

Vampiric Enterprise: Metaphors of Economic Exploitation in the Literature and Culture of the *Fin de Siecle*

Jane Ford

The thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University of
Portsmouth

May 2013

Abstract

This thesis is about the complex network of metaphors that emerged around late nineteenth-century conceptions of economic self-interest — metaphors that dramatised the predatory, conflictual and exploitative basis of relations between nations, institutions, sexes and people in an outwardly belligerent *fin-de-siècle* economy. More specifically, this thesis is about the vampire, cannibal and related genera of economic metaphor which I argue penetrate many of the major discourses of the period in ways that have yet to be understood. In chapters that examine socialist fiction and newspapers; the imperial quest romance; inter-personal intimacies in the writing of Henry James and Vernon Lee; and the Catholic novels of Lucas Malet, I assess the breadth and variety of these metaphors, and consider how they filter the concept of the conflictual ‘economic man’ inspired by Hobbes and formalised in nineteenth-century economic discourses.

The thesis builds on Maggie Kilgour’s *From Communion to Cannibalism: An Anatomy of Metaphors of Incorporation* (1990), which traces the genealogy – in literature from Homer to Melville – of what she terms ‘metaphors of incorporation’. In basic terms, these are metaphors that originate from a foundational inside-outside binary and involve the assimilation or incorporation of an external reality. Kilgour attempts to demonstrate that with the increasing isolation of the modern individual (signalled by the acts of enclosure and the formalisation of property rights, for instance) acts of ‘incorporation’ previously imagined as symbiotic (early communion), were later conceived as cannibalistic (oedipal rivalry). Representing an appetitive antagonism between aggressor and victim, the figures at the centre of this study – the economic vampire and its cognates – have integrity as metaphors of incorporation. However, deploying a combination of historicist and, at times, Post-Structuralist approaches, this thesis demonstrates that these metaphors refuse to accommodate themselves to a simple unified vision of the kind advanced by Kilgour. Therefore, in this thesis, I map the complexities of these metaphors, explaining how they originate from divergent teleological impulses and how they articulate both simple ideological operations, and more complex feelings of ambivalence about economic realities in the cultural moment of the Victorian *fin-de-siècle*.

Contents

<i>List of Illustrations</i>	5
<i>Introduction</i>	8
1. <i>Fin-de-Siècle</i> Socialism and the Problem of ‘Fatmanism’	25
2. On Vampires and Cannibals: Bertram Mitford’s African Quest Romance	66
3. ‘That Odd Double-Graspingness of Nature’: Parasitical Intimacies in the Writing of Henry James and Vernon Lee	88
4. Lucas Malet’s ‘Universal Economy’	135
<i>Conclusion</i>	164
<i>Bibliography</i>	167

Declaration

Whilst registered as a candidate for the above degree, I have not been registered for any other research award. The results and conclusions embodied in this thesis are the work of the named candidate and have not been submitted for any other academic award

Word Count: 75,095

List of Illustrations:

- Fig. 1 *Going Forth Into Battle*
- Fig. 2 Walter Crane, *The Vampire*
- Fig. 3 Walter Crane, *Britannia's Best Defence*

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor, Patricia Pulham, for her insight, help and advice. Without her help, I might never have completed this thesis. Patricia's early support for my work provided me with much confidence and encouragement when financial pressures made the future of the project uncertain.

Many thanks to the University of Portsmouth for their generous funding support and to staff at the Centre of Studies in Literature for their collegiality and for providing a fertile academic environment. The CSL's small (but perfect formed) community of postgraduates made me very welcome at Portsmouth for which, particular thanks to Lisa Felstead, Jon Evans, and Lucy Ball.

Jon Evans (University of Portsmouth) and Anna Pilz (University of Liverpool) generously provided French and German translations, for which I am most grateful.

Thanks to my husband, John, for his heroic patience, to Kim Edwards Keates, for her advice and friendship, and to my parents, for always believing in me. Thanks also to my sister, for her support.

Finally, extra special thanks to my brother, Matthew, whose many years of financial, emotional and practical support have been absolutely invaluable to me and to whom this thesis is dedicated.

For my brother

Introduction

Vampiric Enterprise

In 1881, addressing the Chamber of Commerce on the subject of Britain's trade interests, Prime Minister William Gladstone castigated the supporters of protectionism, remarking sarcastically: '[t]his country, whose life-blood the vampire of free trade is insidiously sucking (cheers and laughter) – let us see what share in this little island we have got of the trade of the world'.¹ Gladstone may well have been amused at the rhetorical ends to which 'the vampire' was deployed, but in characterising free trade as a vampire feeding from the neck of national prosperity, protectionists were in fact, alighting on what was already a popular and resonant formulation. Notably, in *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy (Das Kapital, 1867)*, Karl Marx had ghoulishly described capital as 'dead-labour that vampire-like, only lives by sucking living labour'.² And in his essay 'The Morals of Trade' (1859) Herbert Spencer, similarly suggested that the 'trading community' operated within a system of 'commercial cannibalism' which inherited its 'eat or be eaten' ethos from 'animal creation'.³ Towards the end of the century this kind of vampiric and cannibalistic economic metaphor experienced a striking expansion which we may assume was, in part, due to the popular re-emergence of Gothic fiction; the rise of evolutionism with (to borrow the words of Kelly Hurley) 'the prospect of monstrous becoming' this involved; and a burgeoning socialist movement that assimilated and adapted Marxian motifs.⁴ Evidence of this expansion is not hard to come by. In the late nineteenth-century press, phrases that linked the vampire with commercial interests proliferated, particularly with respect to Britain's fiscal operations abroad. An 1899 *Times* article on the scrimmage between Britain and Russia during the latter stages of the 'Great Game', (aggrievedly) cites *The Berlin Post* as stating that '[a]ll this smells of blood, and as a matter of fact John Bull sits on powder casks like a vampire who has sucked his fill of the heart's blood of India, while Russia holds in her hand the lighted match'.⁵

This thesis is about the complex network of metaphors that emerged around late nineteenth-century conceptions of economic self-interest — metaphors that dramatised the predatory, conflictual and exploitative basis of relations between nations, institutions, sexes and people in an outwardly belligerent *fin-de-siècle* economy. More specifically, this thesis is about the vampire, cannibal and related genera of economic metaphor which I argue penetrate many of the

¹ 'The Prime Minister at Leeds', *The Times*, 10 October 1881, p.7 One might add that despite Gladstone's confidence, the reality was that by 1880 Britain's trading primacy was seriously threatened by the advancing economic power of the United States, closely followed by Germany. See François Crouzet, *The Victorian Economy* (London: Methuen, 1982), p. 9

² Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, trans. from the third German edition by Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling, ed. by Frederick Engels, 3 vols. (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1954; repr. 1977), I, p. 224;

³ Herbert Spencer, 'The Morals of Trade', *Westminster Review*, 71 (1859), 377-390 (p.381).

⁴ Kelly Hurley, *The Gothic Body: Sexuality, Materialism and Degeneration at the Fin de Siècle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 4

⁵ 'The War', *The Times*, 18 October 1899, p.5

major discourses of the period in ways that have yet to be understood. On the most basic level these ‘appetitive’ economic metaphors are antagonistic figures. Revolving around oral consumption, these tropes are figured as a spatial antagonism between an aggressor and victim and are articulated in binary structures such as bleeder / bled, coloniser / colonised, cannibal / cannibalised and so on. In more complex ways, I will argue that the history of this antagonism is, in part, a history of economic individualism, beginning with the basic assumption of selfishness derived from Hobbes, and overlaid with a number of nineteenth-century binary assumptions about the logic of conflict, including Hegel’s master-slave dialectic, Marx’s dialectical materialism and later, Thorstein Veblen’s exploit-drudgery dichotomy. I will explain how these theories imbricate and how they filter the concept of a conflictual ‘economic man’ shortly, but for my current purposes I want to point to the fact that the network of tropes at the centre of this study, the economic vampire, cannibal and their derivations, participate in the on-going renegotiation of economic self-interest through binary or dialectical means. This thesis demonstrates that vampiric and cannibalistic economic metaphors perform both *simple* ideological operations (e.g. expose a scheme of exploitation) and communicate more *complex* feelings of ambivalence about late nineteenth-century economic realities. As I point out, part of this ambivalence arises from the fact that, as metaphors involving eating and other forms of ‘assimilation’, they generally suggest the internalisation of an alien identity. In *Totem and Taboo* (1913), for instance, Freud suggests that ‘[b]y incorporating parts of a person’s body through the act of eating, one at the same time acquires the qualities possessed by him’.⁶ Freud’s statement, which indicates the ‘higher motives’ for tribal cannibalism, implies a veneration of the cannibalised entity, but in *fin-de-siècle* writing, assimilations of this kind, insofar as they apply to ‘economic’ themes, are rarely this affirmative. For example, in Chapter One I discuss how, in Émile Zola’s *Germinal*, bourgeois capitalism is configured as a vampiric entity which, in the object of a coal-mine, drinks the colliers’ blood and swallows their bones. Revealing the threat to identity that appetitive metaphors potentially entail, the mine becomes a gestational space which has the capacity to foster vampiric characteristics in the labour force contained within it.

This thesis begins with the most paradigmatic articulation of these metaphors: the capitalist vampire and commercial cannibal as they appear in the late nineteenth-century socialist press and fiction. Much of this analysis focuses on the spatial dynamics of the conflict between a tyrannical capitalist establishment and an enervated labour class. However, the simple binarisation of vampire / victim is frequently shown to break down as the ambivalence of the metaphor and a parasitical relationship to the dominant capitalist order is revealed. I then move on to consider how British imperialism and other forms of colonial enterprise are figured as cannibalistic or vampiric in the African quest romance of Bertram Mitford (1855-1914), a lesser-known contemporary of Henry Rider Haggard. Thirdly, I examine social intimacies in the writing of Henry James and Vernon Lee. This analysis opens up the parameters of the study to consider domestic parasitism

⁶ Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo and Other Works*, trans. by James Strachey, 24 Vols. (London: Vintage, 2001), XIII, 82

and other motifs that I argue contain a (predatory) economic impulse including gift and Eucharist. Finally, I consider how Lucas Malet (Mary St. Ledger Kingsley Harrison, 1852-1931) brings together the various articulations of the vampire/cannibal trope (relating to socialism, imperialism, and the domestic economy) within the Catholic framework of her novels. Malet schematises capitalist society as a cannibalistic fallen world peopled with dismembered victims of the system. This analysis maps her experiments with various ‘corporate’ models: models that attempt to reconstruct the capitalistic scene of dismemberment.

Two items of scholarship are particularly germane to this thesis. The first is Maggie Kilgour’s seminal 1990 study, *From Communion to Cannibalism*. In this extraordinarily wide-ranging book, Kilgour traces the genealogy, in literature from Homer to Melville, of what she terms ‘metaphors of incorporation’. As the phrase suggests, ‘metaphors of incorporation’ involve the assimilation of what is exterior. Originating from a foundational binary of inside-outside, these metaphors play a fractious role in the formation of identity. As Kilgour explains ‘the model for the antithesis is based in bodily experience and the sense that what is “inside” one’s own body is a coherent structure that can be defined against what lies “outside” of it’.⁷ This antithesis precedes – if not motivates – a desire to assimilate what is external which, in different terms, is a desire to eliminate otherness:

As it is obvious at the most basic level that the circumference contains the center, in order to maintain a situation of centripetal control, what is outside must be subsumed and drawn into the center until there is no category of alien outsidersness left to threaten the inner stability. This process often appears in the form of an attempt to invert actual relations by projecting a desire for assimilation from a center to a periphery, a tactic that has been shown to work in psychic defences, misogyny, racism and imperialism. (5)

Under this scheme, ‘to accuse a minority that resists assimilation into the body politic of that body’s own desire for total incorporation is a recurring tactic’ and one that is conspicuous, for instance, in the representation of the Catholic Church (threatened by Protestant factions), or native Africans (threatened by Imperial enterprise), as cannibalistic (5). Concomitantly, Kilgour attempts to demonstrate that with the increasing isolation of the modern individual (signalled by the acts of enclosure and the formalisation of property rights, for instance) acts of ‘incorporation’ previously imagined as symbiotic (early communion), were later conceived as cannibalistic (oedipal rivalry). For three reasons, Kilgour’s study is a major presence in this thesis. The first is that she supplies a taxonomy for the kinds of acquisitive trope that vampirism and cannibalism are; that is to say, the motifs at the centre of my own analysis have integrity as metaphors of incorporation. Secondly, her inside-outside dynamic illuminates the ideological tactics and identity politics deployed by totalising systems that are central to this thesis, such as Empire. Finally, her remarks on the isolation of the modern individual attendant to property law and economic individualism, though

⁷ Maggie Kilgour, *From Communion to Cannibalism: An Anatomy of Metaphors of Incorporation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), p.4 Further page references to this work are given after quotations in the text

brief, provide a useful springboard for a discussion about why the *fin de siècle* is so fertile in the kinds of economic metaphor at the centre of this thesis. In contrast with Kilgour, this thesis is interested in a specific *fin-de-siècle* moment and rejects Kilgour's (self-consciously) over-determined suggestion that metaphors of incorporation adhere to a historical trajectory from communion to cannibalism. I will explain how I nuance Kilgour's position in more detail in due course, but on a basic level my work attempts to demonstrate that different discourses operate within their own teleological framework which don't always support Kilgour's model.

The second related item of scholarship is Gail Turley Houston 2005 monograph, *From Dickens to Dracula*. Focusing on mid to late nineteenth-century novels that involve 'banking panic and other forms of crisis', Turley Houston suggests that 'Gothic tropes' create an organisational strategy by which to process the disturbing psychological effects of these crises; in other words these tropes 'register, manage, and assess the intense panic produced and elided by the unstable Victorian economy [...]'.⁸ Concomitantly, she suggests that 'economic discourse' itself is 'frequently accompanied by terrifying phantom appendages'.⁹ Because I am arguing for the penetration of a system of arguably 'Gothic' metaphors into a range of nineteenth-century discourses, my work has obvious parallels with Turley Houston's. However, this thesis differs considerably with Turley Houston in matters of scope, approach and argument. Examining novels published between 1853-1897, *From Dickens to Dracula* takes a much more expansive historical approach to my own but one that, mediated through an emphasis on banking crises and Baghotian panic, employs a much narrower definition of (gothic) economy.¹⁰ Indeed, while Turley Houston's impressive historical research occasionally prompts my reading of tropes articulating exploitative activity in the banking sector (her remarks on corporate (im)personality, for instance, are important to my reading of the bank structure in Chapter 4) our analyses rarely intersect because I deploy a broader definition of what 'economic' activity might, potentially, entail.

