effeminate as a result of a man's sentimental feelings is also voiced by Vicesimus Knox whose *Essays Moral and Literary* was widely read and frequently reprinted in the eighteenth century. Knox contends that "[t]he only ill consequence that can be apprehended from [sentiment] is an effeminacy of mind, which may disqualify us for vigorous pursuits and manly exertions" (248). As indicated in Baynard's and Bramble's examples, it is possible for a sentimental man to become weak, powerless and effeminate. This possibility, as I argued, attests to the uncertain future that Clinker and the Bramble family face.

take in order to make his transformation into a gentleman possible are partly manifested in a man's sentimental mind. Both Bramble and Clinker are sentimental men and their feelings of sentiment are portrayed in their relationships with other characters. Since a man's sentimental characteristic is accompanied by some underlying threats, readers will experience some unexpected surprises, both good and bad, while reading Bramble's and Clinker's stories. All in all, it is appropriate for Smollett to name *Humphry Clinker* in this way for such a name indicates roles, responsibilities and the gentleman's education that Bramble and/or Clinker need to take on or receive in the novel.

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德昆西亞洲書寫中「能」的論述*

黃柏源**

摘　要

歐洲於十八、十九世紀之交，因醫學、人類學與科學論述興起，談論種族、身體與膚色的關連，尤以東亞地區與蒙古人種的相關性，一方面重新建立蒙古人種的侵略性，一方面重新強調其未開化的心智與落後，主宰了歐洲優勢對東亞的種族思潮（racial thinking）；而這樣的種族思潮，不僅再度強調了歐洲中心（Eurocentric）的本位主義，並為十九世紀種族主義、殖民主義、帝國主義的興起，提供了貌似科學的背書與正當性藉口。在此脈絡下，本文欲以英國散文家湯姆士．德昆西（Thomas De Quincey）的作品《一位英國鴉片癮君子的自白》（*The Confessions of an English-opium Eater*）為主要分析文本，講述作者使用鴉片的經驗與想像。作者在《自白》中，展現服用鴉片所產生的、不同面向的能：鴉片先是產生驅策身體的「動能」（mobility），「才能」（capability）與「權能」（power）也應運而生；然而成癮之後，「動能」不再，「才能」與權能也隨之而滅。

除《自白》外，德昆西作品多次處理亞洲題材，包括〈喀幕克塔塔人的反叛〉（“The Revolt of the Kalmuck Tartars”），以及稍後的政治散文〈鴉片與中國問題〉（“The Opium and the China Question”），以及〈中國（一）〉〈中國（二）〉（“China (I)” & “China (II)”）等，討論隨著都市的拓展與帝國的擴張，作者的英國身份與歐洲文化認同如何面對亞洲的存在。本文將聚焦德昆西如何在其筆下的亞洲主題作品中，展現能的多重面向。值得注意的是，在作者筆下，能的多重面向，恰恰

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* 本文原以「他者的身體,本體的適應：湯瑪士德昆西作品中的亞洲動能與想像」為題，發表於第三十七屆全國比較文學會議。在此特別感謝兩位匿名審查人對本文提出裨益良多之修改建議。

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回應至當代歐洲對於亞洲——尤其是中國——態度的轉向。一如鴉片初始賦予作者的「增能」（empower）效力，在成癮的過程中，使得作者的身體成為「失能」（disabled）或「無能」（incapable）的狀態。也因之，在德昆西筆下，講述的其實是歐洲在政治、經濟以及軍事上充滿了「動能」，而用以侵略失能或無能的亞洲，使亞洲淪為文風不動（immobile）、任人魚肉的慾望對象。

關鍵詞：動能、才能、權能、德昆西

Aspects of "Ability" in De Quincey's Writings about Asia

Bo-Yuan Huang[*]

ABSTRACT

At the turn of the nineteenth century, medical, anthropological and scientific discussions emerged and popularised the connections among race, body, and skin colours in Europe. The association between the Mongolians and the East Asia was particularly noteworthy, because Europe's strong emphases on the aggressive and the "uncivilised" nature of the Mongolians not only gave rise to the Euro-centric racial thinking but also provided a seemingly convincing standpoint and legitimacy for the later development of racism, colonialism, and imperialism. This article aims to scrutinise Thomas De Quincey's experience and imagination with opium use in his *The Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (1821) in such contexts. In *Confessions*, the drug at first is an agent that empowers the writer, giving rise to his capability and power. Yet progressively, as the addiction kicks in, the drug becomes a destructive force that makes the writer suffer both physically and psychologically, rendering the writer disabled and incapacitated.

In De Quincey's other essays about Asia, such as "The Revolt of the Tartars," "The Opium and the China Question," along with "China (I)" and "China (II)," he seeks to deal with his English identity as he faces Asia in an age of urban and empirical expansion. This article will focus on the various aspects of "ability" in De Quincey's writings about Asia. It is noteworthy that in De Quincey's writings, the various aspects of ability correspond well to the shift in contemporary Europe's attitudes towards Asia—especially China. With De Quincey's opium addiction, the opium falls from an empowering agent to a destructive force that renders the writer's body disabled or incapable. It is therefore my attempt to shed light on how Asia and China were often reduced to a desired object made immobile, disabled, and powerless by European powers, and were in need of European political, economic, and even military intervention in De Quincey's writings.

KEYWORDS: mobility, power, capability, Thomas De Quincey

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十九世紀英國散文家湯瑪士．德昆西（Thomas De Quincey）的著名作品《一位英國鴉片癮君子的自白》（*The Confessions of an English Opium Eater*）（下稱《自白》）首次以匿名形式，[1] 於 1821 年 9 月至 10 月間，在《倫敦雜誌》（*The London Magazine*）上進行連載，並於 1822 年合輯為書，旋即在當代讀者間引發巨大迴響，並於 1856 年進行增修。《自白》一書大致可分為〈自白序〉（"The Preliminary Confessions"）、〈鴉片之樂〉（"Pleasures of Opium"）以及〈鴉片之苦〉（"Pains of Opium"）三部分，細細記錄其鴉片使用之經歷，書中亦處處可見吸食鴉片的影響，既有操弄精神的幻象，亦有影響肉身之效力；既有愉悅，亦有痛楚。其中特別有意思的，便是作者一再以鴉片做為媒介，將自我形象投射於他者之上。他者往往是主體的慾望對象（object of desire），而作家總是藉由鴉片，消解主體對於被他者同化而產生異化的愛恨掙扎。值得注意的是，《自白》中作者對於主體與他者間的掙扎，往往藉由「能」（ability）的表述來展現。除了反映出自身面對亞洲／東方異化與適應的過程，這些能的諸多面向，更充分展現了作者面對亞洲主題書寫時的複雜性。[2]

長久以來，評論家對於《自白》多所關注。貝若（John Barrell）援用佛洛伊德（Sigmund Freud）的精神分析，強調德昆西試圖藉書寫克服個人的創傷與恐懼。此外，當時大英帝國擴張，秉持歐洲中心（Euro-centric）的殖民主義，企圖收編東方異外文化卻未果的文化衝擊與恐懼，與作者個人情緒兩相加乘，使其筆下的亞洲與東方成了恐懼的來源，並常展現於感官之上。在其書寫中，亞洲是群體的、殘酷的、致命的。因此《自白》中，作者對於己身的鴉片癮書寫，也常是負面且妖魔化的。厄茲普卡（Charles Rzepka）則從人類學角度出發，認為德昆西書寫中崇高感的展現，常與主體性的消逝，以及「禮物餽贈」（gift-giving）所蘊含的犧牲美學相關。克萊日（Alina Clej）則認為德昆西直視藥物的書寫，其實是面對被藥物異化而犧牲的主體，在面對日常生活與世界失序時，所亟欲解決的主體性危機，也使德昆西成為領先時代的現代主義者。而希金斯（David Higgins）則認為，英國帝國主義與殖民主義的發展，不僅使得鴉片交易高度便利，也使得「大英帝國」與「英國」之分野愈形模糊。在此情形下，作者的（英國）主體性與他者（帝國殖民的國家與文化）結構，產生不穩定的變化，也讓作者的自我認同進入不確定的狀態。

承繼上述諸位論者的看法，筆者注意到，無論是與藥物共處或抗衡

[1] 本文中所有德昆西作品引文，皆譯自 *The Works of Thomas De Quincey.* Gen. ed. Grevel Lindop. 21 Volumes. London: Pickering and Chatto, 2000-2003 此版本（下以 *Works* 稱之）。本文中所有引文，皆筆者自譯。特此說明。

