Many-sided Sympathy & the Science of Religion in George Eliot, Vernon Lee, & Edna Lyall



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ABSTRACT

'MANY-SIDED SYMPATHY & THE SCIENCE OF RELIGION IN GEORGE ELIOT, VERNON LEE, & EDNA LYALL'

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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN ENGLISH, TRINITY TERM 2017

Discourse on sympathy in mid-to-late nineteenth-century Britain took place in many intellectual contexts, including philosophy, aesthetics, evolutionary science, and physiological psychology. Concomitantly, the science of religion was a rising enterprise that largely transferred the study of religion from theologians to philologists, cultural evolutionists, and anthropologists as it sought to produce a comparative, systematic account of the growth and nature of religious belief. This thesis contends that these ostensibly disparate aspects of the intellectual climate overlapped in the literary marketplace as women writers combined the popular and specialized researches of each, both in answer to public anxieties these discourses fostered and in an effort to wield their fiction to ethical, social, and political purpose. It considers the fiction of three women with very various backgrounds, intellectual pursuits, and writing styles — that of George Eliot (1819–1880), Vernon Lee (1856–1935), and Edna Lyall (1857–1903) — and sets their work side by side to discern a common thread running through their oeuvres: a pattern of fictional 'many-sided' male sympathetic figures arranged to balance broad tolerance with specific function and achieve a form of modern spirituality for the benefit of the reader and society at large. Translated from the German *Vielseitigkeit* in the 1830s, the term 'manysidedness' initially entered the lexicon to describe the multi-faceted mind of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832), whose influence sat at the heart of much of the science of religion initiative. By mid-century it became a conduit for thinking about sympathy via its close association with positions of tolerance, impartiality, and acculturation. Intentionalist in nature and experimenting with 'surface reading' as methodology, this research has resulted in a fruitful exploration of sympathy both as a form of 'doubling' and as a continual intellectual and emotional unfolding akin to the interpretation of manysidedness as a model of self-cultivation. Each author is examined in light of her affinity with a male thinker: Eliot is paired with the scholar of comparative religion, Max Müller (1823–1900); Lee is viewed in relation to the aestheticism of her friend Walter Pater (1839–1894); Lyall is explored through her compassionate response to the suffering of the freethinker Charles Bradlaugh (1833–1891).



FOR HUSSAIN & SWEETPEA

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Archives

NLI — Dublin: National Library of Ireland, Department of Manuscripts.

TCD — Dublin: Trinity College Dublin, Manuscripts & Archives Research Library.

BIF — Florence: British Institute of Florence, Harold Acton Library.

BI — London: Bishopsgate Institute, Charles Bradlaugh Archive.

BL — London: British Library, Department of Manuscripts.

NCA — Manchester: National Co-operative Archive, GJ Holyoake Collection.

SCL — Oxford: Somerville College Library, Special Collections.

WCL — Oxford: Worcester College Library, Special Collections.

HL — San Marino, CA: The Huntington Library. Frances Power Cobbe, 1822–1904.

ML — Waterville, ME: Colby College, Miller Library, Special Collections.

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Prologue: 'Figuring' Sympathy

> Was she beautiful or not beautiful? [...] Was the good or the evil genius dominant in those beams?
>
> *Daniel Deronda*

The opening scene of *Daniel Deronda* (1876) is set in terms of mimicry and reflection. The gambling room at Leubronn is enclosed in a 'deep stillness, broken only by a light rattle, a light chink, a small sweeping sound, and an occasional monotone in French, such as might be expected to issue from an ingeniously constructed automaton'.[1] The room and its occupants, reduced to a mechanical simulation of human behaviour, are comprised of doubles. There are 'two long tables' surrounded by 'two serried crowds of human beings' and, despite the presence of 'very distant varieties of European type', the individuals collectively wear 'a certain uniform negativeness of expression which had the effect of a mask' (*DD* 4, 5). In the midst of this scene, Gwendolen Harleth wins at roulette and wears her own mask, looking 'markedly cold and neutral' while 'concealing an inward exultation'. Her figure raises an 'inward debate' in Daniel Deronda who privately

[1] George Eliot, *Daniel Deronda*, edited by Graham Handley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), pp. 3–4. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text and prefixed by *DD*.

poses aesthetic and moral questions of a dual nature: Beautiful or not beautiful? Good or evil? (*DD* 6). When Gwendolen catches sight of Deronda watching her, his look likewise sparks inner conflict. She wishes to avert her glance but cannot. In her moment of exultation, when an instant before she was 'unaffected by beholders', her lips suddenly turn pale. For her, as for Deronda, the 'moment become[s] dramatic' and they begin to mirror one another. Her gaze, like his, is 'arrested'. Their eyes meet twice. Gwendolen is 'striking[ly] [...] unlike others'; Deronda is 'not like young men in general' (*DD* 5, 8, 9). Deronda 'look[s] bored'; Gwendolen claims she is 'always bored' (*DD* 9). Gwendolen hides her emotions; Deronda wears 'a smile of irony'. The dualism of loss-gain comes to the fore when one moment Gwendolen is 'winning strikingly' and the next she begins to 'lose strikingly'. 'Each time her stake was swept off she *doubled* it' (*DD* 7, emphasis added).

Past and future hang evenly on either side of this narrative's opening, a story begun *in media res*. Dualisms that initially seem mutually exclusive are brought together. The chapter's epigraph compares Poetry (feminized) with Science (masculinized) and their methods are found to be congruent. Science and Poetry alike '[reckon] backwards as well as forwards'. The epigraph's allusion to Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's (1749–1832) double prologue of *Faust* (1808) — set 'in heaven or on earth' — sets the stage for the novel's own double narrative. Gwendolen, we later learn, is on the precipice of a complete volte-face; she is in Leubronn due to her flight from an impending marriage proposal, but soon her family's loss of fortune through speculation will compel her return and reversal in intention. Deronda, too, is on the cusp of his own period of transition. They are the same, but different.

Adjacent to this doubling of Deronda and Gwendolen and the set-up of a double narrative is the way in which the cacophony of the crowd is brought into an uneasy harmony via the shared immersion in gambling. In Deronda's eyes, the scene is one of 'dull, gas-poisoned absorption' — it was 'as if they had all eaten

of some root that for the time compelled the brains of each to the same narrow monotony of action' (*DD* 5). The image, however, of a crowd of varied individuals — where 'every single player differed markedly from every other' — encircling a roulette table is also compelling in its management of similarity and difference, and particularly in its supposition that the achieved uniformity is hollow (*DD* 5). The gambling table as common denominator draws 'The white bejeweled fingers of an English countess' near to a 'bony, yellow, crab-like hand' (*DD* 4). Here, varied classes and nationalities merge — the countess beside the London tradesman and the 'Livonian and Spanish, Graeco-Italian and miscellaneous German' beside 'English aristocratic and English plebeian' alike — but there is no hint of mutual understanding or deferential acknowledgement of difference (*DD* 4). All are either winners or losers, and all are equally preoccupied with playing parasite rather than host. As Deronda and Gwendolen mirror one another, so also do these individuals reflect and refract 'the same narrow monotony of action'. Again, they are the same, but different.

In navigating the relationship between similarity and difference, *Daniel Deronda* is carefully constructed upon two (figurative) models of sympathy drawn from writing of the period — doubleness and manysidedness. The opening pages of the novel illustrate these models in order to foreground our unconscious processes of response and thought. Sympathy, for George Eliot (1819–1880), is not only an aesthetic or moral concern, but also an epistemological one. Each of these models offers a hermeneutic or method of knowing, and here Eliot emphasizes their limitations. Doubleness, or duality, implies friction, contention and warring opposites with nowhere to progress (or in the context of this opening, truth and falsity, depth and surface, similarity and difference). Sympathy, when perceived as a mirrored projection of the self upon the other, is shortsighted and gives birth to misdirected action; it problematizes what was often considered a foundation of moral action. The process of doubling can also indicate a blurring of identities or loss of self, making the practice of sympathetic outreach less of a virtue than a risk.

Manysidedness, or multiplicity, on the other hand, is a prismatic model, involving outward and outspread movement, space in which to diffuse freely. This 'shape' of sympathy generally had more positive connotations than what is indicated in the opening of *Daniel Deronda*. The term manysidedness entered English in the 1830s as a translation of the German *Vielseitigkeit*, a word used to describe the multi-faceted mind of Goethe, and by mid-century it came to imply intellectual development on all sides, wide-ranging tolerance, and a mature impartiality. *Daniel Deronda* in many ways explores its negative aspects and the anxieties it raised. For example, in 1866, an article 'Intellectual Vigour' in the *Saturday Review* claimed that investing energy in many-sided tolerance or sympathy considerably depleted an individual's 'vigour', leading to ineffectiveness, marginalization, and obscurity.[2]

Working through the relationship between these two models of sympathy becomes an exercise comparable to reconciling the image of a coin with that of a gem — they appear to be mutually exclusive due to their irreconcilable 'shapes' and, like the unanswered inquiries into Gwendolen's aesthetic and moral natures, signal a commanding ambiguity. Pick up a coin and then a gem, or imagine each item in your hand in turn. How does one examine a coin; what does it present to the eye? When you hold a coin in your hand it has two sides. It is not transparent. The surface of the coin is its most intriguing feature. The details on either side attract the viewer's attention — what is engraved, or shown in relief? Only one side can be examined at a time. However, by examining each side in turn — one side, then the next, back again, then forwards — by twirling the coin round and round in slow succession, the two aspects of the coin feed into each other. One side may have a relief in profile and the other may have a seal; it becomes evident that both sides reciprocally symbolize a specific authority. Also significant is the fact that the only way to simultaneously examine two sides of the same

[2] 'Intellectual Vigour', *Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art* 21:551 (1866), pp. 584–85, in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 28 January 2016. A more detailed examination of manysidedness, its origin, contexts, and related cultural anxieties, is pursued in Chapter 1 and includes further discussion of this article.

coin is through imitation; methods of mimicry include using a mirror, a realist reproduction, or a photographic image. Put down the coin and pick up a cut gem. The gem is translucent or semi-translucent; light passes through it and in direct sunlight it glitters. Light reflects and refracts in white and rainbow bursts. The most interesting feature of the gem is the *play of light* on and through it, rather than the gem's immediate surface. While a coin is best examined couched in the palm of your hand, a gem is held between fingertips to allow the maximum exposure to light. In order to see the play of white and rainbow light, you must move the gem slightly from side to side, not in a full twirling motion as with a coin, but in a gentle circular and rhythmic rocking movement.

At the outset of *Daniel Deronda*, our attention is directed either towards Gwendolen or Deronda; they are, proverbially, two sides of the same coin. And the narrative structure of the text supports a twirling, oscillating movement between them, one that is similarly interspersed with moments of fusion or overlap that complicate the duality, just as constantly alternating between two images on either side of a coin produces a series of mental links and overlaps between the images. The memory of one side of a coin is still fixed when you turn it over to see the other side. But then, to complicate the schema further, whenever the focus is on either Deronda or Gwendolen, the myriad reflections and refractions of the original image become the focus, rather than the image itself. There is not simply 'irony' in Deronda's look; the reader should remember the 'smile of irony' is a subjective observation made by Gwendolen. The sides of the coin, in effect, paradoxically metamorphose into gems; the protean, prismatic properties of each image become evident upon closer in(tro)spection. From dual objectivity erupts myriad subjectivity — a commentary upon epistemology and the ability to know, as much as it is upon the powers of sympathy and their aesthetic and moral implications.

As such, doubleness and manysidedness can each be fluid and, taken together, a likely interpretation is a warning against confidence in definitive

knowledge and a movement towards resting in the unknown and indistinct. *Daniel Deronda* has long been recognized as a principal example of Eliot's experimentation with the nature of sympathy.[3] The intention of this thesis, however, is not to argue for the centrality of sympathy in the selected texts. Rather, through three case studies of very different women writers — George Eliot (1819–1880), Vernon Lee (1856–1935), and Edna Lyall (1857–1903) — I more specifically examine a shared aspect of their experimentation with sympathy: their common embrace of manysidedness in their constructions of male figures of sympathy and the ways in which these male protagonists feature as the surrogates or doubles of each female author. Eliot, for example, opens *Daniel Deronda* from within Deronda's consciousness.

The thesis also traces each writer's intellectual sympathetic shadowing of a male thinker. Hence, Eliot is paired with the scholar of comparative religion, Max Müller (1823–1900); Lee is analyzed in relation to the aestheticism of her mentor and friend Walter Pater (1839–1894); and Lyall is explored through her sympathetic response to the plight and suffering of the notorious freethinker Charles Bradlaugh (1833–1891).[4] This project itself, then, in its way mimics

[3] See, for example, David Marshall, *The Figure of Theater: Shaftesbury, Defoe, Adam Smith, and George Eliot* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), pp. 193–240; Lisbeth During, 'The Concept of Dread: Sympathy and Ethics in "Daniel Deronda"', in: Jane Adamson, Richard Freadman and David Parker, eds., *Renegotiating Ethics in Literature, Philosophy, and Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 65–83; Audrey Jaffe, *Scenes of Sympathy: Identity and Representation in Victorian Fiction* (Ithaca, NY; London: Cornell University Press, 2000), pp. 121–57; Leona Toker, 'Vocation and Sympathy in "Daniel Deronda": The Self and the Larger Whole', *Victorian Literature and Culture* 32:2 (2004), 565–74, in *JSTOR*. Accessed 5 April 2013. David Marshall argues 'that Eliot's concern with the [...] theatrical dynamics of sympathy, acts as a major organizing principle in *Daniel Deronda*'. Marshall, p. 196. Audrey Jaffe argues, 'Deronda provides a model of selective sympathy that, Eliot wished, would make it possible for her readers to sympathize with the Jews'. Jaffe, *Scenes of Sympathy: Identity and Representation in Victorian Fiction*, p. 133.

[4] Given Eliot's personal relationship with Herbert Spencer (1820–1903) and his writing on sympathy and its social functions from an evolutionary perspective, pairing Eliot with Spencer might be expected. However, I choose to focus upon Eliot in relation to Max Müller due to my interest in elucidating Eliot's use of sympathy and manysidedness as *methods* as well as themes, something seen in Müller and which I discuss at length in Chapter 2. Spencer appears in this thesis marginally, but there is ample research on his relationship with Eliot. See Nancy Paxton, *George Eliot and Herbert Spencer: Feminism, Evolutionism, and the Reconstruction of Gender* (Princeton, NJ; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1991) and Lauren Cameron, 'Spencerian Evolutionary Psychology in "Daniel Deronda"', *Victorian Literature and Culture* 43:1 (2015), ⟨URL: https://doi.

its subject and takes on a many-sided character, enacting a predominant pattern of sympathy explored by each author, while also interrogating the dynamic between doubleness and manysidedness that is so ensconced in each case study. In doing so, it draws together the fiction of three women with very various backgrounds, intellectual pursuits, and writing styles. It directs attention to the appropriateness of exploring sympathy through fiction, which — whether written under a philosophical, metaphysical, or political imperative — asks readers to inhabit and feel for other minds. The work of George Eliot, patently the best-known figure of this project, is thus brought into relation with that of Vernon Lee, a self-declared aesthete and pioneer in late-century psychological aesthetics, and both are linked with the marginal character of Edna Lyall, popular novelist qua political activist. All three women are engaged in a similar 'sympathetic' project, but I do not argue for a dominant or single line of influence from one to the others. They can therefore be regarded as case studies.

I would like to further identify Eliot with 'thinking', Lee with motion, or 'touching', and Lyall with 'feeling', three different but equally valid interpretations of sympathetic exchange. This is not because each author exclusively exhibits one version of sympathy (they each perform all three to some degree), but this identification signals each author's predominant method in experimenting with sympathy. Eliot engages with others both via feeling and thinking, and her personal engagement with places, objects, and art (which extends to her characters' engagements with places, objects, and art) demonstrates the haptic dimension of her work as well. However, in terms of sympathy, she is primarily interested in 'thinking' through its epistemological and ethical implications; the research underpinning her texts is heavy philosophically and scientifically.

Similarly, Lee is as vibrant and striking in her knowledge-base as Eliot,

org/10.1017/S1060150314000345⟩, 63–81. Accessed 4 August 2017, for thorough examinations of the reciprocal influence between Spencer and Eliot. See also Mary Beth Tegan, 'Strange Sympathies: George Eliot and the Literary Science of Sensation', *Women's Writing* 20:2 (2013), ⟨URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09699082.2013.773771⟩, 168–85. Accessed 17 September 2017, for a discussion of the 'science of sensation' and Spencerian definitions of sympathy in Eliot's fiction.

but in terms of methodology and as an aesthete, she is preoccupied with moving through landscapes and around objects, experimenting with how places, objects, and art reverberate through or 'touch' one; what tactile effect do moments of exchange with the material world have upon an individual's physiology and psychology? Lyall's fiction is the least cerebral of the three oeuvres. Her research into current events, efforts to sit in on Parliamentary proceedings, reading of Blue Book records, and insistence upon tracking down key players and communicating with them demonstrates a robust and thorough method of enquiry, but she is chiefly interested in sympathetically engaging her readers through 'feeling'. She often skips over philosophic or religious points of difference between characters (or characters and readers) to kindle feeling for the marginalized figures she makes central to her fiction. In so doing, she aims to effect her readers' active involvement in social and political disputes. All three women, despite their differences, are interested in being 'practical' with their fiction, trying to bring their writing to bear upon social and cultural realities. Thus complexly (dis)aligned, they are the same, but different.

As mentioned, the unspoken yet imposing and underlying force of the opening of *Daniel Deronda* — sympathy — is a tricky and inherently ambiguous concept, and it was one that commanded a great deal of interest and apprehension in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. Definitions of sympathy were often sweeping generalizations, and ones that, moreover, redefined the term in ways that conflicted with past understandings. Leslie Stephen (1832–1904), in *The Science of Ethics* (1882), firmly positioned sympathy as a foundation of rationality rather than emotion or sentiment; 'knowledge implies sympathy' and 'Sympathy and reason have [...] an identical factor — each implies the other. I cannot reason about another man except in so far as I can rehearse his motives; [...] The two processes are mutually involved'.[5] Others were more hesitant to delineate the contours of sympathy and offered only admittances of bewilderment. Eliot's partner, G.H.

[5]Leslie Stephen, *The Science of Ethics* (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1882), pp. 231, 230.

Lewes (1817–1878), wrote in 1873: 'Sympathy is one of the great psychological mysteries; as a psychologist I am bound to explain it, but can't'.[6]

Sympathy, which can be examined as an aesthetic, moral, epistemological, psychological, or even economic concept, is perhaps so difficult to grasp because it is more of a process than an effect or result. It deals in boundaries, between self and the external world, and fills the gaps and spaces between individuals or individuals and objects. It can transform into its opposite, being either moral or immoral, informative or secretive, kind or vicious, barrier or gateway. Its movement is both inward-outward, and outward-inward as individuals engage with surrounding persons and things. Thomas McCarthy, who sets out to navigate the intricacies of sympathy by framing eighteenth- and nineteenth-century sympathy discourses within twentieth-century models of understanding, foregrounds the necessarily 'complex and elusive nature' of sympathy as a concept that has found an honoured place among so many subjects and in the works of philosophers, poets, and novelists alike.[7] He admits that even today no definitive explanation of sympathy or its twentieth-century counterpart, empathy, has been reached.[8]

In the mid-to-late nineteenth century, demystifying the processes of sympathy grew in significance as studies in aesthetics, psychology, anthropology, and religion developed. This thesis, through its focus on manifestations of sympathy in women's fiction at this time, magnifies the deeply embedded concern that dogged the steps of Britain's advancing research and cataloguing of different races, cultures, and religions. Concern for responses to difference and the handling of new vistas of knowledge branches across the writing of these three women writers, with each bringing a distinctive dimension of the problem of sympathy to the fore. I turn to the peculiarly intractable instances of each author trying to understand sympathy, and my analyses look towards the places where the

[6]George Eliot, *The George Eliot Letters,* 9 vols, edited by Gordon S. Haight (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1978), V, p. 376 (19 February 1873).
[7]Thomas McCarthy, *Relationships of Sympathy: The Writer and the Reader in British Romanticism* (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 1997), p. 3.
[8]For McCarthy's reflections upon the uses and differences of 'sympathy' and 'empathy' see pp. 4–8.

mediatory masculine figure somehow stands in-between perspectives, interceding in the relationship between similarity and difference. I am principally interested in how, as a result of the growth of the science of religion in this period and despite its professed ambitions, racial and religious difference is ultimately portrayed as very difficult to surmount. I have found that women who chose to explore sympathy through the use of a male hero are particularly capable of recognizing the inherent difficulties of inhabiting the minds of others. There is necessarily an interesting *gap* between a female author and a male protagonist, and for a thesis concerned with in-between spaces, obstacles, and the challenges of difference, this has proven to be a constructive way to delimit the focus of my research. Moreover, the deeper investigations into sympathy's role in situations of religious difference that these women enact contrast strongly with glib or over-confident imperial fantasies of bridging difference, performed in works like H. Rider Haggard's (1856–1925) adventure novel set in Africa, *King Solomon's Mines* (1885).

While tracing the historical contexts of nineteenth-century sympathy and the scholarly enterprise of the science of religion forms a critical part of this thesis, this project is not a history of ideas, nor is it centered on sympathy directly. Instead, using a sympathetic methodology that demonstrates the value of literary criticism when it is not intent upon looking for weak structural points, this project reconstructs the intellectual history and writing practices of each woman writer, sympathetically entering into her interests, concerns, and investigative methods.[9] It is not problematic, then, that the works of these women did not achieve what they sought to do. *Daniel Deronda*, for example, was only really well-received by the Jewish community; Vernon Lee's work was not popular; and Edna Lyall's fiction, though popular with the lower middle class, did not produce political or social activism to the point that it prevented injustice or atrocity either at home or abroad.

While sympathy should be a way to respond to, surmount, and (hopefully)

[9]My methodological choices and their implications are discussed in detail in Chapter 1.

move beyond differences, the main problem with sympathy as a response to difference or as a solution for resolving differences is that it is, by definition, based in attention to similarity and sameness. According to the *OED*, 'sympathy' refers to 'A (real or supposed) affinity between certain things, by virtue of which they are similarly or correspondingly affected by the same influence'. Etymologically rooted in the Greek συμπαθης ('having a fellow feeling'), at its most basic level sympathy is about parallels. It is to feel 'with' or 'alongside' another. In the process of focusing on similarity, differences recede into the background and remain unacknowledged and/or misunderstood. A person different from ourselves, then, never fully retains his or her identity in our eyes because we, aided by the very process of sympathizing, blind ourselves to the differences that make up a crucial portion of who the other is.

The paradoxical fundamental of sympathy is 'that the role of the self is far more important than that of the Other' — a 'heightened Other-awareness can lead to greater insight into oneself and is intimately connected to personal identity'.[10] Yet, even while sympathy does not always successfully surmount difference, it remains a process of attempting to cross divides — between self and other, thinking and feeling, instinctive response and intentional act. Sympathy, as a process, only really occurs when there is engagement or movement between what has been constituted as internal and what has been constituted as external to the self. Ambiguity therefore reigns in the selected texts, as each author included in this study turns to sympathy in order to use it as a method for managing urgent issues of (religious) difference while simultaneously testing its strengths, weaknesses, and limitations. Rae Greiner argues, ' "thinking of me thinking of you," and vice versa, is what sympathy is all about'.[11] And as an oscillating movement between self and other occurs, sympathy takes on different shapes; visually, spinning a coin metamorphoses what is a disc into a sphere.

[10] McCarthy, *Relationships of Sympathy*, p. 14.

[11] Rae Greiner, *Sympathetic Realism in Nineteenth-Century British Fiction* (Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 2012), p. 1.

This inherent *motion* of sympathy is also featured in the opening chapter of *Daniel Deronda* and further links the seemingly paradoxical models of doubleness and manysidedness. Although couched in dual language — 'beautiful or not beautiful?' — Deronda's preoccupation with the sight of Gwendolen implies energy and movement: 'what was the secret of form or expression which gave the *dynamic* quality to her glance?' (*DD* 3, emphasis added). A powerfully subjective, fluctuating aspect of Gwendolen's appearance becomes increasingly evident as the reader follows Gwendolen moving among the crowded room at Leubronn. She is variously viewed and remarked upon by spectators, each with a different opinion to share, and one remarks that she possesses a 'Lamia beauty', implying transmutation and metamorphosis — something more fluid and pervasive than mere imitation. The room she moves through is the same as the gambling room; in Chapter 1 the 'public salon' doubles as (or oscillates between) gambling room and socializing space: 'In the evening the same room [...] was brilliant with gas and with the costumes of many ladies who floated their trains along it or were seated on the ottomans' (*DD* 7).

The early reference to Gwendolen's 'Lamia beauty' and the later description of 'the iridescence of her character — the play of various, nay, contrary tendencies' further juxtapose duality with multiplicity and, perhaps, feature metamorphosis as the linchpin of both (*DD* 36). The myth of the lamia is constructed upon the sequential duality of serpent and woman, but Keats's poem 'Lamia' (1820) — to which Eliot alludes — describes the Lamia in terms of a 'rainbow-sided' medley. Not merely serpent or woman, the Lamia is a multicoloured hybrid — an imprecise, interlacing 'gordian shape' with features of the serpent, woman, zebra, pard, and peacock.[12] Her very breathing changes her appearance, 'Dissolv[ing] [...] or interwreath[ing] / [...] lustres with the gloomier tapestries'.[13] The explicit connection between Gwendolen and the vibrant, melancholic serpent-woman of

[12] John Keats, *Keats*, edited by Richard Wilbur, Ninth edition (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1971), I. 47.
[13] Keats, *Keats*, I. 52–53.

Keats's poem layers a vision of the coiling, 'palpitating' and 'rainbow-sided' snake over Gwendolen's Nereid aspect and appearance in sea-green *habillée*.[14] She is as glittering and iridescent as the sea, a reflective surface with sides and surfaces in constant flux. As with Keats's Lamia, who 'seem'd, at once, some penanced lady elf, / [...] or the demon's self', the question of Gwendolen's moral disposition — was the evil or good genius predominant? — is never satisfactorily answered.[15] Instead of falling to one side or the other, over the course of the novel Gwendolen serially fills the roles of queen and child, master and slave, colonizer and colonized, victimizer and victim. Like Keats's Lamia, she is many-hued.

Keats's poem poses a problem of sympathy — the reader oscillates throughout the narrative between sympathizing with Lamia (as Hermes does when he stumbles across her) and suspecting her. The poem, in its way, enacts the internal conflict Gwendolen's presence has sparked in Deronda. In each case the viewer is confounded by contradictions and ambiguity. Found coiled 'Bright, and cirque-couchant', Keats's Lamia conjures the image of an *ouroboros*, the ancient serpent that continually (and paradoxically) devours its own tail.[16] This puzzling symbol of eternity, taken together both with the root of the word lamia — *lamos*, meaning abyss — and the word 'palpitating', seems to indicate something grotesque and unnatural. 'Palpitating' suggests a living, pulsing creature, but because of the Lamia's tears and evident sadness it also inclines one to think of a throbbing, unrelieved pain. And yet, the Lamia of Keats's poem is beautiful; she both repulses and attracts the reader, seeming to be both everything and nothing, dynamic and static, full of life and breath and pulse, but also a void, better to shun.

Possibly, George Eliot makes this early allusion to Keats in an attempt to lead readers towards rest in the ambiguity and contradictions that she has unearthed throughout a writing career of ascertaining the nature and processes of sympathy. She seems to call upon Keats's practice of negative capability, 'being

[14]Keats, *Keats*, I. 45, 54.
[15]Keats, *Keats*, I. 55–56.
[16]Keats, *Keats*, I. 46.

in uncertainties, Mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact & reason'.[17] By comparing Gwendolen, the object of Deronda's contemplation, with Keats's Lamia, Eliot identifies the problematic sympathetic encounter between Deronda and Gwendolen as an intricate knot of Gordian proportions — already intertwined in the opening are the aesthetic, moral, epistemological and economic implications of sympathetic exchanges. Perhaps for this reason Eliot's suggested resolution to the problem of sympathy is 'the closer fellowship that makes sympathy practical — exchanging that bird's eye reasonableness which soars to avoid preference and loses all sense of quality, for the generous reasonableness of drawing shoulder to shoulder with men of like inheritance' — she proverbially 'cuts' the knot through a reduction of sympathy to the practical (*DD* 693).

Shaping a project that foregrounds ambiguity so strongly has been a challenge. While manysidedness has crept into the methodology of the thesis in surprisingly productive ways, the unreliably diffuse nature of sympathy has also posed problems. In the process of unearthing patterns, I have had difficulty arranging a narrative that clearly illuminates them. I have had to carefully curtail the connections and associations that *I* have seen and refocus again and again upon the associations that each author makes. My initial drafts have routinely had a disoriented, even if intriguing, quality as I have — at times unconsciously — mimicked the spatial exchanges and outward movements of sympathy.

Sympathy has also made for an ambitiously interdisciplinary topic — one that revels in the links and overlaps between subjects rather than clearly defined boundaries. The result, often, has been not knowing what to exclude or how to justify specific omissions when sympathy itself calls for free (subjective) associations and room for expansion. A kind of paralysis — not unlike that which afflicts Deronda — easily sets in when there is no obvious set of guidelines. The

[17] John Keats, *Selected Letters of John Keats*, edited by Grant F. Scott (Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press, 2005), p. 60. Sally Shuttleworth interprets Eliot's opening comparison between Science and Poetry as a message that 'challenges inductive certitude' and makes the assertion, 'the comfort of certainty must be exchanged for an openness to the unknown'. See Sally Shuttleworth, *George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Science: the Make-Believe of a Beginning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 176.

old adage ‘Jack of all trades, master of none’ suddenly rings sinister. In many ways, I have had to relinquish control and accept that I cannot catch everything, a process that has transformed this project into a lesson in self-limitation, how to privilege other-perspectives, and that has ultimately led to the paradoxical encasement of negative capability in the form of a thesis.

1 Interpreting *Vielseitigkeit* & Sympathy in the Science of Religion: 'Surface' Readings

> [T]here is a special complaint, in our own time, that the culture of the admirable group of intellectual virtues which may be comprehended in the name of tolerance, or impartiality, or sympathy, is being allowed to drain off the sources of the no less admirable virtue of conviction or earnestness. What men gain in manysidedness, it is said, they are losing in vigour.[1]

The 1866 article from the *Saturday Review* on 'Intellectual Vigour' is one of many signs of distrust of the modern 'intellectual virtue' manysidedness. Associated both with 'the doctrine that there must be some germ of truth in everything that can be said or thought' and with 'a too fastidious refinement' of taste, the effects of manysidedness were considered 'paralys[ing]' and too overwhelming for 'stern' and 'feeble' characters alike.[2] The equation between manysidedness

[1] 'Intellectual Vigour', p. 584. I was unable to identify the author of this article via periodical database searches or print reference texts. The *Saturday Review* was known for the anonymity of its contributors and was edited by John Douglas Cook (1808?–1868) from 1855 until 1868. Regular long-standing contributors include George Stovin Venables (1810–1888), Alexander Hope (1820–1887), Mark Pattison (1813–1884), James Cotter Morison (1832–1888), Francis Cunningham (1820–1875), and William Scott (1813–1872) (*ODNB*). John Morley (1838–1923) was also a contributor between 1863 and 1867 (*ODNB*). See M.M. Bevington, *The Saturday Review, 1855–1868: Representative Educated Opinion in Victorian England* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941) and K. Powell, *British Literary Magazines,* 4 vols, edited by Alvin Sullivan (New York; London: Greenwood, 1984), III, pp. 379–83 for more on the history of this periodical, representative of moderate conservatism.

[2] 'Intellectual Vigour', pp. 584, 585.

and a 'culture' of sympathy, impartiality, and tolerance was common, but these comparisons did little to allay anxiety as each of these qualities similarly implied mental 'vacillations' and 'the flux and reflux' of thought. The effect according to this writer is almost unnatural: 'in the most highly-trained minds, opinion is like some abnormal pendulum perpetually oscillating to precisely the same distances on either side of the line'.[3] The fear is that ambivalence and indecision necessarily reign in a society where manysidedness is too prized. This writer complains that persons who exhibit manysidedness in their writing produce work with 'no backbone in it; leaving the order of vertebrates, it has sunk down to lower classes, among mere molluscs and jelly-fish and other flabby organizations'. Instead, 'vigour' is the virtue 'the least to be dispensed with of all those virtues of understanding' — 'vigorous habits of thought' are preferable to the many-sided pursuit 'either of some ideal goddess of truth or of a finicking tastefulness', both of which 'impair the balance of character in a most fatal way'.[4]

This article not only indicates that manysidedness was commonly associated with sympathy or a position of impartiality, but also that related anxieties hinged on fears of inhibiting (social) progress. In part these anxieties are made manifest in what was a typical gendering of the term. Manysidedness was not 'robust' or vigorous; rather it accompanied 'unfruitful timidity', 'flabby' writing, and 'weak' conduct.[5] As David Wayne Thomas notes, 'To the extent that many-sidedness saps vigor, [...] many-sidedness stands opposed to manliness'.[6] The word manysidedness entered English parlance via German sources praising the *Vielseitigkeit* of the mind of Goethe.[7] The *OED* lists its first use by John

[3] 'Intellectual Vigour', pp. 584–85.
[4] 'Intellectual Vigour', p. 585.
[5] 'Intellectual Vigour', p. 585.
[6] David Wayne Thomas, *Cultivating Victorians: Liberal Culture and the Aesthetic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), p. 27.
[7] Notably, 'it was Germany, with its pioneering methods in philosophy, history, and aesthetics, which contributed most to English thinking in the later nineteenth century'. Rosemary Ashton, *The German Idea: Four English Writers and the Reception of German Thought, 1800–1860* (London: Libris, 1994), p. 2. Ashton focuses on the four most influential disseminators of German ideas in Britain in the nineteenth century — Coleridge, Carlyle, G.H. Lewes, and George Eliot.

Strang in 1831: 'There is one peculiarity about the writing of Go[e]the, which the Germans are ever talking about, and that is what they call here [in Germany] the *Vielseitigkeit*, or *many-sidedness* of his mind'. Another source stems from Johann Peter Eckermann, a devoted disciple and the secretary of Goethe whose *Gespräche mit Goethe* (1836) was partially translated into English as early as 1838 and which significantly contributed to Goethe's posthumous rise in popularity in Britain. Eckermann's exuberance for Goethe is evident in his Preface: 'We may, with propriety, compare this extraordinary mind and man to a many-sided diamond [*vielseitigen Diamanten*], which in each direction shines with a different hue'.[8]

Although described here in aesthetic terms, Goethe's manysidedness can be tied to the Goethean emphasis upon action that Thomas Carlyle underlined. Carlyle's publications forged major inroads for Goethe's writing into England; he translated *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* in 1824, gleaned the phrase 'Do the duty that lies nearest thee' from him, 'and sang Goethe's praises throughout *Sartor Resartus*'.[9] Initially known as a signifier of 'that Goethean ideal of character' and 'German humanist ideal' of self-cultivation, by mid-century manysidedness had partially broken away from its Goethean origin and, Carlyle's influence notwithstanding, advanced in the context of Victorian liberalism and other British political and cultural debates.[10] Use of the term in the periodical press increased sharply beginning in the 1860s and 1870s.[11] It was commonplace by century's end to praise an intellectual's 'manysidedness' — articles on the lives and work of individuals from Thomas Hood to Charles Kingsley and George Sand to Sir Syed

[8] Johann Peter Eckermann, *Gespräche mit Goethe*, edited by John Oxenford (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1850), p. 3.

[9] Rosemary Ashton, *142 Strand: A Radical Address in Victorian London* (London: Vintage, 2008), p. 66.

[10] Sebastian Lecourt, '"To Surrender Himself, in Perfectly Liberal Inquiry": Walter Pater, Many-Sidedness, and the Conversion Novel', *Victorian Studies* 53:2 (2011), 231–53, in *Project Muse*. Accessed 18 July 2014. See also Thomas, *Cultivating Victorians*, for analysis of manysidedness in the context of Victorian liberalism, particularly pp. 3–48.

[11] A search for (many*sidedness) in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)* yields 1,466 results. The breakdown by decade is as follows: 1830–39, 18; 1840–49, 22; 1850–59, 62; 1860–69, 196; 1870–79, 268; 1880–89, 248; 1890–99, 274; 1900–09, 244; 1910–19, 82; 1920–29, 32; 1930–39, 20.

Ahmad Khan all commend their 'manysidedness'.[12]

While widely questioned by some, manysidedness was regarded by Victorian thinkers in other quarters as ultimately beneficial both socially and individually. In *On Liberty* (1859) John Stuart Mill uses manysidedness to illustrate the value of individual autonomy. Writing that 'in the human mind, one-sidedness has always been the rule, and many-sidedness the exception', he argues that we must offset this rule by seeking truth in all quarters: 'every opinion which embodies somewhat of the portion of truth which the common opinion omits, ought to be considered precious'.[13] Far from considering manysidedness weak, Mill maintains that 'freedom, and a variety of situations' lead to 'individual vigour and manifold diversity' and he goes so far as to attribute European strength to 'its progressive and many-sided development'.[14]

Matthew Arnold took up a banner of manysidedness in the name of culture, arguing in *Culture and Anarchy* (1867–68) that 'The real *unum necessarium* for us is to come to our best at all points' and Walter Pater's vision of manysidedness was an aesthetic call to reconcile varying, even contending, points of view.[15] Holding Renaissance scholars in high esteem, Pater praised their 'many-sided type of intellectual culture' in its ability to 'reconcile forms of sentiment which at first sight seem incompatible'.[16] Although the 'contemplative inaction' of Pater's vision was criticized as much as Matthew Arnold's inactive position of 'disinterestedness', he was far from seeing manysidedness as flaccid or weak. In his estimation manysidedness was a process of self-refinement equated with energy and vitality —

[12] See 'The Writings of Thomas Hood', *The Leisure Hour: a family journal of instruction and recreation* 807 (1867), 376–80 (p. 378); 'George Sand', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 121:735 (1877), 70–93 (p. 71); 'Charles Kingsley', *The Theological Review: a journal of religious thought and life* 14:57 (1877), 237–52 (p. 241); and Theodore Morison, 'A Descendent of the Prophet', *The National Review* 31:184 (1898), 578–86 (p. 585), in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 2 August 2017.

[13] John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (London: John W. Parker and Son, 1859), pp. 83, 84.

[14] Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 103. Mill quotes from Wilhelm Von Humboldt's work *The Sphere and Duties of Government* (1854).

[15] Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1869), p. 175. <https://archive.org/details/cultureandanarc00arnogoog>. Accessed 19 February 2018.

[16] Walter Pater, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*, edited by Adam Phillips (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 20.

'To burn always with this hard, gemlike flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life'.[17]

These reflections point to the doubleness implicit in the reception of the term manysidedness. It could signal either the strength or weakness of intellectual character, the presence or absence of autonomy, efficiency or fruitlessness, even selflessness or solipsism. It had ethical, intellectual, and aesthetic connotations. Manysidedness, as a purely epistemological method to some and an intellectual virtue of moral value according to others, became a conduit for thinking about sympathy in the mid-to-late nineteenth century via its close association with positions of tolerance and impartiality. To clarify, manysidedness signaled a kind of *many-mindedness*, a useful concept in terms of thinking about sympathy as a state of moving between minds and points of view. The convoluted reception and uses of the term manysidedness parallel mid-to-late nineteenth-century conceptions of sympathy, which also straddled the line between ethics and epistemology.

In a period of increased access to — or surface contact with — different cultures through an amplified flow of information into periodicals, public lectures, and handbooks on the variety of practices, beliefs, habits, and languages around the globe, there were many questions surrounding the problem of how to think about others, how to acknowledge differences when met with, and how to connect ways of thinking about others with ways of feeling and acting towards others. Models of manysidedness, like those of Mill, Arnold, and Pater, were problematic instruments to address this cross-cultural encounter in their emphasis on the individual (as well as inaction). David Wayne Thomas's research shows how embedded the idea of manysidedness became in the context of Victorian liberalism and mid-century ideals of self-cultivation:

> [F]igures such as Matthew Arnold, J. S. Mill, Charles Dickens, and George Eliot brought new prominence to a liberal vision of "many-sidedness," a temperamental and intellectual attainment involving practices of

[17] Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. 152. See Lecourt, 'Walter Pater, Many-Sidedness, and the Conversion Novel', 231–53 for a discussion of Pater's expression of manysidedness in his philosophical novel *Marius the Epicurean* (1885).

> self-criticism, open-mindedness, and earnest conduct.[18]

Manysidedness, as it 'gained special prominence in political and cultural debates of the 1860s', was less and less a model for thinking of others, and increasingly a model for honing the individual's intellectual pursuits and autonomy of the self.[19] Whether self-cultivation increased levels of tolerance and fostered altruistic action or not was debatable, and where this emphasis left the relationship between self and other was a matter of concern for many scholars and authors, particularly those with an eye to sympathy more specifically. Often, the aesthetic treatment of sympathy in prose fiction by the women writers discussed in this study fashions manysidedness in practical and beneficial ways for readers; much of this thesis is concerned with how these writers use sympathy to articulate a message of manysidedness.

A sympathetic turn

Sympathy, in contrast to manysidedness, was not an imported concept — its value and interest in British thought was well-established from the early eighteenth century, and it had been further advanced in aesthetic theory when attached to Romanticism's emphasis upon the poet, the powers of the imagination, and the rising tide of critical interest in Shakespeare.[20] David Hume (1711–1776) and Adam Smith (1723–1790) loom large in any British history of sympathy with Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature* (1739) positioning sympathy as the necessary constituent of all moral action, while in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) Smith expanded this interpretation by transforming sympathy into a reflective process: 'Smith demonstrated that sympathy represents more than simply feeling; it is a critical and aesthetic doctrine'.[21] Where Humean sympathy is more or less automatic, with feeling exhibiting an invasive quality of spreading between individuals like a contagion, Smithean sympathy involves intellectual engagement

[18] Thomas, *Cultivating Victorians*, p. x.
[19] Thomas, *Cultivating Victorians*, p. x.
[20] See McCarthy, 'Introduction', *Relationships of Sympathy*, pp. 1–22.
[21] McCarthy, *Relationships of Sympathy*, p. 2.

and response more akin to 'a highly creative process'; hence, in the wake of Hume's and Smith's publications, sympathy entered into debates not only on morality but also on the nature of the imagination, questions of individual taste, aesthetics, and epistemology.[22] From the time that Hume and Smith fixed it as a point of philosophic debate, sympathy has reigned in British discussions of the benefits and pitfalls of reading fiction, disagreements made more complex by sympathy's role as both subject matter and apparatus of literature. Debate has persisted despite Hume and Smith's general agreement that sympathy is ultimately beneficial on a social level: 'Smith believed our sympathy made us good citizens, and Hume insisted that our sympathy tempered our self-interest'.[23]

From the eighteenth century's largely negative reception of reading novels to the nineteenth-century's Evangelical distrust of fiction and censorship of texts made available by circulating libraries such as Mr. Mudie's, sympathy has consistently featured as a centrally problematic aspect of reading fiction. In the 1860s, 'Sensation fiction [...] freshened the sense that novel reading could be dangerous and corrupting'.[24] Contemporary critics of Victorian novels were well-aware of the sometimes troubling 'affective mechanics' of a text.[25] It was only a mid-Victorian shift towards treating the novel as wholesome, effective, and reformative that began to alter otherwise negative opinions of fiction and its effects on an ever-widening literate public. Suzanne Keen attributes this mid-Victorian 'reinvention of the novel as a form that might do something positive in the world by swaying readers' minds rather than activating their passions' to mid-century uses of fiction 'to diagnose the condition of England' with an eye to reform.[26]

[22] For example, see *An Essay on Genius* (1774) by Alexander Gerard.

[23] Suzanne Keen, *Empathy and the Novel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 44.

[24] Keen, *Empathy and the Novel*, p. 38.

[25] Nicholas Dames, *The Physiology of the Novel: Reading, Neural Science, and the Form of Victorian Fiction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 56. Rachel Ablow, *The Feeling of Reading: Affective Experience and Victorian Literature*, edited by Rachel Ablow (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2010) is also a useful resource.

[26] See Keen, *Empathy and the Novel*, pp. 37–64 for her full discussion of the pros and cons of sympathy in the consumption of fiction. See also McCarthy, *Relationships of Sympathy*, pp. 33–44 for an overview of sympathy treated as a *value* by English Romantic readers.

As it did then, disagreement and uncertainty continue to cloud even our most recent inspections of sympathy. In a wide-ranging social psychology study, *Empathy and Its Development* (1987), sympathy and empathy are examined as 'slippery concept[s] [...] provok[ing] considerable speculation, excitement, and confusion'.[27] By extension, proffered definitions conflict in literary studies. Thomas McCarthy calls sympathy an 'almost inexplicable process' of which its 'subtle, multiplex, even diffuse, nature [...] is its most characteristic feature', while Sophie Ratcliffe acknowledges 'the vagueness that surrounds the term' and the challenging task of understanding how it sits in relation to cognates such as 'empathy', 'pity', and 'compassion'.[28] Suzanne Keen refers to sympathy's close relation to 'empathy' as 'a term bedeviled by conflicting definitions' and Audrey Jaffe 'define[s] sympathy as broadly as possible' as 'an investment in or exchange with others'.[29] For Rae Greiner sympathy is 'a form of thinking geared toward others', whereas Kirsty Martin relies on 'a form of sympathy which is driven by a determination to be true to what it is to feel'.[30] In fact, Martin's readings of sympathy in the works of Vernon Lee, Virginia Woolf, and D.H. Lawrence

[27] Nancy Eisenberg and Janet Strayer, *Empathy and Its Development*, edited by Nancy Eisenberg and Janet Strayer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 5. The term 'empathy' was coined in 1909 in the context of psychological aesthetics from the German *Einfühlung*. It necessarily enters into today's literary and scientific discussions of sympathy as it has largely replaced the term 'sympathy' in the parlance of moral or epistemological debates and especially cognitive studies. The etymology and intellectual history of the word 'empathy' is entwined with that of sympathy and will be addressed in more detail in the following chapters as becomes relevant to the authors under discussion. Due to the prevalence of 'sympathy' throughout the nineteenth century, I rely predominantly upon this term and its associations and connotations during the lives of the authors discussed. Carolyn Burdett has published several articles and delivered papers on this topic over the last five years as part of her current book project *Coining Empathy: Psychology, Aesthetics, Ethics, 1870–1920*. Her scholarship is cited throughout this thesis. Other useful resources include: Gustav Jahoda, 'Theodor Lipps and the Shift from "Sympathy" to "Empathy"', *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 41:2 (2005), 151–63, in *Wiley Online Library*. Accessed 24 September 2017; Samuel Moyn, 'Empathy in History, Empathizing with Humanity', *History and Theory* 45:3 (2006), 397–415, in *Wiley Online Library*. Accessed 30 September 2017; and Rae Greiner, 'Thinking of Me Thinking of You: Sympathy versus Empathy in the Realist Novel', *Victorian Studies* 53:3 (2011), 417–26, in *JSTOR*. Accessed 27 February 2015.

[28] McCarthy, *Relationships of Sympathy*, pp. 2, 4; Sophie Ratcliffe, *On Sympathy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 8.

[29] Keen, *Empathy and the Novel*, p. xxv; Jaffe, *Scenes of Sympathy*, p. 9.

[30] Greiner, *Sympathetic Realism*, p. 1; Kirsty Martin, *Modernism and the Rhythms of Sympathy: Vernon Lee, Virginia Woolf, D.H. Lawrence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 1.

point to sympathy as 'morally troubling [...] something in which concern for the individual is not always paramount' and beneath which lies the fear that emotion is innately selfish — a standpoint that contests Martha Nussbaum's or Brigid Lowe's perspectives on sympathy as individually and socially ameliorative.[31] Nussbaum curtails the power of sympathy somewhat in that she does not register movement between empathetic response and social or political action as immediate or automatic: 'sympathy inspired by literary imagining does not immediately effect political change'.[32] Yet, Nussbaum has argued strongly and consistently on behalf of the beneficial impact of fiction to train and enhance readers' empathetic responses, making them better world citizens in proffering an ability to discern and balance the need for both community and privacy:

> Habits of empathy and conjecture conduce to a certain type of citizenship and a certain form of community: one that cultivates a certain kind of responsiveness to another's needs, and understands the way circumstances shape those needs, while respecting separateness and privacy.[33]

Likewise, Brigid Lowe argues, 'Sympathy may offer the key to both our hopes for and our understanding of social possibility. Sympathy, [...] is never just a mode of understanding; it is, by definition, a spur to action'.[34] Lowe derives from George Eliot the opinion that 'sympathy was not just another virtue [...] not one moral attitude among others' but was 'the necessary condition of all morality, a fundamental mode of understanding'.[35]

This is a sample of the voices among literary critics who have recently engaged with understanding sympathy and its twentieth-century cousin empathy. Express interest in literary studies of Victorian conceptions of sympathy and how it gave rise to the term 'empathy' has mounted in the past two decades, and particularly in the last ten years. In 2007, Jaffe, whose work *Scenes of*

[31] Martin, *Modernism and the Rhythms of Sympathy*, p. 29.
[32] Martha Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education* (Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press, 1997), p. 97.
[33] Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity*, p. 90.
[34] Brigid Lowe, *Victorian Fiction and the Insights of Sympathy: An Alternative to the Hermeneutics of Suspicion* (London: Anthem, 2007), p. 17.
[35] Lowe, *Victorian Fiction and the Insights of Sympathy*, p. 112.

Sympathy (2000) is an early marker of this interest, noted its slow but continued escalation.[36] In the same year, Lowe recognized the relatively scant attention a specifically Victorian sympathy had received up until this point, despite how widely sympathy has been 'considered in relation to eighteenth-century fiction'.[37] But since 2007 there has been steadily rising interest in nineteenth-century, and specifically 'Victorian', sympathy both within and beyond the vale of literature studies.[38] This has been commensurate with a rise in cognitive and neurological studies of empathy.[39]

Many of the recent forays into nineteenth-century sympathy choose either a Humean or Smithean concept as precedent. Kirsty Martin's exposition of Victorian and Modernist 'rhythms of sympathy' draws heavily from Hume, while

[36] In her review of Rachel Ablow's *The Marriage of Minds* (2007), Audrey Jaffe notes the recent surge of interest in nineteenth-century sympathy that 'for the most part [has] suggest[ed] the term's relevance to key Victorian concerns such as class and race'. See Audrey Jaffe, 'Novels and Wives', *Nineteenth-Century Gender Studies* 4:3 (2008), ⟨URL: http://www.ncgsjournal.com/issue43/jaffe.htm⟩, Accessed 31 August 2013.

[37] Lowe, *Victorian Fiction and the Insights of Sympathy*, p. 9.

[38] See Ratcliffe, *On Sympathy*; Thomas Dixon, *The Invention of Altruism: Making Moral Meanings in Victorian Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Ablow; Rebecca N. Mitchell, *Victorian Lessons in Empathy and Difference* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 2011); Carolyn Burdett, 'Is Empathy the End of Sentimentality?', *Journal of Victorian Culture* 16:2 (2011), ⟨URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13555502.2011.589684⟩, 259–74. Accessed 12 February 2016; Greiner, *Sympathetic Realism in Nineteenth-Century British Fiction*; Martin.

[39] See Roman Krznaric, *Empathy: Why It Matters, and How to Get It* (London: Rider Books, 2014) for a comprehensive look at recent developments in empathy research in social psychology, cognitive neurosciences, childhood development, anthropology, journalism, literary studies, history, environmental sciences, and economics, including: Candace Clark, *Misery and Company: Sympathy in Everyday Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997); Martin Hoffman, *Empathy and Moral Development: Implications for Caring and Justice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Mary Gordon, *Roots of Empathy: Changing the World Child by Child* (Toronto: Thomas Allen, 2002); Jill Bennett, *Empathic Vision: Affect, Trauma, and Contemporary Art* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005); Moyn, 'Empathy in History, Empathizing with Humanity', 397–415; Elisabeth Eide, '"Being the Other" – or Tourist in her Reality? Reporters' and Writers' Attempts at Cross-Identification', *Social Identities* 13:1 (2007), 3–17; Michael Slote, *The Ethics of Care and Empathy* (London: Routledge, 2007); David Freedberg and Vittorio Gallese, 'Motion, Emotion and Empathy in Esthetic Experience', *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 11:5 (2007), 197–203; Dev Patnaik, *Wired to Care: How Companies Prosper When They Create Widespread Empathy* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: FT Press, 2009); Jeremy Rifkin, *The Empathic Civilization: The Race to Global Consciousness in a World in Crisis* (Cambridge: Polity, 2010); Jesse Prinz, 'Is Empathy Necessary for Morality?', in: Peter Goldie and Amy Coplan, eds., *Empathy: Philosophical and Psychological Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 211–29; and Gary Olson, *Empathy Imperiled: Capitalism, Culture and the Brain* (New York: Springer, 2013).

Audrey Jaffe considers Smithean sympathy paradigmatic of the sympathy enacted in Victorian texts. Lowe views Victorian realism as resistant to Smith's revisions of Humean sympathy, even as Rae Greiner's analysis of nineteenth-century British realism draws out an exhaustive similitude between Smithean sympathy and techniques of Victorian realism, something she terms 'sympathetic realism'.[40] Sympathy for Greiner is a method comparable with realism — like Smith she emphasizes 'the intentional and evaluative aspects of sympathy'.[41] This study however tries to avoid looking towards either Hume or Smith for a definitive Victorian model of sympathy; it is apparent that negotiations between both Humean and Smithean conceptions of sympathy were taking place in Victorian fiction and that partial derivation from one philosopher did not preclude the influence of the other. I have striven to depict sympathy as each author individually received and (re)conceptualized it.

Moreover, rather than purporting to lift the veil from what sympathy *is*, this research practises and applies an intentionalist or sympathetic method to examining texts by George Eliot, Vernon Lee, and Edna Lyall to determine *how* they worked and reworked the term in light of nineteenth-century investigations of religious and cultural differences.[42] This involves most specifically understanding how and

[40] Lowe, *Victorian Fiction and the Insights of Sympathy*, p. 10. See Greiner, *Sympathetic Realism*, p. 15: '[T]he realism of the nineteenth-century British novel [...] is best understood as "sympathetic realism," not simply because these novels promote or are about sympathy [...] but because they employ forms designated to enact sympathetic habits of mind in readers'.

[41] Greiner, *Sympathetic Realism*, p. 2.

[42] In the seminal article 'The Intentional Fallacy' (1946), 'intention' was defined as 'the design or plan in the author's mind'. M.C. Beardsley and W.K. Wimsatt, 'The Intentional Fallacy', *The Sewanee Review* 54:3 (1946), 468–88 (p. 469), in *JSTOR*. Accessed 18 September 2017. Kaye Mitchell identifies this definition as a 'mentalistic characterization' and 'connection with consciousness' that 'allows anti-intentionalists [...] [to] dismiss intention as inaccessible or as, [...] subject to change in the flux of the creative process'. Kaye Mitchell, *Intention and Text: Towards an Intentionality of Literary Form* (London: Continuum, 2008), p. 2. As such, Mitchell distinguishes between this mutable blueprint, '*intention-to*', and '*intention-by*', which 'tallies more obviously with authorial *meaning*' and 'what the author means by the semantic and syntactic arrangements that make up the final text of the work' (p. 2). Although I do not enter into the long-standing debates surrounding intentionalism as methodology, I note here that my understanding of 'intention' involves a combination of Mitchell's terms. In conjunction with my turn towards 'surface reading' and a 'hermeneutics of sympathy' (interrelated methodological practices that I introduce and discuss at length in this chapter), I consider intentionalism a sympathetic practice interested both in the text and the authorial pursuits or experiences connected

why each author relies upon a characteristically 'many-sided' male sympathetic hero as a source of mitigation in situations of religious or cultural difference. This should explain, at least in part, my reasons for opening this chapter with an eye to manysidedness rather than sympathy specifically.

In treating each author as a guide I have been directed to the concept of manysidedness, and surprised by how well it illustrates analogous tensions of meaning and function with which the term 'sympathy' was increasingly freighted as the century progressed; friction between the masculine and feminine, between nationalism and cosmopolitanism, between religious orthodoxy and pluralism, and the problem of focusing too expressly on self even when the other is (supposedly) in view. Moreover the 'vacillations' or 'flux and reflux' movement of manysidedness is typical of mid-to-late nineteenth-century conceptions of sympathy. Both sympathy and manysidedness commonly fell into the category of virtue — associated with moral thought, constructive emotion and altruistic action — even as their nearness to impartiality and open-mindedness caused criticism. Taking these discoveries into account, the concept of manysidedness has become an organizing principle of this thesis because it serves to illustrate Victorian theories of sympathy and its palimpsestic quality informs the fictional representation of the male sympathetic figures so central to the works of each author I examine. Historically, manysidedness and sympathy can be regarded as separate concepts, but as an organizing principle here, manysidedness is mainly examined and deployed as a method for thinking about the problems and advantages of sympathy in the fiction of each author.

Sympathy's knotty insistence on similarity and its consequential obscuration of difference, as discussed in the Prologue, is of central concern to this project, and manysidedness plays a significant role in (potentially) providing tactical responses

with its composition. I have found these methodological practices most helpful in navigating the wide array of published texts and archival materials related to understanding the interests and intentions of each author. See also Noël Carroll, *Beyond Aesthetics: Philosophical Essays* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 133–96 for a relevant discussion of art, intention, and the hermeneutics of suspicion in the purview of intentionalism versus anti-intentionalism.

to this dilemma. The following pages set the stage for the analyses to come, first by detailing the point upon which most agree regarding the nature of sympathy — that it is a process — and then by explaining what this implies in terms of the pattern of representation seen via the many-sided male sympathetic heroes in selected works of Eliot, Lee and Lyall. The context of the science of religion is also delineated, not only as an illustration of how widespread knowledge of non-Christian religions became in the mid-to-late nineteenth-century, but also as a pertinent example of how sympathy was being deployed as a primary method of research; considering the science of religion's regular discovery of undeniable differences between cultures, faiths, and practices, its reliance upon a method that accentuated similarity is counterintuitive and points further to potential reasons behind these authors' turn towards manysidedness as a possible methodological alternative and avenue of resolution.

Finally, in the course of research it has become increasingly evident that both feminist and gender theory and literary cosmopolitanism theory suggest themselves as productive lenses for analysis. While examining the impact an increased knowledge of religious diversity had on concepts of sympathy and methods of sympathetic exchange in women's fiction, I have discovered cosmopolitanism to be a prevalent — and not unconnected — feature of the male sympathetic figure. Often, the tension between 'world citizenship' and nationalism emerges along the same fissure where the conflict between religious manysidedness and a single religious identity erupts. The case studies I examine persistently push the boundaries of nationalism and touch upon the implications of 'world citizenship': George Eliot in *Daniel Deronda* questions the fixity of national identity and the duties it brings; Vernon Lee, famously cosmopolitan herself, experiments with cosmopolitan identity through her pseudo-self Baldwin in a series of dialogue essays; and Edna Lyall became well-known for her character Donovan, 'a modern Englishman' who nonetheless exhibits degrees of cosmopolitanism throughout the three novels in which he appears. The curious quality of gender fluidity in the male

figures also moves along this fissure of identity where male hero, amalgamation of feminine and masculine traits, doubles as author surrogate. However, such theoretical frameworks somewhat belie the objective of this thesis, which is to reconstruct the intellectual history and writing practices of women prose fiction writers with strong interests in liberal argument for sympathy. In order to fulfill this aim, I have emphasized rather recent debates about the hermeneutics of suspicion, and the merits of 'surface reading' and 'sympathetic' reading practices; such debates serve, both as a way to experience the problematic aspects of sympathy as a methodology first-hand and as a tactic for 'entering into' the mental life of each author.

'Processing' sympathy

While some have celebrated the uncertainty that clouds patent definitions of either sympathy or empathy (McCarthy has declared it 'an indication of the richness of the psychological phenomena toward which the two terms are reaching'), it otherwise makes sympathy a convoluted and tortuous topic.[43] The clearest consensus one finds is that sympathy is a process of alternating between two states. Martha Nussbaum calls for 'a kind of "twofold attention," in which one both imagines what it is like to be in the sufferer's place and, at the same time, retains securely the awareness that one is not in that place'.[44] McCarthy highlights sympathy as a process doubly driven by understanding another and gaining 'insight into oneself'.[45] Martin turns to the 'rhythms of sympathy' with an exposition of sympathy in late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century fiction that gravitates towards textual moments stressing sympathy as 'intuitive, bodily' or automatic through pulses, beats, and circulation — a sympathy 'founded on a conception

[43] McCarthy, *Relationships of Sympathy*, p. 6.
[44] Martha Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 328.
[45] McCarthy, *Relationships of Sympathy*, p. 15.

of what it is to be alive'.[46] Many of the mid-to-late nineteenth-century notions of sympathy to which the authors examined in this study respond similarly rely upon rhythmic descriptions — sympathy was vacillating, vibratory, as essential to being human as breathing. The psychologist James Sully (1842–1923) described sympathy in 1889 in terms of 'vibrations': 'The mind of the person affected does not consciously represent or dwell on the feeling which affects him, but simply vibrates in common with it'.[47] Vernon Lee's work stresses the interconnectivity between people or between people and objects through recurrent use of the word 'vague', a term indicating the hazy and imprecise nature of sympathetic interactions while simultaneously pointing to a rhythmic motion of ebb and flow: 'la vague' in French means 'wave'.[48]

The relatively consistent notice of sympathy as (uncertain) *movement* — its vacillation, flux, rhythm, undulation, even the pendulum-sway of the 'intellectual virtues' to which the anonymous author of 'Intellectual Vigour' alludes — underlies a push or urge (not necessarily a successful one) motivating sympathy and the extension of one's sympathetic imagination towards *reconciliation*. McCarthy likens sympathy to the model of a spiral, calling it 'a dialectical process wherein "we will unavoidably find ourselves reflected within our gaze toward the other. I look for you and see myself; I have no choice but to draw on what I know and feel" '.[49] Implicit in this description is an urge to understand the other, even if it is short-circuited by a limited range of perspective. If sympathy is a spiral or dialectic, it suggests progression and movement towards something rather than a purely insular or solipsistic circle; a spiral model hints that sympathy does not merely self-cultivate, but also cultivates (or strives to cultivate) other-relations. Likewise, manysidedness implies reconciliation between multiple points but lacks

[46] Martin, *Modernism and the Rhythms of Sympathy*, pp. 8, 1.

[47] Quoted by McCarthy from *Outlines of Psychology* (1884); see McCarthy, *Relationships of Sympathy*, p. 11.

[48] Catherine Maxwell also notes this linguistic detail. See Catherine Maxwell, *Second Sight: The Visionary Imagination in Late Victorian Literature* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008), p. 136.

[49] McCarthy, *Relationships of Sympathy*, pp. 15–16.

the added inference that an underlying unity or similarity must be stressed to achieve this. The emphasis of manysidedness on reconciliation (between multiple points) relates well to the concerns associated with sympathy and the question as to whether or not, when seen either as epistemological or as unconscious impulse of the mind, sympathy could still be relied upon as an adequate foundation for moral thought (when faced with difference) and action (on behalf of others). Does being sympathetic ensure a reconciliation of differences? Does it even ensure an acknowledgement of difference? If manysidedness was viewed as just such a mode of reconciliation, then did sympathy's paralleling many-sided features also entail reconciliation, not just of ideas, but between individuals, political parties, religious groups, and nations?

Sympathy, for all its assumed good intentions, may also be regarded with deep suspicion. It can after all also be a power play for the dominance of one perspective over another: 'sympathy, when pursued for its own end rather than as an effort to know and understand another, reifies both subject and object, sacrificing an interactive relationship for the sake of psychological domination'.[50] The doubling that sympathy denotes — of alternately occupying two consciousnesses — has dark gothic undertones. In *Doubles* (1985) Karl Miller reminds us of the uncanny or 'mesmeric' side to sympathy when he invokes the divided self and sinister Doppelgängers of works by E.T.A. Hoffman, James Hogg, and Robert Louis Stevenson, to name a few.[51] Victorians experienced a mounting apprehension as studies in psychology transformed sympathy from the crux of Victorian virtue into a morally empty concept, a 'hollow' mimetic tendency.[52] The freighted fault line between sympathy as a conscious act of ethical outreach and sympathy as an unconscious mimetic impulse is evident in the work of

[50]McCarthy, *Relationships of Sympathy*, p. 51.

[51]Karl Miller, *Doubles: Studies in Literary History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 6.

[52]Carolyn Burdett's current research reviews the shift between Victorian sympathy and the term 'empathy' in the early twentieth century. See her paper presented at The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities (TORCH), 'Reading and Replicating Bodies: Mimicry in Medicine and Culture', 26 March 2015. <https://vimeo.com/125376437>. Accessed 15 April 2015. See also Burdett, 'Is Empathy the End of Sentimentality?'.

George Eliot, Vernon Lee, and Edna Lyall. The women overlap most distinctly in their respective creations of a 'many-sided' male sympathetic hero — in their redefining of masculinity and heroism through an amalgamation of feminine and masculine traits, through the dualism of hero-heroine pairings, and (most explicitly in Eliot's case) through the habit of frequently couching descriptions of their male sympathetic figures in terms of Eastern religious founders and philosophers (Buddha, Mahomet, Zoroaster, Socrates).[53] The many-sided patterning of these heroes accompanies doubling as in the opening scene of *Daniel Deronda*, as if doubling (as a variation of sympathy) haunts manysidedness and suppresses the advantage manysidedness promises of creating space for (understanding and accepting) difference. The many-sided male protagonists not only are each accompanied by a female double in the texts, but also serve as surrogates of their respective female authors.

The pulse this thesis wishes to register is the one animating this repeated construction of 'many-sided' male sympathetic heroes. What (new) point were these women writers trying to make about sympathy by deploying it in their fiction in a pattern of many-sided protagonist-doubles? The recognition of a process of vacillation as more or less forming the basis of sympathy sheds some light on each author's use of a male character as surrogate — the identity of the male sympathetic hero, already fluid in its movement between masculine and feminine traits, also alternates between self (author) and other (character), indicating a concern for correctly representing sympathy as a series of on-going exchanges (throughout

[53] The hero and heroism are fluid concepts, devices for relaying sets of cultural values, moral codes of behaviour, and political or social identities. While much of my research and close readings focuses upon a pattern of many-sided and sympathetic male heroes (and sometimes 'anti-heroes'), I do not delineate where these figures fit in a literary history of the 'hero'. I use the term 'hero' and consider the male figures under discussion in this way: 'heroic figures can be analysed as sounding boards for dominant, resistant and emerging ideologies'. Barbara Korte and Stefanie Lethbridge, *Heroes and Heroism in British Fiction since 1800: Case Studies*, edited by Barbara Korte and Stefanie Lethbridge (New York: Springer, 2017), p. 4. For a useful definition of the hero, see Geoffrey Cubitt and Allen Warren, *Heroic Reputations and Exemplary Lives* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), p. 3. Korte and Lethbridge is a comprehensive collection of essays operating under the assumption that 'The heroic imaginary is the result of ongoing processes of *heroisation* and *deheroisation* in whose course certain types of heroes and heroisms are abandoned or reconfigured within changing social contexts and changing contexts of representation' (p. 2).

which difference, ideally, is preserved). One hypothesis is that the many-sided sympathetic hero is not intended to make the reader sympathize with particular characters — in fact it is often the failure of these figures to do so that comes across more powerfully. Instead, the many-sided figure might be designed to advance readerly sympathy with situations:

> As [Noël Carroll] points out, often 'the emotional state' of the audience 'does not replicate the emotional state of characters'. In this case, one might substitute the idea of 'understanding', in the sense of understanding and empathizing with a fictional character, with the idea of understanding a situation.[54]

The process of understanding a situation rather than a character encourages awareness of circumstantial *differences separating* each and every individual. This arguably teaches readers to be sympathetic towards individuals in a range of varying circumstances — it is a method that makes space for the acknowledgement of difference and includes admittance of the inherent limitations of personal knowledge and experience.[55] This, I believe, is a point Nussbaum wishes to stress through her joint emphasis upon 'citizenship' and 'community' alongside 'separateness' and 'privacy'.[56] If a text inspires sympathy for situations rather than fostering feelings for a fictional character, it might be easier for readers to extend sympathy in many directions — wherever real people are affected by comparable sets of real circumstances. Readerly sympathy is less confined to the text, less one-sided.

What the texts I examine seem to suggest is that, unless we are aware of the limitations of sympathy, sympathy itself is a snare that may trap us in an endless mirroring of self — the process of being led back to ourselves is not only something sympathy cannot elide, but is one of its characteristic reflexes. No matter how much knowledge one possesses or how strongly one feels on behalf of another,

[54] Ratcliffe, *On Sympathy*, p. 46.

[55] In looking to nineteenth-century novels, Brigid Lowe also alludes to their appeal to 'a sympathy founded on the acknowledgment of the pressure of circumstance'. Lowe, *Victorian Fiction and the Insights of Sympathy*, p. 53.

[56] Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity*, p. 90.

this path seems unavoidable unless sympathetic response is redirected towards sets of circumstances, a redirection that involves the decision to *rest* in not knowing, to which we see Eliot alluding in the opening of *Daniel Deronda*. To sympathize with a situation is to know that there is something more to understand but that we can never hope to realize it via our limited perspectives and experiences. McCarthy, in his use of twentieth-century models of understanding sympathy, reaches the conclusion 'that what is needed is a communicative and creative process, not merely a mirroring or echoing, on the one hand, or a one-dimensional quest for personal identity, on the other'.[57] This 'communicative and creative process' sounds to me like a call to manysidedness — and may give us a clue as to why Eliot, Lee and Lyall each turned to a many-sided model in their constructions of sympathetic heroes.

On the surface, in others' minds: 'surface reading' as sympathetic method

With the extensive disagreement from recent literary critics and cognitive studies in empathetic response on the exact definition of sympathy — coupled with the term's instability in the period leading up to the coinage of the word 'empathy' in the early twentieth century — I turn to a methodology that can embrace sympathy's fluid shifts in meaning from author to author, text to text, and from one textual moment to another. In the 2009 special edition of *Representations, The Way We Read Now*, Stephen Best and Sharon Marcus offer 'surface reading' as a corrective to 'symptomatic reading'.[58] Rather than 'assigning a meaning to a text or set of texts' through the act of interpreting what is 'hidden' or 'latent', they suggest transitioning into a practice of attending to textual 'surfaces'. The key tenets or schemas of surface reading are first, an expansion of reading practices and second,

[57] McCarthy, *Relationships of Sympathy*, p. 17.

[58] Stephen Best and Sharon Marcus, 'Surface Reading: An Introduction', *Representations* 108:1 (2009), 1–21, in *JSTOR*. Accessed 21 January 2016.

a challenge to our definitions of literacy and literary culture, both intended to find a means of reconciling contradictory reading practices. The 2009 issue presents several interpretations of what surface reading might mean and what the 'surface' of a text might indicate.[59]

What exactly the 'surface' of a text is remains open-ended, much like the open-ended nature of defining sympathy. In fact, the various examples of surface reading on offer in the special issue of *Representations* parallel varying interpretations of sympathy. There are the 'practices of book history and other material textual approaches' emphasizing 'the physical being of the text', how they 'speak, smell, crinkle, and crunch', which echo interpretations of sympathy as invasive haptic or sensory experiences.[60] There is also surface reading as cognitive reading practice, in which 'the brain is the matter in question', relevant to the development of analyses of the cognitive processes of sympathy.[61] Then there is Margaret Cohen's variation of surface reading as a 'return to the archive' or the (sympathetic) inclusion of 'lost, unread, or minor texts'.[62] This return marks contextual and historical knowledge as essential for critics to be able to properly see the surface of the texts they study. Cohen's case study is Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim* (1899–1900), the surface of which is made considerably more legible if the critic is aware of the maritime terminology and writing that informs the novel. She argues, 'placing a text in its discursive contexts can illuminate textual features that are obvious but which critics have overlooked'.[63] This parallels the view that sympathy necessitates contextual, or situational, knowledge.

[59] See Christopher Nealon, 'Reading on the Left', *Representations* 108:1 (2009), 22–50; Margaret Cohen, 'Narratology in the Archive of Literature', *Representations* 108:1 (2009), 51–75; Mary Thomas Crane, 'Surface, Depth, and the Spatial Imaginary: A Cognitive Reading of 'The Political Unconscious'', *Representations* 108:1 (2009), 76–97; Anne Anlin Cheng, 'Skins, Tattoos, and Susceptibility', *Representations* 108:1 (2009), 98–119; and Leah Price, 'From The History of a Book to a "History of the Book"', *Representations* 108:1 (2009), 120–38, in *JSTOR*. Accessed 28 July 2017.

[60] Emily Apter and Elaine Freedgood, 'Afterword', *Representations* 108:1 (2009), 139–46 (p. 139), in *JSTOR*. Accessed 19 February 2016.

[61] Apter and Freedgood, 'Afterword', p. 139.

[62] Apter and Freedgood, 'Afterword', p. 142.

[63] Best and Marcus, 'Surface Reading: An Introduction', p. 7.

The inauguration of surface reading has sparked substantial debate since 2009. Kristina Straub summarizes surface reading as implying 'a kind of innocence, a neutral engagement with texts on their own terms', but considers that the approach exhibits a too-naïve ignorance of the powerful subjectivity we all bring to what we read: 'I am still suspicious, not only as a reader, but of Marcus and Best's advocacy of interpretive practices that somehow manage to avoid suspicion'.[64] Straub reiterates the need to stress dialectical movement between subjectivity and objectivity: 'while I teach my students to be aware of the concepts they bring to texts, I also teach them that evidence matters'.[65] Stuart Sherman, meanwhile, detects value in surface reading, not in terms of the polemic in which Best and Marcus initially seem to present it, but in terms of its open-ended multiplicity: 'I seem to think that accrual — more and more methods mingling, interrogating, and buttressing each other — may be the strongest methodology of all; that it comes near the core of the way we really (sometimes secretly even from ourselves) do our work'; and ultimately 'Surface reading aspires to something comparable'.[66] Ariana Reilly, whose response pivots around the assumed polemic between Frederic Jameson's motto 'Always historicize' and the surface reading mantra 'Always sympathize', thinks Best and Marcus operate under a false assumption:

> [P]ractitioners of surface reading and other descriptive modes rely heavily on Paul Ricoeur's term, the 'hermeneutics of suspicion,' 'as a shorthand for a broader critical temperament' [...] Yet the connection between this temperament and Ricoeur's method is tenuous. [...] [S]urface readers rarely seem aware of the fact that Ricoeur's hermeneutic found its 'double motivation' in a simultaneous 'willingness to suspect' and 'willingness to listen'.[67]

[64] Kristina Straub, 'The Suspicious Reader Surprised, or, What I Learned from "Surface Reading"', *Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 54:1 (2013), 139–43 (pp. 139, 140), in *Project Muse*. Accessed 18 February 2016.

[65] Straub, 'The Suspicious Reader Surprised', p. 139.

[66] Stuart Sherman, 'Pluralistic Predilections: Surface Reading as Not-Altogether-New Resource', *Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 54:1 (2013), 133–38 (pp. 134, 135) in *Project Muse*. Accessed 18 February 2016.

[67] Ariana Reilly, '"Always Sympathize!" Surface Reading, Affect, and George Eliot's "Romola"', *Victorian Studies* 55:4 (2013), 629–46 (p. 631), in *Project Muse*. Accessed 31 January 2014.

According to Reilly the underlying motive of surface reading and reason for critics' recent 'discomfort with depth' are connected, not with historicism, but with literary criticism's failure to realize historicism's original guarantee of world revolution and renewal.[68] Referencing Christopher Nealon's contribution to *The Way We Read Now*, in which he argues that the text 'contain[s] its own hermeneutic', Reilly writes:

> Nealon's psychological assessment of the situation seems to me of the utmost importance in working through the call for surface reading, suggesting as it does that the source of frustration is not located in the method, but in the apparent disconnect between what critical theory continues to promise and what the world news continues to belie.[69]

Indeed, Best and Marcus also pick up on this, noting that 'Where it had become common for literary scholars to equate their work with political activism, the disasters and triumphs of the last decade have shown that literary criticism alone is not sufficient to effect change'.[70] Drawing together the perspectives of Heather Love, Lowe, Nealson, and Best and Marcus, Reilly concludes that the clearest centre-point and explanation for the debate rests with 'political hopelessness' and the hackneyed, unfulfilled promise of New Historicism to realize historicism's original guarantee of world revolution and renewal. The main concern of all involved is not the overuse of suspicion and lack of sympathy in literary criticism, but the underestimated danger of egoism.[71]

While the positions of those raising concerns and leaning towards some form of surface reading as a new methodology vary, the common denominator for Reilly is 'depreciative portraits of the critic's character' as egotistical and self-righteous. In response, Reilly defends the 'hermeneutics of suspicion' which 'keep our analyses as pure as possible from the contamination of anachronism'

[68] Reilly, "'Always Sympathize!"', p. 638.

[69] Reilly, "'Always Sympathize!"', p. 639. See Best and Marcus, 'Surface Reading: An Introduction', p. 8: 'The left-leaning critic [...] need not add theory to the text or gather texts that exemplify his theories; it is enough simply to register what the text itself is saying'.

[70] Best and Marcus, 'Surface Reading: An Introduction', p. 2.

[71] Reilly, "'Always Sympathize!"', p. 640. Reilly engages with Heather Love, 'Close but not Deep: Literary Ethics and the Descriptive Turn', *New Literary History* 41:2 (2010), 371–91.

while advising a *periodic* and appropriate exercise of the sympathetic imagination: 'Good historicism teaches us to feel sympathetically as well as suspiciously'; 'a sympathetic suspicion' is a plausible (and productive) reaction to any text that is well written but that 'say[s] the very opposite of what we think'.[72]

Reilly's point about historicism's failure to enact political change rings true with the concerns of the authors addressed in this study: to change minds, change hearts, and alter behaviour towards difference for the better. They each turn to sympathy and manysidedness in some form but all projects fail, begging the question: how can we expect surface reading, or a 'hermeneutics of sympathy', to achieve what more 'egotistical' theoretical lenses have not? Sherman's response to surface reading in particular raises another point of parallel between surface reading and this project's interest in sympathy; a pattern of doubleness and manysidedness appears in Best and Marcus's surface reading manifesto. As Sherman points out, Best and Marcus present surface reading as polemic — all of the articles in *The Way We Read Now* provide a contrasting alternative to the symptomatic reading of Frederic Jameson's seminal work *The Political Unconscious* (1981) — and yet surface reading is defined so broadly that it 'make[s] lots of room for antecedents and even antagonists'.[73] Surface reading — far from being the substitute of symptomatic reading merely — becomes a 'many-sided' practice in itself, one which invokes multiple resources, genres, texts, methodologies, and critics. Best and Marcus admit as much: 'Many types of reading, some quite old, some fairly new, might come under the rubric of "surface reading" '.[74] Surface reading in itself, then, is a varied surface arrangement that 'proves most powerful, perhaps, the more surfaces you read', the more 'sides' one addresses.[75] The final line of the special issue's 'Afterword' emphasizes the infinity of reading practices that may in time come under this criterion: 'the ways we read

[72] Reilly, "'Always Sympathize!"', pp. 643, 644.
[73] Sherman, 'Pluralistic Predilections', p. 135.
[74] Best and Marcus, 'Surface Reading: An Introduction', p. 9.
[75] Sherman, 'Pluralistic Predilections', p. 136.

and can read [...] cannot, happily, be enumerated'.[76]

In symptomatic reading practices (Marxist, psychoanalytic, deconstructive) 'we ask not the question the text answers, but the one it has not asked'.[77] I take my cue from the surface reading advocates in attempting to disentangle the discourses with which these authors engaged all too well and self-consciously, asking, what can we see (as far as we can) from their perspectives? What were the ideas and motives on the 'surface' of their texts that, to us now, have become more or less latent unless informed by the right contexts? It is true that something about surface reading or sympathetic modes of literary criticism entails the acknowledgement that what is on the 'surface' for one person is 'hidden' for another, and vice versa. Those who have responded to Best and Marcus's manifesto for surface reading have had trouble identifying exactly what is meant by the 'surface' of a text for this reason — there is no clear rubric for identifying what is 'surface' and what is 'beneath' or 'beside', just as there is no clear rubric for identifying 'sympathy' as only 'this' or only 'that'. As sympathy is about interior response to external stimuli (whether that be sensory experience of objects, nature, or people), sympathy is all about *interactions*, and so its nature shifts and changes depending upon what part of the process one investigates. Similarly, what exactly surface reading is and does depends upon the critic and the texts under scrutiny. Really, the variables are endless.

I have come to consider surface reading as 'sympathetic' in the way it drives ' "readings" of the text [that] are both distant and close'.[78] Like sympathy, surface reading oscillates between distance from and nearness to other/text — distance acknowledged in terms of our inescapable subjectivities and the theoretical lenses we use, and nearness in terms of a foundational emphasis upon 'feeling with' other persons, or what Eve Sedgwick marked in 2003 as a turn away from looking 'beneath' and 'behind' texts in favor of looking 'beside' them.[79] Surface reading

[76] Apter and Freedgood, 'Afterword', p. 145.
[77] Apter and Freedgood, 'Afterword', p. 143.
[78] Apter and Freedgood, 'Afterword', p. 139.
[79] Apter and Freedgood, 'Afterword', p. 145. See Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect,*

and sympathy then each indicate a hermeneutic movement between proximity and distance, parts and whole, self and other. Sympathy and surface reading alike inculcate a process of (self)expansion and (other)reconciliation. As Sherman indicates, 'even more than heretofore, the careful collation of complex surfaces is one of the central ways we read now'.[80]

Surface reading aids the intentionalist nature of my project because it can be interpreted as looking towards what was on the 'surface' in authors' lives: what preoccupied (or haunted) their minds, occupied their time, and took hold of their feelings so that it came to fruition in writing? In reconstructing the intellectual histories and writing practices of Eliot, Lee, and Lyall, I trace the intellectual sympathy between each woman writer and a male intellectual figure that had a prominent impact upon her writing. Coupled with George Eliot is the life and work of Max Müller; with Vernon Lee that of Walter Pater; and with Edna Lyall the career and controversy of Charles Bradlaugh. By looking towards the work of these men their influences upon these women's writing becomes visible — seen to be on the 'surface' as it were of their texts. In this, my interpretation of surface reading comes closest to the practice advocated by Margaret Cohen who 'suggests that placing a text in its discursive contexts can illuminate textual features that are obvious but which critics have overlooked'.[81]

Surface reading has also drawn my attention towards the very different 'textures' of each woman's texts and writing practices — my project, despite its overwhelming preoccupation with sympathy and similarity, has had to acknowledge the very different writing practices of each author. George Eliot is heavily focused on research, reading, interpretative strategies, hermeneutics, and epistemology; hers is a very philosophical approach to understanding what sympathy is and how it relates to knowledge.[82] Vernon Lee interacted closely with

Pedagogy, Performativity (Durham: NC, 2003), p. 145.

[80] Sherman, 'Pluralistic Predilections', p. 136.

[81] Best and Marcus, 'Surface Reading: An Introduction', p. 7.

[82] See David Carroll, *George Eliot and the Conflict of Interpretations: A Reading of the Novels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). Carroll's study is preoccupied with limitations

landscapes (she visited Urbino before setting 'Amour Dure' there, and transformed Granada into the setting of 'The Virgin of the Seven Daggers' following her winter excursion to southern Spain in 1888–89) — she wanted to move through material worlds, seeing, touching, and circumambulating (art) objects. Her methods as an aesthete are no less epistemological than Eliot's but perhaps more haptic and proprioceptive. Edna Lyall, of the three, was most concerned with immediate social and political impact. She would not write about a subject until she had personally contacted (and often befriended) the central figures of an interest group or oppressed minority. She too conducted research through reading but her main attraction was to actively reach out to others and hear their experiences and points of view expressed firsthand, and only then would she attempt to recreate their concerns, hopes, and perspectives through her writing.

Presenting an intentionalist portrait of each woman writer has only been possible through 'triangulation', or bringing multiple textual surfaces to bear upon one another and checking that each guides the reader or critic to similar conclusions regarding authorial intent. As such, this research engages with myriad surfaces in a way similar to Sherman's description that 'The truth, [...] lies somewhere in the triangulation; the play of surfaces, carefully attended, may tell us all we want to know'.[83] Today we are still intensely preoccupied with what sympathy is, how it works, and what benefits it does (or does not) bring to individuals and communities, to which recent and wide-ranging cognitive studies on empathy attest. Although current approaches to analyzing sympathetic and empathetic exchanges are secularly based in cognitive explanations rather than theological ones, it befits us to refamiliarize ourselves with an earlier setting of this controversy, the science of religion, particularly as one which coincided with

of knowledge based upon problems of interpretation. In explicating 'the Victorian crisis of interpretation', he turns to Eliot and her novels as a kind of touchstone; her profound and wide-ranging learning means she was fundamentally concerned not only with knowledge acquisition and dissemination, but also with how to interpret knowledge once it was collected and arranged. Carroll presents Eliot's novels like museums with various and often contending methods of interpretation on display.

[83] Sherman, 'Pluralistic Predilections', p. 137.

an ever-widening global awareness and concern for how to appropriately respond to cultural and religious difference — a practice we have yet to master.

Max Müller's science of religion: many-sided sympathetic scholarship in the tradition of Goethe, Carlyle, & liberal thought

The science of religion flourished in the mid-to-late nineteenth century and fostered a heightened awareness in the reading public of the prevalence of religious difference around the world. As newspapers were flooded with reports of skirmishes and battles between populations of religious difference across the British Empire, there was an immense influx of publications on non-Christian religious traditions. From translations of sacred texts into English and studies of comparative religion to poetry celebrating alternative religious points of view and a wide array of pamphlets and handbooks, these publications introduced the public to religious traditions around the globe.[84] This enterprise concurred with the redeployment of the term 'sympathy' into discourses outside of the usual context of moral sentimentalism, and similar anxieties arose from each; the science of religion marks a region of Victorian discourse wherein the freighted moral and epistemological issues tied to manysidedness, sympathy, and self-cultivation come to the fore, with very real consequences both at home and abroad.

As a scholarly enterprise in Britain that aimed to apply an impartial and scientific attitude to the study of world religions, the science of religion sought

[84]Consider, for example, work by the journalist and poet Edwin Arnold (1832–1904), whose study of Eastern languages and religions was put towards his compositions in verse of the life of Buddha in *The Light of Asia* (1879) and Muslim religious practices in *Pearls of the Faith; or, Islam's Rosary, Being the Ninety-Nine Beautiful Names of Allah* (1883). Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809–1892) also published poems heavily influenced by science of religion scholarship: 'The very late poems, "The Ancient Sage" (1885), on Lao-Tse, and "Akbar's Dream" (1892), on what was then called Mohammedanism, seek to realize — under the influence of Benjamin Jowett — "The religions of all good men", in support of the conviction that "All religions are one" ' (*ODNB*). Perhaps the most impressive publication is the 50-volume series *The Sacred Books of the East* (1879–1910), edited by Max Müller.

to understand the beliefs and social practices of various religious traditions and it created a new space for dialogues that re-examined and redefined religion, but it is a nebulous area of inquiry, complex in its foundations and difficult to navigate collectively. Attention to it as a distinct discourse is only very recent.[85] Marjorie Wheeler-Barclay defines it as 'a distinct field of discourse dedicated to the scientific study of religious practices and belief systems as human institutions meeting definite social and psychological needs'.[86] It frequently overlaps with other areas of study — such as psychology, philology, mythology, theology, cultural anthropology, and archaeology — and simply 'did not begin as an academic specialty, but took shape through the public give-and-take of books, lectures, and articles that appeared in the great Victorian reviews'.[87]

The science of religion is further complicated by how it was variously used, defined and discussed. It and its methods change from person to person and even article to article. The science of religion was introduced by some as an 'increasingly important branch of theological discussion' that will 'yield a rich harvest of support to Christian faith', a position which claimed it for the service of orthodox Christianity.[88] Others, such as the Scottish philosopher Edward Caird (1835–1908), situated it within the framework of organic and evolutionary theory. According to Caird, the science of religion's aim was to discover the underlying 'principle of life' beneath the various forms of human attitudes and consciousness.[89] Modern theories, rather than Christianity, were his concern.

Yet, the famed German philologist and orientalist Friedrich Max Müller

[85]Marjorie Wheeler-Barclay's study focuses upon delineating the diverse contours of the science of religion. Marjorie Wheeler-Barclay, *The Science of Religion in Britain, 1860–1915* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2010). This discourse has also been addressed in the context of theological debates in Britain. See James C. Livingston, *Religious Thought in the Victorian Age: Challenges and Reconceptions* (New York: T & T Clark International, 2006), pp. 230–78.

[86]Wheeler-Barclay, *The Science of Religion in Britain*, p. 1.

[87]Wheeler-Barclay, *The Science of Religion in Britain*, p. 18.

[88]From Marshall Randles, 'The Fernley Lecture for 1880', *The Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine* Dec (1880), 942–45 (pp. 942, 945), in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 22 September 2017.

[89]Edward Caird, 'The Modern Conception of the Science of Religion', *International Journal of Ethics* 1:4 (1891), 389–403 (p. 403), in *JSTOR*. Accessed 4 June 2013.

(1823–1900) coloured the discourse with its most popularly known aims and methods. His modes of inquiry were strongly influenced by Herderean historicism. Much of the scholarship the science of religion produced was influenced — as were the ideas of manysidedness derived from Goethe — by German historicism, which had begun to place the whole range of history's diversity under the umbrella of *Allgemeine Geschichte*, or Universal History, and to apply the sympathetic imagination, or *Einfühlung*, as historical method. This approach, promoted by Johann Gottfried Herder in *This, Too, a Philosophy of History for the Formation of Humanity* (1774), is a method for the interpreter of history to successfully encounter (and surmount) radical differences across historic periods and cultures. Herder's directive is to 'transport yourself into the age, [...] feel your way into everything'; his emphasis upon the need to recognize and confront difference in the study of history is great as he reminds historians that 'in this world no two moments are the same'.[90] Herderian *Einfühlung* implies a balanced historicism — the historian should not be so close to his subject that he slips into self-identification, but he must also refrain from becoming too distant, in danger of fostering prejudice or hostility.

Theoretically, sympathy was brought into the heart of British scholarship on religion in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. Müller held the view 'that each religion [...] was in some sense true', envisioning that a principal 'task of the new science of religion, [...] was to promote this syncretistic view'.[91] The science of religion evidently has a many-sided quality, one which Wheeler-Barclay's study draws out through dividing attention between six of its seminal figures. Her comprehensive sweep from Max Müller (1823–1900), Edward B. Tylor (1832–1917), and Andrew Lang (1844–1912) to William Robertson Smith (1846–1894), James G. Frazer (1854–1941), and Jane Ellen Harrison (1850–1928) touches several facets of the discourse, including philology, anthropology, folklore

[90] Johann Gottfried Herder, Hans Adler and Ernest A. Menze, 'From "This, Too, A Philosophy of History"', in: Hans Adler and Ernest A. Menze, eds., *On World History: An Anthology* (Armonk, NY [u.a.]; London: M.E. Sharpe, 1997), pp. 36, 37.

[91] Wheeler-Barclay, *The Science of Religion in Britain*, p. 248.

studies, orientalism, and classicism. Indeed, such attestation to its myriad contributors is the core strength of Wheeler-Barclay's study, evincing that these thinkers collectively widened the idea of what constitutes religion by providing new points of view on the subject. As a 'many-sided' search for truth in various religious traditions, the science of religion exemplifies the philosophical strand of manysidedness that the author of 'Intellectual Vigour' decries.

Max Müller is generally looked to as the man most responsible for transforming the science of religion's discourse into a recognized discipline and for engaging popular interest in the field. His first series of lectures in 1861 on the science of language 'made him a star in England' and 'the ensuing edition went through fourteen editions during his lifetime and was translated into French, German, Italian, Russian, Swedish, and Dutch'.[92] His lectures on the science of language had such an impact that in 1875 he was caricatured in *Vanity Fair* as one of their notable 'Men of the Day' with the caption 'The science of Language'.

His work in establishing and promoting the science of religion was known especially towards the latter half of his career for its unorthodox and broad religious implications. In July 1902 the *Saturday Review* published a review of Müller's *Last Essays, Second Series, Essays on the Science of Religion* (1901): 'What chiefly strikes one in turning over these miscellaneous writings, [...] is the wide grasp, the humane culture, and the wise tolerance of the writer. The amount of curious learning, the evidences of unflagging mental alertness, of interest in all that was going on, of sympathy for all manner of thought and belief, are astonishing'.[93]

The reviewer marvels at Müller's steady 'increase of sympathy and toleration for the present as well as the past'.[94] Even from the beginning of his time

[92] Arie L. Molendijk, *Friedrich Max Müller and the Sacred Books of the East*, 1st edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 17. Molendijk attests to his popularity further: 'my impression is that he was one of the most publicly visible intellectuals of his day. [...] It is no doubt legitimate to compare him with later public intellectuals who are better known nowadays; philosophers such as Bertrand Russell and Jean-Paul Sartre come to mind, and more recently Noam Chomsky, [and] Richard Dawkins'. See Molendijk, pp. 27–30 for a sketch of Müller's personality and popularity.

[93] Quoted in Friedrich Max Müller and Jon R. Stone, *The Essential Max Müller: On Language, Mythology, and Religion*, edited by Jon R. Stone (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p. 3

[94] 'Max Müller's Last Essays', *Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art* 94:2438

at Oxford — where he initially served as deputy Taylorian professor of modern European languages from 1850 to 1854 and was later elected in 1858 to a life fellowship at All Souls College — he earned a particularly strong reputation as a sympathetic scholar.[95] His former student and friend Professor Cowell remarked that Müller 'imbued me with [...] his deep sympathy with the Hindu mind', and another friend Mr. Bellows records: 'When I came to know him personally I was irresistibly attracted by the power of sympathy that was his most striking characteristic'.[96] His seminal essay *Comparative Mythology* (1856) introduces his subject with a plea to readers to sympathetically engage with history and makes a claim for personally investing in the past: 'The history of those distant ages and distant men [...] assumes a new charm as soon as we know that it tells us the story of our own race, of our own family — nay, of our own selves'.[97] Müller practises *Einfühlung* foundationally and frequently claims that the thoughts and emotions of the people under study take precedence over those of the historian; learning to 'feel with' one's subject is imperative. This is what he means in his 1870 lecture series that introduces the science of religion formally when he emphasizes its study of religion 'in a truly historic spirit'. And adjacent to this call, Müller invokes manysidedness — the 'many contradictions' necessarily exhumed by textual, linguistic, and historic excavations of 'sacred books' — as a feature of 'genuineness' and 'real truth':

> [W]e shall no longer interpret the Law and the Prophets as if they had

(1902), p. 82, in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 22 September 2017.

[95]This sympathetic stance is tied to Müller's methodology and certain assumptions made in his research. For example, his 'conviction of a common human destiny leads implicitly to the (methodological) ideal of a sympathetic way of comparing'; also, Müller's 'identification of the core of all religions in an alleged human faculty to intuit or apprehend the infinite leads to a sympathetic approach to all religious phenomena'. See Molendijk, *Friedrich Max Müller and the Sacred Books of the East*, pp. 129, 156. Calling Müller's scholarship 'sympathetic' can also be problematic. See Molendijk, pp. 103–04 for discussion of Müller's operation as a scholar within a colonial context; see also Molendijk, pp. 109–15 (p. 109) for treatment of Müller's 'alleged racism'.

[96]Friedrich Max Müller, *The Life and Letters of the Right Honourable Friedrich Max Müller,* 2 vols, edited by Georgina Adelaide Müller (New York and Bombay: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1902), I, p. 120 (24 December 1900); I, p. 354 (n.d.).

[97]Friedrich Max Müller, *Comparative Mythology, An Essay*, edited by A. Smythe Palmer (London: George Routledge and Sons, Limited, 1909), p. 7.

> been written in the English of our own century, but read them in a truly historic spirit, prepared for the many difficulties, undismayed by many contradictions, which, so far from disproving authenticity, become [...] the strongest confirmatory evidence of the age, the genuineness, and the real truth of ancient sacred books.[98]

Müller's approach has been described as Goethean. In many ways he was carrying on a tradition of comparative religion in England that had already been made reputable to some extent by Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881).[99] Carlyle's aptitude as a comparative religionist following in the footsteps of German thinkers such as Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729–1781), Jean Paul Richter (1763-1825), Herder, and especially Goethe has been recognized.[100] Carlyle 'epitomizes the [German's] radical historicist attitude' in *Sartor Resartus* (1833–34), and his lecture series *On Heroes and Hero-Worship* (1841) is many-sided by design, intentionally endeavouring to widen the consciousnesses of his audience members in mimicry of Goethe's manysidedness:

> [T]he Past had always something *true*, and is a precious possession. In a different time, in a different place, it is always some other *side* of our common Human Nature that has been developing itself. The actual True is the *sum* of all these; [...] Better to know them all than misknow them.[101]

For Carlyle, moreover, the male hero is an imaginative centre for religious sympathy and comparative awareness. He not only regards non-Christian religious traditions as reliable and commendable sources of heroes for the modern age, but he also maintains that the Pasts he invokes are within us still: 'Unconsciously, and combined with higher things, [Norse Religion] is in *us* yet, that old Faith withal! To know it consciously, brings us into closer and clearer relation with the Past — with our own possessions in the Past'.[102] In *Sartor* Carlyle lauds German learning as

[98] Friedrich Max Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1873), p. 281.

[99] Ruth ApRoberts, *The Ancient Dialect: Thomas Carlyle and Comparative Religion* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988), p. 86.

[100] ApRoberts, *The Ancient Dialect*, pp. 32–33. See Ashton, *The German Idea*.

[101] From Lecture I, 'The Hero as Divinity'. Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*, edited by Michael K. Goldberg, Joel J. Brattin and Mark Engel (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 3–36 (p. 36).

[102] See ApRoberts, *The Ancient Dialect*, p. 33. The range of character studies in *On Heroes*

'indefatigable' and 'unshackled', as that 'which permits and induces [the German Learned] to fish in all manner of waters, with all manner of nets'.[103] At the time of *Sartor*, Goethe's multifaceted intellect was becoming the paradigm of German scholarship in Britain, leading the way in theories of how to see from multiple perspectives, and Carlyle did much to 'persuade his readers of the value, spiritual as well as literary, of reading German literature, and Goethe in particular'.[104] His hero, the German professor Teufelsdröckh, calls Goethe the 'Wisest of our time'.[105] A double in some respects of Carlyle, Teufelsdröckh simulates Goethe's many-sided learning:

> Walking by the light of Oriental, Pelasgic, Scandinavian, Egyptian, Otaheitean, Ancient and Modern researches of every conceivable kind, he strives to give us in compressed shape [...] an *Orbis Vestitus*; or view of the costumes of all mankind, in all countries, in all times.[106]

In *Comparative Mythology*, Müller quotes Carlyle, a phrase which mirrors Müller's maxim 'Unity in Diversity': 'Thus, though tradition may have but one root, it grows, like a banian, into a whole overarching labyrinth of trees'. With this citation, Müller praises Carlyle as one who has 'seen deep into the very heart of mythology' with his early recognition of an underlying unity beneath varying mythological traditions.[107]

In *On Liberty*, J. S. Mill upholds the practice of acknowledging kernels of shared truth in multiple religious traditions. While he lauds aspects of Christian morality, he also calls Christianity 'incomplete and onesided', singling it out as too entirely founded upon 'passive obedience' and its practice of abstinence as too

and Hero-Worship includes the Norse god Odin and Prophet of Islam Muhammad. Carlyle's statement, 'The actual True is the *sum* of all these [...] Better to know them all than to misknow them', reiterates Goethe's maxim regarding language: 'To know one is to know none'. See Carlyle, *On Heroes*, p. 277. Here, ApRoberts quotes from 'The Hero as Divinity'. Carlyle, *On Heroes*, p. 36.

[103] Thomas Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus* (London: Electric Book Co., 2001), pp. 58, 59, in *ProQuest Ebook Central*. Accessed 4 August 2017.

[104] Ashton, *The German Idea*, p. 20.

[105] Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*, p. 236.