Political & Economic Background

In *De Cive* (1642), the seventeenth-century political philosopher, Thomas Hobbes, described the human 'state of nature' as 'nothing but a mere war of all against all; and that in that war all men have equal right unto all things [...]'.¹¹ Hobbes suggested that man, 'desirous of what is good for him, and shun[ning] what is evil', is but a merciless self-seeker with theoretically insatiable desires:

⁸ Gail Turley Houston, *From Dickens To Dracula: Gothic, Economics, and Victorian Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p.2 & p.1 respectively.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ As Turley Houston points out, in 1864 Walter Bagehot claimed 'panic' as an economic term, claiming that 'panic is now come to mean a state in which there is a confidence in the Bank of England, and in nothing but the Bank of England. Turley Houston, *From Dickens to Dracula*, p.1

¹¹ Thomas Hobbes, *De Cive or, The Citizen*, ed. by Sterling P. Lamprecht (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1949), p.13 Though *De Cive* was originally published in 1641, the 'Preface to the Reader' from which this quotation is taken was not added until 1647 for the Amsterdam edition. The Appleton-Century edition reproduces the English version of 1651.

a postulate that the Enlightenment thinker, David Hume, would later call ‘the selfish hypothesis’.¹² Without the existence of a coercive sovereign power, Hobbes remarked that societies would be ‘few, fierce, short-lived, poor, nasty, and destroyed of all that pleasure, and beauty of life, which peace and society are wont to bring with them’.¹³ Hobbes expanded his theory of human nature in *Leviathan* (1651) which takes its title from the biblical sea monster.¹⁴ Representing Leviathan not as a grotesque monster, but a large man composed of many smaller men, the book’s frontispiece is one indication that Hobbes never intended ‘Leviathan’ as a symbol of monstrosity (for this he reserved the appellation ‘Behemoth’¹⁵), but a vast artificial being representing the corporate power of the sovereign state. Hobbes’s *Leviathan* is perhaps more vividly remembered for its statements about human nature (in John Gaskin’s words, unflatteringly schematised as ‘competitive, acquisitive, possessive, restless, individualistic, self-concerned, and insatiable’¹⁶) than its other philosophic contributions; the assumption of man’s inherent egotism being one that underpins later political and economic theory. Bernard (de) Mandeville’s *Fable of the Bees* (published in its final form in 1724), for instance, uses the corporate model of the beehive to explore the social determinants of national prosperity. In an essay contained within this book, Mandeville indicates that in their state of nature, men ‘are only Sollicitous of pleasing themselves, and naturally follow the bent of their own Inclinations, without considering the good or harm that from their being pleased will accrue to others’.¹⁷ Similarly, in his *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), Adam Smith suggests that ‘to the selfish and original passions of human nature, the loss or gain of a very small interest of our own, appears to be of vastly more importance, excites a much more passionate joy or sorrow [...] than the greatest concern of another with whom we have no particular connexion’.¹⁸ While Hobbes had stressed the importance of the sovereign for the *mediation* of selfishness, Mandeville and Smith believed that the exercise of ‘natural selfishness and rapacity’ actually promoted the material prosperity of the nation.¹⁹

¹² Hobbes, *De Cive*, p.26

¹³ *Ibid.*, p.29

¹⁴ The book’s frontispiece embeds a quotation from the *Book of Job*: ‘Non est potestas Super Terram quae Comparetur ei’ Job. 41.24 (‘Upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear’ Job 41:33)

¹⁵ The other monster named in the *Book of Job*. As Carl Schmitt points out, in response to Bishop Bramhall’s criticism of Leviathan in *The Catching of the Leviathan*, Hobbes remarked that ‘Behemoth against the Leviathan’ would have been a more suitable title for Bramhall’s attack. Hobbes later uses the name ‘Behemoth’ as the title of a book about the Presbyterian and Puritan revolution, here intoning Behemoth with anarchy and religious fanaticism. Carl Schmitt, *The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes: Meaning and Failure of a Political Symbol*, trans. by George Schwab and Erna Hilfstein (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), p. 21

¹⁶ John Gaskin, ‘Introduction’ in Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. by J.C.A Gaskin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996; repr.2008). pp. xi-xliii (p.xliii)

¹⁷ Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees*, ed. by Phillip Harth (London: Penguin, 1970), p.81

¹⁸ Adam Smith, ‘The Theory of Modern Sentiments’ in *The Essential Adam Smith*, ed. by Robert L. Heilbroner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp.57-147 (p.105)

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.123 In *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Smith suggests that through tending to the ‘gratification of their own vain and insatiable desires’ the rich ‘are led by an invisible hand to make nearly the same distribution of the necessaries of life, which would have been made, had the earth been divided into equal portions among all inhabitants, and thus without intending it, without knowing it, advance the interest of the society [...] *Ibid.*, p.123 Mandeville’s ‘Fable of the Bees’, subtitled ‘Private Vices, Publick Benefits’, suggested that vice provides employment in the form of law enforcement (and subsidiary occupations) and stimulates a lively trade.

In the nineteenth century, adding fuel to the flame of Hobbes's theory of human nature (which, as I point out, posits a latent savagery, acquisitiveness, and war-like hostility in every man), the formalisation of *homo-economicus* and emergence of evolutionary theory – which hypothesised a 'war of all against all' in the struggle for survival – popularised the view that originary desires smouldered beneath the strictures of civic society.²⁰ The 'possessive market society' that C.B. Macpherson suggests is the model that Hobbes 'constructs' in his political theory (a competitive market in labour, land and capital and where under the laws of property the individual is regarded 'proprietor of his own person or capacities [...]'²¹) might be read as an epitome of nineteenth-century capitalistic industry; that is to say, '[t]he self-moving, appetitive possessive individual, and the model of society as a series of market relations between [...] individuals' that Macpherson suggests were the principal concern of Hobbes, in many ways prefigure the self-maximising economic man of political economy in a hostile, nineteenth-century marketplace.²²

Published in the same year as Darwin's *Origin of the Species* (1859), Hebert Spencer's essay 'The Morals of Trade' attempts to locate the origins of the 'Machiavellian' tactics that he suggests plague commercial culture.²³ Spencer remarks: 'the question which most concerns us is, not whether the morals of trade are better or worse than they have been? but rather—why are they so bad? Why in this civilized state of ours, is there so much that betrays the cunning selfishness of the savage?'²⁴ He concludes that, at the root of our competitive and unscrupulous commercial morality is 'the intense desire for wealth': a proclivity that he suggests is conditioned in infancy. In a similar way, though the dialectical processes of Marx's historical materialism do not map, directly, onto evolutionary conceptualisations of conflict, both posit a war of opposing interests and there are clear interactions between the two. In a letter dated 19 December 1860, Marx wrote to Engels 'during the last four weeks [...] I have read all manner of things. *Inter alia* Darwin's book on natural selection. Although developed in the crude English fashion, this is a book, which in the field of natural history, provides the basis of our views'.²⁵ Later, he wrote to Engels, '[i]t is remarkable how Darwin rediscovers, among the beasts and plants, the society of England with its division of labour, competition, opening up of markets, "inventions" and Malthusian "struggle for existence". It is Hobbes' *omnium contra omnes* [war of all against all] and is reminiscent of

²⁰ John Stuart Mill is largely credited with developing the concept of *homo economicus* (though the term 'economic man' itself was coined by John Kells Ingram, a critic of his work, his *A History of Political Economy* (1888)). In *Essays on Some Unsettled Questions of Political Economy* (1844). Mill explains that man, as understood by political economy, is a 'being who desires to possess wealth and who is capable of judging of the comparative efficacy of means for obtaining that end'. He is adverse to labour and desires 'costly indulgences'. John Stuart Mill, *Essays on Some Unsettled Questions of Political Economy*, 2nd edn (London: Longman, Green, Reader and Dyer, 1874), pp. 137-8

²¹ C.B. Macpherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962; repr. 1972), p.3

²² *Ibid.*, p. 265

²³ Herbert Spencer, 'The Morals of Trade', *Westminster Review*, 71 (1859), 377-390 (p.364)

²⁴ Spencer, 'The Morals of Trade', p.384.

²⁵ Karl Marx, 'Letter from Marx to Frederick Engels, 19 December 1860' in, *Karl Marx, Frederick Engels: Collected Works*, 50 vols. (New York: International, 1975-c2004), XLI [1985], pp.231-3 (p. 232)

Hegel's *Phenomenology [of Spirit (1807)]*.²⁶ Mapping the evolution of (self-) consciousness, Hegel's *Phenomenology*, posits the life-and-death struggle of would-be subjects in the quest for self-recognition, (a process which, for its success, requires the subordination of – and 'recognition' from – a slavish consciousness). It is not, therefore, difficult to see why Marx felt that natural selection, which operates on the same conflictual basis, recalled Hegel's *Phenomenology*. For his own part, Marx (alongside Engels) argued that human progress is marked by the dialectical collision of opposites in the form of class-conflict (though their proposition that the capitalistic epoch of 'momentary barbarism' would be succeeded by a communistic end-term was seen as teleologically inevitable).²⁷ And similarly, noting the antagonism and self-interest that characterised economic life, Thorstein Veblen's 1899 treatise, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, argued that capitalistic society represented a predatory phase of human development. He suggests: '[t]he traits which characterize the predatory and subsequent stages of culture, and which indicate the types of man best fitted to survive under the regime of status, are (in their primary expression) ferocity, self-seeking, clannishness, and disingenuousness—a free resort to force and fraud'.²⁸ Though not a follower of Marx, Veblen advanced a theory of economic behaviour that re-introduced the more expansive historical approach of the Marxists, highlighting the problems of class conflict and economic exploitation (variously called 'predatory emulation' and 'invidious exploit'). As William J. Barber points out, Veblen rejected the neo-classicists' emphasis on 'rational calculating behaviour' insisting 'that human action was more instinctive than reflective'.²⁹ And certainly, borne of a stalwart commitment to evolutionary principles, Veblen's theory posited two distinct traits: the instinct towards exploitation (emulation) or drudgery (workmanship). As E.K. Hunt remarks, this was an 'antagonistic dichotomy that existed [as far as Veblen was concerned] in some form in nearly all societies'.³⁰ Describing the social development of the diametric impulse toward exploitation or drudgery, Veblen explains:

When the predatory habit of life has been settled upon the group by long habitation, it becomes the able-bodied man's accredited office in the social economy to kill, to destroy such competitors in the struggle for existence as attempt to resist or elude him, to overcome and reduce to subservience those alien forces that assert themselves refractorily in the environment.³¹

According to Veblen, the predatory instinct, when applied to economic life, translates as an instinct toward business; the inverse of this principle is, of course, that the instinct of workmanship finds

²⁶ Marx, 'Letter from Marx to Frederick Engels, 18 June 1862' in, *Karl Marx, Frederick Engels: Collected Works*, 50 vols. (New York: International, 1975-c2004), XLI [1985], pp.380-1 (p. 381)

²⁷ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, trans. by Samuel Moore (London: Penguin, 1985), p.226

²⁸ Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions* (London: Unwin, 1970), p.152.

²⁹ William J. Barber, *A History of Economic Thought* (London: Penguin, 1991), p.219

³⁰ E.K. Hunt, *History of Economic Thought: A Critical Perspective* (Belmont: Wadsworth, 1979), p.302

³¹ Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions* (London: Unwin, 1970), p.29

expression in industrial activity.³² Veblen's statement might well have provided an exemplar for the tensions intrinsic to Kilgour's incorporation thesis. As Kilgour explains, incorporation is 'where extremes meet, although not in equal relation but in an identity achieved through the subordination, even annihilation, of one of the terms' (3). Likewise, at the point whereby the polarities of exploitation and drudgery meet, the latter, constituting the 'alien forces' outside invidious exploit are, as Kilgour suggests, destroyed or 'reduce[d] to subservience'.³³

The Critical Field

Existing scholarship in this area has tended to converge on Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) with early work in the form of Franco Moretti's *Signs Taken for Wonders* (1983) paving the way for later readings of 'monstrous' economies. In the chapter titled 'Dialectic of Fear', Moretti reads Stoker's vampire as a 'rational entrepreneur who invests gold to expand his dominion'.³⁴ Together, Frankenstein's monster and Dracula represent the two poles of capitalist society: 'the disfigured wretch and the ruthless proprietor' (the 'propetyless worker' and the ascetic, accumulating capitalist respectively).³⁵ In a similar vein, Judith Halberstam's essay 'Technologies of monstrosity: Bram Stoker's *Dracula*' (1995) theorises the kind of 'thrifty metaphoricality' at the centre of this kind of analysis, formalising the term 'gothic economy' which she defines as any use of metaphor that 'complies with [...] the logic of capitalism, a logic which rationalises even the most supernatural of images into material images of capitalism itself'.³⁶ Dracula's 'great heap of [unused] gold', Halberstam explains, gothicises the Count's 'anti-capitalism'; his aristocratic agglomeration or failure to circulate becomes 'monstrous' in contrast to 'the band of Englishmen [...] who must restore [his capital to the market]'.³⁷ Turley Houston extends the scope of Halberstam's 'gothic economy', suggesting that between 1850 and 1900 the discourses of 'economics' and 'literature' were involved in a feedback scenario: an interaction that was partly managed by Gothic tropes. Turley Houston's work on *Dracula* – to which I will return – reads Stoker's tale as a gothic allegory of 'two incorporated entities (Dracula and his vampire and Van Helsing and his followers), competing to the death for a complete monopoly on circulation and consumption'.³⁸ However, studies of this type have tended to regard the Gothic as a forum that is privileged in its ability to comment on the contemporary culture. Moretti, for instance, points out

³² The Sociological equivalent of this antagonism is that diametric between 'the leisure class' and the 'common man'.

³³ Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions* (London: Unwin, 1970), p.29

³⁴ Franco Moretti, *Signs Taken for Wonders: On the Sociology of Literary Forms* (London: Verso, 1983), p.84

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p.83

³⁶ Judith Halberstam, 'Technologies of monstrosity: Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', in *Cultural Politics at the Fin de Siecle*, ed. by Sally Ledger and Scott McCracken (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp.248-266 (p. 259)

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.259-60

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p.117

that ‘the monster [...] serves to displace the antagonisms and horrors evidenced *within* society *outside* society itself’ [original emphasis].³⁹ Similarly Halberstam considers that the Gothic novel ‘takes on historically specific contours’, in its ‘produc[tion]’ of ‘monstrosity’.⁴⁰ The vampire, through its association with the ‘nineteenth-century discourse of anti-Semitism’ has the ‘ability to condense many monstrous traits into one body’.⁴¹

In *The Gothic Body* (1996), Kelly Hurley remarks on the critical tendency, to some extent evident in these studies by Moretti and Halberstam, to theorise fantastic literature as a ‘vatic discourse’ in times of cultural crisis.⁴² The rationale for this elevation of the fantastic as *the* literature of the ‘turbulent’ cultural moment is that its transgression of natural law establishes a kind of narrative elasticity that makes it the optimal vehicle for the negotiation of such ‘slippery’ concepts as race and species integrity. Yet, as Hurley argues, such analysis assumes ‘too great a coherence on the part of the dominant cultural order’.⁴³ Hurley cites Rosemary Jackson’s *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion* (1981) as illustrative of this tendency and since this work extols the fantastic as singularly equipped to respond to those concerns deemed absent from ‘realist’ fiction, I will also reproduce Jackson’s argument here. Jackson remarks that ‘the fantastic exists as the inside, or the underside, of realism, opposing the novel’s closed, monological forms, with open dialogical structures, as if the novel had given rise to its own opposite, its unrecognisable reflection’.⁴⁴ Emphasising fantastic literature’s ‘parasitical’ dependence on ‘the real’, and positing, as we see, an antipodal relationship between realistic and fantastic forms, studies of this kind advance a dichotomy that is rather artificial. Turley Houston goes some way to redress the critical balance. Parallel to her suggestion that Gothic tropes ‘assess’ economic instability, she points out that, ‘economic’ discourse ‘is frequently accompanied by terrifying phantom appendages’ inversely derived from literature.⁴⁵ Because Turley Houston’s emphasis on late nineteenth-century expressions of ‘Gothic economies’ is exclusively mediated through her discussion of the two fantastic tales *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) and *Dracula*, it reinforces a critical bias that, I think, she is trying to move away from. Therefore, building on Hurley and Turley Houston’s criticism, I want to argue for a more interactive relationship between the gothic and discourses – literary and otherwise – extraneous to this genre. In contrast to those studies that read the literary vampire as an expression of monetary crises, in this thesis, I want to explore how, at the *fin de siècle*, various forms of discourse assimilate the vampire and its related tropes to think about predatory behaviour in the marketplace and other economic environments.⁴⁶

³⁹ Moretti, *Signs Taken for Wonders*, p.84

⁴⁰ Halberstam, ‘Technologies of monstrosity’, p.249

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Hurley, *The Gothic Body*, p. 7

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Rosemary Jackson, *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion* (London: Methuen, 1981), p.25

Given that Jackson’s ‘realism’ appears to encompass both the nineteenth-century Realist novel and fiction otherwise situated within a ‘realistic’ order’, the term itself involves an amount of plasticity.

