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IMPERIAL ANXIETIES IN ENGLISH FICTION 1870s to 1930s

by

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Abstract

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Adviser: Professor Morris Dickstein

What St. Augustine called *imperii cupiditas*, the longing for empire, is as likely to be exerted in relations at the imperial center as in those abroad. It might even be possible to say that, in some ways, imperialism starts at home. Apart from incidental quotations from works of fiction set elsewhere, the action of the novels and stories in this study takes place in England.

Although the stance of such fiction is necessarily determined by English, or British, cultural and literary tradition, there is often an awareness--sometimes an unconscious one--of the exactions in play while the oppressor's foot is moving towards the neck of the oppressed. In works by Borrow, Trollope, Eliot, Meredith, Gissing, Hardy, Wells, Kipling, Galsworthy, Conrad, Beerbohm, Forster, Saki, Lawrence, and Waugh, I compare attitudes of men to women with those of Europeans to savages, and look at race relations as reflecting those of class. At a time of crisis in the national identity, the fear of a moral vacuum at home is exacerbated by the likelihood that imperial expansions are intrinsically cyclical, that they tend to destroy what they contain, or what they meet, or both.

The death of my first adviser, Irving Howe, occurred when I was about half way through the first draft of the dissertation. His comments, distinguished by remarkable literary tact, and his suggestions that I should keep my feet on the ground neither more nor less firmly than the fictional characters do, provided a sustaining voice that has helped to guide me through the later chapters.

I am immensely grateful to Professor Dickstein for agreeing to take Irving Howe's place as adviser. He requested clarity when my temptation has been to obscure; and he has encouraged me to see how anti-arguments can serve the purposes of a thematic discussion.

Professor Menand, who responded very readily when asked, out of the blue, to become a reader, has emphasized the changing nature of imperial activity, particularly with regard to economic factors.

This would have been a much lesser account of imperialism in fiction if Professor Fletcher had not been available to ask and answer questions, to put his finger on the essence of a particular matter and, above all, to show that acts of thinking are continuous, reverberative, and endlessly fruitful. It would have been a much better account if I had been able to follow more of the subtle turnings of his mind.

My friend Carol Saltus has insisted, with me as with others, that faulty expression comes from faulty ideas, that the reader will be decently served only by a writer who is decently prepared. Her determination to illustrate that *le style c'est la pensée même* never flagged for a moment.

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Introduction

Since the post-World War II structural changes between the Western powers and their colonies, there has been a growing critical interest in documents about the activity of empire up to the period of formal decolonization. So far as fiction is concerned, much of the attention in the West has been centered on two groups: fiction set in the colonies, written by authors native to the imperial power; and fiction by authors native to the colonies, written in the language of the mother country. Comparatively little attention has been paid to a third group, which is the subject of this study. I shall look at some English novels and stories from the 1870s to the 1930s that reflect relations of empire, and in which the action is set in England. This choice is, I think, justified by the simple statement that imperialism starts at home. Since what I am calling imperial impulses are at work independently of the imperial activity for which they are responsible, I assume that the influences enabling Englishmen to pursue their imperial labors are also prerequisites for their activities at home, and that an exploration of the conditions in these two arenas--England and the colonies--will reveal analogies between them.

In discussing this fiction and the various ways it reproduces, directly or indirectly, the preoccupations of empire, it is helpful first to define three principal terms. "Metropolis" is the mother state, in this case England.

"Colonialism" is the act of settling in a procured place by metropolitans who keep up their connection with the mother country; a *colonus* is a farmer or planter from the metropolis who settles and ploughs the land. "Imperialism" is a process of rule, requisition, ownership, and order in a procured place. This reflects the probable derivation of the Latin *imperare* from *in parare*, to put, furnish, procure, but with a suggestion also of *perarare*, to plough through, to scratch letters, to write, including the ability to mark boundaries on paper, as well as to make them on the land. Creating boundaries--by ploughing or marking--is the meaning of Sir Thomas More's term *describunt* (page g.i.recto), by which the Utopians, in the first English translation of 1551, delineate the territory they occupy, by driving their resisting neighbors on the mainland "out of those bounds which they have limited and appointed out for themselves," if the Utopian population "should exceed the due number" (70). The word was used for the drawing of forms in geometry, etymologically the measurement of the earth. The metaphor of inscription, reflecting Conrad's romantic comparison of the artist with the empire builder in their common disdain for boundaries not made by themselves (Brantlinger 273), provides an opportunity to conceive the imperial act in terms not necessarily territorial: empire can also be an ideology, doctrine, mystique, dogma, mythology, tradition, or sustaining idea. Two further meanings of *imperare* lurk in the definition of the English word: to demand payment of levies,

and to exercise control over oneself, one's impulses and appetites.

Although the noun "imperialism," in a refreshingly precise claim by Koebner and Schmidt, "from its early beginnings in the 1840's until today has changed its meaning no less than twelve times" (xiv), I shall assume the words "imperial" and "imperious," except for their appearances in the novels, to have their meanings in current usage, including the derogatory flavor that the later "ism" has given them. Authority, control, ownership, exaction, paternalism, expansion, boundaries are more important notions here than the land cultivation and settlement of colonization, which are only one way for the imperial sway to be exercised.

The word "empire" has been used broadly enough in literary England to allow, from the beginning, the interdependent inspirations of both greed and vision. Michael Drayton addressed settlers sailing for the New World:

> And cheerefully at sea,
> Successe you still intice,
> To get the pearle and gold,
> And ours to hold,
> Virginia,
> Earth's onely paradise (123).

The search for pearl and paradise dominated the thinking and language of imperial rhetoric into the twentieth century, even as the pearl became increasingly real and paradise

therefore ever more remote. The idea of what John Dee, in the first known use of the term in 1577, called the "Brytish Impire" (Calder 41) caused Defoe to lament that there had been no major colonizing effort since Raleigh, "upon the Foot of whose Genius almost all the *English* Discoveries were made" (*A Plan* xiv). But, at about the same time, Lemuel Gulliver has a somewhat different view in a description which, he ironically allows, "doth by no means affect the *British* Nation, who may be an Example to the whole World for their Wisdom, Care, and Justice in planting colonies." In an account not unlike some in a more sedate tone, J. A. Hobson's for instance, in the early twentieth century, Gulliver describes the processes of obtaining a colony:

> A Crew of Pyrates are driven by a Storm they know not whither; . . . they go on Shore to rob and plunder; they see an harmless People, are entertained with Kindness, they give the country a new Name . . . they murder two or three Dozen of the Natives, bring away a Couple more by force for a Sample . . . Here commences a new Dominion acquired with a Title by *Divine Right*. Ships are sent with the first Opportunity; the Natives driven out or destroyed . . . the Earth reeking with the Blood of its Inhabitants: And this execrable Crew of Butchers employed in so pious an Expedition, is a *modern colony* sent to

> convert and civilize an idolatrous and barbarous People (258).

Gulliver's attack on the British nation's export of its "civilization" is part of a continuing strand of often equally forceful imperial self-questioning by the empire's beneficiaries. Later in the century, in his "Ode on Lord Macartney's Embassy to China" (Lonsdale, 787) of 1792, William Shepherd, a presbyterian minister, has the spirit of Cathay refer to the embassy, a ship with sixty-four guns, as "Albion's bloody cross . . . oppression's badge," and asks "these slaves of gold" to "remember India's wrongs-- / Remember Afric's woes--and save your destined land." But in 1893, in the Dictionary of National Biography, the author of the entry for Lord Macartney writes, with what had become a characteristically self-pitying projection: "The exactions and acts of injustice perpetrated by the Chinese on English subjects had at this time become so notorious that it was decided to send an embassy to Pekin." In the Protestant churches, Shepherd was not alone in exposing divisions among those involved in advancing the imperial mission. The anti-slavery campaigner Henry Brougham, for instance, speaking in the House of Commons in 1824 with another view of "Albion's bloody cross," talks of "an issue between the System of the Slave-law and the [religious] Instruction of the Negroes," and of the desire of the Demerara planters "to expel all missionaries from the colony, and to pass a law prohibiting their admission for the future" (97).

Sir Walter Scott, in *The Surgeon's Daughter*, published in 1827, uses in the same breath the language both of a realist expansionism and of the imperial Elizabethan spirit when he sets the Indian part of his tale: "It was about the middle of the 18th century, and the directors in Leadenhall Street [of the East India Company] were silently laying the foundation of that immense empire which afterwards rose like an exhalation" (50). The contrast between these modes, of system and of excitement, can be illustrated in two speeches at the beginning of a period of acute imperial self-consciousness in the 1870s, when some Englishmen added a new tone to the questioning of the imperial enterprise, forcing a greater defensiveness among the apologists.

John Ruskin, in his inaugural Slade lecture of 1870, called on England to finance itself as "mistress of Learning and of the Arts" by deputing "mechanical operations . . . debasing in their tendency . . . to less fortunate and more covetous races" (21), that is, indigenous peoples in the occupied territories. England, presumably less covetous, is to seize "every piece of fruitful waste ground she can set her foot on" (42). Although addressing an audience likely to be sympathetic to an argument for the supremacy of art, Ruskin attempted to press the morally frail case for civilization by conquest in a way that was to become a characteristic of imperial polemics. He adapted quotations from speeches that would be increasingly useful both to imperial patriots and their ironists: Nelson's address to the

men at Trafalgar--"England . . . is to 'expect every man to do his duty'"--and Gaunt's celebration, (excluding, however, from the same peroration, his attack on the king's "eager feeding" [R2.II.i.37]), of an England "again a royal throne of kings; a sceptred isle, for all the world a source of light" (41).

Disraeli, in his Crystal Palace speech of 1872, a major statement in defence of the empire, also required evangelical terms in which to justify an exploitative colonialism. He denounced the Liberals for seeing "everything in a financial aspect, and totally passing by those moral and political considerations which make nations great." He asked for a system of "securities for the people of England for the enjoyment of the unappropriated lands." With a faint echo of the "Brytish Impire" that inspired an expanded imagination of England's glory in the Elizabethans, Disraeli looked to "the Mother Country" to encourage "those distant sympathies which may become the source of incalculable strength and happiness to this land" (Monypenny 535).

From the end of the nineteenth century onwards, return to Renaissance beginnings becomes increasingly poignant, no longer to breathe life into a justification of empire, but to underline by contrast a growing disillusion with the imperial idea. The great wedding of the Thames and the Medway in Book IV of *The Faerie Queene*, to which gods, oceans, and rivers have been invited in a magnificently imagined tribute to the strength and fertility of England, is reduced to a suburban

marriage at Christchurch between two of the minor guests, the Stour and the Avon, in E. M. Forster's *Howards End*. Spenser's Stour, with "terrible aspect . . . That doth his course through Blandford plains direct, / And washeth Winborne meades in season drye" (IV.xi.32), has become an "unaccountable stream, dirty at Blandford, pure at Wimborne" (156-7). The imagination is now insular, no longer experienced but evoked. A passage parodying a patriotic travelogue--"chalk of our chalk, turf of our turf"--ends with a sentence that starts with a double-edged eulogy to the imagination's scope, followed by an anticlimax that matches in ambiguity the dirty and pure Stour, in which the predominant meaning of the image is of enclosure: "the imagination swells, spreads and deepens, until it becomes geographic and encircles England" (157).

These two passages invoke attitudes to England's business with the world at two crucial moments of empire: one of birth, and one of ripeness on the verge of decay. Spenser's vision is of a vast confluence, a vision empowered by supremacy of the seas demonstrated in the defeat of the Armada. By marrying two of the less important guests at Spenser's great wedding, Forster comments skeptically on England's strength more than three hundred years later, somewhat in the less exalted way that Beerbohm compares the launching by Zuleika Dobson--"You marvel," she says to Noaks, "as at the skull of Helen of Troy" (233)--of over a thousand undergraduates, with Greece's imperial mission to Troy.

Much as Spenser's river wedding is associated with the curing of Marinell's wound and with the change from stonyheartedness to love's insomnia that permits his betrothal to Florimell, so is Forster's wedding linked to Mr.Wilcox's blemished proposal to Margaret, which immediately precedes it, and with the question of the Wilcoxes' ownership of an encircled England. The previous generation had known, in the Indian Mutiny, a threat to the integrity of the biggest colonial settlement and, very recently, Forster had lived through a further threat in the South African War. His early years coincided with the enormous imperial expansions of the 1880s and 1890s in Africa and Asia, and of the building, by Britain's major European economic competitor, of an armada, effected by the Naval Laws in Germany of 1898 and 1900. Spenser's vision has been transformed into an oscillation between swelling and imperilment, provoking an unprecedented discussion of imperial theory, and exposing the frailty of a national purpose dependent on economic success. The mythopoeic origins loomed behind the discussion like a lost paradise, and inspired a desire to reject the cynicism of the heyday of the East India Company's profligacy a hundred years or so earlier.

A link between political and individual dominion was made by John Stuart Mill a generation before the period of this study begins:

> The love of power and the love of liberty are in eternal antagonism. Where there is least

> liberty, the passion for power is the most ardent and unscrupulous. The desire for power over others can only cease to be a depraving agency among mankind, when each of them individually is able to do without it (182).

One might expect that novelists, working in a tradition with strong realistic elements, in their eagerness to present a picture of society as a whole, would be likely to portray this antagonism between liberty and the individual's desire for power, and what Mill takes to be the relentlessness of its expression. In George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda*, Grandcourt, a predecessor of Alec d'Urberville and Angel Clare, Zuleika Dobson, Soames Forsyte, and Henry Wilcox, is a forceful paradigm of "a depraving agency among mankind" with a compulsion for dominion over others. Although subsequent chapters in the dissertation are thematically arranged, I have chosen *Daniel Deronda* as the subject of the first chapter, since it raises this among other central themes.

The immediate background of these themes derives from the English memory of differences between themselves and others, as a result of conquests abroad, reaching back to the Crusades. These acts of intrusion, having entered the imagination of the people, form part of the national identity. On the one hand there are the English at home, uninvaded, with an agriculture and, for a long period, a technologically advanced industry that together provided sustenence and equipment to their traveling soldiers,

adventurers, explorers, missionaries, administrators, traders, transported convicts, and those escaping from constrictions in England. On the other hand there are Saracens, French, Irish, Scots, Welsh, American and Asian Indians, Africans, Malays, and so on. The distinctions the home group, seeing themselves sometimes as Europeans but always as Englishmen, establish with the subject groups are based on a sense of cultural, racial and religious superiority--derived from truths that seemed absolute in an increasingly relativist ethos--and on the ability to make voyages, to occupy, manipulate, write, and govern. These distinctions, made familiar to those at home by a constant coming and going of imperial functionaries, with accompanying pride and pageantry, were gradually absorbed into the collective unconscious of the English people.

Some fictional characters, such as Dickens's Mr. Merdle and Trollope's Melmotte, like the Elizabethan adventurers, enter new worlds with a temper at once visionary and exploitative. "The swelling act / Of the imperial theme," its image of fertility informing Macbeth's passage to the throne, ends for these domestic nabobs in the destruction of both the commercial empire and, once they have sold their souls for the excitements of financial expansion, themselves. With Midas and Shakespeare's Timon as paradigms, they rise and fall, remembering, in their dying, not the peak of their success but the promise of their beginnings. Mr. Merdle, Melmotte, Michael Henchard, and their successors Gissing's

Bennet Frothingham and Wells's Uncle Teddy Ponderevo, partly mad in what Charles Rosen calls an "aggressive refusal to acknowledge reality," rather than the "incapacity [of Romantic madness] to distinguish reality from illusion" (NYR October 22, 1992, p.36), combine exuberant greed with a visionary desire for a prelapsarian innocence.

The Victorians had lost the imperial innocence of the Renaissance. Now, almost desperately, often self-deceptively, some of them, especially among the polemicists, tried to reconcile devotion to individual freedom at home, an essential benefit of "civilization," with military and economic violation of that freedom in the colonies. The alternative to what became a pervasive metropolitan hypocrisy was to acknowledge the dilemma and, like George Ponderevo at the end of *Tono-Bungay*, sailing purposelessly out to sea in his mysterious destroyer, face its insolubility. The imperial apologists became increasingly perturbed by awareness of this central contradiction.

The major novelists were, of course, attracted to such a tension as the stuff of fiction, and as an opportunity to play off, in the mind of the novel, one sort of dilemma against another. Balancing the explorations of empire with a questioning of its effects might indeed be one way for the reader to distinguish among the novelists the honest from the hypocritical, the bold from the flinching, the doubting from the credulous, Wells, say, from Edgar Wallace, Forster from Rider Haggard, ultimately the better from the worse. By this

dichotomy, Kipling's *Kim* is a great and fraudulent anomaly, where "the conflict from which the interest arises . . . comes to nothing: the two forces never really engage" (Wilson 123). The boyishness, distortion and sentimentalism of lesser novels fail to raise character to a point at which its idiosyncratic strength becomes representational. The serious novels develop their aesthetic power by finding levels at which to allow the destructive consequences of expansion; the others, in their celebration of expansion as a context for adventure, often by appealing to a young audience, evade them.

Expansion must be protected from a double menace: moral erosion from inside both the community and the individual, and the destructive forces it meets in its restless movement within the territories the expander seeks to acquire. As ancestor of the quest motif central to the novel, the epic validates the novel's freedom to explore the duality of expansion and destruction. After Mercury, at Jupiter's command, reminds Aeneas that he is evading his national destiny by lingering in Carthage, and after Dido's entreaty that he delay his departure, Aeneas is described as standing firm like an oak that "grips among the rocks below, for its roots stretch as far down towards the abyss [Tartarus] as its crest reaches up to airs of heaven" (111). The abyss being a hell for the punishment of guilty souls, and heaven the abode of the gods, who must be obeyed, there is no escape for Aeneas from his betrayal of Dido and responsibility for her

death. But the moral fault could be of his own making, a consequence of his heroic, colonizing ambition, if Nisus's question, before he tries to break out of the siege of the Trojan camp, is taken as pivotal: "Do we all attribute to a god what is really an overmastering impulse of our own?" (230)

When, in the underworld, Anchises predicts for Aeneas the future of a Rome made possible by conquest of the Rutulians, he refers to the *fascis* to be won back from the tyranny of the Tarquins, and to be carried by lictors before the magistrates. A bundle of sticks joined together, with a projecting axe, the *fascis* is a symbol of Roman unity and destructiveness. In the appalling losses to be suffered in war before a settlement could be secured in Italy, it also represents the necessity of a tragic violence that besets the wandering Trojans in their transformation into an Italian nation.

In a biographical work, a century or so after the writing of the *Aeneid*, the imperialists' relation to menace is reversed; they are represented as a threat to others but not to themselves. In the first pair of Plutarch's lives, in North's translation, Romulus and Theseus, the builders of Rome and Athens, "were ravishers of women: and neither thone nor thother coulde avoyde the mischiefe of quarrell and contention with their frendes, nor the reproch of staining themselves with the blood of their nearest kinsemen" (30). The link between the founding of cities and violence to

others is also established at the beginning of the Judeo-Christian tradition: the first murderer, Cain, was the founder of the first city, Enoch.

The search for justice by Saint Augustine among the cruelties of the Roman imperium takes him back to prophecies in *The Aeneid*, of which this assurance by Jupiter to Venus could be one: "To Romans I set no boundary in space or time. I have granted them dominion, and it has no end" (36). Noting the pleasures driving the imperial impulse in expressions like *imperii* (22) and *regni* (24) *cupiditas, dominandi libido* (208), Augustine finds the absence of a god solely responsible for the empire to be remarkable and, in the teasing, dismissive tone he maintains when writing of the functions of the gods, presumes that Jupiter, their king, is the one who, in the view of the Romans, "established and extended the Roman empire." But, he asks, "why is not the Empire itself a god?" (55).

Although Augustine acknowledges that "for one vice, that is, love of praise, [the Romans] overcame the love of money and many other vices" (207), their love of liberty, "their passion for praise and glory" (195), were difficult to reconcile with "crushing and subduing peoples who have given no offence, out of mere love for dominion" (25). These contradictions, arising here from a Christian sensibility wanting to identify and interpret a pagan attitude to justice, permeate later discussions of the imperial ethos.

The apparent intimacy between expansion and destruction was a major element in the questions the imperialists were starting to ask themselves about the basis of an empire that seemed to be on the verge of decay. Arthur Balfour's lecture "Decadence," in 1908, with its references to the end of the Roman empire--there was always "the warrant of Roman precedent" (*P. P. & P.* 134), as V. G. Kiernan puts it--is characteristic of an apprehension of this kind among the polemicists. At about the same time, in *Tono-Bungay*, anxiety pervades George Ponderevo's expedition to West Africa to try to save his uncle's financial empire. He murders an African, and the radioactive "quap," intended for the manufacture of gas-mantles and plundered by the expedition, destroys the ship, the *Maud Mary*, Magdalen and Mary, whore and virgin. The quap had been "as remote as fairyland . . . until at last it was real" (185-187). This episode of the novel reflects, as David Lodge has shown, the troubled condition of both Uncle Teddy's fortunes and England's.

As an idealized adventure aborted by what follows from exploiting the territory of others, the episode also parodies the notion of the frontier as a place of regeneration for the individual adventurer and for England. An island, tiny in comparison with its vast holdings over the seas, England, more perhaps than any other center of empire, saw its territories as resources to enjoy for their peoples, landscapes, climates, minerals, and crops. They were places to enchant the curious and give birth to the new. In Donne's

celebrated Elegy XIX, acts of discovery and procreation join the imagined to the real, the frontier to the "innocence" of Madam's naked body, in an apostrophe to both:

> Licence my roaving hands, and let them go,
> Before, behind, between, above, below.
> O my America! my new-found-land,
> My kingdome, safeliest when with one man man'd,
> My Myne of precious stones, my Empirie,
> How blest am I in this discovering thee!
> To enter in these bonds, is to be free;
> Then where my hand is set, my seal shall be
> (107).

The self-reliance of Donne's lover--"My kingdome, safeliest when with one man man'd"--was seen as an essential trait of the colonizer by Lord Curzon in 1907: "I am one of those who hold that in this larger atmosphere, on the outskirts of Empire, where the machine is relatively impotent and the individual is strong, is to be found an ennobling and invigorating stimulus for our youth, saving them alike from the corroding ease and the morbid excitements of Western civilization . . . The Frontiers of Empire continue to beckon" (57-58). For Donne's lover, the bonds into which he enters are a passage to freedom, but for Curzon they are to stir the young to a nobility that will save them from metropolitan decadence. The Renaissance exhilaration has been replaced by a desire for rebirth, a symptom of anxiety on behalf of the mother country.

Curzon's disquiet is characteristic of the late Victorian period that in some respects lasted well into the new century. Hardy, Gissing, Kipling, Conrad, Wells, Beerbohm were responding partly to what Mark Rutherford, in his *Autobiography* of 1881, euphemistically called "the doubts of the nineteenth century" (12), and partly, in the apocalyptic manner of early modernists, to new preoccupations with form and consciousness. I shall examine the ways in which these novelists, and their successors Forster, Lawrence, Woolf, and Waugh, explored the darkness of a changing Darwinian world. Man's progress, a result of struggle within or between species, within or between races, appeared to be definable only in scientific, mechanistic, and rational terms. The novelists depict those impulses of domination and submission that illuminate the relations between character and the forces acting on character that are both overtly social and blindly accidental. There is, for example, in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* a new version of the story of the poor maid's transition from cottage to palace, of which the biblical Ruth, Cinderella, King Cophetua's beggar-maid, and Chaucer's Grisilde are prototypes. The power to import slaves to the Americas from Africa, and the later power to free them from slavery, serve as a political parallel to the poor maid's lack of choice in her destiny: a further bondage, or a regenerative transition. The death of Tess's child and the fake d'Urbervilles' occupation of the manor can be seen as a disillusioned comment on the legend in which the sturdy

peasant girl's elemental energies are used to revitalize the stock of a house or class weakened by endogamy, self-absorption, or economic irrelevance.

The novelists in the earlier part of the period, alienated from the culture that had formed them, were faced with a new and unsettling feature in their female characters. Tess and her maternal ancestresses have always worked; but in the growing numbers of middle-class women then entering the economy, there was a menace of masculinization that threatened to undermine Victorian notions of femininity and the romantic ideal, especially after a period of nostalgia for the medieval world and its chivalric values. Women were deserting their posts; previously, like savages, they had been used as receptacles for the projection of instinctual, anarchic energies repressed by men in the interests of those qualities of the superego, and what Freud called "the cultural superego," that seemed to be needed for the government of self, household, country, and empire. The emergence into the workplace of middle-class women roughly coincided with organized movements for autonomy in the overseas possessions.

Although J. A. Hobson was uneasy enough in 1902 about the term "lower races" to use quotation marks sometimes, and sometimes not, it would seem sensible to leave "race" and "savage" as bare as they were before writers felt they must keep a distance from them, or were sufficiently confident to use them ironically. The savage, according to O. Mannoni, in

the attitudes of European writers, with Baudelaire as his example, is "identified in the unconscious with a certain image of the instincts . . . civilized man is painfully divided between the desire to 'correct' the 'errors' of the savages and the desire to identify himself with them in the search for some lost paradise" (21). In Wyndham Lewis's phrase, the white man wants "to liquify and disintegrate . . . to return to a more primitive condition" (McCartney 44). Mannoni sums it up: "The negro . . . is the white man's fear of himself" (200). The identification, therefore, can take a self-abusive turn, in which Gulliver's criticism is moved a step further and the "civilized" man is himself seen as a savage: closer to the fall than to a paradise lost. Like Montaigne, in well-known passages in his essays on cannibals and coaches, Michael Drayton uses reports of New World encounters to raise the matter of savagery at home--in, for example, a poem "To Master George Sandys, Treasurer for the English Colony in Virginia":

> But you may save your labour if you please,
> To write to me ought of your savages.
> As savage slaves be in great Britaine here,
> As any one that you can shew me there (146).

This may also be about Drayton's distaste for towns: the capacity of Londoners to behave like savages is a theme running through a number of the works I discuss.