[106] Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*, p. 89.

[107] Müller, *Comparative Mythology*, p. 161. Müller also footnotes *Sartor Resartus*. Müller, *Comparative Mythology*, p. 97 n1.

based in self-interest.[108] To bring balance, he turns to religious traditions wherein active duty on behalf of others is paramount:

> It is in the Koran, not the New Testament, that we read the maxim — 'A ruler who appoints any man to an office, when there is in his dominions another man better qualified for it, sins against God and against the State.' What little recognition the idea of obligation to the public obtains in modern morality, is derived from Greek and Roman sources, not from Christian.[109]

According to Mill, indebtedness to multiple religious and cultural sources, far from weakening European Christian culture, fosters 'progressive and many-sided development'.[110] In his Inaugural Address to the English Goethe Society in 1886, Müller spoke at length about European culture's indebtedness to Goethe and Carlyle, and specifically to their ability 'to find out what is true and beautiful in every [literature]' from 'English, French, Italian, [and] Spanish' to 'Serbian, Bohemian, Lithuanian, modern Greek, Swedish, nay, Persian, Arabic, Sanskrit, and Chinese'.[111] Goethe's '*cosmopolitan sympathies*, and, [...] his constant endeavours after what he called *eine Welt-literatur*, a *World-literature*' are among the strengths Müller praises.[112]

In his pronouncement and practice of the science of religion, Müller imitates such Goethean features. His steady release of *The Sacred Books of the East* (1879–1910) — the massive scholarly undertaking ultimately comprised of fifty volumes of translations and commentaries — was itself a slice of *eine Welt-literatur*, and Müller made his sympathetic views towards the sacred books of non-Christian religions plain in his essay 'Forgotten Bibles' (1884).[113] He uses the essay to anchor the public to the enriching use of *The Sacred Books of the*

[108] Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 89.
[109] Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 90.
[110] Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 130.
[111] Friedrich Max Müller, 'Goethe and Carlyle', *The Contemporary Review* 49 (1886), p. 5.
[112] Müller, 'Goethe and Carlyle', p. 5.
[113] See Livingston, *Religious Thought in the Victorian Age*, p. 236: 'Müller secured the translations of primary texts that became the fifty volumes of *The Sacred Books of the East*, a work undertaken by an entire generation of scholars (1879–1904). The project made accessible for the first time a mine of textual riches of Brahmanism, Jainism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Confucianism, and Islam'. For more on the preparation of *The Sacred Books of the East*, and comparison with contemporary large-scale editorial projects such as the Oxford English Dictionary, see Molendijk, *Friedrich Max Müller and the Sacred Books of the East*, pp. 162–86.

East: 'we shall readily understand the great advantages not only of an historical study of our own religion, but also of a comparative study of Eastern religions as they can be studied now in the translations of the Sacred Books of the East'.[114] Such a publication, he maintains, makes the 'mind [...] stronger, larger, and more comprehensive, it may be, more tolerant'.[115] As he argues against the uniqueness or ultimate authority of Christian scriptures, he promotes many-sided religious study for the scholar and layman alike. 'The mere lesson that we are not the only people who have a Bible, [...] may have its advantages, if rightly understood'.[116]

Doubles & Doppelgängers

Müller's many-sided promotion contrasts sharply with the views of another noteworthy contributor to the science of religion, Monier Monier-Williams (1819–1899). An orientalist and the second Boden Professor of Sanskrit at Oxford University, Monier-Williams stood and won against Müller in the 1860 election for the Boden Chair. As a Sanskrit scholar he was not as well-known or celebrated as Müller, but he won the seat due to his uncontested evangelical views.[117] Where Müller celebrated 'Forgotten Bibles', Monier-Williams claimed, 'our own Holy Bible is the only true Bible of God'.[118] The strength Müller sees in many-sided virtues like impartiality and tolerance turns to weakness for Monier-Williams:

> I contend [...] that a limp, flabby jelly-fish kind of tolerance is utterly incompatible with the nerve, fibre, and backbone that ought to characterise a manly Christian. I maintain that a Christian's character ought to be exactly what the Christian's Bible intends it to be. [...] Vigour and manhood breathe in every page.[119]

[114] Friedrich Max Müller, 'Forgotten Bibles', *The Nineteenth Century* 15:88 (1884), 1004–22 (p. 1022) in *British Periodicals (1681–1939).* Accessed 22 September 2017.
[115] Müller, 'Forgotten Bibles', p. 1022.
[116] Müller, 'Forgotten Bibles', p. 1021.
[117] Wheeler-Barclay, *The Science of Religion in Britain*, p. 43: '[T]he German philologist suffered from prejudice against him both as a foreigner and as a holder of suspect religious views'.
[118] Monier Monier-Williams, *The Holy Bible and the Sacred Books of the East: Four Addresses* (London: Seeley & Co., 1887), p. 30.
[119] Monier-Williams, *The Holy Bible and the Sacred Books of the East*, pp. 12–13.

The two pair as neat inversions of each other, two sides of the same science of religion 'coin', highlighting polemical conflicts within the discourse.

The division extends beyond Müller and Monier-Williams. Clinton Bennett, in his study of six Victorian scholars of Islam, isolates two predominant approaches to learning and writing about non-Christian religions in nineteenth-century Britain: the 'conciliatory' and 'contradictory' schools. The 'contradictory' school had in view the goal to discredit Islam and its history, while 'conciliatory' scholars 'adopt[ed] a sympathetic attitude' that made *discovery* their primary task and readily accepted parallels between Christianity and other religions.[120] In his study of Victorian Buddhism, Philip C. Almond names Monier-Williams 'one of the least sympathetic of Oriental scholars' and it is easy to place him in Bennett's 'contradictory' school.[121] In 1881, Monier-Williams strikes a bitter tone in response to the cultural shift taking place as the science of religion made knowledge and acceptance of diverse traditions more commonplace:

> [T]he new light thrown on the religions of the East by the editing and translating of their sacred books, make[s] a change of attitude towards non-Christian systems unavoidable. Until recently it was customary to regard every religion of the world, except Judaism and Christianity, as unworthy of scientific investigation. [...] all Asiatic systems which appeared to be specially saturated with polytheism and idolatry were stigmatized by a special application of such opprobrious epithets as heathenism and paganism. [...] They were the outcome of man's diseased imagination, stimulated by the promptings of the evil one himself. All who believed in them were sinners. As to their so-called sacred books, they were held up to reprobation and derision. [...] No Christian thinker, in fact, suspected — or, at least, confessed to suspecting — what the science of religion is now demonstrating: [...] that all the religions of the world have some common platform on which they may meet on friendly terms.[122]

[120] Clinton Bennett, *Victorian Images of Islam* (London: Grey Seal Books, 1992), p. 13. Bennett identifies three figures of each school. His conciliators are Charles Forster (1787–1871), F.D. Maurice (1805–1872), and Reginald Bosworth Smith (1819–1908); his contradictorists are Sir William Muir (1819–1905), William St. Clair Tisdall (1859–1928), and John Drew Bate (1836–1923). Bennett notes F.D. Maurice's use of Carlyle's lecture 'Hero as Prophet', *Heroes* (1841) in his sermons (p. 52).

[121] Philip C. Almond, *The British Discovery of Buddhism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 4.

[122] Monier Monier-Williams, 'The Religion of Zoroaster', *The Nineteenth Century* 9:47 (1881), 155–176 (pp. 155–56), in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 22 September 2017.

Monier-Williams's dubious receipt of this development is evident; elsewhere in the article, he is quick to point out that the 'perfect concentration and embodiment of eternal truth' is found in Christianity alone, while it is merely 'scattered in fragments through other systems'.[123]

With its roots in German learning and with Müller leading much of the way as Oxford's first Professor of Comparative Philology, the science of religion had many participants engaged in honing sympathy as their *modus operandi* — men like the orientalist scholar of the British Museum and friend of George Eliot Emmanuel Deutsch (1829–1873), classics scholar and master at Harrow School Reginald Bosworth Smith (1839–1908), and 'the most renowned of British scholars on Buddhism' by the 1870s Thomas Rhys Davids (1843–1922).[124] Each of these scholars was 'conciliatory' in his scientific approach to studying religion. Deutsch's career is characterized by his 'attempt to inspire understanding and respect for all religions [...] and to restore [...] maligned creeds to their place in human history'.[125] Rhys Davids was 'generally sympathetic' in his treatment of Buddhist beliefs, and 'found that the legends and myths had an intrinsic value'.[126] Reginald Bosworth Smith, who delivered and published a lecture series on *Mohammed and Mohammedanism* (1874) at the Royal Institute of Great Britain, was heavily influenced by Müller's *Chips from a German Workshop* (1868) and *Introduction to the Science of Religion* (1873). He remarks of Müller, 'the author says very little about Mohammedanism, but from him I have derived some very

[123] Monier-Williams, 'The Religion of Zoroaster', p. 156.

[124] Almond, *The British Discovery of Buddhism*, p. 50. It has been remarked that 'sympathetic' approaches to religious scholarship are explained more by 'the Victorian proclivity for great men coupled with their fascination for an exotic East' than by methodological practices underpinning the science of religion. See Humayun Ansari, 'The Muslim World in British Historical Imaginations: "Re-thinking Orientalism"?', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 38:1 (2011), ⟨URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13530194.2011.559003⟩, p. 83. Accessed 24 November 2013. The postcolonial lens Ansari employs may warrant this statement, but in researching the influence of German historicist practices upon the science of religion in Britain, I maintain sympathy also entered the discourse in other ways.

[125] M.K. Temple, 'Emanuel Deutsch's Literary Remains: A New Source for George Eliot's "Daniel Deronda"', *South Atlantic Review* 54:2 (1989), 59–73 (p. 61), in *JSTOR*. Accessed 4 January 2013.

[126] Almond, *The British Discovery of Buddhism*, pp. 84, 66.

valuable suggestions as to the general treatment of the subject'.[127]

Smith's comments on his resources further disclose the rift between 'contradictory' and 'conciliatory' sets. He virtually denounces estimations of Muhammad and Islam made by the famous orientalists Aloys Sprenger (1813–1893) and Sir William Muir (1819–1905), attributing their lack of impartiality to a willingness to place personal beliefs and prejudices ahead of their subject matter. Muir's four-volume work *The Life of Muhammad and History of Islam to the Era of the Hegira* (1858–1861) was widely acclaimed for distributing advanced learning on Islam to a broader public, but Smith writes, 'its scientific value is somewhat impaired by theological assumptions'.[128] Smith questions the motive of Muir's 'peculiar view' that the Prophet's belief in 'his inspiration was Satanic in its origin' and wonders at Muir's myopia in 'seem[ing] quite unable to see [the] grandeur' of the early history of Islam.[129] Sprenger's two most lauded works, *The Life of Mohammad* (1851) and *Das Leben und die Lehre des Mohamad* (1851–1861) may be 'the most exhaustive, original, and learned of all', but they are 'by no means the most impartial; [Sprenger] is often, [...] flagrantly unfair to Mohammed' as in his claim 'that Mohammed was hysterical' with 'a tendency to lying and deceit'.[130]

Philip C. Almond narrates that contemporary views and concerns were likewise typically projected upon textual studies of Buddhist philosophy and practices. He identifies 'Victorian Buddhism' as the product of Western interpretations 'of the Oriental Mind'.[131] Whether scholars were sympathetic or unsympathetic in their study of Buddhism, all enabled what Almond terms the

[127] Reginald Bosworth Smith, *Mohammed and Mohammedanism: Lectures Delivered at the Royal Institution of Great Britain in February and March 1874* (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1874), pp. xiv–xv.

[128] Smith, *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*, p. xiii.

[129] Smith, *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*, pp. 77, 99; Muir's four volumes conclude with 'the sword of Mahomet, and the Coran are the most fatal enemies of Civilisation, Liberty and the Truth which the world has yet known'. William Muir, *Life of Mahomet* (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1861), IV p. 322. Edward Said references this passage. See Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin Books, 2003), p. 151.

[130] Smith, *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*, pp. xiii, 76.

[131] Almond, *The British Discovery of Buddhism*, p. 140.

'polarity of assimilation and rejection', a process of both 'assimilating Buddhism in so far as it correlate[d] with normative Victorian ideas and values' and 'rejecting Buddhism in so far as it [was] incommensurable with these'.[132] Similarities and parallels were assimilated, while differences too alien for integration were rejected.[133] Such subjectivity produced a discourse that often says more about Victorian identity than practising Buddhists. Almond, in the footsteps of Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978), is 'concerned with the internal logic, the structure of views about Buddhism apart from the question of how Buddhism "*really*" was'.[134] In a separate work, Almond looks to the arena of Victorian Islamic studies, in which he notes a similar subjectivity at work, transforming the Prophet of Islam into 'an ideal Victorian' among sympathetic scholars:

> Muhammad as the noble Arab was also Muhammad the English gentleman, for that which was applauded in the Prophet typified ideas of Victorian gentlemanliness: simplicity of life, boundless liberality, kindness and affability to all, gentleness to inferiors, children, and animals, delicate consideration for the comfort and feelings of others, modesty, gentle speech, decisiveness in judgement, courageousness in thought and action.[135]

As Said describes, 'In any instance of at least written language, there is no such thing as a delivered presence, but a *re-presence*, or representation. [...] that Orientalism makes sense at all depends more on the West than on the Orient'.[136]

Doubling or mirroring oneself in one's scholarship, it seems, lies in wait

[132] Almond, *The British Discovery of Buddhism*, p. 132.

[133] Such a process was even enacted by British converts to non-Christian religions. Consider the personal history of Temperance leader and former Wesleyan-Methodist, Abdullah Quilliam, whose conversion to Islam led to the founding of the first mosque in Britain, the Liverpool Muslim Institute, in 1887. In addition to Friday Jumma prayers held in Arabic, the Institute also held Sunday congregational services in English, during which traditional hymns adapted to the Muslim faith were sung accompanied by an organ to make Christians and converts alike feel at home. As journalist and solicitor; theologian and biblical scholar; geologist and zoologist; and founding editor of two British Muslim periodicals *The Crescent* and *The Islamic World*, Quilliam equipped the Institute not only with a mosque, but also with a library, lecture hall, dark room for photography, chemistry lab, electrical and metallurgical laboratories, and a museum. See Ron Geaves, *Islam in Victorian Britain: The Life and Time of Abdullah Quilliam* (Leicestershire: Kube Publishing, Ltd., 2010) for Quilliam's biography.

[134] Almond, *The British Discovery of Buddhism*, p. 5.

[135] Philip C. Almond, *Heretic and Hero: Muhammad and the Victorians* (Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1989), p. 93.

[136] Said, *Orientalism*, pp. 21–22.

for any researcher, whether 'conciliatory' or 'contradictory' and regardless of acumen or intent. Even respect for the sovereignty of your subject does not preclude augmentation of the familiar. The pattern of sympathy Thomas McCarthy highlights as 'unavoidable' — that it is like a spiral or 'dialectical process' wherein we come across 'ourselves reflected within our gaze toward the other' — applies here. It seems that in order to avoid misplaced confidence in our presumed understanding of another, we must recognize the 'unavoidable' effect of sympathy to show us *our* reflection. In the context of the science of religion and oriental scholarship, this is the '*re-presence*' Said enumerates, and rather than emphasizing a many-sided or inclusive and humanist image, it has uncanny undertones. Western Oriental scholarship's creation of its Eastern double is quite Gothic; it is well-represented in the imperial Gothic fiction of the late-century.[137] H. Rider Haggard's immensely popular *She* (1887) draws the Gothic romance tradition together with new ethnographic sciences and studies in religion. The imperial Gothic, as such, magnifies the imaginative and creative practices underpinning 'scientific' undertakings; in seeking to catalogue facts and enumerate laws of development, science of religion participants perhaps more often submitted their Doppelgängers to the reading public.[138] Their (sympathetic) knowledge of the 'other' could be construed as more or less illusory, and its effect one of deference or capitulation.

Rebecca N. Mitchell notes that when you think you know another person, you risk assuming a pattern of self-extension or self-projection that easily slips into acting upon the other's behalf and, in effect, assuming sovereignty.[139] This often happens in the act of reading fiction. As reader, your knowledge of the other (the characters) fosters the desire to intercede: 'if [only] Dorothea would realize the

[137] See Patrick Brantlinger, 'Imperial Gothic', in: *The Victorian Gothic: An Edinburgh Companion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), pp. 202–16.

[138] See Peter Melville Logan, *Victorian Fetishism: Intellectuals and Primitives* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009), p. 91 for his view of E.B. Tylor's 'self-reflexivity' in his formulation of 'primitivism' and 'primitive man'.

[139] See Mitchell, *Victorian Lessons*, pp. 10–18, for her discussion of sympathy, detachment, and self-extension.

horrors that await her and refuse to marry Casaubon'![140] Besides the point that 'knowing' either a character or a real person is illusory — characters are not real people and the access to interiority we experience as readers is denied us in real life — perhaps an implicit lesson in reading fiction should be that interfering with the sovereignty of another's self should never be an option. Suzanne Keen raises a similar point when she alludes to Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism* (1993):

> Said argues that the novel was immensely important in the 'formation of imperial attitudes, references, and experiences' [...], attitudes that were often at odds with the development of human rights. To put it baldly, how can we know that readers' passionate involvement with fictional others didn't inspire a desire to collect and control people they did not personally know?[141]

Eliot seems to wish to mitigate just such a readerly response when in *Daniel Deronda* the narrator refers to a 'great deal of unmapped country within us which would have to be taken into account in an explanation of our gusts and storms'.[142] The exploration or surveyor metaphor implies 'that the attempt to know every motivation and cause of behavior would be invasive and even imperialistic'.[143] In a novel so preoccupied with sympathy, we can assume Eliot wishes to touch a nerve: is to sympathize, to deny another's sovereignty?

The more 'conciliatory' participants would most likely deny that this was the case. In the context of the science of religion, scholars were often plain in their intentions to 'raise' a specific religion or culture to prominence, wishing to highlight its significance and value for readers, rather than usurp control over its image.[144] Ironically, one way this was effected was, again, to readjust the focus upon oneself. Attempts to forge a sympathetic bridge between self and other or

[140] Mitchell, *Victorian Lessons*, p. ix.

[141] Keen, *Empathy and the Novel*, p. xx. Keen cites Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Vintage, 1994), p. xii.

[142] Eliot, *Daniel Deronda*, p. 257.

[143] Rachel Hollander, 'Daniel Deronda and the Ethics of Alterity', in: David P. Haney and Donald R. Wehrs, eds., *Levinas and Nineteenth-Century Literature: Ethics and Otherness from Romanticism through Realism* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2009), p. 270.

[144] Arie L. Molendijk refers to just such an intention in Müller's scholarship: 'Although the praise he lavished on ancient Indian civilization, being critical of contemporary India, may to our taste have some condescending overtones, it is evident that Müller wanted to raise the status of Indian civilization at least to the same level as that of ancient Greece and Rome'. Molendijk, *Friedrich Max Müller and the Sacred Books of the East*, p. 103.

past and present often took place through placing the past *within* oneself, as Carlyle does in *On Heroes* when he states the Norse Religion 'is in *us*'. Patrick Brantlinger has identified a similar feature in folklorist Andrew Lang's writing as 'a version of the doppelganger motif evident in many late Victorian romances'. He quotes Lang's article 'Realism and Romance' (1887), in which he refers to 'the natural man within me, the survival of some blue-painted Briton or of some gipsy' and celebrates 'the advantage of our mixed condition, civilized at top with the old barbarian under our clothes, [...] that we can enjoy all sorts of things'.[145] Although Lang's tone is somewhat flippant, there is something enticing in his celebration of dual-identity and inner layering of self and other as advantageous in its provision of eclectic taste. Sympathy, surely, has its shortcomings, but in its core function as a process of navigation and movement between self and other, can we say that it takes us — in one way or another — down a path toward dual development?

The science of religion is notable for this study because it manifests such various and contending approaches to confronting diversity and difference. As a mid-to-late nineteenth-century field that relied heavily upon a comparative method constantly (re)negotiating similarity and difference, its frequent deployment of sympathy as methodology informs this project's subsequent glimpses into each author's uses and treatment of sympathy in fiction. George Eliot, we will see, was profoundly invested and involved in this discourse. Not only were several pieces on non-Christian religions published at the *Westminster Review* during her time as editor, but as an extension of her insight into German Higher Criticism she also densely integrated her research on the science of religion into her fiction. She followed Müller's lectures and publications on comparative mythology, the science of language, and the science of religion closely throughout the 1860s and 1870s.

Vernon Lee shadowed British and Continental scholarship and alongside

[145] Brantlinger, 'Imperial Gothic', p. 206. See Andrew Lang, 'Realism and Romance', *The Contemporary Review* 52 (1887), 683–93 (pp. 689, 690), in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 22 September 2017. For a chapter on Lang in the context of the science of religion, see Wheeler-Barclay, *The Science of Religion in Britain*, pp. 104–39. Wheeler-Barclay writes that for Lang 'the past was [...] a repository of superior moral and aesthetic values, an idealized realm of intensely felt experience' (p. 112).

fellow aesthetes turned her attention toward areas of study arising from and around the science of religion: archaeology, classicism, and cultural anthropology, including E.B. Tylor's 'science of culture'. Much of her interest lay with a materialist aesthetic, affect, person-object interactions, and contemporary researches tracking psycho-physiological responses to the external world. Edna Lyall, a lifelong member of the Church of England, may not have been as advanced as Eliot or Lee in her learning, but she was dedicated to social and political concerns hinged on problems of difference that regularly called for the adoption of practical expressions of sympathy and altruistic action, and she writes during the period when the research produced by the science of religion was passing into popular and common knowledge among the reading public. Always eager to ascertain the perspectives of others, Lyall frequently interacted with men and women of dissimilar religious beliefs and party affiliations. For all three women writers, sympathy operates on multiple levels much as it does within the framework of the science of religion — as a basis for rational inquiry, as affective response, as (unconscious) self-amplification and doubling.

'There is light in all': Considering 'a future for literary criticism'

The science of religion altered the quality of religious discussions. Conversations about religion were previously led by clerics and theologians and took place principally within the established Church of England and the debates of philosophers. As the century progressed, these conversations were reallocated to public spaces of debate in lecture halls and the press. The voices of the educated public joined those of the clerics; topics were no longer confined to Christian theology. The science of religion '[spoke] to the public in an open forum on the issue of vital cultural importance to everyone — the essential meaning and

purpose of religion'.[146] Members of the Church of England, Nonconformists, Roman Catholics, and secularists alike joined together in what we may call a 'communicative and creative process'. Polemicist and pluralist alike took part in negotiating similarities and differences.

In a challenge to Edward Said's claims for a cohesive knowledge-power dialectic in oriental studies, Humayn Ansari notes this period's 'considerable plurality of approaches to Islam'.[147] Similarly, Buddhism studies generated a proliferation of scholarly works on Buddhism as well as popular literature items like Edwin Arnold's poem *The Light of Asia* (1879), which went through sixty editions in England and eighty in the United States in two decades.[148] Alfred Lord Tennyson composed a call to pluralism with 'Akbar's Dream' (1892), an expression of the logic of manysidedness applied to religious difference. Influenced in conversation by Benjamin Jowett (1817–1893) and inspired by Müller's scholarship, Tennyson supports Müller's maxim 'Unity in Diversity' through narrating the Mogul emperor Akbar's 'dream' of religious tolerance and pluralism:

> Shall the rose
> Cry to the lotus 'No flower thou?' the palm
> Call to the cypress 'I alone am fair'?
> The mango spurn the melon at his foot?
> 'Mine is the one fruit Alla made for man.'
>
> Look how the living pulse of Alla beats
> Thro' all His world. [...]
> There is light in all,
> And light, with more or less of shade, in all
> Man-modes of worship.[149]

[146] Wheeler-Barclay, *The Science of Religion in Britain*, p. 10.

[147] Ansari, "'Re-thinking Orientalism"?', p. 83.

[148] Philip Almond comments, 'it went through at least a hundred editions in England and America'. Almond, *The British Discovery of Buddhism*, p. 1.

[149] Alfred Lord Tennyson, *The Death of Œnone, Akbar's Dream, and Other Poems* (London; New York: Macmillan and Co., 1892), pp. 28–29. Emperor Akbar was a favourite historical reference point for Müller. He is a prominent figure in his lectures on the science of religion. See Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, pp. 23, 68–100. For a discussion of the composition history and publication of 'Akbar's Dream', see Eric J. Ziolkowski, 'Waking up from Akbar's Dream: The Literary Prefiguration of Chicago's 1893 World's Parliament of Religions', *The Journal of Religion* 73:1 (1993), 42–60, in *JSTOR*. Accessed 20 June 2013.

Conceptually (and morally), manysidedness and sympathy were the stuff of deep religious, social, and political debate, spearheading the epistemological issue of what acquiring knowledge (of others) could or could not achieve. In this project, these concepts double as both subject and lens; just as they doubled as contested character traits and hermeneutics in the mid-to-late nineteenth century.

The women writers here concerned do not always deal directly with religious difference or pluralism, but with the science of religion context in mind one sees that the impact of religious and cultural difference upon 'practical life' — whether in a political, social, or aesthetic context — is of central ('surface') significance. When considering manysidedness and sympathy, the question arises, what might literature accomplish where scholarship struggles? What might the figurative many-sided male sympathetic heroes in the fiction of Eliot, Lee, and Lyall offer to readers practically? Northrop Frye's opinion is that literature is useful because it 'produces [...] tolerance' through its 'power of detachment in the imagination, where things are removed just out of reach of belief and action'.[150] But this tolerance is only effected in the literary realm of the (sympathetic) imagination, when 'experience is removed from us a bit, [...] [and] the illusion gives us a reality that isn't in the actual experience'.[151]

What is more, a reader inspired by literary tolerance and 'power of detachment' may after all only 'be a dilettante so bemused by possibilities that one has no convictions or power to act at all'.[152] Eric J. Ziolkowski contrasts literary engagement with religious difference (as in Tennyson's poem 'Akbar's Dream') with the actual meeting of various religious leaders at the World's Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893. His comparison leaves one with the impression that *more* can be effected imaginatively through literature than concretely through real-life meetings.[153] Similarly, I have found that these women were invested in

[150] Northrop Frye, *The Educated Imagination* (New York: House of Anansi Press, 2011), p. 45.
[151] Frye, *The Educated Imagination*, pp. 45–46.
[152] Frye, *The Educated Imagination*, p. 45.
[153] See Ziolkowski, 'Waking up from Akbar's Dream', pp. 54–60 for a discussion of the missionary agenda at the World Parliament of Religions, effecting 'a rude awakening from Akbar's dream'

writing fiction as an extension of 'practical life', and I consider the question, did they have faith in the power of the written word to do more than engage readers in a 'dilettante' promotion of freedom and detachment?

In such ways, this thesis seeks to build on the many-sided practice of 'mirroring' content with method. Best and Marcus write in *The Way We Read Now*:

> The essays that follow remind us that as much as our objects of study may conceal the structures that give rise to them, they also wear them on their sleeves; that the moments that arrest us in texts need not be considered symptoms, whose true cause exists on another plane of reality. [...] [W]hat lies in plain sight is worthy of attention but often eludes observation.[154]

Manysidedness and sympathy are just such examples — they '[lie] in plain sight'. If I am to 'enter into' the interpretive writing practices of my authors most fully, then utilizing 'surface reading' as a methodological approach that similarly grapples with getting to know a text/other as it marks the critic's limits of properly knowing what a text/person is trying to do is exactly where I want my critical lens to be fixed. I would rather use a methodology that assumes at the outset how little I know with respect to my authors and their texts rather than assume that I can construe a particular meaning from them through a less sympathetic reading. I am more suspicious of myself and my limits of knowing, in this case, than I am suspicious of the texts. I do not want to use a methodology that emphasizes the agency of the critic.

> To the extent that authors are associated with freedom, Jameson posits the critic as the real author; the critic does not literally produce the text, but does produce whatever in it is related to truth. In this sense, Jameson is [...] daringly associating the power of the critic with that of the God of biblical hermeneutics, who can transcend the blinkered point of view of humankind.[155]

As an intentionalist project however, this research is just as much about the 'blinkers' as it is about sight — it is concerned with what is available to us to

(p. 55).

[154] Best and Marcus, 'Surface Reading: An Introduction', p. 18.

[155] Best and Marcus, 'Surface Reading: An Introduction', p. 14.

see and to access and to know, but also with what is not available. An awareness comparable with what the authors in this study realized — that the critic can (unconsciously) be placed into or projected upon the text — accompanies using these methods. As such this approach hopes to evade pretension or pride by seeking to establish humility as a marker of insightful work. As Best and Marcus go on to explain:

> These essays also gesture toward a future for literary criticism that does not involve the untenable claim that we are always more free than those who produce the texts we study and that our insights and methods therefore have the power to confer freedom. [...] Of course, one of the great questions of the last two centuries has been whether we can ever set aside our responses in order to produce undistorted accounts of things, since our responses are often unconscious and unknowable.[156]

I wonder about this as well — are my renditions of these women's lives and work undistorted? I think not. Yet, I approach their texts without the assumption that I am somehow above the issues they struggled with — I do not suppose that as critic I am 'more free than those who produce the texts [I] study' nor 'that [my] insights and methods [...] have the power to confer freedom'. In tackling the subjects of manysidedness and sympathy as they were being displayed, examined, and disseminated in a variety of mid-to-late nineteenth-century contexts and genres, I too am subject to what these authors struggled to understand and what has been 'one of the great questions of the last two centuries'. I have found it insightful, as a process, to turn to a theoretical approach that bluntly addresses the same epistemological issues with which the women writers I discuss were concerned. I have felt myself working, in many ways, alongside them in turn — in sympathy with each — and I can only hope I have succeeded.

In Chapter 2, I pursue the science of religion context as the basis of the intellectual sympathy between George Eliot and Max Müller. In reference to her careful reading of Müller's work, this chapter analyzes Eliot's conceptualization of sympathy as early as 1859 in 'The Lifted Veil' and again in *Middlemarch*

[156] Best and Marcus, 'Surface Reading: An Introduction', p. 18.

(1871–72), thereby tracing the role and influence of Müller's methodological practices. Chapter 3 builds upon this contextualization of Eliot's fiction and charts the arc of development in her many-sided sympathetic heroes before turning exclusively to close readings of *Daniel Deronda*.

Chapter 4 shifts from Eliot to Vernon Lee. I initially introduce Lee in relation to Eliot, using a (sympathetic) comparative method, before focusing upon the intellectual sympathy between Lee and Walter Pater, their shared influences, and Lee's infusion of didacticism into Pater's aestheticism in the 1880s and early 1890s. Here, I begin a discussion of Lee's composition of many-sided sympathetic heroes which is carried forward in Chapter 5, wherein I conduct sympathetic readings of two supernatural tales composed in the late 1880s, 'The Virgin of the Seven Daggers' and 'Amour Dure'.

Chapter 6 introduces the popular novelist Edna Lyall, first noting the contrasting roles held by Lyall and Lee in the literary marketplace, and then moving into a survey of Lyall's oeuvre and its links with current events that had captured public attention. This chapter looks to her texts in light of her correspondence with controversial figures, from the secularists George Holyoake (1817–1906) and Charles Bradlaugh to the Fenians Michael Davitt (1846–1906) and John O'Leary (1830–1907). Chapter 7 analyzes Lyall's creation of a central many-sided male sympathetic agent in her novel *Donovan* (1882) and considers the reasons behind Donovan's reappearances in Lyall's subsequent novels *We Two* (1884) and *The Autobiography of a Truth* (1896). The Conclusion considers the recent advent of a wide range of innovative reading practices by looking to Vernon Lee's theory of empathy in relation to the early-twentieth-century inauguration of New Criticism's formalist reading practices and reflects upon 'surface reading' and a hermeneutics of sympathy.

2 George Eliot & Max Müller: Affinities, *Einfühlung*, & the Science of Religion

> I am grieved to think of [your] sprain. Pray let me know, when you can, that it is better, [...] I hope you are able to enjoy Max Müller's great and delightful book during your imprisonment. It tempts me away from other things.[1]

In this letter to Sara Sophia Hennell, the 'great and delightful book' to which George Eliot refers is Friedrich Max Müller's first series of *Lectures on the Science of Language* (1861). Eliot read Müller's works avidly and returned again and again to these lectures, reading the first series in 1862 and the second series in 1864, 1871, and again a few weeks before her death in 1880. According to her journal she completed the first volume of *Chips from a German Workshop* (1867) in 1868, reread *A History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature* (1859) in 1869, and noted in 1873, 'have been reading aloud Max Müller's Science of Religions'.[2] Eliot took such pleasure in Müller's research that more than once one finds her reading his works when she is ill or depressed. In her journal on 20 January 1862 she records, 'Head still bad, producing terrible depression. Read Müller'.[3] On 28

[1] Eliot, *Letters*, IV, p. 8 (14 January 1862).

[2] George Eliot, *The Journals of George Eliot*, edited by Margaret Harris and Judith Johnston (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 131, 138; Eliot, *Letters*, V, p. 461 (17 November 1873).

[3] Eliot, *Journals*, p. 108.

August 1864 in another letter to Sara Sophia Hennell she remarks: 'Remembering you just a minute ago I started up from Max Müller's new volume, with which I was consoling myself under a sore throat'.[4] And in late 1869 Eliot turned to Müller during a period of misfortune — writing for *Middlemarch* had come to a standstill in the wake of learning that Thornton Lewes, the son of G.H. Lewes, was fatally ill with tuberculosis of the spine. Thornton, who had returned to England from Natal in May of that year, declined rapidly after his arrival and was frequently in severe pain as the disease developed.[5] By October he was paralyzed and only fitfully conscious. On 13 October, just six days before his death, Eliot 'read rapidly through Max Müller's "History of [Ancient] Sanskrit Literature" '.[6]

Eliot frequently returned to Müller's work, then, and often her reading of his scholarship coincided with bouts of illness or depression. Why did she consistently seek out his translations, essays, and lectures? More than this, why does she appear to have considered his research a source of comfort and consolation? To a certain extent Eliot must have taken pleasure in Müller's research because he presented strong German scholarship in accessible English. Eliot viewed German scholarship as many-sided, relentless in ever-widening its scope, and praised the German mind's compulsion to '[look] at a subject in every one of its facets'.[7] Yet, even as Eliot argued that English researchers were obliged to study their German predecessors, she freely admitted the difficulties German publications posed to an English readership.[8] Müller's writing style, in contrast, was a welcome treat. In his review of Müller's first series of *Lectures on the Science of Language*, G.H. Lewes called him 'a very exceptional German' who had 'emancipated himself from the

[4] Eliot, *Letters*, IV, p. 160.

[5] For an account of Thornton Lewes's diagnosis, decline, and death, see Gordon S. Haight, *George Eliot: A Biography* (New York: Penguin Books, 1985), pp. 417–19, 421, and Rosemary Ashton, *George Eliot: A Life* (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1997), pp. 299–300.

[6] Eliot, *Journals*, p. 6.

[7] George Eliot, *Essays of George Eliot*, edited by Thomas Pinney (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), p. 389.

[8] See Eliot, *Essays*, p. 389 for her comment, 'It is true the German rarely writes well, rarely arranges his matter well, or manages it with economy'.

painful minuteness and inartistic prodigality of the German'.[9]

This chapter proposes, further, that Eliot turned to Müller's scholarship so frequently because she found the interrelated comparative and historical-critical methods, as well as an underlying pattern of manysidedness at work in his research, reassuring and constructive in the face of her own doubts about sympathy as a reliable moral foundation for her realism. Aspects of Eliot's oeuvre indicate that she desired to instruct her readers in an 'ethics of difference' or morals of alterity rather than one of sympathy or sameness, but that her early attempts to achieve this were unsuccessful.[10] George Levine finds that the 'ideal of Victorian realism' is 'to see and feel with others' eyes and sensibilities', to use fiction to cultivate, as it were, a many-sided self that is fostered by other-awareness. This is certainly the case for Eliot, whose famous 'dictum on art' unites her moral aims of thinking *beyond* the self with her brand of realism: 'Art is the nearest thing to life; it is a mode of amplifying experience and extending our [surface] contact with our fellow-men beyond the bounds of our personal lot'.[11] Yet, Levine also points to the frequent failure of this ideal, 'the degree to which the sympathy for difference was another version of the effort to assimilate difference to sameness, other to self'.[12]

Of this dilemma, Eliot was well-aware. Thomas Albrecht, for instance, refers to Eliot's novella, *The Lifted Veil* (1859), as a text which 'dramatizes a crisis for Eliot's ethics of sympathy', one wherein she 'suggests that there is a kind of narcissism implicit in sympathy, since sympathy, [...] ultimately refers the other back to the self to confirm and nourish the self'.[13] In her staging of our innate

[9] G.H. Lewes, 'A Box of Books', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 91:558 (1862), 434–51 (pp. 436–37), in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 15 November 2013.

[10] In particular, see Thomas Albrecht, 'Sympathy and Telepathy: The Problem of Ethics in George Eliot's "The Lifted Veil"', *ELH* 73:2 (2006) and Mitchell, *Victorian Lessons in Empathy and Difference*. Albrecht contends that Eliot's self-questioning in regards to sympathy is at the heart of *The Lifted Veil*. Mitchell argues that realism ultimately aims to emphasize difference and the inescapable reality of otherness as a tactic to awaken empathy, and uses examples from *Adam Bede* to support her position.

[11] Eliot, *Essays*, p. 271.

[12] George Levine, *Realism, Ethics and Secularism: Essays on Victorian Literature and Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 4.

[13] Albrecht, 'Sympathy and Telepathy', pp. 440, 454.

inability to know the other as 'other' (unmediated by references to the self) so early in her career, Eliot leaves us with the implication that, while sympathy sits at the heart of her moral and aesthetic vision for realism, extending our contact 'beyond the bounds of our personal lot' is not necessarily a task sympathy can achieve.

A 'central paradox', then, emerges in Eliot's work: 'her deep respect for difference coexist[s] with her equally deep desire to resolve and transcend it'.[14] This highlights the desirability of putting a many-sided model to work within Eliot's fiction to negotiate conflict. As a method, manysidedness functions to embrace paradox and negotiate conflict; it also connotes expanding, radiating, and moving outward *beyond* the self in a way comparable with sympathy, very like Eliot's imperative of '*extending* our contact with our fellow-men *beyond the bounds* of our personal lot', and it underpins Eliot's realism as it does Müller's scholarship, as this chapter will show. Levine, furthermore, highlights a paradox of knowing versus not knowing, of winding the 'familiar' with the 'strange', as a key feature of Victorian realism more broadly, and he, too, significantly uses language of *expansion* as a part of this project:

> Realists explore the consciousnesses and natures of a broad variety of selves, more or less strange, more or less familiar; they thrust the reader into an intimacy with possibilities well *beyond the limits* of the self who reads. They *push the boundaries* of the non-self, [...] even to a recognition of the perhaps ultimate unknowability of others. And, as with all Victorian efforts at knowing, there comes the ethical concomitant, the deepest respect and reverence for that otherness.[15]

Eliot, I think, found respect and reverence for otherness deeply imbued in Müller's publications, which operated on a basis of unearthing similarities concurrently with illuminating differences across past and present cultures and religious communities — his motto, 'Unity in Diversity', is predicated upon a many-sided model and tradition that also implies expansion, development, and a radiating self-cultivation. In her struggle with the conflict between an ethics of sympathy and an ethics of

[14]Ellen Argyros, *Without any Check of Proud Reserve: Sympathy and its Limits in George Eliot's Novels* (New York: Peter Lang, 1999), p. 3.
[15]Levine, *Realism, Ethics and Secularism*, p. viii. Emphasis added.

difference, perhaps best articulated in her own words as an ethics based upon 'heighten[ing] men's reverence before the secrets of each other's souls, that there might be less assumption of entire knowingness', Eliot turned to Müller.[16] Müller, then, as a consoling presence in ill-health and sympathetic male specialist for the female writer in need of support, offered Eliot encouragement in her continued fraught experimentation with sympathy.

Eliot's familiarity with Müller's work can be traced throughout much of her own, particularly via evidence of her comparable interest in the emerging sciences of language and religion. In pursuing the parallels running between their careers and mirrored influences, this chapter explores how Eliot replicates and comments upon Müller's philological, comparative, and historical-critical methodologies in her fiction. Here, I lay the groundwork for the close readings that follow in Chapter 3 and seek to establish two points: first, to demonstrate Eliot's engagement with the science of religion and argue that this developing body of research informed her fiction; second, to parallel her research methods — sympathetic (*Einfühlung*) and many-sided ('Unity in Diversity') — with those of Max Müller, giving us at once new insight into her construction of certain male characters and moving us towards the position that the science of religion should inform a broader reading of *Daniel Deronda* specifically.

It may not be perfectly clear or verifiable that their intellectual sympathy also impacted Eliot's composition of a 'species' of many-sided male sympathetic hero that develops throughout her oeuvre — beginning with Latimer in *The Lifted Veil* and extending to another very experimental figure, Theophrastus in *The Impressions of Theophrastus Such* (1879) — but this kind of sympathetically imagining ourselves 'into' an author's position is what this thesis is partially about: that by going against the grain of a hermeneutics of suspicion, an opportunity is open to us for fruitful conjecture about what an author thought and felt and why she may have written as she did.

[16]Eliot, *Letters*, III, p. 164 (26 September 1859).

Marks of affinity: parallel pursuits & influences in the careers of Eliot & Müller

Both George Eliot and Max Müller began their forays into publishing with translations linked to the mounting interest in German higher criticism. Müller translated the ancient Indian fables known as the *Hitopadesa* into German in 1844 and Eliot — then Mary Anne Evans — translated David Strauss's *Das Leben Jesu* (1835) into English in 1846. Their rises to fame were also nearly concurrent. Only six months after the publication of Müller's popular essay *Comparative Mythology* in 1856, Eliot's first attempt at fiction was well received in 1857 as 'The Sad Fortunes of the Reverend Amos Barton'. *Adam Bede* (1859) followed, sealing Eliot's literary fame. Müller's initial delivery of lectures on the science of language in 1861 established his scholarly reputation.

A prolific reader in nearly all areas of contemporary study, Eliot was up-to-date on publications in linguistic and religious studies. As a student of several languages — she learned French, Italian, German, Latin, medieval Latin, Greek, Spanish, and Hebrew over the course of her life — the value of comparative philology was not lost upon her, and due in part to her resolute interest in these areas, the aims and attitudes of Eliot and Müller coincide on several fronts. It becomes increasingly evident that Eliot found Müller's work on language and its implications for studies of religion highly relevant.[17] Not unlike Müller, her 'knowledge of other languages was a central feature of her intellectual life' and her 'continued study of linguistic scholarship [was] linked to her indefatigable fascination with the mythologies of many cultures'.[18] In addition to Müller's scholarship, Eliot read works throughout the 1860s that spoke directly

[17] Although this thesis is outwardly more interested in the science of religion, Müller's science of language is an important precursor and one so closely related in its methods and goals that it becomes equally important to this conversation.

[18] John Rignall, 'Languages, George Eliot's knowledge of', in: John Rignall, ed., *Oxford Reader's Companion to George Eliot* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), Accessed 16 November 2016; George Eliot, *George Eliot's Daniel Deronda Notebooks*, edited by Jane Irwin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 273.

to the emerging field of comparative religious studies.[19] She calls attention to religious diversity throughout her fiction, for instance via the myriad interpretations of Anglicanism in *Scenes of Clerical Life* (1857), the diverse Protestantism in *Adam Bede* (1859), her use of Maggie Tulliver in *The Mill on the Floss* (1860) to encapsulate the stages of religion's development, the religious history of fifteenth-century Florence as related in *Romola* (1862–3), the Oriental back-story of *Felix Holt* (1866), the Inquisition setting and Catholic-Moor conflict of *The Spanish Gypsy* (1868), the religious pluralism conveyed through *Middlemarch* (1870–71), and the proto-Zionism and comparative religion of *Daniel Deronda* (1876).

As leading intellectuals in their respective vocations, both Eliot and Müller were involved in the gradual displacement of theology from the forefront of England's investigations into understanding mankind and interpreting history; they separately contributed to ushering German developments in scientific methodology into England. Müller's German background and education at the University of Leipzig naturally impacted the tenor of his scholarly contributions in Oxford; concomitantly, Eliot's acquaintance with German writing was extensive and her career trajectory from translator, journalist, and editor to established novelist

[19] For example, in July 1861 she completed Renan's *Études d'Histoire Religieuse* (1857), a collection of essays on Buddhism, Comparative Mythology, Paganism, and Persian 'passion plays' or teaziehs. Likely as part of her research for *The Spanish Gypsy* (1868), she also read Renan's *Histoire des Langues Sémitiques* (1855) in November 1866, Renan's *Averroès and L'Averroisme* (1852) in December 1867, and Salomon Munk's *Mélanges de Philosophie Juive et Arabe* (1859) in January 1868. Other titles include: Baron Joseph Hammer-Purgstall, *O Kind! Die berühmte ethische Abhandlung Ghazalis, Arabisch und Deutsch* (1838); Benjamin Thorpe, *Northern Mythology, Comprising the Principal Popular Traditions and Superstitions of Scandinavia, North Germany, and the Netherlands* (1851–52); John Gardner Wilkinson, *A Popular Account of the Ancient Egyptians* (1854); François Joseph Chabas, *Le plus ancien livre du mond. Etude sur le papyrus Prisse* (1858); Heinrich Karl Brugsch-Bey, *Histoire d'Egypte* (1859); Aloys Sprenger, *Das Leben und die Lehre des Mohammad nach bisher grösstentheils unbenutzten Quellen bearbeitet* (1861–65); Martin Haug, *Essays on the Sacred Language, Writings and Religion of the Parsis* (1862); Ernest Renan, *Histoire Générale et Système Comparé des Langues Sémitiques* (1863); Joseph Arthur de Gobineau, *Les religions et les philosophies dans l'Asie centrale* (1865); Willem Pleyte, *Études égyptologiques* (1866–68); François Lenormant, *La Magie chez les chaldéens et les origines accadiennes* (1874); William Dwight Whitney, *Language and its Study* (1874); Reginald Bosworth Smith, *Mohammed and Mohammedanism* (1874); and Charles de Harlez, *Avesta: Livre sacrés des sectateurs de Zoroastre* (1875–77).

gave her ample opportunity to circulate German ideas.[20] Rosemary Ashton names her one of four 'Germanists' most responsible for disseminating and popularizing German learning in England.[21] In addition to translating David Friedrich Strauss's *Das Leben Jesu* in 1846, Eliot made Ludwig Feuerbach's *Das Wesen des Christenthums* available to an English readership in 1854 and from that year onwards traveled to Germany regularly, turning it into 'almost a second home'.[22] During her first visit Eliot aided G.H. Lewes in compiling material for his biography *Life and Works of Goethe* (1855) and translating his citations from the German. Together they propagated German erudition in defiance of English prejudices generally held against German pedants as 'cloudy metaphysician[s]'.[23]

Goethe, in fact, stands sentinel to a fuller understanding of both of their works. E.S. Shaffer, one of the earliest critics to illuminate the affinity between Eliot and Goethe, writes, 'each of her works, and every aspect of her work, owes much to the fructifying influence of Goethe'.[24] Eliot first became familiar with his writings in the 1840s when she studied German, and from London in 1853 she writes to Sara Sophia Hennell, calling Goethe 'one of my companions here'.[25] She was assiduous in her support of G.H. Lewes's research and preparations for his biography of Goethe and throughout their eight-month stay in Germany in 1854–55 they visited scenes of Goethe's life and interviewed men who had known him (including his secretary Johann Peter Eckermann) alongside their readings and translations of his works. This trip was a time of 'total immersion in Goethe' and

[20] Eliot edited the *Westminster Review* from 1851–54; under her editorship several articles on German culture were published. In her articles Eliot defends Goethe, Heine, Lessing, and Riehl, and draws attention to Liszt and Wagner: 'Three Months in Weimar' (June 1855); 'The Morality of Wilhelm Meister' (July 1855); 'Liszt, Wagner, and Weimar' (July 1855); 'The Future of German Philosophy' (28 July 1855); 'German Wit: Heinrich Heine' (January 1856); 'The Natural History of German Life' (July 1856); 'A Word for the Germans' (7 March 1865). See Eliot, *Essays*.

[21] Ashton, *The German Idea*, p. 26.

[22] Ashton, *The German Idea*, p. 23.

[23] Eliot, *Essays*, p. 387.

[24] E.S. Shaffer, 'George Eliot and Goethe: "Hearing the Grass Grow"', *Publications of the English Goethe Society* 66 (1996), 3–22 (p. 22). See also E.S. Shaffer, *"Kubla Khan" and the Fall of Jerusalem: The Mythological School in Biblical Criticism and Secular Literature, 1770–1880* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975).

[25] Eliot, *Letters*, II, p. 115 (18 August 1853).

Eliot's biographer Gordon Haight has claimed, 'She probably read every word of Goethe'.[26] Müller, meanwhile, as a core feature of his formulation of a science of religion, adapted Goethe's maxim, '*He who knows one* [religion], *knows none*'.[27] He too had a long-standing interest in German literature, and Goethe's *Faust* and *Wilhelm Meister's Wanderjahre* (1821) attracted his attention in particular.[28] He often quoted Goethe, even from a young age, and when the English Goethe Society was founded in 1886 Müller was quickly nominated as its first President.[29] To Francis Turner Palgrave (1824–1897) in 1849 he writes of Goethe, 'he is more than a poet, and more than a philosopher, he is a full man, a whole humanity in himself', and he enquires if Palgrave has also noticed 'a beautiful echo from the *Wahlverwandtschaften*' in J.A. Froude's (1818–1894) recently published (and infamously heterodox) work *The Nemesis of Faith* (1849).[30]

While neither Eliot nor Müller uses the term 'many-sided' with regularity or frequency, each has left clear indications that they were well-aware of the concept and its association with Goethe's legacy of tolerance and impartiality. In his Inaugural Address to the English Goethe Society, Müller venerates the ideal Goethe 'cherished with intense devotion': 'I mean his *cosmopolitan sympathies*, and, more particularly, his constant endeavours after what he called *eine Welt-literatur*, a *World-literature*'. He calls Goethe's habitual search for 'what is true and beautiful' in 'the growth of every literature — not only English, French, Italian, Spanish, but Serbian, Bohemian, Lithuanian, modern Greek, Swedish, nay, Persian, Arabic, Sanskrit, and Chinese', a 'treat in an age when most critics imagine that their chief duty is to discover in every work of art not what is good, but what is bad', and

[26] Haight, *George Eliot: A Biography*, p. 174.

[27] Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, p. 16. Emphasis in original. The original remark by Goethe is 'he who does not know foreign languages knows nothing about his own' [Wer fremde Sprachen nicht kennt, weiß nichts von seiner eigenen], from *Maximen und Reflexionen*, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Goethe Maximen und Reflexionen*, edited by Max F. Hecker (Weimar, 1907), p. 18.

[28] See Müller's letter to his mother, Müller, *Life and Letters*, I, pp. 11–12 (1839).

[29] See Lourens van den Bosch, *Friedrich Max Müller: A Life Devoted to Humanities* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), pp. 20, 169, 177, 295, and Müller, *Life and Letters*, II, p. 192.

[30] Müller, *Life and Letters*, I, p. 94 (27 April 1849).

summarizes: '*Many-sided* (*vielseitig*), [...] is an adjective that belongs to Goethe by the same right as *venerable* belongs to Bede, *judicious* to Hooker'.[31]

In Eliot's case, E.S. Shaffer calls the artistic relationship between Goethe and Eliot 'a genial affinity, which stamped independent pursuit of the same ends, but also deep immersion in and absorption of the one by the other'.[32] In 'The Natural History of German Life' (1856), Eliot praises Goethe as 'eminently the man who helps us rise to a lofty point of observation, so that we may see things in their relative proportions'.[33] In 'The Morality of *Wilhelm Meister*', she openly defends Goethe's 'many-sided' *Bildungsroman*, using her review to demonstrate how English readers can determine the true moral value of a text. She does not shy away from the opportunity to venerate manysidedness and associate it with what she deems its rightful moral import: 'The large tolerance of Goethe, which is markedly exhibited in *Wilhelm Meister*, is precisely that to which we point as the element of moral superiority'.[34] Eliot's review refers directly to Lewes's recently published biography, which, meanwhile, also took up the challenge of delineating what was meant by Goethe's chief characteristic. Writing 'first of his *manysidedness*', Lewes explains that this word indicates Goethe's 'variety of faculty', the 'multiplied activity of his life', his possession of 'a mind open to all influences', his interest in 'diverse characters', and his express involvement 'with life in various forms', being 'alternately busy with languages, mythology, antiquities, law, philosophy, poetry, and religion'.[35]

Despite attempts such as these to reconfigure this term's connotations by improving England's reception of Goethe, it was very likely used sparingly by Eliot and Müller *because* of its close association with Goethe. Representative of liberal humanitarian characteristics and yet also persistently denoting to an English audience indecisiveness and an immoral timidity, the concept of manysidedness has

[31]Müller, 'Goethe and Carlyle', p. 5. Emphasis in original.
[32]Shaffer, 'George Eliot and Goethe', p. 22.
[33]Eliot, *Essays*, p. 297.
[34]Eliot, *Essays*, pp. 144, 147.
[35]G.H. Lewes, *The Life and Works of Goethe,* 2 vols (London: David Nutt, 1855), I, p. 34.

likely gone largely unexamined because of its historical affiliation with Goethe. E.S. Shaffer suggests, 'There was still far to go in the comprehension of Goethe [following the publication of Lewes's biography]. No new writer in England could openly enlist under his banner and hope to gain anything but a large meed of prejudiced resistance'.[36] In this light, Eliot's two additional uses of the descriptor 'many-sided', found in *Daniel Deronda* (1876), must have been phrased intentionally to conjure Goethe, already a strong presence in this Faustian novel. She coins the phrase 'many-sided sympathy' as a part of her depiction of Deronda's 'early-wakened sensibility and reflectiveness' and his consequential inability to maintain 'any persistent course of action' or 'antagonism' in any direction (*DD* 335). Its use here also suggests the intentional kinship between Deronda and Wilhelm Meister.[37] Elsewhere, Eliot calculatedly describes Gwendolen's 'many-sided self', using the narrator to indicate that we each carry a comparable array of conflicting selves and opinions within us (*DD* 545). Gwendolen, already displayed as a fluctuating and multi-faceted series of surfaces, is in this way also cast further as Deronda's double. Müller, meanwhile, appears to have equally been aware of reasons to refrain from using the term manysidedness too freely; in his Inaugural Address, he admits Goethe's '*cosmopolitan sympathies*' and manysidedness were ideals 'for which his own countrymen have often rather blamed than praised him'.[38]

Tied to their high regard for Goethe and his *Weltliteratur*, an exacting and scientific study of language attracted both Eliot and Müller.[39] Müller describes

[36] Shaffer, 'George Eliot and Goethe', p. 11.

[37] E.S. Shaffer calls *Daniel Deronda* 'a novel whose affinities are with *Wilhelm Meister* rather than with *Pride and Prejudice*', and John Rignall refers to Deronda as 'a privileged character' in Eliot's oeuvre as his 'early aspirations are presented in terms that allude directly to the Goethean model'. See Shaffer, *"Kubla Khan" and the Fall of Jerusalem*, p. 234, and John Rignall, 'Goethe, Johann Wolfgang', in: John Rignall, ed., *Oxford Reader's Companion to George Eliot* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), Accessed 16 November 2016.

[38] Müller, 'Goethe and Carlyle', p. 5.

[39] E.S. Shaffer argues that both Goethe and Eliot 'contributed to that world literature whose meaning they helped to define'. Shaffer, 'George Eliot and Goethe', p. 22. Müller concludes his Inaugural Address to the English Goethe Society with the hope that the future holds 'the realization of what Goethe considered the highest blessing of a world-literature, "Peace on earth, goodwill towards men" — yes, towards all men'. Müller, 'Goethe and Carlyle', p. 24.

the aim of the science of language as simply 'to teach what language is'; for him the study of language is a physical science exploring the natural laws of language's growth and decay, processes that occur independently of mankind's influence or choice.[40] He compares the development of language to the growth of trees, the movement of rivers, or else to the gradual layering of sediment. The many-sided model of 'Unity in Diversity' is very apparent when he aligns the science of language with botany and claims that the 'real science of plants' can only begin when 'the unity of an organic system' is found beneath the singularities of individual samples.[41] In particular, he saw the study of language as 'a tool for reconstructing the history of human consciousness' and meticulous precision was essential to accomplishing this goal.[42] In describing his initial foray into linguistics in the 1840s, Müller reflects on his decision to make 'the object of my own philosophical occupation [...] the accurate definition of every word' — 'My interest in this analytical process soon took an historical, that is etymological, character in so far as I tried to find out why any words should now mean exactly what, according to our definition, they ought to mean'.[43] Eliot similarly expresses her reverence for the particularity of language. While staying with Lewes at Ilfracombe in May and June of 1856 to aid him in field research for his naturalist publication *Seaside Studies* (1858), she was impressed by a methodology of close observation and zoological classification:

> I never before longed so much to know the names of things [...] The desire is part of the tendency that is now constantly growing in me to escape from all vagueness and inaccuracy into the daylight of distinct, vivid ideas.[44]

Another mutual concern connected with the study of language was the illumination of ties between past and present, and insistence on the moral

[40] Friedrich Max Müller, *Lectures on the Science of Language, delivered at the Royal Institution of Great Britain in April, May, and June, 1861*, 3rd edition (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1862), p. 11.

[41] Müller, *Lectures on the Science of Language, 1861*, p. 15.

[42] Wheeler-Barclay, *The Science of Religion in Britain*, p. 39.

[43] Friedrich Max Müller, *My Autobiography: A Fragment* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901), pp. 142–43.

[44] Quoted in A.S. Byatt, 'Introduction', in: A.S. Byatt, ed., *Selected Essays, Poems and Other Writings* (London: Penguin Books, 1990), pp. ix–xxxviii (p. xvii).

significance in recognizing such ties. For Müller, 'The object and aim of philology, [...] is but one, — to learn what man is by learning what man has been'.[45] Taking further inspiration from Goethe, he sought to use his research to create feelings of community between dissimilar nations, creeds, and ages. Combining the study of 'a distant past' with 'belief in a distant future' should stoke 'the conviction that we are by indissoluble bonds connected [...], that we form one universal family on earth', while applying a comparative method to religion should lead to the discovery of 'the living kernel of religion, [...] in almost every creed, however much the husk may vary': 'And think what that means! It means that above and beneath and behind all religions there is one eternal, one universal religion, a religion to which every man belongs'.[46] Relying upon a comparative method at all should, in fact, inspire the tolerance and impartiality so closely associated with Goethean manysidedness:

> [A]lthough comparing is about finding similarities as well as dissimilarities, for Müller [...] the most important thing was to show that there are communalities, especially between the East and the West. [...] Comparison implied, as a matter of fact, for Müller impartiality: 'The sacred books of the principal religions of mankind had to be placed side by side with perfect impartiality, in order to discern the points which they share in common as well as those that are peculiar to each.'[47]

Although critics of Müller have registered the implicit (and at times explicit) partiality he expressed for Christianity throughout his career, Molendijk also notes that his 'background assumption of some sort of providential design, which unites all human history' fed into his '(methodological) ideal of a sympathetic way of comparing'.[48] Impartiality remained the order of the day, and Müller's research

[45] Friedrich Max Müller, *A History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature, so far as it Illustrates the Primitive Religion of the Brahmans* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1859), p. 8.

[46] Müller, 'Goethe and Carlyle', pp. 6–7; Friedrich Max Müller, *Thoughts on Life and Religion: An Aftermath from the Writings of the Right Honourable Professor Max Müller*, edited by Georgina Adelaide Müller (London: Constable and Company, Ltd.), p. 145.

[47] Molendijk, *Friedrich Max Müller and the Sacred Books of the East*, p. 185. Molendijk quotes Friedrich Max Müller, 'Address [to the Aryan Section]', in: Robert K. Douglas, ed., *Transactions of the Second Session of the International Congress of Orientalists: held in London in September, 1874* (London: Trubner & Co., 1876), ⟨URL: http://dbooks.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/books/PDFs/555078390.pdf⟩, pp. 177–204 (p. 185). Accessed 4 August 2017.

[48] Molendijk, *Friedrich Max Müller and the Sacred Books of the East*, p. 129.

operates along that fine line between encouraging his readers to see 'similarity where at first [they] saw dissimilarity only', and simultaneously insisting that there exist 'other worlds beside our own, that there are other religions, other mythologies, other laws'.[49]

Müller's research, predicated upon a Goethean model of wide erudition and tolerance, aided Eliot in her own promotion of (many-sided) other-awareness in her fiction. Their works similarly strive to make 'otherness' more accessible to readers — whether this is 'otherness' of past languages and cultures or that of contemporary classes, genders, and religious differences — instructing that educated awareness of difference aids self-understanding because it places the self in a more realistic relation to others. In the words of the narrator of *Middlemarch*, it curbs our instinct to 'tak[e] the world as an udder to feed our supreme selves' and helps us 'conceive with that distinctness which is no longer reflection but feeling' that others have 'an equivalent centre of self, whence the lights and shadows must always fall with a certain difference'.[50] As for Müller, he concludes his 1870 lectures on the science of religion: 'If we have once learned to be charitable and reasonable in the interpretation of the sacred books of other religions, we shall more easily learn to be charitable and reasonable in the interpretation of our own'.[51] One unearths a comparable enterprise of learning to know one's self through acquiring a deeper knowledge of others in Eliot's article 'A Word for the Germans' (1865):

> [I]t is precisely that partition of mankind into races and nations, resulting in various national points of view or varieties of national genius, which has been the means of enriching and rendering more and more complete man's knowledge of the inner and outer world.[52]

No doubt Eliot was peculiarly drawn to Müller's scholarship on mythology, language, and religion for this reason — his work widened his audience's

[49]Müller, *Lectures on the Science of Language, 1861*, p. 18; Müller, 'Address [to the Aryan Section]', p. 184.

[50]George Eliot, *Middlemarch*, edited by David Carroll (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), p. 205. Parenthetical citations given in the text are from this edition and prefixed with *MM*.

[51]Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, p. 281.

[52]Eliot, *Essays*, p. 388.

awareness of the world's diversity while enumerating the elements that unite the world's inhabitants. Through Müller, English readers 'encounter[ed] exotic religions and mythologies whose spiritual outlook and aspirations differed little — in essence — from their own'.[53] Through Müller's eyes the English public might see 'Unity in diversity'. So much of Müller's outlook and method, in fact, responds directly and poignantly to the despondency Eliot conveyed to Charles Bray in 1859:

> I can't tell you how much melancholy it causes me that people are, for the most part, so incapable of comprehending the state of mind which *cares for that which is essentially human in all forms of belief*, and desires to exhibit it under all forms with loving truthfulness.[54]

With 'all religions spring[ing] from the same sacred soil, the human heart', yet each being distinct and *valuable* enough in its differences to warrant thorough translation and study, Müller's science of religion struck a sympathetic chord with Eliot.[55] In claiming that 'To learn to understand one another is the great art of life', while also espousing the view that 'to "agree to differ" is the best lesson of the comparative science of religion', Müller offers a (many-sided) model based in sympathy that does not discount difference.[56]

In the midst of absorbing this (Goethean) lesson, readers of Eliot and Müller were likely to learn to concentrate on historic detail rather than rely upon theories or abstractions. At the heart of comparative philology was the attempt by grammarians to pinpoint an abstract primitive language, but in Müller's lectures linguistic complexity and an acute knowledge of various dialects takes precedence:

> Such a system may be convenient for the purposes of grammatical analysis, but it becomes mischievous as soon as these grammatical abstractions are invested with an historical reality. [...] The grammarian who postulates an historical reality for the one primitive type of Teutonic speech, is no better than the historian who believes in a *Francus*, [...] the supposed ancestor of all the Franks, or in a *Brutus*, the mythical father of all the Britons.[57]

[53] Müller and Stone, *The Essential Max Müller*, p. xiv.
[54] Eliot, *Letters*, III, p. 111 (5 July 1859). Emphasis added.
[55] Müller, 'Address [to the Aryan Section]', p. 185.
[56] Müller, *Thoughts on Life and Religion*, p. 1.
[57] Müller, *Lectures on the Science of Language, 1861*, p. 180. See also Molendijk, *Friedrich Max Müller and the Sacred Books of the East*, pp. 123–27 for a more detailed look at Müller's misgivings about a popular reliance upon theories rather than a historical method in England.

Eliot, meanwhile, in her journalism and fiction correspondingly highlights the intellectual danger of generalizations. Her fiction is founded upon the accuracy she admired in the realism of Ruskin: 'The truth of infinite value that he teaches is *realism* — the doctrine that all truth and beauty are to be attained by a humble and faithful study of nature, and not by substituting vague forms, bred by imagination on the mists of feeling, in place of definite, substantial reality'.[58] She develops this 'humble and faithful study of nature'. In 1866 she writes to Frederic Harrison, 'I think aesthetic teaching is the highest of all teaching because it deals with life in its highest complexity. But if it ceases to be purely aesthetic — if it lapses anywhere from the picture to the diagram — it becomes the most offensive of all teaching'.[59] Eliot shares with Harrison that she applies herself to the 'agonizing labour' of creating 'a sufficiently real back-ground' and grouping 'breathing, individual forms, [...] in the needful relations, so that the presentation will lay hold on the emotions as human experience — will, [...] "flash" conviction on the world by means of aroused sympathy'.[60]

As intellectuals, Eliot and Müller share an aversion to wholly accepting the work of master theorists and philosophers who 'forc[ed] facts into their grand theories', a tendency Müller noted for example in Hegelian dialectic idealism.[61] Caught between Hegelian and Herderean influences in Germany, Müller set himself apart from the Hegelian craze surrounding him in the 1840s. 'When historical facts and Hegelian idealism collided, [...] [and] the Hegelians would side with their theories, declaring "tant pis pour les faits" ', Müller would strive to side with the facts: 'I could not bring myself to admit that the history of religion, nor even the history of philosophy as we know it from Thales to Kant, was really running side by side with [Hegel's] Logic'.[62] In a letter to Charles

[58]George Eliot, 'Review of "Modern Painters" by John Ruskin', *Westminster Review* 65:128, (April 1856), 625–33 (p. 626) in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 5 April 2017.
[59]Eliot, *Letters*, IV, p. 300 (15 August 1866).
[60]Eliot, *Letters*, IV, pp. 300–01 (15 August 1866).
[61]Müller and Stone, *The Essential Max Müller*, p. 10.
[62]Müller and Stone, *The Essential Max Müller*, p. 9; Müller, *My Autobiography*, p. 141.

Darwin, Müller emphasizes this point: 'More facts and fewer theories is what we want, at least in the Science of Language'.[63] The moral impetus to depict what was deeply human, what was real and complex and able to engage the sympathetic imagination, propelled the works of both Eliot and Müller.

Rousing the imagination to visions of difference: Goethean Manysidedness & Herderean *Einfühlung*

Rather than uniformly advocate the theories of German thinkers like Hegel or Kant, Eliot and Müller exercised what became for them a more fruitful aspect of German learning: the historical method of *Einfühlung* as propounded by Johann Gottfried Herder. In his early essay *This, Too, a Philosophy of History for the Formation of Humanity* (1774), Herder explains that radical difference can be surmounted by an interpreter of history through *Einfühlung*, the practice of 'feeling one's way in', a method comparable with exercising the sympathetic imagination. Herder's directive is to 'transport yourself into the age, [...] into the entire history, feel your way into everything'.[64] One scholar interprets Herderean *Einfühlung* as 'a warm, wondering, human [...] sympathy', a kind of empathy at a distance, or an 'entering into' one's subject without fusing with it.[65] Michael N. Forster explains it as 'an arduous process of historical-philological inquiry'.[66] As German historicism began to place the whole range of history's diversity under the umbrella of *Allgemeine Geschichte* the historian's extension of *Einfühlung* became increasingly necessary as a mode of historical understanding. Essentially, Herderean *Einfühlung* implies balanced historicism — the historian should not be so close to his subject that he slips into self-identification, but he must also refrain from remaining too distant, in

[63] Müller, *Life and Letters*, I, p. 495 (13 October 1875).
[64] Herder et al., 'From "This, Too, A Philosophy of History"', p. 36.
[65] ApRoberts, *The Ancient Dialect*, p. 73. As mentioned in the previous chapter, 'empathy' was coined in 1909 by the psychologist Edward Tichener as a translation of *Einfühlung*.
[66] Michael N. Forster, 'Introduction', in: Michael N. Forster, ed., *Herder: Philosophical Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. vii–xxxv (p. xvii).

danger of fostering prejudice or hostility.[67]

While Hegel's idealism emphasized theory, Herder's *Einfühlung* was a central part of systematically privileging fact over philosophic model or supposition and elucidating accurate details of the past. Astride their foundational captivation with Goethean ideas, both Eliot and Müller were familiar with and influenced by Herder's historicism, which buttresses and encourages many-sided vision.[68] Eliot lists 'Lessing, Herder, Goethe, and Schiller' among Germany's 'greatest men' and Müller explains, 'it would, [...] be impossible to understand the life and growth of any language without an historical knowledge of the times in which that language grew up'.[69] Müller periodically uses the phrase 'entering into' to discuss how he relates to his objects of study, writing for example in the second series of *Lectures on the Science of Language* that a correct understanding of a past text depends upon the scholar's ability 'to enter into the original intention' — the otherness — of that text.[70] And in his seminal essay *Comparative Mythology* he introduces his subject with a direct plea to readers to engage sympathetically with the past:

> [T]he more intensely we read, the more our thoughts are engaged and our feelings warmed; and the history of those ancient men becomes, as it were, our own history — their sufferings our sufferings — their joys our joys. Without this sympathy, history is a dead letter, and might as well be burnt and forgotten.[71]

Müller clarifies his foundational practice of *Einfühlung* further when he claims that

[67] See Forster, 'Introduction', pp. xvii–xviii for a breakdown of Herderean *Einfühlung* into five components.

[68] See Van den Bosch, *Friedrich Max Müller*, pp. 190–92, 194–95 for comments on Herder's influence on Müller's views of language. Eliot references Herder in two articles, which 'suggest that she knew his work and admired him'. See K.M. Newton, *George Eliot, Romantic Humanist: A Study of the Philosophical Structure of Her Novels* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1981), p. 79. Newton discusses intellectual 'affinities' between Eliot and Herder. See Newton, pp. 79–81.

[69] Eliot, *Essays*, p. 149; Müller, *Lectures on the Science of Language, 1861*, p. 69.

[70] Friedrich Max Müller, *Lectures on the Science of Language, delivered at the Royal Institution of Great Britain in February, March, April, & May 1863* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts & Green, 1864), p. 406. Consider also Müller's request that readers realize the necessity of the study of language to the study of religion: 'Place yourselves in the position of those who first are said to have worshipped the sky. [...] If we want to understand ancient religion, we must first try to understand ancient language'. Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, p. 269.

[71] Müller, *Comparative Mythology*, pp. 7–8.

the thoughts and emotions of the people under study take precedence over those of the historian: 'In Comparative Theology our task is [...] simply to deal with the facts such as we find them. If people regard their religion as revealed, it [...] has to be treated as such by an impartial historian'.[72]

Likewise, a humanist bent underlies all of Eliot's fiction. The capacity to sympathetically understand a person different from one's self has been called 'Eliot's most cherished moral virtue' and typified as her 'doctrine of sympathy'.[73] When Eliot first began to compose fiction she explained to her publisher, 'My artistic bent is directed [...] to the presentation of mixed human beings in such a way as to call forth tolerant judgment, pity, and sympathy'.[74] Self-reflection poised on extensive knowledge of variety and difference is inherent in Eliot's conception of sympathetic engagement. Ingrained in her fiction, Herderean *Einfühlung* is notably evident in her shaping of her own brand of realism; she considered the detailed and introspective nature of her realist fiction conducive to sympathetically engaging readers, and she industriously researched dialects, conditions of living, styles of clothing, and modes of behaviour and worship both for her historical fiction and novels set in England's recent past. The narrator of *The Mill on the Floss* (1860) summarizes Eliot's motivation well: 'judgements must remain false and hollow, unless they are checked and enlightened by a perpetual reference to the special circumstances that mark the individual lot'.[75]

[72]Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, p. 132.

[73]Beryl Gray, 'Sympathy', in: John Rignall, ed., *Oxford Reader's Companion to George Eliot* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), Accessed 16 November 2016. For Eliot's conception of sympathy in her early fiction see Thomas A. Noble, 'The Doctrine of Sympathy', in: *George Eliot's "Scenes of Clerical Life"* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1965), pp. 55–92. See also Elizabeth Ermarth, 'George Eliot's Conception of Sympathy', *NCF* 40 (1985), 23–42. See Karen Chase, *George Eliot: Middlemarch* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 42 for her description of Eliotean sympathy as 'a turning outward to the world beyond the self'.

[74]Eliot, *Letters*, II, p. 299 (18 February 1857).

[75]George Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss*, edited by A.S. Byatt (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1979), p. 628.

Müller mirrored in the pages of *Middlemarch* & *Daniel Deronda*

George Eliot's recurring consultation of Max Müller's work is most evident in the notebooks that accompany her writing for her final two novels.[76] References are made in her *Middlemarch* notebooks to Müller's *History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature* (1859), the first and second series of *Lectures on the Science of Language* (1861, 1864), and *Chips from a German Workshop* (1868). She carefully attends to an 1862 review by Müller from the *Saturday Review*, 'The Parsees'. Remarks on the *Introduction to the Science of Religion* (1873) are recorded in her *Daniel Deronda* notebooks.

Middlemarch: A Study of Provincial Life has been referred to as a touchstone of Victorian learning disclosing Eliot's 'special awareness of the crisis of interpretation which the Victorians were experiencing'.[77] Eliot's attentiveness across her oeuvre to subjects ranging from higher biblical criticism, mythology, and philology to biology, psychology, and sociology indicates that her fundamental concern was not merely with knowledge acquisition, but with determining how to decipher accumulated knowledge. Her novels are like museums of various and contending methodologies on display and *Middlemarch* in particular investigates their limitations. Set in England's Reform period (1829–1832), the novel is Eliot's exercise in sympathetically imagining herself into the past, experimenting like the historian with how past events and perceptions affected the intellectual and emotional lives of the men and women of the period. Eliot's omniscient narrative mode practices *Einfühlung*: 'her large-minded narrator explore[s] in a spirit of criticism, but also of understanding and sympathy, the consciousnesses of

[76] The *Middlemarch* notebooks are comprised of the Folger and Berg Notebooks. See George Eliot, *George Eliot's Middlemarch Notebooks: A Transcription*, edited by John Clark Pratt and Victor A. Neufeldt (Berkeley, CA; London: University of California Press, 1979). The *Deronda* notebooks are the second half of the Berg Notebook and Pforzheimer notebooks. See Eliot, *George Eliot's Daniel Deronda Notebooks*.

[77] Carroll, *George Eliot and the Conflict of Interpretations*, p. 3.

a remarkably wide range of individuals as they face changes in their lives'.[78]

The very first entry in Eliot's *Middlemarch* notebooks is taken from Müller's article 'The Parsees':

> 31.2 per cent are.....Buddhists
> 13.4.....Brahmanists
> 15.7.....Mohammedans
> 30.7.....Christians
> 0.3.....Jews[79]

The article is the first half of a two-part review of a recently published lecture series on *The Manners and Customs of the Parsees* and *The Parsee Religion*.[80] Müller opens the article with these statistics to draw attention to the absence of the Parsee religion, displaying the stark contrast between Zoroastrianism's past strength and its current state; once a 'terror of the world' Zoroastrianism has become 'a mere curiosity in the eye of the historian'.[81] But why would Müller's comments on these lectures be an object of curiosity for Eliot at the start of her novel of England's 'provincial life'? Other references to Müller's work appear throughout the notebooks — in an eight-page block of notes related to the languages and religions of India Eliot combines comments on Georg Friedrich Creuzer (1771–1858) and Müller, among which she speculates on the parallels Müller highlights between the spread of Buddhism and Christianity, such as his comparison of the relationship between Buddhists and Brahmans with the relationship between Protestants and Catholics during the Reformation.[82] Eliot pursues this line of thought and records her musings, implying a parallel between Buddha and Christ:

> If Sakya Mouni flourished in the 6th Century before Xt [Christ] it is curious that it took about as long for Buddhism to get established & politically

[78] Rosemary Ashton, 'Introduction', in: *Middlemarch* (London: Penguin Books, 1994), pp. vii–xxiv (p. ix).
[79] Eliot, *Middlemarch Notebooks*, p. 3.
[80] The lectures were delivered by Dadabhai Naoroji in Liverpool in 1861.
[81] Friedrich Max Müller, 'The Parsees', *Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art* 14:353 (1862), 144–45 (p. 144), in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 2 September 2013.
[82] See Müller, *A History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, pp. 32–33.

> dominant as it did Xtianity; for Buddhism triumphed under Asoka in the iii.d century B.C.[83]

Eliot's interaction with Müller's scholarship has been discussed in literary criticism previously — most notably in regard to her use of solar symbolism throughout *Middlemarch* — but there may be an additional dimension of Müller in *Middlemarch*.[84]

One of the more tragic figures of the novel is Edward Casaubon, a man ultimately unable to cope with the advancements of his age. An infirm clergyman and scholar, he notoriously weds the young idealistic heroine Dorothea Brooke early in the novel. Dorothea, who seeks comprehension of the world in order to bring what is good and beautiful to others, marries Casaubon because she is in awe of his lifetime's research on a 'Key to All Mythologies', his comparative study of mythological origins that integrates biblical literature; she imagines before their wedding that assisting him in such a noble enterprise will fulfill her philanthropic longings. Sunken in his studies on myth, language, and theology, however, Casaubon by his own admittance 'live[s] too much with the dead', describing his mind as 'something like the ghost of an ancient, wandering about the world and trying mentally to construct it as it used to be, in spite of ruin and confusing changes' (*MM* 17). Utterly unacquainted with German scholarship Casaubon is 'no Orientalist', which turns his attempts to write the 'Key to all Mythologies' into something akin 'to groping about in the woods with a pocket-compass while [the Germans] have made good roads' (*MM* 216, 202). Knowing that ultimately Casaubon's research will 'be thrown away, as so much English scholarship is, for want of knowing what is being done by the rest of the world', Casaubon's young cousin Will Ladislaw wryly observes, 'If Mr Casaubon read German he would save himself a great deal of trouble' (*MM* 201–02).

There have been many attempts to guess Eliot's model for Casaubon —

[83] Eliot, *Middlemarch Notebooks*, p. 30.

[84] See Shuttleworth, *George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Science*, p. 166 and Gillian Beer, *Darwin's Plots: Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 3rd edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 167.

from Mark Pattison, Rector of Lincoln College, to the Elizabethan philologist Isaac Casaubon, to Eliot herself.[85] In several senses, Casaubon is the antithesis of Müller — Eliot indirectly highlights the value of Müller's research through delineating the sad state of Casaubon's attitude and method. While Müller successfully published research for scholar and layman alike, Casaubon has 'a mind weighted with unpublished matter' (*MM* 192). Whilst Müller possessed an affable personality and was a prominent figure at Oxford who proved his adroitness for appealing to wide audiences, and brought with him from Germany all of the linguistic and Oriental knowledge Casaubon lacks, Casaubon contrariwise is widely disliked and his work is inaccessible — 'he dreams footnotes, and they run away with all his brains'; his neighbours quip that a drop of his blood beneath a magnifying glass would be 'all semicolons and parentheses' (*MM* 70, 69). Müller's sophisticated comparative and philological method is a long way from 'Mr. Casaubon's theory [which] [...] floated among flexible conjectures no more solid than those etymologies which seemed strong because of likeness in sound, until it was shown that likeness in sound made them impossible' (*MM* 469–70).

Furthermore, Casaubon does not approach the past with the balanced historicism requisite for practising *Einfühlung*; he is prodigiously unsympathetic in his treatment of past belief systems and his decision part way through the novel to travel to the Vatican to conduct research indicates his resistance to the idea of a non-theologically-based examination of the past. Viewing the world and its past religions through a lens of Christian theology, he tailors his research to fit his preconceived theory 'that all the mythical systems or erratic mythical fragments in the world were corruptions of a [Hebrew] tradition originally revealed' (*MM* 23).

Dorothea, in contrast, exercises a strong historical consciousness and

[85] See John Sparrow, *Mark Pattison and the Idea of a University* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967) and A.D. Nuttall, *Dead from the Waist Down: Scholars and Scholarship in Literature* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), pp. 77–122 for the case that Casaubon is modeled on Mark Pattison. See F.W.H. Myers, 'George Eliot', *Century Magazine* 23 (1881), 57–64 (p. 60) for the account that Eliot gestured 'with a humorous solemnity' towards her own heart when asked of her model for Casaubon.

affective sensitivity to the world's diversity. While on their wedding tour in Rome she wishes to know Casaubon's impressions of the art and architecture, asking 'do you care about them?' only to receive evasive or insipid comments. She soon realizes that Casaubon's attention to the world and mankind 'had long shrunk to a sort of dried preparation, a lifeless embalmment of knowledge' — a telling contrast to Müller's scholastic enthusiasm (*MM* 191). The experience of reading Müller's work was considerably different from Dorothea's experience in Rome. Concerning Müller's first series of *Lectures on the Science of Language* G.H. Lewes reports that its readers will 'undergo a succession of delighted thrills at the vistas of a new world of thought unfolding themselves'.[86] By contrast, exposed to Casaubon Dorothea 'felt with a stifling depression, that the large vistas and wide fresh air which she had dreamed of finding in her husband's mind were replaced by ante-rooms and winding passages which seemed to lead nowither' (*MM* 190). Müller presents his research as beneficial in a way comparable with Dorothea's initial hopes that Casaubon's research will have positive and far-reaching consequences: 'The Science of Religion may be the last of the sciences which man is destined to elaborate; but when it is elaborated, it will change the aspect of the world'.[87]

When Eliot read Müller's *Introduction to the Science of Religion* (1873) in November 1873 she was already acquainted with his lectures from 1870. Far fewer notes are taken directly from Müller's work in the *Deronda* notebooks compared with the preparations for *Middlemarch*, but by this time Eliot was deeply invested in linguistics and comparative religion — it was in preparation for *Daniel Deronda* that Eliot began to learn Hebrew. One can speculate that Müller's insistence on the close alignment between language and religion formed a large part of her motivation to study Hebrew as she began research for the 'Jewish element' of her latest novel. Typically known as her Jewish novel, *Daniel Deronda* (1876)

[86] Lewes, 'A Box of Books', p. 436.

[87] Friedrich Max Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop,* 4 vols, 2nd edition (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1868), I, pp. xix–xx.

is Eliot's most mature experiment with Müller's adoption of Goethe's maxim, '*He who knows one* [religion], *knows none*'.[88] Strongly informed by comparative religious studies and philological investigations into the origins of myth, it offers a particularly sophisticated commentary on the relevance of the science of religion and its potential to impact and transform English identity.

At its time of composition, alongside Müller's lectures Eliot consulted works that buttressed and participated in the science of religion, such as Edward B. Tylor's *Researches into the Early History of Mankind and the Development of Civilization* (1865) and *Primitive Culture* (1871), Emile Louis Burnouf's *La Science des religions* (1872), and John Fiske's *Myths and Mythmakers: Old Tales and Superstitions Interpreted by Comparative Mythology* (1873). Eliot thoroughly hearkens to Müller's call:

> With all the genuine documents for studying the history of the religions of mankind that have lately been brought to light, [...] a comparative study of religions has become a necessity. [...] It becomes the duty of those [...] who value religion [...] to take possession of this new territory in the name of true science.[89]

Eliot uses *Daniel Deronda* to advance this research, transforming exclusive Christian claims into a tolerant acceptance of religious pluralism. Although Jewish, Deronda has been raised as an English gentleman ignorant of his parentage; controversially, Deronda ultimately accepts his Jewish heritage and fuses it with his Christian upbringing.[90] Throughout the narrative he exemplifies a desire to remain self- and other-aware, wishing 'to be at home in foreign countries', 'to understand other points of view. [...] [and] to get rid of a merely English attitude' (*DD* 164, 168). In tracing Deronda's discovery of his past, Eliot attempts to reconstruct how English readers perceive English identity. Readers are encouraged to adopt Deronda's 'habit of seeing things as they probably appeared to others' and to develop a 'fear [of] falling into an unreasoning narrow hatred' (*DD* 335, 336). His

[88] Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, p. 16. Emphasis in original.
[89] Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, pp. 33, 35.
[90] See Deronda's rejoinder that discovery of his Jewish identity does not preclude his 'Christian sympathies', which 'can never die out of me'. Eliot, *Daniel Deronda*, p. 616.

approach is akin to using *Einfühlung* as a method in everyday interactions; Deronda exemplifies 'the Herderean capability to see the world from another person's point of view'.[91]

Deronda's attitude arguably mirrors Müller's description of how to take up the study of religions: 'we [must approach] the religions of mankind without any prejudices or predilections, in that frame of mind in which the lover of truth or the man of science ought to approach every subject'.[92] Müller hoped the science of religion might eradicate ignorance of ancient religions and wipe away the troubling 'doctrine [...] that all the nations of the earth, before the rise of Christianity, were mere outcasts'.[93] Again his perspective coincides with Eliot's sentiment that 'All the great religions of the world historically considered, are rightly the objects of deep reverence and sympathy'.[94]

In *Daniel Deronda* Eliot tests the limits of the comparative method most fully. According to Müller 'all higher knowledge is acquired by comparison, and rests on comparison' and practising it is the principal way to extend equity and sympathy to religions beyond one's personal beliefs.[95] As an essential part of the classificatory stage of any new science, the comparative method is part of 'the secret of all scientific knowledge'.[96] For Müller and Eliot comparison indicated inclusive vision, without which one risks assuming a narrow or discriminatory perspective. At the outset of her novel Eliot's narrator warns, 'beware of arriving at conclusions without comparison' (*DD* 36). Before Deronda has any suspicion of his Jewish heritage, he meets a young Jewess, Mirah Cohen. Mirah confides in Deronda that she has been searching for her brother and, while he promises to help her, feelings of prejudice against 'vulgar Jews' creep into his thoughts. He soon recognizes this precarious slip into unwarranted hostility and the narrator discloses

[91] Michael Mack, *Spinoza and the Specters of Modernity: The Hidden Enlightenment of Diversity from Spinoza to Freud* (New York: Continuum, 2010), p. 169.
[92] Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, p. 145.
[93] Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, p. 223.
[94] Eliot, *Letters*, V, p. 447 (19 October 1873).
[95] Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, p. 12.
[96] Müller, *Lectures on the Science of Language, 1861*, p. 17.

his remedial method:

> [A] little comparison will often diminish our surprise and disgust at the aberrations of Jews and other dissidents whose lives do not offer a consistent or lovely pattern of their creed; and this evening Deronda, becoming more conscious that he was falling into unfairness and ridiculous exaggeration, began to use that corrective comparison. (*DD* 338)

Eliot inserts the comparative method into her novel in less direct ways as well, such as through the construction of Deronda. Although a gentleman character set in 1860s Britain, Deronda is a curious compilation of the founders of non-Christian religious traditions. This is an especially noteworthy aspect of the novel in light of Müller's comment, 'If we want to judge of a religion, we must try to study it as much as possible in the mind of its founder'.[97] Throughout the novel Deronda is compared with Moses, Buddha, and Muhammad. He is called 'an accomplished Egyptian' to indicate that his upbringing mirrors that of Moses who was raised in Pharaoh's household. Deronda's physical appearance and habits are taken from the scholar Emanuel Deutch's extensive descriptions of Muhammad, and Deronda's strong compassionate nature is likened to that of Buddha.[98] Mirah tells him:

> Mr Hans said yesterday that you thought so much of others you hardly wanted anything for yourself. He told us a wonderful story of Bouddha giving himself to the famished tigress to save her and her little ones from starving. And he said you were like Bouddha. (*DD* 434)

The combination of Mohammed, Moses, and Buddha in Deronda metamorphoses him into a representative of the universal beginnings of religious traditions, embedding Müller's 'great problem of the first beginnings' into the novel.[99]

Eliot also uses Deronda to more directly voice some of Müller's ideas of mythology and religion, for example in his defense of the value and truth of myth. Referring to the myth of Buddha sacrificing himself to the starving tigress, Deronda explains it as 'a truth in thought though it may never have been carried out in action.

[97] Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, p. 262.
[98] See Temple, 'Emanuel Deutsch's Literary Remains', pp. 65–67.
[99] Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, p. 220.

It lives as an idea. [...] an extreme image of what is happening every day — the transmutation of self' (*DD* 435). Here Eliot signals receipt of Müller's argument that much of the fantastic and mythical material of ancient religions should be attributed to modern-day misunderstandings of ancient language:

> Ancient language is a difficult instrument to handle, [...] It is impossible to express abstract ideas except by metaphor, and [...] the whole dictionary of ancient religion is made up of metaphors. With us these metaphors are all forgotten. We speak of spirit without thinking of breath, of heaven without thinking of the sky, [...] of revelation without thinking of a veil.[100]

Throughout the novel there is support of Müller's attitude regarding the correct approach to the study of religion; he dedicates his fourth lecture to describing 'the right spirit in which ancient religions ought to be studied and interpreted', one that acknowledges 'the sacred context of the history of the world' and judges 'without prejudice'.[101] Müller denounces the historian who 'see[s] nothing but an angel in his own client, and anything but an angel in the plaintiff on the other side'.[102] Such a reproof would have rung true for Eliot who had written in 1859, 'I have no longer any antagonism towards any faith in which human sorrow and human longing for purity have expressed themselves; on the contrary, I have a sympathy with it that predominates over all argumentative tendencies'.[103]

Ethics of difference versus ethics of sameness: managing 'otherness' in Eliot's fiction & Müller's scholarship

Jointly, a model of Goethean manysidedness and practice of Herderean *Einfühlung* promotes other-awareness in both Müller's research and Eliot's fiction in ways that seek to capitalize on the *strengths* of sympathy and the sympathetic imagination without slipping into its pitfalls. Eliot, I think, was more conscientious in her choice of methodology for this very purpose, but she certainly found in Müller

[100] Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, p. 267.
[101] Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, pp. 221, 222, 224.
[102] Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, p. 221.
[103] Eliot, *Letters*, III, p. 231 (6 December 1859).

— a German scholar already trained and tested in philological, comparative, and historical-critical methods of German origin — a contemporary upon whose research she could depend for thinking through her purposes and experimentation regarding sympathy as ethical method. It is worth reviewing the ethical problem Eliot faced regarding sympathy in more depth, and it brings us back to the 'central paradox' described at the start of this chapter. Eliot wanted to transcend difference (via sympathy), but she was also very responsive to the moral impetus to know the other as 'other', rather than as 'another me like myself'; she wished to respect difference to the point of accepting its unknowability and resting in not knowing. Together with J. Hillis Miller (2001), Thomas Albrecht (2006), George Levine (2008), Rachel Hollander (2009), and Rebecca N. Mitchell (2011 and 2013), I turn to Eliot's preoccupation with the problem of alterity, otherness, and difference.

George Eliot's fiction is rife with anxiety about what sympathy *cannot* do as opposed to the moral or epistemological power it offers. She did not retain confidence in sympathy as a route to altruism throughout her career; rather, the more important lesson that emerges from her fiction is to teach readers to acknowledge the differences and unalterable alterity that separate individuals, and to *rest* in a self-awareness based on such acknowledgement of otherness and uncertainty. Recent criticism upholds this perspective of her oeuvre. Rebecca N. Mitchell discusses Eliot's emphasis in *Middlemarch* 'on the limits of knowledge' and states, she 'situate[s] empathic response as being dependent upon the recognition of the radical alterity of the other'.[104] Mitchell attends to Eliot's 'repeated insistence that before one can feel like another, one must recognize that one is other', claiming for Eliot, 'knowledge derives from the recognition of what one does not know'.[105] Mitchell's analysis relies heavily upon Emmanuel Levinas's twentieth-century ethics of alterity.[106]

[104] Rebecca N. Mitchell, 'The Rosamond Plots: Alterity and the Unknown in Jane Eyre and Middlemarch', *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 66:3 (2011), ⟨URL: https://doi.org/10.1525/ncl.2011.66.3.307⟩, 307–27 (pp. 311, 312). Accessed 22 July 2015.

[105] Mitchell, 'The Rosamond Plots', p. 319.

[106] See also Mitchell, *Victorian Lessons in Empathy and Difference*, pp. 49–69. J. Hillis Miller

Meanwhile, Rachel Hollander views *Daniel Deronda* as that work which 'constitutes an ethical response, in both content and structure, to the problem of knowing the other'.[107] Even Ellen Argyros, who elsewhere strongly argues that Eliot held a mostly positive opinion of sympathy, notes, 'By *Daniel Deronda*, [...] she now sees that some others — like Henleigh Grandcourt — are not only unknowable, but are better left that way', and she goes on to state that certain narrative aspects of this novel indicate 'Eliot's respect for the mysterious and often impenetrable nature of experience'.[108] J. Hillis Miller contends of Eliot more broadly, 'For George Eliot, the other, at its deepest level, remains to the end wholly other', and George Levine argues that 'there are two fundamental aspects of literature [...] its defiant effort to create a sense of what it is like to be an other; and its powerful affirmation of the unknowable reality of the other'.[109] Levine writes specifically of Eliot: 'It is interesting and important, I think, that George Eliot uses an animal, the squirrel, to represent that which we do not know, which we can barely imagine, barely dare to imagine'.[110] Levine refers to the iconic observation from the omniscient narrator of *Middlemarch*:

> If we had a keen vision and feeling of all ordinary human life, it would be like hearing the grass grow and the squirrel's heartbeat, and we should die of that roar which lies on the other side of silence. As it is, the quickest of us walk about well wadded with stupidity. (*MM* 189)

turns to Levinas, commenting, 'Confronting another person, face to face, is, for Levinas, an irreducibly inaugural beginning of all ethically responsible thought, decision, and behavior'; this contrasts with the nineteenth-century novelist's confrontation of the other as 'another me like me that can be known'. J. Hillis (Joseph Hillis) Miller, *Others* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), p. 66. Use of Levinas's theory demonstrates nineteenth-century anticipations of early twentieth-century responses to alterity, including modernism's anxieties about what is or is not human, through references to automatons and sympathy as a morally baseless mimetic response. However, alighting upon parallels between Eliot and Müller is more useful as they were contemporaries; their shared investment in *Einfühlung* as an historicism based in the sympathetic imagination and in manysidedness as a method of negotiating similarities without losing sight of differences, elucidate that Eliot's grappling with moral responses to difference was anchored in her turn to the science of religion enterprise. This is a more 'sympathetic' historicist approach to understanding why Eliot was so invested in understanding sympathy as a place where ethics and epistemology meet.

[107] Hollander, 'Daniel Deronda and the Ethics of Alterity', p. 265.

[108] Argyros, *Without any Check of Proud Reserve*, p. 146.

[109] Miller, *Others*, pp. 78–79; Levine, *Realism, Ethics and Secularism*, p. 248.

[110] Levine, *Realism, Ethics and Secularism*, p. 253.

According to Levine, Eliot's reference to an animal (and I might also add, to plant-life) not only indicates how sharply she perceived that knowing the other was 'extraordinarily difficult', but it also implies her deep reverence for whatever is inaccessible.[111]

It perhaps also indicates the gratitude we should feel for being free or cut off from 'that roar which lies on the other side of silence'. Of course, *Middlemarch* uses the omniscience of its narrator to give its readers a controlled and experimental sense of that 'roar' in a way that calls forth our readerly sympathy and addresses our similarities with individual characters:

> The omniscient narrator of *Middlemarch* is the evidence and guarantee of this accessibility of the other by way of a similarity that crosses class, gender, and national lines. The narrator can and does *enter* at will *into* the intimate interior of each character's thoughts and feelings. This solidarity makes us a "we." It makes us all members of one great human community of suffering and solitude.[112]

Müller strongly emphasizes the 'we' of humanity in his scholarship; solidarity is a mainstay of his message, 'Unity in Diversity', while close upon its heels and also underpinning his work is his comparable reflection upon our inherently limited access to knowledge:

> The lesson that there are limits to our knowledge is an old lesson, but it has to be taught again and again. It was taught by Buddha, it was taught by Socrates, and it was taught for the last time in the most powerful manner by Kant. Philosophy has been called the knowledge of our knowledge; it might be called more truly the knowledge of our ignorance, or, [...] the knowledge of the limits of our knowledge.[113]

By weaving lessons of alterity into a narrative structure that emphasizes similarity, solidarity, and sympathy, Eliot plots her novel along a path that resonates with Müller's example and call. This, in part, is a response to a tricky conflict hidden within Eliot's project of realism.

Eliot's aesthetic, founded upon realism, is supportive of an artist's rendering of a subject through the lens of 'true sentiment', or individual subjectivity.

[111] Levine, *Realism, Ethics and Secularism*, p. 4.
[112] Miller, *Others*, p. 74. Emphasis added.
[113] From Müller's *Last Essays* (1901). Quoted in Müller, *Thoughts on Life and Religion*, p. 96.

However, Eliot's *ethic*, something she wished to found upon recognition and acknowledgement of difference, is then also forced to be founded upon similarity or sympathy. Yet, an ethics of difference leaves no space for the self's subjectivity, bringing Eliot's desired ethic into direct conflict with her realist aesthetic's privileging of subjectivity. Carroll Viera claims *The Lifted Veil* in particular contains the 'nucleus' of Eliot's aesthetic and is, in fact, the only piece of fiction in which 'her aesthetic [is] the central issue'.[114]

More recently, of this novella Thomas Albrecht admits, 'its themes are in several respects central to Eliot's work overall and to Eliot's ethics in particular'.[115] For Albrecht, *The Lifted Veil* is a laboratory for Eliot's (preferred) ethics of difference, yet ultimately this novella forces Eliot — and her readers — to see 'that her sympathetic ethics succeeds only at the *expense* of a telepathic relation'.[116] The 'telepathic relation' or clairvoyance Latimer experiences in *The Lifted Veil* is defined by Albrecht as feeling 'at a distance', as opposed to sympathy, which is feeling 'with' or 'alongside'. In illuminating this distinction, Albrecht hopes to reveal just how central the telepathic powers of *The Lifted Veil* are to understanding what Eliot was all about; it signals a major attempt to figure out a way to somehow *preserve* distance and difference, both of which, significantly, sympathy eradicates. Albrecht contends, 'Latimer's misanthropic responses to other people suggest a less stable relation between art and ethics than the one necessitated by Eliot's theory'.[117] Via Latimer, Eliot raises the problem that we judge others based upon our summations of their experiences, or our subjectivity, rather than based upon the experiences themselves — we are forever *removed* from the experiences of others, so how is sympathy or moral action (even through art) possible?

Müller, it could be argued, exploits our natural inclination to be interested in what is like ourselves via his use of the comparative method. For instance,

[114] Carroll Viera, '"The Lifted Veil" and George Eliot's Early Aesthetic', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 24:4 (1984), 749–67 (p. 750), in *JSTOR*. Accessed 22 July 2015.
[115] Albrecht, 'Sympathy and Telepathy', p. 437.
[116] Albrecht, 'Sympathy and Telepathy', p. 457. Emphasis added.
[117] Albrecht, 'Sympathy and Telepathy', p. 440.

he emphasizes the *commonalities* of various religions, drawing attention to past and foreign belief systems that would likely go unnoticed otherwise by making difference accessible and acceptable to scholars and the wider reading public. Through his focus upon an underlying 'unity', he makes sure the 'diversity' in the details is equally unmistakable, forcing members of his audience to grapple with responding to difference *without* resorting to knee-jerk reactions: assimilation and absorption or rejection, disgust, and 'Hep! Hep! Hep!' cries of segregation. It is not difficult, then, to (sympathetically) imagine ourselves into Eliot's position: how Müller and his emphasis upon what was 'other' could have reverberated so strongly with her in view of the friction between her sympathetic aesthetic and her desired 'telepathic' ethic. Her persistent reading of Müller could indicate her hope of finally recovering her 'lost' telepathic ethics of difference by new (many-sided) means. Müller's comparative method — a method based in highlighting parallels — may operate 'sympathetically', but it also entails that kind of acknowledgement of what differs most from ourselves that Eliot originally claimed was her ultimate pursuit in writing fiction:

> [T]he only effect I ardently long to produce by my writings, is that those who read them should be better able to *imagine* and to *feel* the pains and the joys of those who differ from themselves in everything but the broad fact of being struggling erring human creatures.[118]

A sympathetic turn towards Eliot's many-sided heroes

In pursuing an ethics of sameness that she feared was unable to achieve lessons of alterity, Eliot sought new ways to imbue her realism with moral stature. Her attraction to Müller's writings — because of the focus he places on *Einfühlung*, on recognizing difference even as he employs a comparative (sympathetic) method to draw forth similarities, and on our epistemological limitations — fed even more specifically into her experimentation with the model of a many-sided sympathetic hero as a vehicle for negotiating difference, particularly religious difference. As

[118] Eliot, *Letters*, III, p. 111 (5 July 1859).

she faced sympathy's (ethical) limits, Eliot turned to her preexisting admiration for manysidedness, as expressed by Goethe and displayed in German learning and methodology. And, as we have seen, Müller — ever the industrious scholar adhering to his principle of 'Unity in Diversity' and putting *Einfühlung* to the test in translating and publishing texts as far removed from nineteenth-century England as the ancient Sanskrit *Upanishads* and *Rig-Veda* — was woven into the fabric of Eliot's many-sided heroes.