[2] 亞洲與東方的概念雖有不同，但德昆西的作品裡，兩者經常是互換的。本文將主要使用「亞洲」一詞。

的過程中，德昆西的主體性建構，其實跟面對亞洲「能」的展現有相當密切的連動性。更精確而言，德昆西的英國主體性，在面對亞洲與鴉片作為慾望對象時，異化了主體的身體，使得主體在適應的過程中，包括在「動能」(mobility)、[3]「才能」(capability)與「權能」(power)等三個層面，展現「能」的多樣性。根據牛津大辭典(*OED*)的定義，「動能」係指在移動或被移動的能力(the ability to move or to be moved)，「才能」則係身體與心理的一般能力(power or ability in general, whether physical or mental)，「權能」則指強烈影響的能力(ability to act or affect something strongly)。若細究三字的釋義條目，雖各有不同，卻有許多重複疊合之處。此三字中，「動能」在近年來的學界研究中，獲得許多關注，已有豐碩成果展現，值得進一步說明。文化地理學者艾迪(Peter Adey)的《移動》(*Mobility*)一書，對於「動能」研究做出豐富駁雜的貢獻。另外，麥錫申(Charlotte Mathieson)亦從文化地理學的角度出發，藉此探究十九世紀的小說。她明確揭示了「動能」雖從「移動」(movement)的概念出發，卻不僅侷限於移動。麥錫申認為「動能」從過去所定義的「社會製造的移動」(socially produced motion)，在多方詮釋的擴充下，已非單純的主體在空間中的移動，而是與社會階級、性別以及種族有關連性的(13-15)。伯格斯(Miranda Burgess)則把十八、十九世紀之交的「動能」，聚焦於「運輸」(transport)的進展。她認為當時工業化社會所造成的焦慮，以及「情感的流通性」(circulation of feelings)，使得「情緒的遊蕩」(vagrancy of emotions)所形成的情感與詩學，也成為定義當時浪漫主義的一部分(229-60)。而菲(Elizabeth Fay)更將情緒的遊盪推展得更遠。菲舉德昆西為例，強調德昆西的旅程往往藉由心靈與想像達成(而非實體的旅程)。菲認為德昆西的自我總是「不停止地移動」(endlessly mobile)，將夢境轉化成現實世界的「變形」(altered state)(292-312)。賈維斯(Robin Jarvis)也關注德昆西的移動，認為德昆西雖未如同代作家進行大量且有意義的實體旅行，但德昆西的精神旅行則發生於「加速的思緒與遲緩的意志」(accelerated thoughts and retarded will)所產生的內在衝突(74-87)。由此觀之，晚近文學研究中的「動能」豐富駁雜，似可涵蓋筆者在此所主張的「動能」、「才能」與「權能」等「能」的三個面向。但筆者認為，這三個「能」的面向，雖有許多疊合之處，但根據德昆西寫作展現，並加以細緻區隔之下，德昆西筆下的「動能」常與生理及身體連結，「才能」

[3] 艾迪(Peter Adey)於 2009 年出版的《移動》一書中，揭示 mobility 的豐富駁雜的論述。筆者注意到，在徐苔玲與王志弘的中文譯本中，先將 "mobility" 的概念翻譯成「移動性」，希望與 "movement" 所代表的「移動」做出區隔；但原書名的 mobility，譯者又翻譯成「移動」。為避免混淆，筆者在此採用「動能」一詞來翻譯 "mobility"，因為 mobility 本身即是一種「能力」(ability)。原書請見 Adey。中譯本請詳見彼得・艾迪。

常與心智活動相關，而「權能」則與政治經濟相互作用；而定義相互交纏的「才能」與「權能」，往往又由「動能」所驅策。也正因為「能」充滿複雜的呈現，使得德昆西在自《自白》以降的亞洲書寫中，作者的英國主體性，也往往呈現莫衷一是的搖擺狀態。本文正是希望藉由細究作者的散文書寫，揭示作者的英國主體面對亞洲題材時，「能」的多樣性之展現，以及與當代思潮的對應關係。

《自白》一書先以〈自白序〉開始。作者率先強調己身「英國」的身份，並昭告其以「學者」的姿態寫作，一再闡明其出身並非貧寒，並自豪其以「宗教般的熱忱」（*Works* 2: 10）服用鴉片，與其他業餘等級的使用者不同，預先為敘述者的身份定調。作者以倫敦的貴族或知識份子為引子，暗示其所屬社會階級與往來對象；繼為說明當代鴉片使用之便宜與普遍，作者舉例曼徹斯特的棉花廠工人因「工資低下」，「不容許他們沈溺於麥芽酒與烈酒」，所以他們「很快就開始使用鴉片」（*Works* 2: 11）。作者這樣的敘述，說明鴉片使用的普遍性，其實超越社經階級與身份地位。作者的設計，一方面係為自己使用鴉片的行徑開脫，非其特意獨行；一方面亦暗示鴉片的效用已超越己身，暗示鴉片的影響可能是更全面性、舉國皆然的。緊接著，作者先以〈自白序〉講述其初識鴉片，並非耽溺於享樂，而是為了「緩和最嚴重等級的疼痛」（*Works* 2: 13）。作者講述，從廿八歲起，為治療胃痛之苦，開始每日服用鴉片。而胃痛之始，實源於年少輕狂，他離家出走後落腳倫敦，將隨身小額財富揮霍殆盡後，開啟其於倫敦生存的痛苦時日。當時正積極邁向工業化與都會化的倫敦，讓身無長物的作者飢貧度日。在朋友的介紹下，暫且棲身於幾無住客的房子中。在此他結識了一無名女孩，在偌大無人的屋內，飢寒交迫的兩人相依為命，共享饑寒交迫的肉體痛苦。無名女孩來歷不明，或為私生女或為侍女，當屋主來訪時，甘受屋主差遣。無名女孩將屋主的書房視為童話故事「藍鬍子」裡的秘室，萬分恐懼；且因飢寒交迫，幻覺屋內鬼魂縈繞。年少的作者雖理智不信，但面對都會生活的嚴峻，以及女孩繪聲繪影的恐懼，兩相加乘、內外交逼，艱難的生活條件終究使其夜不成眠、噩夢連連，而噩夢導致身體的虛弱，身體的虛弱又誘發更多的噩夢（*Works* 2: 21-24）。作者仔細描繪此間身心折磨，為其使用鴉片之習預留伏筆。

作者得到資助遷居他處後，無名女孩亦不復見。兩人縱為「悲慘相伴」（*Works* 2: 24），然而長相與資質都平庸的她，始終未讓年輕的作者念茲在茲。相對的，在某次夜間巡弋時，作者在牛津街偶然結識一名為「安」（Ann）的雛妓。可憐且無友伴的安，與作者同病相憐，提供作者肉體與精神的慰藉，因此年少二人相互為伴，情愫與身體慾望隱晦交織。安與作者常在牛津街附近的夜街上遊蕩。一次夜行時，作者胃痛難抑，安且

散盡微薄儲蓄，為作者買來紅酒與香料暖胃提神，卻從未要求作者回報。雖作者在社經條件低落時，安的陪伴係其身心救贖，但好景不常；當作者巧遇家族友人，得其資助，必須離開倫敦尋求金援，希望終有機會可回報安。然而，作者重返倫敦後，卻遍尋不見安的身影。安所提供給作者的肉體與精神慰藉，卻因為其消失造成缺席。在〈自白序〉的第二部分，作者自責無能回饋安的關懷與情感，更使得他夜不成眠。當慾望對象形成空缺，引發作者高度焦慮與內疚。由內疚與逸樂交錯的道德掙扎，導致焦慮與困惑。面對安不知其所蹤的失落，作者暗自悲嘆卻無能為力，調度智識說服自我，卻依舊無法平息苦痛。此部分戛然而止，留下懸疑，筆鋒一轉，以鴉片所產生的逸樂取代，開始講述其〈鴉片之樂〉。

根據作者自述，他初嚐鴉片係為解除頭痛與牙疼，並在牛津大學友人的介紹下，他前往牛津街一不具名的藥劑師處購買鴉片。在服用藥物後的一小時內，疼痛瞬間解除，作者因而大歎鴉片之精妙：「天哪！多麼大的變化！怎能從靈魂最低深處攀昇至此一狀態！」（*Works* 2: 43）。這天啟般的感受引領他在倫敦生活的期間開始耽溺於鴉片的使用。在《自白》的〈鴉片之樂〉中，作者盛讚鴉片之好更勝酒精，因為酒精束縛使用者，而鴉片卻能增加使用者的行為能力。在此，作者所談及的能力可分成兩個層面來看待：一為心智，一為身體。作者利用酒精與鴉片對比，細數兩者相異之處。除貶低酒精之樂在攀至高點後隨即衰退，如烈焰燃完便盡；作者且說鴉片之樂，長效可達八至十小時，如「穩定而溫煦的光芒」（*Works* 2: 44）。酒精令人「心智渾沌」，而鴉片則對心智「制定最精妙的秩序、法規與和諧」；酒精令人行為「怪誕放肆」，而鴉片卻能鎮定激動情緒，將分神意志重新聚焦（*Works* 2: 44）。面對當代英國境內鴉片使用，常與流傳的懶散土耳其癮君子形象聯想，作者亟欲自清，先是貶低土耳其癮君子吸食鴉片後的愚行，繼而強調鴉片在土耳其人身上所造成的逸樂懶散，不曾見於英國人身上。對於英國的癮君子而言，鴉片能夠增加行動力，甚至能增進智識能力（*Works* 2: 47-48）。因此，在鴉片的增能與酒精的失能兩相對照下，作者選擇了鴉片，並舉性喜杯中物的公爵友人相互對照，在兩人相約看歌劇時，作者相信鴉片使其更能領略樂音之妙，甚至歌劇院內的交談雜音也不再喧鬧擾人，連嘈雜的他國語言也能和諧如樂曲。於此，作者強調鴉片能令其將「有機的聲音」（organic sound）建構成「精巧的智力樂趣」（elaborate intellectual pleasure）（*Works* 2: 48-49）。因此，當作者強調鴉片強化其「智識」（intellectual），甚可增加其聆賞樂音之妙，說明了鴉片所賦予增加作者心智能力之「才能」。

作者強調鴉片可「增加心智活動」之外，鴉片也使得作者增加其身體活動的運作（*Works* 2: 49）。作者講述週六夜晚，服用鴉片後，他充滿活力，漫遊倫敦，可走上幾個小時亦不覺疲累。作者尤愛造訪東倫敦勞