A connection between women and savages is made by George W. Stocking Jr in his study of Victorian anthropology. He

lists those groups in England, allied to savages abroad, towards whom middle-class men had similar relations. "In addition to criminals, women, children, [the list] included peasants, rustics, laborers, beggars, paupers, madmen, and Irishmen" (229). Attitudes to laborers and savages are paralleled by those towards class and race, each of these terms with enough meaning to give the parallel its force. Benedict Anderson writes about the mythologizing of the master group: "The dreams of racism actually have their origins in ideologies of *class*, rather than in those of nation: above all in claims to divinity among rulers" (136). Patrick Brantlinger makes the point with regard to language: "Racism functions as a displaced or surrogate class system, growing more extreme as the domestic class alignments it reflects are threatened or erode . . . Imperialist discourse . . . treats class and race terminology as covertly interchangeable or at least analogous" (184). In this reading, of course, the assumption is made that class identity is as immutable as that of race.

There is no shortage of provocative images. In Esther Summerson's account in *Bleak House* of Mrs. Pardiggle's evangelical visit to the brickmaker's house, Esther and Ada "both felt painfully sensible that between us and these people there was an iron barrier, which could not be removed by our new friend" (159). The iron barrier, dividing class from class, race from race, is changed in form from author to author and novel to novel, but, like the payment of levies

included in the definition of imperialism, the exactions made from those on one side of the barrier upon those on the other are never entirely satisfied, nor are the contributions offered ever enough.

One of the difficulties of a study of this kind, which I shall come back to in the concluding chapter, is in the handling of the approach. How does a thematic raiding of a novel avoid disrespect for the autonomy of the work? When the approach is deliberately partial, how is the work not to be denied its most thorough expression and fullest aesthetic power?

Chapter 1: *Daniel Deronda*

The first readers of George Eliot's only novel with a virtually contemporary setting came face to face both with an England they saw about them every day, and also, in a parallel plot, with a Jewish messianism politically exotic but biblically familiar. Bemused by the Zionist theme, George Saintsbury, in the spirit of a famous later reading by F. R. Leavis, suggested an anthropological alternative to fiction: he found "the mystical enthusiasm . . . of a curious people" to be "an admirable subject for a scientific monograph" (Carroll 374-5). But R. H. Hutton, more sympathetically, saw "the art of this story" as "essentially religious" (Carroll 366). This view of Hutton's is helpful as statement leading towards an appreciation of the medievalism of *Daniel Deronda*, already evident in *Middlemarch*. In this, her last and grimmest work of fiction, Eliot incorporates into its realism strong suggestions of the Middle Ages, with analogues from mythology, literature, and history. These allusions furnish the book with literal, allegorical, moral, and spiritual levels like those of a medieval narrative.

Faithful to its genre as successor to the epic, the novel invests Deronda who has, like Don Quixote, the "irrational faith in a non-existent transcendental homeland" (Lukács 130) of the post-classical hero, with a destiny, not in England, but in a distant place where he, like Aeneas, is to found a homeland for his people. In a world without God

and without Christ, the impulses behind the compelling ethical demands of the Judeo-Christian tradition look for a domain where they can be exercised, and find it in an attempt to regenerate and repatriate the Jewish people, who provided the God and the Christ of that tradition. Mordecai, the prophet of return, with "the face of a man little above thirty" (553), is the age of Jesus when he began his ministry.

At the center of a narrative defined by a forward-looking dream of spiritual expansion, qualified by an ideology of national redemption, Mordecai's power is opposed by that of Grandcourt, at the center of another narrative, a conservative social world in which his control is largely unchallenged by rebellion or emancipation. As the purposes of Mordecai's power are largely public, but with private reverberations, so are Grandcourt's coercions largely private, with strong public connections. These protagonists of the two plots, the Zionist and the Wessex, never meet; Deronda acts as the thematic messenger, crossing between them, margin to margin, then closer and closer to the centers until, not immune to the coercive forces he inherits from them, he becomes a successor both to Grandcourt and to Mordecai.

The double-plot mode can be further explored by reference to its interactive exertions of power studied by William Empson in *Some Versions of Pastoral*, also through the belief, which emerged during the Reformation, in England as,

in John Lyly's phrase, "a new Israel, his chosen and peculiar people" (Fisch 43). (This appropriation persisted: the epigraph to Arthur Bryant's *English Saga [1840-1940]*, published early in the war in December, 1940, is a passage from Jeremiah, ending with: "And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God" [30:22]). And, not least, the plots are connected and the novel further unified by strands from Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata*, an epic poem of an earlier, spiritual home, gained by conquest, for Christians. Following the clues directing us to this fictional interpretation of history, we can compare Tasso's version of the First Crusade with allusions to the Crusades and the Near East in the novel's narrative.

Joseph Wiesenfarth, writing of Eliot's recourse to myth in the later fiction, refers to its "complex use as an energizing force to open new worlds" (45). This leads to the question of why, unlike, say, Dickens, Eliot would want consciously to go to myth in search of that energizing force. Perhaps an answer to this question would help in an understanding of *Daniel Deronda*'s construction, and even provide reasons for an aesthetic appreciation of the problematic Jewish part of the story.

If going back into what the narrator calls "ancient fable" (90) is analogous to reaching into far corners of the mind, there might be something here about the fictional exploration of thought and its methods of representation. And, of course, the mythical worlds, unlike Eliot's, are

occupied by gods, ordinances, transcendence, to which she may look for sources of power and irony to inspire and to castigate in a godless world.

More suggestively, perhaps, than any English novel since those of Defoe, *Daniel Deronda* elaborates connections between imperial impulses individually at work within and among the characters, and their expression in political action. Grandcourt, a severe case of that "tendency towards misanthropy" noted by O. Mannoni as a predisposition of "a real colonial" (104)--a willingness to be socially isolated--might have "won reputation" had he been "sent to govern a difficult colony" where he "would have understood that it was safer to exterminate [like Conrad's Kurtz] than to cajole superseded proprietors" (655). He is the agent who, with his languid, subtle coercions, entices Gwendolen to move from her "domestic empire" (71) into his own "empire of fear" (479); from a "world-nausea" after her loss of "personal pre-eminence" (317) caused by poverty and Klesmer's harsh picture of her future as a would-be actress, into his "triumph over that repugnance" (346) of her knowledge of his affair with Mrs. Glasher.

Gwendolen, who is certainly "a difficult colony," "can't bear any one to be very near [her]" (115) except her mother, and subjects herself in marriage to an assault parallel to that of Governor Eyre's cold-blooded suppression of the uprising in October 1865 in Jamaica. In that uprising, according to Grandcourt, "the Jamaican negro was a beastly

sort of baptist Caliban" (376). This refers to the religious enthusiasm of a new sect, known as Native Baptists--the result of a missionary imperialism, like the theme of conversion in the novel--and to the controversy in England between supporters, including Ruskin, and opponents of Governor Eyre's actions. In the aftermath of the uprising, "about eighty-five negroes were shot without trial; no less than 354 were executed by authority of courts-martial" (Carrington 519). Grandcourt would, of course, have been a comparable governor.

Gwendolen decides to marry Grandcourt to escape from the poverty caused by a failure of the "colonial property ["in Barbadoes" (376)] and banking, on which, as she had had many opportunities of knowing, the family fortune was dependent" (94) (as the economy of Mansfield Park relies on that of a plantation in Antigua). The protests that led to the uprising in Jamaica were caused in part by an impoverishment absurdly different in scale from the injury to Gwendolen's pride and social position: food shortages and higher prices as a result of the American Civil War (Carrington 518). In this war, says *Daniel Deronda*'s narrator, looking at Gwendolen's "insignificant . . . consciousness of a girl, . . . women on the other side of the world would not mourn for the husbands and sons who died bravely in a common cause, and men stinted of bread on our side of the world [Lancashire textile workers, deprived of cotton shipments from the American South] heard of that willing loss and were patient" (159).

Most of those killed in Jamaica were ex-slaves, either in their own right, or as descendants of slaves. After the Civil War, about half way through the action of the novel, slavery was officially abolished in the United States. When Gwendolen sees that, unlike herself, "other people allowed themselves to be made slaves of, and to have their lives blown hither and thither like empty ships in which no will was present" (69), she "had not considered," as the narrator reminds us, "that the desire to conquer is itself a sort of subjection" (139). Her childlike will, exercised with a spirited, malicious wit, is a toy of social expectations: "I do what is unlikely" or "turn around and do what was likely for people in general." Her cousin Rex, replying to this, recognizes the bondage: "You see you can't escape some sort of likelihood" (100).

She starts to understand the meaning of servitude only when faced with the prospect of her mother living in "the narrow rooms" (309) of Sawyer's cottage. A Victorian terror of class loss--it would be "a very extraordinary world if people in our position must sink in this way all at once" (310)--checks any promise there might be in work as a governess at "the episcopal penitentiary" (316) of Bishop and Mrs. Mompert. (One is reminded of Jane Fairfax, in *Emma*, not knowing who endure "the greater misery" (300), the victims of the slave-trade or victims of the governess-trade; and one recalls Julia Brabazon who, in Trollope's *The Claverings*,

sells herself to the vicious Lord Ongar to be relieved from debt).

Gwendolen's engagement to Grandcourt, whose power resembles that of the colonists and traders who brought slaves to the Americas, frees her from these prospects, without having to "wear a gown as shabby as Griselda's in order that a marquis might fall in love with her" (68), although the translation to Grandcourt's estates from what her mother calls "some hut or other to shelter us" (44) seems to be like such legendary emancipations. "Perhaps it is not quite mythical," the narrator presciently says of Gwendolen's "pre-eminence" at the archery contest, "that a slave has been proud to be bought first" (133). This apparent liberation lasts only for a few weeks, until her re-enslavement by the shock of Lydia Glasher's letter on her wedding night.

Gwendolen's hopes for dominion over others--in Leubronn she walks along Obere Strasse, past the *Czarina* hotel (47)--are ended by Mrs. Glasher's curse that accompanies the return of the diamonds, a curse that forces Gwendolen to live with the guilt of her broken promise to Mrs. Glasher. The rupture in her conscience, which Deronda can touch in his attempt to redeem her, weakens her resistance to Grandcourt. When he comes into the room after the delivery of the letter and diamonds, she "screamed again and again with hysterical violence" (407) as if, in an act of displaced ferocity, she had already been raped.

She had let go of her riding whip, giving "a little scream of distress" (172), on a walk with Grandcourt during the days of what, if this were a romantic novel, might be called their courtship. The whip passes to Grandcourt after their betrothal: Gwendolen, who had resembled "a young race-horse in the paddock" (54), is "brought to kneel down like a horse under training for the arena" (365). When she obeys him by putting on the "poisoned gems" (407), "Grandcourt inwardly observed that she answered to the rein" (482); and later, in Genoa, after Grandcourt's impatience with her tears, and a discussion about the propriety of Gwendolen talking to Deronda, he feels "perfectly satisfied that he held his wife with a bit and bridle" (744). Gwendolen's tears are a clue to the power of the horse metaphor.

As pervasive in the society as some of those mentioned by Stocking for their equation with savages, horses can be included in the list for comparable qualities of irrationality, unpredictability, appetite; they too are impulsive, unknowable, spontaneous, instinctual, anarchic. As women are to men, so horses and savages are to Europeans. Because of their fundamental tendencies towards social disruption, the members of all these groups, human and animal, whose characteristics are like those Aristotle attributed to slaves, must be curbed and directed, just as, according to Aristotle, the soul rules the body, and the intellect the appetities.

Gwendolen's "confoundedly unpleasant" (743) tears are both a momentary escape from and a collusion with Grandcourt's subjection. Her "constructive rebellion" (667) resists Deronda's advice to escape by spiritual means--"to take hold of your sensibility, and use it as if it were a faculty, like vision" (509)--and reaches a crisis in the purchase of the knife, which she keeps in her dressing-case, "small and sharp, like a long willow leaf in a silver sheath" (756), an expression of her desire to get rid of Grandcourt by killing him in an act of mutiny. These colors recall her appearance at Leubronn as a "Nereid in sea-green robes and silver ornaments . . . the *ensemble du serpent*" (40-41), metaphorically identifying Gwendolen with a lethal object locked in a drawer. Grandcourt breaks her will, destroys her imperiousness, by the exertion of an authority that comes too late in her life, however, to be as invasive as that of Alcharisi's father with his daughter. Because it does come too late, she is free, finally, to emerge, if she can find the strength, from the master/slave dependence.

Gwendolen, the sea-nymph, attending on Grandcourt who thus becomes momentarily a powerful deity of the sea, nevertheless fails to save him when he is drowning. A Gwendolen is also present at a drowning in Milton's "Comus," (the source of the epigraph to Ch.65). Sabrina throws herself into the Severn, "flying the mad pursuit / Of her enraged stepdam Guendolen" (829-30) who, in Spenser's version of this episode, is Locrine's faithful wife, "vile disdained" (FQ

II.x.18) by his adultery, like Gwendolen by Grandcourt's affair with Mrs. Glasher. There may also be a larger, sympathetic association between the Satanic powers of Comus and of Grandcourt who, when on the yacht, is compared with "a dangerous serpent ornamentally coiled in [Gwendolen's] cabin (735). This is a more potent devil than the "evil genius" (35) of Gwendolen, on the way back back from Genoa, contemplating Offendene as a "quiet home . . . after following a lure through a long Satanic masquerade" (831). The Edenic tempter and tempted are interchangeable here in a reptilian theme that runs lightly through the novel.

The joke of Grandcourt as a sea-god derives from the actual source of his power to enslave: "Grandcourt's importance as a subject of this realm was of the grandly passive kind which consists in the inheritance of land" (644). He defines his identity, from land, wealth, and lineage, quite simply, in the statement that a man is "either . . . a gentleman, or he is not" (475). To Grandcourt, Deronda, without land, wealth or lineage, is not a gentleman, and that is all that need be said of him. Grandcourt's three properties--Diplow, Ryelands, Gadsmere--form a miniature empire similar, in both dispersal and scope, to another imperial triad, "the districts of the Niger . . . the Brazils, . . . the South Seas" (283), about which the member of parliament Mr. Bult has opinions.

But land makes Grandcourt a gentleman no more than water makes him Poseidon. "A real gentleman," according to Taine,

whose view is consonant with the narrator's view of Deronda and the blacksmith Joel Dagge, "is a truly noble man, a man worthy to command, a disinterested man of integrity . . . in whom generous instincts have been confirmed by right thinking and who, acting rightly by nature, acts even more rightly from good principles." Having none of these qualities, Grandcourt enjoys, however, an imperial pride associated with what Taine called "the distinctive features of the English upper class . . . a large private fortune . . . a certain outward appearance and bearing, habits of ease and luxury; often enough . . . these outward semblances are all that is necessary" (Guttsman 38-9). Grandcourt, the desiccation of whose personality has much to do with the absence of a gentleman's virtues, is, for all his sophistries, as relentless as the overseers on the Virginia plantation in Defoe's *Colonel Jack*. In the slave Mouchat's account, they "never show Mercièè, me never them see them show one Mercièè, since me live" (138). Characters in *Daniel Deronda* are tested by how much they can or dare distinguish between the real and the seeming, between one feature of a gentleman's equipment and another, in Grandcourt.

When members of the party looking round Sir Hugo's converted medieval abbey enter the choir, now the stables, Deronda knows the difference between the sacred and profane, and removes his hat. "'Do you take off your hat to the horses?' said Grandcourt, with a slight sneer" (474). Colonel Jack has no memories in common with the slaves he controls,

of their lives, or of the places where they have lived. The compassion of "mercièè" is a pious means of getting the best service from the slaves. Similarly Grandcourt, also not "a disinterested man of integrity," knows about the people in his sway only what he thinks he needs to know to manipulate them. His denial of memory, in his contemptuous question to Deronda, is a refusal to quit the material present for what is for him the immaterial past and, implicitly, the equally immaterial future.

Some of his imperatives, grammatically in the future, seem to operate only in the present. In the last moments before he proposes marriage, he speaks these three sentences to Gwendolen, in a sophisticated instance of linguistic control:

> "You will tell me now, I hope, that Mrs. Davilow's loss of fortune will not trouble you further. You will trust me to prevent it from weighing upon her. You will give me the claim to provide against that" (347).

Without the "you will," each sentence could become a simple imperative. The "you will," the force of its repetition, the placing of "now" and "me" combine to suggest a flavor of what J. L. Austin calls a performative utterance (6), in which the verbs "tell . . . trust . . . give," although made predictive by the future tense, and coercive by "will," are themselves a form of enactment. The imperatives, masked also as implied questions to soften Grandcourt's assumption of her obedience,

express in their tact his pleasure in the rhetoric of persuasion that triumphs over Gwendolen's "piteous equality in the need to dominate" (346). No wonder "she had a momentary phantasmal love for this man who chose his words so well" (347).

Grandcourt delicately offers, in these statements, to support her mother as part of the payment he is prepared to make to Gwendolen in return for the beauty and wit that will adorn his dignity, and for the conquest that will feed his pride. As with his other retainers, Lush and Mrs. Glasher, enslaved by the benefits they enjoy from their dependence on him, he acts as a trader in which food and shelter are coercively offered in exchange for an unwavering obedience. This manner of thraldom is like a playing out of the processes described by J. A. Hobson in an imperial development that leads to colonial occupation:

> Our first organized contact with the lower races was by means of trading companies . . . the early trading settlement becoming an industrial settlement, with land and mineral concessions growing around it . . . other interests, political and religious, enter in more largely . . . the original commercial settlement assumes a stronger political and military character (251-2).

The mother of four illegitimate children by Grandcourt, Mrs.Glasher lives in "purgatorial Gadsmere" (831) like a

savage in a distant colony, a pariah on the periphery of an empire centered in Wessex, in "the dark shadow thus cast on the lot of a woman destitute of acknowledged social dignity." The "helpless wrath" of her "Medusa-apparition" in Hyde Park, "as futile as that of a viper already flung to the other side of the hedge" (668), belongs also to three of the other enslaved women, Mirah when living with her father, Gwendolen, and Alcharisi, and feeds yet more reptilian devils into the undergrowth of England.

These women are subject to social, economic, and paternal constraints from which the costs of escaping are severe enough to see them as engaged in aspects of the exploitative system Hobson describes. For Mirah, flight from the horrors of her father's dominion frees her only when she finds other attachments where, as a romantic heroine, her wounds can start to be healed in the act of telling her history to Mrs. Meyrick. But for Alcharisi, Deronda's mother, it is metaphorically apt to use Hobson's words for the strong "military and political character" of the invasiveness of her father's grip on her.

The physical bond of slavery, in J. Loewenberg's decoding of Hegel's passage on the master/slave relationship, expresses the slave's double consciousness of "fear of death and enjoyment of formative activity" (90). These are features of dependence on the master and, through an awareness of constructive work, independence from him. The independence is further developed by the slave's imaginative leap from his

material condition: in Loewenberg's paraphrase, "to think is to be free; to be free is to be independent; to be independent is to be master" (91). The slave moves towards stoic resignation from the uncontrollable outer world, through the moral bankruptcy of his consequent inability to judge between "competing modes of human conduct," and finally arrives at a deeply melancholy freedom to "doubt the adequacy of his stoicism" (93).

Alcharisi, described as Melusina (688), another serpent in the novel, has her own version of a double consciousness: of experience as performance, a disjunction in which "she acted her own emotions" (691). This lack of spontaneity, a result, as we shall see, of a failure to expel the internalized reassertion of her father's voice, is the occasion for a psychological study of a resignation that takes away any choice in the mode of her own conduct. Her period of liberation, and the quality of its evident success, are as provisional as Gwendolen's liberation from poverty. The narration of her life, coming at an advanced moment in Deronda's intimacy with Mordecai, elaborates the theme of release from bondage which dominates Mordecai's thoughts, and to which Deronda is already attracted.

Mordecai's mission is to free his people, "torn and spoiled and trodden on" (594), from the degradations of their exile. Deronda is being prepared, "as Moses was prepared" (818), to direct his people away from their oppressors and "to redeem the soil" of Palestine from the Turks, "debauched

and paupered conquerors" (594). Although, with Mordecai's approval, Deronda speaks of "a great outburst of force in the Arabs, who are being inspired with a new zeal" (584), in his prophetic enthusiasm Mordecai is as blinded to its political effect on the natives of Palestine as Alcharisi was, in the time of her artistic triumphs, to the hold her father had on her. Edward Said attributes to Eliot herself an insensitivity "to races who could not be assimilated to European ideas . . . who happened to be living on the land, people of whom no notice was taken" (21).

But colonial acts are only marginally treated in the novel. After his rescue of Mirah, Deronda is thinking of "existing Jews . . . chiefly of the sort most repugnant to him." Then, in a double-edged comment on racial generalizations derived from the particular, the narrator, still close to Deronda's mind, notes of an already occupied region, "It appears that the Caribs, who know little of theology, regard thieving as a practice peculiarly connected with Christian tenets" (246). The invisibility of the indigenous inhabitants of Palestine is matched by that of the would-be immigrants: the reader hears of no farmers to be displaced, but also of no Jews to displace them. Like the contemporary Anglo-Jewish philanthropist Sir Moses Montefiore who visited Palestine seven times to alleviate distress among poor Jews already living there (Hyamson 353), Deronda will travel to the Near East more as an emissary than settler; none of the Jews in the book will emigrate to a national

home. Klesmer "looks forward to a fusion of the races" (284); Ezra Cohen the pawnbroker will stay with his business and his faulty celebration of the Sabbath; the Jews of the The Philosphers Club, Pash and Gideon, have reasons, commercial and assimilationist, to stay in England, perhaps to "melt gradually into the populations we live among" (586).

Alcharisi is a major character who first appears late enough in the novel to provide not only a dénouement in the revelation of Deronda's identity, but also to raise retrospectively matters to do with both the Wessex and Jewish parts of the novel. The precision of her language is in sharp contrast to the grandiloquence of Mordecai's discourse. Her rebellion against the stifling severity of her father's Judaism, "fettering me into obedience" (692), like a colonial subjugation, also differs from Mordecai's acceptance of suffering; dying, like Alcharisi, of a wasting disease, he says at the end of the chapter that comes between Deronda's two interviews with his mother: "We must take our portion, Mirah. It is there" (722).

Long since baptised to let her become Princess Leonora Halm-Eberstein, the wife of a Russian nobleman by whom she has--mentioned almost casually--five children, she links her first imprisonment, "the slavery of being a girl" (694), with that of being a Jew, and harps on both: "I had a right to seek my freedom from a bondage that I hated . . . And the bondage I hated for myself I wanted to keep you from . . . I relieved you from the bondage of having been born a Jew"

(689). The narrator notes the persistence of this obsession in her: "She had folded her arms again, and looked as if she were ready to face some impending attempt at mastery" (694); she "stood still, as if resolute not to give way utterly to an imperious influence" (699). Then, in recognition of the grip of those early years, Alcharisi says: "my pain seems to keep me there. My childhood--my girlhood--the day of my marriage--the day of my father's death--there seems to be nothing since . . . what my father called 'right' may be a power that is laying hold of me--that is clutching me now" (699).

Alcharisi had responded to Hegel's uncontrollable outer world much earlier. Exulting in her freedom to interpret, like a Talmudist, she was for nine years "the greatest lyric actress of Europe" (703). Then she began to sing out of tune--"it was like a fit of forgetfulness" (702) of her art--as if the time of her success--the raison d'être of her rebellion against her father--were only a gestation period leading to a punishment for the surrender of her unwanted child, and to the reassertion of her father's hegemony as the only reality. This is unlike the loss of voice of another Princess Leonora, in a work where change is less provisional, Goethe's *Torquato Tasso*--"Ah, you are a student of Goethe" (75) says Mrs. Arrowpoint after Gwendolen has quoted from *Faust*. For this Leonora, "the joy of song . . . was denied / To me by my physician . . . I was to live, to suffer / Without resort to that consoling joy" (II.1807-15). But the slip in Alcharisi's

voice proved to be only a stumble, one of Freud's *fehlleistungen* or faulty functions (ILP 25), a return of the repressed, indicating her father's hold on her. It was, however, enough to push her into a new life that seems to have little value for her, in a slave's resignation derided by her fecundity.

The name of Tasso is introduced early into the novel by Mrs. Arrowpoint, whose trivialization of his life includes Princess Leonora, his patron's sister, "who, in my opinion, was a cold hearted woman, else she would have married him in spite of her brother" (76). When, much later, the reader meets Alcharisi, with "not much affection to give" (688) to her son, and who "had to obey that imperious prohibition of any tenderness" (724), another association is made between the two Leonoras, Alcharisi and Mrs. Arrowpoint's version of the Princess of Este. This becomes more forceful if the angry comparison by Goethe's Tasso of the Princess with his own Armida (I.3341), whose erotic conquest of the Frankish knights is politically motivated, is set against Alcharisi's artistic conquest: "Men followed me from one country to another" (688). Just as, within the play, Tasso turns to literature--his own--for a connection with the real world, so, in the novel, Mrs. Arrowpoiont talks about her own work on Tasso, not knowing that, in her real world, she is soon to meet a presumption like the one faced by the Princess. Klesmer, the artist in residence, in "an insurrection against the established order of things" (279), seeks an equality

with the patron's family by marriage to the daughter, a union of which Mrs. Arrowpoint takes a less benign view than she does of Tasso's pursuit of the Princess. These involvements with Goethe's play lead *Daniel Deronda*'s reader to a work of remarkable importance to the novel.

In their lively discussion, Gwendolen tells Mrs. Arrowpoint, "I know nothing of Tasso except the *Gerusalemme Liberata*, which we read and learned by heart at school" (76), a whimsical claim from one whose genteel education was in "French and music" (70), and whose other comments on Mrs. Arrowpoint's pretensions are mischievous and subversive. If not in Gwendolen's mind, Tasso's epic about the First Crusade is in the mind, or heart, of the novel.