⁴⁵ Turley Houston, *From Dickens to Dracula*, p.1

⁴⁶ Beyond those studies I have mentioned Richard Godfrey, Gavin Jack and Campbell Jones’s co-authored article ‘On the Dialectics of Vampirism, Capital, and Time’ (2004) is conceptually similar. Taking Marx’s

The vampire and cannibal are well-established tropes of economic predation but *fin-de-siècle* writing, ductile as it is in its treatment of parasitic, predatory and otherwise exploitative economic activity, wields the often less conspicuous motifs of blood, dismemberment, Eucharist and gift. Strongly keyed to Christian liturgy, these are motifs that recall the anti-Catholic rhetoric surrounding various expressions of the faith in the nineteenth century, including Tractarianism.⁴⁷ In *Catholicism, Sexual Deviance and Victorian Gothic Culture* (2006) Patrick O'Malley notes the tendency to emblemise the Catholic Church as a species of vampire. As O'Malley points out, published in the same year as Stoker's *Dracula*, Walter Walsh's *The Secret History of the Oxford Movement* (1897) 'uses the imagery of the Revelation of St John' to represent Romanists as 'bloodthirsty'⁴⁸: 'The "woman drunken with the blood of the saints" (Rev. Xvii. 6) has not lost her cruel nature [...] her persecuting laws are still the same as when in the Dark Ages her infernal Inquisition performed, unhindered, its bloodthirsty work'.⁴⁹ Indeed, Walsh's polemic takes cues from much earlier expressions of this sentiment. For instance, in William Godwin's *Mandeville: A Tale of the Seventeenth Century in England* (1817), the tale's orphan and narrator, Charles Mandeville remarks that:

I had hardly a notion of any more than two species of creatures on the earth, — the persecutor and his victim, the Papist and the Protestant; and they were to my thoughts like two great classes of animal nature, the one, the law of whose being it was to devour, while it was the unfortunate destiny of the other to be mangled and torn to pieces by him.⁵⁰

Of course, the vampire and cannibal are often linked to the Eucharist and debates surrounding transubstantiation, resurrected in the nineteenth century by Tractarianism, reinforce this relationship. O'Malley's study demonstrates that 'as [...] the debates over the national sectarian significance of the Real Presence – and the real Catholic presence in England – are forced center stage by the Oxford Movement and the "Papal Aggression," the blood drinking Catholic and the

vampire (as metaphor for capital) as its starting point, this work places a range of vampire narratives in dialogue with Bergson's concept of duration. It argues that the dialectical tension between Bergson and his adversaries, roughly conceptualised as tension between linearity and discontinuity, is key to an understanding of the vampire's relationship to capital. For instance, the authors equate erratic feeding habits in vampire film and fiction – identified as a simultaneous pleasure and fear of discontinuity – with Marx's representation of the revolutionizing and temporally disruptive bourgeoisie. Richard Godfrey, Gavin Jack and Campbell Jones, 'Sucking, Bleeding, Breaking: On the Dialectics of Vampirism, Capital, and Time', *Culture and Organization*, 10 (2004), 25-36

⁴⁷ The Eucharistic ritual, because it recalls the Last Supper (where Jesus announces his coming betrayal), has strong associations with gift, blood and dismemberment. Through his sacrifice, Jesus makes a 'gift' of his blood and flesh. In 'Corinthians', it is stated that 'when he had given thanks, he brake [the bread], and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me' (Cor. 11:24). Because the breaking of the bread becomes (symbolically or otherwise) the body of Jesus it is often read as a form of dismemberment. See, for instance, Alvin Boyd Kuhn, *A Rebirth for Christianity* (Wheaton: Quest, 1970; repr. 2005), p.203

⁴⁸ Patrick O'Malley, *Catholicism, Sexual Deviance, and Victorian Gothic Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp.130-1

⁴⁹ Cited in O'Malley, *Catholicism, Sexual Deviance, and Victorian Gothic Culture*, p.130

⁵⁰ William Godwin, *Mandeville: A Tale of the Seventeenth Century in England*, 3 Vols (London: Archibold Constable, 1817), I, p.115

Vampire coalesce'.⁵¹ He might add to this, that since the Reformation, the Catholic and the cannibal have frequently been aligned in anti-catholic discourses.

One might conclude, from the breadth of these tropes that my definition of 'economic life' is somewhat panoptic. It is certainly true that drawing such motifs as Eucharist and gift into the province of 'economy', I extend the parameters that are, customarily, assigned to it. Yet, as Turley Houston and others have remarked, historically the term has experienced a much broader usage. After the seventeenth century 'economy', as we know, has been used largely to describe 'national and global finance' but prior to this, 'the economic was not constructed as separate from the familial domicile'.⁵² Remarking on the 'economy's' etymological and semantic heterogeneity, in *Given Time* (1991) Jacques Derrida states that 'among the irreducible predicates or semantic values, economy no doubt involve[s] the values of law (*nomos*) and of home (*oikos*, home, property, family, the hearth, the fire indoors). *Nomos* does not only signify law in general, but also the law of distribution (*nemein*), the law of sharing or partition [*partage*], the law as partition (*moira*), the given or assigned part, participation' [original emphasis].⁵³ Derrida's inspection of the term's etymological articles allows him to establish a kind of circularity that is central to his analysis of gift-giving (to which I will return) but it also implies a much broader application than we typically assign to the term. For the purposes of this thesis, I define 'economy' as an organising principle – presiding over production, distribution, exchange and expenditure – both within those spheres of home and political governance specified by Derrida and Turley Houston, but also in those monetary, somatic and theological realms that can be seen to labour under the same economic principle.⁵⁴ In Christology, the divine operation of the triune God and the ritual of the sacrament of the Eucharist, have long been regarded as economic forms. Alister E. McGrath explains that the 'economic trinity' 'is the manner in which the trinity is made known within "the economy of salvation". That is to say, the historical process itself'.⁵⁵ In other words, the economic trinity considers the internal dynamic of the trinity and its outward relationship with the world, including creation, and is opposed to the 'immanent trinity', which relates to the internal nature of the triune god without reference to creation or other historical processes. The doctrines of the economic trinity and economy of salvation are philosophically difficult because, as contemporary thinkers, we want to align 'economic' processes with pecuniary ones. Nicholas M. Healy points out that the thirteenth-century theologian, Thomas Aquinas, considered that 'the procession of the son from the father' in the immanent trinity (called 'generation') corresponds with the 'sending forth' of Jesus as the Word incarnate in the economic trinity; the latter, concerned with the world, history and created life is an appointed economic form because it relates to Trinitarian (ad)ministrations of what is other than God. Crucially, Thomas conceptualised the economy of salvation as a circular dynamic

⁵¹ O'Malley, *Catholicism, Sexual Deviance, and Victorian Gothic Culture*, p.135

⁵² Turley Houston, *From Dickens to Dracula*, p.2

⁵³ Jacques Derrida, *Given Time: I. Counterfeit Money*, trans. by Peggy Kamuf (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992; repr. 1994), p. 6

⁵⁴ Nicholas M. Healy, *Thomas Aquinas: Theologian of the Christian Life* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), p. 83

⁵⁵ Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction* (Malden: Blackwell, 1994;repr.1997), p.300

pattern; as Healy states, Thomas's theology is 'organised as a circular movement: creation moves outwards from God – *exitus* – and then is perfect as it returns to God – *reditus*'.⁵⁶

Kilgour's analysis, insofar as it concerns itself with nineteenth-century literature, is restricted to the Gothic and Romanticism: forms which she regards as kindred in their 'necromantic' impulse (172). Adapting the Bloomian model of writerly influence, Kilgour remarks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, that his self-conscious assimilation of 'the literary property of others' means that he 'completely empties himself in subordination to [these figures]': 'he lets everything in without asserting control and so seems to be more eaten than eater' (190-1). Predictably, Kilgour suggests the Gothic deconstructs the foundational binary, for '[i]n this later world, categories appear to be collapsing, boundaries are badly marked though immutable' (174). This genre, Kilgour points out, 'shows that revival, like all acts of incorporation, is difficult to control absolutely [...]' (172). Thus, Coleridge who figuratively bites off more than he can chew, faces the same crisis of identity that Gothic literature, 'suspended' between the polarities of inside-outside, also faces (177). I argue that Kilgour's analysis offers a somewhat tendentious view of incorporation metaphors as they appear in nineteenth-century literature. Like many scholars of the genre, Kilgour assigns to the Gothic (and Romanticism), esoteric guardianship of the ambiguity that is enacted at the level of identity. This thesis will demonstrate, through its emphasis on specifically economic concerns, that the crisis of identity associated with 'incorporation', spills out into multiple discourses. The conflict between capitalism and socialism which can otherwise be expressed as a conflict between self and community, part and whole, is an analogue of the antagonism, described by Kilgour, between cannibalism and communion. As with any expression of conflict, the collision between capitalism and the various factions that, at the *fin de siècle*, formed the socialist opposition, actively produces ambiguity. In late nineteenth-century socialist writing, for instance, tropes of dismemberment, cannibalism and vampirism articulate an anxiety about capitalism's desire for assimilation. As I will show, Émile Zola, as a writer of naturalist fiction, distorts the parameters of vampire and victim, ascribing predatory characteristics to the insurgent miners of his 1885 novel *Germinal*, as well as the bourgeois pit owners that exploit them. In Chapter 1 I will explain that this ambiguity serves Zola's complex rhetorical and meta-critical purposes but for the moment it is sufficient to point out that while these passages of Zola's novel communicate a form of gothicness, the novel is as far removed from 'the Gothic' as genre-classification allows.

Crucially, Kilgour remarks that as nineteenth-century articulations of incorporation move away from the Miltonian conception of controlled and ultimately redemptive modes of assimilation, oedipal rivalry becomes central to their operation. She writes:

[I]n this later fallen world communion between father and son has been thrown off balance, so that the two are simultaneously identified and opposed, two rivals struggling for an individual identity. Relations previously represented as benign, even symbiotic, are revised

⁵⁶ Healy, *Thomas Aquinas*, p. 82

in a world of possessive individuals. While the image for relations is still basically oral, through the introduction of oedipal conflict, orality is seen as pure aggression and cannibalism [...] This is a world of isolated and introverted selves, whose minds are cut off from each other so that relations involving the crossing of individual boundaries are interpreted as acts of violation. All exchanges are regarded as governed by self-interest, which is ultimately the law of the survival of the fittest. The avoidance of oedipal rivalry through communal imagery is no longer possible, because communion itself has been revealed to harbor cannibalistic possibilities [...] (174-5)

The oedipal phase Kilgour describes is vividly apparent in *fin-de-siècle* socialist writing which, in its critique of the capitalist establishment, frequently schematises politically insurgent activity as son rising up against father: a trope it borrows from French Revolutionary symbolism. In line with Kilgour's thesis, I will argue that the impulse driving predatory economic motifs – if not the *dénouement* – is frequently oedipal. Very often these tropes and metaphors describe a conflict between the 'father economy' and subaltern groups operating *within* this economy. Since 'father' may variously denote a patriarchal, ecclesiastic or otherwise hegemonic 'head', I use the term *father economy* to describe an organising principle – superintending production, distribution, exchange and expenditure – presided by any such custodian or figurehead. For instance, Christological and Eucharistic economies are subordinate to God, the father; domestic economies, the *pater familias*; and monetary economies, the hegemonic system of economic exchange: capitalism. However, the narrative advanced in this thesis diverges to the one offered by Kilgour. I will argue that at the end of the nineteenth century, while vampiric, parasitical and otherwise predatory economic tropes frequently harbour oedipal aspirations, the dramatisation of this impulse is rarely straightforward.

As I have indicated, Kilgour suggests that metaphors of incorporation endure because they enact the inside-outside spatiality that bodily experience, presenting a somatic frontier, necessarily involves. However, the oedipal narrative gone awry can be a rejection of the spatial binary. In this alternative scheme, the successful defeat of the father is sublimated in an act of self-directive violence: an opting out of the kind of antagonisms that bodily experience involves. In Chapter 1, I discuss this tactic with reference to Robert Tressell's socialist novel *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* (1914). In Tressell's novel the indigent labourer, progeny of capitalistic industry, undergoes an act of physical decantation by cutting his own throat (and not the throat of the industry, as one might expect). While it is certainly true that in the teleological view of social evolution expounded by Marx and others, some representations of social revolution imagine socialism as victor in its conflict with the capitalist establishment, in a similar failure to imagine the successful overpowering of creator (capitalistic industry) by created (abject labour class), the antagonists are as frequently understood to be locked in a stalemate: the latter diametrically opposed yet degradingly dependent on the former.

A contingent result of Kilgour's theorisation of the nineteenth century as an oedipal phase is that it divests the period of the kind of critical self-recognition that I would like to argue accompanies more sophisticated expressions of incorporation at the end of the period. The problem

with oedipal conflict is that it describes a kind of binary logic that, because of its absorption into Freud's account of (psycho-sexual) identity formation, describes a relationship between self and other that is formative. Kilgour herself notes that inside-outside binaries implicit in incorporation metaphors are an imperfect means of organising experience but, as with other mediating facts, she remains closed to the metacritical and otherwise self-perceptive potential of literature in this period. Henry James (whose work I discuss in Chapter 3) offers perhaps the most coherent expression of Kilgour's theory and paradoxically the most compromising. As I will argue, for James, all social exchanges are economic exchanges. In the manner of Kilgour's network of possessive individuals – for whom 'the crossing of [...] boundaries' is always an act of antagonism – James's social marketplace is comprised of individuals motivated by a desire for profit: a tendency that is represented as orally aggressive (175). *The Wing of the Dove's* (1902) Kate Croy, for instance regrets that, in her relations with her father and sister: 'it would never occur to *them* that they were eating one up. They did that without tasting'.⁵⁷ However, James shows himself aware of the epistemological limits of such modes of organising experience. James's 'antonymic play' – that is, his transposition of semantic units with diametric values – and his sensitivity to the instability that exists at the level of the linguistic sign demonstrate that he is aware that the binary structures (gift / acquisition, eater / eaten, have / have not) that dominate his own work, are unsatisfactory. Similarly, in Chapter 1 I argue that while the predatory motifs that populate Émile Zola's representation of class conflict are frequent, vivid and orally aggressive – the coalmine of the bourgeois Grégoires 'had drunk [Red's] blood and swallowed his bones' – they should not be regarded as a commendation of these binary tenets.⁵⁸ Zola's intention is rather to problematise the deployment of such crude ontological categories as vampire-victim, while at the same time acknowledging them as inherent to the constitutive human psyche.