動階級居住的貧民區。雖造訪貧民區常讓作者憶及年少時倫敦生活之苦，但見識參與貧民生活之清貧之樂，作者總能同享其「堅忍，希望，以及靜謐」(patience, hope and tranquillity)(*Works* 2: 49)。作者重申當他人同情這些貧民之苦，他卻能見識並同情貧民之樂。在多次造訪此區域後，作者愈形熟悉貧民生活種種，並參與貧民生活之討論，不時給予「有見地的」(judicious)想法，而這些貧民總「寬容接受」(received indulgently)(*Works* 2: 49)。若說作者聆賞歌劇時，鴉片增強心智能力的是「才能」，在作者週六夜晚的漫遊裡，鴉片則成為增強其「動能」與「權能」的仲介物。一方面，作者藉鴉片賦予其「動能」，統整感官情緒，驅策他獨自漫步倫敦街頭，穿越盤根錯節的新興都會，相信仍有地圖上未載明、唯他知曉的「未竟之地」(*terrae incognitae*)(*Works* 2: 50)。另一方面，鴉片賦予作者「權能」，使其得以知識份子的身份「同情」這些貧民，並給予他們意見；也給與其以知識與經驗收編這些「未竟之地」的「權能」。然而，當作者承認貧民「寬容地」接受他知識份子的意見，作者亦暗示鴉片所賦予的「權能」終究是暫時且不穩定的；也因此，無論係在「智識」或「道德」(moral)層面，都造就其情緒上的「困惑」(perplexities)(*Works* 2: 50)。筆者推論，作者無法自外於良心的譴責，因為他曾是被都會發展下排擠的一員，而鴉片所賦予其的「動能」與「權能」，更是凸顯其如今已非貧民的身份。當他具備離開與再訪的「動能」，他始終不屬於貧民區的一份子。相對地，當這些貧民不具備離開其社經階級與所居區域的「動能」，使得作者的「動能」並不僅是身體所經歷的漫遊，而是具備社經意義的「社會動能」(social mobility)。也因此，這些他曾造訪過的、熟悉的面容，在稍後的〈鴉片之苦〉中蠻橫「主宰」(tyrannized)其噩夢，即便動用理智「亦無法消解其內心糾結」(*Works* 2: 50)。

學者畢威爾(Alan Bewell)在《浪漫主義與殖民病》(*Romanticism and Colonial Disease*)中認為，倫敦都會區的勞動階級的居所，之所以是「未竟之地」，正因為貧窮以及人口增生，使得它在德昆西筆下與東方地理連結，進而成為帝國中心的「異地」(foreign place)。因此，德昆西筆下的「東方」，其實是「倫敦都會勞動階級的譬喻性代換」(a figural displacement of the urban working class)(158-59)。畢威爾的論述頗具意義，但筆者認為，必須同時考量東倫敦在十九世紀的倫敦發展史裡扮演的角色。當時泰晤士河作為海運與河運的交會點，西印度碼頭(West India Docks)與東印度碼頭(East India Docks)都建於東倫敦，[4] 使得東倫敦成為海陸運輸與貿易之中樞轉運站，亦使東倫敦成為外來移民(合法與不合法兼

[4] 有關西印度碼頭之發展簡史，請卓參 Hobhouse, "The West India Docks"。有關東印度碼頭之描述，請卓參 Hobhouse, "The East India Docks"。此外，當時倫敦的人口概念，亦可見 Chandler and Gilmartin。

有）、船員、勞工、娼妓與黑市交易的溫床。因而由作者所經歷且高度私人化的地圖中，東倫敦與作者世界觀的東方產生隱晦的連結。也因此，筆者推論，若將倫敦都會的擴張視為當時大英帝國在海外拓展的縮影，那麼作者面對東倫敦這些交錯盤據、尚未命名的新興地區，便如同大英帝國在海外擴張遭遇東方國度時，亟欲命名、納入管轄且「私有化」（privatised）的土地。筆者也認為，唯有將東倫敦之拓展與作者世界觀的東方相互連結，才能進一步說明東倫敦新興的廣大勞動人口，如何成就畢威爾所說的，替代德昆西認知裡的東方。在鴉片的驅策下，作者被賦予的「能」實為身心兼具，包含了「動能」、「才能」與「權能」；但正如同他漫遊東倫敦貧民區時，以知識份子身份所獲得的優越感以及內疚，作者亦暗示了大英帝國在東方的海外擴張，藉由軍事上的優勢與「動能」，亟欲征服未竟之地時，歐洲中心的政經層面的優越感隨之而生，但這樣的「動能」依舊引發道德上的愧疚。在作者的鋪陳下，當倫敦作為帝國本體的象徵，作者反覆離開與再訪東倫敦的行徑，說明了在鴉片效力的催發下，作者的主體與東倫敦異地的價值交換益發頻繁，也越來越密不可分。透過鴉片效力的交換下，兩者越來越能易地而處。當優越感與愧疚感同源，鴉片所賦予的「能」也蒙上了陰影，使得造訪過、同情的臉孔亦成為噩夢的根源。同時，隨著帝國的擴張，鴉片作為亞洲他者所生產的物質與商品，[5] 同時成為大英帝國在異地擴張的工具，卻也不意成為在英國境內各階層普遍使用的藥物。也因此，正如同倫敦包含著東倫敦的發展，帝國逐步擴張的軍事與商貿便利性，也讓鴉片不僅是他者，也成了英國主體的一部份。作者的身體也經歷了雷同的經驗：當作者的本體藉由「獲取」（acquire）以及「服用」（take）鴉片，鴉片的藥物效力也逐漸「馴化」（domesticate）作者的身心，成為作者主體的一部份。更精確而言，在「消費／消化」（consumption）的過程裡，本體與他者之間的分界逐漸消失，主要展現在三個層面上：作者的主體，倫敦作為帝國的中心，以及帝國的版圖。當作者服用鴉片，鴉片被作者的身體吸收，讓作者的身心必須適應藥效；作為帝國中心的倫敦，在都會擴張與社經階級的分野裡，也必須包含充滿勞動階級與外來者的、新興卻未知的東倫敦異地；而大英帝國的海外擴張，面對異文化，也終究必須面對異文化的洗禮與適應。也因之，在《自白》中作者情緒上的困惑，其實來自於本體與他者的二元對立逐漸模糊。

[5] 檢視鴉片在此時期的歷史，鴉片由英屬東印度公司在印度種植，並運輸至當代需求的市場。尤其在 1819 年時，英國在馬來西亞取得殖民領地，建立新加坡，成為英國在東南亞地區很重要的商業與軍事貿易點。也因為新加坡的地理便利性，鴉片更方便運送至東南亞，甚至到達位居東亞的中國，也成為英國殖民主義發展的工具。然而，也因為東印度公司的自產自銷，使得鴉片在英國境內能夠成為便宜、普遍的藥物。詳見 Krishnan。

在〈鴉片之苦〉中，二元對立的模糊更為顯著。在〈鴉片之苦〉中，作者著墨探索的，不再是城市漫遊的外部或公共空間，而是私人的、「家國之內」（domestic）的空間。此時作者的鴉片使用，已非如先前僅為逸樂增能，而係習慣性的、為日益惡化的胃痛所常備的止痛藥。在〈鴉片之苦〉的序言中，作者描述其居住鴿子農舍（Dove Cottage）時，某夜偶遇馬來海員登門拜訪，而於山中出生長大的英國女僕應門時，兩人因互不理解對方的語言而對峙，直至女僕請來作者為其溝通。作者描述這英國女孩的美麗臉龐是「如此精緻的美好，伴隨著傲然自立的獨立態度」（*Works* 2: 56），相對於如「虎貓」般的馬來海員「蠟黃如膽汁的膚色」，以及其「小而熱切、不安份的眼睛」，以及「奴性般的手勢」以及對人「恭敬地崇拜」（*Works* 2: 57），在在都看出女僕對於亞洲語言的不理解，以及馬來海員的外貌乃至行為舉止，係如何令其倍感威脅。馬來海員「侵門踏戶」的舉止，不僅來自異國的陌生人實體上侵入作者的居家空間，也象徵了異文化進入英國的文化力量，以及為即將提及的、鴉片對於作者身體／精神的侵入，所預留伏筆。

在英國女僕與馬來水手間的遭遇之際，英國女僕相信作者身為知識份子，通曉「世界上所有語言」（all languages of the earth）（*Works* 2: 57），必能權充兩造間之翻譯，尤其是其所代表之英國與東方。然而，作者先是拖延這個機會（“I did not immediately go down” [*Works* 2: 57]），繼而發現自己實則無能為兩造傳遞訊息。然而，作者並未放棄「假裝」自己懂得馬來語且可為兩造溝通。他先是引用《伊利亞德》（*Iliad*）之片段，推測希臘與馬來亞的地理距離較為接近，盼望希臘語可協助其與馬來人溝通，但很快便意識到自己的失敗。有趣的是，作者在此聚焦的是自己身為「媒介」（medium），而非真正傳遞「訊息」（message）的可能性。學者厄茲普卡便指出，此亦成為作者與讀者關係之隱喻，因為作者在乎的始終是自己書寫所建立的「權威」（authority）不會遭受暴露或挑戰（Rzepka 4-16）。當作者的翻譯失敗，但馬來水手卻仍對作者「恭敬地崇拜」行禮如儀，作者在意的並非是溝通的可能性，而竟是「因此我在鄰人間挽救了自己的聲譽，因為馬來水手無法出賣這個秘密」（*Works* 2: 57）。作者無能居中翻譯馬來語與英文，以及馬來水手無法藉由言說洩漏作者的秘密，面對溝通上雙重的「無能」（incapability），作者唯一的溝通方式則是藉由餽贈馬來海員一丸鴉片。當馬來海員稍事休息，又即將上路時，作者基於認為對方為「東方人」（Orientalist），「必定熟悉鴉片的使用」（*Works* 2: 57），因此慷慨地贈與對方一丸鴉片；卻不料馬來人將鴉片丸分三份，囫圇吞下後便告辭離開。馬來人吞下足以致死的鴉片劑量，令作者感到焦慮萬分。如斯餽贈自相矛盾，既是禮物，亦是毒藥，因此引發作者高度焦慮，接連幾日都關注鄰近地區是否有馬來海員意外致死的消息，然