Müller as model is not the only significant element in Eliot's development of many-sided sympathetic heroes, however. With a basis, now, in understanding the underlying importance of the science of religion, and particularly Müller's scholarship, to Eliot's fiction, I turn first towards three figures that make up the developmental arc of Eliot's many-sided heroes as she sought to forge a new model for sympathetic engagement: Latimer of *The Lifted Veil*, Ladislaw of *Middlemarch*, and Theophrastus from Eliot's final and most experimental text, *The Impressions of Theophrastus Such* (1879). I then look more specifically to the sympathetic figure of Deronda and engage in a series of close readings of Eliot's final novel.

3 Making Many-Sided Sympathetic Heroes: A Developmental Arc & Readings in *Daniel Deronda*

> Mr. Lewes is too able and spirited a man, too cultured, of too frank and quick sympathies in all fine directions, that we should tie him down very stringently to his own enthusiastic expression, that 'in the *Cours de philosophie positive* we have the grandest, because on the whole, the truest, system which Philosophy has yet produced.'[1]

In 1865 David Masson (1822–1907) — scholar, editor, and member of London's literary intelligentsia — published a survey and review entitled *Recent British Philosophy* (1865). As part of this he considers Comte's impact in Britain and labels several thinkers 'British Comtists'. He could hardly overlook G.H. Lewes considering Lewes's work on Comte and Positivism in *The Biographical History of Philosophy* (1846) and *Comte's Philosophy of the Sciences* (1853). However, Masson checks himself before including Lewes in this subset, and his claim that Lewes is 'too cultured' and 'of too frank and quick sympathies in all fine directions' snubs and marginalizes Lewes; per Masson, Lewes is too eclectic in his interests and writings — too many-sided, one might say — to be taken at his word.

George Eliot — who, with Lewes, knew Masson — read this work and in

[1] David Masson, *Recent British Philosophy: A Review* (London and Cambridge: Macmillan and Co., 1865), p. 248. Masson quotes from Lewes's 1857 ed. of *The Biographical History of Philosophy*, p. 662.

October of that year wrote of it to Sara Sophia Hennell:

> The earlier part is a useful and creditable survey, and the classification ingenious. The latter part I thought poor. If, by what he says of Positivism, you mean what he says at p. 246, I should answer, it is simply "stuff"; he might as well have written a dozen lines of jargon. [...] it seems to me much better to read a man's own writings than to read what others say about him. Especially when the man is first-rate and the "others" are third-rate.[2]

Gordon Haight has remarked that Masson's comment about G.H. Lewes (found on p. 248) 'probably irritated GE'. I certainly agree, and would add that it was not merely the slight against Lewes that annoyed her, but also how clearly Masson's comment points to an underlying depreciation of manysidedness itself. For Eliot, manysidedness was too undervalued in Britain, and the more popular praise of stalwart and 'muscular' shows of masculinity — demonstrated predominantly in the 'muscular Christianity' commonly attributed to Charles Kingsley (1819–1875) and Thomas Hughes (1822–1896) — needed counterbalancing.[3]

Her support of manysidedness as an effective method of learning and source of creativity is evident in her review of Otto Friedrich Gruppe's work 'The Future of German Philosophy', in which she praises Gruppe as 'a man of very various accomplishments' who 'throws his active intellect with equal fervour and facility into many channels'.[4] She confidently alludes to the 'versatility' of such men as 'Lessing, Herder, Goethe, and Schiller' and rebukes its disparagement: 'Those who decry versatility [...] seem to forget the immense service rendered by the *suggestiveness* of versatile men, who come to the subject with fresh, unstrained

[2]Eliot, *Letters*, IV, pp. 206–07 (28 October 1865).

[3]The rise of 'Muscular Christianity' discourse and the many literary responses to it have most notably been studied in Norman Vance, *The Sinews of the Spirit: The Ideal of Christian Manliness in Victorian Literature and Religious Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) and the collection of essays, Donald E. Hall, *Muscular Christianity: Embodying the Victorian Age*, edited by Donald E. Hall (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994). See also Linda C. Dowling, *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), pp. 44–46 for the view that 'Muscular Christianity' was a response to Tractarianism in Oxford. For a delineation of Kingsley's views on the phrase 'Muscular Christianity' and the ideal of masculinity and practical patriotism it came to represent, see J.M.I. Klaver, *The Apostle of the Flesh: A Critical Life of Charles Kingsley* (Boston: Brill, 2006), pp. 445–48. See p. 556 for the specific terms under which Kingsley would accept the phrase.

[4]Eliot, *Essays*, p. 149. This review appeared in the *Leader*, 6.279 (28 July 1855), 723–24.

minds'. Kathryn Hughes has even commented that Eliot was 'clearly thinking of Lewes' when in this review she 'took the opportunity to point out the advantages of this kind of easy facility', and that Lewes himself, when writing his biography of Goethe, had gladly found 'an authority for his own much-mocked versatility'.[5]

Michael Mack links Eliot's interest in versatility here with 'the literary attempt to provide an impartial representation of reality', something Eliot strives towards even as her novels are also exercises in 'revealing how difficult it is to attain impartiality'.[6] In Chapter 2 of this thesis I allude not only to the close association often made between sympathy and impartiality — as seen in the article on 'Intellectual Vigour' — but also to the ways in which manysidedness and concepts of sympathy and impartiality straddle (and blur) the line between ethics and epistemology. Sympathy can itself be a dangerously one-sided action, 'not a fully ethical position', but 'a unilateral relation' that 'empowers and inflates the self by means of this relation'.[7] Inherently selective in its capacity to feel 'with' or 'alongside' others, sympathy may exact a kind of tyranny over our choices — we must choose to act on behalf of ourselves, or someone near to us, or perhaps a more abstract community, like a specific social stratum ('the poor'), an ethnicity ('the Jews'), or a nation.

Impartiality, however, implies the opposite — not choice or partiality, but a multifaceted, protean state of mind. There is tension, I think, implicit in equating impartiality with sympathy, even as Müller's 'impartial historian' is identified with interpretive historical practices like *Einfühlung*, or as Eliot's *Middlemarch* narrator suggests that practicing impartiality means 'feel[ing] with' each character in turn: 'Poor Mr Casaubon felt (and must not we, being impartial, feel with him a little?) that no man had juster cause for disgust and suspicion than he' (*MM* 368). The subject of impartiality surfaces in what is perhaps the best-known metaphor of

[5] Kathryn Hughes, *George Eliot: The Last Victorian* (London: Fourth Estate, 1999), pp. 158, 159.
[6] Mack, *Spinoza and the Specters of Modernity*, p. 170; Suzy Anger, 'George Eliot and Philosophy', in: George Levine, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to George Eliot* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 96.
[7] Albrecht, 'Sympathy and Telepathy', p. 454.

Middlemarch, that of the pier-glass: 'It is demonstrable that the scratches are going everywhere impartially, and it is only your candle which produces the flattering illusion of a concentric arrangement, its light falling with an exclusive optical selection' (*MM* 258). Impartiality is an intellectual (and moral) model held aloft because it presupposes escape from subjectivity, from siding 'with' one over another; and yet the 'impartial historian', novelist, or reader is regularly challenged to sympathize and feel with a wide range of people and characters in turn, *without* falling into favouritism or developing personal preferences.

As I examine four of Eliot's many-sided male sympathetic heroes in this chapter — and Daniel Deronda in particular — I want to think more incisively about the relationship between impartiality and sympathy. Both concepts are suggested by manysidedness; both are mentioned by the author of 'Intellectual Vigour' as members of that ambiguous set of 'intellectual virtues' that 'drain off the sources' of 'conviction'; and yet the terms strike me as contradictory and invite discussion in a way that I believe Eliot expected and desired. The affiliation between a comparative method and impartiality addressed in the previous chapter can also be brought forward here in our consideration of Eliot's many-sided sympathetic heroes, figures whose characteristic impartiality (or in Latimer's case, a distorting partiality that approaches paranoia) is displayed, not through a lack of sympathetic partiality, but through indiscriminate partiality to all. This level of intellectual and emotional manysidedness is an extraordinary ideal, requiring high levels of self-awareness and mental training to curtail our natural inclination towards bias. How subjective or objective are we? More importantly, how subjective or objective *should* we be? In her creation of many-sided sympathetic figures, Eliot addresses these questions and concerns. Exercising sympathy and impartiality — especially as historian, novelist, and reader — gives us the capacity to navigate relationships between ourselves and others, between different classes, religious beliefs, and nationalities, making a better understanding of how epistemology and ethics overlap in this regard. When it comes to engaging

sympathetically and thinking impartially it is crucial not to misstep, and it occurs to me that perhaps Eliot hoped to *train* people's minds to be sympathetic in multiple directions in a way that *makes* them impartial, the logic being that if you can see from everyone's point of view (in turn) then you are in the best (central and panoptic) position to claim a lack of bias.

When Edith Simcox (1844–1901) visited the Lewes's home in 1878, *The Lifted Veil* surfaced in conversation. Simcox and Lewes agreed 'that it was not at all like [Eliot's] other writings', and when Eliot suggested it was '*schauderhaft* [ghastly]' Simcox concurred. However, when Simcox relayed that there was much in the tale she 'didn't quite know what to do with' and indicated 'it was a shame to give such things a moral', Lewes interjected: 'Oh, but the moral is plain enough — it is only an exaggeration of what happens — the onesided knowing of things in relation to the self — not whole knowledge because "tout comprehendre est tout pardonner" '.[8] In the following section, we will see something of the range of Eliot's approaches to examining manysidedness, sympathy, and impartiality in her male figures — from the ghastly, 'onesided' and inverted extreme to something striving for a more complete and 'whole' knowledge that approaches the '*suggestiveness* of versatile men' Eliot and Lewes so clearly prized. Her many-sided figures are not perfect, but being 'too frank' or 'quick' in 'all fine directions' does not make them entirely ineffective either.

The many-sided hero: forging a new model for sympathetic engagement

Latimer is many-sided in his sensitivity amounting to an incredible clairvoyance; Ladislaw in his dilettantism, revealing a wide range of interests and abilities,

[8]Eliot, *Letters*, IX, p. 220 (17 March 1878). Lewes may be quoting Madame de Staël's *Corinne* (1807) ('Car tout comprendre rend tres-indulgent [To understand everything makes one tolerant]'), or one of either Goethe's *Torquato Tasso* (1790) ('was wir verstehen, das können wir nicht tadeln [What we understand, we cannot blame]') or *Westöstlicher Divan* (1819) ('Denn wer einmal uns versteht / Wird uns auch verzeihn [For whoever once understands us will also forgive us]').

as well as his sympathetic prowess; Deronda in his (aesthetic) receptivity and 'many-sided sympathy'; and Theophrastus in his cosmopolitan worldview, professed impartiality, and passivity. Structurally, *The Impressions of Theophrastus Such* is Eliot's most many-sided text; it has no narrative conflict, no timeline, and so Theophrastus is very clearly the figure that holds the collection of character sketches in the work together. Latimer may be the inverse of a *sympathetic* ideal, but he still retains the qualities that constitute Eliot's many-sided hero: femininity, sensitivity, passivity, other-awareness (taken to its telepathic extreme), and doubling as the author's surrogate in testing the limits of fiction. And his complete inability to sympathize (his misanthropy, in fact) contrasts with the intensely sympathizing natures of figures like Ladislaw and Deronda, as the flip side of the coin, signaling how central sympathy is to Eliot's experimentation with manysidedness.

In the case of each of these figures, Eliot appears to conjure parts of herself and combines them in a sympathetic amalgamation with the features of others, as seen in the infusion of Müller into her constructions of Casaubon and Deronda. Latimer, in fact, can be taken as a precursor of Eliot's least sympathetic characters: Casaubon and Grandcourt. Casaubon's unsympathetic responses and lack of a strong comparative method in his research strongly echo features of Latimer's character. *The Lifted Veil* is so 'unsympathetic' as a text because, as a first-person narration told by Latimer, it is delivered to the reader via the bleak lens he possesses — he admits that he has 'never been encouraged to trust much in the sympathy of my fellow men'. To him, others' thoughts are like 'importunate, ill-played musical instrument[s]' or 'the loud activity of an imprisoned insect'.[9] Similarly, Casaubon prefers not to hear Dorothea's thoughts. His self-doubt and fear of criticism surface easily when Dorothea presses him on their wedding journey about his plans to publish his research. She gives voice to the strong feelings she has on the subject, desiring to help and encourage, yet Casaubon finds her words 'highly disturbing'

[9]George Eliot, *The Lifted Veil and Brother Jacob*, edited by Sally Shuttleworth (London: Penguin, 2001), p. 13. Parenthetical references in the text refer to this edition and are prefaced by *LV*.

and 'among the most cutting and irritating to him that she could have been impelled to use'. To Casaubon, Dorothea becomes a 'cruel outward accuser' or 'spy watching everything with a malign power of inference', conclusions which have led me to question Latimer's parallel treatment of Bertha (*MM* 195). Both Latimer and Casaubon translate what they see of others' inner lives via their 'one-sided knowing of things in relation to the self'. As for the parallel with Grandcourt, Marianne Burton raises this comparison, noting Grandcourt's uncanny declaration that he can read Gwendolen's mind and the parallel between Gwendolen's and Bertha's murderous thoughts and feelings. In fact, a 'plausible argument can be made that Gwendolen Harleth is a conscious rewriting of Bertha' and that Gwendolen's narrative is 'a re-appraisal of Bertha, [...] this time from the wife's viewpoint'.[10]

Latimer's name — originally referring to a speaker or writer of Latin — implies he is a kind of translator or exegetist (*OED* definition is 'An interpreter'). With his clairvoyance, he should be able to facilely interpret the thoughts and actions of others on all sides. Indeed, he is sensitive on all sides, described throughout the text as 'a very sensitive child', 'a shy, sensitive boy', and possessing a 'nature [...] of the sensitive, unpractical order' (*LV* 5, 6, 7). With his 'vague mind, susceptible and unobservant, hating inquiry and given up to contemplation', he lacks direction and vigour, especially in his father's eyes (*LV* 8). His nerves are weak and he refers to his 'fragile, nervous, ineffectual self' more than once as well as his 'half-womanish, half-ghostly beauty' (*LV* 14). His feminine and 'ghostly' looks give him an indefinite, blurred and imprecise form, which is compounded by his lack of focus or purpose. His father declares, 'That lad will never be good for anything in life' (*LV* 25). He is many-sided in his enhanced sensitivity to sound, smell, sight, touch, taste, and his 'peculiar' sixth sense of prevision and insight. The prevision and clairvoyance he experiences, however, are likened less to a power and more to 'a disease — a sort of intermittent delirium', again implying

[10]Marianne Burton, '"There is No Such Thing as Natural Barrenness in Natural Women": Childless Marriages in "Silas Marner" and "The Lifted Veil"', *The George Eliot Review* 43 (2012), 31–38 (p. 37).

his inherent physical and mental weaknesses (*LV* 12). His ability is a many-sided attribute — via telepathy, Eliot gives him access to the inner lives of a myriad of people in a way comparable with how she hoped her fiction would '[amplify] experience and [extend] our contact with our fellow-men beyond the bounds of our personal lot'.[11] Yet, Latimer calls this his 'abnormal' and 'unpleasant sensibility'; in an unappealing many-sided merry-go-round Latimer is conscious of the 'mental process[es] going forward in first one person, and then another, with whom I happened to be in contact' (*LV* 13).

Significantly, extreme sensitivity via a sympathetic nature approaches the ideal of intuition that Eliot longed for in early letters to her friend Maria Lewis and maintained in later years was admissible even in empirical studies: 'the most thorough experimentalists admit intuition — i.e. direct impressions/sensibility underlying all proof — as necessary starting points for thought'.[12] Suzy Anger admits Eliot 'never surrendered her view that feeling is a source of knowledge'.[13] This desired intuition becomes Latimer's telepathic knowledge of others' thoughts in the first-person narration of *The Lifted Veil* as well as that 'clairvoyance of George Eliot's narrator' of *Middlemarch*, which affords its readers the 'pleasure of being able, [...] to enter into the mind and feelings, [...] of other persons'.[14] Theoretically, telepathy in *The Lifted Veil* resolves the problem of respecting difference and relating to others ethically 'at a distance', without using the self or language as mediums of (mis)interpretation. But then Eliot quickly faces the problem of representing telepathy, like intuition, as non-linguistic:

> The privileged object of knowledge for Eliot's novels in general and for *The Lifted Veil* in particular is the consciousness of other people. [...] For Eliot,

[11] Eliot, *Essays*, p. 271.

[12] Eliot, *Letters*, VI, p. 167 (19 August 1875).

[13] Anger, 'George Eliot and Philosophy', p. 85. In 1841, Eliot asked Maria Lewis, 'When a sort of haziness comes over the mind making one feel weary of articulated or written signs of ideas does not the notion of a less laborious mode of communication, of a perception approaching more nearly to intuition seem attractive?' Eliot, *Letters*, I, p. 107 (3 September 1841). And later that year, she asks again: 'The labour of acquiring knowledge is, I grant, its own reward, but should you not like a little more intuition, or rather intuitive power, [...]?' Eliot, *Letters*, I, p. 123 (16 December 1841).

[14] Miller, *Others*, pp. 73, 66.

> the appreciation of another person's consciousness that is made possible by art is the first step towards moral agency, which is for her the aim of all great art and criticism.[15]

Yet, as Thomas Albrecht points out, when Eliot's novella 'fail[s] to represent Latimer's telepathy', it 'indicat[es] [...] its true ethical dilemma: the inability to face the other as other, despite Eliot's injunction that we must do precisely that, and the inevitable recourse to framing the other in terms of oneself'.[16]

Intuition is a hard-won aptitude according to Herderian *Einfühlung*, and not one achieved entirely through a non-linguistic path. Michael N. Forster, who breaks down Herder's sympathetic-imagination-as-historicism into five components, names the fifth component, the one that it is most difficult to achieve, as something very like intuition, but that entails grappling with language alongside 'relevant sensations':

> Fifth, [*Einfühlung*] also implies that the interpreter should strive to develop his grasp of linguistic usage, contextual facts, and relevant sensations to the point where this achieves something of the same immediate, automatic character that it had for a text's original audience when *they* understood the text in light of such things (so that it acquires for him, as it had for them, *the phenomenology more of a feeling than a cognition*).[17]

As J. Hillis Miller has argued, Eliot's texts demonstrate that 'other people are no more than a constellation of signs that we are doomed to misread' and, therefore, 'No sympathetic intuition allowing us to enter into the interiority of another person exists'.[18] In view of this, the proximity *Einfühlung* has to a kind of intuition that gives an interpreter access to 'the phenomenology more of a feeling than a cognition' must have been of paramount importance to Eliot in her search for a stronger moral foundation for her fiction.

Albrecht considers Latimer 'a stand-in for Eliot herself and for the artist in general.[19] He notes their shared 'intense self-doubt, self-consciousness, insecurity,

[15] Albrecht, 'Sympathy and Telepathy', p. 444.
[16] Albrecht, 'Sympathy and Telepathy', p. 452.
[17] Forster, 'Introduction', pp. xvii–xviii. Second emphasis added.
[18] Miller, *Others*, p. 73.
[19] Albrecht, 'Sympathy and Telepathy', p. 439.

feelings of guilt vis-à-vis their fathers and families, and "feminine" sensitivity'.[20] Helen Small observes Latimer's itinerary through Europe exactly matches that of Eliot and Lewes in 1858.[21] Latimer's love for German Romantic lyrics also mirrors Eliot's interest in the likes of Heinrich Heine, and even Latimer's name mirrors the role Eliot found herself filling as novelist, interpreting the world for her readers via her channels of realism.[22] Latimer raises the problem Eliot faced, that we judge others based on *our* summations of their experiences, rather than based upon the experiences themselves; we are always and forever removed from the experiences of another, only able to interpret their actions through the lenses of our selves. Having access to another's thoughts in addition to their actions does not resolve this, so how is sympathy or moral action (even through art) ever possible? Latimer's descriptions of what he 'hears' — discordant music and angry buzzing — are vibratory, in kind with depictions of sympathy as rhythmic and oscillatory, but instead of leading to 'the appreciation of another person's consciousness' and the kind of 'moral agency' Eliot hoped it would produce, the terms by which these sensations are described indicate Eliot's fear that even a more comprehensive knowledge of others does not translate into sympathetic concern or action.[23] Access to the thoughts of those around him via telepathy may not preclude their 'otherness', but neither does it ensure moral response. He still judges what he contacts in relation to himself.

For Latimer, each mind he sees into acts as a mirror of his own, making the 'obtrusion[s]' labyrinthine and dark. His clairvoyance operates like his favourite stone, the opal, traditionally viewed as changing colour to reflect the mood of the wearer — yet despite the spectral play of colour across the surface of the stone, it remains a stone. Similarly, Latimer's mind is many-sided in its movement between 'the mental process going forward in first one person, and then another',

[20] Albrecht, 'Sympathy and Telepathy', p. 458 n9.
[21] Helen Small, 'George Eliot and the Cosmopolitan Cynic', *Victorian Studies* 55:1 (2012), 85–105 (p. 87), in *JSTOR*. Accessed 20 January 2017.
[22] 'German lyrics' are Latimer's 'pet literature'. Eliot, *The Lifted Veil*, p. 15.
[23] Albrecht, 'Sympathy and Telepathy', p. 444.

but it remains the same (*LV* 13). This ability seems to give Latimer access to momentarily inhabiting the lives of others, but in actuality he only sees others' thoughts through his lens of self. In this way, the small 'patch of rainbow light on the pavement, transmitted through a coloured lamp in the shape of a star' that Latimer sees in his 'distinct vision' of a future visit to Prague may be interpreted not only as a premonition of his 'abnormal sensibility', but also as a warning that his newfound ability will be the transmission of others' minds *through* his own, meaning he needs to *actively* engage with (rather than passively receive) transmissions of others' thoughts (*LV* 9, 13).[24]

The patch of rainbow light, seeming to promise the poetic enlightenment Latimer has selfishly longed for, in fact gives way to a nightmare when his 'morbidly sensitive nature perpetually craving sympathy and support' finds that it is unable to *offer* sympathy and support (*LV* 15). 'Latimer believes he sees everything, when in fact his knowledge is partial — forensic, without the saving presence of sympathy'.[25] Latimer lacks many-sided vision of his fellows, a schema by which to take in the aspects of each individual personality and situation and to see the whole. His one-sidedness is shown through his failure to relay to the reader any of the challenges and problems the other characters face. We do not know what Mrs. Filmore or her husband are thinking, only that their thoughts make up a part of what *Latimer* perceives: that 'ringing in the ears not to be got rid of' (*LV* 18). The quarrel between his servants that prevents them from answering the bell when Latimer is dying is told to us without concerned emotion, save self-pity. By indifferently omitting their inner lives, Latimer exemplifies Müller's warning that without sympathy 'history is a dead letter, and might as well be burnt and forgotten'.[26]

Latimer's preference for opals signals the limits of his manysidedness. Its

[24]The exchange between Ladislaw and Dorothea, we shall see, presents the opposite example.

[25]Helen Small, 'Introduction', in: Helen Small, ed., *The Lifted Veil, and Brother Jacob* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. ix–xxxviii (p. xii).

[26]See Müller, *Comparative Mythology*, pp. 7–8 for the full quotation, which appears in the previous chapter.

fluctuating colour is indicative of the many selves we each possess, our various moods and modes, which are often disjointed and not in clear communication with one another. As a gift for Bertha, it points to the discrepancy between the present Latimer who delights in Bertha as an 'oasis of mystery' and his failure to reconcile this state of mind with that of his future self who sees Bertha's poisonous hate as his wife. Interestingly, the opal is an opaque gemstone; this may point to Bertha's opacity, but as it is Latimer's favourite it may also indicate his imperviousness, which contrasts with the 'transparency' of Will Ladislaw's features described in the later novel *Middlemarch*.

Latimer in many ways is constituted as a parable teaching the lesson also conveyed stylistically by Eliot's later commitment to extradiegetic narration. When Eliot writes in the third-person, for example as the narrative voice of *Middlemarch* we know so well, our readerly insight into each mind is unavoidably viewed via the subjective lens of ourselves. Anyone who has read *Middlemarch* more than once knows that each read is different — different characters take center stage at different times in our lives depending upon their relatability. Rebecca Mead's publication, *The Road to Middlemarch* (2014), is a case in point. As a young woman, Dorothea was naturally the focal point, but later, once Mead has become a mother, Celia's obsession with 'baby' takes on new layers of sympathetic meaning.[27]

Another lesson for the reader is the text's reminder of our need for the uncertain, that mystery is 'blessed'.[28] The kind of freedom or liberation George Levine experiences when confronted with the sublime mystery of total otherness is never Latimer's because his clairvoyance only realizes 'the horror of [...] certitude!' (*LV* 21). As an early prototype of Eliot's many-sided hero and her male surrogate, Latimer transmits the message Eliot feared: that knowledge of others does not necessarily translate into sympathetic concern or action. Latimer perhaps

[27] Rebecca J. Mead, *The Road to Middlemarch: My Life with George Eliot* (London: Granta, 2014), p. 104.
[28] See Eliot, *The Lifted Veil*, pp. 29, 31.

speaks most fully as Eliot's proxy when he claims:

> [T]his is one of the vain thoughts with which we men flatter ourselves. We try to believe that the egotism within us would have easily been melted, and that it was only the narrowness of our knowledge which hemmed in our generosity, our awe, our human pity, and hindered them from submerging our hard indifferences to the sensations and emotions of our fellow. (*LV* 22)

If knowledge cannot protect us from indifference, then perhaps delighting in mystery can. The process of accessing others' thoughts needs simultaneously to entail a (constant) process of self-recognition and self-realization. Every time we encounter someone new, new aspects of ourselves are thrown into relief — we 'change colour' as it were with every face, every look, every exchange. The many-sided hero, in this way, is representative of a kind of on-going natural sequence that embraces the effects of time, our past and present selves. We are different people at different points in time and there are always mysterious corners in our own minds that require quiet and contemplation. Latimer, however, is arrested in time; the entire first-person narrative he offers us is written at a moment at the *end* of his life, meaning even his depiction of his past selves is given to the reader through a very specific (and misanthropic) lens. I wonder whether or not Latimer has become so unflinchingly unsympathetic because he has not had the peace and quiet requisite for the self-contemplation that feeds sympathetic response.[29]

In stark contrast to Latimer's lack of interest in others' lives and partiality for himself, Will Ladislaw, like the narrator of *Middlemarch* and Eliot herself, takes a keen and unbiased interest in all walks of life. In Rome and Middlemarch he is 'given to ramble about among the poor people' in a way that makes most members of polite Middlemarch society feel uneasy or affronted (*MM* 455). He plays with children, having 'a fondness, half artistic, half affectionate' for them (*MM* 454). His curiosity is roused by the education of the working man, as he attends a local meeting about the Mechanics' Institute (*MM* 578). He accompanies

[29] See Melissa Raines, 'Knowing Too Much: The Burden of Omniscience in "The Lifted Veil"', *The George Eliot Review* 43 (2012), 39–46 (p. 43) for consideration of 'the exhausting breadth of Latimer's awareness'.

Farebrother's spinster sister Miss Noble and earns her loyalty through his attention and kindnesses. Ellen Argyros comments upon Ladislaw's versatility when she notes his 'desirability and generosity to many different kinds of women — to the Henrietta Nobles of this world as well as to the Rosamond Lydgates'.[30] 'As Lydgate had said of him, he was a sort of gypsy, rather enjoying the sense of belonging to no class' (*MM* 453). Ladislaw ably situates himself across a broad social spectrum — from escorting Miss Noble in the street and getting to know the poor and orphaned to visiting Dorothea at Lowick (before his expulsion), working in the service of Mr. Brooke, and lying on the hearth rug at the Lydgates'. He finds himself appreciating 'the very miscellaneousness of Rome' and comfortably associates with the artists in residence there, conversing easily with his friend Naumann in German (*MM* 206). Ladislaw can 'belong' almost anywhere. But by making himself 'belong' everywhere, in effect, Ladislaw belongs nowhere. He becomes like the French scholars' interpretation of 'Bouddha' or 'Sakyamouni', a 'recluse' who chooses to sit outside of the class structure and '[dissociate] from any particular socio-political order'.[31] This is emphasized when Lydgate comments that Ladislaw 'thinks nothing of leather and prunella', meaning he does not consider the social distinctions signified by either the cobbler's leather apron or the priest's prunella vestures (*MM* 428).

His aspirations are also perhaps just as ideal as that of a 'Bouddha'. Much to Casaubon's chagrin, he sets before himself the 'vague purpose of [...] culture' when he decides to go abroad (*MM* 79). We almost laugh when we read that he 'had declined to fix on any more precise destination than the entire area of Europe', but this is merely *one* of his very 'various' attempts to attain 'an attitude of receptivity' associated with self-culture, or genius, the others including taking too much wine, fasting to an extreme 'and then supp[ing] on lobster', and getting sick from several

[30] Argyros, *Without any Check of Proud Reserve*, p. 168.

[31] Josh Moats, 'Deronda and the Tigress: Buddhism, Compassion, and National Consciousness in George Eliot's "Daniel Deronda"', *The George Eliot Review* 43 (2012), 7–16 (p. 8). See Moats for a description of Eliot's Buddhism research. Eliot's spelling of 'Bouddha' and 'Sakyamouni' suggests her reliance upon the French scholarship of Eugène Burnouf (1801–1852).

doses of opium (*MM* 82). In terms of his incapacity to choose and pursue a career, Casaubon sniffs at 'his general inaccuracy and indisposition to thoroughness of all kinds' as 'a bad augury for him in any profession' (*MM* 80). Ladislaw would rather seek 'that indeterminate loftiest thing which he [...] dreamed of as alone worthy of continuous effort' (*MM* 453). Like Latimer, he gravitates towards the unknown, 'prefer[ring] not to know the sources of the Nile' and arguing 'that there should be some unknown regions preserved as hunting-grounds for the poetic imagination' (*MM* 80). He is compared directly to Shelley, but his love of mystery also evokes Keats's negative capability.

These factors — his wide-ranging interests, time spent in foreign countries, and habit of engaging unorthodoxly with members of society up and down the social hierarchy — mean others cannot classify him. And what cannot be classified is quickly rebuked and easily feared. In fact, Ladislaw comes to represent a challenge and a test for each of his neighbours to overcome their individual prejudices: Casaubon's prejudice against German scholarship and any who find fault with his methods and research; Chettam's bias against any who potentially sully Dorothea's reputation; Mrs. Bulstrode's dislike of 'his mode of talking about Catholic countries, as if there were any truce with Antichrist'; and more generally the rest of gossiping Middlemarch must respond to his 'foreign blood' and the labels circulating about his person as 'an Italian with white mice!' or 'the grandson of a thieving Jew pawnbroker' (*MM* 455, 480, 761). Mr. Hawley, for instance, lumps him indiscriminately with the likes of Napoleon Bonaparte and any other non-English persons who lack an immediately identifiable homeland: 'Any cursed alien blood, Jew, Corsican, or Gypsy' (*MM* 707).

In regularly (re)presenting an opportunity for others to recognize limitations in their knowledge — of German historic criticism, of Polish heritage, of Catholicism — and admit the bias lurking in their perspectives, Ladislaw serves as a litmus test, marking where Middlemarch individuals fall on a spectrum of acute or obtuse self- and other-perception. Mr. Brooke praises Will for being 'up with you

in any track' and brightly prattles, 'He and I are alike, you know: he likes to go into everything', and Farebrother kindly and bemusedly calls him 'really a disinterested unworldly fellow' (*MM* 320, 379, 707).[32] Far from paralyzing Dorothea with his 'miscellaneous and *bric-à-brac*' nature, in Rome Ladislaw impresses her with a sense of liberty and spaciousness (*MM* 428):

> [I]t was a source of greater freedom to her that Will was there; his young equality was agreeable, and also perhaps his openness to conviction. She felt an immense need of some one to speak to, and she had never before seen any one who seemed so quick and pliable, so likely to understand everything. (*MM* 203)

Her need to speak to someone 'likely to understand everything' persists when they are in Middlemarch like a craving for a life source: 'it seemed fresh water at her thirsty lips to speak without fear to the one person whom she had found receptive' (*MM* 354).

This openness and receptivity, problematic in its extreme form as telepathy in *The Lifted Veil* for Latimer, is Will's greatest asset because, unlike Latimer, he welcomes 'ma[king] the mind flexible with constant comparison'. He feels 'saved [...] from seeing the world's ages as a set of box-like partitions without vital connection' (*MM* 206). His outlook approaches something more akin to 'whole knowledge' than a 'onesided knowing of things in relation to the self'. Rather than possessing a unilateral tendency, Ladislaw 'was a creature who entered into every one's feelings, and could take the pressure of their thought instead of urging his own with iron resistance' (*MM* 487). In considering his options, his method seems precisely to choose whatever promises not to be one-sided. When Dorothea asks him if he will become a painter, he replies, 'No, oh no, [...] It is too one-sided a life. [...] I should not like to get into their way of looking at the world entirely from the studio point of view' (*MM* 201).

John Rignall notes manysidedness as a predominant feature of Will Ladislaw and compares him with Goethe's Wilhelm Meister: 'Although he appears at first to be something of a dilettante, Eliot sympathetically interprets that dilettantism as

[32]Mr. Brooke is described as having 'an impartial mind' (*MM* 80).

many-sidedness [...] and a mark of potential, treating him with the moral leniency that is characteristic of Goethe's *Bildungsroman*'.[33] There is also evidence to suggest that Ladislaw is a more sympathetic rendering of the characteristics Balzac portrayed in his Wenceslas Steinbock in *Cousin Bette* (1846) — a Polish Count, dilettante, and refugee in Paris: weak, lazy, and overly sensual. Ladislaw's 'oddity' of stretching himself out on the hearth rug in homes where he is comfortable, for example, 'was likely to confirm the notions of his dangerously mixed blood and general laxity' (*MM* 455), but Eliot's narrator is far from confirming that which Balzac's narrator takes as a matter of course in his passage 'On Poles in general and on Steinbock in particular':

> [T]he Pole, [...] has in his character all the childishness and inconsistency of a beardless race. He has courage, spirit, and strength; but, cursed with instability, that courage, strength, and energy have neither method nor guidance; for the Pole displays a variability resembling that of the winds which blow across that vast plain broken with swamps.[34]

This description of Poles and the passage's association of Slavic communities with 'primitively wild nations' hints that prejudices against Eastern Europeans were likely. If contemporary readers of *Middlemarch* possessed comparable prejudices against the Polish, Slavic nationalities, or any ethnic group without a definite homeland, then Ladislaw is a test for them as well.[35]

While Dorothea's visit to Rosamond Lydgate in Chapter 81 is often regarded as the novel's zenith of sympathetic response and engagement, Dorothea in an earlier exchange with Will demonstrates more specifically the response to difference that Eliot hoped her fiction would generate.[36] When Ladislaw shares a few words with Dorothea about his family and past — about his grandmother's disinheritance for marrying a Polish refugee, his allusions to his family's poverty,

[33] Rignall, 'Goethe, Johann Wolfgang'.

[34] Honoré de Balzac, *Cousin Bette*, edited by Sylvie Raphael (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 235.

[35] See Eliot, *Essays*, p. 146 for Eliot's praise of Balzac: 'Balzac, perhaps the most wonderful writer of fiction the world has ever seen'.

[36] See Martin, *Modernism and the Rhythms of Sympathy*, pp. 5–6. Martin calls this episode 'Eliot's sympathetic ideal' (p. 5).

and particularly his hunger as a boy — it stirs in Dorothea the kind of response to difference (even if by difference we mean different circumstances) that George Eliot seems to have desired from her readers: ' "Ah, what a different life from mine!" said Dorothea, with keen interest, clasping her hands on her lap. "I have always had too much of everything. But tell me how it was" ' (*MM* 357). She notes the differences in their circumstances and experiences and asks to know more, later 'dwelling, with a sympathy that grew to agitation, on what Will had told her about his parents and grandparents' (*MM* 362). This agitated reflection reaches a breaking point, upon which she must act, and wherein 'The vision of [...] what ought to be done seemed to Dorothea like a sudden letting in of daylight, waking her from her previous stupidity and incurious self-absorbed ignorance about her husband's relation to others' (*MM* 364). Her request to Casaubon that he consider reinstating Will as his heir is framed on either side by learning of (ethnic and cultural) difference (Will tells her, 'You see I come of rebellious blood on both sides') (*MM* 358). It is initiated by a sudden awareness of the differences between her upbringing and Will's, and congealed by her further 'waking' from 'self-absorbed ignorance'. Her recognition of difference that at once engages with the other and acknowledges their sovereignty compels first curiosity, then reflection, and finally *action*, however limited or curtailed it might be.[37]

In addition, it strikes me as significant that Dorothea's 'vision' is compared to 'a sudden letting in of daylight'. In this way, it is aligned with her 'Persian' belief, 'That by desiring what is perfectly good, even when we don't quite know what it is and cannot do what we would, we are part of the divine power against evil — widening the skirts of light and making the struggle with darkness narrower' (*MM* 382). No matter how difficult it is to know another's consciousness — how impossible it may be, in fact — Eliot drives home the message that *not* knowing should never be a hindrance to moral conduct towards the other. We can strive for

[37] Her request to Casaubon in this instance is particularly limited in that she is blind to Casaubon's (emotional) needs or position in relation to Ladislaw. In effect, her request has negative consequences.

what is perfectly good 'even when we don't quite know what [the perfectly good] is'.

Ladislaw is clearly multifaceted in looks, interests, heritage, ethnicity, and abilities. This, coupled with his open, sympathetic disposition and radiance — his 'sunny brightness' and the light 'his hair seemed to shake out' (*MM* 203) — is evocative of Johann Eckermann's description of Goethe, 'We may, [...] compare this extraordinary mind and man to a many-sided diamond, which in each direction shines with a different hue'.[38] He is gem-like in his openness on all sides, the frequent allusion to the 'transparency' of his skin, and the interplay of light with his countenance. Yet, it is Dorothea who we find described in the text as possessing a 'gem-like brightness' (*MM* 267). Ladislaw and Dorothea double and mirror one another as do Deronda and Gwendolen in Eliot's next work and, like them, they are the same, but different. As discussed in the Prologue the two (figurative) models of sympathy that Eliot navigates, doubleness and manysidedness, can be seen at work in Eliot's doubling of male and female characters who also function in the text as sources of outspread, diffusive movement. Eliot uses both Will and Dorothea in this way. Her commentary in *Middlemarch* on 'diffusion' relates to her testing of the efficiency of manysidedness. Ladislaw and Dorothea both radiate, emanate, diffuse, spread, and circulate sympathy as they do light imagery in the text, and the highly ambiguous 'diffusion' effect of Dorothea's small 'unhistoric acts' is a well-known feature of the novel. The very natural and organic responses they have to each other, as plants to the sun's rays, for example, ('Each looked at the other as if they had been two flowers which had opened then and there' (*MM* 354)) is suggestive of Eliot's early positive interpretation of diffusion: 'It is like a diffusion or expansion of one's own life to be assured that its vibrations are repeated in another, and words are the media of those vibrations'.[39] John Rignall refers to this passage in Eliot's letters, saying, 'Diffusion is used here not in the sense of a regrettable dispersion of vital forces but as a form of personal enrichment,

[38]Eckermann, *Gespräche mit Goethe*, p. 3.
[39]Eliot, *Letters*, I, p. 255 (8 March 1848).

of a reaching out to, and mingling with, another life that already anticipates the extension of sympathy'.[40]

Diffusion also implies the collapse of boundaries, something at the heart of Eliot's many-sided figures' functionality and her preoccupation with sympathy. Dorothea demonstrates her sympathetic affinity with gemstones early in the novel, in Chapter 1 when she and Celia sort through their mother's jewellery. Dorothea has just finished insisting that Celia take all the jewels and Celia has been feeling hurt by her sister's 'strong assumption of superiority in [her] Puritanic toleration', when suddenly something captures Dorothea's eye:

> [Celia] was opening some ring-boxes, which disclosed a fine emerald with diamonds, and just then the sun passing beyond a cloud sent a bright gleam over the table. 'How very beautiful these gems are!' said Dorothea, under a new current of feeling, as sudden as the gleam. 'It is strange how deeply colours seem to penetrate one, like scent. I suppose that is the reason why gems are used as spiritual emblems in the Revelation of St John. They look like fragments of heaven. I think that emerald is more beautiful than any of them'. (*MM* 13)

Dorothea's synesthetic experience in response to the light hitting the gems complicates notions of sympathy just as it also blurs the boundaries between the senses. '[L]ike scent', Dorothea is 'penetrated' by the colour and sudden prismatic play of sunlight across the gems, caught and invaded unexpectedly by vague and indescribable sensations. It is an emotional response she cannot identify, but of which she tries to make sense by using her Puritanical sensibilities: 'All the while her thought was trying to justify her delight in the colours by merging them in her mystic religious joy', but she remains troubled by the experience and 'question[s] the purity of her own feeling' even as she '[thinks] of often having them by her, to feed her eye at these little fountains of pure colour' (*MM* 14).

Kirsty Martin has pointed out that throughout Eliot's writing 'there are intimations of how feeling might not buckle to reasonable, altruistic shaping' but instead 'how it might disquiet notions of morality'.[41] Martin's literary analysis

[40] John Rignall, *George Eliot, European Novelist* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), p. 90.
[41] Martin, *Modernism and the Rhythms of Sympathy*, p. 6.

is concerned specifically with 'intuitive, bodily sympathy', and this moment in *Middlemarch* in particular provides her with a pertinent illustration: 'Sympathy can seem at once to be based in the senses and to blur them. This book will be concerned with sympathy less as pitying spectatorship, than as a complex form of sensory entanglement'.[42] Yet, I would add that there is more than one 'sympathetic' encounter happening here. Dorothea, for instance, is diligently bent over her cottage plans when Celia interrupts with her request to view their mother's jewellery. And in the wake of her affective response and sudden kinship with the gems, part of her inner conflict is driven by her more habitual act of sympathizing with the poor and mistreated. Her social consciousness disturbs her even as she has decided to keep the ring and bracelet:

> 'Yes! I will keep these — this ring and bracelet,' said Dorothea. Then, letting her hand fall on the table, she said in another tone — 'Yet what miserable men find such things, and work at them, and sell them!' (*MM* 14)

Celia points out Dorothea's inconsistency in finally deciding to keep the ring and bracelet, and we are left with the impression that different types of sympathy — as 'sensory entanglement' and 'altruistic shaping' — can conflict with each other, ethically and epistemologically.[43] The centrality of gem imagery and interaction in this textual moment is significant in its use of a many-sided aesthetic to acknowledge such conflicts.

Taking the aesthetics of manysidedness further than before, Eliot composed *The Impressions of Theophrastus Such* (1879) as a collection of fictional character sketches. It tightly weaves past with present, contemporary English culture with that of ancient Greece, and makes several allusions to how complexly interlaced the history of English literature is with that of other cultures via translations, travel, the study of myriad religious traditions (Theophrastus refers not only to the Bible, but also to the Koran and Chinese poetry), and the colonial enterprise.

[42] Martin, *Modernism and the Rhythms of Sympathy*, p. 8.

[43] If Dorothea fears associating with injustices that accompany the mining, trading, and cutting of jewels, then she is already inconsistent in keeping her mother's sandalwood box, likely imported from India or the Pacific islands, where sandalwood trade caused detrimental deforestation: 'I have other things of mamma's — her sandal-wood box, which I am so fond of' (*MM* 13).

It shares with *Daniel Deronda* the argument that Christianity springs from Jewish tradition and censures the hypocrisy of contemporary anti-Jewish feelings. It is 'rebarbative from the outset' in its expression of unpopular views, density, and erudite references.[44]

Theophrastus Such is also unique in that we do not learn about Theophrastus through our experience of him as an intradiegetic character; instead, he is the lens through which we view the assortment of characters and consider various aspects of contemporary culture and society. Among his observations of others, Theophrastus includes bouts of introspection, methods for self-reflection, and commentary upon and interpretations of modern society and contemporary culture. The entire volume is held together by him; as the most advanced step in Eliot's development of many-sided male agents of sympathy, he is structured as the point at which all other 'surfaces' of the text converge, and ultimately it is *his* portrait, however fragmented, that we are meant to have and consider by the text's finale. Nancy Henry notes how poorly the work was received initially and that this disregard for it persists: 'There is no tradition of critical debate about *Impressions*, merely an occasionally articulated consensus that there is not much to say about it', and yet 'in no other work does [Eliot] so explicitly concern herself with the ethics of writing and authorship'.[45]

Varied in his outlook on historic periods, social class, and raised in 'a variety' of homes in his father's parish, Theophrastus is aware that his particular shade of 'impartiality is not in vogue at present'.[46] He learned through overhearing his 'pluralist' father's myriad dialogues and in a crowded city he muses over 'what varieties of history lie hidden under [...] monotony of aspect', much as the reader of the opening of *Daniel Deronda* is compelled to see the variety veiled by the monotony of the gambling room at Leubronn (*TS* 20). He has observed life

[44]Small, 'George Eliot and the Cosmopolitan Cynic', p. 98.

[45]Nancy Henry, 'Impressions of Theophrastus Such', in: John Rignall, ed., *Oxford Reader's Companion to George Eliot* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

[46]George Eliot, *The Impressions of Theophrastus Such*, edited by D.J. Enright (London: J.M. Dent, 1995), pp. 18, 14. Further references to this edition are given in text and prefixed with *TS*.

in its forms under 'different ranks' but makes no pretense to being sufficiently knowledgeable as a result (*TS* 20). He is self-aware and humble enough to admit that even his most forgetful acquaintances 'are probably aware of certain points in me which may not be included in my most active suspicion', and to say, 'I must still come under the common fatality of mankind and share the liability to be absurd without knowing that I am absurd' (*TS* 3, 4). He also admits to being somewhat passive, 'given to meditative if not active innovation' (*TS* 19).

Theophrastus clings to his childhood memories, his links to the England of his father and his past, and to the landscape of the Midlands, echoing Eliot in this last regard. 'I cherish my childish loves', he explains. But, again, he is aware of their partial illusory quality: 'Perhaps this England of my affections is half-visionary'. Illusions nevertheless have their purpose, and for Theophrastus 'They feed the ideal Better' (*TS* 24). In the midst of clinging to these half-visionary memories and impressions, Theophrastus has opened his mind to other times, places, and people: 'I have learned to care for foreign countries, for literatures foreign and ancient, for the life of Continental towns dozing round old cathedrals, for the life of London' (*TS* 24). Theophrastus is 'sensitively' mindful of 'the speech of the landscape' and finds he 'belong[s] to the "Nation of London" ' (*TS* 23, 24). In strong contrast to Latimer, Theophrastus — as bachelor sans telepathic burden — has ample time and peace and quiet in which to contemplate himself, the state of the world, and others. He refers to 'Comparison' as 'our precious guide' who 'would teach us in the first place by likeness, and our clue to further knowledge would be resemblance to what we already know', and — because of his manysidedness rather than in spite of it — he recognizes that 'To judge of others by oneself is in its most innocent meaning the briefest expression for our only method of knowing mankind' (*TS* 97–98).

The project of creating a portrait which throws ignorance, hypocrisy, and prejudice into relief in an effort to compel self-awareness and self-cultivation is most developed in Theophrastus. Nancy Henry has said, 'In *Impressions*, Eliot held

out to her readers, [...] a textual mirror to see themselves'.[47] It is strongly akin to *Daniel Deronda*'s project, which E.S. Shaffer claims, 'contains the harshest social satire, the most unflinching indictment of English society to be found anywhere in the English novel'.[48] Shaffer's consideration of *Daniel Deronda* — Eliot's 'cosmopolitan religious epic' — as a novel that 'attempts to join East and West again in a new synthesis', is reflected in Eliot's construction of Deronda as a many-sided sympathetic hero.[49] But with this construction we also see something of Eliot's transformation of 'manysidedness' from an abstract concept or specific personality trait (of Goethe) into a laborious openness; in this she offers readers a model for practical consideration, to imitate and imbibe in procession towards habitual feeling with others.

Edging towards practical manysidedness

> [P]recisely because I felt that the usual attitude of Christians towards Jews is — I hardly know whether to say more impious or more stupid when viewed in the light of their professed principles, I therefore felt urged to treat Jews with such sympathy and understanding as my nature and knowledge could attain to. Moreover, not only towards the Jews, but towards all oriental peoples with whom we English come in contact, a spirit of arrogance and contemptuous dictatorialness is observable which has become a national disgrace to us. There is nothing I should care more to do, if it were possible, than to rouse the imagination of men and women to a vision of human claims in those races of their fellow-men who most differ from them in customs and beliefs. But towards the Hebrews we western people, who have been reared in Christianity, have a peculiar debt, and whether we acknowledge it or not, a peculiar thoroughness of fellowship in religion and moral sentiment.[50]

The most characteristic challenge presented by manysidedness, that of being pulled in too many directions at once to effect change in any direction, is evident in George Eliot's oft-quoted letter to Harriet Beecher Stowe. The excerpt above begins with a focus upon Jews but then moves more broadly towards including 'all oriental

[47] Henry, 'Impressions of Theophrastus Such'.
[48] Shaffer, *"Kubla Khan" and the Fall of Jerusalem*, p. 233.
[49] Shaffer, *"Kubla Khan" and the Fall of Jerusalem*, p. 234.
[50] Eliot, *Letters*, VI, pp. 301–02 (29 October 1876).

peoples' and then even further outwardly to encompass any race of 'fellow-men' who 'most differ [...] in customs and beliefs' before funneling back to its original concentration upon 'the Hebrews'. While much of *Daniel Deronda* hinges on the 'peculiar debt' and 'peculiar thoroughness of fellowship' Eliot perceives between Judaism and Christianity, I will illustrate that the 'Jewishness' of the novel is only *one* facet of Eliot's extensive research of religions.

One outcome of establishing a parallel between Eliot and Max Müller, seen in Chapter 2, is it invites the contextualization of *Daniel Deronda* within the discourse of the Science of Religion. As we have seen, Eliot gives her heroes elsewhere a number of potential associations and affinities with different cultural, religious, and racial traditions, such as Ladislaw's Polish heritage. In *Daniel Deronda*, Eliot turns to a particular juxtaposition of Judaism with Christianity, but is also careful not to lose sight of pluralizing this apparent binary. An underlying many-sided approach to recognizing religious practice and racial identity is at work throughout the novel, which both enhances Deronda's role as a many-sided sympathetic figure and frames the text as a challenge to readers to consider the limits of their knowledge and the reflexive influence of 'impious' and 'stupid' prejudices. But also, the channeled movement and returned attention to the Jewish community observable in this letter — its clear 'partiality' — are equally important as a guide to my consideration of Eliot's commentary upon manysidedness in this novel and how it factors more broadly into her ethical project.

Eliot's consumption of scholarship produced by the science of religion and implicit call to rouse others to such study produces its own set of problems even as it hopes to address those raised by unchecked cultural prejudices. If one is to ingest, study, and compare organized religions and primitive religious practices the world over, how does one choose an organizing principle without recourse to personal affiliation, which spoils impartiality? Eliot, in fact, clearly shows her partiality towards Judaism by using her rootedness in a western Christian society: 'towards the Hebrews we western people, who have been reared in Christianity, have a

peculiar debt'. *Daniel Deronda*, a novel outspokenly concerned with 'human life' that is 'well rooted in some spot of native land', presents a contest between the kind of impartiality implied by manysidedness and the partiality, or specific sympathy, with one religion, culture, or race above all others that allows for definite and directed action (*DD* 18). Indeed, Eliot treats some measure of personal preference and subjectivity as not only unavoidable, but necessary as a basic stage of growth:

> 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; and that prejudice in favour of milk with which we blindly begin, is a type of the way body and soul must get nourished at least for a time. (*DD* 18)

While Eliot's novel has long been termed 'Jewish', I would like to argue that its foundations in the science of religion and Eliot's clear interest in a considerably broader scope of mankind than just those who practice Judaism indicate a commentary on how to be many-sided or 'impartial' while simultaneously measuring, directing, and balancing that manysidedness with partiality — how to move, we might say, from the mesmerized meditation of a gem's bursts of white and rainbow light towards discovering an instrument in one of its sharp edges. Subjectivity and bias, inescapable in human nature, do not *have* to stymie moral conduct towards others. If we are suitably self-aware and other-conscious, then personal subjectivities — stemming from our upbringing, ethnicity, or religious affiliation — can strengthen and direct moral conduct. This lesson is enacted throughout the text and is consolidated and performed via the *Bildungsroman* development of Deronda's 'many-sided sympathy' as he becomes familiar with his background and social standing. Through Deronda, Eliot's experimentation with manysidedness as a 'German humanist ideal' of self-cultivation entails supplementing the humanist emphasis upon fellowship and commonality with recognition of separation; her search is for a 'higher' morality that recognizes distance, acknowledges difference, and inculcates the rights and sovereignty of others.[51]

[51] Lecourt, 'Walter Pater, Many-Sidedness, and the Conversion Novel', p. 243.

Checking the influence of automatic psychological reflexes is a central feature of *Daniel Deronda*.[52] Much of the novel's 'action' is its probing scrutiny of mental and emotional interiors. As carelessly-shared opinions dictated by religious prejudice (Mrs. Meyrick), casual thoughts about stereotypical Slavic and Polish demeanor (Mr. Bult), or offhand comments at dinner parties about slaves in Jamaica (Grandcourt) occur throughout the text, the reader is encouraged to think twice about his or her own habits of thought and speech (*DD* 347, 223, 224, 303). When it was published serially, *Daniel Deronda*'s opening epigraph was reprinted before each book, the first line of which is 'Let thy chief terror be of thine own soul' and, in the context of considering the enigmatic Gwendolen, the narrator meaningfully alludes to the 'great deal of unmapped country within us which would have to be taken into account in an explanation of our gusts and storms' (*DD* 257). The text's more comprehensive mapping of Deronda's mental movements about Judaism and Jews after his rescue of Mirah is also calculated to provoke response. Most readers are expected to identify with Deronda's initial wariness and suspicion of Jews, but it is hoped they will learn from and replicate his humble inclination to accept the limits of his knowledge:

> Deronda, like his neighbours, had regarded Judaism as a sort of eccentric fossilised form which an accomplished man might dispense with studying, and leave to specialists. But Mirah, [...] had flashed on him the hitherto neglected reality that Judaism was something still throbbing in human lives, still making for them the only conceivable vesture of the world. (*DD* 334–35)

To emulate Deronda's 'passing from the supposition that we hold the right opinions on a subject we are careless about, to a sudden care for it, and a sense that our opinions were ignorance' is to become a small but important part of Eliot's efforts to check the 'spirit of arrogance and contemptuous dictatorialness' she observed in English society (*DD* 335). Gwendolen Harleth's trajectory marks a similar check

[52] Carolyn Burdett touched upon Eliot's use of the term 'reflex' in her paper 'Mimicry, Motor Types and Memory: Vernon Lee and Aesthetic Empathy'. She referred in particular to the climactic scene in *Middlemarch* between Dorothea and Rosamond, arguing that Rosamond's 'sympathetic' response to Dorothea's sympathy is merely a 'reflex' — an empty, mimetic response of little or no moral value.

to automatic bias. Terence Cave points out that the first mention of Jews in the text comes from Gwendolen's 'unthinkingly prejudiced habit of mind' when she inwardly complains of 'Jew dealers [...] taking advantage of Christians unfortunate at play!' (*DD* 15).[53] By novel's end, however, when Deronda finally shares with her that he is Jewish and plans to travel to the East in the service of his people, her response is neither scornful nor unthinking: 'she was apparently meditating something that she had to say. "What are you going to do?" she asked, at last, very timidly. "Can I understand the ideas, or am I too ignorant?" ' (*DD* 747).

In examining the tricky distinction between narrow prejudice or unthinking bias and the kind of partiality or subjectivity needful for directing (moral) action, *Daniel Deronda* presents two lessons that must be taken together if we are to understand Eliot's ethical project. First, the many-mindedness Deronda practices as a habitually sympathetic individual and Herderean figure may have its short-comings, but the novel makes it plain that it is inherently moral to routinely consider another's point of view; the habit of cultivating thought (and knowledge) in many directions is worth emulating, and self-examination and meditation are not only admirable, they are a necessity according to the novel's lessons of introspection. And yet, these 'many-sided' qualities and habits require something more to make them 'sharp' or 'pointed': a bias or subjectivity to give them body, force, and direction. Second, as part of hoping to guard readers against *unreasoning* bias, Eliot does not discredit bias wholesale. Her lesson in this regard is that bias founded upon the kind of self-examination that does not exclude thinking of others is not necessarily immoral and may in fact be the key to making a sympathetic or many-sided nature practical. The reality is there are always limits to thinking about and feeling with others. Even as we are encouraged to follow Deronda's 'habit of seeing things as they probably appeared to others', Eliot has carefully added a qualifying 'probably' (*DD* 335). Moreover, how can we plan practical actions if all our energy is committed to 'entering into' the thoughts and

[53] George Eliot, *Daniel Deronda*, edited by Terence Cave (London: Penguin Books, 1995), p. 814 n3.

feelings of each person we meet? Eliot's message: be sympathetic, yes, but also be intentional, be specific, and be practical, using your personal background and subjectivities as a guide to narrow your focus. We can see this approach enacted in her method of research and composition for *Daniel Deronda*.

For recent critics of Orientalism, *Daniel Deronda* is notorious for disregarding the existence of Arabs native to Palestine. The novel has been labeled 'a Zionist manifesto' and called 'propaganda in the service of British strategic national goals'.[54] Edward Said claimed the novel represents 'the total absence of any thought about the actual inhabitants of the East, Palestine in particular'.[55] Over the years this view and the anachronistic use of the term Zionist have largely been refuted. Christopher Hitchens, for instance, considered Said as inaccurately 'viewing the novel through a retrospective optic'.[56] Although Hitchens concedes Said has a point when he claims that *Daniel Deronda* only offers 'absolute silence' in lieu of the 'wishes, values, [and] aspirations' of Eastern peoples living in England's colonies, Hitchens contests his argument regarding Eliot's 'generalized callousness' by turning to several excerpts from *The Impressions of Theophrastus Such*, in which Eliot 'expressed herself rather forcefully about the hypocrisies of empire'.[57] Yet one need not look beyond *Daniel Deronda*. There is evidence to refute Said's verdict within its pages, as becomes increasingly evident the more one knows what to look for based on Eliot's preparatory research.

In *The Jewish Odyssey of George Eliot* (2009), Gertrude Himmelfarb questions, 'Why [...] did Eliot choose to write this book at this time, when the "Jewish question" was of no great public concern, certainly not in England?'[58]

[54] Gertrude Himmelfarb, *The Jewish Odyssey of George Eliot* (New York; London: Encounter Books, 2009), p. 131; A. Clare Brandabur, 'George Eliot's "Daniel Deronda"', *Peace Review* 13:2 (2001), ⟨URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10402650120060418⟩, 221–28 (p. 227). Accessed 23 October 2012. Brandabur writes, 'Zionism in the form advocated by George Eliot is racism' and 'represents the distortion of a religious ideal in the interests of the political ambitions of the Great Powers'.

[55] Edward Said, *The Question of Palestine* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980), p. 65.

[56] Christopher Hitchens, *For the Sake of Argument: Essays and Minority Reports* (London: Verso, 1993), pp. 336–37.

[57] Said, *The Question of Palestine*, p. 63; Hitchens, *For the Sake of Argument*, p. 337.

[58] Himmelfarb, *The Jewish Odyssey*, p. 9.

Part of the answer lies in Eliot's view of the 'peculiar' closeness between Judaism and Christianity; and Judaism's role is further pronounced due to the dictates of Eliot's era. Not only did 'the Jewish question' foment on-going debate in nineteenth-century England, but it was a subject of increasingly vitriolic argument in France and Germany.[59] Eliot rightly focuses on the non-Christian religious tradition that was most physically present in England and Europe, as opposed to the relative absence of Muslim, Buddhist, or Hindu communities.[60] Moreover, by 1868 and again in 1874, Benjamin Disraeli had achieved the post of Prime Minister and was regularly criticized as a 'secret Jew' who nurtured feelings of ill will towards England's populace.[61] Given these contexts, and the long-standing habit of western scholars to 'study [...] Judaism as the context or foil for Christianity', Eliot's focus on Judaism was a logical choice further supported by her sense of a cultural affinity with it.[62] Eliot's mission was clear and she 'took as her goal in Daniel Deronda [...] the reeducation of the English nation in its shared heritage with the Jews'.[63]

There is no doubt that the literature responding to Eliot's final novel overwhelmingly emphasizes her focus on Judaism and the Jews. Eliot's 'Jewish sympathies' are repeatedly highlighted.[64] The Deronda narrative is consistently marked as 'the Jewish part', the 'Jewish half', or in F.R. Leavis's notorious assessment, 'the bad half [...] represented by Deronda himself, and by what

[59] See Himmelfarb, *The Jewish Odyssey*, pp. 13–48.

[60] This is not to imply that these religious communities were entirely absent. See Humayun Ansari, *The Infidel Within: The History of Muslims in Britain, 1800 to the Present* (London: Hurst and Company, 2004). Ansari describes various ways and reasons foreigners of all social strata, from lascars and ayahs to princes and statesmen, came to England and how they were received. See also Geaves for the narrative of Abdullah Quilliam's Muslim community in Liverpool in the late 1880s and 1890s.

[61] See Michael Ragussis, *Figures of Conversion: "The Jewish Question" and English National Identity* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 1995), pp. 234–90 for a discussion of the 'secret Jew' in the novels of Trollope and Eliot in the 1870s and how Disraeli's position polarized literary depictions of Jewish figures.

[62] James Pasto, 'Islam's "Strange Secret Sharer": Orientalism, Judaism, and the Jewish Question', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 40:3 (1998), 437–74 (p. 439), in *JSTOR*. Accessed 27 November 2012.

[63] Ragussis, *Figures of Conversion*, p. 263.

[64] J.M. Picker, 'George Eliot and the Sequel Question', *New Literary History* 37:2 (2006), 361–88 (p. 363), in *JSTOR*. Accessed 5 April 2013.

may be called [...] the Zionist inspiration'.[65] Leona Toker refers to the novel's 'proto-Zionist plot'.[66] Joan Bennett describes Deronda's narrative as 'the product of a conscientious determination to arouse sympathy for the Jews' and the title of William Baker's work, *George Eliot and Judaism* (1975), speaks for itself.[67] In a contemporary review, tellingly entitled 'Deronda the Jew', James Picciotto called the novel, 'the vindication of a long maligned race against ignorant misrepresentation or willful aspersion, the defence of Jews and Judaism against fanaticism and prejudice'.[68] More recently, Himmelfarb refers to *Daniel Deronda* as 'so sympathetic a novel about Judaism and so prophetic a vision of Zionism' and stresses Eliot's 'conversion, [...] to a respect for religion in general and Judaism in particular'.[69] Commenting on Eliot's extensive preparatory research into Judaism, Jewish history, and Hebrew, Himmelfarb notes: 'In the published volume of her notebooks, the list of books she consulted comprises twenty-three pages'.[70]

However, Himmelfarb refrains from mentioning that a large portion of the texts listed on these twenty-three pages have nothing to do with Judaism, Jewish history, or the Hebrew language. Works on Islam range from Aloys Sprenger's *Das Leben und die Lehre des Mohammad nach bisher grösstentheils unbenutzten Quellen bearbeitet* [The Life and Teachings of Mohammed, based on previously unused sources] (1861–65) and Reginald Bosworth Smith's series of lectures on *Mohammed and Mohammedanism* (1874) to George Sale's translation of the Koran. Eliot consulted the leading scholarship on Buddhism and the historical life of the Buddha by Carl Friedrich Köppen, J. Barthèlemy Saint-Hilaire, Eugéne

[65] Harold Fisch, 'Daniel Deronda or Gwendolen Harleth?', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 19:4 (1965), 345–56 (p. 348), in *JSTOR*. Accessed 5 April 2013; Alan T. Levenson, 'Writing the Philosemitic Novel: "Daniel Deronda" Revisited', *Prooftexts* 28:2 (2008), 129–56 (p. 140), in *JSTOR*. Accessed 5 April 2013; F.R. Leavis, *The Great Tradition: George Eliot, Henry James, Joseph Conrad* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1948), p. 80.

[66] Toker, 'Vocation and Sympathy', p. 566.

[67] Joan Bennett, *George Eliot: Her Mind and Her Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), p. 183.

[68] James Picciotto, 'Deronda the Jew', *The Gentleman's Magazine* 17 (1876), 593–603 (p. 602), in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 15 January 2013.

[69] Himmelfarb, *The Jewish Odyssey*, pp. 7, 154.

[70] Himmelfarb, *The Jewish Odyssey*, p. 8.

Burnouf, and Robert Spence Hardy. Eliot also consulted works on Zoroastrianism, the lives and beliefs of ancient Egyptians, the magic of ancient Mesopotamia, Norse mythology, Persian ethics as presented by Al Ghazali, a collection of ancient Indian fables translated from Sanskrit, Babylonian literature, and Central Asian philosophy.[71] Auguste Comte's works on Positivism also appear.[72] Eliot's interest in language also extended beyond Hebrew, expanding as we have seen into comparative linguistic studies by Ernest Renan, William Dwight Whitney, and Max Müller.[73] Müller's distinct and close connection between linguistic and religious studies is evident here. Edward Said may have been pleased to learn that, in lieu of a physical trip to the East (which Eliot and Lewes had considered but unfortunately abandoned), Eliot's research reflects her recourse to travel literature.[74] She consulted William Gifford Palgrave's *Narrative of a Year's Journey through Central and Eastern Asia* (1862–63), his *Essays on Eastern Questions* (1872), Evariste Régis Huc's *Souvenirs d'un voyage dans la Tartarie, le Thibet, et la Chine pendant les années 1844, 1845, et 1846* (1850), Amelia

[71] See, respectively, Charles de Harlez, *Avesta: Livre sacrés des sectateurs de Zoroastre* (1875–77); Martin Haug, *Essays on the Sacred Language, Writings and Religion of the Parsis* (1862); Willem Pleyte, *Etudes égyptologiques* (1866–68); Heinrich Karl Brugsch-Bey, *Histoire d'Egypte* (1859); John Gardner Wilkinson, *A Popular Account of the Ancient Egyptians* (1854); François Joseph Chabas, *Le plus ancien livre du mond, Etude sur le papyrus Prisse* (1858); François Lenormant, *La Magie chez les chaldéens et les origines accadiennes* (1874); Benjamin Thorpe, *Northern Mythology, Comprising the Principal Popular Traditions and Superstitions of Scandinavia, North Germany, and the Netherlands* (1851–52); Baron Joseph Hammer-Purgstall, *O Kind! Die berühmte ethische Abhandlung Ghazalis, Arabisch und Deutsch* (1838); Theodor Benfey, *Pantschatantra: Funf Bücher indischer Fabeln, Märchen und Erzählkungen, aus den Sanskrit übersetzt* (1859); Archibald Henry Sayce, *Babylonian Literature: Lectures Delivered at the Royal Institution* (1877); and Joseph Arthur de Gobineau, *Les religions et les philosophies dans l'Asie centrale* (1865).

[72] Perhaps Leslie Stephen was closer to the mark than he supposed when he wrote, 'Daniel Deronda, one fancies, would have embodied [Eliot's] sentiments more completely if, instead of devoting himself to the Jews, he had become a leading prophet in the church of humanity'. See Leslie Stephen, *George Eliot* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1902), p. 200. See also T.R. Wright, 'George Eliot and Positivism: A Reassessment', *The Modern Language Review* 76:2 (981), 257–72, in *JSTOR*. Accessed 6 April 2013, in which Eliot's use of Comte's theory in *Romola*, *Felix Holt*, and *Daniel Deronda* is discussed.

[73] Ernest Renan, *Histoire générale et système comparé des langues sémitiques* (1863); William Dwight Whitney, *Language and its Study* (1874).

[74] 'Mr. Lewes's mother is now very aged (82) and does not of course like him to go very far beyond easy reach for months together. Otherwise, we should perhaps carry out a plan of going to the East, before we get too old for that daring enterprise'. Eliot, *Letters*, IV, p. 465 (July 1868).

Edwards's *A Thousand Miles up the Nile* (1876), and Salomon Munk's *Palestine: description géographique, historique et archéologique* (1845).

The many-sided eclecticism of this collection supports the view that Eliot had another context in mind for *Daniel Deronda* — the science of religion — an enterprise that was not in competition with her research into Judaism but encompassed and supported it. The movement we see in her letter to Stowe could almost be a synecdoche of the pattern evoked by her research; wide learning and broad other-awareness buttresses and moves smoothly into a concentration upon Judaism, a fixation which enhances rather than undermines Eliot's comprehensive research because it completes the (ethical) pattern of manysidedness joined with specificity that Eliot encourages. But can one detect the multiple non-Jewish strands informing the composition of *Daniel Deronda* without turning to Eliot's notebooks or other texts, as Hitchens does? W.J. Harvey's assessment of Eliot is apt — 'George Eliot's mind is like the National Gallery; for every canvas on display there are two stored away in the basement' — yet in this case she exhibits enough of her research to bring several religious traditions to attention, and the most explicit references collect around and attach to the figure of Deronda, giving him a pseudo-prophet or priest-like status that lends credence to his example.[75] For readers and characters alike, he is depicted as guide and moral exemplar.

Versatility & practicality: Daniel Deronda as ethical project

The name Deronda, while indicating that Daniel's ancestry lies with the Sephardim Jews from the Iberian Peninsula also translates to 'round'.[76] His very name suggests a geometric shape with infinite 'sides' and in the text a series of religious

[75] W.J. Harvey, 'The Intellectual Background of the Novel: Casaubon and Lydgate', in: Barbara Hardy, ed., *Middlemarch: Critical Approaches to the Novel* (London: Athlone Press, 1967), pp. 25–37 (p. 37).

[76] James Picciotto notes this racial link with Spain in contrast with Mirah Cohen's Polish origins. Picciotto, 'Deronda the Jew', p. 601.

images and figures clusters around his person. Besides direct comparisons with Moses, 'Mahomet', and 'Bouddha', Deronda is routinely portrayed as either deity or prophet-hero, from speaking 'words [that] were like the touch of a miraculous hand' to his preference to 'be the calf [rather] than the butcher' (*DD* 166, 434, 716, 162). Hans in his flippancy 'take[s] Deronda as an Olympian who needed nothing', while his sisters have humourously ritualized 'honour[ing]' him: 'Kate burns a pastille before his portrait every day. [...] And I carry his signature in a little black-silk bag round my neck to keep off the cramp. And Amy says the multiplication-table in his name' (*DD* 165–66, 207).

Both Mirah and Gwendolen consider their bonds with him sacred. Mirah's lasting impression is that he was a 'divinely-sent messenger' which had the effect of 'stirring always anew the disposition to reliance and openness' (*DD* 434). Gwendolen enacts an 'ideal consecration' of him — 'Without the aid of sacred ceremony or costume, her feelings had turned this man, only a few years older than herself, into a priest' — and he is responsible for 'subduing' her into a 'receptiveness' likened with 'conversion' (*DD* 401). 'You have a passion for people who are pelted, Dan', warns Sir Hugo, who seems aware of Deronda's precarious inclination towards indiscriminate compassion and self-sacrifice (*DD* 667):

> And, my dear boy, it is good to be unselfish and generous; but don't carry that too far. It will not do to give yourself to be melted down for the benefit of the tallow-trade; you must know where to find yourself. (*DD* 168)[77]

But herein lies the rub for Deronda; because he does not know where to find himself, he is susceptible to being pulled (apart) in multiple directions. We get the impression that Deronda is rounded and versatile not by choice, but because he is not certain of his origin and lacks the guidance that would come from that knowledge. His tutor 'thought his pupil a remarkable lad, to whom one thing was as easy as another if he had only a mind to it' (*DD* 158). Sir Hugo also sees this in him: 'I should think you can take up anything you like' and he gives Deronda free reign

[77] Sir Hugo's concern and critique of a sympathetic nature is in line with those of Lisbeth During and Leona Toker. Toker discusses the novel's theme of cannibalism: 'if sympathy is not hedged in, its object may end up consuming its source'. Toker, 'Vocation and Sympathy', p. 569.

in his choice of occupation: 'Whatever your inclination leads you to, my boy' (*DD* 160). Deronda excels in classics, learns French and German in addition to Greek and Latin, takes up mathematics at Cambridge, and then abandons this degree when there '[springs] up in him a meditative yearning after wide knowledge' (*DD* 162). His desire 'to be at home in foreign countries, and follow in imagination the travelling students of the middle ages' is fed by 'his boyish love of universal history' — a vague enough dictate — and so after he returns from learning abroad he studies law merely 'to fence off idleness' (*DD* 164). He finds that his path thus far has only 'deepen[ed] the roots of indecision' within him, rather than unearthed a lodestone to direct his next steps (*DD* 169). Deronda learns to associate 'knowing too much' with 'indecision' (*DD* 672).

Very like Eliot's previous many-sided figures, Deronda brings together masculine and feminine characteristics. His compassionate nature and sensitivity to others is joined by overt references to his person as a girl or woman. 'There is altogether something experimental about Deronda', writes John Rignall, 'as though Eliot is essaying a new kind of hero, one endowed with all the privileges of a man of wealth and standing yet who, [...] challenges conventional distinctions of gender displaying a feminine quality of sensitivity and understanding'.[78] We see a dimension of femininity emerge in Deronda's compassionate prophet- or priesthood status, which is further suggested by the overt feminizing of 'Bouddha' and 'Mahomet' in Western oriental scholarship.[79] Deronda is sensitive and receptive on all sides — 'there was hardly a delicacy of feeling this lad was not capable of' (*DD* 153) — as well as contemplative and largely passive. 'It was

[78] John Rignall, 'Daniel Deronda', in: John Rignall, ed., *Oxford Reader's Companion to George Eliot* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

[79] See Almond, *The British Discovery of Buddhism* and Almond, *Heretic and Hero*. Examples of feminine descriptions of Deronda include: 'his mind showed the same blending of child's ignorance with surprising knowledge which is oftener seen in bright girls' (*DD* 151); 'he felt himself changing colour like a girl' (*DD* 582); 'He allowed himself in his solitude to sob, with perhaps more than a woman's acuteness of compassion' (*DD* 636); 'It seemed that all the woman lacking in her was present in him' (*DD* 615); 'their exquisite appealingness stirring in him that deeply-laid care for womanhood which had begun when his own lip was like a girl's' (*DD* 692). See Margaret Moan Rowe, 'Melting Outlines in "Daniel Deronda"', *Studies in the Novel* 22:1 (1990), 10–18, in *JSTOR*. Accessed 3 August 2017, for a pertinent discussion of androgyny.

his habit to indulge himself in that solemn passivity which easily comes with the lengthening shadows and mellowing light, when thinking and desiring melt together imperceptibly' (*DD* 172–73). This does not mean he lacks strength or energy, but passivity is seductive, and 'the passion of his nature had got more and more locked by [...] uncertainty' about his origin (*DD* 437). Between this uncertainty and his early insight into what suffering is, Deronda is given over to 'melting' himself down, as Sir Hugo says, like animal fat into tallow for others' use as a guiding light. His nature has a dangerous self-sacrificial tendency.

This bent is discussed indirectly when Mirah earnestly repeats Hans's facetious comparison of Deronda with the 'story of Bouddha giving himself to the famished tigress' (*DD* 434). This remark and the short conversation that follows is telling about the imprint the science of religion leaves upon the novel, as well as the nature and (un)desirability of self-sacrifice. Deronda remarks that thinking of others does not preclude thinking also of oneself, something we see, for instance, in the 'double sympathy' Deronda enacts when he helps a temporarily blinded Hans Meyrick with his classics exams (*DD* 166). Yes, Deronda acts benevolently out of a sympathetic desire to help his friend, but he is equally motivated by his interest in the subject: 'he was very anxious that Hans should not miss the much-needed scholarship, and he felt a revival of interest in the old studies' (*DD* 166–67). This 'double-sympathy' reminds us that the self is never completely obliterated by sympathetic thought or action; each of us always holds a candle to the pier-glass to create the illusion of concentric circles. But while the metaphor in *Middlemarch*, relayed in a chapter that focuses upon Rosamond Vincy, suggests moral condemnation of such subjectivity, in *Daniel Deronda* we are left with the impression that we can, and should, ethically wield our personal subjectivities, rather than eschew them in perpetual self-sacrifice.

In the conversation about Bouddha, self-sacrifice is praised on one hand — Mirah remarks upon 'the beauty of the action' — and on the other it is questioned, 'But *was* it beautiful for Bouddha to let the tiger eat him? [...] It would be a bad

pattern' (*DD* 434–35). Nineteenth-century interpretations of Buddhism frame the tension we see here. 'Of all the qualities praised, it is the Buddha's compassion and sympathy that was most often remarked upon. Millions were won by his intense sympathy for suffering', and yet, 'use of words like "indolence" and "idiocy" signals the failure of the Victorian writer to come to terms with a passive element in religion that contrasted so strongly with their more active, "muscular" vision of the Christian life'.[80] The strong association between sympathy (something to praise) and passivity (something to condemn) is problematic, and self-sacrifice sits uneasily at this junction.

The myth of Buddha and the tigress invokes the criticism of sympathy as all-consuming, taking it to the logical extreme of literally feeding oneself to another in need. Deronda is wary of this 'contagious' variety of sympathy, viewing it as emotion expressed without the balancing presence of reason. Following his first intimate interview with Mordecai, he meditates upon Mordecai's commanding influence, but '[shrinks] from having his course determined by mere contagion, without consent of reason' (*DD* 474). This thinking supports the view that manysidedness is needful because it entails intellect and rationality, signaling a balanced sympathy rather than sympathy as emotion or affect alone. Deronda as the principal many-sided figure of this text is 'given not only to feel strongly but to question actively' (*DD* 473). He may be susceptible to the 'infection of excitement', but he is self-reflective in keeping it from going too far and, while 'Buddhism probably contributed to the ethical paradigm of *Daniel Deronda*', the extreme self-sacrifice and impractical erasure of self that Buddha in this tale demonstrates is placed at the far end of the sympathy spectrum (*DD* 541).[81] Deronda's passivity and habit of 'reflective hesitation' may not be practical, but neither is martyrdom (*DD* 164). Another course, one which fulfills Deronda's 'vague social passion' and 'render[s] fellowship real', must be found (*DD* 336).[82]

[80] Almond, *The British Discovery of Buddhism*, pp. 78, 122.

[81] Moats, 'Deronda and the Tigress', p. 8.

[82] See Moats, 'Deronda and the Tigress', p. 15. Moats argues, 'The tigress legend reinforces Gideon's call for passive national consciousness and portends Deronda's eventual abandonment

Eliot does more with Deronda in this regard than with her previous many-sided figures, using his character development to more completely assess the merits and demerits of manysidedness. *Daniel Deronda* has strong ties, for example, with *The Lifted Veil*. Grandcourt and Gwendolen may be a reimagining of Latimer and Bertha, but there are also echoes of Latimer in Deronda. Each figure possesses acute sensibilities, Deronda's initial 'wandering energy' is like Latimer's 'wandering' habits, and in Geneva Latimer's custom of boating on the lake in solitude, lying on his back 'and let[ting] it glide where it would' as he gazes upwards 'at the departing glow leaving one mountain-top after the other', is reenacted in Deronda's routine boating on the Thames (*DD* 336, *LV* 7). Deronda, too, is 'satisfied to go with the tide and be taken back by it' (*DD* 172). There is an indistinctness between Deronda's interior and the landscape around him in Chapter 17, and as he 'forget[s] everything in a half-speculative, half-involuntary identification of himself with the objects he was looking at', the scene is reminiscent of Latimer's 'dreamy' nature, 'ineffectual self', 'vague mind', and most particularly of how Latimer 'mingle[s]' sensations, his friend Charles Meunier's words blending 'confusedly [...] with glimpses of blue water and delicate floating cloud' (*DD* 173, *LV* 8, 14, 8). Latimer's 'morbid organisation, framed for passive suffering' also parallels to some extent the passive suffering Deronda endures when he responds sympathetically to pain and accepts burdens of confession, feeding his 'meditative interest in learning how human miseries are wrought' (*LV* 14, *DD* 163).

Both figures are cosmopolitan, spending time studying abroad and learning modern languages; Latimer, like Deronda, visits a synagogue while traveling in Europe, and Helen Small writes that Latimer, 'symbolically, [...] becomes in his later years a Wandering Jew, drifting through "foreign countries" until he returns to England'.[83] Latimer is 'ghostly'; Deronda 'roam[s] [...] like a

of Gwendolen and subsequent vision of apocalypse. [...] Buddhism for Eliot extends beyond the "clan" mentality and promotes an inclusivism that both honours cultural heritage and prioritizes universal compassion'.

[83] Small, 'George Eliot and the Cosmopolitan Cynic', p. 87. Small writes, in composing *The Lifted*

yearning disembodied spirit', and U.C. Knoepflmacher calls Deronda 'fleshless and ethereal' (*LV* 14, *DD* 336).[84] Other parallels include their friendships. Latimer's only close friend is the physician Charles Meunier, 'whose intellectual tendencies were the very reverse of my own' (*LV* 8). Charles speaks while Latimer listens, 'half absent' (*LV* 8). Deronda similarly cultivates just one close friendship at school, with Hans Meyrick, also his opposite in personality; Hans shares all, 'want[ing] no confidence in return', and Deronda's reserved nature complies (*DD* 165). But most significantly, Deronda functions as Latimer does in disclosing the moral dilemma we all face, and one which we repeatedly find at the heart of dialogues about sympathy and manysidedness: our 'inability to face the other as other, [...] and the inevitable recourse to framing the other in terms of oneself'.[85] Where Latimer's complete lack of sympathetic interest keeps him distanced from others (despite hearing their thoughts), Deronda's hyper-sympathetic nature and 'activity of imagination on behalf of others' paradoxically keeps him at a distance as well (*DD* 162). We find Deronda 'fall[ing] into a meditative numbness' and as a result, 'gliding farther and farther from that life of practically energetic sentiment' (*DD* 337).

While undoubtedly linked, there are important qualitative differences between these figures. Latimer largely accepts that his 'nature was of the sensitive, unpractical order', whereas Deronda fears the impracticality of his nonalignment: 'He wanted some way of keeping emotion and its progeny of sentiments [...] substantial and strong in the face of a reflectiveness that threatened to nullify all differences' (*LV* 7, *DD* 337). Others' thoughts are *forced* upon Latimer to grate upon his acute sensitivity, but in Deronda's case he has a choice. His 'sensibilities beyond the common, [were] enlarged by his early habit of thinking himself imaginatively into the experience of others' (*DD* 476). Moreover, this practice is balanced by access to meditative quiet, which is denied Latimer.

Veil, Eliot was 'tapping into an established figure of the cosmopolite' (p. 85).

[84] U.C. Knoepflmacher, *Religious Humanism and the Victorian Novel: George Eliot, Walter Pater, and Samuel Butler* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 147.

[85] Albrecht, 'Sympathy and Telepathy', p. 452.

Perhaps the most important result of this comparison is that we see Latimer and Deronda differ in their responses to suspicion and (cosmopolitan) cynicism. Deronda's habit of forming humbling comparisons, in response to his suspicions about Jews for example, saves him from much isolation and inaction, whereas Latimer's comparisons between himself and others are self-(pre)serving. Helen Small concludes, 'Latimer is, on closer scrutiny, not so much a cynic as a man who embodies the fundamental problem exposed by cynicism: that of finding the appropriate ethical distance on the rest of humanity'; her estimation of *The Lifted Veil* — that it 'bring[s] to the fore the problem of the right degree of proximity between self and other' — can also be applied to *Daniel Deronda*. '[P]roximity breeds a level of insight corrosive of affection and respect; distance breeds despair'.[86] How far should one go in establishing closeness with others with their interests at heart — as far as Buddha? It has been suggested that Deronda's development was composed 'to establish an ethics that would be more responsible to what can most broadly be called the other', an ethics 'attentive to heterogeneities, to differences, [and] to the separateness of other people'.[87] Using Deronda, Eliot continues the project launched with Latimer and navigates a path towards wedding manysidedness with purposeful direction, and transforming indiscriminate sympathy into a more localized expression of solidarity that possesses practical 'moral force' which eschews complete self-sacrifice (*DD* 336).

James Picciotto noted the *Bildungsroman* quality of *Daniel Deronda* in 1876, writing, 'The hero is seen under different lights, as various phases of his character are rendered apparent', and beneath these shifting, opalesque lights we detect two distinct phases of manysidedness in Deronda as he undergoes 'metamorphosis' (*DD* 712).[88] Three passages illustrate these stages, marking a before, an after, and the transition. In Chapter 16, which contains the flashback

[86] Small, 'George Eliot and the Cosmopolitan Cynic', p. 96.

[87] Thomas Albrecht, '"The Balance of Separateness and Communication": Cosmopolitan Ethics in George Eliot's Daniel Deronda', *ELH* 79:2 (2012), 389–416 (p. 391), in *Project Muse*. Accessed 17 February 2017.

[88] Picciotto, 'Deronda the Jew', p. 595.

detailing Deronda's boyhood and education experiences, we find a description of how and why Deronda came to be in a 'stage of ineffective brooding' (*DD* 165). Sensitive to his lack of knowledge about his true parentage, and suspecting the illegitimacy of his birth, Deronda 'linger[s] [...] in a state of social neutrality' (*DD* 165). This initial 'social neutrality' links him with Ladislaw and furthers the comparison with Bouddha. He finds himself 'long[ing] [...] to have the sort of apprenticeship to life which would not shape him too definitely, and rob him of the choice that might come from a free growth' (*DD* 164). His sensitive, loving, and sympathetic nature, manifesting itself in regular 'activity of imagination on behalf of others', results 'in acts of considerateness that struck his companions as moral eccentricity' (*DD* 162). He has 'a hatred of all injury' which stems from his personal experience of shame in suspecting his illegitimacy. This not only builds in him 'a meditative interest in learning how human miseries are wrought', but also stunts his ambitious nature: 'how could a fellow push his way properly when he objected to swop for his own advantage [...]?' (*DD* 163, 162).

From the outset, the quality of Deronda's ambition 'lay exceptionally aloof from [...] ugly forms of boyish energy'; Eliot takes great care in this introduction to Deronda's early life not to dissociate Deronda's loving and compassionate nature from an 'energetic' one (*DD* 163). She only insists on its different *quality*: 'a boy who is fond of somebody else's pencil-case may not be more energetic than another who is fond of giving his own pencil-case away' (*DD* 163). Deronda may be described as feminine in more than one textual moment, but strength is not absent. His person is a 'combination of refinement with force'; he is 'manly', possessing a 'lithe powerful frame' and wishing to be 'like Pericles or Washington' rather than 'a Porson or a Leibnitz' (*DD* 170, 158). How this energy is used or (mis)directed is key. In this early stage of versatility, what we may call passive manysidedness, Deronda lacks clear direction and recourse to practical action. He is described in terms of neutrality and even vacuity. We discover how apt Sir Hugo's advice to 'know where to find yourself' is, and his comparison between Deronda's protean

sympathetic activity and melting fat 'for the benefit of the tallow-trade' is startling in its self-destructive violence.[89]

Deronda is in this undefined stage when he first sees Mirah. In Chapter 17 we find Deronda in a boat on the Thames. His initial interaction with the sight of Mirah and their exchanged glance is a commentary upon passive manysidedness; it suggests that a protracted vision of the world and wide-ranging knowledge of history can cause — not action — but neutrality, indecision, vacuity, and an aestheticizing of suffering that signals detachment rather than practical sympathetic outreach. Deronda's initial sight of Mirah does not lead him to actively help or enquire about her circumstances. Even though his automatic response is to '[feel] an outleap of interest and compassion towards her', his wide awareness of the pervasiveness of 'girl-tragedies' — no doubt fed by his 'boyish love of universal history' — means he easily floats into contemplative inaction (*DD* 171–72, 164). In an aesthetic reverie, he compares Mirah's image with a series of art objects, such as 'an onyx cameo', and she is absorbed into a set of preexisting thoughts and emotions Deronda has built around the forsaken image of his unknown mother (*DD* 172). The episode exposes a numbing effect. Manysidedness, left unregulated by specific responsibilities, drifts into a pattern of 'subsum[ing] singularities, [...] into generalities'.[90] His 'overly generous power of empathy ultimately only paralyzes him' and his 'wont to have such wide-sweeping connections with all life and history' feeds his habitual reasoning 'why he should not draw strongly at any thread in the hopelessly-entangled scheme of things' (*DD* 172).[91]

The transition period comes after the rescue of Mirah, but before Deronda's final discovery that he is Jewish. In Chapter 32 we are given deeper access to 'the common undercurrent of Deronda's mind' (*DD* 337). We find that since desiring 'the sort of apprenticeship to life which would not shape him too definitely', he

[89] Eliot counted 'excessive tolerance' and 'a tendency to melt off the outlines of things' among her 'weaknesses'. See Eliot, *Letters*, V, p. 367 (16 January 1873).

[90] Albrecht, "'The Balance of Separateness and Communication"', p. 397.

[91] Albrecht, "'The Balance of Separateness and Communication"', p. 397. See pp. 395–99 for full discussion of this passage.

had come to a new position of 'long[ing] for [...] some external event, or some inward light, that would urge him into a definite line of action, and compress his wandering energy' (*DD* 164, 336). This wandering nature is termed 'a many-sided sympathy, which threatened to hinder any persistent course of action' (*DD* 335). Deronda is uncomfortably aware of the 'apparent indefiniteness in his sentiments' and it is worth quoting the following passage at length to show how he notes his many-sided sympathy's tinctured effect over all his observations and interactions:

> [A]s soon as he took up any antagonism, though only in thought, he seemed to himself like the Sabine warriors in the memorable story — with nothing to meet his spear but flesh of his flesh, and objects that he loved. His imagination had so wrought itself to the habit of seeing things as they probably appeared to others, that a strong partisanship, unless it were against an immediate oppression, had become an insincerity for him. His plenteous, flexible sympathy had ended by falling into one current with that reflective analysis which tends to neutralise sympathy. Few men were able to keep themselves clearer of vices than he; yet he hated vices mildly, being used to think of them less in the abstract than as a part of mixed human natures having an individual history, which it was the bent of his mind to trace with understanding and pity. With the same innate balance he was fervidly democratic in his feeling for the multitude, and yet, through his affections and imagination, intensely conservative; voracious of speculations on government and religion, yet loath to part with long-sanctioned forms which, for him, were quick with memories and sentiments that no argument could lay dead. [...] A too reflective and diffusive sympathy was in danger of paralysing in him that indignation against wrong and that selectness of fellowship which are the conditions of moral force. (*DD* 335–36)

Impartiality rules Deronda; his 'innate balance' threateningly poises him on every side and no side, making him Sabine and Roman, self and other, democratic and conservative. The passage makes it clear this is not ideal: 'Martyrdom changes sides, and he was *in danger* of changing with it' (*DD* 364, emphasis added). Deronda's very impartiality, the manysidedness of his sympathy, hazards his ethical position. *Some* degree of partiality is necessary for moral action. Laid bare, Deronda's deepest desire is to find 'the influence that would justify partiality, and make him what he longed to be yet was unable to make himself — an organic part of social life, instead of roaming in it like a yearning disembodied spirit' (*DD* 336).

He cannot live without 'mak[ing] a little difference for the better', but without the directing influence of either parentage or fixed social status, he is at a loss regarding how to decide upon a specific course of action. His versatility — studying classics, mathematics, history, and law — and the cosmopolitan nature of his education do not provide what he needs. On the contrary, most of all 'he dreaded, as if it were a dwelling-place of lost souls, that dead anatomy of culture which [...] knows, not everything, but everything else about everything' (*DD* 336).

All of this is described, not as 'an admirable experience' per se, but as 'a form of struggle before break of day' (*DD* 337). Deronda's paralysis, while not positive in and of itself, reveals to him that he *wants* partiality, and knows he needs it.[92] Really, the saving grace seems to be the brutal and honest self-awareness Deronda exemplifies, and which further ties him to a tradition of enlightenment: 'he did not attempt to hide from himself that he had fallen into a meditative numbness, and was gliding farther and farther from that life of practically energetic sentiment which he would have proclaimed [...] to be the best of all life' (*DD* 337). Moreover, this documentation of Deronda's innermost self-reflections occurs when he is amid the equally candid realization that he lacks sufficient knowledge about Judaism to protect him against allowing stereotypes to guide his thinking about Mirah's lost brother and mother. Traveling in Europe with Sir Hugo, he decides to visit a synagogue in Frankfort and experience orthodox forms of worship for himself (setting yet another example for readers).

In direct reference to the anticipation of some future 'break of day', in Chapter 63 we see a remarkable amount of light imagery emanating from Deronda as he rejoins Mordecai and Mirah following his revelatory interviews with his mother in Genoa. As he enters their house to tell them the news about his Jewish parentage, he has 'an added radiance in the eyes' and a 'returning glow in the skin' (*DD* 694). His smile is 'bright' and 'beaming' (*DD* 696). To Mordecai and

[92] 'Strangely in these latter months when it seemed right that he should exert his will in the choice of a destination, the passion of his nature had got more and more locked by this uncertainty [of his origin]' (*DD* 437).

Mirah 'the sight of him was like the clearness after rain: no clouds to come could hinder the cherishing beam of that moment' (*DD* 695). Repeated use of the word 'beam' emphasizes the fixed, concentrated, and directed nature the discovery of his heritage brings to his life.

His sympathy with Mordecai and Mirah is also more concentrated. Deronda's sympathetic exchanges between himself and each of them in the past have been less than perfect; his distanced aestheticizing of Mirah's suffering and struggle when he first spoke intimately with Mordecai 'to be receptive instead of superciliously prejudging' come to mind (*DD* 463). Now, however, the three are charged with sympathetic energy: 'The two men clasped hands with a movement that seemed part of the flash from Mordecai's eyes, and passed through Mirah like an electric shock' (*DD* 695). In a novel that consistently draws attention to the pauses and silences that make up so much of our daily exchanges and signal the disjointedness of thoughts between individuals, it is very significant that in this interview Deronda shares his good news 'without pause, speaking from Mordecai's mind as much as from his own' (*DD* 695). Not only is the revelation of his parentage and ethnicity a guiding light, but his conversations with both his mother and on his journey homeward with his grandfather's friend and contemporary, Joseph Kalonymos, bring more certainty and specificity to him than he had expected: 'His mother had compelled him to a decisive acknowledgement of his love [for Mirah], as Joseph Kalonymos had compelled him to a definite expression of his resolve [for his people]' (*DD* 693). Having left England in 'total uncertainty', he returns 'with something like a discovered charter' (*DD* 692). He gladly accepts the 'duteous bond' to his ethnic group that means 'social captainship' and identification with 'a line of Spanish Jews that has borne many students and men of *practical* power' (*DD* 692, 698, 696, emphasis added). No longer spent in multiple directions, 'The strongest tendencies of his nature were rushing in one current' (*DD* 694).

But through this union and sympathy with Judaism and the Jewish people,

there are still references that indicate Deronda's project and future remain many-sided. A chest he has inherited from his grandfather, full of his researches pertaining to his vision of a Jewish homeland and future, is 'beautifully incised with Arabic lettering', and contains manuscripts in Spanish, Italian, Hebrew, Arabic, and Latin (*DD* 671, 696). Deronda, who already told his mother that his 'Christian sympathies [...] can never die out of me', also tells Mordecai, 'Don't ask me to deny my spiritual parentage, when I am finding the clue of my life in the recognition of my natural parentage' (*DD* 616, 699). This approach seems in keeping with the thinking of Deronda's grandfather, who 'mingled all sorts of learning; [...] like our Arabic writers in the golden time' and believed 'that the strength and wealth of mankind depended on the balance of separateness and communication' and a preservation of diversity (*DD* 672). In response to Edward Said's criticism of the absence of Palestinian Arabs from the text, I would also cite the multiple references to Hagar and Ishmael throughout the novel. Deronda, for instance, is described as a dispossessed 'Ishmaelite' (*DD* 160). In the Penguin edition by Terence Cave, Cave includes this Old Testament reference as part of Eliot's project to connect Deronda with Jewish peoples, but I argue it is meant to associate him with Arabs and Muslims. Hagar's son Ishmael is traditionally the ancestor of the Arabs, while Isaac's offspring are Jewish. Another reference to Hagar and Ishmael, comparing them with the dispossessed Lydia Glasher and her children, places Deronda on their side — 'Deronda had naturally some resentment on behalf of the Hagars and Ishmaels' (*DD* 405) — and when Deronda rescues Mirah and rows her to shore, Mirah is compared with the forsaken figure of Hagar searching for water for herself and her son before being visited by an angel and shown a well: 'Her look was full of wondering timidity, such as the forsaken one on the desert might have lifted to the angelic vision before she knew whether his message were in anger or in pity' (*DD* 177).[93] The suggestive parallels made throughout the text between Deronda and myriad religious figures are not suppressed following his implicit

[93]This is my interpretation of this allusion. See Genesis 21.17–19.

identification with 'a Deliverer spring[ing] from [a Jewish family]' (*DD* 617). And acting as political or spiritual guide to a specific people while retaining a reputation for indiscriminate compassion and sympathy falls in line with the traditional role of prophets.

With manysidedness remaining a strong feature of Deronda's character and learning, I argue that these stages mark his movement. Rather than developing his 'many-sided sympathy' into extreme nationalist partiality, he transitions from a passive, impractical manysidedness to an active, practical version.