An edition of *Gerusalemme Liberata*, in the Eliot-Lewes collection at Dr. Williams's Library in London, is signed "Mary Anne Evans. Finito Luglio 27, 1841," when she was twenty-two. Barry Qualls suggests that Eliot "uses an epic paradigm founded on the histories of the effort to retake Jerusalem from the 'heathens.' She bases the novel's structure--its *two plots*--on an episode in Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata* and, very likely, on an adaptation of the episode by Giacomo Rossi for Handel's *Rinaldo*" (171). Mab Meyrick and Mirah both sing an aria from this opera, *Lascia qu'io pianga* (793 and 796). Qualls makes the point that Eliot, in her capacity as "sacred romancer" (172), reverses the process of religious liberation as seen by the Christians: the Jew Deronda tries to guide the gentile

Gwendolen towards a moral conversion, just as Rinaldo, with whom Deronda identifies himself (245), accepts the heathen Armida's submission: "your command," she says to him of herself, "shall be her law" (Tasso 20.136).

One might add that Armida, like Gwendolen, is a "quivered archeress" (17.33); that she is "the lovely sorceress" (20.116), and Gwendolen "this young witch" (109). Like Deronda's resistence to Gwendolen for the sake of obligations to his destiny, Rinaldo has to use what Tasso, in "The Allegory of the Poem," calls his "irascible part, being warlike and strong" to support reason against "the concupiscent faculties" (p.473) at play in his dalliance with Armida. This reorganization of the psyche is a prerequisite for the delivery of Jerusalem, a city which "signifies civic felicity" (p.470).

Jerusalem, the trophy that inspires Tasso's crusaders, is also the focus of the Zionist dream. Tasso's poem enters *Daniel Deronda* to add force to the idealism of its Jewish part and, in its function as what Herbert J. Levine calls in a parallel context a "typological essence" (421), to excoriate a "demonized English materialism" (442). "The anti-Leavisite criticism of the past few decades," he says, "has deepened our awareness of Eliot's anti-realist techniques: her use of a visionary vocabulary, motifs from folklore and melodrama, Greek and Jewish myth" (422). Wiesenfarth's examination of mythology in the novel, mentioned earlier, Levine's account of its allegory, Harriet Bludgett's study of

archetypal patterns, are part of an approach to *Daniel Deronda* that draws together its two plots in a convincing, though not necessarily deliberate, refutation of Leavis's argument for their separation. The realism of the novel, on which his argument is based, takes place in single time, whereas the first readers of *Middlemarch* moved between their own time and a politically turbulent period forty years earlier. Deprived of a consolation provided by the remoteness of history, the readers of *Daniel Deronda* were offered, as in a medieval narrative, the writ of authority and the provocation of the past, not to relieve them of anxiety, but to deepen the shock of current action with precedents that were, in the end, more acutely political than the symbolism of reform in *Middlemarch*.

Tasso's poem is a part of that authority. It is as available as the Greek Hermione to whom the reader's attention is invited by the mention of "ancient fable" when, in a *tableau vivant*, Gwendolen stands as Hermione from *The Winter's Tale*. "These are my levels," the narrator seems to be saying to the reader, "you choose yours." Hermione, a daughter of Helen and Menelaus, wished to marry her cousin Orestes, but her father gave her in marriage to Pyrrhus, to repay favors received from his father Achilles at the siege of Troy. Similarly, Tasso's Hydraotes, ruler of Damascus, sends his niece Armida to weaken the military strength of the Franks outside Jerusalem, using her beauty to entice, if not

Godfrey himself, then "the greatest of the others" (4.26) away from their mission to liberate the city.

Both of these episodes emphasize the commodification of Gwendolen by her uncle, who sees himself as paternally responsible for her. The snobbery of Mr. Gascoigne (né Gaskin) blinds him to Grandcourt's personal unfitness as a husband for his niece, and to the gossip about his past. Mr. Gascoigne's indebtedness to the aristocracy is as demanding as Menelaus's to Achilles, and the political importance to him of his sway over Gwendolen is as reverberative in the novel as that of Hydraotes over Armida in the epic. The match between Gwendolen and Grandcourt was "a sort of public affair . . . it might even strengthen the Establishment" (176); it was, Mr. Gascoigne persuaded himself in an expansive mood, "a match to be accepted on broad general grounds, national and ecclesiastical" (177). Gwendolen's acceptance of Grandcourt's proposal was a matter of "duty . . . of responsibility" (179). The narrator's apparently friendly ironizing of Mr. Gascoigne's grandiosity and familial imperialism assumes a more sinister tone when the reader chooses to follow the narrator's carefully placed signposts.

The steps towards *Gerusalemme Liberata*, its period, plot, themes, and characters, as commentary on events in the novel, are part of an abundance of allusions, starting with Deronda's name--Ronda was an Islamic town in southern Spain--to the Middle Ages, to the Near East and its European intruders and, in particular, to the crusades.

Gwendolen would like "to be a queen in the East like Lady Hester Stanhope (101), attracted, perhaps, to what A. W. Kinglake called Lady Hester's "sway among the Arabs" (78). A Mallinger ancestor "had killed three Saracens in one encounter" (210); their heads are included in the family coat of arms with three bezants, coins which became debased after the First Crusade (Runciman 2.15). According to Tasso, Sutan Solyman has emblazoned on his helmet a dragon "that stretches itself and writhes its neck" (9.25), like the lizard in Grandcourt's character. Mordecai's poverty is compared with that of Peter the Hermit, "who has a tocsin for the rabble" (529). In Tasso, Peter tells Tancred, after losing Clorinda, to resume his duties as a knight of Christ, much as Mordecai directs Deronda towards his heritage, away from Gwendolen who, like Clorinda shut out from entry into Jerusalem, is temporarily excluded from any community.

Deronda muses about this heritage and the possibility that he is illegitimate when, at thirteen--in his barmitzvah year--he tries to understand his birth and ancestry. Although his nature refuses a self-centeredness that would allow the stigma of his birth to turn him into an outcast, "an Ishmaelite" (215), he "naturally had some resentment on behalf of the Hagars and Ishmaels" (489). Thus identified with the legendary father of the Arab peoples, Deronda, since Ishmael was circumcised at thirteen (Genesis 17:25), can also be seen as entering the covenant of Israel, a duality that in the "many-sided sympathy" (412) of his nature, suggests a

less belligerent mission to Palestine than those of his putative crusading forebears. The sympathy continues in the discussion at the *Hand and Banner*, when, as we have seen, Deronda says, "Nations have revived. We may live to see a great outburst of force in the Arabs, who are being inspired with a new zeal," to which Mordecai replies with a fraternal impulse, "Amen, amen" (584).

During the New Year's Eve ball at Sir Hugo's Abbey, standing alone with Gwendolen in a recess by a window, Deronda "moved slightly away" from her; "he had a wonderful power of standing perfectly still, and in that position reminded one sometimes of Dante's *spiriti magni con occhi tardi e gravi*" (500), great spirits with grave and slow-moving eyes. These are the virtuous heathen in Limbo who include, a few lines later in Dante's poem, *solo in parte* (*Inferno* IV, 129), by himself and apart, the figure of Saladin, "whose mercy and kindness" when taking Jerusalem, according to Runciman, "were in strange contrast to the deeds of the Christian conquerors of the First Crusade" (II.466). Deronda, with his catholic sympathies, is closer to Saladin than to the medieval Mallingers.

Hans Meyrick touches on what the narrator calls Deronda's state of "reflective hesitation" and "social neutrality" (220), from which his imagination can take him in any direction, when he whimsically says that Deronda is "like Moses or Mahomet" (222), that is, he could become either one, indifferently. On the other hand, they are both lawgivers

whose adherents suffered from the Christians in the First Crusade. Deronda's "seven hundred a year" (216), the income from "capital which somebody else has battled for" (225), allows him the luxury of standing outside all contention in Christian England, and in his disengagement he can "follow in imagination the travelling students of the middle ages" (220).

Deronda's almost heroic withdrawal is like a point of repose amid the coerciveness and moral negligence of Mr. Gascoigne and Sir Hugo, the controls exerted by Grandcourt, the collapse, in Gwendolen, into "her hidden wound" (625), the the "new chord sounding" in Mordecai, "rather imperious than appealing" (561). Deronda, "in a state of suspense" (570), is waiting to become remarkable.

The slow uncertainty of Deronda's emergence into his calling, in what seems to be a deliberate delay by an author less concerned, in his case, with characterization than with epic destiny, is in noticeable contrast to the self-assurance around him, Mr. Gascoigne's snobbery and Sir Hugo's complacency, for example.

Mr. Gascoigne's pressure on Gwendolen is like a domestic version of Klesmer's comment on the imperial economy, paraphrased by the narrator: "the lack of idealism in English politics, which left all mutuality between distant races to be determined simply by the need of a market: the crusades, to his mind, had at least this excuse, that they had a banner

of sentiment round which generous feelings could rally: of course, the scoundrels rallied too" (283).

The real decencies of Mr. Gascoigne and Sir Hugo mask from themselves a moral insolvency that serves as the material for Eliot's bitter satire of the first two estates. Sir Hugo's "imagination had never once been troubled with the way in which the boy himself might be affected . . . by the enigmatic aspect of his circumstances" (214); in contrast, Deronda exercised "his usual activity of imagination as to how his conduct might affect others" (267). The narrator makes no bones about the gap between what Sir Hugo is and what he purports to be. After his complaint to Mr. Gascoigne about, by his standards, the modesty of Grandcourt's bequest to Gwendolen--"only two thousand a-year and a house in a coal-mining district"--the narrator's acerbic "Thus spake the chivalrous Sir Hugo" (827) elicits the chivalric code that has dwindled to Victorian gallantry, or worse, in a man who, without thought for Mirah's predicament, advises Deronda "that the search for [her] mother and brother had better be let alone" (267). Sir Hugo's "kindliness" (830), which costs him little, is opposed to "that something of the knight-errant" (370), noticed by Hans Meyrick in Deronda, a medieval identity of increasing importance for Deronda as he approaches the vision presented by Mordecai, a vision tied to a land empowering the spirit, not, as with Sir Hugo and Grandcourt, the use of land as a source of material power and social activity. Godfrey, in Tasso's account, was ready to

receive from Gabriel God's command to go to war to liberate Jerusalem for "the building of kingdoms" (Tasso I.13-17); Deronda is equally prepared, by an expansive imagination like that of the Elizabethans, to receive Mordecai's blessing in a mission to make Jerusalem, Tasso's city of "civic felicity," the center of a new Jewish realm.

Sir Hugo's preoccupations with property and conservative politics, in which nothing is intended to happen--he is "a Liberal of good lineage, who confided entirely in Reform as not likely to make any serious difference in English habits of feeling" (864)--resemble Deronda's early commonplace to Gwendolen, "our gain is another's loss" (383), a statement of economic stasis. Developing as a *bildungsroman*, the novel advances Deronda's education by Gwendolen's attachment to him: "the coercion is often stronger on the one who takes the reverence" (485). As he becomes less like "the Prince of Prigs," as R. L. Stevenson called him (Carroll 33), or as he is "rescued from neutrality," as Neil Hertz puts it (289), he can press on her the need to use her sensibility as if it were a visionary faculty. To change the world, the vision must be enacted, and freed from a solipsistic stasis; in a startling use of Grandcourt's imperative locution with Gwendolen, Deronda, emphasizing his emergence into a contentious world, and responding to her fundamental ineffectiveness with a force equal to Grandcourt's, says to her, "You can, you will, be among the best of women, such as make others glad that they were born" (840).

Mordecai's idealism is an essential antidote to the mammonism of Wessex. Sir Hugo ignores, rather than shirks, the chivalric "banner of sentiment" of his ancestors--the quest, the transcendence of self, the seeking out of danger, the justification of chivalry through service, what Angus Fletcher calls "the continuous rededication of the hero to an endless warfare against the forces of night, darkness, winter, deceit, cruelty, lust" (192). The medievalism of Deronda and Mordecai substitutes the Jew for the knight-errant, the heroism of persecution for that of chivalry. Deronda imagines himself in Cordova in the time of the Hebrew poet Ibn Gabirol, and as a Jew on the borders of the Rhine at "the end of the eleventh century . . . the Hep! Hep! Hep! of the Crusaders came like a bay of bloodhounds; and in the presence of those devilish missionaries with sword and firebrand the crouching figure of the reviled Jew turned round erect, heroic, flashing with sublime constancy in the face of torture and death" (430-1).

In 1819, according to Cecil Roth, "to the accompaniment of cries of Hep! Hep! (the initials of *Hierosolyma est perdita* [Jerusalem is fallen], and traditionally the anti-Jewish watchword of the period of the Crusades), sanguinary excesses against the Jews took place throughout Germany" (350). Eliot might have assumed this episode to be sufficiently well known to entitle the last of the essays in her *Impressions of Theophrastus Such* "The Modern Hep! Hep! Hep!" (168-193) without further explanation. Mordecai, in

Deronda's eyes on their first meeting, has "such a physiognomy as . . . might possibly have been seen in a prophet of the Exile, or in some new Hebrew poet of the medieval time" (436). Indeed, says Mordecai, "one of their souls was born again within me . . . it heard the roar of the Crusaders and the shrieks of tortured Israel" (555), presumably the Jews of Jerusalem who "fled in a body to their chief synagogue. But they were held to have aided the Moslems; and no mercy was shown to them. The building was set on fire and they were all burnt within" (Runciman 1.287).

References to movements for national unity in contemporary Europe can be seen as a commentary on Deronda's fantasy of the "erect, heroic Jew." At a time when, according to the narrator, "the fermenting political and social leaven . . . was making a difference in the history of the world" (843), Deronda invokes "the effort after the unity of Italy . . . Mazzini's account of his first yearning" (595) as an analogue vindicating Mordecai's nationalist fervor. Mazzini's liberating and unifying movement, a nationalism educational, prophetic, and mystical, with its determination to expel foreign occupiers, is a model for Mordecai as savior of the Jew from what he calls an exile that was "a yoke of oppression . . . forced afar among brutish people," the Jew to be reestablished through "consciousness of his race" (591) in "a national hearth" (596). Mazzini also serves as a model for Deronda as a maker of community, between the Meyricks and Mirah, Mirah and Mordecai, Gwendolen and the world outside

her. Fourteen years before Daniel Deronda was published, Moses Hess, in *Rome and Jerusalem*, "affirmed that the reconstruction of a political nationality in Palestine was the only solution to the indubitable problem of the Jew" (Roth 409), and compared the situation of the Italians with the potential of the Jewish people: "As Rome is being reawakened by the Risorgimento, so Jerusalem too will awake" (O'Brien 43).

While Deronda, at the hotel *Italia* in Genoa, awaits his mother and the interview with her that will change his universe, "every day was a hurrying march of crowded time towards the world-changing battle of Sadowa" (684), a victory for the Prussians in the course of an expansionism that would lead to the formation of the German Empire in 1871. This is a date that falls between the action of the novel and its writing, and an indicator of unity by subjugation. The fleeting reference by the narrator to Bismarck's conquests and their costs are perhaps a gesture, on Eliot's part, towards the destructive price of Deronda's Zionist mission, if it is to be fulfilled. The reference to Bismarck's triumph also mocks the French, or Norman, oxymoron of Grandcourt's name: a great will imposed on a tiny constituency.

Genoa itself, the birthplace of Mazzini and Columbus, who "will have the daring first to set himself on the unknown course" (Tasso 15.31-2), and the port, in 1860, for Garibaldi's Thousand Red Shirts, is a place of liberation and discovery. But it was also a major port for a fleet (*liguri*

navigli, Tasso 5.86) that supplied the First Crusade (Runciman 1.275).

As ideologue and rhetorician, Mordecai's persuasions are grounded in history. He is a master of the past and, by prophecy, of the future; it is in history that the images arising through his agency are most vivid. For Grandcourt, requiring the immediate obedience of his retainers, only the present exists. Their affiliations in the novel are formed in ways that suggest, rather unexpectedly from this antithesis of ideology and the senses, a reciprocal pastoral relation, with its defining controlling forces, of court to shepherd, state to clown. William Empson's figure for the pastoral elements of the Miracle Play tradition "as a typical submerged concept" is a helpful one here. In the direction I shall consider first, Grandcourt performs as clown to Mordecai as the "king or saint" (29) of Empson's formulation.

Gwendolen's first impression of Grandcourt--"he is not ridiculous"--is governed as much by his freedom "from grimace or solicitous wrigglings" in "the light of prepared contrast" as by the details of his appearance. "He showed an extensive baldness surrounded with a mere fringe of reddish-blond hair, but he also showed a perfect hand." The "but" suggests that something less than perfect is implied in the phrase that precedes it. "The line of feature from brow to chin undisguised by beard was decidedly handsome, with only moderate departures from the perpendicular, and the slight whisker too was perpendicular" (145-6). The tonsure reminds

one of the incongruities of Chaucer's monk, whose "heed was balled, that shoon as any glas," who found no need to "swynken [toil] with his handes," and who "lovede venerie" (GP 165-207), practiced by Grandcourt in both meanings of the word. The line of features and the whisker are in a late Gothic architectural style that started in England in Chaucer's century. The narrator, allowing Gwendolen to refuse to see the absurdity of Grandcourt's appearance, teases the reader into doing so.

The description of Grandcourt includes the "long narrow grey eyes:" (145) of "a handsome lizard of a hitherto unknown species, not of the lively, darting kind" (174), an animal predatory by nature, therefore innocent, waiting patiently until it can satisfy its appetite, alert, circumspect, ready to pounce. Mordecai breathes an air outside the social order of Wessex; Grandcourt, with the unfitness of a philistine buffoon, lives without relation to the people and ideals of Mordecai's moral and metaphysical universe. He looks at Gwendolen "with his most lizard-like expression" when about to make a sour comment on her plan to take singing lessons with Mirah. Gwendolen pushes him still further away from her and more deeply into the animal world when she, "lifting a prawn before her, looked at the boiled ingenuousness of its eyes as preferable to the lizard's" (648-9). Grandcourt's non-human optic vision is placed next to the sound of Mirah's voice, which is praised by Klesmer--with Alcharisi, one of the two great artists of the novel. Their music is part of a

specifically Jewish metaphysical vision. As articulator of this vision, Mordecai, the Christ figure, is like Empson's "king or saint . . . in the serious part . . . In the comic part [are] the people . . . for whom he laboured" (29).

In the scheme to regenerate the people of Israel in the land of their testament, Mordecai, a dying saint "in the serious part," in Empson's elaboration of the pastoral mode juxtaposing the spirit with bodily appetites, is a saintly figure of sufficient stature to labor by example for the people of Wessex, represented at their most contingent by Grandcourt. Mordecai uses his power to attract Deronda towards a heroic idea within his vision. Grandcourt deploys his to attract Gwendolen towards the infernal side of a pastoral that has plebeian revelry and generosity on the other, primarily in the form of Joel Dagge. Dagge is described affectionately by the narrator as "clearly a low character," one of the few in the novel to disturb the composure of "the refined reader," and whose unconventional medicine has arcane, restorative qualities, like those attributed to witch-doctors in tribal societies.

Rex, lagging behind the hunt "on his father's grey nag . . . of sober years and ecclesiastical habits," is thrown and has his shoulder put out of joint when the horse falls and breaks his knees. Dagge, a young blacksmith following the hunt on foot, is there to help: "Lord, sir, let me shove it in again for you . . . I seen a man with his eye pushed out once . . . But it went in again. I's swallowed three teeth

mysen, as sure as I'm alive" (103-4). This is a clown who heals, with a magic unlike the ecclesiastical sobriety of the horse, but a member of the third estate like the "young workman sitting against me" (261) who secretly puts a half-napoleon in Mirah's pocket on the train during the flight from her father. Dagge, a Vulcan figure, is a pagan artisan with a godlike authority, but it is the horse, not Vulcan, who limps. The horse, an emblem of chivalry and the source of its name, is crippled, and the "low character" on foot is the countryman whose familiarity with the body enables him to come to the aid of the distressed, as Deronda does. Although, for the gentlemen of Wessex, Dagge is a clown, for the narrator he is a courtly knight in the context of the broken chivalry of Wessex. Dagge, Mirah's neighbor on the train, and Mordecai, "a poor Jewish workman" (571), inhabit both zones of the pastoral duality nearly simultaneously, like Wittgenstein's duck-rabbit. Powerful at one moment, powerless at another, "gentle or simple" (315) in Adam Bede's phrase, they need the complicity of the reader to resemble the slave's double consciousness in Hegel's model.

The traditional direction of pastoral, from court to shepherd and, in the English meaning of his name, Grandcourt to Mordecai, highly ironized by Eliot in the shift from material to moral power as its basis, is epitomized by Empson: "If you choose an important member the result is heroic; if you choose an unimportant one it is pastoral" (81). Important, though by now seldom heroic, members of

society recognize their importance by the attitudes toward them of the unimportant members within the class system. This recognition, as we have seen from Stocking's list and the comments by Anderson and Brantlinger, seems to be comparable with that involving racial superiority and inferiority. The hierarchies of class and race are both seen as, in Brantinger's words, "the results of evolution or of the laws of nature." The two groups, laborers and savages, supply, or are assumed to supply, the manual work necessary for economic growth, social stability, and the prosperity of their employers.

Distinctions by class and race meet in two of the alien groups living in England: Mrs. Arrowpoint recognizes them when she calls Klesmer "a gypsy, a Jew, a mere bubble of the earth" (289). Eliot had written about Gypsies in *The Mill on the Floss*, but in this novel, unusual in Eliot's fiction for its scarcity of plebeian characters, class and race are joined in the artist and the Jew. Klesmer--a Hebrew/Yiddish name for an informal group of itinerant musicians--neither gentile nor philistine, is doubly strange to the Arrowpoints. His suit for their daughter Catherine forces them to resort, in protest, to a language of public policy, like Mr. Gascoigne's when he is urging Gwendolen to marry Grandcourt: "We must do as other people do," says Mr. Arrowpoint to Catherine, "we must think of the nation and the public good" (290). Mr. Arrowpoint's new money, his father-in-law's "fortune gained by some moist or dry business in the city"

(74), together with those class and race structures that ensure the domestic economy and the uncertain economic benefits of empire, must be protected against raids upon them by impoverished outsiders. Although Catherine's remark, "it is in everybody's mouth that successful swindlers may buy up half the land in the country" (290), follows her comment about the passing of land into the hands of foreigners, it might equally apply to her own family's observance of the long tradition of merchants buying their way into the gentry. This internal colonization, by foreigners and the *nouveaux riches*, prepares imperial adventurers for more coercive investments in what Ruskin called "fruitful waste ground" abroad.

The colonial frontier is evoked by Deronda's encounter with another Jew, Ezra Cohen the pawnbroker, in his search for Mirah's brother. Deronda, at this point still an English gentleman, "particularly desired that [Mirah's brother] should not keep a shop" (432). In what reads almost like a parody of the customary exchange of trinkets at a meeting between the colonial visitor and the native inhabitant, Deronda arranges a "shwop" (443) of pocket-knives with the six-tear-old Jacob Cohen. He watches the Friday evening rituals as an outsider, as bewildered as Robinson Crusoe observing "no less than Thirty" savages "all Dancing in I know not how many barbarous Gestures and Figures, their own Way, round the fire" (201). When Ezra Cohen calls "Mordecai!" Deronda, unaware that someone of this name lives there,

wonders: "Can this be part of the religious ceremony? . . . not knowing what might be expected of the ancient hero" (448).

Encounters at the frontier usually assume a home from which the visitor has traveled, of which he has memories to support his resistance to the allure of an exotic culture, and to strengthen his civilizing purposes towards that culture. Since this equipment is given neither to the long-exiled Jews nor to Gwendolen, to whose futures the hopes of the novel are pinned, and since their journeys start in no one place, they are allowed no encounters that would conclusively define their destinations in terms of where they come from. Mordecai's gathering of the Jews into what Deronda calls "a national centre, such as the English have" (875) is the realization of "the fantasy of returning home" to a "remembered homeland in literature" (Howe 2). The Jewish diaspora and marginalization are prefigured by the narrator's account of Gwendolen's early life, "roving from one foreign watering-place or Parisian apartment to another . . . and meeting new people under conditions which made her appear of little importance" (52).

In a passage unusually lyrical for the narrator, Gwendolen, on her return to Wessex from Germany, is called for the first time by her surname, emphasizing her fatherlessness, her separateness from her mother and half-sisters, her removal from the narrator's sympathy, and with a mock deference to her elevated position in the household.

> Pity that Offendene was not the home of Miss Harleth's childhood, or endeared to her by family memories! A human life, I think, should be well rooted in some spot of a native land . . . a spot where the definiteness of early memories may be inwrought with affection, and kindly acquaintance with all neighbours, even to the dogs and donkeys . . . At five years old, mortals are not prepared to be citizens of the world, to be stimulated by abstract nouns, to soar above preference into impartiality . . . The best introduction to astronomy is to think of the nightly heavens as a little lot of stars belonging to one's own homestead (50).

With a hint of the colonial deracination and isolation of her grandfather, a West Indian planter, Gwendolen returns to "the hundred yards' breadth of old plantation encircling the immediate grounds" (51). She is as exposed to the workings of the outer world, the immutable alienation of the stars, the loss of family fortune, as Meliboeus, the farmer in Vergil's First Eclogue, dispossessed by soldiers rewarded with his land by Octavius Caesar for their part in the civil war--a pastoral happiness interrupted by uncontestable demands of the state.

Gwendolen's passage from a consciousness that is "of little importance" towards one that can be "stimulated by abstract nouns" takes her from a pastoral of childhood

helplessness towards the self-command of the heroic. The crisis of her transformation follows the shock of Deronda's announcement of his departure for the East to restore "political existence to my people." What then enters the "mere speck" of Gwendolen is like "the tread of an invading army or the dire clash of civil war . . . the martyrs live reviled, they die, and no angel is seen . . . the submission of the soul to the Highest is tested . . . and a religion shows itself which is something else than a private consolation"; the shock is "something spiritual and vaguely tremendous" (875-6).

Deronda's "crouching figure of the reviled Jew" returns here with the American Civil War, earlier contrasted with Gwendolen's "insignificant consciousness," to provide for Gwendolen at the end of the novel political myths to empower her in her testing. She is to undergo "the pressure of a vast mysterious movement" (876) in which she becomes an antagonist of the oppressive pastoral sense of Grandcourt's name. Since she herself is now an owner of this name, and since her illness and recovery, like those of Robinson Crusoe, repeat the mystery of death and rebirth, the civil war of her internal struggle and its anguish is of a scope to lead her into a representative, nearly heroic, situation for Wessex and England.