而最後亦不知其所終。雖然作者自我安慰，認為馬來海員必定安然無恙，且鴉片應能免除其遊蕩之苦，但心裡的愧疚與焦慮終究開始引發作者的噩夢。

作者的焦慮其來有自。在山中長大、不諳外語的女僕，象徵尚未接受都市化與帝國主義擴張的英國，其主體之「英國性」（Englishness）是純正的[6]；但馬來海員所隱喻之異文化的擴張，與女僕象徵的、傲然自立的英國性相互對峙時，暗示了帝國面對異文化不願退讓的強勢。而擔任兩者溝通翻譯的作者，雖然語言不通，卻假裝能與馬來海員相互理解。這除了暗示作者主體對於純正英國性的退讓，並因這樣的退讓，使其主體想像遭他者感染異化，是其終究不再純真。更令人玩味的是，當馬來海員欲離開之際，作者贈與馬來海員鴉片。作者對於餽贈的鴉片，除提及鴉片所提供之逸樂之能，更是強調了鴉片的毒物屬性。也因此，這樣的餽贈也顯示了主體的困惑。前述學者畢威爾認為，馬來海員的漫遊與疾病，其實正仿擬了德昆西年少在倫敦的自我流放與疾病。作者給予馬來海員之餽贈，顯示其愛憐遭鴉片感染的自己；然而作者所贈與足以致死之份量，則暗示其亟欲毀滅被感染的自己（Bewell 159-60）。筆者更認為，作者之所以亟欲加害馬來海員，除了馬來海員可能洩漏作者（在溝通上）的無能，正是因為象徵他者的馬來海員，具備漫遊與離開的「動能」，但定居於此的作者卻不再具備這樣的「動能」；也因此，唯有死亡才能使他者徹底噤聲，也才能阻絕他者的「動能」發展。然而，當作者的主體已遭鴉片效力影響，主體與他者也難以區分；作者選擇犧牲象徵他者的馬來海員，正意味著主體也犧牲了部分的主體性，棄絕了離開的「動能」。正因為如此，當作者的「動能」不再，作者的「才能」與「權能」也隨之犧牲。

因為棄絕「動能」，「才能」與「權能」也遭剝奪。這樣的焦慮與掙扎，一路延續到〈鴉片之苦〉。在此，鴉片不再具備增能之效，而是一再苛刻主體的能力。作者接二連三用了「軟弱的」（powerless）、「幼兒般」（infantine）、「愚蠢」（imbecility）、「靜止的」（dormant）、「無力」（incapacity）、以及「衰弱」（feebleness）等字眼（*Works* 2: 64-65），形容使用鴉片後的負面效用，其實是身心兼具的。相對於前文所論及，鴉片對於心智能力與身體移動力所增加之正面效用，於此都煙消雲散。作者

[6] 現代「英國」之概念，產生於 1707 年英格蘭與蘇格蘭議會合併之後。而英國在十八世紀的進程，意謂著都市化、工業化以及現代性的逐步生成。筆者此處談及女僕所代表的「純正英國性」，係欲強調德昆西對於英國「本土主義」（localism）的驕傲與情懷，藉此強化英國女僕與馬來海員的對比。前述學者希金斯也認為，德昆西當代之帝國發展，亟欲收編同化殖民地異文化。然則，德昆西所懷持之英國本土主義，常與這樣的發展相對立（Higgins 174）。因此，當作者再三強調英國女僕的姿態，其實係強化本土主義的優勢；而英國女僕與馬來海員的對峙，可視為德昆西自身對於本土主義與帝國主義發展的抗衡。

甚至明列出鴉片的負面影響，除明言鴉片令其「畏懼動用心智能力」、其效用往往也伴隨「焦慮與陰沉的憂鬱」而來，甚至影響其時間感與空間感（*Works* 2: 66）。因鴉片使用增加所產生的身體「禁錮」（imprisonment），使得作者的身體愈趨無能，精神狀態也為之動搖。這也回應作者初至倫敦之痛苦遭遇，當年作者因饑貧交迫而虛弱無力的身體也遭遇類似的禁錮感，而精神上的壓力也隨之而至。如筆者前論，當作者選擇棄絕「動能」，便反映在作者愈形虛弱的身體禁錮中，而不知其所蹤的馬來海員，其「動能」正是作者缺乏的，而缺乏「動能」的主體焦慮更加強化了他者的「動能」，更使其幻化為噩夢。耐人尋味的是，當馬來海員再度出現時，並非單打獨鬥，而是呼朋引伴而來。這些揮之不去的人像，竟是早年作者漫遊東倫敦貧民區所見識的臉龐（*Works* 2: 70）。當時作者具備離開以及再訪的「動能」，而生活物質條件缺乏貧瘠的居民們，被都市化以及社經階層的限制所禁錮；如今卻易地而處，主宰了作者的惡夢。換句話說，東倫敦與東方的連結在此更是顯而易見，而這也是為何在作者的認知中，「繁衍無度」、「群聚如雜草」的亞洲臉孔，具有逆襲作者英國性主體之能力。當他者具備「動能」，引渡作者「穿越」（transported）異度空間，（地理上隸屬非洲的）埃及、中國、印度的熱帶叢林與蟲鳥林獸，都被化約為主體不能完全理解的亞洲場景。在空間斷裂跳躍的噩夢中，作者有時感受自己被禁錮在塔峰或密室之中長達數世紀，他既是「祭司」亦是「偶像」，既是「被崇拜的」，卻亦是「被犧牲的」；有時則感覺自己被閉鎖於金字塔的石棺當中，與木乃伊及人面獅身像同處，且「遭鱷魚留下致命之吻」（*Works* 2: 71）。在作者的描繪中，洪水猛獸般的噩夢具備「動能」，遭他者異化過的主體，只能毫無抵禦力地任他者攜其來去，也因之產生「被崇拜」、「被犧牲」、「被禁錮」的被動語態。這些攜帶作者穿越異度空間的「動能」，正是作者過去擁有、如今卻失去的「能」。面對高度異化後的主體，不再是原初的主體，也因之作者不再具有「才能」或「權能」。在作者的噩夢間，或在南亞或在中國，其「生活模式」、「禮儀」與「憎惡的界線」與「缺乏同情」，都讓作者驚駭莫名，亦非其理智可分析，作者甚至以與「瘋子」以及「野蠻動物」共存的生活描述之（*Works* 2: 70-72）。這種「共存」的模式，正是作者失去主體主動「動能」的最精確描述。此外，除了精神上地理空間的來去，作者一再被噩夢撼動的情緒，更是取代了身體在實體空間所實踐的「動能」。換言之，正是因為作者的身體被禁錮，使得「動能」發生變異，而以精神幻象與情緒上的被動「動能」（being moved）取代之；也因此，作者的情緒既是「憎惡」（loathing）又是「著迷」（fascinated）（*Works* 2: 71），因為在主體與他者的價值交換中，他失去了所有的「能」，面對自我只能困惑以對。在愛恨鼎峙與失能的掙扎中，唯一救贖是作者的孩子，其純潔與童真殷殷召喚，才能讓作

者自惡夢中醒來。東方夢魘之可怖，對照英國孩童的純真臉龐，讓作者淚流滿面，以親吻自己的孩子，才能短暫消解惡夢侵擾。

作者因失能掙扎所產生之噩夢，終究要訴諸「能」的重新獲得，才能消解噩夢侵擾。如同筆者前述，安的缺席開啟了作者的道德內疚與自責，鴉片則替代安做為主體的慾望對象，開始影響作者身心。因此，作者在〈鴉片之苦〉的最後部分，在某個復活節早晨，在英國的山間，夢見了尋覓多年卻不得見的安。安的再度出現，除了「復活」的隱喻象徵了慾望對象的回歸，也終究預示了鴉片效力的消解。值得注意的是，作者敘述此夢場景仍是相當「東方」(oriental)，仿若其「幼時曾看過的耶路撒冷」印象。在聖城與復活節所象徵的時空之間，安昂然佇立其中。作者激動之餘，對安說道：「我終於找到你了」；然而雙唇「未受污染」(unpolluted)的安，不發一言，寧靜自立，雙眼滿是淚水，表情甚至有些「肅穆」，作者凝觀之餘亦感「畏怯」(awe)(*Works* 2: 73)。在這樣具有高度宗教意味的場景裡，安的重現也象徵了作者英國主體的回歸，這也說明了為何作者凝視安所感受的畏怯，因為安是純潔、未受污染的英國性主體，而作者當下已是遭鴉片異化過的失能主體。當一轉眼，安的影像再次消逝，鴉片引渡兩人穿越時空，重回十七年前，重新夜遊倫敦街道，兩人並肩行走，復歸純潔少年。當作者的原初慾望對象回歸，主體重新獲得部分「動能」，因而他者又再度被棄絕。作者自述，在夢中重見安之後，鴉片的效力逐漸褪弱。某夜夢裡，在震耳欲聾的樂聲中，作者「動也不動地躺著」(lay inactive)，經歷了宗教儀式般的場景，才終究揮別了鴉片的夢魘(*Works* 2: 74)。