> It was as if he had found an *added* soul in finding his ancestry — his judgment no longer wandering in the mazes of impartial sympathy, but choosing, with that noble partiality which is man's best strength, the closer fellowship that makes sympathy practical — exchanging that bird's-eye reasonableness which soars to avoid preference and loses all sense of quality, for the generous reasonableness of drawing shoulder to shoulder with men of like inheritance. (*DD* 693, emphasis added)

His many-sided, sympathetic nature is refined rather than eclipsed by the discovery of an 'added' Jewish heritage. The discovery directs his steps, removing him from 'the mazes of impartial sympathy' and placing a 'practical' version within his reach. This distinction is interesting, as if Eliot thinks impartiality and practicality are mutually exclusive. Kwame Anthony Appiah's division of an 'impartial cosmopolitanism' from 'partial cosmopolitanism' is useful as we consider what Eliot wants to convey through transitioning Deronda from passive to active manysidedness, or from being 'lost' in high-flying impartiality to being 'found' in ground-level practicality. Appiah asks, 'A citizen of the world: how far can we take that idea? Are you really supposed to abjure all local allegiances and partialities in the name of this vast abstraction, humanity?'[94] As part of his answer he writes that 'the position worth defending might be called [...] a partial cosmopolitanism', and turns to *Daniel Deronda* to quote the very same passage cited above: 'Eliot's talk of the "closer fellowship that makes sympathy practical" echoes Cicero's claim that "society and human fellowship will be best served if we

[94] Kwame Anthony Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*, 1st edition (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2006), pp. xv–xvi.

confer the most kindness on those with whom we are most closely associated" '.[95] Appiah's distinction between impartial and partial strands of cosmopolitanism is that the former suggests 'we have obligations to others, [...] that stretch beyond those to whom we are related by the ties of kith and kind, or even more formal ties of a shared citizenship' and the latter 'that we take seriously the value not just of human life but of particular human lives'.[96] 'The benefit of this shift [from impartial to partial cosmopolitanism], as noted by Appiah and as expounded at length in the novel [*Daniel Deronda*] itself, is practical'.[97]

One might think that the bird's-eye view would confer more awareness, and therefore more direction, than being on the ground drawn 'shoulder to shoulder' with others. But, then again, if Eliot did not use her science of religion research to fix her creative energies on Judaism as she composed *Daniel Deronda*, would the novel have force? Deronda's 'boyish love of universal history, which made him want to be at home in foreign countries, and follow in imagination the travelling students of the middle ages' is admirable in its impartiality, but as we see it is not enough to direct him and requires something more. Later, Deronda's love of history manifests itself in a specific interest in 'that wonderful bit of autobiography, the life of the Polish Jew, Salomon Maimon' (*DD* 356). This focus does not eradicate the benefit his love of universal history has rendered, but it does buttress and support his general love by giving it direction. Deronda's notice of this particular book appears to originate in Eliot's personal experience; Eliot read and annotated her own second-hand copy of Maimon's *Life* first in 1871 and later in her preparatory reading for *Daniel Deronda*.[98] Similarly, Deronda's movement from the former to the latter does not mean he replaces the former with the latter; rather, as Albrecht summarizes in reference to Appiah's categories, 'the juxtaposition [...] of a distinctly Jewish consciousness with wide-ranging sympathies and instruction,

[95] Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism*, pp. xvii–xviii.
[96] Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism*, p. xv.
[97] Albrecht, "'The Balance of Separateness and Communication"', p. 391.
[98] See Eliot, *Daniel Deronda Notebooks*, pp. 101–04 for her introduction to Eliot's notes from Salomon Maimon's *Life*. See p. 105 for Eliot's Berg 136 notes.

suggest to Appiah that Daniel [...] has joined together the particular and universal responsibilities that are both implied in any genuinely cosmopolitan ethics'.[99]

The manysidedness of *Daniel Deronda* is not confined to the figure of Deronda. Aromatic in its diffusion throughout the text, it is present in the novel's cosmopolitanism, its movement through Europe, and its appreciation of wide-ranging historic and global awareness.[100] The text, set in the recent past for contemporary readers (the principal action takes place between autumn 1864 and autumn 1866), is frequently agitated by references to events that lie outside the immediate narrative, from 'the results of the American war' and its economic impact to 'the world-changing battle of Sadowa' in the Austro-Prussian War (*DD* 81, 579–80).[101] The text's gestures towards an international 'mighty drama' extend to outlying regions like Canada, Russia and the Baltic, and Jamaica.[102]

The novel clearly delivers a commentary on manysidedness, most expressly signaled by Eliot's double use of the term 'many-sided' in reference to Deronda and Gwendolen. But why should manysidedness be dealt with so extensively in *Daniel Deronda*? Of Eliot's novels, *Daniel Deronda* is the most contemporaneous. Although manysidedness as an issue can be traced broadly throughout Eliot's writing, manysidedness as a cultural concept tied to the rise of liberalism came to prominence in the 1860s. David Wayne Thomas signals Gladstone's ministry from 1868–74 as 'at once the pinnacle and the crisis-point of Victorian political liberalism'. Through its wide-ranging and 'remarkable array of liberalizing legislative acts' impacting 'higher and elementary education, the civil service, the army, trades unions, the rights of Irish Catholics' and more, this period witnessed an ushering in of a 'new marketplace of viewpoints [...], and the cultivation of

[99] Albrecht, "'The Balance of Separateness and Communication"', p. 390.

[100] See Rignall, *George Eliot, European Novelist*, p. 2 for an overview of studies on this subject.

[101] Nancy Henry notes, 'The narrator knows that this war will lead to the confederation of Germany, the formation of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the ceding of Venetia to Italy'. Nancy Henry, 'George Eliot and Politics', in: George Levine, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to George Eliot* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 138–58 (p. 149).

[102] See, specifically, *DD* pp. 109, 76, 141, 143, 303.

viewpoints was therefore a pervasive concern'.[103]

In parallel, throughout the 1860s and 1870s the science of religion similarly offered readers a 'new marketplace of viewpoints', one which needed navigation. James C. Livingston marks the years following 1860 as a time of 'the dissemination of influential new theories of religious origins and development' and notes that after 1870, 'major works of the anthropologists, classicists, and comparativists [...] were accompanied by an array of handbooks and manuals on the history of religions directed to the general public'.[104] Some celebrated this influx of information. Reginald Bosworth Smith, who authored the lecture series on Mohammedanism Eliot lists in her *Daniel Deronda* notebooks, rejoiced in the widening field of scholarship on Islam as a path towards 'impartial judgment of the Prophet of Arabia'.[105] But for others the problem of being pulled in too many directions at once seemed more prevalent and threatening than ever.

The conclusion we must reach is that it is impossible to be sympathetic 'impartially', feeling on all sides with everyone and taking up every cause as your own. Eliot's message of needful partiality and the necessity of practically turning towards supporting those who are nearest to you is neatly summarized by Mab Meyrick in one of her flurries of agitated excitement: 'It makes me want to do something good, something grand. It makes me so sorry for everybody. It makes me like Schiller — I want to take the world in my arms and kiss it. I must kiss you instead, little mother!' (*DD* 181).

[103] Thomas, *Cultivating Victorians*, p. 27.

[104] Livingston, *Religious Thought in the Victorian Age*, pp. 230, 256.

[105] Smith writes, 'thanks to the numerous translations of the Koran into European languages, and to the great works of Oriental scholars, such as Caussin de Perceval, Sprenger, Muir, and Deutsch, the materials for forming an impartial judgment of the Prophet of Arabia are within the reach of any earnest student of the Science of Religion, and of all who care, [...] for the deeper problems of the human soul'. See Smith, *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*, pp. vii–viii.

Clasped hands: sympathy in the silence

If it is impossible to 'kiss' the whole world, this extends to the impossibility of feeling with or acting on behalf of an abstract group of people. How can one act compassionately on behalf of a nation? Is it not more practical — since we are dealing with making sympathy and manysidedness practical — to love and be compassionate towards individuals within reach? Is Deronda's decision to marry Mirah and travel to the East, 'hold[ing] that my first duty is to my own people', supported by Eliot? (*DD* 673). What of drawing 'shoulder to shoulder' with Gwendolen Harleth? In his discovery of sympathy that has 'moral force' stemming from 'selectness of fellowship', Deronda is freed from 'the mazes of impartial sympathy' and rids himself of the paralysis spawned by 'many-sided sympathy', but what exactly changes in the quality of his sympathy as he moves from passivity to action? Undeniably, the ensuing restrictive nature of an active, or 'partial', manysidedness strongly impacts how Deronda interacts with Gwendolen. From being free, drifting, vague — mirroring Gwendolen's own unrooted and 'floating' quality — Deronda progresses into a state of regulated movement that, while it solves the problem of 'dissatisf[action] with his neutral life', comes with its own set of disadvantages, the most supreme of which must be his separation from Gwendolen.

There are hints that a future could have been possible for this pair; he '"should have loved her, if —:" the "if" covering some prior growth in the inclinations, or else some circumstances which have made an inward prohibitory law as a stay against the emotions ready to quiver out of balance' (*DD* 579). Instead, 'his history had given him a stronger bias in another direction'. As we see 'beaming' gladness in those to whom a partial manysidedness directs Deronda's steps, we note that Gwendolen Harleth's experience is dark in comparison. The 'lava-lit track of her troubled conscience' is distinctly contrasted with the bright sunlight imagery flooding Deronda's exchanges with Mirah and Mordecai.

Yet, if the novel *is* trying to productively comment upon achieving directed manysidedness or 'partial cosmopolitanism', or — in the novel's wording the balance of 'separateness with communication' — then is the (disappointing) relationship between Deronda and Gwendolen vindicated? For Gwendolen, 'if ever she thought of definite help, it took the form of Deronda's presence and words, of the sympathy he might have for her, of the direction he might give her' (*DD* 628). So, what happens to the sympathy between Deronda and Gwendolen? Is Deronda able to transfer some of the direction he achieves to her? How does Deronda's treatment of Gwendolen fit with the text's interpretation of manysidedness?

John Rignall muses, 'with the figure of the humane and sensitive Deronda [...], Eliot seems to be testing the qualities of sympathy and understanding that characterize her own typical narrator, asking how they might function in real living relationships'.[106] In thinking about the reality of 'living relationships', Eliot focuses on silence and each person's inaccessible inner world of experience. When trying to pry into Deronda's thinking about her, Gwendolen, with the reader, is told, 'It is impossible to explain such things, [...] One can never communicate niceties of feeling about words and manner' (*DD* 523). Taking the cue from this, I turn to paradoxical expressions of sympathy in terms of silence and distance, looking towards the image, not only of a kiss, but of 'clasp[ing] hands [...] in sympathetic silence' (*DD* 636).[107] Tellingly, this image is first expressed when Deronda is *alone* in his room at Genoa, contemplating his interviews with his mother: 'through all this passionate meditation Mordecai and Mirah were always present, as beings who clasped hands with him in sympathetic silence' (*DD* 636). Deronda physically clasps hands with Mordecai upon his return to England, and

[106] Rignall, 'Daniel Deronda'.

[107] Considering the novel's references to physical expressions of sympathy or support recalls to mind Brigid Lowe's assessment of the novel genre and its function: 'At times the novel seems to approach the plane of philosophical argument. At others it seems an aesthetic object whose "meaning" is of quite another order. Often it seems a vehicle of emotion as impossible either to paraphrase, or to objectify aesthetically, as a kiss'. Lowe, *Victorian Fiction and the Insights of Sympathy*, p. 7.

is in an embrace with Mirah and Mordecai when Mordecai dies.[108] But Deronda also clasps hands with Gwendolen, once in Genoa and again at their final parting. Clasped hands, a tactile image of non-verbal support both emotional and physical, signals something important to Eliot's ethical project. Sympathy has always been problematic in Eliot's search for an ethics of difference that preserves distance between persons. Dorothea's tactile engagement with her mother's emerald jars with her compassionate pull towards thinking of the miners; but clasping hands is both haptic experience *and* sympathetic expression. Moreover, performed in silence it is both a crossing of the distance between persons and an (ethical) acknowledgement, and therefore a preservation, of this distance which cannot be traversed with words.

Thomas Albrecht suggests that Eliot's experimentation with telepathy in *The Lifted Veil* was part of her attempt to solve the ethical dilemma presented by sympathy of falling into a habit of eradicating difference and distance in one's search for similarities and sameness:

> [T]he word telepathy implies distance (*tele*) and apartness; literally, it means to feel something from a distance. Telepathy is usually defined as extrasensory impressions of something or someone far away and separate from oneself. Thus it designates an appreciation of the other from a distance, a relation to the other that is absolutely unmediated by one's senses or language. In accordance with Eliot's injunction to respect the difference between oneself and the other, [...] It is a figure for gaining access to the actual person rather than to an epitome of the person.[109]

Albrecht concludes that Eliot only turns to an ethics based on similarity, or sympathy, in the wake of her failed attempts 'to write telepathically about telepathy', but that this does not resolve how sympathy remains 'a kind of fetish': 'like the Freudian fetish, it designates both the presence and the absence of something deemed valuable (in Eliot's case [...] an ethical relation to the other)'.[110]

I do not think Eliot ever entirely moved away from her experimentation with telepathy, and the repeated image of 'clasped hands [...] in sympathetic silence'

[108] See Eliot, *Daniel Deronda*, pp. 695, 755.
[109] Albrecht, 'Sympathy and Telepathy', pp. 451–52.
[110] Albrecht, 'Sympathy and Telepathy', pp. 452, 453.

is suggestive of this, particularly in the context of Deronda's strange promise to Gwendolen in their final interview. After he tells her that he is Jewish, is engaged to Mirah, and will be leaving shortly to travel to the East, he assures her, 'We shall not be quite parted, [...] I will write to you always when I can' (*DD* 750). He promises future closeness: 'I shall be more with you than I used to be, [...] If we had been much together before, we should have felt our differences more, and seemed to get farther apart. Now we can perhaps never see each other again. But our minds may get nearer' (*DD* 750).[111] Are these empty words to ease their parting, or did Eliot intend something more by this? Their final instant together is spent in silence 'with clasped hands' (*DD* 750). By giving Deronda moments of 'clasped hands [...] in sympathetic silence' with both Mordecai and Gwendolen, it is worth considering that Eliot suggests living by an ethical code of practically active manysidedness, or 'separateness and communication', *can* lead to moral and responsible action towards all.

To understand the telepathic ethics presumably at work in *Daniel Deronda*, we need to look towards what the text says about silence and distance. Noting a key shift in Deronda's moral epicenter helps us enter this discussion. Deronda initially expresses a moral code based on tolerance and recognizing underlying commonalities as part of his early developmental stage.[112] In conversation with Mirah and the Meyricks, Deronda dismisses the assumed 'separation' between Judaism and Christianity and marginalizes their differences, relegating the important detail of distinctions to the single epithet 'peculiar':

[111] See During, 'The Concept of Dread', p. 75 who concludes, 'the bond between them is broken, Eliot implies, by the incompatibility between the ethical codes [of dread and sympathy] they represent'. Patricia Menon views Gwendolen as destroyed by the 'sadistic abandonment' of both Eliot and Deronda. Patricia Menon, *Austen, Eliot, Charlotte Brontë, and the Mentor-Lover* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 178. See also Deborah Wynne, *Women and Personal Property in the Victorian Novel* (Ashgate Pub, 2010), pp. 120–21 for a discussion of the lack of critical consensus about Gwendolen's situation at the close of the novel. Wynne concludes, 'Eliot's reinstatement of her as a *feme sole*, this time with property to control and enjoy, has not been sufficiently registered and appreciated' (p. 121).

[112] See Albrecht, "'The Balance of Separateness and Communication"', p. 393. Albrecht discusses Deronda's 'tendency to overlook differences in the interest of a presumed underlying connection' (p. 405).

> Our religion is chiefly a Hebrew religion; and since Jews are men, their religious feelings must have much in common with those of other men — just as their poetry, though in one sense peculiar, has a great deal in common with the poetry of other nations. (*DD* 346)

When he visits the synagogue in Frankfurt he likewise focuses on similarities, uniting his experience of the foreign service with memories of 'chanted liturgies'. He rationalizes that all liturgical expressions are 'a yearning to escape from the limitations of our own weakness and an invocation of all Good to enter and abide with us' (*DD* 339). This pattern of subsuming differences into similarities includes his initial absorption of Mirah's forlorn appearance into a preexisting track of thinking about his unknown and suffering mother.

Yet, as the novel progresses his urge to reduce differences and limit separations is curtailed, most finally by adoption of his grandfather's theory of 'the balance of separateness and communication'. Deronda takes this as a method of preserving distance and diversity while adhering to principles of communality. At times distance is depicted as needful and self-preserving. Deronda almost comes to a point of willing self-sacrifice in his first interview with Gwendolen following Grandcourt's death: 'he was in one of those moments when the very anguish of passionate pity makes us ready to choose that we will know pleasure no more, and live only for the stricken and afflicted. [...] At last he felt impelled to turn his back towards her and walk to a distance' (*DD* 646).[113]

Deronda's (presumably) moral urge to eradicate difference and eliminate distance between persons is in direct conflict with one of the text's dominant motifs: 'checked' or 'arrested' action, often characterized by 'shrinking' away from others or recoiling from speech, which keeps the fact of distance between persons center-stage. This is the opposite of what we may expect from a novel preoccupied with manysidedness and sympathy, models which suggest an outward

[113] Buttressing Deronda's realization of this, the narrator regularly accents the 'remoteness' of people's experiences: 'the remorseful half' of Gwendolen is 'as much out of [Grandcourt's] imagination as the other side of the moon' (*DD* 554); Deronda 'allowed himself [...] to sob, [...] over that woman's life so near to his, and yet so remote' (*DD* 636); when Gwendolen sobs in Chapter 56, 'Even Deronda had no place in her consciousness at that moment. He was completely unmanned' (*DD* 646).

radiating movement and expansion, yet it is a main feature of the text's commentary upon these concepts. A pattern of checks is in keeping with Eliot's experimentation with how to 'check' the versatility of manysidedness so as to make it practical. Moreover, the novel characterizes sympathy as something that does not necessarily entail the expansion of one's understanding or insurance of ethical behavior, but rather as an experience that may impose painful emotions, hinder speech, smother desire, or simply lead one to make the wrong choices. Deronda's paralysis and suspended state as the principal figure of 'many-sided sympathy' supports this interpretation.

Connected with this theme, pauses and silences are as heavily accentuated in the text as speech, if not more. The implication: so much happens beneath the surface which we cannot be expected to know, making distance between persons inevitable and misinterpretation commonplace. Silences and pauses in conversation are automatically 'filled' by our thoughts, either as we try to decipher another's words or as part of 'floating' around in our estimations of things. When Deronda tells Sir Hugo how his knowledge that he is Jewish has affected him, that 'it is no pain — it is rather a clearing up of doubts for which I am thankful', Sir Hugo 'gave him a quick glance, and turned to walk on', waiting to reply until after 'a few moments' silence, in which he had reviewed all the material in his memory which would enable him to interpret Deronda's words' (*DD* 667). Meanwhile, early in the novel, Gwendolen characteristically 'floats' during pauses in conversation. The dialogue marking Gwendolen and Grandcourt's meeting is deliberately punctuated by 'Pause' after 'Pause' after 'Pause'. Written from Gwendolen's point of view, the text reveals her thoughts during each break as she 'imagine[s] various degrees and modes of opinion about herself that might be entertained by Grandcourt', inwardly 'ma[kes] a brief graphic description of him to an indefinite hearer', or else 'speculated on the probability that the men of coldest manners were the most adventurous, and felt the strength of her own

insight, supposing the question had to be decided' (*DD* 98–99).[114]

In effect, pauses are potent; silence is a language all its own, left to be interpreted by the listener. To Deronda, 'Mordecai's pause seemed an appeal which Deronda's feeling would not let him leave unanswered' (*DD* 502). In his first interview with his mother, Deronda watches the minute changes in expression on her face as if they were a 'tacit language' (*DD* 582). The text goes out of its way to remind us that silence does not signify the absence of thought or feeling, but the opposite: the abundance and overflow of thought and emotion. When Mirah expresses her gratitude to Deronda for saving and 'giv[ing] her the best', in reply 'Deronda could not speak, but with silent adieux [...] hurried away' (*DD* 184). In the darkened hotel room at Genoa as Deronda sits with Gwendolen following Grandcourt's drowning, dreading what she might say, the narrator asks us to 'imagine the conflict of feeling that kept him silent' (*DD* 642).

Pauses and silences in this text implicitly remind readers how distanced we are from one another, and how incapable of communication free from concealment or misinterpretation. The text explicitly supports this view on several occasions.[115] The message is most bluntly expressed via Alcharisi's staccato deflections of Deronda's attempts to sympathize with her. When he says, 'I enter into the painfulness of your struggle', her rejection of his fellow-feeling is abrasive: 'No, [...] You are not a woman. You may try — but you can never imagine what it is to have a man's force of genius in you, and yet to suffer the slavery of being a girl' (*DD* 588).[116] Silence is double-edged — it provides time to collect one's thoughts and makes room for interpretations, but it also signals the failure of language to communicate deep emotion and complex thought. In silence, we may easily drift

[114] Meanwhile, together with Gwendolen we can only guess what Grandcourt is thinking during these pauses. The narrator's comment at the conversation's close is almost sinister — 'How Grandcourt had filled up the pauses will be more evident hereafter' (*DD* 100). It is as if he (like Latimer) reads Gwendolen's thoughts; Grandcourt's silences are 'formidable with omniscience' (*DD* 568).

[115] See Eliot, *Daniel Deronda*, pp. 625, 633.

[116] See Albrecht, "'The Balance of Separateness and Communication"', pp. 399–406 for detailed discussion of conflict between Deronda's projected image of his mother and the mother he meets; this conflict explains his fluctuations between expressions of compassion and rising anger and resentment.

apart. This is especially problematic for expressions of sympathy made in silence, and the first instance of Deronda clasping hands with Gwendolen leaves us feeling ambiguous about the upshot of sympathy in silence. Faced with Gwendolen's terrified question 'will you forsake me?' in the hours following Grandcourt's drowning, 'Deronda could not answer; he was obliged to look away. He took one of her hands, and clasped it as if they were going to walk together like two children: it was the only way in which he could answer, "I will not forsake you" ' (*DD* 643). Silent acts invite misinterpretation, and even as he does so Deronda 'felt as if he were putting his name to a blank paper which might be filled up terribly' (*DD* 643). Gwendolen readily accepts his sympathetic gesture, 'interpret[ing] its powerful effect on her into a promise of inexhaustible patience and constancy' (*DD* 643). Alcharisi's vocal rejection of Deronda's sympathy exposes the distance between them, but the sympathetic exchange in silence with Gwendolen seems no better. Deronda's very look has 'the unintentional effect of making his ready sympathy seem more personal and special than it really was' (*DD* 652).

Distance, like silence, is double-edged. Being too close can result in self-sacrifice, but being too far removed might result in dehumanizing and effacing others. We see this in Mordecai's extreme partiality for Jewish history and nationhood as expressed at the *Hand & Banner* Philosopher's Club in Chapter 42. Mordecai slips easily into debasing those who hold a point of view that opposes his own, showing an unwillingness to see from another's perspective: 'He is an alien in spirit, whatever he may be in form; he sucks the blood of mankind, he is not a man' (*DD* 490). Tension is evident betwixt the call for partiality that ensues from Deronda's inner desire for something more substantial than a 'too diffusive' or 'many-sided sympathy' and Mordecai's extreme partiality. Citing this passage among others, Josh Moats helps us understand that Eliot 'demonstrates a disdain for any exclusivism that precludes fellowship with other cultures'.[117] He concludes, 'Eliot condemns intransigent beliefs like Deronda's

[117]Moats, 'Deronda and the Tigress', p. 11.

that exalt the religious ambitions over compassion for neighbours who suffer' and that 'Deronda's decision to abandon Gwendolen reflects for Eliot the dangers of a religious outlook that promotes cultural solidarity rather than universal compassion'.[118] However, are Deronda's beliefs 'intransigent'? Mirah's and Mordecai's hands are not the only ones Deronda clasps in sympathetic silence.[119]

As a novel concerned with how we do (and more often do not) connect with others, *how* we think about others and process their words, actions, and silences is key. Eliot takes her readers through a series of examples of how the things that happen outside of us are interpreted through a lens of self-projection determined by pre-established habits of thought and feeling, most particularly as laid down by early childhood experiences. Mordecai's fixation upon his people and acting on their behalf impacts his present reception of different viewpoints. In another example, Mirah compares 'When the best thing comes into our thoughts' with 'what my mother has been to me'; her best childhood memories colour her contemplation and experience of all goodness, including Deronda's goodness to her (*DD* 435). The text questions, can you only feel for another what you have felt for yourself? How far must your experience be commensurate with another's to make sympathy possible? When Deronda 'was beginning to feel on Mirah's behalf something of what he had felt for himself in his seraphic boyish time', does it follow that he accurately feels what Mirah feels? (*DD* 519). Could Mordecai possibly bring himself to understand Gideon's point of view? 'They must be rather old and wise persons who are not apt to see their own anxiety or elation about themselves reflected in other minds', the narrator muses (*DD* 508).

One of the novel's loudest silences and most difficult distances has been what happened to Gwendolen Harleth when she was younger to result in her personality, habits, and 'that liability of hers to fits of spiritual dread' (*DD* 57). Margaret Loewen Reimer documents the critical attention Gwendolen's past has

[118] Moats, 'Deronda and the Tigress', pp. 15, 8.

[119] Moats, 'Deronda and the Tigress', p. 13. Moats bases his criticism of Deronda upon Mordecai's 'insist[ence] that justice can only arise from the aggressive re-establishment of Israel as a political state'; readers may want to think twice before standing 'shoulder to shoulder' with Mordecai.

received, but notes that most critics disappointingly conclude that Gwendolen's 'wounded psyche' is 'Not fully explained'. Reimer argues to the contrary and convincingly cites a series of oblique images and references that strongly suggest Gwendolen was abused and molested by her stepfather: 'The idea of incest is not only an intuition based on a few delicate hints in the novel — it runs like a sinister stream through the narrative, gathering force with the author's striking choice of words, potent images, and repeated references'.[120] One such repeated reference is to Gwendolen as the 'spoiled child', and in rereading the text with this context in mind I was struck by the harrowing power of the scene between mother and daughter after Gwendolen has rejected her cousin Rex's advances as a lover. As she 'sob[s] bitterly' and 'let[s] her head rest against her mother', Gwendolen cries, 'I shall never love anybody. I can't love people. I hate them. [...] I can't bear any one to be very near me but you'. Her mother also 'began to sob, for this spoiled child had never shown such dependence on her before: and so they clung to each other' (*DD* 74). Reimer demonstrates, 'Once the key of childhood incest is applied, the meaning of Gwendolen's "blighted" life unfolds with astonishing clarity'.[121]

This context is of particular interest to a conversation about sympathy (and silence) because as readers we are not only likely to be startled and concerned, as is Deronda, by Gwendolen's fluctuating behavior — 'alternations in [her] manner, which at one moment seemed to invite sympathy by childlike indiscretion, at another to repel it by proud concealment' (*DD* 389) — but also if one is able to infer her past of sexual abuse from Eliot's hints, then this realization deeply unsettles and tests our capacity for sympathy. We are either faced with questioning how to sympathize with a woman without fully understanding her history, or how to sympathize with a woman whose experiences are vastly remote (we hope) from our own. In either case, in tackling so disturbing and taboo a subject as incest Eliot

[120] Margaret Loewen Reimer, 'The Spoiled Child: What Happened to Gwendolen Harleth?', *The Cambridge Quarterly* 36:1 (2007), ⟨URL: https://vicnovel.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu/files/2012/02/Reimer.pdf⟩, 33–50 (p. 33). Accessed 4 February 2017.

[121] Reimer, 'The Spoiled Child', p. 34. In addition to tracking Gwendolen's symptoms of trauma throughout the novel, Reimer notes Eliot's covert hints to abusive child-adult relationships and incest.

severely tests our ability to feel with another person not like ourselves.[122]

Like Dorothea and Ladislaw, Gwendolen and Deronda exemplify Eliot's characteristic doubling of male and female characters. They are the same, but different in their combined diffusion and navigation of doubleness and manysidedness. Doubleness characterizes both — Deronda is reserved, Gwendolen is secretive — while Gwendolen's confidence, her 'spontaneous sense of capability some happy persons are born with, [...] that any subject they turn attention to impresses them with their own power of forming a correct judgment on it', however misguided, has its counterpart in Deronda's versatile nature (*DD* 35). Each is 'supercilious', has associations with singing and acting, is admired for beauty, possesses a strong will, and has a 'spirit of adventure' (*DD* 108, 153, 168, 158). Each is an amalgam of English and Continental influences, and of masculine and feminine features. Gwendolen is often compared to a man, and Deronda to a woman or girl (*DD* 139–40, 151). Each is subject to odd sensitivities termed 'peculiar' and is habitually suspicious, but for different reasons. In fact, resemblances between them — in terms of attractiveness, obstinacy, singing talent, sensitivity, and even instinctive kindness (Gwendolen, we remember, as a child liked to 'rescue drowning insects and watch their recovery' (*DD* 20)) — abound, but they differ largely because of their separate childhood experiences; the narrator instructs, it is in the 'experiences of boy or girlhood' that 'the main lines of character are often laid down' (*DD* 156).

The impact of these pasts and how they each first experienced fear and shame is evident in parallel outbursts against things they hate (*DD* 154, 74, 191). Deronda 'had learned to hate secrecy about the grand ties and obligations of his life' and 'It was the habit of his mind to connect dread with unknown parentage' (*DD* 191); when Sir Hugo asks him if he would like to be 'a great singer', Deronda interprets the question as a clue that he will not be a gentleman and answers 'with angry decision — "No; I should hate it"' (*DD* 153–54). Gwendolen hates men

[122]The 'vastness in which she seemed an exile' extends to the novel's wide readership (*DD* 57).

and being touched by anyone other than her mother; 'The perception that poor Rex wanted to be tender made her curl up and harden like a sea-anemone at the touch of a finger. [...] "Pray don't make love to me! I hate it"' (*DD* 73). Deronda's suffering leads to 'meditative yearning after wide knowledge' and 'hatred of all injury' (*DD* 162); Gwendolen's suffering leads to blighted emotional development and an extinguished capacity for compassion and self-reflection.

Even with this dark history, Gwendolen's 'iridescence' radiates from the page as does Deronda's 'round' of religious associations. Deronda and Gwendolen are both used to remark upon the science of religion, displaying the diversity of the enterprise, its (introspective) uses, and interest for readers. We have already noted how *Daniel Deronda* carries a series of reflections about religious origins, one facet of which is Deronda's position as prophet-hero, the admirable man poised at the center of many persons' religious — and often superstitious — activities. Gwendolen, like the Meyrick girls, idolizes Deronda. She turns the turquoise necklace he redeems into 'the memorial necklace', wearing it like a talisman for protection and as a way of keeping Deronda's positive influence present (*DD* 410). His role in her life is spiritual and transformative. To Gwendolen 'He seemed [...] a terrible-browed angel from whom she could not think of concealing any deed', effecting her first efforts towards reform: 'his power over her had begun in the raising of a self-discontent which could be satisfied only by genuine change' (*DD* 627). When the narrator enters into Gwendolen's desperate struggles — cycling between 'Temptation and Dread' driven by her fear that she will impulsively murder Grandcourt — her 'thought of definite help [...] took the form of Deronda's presence and words' (*DD* 628). As Deronda's words of 'rescue' repeat themselves like a mantra or chant in Gwendolen's mind — 'Turn your fear into a safeguard. [...] Take your fear as a safeguard' — the narrator states, almost in a Biblical fashion, 'And so it was' (*DD* 627–28).

But so far from being a consecrated source of morality, much of Deronda's words and attitude towards Gwendolen stem from subjective habits of thought and

self-meditation. In fact, there is a parallel between Gwendolen's egotism and what Thomas Albrecht calls Deronda's 'fundamentally narcissistic' tendency to feel compassion for others as types that fit his preconceived notions and impressions. His sympathy 'inadvertently resembles Gwendolen's egotism, which finds in everything a reflection of its own needs, wishes, and desires'.[123] During the New Year's Eve dance at the Abbey, 'he was uttering thoughts [to Gwendolen] which he had used for himself in moments of painful meditation'; when Gwendolen seeks a private interview with him in the Abbey's library, he speaks to her 'with a touch of indignant severity, which he was inclined to encourage as his own safeguard' and which came 'from the habit of inward argument with himself' (*DD* 421). Similarly, Deronda initially lets his personal fear of learning about his origins seep into his actions on Mirah's behalf in finding her family. He checks this with his habit of self-examination, and his question, 'How far was he justified in determining another life by his own notions?', appropriately applies to Gwendolen as well (*DD* 354).

But Gwendolen is not just a satellite to Deronda's narrative; their narratives are a 'double helix', each revolving around the other.[124] Gwendolen belongs to a different class of religious beginnings from Deronda's, but the frequent summoning of ancient myth and superstitious habit in Gwendolen's narrative feeds the same line of thought Deronda pursues while wandering through the Juden-gasse in Frankfurt: 'the forms of the Juden-gasse, [...] set him musing on [...] the faint beginnings of faiths and institutions, and their obscure lingering decay' (*DD* 337). Gwendolen's figure marks the allure of religions in their degeneracy rather than their supposed pristine or holy origins. She is associated with myth, primitivism — especially primitive fear — and animism. In Leubronn as she wins at the roulette table, 'she had visions of being followed by a *cortège* who would worship her as a goddess of luck and watch her play as a directing augury' (*DD* 6). In her fear

[123] Albrecht, "'The Balance of Separateness and Communication"', p. 409.

[124] Terence Cave, 'Introduction', in: Terence Cave, ed., *Daniel Deronda* (London: Penguin Books, 1995), pp. ix–xxxv (p. xxxi).

and hatred of Grandcourt, she performs 'an imaginary annihilation of the detested object, something like [...] hidden rites of vengeance' (*DD* 627). On horseback she 'witch[es] the world' and 'felt as secure as an immortal goddess' (*DD* 33, 64). Her 'consciousness of centaur-power' is joined by 'demon ancestry' and comparisons with 'a wood-nymph' (*DD* 63, 60, 130). She is 'a Calypso among her nymphs', 'a perfect Diana' with 'a certain fierceness of maidenhood in her' (*DD* 91, 145, 63).[125] She fears that her murderous inclination towards Grandcourt 'would make me like an evil spirit' (*DD* 644). More than 'a princess in exile', with all her links to Diana and moon goddesses in Celtic and Hebrew traditions, she is like one of Heine's gods in exile (*DD* 35).[126] As she walks to the pawnbroker in Leubronn, 'every line in her figure and drapery f[ell] in gentle curves attractive to all eyes except those which discerned in them too close a resemblance to the serpent, and objected to the revival of serpent-worship' (*DD* 14).

With these images in mind, the question, 'Was the good or the evil genius dominant in those beams?' takes on a new layer of meaning (*DD* 3). Snake imagery is not always evil. Satan may have tempted Eve in the form of a serpent, but Eliot, doubtless, considered the wide range of religious meaning attributed to serpents. Serpent worship was common throughout the ancient world, and Eliot made a note of the 'Nehushtan = the brass-god. The brazen serpent [Kuenen I, 288]' in her notebook.[127]

Together with references to antique rites and beliefs, suggestions of material links to the ancient world cluster around Gwendolen. The turquoise necklace, once her father's, is 'an Etruscan necklace', and when she has a rendezvous

[125] See Reimer, 'The Spoiled Child', p. 38 for discussion of Diana and Artemis imagery in relation to Gwendolen.

[126] See Eliot, *Daniel Deronda Notebooks*, p. 446 for transcription of Eliot's notes on associations between the name Gwendolen and Welsh literature, Welsh saints, and 'an ancient British goddess'. Irwin comments, 'GE was quite aware of implicit ironies in the derivation of modern "Christian" names from those of ancient pagan goddesses. Gwendolen Harleth's Christian name has an ambivalent British history'. See also A.S. Byatt's view that Eliot was thinking of the Hebrew daemon-maiden Lilith in writing Gwendolen Harleth. Eliot, *Daniel Deronda Notebooks*, p. 55.

[127] See p. 29 of Pf710, Eliot, *Daniel Deronda Notebooks*, p. 418. In the desert the Israelites were instructed by God to erect and look upon the Nehushtan, a bronze serpent wound round a pole, for salvation during one of their punishments.

with Lydia Glasher they meet at 'the Whispering Stones' — 'two tall conical blocks that leaned towards each other like gigantic grey-mantled figures' (*DD* 135) — which suggest the ancient druids and Stonehenge (*DD* 12, 131).[128] Where Max Müller's research of Asiatic systems considerably characterizes Deronda, I argue Edward B. Tylor's interest in the primitive aspects of religion characterizes Gwendolen. In *Researches into the Early History of Mankind and the Development of Civilization* (1865) and *Primitive Culture* (1871) — two texts Eliot consulted — Tylor pioneered an anthropological approach to the study of religion, myth, and folklore.[129] An admirer of Max Müller who found it 'wonderful to contrast some missionary journals with Max Müller's Essays, and to set the unappreciating hatred and ridicule that is lavished by narrow hostile zeal on Brahmanism, Buddhism, Zoroastrism, besides [...] catholic sympathy', Tylor took the rapidly expanding body of research on formal religions further by turning towards 'savage' religions and 'primitivism'.[130]

Through his influence, 'philological evidence' provided by scholars like Müller was supplemented 'by the contributions of archaeology and folklore'.[131] He argued that the 'rude' qualities of primitive cultures were not a sufficient reason to claim that 'they lie too low for interest and even for respect'.[132] For Tylor, 'The question really lies between understanding and misunderstanding them', and to correctly understand them Tylor devised his theories of animism and survivals.[133]

According to Tylor, animism is 'the doctrine of souls and other spiritual

[128] Irwin confirms that this is likely Eliot's intention when she remarks, 'The "geological structure of Wiltshire" plays a role in a scene in DD ch. 14: the "Whispering Stones" that turn "their blank grey sides" to Gwendolen, as if to conceal Lydia Glasher, are scattered *Sarsen stones*' used also for Stonehenge. Eliot, *Daniel Deronda Notebooks*, p. 315. Emphasis added.

[129] See Logan, *Victorian Fetishism*, p. 68 for a summary of Eliot's 'immersion' in the study of primitive culture. See Wheeler-Barclay, *The Science of Religion in Britain*, pp. 71–103 for a detailed review of Tylor's contributions to the Science of Religion. 'Seven of the nineteen chapters [of *Primitive Culture*] were devoted to the theory of "animism" ' (p. 78). In focusing upon Eliot's engagement with Tylor's research, I do not exclude earlier routes Eliot traversed in thinking about primitivism, such as reliance upon Auguste Comte (1798–1857) in her portrayals of fetishism in *The Mill on the Floss* (1860).

[130] Edward B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture,* 2 vols, 6th edition (London: John Murray, 1920), I, p. 22.

[131] Wheeler-Barclay, *The Science of Religion in Britain*, p. 71.

[132] Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, I, p. 22.

[133] Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, I, p. 22.

beings in general', which teaches that not only humans, but all animals, places, and objects have spirits.[134] In a novel so explicit about the Cabbalistic doctrine of the transmigration of souls, it should surprise us little to recognize Eliot's engagement with Tylor's theory of animism, which hinges on the view that primitive man was essentially rational, but limited in his access to accurate scientific knowledge.[135] The primitive mental state, he claims, easily confuses objective and subjective knowledge, and does so in two ways. First, dreams and visions are easily blended with waking reality because 'the savage or barbarian has never learnt to make that rigid distinction between subjective and objective, between imagination and reality'.[136] Second, limited access to scientific knowledge meant that primitive man viewed the world by using himself as a lens, habitually attributing human qualities to objects of the natural world.[137] According to Tylor, this animistic — or it was also termed fetishistic — habit is a modern-day 'survival', most particularly recognizable in children:

> It [animism] makes its appearance as the child's early theory of the outer world, [...] The first beings that children learn to understand something of are human beings, and especially their own selves; and the first explanation of all events will be the human explanation, as though chairs and sticks and wooden horses were actuated by the same sort of personal will as nurses and children and kittens.[138]

Tylor routinely compares primitive man with a childlike mental state. When modern-day adults exhibit childish habits and superstitions, Tylor calls these practices and beliefs primitive 'survivals'. In Tylor's view wherever there is religion there is animism; it is the source of a host of beliefs and rituals, from dogmatic theology to magic, sorcery, and superstition and even includes

[134] Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, I, p. 23.

[135] See Eliot, *Daniel Deronda Notebooks*, pp. 101, 171 for references to Eliot's extensive research of Cabbalistic doctrine.

[136] Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, I, p. 445.

[137] The terms fetishism and animism are closely linked in the context of nineteenth-century ethnography. Peter Logan explains, 'The last years of this period [1850–1900] saw the legitimacy of fetishism as a term decline in anthropology, when it was gradually replaced by the correlate terms, animism and (to a lesser extent) totemism'. Logan, *Victorian Fetishism*, p. 4.

[138] Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, I, p. 285.

the Cabbalistic belief in the transmigration of souls so central to Mordecai's worldview:

> [A] belief in personal souls animating even what we call inanimate bodies, a theory of transmigration of souls as well in life as after death, a sense of crowds of spiritual beings sometimes flitting through the air, but sometimes also inhabiting trees and rocks and waterfalls, and so lending their own personality to such material objects — all these thoughts work in mythology with such manifold coincidence, as to make it hard indeed to unravel their separate action.[139]

We find more than one oblique reference to Tylor's theories in *Daniel Deronda* and, like Müller's research, it has an active presence in the text. The narrator quips at the Archery Meeting, 'poisoned darts are harmless survivals either in rhetoric or in regions comfortably remote', and the comment, 'Who supposes that it is an impossible contradiction to be superstitious and rationalising at the same time?' falls directly in line with Tylor's argument that primitive superstitions have a foundation in rationality (*DD* 90, 15).

The childlike Gwendolen, willful and self-centered and still sleeping in her mother's room, is very Tylorian. Lisbeth During calls her 'a primitive moralist'.[140] She confuses visions and reality, dramatized at Offendene in the springing open of the movable panel concealing 'the picture of the dead face and the fleeing figure' and in Genoa in her 'fragmentary' confession and 'childlike beseeching' to Deronda when 'emotions against stepfather and husband are almost interchangeable' (*DD* 54, 643).[141] She is unable to 'clearly [distinguish] between what she said and what she had only an inward vision of' (*DD* 645). She is Tylorian in her frequent exhibition of superstitious habit.[142] Gwendolen becomes 'almost superstitious about [Grandcourt's] power of suspicious divination', and

[139] Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, I, p. 287.

[140] During, 'The Concept of Dread', p. 66.

[141] Reimer, 'The Spoiled Child', p. 47.

[142] See Logan, *Victorian Fetishism*, pp. 89–90 for a discussion of the contrasts between Arnoldian and Tylorian theories of culture. For Tylor, culture is acquired from without (social sciences, empirical fact), while for Arnold, culture comes from within (humanities, idealized truth). This is insightful in thinking of the disconnect between Gwendolen and Deronda. Deronda's fear that his attempts to rescue Gwendolen will fail is partially realized by the Arnoldian quality of his advice: 'Try to care for what is best in thought and action' (*DD* 416).

the turquoise necklace's safekeeping 'came from that streak of superstition in her which attached itself both to her confidence and her terror — a superstition which lingers in an intense personality even in spite of theory and science' (*DD* 565, 257). Like a child, Gwendolen does not understand her motives, but this does not mean there is no logical explanation. Her superstition is akin with her 'fits of spiritual dread', which seem enigmatic until explained by her history of abuse: 'Why she should suddenly determine not to part with the necklace was not much clearer to her than why she should sometimes have been frightened to find herself in the fields alone' (*DD* 257).

Gwendolen also expresses the primitive (or poetic) opinion that 'Imagination is often truer than fact' — subjective impressions can, and do, take the place of objective reality. Gwendolen 'could no more have explained these glib words than if they had been Coptic or Etruscan', yet in this statement we find a meeting point for both Gwendolen's and Deronda's narratives (*DD* 40). The same issue addressed by Eliot via Latimer is raised anew via Gwendolen and Deronda; we interpret and respond to others based upon personal experiences and subjective summations. Deronda may practice sympathizing with people who are different, but he has never shaken his habit of projection carried forward from boyhood: 'Daniel fancied, as older people do, that every one else's consciousness was as active as his own on a matter which was vital to him' (*DD* 155).[143] We question whether Deronda is sympathetic whenever he appears to be: 'Deronda's glance and manner as usual convey[ed] the *impression* of sympathetic interest' (*DD* 361, emphasis added).

But how do we resolve the problem faced also in *The Lifted Veil* of 'the ineradicable presence of one's own self in one's ethical philosophy'?[144] What

[143] Consider again Albrecht, "'The Balance of Separateness and Communication"', pp. 399–406. Albrecht notes specifics of this when he discusses Deronda's interviews with his mother; Deronda is compassionate when he projects on to Alcharisi the image of his mother as forsaken and pained by their separation (the mother he has dreamed of comforting) and he becomes angry when Alcharisi checks his projecting habit by asserting her distant self. She rejects being eclipsed by his image of an ideal mother suffering from 'girl-tragedies'.

[144] Small, 'George Eliot and the Cosmopolitan Cynic', p. 99.

does this overlap in Gwendolen's and Deronda's confusions between subjectivity and objectivity tell us about sympathy? It brings us back to Albrecht's point: Eliot recognized sympathy as 'a kind of fetish' that signified 'both the presence and the absence of [...] an ethical relation to the other'. Sympathy, as fetish, 'enables Eliot and her reader to be moral agents, but it also subverts that morality through its uncanny similarity, at a fundamental level, to antipathy, its alleged opposite'.[145] Lisbeth During has contrasted the forms of morality represented by Gwendolen and Deronda. Deronda, meditative and many-sided, 'is the person the author loves [...] [whose] ethical vision she would like us to approve', whereas Gwendolen is an unsettling 'primitive' specimen of desire and dread, 'one of the competing moral centres' of *Daniel Deronda* that represents 'a morality of the uncanny' that ushers in ambiguity and ultimately cannot be reconciled with Deronda's proposed morality of rationality.[146] However, the suggestion of (moral) ambiguity and confusion between subjectivity and objectivity belongs to both figures. In Deronda and Gwendolen, sympathy and manysidedness — presumably at the apex of culture — blur with primitive animism and fetishistic practices. 'Tylor's initial premise is that animism is a product of "human reason" '.[147] Although significantly less self-aware, Gwendolen is no less 'rational' than Deronda.

The dualism of presence and absence plays out in the novel's display of fetishistic interaction with objects. Objects, especially jewellery, are powerful presences in the text.[148] There is an aesthetic element to this, but that does not entirely explain why the turquoise necklace is a charm, or the diamond necklace a hex. Gwendolen communicates her attachment to Deronda through wearing the turquoise as if traces of Deronda's redemptive act were left upon it, and Lydia Glasher attaches such malice to the 'poisoned gems' that Gwendolen's receipt of

[145] Albrecht, 'Sympathy and Telepathy', pp. 453–54.
[146] During, 'The Concept of Dread', pp. 66, 72.
[147] Wheeler-Barclay, *The Science of Religion in Britain*, p. 92.
[148] See the discussion in John Plotz, *Portable Property: Victorian Culture on the Move* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), pp. 72–92. Plotz notes a number of 'Sentimental fetishes' in *Daniel Deronda* (p. 84).

them sets loose 'the Furies' (*DD* 331). After her marriage she 'hurt[s] herself with the jewels that glittered on her tightly-clasped fingers pressed against her heart' and everything she 'used to wish for — it is as if they had been made red-hot' (*DD* 567, 644). Gwendolen is also 'continually haunted' by the dagger, 'small and sharp, like a long willow leaf in a silver sheath', that she hides and locks in her boudoir cabinet (*DD* 644). Alcharisi wishes to see Deronda's diamond ring, which once belonged to his father (*DD* 575). In animistic — or fetishistic — fashion, these objects represent the simultaneous presence and absence of things — of Deronda and his sympathy, of Lydia Glasher and her dispossessed children, of Gwendolen's murderous intentions, and of Alcharisi's deceased husband. Peter Logan defines fetishism, not in terms of objects, but in terms of *relationships*; like sympathy, a fetish is based in exchanges and 'has no existence apart from the relationships that bring it into being'.[149] The animist conceives the presence of a spirit in an inanimate object because of its interaction with and self-projection onto that object.

Deronda's 'metamorphosis' is little like Gwendolen's 'tragic transformation' (*DD* 713). Where he seems to break free from the restraints imposed by 'many-sided sympathy' and becomes more directed as time passes, Gwendolen is caught up in a destructive and cyclical pattern that puts her at risk of spiritual stagnation. Like Keats's Lamia as *ouroboros* she is 'like two creatures', trapped in her oscillation between 'two pale phantoms', 'Temptation [to kill] and Dread [of killing]' (*DD* 643, 628). But she also seeks direction. Can Deronda give it to her? In the chapter that most minutely describes Gwendolen's consciousness during her marriage, one paragraph in particular illustrates what repeats in her mind:

> *Inarticulate prayers*, no more definite than a cry, often swept out from her into that vast silence, unbroken except by her husband's breathing or the plash of the wave or the creaking of the masts; but if ever she thought of definite help, *it took the form of Deronda's presence and words, of the sympathy he might have for her, of the direction he might give her*. It

[149]Logan, *Victorian Fetishism*, p. 8.

> was sometimes after a white-lipped fierce-eyed temptation with murdering fingers had made its demon-visit that these best moments of inward crying and clinging for rescue would come to her, and she would lie with wide-open eyes in which the rising tears seemed a blessing, and the thought, 'I will not mind if I can keep from getting wicked,' seemed an answer to the *indefinite prayer*. (*DD* 628, emphasis added)

The cyclical nature of Gwendolen's experience is reinforced by the paragraph beginning and ending with references to her vague, uncertain prayers. Deronda's presence (and absence) cuts through the paragraph's center. Similarly, his presence and absence cut through Gwendolen's oscillating experience at the close of the novel.

The final interview between Deronda and Gwendolen seems to arrest and break this ensnaring sequence. Following the set of 'double' meetings Deronda has with his mother and then with Gwendolen in Genoa, Deronda and Gwendolen have three interviews after their return to England. The first two meetings show Gwendolen's fluctuating mental states between active interest in 'how she could be kindest to everybody' and 'deep depression' (*DD* 741). In each interview Deronda is silent about his circumstances. By the final scene between them, Deronda makes the distance between them very plain and, while painful, this acknowledgement of distance and difference seems to break into Gwendolen's experience in a new way. He confesses his current situation and in response Gwendolen is 'meditative' and questioning, eager to prove that her life is better for having known him. Presumably, he passes to Gwendolen 'that life of practically energetic sentiment which he would have proclaimed [...] to be the best of all life' (*DD* 337). He encourages her to look to those nearest to her and to act generously towards them, making those people glad to have known her, and their lives better for it. The message, I think, is that in lieu of remaining close with everyone (which is impossible), we can *teach* active and directed manysidedness as a method of living; Deronda's project of adhering to his grandfather's lesson of balancing 'separateness and communication' begins with Gwendolen.

The maintenance of difference and distance in this final interview registers

less a sympathetic than a 'telepathic' ethics. Proximity has been emphasized for Gwendolen's positive transformation under Deronda's influence — 'you might have made me different by keeping as near to me as you could, and believing in me' (*DD* 524) — but has just as frequently been undermined by miscommunication, misinterpretation, and the failure of words. Deronda's promise to write and counsel that despite distance (or because of it?) 'our minds may get nearer' is suggestive (*DD* 750). At the close of their final interview, they replicate each other's actions almost in silence: 'Sobs rose, and great tears fell fast. Deronda would not let her hands go — held them still with one of his, and himself pressed her handkerchief against her eyes. [...] His eyes too were larger with tears. She wrested one of her hands from his, and returned his action, pressing his tears away' (*DD* 750). This mirror-imaging — which contrasts with the scene at Leubronn when Gwendolen kisses her 'cold' reflection (*DD* 14) — reaches a climax in the sympathetic silence when words fail them both:

> Deronda could not speak again. He thought that they must part in silence, but it was difficult to move towards the parting, till she looked at him with a sort of intention in her eyes, *which helped him*. He advanced to put out his hand silently, and when she had placed hers within it, she said what her mind had been labouring with —
> 'You have been very good to me. I have deserved nothing. I will try — try to live. I shall think of you. What good have I been? Only harm. Don't let me be harm to *you*. It shall be the better for me — '
> She could not finish. It was not that she was sobbing, but that the intense effort with which she spoke made her too tremulous. [...] She bent forward to kiss his cheek, and he kissed hers. Then they looked at each other for an instant with clasped hands, and he turned away. (*DD* 750, emphasis added)

The strong mirroring of Deronda's and Gwendolen's actions towards each is highly aestheticized. In a novel that begins with the question, 'Was she beautiful or not beautiful?' and in which we have regularly been directed to closely imagine the striking effects of both Gwendolen's and Deronda's appearances or the impact of music on feelings and conversation, this tender exchange feels both picturesque and emblematic of pervasive themes (*DD* 3). Distance and silence are emphasized. Yet, in spite of Gwendolen's 'dreadful presentiment of mountainous travel for her

mind before it could reach Deronda's' and Deronda's inability to 'divine what was going on within her', the pair solemnly and sympathetically 'meet' with 'kiss' and 'clasped hands' (*DD* 746). We are reminded of the message in *Middlemarch*, that not knowing another's consciousness is no hindrance to moral conduct. Even when the 'distance' between Deronda and Gwendolen is painfully stressed, each can conduct him or herself morally towards the other. Deronda is honest with Gwendolen about his plans and the likelihood that they will not meet again; Gwendolen is selfless in letting Deronda go — for the first time, she '*helped him*' — and altruistic in writing to him on his wedding day, 'You must not grieve any more for me' (*DD* 754).

We may imagine that this note begins the correspondence Deronda promises, but whether this is the case or not, this letter is a powerful object. It will very likely accompany Deronda in his travels, kept safe as a fetishistic symbol of Gwendolen's presence and absence, an object haunted by her memory. The uneasy suggestion of kinship between sympathy and (fetishistic) hauntings is taken much further by another author whose many-sided works we find at the intersection of aesthetics and ethics. We turn now to Vernon Lee.

4 'Shine Forth!': Diaphaneitè & the Science of Culture in Vernon Lee & Walter Pater

> This is a delightful house and its occupants are delightful people. I must explain the mystery. I once reviewed a book called Scientific Meliorism by a Miss Clapperton: [...] We interchanged some letters in consequence. Having left London before my arrival Miss Clapperton (so great was her unreasonable desire to see me!) got me invited here [...] by a friend of hers, Mrs. Cash, who had read me. [...] and was an intimate friend of Geo. Eliot before she was Geo. Eliot. [...] Next door (this is outside the town, a sort of small country house) live two old ladies, Mrs. Bray & Miss Hennell, also great friends of Geo. Eliot. The atmosphere in fact is heavy with Geo. Eliot: there is something old world, sweet, grotesque, pathetic about it.[1]

The date of Violet Paget's birth nearly coincides with the birth of the pseudonym 'George Eliot'. Born on 14 October 1856 at Château Saint Léonard, near Boulogne, France, Violet Paget entered the world when English society was on the brink of reading George Eliot's first piece of fiction, 'The Sad Fortunes of the Reverend Amos Barton', published in January 1857. Marian Evans signed her name 'George Eliot' for the first time in a letter sent to William Blackwood just a month later.[2] When George Eliot died in her home at 4 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea

[1] Vernon Lee, *Vernon Lee's Letters*, edited by Irene Cooper Willis ([n.p.]: [n. pub.], 1937), p. 258 (17 July 1887).

[2] Marian Evans wrote to William Blackwood in February 1857: 'Whatever may be the success of my stories, I shall be resolute in preserving my incognito, [...] Perhaps, therefore, it will be well to give

on 22 December 1880 Violet Paget was 24 years old, living in Florence, and preparing for her first trip to London as an adult. She had already chosen her own pseudonym, Vernon Lee. The year 1880 had witnessed the appearance of her first two books, *The Studies of the Eighteenth Century in Italy* and *Tuscan Fairy Tales, Taken down from the Mouth of the People*. An essay that would soon be collected into *Belcaro* (1881) was also published in the *Cornhill Magazine* in 1880: ‘Faustus and Helena: Notes on the Supernatural in Art’.[3] Although ostensibly traveling to London to visit her friend A. Mary F. Robinson (1857–1944), Vernon Lee had earnest aspirations as a writer and was eager to integrate herself into the literary circles of London and Oxford. She arrived in London 16 June 1881 and stayed with the Robinsons at 84 Gower Street, less than five miles away from the site of George Eliot’s death six months earlier.

Lee’s excursion to Coventry took place in 1887 and she soon found herself not only in a place where George Eliot had resided but also among some of Eliot’s closest friends:

> I had to have a whole morning of old Miss Hennell expounding her philosophic system to me, while her little old sister Mrs. Bray, who has a rival & quite different philosophic system of her own, sat patiently on a sopha, only occasionally turning her eyes to heaven & clasping her hands in mute despair. It was so odd living among people who spoke of Geo. Eliot, who now seems so much a thing of the past, as ‘Marian’.[4]

It is curious that Lee finds Eliot ‘a thing of the past’, and more particularly that the thought of Eliot as ‘Marian’ is strange. Lee and Eliot each pursued their writing careers in London within overlapping networks of intellectual influence. They read and responded to many of the same authors, including Max Müller, John Ruskin, Matthew Arnold, Walter Pater, and E.B. Tylor, all of whom were still living in 1887.[5] As a young woman, Lee read Eliot’s works before the author’s death:

you my prospective name, as a tub to throw to the whale in case of curious inquiries, [...] Yours very truly, George Eliot’. Eliot, *Letters*, II, p. 292 (4 February 1857).

[3]Vernon Lee, ‘Faustus and Helena: Notes on the Supernatural in Art’, *Cornhill Magazine* 42:248 (1880), 212–28, in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 18 May 2014.

[4]Lee, *Letters*, p. 259 (20 July 1887).

[5]Lee read and made note of Müller’s lectures on the Science of Language in 1874: ‘I am reading what

> I am reading *Middlemarch*. The *Westminster* says that George Eliot is a poet. Does it suffice then not to write in verse to be one nowadays? How clever, and how disagreeable! And how tiresome! Still it is better than mumming up English manufacturers and dissenters as Florentines of the Renaissance.[6]

As an aspiring expert on the Italian Renaissance, perhaps Lee’s jibe about *Romola* (1862–63) is to be expected. We begin to see an ambivalent mixture of awe and scorn in Lee’s recorded responses to Eliot. In another instance, Lee praises a short story by her friend Robinson that appeared in *Fraser*, writing, ‘to my infinite amazement, it shows first rate powers by no means unlike those of G. Eliot in the *Clerical Life*, fresh, original, undoubted’.[7] Women writers breaking into the British market were doubtless both haunted and inspired by the memory of the recently deceased George Eliot, hoping to effect a like influence and reanimate her power over readers. Lee shows herself in step with Eliot’s example in taking a male pseudonym; Eliot needed a ‘tub to throw to the whale in case of curious inquiries’, while Lee quipped, ‘I am sure that no one reads a woman’s writing on art, history or aesthetics with anything but unmitigated contempt’.[8] Perhaps the idea of Eliot as ‘Marian’ was so odd for Lee because she was cultivating for herself an identity

I find intensely interesting, Max Müller’s lectures on the Science of Language’. Lee, *Letters*, p. 48 (20 December 1874). See Lee’s essay on ‘Ruskinism’ collected in *Belcaro* (1881) and ‘Our Debt to Ruskin’ (1900), written the year of Ruskin’s death. Christa Zorn writes, ‘Although emotionally closer to Ruskin’s ethical demands, [Lee] disparaged him like an older self she felt she had left behind. She played Ruskin against Pater in *Belcaro*’. Christa Zorn, *Vernon Lee: Aesthetics, History, and the Victorian Female Intellectual* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2003), p. xviii. Lee’s work *Gospels of Anarchy* (1908) alludes to *Culture and Anarchy* (1869). The connection with E.B. Tylor’s work is less direct in Lee’s case than in George Eliot’s (who heard Tylor’s lectures in the late 1860s and read *Primitive Culture* (1871) in preparation for *Daniel Deronda*), but her engagement with Tylor’s theories on animism and ‘survivals’ is a part of her interaction with Walter Pater’s work.

[6] Lee, *Letters*, pp. 56–57 (20 June 1875). This letter was written to the novelist Henrietta Jenkin (1807–1885), Lee’s mentor and regular correspondent throughout the 1870s. Lee discussed her aspirations as a writer with her in some detail and received suggestions on what to read in order to hone her writing skills.

[7] Lee, *Letters*, pp. 69–70 (25 June 1881).

[8] The pseudonym ‘Lee’ was adopted from her half-brother Eugene Lee-Hamilton, an influential male figure in Lee’s life, much as ‘George’ was adopted by Eliot from George Henry Lewes. Eliot, *Letters*, II, p. 292 (4 February 1857); Lee, *Letters*, p. 59 (18 December 1878). See Vineta Colby, *Vernon Lee: A Literary Biography* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2003), p. 2 for mention of Lee’s first use of her pseudonym in 1875. Catherine Maxwell and Patricia Pulham write that Lee ‘armoured’ herself with ‘a suitably androgynous pseudonym’. Catherine Maxwell and Patricia Pulham, *Vernon Lee: Decadence, Ethics, Aesthetics*, edited by Catherine Maxwell and Patricia Pulham (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 6.

shift *away* from her given name Violet, and would rather think of herself and her writing in terms of aspiring to the level of 'George Eliot'.

Three years before the expedition into Coventry with Miss Clapperton, Frances Power Cobbe (1822–1904) wrote to Lee to congratulate her on her novel *Miss Brown* (1884) — Lee's only three-volume novel and one through which she intended a moral revision of aestheticism — and to convey her impression of an affinity between Lee's work and Eliot's.[9] Lee replied:

> You must not mention my name in the same breath as that of George Eliot, dear Miss Cobbe; there is something in this that perfectly abashes me. [...] I feel I have no right, towards myself, to sit down and quietly accept as my due praise which is far beyond me.[10]

We can only surmise what recalled Eliot to Cobbe's mind as she read *Miss Brown*; Cobbe's original letter has not been preserved. The comparison may have been evoked, for example, by Cobbe's public engagement with another of Lee's texts the previous year, the philosophic dialogue 'The Responsibilities of Unbelief: A Conversation Between Three Rationalists'. This appeared in the *Contemporary Review* in May 1883 and is comprised of three interlocutors each espousing a variant of rationalism — an 'optimistic Voltairean', 'aesthetic pessimist', and 'humanitarian atheist'.[11] In Cobbe's response 'Agnostic Morality', which appeared the following month, she censures Lee's agnostic position even as she praises her abilities as a thinker and writer. She lists Lee among other 'illustrious Agnostics' who are guilty of casting 'false lustre' over agnosticism with their 'high Altruistic sentiments and hopes': 'those who have felt the "Responsibilities of Unbelief" ' include 'Mr. Morley, Mr. Harrison, George Eliot, and now, obviously, [...] Vernon Lee'.[12] The correlation with Eliot, therefore, had already been made and with this

[9] See Colby, *Vernon Lee*, p. 271. I was unable to locate Cobbe's original letter; its content is inferred from Lee's response.

[10] San Marino, CA: The Huntington Library (HL), mssCB 1-854, Box 9 (1883–85), letter dated 13 December 1884. Transcriptions of material from HL are my own.

[11] Vernon Lee, 'The Responsibility of Unbelief: A Conversation Between Three Rationalists', *Contemporary Review* 43, (May 1883), 685–710 (pp. 686, 685, 696), in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 24 May 2014.

[12] Frances Power Cobbe, 'Agnostic Morality', *Contemporary Review* 43, (Jun 1883), 783–94 (pp. 793, 792), in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 15 January 2015.

association formed Cobbe might have easily furthered her comparison based upon the talent and vigorous intellect she detected in Lee’s work.

In truth, Lee was not far removed from Eliot’s intellectual breadth and intensity. Her first biographer, Peter Gunn, lists the dizzying range of subjects represented in the collection she left at her death to the Harold Acton Library of the British Institute of Florence:

> [W]orks on geology, geography [...] climateology and meteorology; zoology, botany, biology, physiology; origins, physio-psychology and pathology of sex; psychology (empirical and analytic); language [...] history [...], pre-history; economics, politics [...], industrial relations, position of women, international relations; origins of magic and religion, comparative religion; philosophy (general, epistemology, logic, foundations of science, ethics, aesthetics — studies of form, music, etc.).[13]

The library contains more than 400 volumes in English, French, German, and Italian. More than 200 are heavily marked and annotated with Lee’s marginalia, written in each of these four languages.[14] And yet, these ‘serious’ titles represent ‘only a fraction of her lifetime reading’; absent are volumes of poetry or fiction. Much like the striking collection from Eliot and Lewes’s library, Lee’s compendium of books ‘display[s] the ever alert mind of the writer — [...] eager to challenge but also to discover and absorb new ideas’.[15]

Yet, there may have been another basis for Cobbe’s comparison. I suspect Lee’s concern for social responsibility and attempt to bring a code of ethics to bear upon aestheticism were uppermost in Cobbe’s mind when she wrote to Lee about *Miss Brown*. It is evident from Lee’s response that Cobbe relayed to Lee her dislike of the aesthetic movement, perhaps thinking Lee would be in sympathy with her views. But Lee replies, ‘I cannot join in your animosity against aestheticism. The movement had much that was morbid, [...] Still it has on the whole been a most healthy and useful movement’.[16] Lee has, in fact, come to be recognized as a

[13]Peter Gunn, *Vernon Lee: Violet Paget, 1856–1935* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 8.
[14]Colby says more than 350 volumes in total. Colby, *Vernon Lee*, p. 272. Of the 425 books from Lee’s private library now housed in Florence, her marginalia can be found in 299 volumes.
[15]Colby, *Vernon Lee*, p. 272.
[16]HL, mssCB 1-854, Box 9 (1883–85), 13 December 1884.

zealous and ambitious figure in late-nineteenth-century British aestheticism.[17] A close friend of Walter Pater, Lee assiduously inserted herself into the London and Oxford circles of the aesthetes once she alighted in England in the early 1880s, and as she fixed herself in the aesthete's firmament she expressed an 'increasing concern with "ethical" or "moral" art'.[18] Her 'ethical stance' is particularly visible in *Miss Brown*, in which the heroine Anne Brown — a creature whom Lee tells Cobbe is 'entirely the offspring of my own brain' — is appalled by the aesthetes' inability, or refusal, to be morally improving.[19] She mourns their insistence on (uselessly) contemplating the 'mysterious evil passions of the half-antique, half-medieval ladies of saturnine beauty and bloodthirsty voluptuousness'.[20]

Indeed, in the early 1880s Lee became overwhelmed by social distresses.[21] In an overview of the works Lee composed and published between 1881 and 1884, Vineta Colby picks up on the common thread that 'dominates almost all this work': in her 'history, essays, fiction — is the large and troubling question of the social and moral value of art'.[22] This dimension of her aestheticism is confirmed in a second letter to Cobbe written in April 1885:

> I am coming to London in June & want to know whether you could introduce me to any people who represent more practical interest than the aesthetes,

[17] See Stefano Evangelista, *British Aestheticism and Ancient Greece* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 55–92; Laurel Brake, 'Vernon Lee and the Pater Circle', in: Catherine Maxwell and Patricia Pulham, eds., *Vernon Lee: Decadence, Ethics, Aesthetics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 40–57. Angela Leighton places Lee's ghost stories within the framework of Victorian aestheticism. See Angela Leighton, 'Ghosts, Aestheticism, and "Vernon Lee"', *Victorian Literature and Culture* 28:1 (2000), 1–14, in *JSTOR*. Accessed 4 August 2014. For a narration of Lee's entrance into London literary society and her foray into aesthetics in the early 1880s, see Colby, *Vernon Lee*, pp. 78–83.

[18] Maxwell and Pulham, *Vernon Lee*, p. 13.

[19] HL, mssCB 1-854, Box 9 (1883–85), 13 December 1884.

[20] Vernon Lee, *Miss Brown,* 3 vols (Edinburgh; London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1884), II, p. 71. A critique of what Lee viewed as immoral in the aesthetic movement, *Miss Brown* harangues several prominent aesthetes.

[21] See Vernon Lee, *Juvenilia: Being a Second Series of Essays on Sundry Aesthetical Questions,* 2 vols (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1887), I, pp. 13–14 for Lee's description of England's effect upon her: 'England shows its evils grimly, as much as Italy, unconsciously, thanks to climate, beauty, and a certain dignified stagnation, hides them' (p. 13).

[22] Colby, *Vernon Lee*, p. 95. Much of Lee's work espouses concern for the neglected and underrepresented. See Zorn, *Vernon Lee*, p. xxix: '[Lee] questioned the strong genteel focus of Renaissance scholarship. [...] [H]er studies direct us to a more diversified concept of historical relevance'.

> with whom I have broken entirely. I feel a great desire, especially as a novelist, to see all kinds and conditions of men; & I especially would like to see something of the people who work among the poor & in similar matters. I know you have a great deal to do with these movements, so I venture to ask you to help me in this matter. *Miss Brown*, you see, has thoroughly brouillé [set at odds] one with such intellectual classes as I have hitherto dwelt with; and I am anxious to see what other things there may be in the world.[23]

Lee sounds quite anxious and eager to strike out on more 'practical' work — much like her character Anne Brown — but her averred renunciation of the intellectual class of aesthetes never completely took place. Lee retained her role as aesthetic critic and art historian and combined it with the assumed role of one safeguarding the morality of aesthetics. Lee would move from a direct attack on aestheticism and the immorality of the aesthetes in *Miss Brown* to a more poignant and subtle theorizing of the relationship between ethics and aesthetics in her later dialogues, essays, and fiction. She may never have taken steps beyond her letter to Cobbe to quit the aesthetes or relinquish her identity as an art critic and aesthete, but neither did she forget that she wanted to become a person 'represent[ing] more practical interest than the aesthetes'.

Lee's relationship with Walter Pater is especially conducive to a discussion of her view of the relationship between aesthetics and ethics.[24] Their intellectual affiliation, the main subject of this chapter, is grounded in a friendship that was uninterrupted from 1881 to Pater's death in 1894. While drawing much inspiration from Pater, Lee also alternately aligns herself with and separates herself from Paterian aestheticism throughout the period from their first meeting to her publication of *Renaissance Fancies and Studies: Being a Sequel to Euphorion* (1895) the year following Pater's death.[25] She manages to experiment with Pater's

[23] HL, mssCB 1-854, Box 9 (1883–85), 26 April 1885.

[24] For more on the conflict in Lee's aestheticism and responses to Pater see Sarah Townley, 'Rewriting Paterian Sympathy: Vernon Lee and Elitist Empathy', *Literature Compass* 9:11 (2012), 861–72 (p. 863), in *Wiley Online Library*. Accessed 29 September 2017: 'In her early works, such as *Miss Brown* (1884), Lee offers an anti-aestheticist polemic, interpreting Paterian Aestheticism's emphasis on the individual as self-indulgent. Yet, when writing on Pater shortly after his death in the "Valedictory" of *Renaissance Fancies and Studies* (1895), Lee praises Pater as a figure who had developed high moral standards'.

[25] See Stefano Evangelista, 'Vernon Lee and the Gender of Aestheticism', in: Catherine Maxwell

'aesthetic sympathy' and his (many-sided) eclectic method of assimilation and rejection while also making them her own. Where Müller was a consoling presence for Eliot via his scholarship and texts, Pater too was present in Lee's early life via his publications: 'Some of the intensest romance of Italy was brought to me less by the real places overseas as by Pater's books; their perfume brought Rome, slowly distilled'.[26] Lee was very likely reading Pater's essays as they appeared in the *Westminster* and *Fortnightly* throughout the late 1860s and 1870s, and she certainly knew well his *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1873) before traveling to England in the 1880s.[27] But, importantly, Pater was also *physically* present in Lee's life; a useful distinction since sympathy and manysidedness in Pater's and Lee's respective works take on a heightened haptic and tactile aspect. Tracing their affinities, and in particular Lee's departures from them, this chapter considers the relationship between sympathy, manysidedness, and 'culture' in their work. Their conceptions of sympathy and manysidedness are central to how they each define and try to *diffuse* 'culture', particularly via their constructions of sympathetic and many-sided male figures as 'transparent' conductors or media through which beauty, art, and history flow.

The word 'transparent' is suggested by Pater's term for an archetype character in which he continued to show interest throughout his career —- diaphaneitè — and which is best translated as 'the transparent hero'.[28] Pater's 'transparent hero', or what can also be called his diaphanous figure, is the quintessence of 'ideal relations between an individual and his culture at any given time and over time'.[29] It has been pointed out that 'Transliterated into

and Patricia Pulham, eds., *Vernon Lee: Decadence, Ethics, Aesthetics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 91–111 for an overview of Lee's publications in relation to Pater between 1881 and 1895.

[26] 'Vernon Lee Notebook 1894–1930'. Quoted by Colby, *Vernon Lee*, p. 60.

[27] See Colby, *Vernon Lee*, p. 60. It is understood that Pater entitled his first edition *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, but altered the title in subsequent editions. Unless referring specifically to the 1873 publication, I refer to the collection throughout this thesis as *The Renaissance* for convenience.

[28] Carolyn Williams, *Transfigured World: Walter Pater's Aesthetic Historicism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989), p. 179.

[29] Williams, *Transfigured World*, p. 174.

ancient Greek' the word diaphaneitè 'assumes the form of a second-person plural imperative verb: "[You shall] become transparent!" or "shine through!" '; as this term was the title of an essay Pater wrote and delivered to the Old Mortality Society at Oxford in 1864, its translation as an imperative verb 'reinforces the sense of the essay as a manifesto or imperative command for the future'.[30] The essay itself was not published until after Pater's death, but the aesthetic figure of culture he delineates therein recurs throughout his essays, arguably culminating as Marius in his philosophic and aesthetic novel on religion set in second-century Rome, *Marius the Epicurean: His Sensations and Ideas* (1885).[31] As in his other writing, in this novel Pater moves away from metaphysical accounts of aestheticism towards the material; a Pater-proxy, Marius is a sensate and 'transparent' figure that exemplifies 'ideal relations between an individual and his culture' as he absorbs his surroundings and is shaped by them.

Lee and Pater both looked towards the future in their shared 'materialist aesthetic'.[32] They shared resources in contemporary British psychology — reading works by Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), Alexander Bain (1818–1903), and James Sully (1842–1923) — and particularly relied upon the Associationist school to which these thinkers belonged. 'The notion that we are aware of how our environments shape us appeals to Pater's — and, more broadly, Aestheticism's — notion of self-culture; it is experience (not doctrine) which determines the course of development'.[33] Lee and Pater, as a result, both emphasize bodily response and it is

[30] Maxwell, *Second Sight*, p. 74 n9.

[31] The essay was published posthumously in *Miscellaneous Studies* (1895). See Gerald Monsman, *Walter Pater* (Boston; London: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1977). Mention of Pater's diaphanous ideal recurs throughout Monsman's discussion of Pater's writings. Monsman refers to 'Pater's belief in progress toward the diaphanous condition of the cultural ideal' (p. 169) and to 'those diaphanous heroes of each age who advance the cultural Ideal on its way to perfect realization' (p. 174). The diaphanous figure underlies much of Pater's work, including *The Renaissance* and *Marius*, which was originally intended as one part of a portrait series 'to show the same [diaphanous] temperament "under altered historical conditions" ' (p. 107).

[32] Benjamin Morgan, 'The Matter of Beauty: Materialism and the Self in Victorian Aesthetic Theory', Ph. D thesis, University of California, Berkeley (2010), ⟨URL: http://digitalassets.lib.berkeley.edu/etd/ucb/text/Morgan{_}berkeley{_}0028E{_}10452.pdf⟩, p. 144. Accessed 10 September 2017.

[33] Townley, 'Rewriting Paterian Sympathy', p. 869.

the *touch* of external influences that interests them most. Pater's diaphanous figure understands the world through direct, sensuous engagement with it. We shall see that Lee, like Pater, participates in making aesthetics less 'metaphysical' and more scientific, 'wish[ing] to discuss aesthetic experience by talking about *bodies* rather than concepts'.[34] Lee builds upon Pater's construction of a diaphanous figure with her own proxy, Baldwin.

The continuing sympathy with the ethical project of an earlier woman writer, George Eliot, served Lee in her development of the aestheticism she adopted from Pater. In many ways, Lee *is* a reanimation of George Eliot: a female intellectual pushing her way into a predominantly masculine London elite, a voracious and strategic reader, a polyglot, cosmopolitan, and a purveyor of an ethics-driven aestheticism. More than this, in their writing careers Lee and Eliot are both concerned with (re)interpreting sympathy and manysidedness. Like Eliot giving us Dorothea's startling introspective moment prompted by handling her mother's gems, Lee turns towards tactile interactions with objects as methods of knowing the self and others. Where Eliot's realism is underpinned by (imaginatively) 'extending our contact with our fellow-men beyond the bounds of our personal lot', Lee's aesthetic project is concerned with social usefulness and what the meaning and implications of 'culture' and (objects from) the past are to the individual and, especially, to the relationships between individuals that make up society.

Eliot calls 'a woman of true culture' one 'whose mind ha[s] absorbed her knowledge instead of being absorbed by it. [...] She does not give you information, which is the raw material of culture, — she gives you sympathy, which is its subtlest essence'.[35] In the introduction to her study of sympathy in the works of Lee, Virginia Woolf (1882–1941), and D.H. Lawrence (1885–1930), Kirsty Martin makes a distinction between Lee and Eliot as she defines her position on sympathy in literature against that of Martha Nussbaum. Martin introduces sympathy 'as

[34]Morgan, 'The Matter of Beauty', p. xvi. Emphasis added.

[35]George Eliot, 'Silly Novels by Lady Novelists', *Westminster Review* 66:130 (1856), 442–61 (p. 455), in *British Periodicals (1681–1939).* Accessed 18 September 2017.

a complex form of sensory entanglement', 'disruptive' and 'morally troubling', thereby setting her interpretation against Nussbaum's position.[36] 'Nussbaum [...] takes a humanist view of literature as able to teach us "how to live"' and 'George Eliot [...] provide[s] a good demonstration of Nussbaum's humanist ideals'.[37] However, I would suggest that Lee's work, much like Eliot's, is likewise preoccupied with teaching readers 'how to live'. Not merely a self-proclaimed aesthete, but also a moralist, Lee has a concern for social responsibility that shines through her (re)handling of Pater's 'ideal' relationship between an individual and 'culture'. Lee asks: is aestheticism inherently elitist, or does it carry essential (moral) value that can be disseminated and felt beyond an intellectual elite? Is it, as Lee writes to Cobbe, 'a most healthy and useful movement'?

As with Eliot, in Pater and Lee (aesthetic) sympathy is a central feature — the 'subtlest essence' — of the many-sided character, a figure who sensitively absorbs and transmits the 'light' of a wide range of history and art, like a prism in reverse capturing many colours and beaming pure, white 'culture'. And as with Eliot's turn towards Müller's scholarship, Lee's literary (re)fashionings of sympathy and manysidedness have much to do with Pater's methodical use of these concepts and their connotations. With sympathy, manysidedness is featured in Lee's and Pater's texts as both a dominating aesthetic of 'culture' and a self-cultivating *practice*; manysidedness is the defining quality of their artistic compositions and proxy-figures as well as the foundational (sympathetic) *method* of assimilation and rejection that underpins their aesthetic theories as they bear on the 'ideal' relationship between an individual and his surroundings. In this regard, the proxy-doubling between Lee and Pater and their respective many-sided male sympathetic figures is very strong.

In focusing upon the companionship and exchange between Lee and Pater, my examination of Lee's works in this chapter and the next will be restricted to the period from her first meeting with Pater in July 1881 to the publication

[36]Martin, *Modernism and the Rhythms of Sympathy*, pp. 8, 7, 29.
[37]Martin, *Modernism and the Rhythms of Sympathy*, pp. 4, 5.

of Lee's 'Valedictory' to Pater in *Renaissance Fancies and Studies* in 1895. In comparing their diaphanous figures and delineating Lee's ethical critique of Pater's 'transparent hero', I turn to their shared appeal to contemporary texts and theories of associationist psychology and ethnography as defined by an emerging 'science of culture'. In forging a 'materialist aesthetic' and new vision of self-culture using associationist theories, Lee and Pater also respond to E.B. Tylor's theories of primitive culture, in effect approaching the idea of 'culture' and the science of culture from both 'high' and 'low' ends; they relocate and reconfigure psychological and cultural evolutionary theories in the context of aestheticism. Together, they take sympathy and manysidedness into the realm of physical sensation.

A system of 'rejection & acceptance': Vernon Lee's self-cultivation in relation to Walter Pater

As critical attention to her oeuvre has increased, Vernon Lee has largely become known for her supernatural tales collected into *Hauntings: Fantastic Stories* (1890) set principally in Italy, as well as for her interest in the German school of psychological aesthetics, her work alongside the artist Clementina ('Kit') Anstruther-Thomson (1857–1921), and her formulation of a theory of 'aesthetic empathy' at the turn of the century.[38] Over the past twenty years Lee's works have gradually become more recognizable as fixed features of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century literary landscape. Her oeuvre spans an impressive period, from the early 1870s until well into the twentieth century, with her last major publication *Music and its Lovers* (1932) appearing just three years before her death in 1935. In both form and style, much of her work has a fluctuating quality, like the rippling effect of a changeful surface; her early impressionistic writing

[38] For an overview of Lee's involvement in the 'science of art' and psychological aesthetics, see Carolyn Burdett, '"The Subjective Inside Us Can Turn into the Objective Outside": Vernon Lee's Psychological Aesthetics', *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* 12 (2011), ⟨URL: http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.610⟩, Accessed 3 January 2016.

coupled with shifts between forms that include the short story, novel, novella, essay, and dialogue give her oeuvre an eclectic, miscellaneous feel. The Scottish historian Horatio Brown (1854–1926) once wrote to Lee after reading her romance *Ariadne in Mantua* (1903): 'How ambidextrous you are — for side by side with this jewel of an "Ariadne" you fling off the rollicking, shilling shocker "Penelope Brandling" '.[39]

Even her supernatural tales take on a variety of narrative styles, from the epistolary forms of 'Amour Dure' (1887, 1890) and 'Dionea' (1890) to the distillation of folklore, myth, and oral history into (fictional) written counterparts, as in the case of 'The Virgin of the Seven Daggers' (1909, 1927) and 'Prince Alberic and the Snake Lady' (1895). Prolific in every stage of her cosmopolitan writing career (Lee engaged with Italian, English, French, German, and Spanish texts), Lee carries her readers through some 43 titles and dozens of articles and reviews: through fiction and non-fiction in her periodical and book publications in art history and philosophy throughout the 1880s and early 1890s; into the region of psychological aesthetics and the 'science of art' from the early 1890s into the twentieth century; towards an early example of reader-response theory, or what Lee terms 'literary psychology', in the early twentieth century; to pacifist literature during and in the wake of World War I; to a culminating piece on aesthetic response in the context of musical theory shortly before her death. The 1890s and early twentieth century also witnessed her wide range of travel literature — evocative essays on *genius loci*, or the 'spirit of places' — and if Lee's versatility is still in doubt, in 1914 she published a mystery-romance novel, *Louis Norbert: A Two-fold Romance*, which carries forward the investigation undertaken in her early supernatural tales into the relative merits of intuition or affect versus historical research.[40]

[39]Oxford, Somerville College Library (SCL), Special Collections, Papers of Vernon Lee (Violet Paget), Box I (18 October 1903). My transcription. *Penelope Brandling: A Tale of the Welsh Coast in the Eighteenth Century* (1903) is a piece of gothic historical fiction. See Diana Wallace, *Female Gothic Histories: Gender, History and the Gothic* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013), pp. 115–31 for discussion of this publication.

[40]For *Louis Norbert* analyses see Colby, *Vernon Lee*, pp. 93–94 and Martin, *Modernism and the*

As Kristin Mahoney writes in her review of an early landmark publication in Lee studies, *Vernon Lee: Decadence, Ethics, Aesthetics* (2006), 'a recurring concern voiced in Vernon Lee studies is that if we pay too much attention to one Lee, we may lose sight of another', a difficulty made more pronounced by 'the sometimes baffling heterogeneity of individual texts by Lee'.[41] Multifaceted, complex, and resistant to clear categorization, Lee's oeuvre *can* at the very least be said to wrestle thematically with the murky, multifold connections between aesthetics, the body, and emotion; 'I have tried to bite into the apple of aesthetic knowledge on various sides', Lee reflects in November 1909.[42] What exactly is the (sympathetic) relationship, her work repeatedly asks, between the exterior world, our historic and cultural knowledge of it, and our interior emotional and psychological responses to it? What role does the body play as medium?

In accord with the miscellaneous quality of her oeuvre, criticism on Lee likewise leaves an impression of unchecked diversity. It feeds queer and gender studies, interdisciplinary readings, commentaries on affect and emotion, and analyses of modernism, to name a few. Research has also appeared concerning Lee's likely impact upon canonical writers. Talia Schaffer, Joseph Bristow, and Shafquat Towheed each suggest that her use of the dialogue prefigures and influenced Oscar Wilde's use of this form, and she has been treated as a significant influence on Virginia Woolf.[43] Diana Wallace links her further to twentieth-century

Rhythms of Sympathy, pp. 57–68. The titles referred to above, respectively, include: *The Handling of Words and Other Studies in Literary Psychology* (1906); *Beauty and Ugliness and Other Studies in Psychological Aesthetics* (1912); *The Ballet of the Nations: A Present-Day Morality* (1915); *Satan the Waster: A Philosophic War Trilogy* (1920); *Music and its Lovers: an Empirical Study of Emotional and Imaginative Responses to Music* (1932). See *The Sibyl: A Journal of Vernon Lee Studies* (an online resource for Lee scholars) for a comprehensive bibliography of Lee's publications, correspondence, and Lee criticism. <https://thesibylblog.com/bibliography/>. Accessed 10 July 2017.

[41] Kristin Mahoney, 'Review of "Vernon Lee: Decadence, Ethics, Aesthetics"', *Victorian Studies* 50:1 (2007), 108–10 (p. 108), in *Project Muse*. Accessed 8 August 2017.

[42] Quoted by Vineta Colby, *The Singular Anomaly: Women Novelists of the Nineteenth Century* (New York: New York University Press, 1970), p. 235.

[43] See Talia Schaffer, *The Forgotten Female Aesthetes: Literary Culture in Late-Victorian England* (Charlottesville, VA; London: University Press of Virginia, 2000), p. 62: 'Her Socratic dialogues on art preceded, and thus may have influenced, Wilde's choice of a dialogue format in "Decay of Lying" '. See also, Joseph Bristow, 'Vernon Lee's Art of Feeling', *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 25:1 (2006), 117–39 (p. 122), in *JSTOR*. Accessed 17 November 2014; Kathy Alexis

women writers by arguing that she has left her mark upon the work of Daphne du Maurier (1907–1989).[44] Variously coloured by the intellectual sympathies she shared with those around her, her work has also been examined in light of several of her contemporaries, — Catherine Maxwell comparing Lee’s aestheticism, for example, with the aestheticism of Swinburne and impressionism of Whistler.[45] Emily Harrington examines Lee’s creative collaboration with Mary Robinson, while Maxwell has also looked to ‘the degree of creative sympathy’ between Lee and her half-brother Eugene, a poet whom Walter Pater and Oscar Wilde both admired.[46] Several studies inspect Lee’s foray into psychological aesthetics and her work with Kit Anstruther-Thomson.[47] Carolyn Burdett has carefully followed Lee’s intellectual interactions in the early twentieth century with philosophers and psychologists like Theodor Lipps (1851–1914), Karl Groos (1861–1946), and Edward B. Tichener (1867–1927).[48]

Often Lee’s dedications to friends and peers are starting points for insight into her exchanges and influences. ‘The dedications of Vernon Lee’s books form a kind of public inventory of her most cherished friendships’, writes her first

Psomiades, ‘“Still Burning from This Strangling Embrace”: Vernon Lee on Desire and Aesthetics’, in: Richard Dellamora, ed., *Victorian Sexual Dissidence* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), pp. 21–41; Diana Maltz, ‘Engaging “Delicate Brains”: From Working-Class Enculturation to Upper-Class Lesbian Liberation in Vernon Lee and Kit Anstruther-Thomson’s Psychological Aesthetics’, in: Talia Schaffer and Kathy Alexis Psomiades, eds., *Women and British Aestheticism* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1999), pp. 211–29; Shafquat Towheed, ‘Determining “Fluctuating Opinions”’, *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 60:2 (2005), ⟨URL: http://ncl.ucpress.edu/cgi/doi/10.1525/ncl.2005.60.2.199⟩, 199–236. Accessed 8 April 2014; Dennis Denisoff, ‘The Forest beyond the Frame: Picturing Women’s Desires in Vernon Lee and Virginia Woolf’, in: Talia Schaffer and Kathy Alexis Psomiades, eds., *Women and British Aestheticism* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1999), pp. 251–69; and Martin, pp. 1–29.

[44] Wallace, *Female Gothic Histories*, p. 131.

[45] Catherine Maxwell places Lee’s impressionistic prose in the context of Whistlerian Impressionism, while also setting her work beside that of Swinburne. See Catherine Maxwell, ‘Whistlerian Impressionism and the Venetian Variations of Vernon Lee, John Addington Symonds, and Arthur Symons’, *The Yearbook of English Studies* 40:1/2 (2010), 217–45 (p. 221), in *JSTOR*. Accessed 17 November 2014.

[46] Maxwell, *Second Sight*, p. 128. See Walter Pater, *Letters of Walter Pater*, edited by Lawrence Evans (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 46 (18 November 1882); p. 56 (4 December 1884) for Pater’s responses to Lee-Hamilton’s poetry collections.

[47] As does Bristow, in ‘Vernon Lee’s Art of Feeling’.

[48] See Burdett, ‘Vernon Lee’s Psychological Aesthetics’.

biographer.[49] From close companions (like Mary Robinson in *Belcaro*) to literary acquaintances (like Henry James in *Miss Brown*), it is as if Lee catalogues the productivity and creative effects of her relationships by inscribing the names of individuals upon the texts they helped draw forth. Lee’s routine positioning of her work in relation to that of her contemporaries in this and other ways is very intentional: a quotation on the Italian Renaissance by John Addington Symonds (1840–1893) opens *Euphorion* (1884); snake imagery and femme fatale figures routinely appear in her supernatural tales and folklore in a style reminiscent of Swinburne; and Paterian methods of critical impressionism and the privileging of emotion and affect as sources of knowledge influence her essays in *Belcaro*, *Euphorion*, and *Renaissance Fancies and Studies*. In view of this habit one might refer to one of Symonds’s more scathing comments on Lee. In response to *Euphorion*, he writes to his friend T.S. Perry, ‘there is a certain carelessness & arrogance about [Vernon Lee], wh[ich] makes her think that she has thought out a great deal wh[ich] she has really absorbed from other writers & remembered’.[50]

Symonds may unknowingly be picking up on a central feature of Lee’s aesthetic and intellectual project. In discussing Lee’s collaborative relationship with Robinson, which lasted from 1881 until 1887, Emily Harrington addresses how this friendship reveals Lee’s process of ‘fashioning [...] an aestheticism based not on individual experience but on response and exchange’.[51] Such a pattern of ‘response and exchange’ is Lee’s (many-sided) system of assimilation and rejection; the method mirrors its result — a many-sided oeuvre — and it can be associated with and measured against the ‘aesthetic sympathy’ and eclecticism of Walter Pater. Indeed, the relationship between Lee and Pater has received more attention from critics than any other.[52] Angela Leighton calls Lee ‘Pater’s most

[49] Gunn, *Vernon Lee*, p. 145.

[50] Letter no. 1408, 30 July 1884. Quoted by Zorn, *Vernon Lee*, p. 176 n6.

[51] Emily Harrington, ‘The Strain of Sympathy: A. Mary F. Robinson, “The New Arcadia”, and Vernon Lee’, *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 61:1 (2006), 66–98 (p. 80), in *JSTOR*. Accessed 10 April 2014.

[52] For a description of Lee and Pater’s changing relationship, see Colby, *Vernon Lee*, pp. 60–77 and Zorn, *Vernon Lee*, pp. 38–55. See also Brake, ‘Vernon Lee and the Pater Circle’, pp. 40–57;

original disciple and commentator'; Maxwell and Patricia Pulham name Pater 'the dominant influence on Lee'; and Stefano Evangelista notes that Lee is 'one of the female critics whose art-historical writings were most directly indebted to Pater', whose 'debut into aestheticism takes place in the shadow of Pater's discipleship'.[53]

These assertions are valid, but the narrative that Lee was in the main Pater's disciple and pupil misses a crucial aspect of their friendship — particularly as Lee conceived of it — that it was a rapport based on intellectual exchange. Lee considered herself less as Pater's disciple than as his colleague: 'In Pater [...] she found [...] as she probably preferred to regard him, a peer'.[54] The two aesthetes frequently engaged in tête-à-têtes wherein ideas and evaluations of each other's work were exchanged, rather than sessions wherein Pater presided over Lee and her writing. On the evening of their first meeting, Pater not only complimented Lee on her recent history of eighteenth-century Italy, but also consulted her on some points in his own work.[55] In June and July 1883, Pater wrote to Lee of his great interest in two of her recent periodical publications.[56] In his letter dated 22 July, Pater compares points of his current work on *Marius* with 'The Responsibilities of Unbelief', and as an offshoot of his disappointment in not seeing Lee that summer also indicates he will miss the opportunity of having her comments on *Marius*: 'I [...] meant to have asked you to look at some of the MS'.[57]

In a letter dated 4 June 1884, Pater praises *Euphorion* (1884) and aligns the 'effect' of Lee's writing with his own: 'this evidence of intellectual structure

Evangelista, 'Vernon Lee and the Gender of Aestheticism', pp. 91–111.

[53]Leighton, 'Ghosts, Aestheticism, and "Vernon Lee"', p. 2; Maxwell and Pulham, *Vernon Lee*, p. 6; Stefano Evangelista, 'Vernon Lee in the Vatican: The Uneasy Alliance of Aestheticism and Archaeology', *Victorian Studies* 52:1 (2009), 31–41 (p. 34), in *JSTOR*. Accessed 8 April 2014; Evangelista, *British Aestheticism and Ancient Greece*, p. 55. Here, Evangelista presses this point strongly, adding: 'The influence of Pater [...] will come to dominate Lee's career. [...] Many of her works are haunted [...] by Pater's precedent' (p. 56).

[54]Colby, *Vernon Lee*, p. 63.

[55]Colby, *Vernon Lee*, p. 62.

[56]Pater, *Letters*, pp. 50, 51–52.

[57]Pater, *Letters*, p. 52. When Lee visited the Paters the following summer, 18–21 June 1884, Pater consulted her on *Marius*. Lee writes in a letter to her mother 20 June 1884: 'Each afternoon I have had a long private audience in his study, on account of his lameness, and he has read me part of his philosophical romance about the time of the Antonines'. Quoted by Colby, *Vernon Lee*, p. 65 from Lee, *Letters*, pp. 146–48.

in a poetic or imaginative piece of criticism [...] is also the effect I have myself endeavoured after'.[58] Moreover, even as Lee publicly aligned her aesthetic criticism with Pater by dedicating *Euphorion* to him, Pater also inscribed his work with references to her own, favourably footnoting Lee in the 1893 edition of *The Renaissance*.[59] 'Affinity, whether between fellow aesthetes, fellow inverts or both, is the sentiment that dominates their exchange'.[60] As Lee saw and positioned her work in relation to his, Pater also considered his work in relation to hers — a veritable exchange.

There is another light in which to consider Lee in relation to Pater: as his exponent and, concomitantly, as self-promoter. Born in France and raised in Germany and Italy, Lee lived primarily in Italy in later life. Her initial immersion in studies of eighteenth-century Italian music and Italian classical and Renaissance art is a testament to the affinity she felt with Italian history, culture, and language — an attraction she shared with Pater. Maurice Baring, a close friend, writes in her obituary, 'I suppose that in the last 50 years Italy has never had a more understanding and more subtly local lover and interpreter than "Vernon Lee" '.[61] He describes her as knowing 'not only the hidden objects of historic and artistic interest, but the mind of the people'. Pater visited Italy on three occasions, traveling to Ravenna, Pisa, and Florence with C.L. Shadwell (1840–1919) in 1865, staying in Rome for a month from December 1882 to January 1883 during a time when he was writing *Marius*, and again in 1884 with his sisters when they visited Florence. Having already established a fast friendship following their meeting in Oxford in July 1881, Lee provided Pater with several letters of introduction to use in Rome.[62]

[58] Pater, *Letters*, p. 54.

[59] 'The reader should consult [...] the chapter on "The Out-door Poetry," in Vernon Lee's most interesting *Euphorion; being Studies of the Antique and Mediæval in the Renaissance*, a work abounding in knowledge and insight on the subjects of which it treats'. Walter Pater, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry* (Chicago: Pandora Books, 1977), p. 16.

[60] Evangelista, 'Vernon Lee and the Gender of Aestheticism', p. 97.

[61] Maurice Baring, '"Vernon Lee": An Appreciation', (Feb 1935), p. 19, in *The Times Digital Archive*. Accessed 25 January 2017.

[62] Stephen Bann, *The Reception of Walter Pater in Europe*, edited by Stephen Bann (London; New York: Thoemmes Continuum, 2004), pp. 19–33 (p. 19). See letter from Hester Pater dated 24 February 1883, in which she thanks Lee on her brother's behalf for the introductions, although he

Pater used none, but the gesture looks to be part of Lee’s methodical use of her rapport with Pater to cultivate her role as a writer in Italy.

More specifically, Benedetta Bini writes, ‘she took on the role of disciple of a new aesthetic *credo* in her actual writing on Pater, marking her position in the Italian cultural *milieu* as the clever and up-to-date “correspondent” on English literary matters’.[63] In Italy, Lee fostered a position for herself as Pater’s popularizer or diffuser. Her review of *Marius* in Italian in 1885 — ‘La morale dell’estetica: appunti sul nuovo libro di Walter Pater’ [‘Ethics into Aesthetics: Notes on Walter Pater’s New Book’] — in *Fanfulla della dominica* was the first reference to Pater’s work in an Italian publication and it hints at the complex pupil-peer identity Lee professed in relation to Pater.[64] Pater and Lee were both interested in answering ‘how aestheticism could stretch to ethics and morality, to human conduct’, and Lee’s Italian review, which introduces *The Renaissance* to readers before discussing *Marius*, reveals that she attributed her recognition of a possible ethical, expansive motion of aesthetics to Pater’s influence: ‘the roads to beauty and to goodness, if seldom coincident, are often parallel and can both lead to a wiser and fuller existence. Pater’s ultimate merit is that of having shown how they necessarily coexist in the highest minds’.[65]

Similarly, in her English publications Lee makes much of her position as an aesthete, art historian, novelist, and art critic in relation to Pater. ‘Pater’s presence in Lee’s work is so pervasive as to act as a kind of general subtext’.[66] Lee’s direct references to Pater and his publications are few, but critical consensus looks to

‘was very sorry he had no time to use any’. Pater, *Letters*, pp. 48–49.

[63] Benedetta Bini, ‘“The Sterile Ascetic of Beauty”: Pater and the Italian fin de siècle’, in: Stephen Bann, ed., *The Reception of Walter Pater in Europe* (London; New York: Thoemmes Continuum, 2004), pp. 19–33 (p. 21).

[64] For description and discussion of Lee’s Italian review of *Marius* and introduction of Pater’s work for Italian readers (10 May 1885), see Bini, “‘The Sterile Ascetic of Beauty”’, pp. 21–22 and Elisa Bizzotto, ‘Pater’s Reception in Italy: A General View’, in: Stephen Bann, ed., *The Reception of Walter Pater in Europe* (London; New York: Thoemmes Continuum, 2004), pp. 62–86 (pp. 62–63).

[65] Colby, *Vernon Lee*, p. 143; Bizzotto, ‘Pater’s Reception in Italy’, p. 63. Lee makes this point regarding the relationship between beauty and goodness in her essay on ‘Ruskinism’ in *Belcaro*.

[66] Bini, “‘The Sterile Ascetic of Beauty”’, p. 21.

Lee’s final essay in *Renaissance Fancies and Studies*, ‘Valedictory’, as the principal site of her most explicit responses to Paterian aesthetics.[67] In ‘Valedictory’, argues Stefano Evangelista, ‘Lee effectively rewrites Pater’s career to match her own idea of aestheticism’s natural progression into ethics’; more specifically, it is ‘a rewriting of Pater’s “Conclusion” to *The Renaissance*, the most important aesthetic manifesto, and a text that Lee repeatedly uses to define her ethical positioning within the aesthetic movement’.[68] Many of the affinities to be discerned between Lee and Pater are traced by Lee in ‘Valedictory’, which is simultaneously a tribute to Pater and modification of his posthumous reputation as aesthete and moralist. Lee’s positioning of her self-reflection upon her own role as an aesthete and moralist alongside her revision of Pater’s posthumous image is suggestive. There are moments in ‘Valedictory’ when Lee inserts her voice as Pater’s, making *herself* his proxy. In this essay, Lee is a curious amalgamation of Pater’s historian, his critic, his disciple, his peer, and his proxy. The distinction is lost whether she ‘palimpsests’ herself over Pater to reinvigorate his memory, or ‘palimpsests’ Pater over herself to reinforce her status as aesthete, moralist, critic, and historian.