Just as the agony Gwendolen suffers when she examines her part in Grandcourt's death fails to remove imperious forces from her soul, so does the rehearsal of persecutions

in history fail to rid contemporary life of comparable oppressions. The narrator does not suggest there can be an end to the antagonism between the desire for mastery and the desire to be free, either in the interior action among the characters or within as much of the outer world as the novelist chooses to introduce; nor does the narrator give any facile hope for an end to the interdependence of, on the one hand, conflicts between individuals for dominion and emancipation and, on the other, the apparently insatiable demands of national groups for control over the land, wealth, and destinies of others. But the search under a microscope for the workings of the imperial libido among individuals in England offers a dynamic version of its activities overseas.

Chapter 2: Women and Savages

In this chapter I shall explore the equation: women are to men as savages to Europeans, as part of a current, both overt and hidden, running through a number of fictional works from the 1870s to the 1920s. And I shall look at responses of men to women in the shadow of those by Europeans to savages, and as aspects of other dualities. In discussing slavery, for example, Aristotle observed that non-Greeks, i.e. those without a gift for natural rule, "assign to female and slave exactly the same status" (57), and distinguished between intellect and appetite, or intelligence and desire, as features respectively of master and slave in their relations with each other (68). In his essay "The Subjection of Women," J. S. Mill identified a system of "command and obedience" in which woman is an "odalisque or . . . domestic servant" (52) in "the assimilation of the wife to the slave" (59). With a pessimism unusual for him, he concluded that there is an "eternal antagonism" between "the love of power and the love of liberty" (182).

Mill likened women to negro slaves when he said, as an instance of the inability of each group to act autonomously, that neither is free to break the laws and contracts that govern them, that both groups, "being under the control of others cannot often commit crimes" (142); "there remain no legal slaves, except the mistress of every house" (147). Clara Middleton, in George Meredith's *The Egoist* (1879), has

second thoughts about the contract of engagement she has entered "in his conquering period" (467) with Sir Willoughby. (Mrs. Baggett, the housekeeper in Trollope's *An Old Man's Love*, says "a promise between a lady and a gentleman ought to be as good as the law of the land" [215]). Clara wants "to be brave enough to be dishonourable," to escape from "the cage of a plighted woman hungering for her disengagement" (133). Mill's example is less strange if the crime committed, whatever form it takes, is seen as being always against the laws--or word--that bind the subject in servitude, for if these laws exist, all other laws, forming a single legitimacy of the state, can be seen to support them. (Henry Brougham, in 1830, offers the high crime rate among West Indian slaves as a symptom of their demoralization [140]).

That Mill might be factually incorrect about the infrequency of crimes committed by slaves emphasizes, in a roundabout way, the force of his association of woman with slave on economic grounds--both are limited in choice by being the property of others. In an identification of women with colonized people, Clara's father says that in her "native wildness" she has "wrestled with her engagement, as the aboriginals of a land newly discovered by a crew of adventurous colonists do battle with the garments imposed on them by our considerate civilization;- ultimately to rejoice with excessive dignity in the wearing of a battered cocked-hat and trowsers not extending to the shanks" (498).

In this attempt to assimilate otherness, like the Eskimo Frobisher sent back to England, where he was painted in English dress (Greenblatt 112), Dr. Middleton and his colonists are aware of their own absurdity in enveloping Clara and the aboriginals with constraints foreign to them. The self-mockery is absorbed in an attitude that sees savages as ridiculous, as well as frightening and inferior beings, one of the reasons why they could be enslaved without the moral qualms that kept slavery for the most part from being practiced within the Judeo-Christian countries themselves. But a theoretical opposition, mentioned but not accepted by Aristotle (63 and 71), seldom and only sporadically realized in its early days, was often raised in public discourse about the enslavement of both savages and women.

For example, in his *A Plan of the English Commerce*, Defoe voiced a commercial view, whether his own or not, that was based on widely held assumptions about the propriety of enslavement. In calling for colonization of the west coast of Africa, he pointed out that "Negroe Slaves" could be bought there for "30s to 50s or at most [3 pounds] *per* Head" (250), compared with twenty-five to sixty pounds in the Americas. A quite different opinion, which was held by Captain Misson in Defoe's *A General History of the Pyrates*, opposes assumptions permitting the commodification of slaves, and echoes the statement by a staunch sixteenth-century defender of the Indians, Bartolomeo de Las Casas: "there is only one definition of each and every man, and that is that he is

rational" (Elliott 48). Misson and his fellow pirates are to found in Madagascar a utopian settlement called Libertalia. He tells his crew, in connection with some recently captured slaves, that "for his Part . . . he had not exempted his Neck from the galling Yoak of Slavery, and asserted his own Liberty, to enslave others. That however, these Men were distinguish'd from the *Europeans* by their Colour, Customs, or religious Rites, they were the Work of the same omnipotent Being, and endued with equal Reason" (403). These two views, Defoe's and Misson's, in the words of the anthropologist E. B. Tylor in an 1877 review, treating "the savage mind according to the needs of our argument, sometimes as extremely ignorant and inconsequent, at other times as extremely observant and logical," are the "besetting sin" of those who studied primitive man (Stocking 187).

The minds of middle-class Victorian men, entertaining such similar fears and desires with respect to the irrationality of savages and of women, and bedeviled by the possibility that these possess as much reason as themselves, were shaken at about the same time both by a feminism rejuvenated by its possibilities for fulfilment in the economic world and by agitations for institutional autonomy in the empire. Gissing's *The Odd Women* describes an academy to educate middle-class women for jobs, as if Captain Misson's egalitarian promise were directed both to them and to the founders of the National Congress, in the 1880s, who wanted a larger share in the administration of India. But the

dependence of women on the conventions and legality to which they were subject proved as difficult to overcome as the male resistance to their emancipation.

In *The Odd Women* (1893), Monica Madden is one of three orphaned sisters who all become casualties in the struggle to make their own lives. One defects to gin, another to piety, and Monica, failing to cope with either the emotional or the economic independence demanded by the academy, marries, with some respect and no love, a man twice her age. Widdowson becomes increasingly like a version of the jealous *senex amans* of Chaucer's fabliaux, with a graying of his hair and a "sluggishness" that increases his reading from one daily newspaper to three. Offering what Theodore Elbert in 1828 called the newspaper's "repetition of ephemeral impulses," and R. H. Hutton in 1869 "a distraction which is not based on a fiction" (Altick 16 and 82), the *Times* and two evening papers empower Widdowson with a vicarious sense of living as an alternative to facing the reasons for Monica's absences from home, and to the effort of making an authentic common life with her (*The Odd Women*, 205).

The narrative uses a language of slavery and manipulation: the first chapter that explicitly deals with their marital difficulties is headed "The Clank of the Chains"; Widdowson regards women "as born to perpetual pupilage" (196), but he regrets he took the path that makes him "become her lord and master" (197); Monica, in a letter to him, says "things will never be better until you come to

think of me as your free companion, not as your bondwoman" (201); her mood is near to one of "revolt" (202); he is sure that his "duty was to manage her" (239). Widdowson's conflicting thoughts--to lock her in, to let her go where she will--are not resolved by the expedient of following her, or having her followed. But they are like the dilemma of the colonists at this time when confronting rebellion abroad, and reflect much of the contemporary discussion that was to be crystallized a few years later in J. A. Hobson's study, where anti-imperialist arguments cohabit with Hobson's own imperializing instincts.

Clara Middleton and *Daniel Deronda*'s Gwendolen are early examples of women with no essential vocation struggling for a degree of independent choice. There is an identifiable but not rigidly chronological progression of such women who tend to challenge their men to move beyond the fixed positions that have served them well. But there was a growing sense in the fiction that relations between men and women were to be seen as inseparable from the body politic. Satirized as it is, Mr. Gascoigne's understanding of this in *Daniel Deronda* reflects the context of state in which Aristotle firmly places the operations of the household.

The three women in the life of George Ponderevo, the narrator of H. G. Wells's *Tono-Bungay* (1909), embody various features of women's social condition to which George must respond. He moves from his wife Marion's suppression of undomesticated instincts and her demands for the lower-

middle-class rituals of betrothal and marriage, to Effie Rink's apparent freedom to have an affectionate affair with him and, finally, to a short-lived reciprocated passion with Beatrice. Long after her fling with George, Effie marries "a boy half her age--a wretch of a poet, a wretched poet and given to drugs, a thing with lank fair hair always getting into his blue eyes, and limp legs" (168). Beatrice's frailties are strikingly similar. She is probably a narcotics addict, she can't do her own hair, she is the mistress of another man--"I am a woman spoiled and ruined" (306). Effie's poet appears to have been feminized in a displacement that makes her both mother and master, a strengthening of the woman at the cost of male sturdiness, and a fear, perhaps, on the part of George as narrator--"she amazed me by a sudden display of business capacity" (168)--of the substitution of a man's power by a woman's.

Effie is trespassing on territory in which men have an important investment. To escape what have become mysterious, unpredictable demands from their women, men respond by taking shelter in the emotionally safe functions that are theirs by social, if not divine, allocation. Through the clarity and form of their commercial and governmental activities they look for order and consolation in contract and structure. The fears and desires they have repressed in themselves, by ascribing them to groups that include women and savages, can no longer be kept at bay in the company of women increasingly conscious of and disturbed by their own previous compliance.

In a lecture of 1875, Henry Maine, anthropologist and legal historian, whose "methodology" on the position of women was, according to Stocking, "illustrative" of mid-Victorian cultural commentators, referred, in connection with the need for the human male to curb primary impulses in his nature, to "that same control which produces wealth by subduing the natural appetite of living for the present, and which fructifies in art and learning through subordinating a material and immediate to a remote, intangible, and spiritual enjoyment" (Stocking 207). Anticipating Freud, Maine said that only by such curbing was civilization possible.

In a way that renders relations between men and women as endlessly problematic, Liam Hudson and Bernadine Jacot have argued in favor of a destiny independent of circumstance, the human male being born wounded into his estate, and thus "poised . . . to heal his wound at one symbolic remove; to use the anxiety his separation [from the mother's femaleness] provokes in him to create systems of ideas which can stand in the place of lost intimacy, and within which he can strive for coherence and harmony" (49). This is a retrospective support of Maine's view of repression among middle-class Englishmen, and one that continues to be expressed in fictional characters through and beyond the latter part of the Victorian period.

E. M. Forster's Herbert Wilcox in *Howards End* (1910) certainly shows little "appetite of living for the present" in his deficient marriage proposal to Margaret Schlegel. The

narrator, close to Margaret's thoughts in this passage, says, "It had been a strange love-scene--the central radiance unacknowledged from first to last." Knowing he was unable to say "I love you," she, in his place, would have gracefully put the right words in her father's language, with the less frightening "Ich liebe dich." He might have opened his heart if she had pressed him, "as a matter of duty perhaps; England expects every man to open his heart once" (156). The narrator plays here with the sentence Nelson is reported to have delivered at the battle of Trafalgar, "England expects that every man will do his duty," used by imperial apologists, like Ruskin, as quoted in the introduction. For an instant, the reader is bemused by the reversal of the sentence, a teasing dig at Mr. Wilcox's defences, and also a questioning of Nelson's patriotic call to an imperial navy. This might be rephrased as a questioning, from Margaret's point of view, of the danger of intimacy with her Mr. Wilcox denies for himself in the interests of those more coherent excitements that can apparently be had from profits in the international rubber business or from victory over a Franco-Spanish fleet.

The next day, on the Parade at Swanage, loss of faith in a traditional view of national power is again juxtaposed with Mr. Wilcox's emotional frailty. He and Margaret are taking an evening walk in what she hoped "would be her first real love scene" (166). She sees her fiancé as one of the makers of England--in a rhapsodic tribute, she had told Helen that "if Wilcoxes hadn't worked and died in England for thousands of

years, you and I couldn't sit here without having our throats cut. There would be no trains, no ships to carry us literary people about in, no fields even. Just savagery" (164). Mr. Wilcox tries to talk about business, a subject more congenial to him than any other. The conversation is interrupted by "some youths" who, overhearing Margaret's "When do you want to marry me?" (169), start to mock the couple. "Mr. Wilcox turned on them, and said sharply, 'I say!' There was silence. 'Take care I don't report you to the police'" (170). If the silence of the youths had lasted, only the voices of Mr. Wilcox and Margaret, the capitalist and the rentier, would be heard. But their further conversation is "punctuated by peals of ungovernable laughter" (170). Challenged by men of a class "to whom he gave work as clerks" (171), and whose equivalent in Nigeria work for his Imperial and West African Rubber Company, Mr.Wilcox, like a planter in the colonies turning for protection to the army, threatens to surrender responsibility to forces paid to quell an eruption from those who, as producers of his prosperity, can equally undermine it.

While behaving like a school prefect who warns an insolent fag that he will report him to the housemaster, Mr. Wilcox talks of property and family disbursements to the woman who wants not his money, but an expression of his love. His "I say!", a frequently used but strange, self-referring middle-class expostulation of surprised pleasure or dismay, is an ultimate performative utterance underlining the

absurdity in his inadequacy with both Margaret and the young teasers. After their walk, in Mrs. Munt's garden, with a violence that surprises her, Mr. Wilcox quite suddenly takes Margaret into his arms for their first kiss, and then, just as suddenly, "disappeared into the night . . . the incident displeased her. It was so isolated . . . no tenderness had ensued. If a man cannot lead up to passion he can at all events lead down from it" (172). The derision of the young men is a hostile version of Margaret's affectionate mockery of his stiffness and certainties. But even for Margaret, who had had in the past "mere yearnings for the masculine, to be dismissed . . . with a smile" (155), and who expected her romance with Mr. Wilcox to be "a very good kind of prose" (163), total abstinence from the hope of love was the only way to avoid coping with displeasure at men's failure among women, a failure that men, without guns, equally expressed in the empire.

Women are represented as knowing how, but failing, to protect themselves against such losses. In Far *From the Madding Crowd* (1874), Bathsheba, already married to Troy, "hated herself now . . . Diana was the goddess whom Bathsheba instinctively adored" (334). In *Daniel Deronda*, Gwendolen, the archer, is described by Sir Hugo as "a perfect Diana" (199) and "the fair gambler, the Leubronn Diana" (367), staking her chastity in her betrothal to Grandcourt. D. H. Lawrence's *The White Peacock* (1911) provides a poignant instance of a shift in affiliation within Diana's dual

divinity, from the virgin huntress, for whom chastity is a safeguard against loss of freedom, to goddess of fertility and childbirth. After a night in which Lettie and Leslie are presumed to make love for the first time, without a trace of Sue Bridehead's momentary "glow" after her consummation with Jude (333), she says to him, with an unself-pitying eloquence, her autonomy now at risk, "you make my hands--my very hands disclaim me . . . Oh, why don't you go away?" Leslie, though "puzzled and miserable," seeks refuge in the idea of contract: "we're going to be married, aren't we?" (241-2). As the next chapter opens, the narrator repeats Lettie's initiation into the procreative act, and offers an alternative to Leslie's resort to an intellectualized legal structure. A lyrical account of Lettie's loss of maidenhead encompasses the fecundity of spring: "it occurred to me that I had seen all the ranks of poplars suddenly bursten into a dark crimson glow, with a flutter of blood-red where the sun came through the leaves; that I had found high cradles where the swan's eggs lay by the waterside" (243).

There is a less delicate sexuality in the evocation of spring in Galsworthy's *The Man of Property* (1906) that occurs between a conversation Soames Forsyte has with Bosinney, the architect of his new house and soon to become Irene's lover, and his memory of the day four years before, when she finally accepts his proposal: "It was such a spring day as breathes into a man an ineffable yearning . . . The earth gave forth a fainting warmth . . . It was her long caress of invitation,

to draw men down to lie within her arms, to roll their bodies on her, and put their lips to her breast" (111). This might be a promise of Bosinney's love with Irene, but its crudeness matches Soames's assault on her at another meeting he remembers, before her acceptance of him. "She had looked at him over her slowly waving fan; and he had lost his head. Seizing that moving wrist, he pressed his lips to the flesh of her arm. And she had shuddered--to this day he had not forgotten that shudder--nor the look so passionately averse she had given him" (113). "The rational repression of instinctual tendencies" (Stocking 231) is momentarily lifted, as it was for Mr. Wilcox, with a disregard for Irene that anticipates his rape of her--what he was to call, in a characteristically self-deceptive version of sexual union, "the first step towards reconciliation" (265).

Both episodes demonstrate to the perpetrator something of the costs of losing imperial self-command in a society upholding the tradition that denies instinct. Assaults on the victim invoke the question posed by discovery narratives: who is the savage, the European or the aboriginal, or here, the man or the woman? One is reminded also of the dark public forces in the novel's opening paragraph, in which a supposed observer of a Forsyte family gathering "has been admitted to a vision of the dim roads of social progress, has understood something of patriarchal life, of the swarmings of savage hordes, of the rise and fall of nations" (11).

When Soames first meets Irene, she is an orphan living with her step-mother, "a nice girl, a pretty girl, but no money!" (112). Her marriage to Soames repeats the convention of the rise of the poor girl from hut to palace, like Gwendolen and Mirah, and within the authority of the Griselda paradigm. Irene, "an enigma" (113) as much to the reader as to Soames, fearful of exchanging one kind of bondage for another, questions the benevolence of the man who has the power to liberate her from poverty: "he had promised her for the twentieth time that if their marriage were not a success, she should be as free as if she had never married him!" (111). Although he swore the oath "to gain her" (112), the act of swearing was in itself what Stocking calls a "revolutionary dimension" of middle-class consciousness, "a challenge to the traditional hierarchical structure of status and authority" (231), containing the possibility of the bonded woman's manumission. All the Forsytes, according to D. H. Lawrence, have "sunk to the level of the social being" (*Phoenix 1* 540). At this level only, without transcendence beyond the material world into another sort of communion, Soames nurtures within himself the contemporary tension between respect for the autonomy of others, exemplified in Mill's liberty essay, and fear of the disorder likely to follow any radical change in existing institutions.

The assertion of order is the surest way to avert the chaos and losses of social disruption. Sir Willoughby Patterne, having lost his second fiancée Clara Middleton, and

greatly in need of a wife and heir, spends an exhausting night persuading Laetitia Dale to marry him. Like Irene, she is to be rescued from poverty by a man of wealth and status, and makes no pretence to Sir Willoughby that she loves him. "I can endeavour to respect him," she says to his aunts in Sir Willoughby's presence, "'I cannot venerate. . . He worships himself.' 'Willoughby?' 'He is vindictive.' 'Our Willoughby?' 'That is not your opinion, ladies. It is firmly mine.' . . . . They looked at Willoughby. He nodded imperiously" (595). Within the limits set by the comic tone, Sir Willoughby can own his faults, as he will own his wife. Comic traps, intended for release of both the fictional prisoner and the reader's anxiety, open and close for the women in this novel by their own exertions, not by external switches in the plot. Clara's escape from her engagement, and Laetitia's carefully constructed entry into hers, force Sir Willoughby into a humiliating acknowledgment of their independence that nevertheless allows him to salvage the most important of his social and contractual desires.

The trail I am following starts with men like Grandcourt, Dr. Middleton, Herbert Wilcox, and Leslie Tempest, whose enjoyment of their power is enhanced by a self-serving interpretation of all experience. The desire for a structuring of human relations is expressed through various forms of contract, sometimes enticing the woman into acquiescence by holding out to her the benefits of a union of increased rank or prosperity. They quiet their fears of her

disobedience, the loss of her attention, by a faith in the language and enforcement of legal and civil arrangements in a society where men of the middle and upper classes enjoy what Pierre Bourdieu calls, in a discussion of naming as an act of imposition, a "monopoly of legitimate symbolic violence" (239). Widdowson, George Ponderevo, Soames Forsyte, and Sir Willoughby represent stages in the uneven development of a resentful male vulnerability in the face of the growing confidence of women to choose their own vocations and attachments. One of the most elaborate of these responses occurs in "The Return," a story by Conrad who, he says, was rendered dumb "with a sort of dismal wonder" (11) when he reread it.

At the end of a day in the City, Alvan Hervey goes home to find a note from his wife announcing that she has left him and their marriage of five years for a man Hervey calls "an effeminate, fat ass" (136), the editor, in the narrator's words, of "a semi-political, and wholly scandalous" (113) journal, financed by Hervey as a hobby. During the evening, having changed her mind, and without seeing the editor, the wife, unnamed, returns home. After some conversation with her, Hervey leaves the house, to which, in the story's final words, "he never returned" (170). The theme is as bare as the plot, and can be summarized as succinctly: The wife can no longer tolerate the lack of passion at the center of an unremittingly social marriage. After leaving, she realizes that as long as Hervey loves her as little as she loves him,

there is a basis for the marriage to continue. Hervey, who had delivered many pieties to his delinquent wife during their conversations of the evening, suddenly understands, now that his world has been shaken, "that morality is not a method of happiness. The revelation was terrible." Since, in his view, "she had no gift . . . no love and no faith for any one" (167), their relations, if they continue, are doomed to an indefinite aridity.

The narrative runs mostly in Hervey's consciousness, with no pause in the ironizing of his self-dramatization and sanctimoniousness. The Dantean darkness of the opening introduces a tone of the ultimacies that beset him in the collapse of his universe: "The inner circle train from the City rushed impetuously out of a black hole and pulled up with a discordant, grinding racket in the smirched twilight of a West-End station" (111). Before his wife's return, "he stood alone, naked and afraid, like the first man on the first day of evil . . . Go and seek another paradise, fool or sage" (124-5). The movement between first and last things, between heaven and hell, innocence and corruption, provides the context for Hervey's extraordinary response to his wife's defection, and for the narrator's view of the passengers in the Underground, with faces like those "of a band of brothers who through prudence, dignity, disgust, or foresight would resolutely ignore each other . . . [They] had all the same stare, concentrated and empty, satisfied and unthinking"

(111). It is within this absence of community that the frivolous journal makes its profit.

Hervey finds his wife's note in the dressing room where, in an infinitely extended solipsism from which there is no exit, the mirrors "multiplied his image into a crowd of gentlemanly and slavish imitators," figures which, like the Underground passengers, "could be trusted to do nothing individual, original, or startling" (116-7). The marriage, the journal, the passengers, Hervey himself are part of a common, purposeless vacuity. His wife's withdrawal instigates a process in his mind that begins with "a staggering sense of insecurity" (117), and leads shortly, after his wife's return, to his seeking refuge, with an almost lunatic energy, in a church of his own invention: "the walls of his house seemed to enclose the sacredness of ideals to which he was about to offer a magnificent sacrifice. He was the high priest of that temple, the severe guardian of formulas, of rites, of the pure ceremonial concealing the black doubts of life . . . 'Yes! Restraint, duty, fidelity--unswerving fidelity to what is expected of you. This--only this--secures the reward, the peace. Everything else we should labour to subdue--to destroy'" (143-4).

The language of Hervey's new theology is consonant with Conrad's view of the merchant sailors' relations to their service, the "invariable fidelity to the demands of their special life" (*Notes on Life and Letters*, 196). It is also close to those qualities demanded of themselves by the empire

builders: "authority, discipline, fidelity, devotion, fortitude and self-sacrifice constitute the ideal imperial servant" (Sandison 199). According to Benedict Anderson, "much the most important thing about language is its capacity for generating imagined communities, building in effect *particular solidarities*" (122). At a stage in his transition from a life of social inanity to a repudiation of life without passion, Hervey defines the "moral foundations of a society . . . that's honour--that's honesty" (145) in opposition to his wife's view of her letter as "honest" (134). At this moment, before the implications of his self-subduing are revealed to him, and before he becomes ready to be honest in her way, he sees his wife as a heretic of his church.

In their historically focused work *Imperialism*, Koebner and Schmidt refer to a "lack of a sense of realism that helps us to understand the fundamentally emotional character of the whole Empire movement" (104)--in this version of it, Hervey's church, a structure that is to save him from the terrors of personal and social disintegration by the suppression of erotic and aggressive instinctual energies. "Imperialism," writes Patrick Brantlinger, "as an ideology or political faith, functioned as a partial substitute for declining or falling Christianity and for declining faith in Britain's future" (228). Or, as a character in Gissing's *The Crown of Life* (1899) puts it, "Our work in the world is marked out for us . . . let England spread to the ends of the earth . . .

our politics have become our religion" (207). Hervey is pushed, in Freud's formulation in *Civilization and its Discontents*, "to re-create the world, to build up in its stead another world in which its unbearable features are eliminated and replaced by others that are in conformity with one's own wishes" (269).

Bearing in mind Koebner and Schmidt's sharp observation, one can see Hervey's retreat into his church as an extreme example of the search for consolation and power in patterns of contract. When imperial relations break down, shelter can still be sought in the rhetoric of empire. Hervey's wife teaches him that what satisfies Grandcourt, for example, in the posthumous contract of his will, or Sir Willoughby in the terms he negotiates with Laetitia, is not enough to sustain Hervey in his marriage, nor to support the fantasy of his church beyond its purpose of leading him to a greater, post-Victorian, epiphany. His departure from the house into the infernal streets outside is an acknowledgment of the breakdown of old assurances, with no new ones to replace them.

There is a piquant account of this dilemma in Saki's three-page comic parable, "The Background," published in 1911, which might be seen as a thematic footnote to Conrad's story. A commercial traveler, called Deplis, when staying in Northern Italy, arranges to have a portrayal of the fall of Icarus tattooed on his back by one Pincini, "the most brilliant master of tattoo craft that Italy had ever known."