《自白》中作者所書寫的鴉片，除了是其筆下所描繪的「輕便的狂喜」(portable ecstasies)，更是其鍾意的「運輸工具」(vehicle of transport)(*Works* 2: 43)。有趣的是，"transport" 在此並不單指實體空間距離的「運輸」與移動，也包含了情緒上的「欣喜若狂」。也因此，「輕便」與「運輸」兩個詞彙，都包含了實體的行動動能，而「狂喜」與「欣喜若狂」則說明了情緒動能。[7] 艾迪的《移動》一書，亦揭示了「動能」的多重定義，並不僅囿於由身體或實體空間所實踐的「動能」，亦包含了精神空間與感官所發生「情動力」(emotion)(162-72)。筆者認為，《自白》一書中，鴉片所引發的藥效主要係提供作者「動能」，尤其是「地理動能」(geographical mobility)：個體於地理空間移動的能力(the ability to move around the geography)。[8] 在〈鴉片之樂〉中，鴉片的增能(empowerment)，

[7] 前述學者伯格斯亦持類似看法。伯格斯注意到 "transport" 除了「運輸」之外，亦指「激烈的情緒」(vehement emotion)。詳見 Burgess 234。

[8] 在此，「地理動能」(geographical mobility)有別於人文地理學所談、著重人口移居所用詞彙「地域流動」(geographic mobility)。筆者需說明，本文所談及之「地理」(geography)，正如同此

不僅增強作者聆賞音樂的「才能」，甚至能增加驅策作者漫遊城市空間的「動能」，並賦予其出入貧民區、發表意見的「權能」。以此觀之，「地理動能」增強的是作者主體的主動「動能」，強化作者在都市空間的移動性。然而在〈鴉片之苦〉中，鴉片在被作者服用之後，作者的本體產生變異，適應上的困難與困惑也應運而生。當鴉片負面效力漸次加強，所衍生的禁錮感，固然讓作者的身體失去主動的能力，僅能採取被動語態；但鴉片此時所賦予產生的「地理動能」，將作者的心神意志運輸至陌生的文化語境，成為挾持作者心智的動力，因此「動能」與「才能」的意義在此產生重疊。作者的主體不再產生主動力量，而象徵他者的鴉片強迫作者的本體適應，因此在地理動能的驅使下，主體只能採取被動姿態，使其適應上的困難與困惑更加明顯，「才能」與「權能」也都漸次被剝奪。兩相對照下，〈鴉片之樂〉的地理動能，係以身體與行走，收編實體空間；而〈鴉片之苦〉中的地理動能，則是藉由鴉片效力所產生之「動能」，穿越抽象的精神空間，進行文化繪製（cultural mapping）。因此，在〈鴉片之苦〉中的地理動能，當作者遭鴉片效力再三穿越時空，使其在文化與地理上混雜，消弭遠東與近東間之差異。作者無意也無能（incapable）精確理解眾文化間之差異，而將亞洲文化的差異性，化約成籠統且單一扁平的、相對於歐洲中心文化的「他者」與「異文化」。當作者寫下「長久以來，鴉片的帝國建構在歡愉的幻咒之上；然而正是亟欲棄絕其折磨的想望，反而更讓鴉片統御」（*Works* 2: 74），更揭示了他者的「權能」凌駕於作者之上，作者的身心只能臣服且無能為力。當鴉片最後允許作者在夢中主體召回慾望對象，並藉由最後的時空穿越，令作者喚回部分主體的主動「動能」，作者招認，雖其試圖戒斷鴉片，但直至《自白》篇章結束，其仍受鴉片影響，也揭示其終究仍未尋回真正完整的主動「動能」。換言之，《自白》一書完整揭露了作者如何藉由鴉片增能，轉向失能、無能的擺盪與掙扎，雖然最終召回部分的「動能」，但在此過程中喪失的「才能」與「權能」，使作者稍後在面對亞洲他者所產生的困惑與掙扎時，更加不留情面，也更加暴烈。

事實上，德昆西對於亞洲題材的關注，自《自白》起便愈形增加，而這些亞洲（廣義的東方）或許各有獨自風采，卻更常在充滿歐洲中心（Eurocentric）的主觀意識臆想下顯得面目模糊。例如，在《自白》首次出版後的兩年，德昆西對德哲康德（Immanuel Kant）作品於 1764 年出版的作品《美感與崇高感的若干觀察》（*Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*）當中的〈論國家特色〉（"Of the National Characteristics"）進行重譯。雖然此文意欲比較各國的美學觀，談及東方

門科的「自然地理學」與「人文地理學」的兩個研究範疇，並不僅限於實體的地理空間，亦包含了人文地理的理解與想像。

亞洲諸國時，當中「最為尊貴的」阿拉伯人，雖可視為「亞洲的西班牙人」，但其美學觀仍是傾向「野蠻與不自然的浪漫」（the barbaresque and the unnaturally romantic）（*Works* 4: 155）。值得注意的是，在亞洲諸國的描述中，康德之原著，對於當時歐洲盛讚中國的美學觀點產生質疑；然而德昆西的譯本，在處理中國的部分時，擅自將原著的註釋，挪移入正文內，甚至擅加若干如「至為粗鄙的無知」（grossest ignorance）（*Works* 4: 157）等詞，強化原文對於中國的篇幅與負面觀點。類似的情形尚可見於 1837 年，德昆西的另篇散文〈喀慕克塔塔人的反叛〉（"The Revolt of the Kalmuck Tartars; or, Flight of the Kalmuck Khan and His People from the Russian Territories to the Frontiers of China"）。此文亦非德昆西原創，而係改寫自德國作家伯格曼（Benjamin Bergmann）的作品。[9] 此文講述西蒙古最後的可汗渥巴錫，因俄羅斯向中亞地區擴張勢力，迫使其率領本部人民東遷，企圖回到祖先的家園，但一連串的天災人禍後，只剩下約三分之一的人民成功重回蒙古西部，並在承德避暑山莊接受乾隆皇帝的接待與冊封，並移居裕勒都斯草原。在德昆西筆下，這一次的遷徙幾乎帶有寓言式且悲劇性的色彩。喀慕克民族屬於「中間者」（in-betweeners）：政治上，喀慕克民族既不屬於俄羅斯，亦不屬於中國；宗教上，既非基督徒亦非回教徒；種族上，既非高加索人，亦非蒙古人種。這樣進退維谷的尷尬處境，使得喀慕克人的旅程顯得格外具有意義。在這篇散文的最後數段，德昆西寫道：

> 〔喀慕克人〕他們的處境從此不再相同。他們的社會繁榮在質量上獲得很大的改變。他們不再是單純的游牧民族，而是成了主要依賴農業的情況，社會地位上大為升遷……在政治特權上也獲得很大改善，毋須服役。以此看來，喀慕克人當前的處境都只能算是得利的。但唯一的缺點在於，因喀慕克人的東遷，遙遠的距離使其永久失去皈依基督教的機會。在當前，沒有基督教信仰，喀慕克民族便失去走向真正文明的道途。（*Works* 9: 206）

對喀慕克人而言，游牧生活的遷徙與「動能」，與生活息息相關。因為季節遷徙或資源分佈所必要的逐水草而居，是群體具有目的性的、主動的「動能」。然而，在此文中的喀慕克人，由於政治勢力壓迫而強制產生的、不情願的遷徙，「動能」不再是主動的，而是轉為被動。在文章的發展脈

[9] Pickering & Chatto 版本在此文收錄前的短序中，指出此文脫胎於德國作家伯格曼於 1804 至 1805 年出版的作品 *Nomadische Streifereien unter den Kalmücken in den Jahren 1802 und 1803*。此書於 1825 年譯為法文版 *Le Voyage de Benjamin Bergmann chez les Kalmucks*。德昆西的寫作主要大幅度改寫自法文版，並參酌若干早期耶穌會教士的作品。請參酌 *Works* 9: 171 的說明。

絡下，喀慕克人面對遷徙，身體的「疲憊與飢渴」、行動的「不便與苦痛」，甚至與其他民族間所引發的戰爭，幾乎使其滅族（perish）（*Works* 9: 187-88），更使其「動能」在這不情願的遷徙中被再三消耗。在敘事旅程的最後階段，當「動能」幾乎完全耗盡時，最後的冊封與定居則顯示了「動能」的不再可能（Adey 40-71）。因此，德昆西選譯喀慕克民族的遷徙也值得尋思。喀慕克人的旅程幾可視為猶太人出走埃及（Exodus）的仿擬之作，只是喀慕克民族最後所定居的，並非應許之地，而僅是庇護、依附而非真正的救贖。真正的救贖之所以不可能，正是因為在地理位置上，喀慕克人遠離了基督教文明的範圍。當喀慕克人歸化於中國，接受中國作為政治實體與文化的庇護，即便中國文明、政治實體以及軍事實力優於喀慕克民族；但與基督教文明所涵蓋的歐洲列國相較之，中國仍是屈居劣勢的。換言之，若以作者所採用的歐洲與基督教中心論的觀點視之，中國文化並非真正的知識產出地。因此，喀慕克民族的遷徙「動能」，終歸是種妥協，因為其雖接受冊封、獲得穩定的生活，卻失去了傳統以及游牧生活的自由與「動能」；雖獲得中國的政治庇護，卻非真正由歐洲與基督教中心所認可的文明與救贖。也因此，由於喀慕克歸順的中國文化並非「真正文明」，在德昆西眼裡，喀慕克民族的遷徙，雖然看似在政治與社經地位獲得賦能（enabled）的可能性，但實則係喀慕克民族流離顛沛、無所依歸的失能誌。