Even if Lee wishes to portray Pater as the source of her belief in how aesthetics and ethics overlap, she actively distinguishes herself from the ‘moral significance’ Pater emphasizes in his aesthetics by rewriting it. In his 1874 essay ‘On Wordsworth’ Pater asks what is ‘the true moral significance of art and poetry’ and answers, ‘this art of impassioned contemplation’.[69] In ‘Valedictory’ Lee reframes this question: ‘what can the study of history, particularly of the history of art and of other manifestations of past conditions of soul, do for us in the present?’ and her answer is twofold.

First, ‘we require occasionally to live in the Past’, *not* ‘as the expression

[67] For an overview of Lee’s direct references to Pater’s work in her own, see Bini, “‘The Sterile Ascetic of Beauty”’, pp. 21–22.

[68] Evangelista, ‘Vernon Lee and the Gender of Aestheticism’, p. 109.

[69] ‘Impassioned contemplation is called the ideal of culture in Pater’s essay on Wordsworth’. See Richard S. Lyons, ‘The “Complex, Many-Sided” Unity of “The Renaissance”’, *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 12:4 (1972), 765–81 (p. 777), in *ProQuest*. Accessed 23 May 2017.

of a superfine and selfish dilettantism’, but because self-maintenance is crucial in alleviating social evils; ‘[W]e cannot grind and pant on without interruption’ so ‘why not recognise the need for a holiday?’[70] And truly the bulk of Lee’s work is concerned with the vague and haunting presence of the Past, its (conscious and unconscious) impact upon individuals, and the power of places and objects to conjure it. At times the Past is moralizing, but it can also menace — the distinction for Lee largely depends upon an individual’s level of self-awareness and range of sensitivity. Is one intuitive and self-reflective? Alert to subtle cultural influences in one’s surroundings? Or too isolated from one’s cultural identity and therefore in danger of being insensible to the point of inaccessibility to the finer points of art and beauty? For Lee, sympathy and manysidedness intersect here: at the point where heightened aesthetic sensibility meets historic knowledge and cultural awareness. Her ideas regarding *how* ethics and aesthetics meet rely upon and utilize conceptions of sympathy and manysidedness as she sifts through the layers of historical and cultural detritus forgotten by art critics and historians.

Thus, in the second half of her answer, she considers the more direct usefulness of interacting with the Past without forgetting its beauty:

> I hold by the belief, expressed years ago, in my previous volume of Renaissance studies [*Euphorion*], to wit, that historical reading (and in historical I include the history of thoughts and feelings as much as of events and persons) is a useful exercise for our sympathies, bringing us wider and more wholesome notions of justice and charity.[71]

Lee advocates that her readers cultivate a heightened awareness of what she calls ‘universal life’, an awareness granted both by ‘contact [...] with the tangible, breathable, visible, audible universe’ and with ‘the Past — the joys and sufferings of the men long dead, their efforts, ideals, emotions, nay, their very sensations and temperaments as registered in words or expressed in art’.[72]

Reading history in tandem with intuitively unearthing the Past through

[70] Vernon Lee, ‘Valedictory’, in: *Renaissance Fancies and Studies* (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1896), pp. 233–60 (pp. 239, 238).
[71] Lee, ‘Valedictory’, p. 237.
[72] Lee, ‘Valedictory’, pp. 239, 240.

haptic interactions with objects and places is, for Lee, a many-sided action well worth pursuing, something which promises 'real companionship and congenial activity' of 'infinite delicate variety'.[73] It exhibits the exercise of a 'special sensibility' which Lee and Pater each prize in the aesthetic critic; as with Pater, conceptions of sympathy and manysidedness in Lee draw largely from her insistence upon, not merely people, places, or things (past and present), but upon an individual's *relationships* with what is outside of him or herself, with how an individual draws from his or her surroundings that 'which answers in closest and most intimate way to the complexion and habits of [their] individual soul'.[74] How one, in short, draws forth and (ethically) utilizes the 'vitality' of landscape, people, (art) objects, and history. Lee's project of joining what is useful and 'practical' to what is beautiful and 'Past' is driven by the sympathetic exercise of entering into other times, places, and psyches. In her work, the idea of manysidedness particularly implies a maturity of conscience that comes from the study of different periods in history: 'Our conscience has become quieter, [...] because it has become more healthily sensitive, more perceptive of many sides, instead of only one side of life'.[75]

The heterogeneity of Lee's texts is akin to Pater's, particularly with his fashioning of the imaginary portrait, which 'lies at the intersection of autobiography, biography, the short-story, myth, the history of art, of ideas, of manners, of events'.[76] Pater's writings likewise have a 'deep-seated hybridism', and this likeness is, in part, due to Lee and Pater's joint investment in sympathy and manysidedness as aesthetic methods.[77] In her close tracking of the source texts

[73]Lee, 'Valedictory', p. 237.
[74]Lee, 'Valedictory', p. 240.
[75]Lee, 'Valedictory', p. 249.
[76]Maurizio Ascari, 'The Mask without the Face: Walter Pater's "Imaginary Portraits"', *Textus: English Studies in Italy* 12:1 (1999), 97–112 (p. 98). Consider also, Evangelista, 'Vernon Lee and the Gender of Aestheticism', p. 98: 'The challenges of fusing critical and imaginative writing and of experimenting with a historiographical model that foregrounds the sensuous element of culture will lead Pater and Lee to their parallel development of the hybrid genre of the imaginary portrait in the 1880s'.
[77]Bizzotto, 'Pater's Reception in Italy', p. 82.

that fed Pater's composition of the 'Conclusion', Billie Inman notes the strong influence of Renan's use of the historic method Eclecticism:

> In 'The Religions of Antiquity' (1857), which appears to have been Pater's principal source of ideas on religion in 'Coleridge's Writings' and 'Winckelmann,' Renan states: 'Eclecticism is [...] the obligatory method of our age [...] Schools are in science what parties are in politics: each one is right by turns; it is impossible for an enlightened man to shut himself up in one of them so exclusively as to shut his eyes to what the others hold to be reasonable'.[78]

Eclecticism, from the Greek εκλεγειν, meaning 'to select' (*OED*), is a historic philosophy or method that suppresses the practice of locating 'truth' or certainty in a single system of thought and replaces such philosophic uniformity with a process of 'picking out' and combining valid ideas from a wide range of systems. Like impartiality, eclecticism presents a set of challenges. Richard M. Chadbourne paraphrases Renan's question, 'According to what touchstone are we to determine which ideas in a given system are true and which are false? In the light of what higher criterion are we to *choose*?'[79] Even as much of his religious scholarship depends upon and broadcasts this method, Renan wrestled with its disadvantages: 'is not to select ideas in this fashion to "blunt" (*émousser*) the instrument of one's own thought, to dull the edges of one's originality, or, as [Renan] calls it, one's *physionomie*?'.[80]

Eclecticism, joined by a syncretic process of blending or unification, in Pater's oeuvre is a mark of the manysidedness and 'aesthetic sympathy' integral to his aesthetic and historic cultural project of seeking out and defining 'culture' in any given period. Yet, it is not the image of a *dull* edge that strikes Pater in his adoption of eclecticism as a core feature of his writing; on the contrary, using the individual as the touchstone — 'What is this song or picture, this engaging personality presented in life or in a book, to me?' as he writes in the 'Preface' —

[78] Billie Andrew Inman, 'The Intellectual Context of Walter Pater's "Conclusion"', *Prose Studies* 4:1 (1981), ⟨URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01440358108586119⟩, 12–30 (p. 26). Accessed 12 May 2017.
[79] Richard M. Chadbourne, *Ernest Renan* (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1968), pp. 42–43.
[80] Chadbourne, *Ernest Renan*, p. 43.

eclecticism feeds the many-sided task that runs through much of his oeuvre, that of delineating a ‘fine’ or ‘sharp edge of light’ outlining the essence, or ‘character’, of humanism and culture.[81] Pater’s earliest essay ‘Diaphaneitè’ delineates a specific ‘type of character’ distinguished by ‘that fine edge of light, where the elements of our moral nature refine themselves to the burning point’.[82] Pater carries this image forward in his 1867 essay ‘Winckelmann’, in which he unearths the ‘sharp edge of light’ of Apollonian Hellenic culture as he outlines Winckelmann’s provocative eighteenth-century career in classical studies of Greek sculpture.[83]

Using this kind of language in his descriptions of culture and character ‘types’ of culture later feeds into his iconic promotion in the ‘Conclusion’ of aesthetic ‘ecstasy’: ‘burn[ing] always’ with a ‘hard, gem-like flame’. In fact, the recurring image of a sharp edge supports rather than contradicts this most famous (many-sided) image signalling that brilliant maintenance from moment to moment of ‘ecstasy’, achieved by moving ‘swiftly from point to point’ while simultaneously ‘be[ing] present always at the focus where the greatest number of vital forces unite in their purest energy’.[84] For Pater, manysidedness entails a kind of contraction concomitant with expansion. The cut of the gem is many-sided and yet through it is distilled the diaphanous quality of light to which Pater frequently alludes as ‘fine’ or ‘sharp’. Through the gem there is distilled a pure essence or εθος, meaning ‘character’ in its original Greek. Pater’s imaginary portraits are his contractions of history into personalities or essences, his method being to seek figures with a sufficient (many-sided) sensitivity, or ‘aesthetic sympathy’, to history and culture coupled with a quality of ‘transparency’.

As Stefano Evangelista reminds us, ‘The critic for Pater is not the bearer of a specialized scientific knowledge but of a special sensibility’.[85] In the ‘Preface’ of

[81] Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. xxix.
[82] Walter Pater, ‘Appendix: Diaphaneitè’, in: Adam Phillips, ed., *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 154–58 (p. 154).
[83] Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. 131.
[84] Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. 152.
[85] Evangelista, ‘Vernon Lee and the Gender of Aestheticism’, p. 95.

The Renaissance, Pater's delineation of 'the critic' as one who 'possess[es] [...] a certain kind of temperament, the power of being deeply moved by the presence of beautiful objects' mirrors and prefigures the most important quality of his many-sided sympathetic characters.[86] The critic has an 'exquisit[e] discriminating' power which belongs to 'accomplished humanists'; the 'rule' to follow in order to be a successful critic is '*[se borner] à connaître de près les belles choses, et à s'en nourrir en exquis amateurs, en humanistes accomplis* [to constrain oneself to know beautiful things intimately, and to nourish oneself on these things as exquisitely discriminating amateurs, as accomplished humanists]'.[87] Taken as a 'special sensibility' in the service of aesthetically rendering the spirit or quintessence of an historic period, sympathy *is* the 'subtlest essence' of culture in Lee and Pater (much like Eliot's espousal). Yet, in Pater that sympathy conduces more towards the critic's 'contemplative inaction' or 'impassioned contemplation', which Lee seeks to revise. Lee comes closer to Eliot in attending to the *act* of 'giv[ing]' sympathy and cultivated learning to another.

In tracing the differences separating features of Lee's aestheticism from Pater's aesthetic model of sympathy, Sarah Townley highlights the added import Lee places upon social interaction and turning an individual's consciousness of others (whether historic personalities or people who are present) into action.[88] According to Townley, Lee emphasizes 'a sharper social conscience than that found in the works of Pater'.[89] At times, it is difficult to discern the precise and true distinction between Lee's and Pater's aestheticisms. There is no doubt that Pater was invested in widening the ethical dimension of aestheticism and that his aestheticism was socially conscious. Nonetheless, it seems that Lee sought to invest a more practical streak into the aestheticism she forged in dialogue with Pater's work. Lee experimented much more extensively with ways to knit ethical

[86]Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. xxx.
[87]Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. xxx. Pater quotes the definition of *humanistes* from Charles Augustin Saint-Beuve (1804–1869), *Journal des Savants*, June 1867. See p. 159 for explanatory footnote.
[88]Townley, 'Rewriting Paterian Sympathy', p. 867.
[89]Townley, 'Rewriting Paterian Sympathy', p. 870.

aestheticism into a social fabric, while Pater happily hummed to its tune from an ivory tower where only his closest fellows could hear. Pater saw and *felt* that society needed fire from Mt. Olympus, but Lee tried to bring it down the mountain. And so, to use Townley's remark, in seeking to bring the edge of a 'sharper social conscience' to Paterian aestheticism, Lee revises the implicit passivity of the 'art for art's sake' manifesto, arguably a keynote in Pater's 'Conclusion', by not only adding to Pater's (passive) receptivity an element of active participation, but also revising Pater's image posthumously to 'correct' it beyond a doubt: 'he was utterly unable to turn his powers of perception and expression to idle and irresponsible exercises', she writes, 'and his conception of art, [...] was inevitably one of art, not for art's sake, but [...] art for the sake of life'.[90]

In the same essay, Lee praises *Marius* and, especially, *Plato and Platonism* (1893), calling these texts the results of a 'knit[ting] together [of] congruous qualities', or 'highly personal synthes[e]s'.[91] She calls Pater — in his sensitivity to 'the whole palette, of spring, of temperate climates and of youth and childhood' — 'like Plato, a teacher of self-discipline and self-harmony'.[92] As she emphasizes the positive qualities of *Marius*, Lee compares Pater's 'spiritual evolution' with that of Marius, giving credence to this fictional figure as Paterian proxy; like Marius (and it is implied like Lee), Pater 'began as an aesthete, and ended as a moralist'.[93] Both represent the many-sided ideal (of aestheticism fused with morality) which Lee describes: 'he appears to have risen from the perception of visible beauty to the knowledge of beauty of the spiritual kind, both being expressions of the same perfect fittingness to an ever more *intense and various and congruous* life'.[94] Her portrayal of him in terms of an ideal 'refined' manysidedness — both various in his eclectic process of 'rejection and acceptance' and united in his 'soul's synthesis' — persists:

[90]Lee, 'Valedictory', p. 259.
[91]Lee, 'Valedictory', p. 257.
[92]Lee, 'Valedictory', pp. 257, 258.
[93]Lee, 'Valedictory', p. 255.
[94]Lee, 'Valedictory', pp. 255–56. Emphasis added.

> This inborn affinity for refined wholesomeness made Mr. Pater the natural exponent of the highest aesthetic doctrine — the search for harmony throughout all orders of existence. It gave the *nucleus* of what was his soul's synthesis, his system [...] of *rejection and acceptance*.[95]

He was both great artist and great thinker, creating 'art as one of the *harmonious functions* of existence'.[96]

Conversely, Lee most often critiqued Pater's work as lacking life or vivacity. 'Fine, but I think lacking vitality', she writes of *Marius*, in a letter to her mother.[97] Later in her 'Introduction' essay of *Juvenilia* (1887), she calls it 'delusive'.[98] In 'Valedictory' she assesses *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* in the same fashion, calling it a work that sprang from Pater's period of 'narrow' aestheticism, a text producing, not vivaciousness, but 'a sense of caducity and barrenness'; *The Renaissance*, she claims, is more interested in 'literature as an end, and not as a means', putting it in danger of being fetishistic, or an end unto itself, trailing 'the school of Mr. Swinburne's *Essays*' whose followers '[felt] in order that they may write, instead of writing because they feel'.[99] As a result, *The Renaissance* lacks 'an active synthesis of preferences and repulsions, what we imply in the terms *character* and *moral*'.[100] Here, Lee may be trying to overwrite Pater's use of these terms; as mentioned, 'character' or 'ethos' meant for Pater 'essence'. Similarly, 'ethical' did not mean only 'moral', but also sensuous.[101] Alongside her claim that *The Renaissance* does not exhibit 'active synthesis[ing]', Lee asserts her experimentation with a 'more organic mode of feeling and thinking which results from active maturity, from the ever-increasing connections between our individual

[95] Lee, 'Valedictory', p. 258. Emphasis added.
[96] Lee, 'Valedictory', p. 259. Emphasis added.
[97] Quoted by Colby, *Vernon Lee*, p. 65 from Lee, *Letters*, pp. 146–48. Much later in her career and following her more thorough theorizing of empathy in the context of psychological aesthetics, Lee would stand by this estimation saying *Marius* gives readers the sense of 'insufficient locomotion'. Vernon Lee, 'The Handling of Words: A Page of Walter Pater', *Life and Letters* 9:50 (1933), 287–310 (p. 303).
[98] Lee, *Juvenilia*, I, p. 9.
[99] Lee, 'Valedictory', p. 256.
[100] Lee, 'Valedictory', p. 256. Emphasis added.
[101] For a discussion of Pater's etymological 'digging', see Linda C. Dowling, 'Walter Pater and Archaeology: The Reconciliation with Earth', *Victorian Studies* 31:2 (1988), 209–31 (p. 219), in *JSTOR*. Accessed 18 July 2014.

soul and the surrounding world'.[102]

Lee builds upon the eclectic process of 'selection' and sympathetic 'assimilation' driving much of Pater's work, but ultimately she positions herself as having moved away from Pater's more passive aesthetic process of reception and (critical) registration of pleasurable impressions, and towards a more practically 'moral' development of aesthetic theories. Even as we easily detect that Lee continually sought to refine her position as aesthete and art critic in relation to Pater, the lines separating her praise from her censure and her evocation of Pater from her modification of his aestheticism are blurred. And yet, even while trying to bring a 'practical' edge and 'sharper social conscience' to Paterian aestheticism, Lee's oeuvre is still remarkably focused upon practicing aesthetic criticism by registering and analyzing a wide range of impressions until finally distilling them into a written art form, whether essay, dialogue, or short story. Of principal interest to me, Lee shares and participates in Pater's aesthetic and historic project of defining 'culture' by amalgamating its myriad influences and locating its 'essence' in a many-sided sympathetic figure.

Tilling the same ('Kultur') soil

Culture, or 'Kultur', is 'a turning over of the earth', a process of tilling soil as evident in the shared root with the word 'agriculture'.[103] The earth for Walter Pater is the site of cultural rebirth, hence the repeated focus throughout his oeuvre upon buried relics, opened graves, burial rituals, and beautiful corpses.[104] Tactile engagement with objects surfacing from beneath the earth is another strongly shared feature in the respective works of Lee and Pater. [105] Linda Dowling turns

[102] Lee, 'Valedictory', pp. 256, 251.
[103] Dowling, 'Walter Pater and Archaeology', p. 220.
[104] See Dowling, 'Walter Pater and Archaeology', p. 220 and William F. Shuter, *Rereading Walter Pater* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), particularly the chapter on 'Visiting the Dead', pp. 92–108.
[105] See Catherine Maxwell's chapters on Walter Pater and Vernon Lee. Maxwell, *Second Sight*, pp. 68–113, 114–65.

to Pater's 'reconciliation with earth' as his 'central and lifelong enterprise'.[106] Pater could 'be called "the father of archaeological teaching at Oxford" on the basis of a series of demonstrably unscientific lectures on archaic Greek art he offered in 1878'.[107] Lee's relationship with archaeology, while 'uneasy', certainly shows her knowledge of developing scientific archaeological methods.[108] And significantly, in view of Lee and Pater's joint privileging of emotional response as critical method, Pater notes the 'sense of power' emanating from Lee's union of 'intellectual structure' with tactile and sensuous engagement with art objects — a practice he asserts is very like his own:

> It is not *easy* to do what you have done [...] — to make, viz. *intellectual theorems* seem like the life's essence of the concrete, sensuous objects, from which they have been abstracted. [...] it is also an effect I have myself endeavoured after.[109]

And 'in archaeology — with its necessarily and literally earthbound concerns — Pater found the most serviceable vehicle for his "elegant materialism" ', or 'belief in the primacy of the material or the sensuous'.[110]

Pater's definition of 'culture' and his close and literal association of it with its etymological and earthly roots joins with his eclectic process of assimilation and rejection as he focuses upon moments of transition in history, made particularly visible through historic transitions from one religion to another. Pater, with his expressed interest in recent comparative religion scholarship such as Renan's *Études d'Histoire Religieuse* (1857) and in the theory of historical continuity between pagan religion and Christianity, could certainly be called a participant in the science of religion.[111] The overlap between the science of religion and a science of culture is, in fact, very pronounced in Lee's and Pater's works.

[106] Dowling, 'Walter Pater and Archaeology', p. 211.
[107] Dowling, 'Walter Pater and Archaeology', p. 221.
[108] I refer to Evangelista, 'Vernon Lee in the Vatican'.
[109] Pater, *Letters*, p. 54 (4 June 1884).
[110] Dowling, 'Walter Pater and Archaeology', pp. 209, 211.
[111] For Pater's interest in Renan, see Robert Crawford, 'Pater's Renaissance, Andrew Lang, and Anthropological Romanticism', *ELH* 53:4 (1986), 849–79 (p. 849), in *JSTOR*. Accessed 18 July 2014.

As discussed in Chapter 1 of this thesis, the science of religion had a strong many-sided aspect in the mid-to-late nineteenth-century, being more broadly made up of a wide range of established and emerging disciplines, from philology and theology to psychology, archaeology, and cultural anthropology or the science of culture as it was termed by E.B. Tylor. Robert Crawford, Linda Dowling, William F. Shuter, and John Coates have each discussed Pater’s infusion of Tylor’s research into his aestheticism, most notable in his revision of Tylor’s theory of animism and his initial (re)application of Tylor’s term ‘survivals’ as early as 1872 in his essay ‘On Wordsworth’.[112]

As with archaeology and aestheticism, anthropology and aestheticism cross-pollinate. Robert Crawford, for instance, argues that the works of Pater, Swinburne, Andrew Lang, and John F. McLennan (1827–1881) are tightly interwoven, concentrated around such areas of study as classicism and comparative religion. ‘Swinburne would look to the development of the study of comparative religion as a source of endless sensational excitement’, while Lang, like Pater, published pieces that showed his interest ‘in the Renaissance as the continuation of earlier pagan traditions’.[113] Even for his two-part piece on totemism in *The Fortnightly Review*, McLennan turned to Fenimore Cooper’s *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826) ‘as a source of anthropological data’, which reveals ‘how much

[112] Shuter, *Rereading Walter Pater*, p. 101. The consensus is that Pater actively interacted with Tylor’s theories of animism and ‘survivals’ in the early 1870s, and that this interaction was primarily due to his friendship with Andrew Lang, then at Merton College. See Crawford, ‘Pater’s Renaissance’, for scrutiny of Pater’s relationship with Lang in Oxford, their shared recourse to Tylor’s recently published theories, and the resulting impact upon Pater’s decision to collect essays in *The Renaissance* (originally *Studies*). See Dowling, ‘Walter Pater and Archaeology’, for more on the relationship between Pater and archaeology as evidenced in *Greek Studies* (1895) and ‘The Myth of Demeter and Persephone’ (1875, 1895). Dowling argues that there was no strain between Pater’s aestheticism and his recourse to science and scientific methods. See Shuter for the relations between ‘On Wordsworth’ (1872, 1874), ‘Winckelmann’ (1867), *Marius the Epicurean*, *Plato and Platonism*, ‘The Myth of Demeter and Persephone’ and Tylor’s theories. For a discussion of Pater’s ‘A Study of Dionysus’ (1875, 1876) in relation to Tylor’s theories of animism and ‘survivals’, see John Coates, ‘Pater and the Myth of Dionysus’, *English* 56:216 (2007), ⟨URL: https://doi.org/10.1093/english/56.216.265⟩, 265–82. Accessed 10 June 2014; Pater revises Tylor’s theories by emphasizing the ‘refinement’ rather than lower mentality of past cultures.

[113] Crawford, ‘Pater’s Renaissance’, pp. 855, 859.

nineteenth-century romanticism and anthropology were entwined'.[114]

Sebastian Lecourt, too, discusses Pater's foray into the then-emerging ethnographic science:

> During the early 1870s, Pater became fascinated by anthropologist E.B. Tylor's concept of cultural survivals, and over the next decade would use his essays on art, literature, and mythology to rework it from a theory of cultural detritus into an account of how certain aesthetic forms acquire their social significance over time.[115]

According to Lecourt, 'Pater virtually transforms the idea of self-culture into that of ethnographic culture, with the detached aesthete becoming a participant-observer who can both submit to the determinations of history and reflect on them through an anthropological lens'.[116] The 'participant-observer' model recurs throughout Pater's imaginary portraits and is most pronounced in *Marius*. It reinforces the pattern of fictional character doubling as author-proxy and in-builds a sympathetic model of oscillation between self and other.

Pater read Müller as early as 1867 as well, but as much of Müller's theory hinges on the view that mythologies were products of a 'disease of language', younger than so-called 'higher' forms of religious tradition and therefore the results of degeneration, it was predominantly Lang and his research of Tylor's theories that influenced Pater in the early 1870s in the wake of the publication of Tylor's *Primitive Culture* (1871).[117] It was Lang who revised this assumption — present in both Müller and Tylor — and argued the opposite.[118] Mythology was older and therefore did not need to be viewed 'as a disease or degeneration but as the

[114] Crawford, 'Pater's Renaissance', p. 859. See John Ferguson McLennan, 'The Worship of Animals and Plants, Part I', *Fortnightly Review* 12, (Oct 1869), 407–27; John Ferguson McLennan, 'The Worship of Animals and Plants, Part II', *Fortnightly Review* 13, (Feb 1870), 194–216, in *Wellesley Periodical Index*. Accessed 3 October 2017.

[115] Lecourt, 'Walter Pater, Many-Sidedness, and the Conversion Novel', p. 232.

[116] Lecourt, 'Walter Pater, Many-Sidedness, and the Conversion Novel', p. 231.

[117] See Crawford, 'Pater's Renaissance', p. 867 for Pater's reading of Müller. Crawford argues that Pater's knowledge of Tylor was indirect, mediated through Lang, whereas William Shuter states that Pater read *Primitive Culture* (1871) directly. See Crawford, p. 873 and Shuter, *Rereading Walter Pater*, p. 100.

[118] See Wheeler-Barclay, *The Science of Religion in Britain*, pp. 104–39 for her chapter on Lang's responses to Müller and Tylor and his contributions to the Science of Religion.

refinement and apex of cruder materials, and for Pater refinement was all'.[119] In his shared interest with Lang in Tylor's research and fascination with mythology, primitive forms of culture, and the relationship of these with the modern mind, Pater planned *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* as 'a collection of pieces that, [...] would link the middle ages to modern times, and subtly demonstrate the transmission of a line of pagan values throughout this period'.[120] In 'Pico della Mirandola' in particular, Pater addresses a question springing from his anthropological research and exchange with Lang: 'whether the religion of Greece was indeed a rival of the religion of Christ'.[121] Crawford calls *The Renaissance* 'a work of imaginative anthropology'.[122]

Tylor's definition of 'culture', in 'its wide ethnographic sense' as 'that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society', must have been an attractive and inclusive definition for Pater, but in 'Pico della Mirandola' he qualifies this: 'nothing which has ever interested living men and women can wholly lose its vitality', thereby rejecting Tylor's progressive view of cultural and religious history, which entailed that 'primitive' practices and beliefs would, and should, fall away.[123] Pater's revision of Tylor's theory in this respect repeats itself throughout his work through his characteristic attentiveness to child-like responses to places and objects, as in his sympathetic documentation in 'The Child in the House' (1878) of 'the sense of harmony' that exists 'between his soul and its physical environment'.[124] 'How insignificant, [...] seem the influences of the sensible things which are tossed and fall and lie about us, so, or so, in the environment of early childhood. How indelibly, as we afterward discover, they affect us'.[125]

[119] Crawford, 'Pater's Renaissance', p. 867.
[120] Crawford, 'Pater's Renaissance', p. 867.
[121] Crawford, 'Pater's Renaissance', p. 870.
[122] Crawford, 'Pater's Renaissance', p. 875.
[123] Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, I, p. 1; Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. 49.
[124] Walter Pater, 'Imaginary Portraits: The Child in the House', *Macmillan's Magazine* 38:226 (1878), 313–21 (p. 316) in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 11 August 2017.
[125] Pater, 'The Child in the House', p. 315.

Tylor routinely uses a child-adult metaphor to explain his views on the distinctions between primitive and modern minds. According to Tylor, the child's first theory of the world is naturally animism, which wanes as a child progresses into adulthood; likewise, the influence of animism wanes as a society or civilization develops its level and quality of rational thinking. Animistic beliefs or primitive practices that persist as a kind of residue of an irrational past are 'survivals'; 'processes, customs, and opinions, [...] which have been carried on by force of habit into a new state of society different from that in which they had their original home'. 'Survivals', then, 'remain as proofs and examples of an older condition of culture out of which a newer has been evolved'.[126] Yet, Pater revises Tylor's theories by emphasizing the 'refinement' rather than lower mentality of past cultures, seeing 'a developed mental life' in savages 'comparable with the best the modern world has to offer' and 'propos[ing] "survivals" from the primitive past *inform* later art, blending with and *enriching* it'.[127] There is no gap between moderns and primitives for Pater.[128] 'By the time of *Marius the Epicurean* (1885), [...] Pater's revisionist account of survivals had become an almost Durkheimian celebration of religion as a fabric of images and symbols that embodies the collective memory of a society'.[129]

Lee's links with Tylor's research are less direct in terms of tracing her reading of *Primitive Culture*, but there is ample evidence running through her dialogue essays of the 1880s to suggest that she was familiar with Tylor's theories and the new ethnographic science of culture. For example, there are references to Tylor's theory of 'survivals' in 'The Consolations of Belief', which touches upon the science of culture in delineating that a primitive (or child) may be unable to reason scientifically, but is able to interact with the world aesthetically.[130]

[126] Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, I, p. 16.
[127] Coates, 'Pater and the Myth of Dionysus', pp. 272, 278. Emphasis added.
[128] See Coates, 'Pater and the Myth of Dionysus', pp. 274, 275.
[129] Lecourt, 'Walter Pater, Many-Sidedness, and the Conversion Novel', p. 232.
[130] Vernon Lee, *Baldwin: Being Dialogues on Views and Aspirations* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1886), pp. 76–126. See pp. 84–86 for references to Tylor's 'survivals' theory, and pp. 106–08 for remarks related to animism or fetishism. In another instance, Lee uses like terminology, referring

Aestheticism, feeling, and affect, in this way, are tied to primitivism. Besides references to Tylor's research in associationist psychology texts like James Sully's *Sensation and Intuition* (1874), with which Lee was very familiar, her interest in comparative religion and anthropological sciences also stretches well into the early twentieth century as documented in her library, profuse with studies in religion, art, classicism, folklore, anthropology, primitivism, and cultural relics.[131]

In fashioning an aesthetic manifesto and imaginative ethnographic religious history, Pater puts his eclectic (many-sided) process of assimilation and rejection to work. He turns to Wincklemann, to Goethe, to Renaissance figures like Pico della Mirandola and philosophers like Montaigne and Giordano Bruno, to ancient thinkers like Marcus Aurelius and Heraclitus. Pater also responds to more recent and contemporary figures, like Wordsworth, Matthew Arnold, and Tylor.[132] His articulation of what is 'culture' stretches far and wide and manifests a versatile

to the '*modus operandi* of savages and children'. See Vernon Lee, *Althea: A Second Book of Dialogues on Aspirations and Duties* (London: Osgood, McIlvaine & Co., 1894), p. xiv.

[131] See James Sully, *Sensation and Intuition: Studies in Psychology and Aesthetics* (London: Henry S. King & Co., 1874), pp. 123–24. The following titles are examples that reflect this engagement. Most are annotated by Lee throughout: Hermann Oldenberg, *Buddha: His Life, His Doctrine, His Order* (1882); Edouard de Hartmann, *La Religion de l'Avenir* (1894); Benjamin Ives Gilman, *Hopi Songs* (1908); George Nugent Merle Tyrrell, *Christianity at the Cross-Roads* (1909); Frank Byron Jevons, *The Idea of God in Early Religions* (1910); Robert R. Marett, *Anthropology* (1912); Alessandro Della Seta, *Religione e Arte Figurativa* (1912); Yrjö Hirn, *The Sacred Shrine: A Study of the Poetry and Art of the Catholic Church* (1912); William McDougall, *Body and Mind: A History and a Defense of Animism* (1913); Jane Ellen Harrison, *Ancient Art and Ritual* (1913?); James H. Leuba, *La Psychologie des Phénoménes Religieux* (1914); Hans Driesch, *The History and Theory of Vitalism* (1914); Adolf Brodbeck, *Zoroaster: ein beitrag zur vergleichenden geschichte der religionem und philosophischen systeme des morgen und abendlandes* (19–?); Robert R. Marett, *Psychology and Folk-lore* (1920); Robert H. Lowie, *Primitive Society* (1921); William J. Perry, *The Origin of Magic and Religion* (1923). Note works by R.R. Marett (1866–1943), who was 'intellectually indebted to Tylor' and Jane Ellen Harrison (1850–1928). Wheeler-Barclay, *The Science of Religion in Britain*, p. 72. Marett was Tylor's successor at Oxford as one of the university's first professors of anthropology. Harrison, a classicist, features in Wheeler-Barclay's study as one of its exponents (pp. 215–42). For a record of Lee's complete library, see results for The British Institute of Florence Bibliography search 'Lee, Vernon, 1856–1935 — Former owner'.

[132] The parallel between Wordsworth's imagination and the primitive mind demonstrates Pater's view of the continuity between 'lower' and 'higher' examples of culture. An earlier draft of this essay was intended as the 'Conclusion' of *The Renaissance*, but Pater replaces a focus on Wordsworth with one on Heraclitus, colouring *The Renaissance* with classicism instead of the new science of anthropology. 'On Wordsworth' appeared in 1874 and was the first essay Pater published after the poor reception of *The Renaissance*. Crawford calls 'On Wordsworth' the 'most important outcome of the marriage between his own aesthetic intuitions and [...] the theories [...] made available to him by Lang'. See Crawford, 'Pater's Renaissance', pp. 873, 874.

and roaming knowledge of history essential to his vision. In a detailed analysis of the 'Conclusion', Billie Inman writes, 'beneath the surface of Pater's text, the muses hum — Goethe, Renan; Fichte, Hume; Spencer, Tyndall; Hegel, Aristippus, Plato; Morris, Baudelaire'; Inman hits upon the underlying sympathy and manysidedness of Pater's controversial essay when she adds the qualifying remark that the 'Conclusion' is not a 'pastiche of other writers' ideas' but an 'accumulat[ion] [of] ideas to which he *felt affinities*'.[133] Richard Lyons, moreover, views *The Renaissance* as an attempt 'to establish an ideal of culture based upon the enrichment of personal sensibility', something I have come to perceive as akin to fostering a many-sided 'special sensibility'.[134] At the heart of Pater's aesthetic and cultural project, Lyons locates 'his refinement (or attenuation) of the mid-century ideal of sympathy', shifting it from its practical moral bias to its emotional value', a shift Lee both embraces and seeks to turn back.[135]

In preparation for the comparison with Lee's figure of cultivation, the next section looks to the repetition of Pater's original 'transparent hero' in other characters of ideal culture such that its central features of sympathy and manysidedness reverberate. For examples of Pater's many-sided sympathetic heroes, we turn to 'Pico della Mirandola' and *Marius the Epicurean*; in each we find the eponymous figures described as lifted from the grave, in possession of 'fused' religious identities, exhibiting a 'special' appreciation of 'survivals' or 'cultural detritus' crafted into *ritual* over the ages, and portrayed with language reminiscent of the 'type of character' expressed by Pater in 'Diaphaneitè' and of the aesthetic critic of the 'Conclusion' — bright, sharp, refined, clear. As we shall then see in the following sections, Lee and Pater's shared many-sided and sympathetic methods join with their mutual investment in discourses of 'high' and 'low' culture

[133] Inman, 'The Intellectual Context of Walter Pater's "Conclusion"', p. 28. Emphasis added. See Lyons, 'The "Complex, Many-Sided" Unity of "The Renaissance"', p. 774 for his point that the views of culture held by the thinkers Pater invokes often contradict, as between Winckleman's view of culture as 'passionate contemplation' requiring depth of knowledge and a limited range of interests versus Goethe's call to versatility and action.

[134] Lyons, 'The "Complex, Many-Sided" Unity of "The Renaissance"', p. 779.

[135] Lyons, 'The "Complex, Many-Sided" Unity of "The Renaissance"', p. 779.

to produce closely aligned many-sided sympathetic heroes.

Walter Pater's diaphanous figure shines forth

Originally published in 1871 before being collected into *The Renaissance*, the essay 'Pico della Mirandola' takes Pater's readers to fifteenth-century Italy, a period of 'generous instincts' endowed with the power 'To reconcile forms of sentiment which at first sight seem incompatible' and 'adjust the various products of the human mind to one another in one many-sided type of intellectual culture'.[136] Pico della Mirandola has 'clear skin, [...] as with the light of morning upon it'; 'he is a true *humanist*' exhibiting 'the essence of humanism':

> [T]hat belief [...] that nothing which has ever interested living men and women can wholly lose its vitality — no language they have spoken, nor oracle beside which they have hushed their voices, no dream which has once been entertained by actual human minds, nothing about which they have ever been passionate, or expended time and zeal.[137]

As with the function of the critic — to feel, analyze, and explain the 'powers or forces producing pleasurable sensations' issuing from 'all works of art, and the fairer forms of nature and human life' — the function of Pater's many-sided figure is 'to give humanity, for heart and imagination to feed upon, as much as it [can] possibly receive'.[138] In 'Pico della Mirandola', Pater's clear and broad description of what constitutes 'culture' — similar in its breadth to Tylor's definition of culture — holds sympathy at its heart as its 'inspiriting force': '*nothing* which has ever interested living men and women can wholly lose its vitality'.[139] Lyons calls this passage 'a kind of credo for *The Renaissance* in its entirety', composed as 'a call to our feelings'.[140] Pater engages readers sympathetically with the figures he introduces, infusing his imaginary portraits with what he describes in this

[136]Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. 20.
[137]Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. 32.
[138]Pater, *The Renaissance*, pp. xxx, 20.
[139]Lyons, 'The "Complex, Many-Sided" Unity of "The Renaissance"', p. 778; Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. 32. Emphasis added.
[140]Lyons, 'The "Complex, Many-Sided" Unity of "The Renaissance"', p. 778.

essay as ‘the historic sense, which, by an imaginative act, throws itself back into a world unlike one’s own, and estimates every intellectual creation in its connexion [*sic*] with the age from which it proceeded’; Lee echoes such a directive in ‘Valedictory’ when she prompts readers to participate in ‘the joys and sufferings of the men long dead, their efforts, ideals, emotions, [...] their very sensations and temperaments’.[141]

As Pater presents him, Pico ‘is so perfect an example’ of an ‘inward harmony and completeness’, a feature tellingly helped by Pico’s wide religious and linguistic learning: ‘penetrating, [...] the secrets of all ancient philosophies, and many eastern languages’ which fed his ‘generous hope, [...] of reconciling the philosophers with one another, and all alike with the Church’.[142] Both Christian and pagan, Pico is ‘like some knight-errant of philosophy’, an archetype of sympathy-driven manysidedness in his passionate desire ‘to defend nine hundred bold paradoxes, drawn from the most opposite sources’.[143] Pico ‘reads Plato in Greek, Moses in Hebrew, and by this his work really belongs to the higher culture’, connecting his recorded learning ‘with springs beneath [...] of deep and passionate emotion’; ‘there is a *glow* [...] in his words’ that recalls how ‘his own brief existence *flamed* itself away’.[144]

This is the bright, sharp edge of Pico della Mirandola’s character; he ‘is really interesting’ because his life ‘is so perfect a parallel to the attempt made in his writings to reconcile Christianity with the ideas of paganism’; he ‘is so attractive’ because the ‘picturesque union of contrasts, belonging so properly to the art of the close of the fifteenth century, pervades, in Pico della Mirandola, an actual person’.[145] Bringing his imagination to the portrait, Pater strongly aestheticizes Pico’s image — ‘his colour white, intermingled with comely reds, [...] his teeth white and even, his hair yellow and abundant’ — and symbolically links Pico’s

[141] Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. 22; Lee, ‘Valedictory’, pp. 239–40.
[142] Pater, *The Renaissance*, pp. 24, 25.
[143] Pater, *The Renaissance*, pp. 25, 25–26.
[144] Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. 30. Emphasis added.
[145] Pater, *The Renaissance*, pp. 29, 31.

character with the 'picturesque union of contrasts' found in 'the anemone with its concentric rings of strangely blended colour': 'When the ship-load of sacred earth from the soil of Jerusalem was mingled with the common clay in the *Campo Santo* at Pisa, a new flower grew up from it, unlike any flower men had seen before'.[146] The *Anemone coronaria* is very Paterian, giving readers an attractive — strange and beautiful — vision of life springing from the soil and derived (mythically) from the *physical* cultural exchange between East and West. Pico, too, is one raised from the earth. Reading his 'forgotten books' is like 'glanc[ing] into one of those ancient sepulchers, upon which the wanderer in classical lands has sometimes stumbled'.[147] Pico was placed in his grave 'in the Dominican habit, yet amid thoughts of the older gods' and he 'remains, as one alive in the grave'.[148]

The character of the 'Diaphaneitè' essay is also described as a 'beautiful, buried, classical artifact, brought to the surface and to view by chance'; in Pater, 'the classical relic or artefact' is 'a symbol for the diaphanous character'.[149] Carolyn Williams describes the diaphanous character of 'Diaphaneitè' as 'formed through an unconsciously regulated receptivity', one that paradoxically unites 'sheer passivity with "unconscious" activity'.[150] In discussing what she terms Pater's aesthetic historicism, Williams remarks, 'Pater's notion of diaphaneity defines the role a cultured but otherwise unremarkable individual might play in the vast movements of historical change', and with it Pater 'sets up a complex play of visibility with invisibility, partial permeability with full transparency'.[151]

Marius, too, like some classical relic, issues from 'an old country-house' in the Roman countryside, 'half farm, half villa', where he 'represented an ancient family'.[152] A kind of gentleman farmer, Marius takes an 'interest in the cultivation

[146] Pater, *The Renaissance*, pp. 24, 31.
[147] Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. 27.
[148] Pater, *The Renaissance*, pp. 29, 32.
[149] Pater, 'Appendix: Diaphaneitè', p. 156; Maxwell, *Second Sight*, p. 75.
[150] Williams, *Transfigured World*, pp. 178, 179.
[151] Williams, *Transfigured World*, pp. 179, 173. For Williams's full discussion of 'the transparent hero', which she introduces as an alternative to Harold Bloom's translation of 'Diaphaneitè' as 'the Crystal Man', see pp. 172–84.
[152] Walter Pater, *Marius the Epicurean: His Sensations and Ideas* (London: Macmillan and Co.,

of the earth', for which he feels 'reverence'; 'farm-life in Italy, [...] might well contribute to the production of an ideal dignity of character', observes the narrator (*ME* 10). Both 'full of venerable memories' and in possession of 'a living sweetness of its own for to-day', Marius's home reverently retains signs of its past without their troubling its present 'sweetness' (*ME* 10).

Marius the Epicurean: His Sensations and Ideas was intended by Pater as a companion piece to *The Renaissance* and specifically as his clarification of the aestheticism of the 'Conclusion'. The text positively *revels* in Pater's characteristic interest in the relationship between the dead and the living, mitigated by tactile engagements with ritual, earth (soil), artifacts, and art objects.[153] In *Marius*, ritual in particular is a many-sided ideal, and one's affinity with or sympathetic response to the cultural beauty and significance of rituals says much indeed about the extent to which one is a many-sided sympathetic figure. Sebastian Lecourt interprets *Marius* as a species of conversion novel, not to Christianity, but to (Paterian) manysidedness:

> Ostensibly, many-sidedness was an ethos of complex, cultivated individualism. For Pater, however, becoming many-sided involves eschewing choice and decision as acts that narrow the self and instead surrendering to the determining influences of history, since these saturate the self with a maximum of memory and sentiment.[154]

Taken as Pater's clarification of the 'Conclusion', *Marius* is an extended experiment in the virtues of 'contemplative inaction'. Set in second-century Rome, *Marius* relays the narrative of Marius as he meditatively moves across the Italian

1924), pp. 2, 9. Parenthetical citations given in the text are from this edition and prefixed with *ME*.

[153] See Evangelista, 'Vernon Lee in the Vatican', p. 156: '*Marius* had been written as an extended explanation of the radical aestheticism of the "Conclusion" '. See also R.M. Seiler, *The Book Beautiful: Walter Pater and the House of Macmillan* (London; New Brunswick, NJ: Athlone Press, 1999), p. 43: 'Pater probably began working [...] on *Marius the Epicurean* in autumn 1878. [...] Obviously, he wanted to clear up the confusion he had generated in the "Conclusion" to *The Renaissance*'. Evidence that Pater specifically intended *Marius* as a refinement of the aesthetic manifesto of the 'Conclusion' is also found in his directions to Macmillan for a *physical* link between *Marius* and the second edition of *The Renaissance*: 'Pater [...] asked [Macmillan] that the book [*Marius the Epicurean*] be precisely similar to the second edition of *The Renaissance* [the edition that omitted the 'Conclusion'] with regard to "size, quality of paper, and binding" ' (p. 45).

[154] Lecourt, 'Walter Pater, Many-Sidedness, and the Conversion Novel', p. 233.

landscape and encounters historic personalities like the Emperor Marcus Aurelius and Empress Faustina, teachers of several schools of thought, and hidden Christian communities. Recognizing the centrality of an historic development of religion and philosophic thought is essential to understanding Pater's project and intentions for Marius; as we follow Marius through his round of sensuous and affective engagements with objects, traditions, rituals, places, and persons, we are invited to participate in his experience of slowly 'saturat[ing] the self with a maximum of memory and sentiment'.

Where Tylor proposes a progressive vision of culture and civilization moving gradually away from imaginative, whether religious or literary, thought and towards rational thinking, Pater paints an historic portrait of religious exchange and fusion between animistic 'survivals' and rational philosophies. Beauty and meaning is found in such fusion. The narrator of *Marius* describes the early church as full of 'merciful compromises' and in possession of an 'imperial vocation in regard to all the varieties of human kind, with a universality' like that of 'the old Roman pastorship' (*ME* 275). With this 'wonderful liturgical spirit [...] being thus awake', the church 'was rapidly re-organising both pagan and Jewish elements of ritual, for the expanding therein of her own new heart of devotion' (*ME* 277).

The narration describes the slow formation of 'ancient and venerable' ritual in terms of physical *earth* — 'dealing, as with the dust of creeds and philosophies, [...] organising soul and body out of the lime and clay of the earth' (*ME* 279) — and taking shape from an unconscious eclectic method functioning through the ages, like the slow mysterious effects of rain on landscape over time:

> In a generous eclecticism, within the bounds of her [the church's] liberty, and as by some providential power within her, she gathers and serviceably adopts, as in other matters so in ritual, one thing here, another there, from various sources — Gnostic, Jewish, Pagan — to adorn and beautify the greatest act of worship the world has seen. (*ME* 279)

In drawing 'so many ages of human experience' towards itself, the church possesses an anima, or soul, acting like 'a living creature, taking up, transforming, accommodating still more closely to the human heart what of right belonged to

it’ (*ME* 278). In *Marius* the bonds between ritual, emotion, cultural identity, and the individual are strong. And as an ‘ideal of culture’, the early church’s slow amalgamation and fusion of symbolism and rites from multiple religious sources is a process that parallels the ruling principle in Marius’s life — ‘to surrender himself, in perfectly liberal inquiry [...] to anything that, [...] attracted or impressed him strongly’ (*ME* 266).

Throughout his excursions and meetings, Marius is physically and morally sensitive to objects, personalities, and memories, reverent in the presence of even the smallest physical reminders of local history:

> The old-fashioned, partly puritanic awe, the power of which Wordsworth noted and valued so highly in a northern peasantry, had its counterpart in the feeling of the Roman lad, as he passed the spot, [...] where the lightning had struck dead an aged labourer in the field: an upright stone, still with mouldering garlands about it, marked the place. (*ME* 3)

His intense sensitivity is presented as a kind of ‘light’ by which he discerns the finer moral shades. When in Rome he attends ‘the spectacle of the amphitheatre’ which ‘was, after all, a religious occasion’ and he compares his reaction to violence with that of Marcus Aurelius, realizing that he must be more aware of right and wrong than even the emperor (*ME* 179, 182). The ‘blindness’ to evil Marius sees in most Romans is presented as a blindness that persists in every day and age, and so the narrative seeks to engage readers by convincing them that their need for ‘sensitivity’ and ‘light’ is likely just as great (*ME* 183). The early allusion to ‘the power [...] which Wordsworth noted and valued’ carries forward Pater’s revisions of Tylor in ‘On Wordsworth’.

Instinct and affect are positive in *Marius*, as in the moments when Marius happens across an early morning Christian service. Marius feels as though the ‘brightness’ of the company assembled ‘reflected upon himself’ in a kind of ‘mystic amiability and unction’ (*ME* 283). The ‘poetry of those Hebrew Psalms [...] was certainly in marvellous accord with the lyrical instinct of his own character’; Marius reflects upon and responds sympathetically to the ritual gathering (*ME* 284). The sensory experiences *gleam* against Marius’s physicality

while *resounding* deep within his spirit. Marius is like the gem, many-sided, reflecting and refracting 'light', acting as both mirror and prism, not sending back precisely the same image, but a new (delightful) version. The expression of his manysidedness — as an 'ideal of culture' — is his 'sparkle'.

Marius's child-like sensitivity, like Pater's praise of Wordsworth's intuitive responses to the spirit of landscape ('That sense of a life in natural objects, [...] is in Wordsworth the assertion of what for him is almost literal fact'), also invokes and revises Tylor's theory of animism and progressive cultural evolutionism. Descriptions of the Italian landscape appear to show sensuous and spiritual interaction between Marius and 'earth'. Marius, as the many-sided sympathetic hero, is both bodily receptive and also contemplative of mankind's limitations in sympathizing with one another: 'the very symbol of our poor humanity, in its capacities for pain, its wretched accidents, and those imperfect sympathies, which can never quite identify us with one another [...] We are constructed for suffering!' (*ME* 315).

Following this reflection, Marius proceeds to see, albeit briefly, from the points of view of a series of individuals he observes: an old woman, a young boy, a man with his injured son.[155] His voyeuristic sympathy is part of his paradoxical 'participant-observer' role. Moments of sympathizing in *Marius* are typically brief and focused upon *physicality*, either the presence or absence of life in the body. Fleetingly, a boy has sympathy for a captive northerner, recognizing, 'There's feeling in that hand, you know!', while Marius struggles with his consistent and yet vain feelings of sympathy for the dead (*ME* 333, 338). He realizes that anything he does out of sympathy for the dead is really for himself: 'With a vain yearning [...] still to be able to do something for them, he reflected that such doing must be, after all, in the nature of things, mainly for himself' (*ME* 338).

These qualities of sympathy in him fit with his reflections upon his life as one of 'inward' movement, 'of observation only, or even pure meditation' (*ME* 339).

[155] See Pater, *Marius*, pp. 315–16.

Marius *is* a many-sided sympathetic figure, but certainly not one of action. He is visionary and elusive, feeling instinctively and embodying the ‘gem-like flame’ of the ‘Conclusion’. He reflects or refracts the ‘light’ emanating from the people, objects, and places with which he comes into contact, and he has an inward vision of ‘one long unfolding of beauty and energy in things’ (*ME* 346). His prolonged stance of ‘contemplative inaction’ comes to a point on his deathbed, where he reflects upon the ‘use [of] life [...] as [...] an end in itself — a kind of music’ (*ME* 347). As he drifts in and out of consciousness, Marius thinks of losing one’s self as a good thing — achieving a kind of nirvana — as he does when sympathizing with the dead (*ME* 350, 339).

The meditative and heightened receptive state Marius achieves at the time of his death is composed as an ideal state towards which all individuals should strive; the example of Marius teaches that this meditation and receptivity is the result of a lifelong process of remaining open and sensitive to new experiences while living life inwardly to the fullest:

> At this moment, his unclouded receptivity of soul, grown so steadily through all those years, from experience to experience, was at its height; the house ready for a possible guest; the tablet of the mind white and smooth, for whatsoever divine fingers might choose to write there. (*ME* 347–48)

Moving ‘from experience to experience’ — or as Pater phrases it in the ‘Conclusion’, ‘swiftly from point to point’ — Marius achieves something like the ‘ecstasy’ of the ‘Conclusion’. His mind, as a ‘tablet [...] white and smooth’ and ready ‘for whatsoever divine fingers might choose to write there’, has come to that ‘focus where the greatest number of vital forces unite in their purest energy’.[156]

As Lecourt describes it, *this* is Marius’s ‘conversion to many-sidedness, a transformative experience in which the self becomes rich precisely by learning to hold back and remain in contemplative inaction as the fullest of all conditions’.[157] In his exemplification of ‘ideal relations between an individual and his culture’,

[156] Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. 152.
[157] Lecourt, ‘Walter Pater, Many-Sidedness, and the Conversion Novel’, p. 234.

Marius achieves the full stature of Pater's 'transparent hero'.[158] In Marius, Pater builds his conception of self-culture and interpretation of 'ideal relations' around physical experience. 'The most cultivated self, Pater suggests, is the one most fully attuned to the cultural system within which it is entrenched', and such 'attunement' is achieved by experience.[159] Marius engages to such an extent, for example, with an underground Christian community near Rome that, much like Pico della Mirandola, he is ritually buried by these Christians *as* a Christian. The text, however, is clear that in death Marius remains 'in complete liberty of life', even as he is claimed as a martyr by the Christian community who buries him (*ME* 350).

It has been argued that 'Pater's narrative techniques [in *Marius*] seem designed precisely to block all avenues to readerly identification'.[160] *Marius* may be Pater's 'proxy-narrative' and contemporary readers who knew Pater may have received it as something of a disguised autobiography, but instead of promoting readerly self-identification with Marius, Pater's 'narrative practice in Marius [...] works to displace readerly "feeling" in favour of an aesthetic grounded in bodily affect or sensation'.[161] I would argue this is part of the 'transparency' of Pater's hero; he wishes to emphasize our 'closeness' with Marius not so much in terms of how intently we feel *with* or *for* him, but in terms of our shared physicality and capacity to develop 'special sensibilities' — observation, sensation, and meditation in (well)rounded 'contemplative inaction'. Pater had intended to compose a series of Mariuses — diaphanous 'evanescent' figures (dis)placed throughout history — one of which was Gaston de Latour, a character Pater describes as 'a sort of

[158] Williams, *Transfigured World*, p. 174.

[159] Lecourt, 'Walter Pater, Many-Sidedness, and the Conversion Novel', p. 234.

[160] Ablow, *The Feeling of Reading*, p. 8.

[161] Lecourt, 'Walter Pater, Many-Sidedness, and the Conversion Novel', p. 234; Ablow, *The Feeling of Reading*, p. 8. See Stephen Arata, 'The Impersonal Intimacy of Marius the Epicurean', in: Rachel Ablow, ed., *The Feeling of Reading: Affective Experience and Victorian Literature* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2010), pp. 131–56 for the full argument. I allude to Mrs. Humphrey Ward's review of *Marius*, which considers Pater's novel as disguised autobiography, not unlike Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* (1833–1834) or Froude's *The Nemesis of Faith* (1849). Mrs. Humphrey Ward mistakenly takes *Marius* as proof of Pater's professed Christianity. Mary Augusta Ward, 'Marius the Epicurean', *Macmillan's Magazine* 52:308 (1885), 132–39 (pp. 134, 138), in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 13 September 2017.

Marius in France, in the 16th century'.[162] 'Emerald Uthwart' (1892) according to Monsman, might have been intended as a related 'modern study' in what would have likely been a companion volume to *Imaginary Portraits*. Each figure of the series and companion volume, presumably, would have produced a similar 'readerly' effect although set in different periods, thus drawing several places and past ages around present-day readers.[163]

In thinking about 'readerly' effect and the impression Pater intended to make upon readers, the developmental language surrounding the diaphanous figure and its many-sided sympathy is significant. Gerald Monsman refers to 'Pater's belief in progress toward the diaphanous condition of the cultural ideal', and sees evolutionary advancement couched in *The Renaissance*: 'The unity of the Renaissance essays is, [...] not merely chronological but developmental: the evolution of an ideal personality type from the twelfth century down to the nineteenth' culminates with 'its description in the "Conclusion" and its embodiment in the modern reader'.[164] Lindsay Wilhelm has recently suggested revisiting the relationship between Paterian aestheticism and evolutionary theory to '[contextualize] the evolutionary ideas of [Mathilde] Blind, Oscar Wilde, Vernon Lee (Violet Paget), and other aesthetes who embraced the connection between Paterian aestheticism and progressive — even utopian — evolutionism'.[165] Meanwhile, Sarah Townley has argued that Lee and Pater both wrote for an 'ideal reader' and thus were elite figures writing less for the masses than for the literary intelligentsia.[166] But, once alerted to the context of evolutionary science

[162] Pater, *Letters*, p. 126 (28 January 1886).

[163] See Monsman, *Walter Pater*, p. 107 for a summary of Pater's plans for this series, and the likely companion *Portraits* volume.

[164] Monsman, *Walter Pater*, pp. 169, 50.

[165] Lindsay Wilhelm, 'The Utopian Evolutionary Aestheticism of W.K. Clifford, Walter Pater, and Mathilde Blind', *Victorian Studies* 59:1 (2016), ⟨URL: https://must.jhu.edu/article/649950⟩, 9–34 (p. 10). Accessed 22 August 2017. See also Lindsay Wilhelm, 'Evolutionary Science and Aestheticism: A Survey and a Suggestion', *Literature Compass* 13:2 (2016), 88–97, in *Wiley Online Library*. Accessed 11 September 2017, and Lindsay Wilhelm, 'Evolutionary Aestheticism: Scientific Optimism and Cultural Progress, 1850–1913', Ph. D thesis, University of California, Los Angeles (2017).

[166] See Townley, 'Rewriting Paterian Sympathy', p. 862.

by Wilhelm, the case might be made that both aesthetes desired to extend the sensitive, rational, and 'spiritual' qualities of the aesthetic critic to readers as part of an overarching project geared towards fulfilling a utopian vision of humanistic evolutionary aestheticism. The following section compares Lee's proxy Baldwin with the Paterian diaphanous figure and carries with it a reflection upon Lee and Pater's shared progressive vision, suggesting that Baldwin is a significant marker of Lee's early attempt to transform Pater's aestheticism into an active, practical philosophy for the modern reader.

Vernon Lee's diaphanous figure: Baldwin & a 'new spirituality' for the modern age

Lee composed and published her dialogue essays between 1881 and 1894, during which time most appeared in the *Contemporary Review*, *National Review*, and the volume *Belcaro* (1881) before being collected into *Baldwin: Being Dialogues on Views and Aspirations* (1886) and *Althea: Dialogues on Aspirations and Duties* (1894), a complementary pair.[167] Much like the progressive pattern of the essays in *The Renaissance*, Lee's dialogues form a developmental arc that stretches across these two essay collections. The two dialogues at the outset of *Baldwin* — 'The Responsibilities of Unbelief' and 'The Consolations of Belief' — and the two dialogues at the close of *Althea* — 'The Spiritual Life' and 'The Use of the Soul'

[167] Excluding 'The Consolations of Belief', 'Of Doubts and Pessimism', and 'The Use of the Soul', the following dialogues were printed in periodicals steadily throughout the 1880s and early 1890s: Vernon Lee, 'Vivisection: An Evolutionist to Evolutionists', *The Contemporary Review* 41, (May 1882), 788–811; Lee, 'The Responsibility of Unbelief: A Conversation Between Three Rationalists'; Vernon Lee, 'A Dialogue on Novels', *The Contemporary Review* 48, (Sep 1885), 378–401; Vernon Lee, 'The Value of the Ideal', *The National Review* 6, (Sep 1885), 26–42; Vernon Lee, 'The Value of the Individual', *The Contemporary Review* 53, (Jan 1888), 94–115; Vernon Lee, 'Orpheus in Rome', *The Contemporary Review* 55, (Jun 1889), 828–49; Vernon Lee, 'The Friendships of Baldwin', *The Contemporary Review* 61, (May 1892), 653–74; Vernon Lee, 'The Spiritual Life', *The Contemporary Review* 62, (Nov 1892), 663–82; Vernon Lee, 'A May-Day Dialogue, Part I', *The Contemporary Review* 63, (May 1893), 650–62; Vernon Lee, 'A May-Day Dialogue, Part II', *The Contemporary Review* 64, (Jul 1893), 90–107, in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 10 Sep 2017. The first appearance of Baldwin was in Vernon Lee, 'A Dialogue on Poetic Morality', *The Contemporary Review* 39, (May 1881), 682–707, which was also collected into *Belcaro* (1881).

— mark a pathway for the 'spiritual' evolution of modern readers. Thematic to Baldwin's role throughout the dialogue collections is the pseudo-religious and scientific 'battle to make the kingdom of that which is into the kingdom of that which should be'.[168] Added to this, in the shift from *Baldwin* to *Althea*, Lee's message evolves from 'the attitude of youth' to 'the attitude of maturer life', inciting movement away from 'nourish[ment] on theological notions' towards making 'other notions and ideals [...] organic in young minds'.[169]

The first two dialogues address why religious beliefs persist in the modern day and question whether it is ethical to continue to teach orthodox religion and its 'consolatory' beliefs in an afterlife. As mentioned, Lee relies upon Tylor's cultural evolutionism in these discussions; Baldwin refers to Tylor's 'survivals' theory in 'The Consolations of Belief' as he speaks with a young Scottish woman and compares her belief in God's goodness with fetish-worshipping savages and saintly ascetics or mystics from the Middle Ages. His central point in the first two dialogues is that the consolation of belief is a 'survival' from which mankind must progress to advanced scientific and moral thought. Very like Tylor, Baldwin prefers a scientific worldview bent on making human nature 'excellent and useful' over 'the beautiful and consoling fictions of religion' (*B* 48, 49). If the world is to advance spiritually, religious consolations need to be set aside.

The final two dialogues turn to a 'new spirituality' of increased sensitivity. Barbara T. Gates observes, 'Lee reinstated words like "spiritual" in her work and linked the spiritual to the ethical', holding to a 'moralized, humanistic version of evolution', wherein 'human beings individually and collectively must actively work toward the moral betterment of their kind'.[170] Together, the figures Baldwin and Althea advocate fusing friendship with knowledge and aesthetic appreciation;

[168] Lee, *Baldwin*, p. 49. Parenthetical citations given in the text are from this edition and prefixed with *B*.

[169] Lee, *Althea*, pp. xi, xiii. References to this volume are given after quotations in the text and prefixed with *A*.

[170] Barbara T. Gates, *Kindred Nature: Victorian and Edwardian Women Embrace the Living World* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 185. Gates refers to the 'transcendental rhetoric' of Lee's dialogues.

sharing intellectual and aesthetic pleasures is a pathway towards increased self- and other-awareness, and thus towards a state of moral health conducive to the future progress of mankind. Gates terms this Lee's 'altruistic aestheticism' and Lee puts this message to task in part through her configuration of Baldwin as a diaphanous figure.[171] Like Pater, she builds upon contemporary discourse in physiological psychology, emphasizing a correlative relationship between bodily sensations and moral development. The name Althea, for example, alludes to the Greek word for 'healing' — αλθος — and throughout the dialogues remarks concerning physical health accompany references to the 'spiritual' development entailed in rational thought and increased aesthetic sensitivity, which Baldwin and Althea together represent. By bringing a scientific worldview to bear upon 'spiritual' matters, Baldwin offers 'the sort of spirituality which we modern people can aspire towards' (*A* 289).

In Lee's oeuvre, Baldwin is a primary example of the many-sided and sympathetic male agent who mitigates difference by drawing towards himself a series of (apparent) opposites in a performative and eclectic method of choice (assimilation and rejection) and synthesis, and joined by Althea he comes close to depicting 'the ideal type of a complete human nature' as described by James Sully in *Sensation and Intuition* (1874). As Lee describes in her introduction to *Althea*, 'it is only through the comparison of my two books together [...] what I thought and felt [represented in *Baldwin*] with what I think and feel [represented in *Althea*], that I can achieve what I greatly have at heart', which is 'to point out one road, at least, along which we modern men and women may reach serenity of mind after the uncomfortable resting-places of our youthful thought' (*A* xii). Althea, modeled partially upon Kit Anstruther-Thomson, is still primarily a textual extension of Lee and, like Baldwin, 'a hybrid creature'.[172] Taken together, Baldwin and

[171] Gates, *Kindred Nature*, p. 187.

[172] See Gunn, *Vernon Lee*, p. 112 for the claim connecting Althea with Kit. Patricia Pulham, *Art and the Transitional Object in Vernon Lee's Supernatural Tales* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), p. 44. Pulham also observes that Kit and Althea are linked via Lee's comparisons between each and the Venus de Milo (p. 69 n14).

Althea 'demonstrate, in varying ways, a concern with the complexities of the self' that ultimately serves Lee's 'altruistic aestheticism', as made clear in the *Althea* introduction: 'they show that personal serenity is achieved quite unconsciously in the process of wondering what may be our duties to others' (*A* xvii).[173]

In his discussion of 'The Aesthetic Aspects of Character', Sully describes 'many-sided [...] natures': 'The few larger natures which manifest a wide variety of human attributes, or a high development of many intellectual qualities and emotional susceptibilities, appear to be united wholes in relation to the ideal type of a complete human nature'.[174] He cites Aristotle's definition of virtue — 'to consist in the attainment of a certain mean between two opposed qualities' — and does not question 'the aesthetic value of a rich, variegated, and many-sided mental organization', or its 'vigour'.[175] Baldwin's role is both aesthetic and moral; indeed, Sully's research on the psychology of aesthetics must have been so attractive to Lee because very little distinction is made between the two.

The 1886 review of *Baldwin* in the *Athenaeum* refers to Baldwin 'as the speaker to whom we are to look for holding an even balance between the various extremes of opinion and feeling'.[176] Far from a passive figure, Baldwin is 'a talking energy', a better observation than the one the same reviewer makes of Lee herself: 'She is [...] gifted — if we should not rather say handicapped — with an inclination to write upon all sorts of subjects'.[177] Noting 'his half-identity with his author', the reviewer labels Baldwin 'an agnostic and an evolutionary moralist' — 'firm, yet mild; copious, yet measured; sympathetic, yet discriminating'.[178] Like Marius, Baldwin embraces manysidedness and self-cultivation as a kind of

[173] Lee does make Althea the 'central figure' of *Althea*, but she is not so distinct from Baldwin or Lee. For more on the complex relationship between Baldwin and Althea, see Pulham, *Art and the Transitional Object*, pp. 43–44. For reasons of space, I continue my analysis focusing more particularly upon Baldwin, although Althea's role should be kept in mind in the context of the *Althea* dialogues.

[174] Sully, *Sensation and Intuition*, p. 272.

[175] Sully, *Sensation and Intuition*, p. 282.

[176] 'Baldwin: Being Dialogues on Views and Aspirations', *The Athenaeum* 3059, (Jun 1886), 773–74 (p. 773), in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 10 September 2017.

[177] 'Baldwin: Being Dialogues on Views and Aspirations', p. 773.

[178] 'Baldwin: Being Dialogues on Views and Aspirations', p. 773.

religion or philosophy by which to live. A few 'militant' instances aside, he is patient, pleasing, confident, and informed, and he develops humility as the series progresses (even more so if we take the exceedingly humble Althea as an extension of Baldwin's development); he is, more or less, the 'cultivated' personality needed whenever an aesthetic, moral, or scientific dispute is likely to arise (*B* 41). He plays the Socratic role in most of the dialogues. His figure blurs distinctions between subjectivity and objectivity, body and soul, masculine and feminine, self and other as he contests theoretic cultural dichotomies through his sympathetic mien. Through Baldwin, Pater's 'evanescent shades' take practical shape as a spectrum of opinions on modern problems ranging from religion, evolutionary science, and vivisection to literature, political economy, and housing projects.

Baldwin exhibits a prismatic quality in his wide range of interests and opinions; he could be said to 'flicker' between various roles: 'I can't make out our friend Baldwin', says one interlocutor in the dialogue 'On Novels', 'he is too strangely compounded of a scientific thinker, a moralist, and an aesthete' (*B* 205). As with Pater's creation of 'a participant-observer' through conflation of himself with Marius and his novel's modern-day narrator, Lee uses Baldwin to unite facets of herself, her friends, and her influences so that the Baldwin figure functions as both model of and resource for (readerly) self-cultivation. In *Plato and Platonism*, Pater describes Socrates as 'a figure most ambiguously compacted of the real Socrates and Plato himself; a purely dramatic invention [...] Plato's self, but presented [...] in a kind of stage disguise'.[179] Lee's relationship with her philosopher-speaker Baldwin is similar; she describes him as 'my friend' but his existence is also attributed to the natural exchange that occurs *between* friends: 'the something to which we give the name of our friends is a creature somehow mysteriously born of ourselves and of them' (*B* 3). Baldwin exists in a 'particular borderland between fact and fancy' in the space between individuals that fuses real and imaginary. Ultimately, he is an 'abstract personage' and 'it matters not whether

[179] Walter Pater, *Plato and Platonism: A Series of Lectures* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1893), p. 66.

[he exists] in the kingdom of the subjective or in that of the objective’ (*B* 4).

Baldwin’s history and upbringing bear a striking resemblance to Lee’s, just as the figure Marius was identifiable with Pater. Baldwin, like Lee, was ‘born upon French soil’ and has been carried ‘from country to country’ throughout his childhood, enabling him to ‘see questions of all sorts through variously tinted cosmopolitan glasses’ (*B* 5). His education mirrors Lee’s, making him a composite of both genders; he was successively ‘a sentimental boy’ and then ‘a harshly philosophic youth’ whose education was ‘carried on exclusively at home’, ‘devoid of all discipline and tradition, full of irregularities and individualities’ so that it landed him ‘at a woman’s standpoint’ (*B* 5). Lee claims to have met Baldwin only ‘every now and then’, but Baldwin’s interests resonate as Lee’s own. She describes coming across him at various points in his life, at one time finding him in ‘a frenzy of enthusiasm [...] for all things musical, especially of the eighteenth century’, engrossed in the work of Goethe and Lessing and ‘believ[ing] firmly that all moral qualities were contained in the Beautiful’; and at a later time finding him ‘excessively pessimistic’, not at all interested in Goethe or eighteenth century music, and ‘struggling hopelessly with certain ideas that were surrounded by a kind of blackness: Death, Sin, Pain, Justice’, a time of crisis reminiscent of the period when Lee wrote to Cobbe in April 1884 (*B* 7, 8).[180]

Rather than allowing her readers to infer a direct parallel between herself and her creation, Lee rejects the suggestion that her experiences came first; rather, Baldwin is responsible for ‘infect[ing] me’ with his interests. She can only describe his account ‘as an outsider can show it’ (*B* 8). To complicate matters further, after recounting Baldwin’s history and referring to him in the third person, Lee turns to a letter she has ‘received from him within the last year’ and reads it verbatim. By metaphorically ‘picking up’ Baldwin’s letter to read aloud, Lee acts as his voice in his absence and fuses her first-person narration with his. The second

[180] In ‘Responsibilities’, Baldwin narrates his upbringing, interests, and reading habits during this darker period. The reader can assume his experiences parallel Lee’s own. Lee, *Baldwin*, pp. 54–57, 63–68.

half of the introduction to *Baldwin* is filled with ‘I’s’ that belong to Baldwin, and a reader who accidentally misses Lee’s launch into reading the letter might naturally consider these ‘I’s’ as self-referential. A similarly blurred distinction occurs in *Marius* through its free indirect narration by a modern-day figure who is able to enter Marius’s consciousness. With this letter, Lee ‘fill[s] up these bare outlines’ of Baldwin’s history and brings his thoughts and impressions into play without having to explicate (or fully disclose) what might otherwise be a self-limiting autobiographical link with her creation (*B* 8).

In delineating his personal development, Baldwin refers to himself as an ‘abstract, unreal, fickle character’ full of contradictions: ‘The usual story: many ingredients, much fussing, and a result how out of all keeping!’ (*B* 12). His sketch lends insight into Lee’s view of herself: ‘A creature troubled with the desire to create, yet able only to criticize; [...] scepticism in a nature that desires to believe and rely, intellectual isolation for a man who loves to be borne along by the current’ (*B* 12–13). Baldwin’s letter concludes, but Lee pursues Baldwin’s self-description, as if continuing a seamless train of thought they share:

> [M]y friend Baldwin, [...] An illusive, shimmering personality, seemingly full of contradictions, yet, at the same time, almost repulsively cut and dried. Negative, self-contradictory, abstract, as becomes an inhabitant of the country which lies [...] upon the boundaries of fact and fancy. (*B* 13)

The final paragraph of this Introduction lets slip — as much as Lee will allow — the boundary she has set up between herself and Baldwin, but it still refuses to really define their relation and claims it is beyond comprehension:

> I am the pupil of Baldwin, the thing made by him, or he is my master, yet made by me; choose and understand, for I cannot. I agree in all his ideas; yet I can place myself at the point of view of some of his opponents. [...] If I am pushed into a logical corner and compelled to confess the truth, I have to admit the identity between my own ideas and Baldwin’s; [...] And yet, Baldwin and I are distinct; he does not understand me quite; he stands outside me; he is not I. No, dear friend Baldwin, better far than I and wiser, but perhaps a little less human, you are not myself; you are my mentor, my teacher, my power of being taught. (*B* 13–14)

A ‘shimmering’ or iridescent quality natural to both Lee and Baldwin is enacted

in this paragraph’s rhythmic oscillation between Lee’s partial admission and check of her self-identification with Baldwin. The shift in the last moment of referring to Baldwin directly positions him as separate, an outside reader whom Lee addresses alongside other readers. It is a final note that evades harmony or decision, particularly as Lee’s reading of Baldwin’s letter has also made him a collaborating author. Overall, Lee’s presentation is one which searches for a way to account for the necessarily complex creation of a character that is both ‘outside’ and ‘inside’ an author.

In recent criticism, Baldwin has been variously described as ‘a male figure who generally impersonates [Lee’s] own views’; as Lee’s ‘homologous, fictional alter ego’; as one ‘who is often but not exclusively the mouthpiece for Lee’s own views’; as ‘Lee’s persona and spokesman’; and as her ‘semi-self’ or ‘complex, prismatic narrative other self’.[181] Plainly, for critics Baldwin has come to represent Lee’s thinly veiled textual self, both semi-autobiographical and a literary mouthpiece, but he has also been compared with other figures. He appears to be an amalgamation of the characters, real and literary, Lee has absorbed and assimilated — he simultaneously represents and enacts that method of assimilation and rejection for which Lee would praise Pater in ‘Valedictory’. Richard Dellamora calls Baldwin ‘the Pater-figure’, quoting a passage from the dialogue ‘On Friendship’, in which Baldwin ‘echoes the Pater of *The Renaissance*’.[182] Catherine Maxwell identifies Baldwin with Lee-Hamilton, while Shafquat Towheed equates Baldwin in some moments with an early Pater, and in other moments catches sight of his affiliation with Pater’s Marius or George Eliot’s Theophrastus, paralleling all three as strategic uses of literary personas to dissect complex theoretic ideas.[183]

[181] Bristow, ‘Vernon Lee’s Art of Feeling’, p. 120; Shafquat Towheed, ‘The Creative Evolution of Scientific Paradigms: Vernon Lee and the Debate over the Hereditary Transmission of Acquired Characters’, *Victorian Studies* 49:1 (2006), 33–61 (p. 43), in *JSTOR*. Accessed 17 November 2014; Maxwell, ‘Whistlerian Impressionism’, p. 228; Colby, *Vernon Lee*, p. 53; Towheed, ‘Determining “Fluctuating Opinions”’, pp. 235, 219.

[182] Richard Dellamora, ‘Productive Decadence: “The Queer Comradeship of Outlawed Thought”: Vernon Lee, Max Nordau, and Oscar Wilde’, *New Literary History* 35:4 (2004), 529–46 (p. 535), in *JSTOR*. Accessed 17 November 2014.

[183] Catherine Maxwell, ‘Vernon Lee and Eugene Lee-Hamilton’, in: Catherine Maxwell and Patricia

Baldwin, as Lee’s ‘power of being taught’, *is* her eclectic method of absorbing and drawing influences towards herself and then re-releasing them for the use of the receptive and cultivated reader.

In emerging from that ‘borderland between fact and fancy’, Baldwin is an art form, Lee’s variant of Pater’s diaphanous ‘ethos’ (ηθος), that ‘character’ exemplifying the ‘essential characteristics of the Aesthetic condition’, or what Monsman describes as Pater’s configuration of ‘the harmony of all human powers, the highest perfection of culture’.[184] Catherine Maxwell discusses ‘the pre-eminence of form’ in Pater’s aestheticism as ‘his own version of “art for art’s sake” ’, and turns to *The Renaissance* and ‘The School of Giorgione’ to explain Pater’s focus on a slow alchemical process of refinement that begins with historic subject matter or content and results in pure form.[185] This pure form is the culminating ‘type’ or ‘rectified essence’ extracted from a wide range of materials, influences, and information, generally all originating from a specific place and period of history. The result should be ‘pure’ and crystalline even as it manifests dynamism. Sculpture is Pater’s preferred materialization of this ‘essence’ according to Maxwell, and she emphasizes Pater’s praise of Michelangelo’s *non-finito* sculptures in ‘Luca della Robbia’, sculptures that look unfinished because a sculptor has only fashioned part of a block. Pater calls it Michelangelo’s ‘way of etherealising pure form, of relieving its stiff realism, and communicating to it breath, pulsation, the effect of life’.[186] The contrast between rough-hewn stone and finely detailed form in a *non-finito* sculpture is what makes this variety of sculpture ‘dynamic’, inviting viewers to engage ‘in the creative process or imaginative projection’ of the artist who sees the complete form still lying ‘latent’ within the unfinished stone.[187] The effect is much like that of the

Pulham, eds., *Vernon Lee: Decadence, Ethics, Aesthetics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 21–39 (p. 28); Towheed, ‘Determining “Fluctuating Opinions”’, p. 225.

[184] Monsman, *Walter Pater*, p. 34.

[185] Maxwell, *Second Sight*, p. 89.

[186] Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. 44.

[187] Maxwell, *Second Sight*, p. 94. In *Second Sight*, Maxwell turns to the *non-finito* to exemplify the close relationship between the Victorian imagination and the visionary imagination of

half-buried artifact.

Baldwin, as textual construct, may not seem comparable with sculpture, but Lee's choice to place a semi-fictional self into semi-fictional dialogues invites its own form of dynamism.[188] Like the *non-finito* it provokes readers to imaginatively engage with the subjects under discussion; with each reader, the visionary element of the dialogue shifts and changes to incorporate a different — albeit tacit — voice. Unlike the heavier focus on form Pater urges, in Lee's dialogues 'practical' subject matter is also kept in view. In 'The School of Giorgione', Pater claims, 'the form [...] should become an end in itself', but Lee's choice of form in presenting Baldwin — the philosophic dialogue essay — is diametrically opposed to being 'an end in itself', since it is necessarily many-sided, devised by an active meeting and exchange of multiple perspectives: an appropriate extension of the fusion of art and morality that Baldwin represents.[189] Like the sculpture Pater praises, Baldwin's dynamism consists of his simultaneously being a universal 'type' that encapsulates the modern age, as well as a specific personality. One contemporary reviewer aptly identified Baldwin 'as the type and spokesman of certain tendencies of our own shifty, undisciplined, self-conscious, utilitarian, earnest age'.[190]

Baldwin's name also signals dynamism. 'Baldwin' is derived from the Old French *Baldoin*, which is in turn from the Old High German *Baldawin*, meaning 'bold friend' from *bald* for 'bold' and *wini* for 'friend'. It is also a variety of apple, an appropriate etymological dimension for a figure that shares his wisdom wherever he goes. As Milton's choice of fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, the apple of understanding and experience is offered by Baldwin to readers. Lee gives readers a chance to envisage 'what might leade

Romanticism. Here, I am interested in the *non-finito* as a sign of Pater's interest in pure form as dynamic, and therefore possessing a creative energy.

[188] Lee never entirely rejects the value of pure art forms. As part of her presentation of Baldwin throughout the dialogues, Lee often brings the influence of sculpture and music into discussion, as when she considers the impact of pure art forms on an individual in 'Orpheus in Rome'.

[189] Walter Pater, 'The School of Giorgione', *Fortnightly Review* 22 (1877), 526–38 (p. 528), in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 2 September 2017.

[190] P.A. Barnett, 'Baldwin: A Book of Dialogues', *The Academy* 735 (1886), 389–90 (p. 389), in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 11 September 2017.

/ To happier life, knowledge of Good and Evil', in particular knowledge of the relationship between aestheticism and morality, and reverses its biblical symbolism of knowledge acquisition as negative.[191]

European medieval history is peppered with Baldwins, as if to say Lee's 'friend' personifies a crucial layer of 'cultural' sediment lying beneath modern-day Europe; he is a voice of collective history that offers myriad perspectives and he stands in multiple positions at once, eclectic and enigmatic, containing multitudes — '(I am large ... I contain multitudes)'.[192] As the '*bold* friend' of every party, Baldwin's identity is reinforced by Lee as *vigorous* and *actively* engaging. Both the dialogue form and the subject matter that come together to create Baldwin enact the same rhythmic oscillation between self and other found in Lee's introduction to *Baldwin*, a pattern that constitutes the creative connection between friends. Coupled with Lee's goal to keep the subject matter of each dialogue in view, Baldwin exemplifies a more *energized* form in contrast to Pater's diaphanous figures of *The Renaissance* and Marius. '[L]acking vitality', Pater's forms are so pure or crystalline that their energy is inert and static; the flame is 'hard' and its 'gem-like' facets only produce an *illusion* of flickering life and movement.

Lee furthermore experiments with Baldwin as a revision of Paterian diaphanous character — still representing distilled culture, or refined 'sensations and ideas' — one better able to progress into the minds and bodies of readers. While Pater had plans to compose a series of novels in which his 'transparent hero' is placed in multiple historic contexts, Lee places her hero in modern times,

[191] John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, edited by Jonathan Goldberg, Stephen Orgel and Philip Pullman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), Book IX, l. 696–97.

[192] Walt Whitman, *Song of Myself, and Other Poems by Walt Whitman*, edited by Paul Ebenkamp and Robert Hass (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 2010), l. 1316. The name Baldwin graced the line of Latin kings who ruled the Kingdom of Jerusalem (1099–1291). Many of these rulers were leaders in the Crusades, such as Baldwin I of Jerusalem (c. 1058–1118), a leader of the First Crusade; and Baldwin III of Jerusalem (1130–1163), a leader in the Second Crusade. The name also marks the line of counts of Flanders (a succession of Baldwins I–VIII), as well as Baldwin I (1172–1205) and Baldwin II (1217–1273) of Constantinople. Baldwin of Forde (1125–1190) was the Archbishop of Canterbury from 1185 until his death. The association with Whitman's 'Song of Myself' is not arbitrary. One of two title-page epigraphs of *Baldwin* is from this poem: 'And if I contradict myself, why, I contradict myself'.

discussing modern moral and aesthetic dilemmas, and conveys it all through dialogue essays to invite the modern reader's participation. As Baldwin was promptly recognized by critics as Lee's proxy, in this respect we see that *Lee* is the transparent figure or (as Monsman calls it) the 'Aesthetic hero' actively writing and working to develop the aesthetic and moral sensitivity of her readers. Hers is the diaphanous 'mind of taste lighted up by some spiritual ray within', able to '[detect] without difficulty all sorts of affinities between its own elements and the nobler elements in that [established] order [of things]', and possessing 'sense fine enough for those evanescent shades'.[193] 'Etherealis[ed]' by Lee for practical purpose while still remaining a work of art, Baldwin possesses a dimension of utility not expressly found in Pater's figures. Lee attempts to balance Baldwin between style and subject matter to produce more vital energy. In this way, she unites Pater's 'pre-eminence of form' with utilitarian content to revise the aesthetic credo 'art for art's sake'.

Vernon Lee's 'fine edge of light': the 'gospel of lucidity'

A diaphanous type for the modern age and modern readers, Baldwin expresses the 'Shine forth!' future imperative of Pater's 'Diaphaneitè' figure. A sensitive receptor of the exterior world and its myriad cultural manifestations, Pater's figure has a subtle 'shaping function' as it internalizes and transmits historical and cultural forces. Lee, too, gives Baldwin a 'shaping function', but with a stronger impetus for progressive movement. In 'Diaphaneitè', Pater's diaphanous figure is too inactive for meaningful execution in life: 'Not by it could the progress of the world be achieved. It is not the guise of Luther or Spinoza; rather it is that of Raphael'.[194] Its 'moral sexlessness' denotes 'a kind of impotence', even as it signals its unique existence within spaces between distinct categories. The problem according to Pater's essay, it seems, lies less with the diaphanous figure than with

[193] Pater, 'Appendix: Diaphaneitè', pp. 155, 156, 154.
[194] Pater, 'Appendix: Diaphaneitè', p. 157.

the world: 'The world has no sense fine enough for those evanescent shades, which fill up the blanks between contrasted types of character'.[195]

Pater and Lee agree that the world requires revitalization and impetus for progressive movement, needing its powers of sensitivity developed in order to grant directing energy and power to the 'transparent' or aesthetic figures of the world. In Lee's reworking of the diaphanous character, Baldwin is Raphael fused with Luther or Spinoza. He is 'strangely compounded of a scientific thinker, a moralist and an aesthete', just as Pater's figure exhibits 'a subtle blending and interpenetration of the intellectual, moral, and spiritual elements', yet Baldwin is less vague and more present in 'the main current of the world's life' (*B* 205).[196]As such, part of Baldwin's role in each dialogue is to alert his hearers to 'those evanescent shades' and *make* their 'sense[s] fine enough'; his mission is to urge the increased aesthetic and moral sensitivity of the world.

The transparency of Pater's aesthetic figure is a signal of his unique receptivity to outside forces and ability to internalize and then retransmit a distilled 'essence' of the age. The 'transparent hero' *contracts* 'all that is really lifegiving in the established order of things' and then *expands* these 'nobler elements' in a refining process with, according to Pater, the 'ethical result' being 'an intellectual guilelessness, or integrity, that instinctively prefers what is direct and clear'.[197] Baldwin similarly enacts this concentration of myriad exterior influences for transmutation and dispersal, yet the main difference between Lee's and Pater's diaphanous figures is that, while Pater's is 'a natural prophecy of what the next generation will appear', Baldwin is a modern tool for moving towards fulfilling

[195]Pater, 'Appendix: Diaphaneitè', pp. 157, 154.

[196]Pater, 'Appendix: Diaphaneitè', p. 154. Baldwin 'crosses' the 'main current[s]' of modern thought by dismantling culturally constructed binary oppositions. In 'The Consolations of Belief', Baldwin is neither absolutely an atheist, nor a believer; in 'Of Honour and Evolution', he is neither against scientific advancement, nor in favour of vivisection; in 'On Novels', he compares and contrasts the best and worst elements of French and English novels, criticizing both for their excesses (the English for being too timid and the French for lacking shame) and joins the best from each.

[197]Pater, 'Appendix: Diaphaneitè', p. 156.

this prophecy.[198] His opinions draw the reader's mind towards envisioning a future wherein men and women have progressed and developed into higher, more sensitive, and more efficacious beings. Lee reinforces Pater's view that the 'transparent hero' can be a positive force for the spiritual or ethical advancement of mankind by acting upon his aesthetic vision in a way that Pater, perhaps, never would have. Ultimately, Baldwin's mission echoes the hopeful and progressive closing note of 'Diaphaneitè', that 'A majority of such would be the regeneration of the world'.[199] Lee devises her own version of Pater's 'intellectual guilelessness' in Baldwin's 'gospel of lucidity', a call to readers to recognize their moral and intellectual responsibilities: 'our duty towards our own mind, and consequently towards the mind of others, [is] the gospel of lucidity' (*A* 41).

Carolyn Williams has compared Dorothea with Marius, terming Pater and Eliot's 'move out of a religious context and into a secular, historical context' as a 'secularization-effect [that] is in part dependent on the fiction that an invisible, spiritual phenomenon has been made visible'.[200] Lee's dialogues similarly displace a religious context with one that is secular, aesthetic, and scientific. The developmental arc of the dialogue collections seems precisely constituted to the 'secularization-effect' Williams describes. In her hands, the aesthetic conflation of religious traditions seen in Pater is put towards Lee's 'new spirituality', and the *diffused* power — the common critique of manysidedness — of Pater's diaphanous figure is concentrated in the 'gospel of lucidity'. Lee takes the pseudo-religious identities of Pater's aesthetic figures and makes Baldwin a secular priest-prophet, not unlike Eliot's assignment of Dorothea in the religious guise of a Saint Theresa. Also, like the 'incalculably diffusive' influence of Dorothea in *Middlemarch* that contributes to 'the growing good of the world', Baldwin's effect is to promote the increase of 'exceptional creatures who, [...] are already able to live [...] in their sympathies [...] spiritual people [who] are rehearsing what may become the

[198] Pater, 'Appendix: Diaphaneitè', p. 158.
[199] Pater, 'Appendix: Diaphaneitè', p. 158.
[200] Williams, *Transfigured World*, p. 182.

great reality for all the world, the life which makes other lives easier and sweeter’ (*A* 300). These ‘spiritual people’ are the transparent heroes of the current age. Baldwin speaks of them in biblical language as ‘what Christ called the Salt of the Earth’ (*A* 298).[201]

Similarly using religious imagery to suggest evolutionary theory, Lee positions Baldwin as both aesthetic hero in the style of Pater’s diaphanous figure and as a pseudo-priest or prophet of a scientific secularism. In Lee’s hands, Pater’s diaphanous figure moves from the ‘contemplative inaction’ of Marius to didactic evolutionary enterprise. Baldwin is no less contemplative, but he is less inert as he spreads his ‘gospel of lucidity’, the name of which suggests the rationality, clarity, and luminescence of the diaphanous figure. Baldwin’s gospel is not introduced until the opening dialogue of *Althea*, ‘The Value of the Individual’, but the secular mission of all ‘unbelievers’ is outlined as early as the ‘Responsibilities’ dialogue and indicates the far-reaching implication of Baldwin’s message:

> We unbelievers — I should rather say we believers in the believable [...] should all of us be, in a fashion, priests. [...] do we not live spiritually, do we not feed our souls upon the truth which we ourselves can find, upon the truth which generations of men have accumulated for us? If, in the course of time, there be no more priests in the world, I mean in the old sense, it will be that every man will be a priest for his own family, and every man of genius a priest for the whole of mankind. (*B* 69–70)

Here, Baldwin presses the point that each person is ‘a drop in the great moral flood called progress’, and therefore liable to mankind’s moral development (*B* 68). In *Althea*, Baldwin expands this insight into the refined ‘gospel of lucidity’ as the basis of his vision for spiritual living in the modern scientific age:

> It behoves every individual, [...] to acquire to the utmost a general lucidity of mind, a power of reasoning correctly, of sifting away prejudice and falsehood, so that all new theories may be understood and judged at their value. [...] But this is only one half; we are bound to be in morally working order as well: to accustom ourselves to sympathize, to renounce, to aspire. (*A* 40–41)

[201] Lee signals *Althea* as a ‘spiritual’ text early by inscribing its title page with a verse referencing the salt of the earth, Matthew 5. 13.

Baldwin shares this after Althea has compared his moralizing tendencies with a preacher sermonizing. When Baldwin claims the toleration of immorality is as much a vice as immoral action, he speaks 'almost like the man at the village kirk' (*A* 19).

Lee writes to her mother in 1893 that *Althea* 'is far the most important book I have so far written'.[202] There is no record of Pater's responses to the *Althea* dialogues as they appeared in periodicals in the early 1890s, but in his positive review of *Juvenilia: Being a Second Series of Essays on Sundry Aesthetical Questions* (1887), Pater picks out Lee's tendency to edification:

> [T]here has always been traceable in Vernon Lee's work an unaffected sense of great problems, of the real probation of men and women in life, of a great pity, of the "sad story of humanity," bringing now and again into her exposition of what is sometimes perhaps decadent art a touch of something like Puritanism.[203]

Pater probably recognized this tendency as more than a 'touch' in the *Baldwin* and *Althea* dialogues. Again, it may be difficult to exactly pinpoint where the aesthetic philosophies of Pater and Lee conflict, but their applications certainly vary. *Baldwin* and *Althea* mark Lee's quasi-religious devotion to an 'evolutionary aestheticism' that correlates increased aesthetic sensibilities and appreciation for beauty with mankind's moral development and capacity for altruism. A similar commitment on Pater's part characterizes *Marius*, particularly if we consider Lecourt's point and take this novel as one of conversion to manysidedness and prevision of civilization's advanced state of cultivation.[204]

When 'Responsibilities' appeared in 1883, Pater did compare this initial dialogue essay with his work on *Marius* in a private letter to Lee:

> I have hopes of completing one half of my present chief work — an Imaginary Portrait of a peculiar type of mind in the time of Marcus Aurelius

[202] Waterville, ME: USA, Colby College, Miller Library (ML), Special Collections, letter no. 686 (13 July 1893).

[203] Walter Pater, 'Vernon Lee's "Juvenilia"', *Pall Mall Gazette* 6984, (Aug 1887), p. 5, in *British Library Newspapers, Part I: 1800–1900*. Accessed 25 July 2017.

[204] See Wilhelm regarding the 'almost religious sense of hope with which they [the aesthetes invested in evolutionary theory under discussion] regarded the future evolution of culture'. Wilhelm, 'Evolutionary Science and Aestheticism', p. 94.

> — by the end of this Vacation, [...] I regard this present matter as a sort of duty. For, you know, I think that there is a fourth sort of religious phase possible for the modern mind, over and above those presented in your late admirable paper in the Contemporary, the conditions of which phase it is the main object of my design to convey.[205]

Pater may have found ‘a fourth sort of religious phase possible for the modern mind’ lacking in this dialogue, but in its later context as the opening dialogue of a series, it becomes the starting point for a gradual move towards the ‘new spirituality’ Lee (as Baldwin) locates humming beneath every religion and philosophy through the ages:

> Christianity and stoicism, mysticism and philosophy, whatever their schemes and whatever their methods, have recognized the same great practical, commonsense fact, that only when happiness of the one is compatible with happiness of the other, when happiness is increased by sharing instead of diminished by robbing, can the world become large enough, and man sufficiently free; and that what makes the world large and man free is the great power which renovates as it uses, which multiplies as it unites, which, because it unifies, expands. (*A* 280)

Lee’s pattern here of contraction — uniting separate religious and philosophic systems under ‘the same great practical, commonsense fact’ — joined by a social notion of expansion, (re)encapsulates Pater’s same vision of the pattern of self-cultivation and manysidedness. She brings this core feature of Paterian aestheticism into the heart of the moral or ‘spiritual’ dialogue that continues the utilitarian thread of thinking initiated in ‘Responsibilities’ and ‘Consolations’.

James Sully makes an interesting observation regarding the most suitable expression of manysidedness, relocating the beauty and virtue of an individual’s ‘many-sided mental organization’ in society at large:

> One does not wonder, [...] at the high rank which seems to have been universally accorded to such a moderate and proportioned style of character. At the same time, the several emotional susceptibilities derive their fullest gratification, not from a simultaneous presentation of many distinct qualities in one and the same mind, but from the spectacle of many different types of character, picturesquely varied by innumerable shades of individuality.[206]

[205] Pater, *Letters*, p. 52 (22 July 1883).
[206] Sully, *Sensation and Intuition*, pp. 282–83.

In 'The Use of the Soul', Baldwin professes that one sign of the 'extension of the self to the not self' is the fact that an increasing number of people are recognizing that pleasures are 'nobler' — a word Sully associates with both aesthetic and ethical connotations — when they 'are compatible with the pleasures of others':

> We are learning [through science] that the wider the range of our sympathies, the larger the activity of our thoughts; the intenser, fuller also will be our life, the freer, deeper our pleasures; the more restricted and less destructive our pains. Is there not in these facts the basis for a new spirituality, which shall consist in making ourselves not more indifferent but more sensitive? [...] this is already the case wherever there exists great affection or devotion. (*A* 289)

Through friendship, 'many different types of character, picturesquely varied by innumerable shades of individuality' are brought to bear harmoniously upon one another.[207] Pater's vision of the diaphanous figure or aesthetic hero as a cultivated, many-sided and sympathetic individual expands in Lee's evolutionary and altruistic (or 'Puritan') aestheticism to encompass the actively loving, sympathetic relationships between individuals. Lee drives home her evolutionary vision of an aesthetically and morally advanced society by directly comparing the actions and reactions of individuals upon one another with natural forces, writing in the dialogue 'On Friendship' that the necessarily diverse 'spiritual life' of society is like 'what the sun, and the sea, and the wind, and the rocks are showing us now, each struggling, breaking against the other, their victories and defeats making the beautiful life of the world' (*A* 140).[208]

Making moral choices: 'a spot of blood-stained mud'

In her 'Introduction' to *Juvenilia* (1887), perhaps the second most direct commentary upon Pater's aestheticism in her oeuvre after 'Valedictory', Lee claims that *Marius the Epicurean* reminds her of a 'delusive' type of morality,

[207] Sully, *Sensation and Intuition*, p. 283.

[208] The dialogue 'On Friendship' is more complex than this. Signore Elena concludes with this view, but friendship is also troubling to Baldwin and Althea who dwell in different ways on the pain people might cause each other.

a philosophy of youth that gives ‘the sense of a moral and intellectual spring’ related to less mature ‘sensations and emotions and thoughts so utterly simple, single-hearted, and detached from all things practical’.[209] She recognizes in the figure of Marius Pater’s fashioning of a *sculpturesque* ‘form’, ‘harmonious and strong and chaste like the statue of some high-born boy priest’, and she describes her first reading of the book amidst ‘the earliest days of our Florentine spring’, referring as Pater does in ‘Pico della Mirandola’ to the beautiful multi-coloured anemone and adding to this his favourite image of the gem: ‘everywhere in the sprouting bright green wheat, flamed the scarlet and purple anemones, the light playing with them as with gems’ (*J* I, 8, 7–8).

She obliquely alludes to the novel’s manysidedness as she aligns ‘its story of the search after Beauty and Good’ with ‘the Lehrjahre of an antique Wilhelm Meister; but a Wilhelm Meister simpler, purer, more dignified than the hero of Goethe’ (*J* I, 8). The philosophy of youth it offered to her upon first reading it ‘is the morality of all antique art and philosophy, of the teachings of Goethe and of Plato, of every blossoming fruit tree and sprouting blade of grass’, and yet, ‘Unfortunately, it is delusive, and when we come to read “Marius” a second time we feel a certain sadness, of which this book is the seemingly serene result’ (*J* I, 9).

Lee explains this second response by framing it in terms of her experience of a moral and spiritual crisis in the early 1880s in England, a period that matured her perception of the relationship between Beauty and Good, and which we might also consider essential to the ‘spiritual’ development and attitude shift as documented in moving away from Baldwin and towards Althea in the dialogue collections:

> Little by little we begin to perceive that there are ugly things in the world: apathy, selfishness, vice, want, and a terrible wicked logic that binds them together in thousands of vicious meshes. And perceiving the ugly things in the world, we perceive for the first time, perhaps, the ugly things within ourselves. [...] Then comes the moment of choice: we have learned, or

[209] Lee, *Juvenilia*, I, pp. 8, 9. Parenthetical citations given in the text are from this edition and prefixed with *J*.

> guessed, that in continuing to live only for and with the beautiful serenities of art, we are passively abetting, leaving unfought, untouched, the dreadful, messy, irritating, loathsomeness of life. (*J* I, 10)

Marius is the product of the 'sadness' of middle age that sees these 'ugly things', but still tries to retain the view of Beauty and Good belonging more appropriately to youth: 'The Good? One feels, at that age, that one has got it; for who can connect anything save good with beautiful form, when it is temperate, harmonious, perfect' (*J* I, 9). But this is the point upon which it is 'delusive', and rather than stymie necessary and healthy development from a youthful philosophy to one that is more mature (as she sees Pater doing), Lee wishes to develop aestheticism to incorporate the 'ugly things'.