Deplis is slightly put out by the result, since he "had suspected Icarus of being a fortress taken by Wallenstein in the Thirty Years' War, but he was more than satisfied with the execution of the work, which was acclaimed by all who had the privilege of seeing it as Pincini's masterpiece" (122). Soon after, Pincini dies, and his widow, when Deplis defaults on the bill, cancels the sale, and donates the work to the municipality of Bergamo, which forbids the export of this important work of art. In due course Deplis becomes an anarchist: "Four times at least he was escorted to the frontier as a dangerous and undesirable foreigner, but he was always brought back as the Fall of Icarus." When his back is scarred in a violent accident at an anarchist meeting, and the picture ruined, Deplis is deported as an unwanted alien. He is finally seen in Paris, "a depressed, anxious-looking man," nursing "the illusion that he is one of the lost arms of the Venus de Milo" (124).

Without being too heavy-handed towards the whimsy of this story, one might wonder at the contrast between the tattoo and the anarchist, the tattoo, that is, with an intially uncertain identity, which becomes by general recognition as integral a part of the man's person as an ideology, and the anarchist's desire for freedom, constantly restricted by the marvelous burden he carries on his back. When the picture loses its power, and he can be free, part of his mind collapses into a derangement. Like Icarus, and like

Hervey, he is undone by dissolution of an old and trusted assurance.

When, under a compulsion felt by the artist, the practice of art becomes a teleological necessity for the community, the destruction of a masterpiece resembles a desecration of scripture. In a fanciful way, Pincini's widow and the people of Bergamo suffer such a disaster in Saki's story. It is also a pivotal act in Kipling's novel *The Light that Failed* (1890).

Dick Heldar, an artist working for a press agency in London, has been traveling, in the company of friends who are war correspondents, with British troops in Egypt and the Sudan, painting and drawing soldiers at leisure and in battle. He engages as a warrior himself, and is wounded on the head by the spear of an Arab in a skirmish in the Sudan. Months later, in London, he becomes blind as a result of this wound, immediately after he finishes painting what he sees as his masterpiece, a *Melancolia*. Bessie, the model for this picture, is an impoverished young part-time harlot who commutes from the "grey wilderness of South-the-water" (135) to Heldar's lodgings in the civilization north of the Thames. Angered by Heldar's opposition to her taking up residence as a mistress to the friend with whom Heldar shares the lodgings, Bessie scrapes enough paint off the picture to ruin it completely. After the woman he adores runs from him because she has neither the strength nor the love to look after a blind man, Heldar starts to to arrange with Bessie to

live with him as his own mistress and to take care of him. At this point Bessie tells him that she has destroyed the picture. He leaves for the Sudan where he exposes himself to enemy fire and is killed.

Bessie, of an inferior class, wrecks the picture, reenacting the savagery of one of an inferior race, "the Arab who cut [Heldar's] head open" (133) and annihilated his vision. Bessie is not Heldar's first adventure in entertaining woman as savage, or savage as woman, when the woman is the model for the picture. Some time before, on a cargo ship from Lima to Auckland, an illiterate "Negroid-Jewish-Cuban" woman was his paramour for the voyage, and a model for the painting that was "the best thing I'd ever done" (98) before the *Melancolia*. Woman as savage is thus both inspiration and destroyer of Heldar's artistic impulse.

His isolation and rootlessness, exemplified by the ports of call of the cargo ship, are consoled by a release of the creative spirit through the dangerous possibilities of the flesh. To inspire him while making a sketch of a Frenchman in Port Said, Heldar pays to have Zanzibaris dance for him. The model's wife plays the piano, "and to the tin-pot music of a Western waltz the naked Zanzibari girls danced furiously." The wildness of the women who, at the end, "threw themselves panting on the hard-beaten ground" (29), is contained by the waltz. The music of Europe, in a form Heldar can recognize as ordered, is used to tame the sensuality of African savages, much as the act of painting the *Melancolia* counters the lure

of Bessie, its model, and his initial fear of being sucked into her world.

When some of the episodes move towards the edge of melodrama, they are brought back by the purpose they serve, which is Heldar's art. Heldar loves Maisie, also an artist, and although he is disdainful of her work, he is in a state of "hopelessness enslavement" (63) to her. Maisie is unable to love either him or anyone else; she wants success as a painter, but has no conviction--"*il n'y a pas de parti pris*" (75)--and--the greatest perfidy in Heldar's artistic lexicon--shirks the hard work of line. Her betrayal of him is one more consequence of her endless failure to make something important of herself, emotionally and artistically.

Maisie leads us to a feature of Heldar that constitutes another step in the progression of male characters we have been considering. Her velleities, an insidious indication of the philistinism that undermines Heldar from several quarters, combine with his blindness to push him into surrender to his losses in a nihilism anticipating that of Hardy's Jude a few years later, and already foreshadowed by the *Melancolia*. We learn from Maisie's friend (110) that the picture is a comment on Dürer's engraving *Melencolia I* and its presence in James Thomson's poem *The City of Dreadful Night*.(1874) The poet speaks of the recurrence of "three terms, dead Faith, dead Love, dead Hope" (26) in a ruined city through which "the River of the Suicides" (64) flows. Heldar's picture is a narrower vision of desolation than

Dürer's anomie or Thomson's deep lugubriousness--Samson, betrayed by his two wives, kills three thousand Philistines in his blindness as well as himself, but Heldar, betrayed by Bessie and Maisie, manages only to end his own life.

In using an imperial situation to achieve his death, Heldar, an anti-hero of empire, scoffs at its grandeur and celebrates its instability with a boyishness characteristic of an adventure story. "What luck! What stupendous and imperial luck!" (207) he says to himself when he finds there is an attack in progress as he approaches the British encampment. Heldar's continuous self-mockery prepares him for the form of his suicide. He sees himself as being in chivalric relations to Maisie as a "Faery Queen" (60), a knight of the creative impulse, and part of an imperial quest in jeopardy from, for instance, the Nile: "it was as though the brown weight of the river would drive the white men back to their own country" (18).

Heldar subverts the heroism of his own postures. In talking to his friend about the debasing of his work for the marketplace, he plays, in turn, Coriolanus--"alone I did it," Macbeth--"no man born of woman," and Hamlet--"now swear" (41-42). Later, in front of the *Melancolia*, which contains features of Maisie as well as Bessie, and was painted without regard to the market, the boast "alone I did it" (134) sounds a note of genuine triumph. But the boast is made, like that of Coriolanus, in the presence of those who will destroy him. Like Jude with Sue Bridehead, a major contributor to that

destruction is Heldar's inability to cope with the dissociation in Maisie between a will to love and a defining need for self-assertion.

But in a work that lacks the guiding narrative intelligence of the Victorian tradition, the characters elude the reader's judgment upon the arbitrary, sometimes ludic quality of their behavior. In the novel's version of modernity as a social incoherence, love and the centrality of unsentimentalized representational art, not imperialism, are substitutes for loss of religion and of faith in Britain's future. As a consequence, Maisie's unnamed friend, the red-haired girl, a gifted artist and, unknown to Heldar, in love with him, suggests undeveloped possibilities to which he is as blind with one kind of sight as he is with another.

Kipling was unable to represent the newly developing code of social conduct needed to express instincts of the libido that had been either sexually taboo or had threatened the conventional situation of the middle-class male. At varying levels, these instincts, always available for association with those of savages, are acknowledged, but their consequences are not faced. Thirty years later, in *Women in Love* (1920), D. H. Lawrence both met and explored, with what Edmund Blunden called "jubilant brutality" (Farmer lii), relations between man and woman, man and man, woman and woman with a determination to socialize passion by denying as little of it as possible.

Blunden identified only one aspect of a Manichean division between violence and tenderness in the novel, exemplified by words of tearing (including those that derive from the Latin *vellere*, convulsive, revulsion etc) and of folding, as a stage in the development of relations between man and woman. When Rupert and Ursula are separately watching the reflection of the moon in Willey Water, Rupert throws stones into the pond. The moon "exploded on the water . . . the broken lights scattered in explosion . . . like a madness he must go on . . . till there was . . . no moon any more . . . Birkin . . . was satisfied . . . a distorted, frayed moon was shaking upon the waters again, re-asserted, renewed, trying to recover from its convulsion" (323-5). Then, in their reunion, "it was such peace and heavenly freedom, just to fold her and kiss her gently . . . she cleaved to him . . . 'Kiss me! Kiss me!' And she cleaved close to him. He kissed her many times" (329).

A difference between this and its echoes from Sue Bridehead's "Kiss me, O kiss me lots of times" (469) is a difference between the end of love, for Sue and Jude, and its beginning for Ursula and Rupert. But the antithetical meaning in the repeated "cleave" questions the intimacy of the lovers. Much as the blue mountains in Lawrence's story "The Prussian Officer" act as a symbolic focus for the orderly in his struggle with the captain, so the moon itself, not its changeable image, replaces the social world that is part of the doomed love between Jude and Sue and, for that matter, of

the love between Lady Chatterley and Mellors. In its attempt to exclude any social authority from the strong psychic interplay among the protagonists, the novel twice has recourse instead to the symbolic power of an unchangeable art in the form of African statues of women, once for Gerald Crich, and once for Rupert.

In the Pompadour Café, Gerald meets some of Rupert's bohemian friends in London, including Pussum, the artist Halliday's cocotte. If London is in general like hell--"'Don't you feel like one of the damned?' asked Birkin" (113)--in the "dim world of shadowy drinkers . . . a host of licentious souls" (114), Gerald is very much an Aeneas figure in the underworld, not an artist, "an outsider . . . a soldier, and an explorer, and a Napoleon of industry" (116). "You needn't be afraid," Pussum says to Halliday; and to Gerald, "Were you ever vewy much afwaid of the savages?" (118). The coy and excessively feminine "r," used here only with Gerald, emphasizes her condition as subjugated savage in relation to him. "Her dark eyes . . . roused him so deeply" that "he felt, she must relinquish herself into his hands, and be subject to him. She was so profane, slave-like" (119).

A little later, "the Pussum, who was very handsome, and soft, unfolded like some red lotus in dreadful flowering nakedness" (122). The other side of the savage, however, is not long in coming. To illustrate her fearlessness of blood, Pussum "suddenly jabbed a knife across [the] thick, pale hand" of a young man who has mocked her, forcing Gerald into

meeting his responsibilities as the savage's master: "'Stop that', said Gerald, in quick, instinctive command" (123). The folding and ripping element of the master/savage relationship, more keenly established here than with Kipling's Bessie and Heldar, is taken further in a series of juxtapositions linking Pussum with, on the one hand, Halliday's Indian servant and, on the other, with one of his West African statues.

Pussum is a "female panther" (125). The Hindu man-servant is "half a savage" (127) and "leopard-like" (135). Halliday wants to give the pregnant Pussum a hundred pounds to get rid of her, and borrows a shilling from Gerald to give to the servant to buy underclothes for himself. Gerald himself regrets his failure to give Pussum ten pounds after spending a few nights with her. As savages and predatory cats, both Pussum and the servant are in exotically threatening relations with Gerald and Halliday, who, by making them recipients of payment for services rendered, reify their individualities in an attempt to reduce the power of the threat.

Even before Gerald recognizes the Pussum in the statue that fascinates him in Halliday's flat, her pregnancy makes a connection with the African statue of the "woman sitting naked in a strange posture, and looking tortured, her abdomen stuck out . . . she was sitting in childbirth . . . The strange, transfixed, rudimentary face of the woman again reminded Gerald of a foetus" (127). But the next day, "it was

a terrible face, void, peaked, abstracted almost into meaninglessness by the weight of sensation beneath. He saw the Pussum in it. As in a dream, he knew her." In the conservative spirit of what Stephen Greenblatt calls "absolute blockage" derived from the "stable entity" of a given culture (121), Gerald "hated the sheer African thing." But Rupert tells him it comes from a culture of "'really ultimate *physical* consciousness, mindless, utterly sensual' . . . 'You like the wrong things, Rupert,' he said, 'things against yourself'" (133). Although Gerald tries and fails to free himself from control by an emotional system of tearing and folding, and from a shift of the violence of his sensuality from dream to the conscious mind, he recognizes here the danger for Rupert, whose "directionless reaction between animalism and spiritual truth would go on in him till he tore himself in two" (378).

Immediately after his scene with Ursula by Willey Water, Rupert remembers a different African statue of Halliday's: "Her body was long and elegant, her face crushed tiny like a beetle's." He remembers "her astonishing cultured elegance," the "short ugly legs, with such protuberant buttocks, so weighty and unexpected below her slim long loins. She knew what he himself did not know . . . the single impulse for knowledge in one sort, mindless, progressive knowledge through the senses . . . the principle of knowledge in dissolution and corruption" (330).

Christopher Heywood suggests that "the African sculpture warns Birkin that he is facing a degeneration of a type which had overtaken Africa as well as Europe and America" (17). But the idea of parallel seems more appropriate than this example of it, for surely it is a particular knowledge which dies with the death of the senses, a knowledge reiterated in the text, and in each sentient life. This is close in tone to Birkin's response to Gerald's death, "Imperial Caesar dead, and turned to clay / Would stop a hole to keep the wind away" (581).

Rupert's error in the substitution of "imperial" for "imperious" in Hamlet's graveyard couplet shifts the emphasis from the temporal commanding individual to an idea of command that survives the corruption of the flesh. The artistic equivalence of Africa and Europe leads Rupert to what, in a reference to the road near the place where Gerald dies in Austria, Heywood calls "Birkin's final rejection of the old imperial route of conquest for the exploration of Italy" (17). Birkin ruminates that, instead of dying, the Nordic Gerald might have taken "the great Imperial road leading south to Italy" (579). But to be free of Gudrun, to repair "the rent that had been torn in him" (543), he would have to travel farther south than Italy, to the paradox of a non-subjugated Africa, where there was no political reciprocity, where no inhabitants of Benin could have a part of themselves restored by looking at Halliday's pictures.

Rupert's willingness to absorb "things against" himself enables him to absorb Gerald's denials. In their mindlessness the statues embody what belongs to the libido and to unconscious forces at the root of the human psyche. The novel plays against the European tradition of African darkness in Rupert's use of the tearing/folding duality to transcend Gerald's predicament, but an irresistible social authority is asserted from another kind of darkness. The work of Gerald's miners "was terrible and heartbreaking in its mindlessness" (304). The coal is torn from the earth in its dark underground, and those who work at it "were satisfied to belong to the great and wonderful machine, even whilst it destroyed them . . . This was a sort of freedom . . . the subordination of every organic unit to the great mechanical purpose" (304-5).

Rupert's search for another sort of freedom--as an advance from, rather than an enduring of, coercive relations--takes him through the organic mindlessness of the African statues, through a world "torn in two" when, "folded together, folded round with the same rug . . . in a trance he lay enfolding Ursula round about" (478-9) on the ship to Ostend, as he travels toward an epiphany in the Austrian mountains, prepared for him by the statues.

Chapter 3: Expansion and Rule

It is our "Stupidity," wrote Defoe in *A Plan of the English Commerce* (1728), in which he presses for a major colonizing effort in West Africa, if we "check the Humour of Encreasing" (xii). If we read "humour" here in a double sense, "habitual tendency" (OED 4), and also "temporary state of mind" (OED 5), colonial expansion could be seen at the same time as both necessity and whim, both determined and arbitrary. The ambiguity in the meaning of "humour" provides a paradigm for various dualities: the ideology, for example, is constant, but it is expressed at random and contingently, according to circumstance--where slaves are cheap, where viable crops can be grown, where trading routes must be protected.

This doubleness, sometimes a matter of principle--as a civilizing force, for example--often, however, unpredictable, which Defoe called "an unbounded Ocean of Business; Trackless and unknown, like the Seas it is managed upon" (ix-x), began in Elizabeth's England when "all the Nation was in a Kind of Flame" (110), and the stance of a British empire was first assumed. During the nineteenth century a new kind of greedy character appears in fiction, reflecting the opportunism and certitudes behind expansion and its anxieties.

Domestic nabobs, driven by desire for a fast commercial increase, look for a civic respectability while manipulating

the financial or general community in ways which undermine those social institutions that authenticate the respectability they seek. Intoxicated by the changes they effect for themselves and for businesses they enlarge, they seldom notice that their guiding attitudes are without the choices they make so freely in quotidian decisions, or that these attitudes are also those of the investors they encourage and, finally, dupe. The fear of bankruptcy, a commercial death, and of its consequences, is played out as a version of the end of empire, where military strength may not be enough to guarantee that the possessive grip cannot be loosened by those within it. The fall of *Little Dorrit*'s Mr. Merdle brings more devastation to his backers than Trollope's Melmotte in *The Way We Live Now* (1875), but the rise, the fraud, and the fall follow similar patterns. Melmotte, however, is a foreigner.

The writer of *The Times* review of August 24, 1875 said that Melmotte "is sharp enough to know that though in society to a certain extent he is not of it, and can never be." He is American, or French, and almost certainly, like his wife, a Jew. In a planned list of characters, Trollope first called Melmotte Emanuel, then Samuel, and finally, with an imperial flourish, Augustus (2.477). The tone of the discarded forenames persists in the mystery surrounding Melmotte's origin and activities: "It was said that he had made a railway across Russia . . . it was also said that he was regarded in Paris as the most gigantic swindler that had ever

lived . . . other people said that . . ." (1.31 and 33). These impersonal, passive locutions keep Melmotte at a distance--the less that is known of him, the more ominous he becomes. The speculation about his past allows limitless speculation about the extent of his achievements and perfidies.

In a strange quest that tests possible identities for Melmotte, Father John Barham, an extremely earnest Roman Catholic priest, comes to London from his Suffolk parish in an attempt to open the heart of the "Great Financier," now a parliamentary candidate, to the Catholic religion, if he should prove not to be already a member of "the true Faith" (2.56). Melmotte, as the reader might predict, throws him out. But "this poor priest's mad visit" (2.57), to use the narrator's words, raises two locating questions: since Suffolk represents the moral center of a traditional England, what are the prospective MP's connections with the national constituency he would be elected to serve? And what is his relation to England's first church? These are questions of primary affiliation, to do with Melmotte's responsibility towards the society he lives and thrives in, questions about his appreciation of the native culture, and about a spirituality Father Barham failed to find in the Protestant church from which he converted. Melmotte's brusque ejection of Father Barham indicates the depth of his separation from Father Barham's own constituencies, like a District Officer of the colonial system at a loss among the defining rituals

of the people he governs, or like a visiting maharajah bemused by the ways of the metropolitan country.

Melmotte's surname echoes, as John Sutherland points out (xvi), Maturin's wandering and Faustian outcast Melmoth. And a marmot is a stout, burrowing rodent in English, but, like Mr. Merdle's, it may also have a French association. *Marmot* is a grotesque figure used as a door-knocker, and *croquer le marmot* means "to dance attendance." Melmotte, the great financier, gathered to his support "honest good men, men who really loved their country, fine gentlemen, who had received unsullied names from great ancestors" (2.34), but "no doubt arrogance will produce submission; and there are men who . . . gave their hinder parts to be kicked merely because [Melmotte] put up his toe" (2.35). As we have seen *Daniel Deronda*'s Klesmer say of the crusaders, they "had at least this excuse, that they had a banner of sentiment round which generous feeling could rally: of course, the scoundrels rallied too." With their complicated affinities, Melmotte's followers rally round his projects, including the building of railways, often, as gentlemen and scoundrels at the same time, with motives both honorable and avaricious. Members of a class of aristocrats now in decline, they are themselves descendants of families that have appropriated the land of England, partly by enclosures that concentrated ownership and dispossessed the inhabitants.

The country consists of layer upon layer of occupation, like the victory stele of Naram-Sin. The original inscription

on this monument, a stone sculpture of the conqueror with his feet on vanquished soldiers about half his size, describes the victory of Naram-Sin, an Akkadian king, over a mountain people. A thousand years later, in the twelfth century B.C., it was taken from Sippar to Susa, with a second inscription relating the successes of the conquerors of Sippar. Its subsequent history--its discovery by a French archeologist in 1898 and removal to the Louvre, its place in an exhibition in New York soon after the Gulf War and the conquest of an expansionist Iraq, the site of ancient Sippar, in the Gulf War--elaborates the theme of repeated appropriation.

It is in this context that the interplay of coercive acts takes place in *Daniel Deronda*, and in this novel by Trollope. The attitude of the gentry towards the common, landless people is characterized by the attempted seduction of Ruby Ruggles by Sir Felix Carbury. Ruby, for whom "the young squire is an Apollo" (1.170), lives with her grandfather, a farming tenant of Roger Carbury, a cousin of Sir Felix, who is a debauched young member of the minor nobility. Among the protagonists only the visiting American Mrs. Hurtle behaves with ordinary respect towards the domestic savages.

Like a colonial master in a subdued territory, Melmotte finds partners and compradors who understand and can manipulate the native culture. He presents a mirror image of a commercial adventurer among strange and inferior peoples in the colonies. And, in another reversal close to a colonial

situation, his acolytes can sufficiently resent their own deference to his sway to long for rebellion. When Lord Alfred, Melmotte's senior henchman, is asked to restrain Melmotte's hubris, he replies, "'If you got him down and trampled on him, you might make him mild . . .' 'You couldn't speak to him, then?' 'Not unless I did it with a horsewhip'" (2.36). This, in a moment when he enforces his class, is the way Lord Alfred might deal with a poacher on his land. And it is in the spirit that drove British soldiers to a retributive carnage in the Indian rebellion of 1857, and Governor Eyre to the massacre of ex-slaves in Jamaica in 1865.

Much as the ridicule of *Daniel Deronda*'s Mr. Bult derives partly from his interest in "the districts of the Niger . . . the Brazils, . . . the South Seas," An under secretary of state, Earl De Griffin, is lightly satirized by his more assiduous knowledge of another imperial triad. He "read everything that anybody could write, and more than any other person could read, about India. Had Mr. Melmotte wanted to know the exact dietary of the peasants in Orissa, or the revenue of the Punjaub, or the amount of crime in Bombay, Lord De Griffin would have informed him without a pause" (2.38). Melmotte does not consult Lord De Griffin's erudition, but these features of imperial sway--curiosity, extortion, and suppression--are brought close to him by this typically thorough colonial sociology.

Reporting the speculations surrounding Melmotte's activities, the narrator makes him into an imperial

benefactor, partly in territories called by P. J. Cain and A. G. Hopkins "the 'informal' empire of influence" (7), where investment takes precedence over trade. He "would be able to open up new worlds, to afford relief to the oppressed nationalities of the over-populated old countries." His railway will "regenerate Mexico"; there was to be an arrangement with its emperor to farm the tea-fields of China; there would be a fleet of ships to carry discontented Irishmen wherever they wanted to go; he would lay an undersea cable to India to free England from dependence on others for communications with its major colony; he was to make a deal with the Khedive of Egypt to secure the liberty of Arabian peasants in exchange for a huge territory in East Africa (1.412). Although the gossip about Melmotte is more like fairy tale than fact, in presuming that Melmotte has the capacities of a benign and omnipotent emperor, the narrator provides for those who are tempted to invest in him a rosy tint to his national as well as international investments. More to the point, any distinction there might be between his commercial and political behavior loses its sharpness. The commercial is not simply paradigmatic--in the public fantasies about its scope, it becomes a literal version of the imperial pattern. The border between financial and imperial sway is momentarily acknowledged to be an artifice that can be dispensed with when allowing the two worlds to coalesce into a single identity.

In a discussion of *Mansfield Park*, Edward Said notices Jane Austen's assumption of "the importance of an empire to the situation at home" (*Culture and Imperialism* 106). But in this novel, Melmotte's English career appears to illustrate the importance of home to the situation in the empire; the exertions in England are a recital of exercises abroad.

His disgrace, when "the world was more than ordinarily alive because of Melmotte and his failures" (2.311), and then his suicide, distinguish the individual's dilemma at home from that of an imperial official abroad--Melmotte can turn to no friendly maharajah for support, nor for help to compatriot functionaries of the metropolitan power. His drunken, lonely, unheroic end is mocked with an imperial echo: "It was thus that Augustus Melmotte wrapped his toga around him before his death!" (2.316).

Foreigners, especially Europeans and Jews, can add to the English novel a metaphysical tone largely absent from the native pragmatism. Melmotte, with his degraded dealings and murky past, is in this sense no match for the irreproachable idealizations of Scott's Rebecca, Disraeli's Sidonia, or Eliot's Mordecai. But he brings with him an aura in which ideas are formed before rather than by the event, in ways that stretch the imaginations of other characters. "What power;- what grandeur!" says Mrs. Hurtle. "Such a man rises above honesty." Mentioning him in the same breath as Napoleon and Washington, she says, in an elevation of her subject beyond the temporal, that "he is a man whose hand I would

kiss; but I would not condescend to speak even a word of reverence to any of your Emperors" (1.245-6).

The financial empire builder tends to emerge from a place previously unrecognized by the traditional commercial community, just as the territorial empire makers appear unexpectedly in their ships from a Europe unknown to the natives. The emergence can take place, as well as from another country or from a people with metaphysical traditions, also from another class, with an energy, adventurism, and analytic vitality of a different kind of intruder, equally unknown to the financial establishment, and with equally few allegiances within it. Those who have, or acquire, elements of this kind of rise and fall include, outside the scope of this study, Heathcliff and Mr. Tulliver, then Michael Henchard, Gissing's Richard Mutimer and Bennet Frothingham, Wells's Uncle Teddy Ponderevo, Mr. Wilcox, and, as a sexual outsider who, unusually, intends to recover the assets she has lost, Beerbohm's Zuleika Dobson.

As can be seen from Altick's documentation (604-614 and 638-667), a mid-Victorian belief in industrial and agricultural growth, at home and abroad, led to wildly optimistic investments--the "railway mania," for example--that encouraged large scale peculation and frequent sensational collapses. Like the reports of anthropologists, the novelists incorporated items of what was, or might become, publicly identifiable knowledge. These came to life as materials of fiction that could entice the reader, by his

familiarity with them, into accepting the writer's invitation to suspend disbelief in less founded inventions that make a fabric for the play of the novelist's thematic imagination.

Not only, as Conrad believed, does the artist find himself at one with the empire builder in their common disdain for boundaries, but, against a background of feverish colonizing in the 1880s and 1890s, the novelist might find that his own audacity, his own powers to select, exclude, and organize, to have his characters expand and take risks, draw him towards similar powers in the real worlds of commerce and empire.