上述兩篇文章所處理的德昆西之書寫，雖以亞洲為題材，卻以翻譯改寫為主，中國在當中也僅算是聊備一格的配角，或曇花一現的對比。在《自白》中，中國僅僅是作者噩夢難醒間的場景；在重譯康德裡，中國在歐洲所引領的風尚，不過是言過其實、不能理解的「愚行」（fooleries）（*Works* 4: 157）；在〈喀慕克〉一文中，中國也祇是提供庇護的政治勢力，甚至不具備歐洲認可的、「真正的」文明。然而，在繞行中亞與南亞之後，德昆西終究得前往這個令他高度焦慮的國度：中國。事實上，中國始終是德昆西持續關注的題材，也是他著墨最為詳盡的。德昆西於 1822 年所作的〈鴉片與中國問題〉（“The Opium and the China Question”），便是德昆西首次完全專注於中國主題的篇幅。英國社會在歷經 1792 至 94 年馬戛爾尼（Lord Macartney），以及 1816 至 18 年的安姆赫斯特（Lord Amherst）兩次使節團出使失敗後，英國輿論對於中國態度丕變，從尊崇中國文明，轉而鄙視中國的外交與經濟政策。中國此時亦採取鎖國政策，有意阻絕外來文化。值得注意的是此文雖於 1822 年寫就，卻推遲至 1840 年才發表。在寫作與發表中的十八年間，中英外交關係有了急遽的變化。此間，英國東印度公司在印度的據點勢力迅速擴張，中國成為其於遠東地區最關鍵也最重要的市場。東印度公司藉賄賂中國地方官員進行走私，使鴉片在中國沿海地區的需求廣泛增加，藉以平衡歐洲對於中國商品貨物之

高度需求所製造出來的貿易逆差。1893 年林則徐的禁煙活動，以及義律（Captain Charles Elliot）袒護鴉片走私，再加上英國水手醉後打死尖沙咀村民林維喜等近因，終究使得中英兩國在〈鴉片〉一文出版兩個月後，發生了第一次鴉片戰爭。〈鴉片〉一文並非高度原創的作品，充其量可視為德昆西對於當代英國知識份子，以及十八世紀以降，諸多歐洲知識份子對於中國想像的整理。除了出使中國所受到的外交挫敗新觀點之外，德昆西承繼笛福（Daniel Defoe）筆下中國與歐洲間商業貿易的觀點，認為中國與外來商人的貨物交易多採白銀或貴金屬；若英國持續迷戀與中國商業交易或走私，英國所產的貴金屬將被中國攫取，此舉甚或嚴重影響英國經濟。[10] 雖說笛福的觀點主要立論於當時歐洲對於中國瓷器進口之風潮，而德昆西的論述主要奠基於十九世紀的鴉片走私，兩位作家對中英貿易利益失衡相當焦慮，擔心削弱國力。面對這樣的焦慮，德昆西將中國貶為「微不足道的文明」（petty civilisation），並比較世界各國的經濟實力，將英國尊為上位，卻將中國視為在各國中政經地位最低的（*Works* 11: 545-46）。德昆西且說「停滯的中國，毫無動力，在本質上毫無改變的希望」（*Works* 11: 546）。德昆西認為中國「無能擁有真正文明」，在禮儀與技藝工法上僅是「半文雅／半精緻的」，而在道德上則是「無可救藥的野蠻」（incapable of a true civilization, semi-refined in manners and mechanic arts, but incurably savage in the moral sense）（*Works* 11: 555）。因此，英國必須明確地「對中國進行軍事遠征」（*Works* 11: 556）。在這裡，縱使不難理解德昆西亟欲尋求縮減貿易逆差、或是強調中國政經與文化體制僵化的說法，但其於文中的呼告，恰恰展現了中國並非徹底地失能；或更精確一點描述，中國打從一開始便是「無能」的。德昆西對於中國「無能」的看法，更是一路延續到 1857 年寫作的政治散文〈中國（一）〉（“China (I)”）與〈中國（二）〉（“China (II)”）。〈中國（一）〉無甚可觀，大抵是重述中英兩國自馬戛爾尼使節團失敗以來的外交糾葛，但〈中國（二）〉中，德昆西進一步持續對中國無能的描述。在這篇散文中，德昆西建立本體與他者的寫法昭然若揭，一再強調兩者區別。在政治實力、經濟、憲政體制、宗教、文學等層面，作者認為相較於英國國力的「雄偉」，中國毫無見識；更有甚者，作者將中國比擬成一具龐大、罹癌的身體，但更可悲的，中國甚至「不具有讓癌細胞擴張的部分」（*Works* 18: 132），而面對這具槁木死灰、母親般的身體，中國人們根本無從冀望獲得母親的溫柔慈愛，亦無法尊崇母親。換言之，中國做為身體的象徵，是一具沒有器官、沒有精力，也是染病、瀕死、無能的身體，而作者得以大聲疾呼征服這具他者的身體。

[10] 關於笛福討論中英之間的經濟面向，可參酌 Starr。

從以上的文本分析，筆者發現，當德昆西作品所處理的「亞洲」與「東方」，在意義上經常是毫無區隔的，並且在歐洲中心以及基督教中心的主導下，「亞洲」與「東方」也缺乏地理實體的本質，文化想像上也缺乏景深而顯得扁平。換言之，正如同德昆西的文學批評觀點所宣稱的，「知識文學」（literature of knowledge）與「力量文學」（literature of power）兩者間的區別，「知識文學」的主要功能是「教導」（to teach）讀者，而「力量文學」的主要功能則是「感動」（to move）讀者（*Works* 16: 332-53）。以此觀之，對於「東方」與「亞洲」的題材，德昆西從來就不欲訴諸智識上的真正理解，而是藉助書寫此題材，展現情緒與精神上的情動力。若以筆者此處所探討的「能」觀之，作者在這一系列的亞洲主題之書寫裡，主題能夠藉由書寫達成「能」的展現。正因如此，作者的「能」並非恆定的單一指涉，往往更是交纏駁雜、莫衷一是。正如《自白》所展現的，始於生理的「動能」，總會進而影響心智活動的「才能」；而身體與精神狀態，亦可成為居住空間、都市與帝國的縮影，也有了政經活動的干預。相對而言，亞洲的他者在德昆西書寫與主觀意識的主導下，始終缺乏真正的主動「動能」。在《自白》中，他者唯一展現的主動「動能」，來自於主體噩夢中的地理動能與「空間位移」（displacement）。然而，在重譯康德時，中國在其筆下成為停滯不前的文明，失去發展的「動能」，無法跨越的文化藩籬，使中國無法提供歐洲中心文明可理解的美感經驗；在〈喀慕克〉一文中，中國所提供的政治軍事庇護，僅僅是喀慕克民族失能後的居所，而非基督教文明所認可的應許之地；在〈鴉片〉文中，中國具有可輸出歐洲所需物質的經濟實力，卻因鎖國與故步自封，造成中英貿易逆差，輔以英國出使中國之外交挫敗，因而遭描繪成為野蠻的、失能的民族，亟需英國以遠征武力迫使其產生改變；在〈中國〉二文中，中國則更進一步淪為一具無能的母體，無以養育萬千子女，更成為英國軍事與帝國主義下的刀俎魚肉。

在這樣「能」的多樣化與變異中，也許可以回應到貝若以降諸多學者對於德昆西書寫亞洲的討論。例如李斯克（Nigel Leask）探究德昆西對於東方的異族恐懼（xenophobia），注意到亞洲相對於擴張的大英帝國而言，是個懶散的存在，雖是個可供帝國侵略的對象；但對於當時急速擴張的帝國而言，亞洲的狀態更像一則提醒，尤其是幅員遼闊、人口眾多的中國，是如何因驕傲自滿而疏於精進、停滯不前，而輕易被歐洲文明超越。除貝若與李斯克的精神與病理學分析之外，基森（Peter J. Kitson）則認為，德昆西找上亞洲作為其代罪羔羊，與十八世紀興起的人類學以及種族理論不無關係。基森認為，當代盛行一時的、白人優越於亞洲人的種族理論，「凌駕於宗教、經濟、以及商業論述」（213）。而當代亞洲人種的論述，對於「文明的中國人」以及「野蠻的韃靼人」間，也從過

去十八世紀兩者間涇渭分明的分野，逐漸統合成蒙古種族的一支。基森的觀點在奇邁可（Michael Keevak）的《成為黃種人：一部東亞人由白變黃的歷史》（*Becoming Yellow: A Short History of Racial Thinking*）獲得更全面性的闡述與證實。奇邁可認為，在十八世紀末期由布盧門巴赫（Blumenbach）與邁納斯（Christoph Meiners）的倡議下，將世界人種主要區分為高加索人與蒙古人種。歐洲由高加索人種覆蓋，而亞洲（尤其是東亞）則被列為「蒙古人種」的區域。有趣的是，在東亞國家被列為「蒙古人種」後，整個東亞地區都顯露出「蒙古人種」的性格特色：「蒙古人種」仍具有四處遊蕩、具備潛在危險性的性格，並隨時可能捲土重來。十三世紀時蒙古人西征建立的帝國，涵蓋整個中亞至近東，甚至少部分的東歐國家。雖然絕大部分的歐洲領土並未遭蒙古人侵略，但歐洲對於蒙古人野蠻原始的恐懼，來自於蒙古人種侵略的高度「動能」，而統御的「權能」也隨之而生。然而，當蒙古帝國不再，加上地理大發現後，由歐洲主導更全面性的、更海陸兼具的遠征探險，顯示了歐洲在智識與技術上，超越並取代亞洲當時所具備的「動能」。在歐洲中心的政治、經濟與軍事都愈形發達的情況下，對於亞洲的想像僅剩「未開化」與「原始野蠻」等想像，而這樣的想像更落實在十八世紀多種商賈紀錄、旅人遊記，以及傳教士信函中。[11] 這些紀錄，也包含了對於「蒙古人種」的外貌進行嚴格的批判，其中也包括將喀慕克人的外貌形容為「醜陋」與「畸形」。而對於這些由內在性格的評論出發，形成系統性的、對於外在生理特徵的批判，脫離了十八世紀部分歸咎於氣候或文化的觀點，進而轉向更符合當代科學與種族論述的角度：遺傳。以此論之，「蒙古人種」所涵蓋的地理範圍包括整個東亞（以及少部分的南亞），而遠東國家的種族特色，也因之常與遲緩與落後的描述相關連。奇邁可也提到，這樣的刻板印象，亦與西方對中國（或泛東亞）文化的喜愛與藝術風格的迷戀逐漸消退，「中國迷戀」（Sinophilic）逐漸轉為「中國恐懼」（Sinophobic）。即便當時歐洲普遍的理解都是東亞文明較歐洲文明先一步達到輝煌境界，但長久以來已失去前進的動力而停滯不前。[12]