In *Euphorion* (1884), Lee had criticized Pater's version of the French medieval tale 'Aucassin and Nicolette' because he omits the single episode that points to the wider world of 'sordid reality', the moment when the knight Aucassin gives money to the poor and hungry serf: 'In his beautiful essay upon that story, Mr. Pater has deliberately omitted this episode, which is indeed like a spot of blood-stained mud upon some perfect tissue of silver flowers on silver ground'.[210] She understands the aesthetic purpose behind the omission, but in contradistinction to Pater wants to resist this and revise aestheticism in a way more suited to a matured moral outlook, so she translates and includes the episode in *Euphorion*. Her discussion following this translation gives us the best clue to her motive for including it. Of Aucassin's grief we feel very little, but the plight of 'that ragged, tattered, hideous serf', who in his moment of starvation and want is only concerned for his mother and what ails the nobleman Aucassin, is a rare instance of 'terrible tragic realism' in 'delicate and fantastic mediæval love poetry' (*E* I, 136, 134, 137). For once, 'that fanciful, wistful stripling King Love of the Middle Ages, [...] is confronted with the sordid reality, the tragic impersonation of all the dumb

[210] Vernon Lee, *Euphorion: Being Studies of the Antique and the Mediaeval in the Renaissance,* 2 vols (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1884), I, pp. 137, 133. Further parenthetical citations are in text and prefaced by *E*. See Zorn, *Vernon Lee*, pp. 47–48 for commentary on this point of Lee's criticism.

miseries, the lives and loves, crushed and defiled unnoticed, of the peasantry of those days' (*E* I, 137). The distinction is one of readerly response; the suffering of Aucassin and Nicolette give the reader 'no more sense of grief than at some pathetic little snatch of melody', while 'We feel the dreadful solemnity of the [serf's] words' (*E* 134, 137). Which response is likelier to inspire self-reflection or action?

Lecourt observes that over time myths and tales 'simultaneously undergo a contraction of form and an expansion of meaning: [...] their significance also becomes increasingly general and symbolic'.[211] For Pater, this is the process that moves mythology and folklore from its 'mystical', or 'earthy' roots, closer to an ethereal 'ethical' form, as a 'character' or 'essence'.[212] Pater's process of refinement, in its displacement of a moral emphasis upon or consciousness of worldly ills, is resisted by Lee. She recognizes that the progressively 'general and symbolic' nature of a myth or tale means it will become increasingly susceptible to being an illusory and simplified projection of ideals, thus closing readers off from the kind of balanced self and other awareness that contributes over time to the recognition and fulfillment of one's social responsibilities, the 'extension of the self to the not self'.[213]

As we will see in the next chapter, Lee's handling of religious differences — past and present — is at times very distinct from Pater's effacement of 'a piece of cruellest realism' and his habitually eclectic, beautiful, and sensuous fusions of religious rites and symbolism, as in *Marius* (*E* I, 133). Her treatment

[211] Lecourt, 'Walter Pater, Many-Sidedness, and the Conversion Novel', p. 237.

[212] Moran gives a good description related to Pater's view of this process as 'ethical' in a way connected to defining this term as 'character' or 'essence': 'Blending an appetite for sensation, the most tender sentiments, and an ability to spiritualise the material in imagination, the ideal aesthete cultivates a measured moral restraint and a passionate appreciation of the world's grace and beauty'. See Maureen Moran, 'Walter Pater's House Beautiful and the Psychology of Self-Culture', *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920* 50:3 (2007), 291–312 (p. 302), in *Project Muse*. Accessed 24 August 2017.

[213] It may be well to mention that Pater does include sensitiveness to sorrow (pity) as a cultivated feature of the aesthetic hero: 'In Pater's modelling of self-culture, a finely tuned sensitivity to physical beauty increases sorrow when loveliness is marred and, by association, embeds sympathy for the pathos of suffering and decay'. See Moran, 'Walter Pater's House Beautiful', p. 300. Again, the chief point of difference between Pater and Lee in this regard seems to lie, not in their aesthetic or moral philosophies, but in their application.

of religious difference does not always only aesthetically blend or blur religions as Pater does with Christianity and paganism through Pico della Mirandola or Marius, both of whom rest peacefully in their graves as aesthetic symbols of this fusion. Instead of the quiet and peaceful death of Marius in a perfected state of 'contemplative inaction', in two of her supernatural tales written on either side of the publication of *Juvenilia*, Lee emphasizes religious and cultural differences through portrayals of sudden, violent deaths and trauma to individual psyches. In effect, Lee positions her writing as distinct from Pater's because she seeks to dispel the beautiful illusions of youth, not perpetuate them; she jostles the beautiful depiction of Aucassin, 'the daintily nurtured boy, weeping over the girl whom he loves with almost childish love of the fancy', with a 'sordid reality' where Pater does not (*E* I, 136). With her fiction, Lee assumes Baldwin's mission to dispel illusions, agreeing with his claim that of all the 'various methods' of seeing and acting, 'that one will tend to most practical good which is connected with a true view of the world rather than an imaginary one' (*A* 21).

Lee's interest in religious history certainly parallels Pater's focus on the slowly-wrought development of symbol and ritual, but she draws more attention to the grim reality of religious difference and the upheaval a shift in political power or religious authority can cause in a culture, community, and individual. In the following chapter, we will see the interplay in Lee's fiction between the powerful (and enticing) attraction of sensuous and beautiful illusions and Lee's attempts to infuse her aestheticism with that all-important, ethical 'moment of choice': 'to be, I will not say beautiful, but clean and moderately healthy, spiritually, means to see much that is ugly and foul' (*J* I, 10). Lee takes this up as a challenge — to herself and the (ethical) limits of aestheticism — to artistically and 'practically' incorporate into her fiction that which 'is ugly and foul' in history, not hesitating to throw 'a spot of blood-stained mud' upon an otherwise 'perfect tissue of silver flowers on silver ground'.

5 Diaphanous Didacticism: The Aesthetic Hero as Writer and Reader

> I have Spanish lessons 3 times a week from a Jew of the Legation. Find it is *very* difficult. [...] Except costumes everything is infinitely less beautiful than Italy or Riviera, & the rides very monotonous. I don't feel as strong as in Scotland, but am well. I miss Kit very much & am rather dull. Am reading the Coran.[1]

In the late 1880s and early 1890s, in a few letters and postcards to her mother, Vernon Lee alludes to various religions, including this reference to 'reading the Coran' while she was in Tangier in the winter of 1888–89. A year previous, on 21 June 1887, Lee describes meeting 'a Mr. Lane Fox', 'a great electrical inventor and a tremendous votary of Mrs. Kingsford. He quite believes in Buddhism & is trying to subdue himself into indifference to all things & preparation for spiritual life. He seems quite sane'.[2] The 'Mrs. Kingsford' was Anna Kingsford, a feminist and Theosophist who 'mixed a progressive spiritual agenda with a progressive social agenda' in a way that likely intrigued Lee.[3] A few years later, on 8 September 1891, Lee writes from Crarae, Scotland, 'I want to be in London for a little while to see

[1] Lee, *Letters*, pp. 300–01 (12 December 1888).
[2] Lee, *Letters*, p. 249.
[3] J. Jeffrey Franklin, *The Lotus and the Lion: Buddhism and the British Empire* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), p. 72.

a few people, particularly Buddhists with a view to a story'.[4] On 6 October, she continues from London, 'I am in search of Buddhists and spiritualists for a story'.[5] And then on 8 October: 'I am going to see some Theosophists this evening, but am too tired to enjoy it'.[6]

These fragmentary references from 1891 offer no details and little context for the said 'story' although they coincide with Lee's preparation of *Vanitas: Polite Stories* (1892), a collection of short stories preoccupied with worldly waste and the souls of women in the upper classes.[7] Towards the end of 1892 and the early months of 1893, Lee was also hard at work composing *Althea* (1894), of which she writes to her mother as her treatment of 'the spiritual life'.[8] Her interest in such hybrid-religions as Madame Blavatsky's Theosophy and Esoteric Buddhism is likely connected with her evolutionary and socially conscious configuration of a 'new spirituality'.[9] There is more readily available context for the note posted from Tangier, which was followed by a longer letter on 8 January 1889 on sixteenth-century religious disputes between Islam and Catholicism in the Andalusian region.[10] Together, they gesture towards Lee's self-experimentation with her aesthetic theories while abroad in Morocco and southern Spain during the winter of 1888–89. In this chapter, I turn to these references to religion and 'hybrid-religion' on the 'surface', as it were, of Lee's letters, and consider them in the context of other textual surfaces: Lee's supernatural tales, 'The Virgin of the Seven Daggers' and 'Amour Dure'. I carry forward the previous chapter's discussion of Lee's revisions of Walter Pater's aestheticism and build upon an understanding of Lee's many-sided figure and proxy, Baldwin, as a modification

[4] Lee, *Letters*, p. 339.
[5] ML, Special Collections, letter no. 588.
[6] Lee, *Letters*, p. 341.
[7] The three stories originally published in *Vanitas* are 'Lady Tal', 'A Worldly Woman', and 'The Legend of Mme. Krasinska'. In a 1911 edition, Lee added 'A Frivolous Conversion', written in the same period. All four stories address questions of sympathy, friendship, and moral responsibility to others.
[8] Lee, *Letters*, p. 351 (11 July 1893).
[9] 'Hybrid-religion' is a term used by Franklin.
[10] ML, Special Collections, letter no. 439.

of Pater's 'transparent hero'. In practising a 'triangulation' of various texts, we find that Lee makes her own contribution to the science of religion.[11]

Lee engages with scientific and pseudo-religious discourse that redefined 'the spiritual life' and 'soul' in materialist and evolutionary terms, and often writes about 'spirituality' and the 'soul' in physical terms. Throughout *Baldwin* and *Althea*, the soul is compared with bodily needs or wants.[12] Lee read much of Max Nordau's work in its original French and in 1896 reviewed his then recently-translated edition of *Degeneration* (1892), referring to the soul both in terms of decay, claiming that the absence of friendship causes 'deterioration of soul', and in terms of healthy intimacy with friends: 'no one even asks his friend to metaphorically feel his pulse or look at his tongue, or has a friend to whom either pulse or tongue, in the spiritual order, could reveal anything'.[13] In the review, Lee takes issue with Nordau's work because his research only focuses on extreme cases of 'spiritual degeneracy' in criminals or lunatics, and 'reassure[s], quite unreasonably, the mediocre mass of mankind'.[14] For Lee, however, 'psychic healthiness' is a subject that each member of society needs to consider because 'the average man, [...] is equally in danger of becoming an obstacle to human improvement'; such things as 'National and class separation, professional routine and limitation, social rivalry, isolation of the exceptional individual and consequent self-assertion' are all examples of 'maladjustments [...] filling the world with damaged thought and feeling which beget in its turn feeling and thought more damaged still'.[15]

Lee's position in this review is consistent with the one she had taken up in the stories of *Vanitas* and *Hauntings* (1890). Of these, I discuss Lee's claims

[11] See Sherman, 'Pluralistic Predilections', for the comment upon 'surface reading': 'The truth, [...] lies somewhere in the triangulation; the play of surfaces, carefully attended, may tell us all we want to know' (p. 137).

[12] For example, in 'Responsibilities' Baldwin refers to the 'poor maimed and crippled soul decked out in becoming purple' of the 'effete' intellectual (*B* 36).

[13] Vernon Lee, 'Deterioration of Soul', *Fortnightly Review* 59:354 (1896), 928–43 (p. 940), in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 12 Sep 2017.

[14] Lee, 'Deterioration of Soul', p. 930.

[15] Lee, 'Deterioration of Soul', pp. 930, 939.

in the context of 'Amour Dure', a story composed a decade before her 1896 review and one which shows her enduring investment in bringing aestheticism and ethics together through contemporaneous researches in psychology and religious belief. Lee, then, is a woman writer focusing on fields dominated by men and operating within that tricky intersection between the emerging ethnographic sciences, archaeology and classicism, and psychology. In her intellectual history of the science of religion, Marjorie Wheeler-Barclay refers to the 'muddle over disciplinary categories that attends the history of the science of religion in the nineteenth century', noting that by the late 1880s the new anthropological 'science of culture' 'had become widespread among [...] scholars in archaeology, history, zoology, psychology, [...] as well as classicists'.[16] More specifically, we find Lee at the heart of a modern cultural movement E.B. Tylor identified as representative of the crucial modern evolutionary shift from religious or animistic thinking to a scientific and materialist outlook: 'Animism, [...] seems to be drawing in its outposts, and concentrating itself on its first and main position, the doctrine of the human soul'.[17] According to Tylor, the animistic theory of a human soul 'is becoming separated from the investigations of biology and mental science, which now discuss the phenomena of life and thought, the senses and the intellect, the emotions and the will, on a ground-work of pure experience. There has arisen [...] a "psychology" which has no longer anything to do with "soul" '.[18]

Lee participates in the shift Tylor detects, but, like others (Theosophists and Esoteric Buddhists among them), she does not entirely leave the ideas of a 'soul' or 'spirituality' behind; instead, she redefines them as moral centres of sympathy, responsibility, and altruism that have important correlations with our physical and mental health.[19] Much like Pater, she reinterprets ideas of soul and spirituality for a modern audience, bringing together Tylor's theory of animism — a 'doctrine

[16]Wheeler-Barclay, *The Science of Religion in Britain*, p. 216.
[17]Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, I, p. 501.
[18]Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, I, p. 501.
[19]There is a pertinent discussion of anxieties related to the soul in the context of materialism versus spiritualism in Franklin, *The Lotus and the Lion*, pp. 51–59.

of the soul' at its most basic level, 'anima' being a spirit or soul and 'animism' being belief in spirits and souls — and contemporaneous theories in physiology and psychology to comment upon the soul as a very 'physical phenomenon'. Matthew Beaumont comments, 'according to Pater, psychology [...] connotes a science of the soul [...] The soul, in Pater's conception, is a physical phenomenon, as material as it is transcendental'.[20] However, less like Pater, Lee attempts to take this research and use it in her fiction to trigger real and practical social development.

In his essay on 'Coleridge's Writings', Pater praises Coleridge for his 'learning, inwardness, a subtle psychology, [and] a dramatic power of sympathy with modes of thought other than his own'.[21] Beaumont has pointed out that 'Pater is interested in Coleridge's capacity for testing and tracing the involutions of his own consciousness. [...] Coleridge is implicitly the archetypal aesthetic critic, because he experiments on his own mind, distinguishing, tracking, analysing'.[22] Likewise, Lee uses her mind and body as her own laboratory. In the following two analyses, I examine Lee's self-experimentation with associationist psychology in 'The Virgin of the Seven Daggers' and 'Amour Dure'. Each tale can be analyzed as an interdisciplinary experiment with aesthetic and scientific ideals of self-cultivation.

I present 'The Virgin of the Seven Daggers' as an example of Lee's self-identification with Pater's aesthetic critic and diaphanous figure for the modern age, using it to frame an introduction to Lee's two central associationist aesthetic theories, and I turn to 'Amour Dure' as a practical part of Lee's literary project to extend the qualities necessary for the self-cultivation of the aesthetic critic to readers. Each tale relies in some way upon violent and traumatizing histories of

[20] Matthew Beaumont, 'Pater as Psychagogue: Psychology, Aesthetics, Rhetoric', *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* 12 (2011), ⟨URL: http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.592⟩, 1–15 (p. 2). Accessed 16 May 2017. The manuscript 'Art and Religion', discovered among Pater's papers after his death, was a work-in-progress with a message very like Lee's in this regard.

[21] Walter Pater, 'Coleridge's Writings', *Westminster Review* 29:1 (1866), 106–32 (p. 129), in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 12 September 2017.

[22] Beaumont, 'Pater as Psychagogue', p. 3.

religious difference and conflict, and 'Amour Dure' illustrates more particularly the impact of 'maladjustments [...] filling the world with damaged thought'.[23] In both tales, Lee incorporates the 'ugly' things of the world to help usher in a new evolved society. My analyses illustrate that, as with *Baldwin* and *Althea*, with her short stories Lee invests in changing 'how things are' into 'how things ought to be'. Although it is the later composition, I look to 'The Virgin of the Seven Daggers' first because together with Lee's Commonplace Book IV it serves as a good introduction to her early aesthetic theories regarding a 'faculty of association' and 'historic emotion', concepts that also inform an ethical dimension of her aestheticism more broadly.[24] The comparison between the respective aestheticisms of Lee and Pater is sustained in this chapter but is not its focus as in Chapter 4.

'The Virgin of the Seven Daggers: A Moorish Ghost Story of the Seventeenth Century'

The tale opens in the present day, with lurid descriptions of Granada's Basilica of Our Lady of Sorrows. The narrator paints a vibrant portrait of the church's sixteenth-century baroque interior — a style Lee detested as signaling 'the last traditions of chivalry of the Pulgars and Garcilastros disappearing in the buccaneering swagger, the pirates' heroics of Cortes and Pizarro' — and fixates upon the enthroned Madonna beneath the cupola, the Virgin of the Seven Daggers.[25] Then the scene is reimagined in the glow of the past as the narrative

[23] Lee, 'Deterioration of Soul', p. 939.

[24] The story first appeared in print in 1896 when it was published in French under the title 'La Madone aux sept glaives' in *Feuilleton du journal des débats du Samedi*. It was first published in English in two parts in January and February 1909. See Vernon Lee, 'The Virgin of the Seven Daggers, Part I', *English Review*, (Jan 1909), 223–33; Vernon Lee, 'The Virgin of the Seven Daggers, Part II', *English Review*, (Feb 1909), 453–65, in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 12 September 2017. The tale was reissued and collected in Vernon Lee, *For Maurice: Five Unlikely Stories* (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1927). Parenthetical citations given in the text are from the 1909 publications and prefixed with VSD.

[25] ML, Special Collections, Commonplace Books, IV, pp. 1–38 (p. 28). Vernon Lee's Commonplace Books are marked sequentially from III to XIV and cover a period from May 1887 to May 1900. Further references to this volume are given after quotations in the text and prefixed by CB. Transcriptions are my own. See Colby, *Vernon Lee*, p. 241 and Pulham, *Art and the Transitional*

turns to a winter afternoon in the seventeenth century just in time to see Don Juan Gusman del Pulgar, Count of Miramor, enter the church to pray to the Virgin. In preparation for his most daring feat, he swears his devotion to her for protection; in return she promises salvation. Encouraged, Don Juan confidently proceeds with his plans to enter the enchanted subterranean depths of the neighbouring Alhambra by necromantic means, and claim the chthonic fourteenth-century Islamic princess hidden there as his bride; he hires a Jew, Baruch, to perform the rites and then kills him afterwards. Even after a lifetime of profanity, sexual escapades, and outrageous murders, Don Juan's previous exploits seem 'trumpery and mawkish' in the face of this new roguery (VSD I, 227). In wedding himself to the Islamic Infanta he will bring his lineage, 'in direct line from the Cid, and from that Fernan del Pulgar who had nailed the Ave Maria to the Mosque', into irreverent contact with that of the daughter of 'King Yahya, of Cordova', the penultimate caliph of the Umayyad dynasty before Spain was overtaken by the Catholicism of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella (VSD I, 228, 229).

Alas, when Don Juan finds the Infanta she asks him to swear that she is more beautiful than any other woman, including the Virgin of the Seven Daggers. He cannot bring himself to swear against the Virgin, and reeling from a confused vision wherein he sees the image of the Infanta fused with that of the Virgin, Don Juan is decapitated. He awakes the next day in the open air near the Alhambra and, deciding his experience was a dream, strides back into the city. He encounters a crowd gathered round a grotesque scene, which he discovers to be his own bloodied corpse. Upon realizing that he is dead, he flees into the Church of Our Lady of the Seven Daggers in fear and anguish, believing she has forsaken him. Once inside, however, she cleanses him of his sins and he is lifted to Heaven with a vision of the Virgin before him. The tale ends with a coda from the present-day narrator: a letter

Object, p. 92 for more on Lee's dislike of the Spanish baroque. See the 'Preface' to the 1927 edition of 'The Virgin of the Seven Daggers', in which Lee addresses her dislike of the art of the Catholic Revival and Spanish Madonnas. Vernon Lee, *Hauntings and Other Fantastic Tales*, edited by Catherine Maxwell and Patricia Pulham (Peterborough, Ont.; Plymouth: Broadview, 2006), p. 246.

from Don Pedro Calderon de la Barca — the famous seventeenth-century Spanish playwright in whose plays 'you hit upon death wherever you go' (CB 29) — reveals that the story we have just read came to his friend, 'the Archpriest Morales, at Grenada' in a vision (VSD II, 465). Calderon agrees with the archpriest's suggestion that this story, 'were it presented in the shape of a play, adorned with graces of style and with flowers of rhetoric, [...] would be indeed [...] well calculated to spread the glory of our holy church', but then dismisses the project as he is much too old to write. And so instead, 'unworthy modern hands have sought to frame the veracious and moral history of Don Juan and the Virgin of the Seven Daggers' (VSD II, 465).

Lee would later make the claim that the 'utter unfamiliarity [of the holiday-maker] baffles aesthetic responsiveness'.[26] But in seeking to understand Lee's intentions with this tale, we find that in a period of personal crisis Lee put her powers as aesthetic critic to the test by specifically attending to her mental associations and affective responses while surrounded by the 'unfamiliar' or 'other' objects of Tangier and southern Spain. A. Mary F. Robinson — a poet, mentee of J.A. Symonds, and constant companion (some argue lover) of Lee from 1881 to 1887 — had helped to precipitate a prolific period of writing for Lee.[27] It was Robinson's literary connections in London and Oxford that enabled Lee to meet Pater in 1881. On 24 August 1887, however, Lee received a letter from Robinson which announced her engagement to a noted Persian scholar and orientalist from France, James Darmesteter. While Robinson's relations reeled at her choice

[26] Vernon Lee, *The Beautiful: An Introduction to Psychological Aesthetics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1913), p. 135.

[27] There is no critical consensus as to the exact nature of Lee and Robinson's relationship. See Colby, *Vernon Lee*, p. 58 for her view that it was physically non-sexual. See also Martha Vicinus, '"A Legion of Ghosts": Vernon Lee (1856–1935) and the Art of Nostalgia', *A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 10:4 (2004), ⟨URL: http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:3267/content/10/4/599⟩, 599–616. Accessed 25 July 2017. Emily Harrington notes there is evidence of Lee and Robinson's physical intimacy in their letters in Harrington, 'The Strain of Sympathy', p. 74, n19. See Sally Newman, 'The Archival Traces of Desire: Vernon Lee's Failed Sexuality and the Interpretation of Letters in Lesbian History', *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 14:1/2 (2005), 51–75, in *JSTOR*. Accessed 4 January 2016, for discussion of Lee's place in lesbian history and seeking 'traces' of lesbian desire in the archive.

— there were reservations about the couple's short acquaintance and objections to Darmesteter's Jewish heritage and physical deformity — Lee's distress was particularly acute. By March 1888 she suffered a nervous breakdown and, devastated, turned for support to Kit Anstruther-Thomson, whom she had met that same summer. After experiencing a relapse in poor health in August 1888 — the month of Robinson's marriage — Lee spent the autumn with Anstruther-Thomson in Scotland and was ultimately persuaded by her new friend to travel south for the climate, and to escape the familiar sights of England and Italy that held so many memories of Robinson. From November 1888 to January 1889, Lee stayed in Tangier and travelled in southern Spain before returning to Italy; the notes from this period now comprise the first thirty-eight pages of her Commonplace Book IV. Her meticulously recorded travel experiences took place in the context of the emotional aftermath of a failed love (and work) relationship, partially healed with the help of a new and similar one. In the coming years, Lee would lift whole sections from these entries and transfer them into her essays and fiction, but her initial step was to concentrate her recorded impressions of landscapes, architecture, and cultures into 'The Virgin of the Seven Daggers'.[28]

With this deeply personal context in mind, this tale can be read as a strong instance of Lee's self-experimentation in grappling with her aesthetic theories. In particular, her development of two early aesthetic theories can be traced throughout her work of the 1880s, the period marked by Lee's collaborative friendship with Robinson as well as her regular meetings with Pater.[29] These theories begin taking shape in her dialogue essays, which she began to write while working alongside Robinson. Lee's first dialogue features Baldwin and Cyril and mirrors

[28] Additional pieces Lee wrote using sections from her Commonplace Book IV include: 'Orpheus in Rome', *Contemporary Review*, (June 1889), pp. 828–49; 'Sketches in Tangier', *New Review*, (March 1890), pp. 22–28; and 'In Praise of Old Houses', *Longman's Magazine*, (July 1892), pp. 287–96.

[29] Letters between Lee and Pater past 1884 do not survive, but Lee visited the Paters throughout the 1880s and early 1890s. See ML, Special Collections, letters nos. 305, 349, 482, 554, 563, 599, 625, 679, 682 for Lee's references to her visits. Lee stayed with the Paters from 20–25 July 1886, in July 1887, 19–24 October 1889, July 1891, June 1892, and 28 June to 3 July 1893. Lee also records seeing the Paters on 30 July 1891, 31 October 1891, and 27 June 1892.

her partnership with Robinson. Set in Italy, it is an artistic reproduction of their discussions surrounding the uses and morality of literary art.[30] As discussed in the previous chapter, Lee used the genre of the dialogue essay to engage with Pater's aestheticism; Baldwin is a methodological and ethical reimagining of Pater's more sensory diaphanous or 'transparent' figure, and the content of the dialogues is often 'in dialogue' with Pater, among others.

In 1885, Lee utilized the dialogue essay to devise and expound upon a theory of an 'aesthetic life [...] within us'.[31] Through this theory of unconscious aesthetic response to external form, Lee identifies how within each individual an 'aesthetic life' is created over time from the gradual, unwitting accumulation in our souls of past 'broken impressions'; it is presented as pleasure-driven, 'a kaleidoscopic shifting and rearranging of all pleasant impressions of colour, sound, form, or emotion' (*B* 276). As a direct result of what has pleasurably influenced us in the past, each 'aesthetic life' has its own set of 'sympathies and desires' that hunger for 'food' similar to earlier satisfying impressions (*B* 275). In this way, the 'aesthetic life' predetermines the exterior forms and objects with which one identifies; the mind is naturally drawn to the familiar: 'we stretch out, as it were, our mental feelers [...], as the needle may be said to recognize the loadstone, the special object of its desires — it sucks them in' (*B* 298). These 'sympathetic' impulses limit one's receptivity and sensitivity, especially as aesthetic critic, and lead to living much more 'in the past of our aesthetic impressions than in their present'; external forms and objects (particularly if unfamiliar or disliked) are much less important than an individual's internal 'aggregate, constantly shifting, [...] living dust of broken impressions' (*B* 276, 275).[32]

[30] Lee, 'A Dialogue on Poetic Morality'.

[31] The dialogue essay in which Lee theorizes about the 'aesthetic life' first appeared as Lee, 'The Value of the Ideal', 26–42. It was collected in *Baldwin*, pp. 249–307. References given after quotations in the text are from this 1886 edition and prefaced by *B*.

[32] This theory recalls a similar process Pater allied with his diaphanous figures to theoretically understand the relationship between an individual and his surroundings. Williams, in *Transfigured World*, refers to this aspect of Pater's aesthetic theorization as his 'ethics of internalization', an 'unconsciously regulated receptivity': 'what is inward has quite clearly been internalized from what is without' (p. 178).

Lee continued to investigate this point, publishing 'The Lake of Charlemagne: An Apology of Association' in *Juvenilia* (1887).[33] In it she elaborates upon the basis for her theory by describing an innate 'faculty of association'. This faculty is fundamentally the engine that keeps the cumulative 'aesthetic life [...] within us' running. Like the unconscious aspect of the 'aesthetic life', the 'faculty of association' functions involuntarily. Both may afford pleasure, but Lee makes the qualifying remark in 'The Lake of Charlemagne' that 'pleasant things are not necessarily good or proper' (*J* I, 43). In this essay, Lee writes informally in the first person rather than using Baldwin; she adopts a conversational tone of one weighing the advantages and disadvantages of this associative faculty, the process 'by which the real presence of one object evokes the imaginary presence of other objects' (*J* I, 30). 'Association', she writes, 'means the investing of one object, having characteristics of its own, with the characteristics of some other object: the pushing aside, in short, of reality to make room for the fictions of the imagination or memory' (*J* I, 45). Although concerned with this faculty's moral implications, by the essay's conclusion, Lee does not (or cannot) decide whether ultimately to name this a 'pestilent faculty, leading to insincerity, injustice, and stupid wastefulness' or an 'excellent, useful, and most honourable' thing (*J* I, 30, 31).[34]

Lee's Commonplace Book IV entries demonstrate her continued preoccupation with association. She frequently superimposes memories of the familiar over recordings of what was foreign and new, often connecting what she sees while abroad with recognizable landscapes or styles of art, exhibiting a cognitive pattern of turning inwards towards memories and the stores of her imagination. In Tangier, Lee writes, 'these Moors, ploughing on the hillside, look like white Benedictines in some old fresco — or like some allegorical orchard in a mediaeval poem' (CB 6). In the crepuscular moments she loved so well, when the

[33] Lee, *Juvenilia*, I, pp. 23–76. Subsequent in-text parenthetical references are prefaced by *J*.

[34] This essay is a strong disclosure of Lee and Pater's shared turn towards British associationist psychology.

hills 'turned faintly purple', Lee catches glimpses of the Italian landscape: 'they seem to tell of something in common with other countries, [...] of the solemn and tender country of St. Francis' (CB 6). A Moroccan beggar has 'withered features' as 'keen [and] singularly straight' as 'those of certain early Greek coins or certain marble Renaissance medallions' (CB 1). Standing on a roof in Tangier overlooking sea, city, and hillsides, she receives 'an impression making one think of Salambô', Flaubert's historical novel set in third century BC Carthage, while a youth she catches sight of in the city streets looks like 'a young prince in disguise, [...] one of the *Arabian Nights*, thinking of his princess Badura' (CB 4, 9). This careful inclusion of memories and associations drawn from an internal 'aesthetic life' demonstrates Lee's self-experimentation in the winter of 1888–89, indicating her specialized attention to the 'faculty of association' and how things from her past — memories of reading Flaubert and the *Arabian Nights*, knowledge of Greek coins and Renaissance medallions — are conjured by the external world: 'it came home to me that in our perceptions of nature and of art there usually exists a kind of phantom of the past' (*J* I, 68).

Lee knows the 'faculty of association' poses a problem of attention: personal associations with the past, subjective impressions, and memories fill our minds easily and unbidden, distracting us from specific (art) objects, places, and time. The faculty awakens Lee's 'fear of injustice' because it has the mischievous effect of causing unwarranted 'maltreatment of others, vandalism, and wastefulness' through its (misdirected) concentration upon subjective realities (*J* I, 31, 45). It becomes too egoistic, or one-sided, as an epistemological method, for instance, committing an injustice towards the artist whose symphony, sculpture, or painting we only engage with so far as it reminds us of ourselves. Yet, even as Lee struggles with these draw-backs she cannot help but refer to the faculty as the 'indispensible' basis of all art: 'Without association, I say, no art' (*J* I, 53, 56). Without it, our creative impulses would never draw associations together to a sufficient degree for the transmutation of memories and impressions into symphonies, sculptures,

paintings, or — in Lee's case — dialogue essays and short stories.

Lee does, however, gesture towards her hope that there is a chance we may prevent 'maltreatment' and 'wastefulness' — not despite this faculty, but because of it. She suggests that association can be construed as moral because by fastening the unfamiliar present to the familiar past, we transform the present into a permanent feature of our mental landscape: 'the present is in itself, however vivid, too transient and thin; [...] it requires, in order to remain, a layer or two of the past, unseen, perhaps, but which gives it body, and tone, and stability' (*J* I, 68–69). But Lee provides a caveat: the past does not necessarily indicate the *subjective* past. One might want rather to consider the past of a place, another person, or artwork:

> There are persons, and many, who, going through a picture gallery which is new to them, or walking through a new country, will frequently complain of a sort of painful sense that their minds cannot take in new things sufficiently quickly. Now, if you question such people, you will almost invariably find that they have *only confused and very general impressions* about the galleries and countries which they have previously visited. They compare their brain to a thoroughly soaked sponge, which can absorb no more water. But their simile is false; they suffer not because there is too much past to admit the present, but because *they have not enough of that many tinted though faded tapestry of the past, into which to weave, to secure them, the brilliant threads of the present.* These are the benefits which we obtain in our aesthetic life from association; nay, this constant adding of old to new is our aesthetic life itself. (*J* I, 69–70, emphasis added)

For the 'faculty of association' to function ethically, a working knowledge of what lies behind the scenes of any new and unfamiliar place, person, or object — a place's history, an artist's story, or a culture's folklore — is required. Only by attending to history — 'that many tinted though faded tapestry of the past' — can the 'faculty of association' bring an individual's subjective past and external realities of the present together in a way that ensures the present will have sufficient 'body, and tone, and stability' (*J* I, 69).

In her Commonplace Book IV entries from this travel period, Lee introduces a second aesthetic theory, one that results from a knowledge of history combined

with affective responses to external realities: 'historic emotion'. It overwhelms an individual's past with the past of history. It is distinct from association and the 'aesthetic life' because, rather than a 'delicate' or 'permanent process', it is a 'powerful thing', an 'intellectual [emotion], [...] made up of many and various elements' that 'approach[es] and com[es] upon [one]' without warning (CB 25). Lee identified it with 'that curious emotion which I have felt in such different places', from 'the little gothic church at Lamballe' to 'the porch at Ely' to 'the churches of Bruges and Innsbruck' (CB 25, 26). Its effect is (to make one) more critically disinterested and many-sided. It is not perceptually pleasurable, but 'fill[s] us with the confused throb of passions welling from our most vital parts. It is [...] akin to the emotions of religion. There is [...] a sense of the presence [...] of the Past' (CB 26).

'Historic emotion' has less to do with an individual's unconscious 'aesthetic life' and more to do with acquired knowledge of 'that many tinted though faded tapestry of the past'. Lee's fullest description of her experience of 'historic emotion' comes from an occurrence at Granada when attending a ceremony celebrating the Conquest at the Chapel of the Catholic Kings.[35] Sitting beside the burial place of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, Lee found the ceremony 'very paltry [...] compared with what one sees in Italy', adding, 'nor did I care for it at all' (CB 24). And yet during the ceremony, Lee describes how 'for a moment [...] the life of today seemed to stagger and vanish and my mind to be swept along in the dark of gleaming whirlpools of the Past' (CB 26). In struggling to explain what 'historic emotion' is — 'a kind of rapture [...] not easy to describe' — Lee details exactly how her senses were being overwhelmed in the moments leading up to the experience:

> My eyes wandered round the wide chapel, up the sheaves of the pilasters to the gilded spandrils of the vault, round the altars covered with [...] sculpture, [...] and down again among the kneeling crowd on the matted floor, women in veils, men in cloaks [...]. In the middle were the marble tombs of Ferdinand and Isabella, lying with folded hands and rigid feet, four crimson banners of

[35]The anniversary marks the end of Moorish rule in Spain.

> the Moors hanging above them [...]. The organ played in vague mazes above the chanting. (CB 24–25)

In this account, 'historic emotion' is produced from fusing historic knowledge with affective response. Lee had been intensely focused upon the arrangement and movement of the architectural lines in the cathedral's interior. She seems to have been attentive to internalizing these forms, indicating that her 'aesthetic life' within was not uppermost.

It is possible that Lee's unexpected experience of 'historic emotion' amid architecture she disliked and during a ceremony she was inwardly criticizing led her to consider using it as a further corrective to the 'faculty of association', one through which personal subjectivities would not only be checked, but made to give way to alternate perspectives. Because the 'aesthetic life' unavoidably distracts from reality, 'historic emotion' usefully springs from a knowledge of history that accentuates surrounding forms and objects, drawing forth and emphasizing their historic reality in a vibrant, if mysterious, way; it (intellectually) redirects attention to the 'reality' of a place and thereby restricts any unjust emphasis the 'faculty of association' may place upon 'the fictions of the imagination or memory' (*J* I, 45). The 'faculty of association', nevertheless, still plays its part in preventing 'historic emotion' from becoming *too* oppressive, and sweeping the mind *away* 'in the dark of gleaming whirlpools of the Past'.[36] To test this, Lee relies upon cooperative use of these two forms of association in 'The Virgin of the Seven Daggers'.

The 'aesthetic life' & 'historic emotion' in 'The Virgin of the Seven Daggers'

In her Spanish tale, Lee transplants her recorded subjective memories and impressions to give 'body, and tone, and stability' to the places and people she

[36] A noteworthy aside: the language Lee employs in communicating her experience of 'historic emotion' (that it is rapturous, 'akin to the emotions of religion', and 'made up of many and various elements') strongly recalls language in the 'Conclusion', a comparison which aligns 'historic emotion' with a type of many-sided self-cultivation.

encountered during her travels and thus celebrate the 'constant adding of old to new' (*J* 69, 70). Simultaneously, she infuses her tale with planned historic and cultural research to reach towards that 'intellectual' emotion 'made up of many and various elements' and apprehend 'a sense of the presence [...] of the Past' (CB 26). Lee added her prior knowledge of the folk tales of Andalusia, Calderon's plays, and the history of baroque architecture to the research she conducted while traveling.[37] On 8 January 1889 she composed a detailed letter to her mother about her learning of Granada's local history, citing facts about 'the Moorish revolt under Aben-Ameya or Humeya' of the sixteenth century.[38] Lee took an evident interest in the religious disputes and violence that occurred in the century following the fall of Moorish Spain. In this letter, she further shares her efforts to translate 'the story of Catalina de Arrazo' and in a postcard to her mother also dated 8 January she passes on Catalina de Arrazo's history for her half-brother Eugene as a suitable 'ballad subject':

> I have another ballad subject for him; in the tremendous Morisco revolt of 1569, a Moorish woman, Catalina de Arrazo, who had a son by a Xian [Christian], but who had remained strictly Moorish, saw her son, a priest, killed by the Moors; whereon she declared herself a Xan [*sic*] & made them kill her in the church yard, singing Xan hymns.[39]

In this research and the tale, one detects parallels with Pater's focus on periods of history that emphasize transition and flux; Spain's more recent Catholic history overlays its centuries of Moorish rule and influence. However, part of Lee's distinction from Pater here is that the antagonistic quality that subsists between Catholicism and Islam is preserved rather than aesthetically displaced. Attention is even drawn to 'the fact that her Highness does not understand the Castilian tongue, nor [Don Juan] the Arabic' (VSD II, 458). The 'confused vision' that conflates the

[37] Lee dedicated the 1909 publication of her Spanish tale to her friend Jose Fernando Gimenez, 'in remembrance of the Spanish legends he was wont to tell me'. Lee had already published 'Don Juan (con Stenterello)' in *Juvenilia* as a result of Gimenez's stories. Lee, *Juvenilia*, II, pp. 295–316.

[38] ML, Special Collections, letter no. 439 (8 January 1889). My transcription.

[39] Lee, *Letters*, p. 304. Eugene was an invalid confined to the family's home in Italy. For an analysis of his and Lee's overlapping interests, see Maxwell, *Second Sight*, pp. 114–65. Lee habitually sent Eugene descriptions of places and artifacts she considered of use in his poetry.

image of the Islamic Infanta with the Virgin Mary gives way to violence, and the grim beheading of Don Juan in turn leads to his affirmation of loyalty to the Virgin Mary alone. Lee's research into Spain's violent religious history surfaces in her tale's opening description of the church's 'jagged lines everywhere as of spikes for exhibiting the heads of traitors; dizzy ledges as of mountain precipices for dashing to bits Morisco rebels' and in her meticulous references to the lineages of Don Juan and the Infanta — Don Juan 'as descendant of Fernan Perez del Pulgar, would be expected to carry the banner of the city at High Mass in the cathedral' during the Liberation, the holiday celebrating the overthrow of the Moorish caliphs (VSD I, 223; II, 462).

Lee's choice to set the tale on the eve of the anniversary of the Conquest is telling. The holiday is 'a very solemn feast for the city, being the anniversary of its liberation from the rule of the Infidels' during which time the city excitedly looks forward to 'the grand bullfights of the morrow, and the grand burning of heretics and relapses in the square of Bibrambla' (VSD I, 226). The interest in religious tensions also emerges in her allusion to how Calderon would have penned the tale as 'well calculated to spread the glory of our holy church', and in the form of Baruch, 'the converted Jew of the Albaycin', whom Don Juan employs to perform the necromantic rites needed to find the enchanted Infanta (VSD II, 465; I, 226). The Albaycin was the quarter of the city inhabited since medieval times by (converted) Jews and Arabs. There are several hints of religious tension and controversy surrounding Baruch who, although his name means 'blessed', is anything but; Don Juan 'really could not stomach that Jew Baruch, whose trade among others consisted in procuring for the Archbishop a batch of renegade Moors, who were solemnly dressed in white and baptized afresh every year' (VSD II, 228). The subject of forced conversions also arises in Baruch's comical slip of the tongue when he voices his fears of damnation for performing rites of necromancy: 'I have imperilled my eternal soul [...] in the purchase of the necessary ingredients, all of which are abomination in the eyes of a true Jew — I mean of a good

Christian' (VSD I, 230). As such, Lee's broader treatment of the traumatic shift in the religious and cultural identity of Spain does not aesthetically blend or blur religions.

What Lee does blur is the subjective with the objective, pieces of her 'aesthetic life' with this recorded history. She adopts the characteristic bloodshed of Andalusian folk tales and Calderon's plays to stress the violent and ugly reality of religious difference in the region's history, and then weaves her impressions into this 'many tinted though faded tapestry'. The opening of the tale with a present-day description of Granada's Basilica of Our Lady of Sorrows, for example, reads like the entry in her Commonplace Book IV from 2 January 1889 when she examined the sixteenth-century Malaga cathedral: 'pillars hoisted upon pillars, arches on arches and architraves on architraves, those enormous shafts, that confusion of colossal bases and capitals, line warring with line, and curve with curve' (CB 27). The present-day narrator echoes, 'On colonnade is hoisted colonnade, pilasters climb upon pilasters, bases and capitals jut out, [...] line warring with line and curve with curve' (VSD I, 223). Lee's visit to Malaga incited her contempt for the 'desire, as it were to be bruised and stunned, or to bruise and stun others, in the imagination of this people whose holidays have been *auto da fés* and are bullfights' (CB 27). The present-day narrator voices this view, calling the Church of Our Lady of the Seven Daggers 'a place in which the mind staggers bruised and half-stunned', but the history of the architecture is also noted: 'the church presents a superb example of the pompous, pedantic and contorted Spanish architecture of the reign of Philip IV' (VSD I, 223).

Lee knew before she travelled south how strongly she disliked the 'pompous' (an epithet she cannot resist) baroque art of the Counter-Reformation. For her, this was a style that emulated the wastefulness and intolerant fanaticism of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: 'Lee had little appreciation for Spanish culture', writes Colby, 'especially its art of the baroque age, [...] she scorned the Calvinism of the Counter-Reformation, [...] She was also repelled by the

grim, morbid spirit of Spanish art'.[40] Furthermore, she was uneasy before the waxen life-size effigies of wounded Christs and agonized Madonnas common in the Spanish churches:

> In proportion to that natural devotion of mine to the Beloved Lady and Mother, Italian or High Dutch, who opens her scanty drapery to suckle a baby divinity, [...] did that aversion concentrate on those doll-madonnas in Spanish churches, all pomp and whalebone and sorrow and tears wept into Mechlin lace.[41]

And yet, Lee encases her impressions within a baroque style and uses her tale to exhibit an excessive and ironic tone that mimics the excesses of the high baroque. She brandishes heavily ornate and florid descriptions, and her sardonic quips throughout (the tale is, in fact, very funny) are capricious and cavalier, as if to invoke the volatile nature of the architecture and 'buccaneering swagger' of Don Juan (CB 28).

Although Lee's 'aesthetic life' rejected 'the senseless pomp, the monstrous spears, the miserable meanness' of this age, the tale remains dedicated to this 'Past' and to the very Madonna figure Lee detested (CB 28). The Virgin of the Seven Daggers is a rendering of the Virgin Mary as a mater dolorosa, or Mother of Sorrow, traditionally portrayed with seven daggers piercing her heart to represent her seven sorrows. Her suffering is always on display. Sometimes the lifeless body of Christ is flung across her lap. Lee strongly preferred the art of the Renaissance touched by the effects of humanism as opposed to the Spanish Counter-Reformation's 'cultus [*sic*] of death, damnation, tears and wounds'.[42] During the Renaissance, portrayals of the Virgin Mary as the Mater Gratiæ, or Mother of Grace, made her more accessible and maternal; she was often positioned with open arms or in moments of tenderness with Jesus, either breastfeeding or playing with him as an infant or young child. The harsher rendering of the Virgin Mary was not unknown to Lee, but in Spain the image was startling in its relentless repetition and the prevailing use of life-size waxen effigies rather than sculptures or paintings.

[40]Colby, *Vernon Lee*, p. 241.
[41]Lee, *Hauntings*, p. 246.
[42]Lee, *Hauntings*, p. 245.

In fact, this model of the Madonna seems to have haunted Lee throughout her time abroad. In Tangier, at first she is subtly reminded of the Madonna when she spots a beggar with 'rows and rows of beads and silver and coral amulets' that hang around his neck 'like ex votos on a Madonna' (CB 1), but on two later occasions mental associations with the sorrowful Virgin are more forceful. In the first instance, Lee visits the home of Selám, a man who has had multiple wives, and she is uncomfortable with the evident social inequality between the sexes. Mme Selám is an obedient wife and mother who never asks for permission to leave home (a fact at which Lee inwardly exclaims, 'But this is a convent!' (CB 12)) and Lee expresses her uneasiness and irritation through objections to the 'meretricious' quality of Mme Selám's clothing. Soon she finds herself comparing this Moorish woman with Italian images of the Virgin of the Seven Daggers.[43] The impractical, overelaborate, and imprisoning dress reminds Lee of the wasteful extravagance on waxen effigies:

> I sit and look at [...] Mme Selám, with her white face, huge and painted eyes, her stiff attitude in her wide, stiff embroideries of a shimmer of various colours, [and she] strikes me at first as one of those lifesize wax Madonnas in Italian churches, when they have on their best silk and lace frock and veil in drought or cholera time; if you stuck daggers in her heart she would not wince. (CB 11–12)

The dutiful mother is joined by the virginal bride when a few days afterwards Lee is taken to see a bride 'of twelve or thirteen':

> She sat, with her embroidered vests and muslins spread out, her hands folded, her face, elaborately painted under the eyes, about the eyebrows and with a large black patch in the middle of a delicately rouged cheek, absolutely motionless, scarcely raising her heavy black eyelashes [...] With her halo of gauze, her shimmer of gold embroidery, beads and borrowed jewels, she looked even more like a miraculous Madonna than Mme Selám. (CB 17)

When Lee arrives in Spain and visits the churches the haunting continues: 'Always dolls, and always dolls in agony — For every Madonna with her child, for every

[43] When Lee published sections of her Commonplace Book IV recordings of Tangier, she replaced 'Italian churches' with 'Spanish churches'. See Vernon Lee, 'Sketches in Tangier', *The New Review* 2:10 (1890), 221–28 (p. 223), in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 7 July 2015.

peaceful mother you may count two dolorosas, weeping, wringing hands, the seven daggers stuck in or near them' (CB 28).

In the tale, the Virgin of the Seven Daggers is 'an enthroned Madonna in agony' with 'hoop, brocade skirts and stays, lace veil and tinsel diadem' (VSD I, 224). Reminiscent of the Tangier descriptions, 'the reddish shimmer of the gold wire, the bluish shimmer of the silver floss, [blend] into a strange melancholy hue without a definite name' and 'a little clearing is made among the brocade and seed pearl, and into this are stuck seven gold-hilted knives' (VSD I, 224). The Infanta also wears 'shimmering gauze', a 'diaphanous veil of shimmering colours' (VSD II, 457). Like the Tangier bride, she sits motionless with 'the rigidity of a statue' and cast-down eyes, 'her heavy eyelids, stained violet with henna' (VSD II, 457, 459).

Lee's conflated memories of Mme Selám and the young Tangier bride no doubt influenced her fusion of the Virgin of the Seven Daggers with the Islamic Infanta, making it a subjective feature of the tale that may also relate to the undoubtedly tumultuous emotions Lee experienced in losing the companionship of Robinson and gaining a close friend in Kit Anstruther-Thomson. When Don Juan is forced to choose between the Infanta and the Virgin, 'the place seemed to swim about [him]':

> Before his eyes rose [...] the Moorish Infanta with the triangular patterns painted on her tuberose cheeks, and the long look in her henna'd eyes; and the image of her was blurred, and imperceptibly it seemed to turn into the effigy, black and white in her stiff puce frock and seed-pearl stomacher, of the Virgin of the Seven Daggers staring blankly into space. (VSD I, 460)

His punishment by decapitation and eventual realization that he is dead after following a trail of blood to his corpse are also both in line with Lee's Commonplace Book IV. Her entries testify that she wrestled with Spain's cultural glorification of violence and the profusion of blood in both literature and religious art: 'the Christ is always on the cross, or just off it, or weeping and bleeding with stripes and crowned thorns' (CB 28). During her trip, Spain became like 'Andulusian [*sic*] folktales [...], you hit upon death wherever you go, you meet

your own funeral, you sit with dead women, or you are brought face to face, like Ludovic Enio in Calderon's play, with your dead self' (CB 29).

'Ex-Voto dans le Goût Espagnol'

Lee's decision to compose a supernatural tale based upon a culture, time, and place with which she felt little affinity is part of her maturing project to keep aestheticism from being 'unjust', likely either to marginalize or erase 'ugly' realities (as, for instance, Pater does in omitting the serf from 'Aucassin and Nicolette'), and in this tale Lee manages to join the uglier historic details of Andalusia with an aesthetic rendering of her own pain. Very likely, Lee's recurring meetings with the Virgin of the Seven Daggers, first via mental associations in Tangier and later via physical confrontations in Spain, awakened deep stirrings of depression. Due to the nervous disorder Lee endured following Mary Robinson's engagement, she suffered in a blurred region between psychical and physical pain, her own heart having in effect been pierced. It is probable that the sorrowful Virgins continually brought Lee's mind back to her painful separation from Robinson; Mary haunted Lee.

Possibly considering this, Lee noted on 2 January 1889: 'Perhaps it is the fault of my illness that I should have received so gloomy an impression of this place, and so far, of Spain' (CB 26). But then she immediately questions this, 'Be it as it may the impression is very homogeneous; and everything, almost, seems to conduce towards it' (CB 26–27). We might ask, which theory of aesthetic effect is uppermost in this tale? Is Spain 'gloomy' because of Lee's illness and emotional vulnerability, or because 'everything, [...] conduce[s] towards' gloom? Do the 'faculty of association' and Lee's mental state have more sway over her tale's composition, or has careful study of history and observation — producing 'historic emotion' — been more central to its inspiration?

We find by the tale's end that the author is doubling as Calderon: 'unworthy modern hands have sought to frame the veracious and moral history of Don Juan

and the Virgin of the Seven Daggers' (VSD II, 465). While the tale endeavours to capture so many elements of Granada's history and of seventeenth-century Spain, it is certainly more about Lee's response to the Virgin than it is about the devotion we witness in the legendary Spanish libertine Don Juan. Don Juan is not one of Lee's many-sided sympathetic male figures, and Lee does use him to displace *herself* as this tale's primary many-sided sympathetic figure, the term 'sympathetic' being used here to denote both associative and historicist meanings. Lee experiments with the aesthetic sympathy indicated by her mental associations and 'aesthetic life', while also looking to her many-sided abilities as an aesthetic critic, able to enter into a different and remote age. According to Lee, the story doubles as her 'Ex-Voto dans le Goût Espagnol' — her 'votive offering in the Spanish style'. When Lee collected the tale in *For Maurice* (1927), she insists in the preface that it 'is really the outcome of my devotion to the other Madonna, Mater Gratiæ' and she confesses:

> If I have anywhere in my soul a secret shrine, it is to Our Lady. Even I don't like living in places where her benignant effigy does not consecrate to sweet and noble thoughts. For is she not the divine Mother of Gods as well as God, Demeter or Mary, in whom the sad and ugly things of our bodily origin and nourishment are transfigured into the grace of the immortal spirit?[44]

In giving her tale this name, Lee makes its content deeply personal but also alien. She complicates distinctions between her 'aesthetic life' and history, experimenting with how far the creative potential of the 'faculty of association' can be stretched to add 'new' disliked, painful, or 'unfamiliar' elements to 'old' familiar memories. She tests how faithfully she could render moments of Spanish and Moorish history when blended so fully with her subjective impressions.

When Don Juan realizes he is dead he knows his fate is in the hands of the Virgin of the Seven Daggers and, like 'the divine Mother [...] in whom the sad and ugly things of our bodily origin and nourishment are transfigured into the grace of the immortal spirit', she saves him, appearing before him in a vision, 'her big black eyes fixed mildly upon him' as she raises him 'upwards through the cupola of

[44]Lee, *Hauntings*, p. 245.

the church, his heart suddenly filled with a consciousness of extraordinary virtue' (VSD II, 465). By the tale's end Lee had transformed Spain's devotion to the mater dolorosa into 'my devotion to the other Madonna, Mater Gratiæ', perhaps as a signal of her movement away from mourning and grief, towards gratitude.

By reviewing 'The Virgin of the Seven Daggers' in the context of Lee's early aesthetic theories and the personal crisis she experienced during her time abroad in the winter of 1888–89, we see that Lee, as writer and aesthetic critic, was invested in perfecting in herself the manysidedness and sympathy of the disinterested critic of art. In her description of Don Juan's ascension, Lee tellingly describes 'white winter light br[eaking] into wondrous iridescences' in a reversal and displacement of Pater's emphasis upon pure white light:

> Don Juan, [...] felt himself *rise*, higher and higher, as if borne *up* on clusters of soap-bubbles. The cupola began to *rise* and *expand*; the painted clouds to *move* and blush a deeper pink; the painted sky to recede and turn into deep holes of *real* blue. [...] the allegorical virtues in the lunettes began to *move* and brandish their attributes; [...] the gold *transparency* at the top of the dome *expanded*; [...] and there *burst* from it at last a golden moon crescent, on which stood, [...] the Virgin of the Seven Daggers. (VSD II, 465, emphasis added)

Expansion and animation join with the 'transparency' of the cupola; the paintings and the Virgin come to *life*, the painted sky becomes the real sky, the 'allegorical virtues' *perform* their merits. In short, the scene is imbued with 'vitality' issuing from the heart of Lee's reimagining of what sympathy (as the 'faculty of association') and manysidedness (as openness to 'historic emotion' in different places and ages) can do.[45] Ultimately, Lee's role as the many-sided sympathetic figure here concerned is to treat literature as a means, rather than an end. Now, in turning to 'Amour Dure', we see Lee's emphasis upon herself as the many-sided sympathetic writer and aesthetic critic shift to the reader as she endeavours to draw others into her ethical aestheticism.

[45] Here and elsewhere in this tale, Lee's use of diaphanous and iridescent descriptions intentionally alludes to Pater's iconic image of contraction in the aesthetic critic — 'burn[ing] always with this hard, gem-like flame' — in order to displace it with distinct descriptions of rising and expansion. This example and others form a part of Lee's revision of Paterian aestheticism, which so often relies upon invocations of sympathy and manysidedness.

'Amour Dure' & readerly cultivation

Like Pater, Lee is fascinated with what is fleeting, transitory, or momentary, and particularly with objects or phenomena that express physical and ethereal qualities simultaneously: mirages like *fata morgana*, kaleidoscopes, and — as in the tale above — the iridescent play of light across jewels and soap bubbles. For Pater and Lee alike, the 'spiritual' is made more accessible and real through its relationship with the material; Lee carries forward from his essay 'The Child in the House' his 'foundational account of how material things acquire spiritual resonance' and frequently turns to descriptions of child-like interaction with the material world.[46] In her dialogues, the transformative quality of light and its effects on sky and landscape frame the subjects under discussion. Changing light is almost always present whether through descriptions of sunrises or sunsets, the effect of sunlight through mist, or of moonlight cast across landscape. This preoccupation reflects her interest in impressionistic moments or flashes of memory and emotion, again highlighting interplay between material and subjective. As in 'The Virgin of the Seven Daggers', iridescence, opalescence, twinkling, glittering, glistening, gleaming, beaming, shining, shimmering, dazzling — such descriptors and more bedeck and festoon Lee's prose to a purpose: to evoke and (morally) reinvigorate the many-sided and sympathetic self-cultivation implicit in Pater's use of similar imagery. And adding to the beautiful quality of the changing play of light, Lee invokes 'the well-known psychological fact, that conscious life is a continual transition'.[47]

Lee adds to this a fascination with arabesque patterns and the interlacing, mingling, or melting of light, lines, or colours, as in the arrangement of honeycomb or interweaving and moving network of light produced by fireflies against a twilight background.[48] This quality is present in her narrative construction and

[46] See Maxwell, *Second Sight*, p. 78.
[47] Sully, *Sensation and Intuition*, p. 43.
[48] See Lee, *Baldwin*, p. 293 for a representative quotation.

emphasis upon relationships between individuals that crisscross and make up society. In response to her half-brother Eugene's comments upon her supernatural tale 'Dionea', collected into *Hauntings* with 'Amour Dure', Lee writes:

> As regards obscurity in the narrative, I think that if you read it three months hence that would not strike you; for you will regain a habit of twigging suggestions and of easily following tortuosities of narrative which is the result of the habit of consecutive reading. You will then, I think, agree with me that such a story requires to appear & reappear & disappear, to be baffling, in order to acquire its supernatural quality.[49]

This explanation alludes to the discriminatory powers Lee expected in readers. For, as part of the sharpened practical dimension of her aestheticism, Lee not only practises critical disinterestedness and 'discrimination' in her identity as an aesthetic critic, but also seeks to *foster* this quality and ability in readers. The 'tortuous' pattern Lee invokes to lend a supernatural quality to her tales — 'to appear & reappear & disappear' — is suggestive of her intentional manufacturing of a reading experience that is like a process of archaeological excavation, wherein a half-buried site or artifacts take shape first as one item, then as another as digging proceeds. Lee was 'Acutely aware of the psychological powers involved in the reading process, [and] [...] aimed consistently to develop in her reader what she called "a habit of thinking, an attitude...of wider influence than [any] rules of conduct" '.[50] Zorn quotes from Lee's essay collection *Gospels of Anarchy* (1908) and explains, 'Against passive acceptance, she invokes a principle of (active) "selection and rejection" by a cultivated, reasonable human consciousness'.[51]

The full nostrum Lee proposes is in fact something like what she experiments with in 'The Virgin of the Seven Daggers':

> [I]n our life, a habit of feeling and thinking, an attitude, is of wider influence than a rule of conduct. [...] to be able to face *fact* as *fact*, as something transcending all momentary convenience or pleasantness; yet at the same time to preserve our human preferences, to exercise our human selection all the more rigidly because we know that it is *our* selection, [...] such a double

[49]Lee, *Letters*, p. 363 (31 August 1893).
[50]Zorn, *Vernon Lee*, p. xx.
[51]Zorn, *Vernon Lee*, p. xxvi.

> attitude would surely be the best. It would be the only attitude thoroughly true, just, kind, and really practical.[52]

The maintenance of subjective 'selection and rejection' joined with the objective ability 'to face *fact* as *fact*' is the heartbeat — systole and diastole — of 'The Virgin of the Seven Daggers'. I maintain it is also how Lee construes the 'refining' or self-cultivating effect of the aesthetic critic's 'discrimination and analysis', to which she and Pater both subscribe.[53] Readers, in effect, should mirror the sympathy and many-sided sensitivity (to beautiful objects) of the aesthetic criticism through cultivating critical disinterestedness alongside knowing when and to what extent to privilege individual subjectivity. Lee, interested like Pater in moments of physical exchange and touch, constructs many of her texts as accompaniments to each other and, whether she is the primary many-sided sympathetic figure of a text or she displaces herself with a fictional counterpart, she keeps the boundary between writer and reader porous.

Lee did not want her fiction to lack life or purpose and, together with her dialogue essays, her fiction in the 1880s and early 1890s forms something of a sympathetic architecture in its pattern of dialogue and exchange. Lee infuses her work with many-sided vitality, composing separate texts so that they interlock in a pattern of shared 'sides'. While each fictional narrative, essay, or dialogue can stand alone, each piece of writing also gestures towards and informs the others, knitted each to each in something expressive of a spatial, or sculpturesque, design made more distinct by contrast, like the rhythmic disparity between finished and unfinished marble in the *non-finito*. The supernatural tales in *Hauntings* and 'polite stories' of *Vanitas*, for instance, are manifestly different from the assembly of dialogues in *Baldwin* and *Althea*, yet these short stories and novellas are illuminated by the content of the dialogues.

The dialogues in *Baldwin* and *Althea* act as touchstones that reveal the

[52] Vernon Lee, *Gospels of Anarchy, and Other Contemporary Studies* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1908), *Gospels of Anarchy*, p. 39. Emphasis original.
[53] Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. xxx.

'practical' merits of the supernatural tales — and now in using the word 'practical' I refer to Lee's definition of what is 'really practical', the 'double attitude' she describes in *Gospels*. A reader familiar with Lee's dialogues, and who is trained to read actively by 'twigging suggestions' in a narrative, will note a tessellation effect produced by the points of contact and overlap between the tales and dialogues. With this (many-sided and sympathetic) compositional method in view, Lee emerges further as the primary aesthetic hero practising self-cultivation here. However, Lee does much to displace her centrality, as she does in 'The Virgin of the Seven Daggers' where she uses unfamiliar places, disliked architecture, contemptible effigies of womanhood, and the misogynist Don Juan. I turn next to her supernatural tale 'Amour Dure: Passages from the Diary of Spiridion Trepka', first published in *Murray's Magazine* in January and February 1887 and later revised and collected into *Hauntings* in 1890.

My reading gestures to some of the tale's points of contact with Lee's dialogues so that the analysis 'vibrates' with intentional backward-and-forward movements. The story itself is built around the developing actions and reactions between the present-day protagonist Spiridion Trepka, an historian practising *Einfühlung* as the historic method, and the late-Renaissance figure Medea da Carpi, his object of research. In its form and content, the story is focused on *relationship*, on the uneasily identified point of interaction between two figures at which exchange, influence, and transformation can take place. By constructing connections between her texts and focusing upon Spiridion's understanding of Medea mitigated through acts of reading (texts, portraits, sculpture), Lee also plays with that mysterious and complex space between an author and reader, a space mediated by the physical text but which also extends to the mind of the reader where the moments of exchange, influence, and transformation prompted by the act of reading take place. This pattern lends some insight into why Lee chose to compose fiction alongside her other work when she was a self-identified essayist who espoused multifarious opinions on popular fiction and the literary

market.[54] To Lee's mind, reading may not be *intrinsically* self-cultivating, but she offers her writing as a 'practical' pastime requiring the kind of self-discipline and active participation that cultivates 'a habit of feeling and thinking, an attitude, [...] of wider influence than a rule of conduct'. With 'Amour Dure', Lee carries forward her interaction with Pater's evolutionary aestheticism — seen also in her construction of Baldwin — and, I argue, again expands his conception of the single diaphanous figure to a vision of an advanced and variegated society morally refined and disciplined by sympathy and friendship.

There are many other similarly sinewy, connecting threads between Lee's short stories and dialogues. For instance, Lee addresses the importance of reading in *Vanitas* in creating or destroying individual culture in 'A Worldly Woman', a tale that displays unregulated and passive reading habits negatively impacting an individual's self-cultivation. Lee echoes this message in her 1896 review of *Degeneration* when she writes that 'psychic healthiness' is a subject each member of society needs to consider because 'the average man, [...] is [...] in danger of becoming an obstacle to human improvement'.[55] However, I focus upon 'Amour Dure' for reasons of space and because of its plot construction around a point of religious and cultural difference in modern history.

In 'Amour Dure', Lee narrates the point she would later make in her 1896 review, that an array of modern 'maladjustments' is 'filling the world with damaged thought and feeling which beget in its turn feeling and thought more damaged still'.[56] The earlier composition date of 'Amour Dure' in comparison with this review suggests that much of Lee's work throughout the 1880s and 1890s aims to alter society's 'indifference to the soul's hygiene'.[57] For the careful reader of 'Amour Dure', Lee presents friendship — having 'a friend to metaphorically feel [your] pulse or look at [your] tongue, [...] to whom either pulse or tongue, in the spiritual order, could reveal anything' — as the remedy of modern

[54] See the discussion in Towheed, 'Determining "Fluctuating Opinions"'.
[55] Lee, 'Deterioration of Soul', p. 930.
[56] Lee, 'Deterioration of Soul', p. 939.
[57] Lee, 'Deterioration of Soul', p. 940.

'maladjustments'.[58] The central figure of the tale, Spiridion Trepka, is a Lee-proxy, like Baldwin. However, unlike Baldwin's story of refinement through dialogues with friends, Spiridion's narrative is told through a series of diary entries wherein he is in conversation with himself. 'The individual, it seems to me, becomes weak and limited in proportion as he is isolated and self-centred', he writes.[59] As Baldwin and his web of friendships rework Pater's 'transparent hero', so also is this tale's protagonist an intriguing example of how Lee problematizes the presumably ideal nature of Pater's pure, diaphanous 'type'.

'Amour Dure: Passages from the Diary of Spiridion Trepka'

In 'Amour Dure' a present-day citizen of the Protestant German Empire, Spiridion Trepka, closely identifies with and is romantically fascinated by a sixteenth-century Italian Catholic woman, Medea da Carpi.[60] As in Lee's other supernatural tales collected in *Hauntings*, this story is one of transhistorical sympathetic communion. Medea is a *femme fatale*, infamously responsible for the deaths of five of her lovers. Following the mysterious deaths of her first two husbands, Medea da Carpi seeks the protection of Duke Guidalfonso II of Urbania. The Duke of Urbania is captivated by the beauty of the young widow and mother and, following the death of his own wife, marries her and appoints her young son as his heir, 'at the expense of the obvious rights of the Cardinal Robert, Guidalfonso's younger brother' (11).

When this Duke of Urbania meets a mysterious end, Medea and the Cardinal enter into a power struggle; Medea tries to act as regent after declaring her son

[58] Lee, 'Deterioration of Soul', p. 940.

[59] Lee, 'Deterioration of Soul', p. 942.

[60] 'Amour Dure' first appeared in *Murray's Magazine* in two parts, Vernon Lee, 'Amour Dure, Part I', *Murray's Magazine* 1:1 (1887), 49–65 and Vernon Lee, 'Amour Dure, Part II', *Murray's Magazine* 1:2 (1887), 188–99, in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 12 September 2017. It was slightly expanded and republished in Vernon Lee, *Hauntings: Fantastic Stories* (London: William Heinemann, 1890), pp. 3–58. References are from the 1890 edition and given after quotations in the text.

the rightful Duke of Urbania, but Cardinal Robert and his supporters depose them and the Cardinal becomes his brother's successor, imprisoning Medea and sending her son away. After two conspiracies to murder Duke Robert are uncovered and both men are executed following declarations of loyalty to Medea, the Duke sends Medea to a convent and arranges her murder at the hands of two women, 'infanticides to whom he remitted their sentence' (15).

The tale is narrated through Spiridion's diary. Spiridion is a young Polish historian who has traveled to Italy on a German government scholarship to conduct research on the city of Urbania. The predominant emotion Spiridion expresses upon his arrival is disappointment: disappointment that Italy, a place he has 'longed' to visit in order 'to come face to face with the Past', is contaminated with modernity and disturbed by 'Berlin and Munich Vandals at my heels, telling me where the best beer and sauerkraut could be had' (3). Although he has connections with the German Embassy in Rome and arrives in Urbania with a pocketful of letters of introduction, he does not enjoy German or scholastic company. Spiridion struggles with his identity as a Prussian professor and German pedant, evidenced in part by his emotional and imaginative nature. Expected to move in the society of the Director of the Archives and the Vice-Prefect in Urbania, he feels hemmed in by academic and government officials and speaks disparagingly of how the Director 'bored [him] to extinction [...] for three-quarters of an hour without taking breath', and he compares 'the sensations of a former racehorse being driven in a cab' with his position as 'a Pole turned Prussian professor' (5). Unconsciously, Spiridion periodically releases hints of his personal history of oppression at the hands of the German Empire, part of the narrative's 'suggestions' Lee expects readers to actively 'twig'. Thinking scornfully of all things modern and German, Spiridion hopes in the 'vain belief' that his diary entries, recording 'these happy Italian days', will someday act as a kind of talisman to help him when he must return to 'that hateful Babylon of Berlin' (7).

As he prefers to maintain his idealization of the Italian Past as much as

possible, Spiridion is aloof not only from fellow scholars and members of the Urbanian elite, but also from the natives, keeping himself in a state of almost constant isolation by working alone in the Archives and taking solitary walks each day. As he conducts his research between August and December 1885, he becomes more and more obsessed with the figure of Medea da Carpi, and the main action of the tale features Medea's steady invasion of Spiridion's identity. He confesses, 'Even before coming here I felt attracted by the strange figure of a woman' (8). Initially a narrator recounting his experiences abroad, over time Spiridion is molded and (dis)figured as the keeper of Medea's story. Medea, born in 1556 and killed in December 1582, first appears in the narrative through Spiridion's record of scholarly biographical accounts, but her story is then retold more imaginatively as Spiridion experiences a deeper connection with her. Spiridion claims he 'can understand' Medea and sympathizes with her plight and actions (23). He learns more about Duke Robert through his research in the Archives — 'A cunning, cold, but craven priest' who feared Medea 'as something almost supernatural' (26) — and he sides with Medea against him, vowing, 'Aha! my good Duke Robert, you shall be shown up in my history; and [...] heartily laughed at!' (27).

The Duke's superstitious fear of Medea was so strong that even after her murder he instructed that a small 'silver image [...] be soldered into his effigy by Tassi', a bronze equestrian statue still standing in the *Corte* square in modern times (27). Spiridion is at first 'baffle[d]' by this historic detail since, 'as a Catholic [the Duke] ought to have believed that [his soul] must, as soon as separated from his body, go to Purgatory' (19). But after considering the Duke's superstitious fear, Spiridion realizes that the Duke believed having a 'consecrated' silver image of his soul tied to an image of his body would protect him after death from Medea and he satirizes the Duke's conviction: 'As long as the image of his soul was attached to the image of his body, he should sleep awaiting the Day of Judgement, fully convinced that Medea's soul will then be properly tarred and feathered, while his [...] will fly straight to Paradise' (27).

Spiridion's retelling of Medea's history sheds fresh light on her situation, his sympathetic imagination doing something to offset the eighteenth-century historian Don Arcangelo Zappi's biased biography of Duke Robert as 'This clement prince' (15). Medea is neither a 'scorpion' nor a devilish agent as recorded by Zappi, but Spiridion takes the opposite extreme view by inverting Medea's and the Duke Robert's roles. Neither Medea nor the Duke is entirely malicious or completely justified, but through his obsession Spiridion is unable to see these figures disinterestedly. His imaginative historicism, as Herderean *Einfühlung*, does not follow Herder's call to maintain impartiality; he goes too far towards self-identification and unconsciously colours Medea's history with his feelings and experiences while justifying her crimes: 'we must put aside all pedantic modern ideas of right and wrong. Right and wrong in a century of violence and treachery does not exist, least of all for creatures like Medea. Go preach right and wrong to a tigress, my dear sir!' (23).[61]

Medea's 'invasion' of Spiridion grows, first through the encounter with her story in the dry pages of other historians' researches, then via a series of art objects Spiridion locates in late September depicting Medea. The art objects — a miniature, a bust, and a sculpture — feed his imagination and over time he projects more and more life into her image, fancying what she must have been like in life: 'I often examine these tragic portraits, wondering what this face, which led so many men to their death, may have been like when it spoke or smiled' (18).[62] By October, he confesses she 'haunts' him and in November his ecstasy — 'Oh, joy!' — in discovering some of Medea's letters is palpable; the letters are 'mere drafts of business letters', but in seeing her 'round, scholarly' handwriting 'with a Greek look about it' Spiridion 'can imagine almost that there hangs about these moldering pieces of paper a scent as of a woman's hair' (25–26).

He learns from his research that when Medea lived in the palace of Urbania

[61] Spiridion's comment suggests that as morality does not exist in Nature, modern man must question if morality exists at all. This point is raised in 'Responsibilities' and used by Lee to direct attention to the moral importance of friendship. See Lee, *Baldwin*, pp. 66–67.

[62] The diary entries for 20 and 28 September were not in the original 1887 publication.

— where he now works daily in the Archives — she occupied the 'magnificent apartments in the left wing of the palace, among which was the room containing the famous fireplace ornamented with marble Cupids on a blue ground' (10). In late November, he visits the remote villa in the mountains where Medea also lived when imprisoned by Duke Robert. Once there, he finds something to associate with her life in the palace: 'in one of the big rooms, [...] a large marble fireplace, similar to those in the palace at Urbania, beautifully carved with Cupids on a blue ground; a charming naked boy sustains a jar on either side, one containing clove pinks, the other roses' (29).[63]

A few days afterwards, he is surprised and very shaken — 'I gave a great start, and almost shrieked' (32) — by a large portrait of Medea that appears over his shoulder as he looks at his reflection in a large mirror: 'Behind my own image stood another, a figure close to my shoulder, a face close to mine; and that figure, that face, hers!' (32). Spiridion is so 'excitable' that even 'after several hours' he 'feel[s] terribly shaken in all my being' (33). By December, Spiridion's every expression is saturated with references to Medea. He makes a 'snow-woman' in her image when it snows in the city, teaching some boys to cry 'Evviva, Medea!' and, 'scarcely aware' he is singing, he adopts a tune he hears in the city streets to express words of love and devotion to her: 'Vieni, Medea, mia dea' (35, 36).

Medea's constant inward presence is made manifest externally, first through a chance sighting of her in the street, then through a letter addressed to Spiridion in her handwriting — 'it was addressed to me, written to me, no old letter' (38) — and finally through three nightly visits to a locked and abandoned church. Sensory experiences mount as Spiridion believes he encounters Medea in these nightly

[63]The reference to the 'charming naked boy' may suggest that Spiridion's obsession with Medea is his displaced desire for (intellectual closeness with) the Vice-Prefect's son. It may also signal the wider debate regarding same-sex desire and relationships. Are physically 'non-reproductive' relationships reproductive in other ways? Do they contribute to the 'degeneration' of the species or are they essential to society's intellectual and moral evolution, as Lee claims? In the 1896 review of *Degeneration*, Lee refers to same-sex friendship as 'the marriage of true minds', a distinct 'corrective' of mankind's spiritual degeneracy. See Dellamora, 'Productive Decadence', for more on what Lee terms 'the queer comradeship of outlawed thought'.

visits and receives more objects from her; first a red rose like the one she holds in her portrait — 'I felt it, smelled it; a rose, a real, living rose, dark red and only just plucked. I put it into water [...] after having kissed it, who knows how many times?' (47) — and then a letter with very specific instructions to destroy the silver figure inside Duke Robert's statue. It promises 'reward [for] thy fidelity' and is sealed with her device in wax, 'Amour Dure — Dure Amour'. Spiridion's fixation mounts to a feverish pitch of fanatical religious devotion. He obeys the instructions and his mania culminates in willing self-sacrifice for the sake of Medea's 'Amour Dure — Dure Amour': 'all had to die, and I shall die also' (53). Spiridion is discovered on Christmas morning, 'dead of a stab in the region of the heart, given by an unknown hand' (58).

A word from Baldwin 'On Novels': 'Amour Dure' as *Marius* critique

'Amour Dure' appeared in two parts in *Murray's Magazine* in January and February 1887, but it was originally planned as a 'Renaissance novel' entitled *Medea da Carpi*.[64] William Blackwood objected to its overtly fanciful fusion of fact and fiction so Lee composed it as a short story for a magazine with an alternative publisher, but this point is significant.[65] Writing fiction was not a marketplace venture for Lee, so her fiction should be viewed as part of a larger project to train and educate readers to be more receptive to messages she considered crucial to the cultural advancement of society, such as the cultivation of a spiritual self that evades 'deterioration of soul'.[66] It may seem unlikely that Lee would want to publish another novel so soon after the stinging reception of *Miss Brown* (1884),

[64] See Gunn, *Vernon Lee*, p. 129.

[65] When it was rejected by Blackwood in July 1885, Lee recorded with amusement, 'because he thinks it a pity to put the historical facts into a fictitious frame! Isn't that a joke!' Lee, *Letters*, p. 183.

[66] See Towheed, 'Determining "Fluctuating Opinions"'. Towheed's investigation of Lee's "fluctuating opinions" on the uses and abuses of popular fiction indicates that any of Lee's ventures to compose a novel would have been driven by specific aims.

but she shows her determination on that front in her letter to Frances Power Cobbe in April 1885:

> I shall certainly show fight in the sense of writing another novel, in which I shall certainly not brazen out anything that may have justly offended people in Miss Brown but at the same time not say a word less than I ever think necessary.[67]

The motivation behind her original composition of 'Amour Dure' as a novel may be found in its correspondence with the period when Lee was considering afresh Pater's *Marius the Epicurean* (1885). Lee's sensitivity and responsiveness to Pater's aestheticism make it likely that she would have formulated a response to *Marius* through fiction, wanting to reply to Pater's novel with one of her own, as initially attempted with *Miss Brown*.[68]

Lee may have intended her original plan for the publication of *Medea da Carpi* as a direct commentary upon *Marius*, marking out the figure of Medea as a critique of Marius. If so, the dialogue essay 'On Novels', which Lee published anonymously in the *Contemporary* only a few months following the appearance of *Marius*, may shed light on Lee's intentions with 'Amour Dure' in connection with Pater's text. In this dialogue, Baldwin identifies and differentiates between 'the perfect arts' and 'the half-arts'. He begins by explaining that Beauty and Morality, although separate concepts, are frequently conflated and falsely associated by analogy: 'because we perceive that such a [moral] pleasure is neither unreasoning and animal nor intellectual and utilitarian, [...] we apply to pleasing moral impressions the adjective beautiful' (*B* 202). But, Beauty is confined to 'the domain of the senses and of the sensuous impressions recalled and reconstructed by the intellect', or memory (*B* 202). Fundamentally sensuous, Beauty 'has a far

[67] HL, mssCB 1-854, Box 9 (1883–85), letter dated 26 April 1885.

[68] Towheed discusses *Miss Brown* as Lee's 'scathing indictment of the misguided moral relativism of aestheticism'. Towheed, 'Determining "Fluctuating Opinions"', p. 222. See also Brake, 'Vernon Lee and the Pater Circle', pp. 40–57, for a comparison of the composition timelines and implicit dialogue between *Miss Brown*, *Miss Bretherton* (1884) by Mrs. Humphrey Ward, and *Marius*. For more on *Miss Brown*, see Psomiades, 'Vernon Lee on Desire and Aesthetics', and Dennis Denisoff, *Aestheticism and Sexual Parody, 1840–1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 30–55.

smaller share in the poem, novel, or the drama than in painting, sculpture, or music' (*B* 204). The novel, poetry, and drama are 'half-arts' unable to 'attain unmixed, absolute beauty', whereas all arts of form (painting, sculpture, music) are directed, 'however unconsciously', to fulfilling mankind's 'desire for the beautiful' (*B* 205, 200).

'The novel has less value in art, but more importance in life', Baldwin explains, because it is not restricted to playing upon man's aesthetic sensibilities (*B* 207). Art increases man's aesthetic sensitivity, but the 'half-arts' — and especially the novel — increase emotional and scientific experience. The former entails an enclosed or fetishistic occupation (experience that is non-reproductive) — 'familiarity with beauty train[s] us only for further familiarity with beauty' (*B* 208) — and endorses a kind of solipsistic aestheticism. Art feeds aesthetic sensitivity and only refines an ability to perceive more objects of beauty. The latter, however, is 'part of our *viaticum* for life' and the emotional and scientific experiences transmitted to participants in the 'half-arts' increase our sensitivity in a different way, enabling and 'train[ing] us to feel and comprehend — that is to say, to live' (*B* 208). Emotion and intellect, sharpened and refined together, combine to give birth to 'other interests, [...] and these interests, psychological and sympathetic, [...] create new powers' (*B* 209). Half-arts have the (reproductive) potential to expand our powers of perception: 'Hence, I say, that although the novel, [...] is not as artistically valuable as painting, or sculpture, or music, it is *practically* more important and more noble' (*B* 209, emphasis added).

Having introduced two scales of value — the aesthetic perfect arts and the practical or 'noble' half-arts — Baldwin aligns the 'practical' with the '*viaticum* for life'. In answer to his cousin Dorothy's despondent view that 'The "how things are" seems forever, hopelessly, opposed to the "how things should be" ' (*B* 242), Baldwin rallies: 'the novel itself must represent a compromise between the knowledge of how things are, and the desire for how things ought to be' (*B* 244–45). *Viaticum* is a religious term and a very Paterian choice of ritual image.

It refers both to the Last Rites of the Catholic Church and to the pagan tradition of placing a coin beneath a dead person's mouth for passage across the River Styx. In using this term, Baldwin designates the 'noble' half-arts as the bridge across which one may pass safely from life to new life, or from 'how things are' to 'how things should be'; they are a secular rite that moves readers towards a state of cultivated (many-sided) intelligence and emotion.

The novel especially has this powerful potential to aid mankind's 'spiritual' evolution, increasing our moral sensitivity over time:

> [I]n all those things, those finer details of feeling which separate us from the people of the time of Elizabeth, [...] who have been those that have discovered, made familiar, placed within the reach of the immense majority, subtleties of feeling [...]? The novelists, I think. They have, by playing upon our emotions, immensely increased the sensitiveness, the richness, of this living keyboard. (*B* 211)

Lee takes fiction and the novel seriously, and here uses Baldwin to express her views. In the context of this dialogue it is useful to recollect Lee's reference to *Marius* as a 'statue' in the 'Introduction' to *Juvenilia*. Her comments through Baldwin indicate that she considered Pater too fully concentrated upon Beauty and form in his composition of *Marius*. His creation is beautiful, but it is too much like a 'perfect art', despite being a novel. Lee implies Pater 'attain[s] unmixed, absolute beauty' but at the (moral) cost that only our 'desire for the beautiful' is fulfilled. Lee finds fault with Pater's beautiful 'object' because it does not do enough to push beyond being an end in itself.

Likewise, sensory experience and exposure to beautiful, perfect art forms are uppermost in Spiridion's narrative. Spiridion fetishizes Medea and any object connected with her, making Medea's role as fetish an embodiment of the solipsistic aestheticism Lee shuns. The enclosed relationship Spiridion forms with her is reflected in the run-on maxim 'Amour Dure — Dure Amour', 'love that lasts, cruel love'. The narrative arc recounting Spiridion's decline and death is simultaneously a commentary upon what the perfect arts cannot be expected to attain or offer — practical experience that moves past beautiful form — and what the half-arts

must do: depict 'ugliness' and 'moral deformity' as part of a 'psychological and sympathetic' interest in 'the human figure' (*B* 208–09). Baldwin explains, 'there enter into the novel a proportion of interests which are not artistic, interests which are emotional and scientific; [...] desire for the comprehension of psychological problems' (*B* 207).

How, then, does Lee intend 'Amour Dure' to train our emotions and intellect as a 'half-art'? What does it tell us about the psychology of relationships between individuals and art? Ultimately, the tale supplements Pater's perfect, statuesque presentation of Marius. It harmonizes with 'On Novels' to remind us what an 'ugly hybrid' literature is and what it might achieve (*B* 205). In tandem with Spiridion's engagement with beauty and refinement of aesthetic sensitivity, Lee intends that the reader engage actively with the text, 'twigging' its suggestions and gaining the kind of emotional and scientific experience Baldwin mentions. Specifically, E.B. Tylor's cultural evolutionism meets physiological psychology in 'Amour Dure'. While suggesting that fetishistic 'survivals' can persist in the modern day to the detriment of the moral evolution of the species, the tale also dramatizes associationist psychological theory by exemplifying how childhood memories form a powerful part of our personalities in the present. Just as Marius's upbringing and physical surroundings as a child are depicted as an essential stage of his development into a diaphanous figure, a careful reader of 'Amour Dure' also locates a semi-veiled and suggestive childhood history in the frequent references to Spiridion's Polish ethnicity.[69] Spiridion's interactions with perfect art forms, then, are not the *foundational* cause of his gradual mental and moral deterioration.

[69]This feature of the tale is something Lee certainly developed between its 1887 and 1890 publications; the diary entries added to the 1890 edition are directly relevant to the historic context of Spiridion's childhood and the effects of his interactions with perfect art forms.

The physiology & psychology of aspirations

As Pater uses Marius to emphasize the power and significance of bodily sensations, both Medea's and Spiridion's names prompt references to physiology. Lee and Pater were mutually influenced by mid- to late-nineteenth-century theories in physiological psychology tying intellectual life to the physiology of the brain, nervous system, and body.[70] British research of this kind was extended to aesthetics in the 1870s with James Sully's research in *Sensation and Intuition: Studies in Psychology and Aesthetics* (1874) and Grant Allen's *Physiological Aesthetics* (1877).[71] Allen, like Charles Darwin and other evolutionists, connects sensitivity with the spine. He argues that aesthetic pleasure is the reaction of nerves, specifically 'the cerebro-spinal nervous system', to stimuli.[72] Carpi is the plural of 'carpus', which refers to the collection of small bones that make up the wrist (*OED*), while the Modern Latin *Spirifer* refers to 'A genus of fossil brachiopods [...] characterized by long highly-developed spiral appendages' (*OED*), connecting Spiridion (almost humorously) with psycho-physiological theories of highly-developed aesthetic sensibilities.

Spiridion, in his links with Medea, is the many-sided sympathetic figure under interrogation.

His extreme 'spinal' sensitivity recalls the critique of modern thought and literature by the author of 'Intellectual Vigour' (1866) as having 'no backbone in it'. Perhaps owing to the claim that modern (many-sided) writing has 'a too fastidious refinement' to possess adequate 'vigour', Lee has put the vertebrae back

[70] Burdett has conducted extensive research in this area in connection with Lee. See Carolyn Burdett, 'Introduction: Psychology/Aesthetics in the Nineteenth Century', *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* 12 (2011), ⟨URL: http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.609⟩, 1–6. Accessed 2 October 2017; Burdett, 'Is Empathy the End of Sentimentality?'; and Burdett, 'Vernon Lee's Psychological Aesthetics'. See also Moran, 'Walter Pater's House Beautiful', for discussion of James Sully's influence upon Pater's works in terms of interrelations between one's physical surroundings and self-culture.

[71] Lee read and annotated *Physiological Aesthetics* (1877) shortly after its publication; her library copy is signed on the first page, 'Violet Paget, Oct. 79'. See British Institute of Florence Summary for VL 111.85 ALL.

[72] Grant Allen, *Physiological Aesthetics* (London: Henry S. King & Co., 1877), p. 34.

into modern writing with comical exaggeration.[73] Spiridion's name also comes close to *spiriform*, an adjective meaning, 'having the form of a spire or spiral' (*OED*), which suggests the reverberating movement between Spiridion and Medea that the narrative documents, and which also recalls this thesis's reflections upon sympathy in Chapter 1 as a 'reverberating' or 'dialectical process wherein "we will unavoidably find ourselves reflected within our gaze toward the other. I look for you and see myself; I have no choice but to draw on what I know and feel" '.[74] Spiridion's discovery of Medea's face and figure when he turns to see his reflection in a mirror is a case in point: 'Behind my own image stood another, a figure close to my shoulder, a face close to mine; and that figure, that face, hers!' (32).

The form of a 'spire' is also significant in relation to Spiridion's idealism and the gothic nature of doubling in 'Amour Dure'. Spires, as gothic architectural features pointing towards heaven and directing thoughts to God, are sublime boundary-breaking structures, suggesting the attempt to extend past oneself, tapering upwards until spent like an extinguished flame. Spiridion's obsession with Medea is a manifestation of his craving for something 'ideal', and stems from his 'Victorian Gothic' dual-identity, which Lee bases in research in evolutionary psychology.[75] His Polish self, imaginative and emotional, is at war with the German pedantry he supposedly represents as an historian 'known in literature' (35). On one hand, the text's frequent allusions to Spiridion's Polish ancestry and childhood in Posen feed common Polish sensitivity stereotypes, like the ones found in *Cousine Bette* and moderated by George Eliot in *Middlemarch*, and link excessive sensitivity with madness. Spiridion confides in his diary, 'With the case of my uncle Ladislas, and other suspicions of insanity in my family, I ought

[73] 'Intellectual Vigour', p. 585.

[74] McCarthy, *Relationships of Sympathy*, pp. 15–16.

[75] See Ed Block, 'James Sully, Evolutionist Psychology, and Late Victorian Gothic Fiction', *Victorian Studies* 25:4 (1982), 443–62 (p. 445), in *JSTOR*. Accessed 29 August 2017. Block groups Vernon Lee's late-nineteenth-century fiction with the 'Victorian Gothic' of contemporaries like Pater, Robert Louis Stevenson, H.G. Wells, Bram Stoker, and Rudyard Kipling, among others who were also responding to the 'evolutionist climate'. Ultimately, 'a peculiarly Victorian uncanniness' emerges through 'an atmosphere permeated by the suggestion of evolutionary forces at work — often in sinister and retrogressive ways' (p. 463).

really to guard against such foolish excitement' (31). Yet, on the other hand, the Polish references are specific gestures towards a wider historical context. Just as Lee would soon be interested in the Andalusian history of religious difference and violence while abroad during the winter of 1888–89, in 'Amour Dure' she shows pronounced attention to the traumatic impact of religious differences and organized oppression within the modern German Empire and, as an historian herself, practises facing ugly, inconvenient, or unpleasant facts ('fac[ing] *fact* as *fact*') in the way Spiridion should, but cannot.

In between Spiridion's recording of the official history of Medea and his sympathetic revision of her plight, a bizarre diary entry for 20 September appears. Spiridion succinctly records the 'grand illumination of the town in honour of the taking of Rome fifteen years ago' (16). It seems a marginal observation. Yet, through this reference to the capture of Rome in 1870 memories of the Franco-Prussian war should come to the (contemporary) reader's mind. The decisions leading to German unification were made during the Franco-Prussian war and in 1871 the Polish region of Posen, formerly an annexed part of Prussia, became a part of the newly formed German Empire. What followed throughout the 1870s was Otto von Bismarck's *Kulturkampf*, involving anti-Catholic legislation and widespread politically sanctioned prejudice against Catholics. As the Polish members of the German Empire made up the largest Catholic population, Polish nationality was targeted by Bismarck's policies. Spiridion, a Pole aged twenty-four, would have been a young boy aged nine or ten in 1871, still able to remember a Catholic upbringing before the *Kulturkampf*. This disruptive and injurious history of religious difference and discrimination underlies Spiridion's personal history and, as such, this entry serves as a reminder of Spiridion's position as an oppressed Pole. Spiridion, on the surface, is a model exemplar of Bismarck's Germanizing policies, but as his retelling of Medea's history reveals, he suffers from the long-term psychological effects of totalitarian abuse.

Another significant detail between the two narrations of Medea's history is

Spiridion's reflection on his lack of 'amori'. Disappointed with the society of the Vice-Prefect's son, who has tried to befriend him and introduce him to Urbania, and the women of the 'Urbanian *beau monde*', Spiridion reveals that he 'looked out for romance' when he first came to Italy. He 'sighed, like Goethe in Rome' and longed for 'a woman to go mad about, [...] a woman out of whose slipper to drink, and for whose pleasure to die' (21–22). These unfulfilled desires for an ideal, together with Spiridion's oppressed past, predispose Spiridion to find a woman (or cause) worthy of martyrdom. These are just some of the filters through which Medea's story passes, and which Lee expects readers to detect.

Spiridion's childhood trauma, then, is a primary feature of his relationship with Medea, and the clearest reason for his pseudo-religious devotion to her. As Maureen Moran points out in her case for the overlap between Pater's 'brain-building' narratives and James Sully's theories of the 1870s and 1880s regarding child psychology and mental evolution, 'the physical qualities of the home environment are central to the protagonists' emotional, intellectual and moral development'.[76] Lee also read Sully's work and relays through 'Amour Dure' his view that traumatic experiences or identity crises in childhood are 'maladjustments' with the power to disrupt the moral and mental development of an individual, and thus disrupt the progressive evolution of the species. Lee was like many of her contemporaries in this regard; where there were theories of civilized advancement and evolution, there were converse theories of degeneration and decay, and Spiridion's loss of emotional control and fetishistic 'passion-inspired hallucinations' of Medea are one example.[77]

Spiridion's name perhaps comes closest etymologically to 'spiration', a noun with two meanings: either, 'The action of breathing as a creative or life-giving function of the Deity', 'An inspiration, a spiritual influence'; or, a 'spiral conformation' (*OED*). Spiridion's relationship with Medea, then, is one of

[76]Moran, 'Walter Pater's House Beautiful', p. 292; the narratives she discusses are 'The Child in the House' (1878), *Marius*, *Gaston de Latour*, and 'Emerald Uthwart' (1892).
[77]Block, 'James Sully, Evolutionist Psychology, and Late Victorian Gothic Fiction', p. 443.

religious idealization and worship connected to his physical health and sensitivity. As he fetishizes her images and memory, even kissing and cradling the objects she has 'left' for him, he becomes her votary and a willing martyr. Spiridion is a hopeful aspirant, but the deaths by dagger littering Medea's path are evocative of a spire as a 'sharp point' that signals the dangers of idealism. The *aspiring* quality of Spiridion's nature is both his strength and weakness. Baldwin's 'gospel of lucidity', for instance, depends upon individuals who 'accustom [them]selves to sympathize, to renounce, to aspire' (*A* 41), as Spiridion does in connection with Medea. Baldwin offers 'the sort of spirituality which we modern people can aspire towards' (*A* 289), but achieving 'a general lucidity of mind' must accompany an individual's aspirations; 'a power of reasoning correctly, of sifting away prejudice and falsehood' (*A* 41–42) must join habitual aspiration and sympathizing. Such 'lucidity of mind' is best achieved via friendship. Without friendship, Spiridion's relationships can only be fetishistic.

The term fetishism explains the primitive mental process of projecting human attributes onto inanimate objects, in effect anthropomorphizing them and creating a 'double'. It is derived from '*feitiço*', the word originally used by fifteenth-century Portuguese sailors to describe the 'charmed' or 'magical' relationship they witnessed between West Africans and their talismans; the term emerges from an imperial perception of hierarchical cultural difference, but Portuguese sailors significantly chose to describe the strange practices they witnessed in Africa by using the same word for the rosary in their Catholic tradition.[78] Fetishism, then, conceptually rests upon a complex web of similarity and difference that is very like sympathy, particularly as it was being reevaluated and understood in the context of psychological aesthetics. Both fetishism and sympathy are processes that indicate some form of crossing boundaries and existence in a borderland where material and spiritual, living and dead, or present and past overlap. In this way, Spiridion's employment of a sympathetic historic

[78]For an intellectual history of nineteenth-century conceptions of the fetish and fetishism, see Logan, *Victorian Fetishism*, particularly pp. 7–14 for the term's history.

method, or *Einfühlung*, transitions into his formation of fetishistic relationships with objects associated with Medea, thus anticipating and mirroring the shift in meaning that occurred for this German word in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. From the sympathetic historicism of Herder's impartial historian wanting 'to feel into everything', in the field of psychological aesthetics *Einfühlung* later came to signify 'aesthetic responsiveness', or 'the process of emotional transferal into an external form'.[79]

Fetishism, much like sympathy or the new aesthetic interpretation of *Einfühlung*, collapses the distinction between material and spiritual, or objective and subjective, worlds. Significant to this point is the story behind the new application of the German term, which Carolyn Burdett describes:

> The word had first been used as a noun in an 1873 work by the aesthetician Robert Vischer (1847–1933), *Ueber das optische Formgefühl: ein Beitrag zur Aesthetik* ['On the Optical Sense of Form: A Contribution to Aesthetics']. [...] Vischer coined a new term, *Einfühlung*, to describe the process [of symbolic injection of emotion into external forms]. Earlier uses of the verb form, *einfühlen*, go back to romantic thinkers such as Johann Gottfried Herder and Novalis. [...] [But] Vischer explains that the process of emotional transferal into an external form which he called *Einfühlung* was suggested to him by a book on dream interpretation. This was Karl Albert Scherner's 1861 *Das Leben des Traums* [The Life of the Dream].[80]

Burdett continues by quoting Vischer's reference to this book in his work 'On the Optical Sense of Form: A Contribution to Aesthetics' (1873):

> Here it was shown how the body, in responding to certain stimuli in dreams, objectifies itself in spatial forms. Thus it unconsciously projects its own bodily form — and with this also the soul — into the form of the object. From this I derived the notion that I call "empathy" [*Einfühlung*].[81]

[79] Burdett, 'Is Empathy the End of Sentimentality?', p. 261; Burdett, 'Vernon Lee's Psychological Aesthetics', p. 15. See further, Burdett, 'Vernon Lee's Psychological Aesthetics', pp. 13–22 for a history of this term in the context of German psychological aesthetics.

[80] Burdett, 'Vernon Lee's Psychological Aesthetics', pp. 14–15.

[81] Burdett, 'Vernon Lee's Psychological Aesthetics', p. 15. Vischer's work has been translated and published in Robert Vischer, *Empathy, Form, and Space: Problems in German Aesthetics, 1873–1893*, edited by Harry Francis Mallgrave and Eleftherios Ikonomou (Santa Monica, CA: Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1994), pp. 89–123. See also Benjamin Morgan, 'Critical Empathy: Vernon Lee's Aesthetics and the Origins of Close Reading', *Victorian Studies* 55:1 (2012), 31–56, in *Project Muse*. Accessed 18 February 2016, for examination of the

In noting this transition in meaning, we see that Lee brings her readers into contact with a broad spectrum of definitions of 'culture' that moves from engagement with *Einfühlung* as historic method to *Einfühlung* as a process of 'aesthetic responsiveness' and self-projection very like fetishism.[82] Spiridion's heightened 'aesthetic responsiveness' can be construed as very like Lee's theorizing in *Juvenilia* on the 'faculty of association' as in part a 'pestilent faculty, leading to insincerity, injustice, and stupid wastefulness' (*J* I, 30), but it is also desirable as a primary characteristic of the diaphanous figure or aesthetic critic, conversely suggesting that fetishistic or imaginative self-projection is an 'excellent, useful, and most honourable' thing (*J* I, 31).

The context of fetishism extends to Lee's choice of name for Medea da Carpi. Christa Zorn turns to her name's 'mythological connotation [which] brings a pagan otherness into the Christian setting of Urbania' and recalls the pagan Medea's murder of her children.[83] However, I conclude that with 'da Carpi' Lee was also making a direct reference to the liberal figure and printing work of Aldo Pio Manuzio from J.A. Symonds's second volume of *Renaissance in Italy: The Revival of Learning* (1877).[84] Aldo Pio Manuzio is a fifteenth-century Italian Renaissance figure who 'resid[ed] as a client in the princely house of Carpi'.[85] Symonds records the selfless work of this man to '[bequeath] to the world Greek literature' (recall the 'Greek look' of Medea's handwriting) — 'No man could have been more generously anxious than he was to serve the cause of scholarship

history of the term *Einfühlung* in relation to Lee's 'critical empathy' and a wider context of somatic reading practices. Morgan discusses Vischer's and Lee's theorizing regarding embodied responses to objects at length.

[82] Burdett, 'Is Empathy the End of Sentimentality?', p. 261. In light of new theories like Vischer's of 'aesthetic responsiveness' to objects, the detail in 'Amour Dure' regarding the Duke Robert's orders to have his soul 'tied' to a silver idol and literally placed within his statue appears as a tongue-in-cheek fusion of advancements in psychological aesthetics with 'science of culture' theories of primitive animism or fetishism.

[83] Zorn, *Vernon Lee*, pp. 161, 162.

[84] John Addington Symonds, *Renaissance in Italy,* 7 vols (London: Smith, Elder, & Co.), II, pp. 271–78. The volumes appeared between 1875 and 1886: *The Age of Despots*, I, 1875; *The Revival of Learning*, II, 1877; *The Fine Arts*, III, 1877; *Italian Literature, Parts I and II*, IV and V, 1881; *The Catholic Reaction, Parts I and II*, VI and VII, 1886.

[85] Symonds, *Renaissance in Italy*, II, p. 270.

by the widest possible diffusion of books at a moderate price' — and connects him with Urbino, the medieval city which Lee renames Urbania.[86] Aldo also printed Latin and Italian texts. Symonds calls the burst in printing activity Aldo led as 'the fervid days of humanism at its noon', adding that Aldo 'rescued [books] from book-buriers', or 'selfish bibliomaniacs, who tried to hoard their treasures from the public and refused them to the press'.[87] His drive to disseminate and diffuse learning contrasts with Medea's bewitching role and arrest of Spiridion's scholarship.