The modest scope of Michael Henchard's prosperity, in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), makes him no less important a figure of rise and fall than, say, Mr. Merdle or Melmotte. His progression from the poverty of a hay-trusser to the prosperity of a corn and hay merchant takes place, as Hardy wrote in his 1912 preface, during "the uncertain harvests which immediately preceded the repeal of the Corn Laws" (67). But "the legions of the Empire" (385) permeating Casterbridge, which "announced old Rome in every street, alley, and precinct" (140), Susan's years in Canada, and Farfrae's interrupted passage to the New World, suggest openings into domains away from the current life of the town, in geography and in time.

When Dale Kramer writes, "tragedy and the idea of social change develop together in *The Mayor Casterbridge*" (70), he is asserting a prime difference in the novel from most of its

tragic sources. And when, in the introduction to his edition, he mentions Saul, David, the Greek dramatists, *King Lear* (xxvi), he emphasizes the novel's similarities with them: present doom deriving from past action, a suffering greater than transgressions require. But one of the sources not mentioned by Kramer, *Timon of Athens*, a tragedy with a strong sense of its society, helps to illuminate Henchard's situation in the political world of Casterbridge and beyond.

The "great public dinner of the gentle-people" (99) presided over by Henchard as mayor, and seen by Susan, the wife he had sold nineteen years before, on the first day of her return to Casterbridge, recalls both of the banquets Timon gives to his Athenian friends, one excessively lavish, and the second revengefully bitter. The first hint of Henchard's vulnerability as a prosperous merchant, his supply of bad wheat to the bakers, is publicly elicited at the dinner: "Will you replace the grown flour we've still got by sound grain?" (104). Henchard's refusal to do so is a far cry from Timon's contemptuous "Uncover, dogs, and lap" (3.6.85) at his second banquet, but Henchard's separation from "the gentle-people" of his community, with whom the bonds seemed so strong, is just as complete. Like Timon, Henchard exiles himself outside, but only just outside, his own town and the place of his bankruptcy. And, like Timon, in a crisis of self-definition, he sees an image of himself that mocks him.

Timon, giving lavishly and obsessively, and Henchard, burdened with the fault of the drunken sale of his wife and

child, and teetotal in a community of drinkers, both deny themselves any intimate connections in the societies they depend on for recognition. Events push them into disintegrations to which their natures are predisposed. Timon, digging in the woods, grows into his misanthropy:

> Therefore be abhorr'd
> All feasts, societies, and throngs of men!
> His semblable, yea himself, Timon disdains.
> Destruction fang mankind! Earth, yield me roots
> (4.3.20-23).

The split in Timon, between himself and his "semblable," deepened by acting as own commentator, is matched by a consequence of the skimmity-ride, in which Henchard and his ex-mistress Lucetta are ridiculed in effigy by some of the townspeople. Henchard sees in a stream the discarded dummy of himself, "not a man somewhat resembling him, but one in all respects his counterpart, his actual double . . . floating as if dead" (372). This sight takes away from "the self-alienated man" (405), as the narrator calls him, any intention of drowning himself, since he is already destroyed.

Timon and Henchard, in becoming lords of a kind over their own people, exercise one aspect of the experience of a colonial governor. When the rule and expansion are tested by the collapse of their economic basis, the essential alienation becomes clear. But removal from those around them is, unlike the governor's, problematically based, for they are at the same time part of and distinct from those under

their sway, belonging and not belonging. Like the governor after his tour of duty is over, however, Henchard returns home, going "back to the working clothes of his young manhood . . . form[ing] at this moment much the same picture as he had presented when entering Casterbridge for the first time nearly a quarter of a century before" (387-388).

Timon, with his useless gold, and Henchard, with nothing, are both authors of valedictions brought to Alcibiades and to Farfrae, the new leaders to whom the old ones give way, by illiterate messengers, a dramatic expedient for the audience in Timon's case. His epitaph is taken almost word for word from North's *Plutarch* in such a way as to erase and affirm himself in adjacent lines:

> Here lies a wretched corse, of wretched soul bereft;
> Seek not my name. A plague consume you wicked caitiffs left!
> Here lie I, Timon, who alive all living men did hate.
> Pass by, and curse thy fill; but pass, and stay not here thy gait (5.4.70-73).

Henchard's will reads, in part:

> MICHAEL HENCHARD'S WILL
>
> that I be not buried in consecrated ground. . .
> & that nobody is wished to see my dead body. . .
> & that no man remember me.
> To this I put my name.

MICHAEL HENCHARD (409).

The emphatic naming in this document belies his desire for extinction, much as Timon wishes to be both forgotten and remembered. He has already shown a disposition to paganism in his visit to an oracle for a weather prediction to which his fortunes were tied. If the earlier pagan is a pattern here, the mystery of Timon's solitary burial not only touches the final separation of Henchard from his beloved step-daughter, but enigmatizes other kinds of division, between, say, the assertion of ego and the times of origin and death when ego has little meaning.

The origins of Richard Mutimer in Gissing's *Demos* (1886) are in the industrial working class, unlike those of Henchard, who was an agricultural laborer. He enters an entrepreneurial world where he can, as an outsider, practice an adventurism unconstrained by the rules and customs of those born into the established milieu, which is new to him. The social movements in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* occur independently of Henchard's activities; in *Demos*, Mutimer is himself a mover of change, an energetic agent engaged in the reorganization of society. And his reforming zeal, attaching him initially to those liable to benefit from the mutations that give him his name, ends in souring them by its failures.

A surprising inheritance raises him from the life of a politicized working man, "Comrade Mutimer" (60), to the control of an industrial activity in coal and iron, where he is proud that he pays the workers well, provides decent

housing, a community hall, and a school. Except that the profits are to go to the propagation of socialism, this is much like an Owenite benevolent paternalism soon to be mocked by the Fabians. In the novel, before Mutimer moves into his new position, a Union member at a socialist meeting in Islington predictively undermines Mutimer's exertions by offering an absurd alternative to the current condition.

The audience is asked to imagine "a country still in the hands of aborigines, as yet unannexed by the capitalist nations, knowing not the meaning of the verb 'exploit'." This is a pastoral paradise where all are equal, the people going up and down in their boats "a-strumming on the banjo . . . and a-singing their nigger minstrelsy with light 'earts . . . Their time's their own! *That's* the condition of an unexploited country, my friends!". The precolonial analogy gives a new flavour to the well documented utopianism of this "sweetly idyllic picture" (64), for which Gissing did not have to await the publication of William Morris's *News from Nowhere*.

The conflict between jobs and nature, between industry and vegetation, makes the valley where Mutimer's factories operate a model for England. And England is a place where capitalism, in its guise of colonialism, has already undermined a basic autonomy in the lives of the people; it is a source of what a character in Gissing's *The Crown of Life* calls "the brute force of money; the negation of the individual . . . cries of anguish stifled by [capitalism's]

monotonous roar" (176-177). The disingenuous naïveté of the Union speaker's tone suggests that without Mutimer's coal mines and iron works, there is only God to provide an economy. The godless options for the valley reflect a theme that occurs as a conscious topic in much of Gissing's fiction: the difficulty of integrating a desire for social change into the aesthetic demands of a work of art.

Through the finding of a lost will, Mutimer's governance is ended, and ownership of the estate is transferred to its legitimate heir, an artistic young man with no interest in production. "The darkness of that ravaged valley" (292) is to be transformed by him into its former state of grass and trees. Nature and art are equated here in a victory gained by the aesthetes, a victory that will exclude Ruskin, for whom production was a source of leisure for artistic creation. Expansion is cancelled, economic inactivity restored. The new proprietor who belongs, as he puts it, to "the class that has finer sensibiliies" (339), is like a tribal leader who wants to be rid of the modernising colonist, not in the interests of his own people, but to revive the old traditions that emphasize his differences from them. And, in a reassertion of the social order, he marries Mutimer's widow Adela, a young woman of genteel family, whose child by Mutimer, a man "not of her class, not of her world" (350), has died in infancy.

The last part of Mutimer's fall follows the abandoning of his seamstress fiancée Emma Vine for the now more suitable Adela, and a disastrous misjudgment in the investment of the

small savings of working men. The savers object as much to his treatment of Emma as to the apparent misappropriation of their money. His decencies are no match for a public perception of his desire to move upward in class and to steal the modest funds of poor men. He has betrayed the class from which he comes, but after the poor financial results of his industrial empire and his displacement by the will, "he belonged to no class at all" (411). Killed by a stone thrown by one of the disaffected workers from a social group "in an elementary stage of civilisation" (149), he is punished, not for his deracination, but for failures of character and circumspection. He dies, by chance, with Emma Vine next to him, ending, like Henchard, where he began. For a moment he is re-attached to the person who has suffered most from his estrangement.

The colonial administrator, after a life's work among strangers, returns home to retire and to die. He may have had exemplary, constructive relations with the peoples under his control, or he may have had to call in troops to quell resistance by feckless, ungrateful natives, or both. Mutimer's work, for people of his own kind, reproduces predispositions behind these activities, but because his origin is from among those he wishes to govern and teach, he inflicts on himself wounds symbolized by the stone that strikes him on the temple.

There is a new tone in somewhat later novels, reflecting the extraordinary expansions in Africa and Asia during the

last quarter of the century. Bennet Frothingham in Gissing's *The Whirlpool* (1897) and Uncle Teddy Ponderevo in Wells's *Tono-Bungay* (1909) also move toward their beginnings after their empires collapse. . Mr. Frothingham "began just in a small way" (4) and shot himself in a room, "his first place of business, the scene of poor beginnings . . . Perhaps he had long foreseen this possibility, had mused upon the dramatic fitness of such an end" (46).

The investors "who would suffer most . . . were dwellers in many parts of the British Isles, strangers most of them to London city, with but a vague mental picture of the local habitation of the Britannia Loan, Assurance, Investment, and Banking Company, Limited" (43). The behavior of an ambitiously named London company is as much of a mystery to those have made themselves dependent on it as are the policies of a commodities company in England to those in the colonies most affected by them. And the company's grandiose name is, of course, emblematic--several of the characters leave, or contemplate leaving, for the "white" colonies, seen as places of vigor and regeneration. Harvey Rolfe, the central male character, tells Mr. Frothingham's daughter that "the future of England is beyond seas. I would have children taught all about the Colonies before bothering them with histories of Greece and Rome" (105).

Mr. Frothingham's suicide early in the novel casts its shadow over subsequent events, which thus take place in the context of his "criminal recklessness" (68), the symptom of a

corrupt and weakened England. Rolfe's father "had engineered certain lines of foreign railway," and Rolfe, coming into "a substantial income," seems to have "no purpose in life, save that of enjoying himself" (2). Socially he is a rentier, situated like Deronda and the Schlegel sisters.

By the end of the novel, after marriage and the death of his wife, Rolfe's quiescence permits a sardonic view of the world, stimulated by his reading of Kipling's *Barrack-Room Ballads*. "The brute savagery of it!" he says to a friend, "the tongue of Whitechapel blaring lust of life in the track of English guns! . . . Mankind won't stand it much longer, this encroachment of the humane spirit . . . We may reasonably hope, old man, to see our boys blown into small bits by the explosive that hasn't got its name yet." This is an early reference to Kipling's reputation as an opponent of the "humane spirit," and Rolfe's welcome of the poems is partly mocking, partly appreciative. "The average Englander has never grasped the fact that there was such a thing as the British Empire. He's beginning to learn it, and itches to kick somebody, to prove his Imperialism . . . By God! we are the British Empire, and we'll just show 'em what *that* means!"

His friend's response, "I'm reading the campaigns of Belisarius," refers to recent and current British encroachments, to use Rolfe's word, in absorbing large parts of Africa into the empire. Belisarius was a brilliant sixth-century Roman general "in a degenerate and effeminate age" (Lemprière), whose most celebrated victories were against the

Vandals in North Africa. Characteristic of the doubleness in this conversation, the friend, when asked by Rolfe what Belisarius has to do with it, says, "Thank Heaven, nothing whatever" (449-450).

There is no such ambiguity in any of the multiple imperial connections in *Tono-Bungay*. Just as Mr. Frothingham's prosperity and decay influence attitudes towards the state of Britain and relations with the colonies, so does the narrator's attitude to the bravado of Uncle Teddy's forays against the public touch the sourness about empire throughout the novel.

The major acquisitions of the 1870s to the 1890s have been made, with military defeats as well as victories. There were constant skirmishes and outbreaks of resistance--for example, in 1903, when fifty thousand indentured Chinese laborers were imported to work in the mines of Transvaal. In *The Man of Property*, published two years before *Tono-Bungay*, Nicholas Forsyte has

> a scheme for the employment of a tribe from Upper India in the gold mines of Ceylon . . . It would double the output of his mines, and, as he had often forcibly argued, all experience tended to show that a man must die; and whether he died of a miserable old age in his own country, or prematurely of damp in the bottom of a foreign mine, was surely of little consequence, provided

> that by a change in his mode of life he benefited the British Empire (47).

The cynicism of this is harsher than the cheerful depredations of Uncle Teddy and the skeptical compliance of the narrator, his nephew George, but the authorial objection to the manipulation of lesser beings is comparable.

The displacement, of the man by the boy, is one of the engaging features of Uncle Teddy's enthusiasm in a novel that might otherwise be seen as the journey from boyhood to manhood of George Ponderevo, the son of a servant, rising by pluck, education, and a literal nepotism, to the commanding class. His uncle Teddy, on the way to his "Napoleonic title" (173), is spurred by a limitless ambition, with an almost infantile lack of circumspection, and a boyishness that often keeps at bay those questions that might disturb the flow of the imperial adventurer's energies.

But behind this activity, there seems to be lurking another set of rules, illustrated in part by the gullibility of the public in buying the well advertised nostrum that made Uncle Teddy's fortune, what George calls "slightly injurious rubbish," which, like an ideal colonial rule, "brought us wealth, influence, respect, the confidence of endless people" (120). The hopes of the public for the body's perfectibility, and the destruction of the *Maud Mary* by the quap, plundered with imperial high-handedness and murder, are another part of the novel's business with the reader. As long as British citizens have no wish to transcend their appetites and

individual desires, the novel suggests, there is no authority to keep a vigil on practices carried out in their name.

In Eliot's novel published a generation earlier, Felix Holt stops his mother from selling such remedies, but in *Tono-Bungay*, George Ponderevo, the novel's only possible source of moral criteria, removes himself from any position where a commentary might be made on the public's determination to adore his uncle, for "Tono-Bungay carried me to freedoms and powers that no life of scientific research, no passionate service of humanity could ever have given me" (120). The hero worship preached by Carlyle and his disciple Samuel Smiles, and taught in schools as the stuff of history, contends, in its celebration of the individual, with any impulses that would make England and its empire less aleatory.

The quap, taken without leave from an island off the West African coast, is intended to save Uncle Teddy's fragile empire, and destroys the ship that carries it. The withering of a commercial myth is caused by the corrosive effects of materials needed to support the myth. Dying near a frontier, Uncle Teddy wanders in his mind back to a first innocence: "such splendid beginnings . . . aspirations . . . trailing clouds of glory" (297). In Wordsworth's Immortality Ode the rite of passage from "the visionary gleam . . . the glory and the dream" of the child to the man who "perceives [the vision] die away" is recalled as Uncle Teddy, at a border between countries, is poised between dying and death. The

vision was blasted by forgery, theft, and the consequences of usurpation, for the *Maud Mary* had been a potato carrier, "and she reeked from end to end with the faint subtle smell of raw potatoes" (254).

Similarly, the aristocratic inhabitants of London were being replaced by a new kind of occupant, "in the West End, in Mayfair and the squares about Pall Mall . . . here were actors and actresses, here moneylenders and Jews, here bold financial adventurers." (George's antisemitism denies any credit to previous inhabitants: a "more enterprising and intensely undignified variety of stupidity had replaced the larger dulness of the old gentry" [54]). The London houses are

> all much shaken and many altogether in decay, parasitally occupied, insidiously replaced by alien, unsympathetic and irresponsible elements;--and withal ruling an adventitious and miscellaneous empire of a quarter of this daedal earth (84).

This passage, taking itself into a pagan past with an unusual ostentation of Greek and Latin words, notices the ability of indigenous peoples to look after their own soil, long before the emergence of inept rulers. The new occupation of houses and of foreign lands also provides for George, whose name is derived from the earth, a model in Daedalus of an inventor of a mode of flight to save him from a labyrinth of his own making. George, it will be remembered, rescues his uncle from

charges of forgery by taking him out of England in an airship that he had constructed.

After Uncle Teddy's death and Beatrice's insistence on the equality of her affair with him, when the release from dominion and dominion's reassuring attachments places him in an existential limbo, George builds a destroyer, which he takes on a fantastic trip down the Thames, the river of William Morris's utopian paradise. Like that narrator, he shuns the horrors of a fragmented world, one with, as he summarily says, "no comprehensive desire" (315). Watching a scene that replays his murder of an African while collecting the quap, he passes "tall slow ships . . . bound on strange missions of life and death, to the killing of men in unfamiliar lands" (316). The destroyer "isn't intended for the empire, or indeed for the hands of any European power. We offered it to our own people first, but they would have nothing to do with me." Wherever--if ever--it is to be sold--"I have long ceased to trouble much about such questions" (316)--the destroyer, as it enters the sea, is a symbol of George's total alienation. "I am, in sense, decay," he says, "I too have a source of hope . . . that finds no promise in this Empire or in any of the great things of our time" (311). He has made for himself a new ship, mysteriously aggressive, in which to start again by effecting his separation from the current order.

As the novel progresses, George's technological innovations are increasingly sophisticated, but any

suggestion that these advances follow a Victorian definition of progress is firmly rejected. Technology, as a means of enlargement behind the advertising and production of patent medicine, opens up, for a while, an enormous market, as the consumers are enticed--and bewildered--by novelty and promise. But George allows none of those who take the medicine to enter the pages of what, disconcertingly, he calls his novel. Some twenty years earlier, in *The Woodlanders*, Hardy has a scene where the response of local people to a capriciously motivated technology is like a replica of the colonial frontier.

Although his home town is "not a great many miles from" (47) Little Hintock, the doctor, Edred Fitzpiers, is a complete stranger in the village. In words that recall the meaning of home in *Daniel Deronda*, the narrator says that the native knows "what birds affect that particular brake; what bygone domestic dramas of love, jealousy, revenge, or disappointment, have been enacted in the cottages, the mansion, the street or on the green. The spot . . . if it lack memories will ultimately pall upon him who settles there without opportunity of intercourse with his kind" (94-95). Fitzpiers is as much an interloper in Little Hintock as Lord Macartney was in China. "To live without anguish," writes Albert Memmi of the colonizer, "one must live in detachment from oneself and the world--one must reconstruct the odors and sounds of one's childhood" (92). Unconstrained by any local attachments, by giving her ten pounds now, Fitzpiers

arranges to buy her head from an old woman so he could examine it after her death.

In a scene reminiscent of the wonders brought by Europeans to places where they trade and conquer, one evening, as she looks from her window, Grace Melbury sees "one solitary point of light" which "gradually changed colour, and at length shone blue as a sapphire. Thus it remained several minutes, and then it passed through violet to red . . . An appearance of this sort . . . was no less than a marvel in Hintock . . . here was something dissociated from these normal sequences [of "the season's changes"], and foreign to local knowledge" (37). These effects were produced by Fitzpiers, the scientific dilettante, at one of his experiments.

Seeing wonders from a distance, in a European interpretation of a native's astonishment, Grace experiences in a Wessex village an encounter with the colonizer's technology. And, as recounted in some of the discovery narratives, the initial marvels contain no hint of the mischief to be perpetrated by unprincipled magicians from foreign places. Because the emphasis here is on the newcomer as "other," his power is mistakenly seen as greater than that of the woodlanders themselves. In due course they discover that the manifestations which display the aura of a system do not necessarily mean that there is a system behind them.

The havoc caused by Fitzpiers is matched by the suffering of Leonard Bast in *Howards End* (1910). The Wilcoxes

and Schlegels, competing for the ownership of England, jointly manage to destroy him, but it is his son, with a Schlegel mother and in Ruth Wilcox's house, who is to be heir to Howards End and thus to England. The theory of "romantic irony," advanced by Friedrich, the younger of the German Schlegel brothers, is exemplified by the difference, for the younger Schlegel sister, between her hopes and their realization. Similarly, Mr. Wilcox's justifiable expectation, that his identity could be affected only by commercial change, is dashed by the family's moral collapse after his son's manslaughter of Leonard Bast. The violence of George Ponderevo in his murder of the West African inhabits the same world of antagonistic separation as Charles Wilcox's blow with the flat of his father's sword against a poor clerk.

The difference between the material basis of the Wilcox business and the social piety of the Wilcox family is a degraded form of the contest between the Wilcoxes and Schlegels for the ownership of England, and is foreshadowed in both parts by a lofty imperial musing of the narrator.

> England was alive, throbbing through all her estuaries, crying for joy through the mouths of all her gulls . . . Does she belong to those who have moulded her and made her feared by other lands, or to those who have added nothing to her power, but have somehow seen her, seen the whole island at once, lying as a jewel in a silver sea, sailing as a ship of souls, with all the

> brave world's fleet accompanying her towards eternity? (165)

The substitution of "jewel" for "precious stone" in John of Gaunt's speech etymologically emphasizes the "joy" of England as a vital human body, with blood in her veins and cries from her mouth. In spite of the rhapsodic tone, this is a non-transcending England, not an Eden or demi-paradise, like Gaunt's.

But Gaunt is already seeing his England historically--his speech is part of his castigation of the king, raisng questions of the legitimacy of rule, of usurpation, and it is followed by his dying, contemptuous denunciation of Richard as "landlord of England" (R2.2.1.113), like Mr. Wilcox, an exploiter of possessions for gain. The contrast of bard and proprietor, Gaunt and Richard, resembles that of the Schlegels and the Wilcoxes; and, as Richard goes to the Irish wars, so Paul Wilcox occupies himself in Nigeria with the affairs of the family business. The physical owners of England send their scions abroad to quell opposition and stimulate trade. The tongue-in-cheek eloquence of Forster's narrator deepens the spiritual impoverishment of the usurpation of the soul's work by the imagination.

The stability of Mr. Wilcox's commercial world, solidly founded and carefully nourished, represents a basic feature of that puritan middle-class industriousness which eschews tycoons as much as it avoids ostentation. Mr. Wilcox and the Forsytes can be comforted by reinforcement of their social

positions, or unnerved in discovering the objects within their grasp to be more slippery than they expect. In *The Man of Property* (1906), Swithin Forsyte, driving his phaeton, finds himself in a race with a donkey-cart. The driver, a coster, and his girl mimic him and his passenger Irene, much as the young men tease Mr. Wilcox on the Parade. Both he and Swithin have reason to fear, prejudicing their wealth and privileges, the growing demands of laborers, the formation of trade unions, with the dock strike of 1889 heralding the organization of the unskilled. They also have reason to fear--Mr. Wilcox more directly--in colonies with small white settlements, the rising of savages who, with the other groups on Stocking's list, are governed "by impulse, deficient in foresight . . . unable to subordinate instinctual need to human rational control" (229).

In the race with the coster, "the lowly ruffian,"

> the two chariots, however, by some unfortunate fatality continued abreast. Swithin's yellow, puffy face grew red; he raised his whip to lash the costermonger, but was saved from so far forgetting his dignity by a special intervention of Providence. A carriage driving out through a gate forced phaeton and donkey-cart into proximity; the wheels grated, the lighter vehicle skidded, and was overturned. Swithin did not look round (133).

Swithin's dignity is rescued, not by intellect, but by providence expressed as chance, a reminder of Wells's "adventitious" empire. His indignant violence, its energy derived from repression of the instincts of the social master, replaces the workings of the mind. The consequent alarm of the horses, the swinging of the phaeton, the frightened faces of the pedestrians--these threats to stability are the results of substituting anger for intellect as the imperious authority, and are a mirror of the riot in Swithin's flustered mind. "Are we going to have an accident?" asks Irene. The empire, if the master's rational habits are undermined, is adventitious indeed.

The misfortune to Swithin's phaeton has many precedents. A coach carrying Cromwell upset in Hyde Park in 1654. In commemorating the incident, Marvell sees the fall of the great man, who "alarms / More than all men, all navies, and all arms" ("The First Anniversary" 375-376), as a danger to everyone: "Our brutish fury struggling to be free, / Hurried thy horses while they hurried thee" (177-178). The carriage that overturns in the first sentence of Jane Austen's unfinished *Sanditon* introduces an uncertain world in which, as one shocking instance, a young heiress with a black grandparent begins to emerge as a major character. One is reminded ultimately of the wreckage of the chariot that killed Hippolytus, in a context of false accusation, credulity, and providential complicity of the gods.

The institutions that must absorb the shock of collapse are often sturdy enough to survive it, but the threat, since one business or empire is essentially the same as another, is always posed. As Henchard starts to go down, Farfrae with unseemly haste takes his fiancée , his house, his furniture, his business and, finally, his step-daughter, leaving no uncomfortable vacuum for the citizens of Casterbridge. From a time towards the end of the century, in a modern period that includes *Tono-Bungay* and *Howards End*, at least part of the disarray of a world shaken by the fall of commercial princes is allowed to continue unrectified.

As we have seen, one feature of a resilient order is an ability to cope with threats to its steadiness, including the social disturbance that can follow the undermining of mastery by its frailties. The ending of Max Beerbohm's *Zuleika Dobson* (1911), a novel in which the action is under the influence of the Greek gods, might be taken as a paradigm for a pre-modern renewal of order in which an insatiable need to conquer is so much the paramount expression.that, egregiously, the practitioner of dominion is allowed another chance.

In this comic fantasy, Zuleika's femininity is no less persuasive than the feminism behind the plot's pressure on Clara Middleton in *The Egoist*. In twenty-four sections, like *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, it is a mock-epic in the spirit of "The Rape of the Lock," with trivial matter, Zuleika's commonplace personality and her mediocre skill as a conjurer, at the center of an elaborate structure. It clearly fulfils a

requirement of romance, for all the undergraduates of Oxford fall in love with Zuleika at first sight. And it uses its formal origins to stake its position in the shift from Victorian supremacism to Edwardian snobbery.