Concomitant to these claims I argue that an examination of economic conditions is fundamental to our understanding of predatory or 'incorporative' metaphors at the *fin-de-siècle*. A useful way of approaching the issue, articulated by this thesis, is to read *fin-de-siècle* metaphors of incorporation alongside economic theory and practice without displacing assimilative tactics in *literature* with corrective ontological categories in *criticism*. It is not my intention to memorialise the victims of the nineteenth-century economic enterprise (the enervated labourer, the circumscribed woman, the imperial subject etc.) by making their creative inversion of the mechanisms of (economic) power an analytical priority. I do, however, suggest that at the *fin de siècle* economic operations so closely resembled the way human or social operations were conceived (and the two are closely imbricated) that it is impossible to give account to the expression of incorporation metaphors without appreciable consideration of the economic conditions under which they were produced.

⁵⁷ Henry James, *The Wings of the Dove*, ed. Amy Bloom & Pierre A. Walker (New York: Modern Library, 2003; repr. 2004), p.60

⁵⁸ Émile Zola, *Germinal*, Trans. by Leonard Tancock (London: Everyman, 1991), p. 38; 'le sang bu et les os avalés par les roches', Émile Zola, *Germinal*, chronologie et preface par Henri Guillemin (Paris: Flammarion, 1968), p.33

Scope and Organisation

The thesis consists of four chapters, divided thematically to consider how predatory economic tropes find expression in *fin-de-siècle* discourses surrounding socialism, imperialism and smaller-scale social intimacies. Some of the texts at the centre of this study (including Vernon Lee's supernatural tales) sit comfortably within the category 'Gothic' while others, for instance Henry James's late psychological novels (*The Sacred Fount* excluded) clearly do not. Because the intention of this study is partly to demonstrate the global penetration of a system of metaphors (definable as Gothic), I have selected texts that sit both within and outside of this category.

Surveying newspaper articles from the period and two key novels by Robert Tressell and Émile Zola, Chapter 1 considers the ideological end to which socialist writing and illustration deploys vampiric and cannibalistic motifs (and those attendant motifs, including blood, dismemberment and patricide). Establishing the French Revolution as an important symbolic site of political conflict, I suggest that *fin-de-siècle* socialist fiction dramatises the patricidal ethos that tends to feature in both contemporary accounts and subsequent analyses of French Revolutionary conflict. In Tressell's *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* (1914) and Zola's *Germinal* (1885), the razor (which resonates with the Revolutionary guillotine: the 'national razor') is figured as the metaphorical instrument of capitalistic industry. According to the established narrative of Revolutionary conflict, the paternalistic structure of absolute monarchy (*la puissance paternelle*) gives way to a *sans culottes* fraternalism: a process in which the instrument of power (the guillotine) is turned against the originator of that power (the monarchy). The novels by Tressell and Zola describe the capitalistic razor turned back on itself, but their rendition of Revolutionary patricide is not straightforward. As I have indicated, in Tressell's novel, resistance is most *successfully* imagined in self-directed violence. Given that Revolutionary patricide is an oedipal operation it involves identification with the father that, for Tressell, is degrading. Yet where Tressell attempts to secure the integrity of a proletarian identity outside capitalistic enterprise, Zola intentionally obscures individual identity. In *Germinal*, the patricidal instinct, rendered in 'appetitive' terms, is barely suppressed; yet because Zola wants to undermine any facile notion of victimhood, it is difficult, at any one time, to establish who the paternalistic agent is.

In Chapter 2, I present Bertram Mitford (1855-1914), a lesser-known writer of African quest romances, as an important marginalist voice in *fin-de-siècle* imperial politics; one who, far from acting as a mere extension of his contemporary, H. Rider Haggard, problematises the jingoistic sentiment prevalent in the imperial narratives of the age. I show how, following the Marxian precedent, Mitford schematises tribal cannibalism as a primitive counterpart of Western capitalism. As a (converted) Catholic, Mitford uses biblical motifs to negotiate the ethics of Western expropriations of African territory. I will go on to argue that Mitford advances an imperial eschatology that imagines the *fin-de-siècle* end-term of economic progress as a damnation scene of

primal dismemberment and in this way, rejects what Jacques Derrida identifies as Marxism's own 'messianic eschatology': an eschatology that identifies communism as the *telos* of economic development (despite the present capitalistic condition of 'momentary barbarism').⁵⁹ These biblical motifs work in complement to Mitford's evolutionary view of economic progress and I will argue that in positing survivals of a primal instinct towards exploitation, Mitford is proto-Veblenian.

Chapter 3 examines parasitical intimacies in the writing of Henry James and his contemporary, the essayist and writer of fiction, Vernon Lee. I suggest that Lee, who wrote the introduction to the Italian version of Gilman's *Women and Economics*, embellished the gothic potentialities of New Woman eugenics, making the *femme fatale* and parasitical vampiress the frequent focus of her supernatural tales. In a similar move (though not with the same feminist agenda) James imagines social life as vulnerable to the vampire-like appetites of the egoistic personality; as I argue, James's conception of human intimacy as intrinsically hazardous, can be traced to events in his biography. The chapter is organised in two parts. The first, titled 'network of virtuous rapacity', describes the structural principle under which economically parasitic activities operate. This framework, a development of George Eliot's 'web' of invidious interest reflects the tendency, prevalent in nineteenth-century social thought, to understand human life as an organic web or network of inter-dependent interests.⁶⁰ Part two of the chapter can most accurately be described as a micro-analysis of 'the gift' as a locus of economic exploitation. Drawing on the theoretical work of Marcel Mauss and Jacques Derrida, I suggest that since gift-giving is a circular operation – soliciting a return on every outlay – it might usefully be classified as an economic activity. That is to say, beneath the gift's veil of beneficence, the inconspicuous play of reciprocity and obligation makes bondsman of beneficiary. For Lee, who wants to expose and redress the patriarchy that rules sovereign over various forms of cultural exchange, the gift-economy – as articulated in Christian ritual and other exchanges (including haematic ones) – creates a forum in which the tension between the possessor and contestant of economic power can be worked out. James, who is equally sensitive to the Christological dimension of the gift, offers his most sustained exposition of gift-giving in the 1904 novel *Golden Bowl*. The central artefact, the bowl itself (an intended gift and likeness of the Eucharistic cup) has a reflexive quality which makes it an appropriate figure to describe James's broader philosophy of giving: a philosophy that both calls into question the epistemological possibility of the pure gift and undermines the linguistic investment in such binary structures as gift and acquisition.

With primary reference to the novels of Lucas Malet, Chapter 4 consolidates the sundry expressions of vampire-like, parasitic or otherwise predatory economic activity that appear in the preceding chapters. In addressing the imperial tensions inherent to the second Boer War, the abuses of capitalistic industry and sex-inequality (tensions that have provoked in *fin-de-siècle* socialism and the writing of James, Lee and Mitford, their own form of metaphoric), Malet's fiction

⁵⁹ Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, p.226

⁶⁰ Recall *Middlemarch*'s Mrs Cadwallader: the 'swallower [who] waits passively at [her] receipt of custom'. George Eliot, *Middlemarch*, ed. by Rosemary Ashton (London: Penguin, 1994), p.60

describes a ‘universal economy’; that is, a common economic platform or organising principle, according to which, the industries of God, man and nature operate. In this chapter, I suggest that Malet’s novels, conspicuously Catholic as they are, imagine the *fin-de-siècle* milieu of godless capitalism as a spectacle of dismemberment and one in which the motif of cannibalism features prominently. I suggest that Malet’s attempt to reconstitute this Fallen world assumes multiple identities (the for-profit corporation, for instance, or socialistic enterprise). Yet despite their corporate potential, I argue that for Malet, these models offer a less satisfactory solution than the reconciliation with a one God (or hypostatic union), as recognised by the Catholic Church.

1

Fin-de-Siècle Socialism and the Problem of ‘Fatmanism’¹

Rapacious beasts, metamorphic beetles, voluptuous vampires poised to suck the blood of unwitting victims; the *fin-de-siècle* literary imagination was troubled by the appearance of predatory creatures. Likewise, in the socialist writing of the period, the creative and emerging nomenclature pertained to parasitism, predatory enterprise: a species of fiscal vampirism. Certainly, the ‘capitalist vampire’, popularised by Marx in volume one of his magnum opus, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, offers a resonant motif of the worker’s relationship to the mechanisms of production that engaged him; a motif that burgeoned following the publication of the first English edition in 1887.² In the oft-cited passage, Marx writes: ‘capital is dead labour, that vampire-like, only lives by sucking living labour, and lives the more, the more labour it sucks. The time during which the labourer works, is the time during which the capitalist consumes the labour-power he has purchased of him’.³ Marx’s polemic on the working day continues with the accusation that the putatively ‘free’ market on which the worker sells his labour more accurately constitutes institutionalised slavery or servitude: ‘[t]he bargain concluded, it is discovered that he was no “free agent,” that the time for which he is free to sell his labour-power is the time for which he is *forced* to sell it, that in fact the vampire will not lose its hold on him “so long as there is a muscle, a nerve, a drop of blood to be exploited”’[my emphasis] (285). In the work’s final reference to the ‘capitalist vampire’, Marx laments that ‘the prolongation of the working-day beyond the limits of the natural day, into the night, only acts as a palliative. It quenches only in a slight degree the vampire thirst for the living blood of labour’ (245). The metaphor strips down the contractual bond of employer and labour-force to the affective dichotomy of exploiter / victim and calls into question the durability of the commodity under the industrial conditions of capitalism. The protracted working day does not merely make ‘use of [...] labour-power’ but insists on the ‘spoliation’ thereof: a loss in the ‘substance’ and vitality of the worker’s ware, his labour (225). In this way, while the capitalist grows fat on surplus value, the worker, reproached for his apparent ineptitude for ‘saving’ and ‘abstinence’, is literally unable to operate a remunerative economy of self; that is to say, through his indenture to the thriving capitalist, he can expect only diminishing returns from his enervated body-commodity.

¹ ‘On Fatmanism’, *The Clarion*, 16 January 1897, p. 24

² *Das Kapital* was published in the German for the first time in 1867.

³ Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, trans. from the third German edition by Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling, ed. by Friedrich Engels, 3 vols. (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1954; repr. 1977), I, p. 224. Further page references to this work are given after quotations in the text.

It is difficult to over-estimate how pervasive the trope of the economic vampire is – beyond these notable expressions in Marx and Engels – in the left-wing writings of the period. In text and image, socialist newspapers and pamphlets revile the so-called ‘Vampire Capitalism’ or, ‘bloated vampire[s] of commercialism’: the mercenary creatures who prey on the innocent like great ‘man tiger[s]’, and ‘lurk till they’ve claw’d ye / and suck up your blood ere they mangle your body’.⁴ Bankers, politicians and landowners imagined as ‘vampires’, ‘fatten’ on the ‘filth’ of poverty, ‘destroy all vigor and all bloom in life’ and ‘gnaw[...] our trading vitals out’.⁵ One might, very well, regard the motif as an enduring rhetorical figure since it appears intermittently in eighteenth and earlier nineteenth-century writing⁶ and persists in the political rhetoric deployed during our own economic crisis. Indeed, while opposition MPs have recently remarked that corporation tax policies contribute to a culture of ‘predator capitalism’, the Chancellor, during the 2013 Spending Review, suggested that taking financial advice from the Shadow Chancellor, Ed Balls, would be like ‘getting a lesson from Dracula on how to look after a blood bank’.⁷ The economic vampire has materialised in various forms, arguably since the rise of laissez-faire economics. Yet nowhere, outside novelistic writing, does it appear with such ubiquity and with such intent to disrupt the established (economic) order, than in *fin-de-siècle* socialist writing. Of course, the conditions were set for the trope’s swift rise to prominence. The vampire, as parasitical, sub-human subject, degenerate and fecund, is the perfect vehicle for the inscription of specifically late nineteenth-century anxieties. Certainly, in recent years, there has been an abundance of critical work linking the vampire to *fin-de-siècle* fears about empire, racial purity, sexually transmitted disease and female sexuality (to name a few). More pertinently, in her work on the parasite in nineteenth-century science and literature, Anne-Julia Zwierlein points out that the preoccupation with parasitism in social life is mirrored by an emerging interest in the subject in mid to late nineteenth-century scientific enquiry. She remarks that ‘parasitology as an institutionalized science was first mentioned in an 1893 *Times* article’ and the journal *Parasitology* was established shortly after in 1908’: significantly, around the same time that a proliferation of vampire tales by writers such as Bram Stoker, Florence Marryat, Arabella Kenealy, Count Stenbock and Gustave Le Rouge

⁴ ‘Our Cartoon. “The Vampire,”’, *Justice: The Organ of Social Democracy*, 22 August 1885, p.1; William Thompson, *A Prospectus of Socialism, or, a Glimpse of the Millennium* (London: W. Reeves, 1894), p. 259; ‘Their Other Selves’, *Justice: The Organ of Social Democracy*, 23 April 1898, p.2

⁵ A.J.Starkweather & S. Robert Wilson, *Socialism* (New York: John W. Lowell, 1884), p.30 & p.54; ‘The Trade-Rivalry of Nations’, *Tinsley’s Magazine*, August 1869 – January 1870, p. 384

⁶ For example, Voltaire, in his *Philosophical Dictionary* (1764) writes, ‘We never heard a word of vampires in London, nor even at Paris. I confess that in both these cities there were *stock-jobbers*, brokers, and men of business, who sucked the blood of the people in broad daylight’, Voltaire, *Works: A Contemporary Version*, trans. by William F. Fleming (New York: St Hubert Guild, 1901), p.144

⁷ Patrick Wintour, ‘Ed Miliband Says Tax Changes Will Benefit ‘Predator’ Capitalism’, *Guardian*, 31 October 2011, <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2011/oct/31/ed-miliband-tax-changes-predator-capitalism>>, [Accessed 21/11/11]; George Eaton, ‘Why Labour Should be Wary of Attacking Osborne Over Borrowing’, *New Statesman*, 25 June 2013, <<http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2013/06/why-labour-should-be-wary-attacking-osborne-over-borrowing>>, [Accessed 18/07/13]

Similarly journalist Matt Taibbi, in an often cited statement, remarks that the investment banking and security firm Goldman Sachs is a ‘great vampire squid wrapped around the face of humanity, relentlessly jamming its blood funnel into anything that smells like money’. Cited in Dominic Lawson, ‘Goldman was doing its job, you muppet’, *The Times*, 18 March 2012, p. 22

appeared in print.⁸ Given that positivist science frequently directed its analysis of parasitic life at those ‘assimilations’ of an economic or financial species, the pairing of the capitalist and vampire seems unsurprising.⁹