以當代的科學思潮觀之，「動能」（以及應運而生的「才能」與「權能」）所激化作者的焦慮，也許更能說明德昆西針對亞洲主題書寫的持續

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[11] 史密瑟司特（Paul Smethurst）亦提出觀點，認為旅行寫作（無論目的是宗教、商業或是軍事）為歐洲中心的西方知識界探索未知、提供「動能」（mobility），並且回饋給當代的歐洲帝國的中心，進而將知識作出更有系統性的整理。獲取知識的行徑得到動能，想像與慾望驅使更多旅行寫作的發生。由歐洲中心所代表的西方，成為動能、科學、與現代化進步的代名詞，而「非西方」的世界則僅剩歷史與地理的「**靜態**」（*stasis*）（1-18）。

[12] 關於黃種人的論述，請卓參 Keevak。關於十八世紀歐洲對中國風的迷戀與轉向，已有諸多著作細加討論。例如 David Porter 在 2001 年的 *Ideographia* 以及 2010 年的 *The Chinese Taste in Eighteenth-Century England* 都有精彩論述，在此不加贅述。

關注。更精確而言，筆者認為，在大都會積極擴張、帝國亟欲向外征服的「動能」帶動下，德昆西的書寫，也許更反映了作者的主體，在面對個人、都市、國家、帝國的多重「能」的展現下，必須隨之而「動」的焦慮。換言之，在充滿「能」的當代氛圍中，「停滯」（immobile）與「靜態」（stasis）所象徵的「失去動能」（motionless; immobility），終究可能成為「無才」（incapability），進而淪為「失勢」（powerless）。也因此，無論是《自白》、重譯康德、〈喀慕克〉、或中國主題的系列書寫，一旦「停滯」，就註定了「無能」以及「失勢」。當作者的身體從放逐或漫遊的「動能」走向禁錮，他便失去了智識的「才能」與發聲的「權能」；對康德的譯文中，中國正是因為文化上的停滯，而成為愚蠢的文明；在〈喀慕克〉文中，一旦定居失去了在地理空間上移動的「動能」，喀慕克族也缺乏邁向真正（基督教）文明的可能性；在中國系列的書寫中，中國更是因為文化上的故步自封與停滯不前，使中國的政治、軍事、經濟都缺乏能動力，只能淪為歐洲「動能」下，失勢的、承受列強魚肉的慾望對象。在當時科學與種族論述之盛行，在帝國的擴張下，對於未知的探索充滿了將之收編、系統化的驅力。因此，在德昆西的亞洲書寫中，殖民主義的方興未艾充滿「動能」，無論是政治、經濟、軍事或文化上，都有向外的驅力；因此亞洲，尤其是在外交上令英國再三吃鱉受挫的、靜滯不前的中國，便成為帝國陰影下，作者對於「動能」焦慮的代罪羔羊。

綜觀德昆西的亞洲書寫，不僅是英國主體與他者的對話。更重要的，也許是揭露作者對於個體停滯、無才與失勢的焦慮，更提示了「能」—尤其是「動能」—在當代愈形舉足輕重之重要性。在藥物使用下，藥效與個體身心的作用；在都市發展中，個人與群體的交會，以及社經階級的區分與流動；在殖民主義的興盛時，英國（甚或歐洲）與東方的遭遇，以及亟欲對亞洲進行編制的種族與科學論述之興起等等，都有「能」居於其中，或為衝突，或為磋商。也因此，這些交會、遭遇、作用與興起，在在都顯示了「動能」在當代獨有的溝通與輸運經驗，並藉此展現出「才能」與「權能」的多重樣貌。也因之，德昆西的書寫，並不僅是為現代讀者掌握當代的高度「動能」，而更是反映作者的主體如何調度己身之「能」，以因應時代的脈動。藉由鴉片的媒介所引發身體的放逐與漫遊，或心智想像的輸運力量，作者的書寫不僅是主體與他者間的對話，也是主體面對異動頻繁的當代世界，所必須採取的溝通形式。換句話說，作者所欲藉書寫克服的焦慮，正是憂心面對世界高度「動能」的生產下，己身缺乏相對應之抗力。因此，筆者認為，唯有藉由探究論述德昆西面對亞洲主題書寫「能」的多樣性，才能使作者的英國主體與亞洲他者間，在溝通與輸運的衝突與協商中，呈現完整的系統化脈絡。

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Leslie Elizabeth Eckel and Clare Frances Elliott, eds, *The Edinburgh Companion to Atlantic Literary Studies* (Edinburgh Companions to Literature), Endinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2016. 432pp. £150.00. ISBN 139781474402941.

Linda K. Hughes and Sarah R. Robbins, eds, *Teaching Transatlanticism: Resources for Teaching Nineteenth-Century Anglo-American Print Culture*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2015. 312pp. £90.00. ISBN 139780748694457.

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While it is almost always risky to speak in hyperbole, one seems apropos here. Never, in its short history, has Transatlantic Studies (now Atlantic Studies) seemed so necessary. The refugee crisis and Brexit were the most visible of the early warning signs of the Euro-American retreat from trans-anything, a Hungarian-style hard right away from engagement and nuanced complexity towards closed borders and open racism. Trump is Brexit writ large, like his licensed name on the buildings and businesses he does not actually own. His is the braying voice of narcissistic American exceptionalism, the embodiment of xenophobic post-postmodern Know-Nothingism. Instead of "discursive mobility," Trump offers walls and the enclosed space and reduced attention span of a tweet. Instead of Ralph Waldo Emerson's "energized space and its currents," Trump and his Tory counterpart (and first Transatlantic visiting head of state) Theresa May offer Fortress America and Little Englandism.

In his magisterial introduction to *The Edinburgh Companion to Atlantic Literary Studies*, Paul Giles charts a very different course: the rise and fall of a distinctive national, and nationalist, American literature against which "Let's Make America Great Again" sounds not so much nostalgic as cynically manipulative, not unlike the verbal eruptions of Uncle Sam in Robert Coover's Rabelaisian masterwork, *The Public Burning* (1977) which Coover wrote while living in England and intended as a sardonic Bicentennial birthday gift to his home country. Given the central role that slavery played in jump-starting Transatlantic Studies (Paul Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic*), it

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seems a further sign of these parlous times that the only African-American in Trump's cabinet has recently reimagined slaves as immigrants aspiring to a better life in America (presumably "by any means necessary"). The interdependence that Atlantic Studies seeks out (Elizabeth DeLoughrey's "routes and roots") and that the two collections under review so ably demonstrate sharply contrasts with the current essentialism that combines the worst of neo-liberalism and blinkered ethnic nationalism. US literature, as institutionalized in anthologies such as the Norton, which has grown to near-archive size—and various literary histories of the US—now seem far less authoritative than before, in keeping with—and in keeping up with—challenges to authority in all forms and to an understanding of literature as less an expression of an essential national character and more the result of complex as well as contingent forces.

Liberation from essentialist and exceptionalist views of American and Anglophone literature is not without risks. One is succumbing to "the innate provincialism that scholarship always seems to foster" which was evident in early resistance to Transatlanticism and to which it, as decidedly interdisciplinary in theory and in method, would seem to be immune. Indeed, as several essays in the two collections show, the very term Transatlantic has been deemed parochial in emphasizing the US-UK relationship and in failing to account for factors from outside the Atlantic which have influenced that relationship. As Giles points out, "Atlantic literary studies now carries a wide global resonance" (12). "Planetary perspectives," "hybrid aspects," and "global networks" are very much in Transatlanticism's favor, but they also hint at a second risk. This is not the provincialism to which all critical approaches tend, but alignment with the globalization against which 2016 saw such a violent and widespread reaction on the part not just of ideologues and opportunists but of those who benefitted least or not at all from cosmopolitan capitalism. The third risk is perhaps best seen as an opportunity: the need to make Atlantic Studies more politically engaged. Atlantic Studies is already implicitly political, but because it mainly looks back to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it risks becoming or being seen as merely antiquarian and in this way susceptible to the same criticism leveled by Emerson, himself often the subject of Transatlantic studies: "Our age is retrospective. It builds the sepulchres of the fathers." Having established a loose methodology, an evolving underlying theory and a geographically expanding range, Atlantic

studies would do well to devote more attention to contemporary texts and cultural phenomena.

To indicate where Atlantic Studies should go is not to criticize where the two collections under review have just gone. Just the opposite, and not just because the individual essays are all of high quality and make noteworthy contributions to the field. Especially welcome are the essays in the *Edinburgh Companion* that deal with contemporary topics: Sinead Moynahan's on Colm Toibin's *Brooklyn* in relation to return migration at the time it was written rather than the time it is set; Heidi Slettedahl Macpherson's on contemporary American novels and the problem of defining the US in an age of "leaking borders"; Catherine Morley's on the post-9/11 novel; and Christopher Gair's on the transformation of pop music from ephemera to art in the 1960s. Gair's essay brings to mind other areas for Atlanticists to explore, including screen, small and large; Sarah Street's *Transatlantic Crossings: British Feature Films in the United States* (2002) being an early example. The essays on 19th century environmental journalism, urban reform movements, feminist periodicals and celebrity, gender and sexuality point to other topics worth pursuing in a more contemporary setting. Three especially stand out: Leslie Eckel's on the radically different utopias imagined by nineteenth century black abolitionists and colleagues, Martin R. Delaney and Frederick Douglass; Juliet Shields's on North American poets who used elements of pastoral and georgic to "contrast the social ideals of their new settlements with Goldsmith's portrayal of English economic disparity and moral corruption" in *The Deserted Village*, and Eve Tavor Bannett's on imitation and originality in relation to nationalism and exceptionalism.