The superbly gifted Duke of Dorset, cynosure of the undergraduates, tries to protect his friends, like Odysseus with his crew, from the enticements of the Siren. Comparing Zuleika to the Transvaal Republic in the Boer War (99), he calls them to their patriotic duty to resist her, and he tells her directly that "she was a danger in the world" (238). His own achievement is to die for honor, not for love. To prepare for drowning himself in the river, he dresses in the rich regalia of his titles: "reflecting him, the mirror reflected, in due subordination, the history of England" (197). With cries of "Zuleika," all the others, "two or three thousands of human bodies, human souls" (119), follow his example, as if engaged in pagan initiation rites. Zuleika, "a nymph to whom men's admiration was the greatest part of life" (16), has totally conquered Oxford and the insignia of England. But her appetite for conquest cannot be satisfied, and the novel ends with her booking a private train to Cambridge.

The vigorous emotions unleashed find a symbol in the pearls exchanged by Zuleika and the duke: her earrings and his studs, which fall in the end into other hands. The pearl is a common Elizabethan figure for a matter of high, and potentially expanding value. At Spenser's river wedding, for

example, Neptune's queen is "deckt with pearles, which th'Indian seas for her prepaire" (FQ IV.xi.11.9.), and in *Othello* the pearl thrown away by the base Indian is "richer than all his tribe" (5.2.351). When Mr. Noaks, who is an undergraduate from a social class like that of Leonard Bast, and has a "vision" of starting a small school, changes his mind about handing over the earrings to the duke's executors, he sees them "as things transmutable by sale hereafter into desks, forms, black-boards, maps, lockers, cubicles, gravel soil, diet unlimited, and special attention to backward pupils" (230-231).

What was once visionary is transformed into the mundane. Pearls, emblems of imperial expansion, contrasted with the iron ring Mr. Noaks wears to soothe his rheumatism, have a comparable future in a Paris café. Zuleika's maid Mélisande sees the pearl studs, now in her possession, "as things presently transmutable into little marble tables, bocks, dominos, absinthes au sucre, shiny black portfolios with weekly journals in them, yellow staves with daily journals flapping from them, vermouths secs, vermouths cassis" (249).

The pearls, which change color to tell the truth about their sentiments to Zuleika and Dorset, have become "things." The metamorphosis of the restless imperial vision, from expansion and pageantry to useful little twentieth century establishments, devoid of any metaphysical content, is complete. Even the heroism of Mr. Noaks, who lives for a few hours longer than the others, is unable to modify Zuleika's

overwhelming victory. The satirical fantasy of a devastating mass sacrifice, caused simply by the spectacle of one "not strictly beautiful" (12) person, but "the toast of two hemispheres" (13), depends for its sustenance on a mock-heroic gallantry and a Swinburne-like romanticism in the undergraduates.

Only Zuleika survives to represent the imperial vision and the epic quest, but her work has no consequences that are not destructive. In her, the empire ruins all that it touches, and must refurnish its energies to find new opportunities. There is no building of empire, only a reassertion of its search for power. However, the novel could not have been written without an acknowledgment by the undergraduates of a predestined right, in the duke and Zuleika, of an irresistible political authority, or without their complicity, like that of the consumers of the wonder drug Tono Bungay, in a collective response for which they are already prepared. Zuleika, doomed to endless repetition of her enchantment, can exploit only the residual habits of empire in her constituency.

This may be one of the last major novels in which the decline of empire is addressed so directly. The gains in the scramble for Africa were quickly made and dominantly commercial, and the setback of the South African War alerted those who were previously doubtful to the fragility of the African acquisitions. A time had started when the predictive sensibility informed the artist in the novelist that the

struggle for egalitarian relations was more pressing than an exploration of social coercion. Questions of authority were to become centered on more private relations, less and less on the public domain.

Chapter 4: Class and Race

An association of class with race in the 1920s was made clearly by Leonard Woolf in his autobiography. With a comforting, estranging, and characteristic use of the singular noun, he classified some of the people he controlled in Ceylon in the first years of the century: "One of the ways in which the Arab was different from the Tamil was the way in which he treated the white man in authority" (1.190). This generic terminology served later, in England, to express his alienation by class when, as a member of the Co-operative Movement, he attended an annual congress of the Women's Guild. He heard a speech from "a typical working class woman" and realized, as he "got to know many of these women well," that "the days, weeks, months, years I had spent talking to those strange, alien men and women in the Kandyan hills . . . helped me to understand and get in touch with Mrs. Barton and Mrs. Harris" (2.76).

Woolf accepted without question that his separation from the members of the British working class and from the inhabitants of Ceylon were parallel in kind. His socialism did not affect the cultural attitudes he shared with many other liberal intellectuals in the first decades of the century, including J. A. Hobson, the author of a study skeptical of imperialism. Within the compass of these attitudes, class was no more provisional than the racial taxonomies that were constantly being established and revised

by ethnographers and others in the colonial service. The severest differences were probably those that separated the industrious middle class, celebrated by Samuel Smiles, from that "vast portion" of the populace which, in Matthew Arnold's words, "is beginning to perplex us by marching where it likes, bawling what it likes, breaking what it likes" (105). The writer of a leading article in *The Times* of November 25, 1861, commenting on a modest democratizing move in education, says "it would be an impossibility as well as a piece of affectation to lodge under the same roof and board at a common table . . . those who are to work mainly with their heads and those who are to work mainly with their hands." This attitude, nourished by fears of a challenge to the current order and of a downward class movement through economic loss, was available to respectable middle-class people throughout the period under consideration. There was little sense among them that manual workers were constantly evolving cultures as substantial as their own.

"In the Empire the conquered races were treated as a new proletariat" (Brantlinger 184), and laborers were treated as conquered races: in Lawrence's *St. Mawr*, the Welsh groom "was thinking that [his employer's American mother] put him on a level with a negro slave on a plantation" (334). Roughly speaking, laborers and savages shared common masters drawn from the middle and upper middle classes. However complex the attitudes of working men and women at home towards their less well off fellow servants of a different color overseas, their

masters had similar economic and psychological investments in both groups; they were like "demi-god[s]," as V. G. Kiernan says of post-mutiny British officers in India, "born to command the lower race as well as the lower class" (53-55).

On first seeing Halliday's servant, in *Women in Love* (1920), "Gerald looked in surprise, wondering if he were a gentleman, one of the Hindus down from Oxford, perhaps. But no, he was the man-servant" (126). The next day, Rupert responds more graphically: the servant's "face was immutable, aristocratic-looking, tinged slightly with grey under the skin; he was young and good-looking. But Birkin felt a slight sickness, looking at him, and feeling the slight greyness as an ash or a corruption, in the aristocratic inscrutability of expression a nauseating, bestial stupidity" (135).

While Gerald's response is from another, earlier era, Rupert's is almost relentlessly modern. His view of the servant is a long way from that in which Indian men were "believed by prudish Victorians to be inordinately, unnaturally lascivious" (Kiernan 58). The play on the word "slight," the shift from its narrative function to Rupert's consciousness, then back to a descriptive use, but now attached to Rupert's feelings--this mild internalization by Rupert of the Indian's "greyness" leads to the brutal rejection at the end of the passage, as if Rupert quickly empties himself of something distasteful. Such shifts, moving to and fro between centers of consciousness, are, of course, characteristic of Lawrence's method in his search for

revelations of the complex self. Here, elements of race and class combine to present to Rupert an otherness close enough to a horror of it in himself to stimulate his nausea.

The interactivity of thought, language, and the movement of language, is so fluid that the thematic content is absorbed into the diction. In *The Rainbow* (1915), the first part of what, with *Women in Love*, was to be a single novel, there is a comparable episode to do with class and its implications, but here thought and language are joined with external events in the integrated aesthetic act. And there is in Skrebensky, as in Gerald, a streak of the Victorian gentleman that would not be out of place in the 1870s.

In India, Skrebensky tells Ursula, "there would be real work to do . . . The country did need the civilisation which he himself represented: it did need his roads and bridges, and the enlightenment of which he was part" (449). And he tells her about Africa, "the strange darkness, the strange, blood fear . . . the negro, with his loose, soft passion that could envelop one like a bath. Gradually he transferred to her the hot, fecund darkness that possessed his own blood" (451). Such references are invigorating components of the Victorian gentleman's attitude to empire; Ursula is the one who introduces another sensibility into the novel.

Before this, the two of them are walking along a canal, at a time towards the end of the 1890s. Skrebensky, an army officer, defends his position against an attack on war by Ursula:

"But the result matters . . . It matters whether we settle the Mahdi or not."

"Not to you--nor me--we don't care about Khartoum."

"You want to have room to live in: and somebody has to make room."

"But I don't want to live in the desert of Sahara--do you?" . . .

"*I* don't--but we've got to back up those who do."

"Why have we?"

"Where is the nation if we don't?"

"But we aren't the nation . . . if everybody said it, there wouldn't be a nation. But I should still be myself," she asserted brilliantly" (314).

The war was the intermittent struggle for the Sudan where, a few years earlier, Kipling's Dick Heldar exposed himself to the enemy's bullets. Skrebensky typically distorts the imperial purpose which was probably to protect British occupied Egypt from interference with the Nile, Egypt itself being a vital link in the passageway to India. The insurgence was led not by the deceased Mahdi, but by his successor, the Khalifa, though in the spirit of what the British called Mahdism, described by W. Baird in 1900 as this "new power emerging out of the African darkness" (Kiernan 216).

In the way that the incorrect use of Latin tags in Kipling's story "Mrs. Bathurst" suggests an instability of the British empire compared with Rome, Skrebensky's inaccuracies evoke deeper perplexities, like his defensive

use of the word "nation" and, in the end, the undefinability of empire. In comparison, Ursula's "brilliance" seems more precise, and "myself" is given equal weight with "nation." It is that self which meets the bargeman at Ursula's next encounter.

In one of the free episodes of this family saga, and in one of those illuminating juxtapositions that seem instinctive in Lawrence, she and Skrebensky, immediately after this conversation, come across a barge, its owner sitting on the deck with his baby daughter. The difference between his language and Ursula's soon emerges in his comment on the weather: "'Appen for them as is childt-nursin' it's none so rosy" (315). Since the bargeman and his wife disagree about a name for the child, she is so far unnamed. They decide to call her after their friendly middle-class visitor, who leaves for the baby a necklace her uncle had given to her.

By naming the child Ursula, the parents give her an identity which emphasizes that of the senior Ursula, who is thus provided with a continuity to replace the child she loses in a miscarriage at the end of the novel. In the conversation with Skrebensky, Ursula's last thrust--"Are you anybody, really? You seem like nothing to me" (315)--defies his national and imperial self-definitions, and she goes on to make the point by bestowing something as specific as her name for the baby. As they walk away from the barge, he says, "The woman had been a servant, I'm sure of that" (319), in a

stubborn attempt to salvage the clarity of his political taxonomy. Benedict Anderson's remark seems to be appropriate for this imperial soldier: "The dreams of racism actually have their origin in ideologies of *class*, rather than in those of nation" (136).

The bargeman's dialect is unlike Ursula's, just as the language of the Sudanese is unlike Skrebensky's. But Ursula is engaged in the contradictory business of making a union through the class barrier by an unintended, nominal appropriation of the child, while Skrebensky is less ambivalently employed with the Sudanese, in a struggle where names are irrelevant, because "you either kill or get killed" (313).

These juxtapositions suggest that the act of naming is in some way connected to the beginning of community. The pastoral quality of Ursula's relations with the family on the barge, relations that must be interrupted if she is to carry on with an unraveling of the self, is set against the chivalric heroism of Skrebensky's view of what it means to journey to a distant place for the rectification of injustice. His falsifications put into question, of course, both the chivalry and heroism of the enterprise, but the diminished rhetoric of what he believes to be true anachronistically recalls the high tone of imperial hopes in a period before the scramble for Africa and the war against the Boers.

The discussion of class and race, a theme that runs through much of Lawrence's fiction, continues in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928). As Victorian in some ways as Gerald and Skrebensky in his social views, Sir Clifford Chatterley tells Connie that the masses as a group are uneducable and unchangeable. But, with the possibility between them of her producing a Chatterley heir by another father, nurture is paramount, and "the overwhelming pressure of environment" could make a working class boy into a ruler. This doctrine, with its Darwinian overtones, is very much a bid for the rejuvenation of a class, of which he is a crippled emblem, already in decay before the challenge posed by a new democratic spirit after the 1914-18 war. In summing this up for him--"Then the common people aren't a race, and the aristocrats aren't blood"--Connie looks for comfort in what is "devastatingly true in what he said. But it was a truth that killed."

Sir Clifford is being disingenuous--since "the masses" are collectively "unalterable" (239-240), they are as fixed in his mind as effectively as a race; indeed, given the gamekeeper's record as an army officer and his ability to speak at will either standard or dialect English, one is tempted to argue that a release from the common people is necessary to the mind of the novel, if Connie is to take Mellors as a lover and the father of her child.

At about the same time in this late stage of the period under study, and after the slaughter of the Great War, the

fear of a full encounter between those on different sides of class and race divisions lies behind a reversal of their positions in "Out of Depth" (1936), a story by Evelyn Waugh.

Like the eponymous character in Kipling's Indian story "The Strange Ride of Morrowbie Jukes," Waugh's Rip Van Winkle finds himself accidentally in the nightmare fantasy of an initially unintelligible situation, dominated by alarm at the possibility of white powerlessness in the colonial arena.

He is transported by a magician five hundred years ahead into a world more radically changed than that of his namesake in Washington Irving's story. As an American, though a frequent visitor to a social milieu in London familiar to readers of Waugh's novels, he provides an extra edge to his alienation from the twenty-fifth century London where he is now placed.

The scene between Piccadilly and the Thames, with its herd of grazing sheep, stretches of mud, dogs prowling for refuse, recalling Cerberus in Hades, not far from the river Styx, marks a grievous end to urban civilization. The people in the vicinity of the Thames, a river now lined with wattle and mud huts, "were fair skinned and fair haired, but shaggy, and they moved with the loping gait of savages. They spoke slowly in the sing-song tones of an unlettered race who depend on oral tradition for the preservation of their lore" (131).

These are Englishmen who have lost their power with their literacy. One is reminded here of the doomed bravado of

Shakespeare's illiterate rebel Jack Cade, who ordered his men to "burn all the records of the realm. My mouth shall be the Parliament of England" (2H6.4.7.14). Literacy is at the center of the ability to govern--the reader is to meet, among the rulers of these degraded Londoners, "a negro anthropologist with vast spectacles" and "a black man trying to read Shakespeare to Rip" (135-136).

The black masters are based at "a large military station" (135) where Rip is taken after witnessing some barter between "a crew of smart negroes" (134) and inhabitants of the mud huts. In exchange for the artifacts the Londoners "had recovered from the ruins by digging--pieces of machinery and ornament, china and glass and carved stonework, jewellery and purposeless bits of things, the blacks landed bales of thick cloth, cooking utensils, fish-hooks, knife-blades and axe-heads" (134-135). The reversal of a traditional meeting at the frontier moves to an apotheosis in a service familiar to Rip from his Catholic childhood. A black priest from the mission begins by greeting the converts, "dishevelled white men," their eyes "vague, uncomprehending," with the last words of the Latin Mass, "'Ite, missa est'" (137), used in the modern church to dismiss the communicants after the Eucharist.

The frivolous pun of the "black art" (138), to which Rip confesses when he returns to the London of 1933, reads like a feint to disguise the more serious play on words in the story's title. Rip is lost, out of depth, in the fantasy

world of what seems to him like a nightmare, an exploration playing to unconscious terrors in a future radically upset by a reversal of the Mass and of imperial identities. The colonial mentality will survive the body of its particular attribution and can be easily taken up by the colonized in a transcendence of colour that suggests no limit to its repetitions and displacements. The prospect of Rip's own losses, the Ritz hotel, "cabin trunks, and promenade decks, the casinos and bars and supper restaurants, that were his home" (136), puts at risk the imperium of Americans, themselves once colonized, as well as that of their former masters.

In a period when new kinds of thinking arose next to systems of thought based on unquestioned imperial assumptions, writers of serious fiction represented these anxieties by introducing their orthodox characters to threats from a region lurking at the edge of consciousness. A tendency in such characters is to retrieve from chaos some sort of order in the world of class and race. The need for such a retrieval can be so compelling that, as we have seen in Waugh's story, it could be at the cost of a new and diminished identity for the ruling group. Cavafy's poem "Waiting for the Barbarians" expresses the fear and desire of such a condition for the Romans: "the barbarians are coming today / and the emperor's waiting to receive their leader . . . night has fallen and the barbarians haven't come . . . Now

what's going to happen to us without barbarians? / Those people were a kind of solution" (31-33).

The meaning seems to be something like this: the people who live beyond the borders tell us where the borders are in geography and, by internalizing them, we come to know who we are, where the borders are located in our consciousness. One way of watching the development of this practice in fiction is to examine the function of Gypsies who are, until Lawrence's *The Virgin and the Gipsy*, seldom essential to the plot, and are often brought in as a countertype to other characters in the novel.

When Mrs. Arrowpoint, in *Daniel Deronda*, calls Klesmer "a gypsy, a Jew, a mere bubble of the earth," she is identifying two of the more pervasive alien groups at that time in England. Both were nomadic in their histories, but only the Gypsies followed an itinerant life in England, as basket-makers, tinkers, horse-dealers, fortune-tellers, and other vocations that fitted their mobility. In the popular view they were also thieves, swindlers, prostitutes, kidnappers of children--transgressors against the law and Christian doctrine in any way that suited English fears of a rootless, dark-skinned, mysterious people with an incomprehensible, non-European language. Unlike the Jews, they seemed to the general public, overlooking any reluctance of its own to let them do so, rarely to want to surrender their freedom from social constraint by trying to reach

positions that would rid them of their class, if not race, stigma.

David Morse argues that "Victorian observers, as they attempted to write about the working class, very naturally fell back on already existing categories, and . . . sometimes consciously, sometimes unconsciously, they tended to think about them as if they were gypsies" (8). This is in harmony with Arnold's view of a "vast portion" of the populace, marching, bawling, breaking, and also with Henry Mayhew's reports of laborers as a nomadic people engaged in strange and marginal occupations. As he points out, Morse's Victorian observers knew little about the scope and complexity of working class life--no more than they did about conditions that led to the mutiny in India and the events of the mutiny itself. From the knowledge they allowed themselves, these observers saw the working classes, like the Gypsies, "uprooted and dispossessed, with few possessions they could call their own. They spoke in their own arcane dialects, practised their own strange customs and rituals, often brought up their children in a state of godlessness, lived in a state of general indifference to the rule of law, yet were bound together by a deep sense of tribal solidarity" (Morse, 10).

The tone of the public attitude to Gypsies throughout the Victorian period is reflected in the Vagrancy Act of 1822, "which declared that 'all Persons pretending to be Gipsies' or to tell fortunes, or wandering abroad or lodging

under tents or in carts or waggons were to be deemed rogues and vagabonds, for which the penalty was up to six months' imprisonment" (Fraser 137). In an account probably written in the 1820s, John Clare reports a magistrate's comment in a trial of two Gypsies for horsestealing: "This atrosious tribe of wandering vagabonds ought to be made outlaws in every civilizd kingdom and exterminated from the face of the earth [*sic*]" (*A. W.* 69). The desire to annihilate groups of unruly inferiors, which we have seen in Grandcourt, and which was to animate Charles Dickens after the killing of English women and children at Cawnpore in the Indian Mutiny--"I should do my utmost to exterminate the Race upon whom the stain of the late cruelties rested" (Brantlinger 207)--is one to which the Gypsies make a voluntary and unnerving contribution. Clare, who was friendly enough with one group of Gypsies to learn from them their way of playing the fiddle, and was "often tempted to join them" (*A. W.* 69), found, when relying on those who were to hide him on his escape from the mad house in Essex, that "they were all gone" (*A. W.* 153).

In a poem "The Rivals," a pastoral dialogue, Clare writes in the introductory passage about the use by shepherds, for branding sheep, of firesticks which they come upon "About the spot by gipseys left behind" (*C. T.* 98). This disappearance of the Gypsies, a kind of self-annihilation, is repeated in Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874). Gabriel Oak, looking for the Gypsies in their encampment, finds them to be no longer there (267). As savages foreign to

England, and as artisans, serving social superiors like members of the working class, their elusivess can be a nuisance, but their mobility fulfills the wishes of those who would like them to be invisible, who would prefer not to know them, who would like Indians and laborers to be both useful and non-existent.

These contradictory desires are a source of the supernatural powers allocated to Gypsies. The Duke in Eliot's dramatic poem "The Spanish Gypsy" (1868) is reported to have transformed in his mind the captive Gypsy chieftain into "sage or warrior, and like the sun / Plays daily at fallacious alchemy, / Turns sand to gold and dewy spider-webs / To myriad rainbows" (235). In a poem with a heroic view of the Gypsy destiny, a skeptical narrator watches the rational Christian bemused by the magic inherent in his view of the Gypsy.

Some aspects of the menace from Gypsies--their occult powers, their knowledge of the future and of the soul's secrets--grew in the popular imagination with the spread of Romantic sensibility. Clare's wry appraisal--"a quiet, pilfering, unprotected race" (*S. P.* 212)--is closer in tone to the Gypsies in *Moll Flanders* and *Tom Jones* than to those who terrify Harriet Smith in *Emma* or Little Nell in *The Old Curiosity Shop*.

"It was Borrow who first gave gypsies a citizenship in literature . . . Borrow made gypsies live in the English mind" (*The Cambridge History*, 145). In his two

autobiographical fictions set in England, *Lavengro* and *The Romany Rye*, George Borrow in the 1850s presented to English readers a series of discursive encounters of which those with Gypsies are only a part. In opening his preface to *Lavengro* (1851) with "I have endeavoured to describe a dream," and then representing England as "a fair field" (vii and ix), the narrator, named Lavengro--"Word Master" (107)--by the Gypsies, places himself in a tradition of populist and moral enigmatizing that has an archetype in *Piers Plowman*. The subtitle, *The Scholar--The Gypsy--The Priest*, might refer to characters in the narrative, but in his preface the author slyly denies they can be brought together in the person of Lavengro. It can be argued, however, that the three descriptive nouns are all conditions of mind, and are subsumed in the prime theme of the book, which is language.

In London Lavengro wanders like a Gypsy, from episode to episode, dealing on his travels with what he stumbles across. One place is as likely to yield some interest as another: "I could not say that I had any particular business in that direction, but what could I do were I to turn back?" (289). His one, unfulfilled, quest is to find a publisher to take his translations of poems from Welsh and Danish. Among other chores he undertakes to keep afloat, he translates an incomprehensible work of philosophy into an equally incomprehensible German version. He becomes attached to no one, but enjoys speaking to an old woman, a receiver of

stolen goods with a fruit stand, who reads only *Moll Flanders*, a novel as picaresque as his own.

He moves among languages like a linguistic nomad, hated by some of the Gypsies for his knowledge of their language. As he learns from them, he occasionally teaches, but "I am not in the habit of giving my opinion to people on any subject, unless questioned" (513). Towards the end of the novel, when he is living chastely in a dingle in the company of a young non-Gypsy woman as vagabond as he, Lavengro becomes her teacher. After she has learned from him the Armenian numerals from one to a hundred, he tries to teach her the declension of nouns in Armenian: "'I merely want you to decline masters in Armenian.' 'I do decline them; I will have nothing to do with them'" (513). Although he rebukes her for the pun, it indicates the freedom of each of them from the surrounding hierarchies, and is a sign of Lavengro's extraordinary removal from a class system that he clearly notices in all his encounters. The place in which this exchange occurs is traditionally threatened, according to Robert Pogue Harrison, by imperial intrusions, exemplified by the "Athenian navy's need for wood," "the insatiable mouth of [the Roman] empire" (*Forests*, 55), and a "timber shortage for Navy ships" (100) in seventeenth century England. By language play and by setting, Lavengro lives in a forest apart from the world of wooden ships. A white Gypsy, son of a recruiting officer who celebrates his links to the established order, Lavengro conducts, with the classnessness of a true priest,

the rites of language; he mediates between its absolutes, grammar and vocabulary, and those who would have access to them.

Lavengro comes literally to grips with Gypsies in the fight "beneath some lofty trees" (439) with his friend Jasper Petulengro, the blacksmith. This is again in the rich imagery of a forest setting, a place to evoke the chivalry and lawlessness, enchantment and wildness, of, say, the Robin Hood ballads and *The Faerie Queene*, and a place of what Harrison calls "comic absurdity," where the outlaw, in unmasking injustice outside the forest, "becomes the law's apologist" (79-80).

The fight is a matter of family honor for Petulengro, whose mother-in-law hanged herself as a result of a dream after failing to kill Lavengro by poison. The "tuzzle" (441) is conducted as a ritual without animosity, in the same oblique spirit that informs much of Lavengro's dealings with human kind. The attachment of real Gypsies to their people's code of behavior, and to depredations against those outside that code, gives them an indisputable place within the systems that surround them. They are outcasts, but only from the point of view of those habituated to looking for class and race inferiorities. Lavengro's freedom from affiliation in his account of the Gypsies, more intimate than reports in the eighteenth century, makes available a deromanticizing of Gypsy life to any subsequent novelists wanting to introduce Gypsies into their fictions.

This switch, from fantasy to the real, is well illustrated in little Maggie Tulliver's escape to the Gypsies in *The Mill on the Floss* (1860). In a chapter entitled "Maggie Tries to Run Away from Her Shadow," she goes to the Gypsies for refuge from her iniquity in pushing her little cousin into the mud. Applied to a child of eight or nine, the shadow is a complex and puzzling image that includes, perhaps, the guilt of her naughtiness and, in the light of later events, the bond with her brother Tom. It might also refer to a darkness in the world of the Gypsies from whom, by the end of her encounter with them, she wants desperately to get away. They are not the people she expected, who would be grateful for her knowledge and instruction, and whose queen she might become. On the contrary, "she had begun to think that they meant perhaps to kill her as soon as it was dark, and cut up her body for gradual cooking" (177). Not surprisingly, she refuses the stew they offer, and in her imagination turns for rescue to her reading, Jack the Giantkiller and Mr. Greatheart, forces of good to counter the evil about her. The discussion among the Gypsies in a strange language is part of the transformation from Maggie's hopes for ascendancy to a nightmare realism. And they fail to return to her the silver thimble they take for inspection.