In the second half of the nineteenth century, many major writers, including Dickens, Eliot and Trollope, featured avaricious, vampire-like figures – particularly bankers, brokers and speculators – in their novels. Indeed, many cite the example of Mr Vholes, the mercenary lawyer of Dickens’s *Bleak House* (1852-53), who asserting his influence on the ‘bloodless’ Richard Carstone appeared to have ‘something of the vampire in him’¹⁰ or, of George Eliot’s Mr Vincy: a vampire who ‘suck[ed] the life out of the wretched handloom weavers’.¹¹ As Gail Turley Houston points out, representations of grasping malevolent financiers often figure, in these novels, as a response to the crash of 1857: a crisis exacerbated by large-scale bank fraud.¹² While late nineteenth-century socialism responds to discernibly different economic conditions to those experienced by the mid-century social problem novelist, there certainly exists a dialogic relationship between these media. As we know, at times of cultural pressure, language can be seen to strain against the established lexicon of a field, spilling out into new creative discourses in order to articulate the threat(s) addressed against it. In the same way that Frankenstein has become, for generations, the metaphoric expression of that terror of one’s own making, so too the vampire exceeds its own gothicness to address a specifically economic threat. In recent years, literary critics have tended to transpose financial anxieties *back* onto the literary representations of the vampire. For instance, in *Signs Taken for Wonders* (1983) Franco Moretti interprets Stoker’s *Dracula* as a ‘totalising’ capitalist.¹³ According to his rationale, the monopolizing threat of the vampire is the peril of late nineteenth-century corporate enterprise. Pointing out that monopoly was largely uncommon in Victorian industry, Moretti claims a nationalistic purpose for Stoker’s novel, arguing that *Dracula*, as director of a sprawling foreign corporation, threatens non-monopolistic British enterprise.¹⁴ Similarly, in *From Dickens to Dracula* (2005) Turley Houston posits that Victorian gothic tropes realise fears of financial instability and significantly, the notion of ‘panic’: a term adapted by Walter Bagehot to denote fears relating to specifically economic crises.¹⁵ Turley Houston’s chapter ‘Bankerization panic and corporate personality in *Dracula*’ argues, like Moretti, that Stoker’s novel

⁸ Anne-Julia Zwierlein, ‘From Parasitology to Parapsychology: Parasites in Nineteenth-Century Science and Literature’, in *Unmapped Countries: Biological Visions in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture*, ed. by Anna-Julia Zwierlein (London: Anthem Press, 2005), pp. 155-172 (p. 158)

⁹ For instance, in their 1895 work, *Parasitism, Organic and Social*, Jean Massart and Émile Vandervelde, suggest that Spain suffers from a ‘frightful multitude of parasitic individuals’, who are apparently ‘reduced to a kind of economic consumptiveness’. Jean Massart and Émile Vandervelde, *Parasitism, Organic and Social*, trans. by William MacDonald, rev. by J. Arthur Thomson (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1907), p.102.

¹⁰ Charles Dickens, *Bleak House*, ed. by Stephen Gill (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.854.

¹¹ George Eliot, *Middlemarch*, ed. by Rosemary Ashton (London: Penguin, 1994; repr. 2003), p.327

¹² Gail Turley Houston, *From Dickens to Dracula: Gothic, Economics, and Victorian Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp.71-2

¹³ Franco Moretti, *Signs Taken for Wonders: Essays in the Sociology of Literary Forms* (London: Verso, 1983), p. 84

¹⁴ Moretti, *Signs Taken for Wonders*, pp. 92-3

¹⁵ Turley Houston, *From Dickens to Dracula*, p.1 & 117

echoes fears about market centralisation and corporate monopoly.¹⁶ What is missing from this narrative, then, is a consideration of the trope beyond its purely literary uses. Supplying this gap, this chapter focuses on the symbolic and rhetorical value of the ‘capitalist vampire’ motif in *fin-de-siècle* socialist writing and illustration.

*‘The Survival of the Unfittest’*¹⁷

It is not, in the strictest sense, possible to talk about a late nineteenth-century socialist movement. While the various factions generally agree on a collective organisation of labour, land and education, there are significant ideological discrepancies between, for instance, Christian, democratic and anarchist socialist groups. As Deborah Mutch points out, ‘the twenty years leading up to the founding conference of the Labour Representation committee (later re-named the Labour Party) in February 1900 was a period of intense political debate on the characterization of socialist politics’.¹⁸ Even within socialism’s cohesive divisions, there is often a surprising lack of consistency on concepts like social Darwinism and evolutionary economics. In fact, the socialist press tended to vacillate around three broad perspectives on evolutionary theory. First, there was a complete rejection of the principle of natural selection. In 1897 Robert Blatchford’s *The Clarion*, published an article that refuted the claims of social Darwinism on the basis that it did not discriminate ‘between accumulating money and surviving’. ‘Of the fittest’ the author writes ‘our present unlovely millionaires are [undoubtedly] a type’ but ‘outbreed [the poor...] they do not do’.¹⁹ Next, is an acceptance of the principles of natural selection accompanied by a belief that biological adaptation privileges mercenary – and often ‘primitive’ – types. In 1885, *Justice*, the newspaper of the Social Democratic Federation, claimed that ‘modern society tends to the survival of the unfittest’, suggesting that ‘[u]nder capitalism, competition, and the degrading domination of purely pecuniary interests those survive and do well who are specifically cunning, astute, miserly and dexterous’.²⁰ Finally, in certain quarters, there was a tendency, not only to accept the theories of Darwin and Spencer, but to regard them as consistent with the aims and progress of socialism. In his *History of the Fabian Society* (1916), Edward Pease suggests that evolutionary theory inspired an ‘intellectual revolution’ in socialist circles and Isobel Spencer, in her work on the socialist artist, Walter Crane, points out that evolutionary science ‘encouraged [Fabian] socialists to believe that

¹⁶ Also, Judith Halberstam argues that Stoker’s *Dracula* operates a ‘gothic economy’ which ‘complies with what we might call the logic of capitalism, a logic which rationalizes even the most supernatural images into material images of capitalism itself’. Judith Halberstam, ‘Technologies of Monstrosity : Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*’, in *Cultural Politics at the Fin de Siècle*, ed. by Sally Ledger and Scott McCracken (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 248-266 (p.259)

¹⁷ ‘The Survival of the Fittest’, *Justice*, 19 December 1885, p.2

¹⁸ Deborah Mutch, *English Socialist Periodicals, 1880-1900: A Reference Source* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), p. ix

¹⁹ ‘Survival of the Fittest’, *The Clarion*, 27 November 1897, p.384

²⁰ ‘The Survival of the Fittest’, *Justice*, 19 December 1885, p. 2

not only reform was desirable but that historical evidence existed to prove that its progress was inevitable'.²¹

Because of its functional proximity to the parasitic life so recently to come, as it were, under the microscope, the capitalist vampire is clearly keyed to evolutionary discourses even if, as I point out, not consistent with them. The attitude that natural selection propagates a species of economic predators and parasites is evident in the tendency to bestialise the capitalists. The socialist press is literally saturated with accounts of degenerate financiers, transfigured as 'human vermin', 'Man-tigers' or, 'greedy gross baboons' who 'sucked the people's blood'.²² In image too, the capitalist is figured as a species of parasitic vermin. In 1894, *The Labour Leader* printed the cartoon 'Going Forth into Battle' (fig. 1.0), which featured financial predators waging war against the soldier, 'Socialism'. 'Capital', personified as a fanged financier, is flanked by the figures of 'Bribery', a crouching baboon, and 'Land', a similarly fanged creature while 'Legal civil war', an adaptation of the mythological Harpy, precipitates carrion from its aerial post. Two years later in 1896, the paper fronted a December issue with a surprising variation on the Christmas theme; above the caption 'After Nineteen Centuries!' a fanged bat, with the insignia 'Capitalism' unfurls its wings above the crib of the infant Jesus, apparently in anticipation of its great feast.²³ In what is essentially a Marxist construct, Walter Crane's more famous illustration, 'The Vampire' (fig. 2.0), likewise features a vampire bat, 'Capitalism', feeding off the enervated body of labour. The illustration is accompanied by a 'special announcement' in which it is remarked that 'the gluttonous, evil loathsome appearance which the artist has given to the vampire "Capitalism" is worthy of the vile creature which is preying upon the very vitals of the people of England and the World'.²⁴ Reprinted in *Cartoons for the Cause* (1896), and later adapted for the cover of the American socialist periodical, *The Comrade*, Crane's image in its bestial depiction of capitalism was evidently considered an iconographic success.

²¹ Isobel Spencer, *Walter Crane* (London: Studio Vista, 1975), p.142.

²² 'Capitalists as Murderers', *Justice*, 11 June 1898, p. 4; 'Their Other Selves', *Justice*, 23 April 1898, p.2; 'The Grinning Ape', *The Commonweal*, 23 February 1889, p.61

²³ 'After Nineteen Centuries!', *The Labour Leader*, 19 December 1896, p.1

²⁴ 'Special Announcement!: Our Cartoon "The Vampire"', *Justice*, 22 August 1885, p.1



Figure 1.0 - Going Forth Into Battle



Figure 2.0 - The Vampire



Figure 3.0 Britannia's Best Defence

‘Britannia’s Best Defence,’ (fig. 3.0) (1898) Crane’s later revision of the vampire trope – also printed in *Justice* – bears resemblance to the *Labour Leader’s* ‘Going Forth’. Britannia, like the soldier, ‘Socialism’ raises her shield against an inhuman predator, here, a bat-winged figure branded ‘Monopolist Speculation in Corn’ and ‘Dependence on Foreign Supply’. In the illustration, which articulates the ‘free trade vampire’ motif, commonly deployed in protectionist rhetoric, the vampire-bat takes on a more anthropomorphic aspect than in Crane’s earlier image but nonetheless appears with taloned hands, haggard countenance and Medusan locks. Significantly, the tendency to regard the Capitalists as a degenerate sub-species, adapted to the hostile marketplace, does not interfere with the socialists’ narrative of progress: a narrative itself indebted to evolutionary thinking. In ‘Going Forth to Battle’ and ‘Britannia’s Best Defence’, the figures of ‘Socialism’ and Britannia offer a lesson in species advancement. In the former, ‘Socialism’, brandishing the shield of the Independent Labour Party, is lean, muscular, genetically ‘fit’. Britannia, striking the shield of ‘home supply’ against the vampire of free-trade, exposes her muscular forearm. She is Britannia by designation but has the undeniable aspect of Demeter; her encircled breasts and the swell of corn-ears about her similarly encircled hips, point to her fecundity and she bears not a trident but a corn scythe. This image, along with the ‘The Vampire’, resonate with Swinburne’s poem ‘The Eve of Revolution’ which, with its approbation of republicanism and Italian independence, reifies the revolutionary night as a woman, or god, with ‘breasts palpitating and winged unfurled’.²⁵ The poem continues ‘the reaping men that reap men for their sheaves, / And without grain to yield, / Their scythe-swept harvest-field’: a figure that is echoed in the windswept corn and abandoned scythe of Crane’s illustration.²⁶ The Arcadian tenor of these illustrations echoes the neo-romantic cast that socialist politics lent to evolutionary accounts of human progress. As historian Daniel Gasman points out: ‘repelled by the harshness of reality, be it in the natural world or in the factory town, many Marxists and Darwinists were captured by visions of better things to come, and of course by utopianism, conceived frequently in dream-like and mythologically styled fantasies’.²⁷ Crane betrays his fondness for the ‘dream-like’ and ‘mythological’ quality of the Pre-Raphaelite art, styling Britannia in the manner of Rossetti’s women, her muscular, undulating neck giving way to a trenchant jaw and set against the kind of bucolic scene favoured by his mentor, John Ruskin. The utopic vision of socialism as an ‘ultimate term’ of human development was widely championed in the closing decades of the nineteenth century. Notably, the German Socialist poet Leopold Jacoby considered Marxism and Darwinism as originating from an ‘identical impulse’; he writes ‘[w]hat Darwin’s book on the Origin of Species is on the subject of the genesis and evolution of organic

²⁵ Algernon Charles Swinburne, ‘The Eve of Revolution’ in *Selected Poems*, ed. by L.M Findlay (Carcenet: Manchester, 1982; repr. 1987), pp. 95-107 (p.95, l.3)

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.95, l.11-13

²⁷ Daniel Gasman, *The Scientific Origins of National Socialism: Social Darwinism in Ernst Haeckel and the German Monist League* (London: MacDonald, 1971), p.xii

life from non-sentient nature up to man, the work of Marx is on the subject of the genesis and evolution of association among human beings, of states and the social forms of humanity'.²⁸

There is a contradiction, then, between the visualisation of capitalists as singularly adapted – in the way of parasites – to new economic conditions and, the representation of socialism as evolutionally ascendant: that is, a symbol of inevitable human progress. A meaningful illustration of this conflict can be found in a 1900 *Labour Leader* article backing W. Pickles, president of the Trade Union Congress, in his conviction that 'in all forms of social evolution, the economic factor was the dominant one and it was that factor which conditioned the struggle for existence'.²⁹ According to this view 'labour, diligence, and capacity played but a secondary part of the power to make money'.³⁰ This principle is well imagined in the small army of fanged and 'successful money-grabber[s]', populating the space of the paper's own 'Going Forth'³¹. But, if we are to accept this position, 'socialism' as a paragon of social evolution, is situated in a necessarily antagonistic position. This is one of the great conflicts at the heart of socialism's relationship to natural science: a conflict that did not go unnoticed by the contemporary opponents of the movement. Oscar Schmidt, in his 1879 article, 'Science and Socialism', remarks: 'it is, of course, all right enough if certain representatives of Socialist Democracy think they can with the aid of Darwinism add force to their opinions; but they jumble together doctrines which either are irrelevant, or which mutually exclude one another'.³² And, 'mutually exclude one another', these perspectives do. Yet, in the three illustrations an oblique or diagonal partition marks the ideological separation between a utopian socialism and dystopian (degenerate) capitalism: a spatial parameter that speaks of the dialectical tension between the discordant impressions of social evolution. In 'The Vampire', the upper-left to lower right hand section of the composition falls under the dominion of the vampire, 'capitalism', while the bugle-playing angel, 'socialism', monopolises the top right to lower-left hand space. Similarly, in 'Britannia's Best Defence', the free-trade vampire, occupies the bottom right and top left hand area and is set against the backdrop of industrial dock land which incongruously gives way to rustic corn fields in the region of Britannia at the bottom right to top left hand area. The compositional separation of the adversative futures of social evolution, socialism and capitalism, would seem to acknowledge the 'mutual exclusivity' of these points of view. However, it is equally possible that the visual 'split' is indicative of a pictorial dialectic that mirrors scientific socialism's own materialist dialectic.