As its title indicates, the *Teaching Transatlanticism* volume provides practical suggestions and models for designing and implementing courses, both graduate and undergraduate. The subtitle, "Resources for Teaching Nineteenth-Century Anglo-American Print Culture," deliberately narrows the chronological focus but does so in a way that not only connects Transatlanticism to US higher education's current emphasis on global awareness but also proves especially suggestive and adaptable to twentieth and twenty-first century topics and literary media. Here are just a few of the collection's many highlights. There is sound advice on the use and advantages of digital databases—and their limitations in that they provide access to texts separate from their material form. Kate Flint reminds us that the term

"Anglo-American" is misleading in that it continues to give Canada the short end of the Transatlantic stick.[1] "Print Culture" redirects attention away from narrowly text-based analysis (that had characterized the American new criticism and that is again the focus in the widely adopted Common Core in the US) and towards contextual matters as Andrew Taylor demonstrates so well in his chapter on Herman Melville's *Israel Potter*, which Taylor reads in relation, in part, to *Putnam*'s, which published it, and *Putnam*'s relationship to the older, much more politically conservative *Harper's*. In his essay on creating an undergraduate version of a seminar on Race in Nineteenth Century Transatlantic Print Culture, Daniel Hack pairs texts such as Douglass's *Narrative* and Shelley's *Frankenstein* as part of a much broader attempt to have students approach texts and their meanings as mobile in time and space: "How does attention to the transnational circulation, reception, and afterlife of literary texts alter our understanding of those texts themselves, of literary history, of the nature of creativity and authorship, and of the cultural work of literature?" The editors make a similar point about Atlantic studies itself: about "opening up the ever-larger questions about where, exactly, the boundaries of transatlanticism start and stop" and bringing these questions into the classroom. The collection, which includes a companion website, also brings in the voices of students who took the Transatlantic Studies courses at Rutgers and Texas Christian University, where the editors, one a specialist in British literature the other in American joined forces to create their course and now this immensely useful collection.

The covers of these two collections underscore the concerns mentioned above: on the *Edinburgh Companion* a map of the Atlantic Ocean currents and on *Teaching Transatlanticism* the Eastern Telegraph Company's system map, with its extensive connections across the Atlantic and Europe to India and China as well. It is inevitable that just as Transatlantic Studies has expanded its range across space to encompass the entire Atlantic and beyond, Atlantic Studies will continue to expand its range across time to deal more extensively with more contemporary literary issues and their wider cultural political contexts and consequences.

[1] As *Beyond "Understanding Canada": Transnational Perspectives on Canadian Literature* demonstrates, the term Canadian literature requires additional scrutiny as well, especially from an Atlantic Studies perspective (ed. Melissa Tanti and Jeremy Haynes, U of Alberta P, 2017).

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J. Michelle Coghlan, *Sensational Internationalism: The Paris Commune and the Remapping of American Memory in the Long Nineteenth Century*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2016. 228pp. $82.39. ISBN 9781474411202.

Woody Brown[*]

The failure of Western neoliberalism has had many deleterious effects, of which perhaps the most terrifying has been the resurgence of fascism, ethnonationalism, chauvinism, and other hateful facets of the extreme right wing. Their reintroduction into the mainstream of political discourse, however, has effectively reinvigorated a leftism that had grown docile during the impatient years of relative domestic stability in the West. J. Michelle Coghlan's *Sensational Internationalism: The Paris Commune and the Remapping of American Memory in the Long Nineteenth Century* could not have arrived at a better time. The book, which won the 2017 Arthur Miller Institute First Book Prize, deftly connects the memory of the Paris Commune and the profound effects it had on contemporary American literary and political discourse with the transatlantic state of affairs after Occupy Wall Street, Brexit, and the election of Trump.

Coghlan begins with explicit reference to "recent events—in particular, scenes from Zuccotti park in the fall of 2011," in order to approach the Paris Commune of 1871, a revolutionary government that was established by radical socialists following the fall of Paris during the Franco-Prussian War (1). Though the relation between the two events might not seem self-evident, Coghlan's research explores the curiously potent specter of the Paris Commune in leftist discourse and activism throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. While she reads literary texts like the work of Henry James, she also analyzes popular fiction of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (e.g. Edward King's *Under the Red Flag*, G. A. Henty's *A Woman of the Commune*, and *The Werewolf of Paris* by Guy Endore) and other forms of cultural production such as plays, periodical poems, tableaux vivants, and cycloramas. Coghlan's decision to broaden the scope of her investigation in this manner has produced an account of the reverberating impacts of the Paris Commune that is exhaustive, informative, and

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compelling.

The first chapter, "Framing the Pétroleuse: Postbellum Poetry and the Visual Culture of Gender Panic," examines the unprecedented destabilization of gender roles presented by "the figure of the female petroleum-thrower or pétroleuse laying waste to the city" (24). Beginning with the comparison of Verena Tarrant in James's *The Bostonians* to "some feminine firebrand of Paris revolutions, erect on a barricade," Coghlan explores the myriad cultural forms the pétroleuse took in America and across the Atlantic. The association of the pétroleuse with suffragists was swift: "[T]his figure so often haunted that of the suffragist in the late nineteenth-century American imaginary: the danger that a woman on a platform *might be* a woman on a barricade, for both during the 1871 uprising and in the wake of the Commune's fall, Americans encountered unsettling images of female Communards marching across the pages of illustrated periodicals" (24). The examples Coghlan finds of this both convince the reader overwhelmingly that the pétroleuse functioned in American life as a terrible threat of the collapse of domestic life.

In the second chapter, "Becoming Americans in Paris: The Commune as Frontier in Turn-of-the-Century Adventure Fiction," Coghlan turns her focus to fin-de-siècle boys' fiction in order to show that the Paris Commune remained a potent scene in the American imaginary even after the failure of the Great Railroad Strike of 1877. Novel's like Henty's *A Woman of the Commune*, Robert W. Chambers's *The Red Republic: A Romance of the Commune*, Eugene Savadge's *The American in Paris: A Biographical Novel of the Franco-Prussian War, the Siege and Commune of Paris from an American Stand-point*, and others show that, as Coghlan writes, "the US literary resurgence of interest in the Commune was one of particular intensity," and that the "unlikely afterlife of the Paris Commune in American fiction of the 1890s" produced numerous texts that "[showcase] a strikingly similar imperial template for re-emplotting Paris" (53). Coghlan's extensive reading of *Under the Red Flag* is particularly compelling, as is her commitment to challenging received notions of literary value. It is precisely these received notions that have, in her view, helped to perpetrate a misunderstanding of the transnational afterlife of the Paris Commune.

The third chapter, "Radical Calendars: The Commune Rising in Postbellum Internationalism," focuses on the celebrations of the Commune that occurred in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These were,

Coghlan argues, holidays that stood outside the confines of national affiliation and which therefore provided radicals in the US an opportunity to "live by and through a radical calendar whose sense of alternate time and subversive affiliation provided the grounds for extra-national feeling as an embodied practice of radical memory-making" (84). The syntax of that sentence is complex, and Coghlan's prose in general can be as well. That occasionally presents an obstacle to the reader who might be searching for clarity, but Coghlan's methodical presentation of evidence more than compensates for the sometimes obscure summary portions of the text. In chapter four, Coghlan takes a novel approach to Henry James's "fascination with this Paris in ruins" by focusing on the senses that are often excluded from historical and literary analysis, mostly notably taste (106). Coghlan, who recently edited a special issue of *Resilience: A Journal of the Environmental Humanities* called "Tasting Modernism," has an exciting interest in the ways we preserve and revisit memories that fall outside the confines of traditional academic analysis. In this case, that method rewards the reader with a rich, full-bodied portrait of the sensory and affective experiences of Americans grappling with Paris *en ruines*.

Sensational Internationalism ends with a turn to radical pulp and theater alongside Endore's *The Werewolf of Paris*, a novel that retells the Franco-Prussian War through the lens of horror. This chapter, "Restaging Horror: Insurgent Memories of the Commune in the 1930s," along with the epilogue, "Barricades Revisited—The Commune on Campus from FSM to SDS," successfully bring the focus of Coghlan's project up to the state of leftism today. These chapters and the rest of *Sensational Internationalism* significantly expand our understanding of the role that the Paris Commune has played and continues to play in American political discourse. Taking the Commune seriously, in all its varied aspects, has rarely been more important.

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Sir Walter Scott: His Worlds and His Legacies

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Carl Plasa

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Páraic Finnerty

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Dorothy Butchard

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Abiodun Adeniji

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(Aspects of "Ability" in De Quincey's Writings about Asia)
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Leslie Elizabeth Eckel and Clare Frances Elliott's *The Edinburgh Companion to Atlantic Literary Studies* and Linda K. Hughes and Sarah R. Robbins' *Teaching Transatlanticism: Resources for Teaching Nineteenth-Century Anglo-American Print Culture* reviewed by
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J. Michelle Coghlan's *Sensational Internationalism: The Paris Commune and the Remapping of American Memory in the Long Nineteenth Century* reviewed by
Woody Brown

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