Peter Logan explains that, when it comes to a 'fetish dialectic', interaction is central: 'the discourse of fetishism is never about the fetish itself; instead, its business lies in constructing the sequence of relationships that produce the notion of the fetish'.[88] 'Amour Dure' is about such a sequence. The space between Spiridion and Medea is the forum in which a 'fetish dialectic' takes place and tangible objects are important mediators stimulating 'interaction'. Pater and Lee were both interested in crossing boundaries and in what exists in the 'borderland' space of exchange, and their shared interest in the psychology of animism and fetishism attests to this, as we see via Lee's scrutiny of Spiridion's fanciful fetishization of objects related to Medea. The collapse in distinction between the material and spiritual is something Pater appreciated aesthetically and distinctly incorporated into 'brain-building' narratives like 'The Child in the House' and *Marius*. For Pater, Catherine Maxwell argues, 'the conceptual boundary line which marks one thing off from another, [...] is *permeable*, a point of mergence and fusion', and in his 'habit of collapsing boundaries' he locates an *ethical* advantage.[89] Jeffrey Wallen notes that throughout *The Renaissance*, 'Pater is fascinated by moments of contact and transmission, by possibilities of combination

[86]Symonds, *Renaissance in Italy*, II, pp. 276, 275. See Symonds, II, p. 277: 'the MSS. of the "Lysistrata" and "Thesmophoriazusae" were afterwards discovered at Urbino'. See Zorn, *Vernon Lee*, p. 191 n21 on Lee's use of Urbino as a model for Urbania.
[87]Symonds, *Renaissance in Italy*, V, p. 251; II, p. 276 n1.
[88]Logan, *Victorian Fetishism*, p. 9.
[89]Maxwell, *Second Sight*, p. 80. Emphasis added.

and reconciliation', which 'let us enter into the experiences of others'.[90]

A similar fascination with historic moments of exchange and fusion appears throughout Lee's work, as she often introduces and fuses Christian and pagan practices and highlights the gradual blending of distinct periods over time through the permutation of physical traces. Like Pater, Lee was impressed by moments in history when periods 'met', and she was drawn to the physical evidence these meetings left behind. In 'Pictor Sacrilegus: A.D. 1483' (1891), for instance, Lee 'retrac[es]' her steps in Rome 'to such parts of the city as bear witness to the strange meeting of centuries; where the Middle Ages have altered to their purposes, or filled with their significance, the ruined remains of Antiquity'; these rare places are 'impressive, [...] fragmentary and enigmatic'.[91] In effect, these places invite subjective associations. But, to be moral and practically productive, the moment when one 'faces *fact* as *fact*' must intervene.

Spiridion focuses too much upon the other half of the 'double attitude' Lee prescribes: 'preserv[ing] our human preferences'.[92] His fanciful conflation of his history of oppression as a Catholic and Pole with Medea's oppression as a woman turns out to be a dangerous practice. Lee implies he should maintain distance by retaining the kind of self- and other-awareness founded upon the critically disinterested practice of recognizing (and respecting) differences. Paintings, statues, manuscripts, and music, however, call forth and command the instinctively egotistical aspect of Spiridion's personality, one insufficiently moderated by social interaction, productive collaborations, or the compassionate and sympathetic attitudes towards others that Lee considers self-cultivation. Fetishistic relationships are ultimately one-sided; Spiridion only *fancies* that he understands Medea, and as a many-sided but isolated figure with a well-developed range of sensitivities and sharp capacity for sympathetic exchange, he is a victim of 'the perfect arts'.

[90] Jeffrey Wallen, 'Alive in the Grave: Walter Pater's Renaissance', *ELH* 66:4 (1999), 1033–51 (p. 1037), in *Project Muse*. Accessed 15 September 2017.

[91] Vernon Lee, 'Pictor Sacrilegus: A.D. 1483', *Contemporary Review* 60 (1891), 188–206 (p. 188), in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 19 September 2017.

[92] Lee, *Gospels of Anarchy*, p. 39.

His senses are only refined for continued interaction with art objects that in turn increase his isolation, vanity, and egoism. This is why many-sided, cultivated society is needful. As Lee writes: 'bigotry and fanaticism are dangers to every individual. [...] To combat it we require to hear every one, to allow every variety of human being to express itself; we require to compare opinion with opinion, [...] to taste of all that we may select in everything'.[93]

Double identity: Spiridion as Lee-proxy & as suppressor of his past

In her reliance upon the same sources directing the emergence of a British discourse of psychological aesthetics in the context of evolutionary theory as Pater, Lee places a series of covert references to Spiridion's childhood throughout her supernatural tale.[94] Very like Lee's later self-experimentation in her Commonplace Book IV, Spiridion's diary entries reveal much about his 'aesthetic life [...] with in' and the unconscious contrivances of his 'faculty of association'. In reading, we witness Spiridion's process of projecting and creating what he desires from materials at hand. 'So it is true! I was reserved for something wonderful in this world. I have at last found that after which my soul has been straining', he writes to himself in his ecstasy that Medea has called upon him to act on her behalf (50). Even the prospect of death is not troubling in the face of having his ideal desires 'satisfied': 'I must die. I always felt that I should not live long; a gipsy in Poland told me once that I had in my hand the cut-line which signifies a violent death' (53).

There are enough parallels between Lee and Spiridion to suggest that 'Amour Dure' is a precursor of her self-experimentation with the composition of 'The Virgin of the Seven Daggers', and the correlation between Spiridion's mental

[93] Lee, 'Deterioration of Soul', p. 943.

[94] I refer, primarily, to the influence of works by Alexander Bain, James Sully, Grant Allen, Herbert Spencer, and Charles Darwin.

habits and fetishism — his immature and irresponsible childlike self-projection — throws an additional layer of interpretation across Lee's struggle with the 'faculty of association'. Lee extends to Spiridion a complex proxy-relationship like the one set up between herself and the figure Baldwin, likewise complicating her real identity with his fictional one. The first diary entry is dated 20 August 1885, likely near the date of Lee's initial composition of the story.[95] When Spiridion first arrives in Urbania, he is 'twenty-four, and known in literature', just as Lee was when *Studies of the Eighteenth Century in Italy* (1880) was published (35).[96]

Also like Lee (as evidenced by the quality of her observations in Tangier and southern Spain), Spiridion is less 'Dryasdust' pedant and more traveling ethnographer; he instinctively fuses pedantic training with imaginative responsiveness.[97] His interest in curious cultural details that suggest primitive 'survivals' in modern times, for example, surfaces in his record of his landlord Sor Asdrubale's belief in a superstitious ritual that reveals winning lottery numbers:

> [I]f only you lay a table for two, light four candles made of dead men's fat, and perform certain rites about which he is not very precise, you can, on Christmas Eve and similar nights, summon up San Pasquale Baylon, who will write you the winning numbers of the lottery upon the smoked back of a plate, if you have previously slapped him on both cheeks and repeated three Ave Marias. (8)

The hilarity of Sor Asdrubale's combination of local superstition and Catholicism to greedy purpose (a comical synthesis of spirituality with materialism) shows to what irrational lengths the human mind may go in devising illusory means of fulfilling one's desires. Elsewhere, as Spiridion observes the locals in Urbania, he

[95] Lee references her editing of *Medea da Carpi* in two letters to her mother. See: Lee, *Letters*, p. 229 (4 August 1886); p. 231 (13 August 1886).

[96] Newman also suggests Lee leaves personal traces of herself upon Spiridion, such as the gift of a red rose from Medea, which mirrors the touching gift of a white rose from Kit Anstruther-Thomson, given to Lee during her period of crisis in the aftermath of discovering Robinson's engagement. This suggestion is interesting but not likely chronologically. Lee composed this part of the story for publication in February 1887 and the gifting of the white rose did not happen until August of that year. See Newman, 'The Archival Traces of Desire', p. 75.

[97] Pertinent to this fusion of methods is Evangelista, 'Vernon Lee in the Vatican'. Evangelista discusses aestheticism in relation to the transition from historicist and philological methods to ethnographic and archaeological methods that privileged material objects over texts and imagination over scholarly linguistic analysis.

is very like Lee in Tangier in his associations between people and familiar artwork, and treatment of life as tableaux: 'loitering about, great, brawny, low-headed youngsters, [are] like the particoloured bravos in Signorelli's frescoes; the beautiful boys, like so many young Raphaels' (6). He associates women he sees with 'Madonnas or St. Elizabeths, [...] with their clogs firmly poised on their toes and their brass pitchers on their heads' (6). The three daughters of his landlord are like 'the three Fates in person, even to the distaffs, and their black cats' (7). He treats life like art, and even refers to the associationist theory informing Lee's aestheticism, coming tantalizingly close to realizing what ails him: 'Things, all these, which I may have seen elsewhere, stored unawares in my brain, and which may have come out, somehow, in a dream; I have heard physiologists allude to such things' (46).

Yet, Spiridion remains ignorant of the mechanism and illusory effects of the 'faculty of association', and Lee composes his story in such a way that it is up to the reader to note and piece together his narrative's 'tortuosities'. If the 'aesthetic life' has its own set of 'sympathies and desires' that hunger for 'food' in sympathy with earlier satisfying impressions, then what are the earlier satisfying impressions driving Spiridion's associations? What material things or sensory experiences in the present trigger Spiridion's 'broken impressions' from the past? Lee takes two things that seem personally significant in her own imagination — snow and blue-and-white-robed Madonnas — and places references to these throughout Spiridion's diary entries in conjunction with expressions of his thoughts and feelings related to Medea. These items also recall *The Renaissance* and connect 'Amour Dure' with Lee's revisions of Pater's diaphanous figure and vision for modern self-cultivation.

We can consider two motifs in the tale: the presence of snow, and patterns of white on a blue background. In charting these, I introduce an analysis of Lee's use of 'Amour Dure' to respond to Pater's aestheticism and look to how we can trace the components driving Spiridion's 'aesthetic life'. In 'Luca della Robbia',

Pater describes this famous artist's low-relief sculpture: 'I suppose nothing brings the real air of a Tuscan town so vividly to mind as those pieces of pale blue and white porcelain, by which he is best known, like fragments of the milky sky itself fallen into the cool streets and breaking into the darkened churches'.[98] Pater notes, 'in his nobler terra-cottas, he never introduces colour into the flesh, keeping mostly to blue and white, the colours of the Virgin Mary'.[99] In the same essay, Pater turns to Michelangelo's *non-finito* sculpture:

> Something of the wasting of that snow-image which he moulded at the command of Piero de' Medici, when the snow lay one night in the court of the *Pitti* palace, [...] lurks about [his sculpture], [...] that incompleteness [...] is his way of etherealising pure form, of relieving its hard realism, and communicating to it breath, pulsation, the effect of life.[100]

Opposite the Ducal Palace at Urbino is the Church of San Domenico, a Gothic building with an early Renaissance portal and a blue and white relief in the lunette by Luca della Robbia (c. 1451) depicting the Madonna and Child. Blue and white, as Pater states, are widely recognized as colours of the Virgin Mary, and Polish art principally renders the Madonna dressed in a white robe beneath a light, sky-blue cloak. The Madonna of the Italian Renaissance most typically appears in a dark blue or black cloak over red robes. Christa Zorn, for instance, 'twigs' the link between Medea da Carpi and Piero Della Francesca's *Madonna della Misericordia* (1445–62). When Spiridion sees Medea in the church at night, 'She appears in the red and black garb of the Compassionate Madonna'.[101]

As a mother, Medea is a perverted 'Madonna'. The passing references to her son Bartolommeo suggest that her scheming and criminal activity is motivated by a misused maternal desire to protect and provide for him. She also distorts Mariana imagery in other ways. The village superstitions that crowd round her image evoke both Virgin Mary and devil. The Vice-Prefect's son remembers being 'threaten[ed]' as a child 'with a visit from Madonna Medea, who rode in the sky on

[98] Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. 53.
[99] Pater, *The Renaissance*, pp. 59–60.
[100] Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. 57.
[101] Zorn, *Vernon Lee*, p. 162.

a black he-goat' (27). Spiridion reveres her as 'the Lady of my thoughts' (31), and when he questions whether or not he actually saw Medea in his nightly church-visit, he records, 'I saw her, [...] standing there, in the full blaze of the altar' (47), indicating further that he conflates Medea's image with that of the Virgin Mary.

The more we understand Spiridion and his past, the more we see his image reflected in Medea and note that *his* personal history and associations drive his fixation. Simultaneously, we see that Lee's wider aesthetic project drives her portrayals of these figures. We can document that the circular Spiridion-Medea union is part of her broader response to Pater's vision of the diaphanous figure. 'Amour Dure — Dure Amour', as Medea's 'device' or 'posy' (18), signifies the 'closed' aestheticism of the school of 'art for art's sake' that Lee was to critique most explicitly in her 'Valedictory' essay. Christa Zorn notes that Medea da Carpi as *femme fatale* reinterprets Pater's ekphrastic 'La Gioconda'.[102] The 'germinal principle' of 'La Gioconda' is 'the unfathomable smile, always with a touch of something sinister in it'.[103] Of Medea da Carpi's 'Tight eyelids and tight lips', Spiridion records 'a somewhat sinister seductiveness' (17). Her beauty is 'voluptuous yet cold' and 'the more it is contemplated, the more it troubles and haunts the mind' (18). Medea's history initially reminds Spiridion 'of Bianca Cappello, and [...] Lucrezia Borgia' (9), just as the Mona Lisa represents 'the sins of the Borgias' for Pater, but while Pater's description rests on 'Lady Lisa [...] stand[ing] as the embodiment of the old fancy, the symbol of the modern idea', Lee's version 'includes the viewer's perspective': ' "Amour Dure" not only represents the mythical female object but reveals the relationship between the object and the maker'.[104]

In Lee's version, Pater's symbol of modernity is reconstituted to turn attention *away* from Pater's emphasis upon the art object's emblematic potential and *towards* the space wherein the relationship between object and person is

[102] See Zorn, *Vernon Lee*, pp. 157–68.
[103] Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. 79.
[104] Zorn, *Vernon Lee*, p. 165.

enacted. Her focus no longer falls upon the object as a grandiose symbol of 'All the thoughts and experience of the world', but upon a creative process of exchange.[105] By emphasizing *how* an object receives meaning — a (fetishistic) process of transferring (the semblance of) life to an object or a (creative) process of fashioning meaning from individual feelings and associations that make up the 'broken impressions' of our memories, anxieties, fears, and desires — Lee infuses Pater's symbol of human history and experience with the life and 'vitality' she thought it lacked. For instance, in invoking Pater's 'La Gioconda', Medea has 'a strange refinement, and, [...] air of mystery' (17); she 'sits like that of the antique Arethusa on a long, supple, swan-like neck' (18), a description with subterranean, agile, and formidable connotations. References to Pater's essay 'Leonardo da Vinci' also abound with the effect of contributing to the distinction Lee wishes to make between 'art for art's sake' and 'art for the sake of life'. Pater writes of da Vinci's 'face[s] of doubtful sex, [...] with something *voluptuous* and full in the eyelids and the lips', which combine with 'Leonardo's type of womanly beauty' wherein 'the dainty *oval* of the face' is accentuated, as in Medea.[106] Leonardo's figures are 'clairvoyants, through whom [...] material things rise to that subtlety of operation which constitutes them spiritual, where only the finer nerve and the keener touch can follow'.[107] For Leonardo, 'the exquisite effect woven' into his work by his 'unique temperament' was 'an end in itself — a perfect end'.[108]

However, in displaying this 'perfect end' in narrative form, Lee shows that the effect of Spiridion's 'finer nerve' and 'keener touch' in imbibing Medea's image and sympathetically retelling her story looks much more like (degenerative) possession than (healthy) inspiration. Together, Spiridion and Medea da Carpi form a closed, ever-tightening circle; whenever Spiridion comes across Medea's image, her 'mouth [...] is a little too tight' (17), her eyelids 'a little tight across the eyes' (33), her 'lips, a little tight across the mouth' (33). Moreover, the frequent

[105] Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. 188.
[106] Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. 74. Emphasis added.
[107] Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. 74.
[108] Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. 75.

references to Spiridion's childhood, which increase as the narrative draws closer and closer to Spiridion's death, reinforce the closed pattern, and his memories of Christmases in Posen when he eagerly anticipated the arrival of the Christmas-child result in a macabre, closed-circle fusion of life and death: Spiridion's death at midnight on Christmas Eve coincides with the moment commemorating Jesus's birth. We learn, too, that Medea da Carpi died in December. Lee makes vacuous rather than grand the 'perfect end' Pater refers to in the 'Leonardo da Vinci' essay: her conclusion collapses it in on itself.

Medea also bears a resemblance to the 'hard, gem-like flame' of the 'Conclusion'. Her motto 'Amour Dure — Dure Amour' is engraved on four 'lozenges' — diamond-shaped plates — linked at intervals along her necklace. There is hardness to her person, both in its image (her forehead and throat are like 'alabaster' and 'marble') and in her cruel history. She has a glittering, iridescent quality. Her figure is 'dazzlingly fair' (17); she has 'a purity of line, a dazzling splendour of skin' (33) that recalls 'that fine edge of light', 'the clear ring, the eternal outline of the antique' in 'Diaphaneitè'.[109] Much like the Virgin and the Infanta, in her large portrait Medea wears a 'stiff brocade of skirts and stomacher, stiffer for plaques of embroidered silver flowers and rows of seed pearl' (32).

In Pater's aesthetics, white signifies the 'colourless [...] purity' of his diaphanous figure, and in 'Amour Dure' white is linked to Spiridion and Medea, conversely used to track the spiritual degeneration of Spiridion. When Spiridion sees Medea's life-sized portrait for the first time, his white face reflects in Medea's forehead 'white and hard', and her throat 'white as marble' (32–33). White is also present in Spiridion's careful note of snow in his diary entries. As the Christmas season approaches, snow makes its way further down the mountainside until it comes into the city. The whiteness sweeping across the landscape brings a 'sparkling' iridescent effect, and the references to snow are accompanied by the increasingly disturbing references to Medea. On 13 October, Spiridion marginally

[109] Pater, 'Appendix: Diaphaneitè', pp. 154, 156.

notes, '(the highest hills are just tipped with snow)' (18). On 20 November, he recounts showing the surrounding countryside to a visiting 'Bavarian Professor of mediæval history' and together they ride 'up the desolate Apennine valleys' to see the villa where Medea was once confined by Duke Robert. They approach 'the rocks of snow clad peak' until 'the newly fallen snow [is] close' (28). The mountain-tops are 'wrapped in thick grey cloud' and Spiridion looks forward to seeing them on the next day as 'round masses of snow against the cold blue sky' (28). When Spiridion and the Bavarian Professor arrive at the villa, they explore the rooms and come upon the fireplace 'beautifully carved with Cupids on a blue ground', and upon their return they are 'caught in the skirt of a snowstorm': 'The sight of the snow falling gently, of the earth and bushes whitened all round, made me feel back at Posen, once more a child. I sang and shouted, to my companion's horror' (29).

Spiridion records this childish reaction and reference to Posen, but without initiating any careful (self)examination of his childhood. Instead, that night he retires into his imagination and thinks only of Medea: 'I lay awake [...] thinking of Medea da Carpi mewed up, in winter, in that solitude of Sant' Elmo, the firs groaning, the torrent roaring, the snow falling all round; miles and miles away from human creatures' (30). On 25 November, Spiridion unexpectedly comes across Medea's life-sized portrait, catching sight of a familiar view from the window just before the 'uncanny' discovery: 'the piece of the line of Monte Sant' Agata and the Leonessa, covered with snow, against the sky' (31). The white-on-blue is further present when he examines Medea's portrait, her white 'long slender neck, and the face with bared forehead' are painted against a 'harsh, dark blue' background (32), synchronously recalling the snow and blue sky, the white-blue reliefs of Luca della Robbia, the fireplace with Cupids, and — most significantly — white-blue Polish Madonnas.

With the aid of such clues as these, we see that Spiridion associates white against blue with Medea, but remains unaware of the root cause for his attraction.

Lee insinuates that one-sided bigotry or racism like that of the *Kulturkampf* (to return to Otto von Bismarck's subjection of the Catholic Church to state control) is exactly the kind of 'maladjustment' that negatively affects the individual psyche and degenerates the spiritual or moral health of social fabric over time. For Spiridion, it has created a 'double' repressed Polish Catholic identity that emerges in fits. The Christmas season and Catholic preparations were no doubt accompanied by wintry whiteness at Posen; an image of the Virgin Mary is traditionally paraded in a procession at the midnight mass, or *Pasterka*. When Spiridion momentarily catches the scent of incense coming from a midnight mass celebration on his way to vandalize the Duke Robert's statue, he almost succumbs to his sudden urge to go inside. A bizarre reference to wolves invading snow-laden Urbania — 'one can imagine the wolves trooping down through the dry scrub and beleaguering this town' (54) — only makes sense in the context of a Polish legend that the Virgin Mary protects people in the forty days following Christmas. To commemorate Polish celebrations of Candlemas Day (February 2), she is sometimes depicted safeguarding homes from wolves using a candle like those blessed in Candlemas Day rituals.[110] In order to *really* follow the details of Spiridion's narrative, one must know (or go and learn) something of Polish Catholic traditions. As in 'The Virgin of the Seven Daggers', Lee simultaneously invokes a foreign culture while also signaling her personal veneration for the Virgin Mary.

On the next date with a diary entry, 10 December, Spiridion records he has accepted an invitation from the Vice-Prefect's son to travel to the coast, taking him away from snowy scenes: 'I had left Urbania wrapped in snow-clouds; [...] the sunshine, the sea, the bustle of the little port on the Adriatic seemed to do me good. I came back to Urbania another man' (34). By 14 December, however, this change is undone and Lee recalls the *non-finito* 'snow-image' from 'Luca della Robbia':

> It snowed yesterday for the first time in the city, for two good hours. When it

[110] In his painting *Legend of the Black Madonna*, the Polish artist Piotr Stachiewicz (1858–1938) depicts the Virgin Mary as the *Matka Boska Gromniczna*, or 'Mother of God of the Blessed "Thunder Candle" ', using a candle to ward off a pack of wolves. She is set in a blue and white snowy landscape with a peasant home behind her in the distance.

> had done, I actually went into the square and taught the ragamuffins to make a snow-man; no, a snow-woman; and I had the fancy to call her Medea. (34–35)

His unconscious associations again coincide with his imaginative engagement with Medea, now both embodied and 'etherealis[ed]' as a pure white figure against a blue sky. In the context of Michelangelo's vibratory *non-finito* method of 'communicating [...] breath, pulsation, the effect of life', Spiridion's act is ritualistic.[111] His molding of Medea as 'snow-woman' is revitalizing, like the vibratory incantation of his singing. In this moment, Spiridion feels like a child again: 'I feel as if I were the greatest historian of the age; and, at the same time, as if I were a boy of twelve' (34–35).

On 19 December, 'The snow-clad mountains sparkle against the bright blue sky' (44). Spiridion tries to describe the seasonal fair in the square but cuts himself off: 'Bah! why do I write this trash? [...] While I am forcing myself to write about bells, and Christmas festivities, [...] one idea goes on like a bell within me: Medea, Medea! Have I really seen her, or am I mad?' (45). As Spiridion prepares to obey Medea and mutilate the statue of Duke Robert, references to blue and white appear more frequently in conjunction with childhood Christmas memories, both of which are repeatedly conflated with Spiridion's imaginary dealings with Medea. He steals a hatchet, 'unable to resist the sight of the shining blade' (51) and later remarks, 'The bright sun [...] make[s] the snow on the mountains glitter, the blue air to sparkle like steel. [...] Somehow this cold makes me feel wonderfully calm — it seems to bring back to me my boyhood' (54). On Christmas Eve day, sights and smells evoke Spridion's strongest childhood recollection yet:

> As I walked up the rough, steep, paved alleys, slippery with frost, and with their vista of snow mountains against the sky, and passed by the church steps strewn with box and laurel, with the faint smell of incense coming out, there returned to me — I know not why — the recollection, almost the sensation, of those Christmas Eves long ago at Posen and Breslau, when I walked as a child along the side streets. (54–55)

[111] Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. 57.

The cold makes Spiridion 'feel wonderfully calm' (54), but 'all seems a dream; [...] as if time had ceased, [...] myself absorbed into I know not what passive dreamland' (55). These details are very suggestive of contemporary interpretations of Buddhist nirvana, something to which Lee refers more directly in the context of modern pessimism in *Baldwin*.[112] Here, it supports her message of the likelihood of a modern 'deterioration of soul'. J. Jeffrey Franklin locates debates surrounding the Buddhist concept of nirvana within a wider discourse concerning the role of the 'soul' in modern culture:

> Nirvana [...] must be nothing. But, as such, it served a number of vital functions [...] within Victorian culture [...] it [...] was the *doppelgänger*, the necessary twin, [...] the complementary dark side of Victorian progressivism. [...] As progress was the promise of future fullness or completeness, Western nihilism was an expression of the accompanying emptiness or hollowness.[113]

At its climax, Spiridion's world is 'nothing', only blue and white symbolic of his (self)annihilation: 'I hurried along the narrow lane, with the moonlight blue upon the white walls' (57). Any 'spiritual' potential Spiridion might have contributed to society's advancement is made empty and hollow.

'On Friendship': missed opportunity & the Vice-Prefect's son

For Lee, the converse of (one-sided) fetishism, and the thing that has the power to mitigate the negative and degenerative effects of subjectivity, is (many-sided) friendship. Richard Dellamora calls Lee 'a virtuoso of friendship', citing the dialogue 'On Friendship' collected into *Althea*, which first appeared in the *Contemporary* as 'The Friendships of Baldwin' (1892).[114] In stealing the hatchet and committing an act of vandalism, Spiridion acts out Lee's warning in her review 'Deterioration of Soul': 'we may be allowing ourselves to become, [...]

[112] See the reference to 'a blissful nirvana' in 'Of Doubts and Pessimism' (*B* 328).
[113] Franklin, *The Lotus and the Lion*, p. 186.
[114] Dellamora, 'Productive Decadence', p. 535.

semi-maniacs and semi-criminals, where we might, [have] [...] remained sane and harmless'.[115] As with the Baldwin dialogues, in 'Amour Dure' Lee relays James Sully's praise of the many-sided character made manifest in society through sympathetic interaction and friendship.

Carolyn Burdett notes that the ' "shareable" and sympathetic quality of aesthetic feeling is its key feature for [Alexander] Bain', in his associationist psychology, as it was for Sully; 'Sully, like Bain, aimed to ground aesthetic pleasure in an evolutionarily robust but nevertheless socially-oriented notion of shareable pleasure', one that is 'Productive of sympathy and thus functional as a type of social glue, [...] a physio-psychological aesthetics fitted for ethical purpose'.[116] As Burdett explains, for Bain and Sully in the context of associationism, 'Sympathy acts as a way of ballasting the individualized psycho-physiological self — with its sensorium tuned for pleasure — reconnecting it into a social fabric'.[117]

Spiridion's chance to become integrated into the social fabric of Urbania comes through the Vice-Prefect's son. This missed opportunity for friendship illustrates Lee's point that the absence of collaborative relationships wastes opportunities for both exceptional and average individuals 'to alter continually for the better' and 'to become, rather than to remain, absolutely sane', thereby assuming their share of responsibility for the gradual advancement of mankind.[118] As the stories in *Vanitas* are about how frivolous or narcissistic living is exacerbated and made permissible by the failure of individuals to truly befriend one another (in isolation, the talents of upper class individuals are wasted), the tales in *Hauntings* show that absence of friends renders genius obsolete. Each publication can be construed as a series of cautionary tales about the importance of 'healthy' collaboration and the kind of sympathetic sharing that emotionally and intellectually joins individuals. If friendship is absent, the result is a tendency to

[115]Lee, 'Deterioration of Soul', p. 941.
[116]Burdett, 'Vernon Lee's Psychological Aesthetics', p. 10.
[117]Burdett, 'Vernon Lee's Psychological Aesthetics', p. 11.
[118]Lee, 'Deterioration of Soul', p. 943.

(sympathetically) obsess over an idea, object, or illusion that wastes and destroys the value of an individual.

Spiridion and the Vice-Prefect's son, in fact, are perfectly suited to one another and to preventing such a fate. Spiridion is conducting a history of Urbania; the Vice-Prefect's son was raised as a child in Urbania. Spiridion specializes in German historicism but abhors its 'Dryasdust' methodology; the Vice-Prefect's son is an amateur archaeologist, able to introduce Spiridion to its imaginative and interactive methodologies. The only point in the narrative when Spiridion appears to recover some self-composure is when he spends a holiday on the coast with the Vice-Prefect's son. Reading between the lines, Spiridion mentions this young man so often that it is evident he wants to befriend Spiridion. He probably thinks he and Spiridion *are* close! The invitation to the coast may have been a gesture of concern and chance for the Vice-Prefect's son 'to metaphorically feel [Spiridion's] pulse or look at his tongue'.[119]

However, Spiridion's arrogance (another stereotypical Polish attribute) obstructs real friendship. Spiridion initially describes him as 'an amiable young man with a love-sick face and a languid interest in Urbanian history and archaeology, of which he is profoundly ignorant' (20). In November, when the Vice-Prefect's son remembers to tell Spiridion of the bogey stories of Medea, Spiridion calls him 'That idiot' (27) and when Spiridion receives the first of two letters (supposedly) from Medea, he blames the Vice-Prefect's son for 'play[ing] me a trick!' (38). When he finds that the church where his rendezvous with Medea is supposed to take place is shut, he considers 'pull[ing] the Vice-Prefect's son out of bed (for I felt sure that the joke was his)' (41). Knowing nothing 'about the symptoms of his soul's health or disease', Spiridion treats the Vice-Prefect's son unjustly, which makes Spiridion a modern diaphanous figure symptomatic of the age's 'likely' development of 'tendencies to habits destructive, if not to others directly, then indirectly through the impairing of our own physical and spiritual

[119]Lee, 'Deterioration of Soul', p. 940.

efficiency'.[120]

The Vice-Prefect's son — with his intimate knowledge of Urbania, dilettante interest in archaeology, and, quite simply, his efforts to be Spiridion's friend — is part of a more realistic dimension to Spiridion's experience in Italy. Spiridion seems incapable, however, of seeing these facts and never even records the Vice-Prefect's son's name. His obsession with Medea — marked by references to iridescence, Cupid, and the fireplace sculpture of a 'young boy' — displaces the potential for a synergetic and progressive friendship between himself and the Vice-Prefect's son, something Lee calls the 'queer comradeship of outlawed thought' in her 1896 review of *Degeneration*.[121] Spiridion, with his 'aesthetic life' craving 'satisfaction', lets himself believe that 'The possession of a woman like Medea is a happiness too great for a mortal man' (25); yet, according to Lee's dialogues, happiness and satisfaction are only truly achieved 'in the process of wondering what may be our duties to others' and Baldwin warns more than once that valuing happiness above responsibility is dangerous and destructive (*A* xvi).

Spiridion's role as religious votary is the antithesis of Baldwin's role as secular priest, and more than one of Lee's dialogue messages is compounded in 'Amour Dure'. Baldwin aims to replace imaginary views of the world with true views because only a true view of the world 'will tend to most practical good' (*A* 21). Spiridion's view of the world, meanwhile, is imaginary and his actions impractical. His death is the reverse of utility and his view of the world — with Medea (or his egoism) at its center — plainly does not tend to 'practical good'. His self-sacrifice accomplishes nothing, and even the collection of references to various religions that cluster round Medea signal the illusory 'phantasmagoria of Love' Lee describes in 'The Responsibilities of Unbelief' (*B* 53). Religious references to Medea include her associations with Mariana imagery and the villagers' superstitions; Spiridion compares her with the Hindu Juggernaut (24–25); Duke Robert associates her with the Sirens (13–14); and her past lover the

[120]Lee, 'Deterioration of Soul', pp. 940–41.
[121]Lee, 'Deterioration of Soul', p. 938.

Prinzivalle degli Ordelaffi died for her sake during mass 'on the festival of Easter Day' (14).[122] 'Love' in Lee's dialogues has a strange dual purpose: on one hand, it knits individuals together in a way that advances the development of mankind and brings it closer to 'the sort of spirituality which we modern people can aspire towards', making lives 'gradually more complex in the matter of sympathy' (*A* 289, 290); on the other hand, it is 'the Wizard who has evoked for us the *fata morgana* of an after life', leading individuals to 'shirk' their intellectual responsibilities and effect a retrograde motion in matters of religion and scientific advancement (*B* 53). The two pathways of 'Love' before Spiridion in 'Amour Dure' (Medea-obsession or friendship with the Vice-Prefect's son) are similarly opposed.

The distinction between the 'perfect arts' and the 'half-arts' from the dialogue 'On Novels' is also performed through the contrast delineated between Spiridion's relationship with Medea da Carpi and his (largely absent) relationship with the Vice-Prefect's son. The former set of interactions is non-reproductive or fetishistic, while the latter had the potential to be synergetic and fruitful. In the opening dialogue of *Althea*, Althea sees the importance of ridding oneself of 'that habit of looking at everything through religious spectacles', while Baldwin expresses his view:

> Every day I am more and more struck by the fact that the most devoted and enthusiastic creatures are usually the most unthinking and prejudiced, merely because they have never been taught that intellectual responsibility is a necessary part of moral responsibility. (*A* 32, 36)

It is a comment we could easily imagine Lee saying and, taken together with 'Amour Dure', further directs the reader's attention toward the didacticism at the heart of her fiction.

[122] The celebration of Christ's resurrection parallels Ordelaffi's death to highlight that his devotion to Medea is perhaps perceived by him as soteriological.

Vernon Lee's 'purification of the passions'

A suggestive detail that connects 'Amour Dure' with James Sully's *Sensation and Intuition* is the comparison between Medea da Carpi and Cleopatra when Spiridion comes across a piece of sculpture depicting Cleopatra using Medea's image (16–17). In *Sensation and Intuition*, Sully cites Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's (1729–1781) criticism of the French tragedian Pierre Corneille's (1606–1684) theatrical depiction of Cleopatra, a character critiqued by Lessing as 'a monster' who expresses 'the most senseless bravadoes of crime'; Lessing claims that next to this Cleopatra, 'Medea is virtuous and lovable' because 'all the cruelties which Medea resorts to, she resorts to out of jealousy'.[123]

Sully refers to Lessing's critique as part of his discussion of Aristotle's χαθαπσις (catharsis) or 'purification of the passions' in relation to theatrical tragedy: 'By the ideal excitation of these feelings [fear and pity] through dramatic representation, the actual emotions are to be regulated; that is, excited if dormant, and repressed if in excess, so that the spectator may be brought into that mean ethical state in which all virtue consists'.[124] Sully brings modern evolutionary theory to bear upon Aristotelian philosophy and cites Herbert Spencer:

> As Mr. Spencer well remarks, there is a certain need of pity in the human heart, which may appropriately be traced to the play of a deep and powerful instinct through innumerable generations. And tragedy, by supplying ideal channels for this sentiment, serves, [...] to lighten the mind of its pent-up emotional forces. Thus we may trace the effect of tragedy, like that of all art, to the play of natural sentiments, [...] It is true that art, chiefly by its unreality, serves to modify the action of these natural feelings.[125]

Lee's *Hauntings* tales, then, are intended as *regulatory*, fitted to complement the encouragement of rationality and instigation of intellectual debate effected via *Baldwin* and *Althea* by providing additional monitoring 'channels' for our emotions and aesthetic sensibilities.[126] The reader of Spiridion's tragic narrative,

[123] Sully, *Sensation and Intuition*, p. 329.
[124] Sully, *Sensation and Intuition*, p. 330.
[125] Sully, *Sensation and Intuition*, p. 333.
[126] Most of the *Vanitas* tales also end in some degree of tragedy.

thus, should be less likely to repress his present desires or past pain and ignore his responsibilities to others. Lee brings practical purpose to her aestheticism as she intends her fiction to mitigate the degenerative effects of the modern age, hoping even a few readers will gain the 'double attitude' that is 'the only attitude thoroughly true, just, kind, and really practical'.[127]

In the following two chapters, we turn to Vernon Lee's contemporary, the novelist and social activist Ada Ellen Bayly, known best while living as Edna Lyall, but comparatively unknown today. Although markedly different, especially her opinions regarding the role and value of self-sacrifice both in life and in relation to sympathy in literature, Lyall was equally invested in the practical application of fiction.

[127]Lee, *Gospels of Anarchy*, p. 39.

6 Edna Lyall & Charles Bradlaugh: Religion of Action, Sympathy of Sacrifice

> We go through life in two ways, either as lovers of uniformity, jealously shrinking from all that offends our taste and shocks our views of truth; or as lovers of unity, holding fast through evil report and good report to that love of humanity, that great quality of brotherhood, which will outlast all differences in religion and in politics.[1]

Murray's Magazine: A Home and Colonial Periodical for the General Reader sought to provide middle-class readers with instructive, moralizing, and informative material related to questions of the day 'without engaging in abstruse disquisitions or research'; as part of its edifying objective, it 'invite[d] discussion from representatives of opposing views'.[2] All authors signed their names and were held responsible for the content of their contributions. The first two issues presented Vernon Lee's tale 'Amour Dure: Passages from the Diary of Spiridion Trepka'. Two years later, the magazine serialized Edna Lyall's novella *Derrick Vaughan, Novelist* in three parts.[3]

[1] Edna Lyall, *To Right the Wrong,* 3 vols (London: Hurst and Blackett, Limited, 1894), II, p. 50.

[2] 'Advertisement', *The Athenaeum* 3086, (Dec 1886), p. 810, in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 19 September 2017.

[3] Edna Lyall, 'Derrick Vaughan, Novelist, Part I', *Murray's Magazine* 5:28 (1889), 433–51; Edna Lyall, 'Derrick Vaughan, Novelist, Part II', *Murray's Magazine* 5:29 (1889), 586–607; Edna Lyall, 'Derrick Vaughan, Novelist, Part III', *Murray's Magazine* 5:30 (1889), 738–62, in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 19 September 2017.

Vernon Lee and Edna Lyall (1857–1903) are a disparate duo. Their paths rarely cross, and their contributions to *Murray's Magazine* reflect their differences. The esoteric tone of 'Amour Dure' and its eerie cautions against isolation and habits that reinforce myopia and self-centeredness contrast sharply with the quality and content of *Derrick Vaughan*. Like all of Lyall's fiction, its tone is moralizing, gentle, and comforting. Where Lee's attempts to educate her readers are demanding, entailing a hard lesson in (re)learning *how* to read, Lyall's writing demonstrates her desire to console as she instructs.

Born within a year of one another, Lee and Lyall each sought literary occupations. They carefully selected pseudonyms for the literary marketplace that reflect their intentions. Lee derived her male authorial persona from the names of her father and step-brother, signifying her entry into the male-dominated realm of British aestheticism. She was audacious in her self-insertion into discourses on aestheticism, archaeology, Greek sculpture, and psychological aesthetics. Lyall's image is demure in comparison. She rearranged letters from her own name — Ada Ellen Bayly — to fashion a female *nom de plume* that would readily place her among established Christian New Woman authors who were already working towards replacing the 'sterility, even the self-centeredness of [male-dominated] academic theology' with a feminized practical Christianity or religion of action.[4]

While Lee published essays in prominent periodicals like the *Contemporary* and *Fortnightly*, and featured in literary magazines like the *Cornhill*, *Macmillan's*, and *Fraser's*, Lyall's work predominantly appeared in the *Christian World* and *Good Words*, periodicals directed at evangelical and non-conformist audiences in the lower middle classes. Yet, in spite of their differences, both women made names for themselves as spokespersons for variants of late nineteenth-century discourses on sympathy. Lee's investigative methods and heady reliance upon contemporary psychology and evolutionary science may contrast with Lyall's approach and conclusions, but they nevertheless coincide in their preoccupation

[4]Julie Melnyk, *Women's Theology in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Transfiguring the Faith of Their Fathers*, edited by Julie Melnyk (New York; London: Garland, 1998), p. xvii.

with how to respond to difference and relate to the other in socially constructive ways. Furthermore, they arrive at that response through constructing and developing fictional figures of masculine virtue who model and debate the nature of modern sympathy.

Lyall's career is a sympathetic enterprise in more than one sense. Not only does she write sensitively to assuage myriad anxieties crowding the minds and lives of lower-middle-class readers; she also aspires to instill in her readers a habitual sympathetic response to difference. This chapter discusses Lyall's view that sympathy opens the door to altruistic action via a moral or spiritual awakening. It examines the image Lyall cultivated for herself and her work as symbols of reassurance and sympathy in the literary marketplace. Her career substantiates contemporary views of sympathy as moral and practical and claims, alongside today's literary critics like Brigid Lowe, that sympathy's moral foundation remains intact. By her own example as political activist qua novelist, she instills the belief that sympathy can be used as a 'spur to action'.[5]

Sympathy for Lyall is not only unproblematic, but it is innately restorative. Unlike for Lee, alterity has no place in fiction for Lyall. She chooses *not* to confront difference, whether suppressing complexities raised by diversity through superficial acknowledgements of difference in her texts, or falling silent when confronted with alterity in the individuals with whom she interacted. Through a closer look at Lyall's engagement with the notorious freethinker Charles Bradlaugh and his daughter Hypatia Bradlaugh Bonner, and the stimulus that this engagement provided for her fictional writing, this chapter considers the nature and limitations of Lyall's particular brand of sympathy. She and her fiction, too, are representative of the cultural influences of the science of religion in Britain, but she skirts its edges, preferring to remain ostensibly 'outside' its more distinct contours; she may not deal with the science of religion as a discipline, but the popularity of her oeuvre signals the science of religion's impact upon the public's inclination towards a

[5]Lowe, *Victorian Fiction and the Insights of Sympathy*, p. 17.

culturally comparativist worldview.

Getting to know Edna Lyall

Ada Ellen Bayly was born on 25 March 1857 in Brighton. Named Ada after one of the heroines of *Bleak House*, Lyall lost her father when she was eleven and her mother when she was fourteen.[6] Her uncle Thomas Bradbury Winter was her guardian in childhood, and throughout her adult life she lived successively with her married sisters. Lyall's family was well rooted in Anglicanism, while remaining broad-minded in its Christian faith. She was raised with the influence of Baptist ancestry on both sides, although on her father's side there was also Unitarianism and on her mother's side there was Congregationalism.[7] Lyall's biographer describes her childhood home as 'a liberal, comprehensive atmosphere of thought' wherein the family was 'taught to see good in all forms of religion'.[8]

Lyall came from a family of lawyers, doctors, and clergy. Her father, Robert Bayly, had been a barrister of the Inner Temple, and Henry Fawcett, the Liberal MP for Brighton between 1865–74, was 'a family hero'.[9] Her mother's cousin was the Rev. Philip Newnham, who became the basis for the character Charles Osmond in Lyall's novels *Donovan: A Modern Englishman* (1882) and *We Two* (1884). Lyall's only brother, the Rev. Robert Burges Bayly, was a clergyman

[6] J.M. Escreet, *The Life of Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1904), p. 4.

[7] Clyde Binfield, 'Breadth from Dissent: Ada Ellen Bayly ("Edna Lyall") and Her Fiction', in: Peter D. Clarke, ed., *The Church and Literature* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2012), p. 353.

[8] Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 41. This is one of two biographies that appeared immediately following Lyall's death. See also Rev. George A. Payne, *"Edna Lyall": An Appreciation, With Biographical and Critical Notes* (London: John Heywood, 1903). There are no recent biographies of Lyall, but biographical entries can be found under 'Bayly, Ada Ellen' in the *ODNB* and 'Lyall, Edna' in *Orlando: Women's Writing in the British Isles*. I include a detailed record of my archival research on Lyall in the Appendix for the convenience of future researchers. Many of my attempts to locate Lyall's letters were unsuccessful and as a result I rely extensively upon Escreet's and Payne's biographies.

[9] Binfield, 'Breadth from Dissent', p. 350. See Lyall's reference to Fawcett as her 'first political hero' in Edna Lyall, 'My Early Literary Influences', *Ladies' Home Journal* 13:2 (1896), p. 13. Issued online by the University of Michigan on *Hathi Trust Digital Library*. Accessed 21 September 2017.

of the Church of England, while her brother-in-law Hampden Gurney Jameson — with whom she lived the longest and to whom she gave partial executive rights in her will — was a minister from a mixed Baptist and Congregational background. The Rev. Jameson's brother, Kingsbury Jameson, was a successor of F.D. Maurice at St. Edward's in Cambridge and was married to one of George MacDonald's daughters.[10] The Broad-Church influence of men like Maurice and MacDonald was prevalent in Lyall's life. Family connections also linked Lyall with the publishers of the *Christian World*, the weekly religious journal owned by James Greville Clarke (1854–1901) whose brother was married to one of Lyall's cousins. Lyall and the Clarkes shared Broad-Church ideals and Liberal political views.[11]

Although appealing to nonconformist audiences, Lyall remained a member of the Church of England throughout her life and regularly attended services. Her will includes instructions for the Church of England Service and her ashes were interred in her brother's country churchyard at the foot of a cross. In the biography by J.M. Escreet published after Lyall's death, letters of appreciation from Canon Ransley, the Archdeacon Wilberforce of Westminster, and the bishops of Hereford and Ripon conclude the volume.[12] Even so, Lyall's request for cremation and her appeal that 'no one wear Mourning for me unless it pains them very much to relinquish the old custom' indicate her life-long tendency towards reform and the unorthodox.[13]

Edna Lyall's popularity rose in 1884 with the publication of *We Two*. Before this, her novels *Won by Waiting* (1879) and *Donovan* (1882) received little attention with *Donovan* initially selling a meager 320 copies. Although Lyall sent the edition to William Gladstone (he described it as 'a very delicate and refined work of art'), it was not until the successful publication of *We Two* that readers began to

[10] Binfield, 'Breadth from Dissent', p. 353.
[11] For a description of this relationship, see Binfield, 'Breadth from Dissent', p. 352.
[12] Binfield, 'Breadth from Dissent', p. 351. See Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, pp. 257–63.
[13] 'The Last Will and Testament of Ada Ellen Bayly', signed 11 December 1894; death 8 February 1903; probate granted 2 April 1903; registry: London; folio number: 434; digital image provided by 'Find a Will', Gov.UK (https://probatesearch.service.gov.uk/wills), 9 May 2015.

turn to *Donovan* in larger numbers.[14] From 1884 until her death in 1903, Ada Ellen Bayly became known as 'Edna Lyall', popular novelist. In her letters, she regularly signed her name twice — Ada Ellen Bayly followed by 'Edna Lyall' enclosed in quotations — in an act that reveals her level of self-awareness in professionalizing herself as a novelist. In fact, following her surge in popularity, she easily conformed to the expectations of publishers who 'positively encouraged topical fiction' and wished to make the most of a literary marketplace fueled by writers' willingness to be opinionated.[15] Philip J. Waller, for instance, looks to 'the advent of the journalistic interview' in the popular press in the late nineteenth century, which 'made more demands on authors, profiling them as public persons and encouraging them to ventilate their concerns on public issues'.[16] Just such an interview with Lyall was published in *The Windsor Magazine* in 1895, complete with images of her home in Eastbourne, the interior of her study, childhood photographs, and a full-length portrait filling an entire page.[17] Her portrait is prominently placed and embellished in many similar pieces in women's magazines, for example in her article on 'My Early Literary Influences' in *The Ladies' Home Journal* and in an undated 'Page of Confessions' in *The Woman at Home*, which lists Lyall's handwritten responses to a series of questions about her favourite places, pastimes, and books and includes a copy of her signature.[18]

With her religious creed being one of supportive action directed to moral alacrity rather than theology or intellectual questioning, a practical sympathy naturally sat at the heart of Lyall's oeuvre. It suited her outlook as well as the marketplace that she choose to write and speak in print about social and political issues garnering attention. Each piece of fiction was often the means to a very

[14] See Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 47 for the quotation from Gladstone's letter.

[15] Philip J. Waller, *Writers, Readers, and Reputations: Literary Life in Britain, 1870–1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 845.

[16] Waller, *Writers, Readers, and Reputations*, p. 874.

[17] Ellen Velvin, 'Illustrated Interview with Edna Lyall', *The Windsor Magazine: An Illustrated Monthly for Men and Women*, (Jan 1895), 18–25, in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 26 February 2014.

[18] See Lyall, 'My Early Literary Influences', p. 13; and 'Edna Lyall: A Page of Confessions', *The Woman at Home*, n.d.



Figure 6.1: *Ladies' Home Journal*, January 1896, p. 13.

practical end. Her texts are not only *expressions* of her philanthropy and political interests, but also *functioned* as philanthropic and political acts; 'she was too modest and diffident to take any prominent place in political agitation' and so her recourse to fiction as an alternative method of being politically and socially active indicates her belief in the didactic potential of fiction while also fueling her mantra

that a sympathetic stance is conducive to altruism.[19]

Donovan and *We Two* address secularism and bigotry among Christians; *Knight-Errant* (1887) portrays professional singers, often maligned, in a positive light; a cautionary novella, *The Autobiography of a Slander* (1887), follows the development of a piece of gossip as it transforms in people's minds from a thoughtless comment to a powerful agent with severe consequences; *Derrick Vaughan, Novelist* (1889) questions traditional interpretations of heroism and advocates the natural agency of novelists both in practical life and writing (the femininized male novelist Derrick Vaughan is strongly contrasted with his twin brother, a military hero); *Doreen* (1894) supports Irish Home Rule while exposing unjust treatment of the Irish at the hands of the English; another novella, *The Autobiography of a Truth* (1896), draws attention to the Armenian Crisis; *Wayfaring Men* (1897) looks back to *Knight-Errant* as a vindication narrative that sets out to redeem the reputation of theater professionals; *A Hardy Norseman* (1899) was written after Lyall traveled to Norway and strongly supports Norwegian nationalism, questions capitalist enterprises as necessarily egotistical, and addresses anxieties attending population increase and the reduction of individuals to 'units'; *The Hinderers* (1902) concentrates on the Boer War and denounces 'jingoism' as something other than 'true patriotism'.

Lyall regularly used the proceeds from her novels to give back to local and foreign communities. After *Donovan*, she used her earnings to give three bells to St. Saviour's Church in Eastbourne.[20] She published *How the Children Raised the Wind* (1895) to raise funds for the debt on the new church of St. Peter's at Eastbourne.[21] Her provocative novella *The Autobiography of a Truth* was composed to fund-raise in support of the Armenian Relief Fund. And in the early 1890s, as an increasing number of autograph collectors requested a specimen from her, she decided to charge a shilling per autograph to put towards her cousin

[19]Payne, *"Edna Lyall": An Appreciation*, p. 54.
[20]Payne, *"Edna Lyall": An Appreciation*, p. 25.
[21]Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 150.

Miss Agnes Weston's work among 'bluejackets', sailors of the Royal Navy.[22]

Lyall was also politically active beyond her writing. She supported the suffragist movement, 'believ[ing] in women's influence in politics', and was an active member of the Woman's Liberal Association in Eastbourne, serving as Secretary and later as Vice-President.[23] She often sat in the Ladies' Gallery in the House of Commons to listen to debates in Parliament and the Liberal MP Justin McCarthy used to meet with her afterwards to discuss them. Lyall was a staunch supporter of Gladstone and his Liberal politics, consistently supporting Home Rule for Ireland and putting pressure on the British government to intervene in Anatolia on behalf of the Armenians between 1894 and 1896. Lyall may not feature in Julie Melnyk's collection of work on *Women's Theology in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (1998), but like the Christian women discussed in this volume — including Emma Jane Worboise and Mrs. Humphry Ward — Lyall participated in the construction of a religion or 'theology of action' to replace what many women writers saw as a solipsistic male-dominated theological discourse.[24] In a tidy, wry volume of 'letters to eminent hands', the art critic J.W. Gleeson White compares Lyall with both Worboise and Ward.[25] His 'letter' is facetious, bordering the sardonic, but it clearly classes Lyall among such 'female theologians' as are discussed in Melnyk's volume.

References to Lyall's legacy as a popular author thread in and out of only a very few articles and theses, and little has been written on Lyall specifically. More often she is gathered into wide samples of writers that collectively illustrate

[22]Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 123. Miss Weston devoted her life to working with the Royal Navy and was recognized as Dame Agnes Weston just before her death in 1918 with the awarding of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (GBE). She is the first woman to have been given a ceremonial Royal Navy funeral. Her role sheds further light on the shared and inherited nature of Lyall's activism.

[23]Payne, *"Edna Lyall": An Appreciation*, pp. 54, 20.

[24]Melnyk, *Women's Theology in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, p. xvii. For example, 'Mark M. Freed argues that Ward introduced the British public to the ideas of German Higher Criticism, but moved beyond it to formulate a "theology of action" ' (p. xvi).

[25]J.W.G. White, 'To Miss EDNA LYALL', in: *Letters to Eminent Hands; to wit Andrew Lang, Bret Harte, Edna Lyall, F. Anstey, George Moore, Grant Allen, Phil Robinson, Rhoda Broughton, Robt. Louis Stevenson, Rudyard Kipling, Thomas Hardy, W.S. Gilbert* (Derby, Leicester, and Nottingham: Frank Murray, 1892), pp. 14–18.

a feature of the period, or as one among many under-represented female authors of the late-nineteenth century.[26] Two biographies appeared in quick succession in 1903 and 1904 in the wake of her death, indicating that interest in her life and oeuvre at that time remained moderately high, but no substantial criticism of her life and work has been written.[27] In addition to these biographies, the most substantial sources of general information can be found via the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* and *Orlando: Women's Writing in the British Isles*, but each relies heavily upon the early biographical sources. She is mentioned in passing in John Sutherland's *The Longman Companion to Victorian Fiction* (2009) and *The Oxford Guide to British Women Writers* (1994).[28] More recently, Lyall makes a cursory appearance in an article by Eliza Riedi on women's activism during the Boer War, which emphasizes her Liberal politics and pacifism more than her literary achievements.[29]

Georgia Corrick and Clyde Binfield have written the most substantial criticism on Lyall.[30] Binfield, writing for the Ecclesiastical History Society, stresses the religious history of Lyall's family, its influence in her historical fiction,

[26] See, for example, Natalie Joy Woodall, 'The Appropriation of the Medieval Motif by Nineteenth-Century British Women Writers', Ph. D thesis, Syracuse University (1994) and Rory Michelle Moore, 'Literary Sensations: Victorian Women Writers and Celebrity', Ph. D thesis, University of California (2013).

[27] Payne, *"Edna Lyall": An Appreciation*, and Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*. G.A. Payne (1865–1950) was a Unitarian minister in Knutsford. Jessie Maria Escreet became friends with Lyall in 1890. She traveled with her to Ireland in the early 1890s and was a witness to Lyall's will in 1894.

[28] John Sutherland, *The Longman Companion to Victorian Fiction*, 2nd edition (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2009), pp. 48, 192; Joanne Shattock, *The Oxford Guide to British Women Writers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 271–72. She also appears in John Sutherland, *The Stanford Companion to Victorian Fiction* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1989), pp. 34, 52, 193.

[29] Eliza Riedi, 'The Women Pro-Boers: Gender, Peace and the Critique of Empire in the South African War', *Historical Research* 86:231 (2013), 92–115, in *Wiley Online Library*. Accessed 23 February 2013.

[30] See Georgia Corrick, '"Nobody Ever Guessed How Much It Cost Her": Edna Lyall and the Slow Torture of the Novelist', in: Darby Lewes, ed., *Auto-Poetica: Representations of the Creative Process in Nineteenth-Century British and American Fiction* (Lanham, MD; Oxford: Lexington Books, 2006), pp. 67–74; Georgia Corrick, '"You will blame me... but... it seemed to me simply a thing that had to be done": Women's Transgressions and Moral Choices in Edna Lyall's Novels', *Women's Writing* 14:3 (2007), ⟨URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09699080701644972⟩, 476–95. Accessed 23 February 2013, and Binfield, 'Breadth from Dissent', pp. 349–61.

and her fiction's subsequent impact upon Anglican and Congregationalist readers, including 'the present writer's Congregational mother and grandmother and his Anglican aunt [who] were devotees of her books'; moreover, the founding member and past president of the Ecclesiastical History Society, Geoffrey Nuttall, also read Lyall's work and Binfield makes a note of it as evidence that Lyall's fiction continues to impress 'in the formation of this society' today.[31] Corrick examines the implications of Lyall's construction of resolute female characters, arguing that Lyall's fiction represents women who can behave well while simultaneously questioning orthodox practices and opinions. Orthodoxy often joins with reformist or progressive stances in Lyall's fiction and practice, and in another example, through the combined influence of a 'theology of action' and her political liberalism, Lyall was invested in using her marketplace image and fiction to mitigate the plight of secularism and secularists. Like the patterns of intellectual sympathy delineated between Eliot and Max Müller and Lee and Walter Pater, Lyall also turned towards and was influenced by male thinkers whose principles of sympathetic openness she sought to represent through the male figures in her fiction.

Secularism, sympathy, & self-sacrifice

On 8 April 1891, George Jacob Holyoake (1817–1906), the tenacious leader of British freethinkers and man responsible for coinage of the word 'secularism' in 1851, wrote to Edna Lyall:

> In consequence of the generous gift you made Mrs. Bonner, I suggested to Mr. Bradlaugh's friends that the subscription they need for redeeming his little estate for Mrs. Bonner could be more aided by you than by any other person [...] [T]here is no doubt that if an appeal was made to them by one in whom they had confidence many would imitate your example and send subscriptions.[32]

[31] Binfield, 'Breadth from Dissent', p. 361.

[32] Manchester, National Co-operative Archive (NCA), GJ Holyoake Collection, George Jacob Holyoake to Edna Lyall, 8 April 1891. Item no. 3296. My transcription.

Hypatia Bonner was the daughter of Charles Bradlaugh (1833–1891), the notorious freethinker and Liberal MP for Northampton who died in January 1891. At the time of his death, Bradlaugh was £6,000 in debt due to the numerous litigation fees incurred throughout his career as an outspoken atheist. When Lyall initially heard of Bradlaugh's death and the debts inherited by his only surviving daughter, she sent £50 to Bonner.[33] Once plans to set up a subscription on Bonner's behalf were set in motion, Lyall was the natural high-profile personality to contact in order to raise funds. In response to Holyoake's request, she submitted a letter of support that was reproduced and printed in facsimile in several papers, urging readers to act:

> Hundreds of kindly notices, and regrets for the harsh treatment Mr. Bradlaugh received, have appeared recently in the newspapers; we have not to prove that these words were no mere empty sentiment to relieve our own sense of discomfort, but genuine, unselfish sympathy.[34]

During his lifetime, Charles Bradlaugh was a striking and prominent figure for secularism. A journalist, lecturer, pamphleteer, political activist, and the Liberal MP for Northampton from 1880–1891, Bradlaugh's identity as a freethinker permeated each of his professional roles. He became a public figure as early as 1850 when, at the age of 17, he published his first pamphlet — 'A Few Words on the Christians' Creed' — and gave his first lecture entitled, 'The Past, Present and Future of Theology'. George Holyoake was responsible for organizing the latter and, as a result, Bradlaugh's first lecture was reported in Holyoake's periodical, the *Reasoner*. Bradlaugh was the co-editor of the secularist newspaper the *National Reformer* from 1860 to 1890, and he became the President of the London Secular Society in 1858, later co-founding the National Secular Society in 1866.

He worked closely with other prominent secularists, such as Annie Besant (1847–1933), particularly in their controversial promotion of birth control and

[33] George Anderson, the Treasurer of the Bradlaugh appeal, references Lyall's early donation in a letter of June 1891: 'Miss Edna Lyall the famous novelist has given Mr. Bradlaugh's Daughter £50 and written on her behalf the generous letter of which I enclose you a facsimile'. London, Bishopsgate Institute (BI), Charles Bradlaugh Archive. Item no. 2300. My transcription.

[34] NCA, GJ Holyoake Collection. Item no. 3299. My transcription.

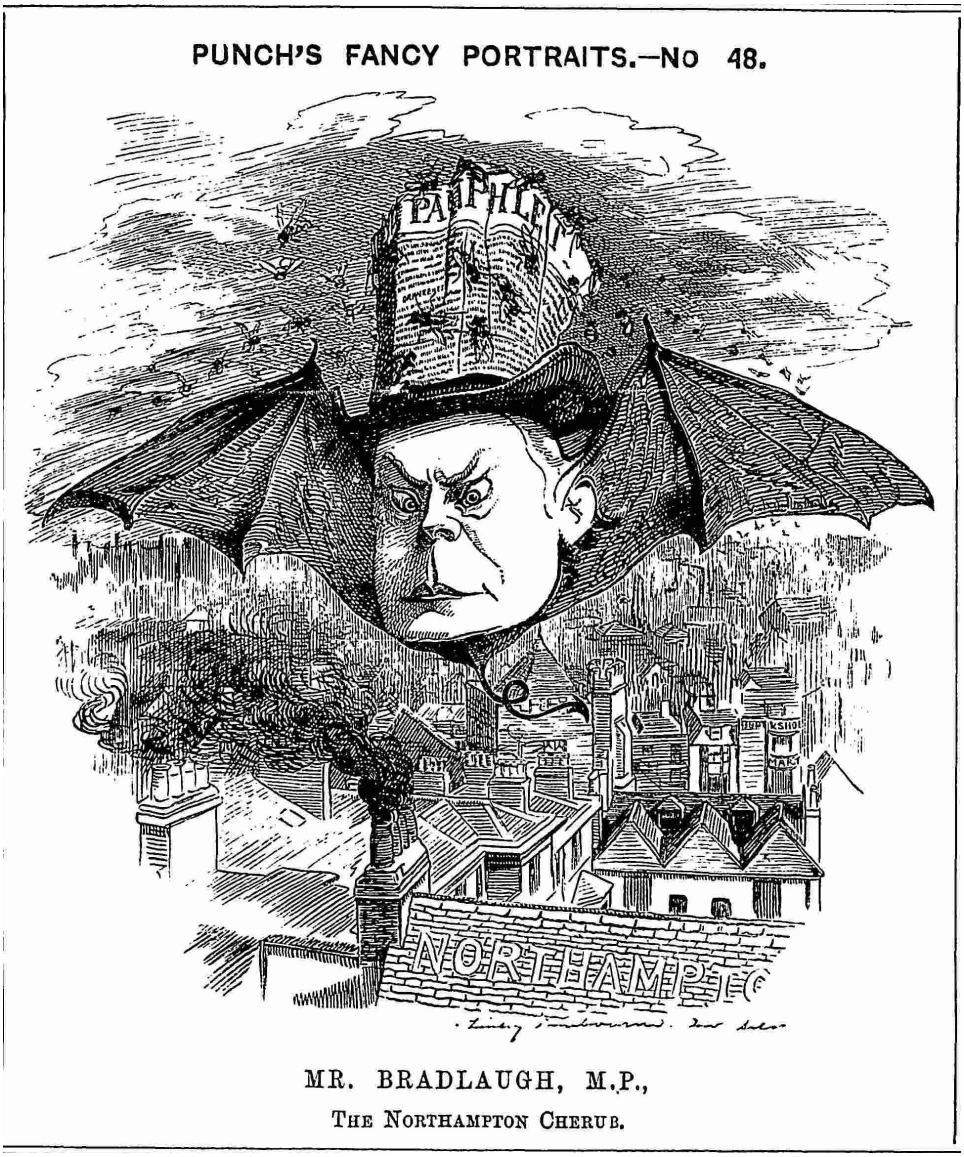

Figure 6.2: *Punch*, 10 September 1881, p. 118.

publication of *Fruits of Philosophy* by Charles Knowlton (1800–1850). Bradlaugh regularly published secularist pamphlets under his pseudonym 'Iconoclast', and a *Punch* cartoon from 1881 features a caricature of him as a devilish creature with bat wings, bringing pestilence to Northampton as he sweeps over a cityscape wearing a top hat fashioned from his 'PAMPHLET[S]'.[35]

[35]Edward Linley Sambourne, 'Punch's Fancy Portraits. — No 48. Mr. Bradlaugh, M.P., The

As the *Punch* cartoon reflects, Bradlaugh was elected as the Liberal MP for Northampton in 1880, but he was unable to take his official seat in Parliament until 1886 due to a lengthy battle over the Parliamentary Oath of Allegiance. In 1880, Bradlaugh requested to 'affirm' his allegiance to the Crown without swearing the Oath, which included the religious clause 'So help me God'. When a Select Committee made it clear that he could not affirm in lieu of taking the Oath, he agreed to take it in 'the spirit which the affirmation would have conveyed', but was repeatedly prevented from doing so due to Parliamentary motions set against it.[36] After one such motion, the House instructed Bradlaugh to withdraw without taking the Oath and when he refused he was forcibly removed to be temporarily imprisoned in the Clock Tower.

Throughout this period, Bradlaugh was repeatedly forced to forfeit his seat only to subsequently be re-elected in special by-elections. The case received heavy press coverage, and in 1884 a pamphlet entitled *Mr. Bradlaugh and the House of Commons, From a Hindoo Point of View* appeared. Written as a series of letters to an unspecified friend in India, the pamphlet's ostensible 'Hindoo Point of View' allows the anonymous author to comment freely on the inconsistencies and hypocrisies of British society and politics in relation to religion. The 'Hindoo' begins his first letter, dated September 1880, with his initial impressions of English society as 'pervaded with a spirit of toleration'.[37] As the letters continue, however, they trail the progress of the 'Bradlaugh question' in Parliament. Five letters make up the pamphlet, written at intervals in September 1880, August 1881, November 1882, August 1883, and July 1884. In following the case, the author is forced to reconsider his first impressions of British society:

> [T]he roar of [fanaticism] has now disquieted for four years the place where

Northampton Cherub', *Punch*, (Sep 1881), p. 118, *19th Century UK Periodicals*. Accessed 22 January 2017.

[36] See Charles Bradlaugh's letter to the public explaining his decision to take the Oath. 'Mr. Bradlaugh and the Parliamentary Oath', *The Times*, (21 May 1880), p. 4, in *19th Century UK Periodicals*. Accessed 20 January 2017.

[37] Oxford, Worcester College Library (WCL), Special Collections, 'Mr. Bradlaugh and the House of Commons: From a Hindoo Point of View', in: *Pamphlets 1884* (London: W. Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 1884), pp. 5–51 (p. 5).

> laws are made [...] The spirit of intolerance which superficial observers of English society had thought dead, has leaped up, strong and active, like a giant refreshed after a long sleep'.[38]

The author also ties the Bradlaugh case to broader shifts in scientific and religious thinking in Britain. He draws it into the arena of comparative practice in the science of religion by alluding to Britain as 'a country which has for the founder of its religion one who has so much in common with Gautama'.[39] The implication is further supported by the author's mention of Britain's 'neutral ground of philosophical discussion' between the members of different religious sects, and references to Buddhism, 'Mahomedan[ism]', Agnosticism, and Atheism in addition to his professed 'Hindoo[ism]'.[40] Moreover, he notes that the 'prevailing tone of remark' in Britain is one of 'scepticism', which clearly 'show[s] the influence of philosophic teachers, like J. S. Mill and Herbert Spencer, and [...] Professor Huxley'.[41] Therefore, he determines that hypocrisy is at the heart of the case: Bradlaugh's notoriety is due less to his atheism and acceptance of modern scientific thought — already so widespread among the educated elite and upper classes — than it is to his efforts to '[take] the results of "modern thought" and "scientific research," and [...] bring them home to the mind of the plain man, the hard-worked artisan'.[42]

Like the author of the 'Hindoo' pamphlet, Lyall took up Bradlaugh's cause, attacking his treatment in Parliament through her novels *Donovan* and *We Two*. Donovan is an atheist presented sympathetically to readers, and in *We Two* the 'we two' father and daughter Luke and Erica Raeburn are based upon Lyall's imaginative interpretation of the relationship between Charles Bradlaugh and his daughter. On 7 June 1884, *The Spectator* published the review 'Two Remarkable Novels', in which *We Two* and *Donovan* are appraised: 'They are novels with an earnestly, even passionately, enforced purpose; they are essentially religious

[38] WCL, 'Mr. Bradlaugh and the House of Commons: From a Hindoo Point of View', p. 31.
[39] WCL, 'Mr. Bradlaugh and the House of Commons: From a Hindoo Point of View', p. 5.
[40] WCL, 'Mr. Bradlaugh and the House of Commons: From a Hindoo Point of View', pp. 6, 39, 43.
[41] WCL, 'Mr. Bradlaugh and the House of Commons: From a Hindoo Point of View', p. 6.
[42] WCL, 'Mr. Bradlaugh and the House of Commons: From a Hindoo Point of View', p. 7.

novels'. The review states the case of Lyall's work; 'She is a Christian' and the 'chief element' in the lives of her characters is 'religious', yet she 'has devoted powers [...] to the defence of the Atheist and the Agnostic from the intolerance of believers in Christianity'.[43]

Lyall was plainly less concerned than the author of the 'Hindoo' pamphlet with using her publications to think through the cultural implications of the Bradlaugh case, or to connect it too directly or profoundly to the wider array of related scientific and religious discourses, like the science of religion or influential works of 'scepticism' by men like Herbert Spencer and Thomas Henry Huxley (1825–1895). Like so many others, she followed Bradlaugh's Parliamentary career in the papers with keen *feeling*, and this, in turn, fed her creativity, directing her to use her fiction to build upon the emotions that already existed in the minds of the public and then try to facilitate more specific feelings of sympathy, indignation, and compassion in readers on Bradlaugh's behalf. 'I well remember beginning one sunny August morning the first chapter of "We Two" ', she writes. 'It was at the time when England was plunged in the bitter controversy on the question of the Parliamentary oath'.[44]

> A line in the Daily News [...] suggested to her mind the story of 'We Two', with its two principal characters. It was an account of the late Mr. Bradlaugh's imprisonment in the Clock tower, which finished with the words, 'Mr. Bradlaugh has telegraphed for his daughter'. 'I pictured to myself the devotion of his daughter at such a crisis in his stormy life, and thought of the strength and support it must have given to him'.[45]

Philip J. Waller observes, 'It was as a doughty champion of individual liberty and toleration, battling against an over-mighty executive, that Bradlaugh won Lyall's admiration', and, indeed, for all her ostensible support of Bradlaugh, Lyall's success in marketing herself as 'Christian' and in writing novels that reviewers characterized as eminently 'religious' misaligns her from Bradlaugh's education

[43] 'Two Remarkable Novels', *The Spectator* 57:2919, (7 Jun 1884), 764–65 (p. 764), in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 19 September 2017.
[44] Payne, *"Edna Lyall": An Appreciation*, p. 31.
[45] Payne, *"Edna Lyall": An Appreciation*, p. 27.

project; both he and Lyall directed the publicizing of their (religious) opinions to the lower middle and working classes, but to very different ends.[46]

Two years later, Lyall and Bradlaugh began corresponding in the wake of a positive review of *Donovan* in the *National Reformer*.[47] *We Two* followed closely on *Donovan*'s heels; both novels advocate religious tolerance, particularly in response to secularism, meaning Lyall was eager to be in touch with Bradlaugh directly to do justice to her portrait of him in the guise of Luke Raeburn. In her letters to Bradlaugh, 'she plied him with questions on Secularism of which she wished to learn all that was possible. An interview was arranged referred to in her later letters'.[48]

In August 1882, this meeting between Lyall and Bradlaugh took place in London. Escreet quotes from a letter by Lyall:

> The other day I came across the notes written down immediately after my talk with Mr. Bradlaugh in August, 1882. [...] I was then writing *We Two*, and he spoke much of his own views on death because I was very anxious to represent the Secularist position quite fairly. [...] People have accused me of exaggeration in *We Two*, but Raeburn's story seems to me far less pathetic than the story of his prototype.[49]

Although the precise content of their exchanges has not been preserved — any notebooks or letters that may have been left to Lyall's descendents have not been traced — Lyall's fellow-feeling with Bradlaugh's struggles against inequality is evident in her emotional support of his efforts: 'It makes me *mad* to see and hear the unjust way in which people treat him. Oh! I *hope* he'll have strength to act conscientiously about the oath. I am looking forward quite anxiously to Friday's paper. How about that life of him? I should so like to see it'.[50] There is certainly a link between Lyall's emotional support and her decisions to provide financial

[46] Waller, *Writers, Readers, and Reputations*, p. 876.

[47] These letters have not been traced. See Hypatia Bradlaugh Bonner, *Charles Bradlaugh, a Record of His Life and Work by His Daughter Hypatia Bradlaugh Bonner,* 2 vols (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1894), I, p. v: 'my father made a point of destroying his correspondence'.

[48] Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 48; see also Payne, *"Edna Lyall": An Appreciation*, pp. 27–28.

[49] Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 48.

[50] Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 34.

support. In addition to contributing towards alleviating Bradlaugh's posthumous debts, Lyall also financially supported one of the Northampton by-elections organized to re-elect Bradlaugh during his Parliamentary struggle to claim his seat. Lyall's biographer reports that in 1885 she wrote to a childhood friend, Miss Picard, in the following terms:

> So that gossip has reached you! It is perfectly true that I [...] subscribed to the expenses of the last election at Northampton, feeling very strongly that its member had been most unjustly used, and that it was the duty especially of those Christians who hate bigotry and injustice to protest in this practical way. Of course I should not have written — should not have been able to write — *We Two* if I had not known that Secularists are frightfully misrepresented by their orthodox opponents, and been brought into close contact with them.[51]

Lyall's activist position in relation to Bradlaugh is consistent with the way in which she approached the writing of each of her novels. She was eminently practical in the way she addressed socio-political issues of the day and habitually fused the attitude and actions of a campaigner with her position as a novelist. Brigid Lowe describes sympathy as 'a mode of understanding', which, when used properly, becomes 'a spur to action' — a pattern Lyall's life and works repeatedly exemplify.[52] Another occasion sees her, from 1893 to 1899, periodically correspond with the founder of the Irish National Land League, Michael Davitt, whom she initially contacted to request his advice as she composed *Doreen* (1894). In this novel Lyall exposes the injustice of English rule in Ireland and supports the Home Rule policies of Gladstone's government. In her first letter to Davitt from November 1893 she inquires, '[W]ill you tell me whether it is allowable for English people to contribute to the Fund for the Evicted tenants [...]. I should much like to subscribe, having a horror of writing about grievances and then doing nothing to help'.[53] In a letter of June 1894, she comments on Doreen: 'I do hope it may win a few people to the Irish Cause'.[54]

[51] Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 49.
[52] Lowe, *Victorian Fiction and the Insights of Sympathy*, p. 17.
[53] Dublin, Trinity College Dublin (TCD), 'Edna Lyall letters to Michael Davitt', 27 November 1893. My transcription.
[54] TCD, 'Edna Lyall letters to Michael Davitt', 2 June 1894. My transcription.

After Bradlaugh's death, Lyall began to correspond with his daughter.[55] Escreet discloses a few excerpts from letters sent in the spring of 1892. In one, Lyall shares her wish that the Blasphemy Laws will be repealed. In another, she relates her experience of hearing Annie Besant speak on Theosophy.[56] Both letters reflect Lyall's careful choice of subject matter for the daughter of the late secularist leader. The latter excerpt is of particular interest because it sheds light on Lyall's brand of sympathy, and its limitations:

> There was much that seemed to me most beautiful in what she [Besant] said as to the gradual growth of character and as to unconscious influence — but then all that is not specially characteristic of Theosophy. The great want in all theories of 'universal brotherhood,' such as she described, seems to me that such a brotherhood can only be a phrase, not an actual living fact, unless there be a Universal Father. But there we come to the point on which you and I differ, so I will say no more.[57]

Dialogue ends where difference begins. Lyall's ability to sympathize is based upon likeness; when she cannot find common ground she does not know what to do. Escreet elaborates, 'She was so anxious to understand people, to love and serve them, it quite distressed her if she could not find a meeting point', and on one occasion when Lyall stayed at a hotel while traveling on the Continent, she came across a married couple and their young son: 'There is a child in this hotel who makes us all quite unhappy. He is only four and a nice friendly little fellow. But he has a weak mother and a bullying father and they are just ruining him'. Lyall

[55] Lyall initially wrote to Hypatia Bonner to offer her condolences after Bradlaugh's death in January 1891. They exchanged a few letters at this time, one of which was printed in the *National Reformer* with Lyall's permission. Lyall first met Bonner in July 1891 and 'from this time a correspondence was kept up between them, and the friendship became a great mutual enjoyment'. 'With intense sympathy for his daughter she at once wrote to her, and for twelve years — until her own death — on each anniversary of the day [of Bradlaugh's death], sent Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner a box of violets and lilies of the valley, sheathed in their broad pale green leaves; these, being her father's Northampton colours, conveyed their message of sympathy'. See Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, pp. 97, 102.

[56] Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, pp. 112–13. Besant joined the National Secular Society in 1874. She began writing for the *National Reformer* in 1875, which marked the start of both a professional and personal relationship with Charles Bradlaugh. See John Richard Wood, 'Bradlaugh, Charles (1833–1891)', in: Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor, eds., *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland* (Gent [Belgium]: Academia Press, 2009), p. 72 for a summary of their shared freethinking campaigns and publications.

[57] Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, pp. 112–13.

describes the parents as 'of the racing, gambling set' and recounts the times she has sat with them at meals: 'it is rather depressing, [...] It is a great puzzle to know how to get into touch with people like that. I generally end in sitting by quite silently'.[58]

In lieu of seeking to understand, or enter into, people's differences, Lyall, perhaps rightly, waits to speak until she can find common ground, without which she remains silent. Lyall appears to rest comfortably in her knowledge that others differ as long as she is able to find 'a meeting point' to serve as a foundation for sympathy that will keep communication active and the relationship alive. In a letter to one of her cousins, 'a strong Unionist' who disagreed with Lyall's support of Home Rule in Ireland, she writes:

> I am afraid like the two knights and the shield we never could agree politically, but I hope nevertheless you will believe I am always glad to read on both sides of the question, and that you will not count me an enemy but reckon me always your affectionate cousin.[59]

Here, Lyall emphasizes their familial connection — no matter their political differences, they may rest in the shared knowledge that they remain 'affectionate cousin[s]'. The fable of the two knights and the shield recounts two knights who each walk towards a shield standing in the ground, but come from opposite directions. One side of the shield is silver; the other is gold. When the knights meet they disagree over the beauty of the silver/gold shield. Their conflict is easily resolved when they encircle the shield and see the validity of the other's perspective. Lyall, at least, recognizes the frequent impossibility of performing such an exchange of perspective in reality and highlights her inability to understand Bonner's point of view on more than one occasion: 'What the struggle must be for you, who have had so much to bear from them [slanderers], I can't conceive'; 'I cannot help being surprised that you do not wonder whether those months of complete happiness were not just a foretaste of a happiness that is, from its very nature, lasting. I don't understand how, having had this foretaste, you can yet be

[58]Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 126.
[59]Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 128.

"entirely satisfied with the years between birth and death" '.[60] And in contrast, she delighted in finding shared interests: 'I am so glad you know her [Mrs. Davies] and like her so much as a singer — that will be a bond between us'.[61]

The letters between Lyall and Bonner strike one as deeply personal, but exchanging perspectives like the fabled knights was not an option, and it is at this juncture that Lyall considers sympathetic gestures and action to be of such importance. Early in their correspondence, Lyall invited Bonner 'to let me know if at any time or in any way I can serve you', and it seems Bonner did turn to Lyall in some of her struggles — clearly she felt safe in doing so.[62] As a result of being a person Bonner reached towards candidly, Lyall confesses that she has 'I think, [come] to understand and know you better' and in replying to a letter from Bonner that must have spoken of struggles with anxiety and loss, Lyall comforts her:

> There is a quaint bit in one of George Herbert's poems which has often helped me — 'Either grief will not come; or it must. / Do not forecast, / And while it cometh, it is almost past.' I will not finish the verse for it would very likely only jar upon you, and you are always so careful to avoid hurting me, that I want to be equally careful.[63]

The omitted lines read, 'Away distrust: / My God hath promis'd; he is just'. It is interesting that Lyall chooses to mention the omission in a moment of tender reassurance — why allude to it at all if her intention is to avoid what might 'jar upon' Bonner?

There is another instance when Bonner requested something more concrete from Lyall — permission to print her letter in the *National Reformer* because she found it a 'great consolation [...] to let it be seen in how great honour her father was held by "all sorts and conditions of people" '.[64] Writing to a different friend on the matter, Lyall confesses that she is a coward by nature and experiences 'a sort of *agony* to [...] come before the public in any way', but that the promise of

[60]Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, pp. 99, 107.
[61]Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 105.
[62]Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 99.
[63]Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 106.
[64]Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 101.

'giving her [Bonner] even a minute's comfort is enough to make up for any slight pain'.[65]

> I am much too apt to forget 'the joy' that is 'set before' us *when we try in our stumbling fashion to live the life of the Crucified.* The loss seems at the time so real and unduly large, and the gain to others so trifling and almost problematical. But your words about the comfort to Mrs. Bonner toughened my foolishly thin skin, and I went to bed gloriously happy at the thought that it really might perhaps give her *some slight comfort*.[66]

Having her letter of condolence printed in the *National Reformer* caused Lyall some measure of Christ-like 'agony' (certainly this word choice points to Christ's example), but it is a sacrifice she willingly makes if in exchange it brings even 'slight comfort' to another. For Lyall, sympathetic action goes hand-in-hand with self-sacrifice.

In terms of Lyall's intellectual relationship with Bradlaugh, there is no evidence that she attended Bradlaugh's lectures and there are no records of exactly what she read by him as part of her research for *We Two*, or what she thought as she read. She corresponded with him, met with him in London, and followed his career from 1880 onwards in reference to the Parliamentary oath. She read the *National Reformer* and refers in an early letter to Bonner to a time when she read some of Bradlaugh's work.[67] Yet, as in the case of her correspondence with Bonner, it seems she habitually relied upon 'meeting point[s]' — their shared aversion to hypocrisy, shared aspiration for Parliamentary oath reform, and shared interest in gender and religious equity, for instance — rather than seeking to understand the shades of difference that separated her Anglicanism and Broad-Church upbringing from Bradlaugh's secularism and early turn away from Christian orthodoxy. As such, Lyall's sympathy is based upon unearthing commonality, and when she is unable to find common ground dialogue ceases and she does not know what to do. But perhaps Lyall's brand of sympathy is effective. She does not seek to eradicate difference; only she does not dwell upon it. Instead, she focuses upon what *can* be

[65]Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 101. Emphasis added.
[66]Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 100. Emphasis added.
[67]Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 99.

done, and so her sympathy takes on a very practical dimension, while keeping her *felt* sympathy in view.[68]

Lyall's fiction largely advocates a sympathy that is 'practical not sentimental' (as she phrases it in *The Autobiography of a Truth*).[69] She does not analyze sympathy or shrewdly question its functionality as a basis for morality, as Eliot and Lee do. Where Rebecca N. Mitchell suggests that Victorian novelists urge their readers 'to acknowledge the limits of the self while at the same time pushing them, from within their awareness of their limitations, to understand the other as best they can', Lyall it may be said only pushes her readers in one direction: towards an habitual focus upon the similarities between ourselves and others.[70]

Lyall in the literary marketplace: a self-sacrificial brand of sympathy

Lyall cultivated an image of herself and her work in the literary marketplace that places her sympathetic nature at its heart. Interviewers, family members, and biographers promoted this image throughout her career, and this commercially successful portrait was particularly well-preserved posthumously. Escreet's biography renders Lyall from her earliest years as a person in a constant state of sympathy with others. According to Escreet, she never resented childhood trials; she regarded all suffering as the 'learning of a language, to enable her to understand others'.[71] As a little girl in school, Lyall reportedly refused to compare paintings by two girls, saying, 'Comparisons are odious' and one of her cousins reports, 'She

[68] In one of Lyall's earliest letters to Bonner she asks her to accept a cheque as 'practical proof of the deep respect which I have always *felt* and shall always *feel* for Mr. Bradlaugh'. Lyall sends this in lieu of other expressions of sympathy, writing, 'I am afraid to try to put into written words how much I sympathise with you'. Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 98. Emphasis added.

[69] Edna Lyall, *The Autobiography of a Truth*, 2nd edition (London, New York, and Bombay: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1896), p. 73.

[70] Carolyn Betensky, '"Victorian Lessons in Empathy and Difference" by Rebecca N. Mitchell (review)', *Victorian Studies* 55:4 (2013), 738–40 (p. 739), in *Project Muse*. Accessed 21 August 2015.

[71] Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 10.

always took up the side of any one who seemed to her oppressed or ill-treated, whether their ill-treatment was deserved or not'.[72] As she grew older, she learned 'to see both sides of the question', as her novels — regularly 'tak[ing]care to have both villains and heroes belonging to each party' — show.[73]

Escreet's biographical portrait of Lyall is consistent with the presentation of Lyall in the literary marketplace: compassionate, fair, and ever sympathetic to the downtrodden or unjustly-treated. She describes Lyall's 'intense love of justice', 'her dread of anything approaching religious intolerance or oppression', and 'her quick sympathy for the oppressed'.[74] In 1895, Ellen Velvin's publication of an 'Illustrated Interview with Edna Lyall' calls Lyall 'kindliness and tenderness personified; full of sympathy and cheery encouragement, and ever ready to give practical help and advice'.[75] Lyall's obituary notices similarly uphold this image, one calling her 'an apostle of tolerance for all opinions conscientiously held' who 'hated hypocrisy in its manifold guises' and emphasizing her philanthropy, her 'close attention to politics', and her 'admiration for the character and career of the late Mr. Bradlaugh'.[76]

In the *Athenaeum* obituary, her 'stories of social life' are called 'consciously didactic' and she is termed 'broad enough generally to see more than one side of a question, even when that question was religion'.[77] In the piece written for the *Ladies' Home Journal* in 1896, Lyall stresses the important early influence of a nurse with a 'kindly heart' and 'whose sympathies were wide and far-reaching' and of her parents' 'wise guidance and loving sympathy'.[78] She portrays her early leanings towards becoming a novelist through examples of her sympathetic imagination at work when, as a child, she would consider what the lives of ordinary

[72] Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, pp. 15, 17.
[73] Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 17.
[74] Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 48.
[75] Velvin, 'Illustrated Interview with Edna Lyall', p. 19.
[76] 'Talk of London', *The Penny Illustrated Paper and Illustrated Times* 2177, (14 Feb 1903) in *British Library Newspapers, Part I: 1800–1900*. Accessed 14 November 2014.
[77] 'Edna Lyall', *The Athenæum* 3929 (1903), p. 210 in *British Periodicals: (1681–1939)*. Accessed 19 September 2017.
[78] Lyall, 'My Early Literary Influences', p. 13.

people she met might be like: 'a character in real life would suddenly stand out, [...] from its surroundings, and become to me [...] the hero or heroine of my next story'.[79] Via newspaper reports of Lyall's periodic illnesses (her constitution is often described as 'fragile'), readers were encouraged to mimic Lyall's example by extending sympathetic feelings of concern to the author. In 1890, a short item in 'Personal Summaries' notes that Lyall is seriously ill and 'too prostrate to reply to current attacks on her in certain London publications regarding her theological opinions'; 'much local sympathy is expressed towards her under the circumstances'.[80] Towards the close of the century, papers reported the Queen's level of admiration for Lyall's work to continue to bolster her image; Lyall 'enjoys the distinction of being the only woman novelist living, who is included by Queen Victoria among her favourite authors'.[81]

This consistent characterization of Lyall as compassion and kindliness personified was satirized in 1891 by *Punch* via its parody of *Donovan* as *Sonogun* by 'Miss Redna Trial, Author of "Wee Jew;" "A Lardy Horseman;" "Spun by Prating," &c., &c., &c.'.[82] Prefacing the main text, a short note from 'the fair Author' gives readers a recipe for 'pleas[ing] the publishers and captur[ing] the public':

> The philosophic infidel must be battered into belief by the aid of philosophy mingled with kindness. Take Renan, Haeckel, Huxley, Strauss, and Draper — the names, I mean; it is quite useless and might do harm to read their books, — shake them up together and make into a paste, add some poetical

[79] Lyall, 'My Early Literary Influences', p. 13.

[80] 'Miss Edna Lyall', *The Blackburn Standard and Weekly Express*, (3 May 1890), p. 6 in *19th Century UK Periodicals*. Accessed 25 January 2017.

[81] 'Edna Lyall enjoys the distinction', *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel*, (29 Sep 1897), p. 2 in *19th Century UK Periodicals*. Accessed 25 January 2017. It may or may not have been known that the Queen compared Lyall with George Eliot after reading *Donovan* in 1886. She recommends Lyall's work in a letter to her daughter, Princess Beatrice: 'I send you two books which I think you will find very interesting and very powerfully written. The author (whose real name I do not know) is only 21 — and I must say I think the writing worthy of George Eliot and Curra [*sic*] Bell'. Queen of Great Britain Victoria, Empress Victoria and Agatha Ramm, *Beloved and Darling Child: Last Letters between Queen Victoria and Her Eldest Daughter, 1886–1901*, edited by Agatha Ramm (Stroud: A. Sutton, 1991), p. 30 (17 February 1886).

[82] 'Mr. Punch's Prize Novels', *Punch*, (7 Mar 1891), 112–13 in *19th Century UK Periodicals*. Accessed 25 January 2017.

> excerpts of a moral tendency, and spread thick over a violent lad smarting under a sense of demerit justly scorned.[83]

Undoubtedly Lyall was a caring individual and her strongly marketed identity (she became a veritable icon of sympathetic feeling and action for the lower middle classes) is part of the reason for her presence in this thesis. It is important to place her publicized image in the context of the late-nineteenth-century's growing market invested in making a profit. Indeed, in the interview with Ellen Velvin, Lyall casually refers to the Remington typewriter she uses to write her novels, a detail which suggests she was not adverse to 'mix[ing] advertising and editorial material on the same page' as was more common in the 1890s once advertisements became significant sources of financing for magazines.[84] Her few surviving letters, along with the many quoted by Escreet, indicate her concern for others, her desire to communicate clearly and effectively, and an inclusive Broad-Church outlook. Escreet makes some observations about the tenor and quality of Lyall's sympathy:

> It is scarcely necessary to repeat how deeply Edna Lyall felt for, or rather with, all who were oppressed or unjustly treated. Her imagination was so strong that she realised the sorrows of those at a distance more vividly than many realise what is under their very eyes, and cruelty and wretchedness at home or abroad touched her as 'one of a great family' as really as a personal trouble. Her first impulse was to help at any cost to herself.[85]

Feeling 'deeply' for the unjustly treated, imagining 'strong[ly]' with the sorrows of others, realizing 'vividly' the suffering taking place 'at a distance', Lyall was able to respond in these ways because of her underlying belief in common humanity — we are all 'one of a great family'.

The subject of self-sacrifice (which figures prominently in Eliot and Lee as a questionable practice) here becomes an essential component of Lyall's identity as a sympathetic figure — she would help others 'at any cost to herself'. Her sympathy

[83] 'Mr. Punch's Prize Novels', p. 112.

[84] Rosalind Ballaster, *Women's Worlds: Ideology, Femininity and the Woman's Magazine* (London: Macmillan Education, 1991), p. 80. For broad and detailed readings of nineteenth-century women's magazines and a discussion of the economic and ideological forces driving the content of their publications and formation of a female readership, see pp. 75–125.

[85] Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 150.

is not only founded upon finding common ground, but also embedded in the view that self-sacrifice is essential. In the Rev. H.G. Jameson's eulogy at Lyall's funeral, he describes Lyall as always able to meet those in need with 'a ready sympathy', but at a cost:

> [W]e know how often the morning post perhaps would bring with it letters with some tidings of want or distress, some calamity of a friend, something which called forth her ready sympathy; that is, the community of suffering in her mind. And it would be followed by hours, possibly by days, of absolute physical prostration, the result of that true sympathy which she gave with her true help.[86]

This account borders the absurd. It too seems to form a part of the maintenance of Lyall's posthumous image, and it indicates that self-sacrifice characteristically went hand-in-hand in Lyall's mind with extensions of sympathetic feeling and action. It also highlights a significant point: the potentially negative effects of an indiscriminately sympathetic nature. In a letter to a friend in the wake of the initially poor reception of *Donovan*, Lyall shares her frustration, then adds: 'However, I've had a great deal of comfort from private sources, and though I believe you in your ascetic soul think kindness and appreciation and sympathy of that sort dangerous — I think exactly the opposite'.[87] As an 'ascetic soul', Lyall's friend is most likely concerned that too much sympathy is an indulgence and therefore likely to foment false confidence or egoism in the recipient. The quotation is interesting in terms of Lyall's defense of sympathy as not dangerous. But if one has a reputation as 'ready to help without a thought of self', surely sympathy can also quickly become dangerous as an expression of too-willing (Christ-like) self-sacrifice.[88] Lyall even went so far as to construe the very act of writing novels as indelibly imbued with self-sacrifice that was nonetheless 'worth while'. Calling her novels 'dream children', she writes:

> They cost one much suffering, and bring many cares and anxieties; [...] Still they are our "dream children," and when they cheer the dull, or interest the

[86]Delivered 15 February 1903. See Payne, *"Edna Lyall": An Appreciation*, pp. 76–78.
[87]Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, pp. 45–46.
[88]Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 6.

> overworked, or help the perplexed, there comes a glad sense that it has all been worth while.[89]

This element of self-sacrifice is problematic in other ways, particularly as it reflects Lyall's Christian beliefs and thus inherently belies her advocacy for sympathy — she believes self-sacrifice is desirable in pursuit of the highest good and so, when she tries to be good to others, she performs her belief through reenactment of Christ's example, thereby privileging her own set of values rather than seeking to understand or learn from another's. Julie Melnyk observes that the group of women writers she identifies as 'female theologians' in this period customarily focused on Christ in their fiction in ways that minimize patriarchy; Christ was often construed as 'the feminized Suffering Saviour, with whom women and other social disadvantaged groups could readily identify'.[90] Considering her routine attention to finding and dwelling upon similarities, Lyall's use of Christ and his suffering to '[encourage] identification' fits perfectly into her oeuvre. She certainly enacts this both in life and in her fiction. Christ, as 'the model of a (feminized) man [...] possessing all virtues — "feminine" virtues as well as "masculine" ones', is the figure upon whom she bases many of her male protagonists, while also infusing them with her personal experiences and characteristics.[91]

Examples of this include: Donovan, whose crisis of faith parallels Lyall's experience of doubt in 1880 to 1881; Derrick Vaughan, whose struggles as a novelist simulate Lyall's own; Max Hereford, whose illness in *Max Hereford's Dream* (1891) is based upon Lyall's experience of illness (pericarditis) in April 1889. Escreet writes that after this experience she was able to 'bring vividly before one's eyes the sick-room from the patient's point of view'.[92] Overall, Lyall's 'diversity' of perspective is not a result of empathetic practice, or trying to imagine the lives and experiences of those very different from her — instead it

[89]Lyall, 'My Early Literary Influences', p. 13.
[90]Melnyk, *Women's Theology in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, p. xvi.
[91]Melnyk, *Women's Theology in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, p. xvii.
[92]Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 91.

comes from her own varied range of experiences. Each novel has a foundation in her experience, even as she writes on behalf of those suffering from injustices. Is this sympathy, or unacknowledged solipsism? On the other hand, perhaps Lyall is wise in her unwillingness to assume that she can understand experiences she has not had. Discussing her early idea of writing a novel about Irish Home Rule (what became *Doreen*), Lyall concedes: 'I don't think I could ever write a novel the scene of which should be chiefly laid in Ireland. To do that effectively you must have lived for years in the country'.[93]

Lyall's work is easily construed as one-sided and self-focused. And yet, she presented her work as the bringing together of multiple perspectives. When a copy of *Doreen* was sent to John O'Leary, an Irish separatist and Fenian whom Lyall had contacted as part of her research for the Home Rule novel, he responded with a 'candid letter' that raised some question as to whether or not *Doreen* was anti-Fenian. In her reply, Lyall sheds some light on how she regarded the construction of her novels:

> One or two people have commented as you comment on the *mixed medley* of Irish writers and Irish poets quoted in 'Doreen.' I did not at all mean to assume that they all agreed with the heroine or with the author of the story, but it has long been *a great delight to me to draw from very various sources, and from people of the most opposite opinions*, sayings which help *to bind us together*. I can't understand why we must always be trying to divide on our differences instead of trying *to unite in our common sympathies*.[94]

Lyall's compositional method is not many-sided in terms of a state of 'contemplative inaction' or disinterestedness — rather, it is a religion of action. However, her method could be described as many-sided or wide-ranging in its 'mixed medley' approach of 'draw[ing] from very various sources, and from people of the most opposite opinions, sayings which help to bind us together'. Her manysidedness has a centripetal force, which further characterizes her brand of sympathy as a unification project. Lyall implies in this letter that she takes 'from

[93] Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 92.

[94] Dublin, National Library of Ireland (NLI), 'Letters from Edna Lyall to John O'Leary'. Ref No. Ms 8001 (33). 27 February 1895. Emphasis added. My transcription.

very various sources, [...] sayings which help to bind us together' in order to show that within contending points of view harmonious elements can always be found (although in her own experience we have seen that this was not always the case).

But, Lyall's texts themselves are not constructed on multiple points of view — the complex inner lives and striking representation of difference and alterity in a novel like *Middlemarch*, for example, are nowhere to be found in her work and are not its point. Unity is her message and her method. Her choice of sayings 'from very various sources' is calculated, which makes the 'medley' of multiple perspectives illusory. Uninterested in disentangling the trickier relationships between sympathy and impartiality or contemplative inaction, Lyall wants her readers to *feel* that Christ is Truth and sympathy and self-sacrifice are virtuous models for action, unproblematic and enlightening. These messages come across again and again in her fiction as we shall see through looking more closely at the role of Donovan Farrant in *Donovan*, *We Two*, and *The Autobiography of a Truth*.

The limitations of Lyall's sympathy

After Lyall sent off *We Two* for publication, she decided to travel south in order to avoid seeing the reviews. She expected her choice of subject to be her downfall, not her reason for success: 'The book, for which she had thought her friends would cut her [...] had made her name'.[95] Looked at in this way, there seems to be a distinct sentiment of eagerness for self-sacrifice behind her choice to write a convincingly sympathetic portrait of secularists in *We Two*. We will see in the next chapter that Lyall recurrently advocates self-sacrifice through the example of her characters, and that this is a feature arguably directing more attention to Lyall's image than to any marginalized figure or group she wishes to assist.

With her practical sympathy predicated upon unity, similarity, and shared experience, Lyall in effect does not help her readers recognize difference, but aims to make them realize that we are all united in common experience and common

[95]Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 51.

humanity. In her novel *In the Golden Days*, she writes of union through shared history and responsibility:

> It is a wonderful time for all of us when we first begin to take keen interest in matters outside our own small circle. [...] [W]e wake up one happy morning to find that there is a living history [...] a history in which we all have our share [...] of influence and responsibility.[96]

Colouring such a discovery as 'happy' strikes me as naïve, but Lyall did her best to impress the reality of shared 'influence and responsibility' upon her readers. *The Autobiography of a Truth*, for example, was written in support of the Armenians and in protest of the British government's ostensible resistance to act on their behalf. The work is quite short, but the content is intently directed towards eliciting a very specific response; it attempts to raise the British public's awareness of the Armenian crisis and instigate action. Readers are reminded of the ongoing injustices currently taking place throughout the Ottoman Empire — not only Armenians, but also Turkish citizens are suffering — and provocative contrasts between the peace of England and the 'horrors of Turkish rule' are brought to the reader's attention. Above all, Lyall's message is a reminder to the public of their share in responsibility of this particular 'living history'.

In the next chapter, I connect Lyall's reactions to the Armenian crisis from 1894 to 1896 with her responses to secularism and Bradlaugh's persecution in her fiction. Historically, in both scenarios religious differences are contentious and Lyall's responses to each issue are manifestly the same: through her fiction she (paradoxically) presents the case that religious difference is not the source of disagreement but then uses her texts to promote a practical Christianity wherein Christ-like imitation is regarded as the highest aim and acts of self-sacrifice are treated as universally good. Her ability to be sympathetic is based upon her discovery of similarities, a pattern that belies the encouragement she gives to taking interest in 'matters outside our own small circle'. In turning towards Lyall's fiction and her construction of a many-sided sympathetic figure, Donovan Farrant, we will

[96]Quoted by Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, pp. 110–11.

see that she relies upon her beliefs, background, and experiences in constructing her hero, even as she additionally characterizes him as an outcast, misanthrope, and foreigner. We will also see that in her fiction, as in life, when she is unable to find common ground, dialogue ceases and she does not know what to do.