Adapting Hegel's idealist dialectic – which involves a tripartite development erroneously (though for the purposes of this analysis, usefully) termed the thesis-antithesis-synthesis model – to the scientific socialist's materialist philosophy, Engels, working alongside Marx, is able to develop

²⁸ Cited in Enrico Ferri and R. R. La Monte, *Socialism and Modern Science (Darwin, Spencer, Marx)* (Fairford: Echo, 2006), p.45

²⁹ 'Darwinism and Labour', *The Labour Leader*, 8 September 1900, p.248

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Oscar Schmidt, 'Science and Socialism', *Popular Science Monthly*, 36, 14 (1879), pp. 577-91 (p. 577)

a dynamic scheme of material (including human) development.³³ In the *Dialectics of Nature* (1883) he writes:

Dialectics, so-called *objective* dialectics, prevails throughout nature, and so-called subjective dialectics, dialectical thought, is only the reflection of the motion through opposites which asserts itself everywhere in nature, and which by the continual conflict of the opposites and their final passage into one another, or into higher forms, determines the life of nature [original emphasis].³⁴

Thus, in order to understand the dynamic qualitative change in material conditions, it is necessary to interpret these phenomena as a series of constantly arising conflicts, resolved through the act of sublation. For instance, as Engels points out, in evolutionary terms ‘heredity’ is in perpetual conflict with ‘adaptation’. Adaptation, by supplanting hereditary characteristics, performs a negation that results in qualitative change in an organism. This principle can, and is, rolled out to encompass political change resulting from class conflict. Writing of the *coup d’état* which resulted in the re-establishment of the French empire, Engels explains that in 1851 the French bourgeoisie were faced with an unappealing choice between ‘a caricature of empire, praetorian rule, and the exploitation of France by a gang of scoundrels, or a social democratic republic’. They chose to ‘[bow] down before the gang of scoundrels so as to be able, under their protection, to go on exploiting the workers’.³⁵ To many socialist thinkers (as we shall see in the second part of this chapter) the events of, and subsequent to, the French Revolution are of pre-eminent significance in the history of class conflict (and Kant formalised this ‘tendency’ with his *signum rememorativum, demonstrativum, prognostikon*).³⁶ The dialectical tension between social democracy and empire is discharged, in Engel’s example, by the dissolution of the republic: an event which transformed the political composition of the country (and not to its own advantage).

Isobel Spencer remarks that Crane, ‘had little difficulty’ accepting socialism as the evolutionary successor of capitalism subsequent to his reading of Darwin and Spencer.³⁷ I would

³³ In his preface to *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel attributes the tripartite thesis-antithesis-synthesis model to Kant. As Frederick C. Beiser points out ‘although Kant’s antinomies were the inspiration for Hegel’s dialectic, Hegel never used this terminology, and he criticized the use of all schemata. In the *Phenomenology* Hegel did praise ‘the triadic form’ that had been rediscovered by Kant, describing it even as ‘the concept of science’ (PG41/¶50); but this is a reference to the triadic form of Kant’s table of categories, not a method of thesis-antithesis-synthesis’. Frederick C. Beiser, *Hegel* (New York: Routledge, 2005), p.161

³⁴ Friedrich Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, trans. by Clemens Dutt (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1972), p.211

³⁵ Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p.212

³⁶ Kant’s ‘signum rememorativum, demonstrativum, prognostikon’, is an historical sign – possessing rememorative demonstrative and predictive faculties – that reveals an historical *tendency* towards human progress. According to Kant, the French Revolution specifically reveals a positive operative change in human behaviour. As Harry Van der Linden points out ‘[T]he French Revolution itself is a sign of moral progress in that it makes clear that human agents will act upon their ideals, and the enthusiasm of its spectators is relevant in that it supports the hope that we may expect events like this revolution to happen in the future’. Harry Van der Linden, *Kantian Ethics and Socialism* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1988), p. 168

³⁷ Spencer, *Walter Crane*, p.142

suggest, however, that his cartoons and illustrations – which as I will demonstrate, are perfectly consistent with the bifurcation of social evolutionary ideas present in socialist writing at this time – complicate this statement. Indeed, Crane’s socialist illustrations very often represent a dialectical conflict between capitalistic enterprise and socialist economics. His 1910 May Day illustration ‘A Posy for May Day and A Poser for Britannia’, for instance, features Britannia perched doubtfully on a stile while ‘Citizen Force’, brandishing a posy with the legend ‘Co-operative Commonwealth’, beckons Britannia towards the path of ‘Socialism’. Behind the stile, the militaristic figure ‘Imperialism’ tempts Britannia about-face with a dandelion inscribed ‘Tariff Reform’. Similarly, ‘Socialism and the Imperialistic Will ‘O the Wisp’ (1907) depicts a labourer, saddled with the body of ‘Militarism’ wading into the ocean towards the bat winged ‘Commercial Imperialism’ on the horizon. The labourer looks hesitantly back towards the illuminated figure, ‘Socialism’, who is gesturing toward an abandoned spade inscribed ‘Land for the People’. Crane’s illustrations reflect a materialist dialectic insofar as they describe the perpetual motion and ‘conflict of opposites’ fundamental to materialist philosophy. Yet, representing an isolated moment in the conflict between socialism and capitalism, Crane invests his illustrations with a visual indeterminacy which reflects the ambiguity at the heart of socialism’s treatment of social evolution. Using Newton’s first and third laws, the art critic Arthur Danto usefully demonstrates that motional identification is often impossible — that bodies in uniform motion are indistinct from inert bodies operating under equal and opposite force. The interpretation of the work of art therefore requires the competition of visual experiences. As Danto argues, ‘acceptance of one identification rather than another is in effect to exchange one *world* for another’.³⁸ In a similar sense, the illustrations by Crane, representing a moment of collision between socialism, the shining matriarch and capitalism, the vampire predator, support two conflicting projections of social evolution; the one directly substitutable with the other.

With neither Capitalism nor Socialism trumping the visual experience, Crane arrives at an impasse: one that I want to explain, partly, using Kilgour’s ‘incorporation thesis’ since it links consumption metaphors, including vampirism, to the kind of ideological operations at work in socialist text and illustration. Kilgour remarks that ‘the body itself can be imagined [...] as a corporation of its members, which together form a unified and clearly defined structure whose boundaries separate the self from others and so mark off individual identity’ (6). In ‘The Vampire’, the allegoric bodies of capitalism and socialism are the unified or corporate face of their respective economic systems yet despite the apparent autonomy of the individual body, it ‘must [as Kilgour writes] incorporate from elements outside itself to survive’ (6). Feeding on the collective body of labour, the vampire, Capitalism, illustrates this necessity through the digestive metaphor. Yet despite the impossibility of a co-operative state between these bodies (one must ultimately subsume the other) and moreover the visual contiguity of appetitive tropes (vampiric consumption), these illustrations, with their compositional antagonism, sustain, to borrow from Terry Eagleton, an

³⁸ Arthur Danto, ‘The Art World’, *Journal of Philosophy*, 61(1964), 571-584 (p.578).

‘absolute frontier’ between parties.³⁹ This can be attributed to a complex set of factors. On the one hand, the illustrations’ compositional indeterminacy or separation reflects the growing sense of frustration experienced by socialists including Morris – and those, like Crane, who followed him – who, by the mid to late eighties, began to feel that true social revolution was nowhere near imminent.⁴⁰ While, as I point out, the appetitive motif is close to the surface of Crane’s illustrations, there is no sense that one combatant might succeed the other (in the battle of incorporation). Occurring just at a time when it was felt that revolutionary socialism had stalled, Crane’s illustrations reveal an equivalent stalemate. Moreover, the visual schism between capitalism and socialism is, as I point out, reinforced by the corresponding conflict at the heart of socialism’s own master-narrative of social evolution.

Blood will have Blood

The rhetorical vogue for the capitalist vampire is partly due to its marriage to another, broader, trope at the heart of socialist thinking; that is, blood. An apparently unwieldy motif attached to a heterogeneous range of conditions – including (cursorily) heredity, tyranny and honour – ‘blood’ is often mobilised in a surprisingly focused ideological assault on the capitalist establishment. In volume one of his *History of Sexuality*, Michel Foucault describes the transition from a ‘*symbolics of blood*’ – conspicuous in the sovereign right of death in the Classical age – to modernity’s ‘*analytics of sexuality*’ [original emphasis]; in Foucault’s terms, ‘the mechanisms of power’ as ‘addressed to the body, to life, [and] to what causes it to proliferate’.⁴¹ Of the former condition, Foucault writes: ‘A society of blood - I was tempted to say, of “sanguinity” – where power spoke *through* blood: the honor of war, the fear of famine, the triumph of death, the sovereign with his sword, executioners, and tortures; blood was *a reality with a symbolic function*’ [original emphasis].⁴² Thereafter the so called ‘substitution of sex for blood’ is partly visible in the eugenic ‘administration’ of sex emerging in the second half of the nineteenth century.⁴³ Importantly, the symbolic rite of blood does not, absolutely, give way to the ‘analytics of sexuality’ but, as Foucault indicates, occurs as a recalcitrant realignment of the mechanisms of power: a realignment characterised by ‘overlappings, interactions and echoes’.⁴⁴ In Foucault’s study, the live example of

³⁹ Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983; repr.1993), p.133

⁴⁰ Spencer, *Walter Crane*, p.147. Ruth Kinna remarks that in the ‘late 1880s Morris revised the central tenet of his programme and came to the conclusion that the ruling class had managed to divert the energies of the workers and temporarily put the class struggle into abeyance’; Morris ‘gave up the idea that he would live to see the realization of socialism’ Ruth Kinna, *The Art of Socialism* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), p. 157

⁴¹ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: I The Will to Knowledge*, trans by Robert Hurley (London: Penguin, 1990; repr. 1998), pp.147-8

⁴² Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge*, p. 147

⁴³ *Ibid.* p.148

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* p. 149

Nazism, demonstrates how the ‘analytics of sexuality’ as evident in administrative power of eugenic policy, is concomitant with the ‘symbolics of blood’ expressed in the Nazi’s bloody and ‘systematic genocide of others’.⁴⁵ Though Émile Zola’s novel, *Germinal* (1885) is amongst the work that is explicit about capitalism’s role in the production of a reserve army of labour, at the *fin de siècle*, on the threshold of modernity, the socialist media did not always show itself aware of this administration of life (according to a Materialist logic). Rather, it was possessed of a retrogressive impulse to claim (reluctantly) Capital as its sovereign and attend to the re-inscription of blood’s symbolic value in the discourse of capitalism.

Robert Tressell’s (Noonan) socialist novel, *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* (1914), written, it is thought, between 1906-10, follows the plight of tradesmen working in the fictional town of Mugsborough, South England.⁴⁶ The novel’s title is significant, since the ‘ragged trousers’ of the tradesmen’s livery resonate with the *sans culottes* of the French Revolution: an event which, as I point out later, represents an important site of resistance in socialist writing at this time. Tressell, whose professed object in writing the novel is to promote socialism as the ‘only true remedy’ for poverty and class antagonism, describes the attempts of socialist agitator and decorator Frank Owen to rouse the political feeling of his fellow men against the mechanisms of capitalist production at the heart of their indigence.⁴⁷ Tressell, in the manner of Dickens, directs the allegorical naming of his bourgeoisie at the bodily abjection of the working man. ‘Grinder’, the monopolist greengrocer, ‘Sweater’, borough Mayor, and ‘Featherstone Blood’, a parliamentary candidate, in their gross corpulence conspire to bleed the workers of their means of subsistence. Despite the workers’ apparent reluctance to renounce the system responsible for their financial and bodily ruin, the men nonetheless ‘agreed that Old Sweater was a sanguinary rotter’: comic allusion to the vernacular preference for the expletive ‘bloody’ and, of course, reference to the bourgeois consumption of the life-blood of a pauperised proletariat (294). What is interesting is that blood figures in a symbolic form of suicide prevalent amongst the irredeemably penniless. Owen is particularly moved by a newspaper account of a domestic tragedy in which an out-of-work labourer took the lives of his family, before finally killing himself. The newspaper report of the incident reveals how ‘the dead bodies of the woman and the two children, with their throats severed, [were] laid out side by side upon the bed, which was saturated with their blood’ (85). The body of the father was discovered

⁴⁵ Ibid. p.150

⁴⁶ Robert Noonan used the pen name ‘Tressell’ for his only attempt at a novel. As Peter Miles points out he took this name ‘from the portable trestles that constituted an emblem of the painter’s trade, as also of its uncertainties’. The writer lived under the surname ‘Noonan’ - his mother’s maiden name - though he was born Robert Croker. For the purposes of this chapter I will use Noonan’s pen name: Tressell. Peter Miles, ‘Introduction’, in Robert Tressell, *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, ed. by Peter Miles (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005; repr. 2008), pp. ix-xxxvii (p.ix)

⁴⁷ Robert Tressell, *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, ed. by Peter Miles (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005; repr. 2008), p. 5 Further page references to this novel are given after quotations in the text.

surrounded by the blood that had poured from the wound in his throat which had inevitably been inflicted by the razor that was grasped in his right hand.

No particle of food was found in the house, and on a nail in the wall in the kitchen was hung a piece of blood-smear'd paper on which was written in pencil:

‘This is not my crime, but society’s’ (85)

Peter Miles points out that the blood-smear'd inscription mirrors aspects of Robert Blatchford's *Not Guilty* (1905), which ‘elevates social responsibility over individual responsibility’.⁴⁸ Beyond this though, Tressell takes pains to emphasise the symbolic significance of the labourer's suicide. Indeed, Owen ‘thought it very strange that the man should have chosen to do it in that way, when there were so many other cleaner, easier and more painless ways of accomplishing the same object’ and ‘[t]he more he thought of it the stranger it seemed that such a clumsy method as a razor should be so popular’(85-6). Owen's utterance strikes as a moment of dramatic irony since the reader knows that the ‘employers have been cutting each other's throats to get the work’: the cost of which must ultimately be shouldered by the working man (154). Given Tressell's familiarity with – and impulse to cite from – the bible and moreover that in his novel, the capitalist class are generally beset with exorbitant fleshliness and a gluttonous taste for fine cuisine, it would seem likely that Tressell was aware of the incident's resonance with proverb 23: ‘When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what *is* before thee: And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite’ (Proverbs 23. 2). Again this is ironic because, of course, ‘no particle of food was in the house’ (85). Though considered in this way the labourer's actions emerge as a form of violent symbolic resistance. A biblical rejection of the gross orality exhibited by the capitalist elite, the labourer's death bespeaks the bloody re-appropriation of an autonomy seized – at point of contract – by the bourgeoisie. Directing the metaphoric instrument, or rather, weapon of capitalist production self-ward the labourer secures a death in which the sovereignty that Foucault insists lies in the symbolic fabric of the trope is transposed. Pertinently, Foucault remarks of the phenomena of suicide, that:

it testified to the individual and private right to die, at the borders and in the interstices of power that was exercised over life. This determination to die, strange and yet so persistent and constant in its manifestations, and consequently so difficult to explain as being due to particular circumstances or individual accidents, was one of the first astonishments of a society in which political power had assigned itself the task of administering life.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Peter Miles, ‘Notes’, in Robert Tressell, *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, ed. by Peter Miles (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005; repr. 2008), pp. 615-49 (p. 662n).

⁴⁹ Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge*, p. 139

Indeed, sadly, though perhaps not surprisingly, the tragedy of Tressell's tale is not without its real life counterpart; newspapers from the period are replete with reports of poverty-motivated killings executed in the same way. On March 8 1895 *The Times* reported on the case of Frank Taylor, an out-of-work plasterer – the same profession as Tressell's 'philanthropists' – whose 'straightened conditions' caused him to murder 'his wife and six children by cutting their throats with a razor' before finally cutting his own throat.⁵⁰ The report states that 'the father, who was aged 39, was driven to despair in consequence of being unable to work. When the severe weather set in he was thrown out of employment, and the family had been in a very distressed condition.'⁵¹ There is little evidence, in these factual accounts of the phenomena, that the deluge of 'cut throat' deaths formed part of a wittingly symbolic resistance against capitalism.⁵² We can assume, then, that Tressell's invocation of the practice constitutes an attempt to invest meaning in otherwise senseless death, claiming its emotive value in the furtherance of the socialist cause. But this is not the only incident of its type; the foreman 'Hunter' – otherwise known as 'Pontius Pilate', 'Misery' or 'Nimrod' – who is variously employed in supervising the men's work and producing quotes for tender, likewise cuts his own throat. It is an on-duty policeman, who, in the early hours of the morning, discovers Hunter's body, his suspicion aroused by the sight of a light burning in the offices of Rushton and Co. at that unsociable hour:

[A] single push of [the constable's] shoulder wrenched [the door] from its fastenings and as it flew back the socket of the lock fell with a splash into a great pool of blood that had accumulated against the threshold, flowing from the place where Hunter was lying on his back, his arms extended and his head nearly severed from his body. On the floor, close to his right hand, was an open razor. An overturned chair lay on the floor by the side of the table where he usually worked, the table itself being littered with papers and drenched with blood (594).