The magic world Maggie was expecting in her childhood fantasies collapses in the presence of a moral and material impoverishment. The command she might have had as a queen, Victoria perhaps, erodes in the face of what proves to be a

harmless opportunism in her potential subjects. In an episode that contributes to Maggie's growing up, she could be enacting the movement from one queen to another, Elizabeth to Victoria, like a rite of passage from the childhood time of empire to its adult reality in the nineteenth century. As the agents by which this happens, the Gypsies fulfil the role of Cavafy's barbarians, "a kind of solution," the shadow from which Maggie tries to run away. In a class sense, they are kept in their place by Mr. Tulliver's five shillings tip to the Gypsy who restores Maggie to him, much as Halliday ensures the master's position in *Women in Love* by the shilling he takes from Gerald to give to the Indian servant.

Although Borrow took some of the magic from the Gypsies, he wrote nothing to rid them of their reputation for stealing. When a servant in *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874) sees in the night a slight figure take one of the horses, the culprit is quickly assumed--"to raise suspicion to conviction itself, there were gipsies in Weatherbury Bottom" (266). The thief, it transpires, is Bathsheba, harnessing her own horse, but the leap to Gypsies reaffirms the unknown world they are seen to inhabit and their availability as scapegoats in subversion of the law.

The reading invoked by Maggie suggests her own allegorization of the encounter with the Gypsies. The struggle between good and evil--the necessity for the forces of good to find weapons to subdue the forces of evil--plays in the child's mind as a way of translating the danger into a

language familiar to her. This might also be seen as a particular case by the novelist of a non-literal mode of thinking behind all meetings at the frontier. A similar symbolic shift is momentarily raised in Hardy's horse-stealing incident, in matters between Gabriel Oak, who pursues the horse and gig, and the apparently guilty Gypsies--and, significantly for the plot, between Gabriel and the iniquitous Troy, to whom Bathsheba is secretly traveling.

In both instances, Eliot's and Hardy's, the move in the direction of allegory reads like a displacement of the discomfort of the literal for Maggie and for Gabriel, who prefers not to face the reasons for Bathsheba's use of the horse and trap. Maggie's recourse to Bunyan helps her to deal with the reality of the strange Gypsies; and Gabriel's instinct to blame the absent Gypsies allows him to escape from emotional realities of which he is very much a part, and where he has responsibilities. These two functions of the Gypsies are like projections of the colonial ego's demands on itself: get rid of the actual presence of the savages by an intellectual shift, like allegory; and allocate to them a crime against the law as a substitute for the failure of one's own appreciation of the colonial reality.

One reason for obeying such demands is to avoid the risk of disgrace in being tempted to short-lived encounters with savages. The title of Hardy's story "A Tragedy of Two Ambitions" (1888) refers to the hopes of two brothers frustrated by the profligacy of their widowed father, a once

thriving millwright with several employees, now nearly destituted by his dissipations. Their mother's careful savings would have been enough to see them both through university and to give them an entry to that clerical preferment within the Church of England to which they both aspired. As it is, "the utmost we can hope for is . . . possible admission to a theological college, and ordination as despised licentiates" (433). In preparation for this, their studies, like Jude's, are hard and lonely. The father makes an unexpected, begging, embarrassing visit to the older son, Joshua, in his theological college, accompanied by "his strapping gipsy wife--if she were his wife" (439). The "disreputable connection," Joshua thinks, with an urgency that is to cause the death of his father, "will kill me. For how can we live, and relinquish our high aim, and bring down our dear sister Rosa to the level of a gipsy's step-daughter?" (440).

From affection for their sister, and an understanding that a good marriage will do no harm to their own careers, they are determined to protect her possible engagement to the squire of the parish where Joshua has obtained a curacy. The father returns alone from Canada where the sons have sent him. As he travels across the country towards them, drunk and intent on giving his daughter away, for he picks up rumors of the union, the two brothers hear him fall in the river. "'Her life and happiness,'" says Joshua to the younger, "'your reputation and mine--and our chance of rising together, all

three' . . . 'We'll go--we *must* save him' . . . 'Yes, yes! we must!' Still they did not move" (450). They continue to do nothing, and he drowns.

The class language of rising and falling, the "high" and the "down," expresses the social and vocational torment of the sons. Their father's connection with the Gypsy is a colorful example of his degradation. Her only words, a response to his rhetorical question about their union, are as much an Irish as a Gypsy stereotype: "'Oi, by the great Lord an' we did!' simpered the lady" (438), a confusion between alien groups that would not be made by a writer who, like Borrow's Lavengro, had been close to Gypsies. The perfunctoriness in setting up the Gypsy wife, to show more than anything a careless morality in the husband, indicates where the emphasis is intended: on what proves to be a homicidal response by the sons to that morality. The Gypsy, existing no more than those who decamped in *Far from the Madding Crowd*, serves her purpose. She disappears in Canada, returning, as it were, to the obscurity from which she comes, much in the way that, for the benefit of the sons, the father's life is extinguished by the river. She is a character of fictional convenience whom the author introduces and lets go with the ease of a farmer hiring temporary help for the harvest. As an emblem of the father's concupiscence, she is far from those threatening Gypsy figures that entered the imagination earlier in the century, and very much like black women taken, in popular thought, by the more

disreputable of colonial settlers deserting the class they come from.

Her sexuality, blasphemously expressed in her single utterance, threatens the habits of the church hierarchy; according to her consort, when the principal of the college is addressed by the two of them, he "seemed to think we should poison him!" (439). But her potential for undermining an institution of the establishment conceals what she has in common with Joshua. He has been reading Pusey's *Library of the Fathers* and, in the spirit of Pusey's own preaching, he so fascinates the congregation with the "thrilling periods" of his first sermon that they are taken aback with "the novelty of their sensations" (440). The text of his sermon, "O Lord, be Thou my helper!" is similar to that of Pusey--"The Holy Eucharist, a Comfort to the Penitent"--which caused a suspension for heresy from his university post. Joshua's Tractarian enthusiasm, exercised in a safer time, takes the English church back to its early energies, a version of individual primal impulses represented by the Gypsy.

In Lawrence's novella *The Virgin and the Gipsy* (written in 1926), the fabled power of the Gypsy is contrasted with an ecclesiatical expression more like Mr. Gascoigne's in *Daniel Deronda* than the one in which Joshua wishes to flourish. Cynthia, wife of the hypocritical rector Arthur Saywell, runs off with a young, penniless man, much as Diana, whose surname she carries, enjoys illicit relations with Endymion. Her two daughters are left in the suffocating atmosphere of the

rectory, now managed by Mr. Saywell's mother and sister, who bring into the open the social narrowness hidden behind the rector's bogus liberalism. Yvette, the younger daughter, is in almost constant battle with her blind grandmother's demands for the most trivial attentions: "She was like the old toad which . . . sat on the ledge of the bee-hive . . . and which, with a demonish lightning-like snap of its pursed jaws, caught every bee as it came out to launch into the air" (484).

This strong image of the grandmother as predator on useful insects recalls Grandcourt as a lizard in *Daniel Deronda*, and ultimately the most oppressive features of imperial hunger. Yvette, equating appetite with power, loathed the rectory, "a loathing that consumed her life," where she feared being devoured by "the will, the ancient, toad-like, obscene *will* in the old woman" (537-538). When, at the age of twenty-one, she comes upon the Gypsy by chance on an outing, part of her is ready for a radical release from the rectory: "She met his dark eyes for a second . . . She thought: 'He is stronger than I am! He doesn't care!'" (489).

The narrative voice, in typical Lawrentian fashion, moves in and out of the consciousness of the characters, but, in keeping its distance from the Gypsy's, allows him a symbolic detachment to which Yvette responds. A folk view of Gypsy freedom is the inspiration of an anonymous verse which is in Yvette's mind when thinking of the "insipid" young men in her social circle, and of "the raggle-taggle gipsy women"

who "despise men who are not gipsies" (513). One stanza illustrates the tone:

> What care I for a goose-feather bed,
> With the sheet turned down so bravely, O?
> For to-night I shall sleep in a cold open field,
> Along with the wraggle taggle gipsies, O!
>
> (de la Mare, 80)

By seeing herself as a Gypsy, Yvette enters into the spirit of Clare's poem "The Gipsey Song," into the "gipsey liberty" of those who "pay no rent nor tax to none / & live untythed & free" and, in a language appropriate to her first admiration of the Gypsy, into the cavalier freedom of "None cares for us for none care we" (*M. C.* 325).

The Gypsy's appearance, "curiously elegant, and quite expensive in its gipsy style . . . pressing in his chin with the old, gipsy conceit" (489), recalls that of Romero, an impoverished, dispossessed descendant of Spanish landowners in New Mexico, in "The Princess," a story Lawrence wrote about eighteen months before *The Virgin and the Gipsy*. A rich young Anglo-American woman, following "the March of Empire, which is brought up rather short on the Pacific coast" (437), for want of anything better to do, goes to stay on a ranch where she meets Romero in whose eyes "was a spark of pride, of self-confidence, of dauntlessness. Just a spark in the midst of blackness of static despair . . . his clothes were thinnish and graceful" (439).

Each of these characters is something of a beau in appearance and demeanor, and each enacts the myth of the powerfully sexual other to a virginal middle-class woman. The "princess," repeating the expansion of the United States to the west, finds her other in a figure whose ancestors have done their share of displacing indigenous inhabitants. But Yvette's Gypsy is from a people in a condition of permanent displacement, indefinitely marginalized by their refusal to be bound by customs not of their own making. The Gypsy, in his mobility and the need to sell his wares and services to the surrounding population, is both dependent and free; Yvette, alienated at home, is both at one with him and, like one of her "insipid" friends who "honked the horn [of his car] imperiously" (488) at the Gypsy's cart in his way, superior to him: "With one self she loved this gipsy man. With many selves, she ignored him or had a distaste for him" (541).

Yvette "wished she were a gipsy" (499), "she just felt that her soul was up there, at the quarry, among the caravans, with the gipsies" (511). The quarry is a place of seclusion, "a deep recess . . . this sudden lair . . . a hidden, snug winter camp" (489); "there was a peculiar feeling of silence and secrecy in that lonely, hidden quarry" (493). The Gypsy who emerges from this world touches desires in the recesses of Yvette's soul, too submerged for illumination by her experience. And the language describing the Gypsy takes him into a region impenetrable by the white

people--including Yvette's "many selves"--with whom he has dealings in the story. He has "dark conceited proud eyes" (491), a "dark, suave purity of all his body." Yvette "was aware of the pure dark nape of his neck, the black hair groomed away" (493). She sees in her mind the "stare of the black eyes, which seemed to shoot her in some vital, undiscovered place, unerring" (513). She made the first, accidental, visit to the quarry with her friends in the car; on the second, alone, "she was aware of [him], as a dark, complete power" (519).

On this visit Yvette was about to enter his caravan with the Gypsy--"she was gone in his will" (519)--when they were interrupted by the arrival of two people in a car. This is like a mockery of Herbert Spencer's view of evolutionary progress, of which "the repression of immediate impulsive response was the mechanism" (Stocking 227). The intrusion into the private encounter about to take place does indeed lead to an extended period of rationality for Yvette, but the involuntary cause suggests an oscillation between instinct and reason that denies the supremacy of reason as either a cause or a purpose of progress. The consequent instability of relations between the powerful and powerless, between, say, white and black, undermines pretensions to a coherent imperial attitude based on reason and structure.

A human accident prevents a union between the virgin and the Gypsy, and a technological accident causes one. The flood that, at the end of the story, engulfs the rectory and drowns

the grandmother, is the result of a collapse of "an ancient, perhaps even a Roman mine" (553) under a reservoir dam. In a concession to coincidence in older fiction, the Gypsy happens to be at hand, and rescues Yvette by dragging her, with a difficulty recalling the trials of an epic hero, to her room at the top of the house. Naked, they grasp each other in her bed for warmth, entirely equal. The language--"gradually the sickening violence of the shuddering, caused by shock, abated, in his body first, then in hers, and the warmth revived between them" (549)--does not insist on the loss of Yvette's virginity, for the emphasis here is on the restoration of life for a couple pushed to the extreme of their physical resources. In the interests of survival, the questions of power and surrender slip away. The rector, knowing only that the Gypsy had saved his daughter, goes some days later to the quarry to thank him, but "the gipsies had lifted camp and gone, no one knew whither" (553).

Once again, the Gypsies are not where they were, giving them an identity of absence, like Yvette's desires, which are stirred into life only by the Gypsy's presence or her thoughts of him. Suddenly, however, there is a moment of location, when Yvette receives a polite, informal letter of regret that no goodbye was said, signed Joe Boswell. "And only then she realized that he had a name" (553).

Although she "was acquiescent in the fact of his disappearance" and "her young soul knew the wisdom of it" (553), the Gypsy's name suggests that, much as an old Gypsy

woman in the quarry had told Yvette's fortune, he has, as it were, brought her to read her own life as it is, not as it might be, by composing its hidden biography for her.

Lawrence was writing this novella at a time when the disgraceful ways of Gypsies could co-exist in the popular mind with a more respectful attitude that would lead to the capitalization of their name. By exploiting this duality, Lawrence, for whom the vitality between individuals must at all costs avoid all attempts to control, makes Joe Boswell's gift to Yvette into a paradigm for what seems to be a contribution that can be made unwittingly by apparently powerless members of society and empire to those whose stance towards them is one of exaction and use.

The Gypsies, figures of both class and race difference, roam about the towns and, especially, the countryside of English fiction. By raising questions of identity and libido, they allow the reader to see how they stimulate in the rest of the populace those forces that oppose modes of calculation and measure, of manipulation and rule.

Conclusion

The two novelists who feature most prominently in this account, Eliot and Lawrence, were both, like Borrow, Hardy, Conrad, and Wells, largely self-taught. One is tempted to think that their fight to emerge into an Oxbridge educated male literary ethos gave them an outsider's view of the established order, and that this view provided them with unusual insights into violence and its preemption in domestic behavior as a nursery for that exercised abroad. If such an argument were to made, one might expect a comparable case to explain particular explorations by more apparently establishment figures like Beerbohm, Forster, and Waugh. I have deliberately refrained from trying to associate any of the authors biographically with their works, not because their existence as authors can be separated from their language, but because their fictions are paramount, and any connections to be sought between the life and imperial elements in the work would be so individual as to exceed the scope of this study.

Such an approach would treat the authors as if they were themselves characters in a novel--high and low, to use Hardy's distinction. But all the authors are in command positions; the blank paper with which they start is like the unknowable, not yet colonized "many blank spaces" on the maps Marlow looked at as a boy, in *Heart of Darkness*: "When I grow up I will go there" (70-71). As I noted in the introduction,

the making of territorial boundaries can be metaphorically interchanged with the act of inscription, a matter close to Conrad's understanding of the way the artist's imagination works. Unmarked paper and empty territory are absences that invite writer and colonist to make invasions that can, among other motivations, reduce their isolation.

Faced with the endless possibilities of a clean sheet of paper, Lawrence's creation of Sir Clifford Chatterley, or Beerbohm's of Mr. Noaks, is of course no less a product of the generative mind than a character known to be founded in the life, like Paul Morel in Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*.

The point here is the imperial flavor of the physical circumstances in which the writer of serious fiction approaches his work. In the beginning there are no indigenous inhabitants on the paper; the writer can select at will from his capacity to colonize his pen, to co-opt and assemble incident and character. If the natural habits of the novelist are to represent, to delve, to invent a new world, to question, to satirize, to raise alternatives by the suggestiveness of simple acts of definition, one might expect, at a time when the ideology of imperialism is at issue, that an element of dissent from that ideology would enter his work. The case of Kipling, whose name quickly became connected with a jingo mentality, is exemplary. As we have seen in *The Light that Failed*, the literary artist in him explores the likelihood that imperial acts can be shaken, even undermined, by discoveries of equal and opposite

reactions. In choosing the war against the Sudanese as a means to end his life by exposure to the bullets of the enemies of imperium, Dick Heldar brings his author close to the Conrad of *Heart of Darkness* by ironizing not only his own despair but also, as the ultimate nihilism in a faithless age, the pretensions of its only pervasive ideology.

"Conquest by force of arms," wrote Bertrand Russell in 1938, "has had more to do with the spread of civilization than any other single agency" (39). This focus may be too narrow, but if the form of imperialism is determined by economic, political, and military impulses, and its passion by a desire to civilize or Christianize, a loss of faith in the civilization and Christianity to be carried to the unenlightened leaves the way open for an increasingly material approach. In 1870 the Vatican, at an Ecumenical Council--where "the subject is Rationalism" (*The Times*, January 12, 1870)--raised papal infallibility from doctrine to dogma in a defensive move against the growing Western empiricism. The deep materialism at home, castigated at one level or another in most of the works of this study, in the course of its elevation to a national self-definition was undergoing a struggle with aesthetic and humanist oppositions.

Representing the impulses at play by means of a work of art is itself an implicit contribution to such oppositions. More specifically, characters arise in the fictions who either remove themselves from pressure by the plot to enter

its power play, or make a contribution which, if not made, would not affect the plot at all. Vernon Whitford in *The Egoist* stands by while Clara unravels her connection to Sir Willoughby, not allowing her to consider him as an alternative lover until she has completed her internal struggle to be free of Sir Willoughby's grip on her. *Daniel Deronda*'s Joel Dagge, whose absence would be a thematic loss, is in his powerlessness out of all contention as far as the story is concerned. He is, in a tiny episode, a free character, and a model for another kind of power--that of the individual to choose the sort of community he wants.

These refusals and separations, within an interplay of force and reaction, raise the question of why one work might be chosen as an example rather than another. Perhaps there are novels from the same author or period that fail to illustrate the imperial preoccupations of the time, novels in which no non-coercive character need remove himself from the action, nor be removed by the author. All the works in this study, in examining relations between the individual and society, exhibit impulses and anxieties that have parallels in imperial aggrandizement and its self-justification. Some questions arise about the basis of selection: have these works been picked at random from many others that would be suitable to the same kind of scrutiny, or do they have features that particularly qualify them for a survey of this kind? Perhaps, to answer these questions, it would be helpful to make a short detour.

With the empire at its apex and about to begin its fall, the imperial sensibility oscillated, like Forster's Stour, quoted in the introduction as an "unaccountable stream, dirty at Blandford, pure at Wimborne," between doubt and belief, guilt and exertion, retreat and attack. Painted in mid-century, Sir Edwin Landseer's two deer pictures, the besieged "Stag at Bay" and the triumphant "The Monarch of the Glen," which was commissioned for the House of Lords refreshment room, might be seen to illustrate the extremes of this double attitude. For our purposes we can, as we wish and in a commanding way, select these two from the great store of Landseer's Scottish deer paintings and engravings, and from his many pictures of animals, dead and alive, in modes realistic, anthropomorphic, and allegorical, often made for royalty, aristocrats and rich merchants who were his patrons.

The two pictures are not, of course, directly about empire, but about deer, the stag's pride among his own kind, and the vanquishing of pride in the hunt. Like, perhaps, the attraction of writers to Napoleon, there is a particular kind of artistic excitement in portraying a heroic subject in victory and in defeat. But the stances of the animals are inescapably projections from within the culture of the artist's time, and it is difficult to see them as other than part of a collective activity, conscious or dream-like, within the artist's imagination. As engravings, the two pictures quickly "achieved their status as familiar household icons" (Ormond 177), which suggests a public readiness to

recognize at a glance the intrepidity and fears of the national posture. The animals thus become a focus available for interpretation as emblems of national sentiment.

But other, less celebrated, paintings can be seen to make comparable impressions. In a picture of astonishing grace, "The Sanctuary," also by Landseer, a stag emerges from the water of a lake, and some ducks, out of the rushes behind him, fly off in formation towards the sunset. Richard Ormond describes the calm of the scene as "mysterious but thrilling," and a few lines later includes a quotation that summarizes part of the thesis of this study: "The lake is a refuge from the violent world, although in reaching it the stag disturbs a group of ducks, as though, according to the Athenaeum critic in 1842, 'there was no purchasing safety for ourselves on this earth, without bringing trouble and peril to others'" (170).

The austerity of the colors and the scene's evening quietness can divert the viewer's attention from the drama taking place, much as symbolic moments like Harriet's terror of the Gypsies and the violence of farm laborers towards the railway surveyors can be easily forgotten by readers of *Emma* and *Middlemarch*. Where the stories are compelling, and the turbulence the result of social, temperamental, or psychological mistakes, the exertions of power can be either dormant, to be awakened only by a "what if?" from the reader, or hidden.

When, for instance, in *Middlemarch*, Dorothea is identified by the artist Naumann as "a sort of Christian Antigone--sensuous force controlled by spiritual passion" (221), he provides a reference for an external contention that mirrors Dorothea's internal conflict. Her individual religious quest in a world of legally sanctioned, secular necessity equips the literal account with a depth of meaning withheld from the surface in the interests of a fictional tact necessary for the provincial emphasis of the story.

We can assume that no novel set in England is likely to have a plot preoccupied with matters of empire, but I would argue that every work of fiction written in a period of imperial anxiety is subject to thematic eruptions that mirror this paramount ideology. If the empire were in place, Joseph Chamberlain, the senior apologist for protective tariffs, would not have needed to exhort an audience, in 1904, to "learn to think imperially" (Amery 539). In one way or another, like speeches by the polemicists, the fictions are situated in an endless potential for touching and reflecting agitations in the pervasive imperial idea.

The corrosion of belief in the imperial mythology coincided with a modernist preoccupation with self, or rather a multiplicity of selves. As the assumptions of many generations about imperial supremacy started to crumble, the questions asked by the novelists about the inequality of relations were gradually superseded by enquiries that turn inward, to do with powers at work in the self. Conrad's story

"The Return" seems to be ironically poised between an old stability and a new sensitivity to discrete fragments in the protagonist's inner world.

A reliance on enduring habits of language made a further irony possible; but the double presence of old and new linguistic habits provides a disturbance in patterns of thinking which, in an evasion of irony, become a breeding ground for energies released by a search for the durable in a provisional world. Lawrence, who, unlike Conrad, inherited no mode of discourse he could trust, in making himself as a writer created a language largely devoid of irony as he explored the various selves of his characters. He was able to free many sorts of power play to make new connections among his characters in an exploration of movements both towards and away from coercive control.

Attempts to escape from individual and social sources of mastery are bedeviled by their frailty. Little Jude's murder of the two children and his suicide reflect Sue's exclamation, "O why should Nature's law be mutual butchery!" (378), and rehearse Malthusian attitudes to population with a pun in the spelling of his note, "Done because we are too menny" (410). Their buffeting by religious, academic, and social forms, and Jude's self-inflicted bewilderment reflected in his son's deep dissociations, combine to push Jude and Sue into their separate culs-de-sac. After the deaths, Sue runs from "the days when her intellect scintillated like a star," exchanging her old ideas "for a

sense of Jude and herself fleeing from a persecutor" (417). Neither she nor Jude will risk reengagement with their hopes--Sue goes to "drink her cup to the dregs" (475) in Phillotson's bed, and Jude begins the process of destroying himself.

The novel ends without a future. There are no children--Sue's third child is stillborn--and the doctor has referred to "the beginning of the coming universal wish not to live" (411). Although the nihilism here was in the air in the 1890s, in Max Nordau's *Degeneration*, for example, and exacerbated in Jude's world by the deracination of agricultural workers, it depends for its authenticity on matters inside the novel: on the capacity of the "persecutors" to cause Jude's personality to disintegrate and Sue, "superstitious as a savage," to be "cowed into submission" (417). Jude could himself be a savage demoralized by distortion of his traditional attachments and beliefs under the requirements of intransigent occupying hierarchies.

Without being unduly fanciful, one might allow Ormond's words about Landseer's "Sanctuary," "the stag disturbs a group of ducks," to apply metaphorically to much of the jostling, as subdued as the tones in the painting, that takes place beneath the surface of a novel's plot. When a character is under test, in the footsteps, say, of the epic or Romance hero, the collisions can be revealed in a language that reflects one aspect or another of imperial thinking.

The small community in the house at the close of *Howards End* includes the now broken commercial warrior Mr. Wilcox, who has passed to his son the running of his rubber-based empire. "The Imperialist," we are told by the narrator, near the end of the novel, "is not what he thinks or seems. He is a destroyer" (301). The Wilcox empire will be guided on its destructive path by Paul Wilcox who, with plural contempt and an etymological reference to Iberian conquests, calls Helen Schlegel's illegitimate son "piccaninnies" (318). But Mr. Wilcox's own imperial quest has ended in the novel's eponymous house with his wife, sister-in-law, and her infant son, and it is this son who carries the promise of a different, quieter, egalitarian future.

The reader, however, is not allowed to be at ease with this prospect. "London's creeping," says Helen. "And London is only part of something else, I'm afraid. Life's going to be melted down all over the world" (316). And in the midst of her own fertility and that of the meadow at Howards End, Helen, with the last word of the novel, throws a chill into the vision of her final rhapsody: "The field's cut . . . We've seen to the very end, and it'll be such a crop of hay as never!" (319).

Like that of Mr. Wilcox, empires continue, or are reborn, in different hands. In Conrad's *Nostromo*, the province of Sulaco, rich in minerals, gains its independence from the country of Costaguana (literally, birdshit coast), only to become, in Said's words, "a smaller, more tightly

controlled and intolerant version of the larger state from which it has seceded" (*C. & I.* xx-xxi), and equally subject to British and American investment interests. Similarly, European exploitation in Africa is presented in *Heart of Darkness* as a reenactment of the Roman occupation of Britain.

There seems to be no escape, abroad or at home, from the cyclical nature of imperial urges, nor from their elusive tendency to destroy either what they contain or what they meet.

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