7 'Christlikeness': Sympathy & Manysidedness in Edna Lyall's Heroes

> One of the things which perplexed me most as I watched humanity was the extraordinary slowness with which one man is able in imagination to put himself into the place of another [...] [A] rusty and disused imagination is quite as dangerous as a wild and diseased one.[1]

When Edna Lyall wrote *The Autobiography of a Truth* (1896), she had a vested interest in cultivating habits of a sympathetic imagination in her readers. Her novella trained the 'rusty and disused imagination[s]' that could not promptly and sufficiently realize the persecution of Armenians in Anatolia. Lyall remarked to her publisher in the summer of 1896, 'Of course I scrupulously avoid anything like party politics, with which indeed the Armenian question seems to me to have nothing whatever to do'. She continues, 'It is surely a national question, on which all parties and all shades of religious people can think alike.[2] The Armenian crisis, however, was made up of a confused array of national and international political motives. The reading British public was not widely aware of the complex nature of the crisis, and Lyall's comment evinces her disposition towards a rudimentary understanding of the issue. It also indicates what she hoped an increased awareness

[1] Lyall, *The Autobiography of a Truth*, pp. 75–76. 'Truth' speaking. Further references are given after quotations in the text and prefixed by *AT*.
[2] Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 155.

of the Armenian crisis through fiction could achieve: solidarity across cultural, political, and religious divides founded upon the sympathetic realization of pain suffered by Armenians.

The Autobiography of a Truth follows the story of a young American woman named Faith Revere and her fiancé Professor Kaspar Sefariân, a native of Armenia who has recently returned to the Anatolia region. In the wake of the 1894 massacres, Kaspar considered it his duty to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with his people and so relocated himself in order to teach his countrymen at Vosdân College. Faith, unable to join him due to the needs of her elderly father, struggles to adjust to living in a state of constant anxiety about his safety. She meets Gladys Farrant, wife of Donovan, in Switzerland where she has taken her father for his health. The main 'figure' of the novella, however, is not any single member of the cast, but as the title reveals, is Truth. In a series of seven stages, the story is told from the perspective of abstract 'Truth' as it passes from the lips of Gladys Farrant to Faith, from Faith to Kaspar, and slowly develops until it has power enough to not only inspire acts of conviction in Kaspar and Faith but also advance 'fearless right-doing' everywhere. The story opens in the middle of a conversation between Gladys and Faith, in which Gladys attempts to alleviate Faith's apprehensions, beginning at the moment when Truth is 'born' from Gladys's words of reassurance: 'Surely [...] it is by the fearless right-doing of each man and woman that all good comes. It seems to me that Professor Sefariân was perfectly right to go back to his own country' (*AT* 4).

In this pronouncement, Kaspar's act of self-sacrifice, and the self-sacrifice it imposes upon others is labeled 'Truth'. In this chapter, I consider how this kind of certainty impacts Lyall's (reputed) sympathy-centered enterprise. What are its implications in terms of readers' responses to racial and religious differences? Where George Eliot leaves questions of sympathy relatively open — Does moral duty and sympathetic action lie in kinship loyalty or faithfulness to new loves? Does it lie in acting on behalf of abstract historical affiliations or on behalf of a concrete individual? — Lyall answers them. Kaspar's decision is like Deronda's

in that he chooses to forge a life for himself in Anatolia and dedicate his talents to his fellow Armenians; it is tied directly to his realization of ethnic and religious loyalties. However, the difficult question (does sympathy lie with a suffering group or only with a suffering group with whom one identifies), managed by Eliot through careful attendance to a cosmopolitan ethics, is less delicately treated by Lyall. The close of *Daniel Deronda* gives no clear indication of Deronda's future success or failure in Palestine and leaves the reader with a painful impression of Gwendolen's grief and lasting psychological damage, while in *Autobiography* Lyall undeniably advocates Kaspar's act of self-sacrifice on behalf of a suffering group with whom he is racially and religiously affiliated.[3] Moreover, she simultaneously depicts the woman left behind — appropriately named Faith Revere — as a bastion of spiritual strength who ultimately benefits spiritually from Kaspar's absence.

Lyall's texts do not employ the term manysidedness, but the concept acts in a diffuse manner, influencing her work even as others invoked it more explicitly. G.B. Tennyson has called manysidedness the preferred term in the nineteenth century 'for the German humanist ideal of the "cultivation and harmonious development of the whole personality" ', and in Lyall's case she recycles this ideal in service of her practical Christianity.[4] Historically, German humanism has involved studying the lives of past religious founders in order to exhibit them as secular models of altruistic behaviour and shift attention away from divine truth or theology. Lyall seems engaged in turning back this page of history and re-infusing an ideal many-sided figure with the quintessence of her Broad-Church faith. Her project of manysidedness is expressed in the repeated reflections and refractions of an ideal 'goodness' or 'Truth' and is best explained through a conversation between Erica Raeburn and Charles Osmond that takes place in *We Two* (1884).

Erica is the daughter of the secularist leader Luke Raeburn, while Charles

[3]See Moats, 'Deronda and the Tigress', who argues that the close of *Daniel Deronda* negatively foreshadows Deronda's future in Palestine.

[4]See Lecourt, 'Walter Pater, Many-Sidedness, and the Conversion Novel', p. 243. Lecourt cites G.B. Tennyson, *Medieval Epic to the "Epic Theater" of Brecht: Essays in Comparative Literature*, edited by Rosario P. Armato and John M. Spalek (Los Angeles, CA: University of Southern California Press, 1968), pp. 135–46 (p. 137).

Osmond, a Broad-Church preacher, has recently become a friend of the family and a rare example of Christian charity in their lives. Erica eventually converts to Christianity, but in a conversation with Osmond leading up to her conversion the two discuss the definition of a hero. Erica claims a hero must have two qualities — 'brains and goodness' — and Osmond asks her to define 'goodness': 'Oh! it isn't any one virtue, or even a parcel of virtues, it will not go into words'.[5] When Osmond inquires where this conception of an 'ideal' came from, Erica cannot answer. Osmond offers his view:

> The explanation of that ideal of goodness which more or less clearly exists in all our minds, seems to me to rest only in the conviction that all are children of one perfect Father. And I can give you our definition of goodness without hesitation, it is summed up for us in one word — 'Christlikeness'. (*WT* 85)

Here we find the essential features of Lyall's oeuvre, unity and harmony, expressed in Osmond's confession of faith: '*all* are children of *one* perfect Father'.[6] 'Christlikeness' — and all of the virtuous principles it implies — is the ideal behind each of Lyall's many-sided sympathetic figures; Christ 'figures' as the core of her admirable characters.

For Lyall, a single character cannot embody all of the principles she advocates, or contain all that 'Christlikeness' entails, and so she structures her fiction in such a way as to build the multiplication of ideal principles across several characters. Her aim, I would argue, is the inverse of Eliot's or Vernon Lee's or Walter Pater's — where they work the minds of their readers towards grappling with the implications of prismatic light as it spangles across the pavement, Lyall works the minds of her readers in the other direction. She wants to give her readers some conception of the white light (as she perceives it) *before* it passes through the prism.

The episode between Osmond and Erica encapsulates another important

[5]Edna Lyall, *We Two*, 22th edition (London: Hurst and Blackett, Limited, 1911), p. 85. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text and prefixed by *WT*.

[6]Osmond's words prefigure Lyall's point to Bonner: 'The great want in all theories of "universal brotherhood" [...] seems to me that such a brotherhood can only be a phrase, not an actual living fact, unless there be a Universal Father'. See Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 113.

feature of Lyall's writing, one that throws her sympathy enterprise into question: her construction and reinforcement of simplified binary oppositions. Osmond, a Christian, shares his views with Erica, a secularist, in language that clearly separates them: '*our* definition of goodness [...] is summed up for *us* in one word'. In another instance, when Erica listens to Osmond speaking publicly, his 'noble' speech and posture seem 'to be the outcome of faith in Christ' and strike Erica as a reason for 'the difference between them' (*WT* 135). At Osmond and Erica's first meeting, he is saddened to catch 'a glimpse [...] of life viewed from a directly opposite point'; when Donovan Farrant relates his past experiences as an atheist, he refers to atheism compassionately but also states that he now 'speak[s] from the directly opposite standpoint' (*WT* 18, 150). Difference, then, where it is acknowledged, is understood as a direct opposing of sides. Yet, the many-sided ideal methodically expressed throughout Lyall's oeuvre ostensibly contradicts the construction of binaries. Just as literary doubles have an uneasy relationship with the concept of manysidedness (coin contra gem), so in Lyall's texts each model of sympathy undercuts the other. The fluid, palimpsestic pattern achieved through reappearances of characters from past novels, the sympathetic relationships between old and new heroes and heroines, and the frequent repetition of a qualitatively sensitive and sympathetic figure at first indicates a porous quality to Lyall's depiction of difference and a free transmission of sympathy between persons of different faiths. However, this feature deteriorates as binaries come into sharper focus and the underlying 'Christlikeness' of Lyall's manysidedness rises to the surface.

These are the issues this chapter explores and the question to ask as we look more closely at Lyall's novels, and particularly as we explore them as responses to specific current events, is whether or not Lyall's project *can* be called sympathetic when it comes to the central issue of religious difference? Is Lyall's portrayal of sympathy perhaps more akin to solipsism? In this chapter, we see that the figure of Christ persists, appearing again and again throughout Lyall's texts, mirrored

in both masculine and feminine traits and in both male and female characters. Her texts reproduce and refract an image of 'Christlikeness'. While outwardly she may appear to construct this image out of multiple systems of belief (and unbelief), ultimately her male sympathetic figure is one-sided in terms of religious identity. Just as Lyall looks to Christ-like self-sacrifice as the zenith of morality, she also raises Christ above all other religious founders. She may not actively disparage other religious founders, but the pattern of her writing is suspicious in its unsympathetic implications of their inferiority in the face of Christ's superiority. Unlike Lee's many-sided figures, where the male sympathetic hero is a composite of Christian and pagan, (im)moral and aesthetic qualities, and unlike Eliot's Deronda, compounded of Christian and Eastern religious identities, Lyall's male (and female) sympathetic figures are expressions of 'Christlikeness'. Central to the sympathetic nature of her heroes and heroines is their sympathetic imitation of Christ and, most importantly, their simulation of the characteristically Christ-like quality of noble self-sacrifice.

This chapter looks more carefully at Lyall's texts as responses to specific contemporary issues. It will examine how Lyall's responses to contemporary issues follow a similar pattern; her characters are reproductions of each other, frequently mirroring (or transmitting) the same qualities of Christ-like goodness and truth. In connection with this, we will touch on how Lyall's characters are not only based on public figures (Charles Bradlaugh, Michael Davitt) and people she knew personally (such as her cousin Rev. Philip Newnham), but are also fashioned after herself, her experiences, and her personal faith. If Lyall was teaching readers to put themselves 'into the place of another', she was also training readers to see from her perspective.

'Go[ing] through life [...] as lovers of unity'

Lyall's aims in writing *The Autobiography of a Truth* were clear to her public. She was not the only author stepping up to contribute her talents to assisting the

plight of the Armenians. *Autobiography* was immediately compared with W.T. Stead's (1849–1912) endeavour in *The Haunting Horror of Armenia, or Who will be damned for this?* (1896): 'In both cases an effort is made to work up public opinion to a passionate pitch, and so to force the Government to more active measures'.[7] In lieu of procuring alert and astute awareness of the complexities and shades of difference characterizing matters like British secularism and the Armenian crisis, Lyall favours promoting her method of 'go[ing] through life [...] as lovers of unity holding fast through evil report and good report to that love of humanity — that great quality of brotherhood — which will outlast all differences in religion and in politics'.[8] In focusing on unity, specific differences fall to the wayside. For example, in much of Lyall's oeuvre we see intricate layers of (often combative) discrepancies in Christian theology reduced to the single point of knowing 'Christ's real character'; Christian lifestyle is condensed to the simple imitation of 'Christlikeness'. The litigious nature of the Armenian crisis is similarly abridged, and the more one understands its density, the more menacing Lyall's unsophisticated reference to the Armenian question as 'a *national* question' looms.

The Armenian crisis was the result of the Hamidian massacres that took place against the Armenian populations across the Anatolian region between 1894 and 1896. Although the Armenian rebellion and massacre in September 1894 at Sassoun was largely the reason the Armenian crisis came into the British public's line of sight, the crisis extended as far back as 1878 to the Congress of Berlin's placement of the Ottoman Empire 'on probation' in the wake of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78.[9] An early editorial piece on the 1894 massacre claims 'Sassoun is a climax, not an isolated fact' and draws attention to the long-standing violence against the Armenians in the region, claiming in particular that it had been

[7] 'Literature', *Derby Mercury* 9477, (26 Aug 1896), p. 6 in *British Library Newspapers, Part I: 1800–1900*. Accessed 19 September 2017.
[8] Lyall, *To Right the Wrong,* 3 vols, II, p. 50.
[9] Roy Douglas, 'Britain and the Armenian Question, 1894–7', *The Historical Journal* 19:1 (1976), 113–33 (p. 113), in *JSTOR*. Accessed 15 August 2015.

facilitated by Turkish policy in 1892 when the Turkish Government began to give Kurdish raiders on Armenian villages legitimacy by forming Kurdish regiments. Consequently, 'Anyone who lifted his hand against a Kourdish robber was liable to punishment for resisting a soldier of His Imperial Majesty'.[10]

The Armenian crisis was frequently compared by readers in Britain with the Bulgarian atrocities of 1876 and conflated with the influx of oppression narratives relating to various Balkan Christian communities subject to Ottoman rule.[11] As reports of the massacre flooded British newspapers, voices of special correspondents in Constantinople eviscerated the Turks. One correspondent doubts that any Turk had ever 'had any idea of equity or of conscience', asserting, 'To a Turk secrecy is the one essential condition, as regards his real acts and thoughts, of his maintaining before the world a dignified and polished aspect'. Reports of interviews with Armenian refugees, particularly those who claimed to have escaped the atrocities at Sassoun, were sensationalized.[12]

In his attempt to defend the Sultan against biased reports, the MP of Eye, Suffolk, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett (1849–1902), called the journalism surrounding the massacre an 'atrocity campaign'.[13] In the same article, he contests the unfair demonizing of 'Mohammedan Turkey' and journalists' convenient disregard of the fact that terrible atrocities were committed in 1877 and 1878 by Christian Russia against Muslim Turkish victims. In particular, he censures the Rev. Frederick Davis Greene's presentation of the crisis in his account, *The Armenian Crisis – The Massacre of 1894; its Antecedents and Significance – with a consideration of some of the factors that enter into this phase of the Eastern Question* (1895), cautioning would-be readers that it is 'a very inaccurate book'. Greene's work parallels the

[10] 'The Armenian Crisis', *Glasgow Herald* 296, (11 Dec 1894), p. 2 in *British Library Newspapers, Part I: 1800–1900*. Accessed 19 September 2017.

[11] See Douglas, p. 115. J.M. Escreet makes this exact comparison in her biography of Lyall when she writes, 'the Armenian troubles too painfully [seem] to be a repetition of the Bulgarian atrocities of 1876'. Escreet, pp. 150–51.

[12] 'Mr. Gladstone at Hawarden', *Cheshire Observer* 2228, (20 Apr 1895), p. 7 in *British Library Newspapers, Part II: 1800–1900*. Accessed 19 September 2017.

[13] 'Condemning Turkey Unheard', *Derby Mercury* 9410, (15 May 1895), p. 8 in *British Library Newspapers, Part I: 1800–1900*. Accessed 19 September 2017.

Armenian-Ottoman conflict with the Biblical account of the Israelites in Egypt, overall making his portrayals of the Ottoman Government and Islam belligerent.[14]

Despite inaccuracies and prejudices, F.D. Greene's work became a staple resource for anyone in Britain who wished to learn more of the Armenian massacres. Gladstone, who had routinely acted as 'Britain's conscience' during his years in office, maintained a public presence after his retirement from the premiership in March 1894. His eighty-fifth birthday, 29 December 1894, was celebrated at his parish church in Hawarden where he welcomed and addressed three Armenian refugees introduced to him by F.D. Greene. Gladstone was not shy regarding his opinion of how Britain should act in response to the massacres. Nearly two years later, in his last political speech, he detailed a policy of intervention that began with the breakdown of Britain's diplomatic relations with Turkey.[15] Lyall, Liberal in her politics, supported Gladstone's efforts as ex-premier. In August 1896, she wrote to him, enclosing a copy of *Autobiography*:

> Will you accept this copy of a short story I have written in the hope of doing a little for the Armenians. You, who have done so much for all oppressed people, work for them still I know, though it is hard for us not to long to have you once more as our Leader.[16]

Sans Gladstone, the British Government's non-intervention policy was directly related to the wider implications of the thorny Eastern question; if Armenian separatism was supported by Britain, it would likely spark dangerous uprisings in Syria, Arabia, and other Ottoman regions, regions where Britain — and all of the Great Powers — had a vested interest in maintaining the status quo.[17] For a time,

[14]See 'Summary of News', *Sheffield & Rotherham Independent* 12693, (30 May 1895), p. 4 in *British Library Newspapers, Part II: 1800–1900*. Accessed 19 September 2017, for a report of Mr. Greene's opinions of Turkey, Islam, and the Sultan. F.D. Greene's text sold well. He published a further account in 1896 entitled *Armenian massacres, or, The sword of Mohammed: containing a complete and thrilling account of the terrible atrocities and wholesale murders committed in Armenia by Mohammedan fanatics, including a full account of the Turkish people, their history* (1896). His descriptions lean heavily on Western stereotypes and misrepresentations of Islam dating from the Middle Ages. For origins of a range of these stereotypes, see W. Montgomery (William Montgomery) Watt, *The Influence of Islam on Medieval Europe* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1972), pp. 72–84.

[15]Douglas, 'Britain and the Armenian Question', p. 128.

[16]London, British Library (BL), Vol. CCCCXXXVIII, Add MS 44523 f. 200.

[17]See Arman Dzhonovich Kirakossian, *The Armenian Massacres, 1894–1896: British Media*

Russia and Britain considered jointly pressuring the Ottoman Sultan to implement internal reforms in Eastern Anatolia; but this backfired when relations between Russia and Britain deteriorated over a separate issue: Russian encroachment on Japanese waters.[18] Additionally, in 1894 the British Government was unstable and its foreign policy shifting; a Conservative government was elected over the Liberal encumbents on 22 June 1895. Ultimately, Britain chose not to risk intervention.[19]

Despite the rising tide of information in the press and the public's increased activity on behalf of the Armenians, there were still questions regarding who qualified as 'Armenian' and which region counted as 'Armenia'. At the time, this people group was scattered across Anatolia and consisted of Roman Catholics, Protestants, the Orthodox, and Gregorians.[20] 'Armenia' was not easily designated; it mainly consisted of six vilayets in eastern Anatolia, but even these locations had a fluid Armenian identity.[21] None of these details were widely known by the British public in the 1890s; 'most people were probably disposed to regard Armenians as a more or less compact ethnic, linguistic and cultural group, occupying a fairly defined area'.[22] Nevertheless, the research efforts behind Lyall's novella are evident. *The Autobiography of a Truth* appeared as a slim volume priced at one shilling in 20 August 1896 towards the tail end of the 'atrocity campaign'. To ensure her readers would know 'that the picture I have drawn is by no means exaggerated', Lyall provided a short 'list of authorities' at the back. She lists

Testimony (Dearborn, MI: Armenian Research Center, University of Michigan, 2008) for commentary on the impact Britain's role in European politics and position on the 'Eastern Question' throughout the nineteenth century had upon events leading up to and culminating in the Armenian crisis. Kirakossian has collected 48 contemporary articles published in periodicals between 1890 and 1897 on the Armenian question to give a cross-section of the opinions and arguments published for public consumption.

[18] See Douglas, 'Britain and the Armenian Question', p. 114. An end was put to this after the British navy refused to aid Russia in its encroachment of control over Japanese waters.

[19] See Douglas, 'Britain and the Armenian Question', pp. 122, 119.

[20] Gregorian Armenians were most often targeted in the massacres. Douglas, 'Britain and the Armenian Question', p. 114.

[21] Only about 23% of these vilayet populations were Armenian and only Bitlis had a majority Armenian population: Erzerum, Bitlis, Van, Sivas, Kharput and Diarbekr. Douglas, 'Britain and the Armenian Question', p. 115.

[22] See Douglas, 'Britain and the Armenian Question', p. 115. The intricacies of the political scene are clearer in hindsight with access to the personal correspondence of the Liberal leader Lord Rosebery, the Conservative leader Lord Salisbury, and Queen Victoria.

the five Parliamentary Blue-books documenting the crisis, works by Rev. Canon Malcolm MacColl, the Duke of Argyll (John Murray), F.S. Stevenson, MP (and President of the Anglo-Armenian Association), and *The Armenian Crisis* by F.D. Greene.

Read alongside contemporary news reports, Lyall's novella strikes me as a regurgitation in fictional form of the frequent newspaper accounts. It offers a peculiar patchwork of biased anti-Turkish reports. Like them, Lyall's text implies parallels between the Armenian crisis and the Bulgarian atrocities. One character voices the concern that educators in Armenia will be victimized 'as they were in the case of Bulgaria' (*AT* 48). As did F.D. Greene and other journalists, the novella compares the Armenians with the Hebrews in Egypt: 'Like the Egyptians of old, the Turks see a strong energetic race growing in their midst, and they adopt Pharaoh's plan and try to exterminate the people' (*AT* 28).[23]

The text also refers to events that led up to the Armenian massacres, such as the Turkish formation of the Kurdish militia, and echoes media reports that incriminate the Sultan.[24] 'Depend upon it, the formation of the Hamidieh cavalry in 1891 — the formal enlistment of the Kurds under the Sultan — is, as they themselves openly avow, a means of exterminating us. It was the Sultan's own plan' (*AT* 48). While the Sultan is criminalized, the valiant efforts of unarmed Armenians defending themselves against Kurdish soldiers are emphasized. In a sensational manner similar to that adopted in printed interviews with Armenian refugees, Lyall's text describes the horror when an Armenian wedding scene is violently disrupted by Kurds. Kaspar, and others, do what they can to save the wedding party, but when the skirmish ends the bridegroom and father of the bride have been killed.[25]

[23] Compare with, 'This unhappy nation at this latter end of the nineteenth century is in the position of the children of Israel in the Egypt of the Pharaohs', from 'Summary of News'.

[24] 'In 1892 the Turkish Government organised the Kourds to regiments of irregular cavalry "in order the better to control them." Whatever the intention of the inventor of this scheme, its result has been simply to give the impress of Government authority to outrages that before were merely Kourdish outrages'. See 'Summary of News'.

[25] Lyall, *The Autobiography of a Truth*, p. 30. See 'Mr. Gladstone at Hawarden', for sensationalized

Critical descriptions of the Turks — falling in line with British reports of their secrecy, immorality, and savagery — also abound in *Autobiography*. The Turkish gendarmes are described in terms of their failure to keep promises and their recourse to bribery.[26] Turkish officials and the Sultan's government are described in terms of secrecy and 'habitual cunning': 'From the Sultan's dominions ill-news [...] is hushed up as long as possible, and garbled in long-delayed telegrams, confiscated letters and other hindrances' (*AT* 78, 63).[27] Throughout *Autobiography*, the reader is presented with the British newspapers' construction of a Turkish Muslim of the Ottoman Empire. Ottoman Turks are a 'people who think the murder of a Christian an act to be rewarded in this world and the next', who do not keep their promises, and who act 'with their habitual cunning' (*AT* 11, 49, 78). A Turkish official, Reshed Pasha, is described as an uneducated 'murderer and an ex-brigand', a 'brutal, ignorant scoundrel' who 'had never heard of New York', a comment which polarizes the Turkish official from Kaspar who has traveled to the region from America (*AT* 50, 51).

Lyall's aim is to correct the perceived lack of awareness in the British public about the situation in Armenia: 'People in England and America have little notion of what daily life in Armenia is like', claims one character. Another asks, 'Is it not time that they learnt the truth? [...] Specially the English, who are responsible for our still being under the Sultan's rule' (*AT* 27). The text frequently directs attention to the British government's lack of action on behalf of the Armenians: 'What is Christendom about that it permits the things which go on out here in a country which it is pledged to safeguard?' (*AT* 36). 'Truth', an intradiegetic figure,

reports of violence against Armenians. This article includes descriptions of 'a church full of the bodies of worshippers who had been butchered by the soldiers', and of 'Mrs. Bedros, who had her infant of six months' old [...] wrenched from her grasp, and bayoneted'.

[26] Lyall, *The Autobiography of a Truth*, p. 49.

[27] See 'Summary of News', for evidence of repeated descriptions of the Turks and Turkish government in terms of secrecy, hiding, blindness: 'With this must be noticed also the fact that secrecy is essential to the execution of the plan, [...] of wiping out Armenians from the region, as the Turks have already wiped out the name Armenia from every map and every book of any kind in the empire. Secrecy is the great arm of defence used by Turkey, and this secrecy is fostered by the policy of not publishing the blood-curdling recitals found in the simple narratives of the daily observations of the Consuls'.

carefully narrates for the reader specific infringements Turkish rule has made on the rights of the Armenians. Armenians may not own weapons and are liable 'on the slightest suspicion' to be arrested and imprisoned. The circumstance of being forced to choose between 'death by torture' and apostasy is discussed. Attention is directed to the word 'gospel', legal to use in conversation but not in sermons or articles. Atlases that mark Armenian territory are prohibited. Resisting a Kurdish soldier is considered an act of rebellion against the Sultan. Letters to Armenians are intercepted and read by Turkish officials, sometimes falsely interpreted in order to warrant an arrest of the recipient (as happens with Kaspar). Unannounced searches of Armenian homes for incriminating evidence regularly occur.[28]

The central male agent and target of sympathy in *Autobiography* is loosely based on Professor Thoumaian, an Armenian refugee whose story appeared in the press. 'Professor Thoumaian has related some of the tortures of which he was the eye-witness, as well as the treatment to which he himself was subjected'.[29] Thoumaian became a readily recognizable source for the characterization of Kaspar. Like Thoumaian, Kaspar is also a Professor of science, and one of Lyall's biographers states, 'The story of the hero and his sufferings causes us to think that the writer must have had in mind the facts relating to the life and sufferings of Prof. Thoumaian'.[30] The supplementary American identities of Kaspar and Faith are significant; the American government had refused to act on behalf of the Armenians and it is likely that Lyall intended to use the active roles played by Kaspar and Faith as an oblique criticism of the U.S. government's failure to act.[31]

The novella's titular emphasis upon Truth recedes as the narrative progresses and a fiction of mutually exclusive accounts becomes more pronounced. Like the British newspapers that responded to the Porte's pro-Sultan, anti-Armenian

[28] See, respectively, Lyall, *The Autobiography of a Truth*, pp. 23, 24–26, 27, 32, 40, 43.

[29] Francis Seymour Stevenson, 'Armenia', *Contemporary Review*, February 1895, pp. 211–19 in Kirakossian, *The Armenian Massacres*. See also Kirakossian, pp. 173, 180, 183 for contemporary references to Thoumaian, or Thoumayan.

[30] Payne, *"Edna Lyall": An Appreciation*, pp. 45–46.

[31] For reference to this US response, see Douglas, 'Britain and the Armenian Question', p. 117.

nationalism with contra-Sultan, anti-Turk, and pro-Armenian reporting, Lyall's text carries this binary forward, arguably representing the Armenian crisis just as supporters of Gladstone within the Liberal party wished it to be viewed in order to pressure the government to act in line with Mr. Gladstone's speeches on the issue as ex-premier. Nearly a decade later, Lyall's biographer, George Payne, continues to perpetrate the polarity between 'the wronged Armenian against the blood-thirsty Turk'.[32] He praises the novella as 'a most eloquent appeal to all lovers of freedom'.[33] Based on her echoes of the sensationalism and binaries constructed in newspaper reports, likely Lyall's aim is *not* to dismantle the fictional simplicity of the binary oppositions that were notoriously popular in the wake of the Armenian atrocities.

Given her degree of bias, how is Lyall's emphasis on unity fitted to the pattern of dichotomy? In the midst of her reiterations of British journalism, Lyall persists in her focus on unity and makes a point of referencing the injustices Turkish citizens have also suffered.[34] A Turkish Muslim voices the view that Armenians are not suffering alone: 'it is not alone the Armenians that the Government ill-treat. Are not we ourselves oppressed, and over-taxed, and ruled as badly as a people can be ruled?' (*AT* 57). Even though she still holds that Turkish citizens are not as severely punished as Armenians, she takes the time to make the claim that Ottoman officials should be held responsible for injustices, not the Turkish people as a whole. And in another instance of trying to reset the balance, she describes a virtuous Turkish official. Kaspar meets a Vali who was 'a fair and upright man, free from the vices of the old Turkish school of officials' (*AT* 89).

These details seem to be included in order to caution readers in the application of their prejudices, to rein in wholehearted acceptance of anti-Turk propaganda and indicate that Lyall was concerned with eliciting specific sympathetic responses from readers. She wanted to curb anti-Turkish prejudice,

[32]Payne, *"Edna Lyall": An Appreciation*, pp. 45–46.
[33]Payne, *"Edna Lyall": An Appreciation*, p. 45.
[34]Lyall, *The Autobiography of a Truth*, p. 47.

but also hoped to inspire action on behalf of the suffering Armenians. In a separate narrative tactic, the narrator Truth takes care to detail Kaspar's physical suffering in prison after his arrest: 'Heavy wooden manacles, [...] made any sort of movement impossible, and were so tight that they broke the skin' (*AT* 52). Kaspar 'turned sick and faint with pain when his torturing bonds had been put on' (*AT* 53). These descriptions, and others, feel designed to invoke *physical* responses and their parallel sympathetic feelings of concern — imagining raw, broken skin rubbing against tight manacles makes a reader wince. At the end of the narrative, Truth notes the scars left on Kaspar's wrists and elsewhere from wounds inflicted by torture.[35] In this way, through their sympathetic identification with a single character, readers are brought close to the suffering of individual Armenians, a method that complements the statistical evidence also fielded; Lyall additionally notes that at the time up to 70,000 Armenians had been massacred.[36]

Another method Lyall employs is to allude frequently to the moon shining on both Armenia and England, transforming it into a symbol and reminder of the Armenian crisis, perhaps in reference to the crescent moon of the Ottoman flag: 'that same moon [...] shone upon Faith far away in London, and upon so many others in peaceful England who were wholly ignorant of the horrors of Turkish rule' (*AT* 54). Although the two cultures are unified under one moon, the contrasts between England and Armenia are stressed: 'Never can I [Truth] forget the contrast between the Turkish gaol [...] and the quiet little house near Nothing Hill Gate, where Faith Revere and her father had taken up their quarters'; 'Most terrible was the contrast between the gaiety of London in the height of the season and the Turkish prison' (*AT* 62, 76). Readers sitting quietly at home, or who may have recently been socializing and enjoying the London season in particular, should feel pangs of conscience as they imagine the disparity between their lives and the lives of men like Kaspar.

As it enhances British awareness and ruffles readers' consciences, Lyall's

[35] See Lyall, *The Autobiography of a Truth*, p. 104.
[36] Lyall, *The Autobiography of a Truth*, p. 110.

novella also aims to shame the British government specifically and includes a damning critique of Parliament. Faith receives varied responses from the House of Commons' members as she asks them to act on behalf of Kaspar after he has been imprisoned: 'so many [...] speciously promised, but did nothing; there were others who were sceptical as to the truth of the whole matter, and there were some who did not want to be bothered, being full of their own pet schemes and projects' (*AT* 71). When she seeks aid from the American ambassador, he explains, 'Whatever help could be given could best be given by the British Government' (*AT* 66). Eventually, Faith's efforts are rewarded and the text juxtaposes the end of Kaspar's torture with the Turkish officials' receipt of the news that 'the British Ambassador is taking up the case of the Professors' (*AT* 83–84). Readers would have come away from the text with an idea of how vital British government action is to the individual lives of suffering Armenians. And, very significantly, British action results from Faith's efforts, an outcome which invites readers to act in the same way; the mantle of responsibility (and guilt) shifts directly onto the shoulders of readers.[37]

In the midst of these specific aims to produce action, how is religious difference treated in the text? How does Lyall's emphasis on self-sacrifice as 'Truth' and the emulation of 'Christlikeness' play out in a novella centered on a conflict ostensibly driven by religious difference? How much sympathy does the narrative extend to Islam? Before his imprisonment for alleged conspiracy against Ottoman officials, Kaspar and his colleagues discuss the threat of arrest and being forced to decide between apostasy and death. Kaspar, however, does not object to apostasy in terms of hatred or dislike of Islam and he considers the question without speaking vehemently:

> [T]he *Zeitgeist* [...] would suggest that Christ would certainly not be hard on a fellow for telling a lie under such circumstances; that, in fact, He would account it no base desertion if we denied Him and became followers of

[37] See Lyall, *The Autobiography of a Truth*, p. 104. The release of Kaspar and others from prison is attributed to Faith's efforts: 'it is through you that we were saved from death'. Faith's reply — 'one has to keep hammering away at a thing for a long, long while before the English can be stirred' — is designed to encourage campaigners for the Armenians not to give up hope.

> Mahommed, who, after all, was doubtless in some respects an excellent man, and a believer in the One God. (*AT* 25–26)

Instead, Kaspar rejects apostasy in terms of the view that, as Christians, they have no right to lose faith and convert in fear. To act in any way out of fear, even if the action itself is not immoral, is to fall short of the Christ-like ideal. 'The gospel [account of Christ's incarnation] begins with a "Fear not" ', Kaspar reminds his fellows (*AT* 26). Self-sacrifice is absolutely upheld by this narrative, with its system of values placing suffering at its pinnacle — any pain, even death, is of value if it means, 'through the pain this country's wrongs are revealed!' (*AT* 54). Truth and reform are more valuable than individual safety or life.

Lyall makes another key observation through Kaspar after he experiences the kindness of Turkish Muslim prisoners. His remark is perhaps the novella's most striking point after its acceptance of Mahommed as 'an excellent man':

> I never expected to part so reluctantly with a Turk, [...] Neither the difference in race, nor the difference of creed, need hinder us from living peaceably enough together, it is the accursed meddling of the officials, the deliberate effort of the Government to stir up strife between us, that is at the bottom of all our troubles. (*AT* 59)

This comment, while groundbreaking in its acceptance of difference and refusal to consider racial or religious differences as an automatic reason for dispute, also reveals the deficit in Lyall's approach to difference. Mutual understanding of religious differences is not achieved. Kaspar and the other inmates bond through their common experiences of injustice — they share an unclean space; they suffer from wearing wooden or iron manacles; they exchange stories of ill treatment at the hands of Turkish officials — but there is no indication that they improve each other's knowledge of religious diversity, or that this is in any way a fundamental aspect of responding to religious difference.

The dichotomy between Christian belief and non-Christian belief, then, remains intact and strong enough to reemerge at the critical moment. At the narrative's climax, when Kaspar must choose between death and apostasy, he hears the contending voices of Truth and the *Zeitgeist* in his mind. Like Pontius Pilate,

the *Zeitgeist* asks, 'Truth, what is truth?' and argues that there are 'Plenty of good Mahommedans'.[38] Evidently, emphasis does not fall on understanding religious differences, or even on the recognition of parallels subsisting between religions. Instead, the narrative is a dramatic representation of Lyall's claim that the answer to 'What is truth?' is 'the Incarnate Word of God': Jesus (*AT* 93). Even as it speaks on behalf of the Armenian population, the novella is a platform for Lyall's expression of *her* belief that Christ is Truth. Choosing Christ means one is always 'a free man, with the power of an endless life', and although what it means to *not* choose Christ is not directly expressed, the implication is obvious (*AT* 94). The dichotomy between Christianity and non-Christian religions is preserved; and the Pauline separation of sheep from goats prevails.

Considering this, the sympathetic reach of Lyall's writing appears to be compromised. On one hand, her oeuvre revolves around a compassionate desire to instigate altruistic action; her texts are bent on eliminating the suffering of minority groups. Her texts are also arguably 'sympathetic' in their very orchestration of reader-response; the pain of suffering individuals is made to be the pain of her readers. Truth in *Autobiography* is 'perplexed' by 'the extraordinary slowness with which one man is able in imagination to put himself into the place of another'. Lyall's texts try to correct this slowness by attempting to train readers to sympathetically locate themselves in the suffering positions of others regularly, whenever they pick up a newspaper, in fact. As Truth observes, 'a rusty and disused imagination is quite as dangerous as a wild and diseased one' (*AT* 76). The imagination needs constant exercise in order habitually to exert a sympathetic extension of self into the place of another. This is one way Lyall's literary oeuvre may still rightly be termed a sympathetic endeavour, even if in other ways — the build-up of binaries and (solipsistic) representations of self and personal beliefs — her oeuvre is 'unsympathetic'. She also customarily alleviates specific anxieties facing readers. Even as each successive work centres on raising awareness of a

[38]The pattern of dichotomy persists through the implied contrast between Christ's and Pilate's examples. See John 18. 38.

specific political issue or debate, each is comprised of her efforts at reassurance, such as her attempts to alleviate contemporary concerns about population increase, flooded job markets, the strangeness of cities, or the overwhelming nature of London crowds.

On the other hand, Lyall's body of work is centered on certainty. In *Donovan*, after Donovan Farrant converts he is *certain* his faith is true; in *We Two*, Erica Raeburn is *certain* her conversion was the right decision, even when she faces the pain her choice has caused her secularist father; in *Autobiography*, Kaspar is *certain* his resolutions, taking him to Anatolia and leading to his imprisonment and death-sentence, were morally correct. Lyall's lovers-of-unity mantra coupled with the maintenance of binaries persisted in her novella *Autobiography* and now we turn to the context of her representation of British secularism in the two earlier novels that were perhaps her most popular works. Through examining the famed figure of her fictional hero Donovan Farrant, his frequent reappearances, and how his sympathetic nature relates to the feature of manysidedness, the next section develops a sense of the limitations of the sympathy figured in Lyall's oeuvre and the emphasis in all her works upon the importance of alleviating anxiety in readers.

Secularism, *Donovan*, & *We Two*

As in the case of the responses to the Armenian massacres, responses to the growth of secularism in Britain were not homogenous. Sub-factions and rivalries multiplied as the century progressed. As early as the 1850s, the scene of British secularism was divided between Holyoake and anti-Holyoake camps. Throughout his career, Charles Bradlaugh became entangled in disputes with secularists and religious groups alike.[39] He became the editor of the *Investigator* in 1858 — a platform of anti-Holyoake secularism from 1854 — and in 1860 founded the *National Reformer* and the National Secular Society in spite of the

[39]Edward Royle and Charles Bradlaugh, *The Bradlaugh Papers: A Descriptive Index* (Wakefield: EP Microform, 1975), p. ii.

existence of Holyoake's paper the *Reasoner*. As Bradlaugh rose throughout the 1860s and 1870s as a secularist leader, more dissension dogged his steps. A severe break between him and the sub-editor of the *National Reformer*, Charles Watts (1836–1906), occurred in 1874 in the wake of Bradlaugh's joint campaign with Annie Besant (1847–1933) for public information about birth control and their support of Neo-Malthusianism. Watts and the secularist George Foote (1850–1915), also formerly of Bradlaugh's party, formed the British Secular Union as a rival faction of the National Secular Society in 1877, even going so far as to set up a series of 'anti-Bradlaugh branches [...] in various towns'.[40] It adopted the *Secular Review* — founded jointly by Holyoake and Foote in 1876 — as its mouthpiece in opposition to the *National Reformer*. Foote also partnered with Holyoake in founding the *Secularist* in 1874 at the time of his initial split from Bradlaugh, which was followed by another paper, the *Freethinker*, in 1881. In the latter, Foote published a series of blasphemous 'Bible Sketches' in a deliberate attempt to achieve notoriety, a move of which Bradlaugh disapproved.[41]

In addition to raising awareness about birth control and promulgating Neo-Malthusianism, Bradlaugh supported temperance, Fenianism (he helped the Fenian Brotherhood draft their manifesto in 1867), and was unofficially denominated the 'Member for India' due to his support of self-government for India. 'In the 1870s it seemed that all roads to reform led eventually to Charles Bradlaugh'.[42] These and other political and social positions made Bradlaugh unpopular with many British secularists, who were far from being united under a consistent set of views. W. Stewart Ross, who signed himself 'Saladin' in the papers, was another competitor against Bradlaugh within the Secularist movement. Acquiring the *Secular Review* from Charles Watts in 1884, Ross used the paper for blatant anti-Bradlaugh campaigning.[43] Eventually, a rift also divided Bradlaugh and Besant, following Besant's dedication to Fabian Socialism and Madame

[40]Royle and Bradlaugh, *The Bradlaugh Papers*, p. vi.
[41]Royle and Bradlaugh, *The Bradlaugh Papers*, p. iv.
[42]Royle and Bradlaugh, *The Bradlaugh Papers*, p. v.
[43]Royle and Bradlaugh, *The Bradlaugh Papers*, p. ix.

Blavatsky's Theosophy.[44]

In both cases — British secularism and the Armenian crisis — Lyall's response to differences of belief is the same. She seeks to transform these issues, so often sources of vehement disagreement and violence, into wellsprings of unity, commonality, or universal brotherhood. Lyall's texts implicitly argue that a focus upon difference is liable to cause one of two reactions: either it leads to the desire to force uniformity through conversion and integration, or it causes silence and inaction. The problem stemming from this approach is that in focusing too exclusively upon unity there is a failure to acknowledge the specifics of difference, such as the socio-political and religious complexities of an issue. To claim something as a '*national* question', for example, means losing sight of the diversity and the wide range of individuals involved — who they are, what they are doing, how they are affected. In effect, an emphasis on unity manufactures absences. And these gaps in knowledge, then, are filled with Lyall's views, her literary aims, her experiences, people she knew personally, and her perception of the public figures with whom she came into contact.

As much as Lyall ostensibly aimed to accurately represent public figures (Bradlaugh, Davitt) and controversial issues (secularism, the Armenian crisis, Irish Home Rule), she enacts a process of sympathy that George Eliot and Vernon Lee interrogated by routinely (and perhaps naïvely) creating characters that are types embodying her own principles. Effectively, she 'doubles' the original figures upon whom her characters are based and her replacements seem programmed or automatic — designed to function mechanically in a very specific way and produce very specific reader-responses. Lyall, as a lover of unity, falls into a dangerous pattern of over-simplifying the complex cultural, political, and religious aspects of controversial current events, and in the process essential contours of difference are absented.

Lyall's use of Charles Bradlaugh as her inspiration for and the model of

[44] See Royle and Bradlaugh, *The Bradlaugh Papers*, pp. i–xi.

Donovan and Luke Raeburn, with the latter corresponding most closely to the original, illustrates this. While references in Lyall's letters to her interest in meeting Bradlaugh indicate a desire to dependably represent secularism as well as its leader, ultimately this man is cut to fit a distinctly Lyallian pattern. Luke Raeburn is early associated with Bradlaugh in that he speaks Bradlaugh's own words in the (in)famous statement: 'The word God is a word without meaning, it conveys nothing to my understanding' (*WT* 15). Although Donovan and Raeburn are both ousted from their respective homes as young men due to their atheism (as Bradlaugh was), Raeburn's upbringing parallels Bradlaugh's more distinctly. Erica remembers seeing her father amidst an angry mob, describing similar accounts of Bradlaugh's reception: 'I saw him pushed, struck, spit upon, stoned. At last a great brick struck him on the head' (*WT* 85). Donovan parallels Bradlaugh in his election as Liberal MP in *We Two*, although in his case (as he is a Christian by the time of his election) there is no drawn-out debate over the Parliamentary oath. While Donovan is routinely characterized as an impartial pseudo-religious leader, Luke Raeburn is introduced as 'the much-disliked prophet of atheism [who] was the most disinterested of men' (*WT* 11).

Donovan Farrant makes his third and final appearance in Lyall's oeuvre in *The Autobiography of a Truth*:

> A feeling of hope and good cheer took possession of her [Faith] when, after weary waiting, the official called out the name of 'Mr. Farrant,' and she and her companion walked up the long lane [...] to a tall, dark-complexioned man, in whose strong, manly face and hazel eyes she could read a fearless sympathy, an eagerness to help, a subtle power to discern the true from the false. (*AT* 68–69)

Widely regarded by publishers as Lyall's best-known and most beloved character, Donovan is the ideal Victorian gentleman. Possessing a sensitive and sympathetic nature refined by hardship and lessons in self-sacrifice, he is also eminently practical. He is a doctor trained to serve in Britain's overseas ambulance services and by the start of *Autobiography* he has been elected Liberal MP of Greyshot and features as a prime example of what every member of the House of Commons

should be: a man of 'fearless sympathy' and 'a tower of strength to the oppressed' (*AT* 69). Donovan is arguably Lyall's pivotal male figure of sympathy — a discernibly pseudo-religious persona who embodies multiplicity of view while remaining an exemplar of political activism.

Donovan's history is narrated in *Donovan, A Modern Englishman* (1882), a three-volume *Bildungsroman* that follows Donovan's inward development as he reacts against injustice directed either towards himself or towards other sufferers. Having only experienced the more hypocritical and judgmental aspects of Christianity in childhood, Donovan begins life as an atheist and cynic. He calls Christianity 'a hideous mockery, a hollow profession' and determines, 'I at least will profess nothing'.[45] In the course of the narrative, Donovan is unjustly dispossessed of his inheritance and transitions from being a member of the country gentry to a poor Londoner. Destitute, he turns to gambling and becomes a cardsharper before returning to honest work and studying to become a medical professional. At the novel's close, his possession of his family's estate is restored and he selflessly joins an ambulance service. Throughout his hardships, Donovan's naturally charitable temperament rises above his misanthropy. His atheism gradually softens into agnosticism and ultimately transforms into Christianity once he discovers a Broad-Church faith compatible with his scientific views and acceptance of evolutionary theory.

Donovan was not immediately successful, though Gladstone, who received a copy from the author, praised it as a work that 'conveys true and deep knowledge, and combines a thorough equity and charity towards an atheist with a not less thorough homage to the authority of truth'.[46] The novel that marked the beginning

[45]Edna Lyall, *Donovan: A Modern Englishman,* 3 vols (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1882), I, pp. 42–43. Further references to this edition are given after quotations and prefixed by *D*.

[46]Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 47. See Lyall's letter of thanks to Gladstone for reading *Donovan*: 'Nothing could have given me such great pleasure as your kindness in reading "Donovan," and sending me your opinion of it'. BL, Add MS 44480 f. 284. Lyall later dedicated *Doreen* (1894) to Gladstone and received a 'kind letter' from him after he read it. Her reply follows the pattern of willing self-sacrifice for the sake of others established in the previous chapter: 'with that letter as a possession I ought to be strong to bear the attacks that must be expected from opponents. [...] If only the book will help the Irish cause a little I will not complain at all about

of Lyall's success in the marketplace was *We Two*. Lyall wrote much of *Donovan* and *We Two* side-by-side, and *We Two* peripherally features an older Donovan — married and settled — as a character who befriends the heroine Erica Raeburn and plays a pivotal role in her conversion, like his own, from atheism to a Broad-Church faith. The portrayal of Donovan as versatile, capable of success wherever he directs his attention, is consistent from *Donovan* to *We Two*. In *Donovan*, readers find the hero 'mak[es] [...] a masterpiece of' any activity he pursues (*D* I, 200–01). In this regard, he is very like Eliot's description of Deronda as a child, 'a remarkable lad, to whom one thing was as easy as another if he had only a mind to it' (*DD* 158).

He is an expert swimmer and skilled as an ice-skater; his forehead 'bespeak[s] rare mathematical talent' (*D* I, 4); he learns to play the piano; he philosophizes; he cares for mistreated animals; he is interested in Positivism and secularism; he plays cards and billiards proficiently, which for a time facilitates his slip into life as a cardsharper; and he is talented in medicine as a care-giver. One of his chief attributes is his desire to protect: 'The element of protection was his most pronounced characteristic; he was strong, and liked above all things to have something to take care of' (*D* I, 40).[47]

Resourcefulness and a cultivation of interests and activities on all sides strongly commend Donovan to readers as a many-sided figure, and his comprehensive reading habits reinforce his image as intellectually multifaceted. As a medical student in London, Donovan's books sit in 'an untidy pile of a strangely heterogeneous character. [...] Maurice, Renan, Haeckel, Kingsley, Strauss, Erskine, and at the top an open volume, Draper's "Conflict between Religion and Science" ' (*D* III, 84). Grouped in the 'heterogeneous' pile are broad-church views (Maurice), work from the evangelical wing of the Anglican Church (Kingsley), German higher biblical criticism (Strauss), secular historicism's focus on the historical life of Jesus (Renan), scientific work by a biologist and popularizer of Darwin's evolutionary theory (Haeckel), a Scottish revision of Calvinism

loss of reputation'. See BL, Add MS 44519 f. 239. Transcriptions are my own.

[47] See Lyall, *Donovan*, I, p. 246; II, p. 78 for instances of Donovan perceived as a natural protector.

(Erskine), and work by a promoter of the conflict thesis (John William Draper). Lyall evidently wishes to draw readers' attention to heterodox interpretations and scientific advancements, pointing to her hero as an exemplar of intellectual integrity, but the *Punch* parody of *Donovan* hits upon the severe lack of feasible guidance in Lyall's texts when it alludes to relevant (and challenging) modern works: 'Take Renan, Haeckel, Huxley, Strauss, and Draper — the names, I mean; it is quite useless and might do harm to read their books'. The parody further suggests that when Lyall's characters *do* discuss religion or science, the conversations are less proof of intellectual manysidedness than evidence of a vapid (broad-church) defense of Christianity. The *Punch* satire is quite short because '(Several chapters of theological disquisition [are] omitted. — Ed.)'.[48]

Donovan is also a composite of multiple nationalities. He is described as 'an Englishman' keeping up 'the national character', but due to his 'dark hair and complexion' and 'dark, flashing eyes' he is several times mistaken for a foreigner (*D* II, 181; I, 4, 228).[49] 'Donovan' stems from the Irish surname *Donndubhán*, meaning brown- or black-haired. He is once described as 'a gloomy Spanish don', and the minister Charles Osmond light-heartedly calls him 'You old Italian!' when Donovan tries to describe his natural inclination towards revenge (*D* III, 248). In the same moment, Charles comments on Donovan's exotic looks: 'I staked my reputation as an observer that you had a bit of the Italian in you the very first time we met'. While traveling in France, Donovan seems to move freely and easily in foreign society, as if his natural leadership abilities transfer to any cultural situation. Through this steady stream of references, Donovan emanates a cosmopolitan blend of English, Continental, and Irish identities. Added to this modern-day feature is a facet that fuses past with present. A tincture of classicism about Donovan furthers his composite (inter)national identity. Donovan's fellow classmates see 'a touch of the Roman in him', and in a passionate moment when 'his eyes flashed fire [...]

[48] 'Mr. Punch's Prize Novels', p. 112.

[49] See Lyall, *Donovan*, I, pp. 226–31 for an episode when two elderly women mistake Donovan for an Italian or Spaniard.

he might have stood for a model of one of the old Romans righteously hating his enemy' (*D* I, 2; III, 266). His cousin Ellis describes him as 'handsome — very — an Apollo — an Adonis' (*D* I, 144). A past and present figure, apollonian and saturnine, contradictory aspects of Donovan continually flash from the text.

In fact, we might see some kinship between Donovan and Eliot's sympathetic hero with a public conscience, the many-sided Will Ladislaw (also called, as we remember, 'an Italian with white mice!' (*MM* 480)). As the sanctimonious Nicholas Bulstrode cheats Ladislaw out of his inheritance, so also does Donovan's scheming cousin Ellis Farrant cheat him out of his. Ladislaw is initially at a loss in deciding upon a single occupation, and the problematical nature of his varied interests is summarized in Mr. Brooke's praise: 'He and I are alike, you know: he likes to go into everything' (*MM* 379). The same is true of Donovan. Where the gradual maturity of Donovan and Ladislaw are concerned, a similar lesson of lenience and suspension of criticism charges Lyall's text as it does Eliot's: 'people may really have in them some vocation which is not quite plain to themselves, [...] They may seem idle and weak because they are growing. We should be very patient with each other, I think' (*MM* 81).

Although Donovan spends time as a medical professional, both he and Ladislaw ultimately serve in the House of Commons (one wonders whether Donovan's medical expertise is meant to make him a combination of Lydgate and Ladislaw). Their physical features are also similarly fluid and bright. While 'The first impression on seeing Will was one of sunny brightness' (*MM* 203), in Donovan's case 'The natural energy of his character shone out strangely [...] His stern face was lighted up with resolute perseverance' (*D* II, 194). There is 'uncertainty' in Ladislaw's 'changing expression', which seemed 'a preparation for metamorphosis' (*MM* 203). In Donovan's face a flickering occurs in his eyes, which are 'strange [...] black in some lights, hazel in others' (*D* I, 4). Via Donovan, Lyall responds to such common criticisms of manysidedness as were featured in 'Intellectual Vigour' in the *Saturday Review*. Tolerant and sympathetic, Donovan is

proven by the novel's end to be none-the-less earnest or vigorous, just as Ladislaw is 'always [...] blamed for thinking of prospects, and not settling to anything' and yet becomes 'an ardent public man, [...] in the thick of a struggle against [wrongs]' (*MM* 359, 822).

Lyall's version of an idealized many-sided, sympathetic or fluid character does not end with Donovan, but courses through the veins of her work in three principal ways. As noted, she begins by constructing Donovan as a superlatively varied, multi-talented, sensitive and practical figure. As hero, protector, and spiritual guide, he becomes a touchstone of the virtues of manysidedness. Next, Lyall reinforces the adaptability of Donovan's nature by reintroducing him in two subsequent texts; in each he serves a slightly different role, both in terms of his career and how he impacts the personal lives of those around him. For instance, the transformative contact Charles Osmond has with him in *Donovan* is later shared between him and Osmond in *We Two* in their like impact upon Erica. Lastly, Lyall constructs an in-built repetition of the ideal many-sided figure first depicted via Donovan by overlapping the virtuous characteristics of her heroes and heroines.

This extends to a conflation of the inspirations for these figures — such as Charles Bradlaugh, Michael Davitt, Professor Thoumaian, Lyall's cousin Rev. Philip Newnham, and Lyall herself. But by emphasizing sympathetic points of contact and correlation, Lyall reduces her characters (and the people who inspired them) to a series of less-sophisticated portrayals of the originals — they begin to embody Lyall's experiences, her Liberal political views, and her broad-church faith and perspective. Lyall repeats the same figure in various guises, always upholding a model of Christ-like self-sacrifice, and always promulgating her message and method of Unity. The cast of characters across her work is woven together by webs of interlacing connections and meeting points.[50] 'How curiously lives are linked together!' Erica exclaims when she is introduced to Donovan and realizes she has already met him at the seaside, the father of a lost little girl whom Erica found

[50] See Binfield, 'Breadth from Dissent', p. 354 for mention that Lyall does something similar with the character Wharncliffe in her historical fiction.

and returned.[51] And Lyall forges more links for readers to unearth. She constructs the lives of her characters so as to criss-cross their relationships and (delightfully) surprise readers with familiar figures from previous novels. Donovan hears Luke Raeburn speak at a town hall lecture when he is a young man; he befriends Brian Osmond, son of Charles Osmond, in medical school and then Charles Osmond plays a crucial role in his conversion to Christianity. Some years later Brian falls in love with Erica, and soon she and her father are acquainted with the Osmonds and Farrants. The hero and heroine of *Doreen*, Max Hereford and Doreen, reappear in *Autobiography* as Mr. and Mrs. Hereford to offer their sympathy and support to Faith Revere as she struggles to campaign for support in the House of Commons. Donovan and Gladys Farrant also befriend and aid Faith.

Frequent meetings of characters with varied opinions are fashioned to uphold Lyall's procedure of seeking out underlying unities and emphasizing them. Donovan and Luke Raeburn speak at some of the same political meetings because they share certain political views, and when Raeburn falls ill Donovan is there to lend support. When Raeburn collapses from overwork, Brian Osmond is called for medical attention — Brian also attends Mrs. Raeburn on her deathbed.[52] Charles Osmond and Luke Raeburn 'sympathise with each other' in being 'born fighter[s]' and agree on certain political and social issues: 'there are many obstacles which we can struggle to remove, side by side', Osmond claims. 'We should be like one man, [...] on the question of the opium trade, for instance' (*WT* 112).

Donovan in particular is woven tightly into *We Two*, casually featured at first in Brian and Charles Osmond's conversations as early as Chapter 2 — 'Fancy how indignant Donovan would be! I only wish he were here to take word to Mr. Raeburn' (*WT* 17). He is mentioned again when Brian claims that only Charles Osmond or Donovan could possibly 'be the means of waking the spirit' in Erica (*WT* 39). Meanwhile, parallels naturally subsist between the figures based

[51] Lyall, *We Two*, p. 246.

[52] See Lyall, *We Two*, pp. 368, 372, 71 for these instances of physical aid. It is significant that Lyall relies upon engendering sympathy by setting all argument *aside* in moments of physical need.

upon Charles Bradlaugh. When Donovan first hears Luke Raeburn speak, he is overpowered by him:

> 'I can find, and you can give me, no proof of God's existence.' The words caused an electric thrill of sympathy in his heart. He stood motionless, quite unconscious of all around, his whole being absorbed in the argument of the lecturer. (*D* I, 118)

As Donovan listens to Luke Raeburn, the power and consolation of his speech come from a mirroring between his feelings and Raeburn's words: 'The lecturer was putting into words, and clothing with marvelously able arguments, all his own thoughts and opinions. [...] A speedy sympathy is established; [...] Donovan felt himself one with the speaker, [...] the sudden consciousness of unity and sympathy was almost intoxicating' (*D* I, 118–19). Erica and Luke, like Donovan when he was an atheist, have made 'up [their] mind[s] to exile and sacrifice' as secularists (*WT* 149). Later, after Donovan's religious views have changed, Donovan and Luke still match each other in physical strength and share the same views on temperance.[53] Luke's nature and will are also described at the start of *We Two* in terms similar to Donovan's; he possesses 'an originally sensitive nature' and 'a strong will' (*WT* 31). His long-standing position as a staunch secularist, however, has embittered him and this bitterness is the main difference between Luke and Donovan.

In addition to this interlacing technique, Lyall also uses similar descriptions between her characters to bring them into closer alliance. Descriptions of Erica are designed to conjure memories of Gladys and Donovan. Gladys and Erica are both 'bright-faced' and associated with sunlight — Erica 'brighten[s] the whole place with her sunshiny presence' (*WT* 2, 27). When we meet Erica she is, like Donovan, suffering from unjust treatment; like Donovan she is 'keenly alive' to 'impressions' (*WT* 4, 6). She is 'a great lover of animals, and a passionate lover of justice' (*WT* 239); Donovan 'was exceedingly fond of animals' and also 'a lover of justice' (*D* I, 110; III, 271–72). Like Donovan, Erica is full of variations, with 'a mood for every

[53] Luke Raeburn is like the 'very strong man Kwasind' in Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem *The Song of Hiawatha* (1855), read in the text by Erica; Donovan is also repeatedly referred to as 'strong'. See, for example, Lyall, *We Two*, p. 8.

day' — like him, she is 'very sensitive, responding at once to the merest touch, and easily moved to admiration and love, or to strong indignation' (*WT* 2, 25). The text later describes them as having 'links innumerable'; 'so perfect was her sympathy with Donovan, so closely and strangely were their lives and characters linked together' (*WT* 250, 255).

At the same time, Erica is 'a sort of miniature and feminine edition of [...] Luke Raeburn', a blending of the masculine and feminine (*WT* 206). She is named after her father's friend Eric and when first described she has 'the loveliest face' and hair 'scarcely longer than a boy's' at the back. Luke Raeburn calls her his 'little son Eric' (*WT* 2, 9). Donovan also unites feminine and masculine attributes. He has 'firm yet sensitive lips' and, although he has a 'masculine dislike of being helped', he also 'felt [...] more than most men'. He is 'manly', and 'tender and considerate'.[54] Charles Osmond's character further blends the masculine and feminine, the old and the young. He is 'muscularly very strong, but constitutionally delicate', and he 'united in a very rare way the man's strength and the woman's tenderness' (*WT* 256). And so it continues. Characters are regularly united in a similar blending of masculine and feminine features, which began with descriptions of Donovan. A pattern emerges as more and more of Lyall's subsequent heroes and heroines share in the qualities of Donovan's nature. In *Derrick Vaughan, Novelist*, Derrick has a 'highly-strung, sensitive nature' characterized by 'refinement, [...] gentleness'.[55] In *A Hardy Norseman*, the hero Frithiof Falck has Donovan's classical looks: 'his features were of the pure Greek type'.[56] And Kaspar possesses the stronger facets of Donovan's character: his

[54]Lyall, *Donovan*, III, p. 255; I, pp. 170, 171. Amelia Yeates argued in a conference paper on Victorian perceptions of masculinity that words like 'manly' or 'manliness' implied tenderness as an admirable male quality. Descriptors such as 'manly' and 'tender', then, are not necessarily oppositional. Lyall, however, uses these terms in a way that suggests she considered them as distinct, for instance, in the way she separates 'man's strength' from 'woman's tenderness' in her description of Charles Osmond. Amelia Yeates, 'Male Tenderness in Victorian Culture', The Arts and Feeling in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture, Birkbeck, 16–18 July 2015. See Amelia Yeates and Serena Trowbridge, *Pre-Raphaelite Masculinities: Constructions of Masculinity in Art and Literature*, edited by Amelia Yeates and Serena Trowbridge (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014).

[55]Edna Lyall, *Derrick Vaughan, Novelist* (London: Methuen and Co., 1889), p. 39.

[56]Edna Lyall, *A Hardy Norseman* (New York: The F.M. Lupton Publishing Company, 1890), p. 8.

'vigorous, independent nature bitterly resented the tyranny and the injustice which darkened the lives of his fellow-countrymen' (*AT* 23).

The brightness of faces, and their variability, are qualities of the many-sided figure interpreted as signs of 'Christlikeness'; Christ, really, is the foundational figure upon whom all other heroes and heroines are modeled. Ever the faithful protector and noble hero, descriptions of Donovan evoke Christian religious imagery. As part of his protective nature — a quality seen elsewhere in Deronda as part of a series of associations with non-Christian religious founders — Donovan is intensely self-sacrificial. In his most concentrated moments of suffering, Donovan's observers instinctively associate his image with that of Christ. In order to protect Gladys from the social consequences of loving an agnostic, Donovan refuses to clear his name from outstanding accusations against his character. He turns away from her when she asks him to clear himself and she reflects, 'He had looked utterly noble, the very light of Christ had shone in his face' (*D* III, 109). Likewise, after Donovan helps to reunite a young man in London with his father, a country blacksmith, the young man 'half-worshipped Donovan' for his help (*D* III, 273). In conversations with Charles Osmond, Donovan considers 'Mill's notable allowance that, on the whole, men could not do better than try to imitate the life of Christ', but thinks of the task as hopeless: 'this struggling to copy the life of Christ is such frightfully discouraging work' (*D* III, 193, 198).

The conversions in Lyall's texts invariably occur once Christ's character has become sufficiently real in the minds of the protagonists. Donovan converts 'by seeing the grandeur of the character of Christ', and when Erica converts, 'All in a moment the Christ who had been to her merely a noble character of ancient history seemed to become to her the most real and living of all living realities' (*WT* 120, 157). At the climax of *Donovan*, Donovan rushes to the side of his cousin Ellis Farrant who is dying from smallpox. Ellis, also Donovan's step-father and the executor of his father's will, was responsible for destroying the will that made

Donovan heir to his father's property.[57] He allowed everyone to believe that an earlier will, leaving everything to Donovan's mother, was the only one in existence. After biding his time, Ellis married Donovan's mother and came into the property himself. When Ellis is dying, Donovan seizes the opportunity to nurse him and show him forgiveness. Ellis refuses to believe that Donovan has truly forgiven him, but Donovan explains that he has been by his side for days and exclaims, 'surely you can believe in me now?' (*D* III, 296). In this moment and the moments that follow Ellis's death, Donovan's words return to him as if they had been spoken by Christ — 'Surely you can believe in me now!' — and they signal his conversion from agnosticism to belief (*D* III, 297–98).

The figure of Christ is the shaping model for Lyall's sympathetic characters who also share many of her attributes and experiences, following the pattern of Eliot and Lee with their proxies. Lyall frequently anchors her plots and characters to either personal experiences or the experiences of figures with whom she corresponded. Donovan, for example, acts as a surrogate of Lyall, exhibiting her reactions to injustice, her political views, and modeling a faith crisis after her experience. Yet, to a certain extent it also appears that as she used characters as vehicles for her consciousness, their consciousnesses began to sympathetically inform hers. Her biographer comments that as she wrote *Donovan*, 'she found herself compelled to face the problems which "Donovan" had to face, and to find an answer to the questionings which come at some time to all those who go below the surface'.[58]

In experiencing this permutation early in her writing career, it could be that Lyall's intentions with *Donovan* (and her later fiction) were reinvigorated by it; if *she* experienced a deep urge to revisit (and renew) the foundations of her faith through writing *Donovan*, then his figure would be likely to abet a similar process in the thoughts and lives of many readers (perhaps this is why an assortment of

[57] One questions again whether or not certain features of Lyall's plot are veiled references to *Middlemarch*; for instance, to Mary Garth's refusal to follow Featherstone's request to destroy the most recent copy of his will.

[58] Escreet, *Edna Lyall, Ada Ellen Bayly*, p. 38.

titles and authors is mentioned in connection with Donovan, but not addressed in any depth; readers are being provoked to seek out these texts). Further, Lyall chose to incorporate her personal experience with a minister who helped her to regain her strong faith in the form of the character Charles Osmond. He appears late in the narrative and is used as the catalyst for Donovan's final steps towards conversion. The real-life counterpart who helped Lyall regain her faith was her cousin, the Rev. Philip Newnham, to whom *Donovan* is dedicated.

One suspects that the anxieties Lyall seeks to alleviate in her novels are things she herself feared. She tries to mitigate fears related to population increase, like the difficulties of finding work in a flooded market, the strangeness of cities, and overwhelming nature of London crowds. Her habitual reincorporation of characters from earlier novels is arguably a method by which she provides a sense of security and familiarity for her readers. She enables them to track the later lives of beloved figures and the pattern of recurrence that readers came to expect is likely part of a larger project of alleviating the 'fear of non-recurrence' that haunted discussions of religion.[59] In this, recurring characters and the frequent sympathetic relationships between them is a key aspect of Lyall's work, a part of her method of response to the religious interpretation of the fear of non-recurrence, which is related to that of solar physics — as many tried to reassure the reading public that the sun would continue to rise each day, Lyall uses sun imagery and combines it with 'Christlikeness' qualities to argue that Christ and a true Christ-like religion of action will not fail to reappear and persist as history progresses. As such, Lyall's oeuvre is in direct opposition to the cultural evolutionism of theorists like E.B. Tylor. The sun imagery is especially useful to Lyall, and her references

[59] See Gillian Beer, '"The Death of the Sun": Victorian Solar Physics and Solar Myth', in: J.B. Bullen, ed., *The Sun is God: Painting, Literature and Mythology in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), pp. 159–80. Beer discusses mid-to-late nineteenth-century fears surrounding the inherent contradiction between Darwin's progressive evolutionary theory and the results of solar physics that predicted the sun's energy could not last. Huxley's resolution of this contradiction — his proposal that evolutionary development could be 'retrogression' just as easily as progression — generated 'fear[s] of oblivion' and 'non-recurrence' manifested around ideas of human degeneration.

are framed so as to continually remind her readers that, as the sun is the original source of prismatic light, the figure of Christ is the original of her multi-faceted and interrelated cast of characters, a figure whose features are continually reflected and refracted throughout each text.

Lyall's interest in easing modern-day apprehensions is directly connected with her depictions of sympathy. Readers see several kinds of sympathy at work in her texts: an instinctive, physical sympathy such as blushing, crying or a 'throbbing' pulse, no doubt related (however remotely) to contemporary researches in physio-psychology; a 'contagious', or Humean sympathy transferred to a spectator who witnesses an emotional display; a Smithean sympathy driven by a spectator's sympathetic imagination when emotional display is absent but context implies pain or passion; a sympathetic (associationist) connection between person and object; and sympathy as hollow and meaningless mimicry, such as in the case of the mocking parrot in *Donovan*.[60] *All* are funneled into Lyall's anxiety-alleviating project. For example, Lyall's construction of Donovan's character responds to ideas related to the relationship between body and mind: that bodily activity will tell upon mental attitude and emotions. Emphasis falls upon *responsiveness* — response to circumstance, to people, to bodily exertion. It is also concerned with the relationship between conscious (willed) and unconscious (instinctive) action, and by extension with two types of sympathy: intuitive, or passive and unconscious, sympathy; and intentional, or active and conscious, sympathy.

By making Donovan an exemplar of both strong will and sensitive, responsive intuition, Lyall's text attempts to ease the anxieties of her readers;

[60]See Bruce Thomas Boehrer, *Parrot Culture: Our 2,500-year-long Fascination with the World's Most Talkative Bird* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), pp. 84–118 for more on parrots in nineteenth-century literature and Bruce Thomas Boehrer, *Animal Characters: Nonhuman Beings in Early Modern Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), pp. 74–106 for a discussion of the parrot in early modern literature and art; Boehrer establishes that by the early modern period the parrot 'ceased to be the sentient, articulate, and miraculous figure of much medieval discourse and [...] bec[a]me instead [...] a conventional emblem of mindless iteration' (p. 75).

Donovan's character indicates that these (opposing) interpretations of sympathy (as moral consciousness versus unconscious response) are in fact compatible and simultaneously at work. Neither takes precedence, and so the moral foundation of sympathy does not give sway to its recent aesthetic and physio-psychological interpretations. Lastly, Lyall addresses the contention that sympathy is innately mimetic through constant examples of mimesis that remain based in strong moral feeling, as with Donovan's love for and sense of injustice on behalf of his younger sister Dot. Donovan unconsciously mimics his younger sister's physical state in her final illness. When her breathing becomes slow and painful, so does Donovan's: 'he too drew each breath slowly and painfully', and it 'brought to his strong, firm face a pallor almost as deathly as that of the little dying child' (*D* I, 285).

Ultimately, for Lyall sympathy is a good thing. Her texts relieve the tension surrounding the manifold ideas of sympathy; she sutures the cracks in a moral definition of Christian sympathy that was becoming increasingly contested as new aesthetic and psychological interpretations of sympathy as a fundamentally mimetic feature of the mind were popularized. And so, in her presentation of Donovan as a many-sided, sympathetic figure, Lyall also uses her text to offer readers lessons about *sympathy itself*, and how to be sympathetic in ways that maintain its legitimacy as a foundation of ethics.

A lesson from Lyall

> She has stood up for the wronged Armenians. She has shown in *We Two* that even an Atheist may possess greater kindness and generosity than many professing Christians; [...] and has shown that Christianity consists in being and doing, and not in professing or believing.[61]

Lyall claims all love of humanity as 'Christian'. Brian Osmond states, 'I should call all true lovers of humanity Christians, [...] whether they are consciously followers of Christ or not' (*WT* 72–73). Her work is an earnest, didactic enterprise couched in broad-church Christian terms and undoubtedly she had a reputation for

[61] Payne, *"Edna Lyall": An Appreciation*, p. 8.

sympathetically depicting atheism. But where does Lyall fall on the line separating sympathy from solipsism? And, as she was so keen to enjoin life lessons for the educational benefit of her readers, what lessons can we draw from her work about sympathy?

In her discussion of Lee's oeuvre, Kirsty Martin writes, 'On the one hand, Lee implies that literature makes us think about life, and as such has a moral value' — a view held by Eliot and other mid-Victorian novelists — but 'on the other hand, she suggests that referring everything to our own life might make for a self-centred, appropriating attitude to art'.[62] Martin, concerned with discussing 'uneasy sympathy', comes close to Lee's long-term preoccupation with understanding the 'faculty of association' as either predominantly positive and good or wasteful and unjust. Lee was focused upon engendering altruistic action, but as we have seen her conception of sympathy (as memory, emotion, and mental association) oscillates between an uneasy, suspicious and sceptical notion and a more serene and confident view. The rhythmic movement between suspicion of self and a consideration for others leading to altruism is what Martin argues is the source of 'life' in Lee's theory of sympathy. Ultimately, Lee wants her readers to learn to restrain their urges to sympathize (that is, to project themselves onto others and their surroundings), while simultaneously learning how they can better feel for another and respond appropriately by channeling their emotions into sincere acts of (evolutionary-driven) altruism.

In Eliot's texts, her experimentation with sympathy, sympathetic attitudes towards others, and desire to foster altruistic action join her wonderment and ultimate uncertainty regarding where sympathy registers on the scale of virtuous action. Eliot and Lee both treat sympathy with 'a sympathetic suspicion', the phrase Ariana Reilly uses to describe Eliot's mode of response to ideas and texts that do not reflect the reader's opinions. Reilly looks to a passage from Eliot's essay 'Carlyle' as representative of her more extended reading of *Romola*:

[62]Martin, *Modernism and the Rhythms of Sympathy*, p. 64.

> When saying the very opposite of what we think, he says it so finely, with so hearty conviction — he makes the object about which we differ stand out in such grand relief under the clear light of his strong and honest intellect — he appeals so constantly to our sense of the manly and the truthful — that we are obliged to say 'Hear! hear!' to the writer before we can give the decorous 'Oh! oh!' to his opinions.[63]

The lesson lifted from Eliot and highlighted by Reilly can be applied to both Eliot and Lee. Eliot and Lee could be said to exclaim 'Hear! hear!' to the ethical and intellectual acculturation sympathy might confer, its flowering in a many-sided process of continued self-expansion and other-awareness; and 'Oh! oh' to the myopia that might result from its tendency to self-projection and doubling. In Eliot and Lee, suspicion is braided to sympathy in a kind of double helix hermeneutic.

Does Lyall give us a similar lesson? Lyall does not seem to enjoin her readers to treat sympathy itself with suspicion. Everything she writes, from her fiction to articles, interviews, and even her personal letters, funnels readers towards an acceptance of her beliefs: of Christ as Truth and self-sacrifice and suffering for the sake of others (based upon Christ's example) as the highest model of morality. Perhaps Lyall is best set before readers as an instance when the scale has been tipped too far in favour of sympathy, leaving the (methodological) virtues of suspicion and uncertainty relatively unexplored.

Setting quality distinctions aside, the chief difference between Lyall and Eliot and Lee lies in this: where the latter two authors question the moral value and individual and social utility of self-sacrifice, Lyall unreservedly advocates it as an undeniable virtue. In *Donovan* she writes, 'self-sacrificing love [...] alone can lead into the light' (*D* III, 335). In *Autobiography*, she asserts the moral significance of self-sacrifice so clearly that it is the proclaimed 'Truth' the novella traces. The instinctive self-sacrifice that Eliot explores in *Daniel Deronda* and leaves as an open-ended moral problem, and that Lee uncannily portrays and questions in 'Amour Dure', is taken by Lyall and labeled 'Truth'. Of the three

[63] Quoted by Reilly, "'Always Sympathize!"', p. 644. See George Eliot, *The Writings of George Eliot: Essays and Uncollected Papers*, edited by John Walter Cross (Boston: Houghton, 1909), pp. 310–13 (p. 312).

authors considered in this study, Lyall is the least concerned with philosophizing *about* sympathy and uses it instead (at times provocatively) as a tool, taking to writing as a means of actively transmitting her sympathy for and rapid response time to the sufferers she sees in society or abroad. Her texts are less introspective and reflective about the problematic nature of sympathy and more invested in triggering sympathetic response, attesting to her self-assurance that sympathizing with suffering through reading fiction is not only possible, but that it can lead to altruistic action.

The sympathy in Lyall's texts may at times be qualified as an intuitive, even physical, response to external stimuli, but this does not lead her, as it does Lee, to consider the implications that sympathy might be innately unstable or uncanny, or that it is deficient in morality. For the historian and literary critic, Lyall peculiarly represents the consoling aspects of Victorian sympathy. Her work presents a convincing case that — even as the modern minds of this period were being taught to consider sympathy as a physiological and imitative function of the mind or as another side of solipsism — confirmatory views of sympathy as a moralizing agent successfully reverberated in the late-nineteenth-century literary marketplace.

Conclusion: Prefiguring Sympathetic Reading Practices

> [O]ur life must needs be double, interwoven of absent and present, of what has been and what is; or rather, even as in that musical ornament called a *trill* or *shake*, the special quality of an impression depends upon a rapid oscillation between two sounds, so here there must be a rapid alternation between two sets of ideas. Such alternation is the essence of all knowledge.[64]

In the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, Vernon Lee advanced her aesthetic theories and critical attention to readerly response beyond her initial reliance upon British associationist psychology and physiological aesthetics by turning towards the German psychological aesthetics of men including Robert Vischer, Theodor Lipps, and Karl Groos. She developed her earlier formulations into a theory of physiological empathy or embodied response to works of art. Empathy, as initially translated from *Einfühlung* into English in 1909 and used by Lee, did not deal in ethical experience, but signified somatic response to exterior form. In the context of a science of aesthetics, *Einfühlung* (feeling into) was merely one example of a wide range of terms used to denote specific bodily responses to art, and Lee carried it forward as a critical practice through treating bodily responses as the articulation 'of formal qualities as feeling', either

[64] Vernon Lee, 'Of Writers and Readers', *The New Review* 5:31 (1891), 528–36 (p. 530), in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 26 September 2017.

'unconsciously as metaphor, or consciously as a gallery diary or lecture' (indeed, her Commonplace Books and notebooks should be regarded in this light).[65]

Concomitantly, and as an interrelated methodology, Lee also advocated the use of systematic approaches to textual analysis, publishing a range of articles and essays on literary criticism in the 1890s and early twentieth century, one of which is quoted above.[66] In 1923, Lee collected many of her ideas and essays in *The Handling of Words*, a work on literary criticism often treated as distinct from her earlier aesthetic theories and empathy theory, but which should be revisited as part and parcel of her interest in cataloguing somatic response as a method of formal (textual) analysis. Benjamin Morgan takes this comprehensive view and looks to Lee's formulation of 'empathic close reading' in the context of the early history of New Criticism to understand when and why the critical shift away from somatic and affective reading practices occurred. He cites William K. Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley's influential essay, 'The Affective Fallacy' (1949), which famously 'pathologized readerly affects' and, as 'a polemical expression of a depersonalized critical practice', sent a clear message: 'the responsible reader will put her feelings aside and soberly reflect on irony and imagery'.[67]

Morgan suggests that the depersonalized aesthetic theories of the 1920s, like those of I.A. Richards, were so polemical because they were responding to the 'embodied' reading practices proposed by theorists like Lee; indeed, Richards's *Principles of Literary Criticism* (1924) appeared a year after Lee published *The Handling of Words*. Lee's combination of 'Victorian' physiological aesthetics with more formalist practices of the kind that took root in New Criticism evidently called for an uncompromising response, and New Criticism likely took the path

[65]Morgan, 'Critical Empathy', p. 47. Morgan notes, 'In *On the Optical Sense of Form*, [Robert] Vischer generates multiple neologisms [...] to describe unusual modes of perception. He coins the terms *Anfülung* (attentive feeling), *Ausfülung* (out-feeling), *Nachfülung* (responsive feeling), *Zufülung* (immediate feeling, and *Zusammenfülung* (feeling-together)' (pp. 43–44).

[66]Consider, for instance, Lee, 'Of Writers and Readers', and the two-part series Vernon Lee, 'The Syntax of De Quincy, Part I', *Contemporary Review* 84 (1903), 713–23, and Vernon Lee, 'The Rhetoric of Landor, Part II', *Contemporary Review* 84 (1903), 856–64.

[67]Morgan, 'Critical Empathy', p. 32.

it did as 'a strategic move in the service of a literary history that wishes for a clear break between Victorian moral-aesthetic evaluative criticism and modern analytical, descriptive criticism'.[68]

In the wake of polarizing 'embodied feeling' and 'disembodied formalism', somatic and affective reading practices lost traction. Richards's dismissal of theories similar to Lee's theory of empathy was carried forward by others, including Wimsatt and Beardsley, who specifically reject *Einfühlung* as theorized by Theodor Lipps and write disparagingly that 'affective theory' criticism 'approximate[s] the tone of the Buchmanite confession, [and] the revival meeting'.[69] A detailed review of Lee's reading practices cannot be enumerated here, but it suffices to say that she combined careful and critical attention to bodily and affective dimensions of reader-response with the systematic analysis of an author's lexicon, in effect bringing a formalist practice of close reading together with the (sympathetic) inclusion of readerly response as a legitimate source of disinterested analysis.[70]

In inaugurating both subjectivity and objectivity as legitimate methods, not only of knowing, but also of formal analysis, Lee alters the conception of responsible reading. If a person's subjective (somatic and/or affective) response to the words on a page or the form of an object is construed as a measurable articulation of the formal qualities of that text or object, then responsible reading is *not* all sober reflection and setting feeling aside, but entails taking note of our subjectivities so we might differentiate between what we bring *to* a text and the (embodied) feelings that originate *in* the text. Lee's method is a call to make room for the 'surfaces' of our reading experience and to consider them in relation to the 'surfaces' of a text, looking for where they might align.

[68] Morgan, 'Critical Empathy', p. 49.

[69] W.K. Wimsatt and M.C. Beardsley, 'The Affective Fallacy', *The Sewanee Review* 57:1 (1949), 31–55 (pp. 40, 41), in *JSTOR*. Accessed 26 September 2017. Wimsatt and Cleanth Brooks more specifically dismiss Lee's theory of empathy in *Literary Criticism: A Short History* (1957).

[70] See Morgan, 'Critical Empathy', pp. 37–50 for a more detailed inspection of Lee's and Kit Anstruther-Thomson's practice of critical empathy.

In conducting this research, I have made note of many personal responses to the texts under analysis; for example, feeling physically crushed while discreetly wiping away a few tears in a cafe after rereading portions of Gwendolen's narrative in light of Margaret Loewen Reimer's suggestion of child abuse; or feeling elevated by the (moral) tone of certain of Lee's book reviews after historicizing and 'feeling my way into' a better understanding of the period's evolutionary and utopian discourses; or feeling startled and saddened by parallels between the widespread nature of biased and polemical reporting on the Armenian crisis in Britain in the 1890s and the public treatment we frequently see of humanitarian crises today.[71]

A significant portion of this thesis, moreover, was completed during and following my first pregnancy and, as a result of my initiation into motherhood, I have since caught myself thinking of these women writers in terms of what I now am and what they were not. Although George Eliot was 'Mutter' to G.H. Lewes's three boys and Edna Lyall spent many years living with her nieces and nephews, none of the women here concerned ever had children of their own, and this impromptu rehearsal of a comparative method has stimulated much personal reflection upon the relationships between reading, writing, creativity, and motherhood.

Catching myself in such affective and associative modes as these, I have found that registering (and checking) them has put me in the position of a critic oscillating between sympathetic response and suspicious interrogation of that response. Even as a personal reaction to the suggestive hints about Gwendolen's past, for instance, has driven me to try to do 'justice' to her narrative, it also persuades me to take a step back and review the result more objectively. Emotional response, often, has impelled me to write, while remembering the importance of critical disinterestedness has required that I scrutinize my research and rewrite.

[71] For instance, I was surprised by feelings of inspiration and pride (as a scholar, perhaps?) in reading Lee's review of *The New Godiva* (1886), wherein she praises the book's 'fervent appeal to go and learn. [...] the full extent of responsibility of judgment and of the duty of sympathy'. Vernon Lee, 'The New Godiva, and other Studies in Social Questions', *The Academy*, (27 Feb 1886), p. 143, in *British Periodicals (1681–1939)*. Accessed 6 January 2015.

In other instances, however, my subjectivities have aligned more immediately with my subject. The initial apprehensive and disoriented nature of my early drafts for this thesis necessarily required careful revision, but it also helped me identify and pinpoint the very important 'spatial' feature of sympathy. In my unconscious mimicry of sympathy's tricky outward movement, I perhaps practised Lee's embodied 'critical empathy' while also remaining 'close' to textual surfaces. Critical insight, then, surely arises from mixed critical practice and the juxtaposition of personalized (embodied or emotional) response with depersonalized (formalist, evidence-based) method: spice and flavour blended with 'drier' ingredients; somatic and affective rhythms rendered into critical work such that they (re)invigorate the texts under consideration.

Following the Prologue's establishment of sympathy and manysidedness as organizing principles of this thesis, in Chapter 1, I looked to the advent of 'surface reading' and came to consider it as 'sympathetic' in its movement between distance from and nearness to the other or text; as a critical stance that invites the expansion of reading practices, it acknowledges distance in terms of permitting the subjectivity of the critic and inspires nearness in its commitment to 'thinking', 'touching', or 'feeling' with other persons or texts. I further introduced the science of religion as a significant intellectual and cultural context for thinking about sympathy and manysidedness in the work by George Eliot, Vernon Lee, and Edna Lyall, and I set out to delineate a pattern of many-sided male sympathetic heroes by turning to each author in turn and in light of a particular intellectual affinity with a male thinker. In Chapter 2, I established the significance of the science of religion as a discursive context of Eliot's oeuvre and, in trying to understand the reasons behind Eliot's particular closeness with the scholarship of Max Müller, discovered a relationship between Müller's methodological uses of sympathy and manysidedness and Eliot's conceptualizations of sympathy in terms of her desired 'ethics of difference'. Chapter 3 built upon this context in charting the developmental arc of Eliot's many-sided sympathetic heroes before turning to

Daniel Deronda to practise 'close' readings in tandem with keeping the 'surface' of Eliot's interests and intentions in view as much as possible.

Chapter 4 marked the transition to Vernon Lee, initially introduced 'beside' Eliot, and argued that Lee diligently applied herself to imbuing Paterian aestheticism with a didacticism intended as practical edification for aesthetic critics and readers alike. The textured 'surface' of Lee's relationship with Walter Pater — composite of their alliances and departures understood best in the contexts of associationist psychology and the science of culture — is thrown into relief through my comparison of their diaphanous heroes. In Chapter 5, I carried forward the discussion of Lee's composition of many-sided sympathetic heroes through conducting sympathetic readings of 'The Virgin of the Seven Daggers' and 'Amour Dure'; in practising a 'triangulation' of various texts — including Lee's letters, essays, book reviews, and Commonplace Book IV — Lee emerges as a long-standing participant in the science of religion, particularly active in its points of contact with researches in psychology and new ethnographic methodologies.

Edna Lyall was a popular novelist promoted in the literary marketplace 'alongside' Lee and, in Chapter 6, I introduced her and her literary aims 'beside' those of Lee, before looking more exclusively to her investment in sympathy as the defining (moral and aesthetic) feature of her fiction, message, and marketed image. Her sympathetic responses to suffering have a determining influence upon her choices of subject for her fiction and the impact she hoped she could render through readerly response, as well as upon her handling of differences across religious, political, or ethnic divides. In Chapter 7, I examined Lyall's fiction more closely and considered her likely intentions for a central many-sided male sympathetic agent within the contexts of British secularism and the Armenian crisis.

In the example and fiction of all three women writers, subjectivity is significant; it recurs as motivation through affect, emotion, critical and intellectual interests, and compassion; as the desire to impart comfort, hope, inspiration, or edification; and can be placed all along a broad spectrum of feeling 'into', 'beside',

or 'alongside' the experiences of others, or even recognizing the ultimate futility of such attempts. Throughout, I have applied several methodological practices to secure a sympathetic stance. I have touched and transcribed textual 'surfaces' in the archive; practised a comparative method in contemplation of the advantages and limitations inherent in the science of religion's reliance upon a comparative method in the nineteenth century; contextualized my authors in discursive analyses; exercised intentionalism in author-oriented (but not biographical) studies; and taken up Brigid Lowe's 'hermeneutics of sympathy' in accord with her critique of New Historicism's aim to 'discover meaning that those who left traces of themselves could not have articulated' and its practitioners' failure to conversely recognize our limitations in 'entering into' the past.[72]

Employing such a wide (eclectic) array of sympathetic reading practices has encouraged self-examination, to the effect that in reading texts I have often asked questions similar to those posed by Pater in the 'Preface' to *The Renaissance*: 'What is this [text] to *me*? What effect does it really produce on me? [...] How is my nature modified by its presence, and under its influence?'[73] But they have also, conversely, led away from subjectivity and towards contemplation of my limited access to otherness, alienation, and difference, and therefore towards reliance upon more objective methods of knowing. Ultimately, I have found myself practising the dialectical movement between subjectivity and objectivity that Kristina Straub advocates in response to what she concludes is surface reading's naïveté regarding the powerful personal associations a reader brings to a text: 'I teach my students to be aware of the concepts they bring to texts, I also teach them that evidence matters'.[74] Stuart Sherman's opinion of surface reading as valuable in its aspiration towards open-ended multiplicity has also attracted my attention further as I have reflected upon the content of and methods at work in each chapter of this thesis.

[72] See Lowe, *Victorian Fiction and the Insights of Sympathy*, pp. 8–9. Lowe quotes from Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt, *Practicing New Historicism* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2001), p. 8.

[73] Pater, *The Renaissance*, p. xxix.

[74] Straub, 'The Suspicious Reader Surprised', p. 139.

To reiterate his point: 'I seem to think that accrual — more and more methods mingling, interrogating, and buttressing each other — may be the strongest methodology of all'.[75]

Straub's and Sherman's opinions bring us again to Ariana Reilly's rejoinder to surface reading as a sympathetic reading practice that places itself in contradistinction to Jameson's motto 'Always historicize': '[S]urface readers rarely seem aware of the fact that [Paul] Ricoeur's hermeneutic [of suspicion] found its "double motivation" in a simultaneous "willingness to suspect" and "willingness to listen" '.[76] As she observes from her readings of Eliot's *Romola*, suspicious and sympathetic methodologies can coexist. Many participants in the science of religion, in fact, might have done well to follow Ricoeur's 'double motivation'; too often, in an area of research that was bound to be polemicized because it touched upon a foundational feature of many inner lives, scholars were either too willing to listen or too willing to suspect.[77]

Today, we might consider alongside Eliot 'that feeling is a source of knowledge', even as we experiment with Lee in at once privileging and checking our personal subjectivities.[78] Allowing the play of our likes and dislikes, past influences, and embodied responses has a (critical and formal) place alongside strivings towards objectivity. Perhaps looking back to Lee's proposed combination of literary-critical methodologies in the early twentieth century presents an opportunity to (re)adjust our critical lenses in the twenty-first and consider afresh the many innovative reading practices currently on offer; it might further teach us to guard against becoming likewise unnecessarily polemical in our adoption of new (sympathetic) reading practices.

[75] Straub, 'The Suspicious Reader Surprised', p. 134.
[76] Reilly, "'Always Sympathize!"', p. 631.
[77] As is illustrated by the polemical conflict between Max Müller and Monier Monier-Williams outlined in Chapter 1.
[78] Anger, 'George Eliot and Philosophy', p. 85.

Appendix

Record of Edna Lyall Research

Efforts to recover Edna Lyall's correspondence were only partially successful. I have not discovered a collection of Lyall's letters or manuscripts. Rather, using the Location Register of English Literary Manuscripts and Letters, 23 records of Lyall's letters or related archival material (including autographs, photos, and newspaper clippings) were found in 19 locations, most often in the collections of her better-known correspondents. These materials were located in archives across England, Ireland, and Scotland, and it was impossible for financial reasons to visit every archive in person. The records, in detail, are as follows:

> The West Sussex Record Office in Chichester holds a letter from Edna Lyall to Jane Cobden Unwin (1851–1947) in their Cobden Papers Archive; the Tate Gallery Archive is in possession of the microfiche copy of a letter from Edna Lyall to George Frederic Watts (1817–1904); the University of Reading houses a letter from Edna Lyall to Mr [Thomas Norton] Longman (1849–1930); the Bodleian Library owns a letter from Edna Lyall to an unspecified recipient; the Cheltenham Ladies' College Archive houses a letter from Edna Lyall

to Miss Beale and a letter from Edna Lyall to an unspecified recipient; the Royal Literary Fund owns a 'Letter from Edna Lyall as a sponsor', which is held in the British Library's Department of English and Drama; Trinity College Dublin's Library has several letters from Edna Lyall to Michael Davitt (1846–1906) in their Michael Davitt Archive; the National Library of Ireland is in possession of three letters from Edna Lyall to John O'Leary (1830–1907); the British Library's Department of Manuscripts is in possession of a letter from Edna Lyall to Miss Sharples as well as letters from Edna Lyall to W.E. Gladstone (1809–1898); the National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh has a letter from Edna Lyall to John Stuart Blackie (1809–1895) as well as letters from Edna Lyall to Donald Macleod (1831–1916); the Torquay Museum is in possession of a card signed by Edna Lyall; the National Co-operative Archive in Manchester owns a letter [circular] from Edna Lyall as well as six letters from the correspondence of Edna Lyall and George Jacob Holyoake (1817–1906), held in their Holyoake Collection; the Brotherton Library's Brotherton Collection in Leeds has a letter from Edna Lyall to James Alexander Manson (1851–1921); the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge has a letter from Edna Lyall to Canon Hoste in their Ashcombe Collection; the John Rylands University Library of Manchester is in possession of a letter from Edna Lyall to W.F. Tillotson & Son; the Mitchell Library in Glasgow houses an unspecified letter from Edna Lyall; the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust in Stratford-upon-Avon owns an autograph from Edna Lyall as well as a newspaper clipping of Lyall's obituary; the London Metropolitan Archives house two letters from Edna Lyall to Henrietta Barnett (1851–1936); the Liverpool Central Library, or Hornby Library, has a letter from Edna Lyall to an unspecified recipient in the Synge Collection.

After pursuing each entry individually and inquiring into the nature of the material, requests were sent to the West Sussex Record Office, the University of Reading, the National Library of Ireland, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, the Liverpool Central Library, Cheltenham Ladies' College, Trinity College Dublin, the National Library of Scotland, the National Co-operative Archive, the London Metropolitan Archives, the Brotherton Library, and the Mitchel Library. Lyall material was received from each of these archives either as photocopies via post or as scanned or photographed copies sent electronically.

I visited the British Library in person to view the correspondence between Edna Lyall and W.E. Gladstone.[79] Here I also requested to see a letter from Edna Lyall to the Committee of the Literary Fund, a letter from Edna Lyall to Mrs Scatcherd in connection with the Jubilee Appeal, and the aforementioned letter from Edna Lyall to Miss Sharples. This letter to Miss Sharples is very brief and written in response to a laudatory letter from Miss Sharples about *We Two*. In her reply, Lyall thanks Miss Sharples for the pincushion she enclosed with her letter.[80] The Jubilee Appeal relates to an appeal for signatures supporting women's rights to be presented to Queen Victorian on her golden Jubilee in 1897. Lyall's letter to Mrs Alice Cliff Scatcherd indicates her acquiescence to be listed by name on the General Council.[81] The letter to the Committee of the Literary Fund is a letter of testimony. Edna Lyall writes in support of the application of the late Mr John Saunders's five daughters for financial support from the Royal Literary Fund. Lyall supports their application and notes the 'delicate health' of each young woman, also indicating that only one daughter is well enough for regular work.[82]

There are only four letters from Edna Lyall to W.E. Gladstone. An early letter from 1883 thanks Mr Gladstone for his letter concerning *Donovan*. Two letters from November 1893 are concerned with *Doreen*. The first letter

[79]BL, Department of Manuscripts, Letters from 'Edna Lyall' to W.E. Gladstone, 1883–1896, Add.Mss.44480-44523.
[80]BL, 1892, 'Miscellaneous Autograph Letters', Add MS 45918 f. 169.
[81]BL, 1897, 'Jubilee Appeal', Add MS 74952 f. 5.
[82]BL, 19 December 1895, Loan 96 RLF 1/974/104.

accompanied a copy of the novel, and the second letter thanks Mr Gladstone for his letter about the novel. A simple letter from 1896 asks Gladstone to accept a copy of *The Autobiography of a Truth*. Here she writes of hoping to do 'a little for the Armenians', and praises Gladstone as one 'who ha[s] done so much for all oppressed people, [and] work[s] for them still'.[83]

In addition to the search detailed above, I separately sought Lyall material in the Bishopsgate Institute in London, hoping to uncover her correspondence with Charles Bradlaugh in the Charles Bradlaugh Archive. However, here I only found three items related to Lyall: a letter from George Anderson, Treasurer of the Bradlaugh Appeal, to Edna Lyall; a second letter from George Anderson to an unspecified recipient, which encloses a facsimile of Edna Lyall's letter to the public appealing for £6,000 to liquidate the debts left by Bradlaugh; and two press cuttings related to Edna Lyall's support of Bradlaugh (one, from *The Echo*, is of unspecified date, and the other is entirely unspecified).[84]

I also attempted to trace Lyall's property through her will and the wills of her descendants; my hope was to find and contact living descendants in order to inquire about family heirlooms or papers owned by Lyall. I was particularly interested in being successful in this attempt because of a comment recorded by Lyall's friend and biographer, J.M. Escreet, describing Lyall's consistent habit throughout her life of keeping notebooks.[85]

I examined Lyall's will and the wills of her descendants, where available. To obtain Lyall's will, I searched the National Probate Index for England and Wales, 1858–1966 via Ancestry.co.uk. Lyall passed away on 8 February 1903. She died in her home, 6 College Road Eastbourne, in the county of Sussex. She was a spinster. The gross value of her estate at the time of her death was £25,966. The net value of

[83] BL, 1896, Add MS 44523 f. 200.

[84] BI, Charles Bradlaugh Archive, items 2299, 2300, 2301. Viewed 15 February 2014.

[85] '[A]t school, [...] she then kept a note-book in which she entered any funny or interesting anecdote that she happened to hear. [...] The note-book went by the name of "Cuttle" — readers of Dickens will remember the Captain of that name who always made "a note of it!" — and a succession of note-books were in use all her life'. Escreet, p. 23.

her personal estate at the time of her death was £25,338. On 2 April 1903, probate of this will was granted to the Reverend Hampden Gurney Jameson and Samuel George Sloman, the executors. The witnesses to the will were Jessie Maria Escreet, Lyall's friend and later biographer, and Sarah Ann Cunfield, a domestic servant of 6 College Road Eastbourne. Lyall appoints the Reverend Hampden Gurney Jameson, her brother-in-law, and Samuel George Sloman, her cousin, as executors and trustees. The will is about five pages long. She requests as simple a coffin as possible, the Church of England Service, and cremation, 'believing cremation to be the only healthy system'. She wishes her executors to 'avoid expense as far as possible' and requests 'no one wear Mourning for me unless it pains them very much to relinquish the old custom'.

Using the England & Wales National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858–1966, I traced the following. The Reverend Jameson died 26 December 1939; Hugh Philip Jameson (son) and Agnes Monica Jameson (daughter) received the probate 5 April 1940. Hugh Philip Jameson died 16 January 1956; Winifred Ethel Jameson (widow) and Kenneth Edward Parkes received the probate 12 March 1956. Agnes Monica Jameson died 26 March 1963; Westminster Bank Limited (now NatWest) received the probate 18 June 1963. Samuel George Sloman died 8 January 1929; Sydney Herbert Arthur Lambert and Frederick Sloman received the probate 20 March 1929. Sydney Herbert Arthur Lambert died 12 February 1931; Edith Ellen Lambert (widow) and Lionel Mowbray Hewlett received the probate 23 April 1931.

Ultimately, in seeking the Lyall-Bradlaugh correspondence, I discovered in Hypatia Bonner's biography of her father that Bradlaugh routinely destroyed his correspondence.[86] Much of the content from Lyall's letters is only accessible through the two biographies published just after her death.[87] As Escreet was a close friend of Lyall, her biography in particular quotes from many of Lyall's letters to friends and family. In terms of a summary of Lyall's family history and

[86]Bonner, I, p. v.
[87]Payne and Escreet.

background, Clyde Binfield's research has been helpful and concise, and has also directed attention to the family tree of Lyall's brother-in-law, Hampden Gurney Jameson (1852–1939).[88]

[88]Binfield, p. 353.

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