In his introduction to the Oxford edition of the novel, Peter Miles suggests that 'Hunter eventually becomes in his own person the most terrible emblem of Capitalism and Death, literally enacting his lifelong immersion in cut-throat competition by 'cutting his own throat'.⁵³ This is undoubtedly true yet the scene of Hunter's death, containing, as it does, biblical and literary allusions, plays into a more complex figurative scheme than Miles's statement appears to indicate. To begin with, the appellation 'Pontius Pilate' is a device through which Tressell channels a Christological economy of blood; 'Pilate', yoked, as I will explain, to a substitutive New Testament ethos, serves both to

⁵⁰ 'A Family Murdered at Tooting', *The Times*, 8 March 1895, p.11

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Because these incidents invariably involve the disposal of both self and family they might be regarded as latter day expression of the *patria potestas* principle; that is, the absolute authority of the father in Roman law, encompassing the right to dispose of the life of his children. Given the impoverished condition of these families, the actions of the father ironically appear to exercise an archaic right of property in the context of material paucity.

⁵³ Miles, 'Introduction', p. xvii

highlight the frequently somatic (and Haematic) basis of capitalist exchange and critique the conflation of capitalism and Christianity. Indeed, the Gospels operate a strict somatic currency. Flesh and blood, as the principal capital, undergo a series of substitutions, evident in the transubstantiation (victual for blood and flesh), Judas Iscariot's betrayal of Jesus (blood for coin)⁵⁴ and Pontius Pilate's substitution of Barabbas for Jesus (flesh for flesh). In fact, the power of coin is subordinated to somatic capital: a reality Judas discovers with compunction when he attempts to reclaim his sacrifice with the silver he secured on the head of Jesus (and one, according to Matthew, he ultimately repaid with his own life (27. 5)).

In *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, money and victual are ecclesiastic analogues. Financial parasitism of the kind practiced by the Church is rendered figuratively in the corpulent body, suggesting that flesh and wealth are one and the same (in the similar sense that 'bread' denotes both nutriment and money). Aptly, the Reverend Belcher, earthly representative of God and Church, is a 'very fat man', who, in consequence of his gross overfeeding' is 'afflicted with chronic flatulence' (169). The reverend is so corpulent that his 'waistcoat and trousers, distended almost to bursting [over] the huge globe of flesh they contained' (169). Belcher's fleshliness is placed into sharp relief when he attempts to raise a subscription from his impoverished parishioners; the reverend 'reached out a flabby white hand and, taking up one of the folded [church subscription] cards, he looked around upon the underfed ill-clad children with a [...] fatherly smile' (170). The somatic bodies of minister and parishioner – the one fattened at the expense of the other – are analogous to their respective pocketbooks. For the illustration of this tendency, Tressell and the philanthropists show preference for the verb 'devour' which, unlike its counterpart, 'consume' – which naturalises the dual sense of economic and digestive acquisition – calls attention to the figurative parity between eating and financial incorporation. Tressell remarks that Belcher's 'part in life was not to help to produce, but to help to devour the produce of the labour of others' (170) and similarly, Owen asks the philanthropists to '[r]eflect that all the other people are devouring the things produced by [the workers...], to which statement the labourer, Philpot, replies 'devouring is a good word' (279). Kilgour, noting the diminishing role of communicant in *renaissance* sacramental praxis, remarks that '[t]he growing power of the ecclesiastical corporate body was at the expense of the individual [...] as the layman became gradually eased out of participation in the sacraments [...]'(81-2). She continues: 'the role of the communicant was reduced from receptive participant to mere spectator, whose role was not to eat but to see [...] [C]ommunion was no longer a truly corporate act, but rather a purely private, individual experience, as the consolidation of the ecclesiastical body on an economic level led to its own dismemberment on a personal one (81-2). The *fin-de-siècle* church operates under different conditions (though, as we shall see, the trope of Eucharist does figure in socialist critiques of capitalism) but the parishioner similarly becomes witness to the spectacle of ecclesiastic eating: a spectacle that tends to the financial and bodily consolidation of the Church. Phrased differently, the

⁵⁴ 30 pieces of silver, according to the Gospel of St Matthew (Matthew 26. 15)

parochial parasitism of Belcher and his kin augment the corporate body of Church at the expense of its congregation through the act of eating.⁵⁵ Indeed, the novel's capitalistic Christianity teaches that 'God made the poor for the use of the rich' (76): a statement that parallels Robert Blatchford's (ironic) proposition that: 'if man's flesh and woman's flesh are merchandise [...] then we have the painted altar [...] and everything is for the best in this best of all possible worlds: amen'.⁵⁶ Like Tressell, Blatchford is critical of the kind of divine law that maintains a status quo which, to cite Foucault, endorses the 'insertion of bodies into the machinery of production'.⁵⁷ In *The Philanthropists'* currency, moreover, is soiled with the secretions of working men; Rushton and company 'knew that the money they accumulated was foul with the sweat of their brother men, and wet with the tears of little children' (476).⁵⁸ This economy of flesh and coin is vividly realised when Hunter's voracious cost-cutting culminates in the loss of Philpot, who falls to his death after a withered rope gives way during a lofty undertaking. Like Pilate, who 'washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person' (Matthew 27. 24), at inquest Hunter denies any hand in Philpot's death by withholding his direction to retain the deteriorated rope.

Hunter's suicide itself occurs in the chapter titled 'It's a Far, Far Better Thing that I Do, than I Have Ever Done': an allusion to the final thoughts of Sydney Carton as he approaches the guillotine in Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859).⁵⁹ It would seem that Tressell, in the manner of the *Melvilleuses*, who donned red ribbon chokers in reference to the guillotine (a style known as *à la victime*), recalls the revolutionary punishment in the form of Hunter's suicide.⁶⁰ Assuming the identity of the condemned Charles Darnay, Carton, like Jesus in the biblical narrative, is the substitutive body of sacrifice. Given that Carton's encounter with the guillotine is often read in line with the novel's rhetoric of salvation, it is possible that Tressell intended Hunter's suicide to be read as a somatic restitution in the manner of Judas or Carton. However, since Tressell never accredits Hunter with any sense of remorse and since Dickens's novel itself complicates Christian imagery, this would seem unlikely. To understand, then, why Tressell alludes to Dickens here, it is necessary to consider the symbolic function of blood and guillotine in the novel. In *Dickens, His Parables, and His Reader* (2011) Linda M. Lewis usefully points out that the *Tale of Two Cities*

⁵⁵ As Peter Miles remarks, the novel's 'the discourse of Christianity' serves to 'pacify [...] and incorporate a politically insurgent working class' [my emphasis] Peter Miles, *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, p.xvii

⁵⁶ Robert Blatchford, *Not Guilty: A Defence of the Bottom Dog* (London: Clarion, 1906), p.9

⁵⁷ Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge*, p.141

⁵⁸ The idea that currency is tarnished by the 'sweat' of working man was common. For instance in 1885, *Justice*, similarly ran an article on 'the starvation wage' which declared that 'the capitalist chinks his gold and society is cemented with the sweat and tears of half the human race'. 'The Starvation Wage', *Justice*, 14 February 1885, p. 2

⁵⁹ The connection to the guillotine is re-affirmed in the manner of Hunter's excision; his head, it is stated, was 'nearly severed from his body' (594)

⁶⁰ Elizabeth Wilson, *Bohemians: The Glamorous Outcasts* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2003), p. 162

inverts Christian iconography.⁶¹ Lewis reads the scene involving the ruptured cask of wine at Saint Antoine as a ‘Satanic Eucharist’ and well she may for the recipients of this libation exhibit a ‘tigerish smear about the mouth’ and one party, with ‘finger dipped in muddy wine’ inscribes ‘BLOOD’ on wall nearby.⁶² Sensitive to the Christian symbolism also present in the final scene of Carton’s execution, Lewis recurs to the trope of Eucharist, suggesting that “‘Little Sainte Guillotine’ is fed sacramental wine in the form of victims presented to her for beheading’.⁶³ As Lewis suggests, ‘blood’ is invariably keyed to revolution but the novel also conflates Christological conceptions of blood with state instituted violence, producing the inversion that Lewis suggests is emblemised in the Eucharist. Tressell’s allusion would serve, then, to draw analogues between the mechanisms of power as expressed in the ‘national razor’ (a pun that Dickens himself employed⁶⁴) and sovereignty turned inward in the object of Hunter’s own (capitalistic) razor. Tressell draws on the equivalence that Dickens sets up between Christianity and the sanguinary establishment, adapting this homology in his critique of capitalism; just as bodies are consumed at the altar of revolution, the guillotine, so too are lives offered up in sacrifice to the deity, Capitalism. This thought impresses itself on Owen following his fruitless attempts to convert his fellow workers to the socialist cause:

And then the starving, bootless, ragged, stupid wretches fell down and worshipped the System, and offered up their children as living sacrifices upon its altars, saying:

‘This beautiful System is the only one possible, and the best that human wisdom can devise. May the System live for ever! Cursed be those who seek to destroy the System!’ (379)

Interestingly, Julia Kristeva suggests that the conceptualisation of the guillotine as sacred has an historical basis, evident in the sacramental rhetoric surrounding the execution of Louis XVI. Kristeva states that the execution was schematised as ‘an act of national salvation’⁶⁵ and cites Madame de Staël, who, regarding the event a species of martyrdom, saw Louis XVI as a ‘holy victim [who] was offering himself voluntarily as sacrifice’.⁶⁶ Whether Tressell was aware that the religious awe he himself attributed to the blood-thirsty ‘system’ is approximately parallel to the sacramental reverence attached to the (sainte) guillotine is unclear. However, the severity of Hunter’s incision, which ‘nearly severed [his head] from his body’, renders his suicide rather more a case of beheading than of wounding (594). Coupled with the allusion – via Dickens – to revolutionary France, this detail strongly points in the affirmative. And certainly, like the Louis XVI who instituted the guillotine, Hunter too falls victim of the instrument of his own making.

⁶¹ Linda M. Lewis, *Dickens, His Parables, and His Reader* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2011), p. 211

⁶² *Ibid.*, p.211; Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities* (London: Penguin, 1994), pp. 37-8

⁶³ Lewis, *Dickens, His Parables, and His Reader*, p.211

⁶⁴ Charles Dickens, *Little Dorrit*, ed. by Harvey Peter Sucksmith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982; repr. 1999), p. 4

⁶⁵ Maximilien Robespierre cited in Julia Kristeva, *The Severed Head: Capital Visions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012) p.93

⁶⁶ Cited in Kristeva, *The Severed Head*, p.93

The striking resemblance between the suicides of Hunter and the out-of-work labourer compel the reader to regard the events as inversely doubled. Curiously, both parties are engaged, immediately prior to their death, in writing activity. Hunter's desk was 'littered with papers [,] drenched with blood,' (594) and the documents were 'covered with a lot of meaningless scribbling, the words wrongly spelt and having no intelligible connection with each other' (595). Involved in the task of producing quotes for tender, Hunter is mired in unintelligible figures and, falls unceremoniously victim to the cut-throat competition in which he is occupied. On similarly blood-smeared paper, the out-of-work labourer inscribes the brief but arresting political message, 'This is not my crime, but society's' (85): a missive of converse clarity announcing the labourer's rejection of, or withdrawal from, capitalist society. Certainly for Tressell, blood is no longer the symbolic weapon of sovereign power, but an important site of resistance. Where, according to Foucault, 'power [previously] spoke through blood', it is through blood that power is now obscured.⁶⁷ This is evident in Hunter's oblique and blood stained inscriptions which highlight the irrationality – or so Tressell believes – of capitalistic enterprise.

Given the underlying historical significance of French revolutionary ideas, it is unsurprising that 'Blood' as an emblem of resistance is not peculiar to British socialist fiction. Indeed, Émile Zola's Rougon-Macquart novel *Germinal* (1885) offers what is perhaps the most explicit and persistent application of this motif in the genre. Zola's treatment of haematic tropes is moreover of the most intricate, not least because of his pre-occupation with heredity. *Germinal*, like other novels in the series⁶⁸, employs complex colour imagery, invariably associated with blood, as a tonal invective against bourgeois parasitism, clericalism and, making the ideological distinction between socialism's various factions explicit, anarchism. Through the trope of blood, Zola draws parallels between capitalistic enterprise and vampirism and, through the symbolic *letting* of blood, turns the metaphoric instruments of capitalist exploitation back on the establishment. The novel, set in the coalmining region of Montsou in northern France, follows the misfortunes of the region's colliers during a long and destructive period of strike action. The central character, Étienne Lantier is a journeying railway engineer who, because of his limited means, is forced to accept a haulage job at Le Voreux mine. Lantier's first impression of the colliery as it emerges from the darkness, 'as if from a dream', is forbidding. He describes the pit-mouth as 'evil-looking [:] a voracious beast crouching ready to devour the world'⁶⁹ and with horror, Lantier observed the pit as it 'gulped [the colliers] down [...] in mouthfuls of twenty or thirty' (24). An encounter with the elderly haulier, Vincent Meheu (otherwise known as Bonnemort) confirms this impression as he relates the story of a mine collapse that killed his father, Red. As Bonnemort explains, it appeared to him that 'the

⁶⁷ Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge*, p.147

⁶⁸ Particularly *La Fortune des Rougon* (1871)

⁶⁹ Émile Zola, *Germinal*, trans. by Leonard Tancock (London: Everyman, 1991), p. 5 All further references will be given in the text. 'Cette fosse, tassée au fond d'un creux, avec ses constructions trapues de briques, dressant sa cheminée comme une corne menaçante, lui semblait avoir un air mauvais de bête goulue, accroupie là pour manger le monde'. Émile Zola, *Germinal*, Chronologie et préface par Henri Guillemin (Paris: Flammarion, 1968), p.33 All further quotations from the original French are taken from this edition.

rocks had drunk [Red's] blood and swallowed his bones' (10).⁷⁰ An anthropomorphic monster, the pit assumes the qualities of gluttony and avarice that Zola attributes to the bourgeois pit-owners, the Grégoires. As Brian Nelson points out 'the avid appetites of Zola's characters correspond to the motifs of food and eating'.⁷¹ In fact, Zola establishes 'a symbolic equation between mountains of food and bourgeois complacency'.⁷² This is certainly true of the pit which, representing bourgeois economic interests, construes financial cupidity as a consumptive drive akin to that exhibited by the Grégoires themselves. In Kilgour's taxonomy '[t]he most basic model for all forms of incorporation is the physical act of eating, and food is the most important symbol for other external substances that are absorbed' (6). Indeed, the Grégoires' mine 'which fattened them at their groaning table' supplies the family their nutritive and financial substance (74).⁷³ Thus, the ingestion of the fruits of this industry becomes, indirectly, the cannibalistic incorporation of the economic other. Since the question at hand is 'blood' and the food of choice, colliers, the motif equally corresponds to a Marxian formulation; that is, vampirism.

Zola frequently figures Le Voreux as an insatiate consumer of the miners' blood: a direct analogue of the vampire-like interaction between the colliers and pit-owners (the qualities of whom are metonymically implied in the apparatus of their enterprise).⁷⁴ Lantier, in particular, is keen to employ the motif popularised by Marx in his representation of bourgeoisie-proletariat relations. Emphatically castigating the colliers for their political apathy, he remarks '[a] fine method, indeed, to wait with folded arms if you wanted to see men devour each other like wolves for ever and ever! No, you had to take a hand in it yourself or injustice would never end and the rich would always suck the blood of the poor' (226).⁷⁵ Lantier's application of the vampire trope can be traced to Marx's own, through his allusion to the latter's notable accusation that capital consumes the metaphoric life-blood of labour.⁷⁶ Though Lantier expresses his socialist ideas 'badly, in confused phrases', '[a]t the summit [of these thoughts] stood the unshakeable idea of Karl Marx: capital was the result of theft' (226).⁷⁷ Despite the apparent simplicity of the allusion, a reader should take caution against reading Lantier's invocation of the capitalist / bourgeois vampire as an unequivocal transmission of the popular trope. While the leitmotif of vampirism is of the most prominent in Zola's novel, ventriloquised by the dilettantish Lantier, it assumes a meta-critical or self-reflexive quality that, as I will explain, prompts a re-appraisal of the adequacy of 'vampiric' formulations of economic exploitation.

⁷⁰ 'le sang bu et les os avalés par les roches' p.38

⁷¹ Brian Nelson, *Zola and the Bourgeois: A Study of Themes and Techniques in Les Rougon-Macquart* (London: MacMillan, 1983), p.13

⁷² *Ibid.*, p.13.

⁷³ 'les berçant dans leur grand lit de paresse, les engraisant à leur table gourmande.' p.99

⁷⁴ The name 'Voreux' itself resonates with the Latin, 'Vorax' which means 'devouring' *OED*

⁷⁵ 'Non! il fallait s'en mêler, autrement l'injustice serait éternelle, toujours les riches suceraient le sang des pauvres.' p.245

⁷⁶ 'capital is dead labour, that vampire-like, only lives by sucking living labour, and lives the more, the more labour it sucks. The time during which the labourer works, is the time during which the capitalist consumes the labour-power he has purchased of him'. Marx, *Capital*, p.224

⁷⁷ 'Au sommet, restait debout l'idée de Karl Marx: le capital était le résultat de la spoliation' pp.245-6

Lantier's limited grasp of socialist principles is compensated, partially, by his rhetorical skill in exciting the passion of his comrades. He 'found simple, energetic images which struck home with his audience' (269)⁷⁸: the motifs of blood, and vampirism, in particular. In this respect, Lantier bears resemblance to Parti Ouvrier founder, Jules Guesde (1845-1922), a skilled orator, who made vivid use of the capitalist vampire motif. Notably, Guesde employed the trope in his dismissal of fears about finance capital, the practitioners of which he schematised as the 'exploiters of our exploiters, vampires upon the vampire [land owning] class.'⁷⁹ Similarly, in defiance of those 'blood sucking swine' (113), the bourgeoisie, 'vampirism' is Lantier's rhetorical line of resistance, but one that quickly breaks down when it becomes clear that, like a contagion, the predatory spirit infects proletariat and bourgeoisie alike. This is particularly evident during the riot that breaks out following several weeks of unprofitable strike action. Famished and penniless, the colliers congregate at Le Voreux's sister mine, Jean Bart, to picket the entrance. After a collision between the returned miners and those upholding the strike, a revolt takes place in which many of the region's mines are ravaged by the frustrated colliers and their families. Lantier, though initially critical of the violence, succumbs to the rapture of the mob and 'an ugly drunkenness, the drunkenness of the hungry, was making his eyes bloodshot and baring his teeth like a wolf's fangs between his pallid lips' (319).⁸⁰ Like his beloved, Catherine, whose 'pale chlorotic gums' (14) attest to her nutritive poverty, Lantier's own 'pallid lips' betray his anaemic state.⁸¹ Fanged, animalistic, and hungry for blood, Lantier bears the undeniable aspect of the vampire. As a labourer, though, he reverses the established structure of the trope, an inversion that is again apparent during the period following the strike. As a consequence of the outbreak 'the pits had armed guards, with soldiers standing by every engine' (355).⁸² In this atmosphere of 'deceptive gentleness', the miners behaved with the 'enforced obedience of wild beasts kept in a cage, never taking their eyes off the trainer, but waiting to bury their teeth in his neck the moment he turns his back' (355-6).⁸³ Poised to sink their teeth into the neck of the capitalists, the bestial colliers dispel the legitimacy of the propagandistic 'bourgeois vampire' since the fratricidal spirit is both endemic and reciprocal. This formula perfectly corresponds with Kilgour's remarks on the political operation of incorporation metaphors. As she points out the 'fear of being devoured' as 'a reaction against [one's] own desire to devour and possess what is external to the self' works to sustain 'a situation of centripetal control' (5). For Lantier, the vampire motif, indicating a fear of being devoured, offers a way to maintain stability in a lay syndicate threatened by competing political

⁷⁸ 'il rencontrait des images d'une énergie familière, qui empoignaient son auditoire' p.285

⁷⁹ Jules Guesde, 'Antisémitisme et Socialisme', *Le Socialiste*, 11 October 1893. Translation taken from Robert Stuart, *Marxism and National Identity: Socialism, Nationalism and National Socialism during the French Fin de Siècle* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2006), p.158

⁸⁰ 'Peu à peu, une ivresse mauvaise, l'ivresse des affamés, ensanglantait ses yeux, faisait saillir des dent de loup, entre ses lèvres pâlies.' p.332

⁸¹ 'la pâleur chlorotique des gencives' p.41

⁸² 'Des postes armés gardaient les puits, il y avait des soldats devant chaque machine' p.367

⁸³ 'il y avait la douceur menteuse, l'obéissance forcée et patiente des fauves en cage, les yeux sur le dompteur, prêts à lui manger la nuque, s'il tournait le dos.' pp.367-8

actors. Lantier's own 'totalising' ambition is exposed when his own vampire-like appearance reveals him to possess correspondingly predatory faculties.

While Zola, like Tressell, figuratively yokes blood to resistance, Zola's engagement with these themes is unsurprisingly far more complex. To begin with, as a Naturalist, Zola tried to avoid political bias, a duty he was acutely aware of (though in reality, this wasn't always possible). When asked, during the serialisation of *Germinal*, if he supported the miners participating in Anzin strike (of 1884), Zola responded 'neither with them or against them [...] Naturalism does not make pronouncements. It undertakes examinations'.⁸⁴ Zola's even-handedness is visible in his sophisticated treatment of the vampire motif, which neither dispels nor validates the Marxian formulation (though it does, through Zola's acknowledgement of the motif's dual naivety and oratorical force, form a meta-critique of this kind of figurative rhetoric). Rather, we find traces of that predatory spirit indebted to the characteristics of vampirism across the social spectrum; the entire sentient and inanimate world, providing it falls within the insidious grasp of capitalism, is vulnerable to haematic and vampiric metaphors.

Availing himself of the whole symbolic range of the motif (of blood), Zola links the colliers' predatory instinct to a degenerative evolutionary tendency. The inhabitants of Village Two Hundred and Forty live in a milieu of indecent prolificacy, indeed 'as soon as it was dark, the boys and girls began their dirty tricks – upending themselves, they called it – on the low, sloping roofs of the sheds' (95). Suffering environmentally, from a dearth of the material necessities of life and hereditarily, from a depleted ancestral stock, the workers are propelled, fecundly, towards their savage roots. Epitomizing this process, Jeanlin, the younger brother of Catherine, 'resembled some degenerate with the instinctive intelligence and craftiness of a savage, gradually reverting to man's origins' (260).⁸⁵ Injured in a collapse at Le Voreux, Jeanlin undergoes the final phase of his devolution; as Zola writes: 'the pit had made him what he was, and the pit had finished the job by breaking his legs' (260).⁸⁶ Capitalism, incarnate in the entity of the pit, figuratively gestates Jeanlin, effectively re-fashions him in its own likeness. Certainly, as Dorothy Kelly points out, the mine is a 'cavernous, womblike structure' that harbours distorted 'images of germination and gestation'.⁸⁷ Jeanlin's metamorphosis is rendered complete when he replicates the 'cut-throat' capitalism (138, *acharnement* in the original French) that drives the region's mining industry in his own individualistic activity. For instance, after collecting dandelions with his comrades, Lydie and Bébert, Jeanlin employs Lydie to sell the leaves at the 'grand people's doors', making the children a profit of eleven sous (116).⁸⁸ For their labours, Lydie and Bébert are remunerated with two sous, the former's profit Jeanlin retains for 'safekeeping'. Chastising Lydie, he demands: 'But what the

⁸⁴ Quoted in Frederick Brown, *Zola: A Life* (London: Macmillan, 1996), p. 541-2

⁸⁵ 'Il le regardait, avec son museau, ses yeux vert, ses grandes oreilles, dans sa dégénérescence d'avorton à l'intelligence obscure et d'une sauvage, lentement repris par l'animalité ancienne.' p.276

⁸⁶ 'La mine, qui l'avait fait, venait de l'achever, en lui cassant les jambres' p.276

⁸⁷ Dorothy Kelly, *Reconstructing Woman: from Fiction to Reality in the Nineteenth-Century Novel* (University Park, Pa.: Penn State Press, 2007), p. 92

⁸⁸ '[...] poussant Lydie à sonner chez les bourgeois, où elle offrait les pissenlits.' p.140

hell can you do with all that? Your mother's sure to pinch it if you can't hide it' (116).⁸⁹ Pocketing his nine sou profit, Jeanlin's enterprise resonates with Engels' indictment of the sham benevolence practiced by the bourgeoisie philanthropists. In *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1887) Engels remarks: it is 'as though you [the vampiric bourgeoisie] rendered the proletarians a service in first sucking out their very life-blood and then practising your self-complacent Pharisaic philanthropy upon them, placing yourselves before the world as mighty benefactors of humanity when you give back to the plundered victims the hundredth part of what belongs to them!'.⁹⁰ Participating in what is a much broader critique of nineteenth-century philanthropic activity, Engels considers the bourgeoisie not only in violation of the natural law of property but, moreover, like many of his contemporaries, he was outraged that the proletariat's scant return on their outlay should be lauded as an act of great beneficence.⁹¹ In a similar sense, Jeanlin, while profiting from the children's industry, sets himself up as charitable guardian of Lydie's swindled share. The analogues between Jeanlin and his surrogate forbearer, the mining industry, are re-affirmed in their concurrent accumulation of surplus capital. While at the mines, 'coal had been piling up in the yards for two months' (166), Jeanlin, in his own subterranean den, had accrued a stockpile of stolen goods including 'everything needful – bread apples, opened litres of gin – in fact a real robber's den with spoils collected over many weeks' (258). A quintessential product of hostile enterprise, Jeanlin literalises the cut-throat mining industry – which by the end of the strike action is beginning to implode – by cutting the throat of the sentry patrolling Le Voreux. Lantier, who witnesses the incident, 'immediately recognised Jeanlin by his long thin weasels back'. The boy 'leaped on the soldiers shoulders with one bound, like a wild cat, clung on with his nails and plunged his open knife into his throat' (394). Jeanlin's oedipal offence, executed with savage wile, lays bare his 'bad blood'. The *absence* of blood at the scene ('there was not a drop [...] for the knife was still buried up to hilt in the man's neck), against the backdrop of the vitiated slag heap, speaks of an industry rendered bloodless by its own cut-throat ferocity. In fact, the 'cut-throat' motif has a wider incidence than Jeanlin's actions alone. Souvarine, the Russian anarchist responsible for Lantier's early conversion to socialism, makes a religious fetish of blood, envisioning apocalyptic images of anarchy and re-birth that correspond with the novel's title.⁹² In an uncharacteristically loquacious

⁸⁹ 'Hein? qu'est-ce que tu vas fiche de tout ça?... Ta mere te le chipera bien sur, si tu ne sais pas le cacher... Vaut mieux que je te

le garde. Quand tu auras besoin d'argent, tu m'en demanderas.' p.140

⁹⁰ Engels, *The Conditions of the Working Class*, p. 283

⁹¹ Likewise, in their pamphlet, *Socialism* (1884), the Americans A.J. Starkweather and S. Robert Wilson, castigate the 'hideous [commercial] vampire' 'who filches from all and says: "But for *me*, but for *my* money, *my* enterprise, *my* brains, *my* pluck, one of you would have anything I employ you all; *I* feed, clothe and house you all" When the real truth of the matter is that it takes every one of us ... to keep one capitalist...A thousand factory girls drudge out their weary lives in stint and squalor that one factory lord may coin their blood and bones and brains to deck the mistress of his lust and ease.' ⁹¹ A.J. Starkweather and S. Robert Wilson, *Socialism: Being a Brief Statement of the Doctrines and Philosophy of the Social Labour Movement* (New York: John W. Lowell, 1884), p.58

⁹² As W. F. J. Hemmings points out, 'Germinal' was, in the revolutionary calendar of 1793, the seventh month: 'it has revolutionary connotations and may suggest a new revolution destined to be marked by the same bloodshed and devastation as had stained the first one.' W.F.J. Hemmings, 'Introduction' in Émile Zola, *Germinal*, trans. by Leonard Tancock (London: Everyman, 1991), pp. ix-xxvi (p.ix)

moment Souvarine declares that ‘everything must be destroyed or else hunger will start up again. Yes, anarchy, the end of everything, the whole world bathed in blood and purified by fire’ (136).⁹³ Like Jeanlin, Souvarine launches a violent attack on the industry which is figured as a laceration to the throat of the mine; Zola writes: ‘the pit had its throat cut and was bleeding to death,’ (450)⁹⁴ and the earth was ‘bleeding from her veins because a man had cut her arteries’ (473).⁹⁵ The metaphor is appropriate since Souvarine literally severs the mine-shaft lining:

He attacked the lining at random, hitting wherever he could, using his brace and bit or his saw as though his one idea were to rip everything open there and then on top of him. He put into the task a sort of ferocity with which he might have driven a knife into the flesh of some living being whom he loathed. He would kill this foul beast in the end, this pit with the ever-open jaws that had swallowed down so much human flesh. (437)⁹⁶

Souvarine’s initiative, like Jeanlin’s, should properly be read as a symbolic inversion of capitalism’s ‘cut-throat’ tactics. Indeed, through their strike action, the colliers had already raised a knife to the throat of the mining industry: a figurative stance the pit-owners show themselves sensitive to. Deneulin, manager of the Jean-Bart mine attempts to explain this position when the strike affecting other mines in the region threatens to take hold at Jean-Bart: ‘you can’t expect a man to do himself in (*de s’egorger lui-même* in the original French), can you? And whether I give you five centimes or let you go on strike, it’s like cutting my throat either way!’ (285).⁹⁷

Thus far it is clear that blood, and the letting of blood, are tropes through which Zola’s critique of capitalism functions at the level of heredity. It is equally clear that through this means Zola articulates resistance and complicates the hegemonic structure of bourgeois parasitism. But blood is also instrumental in the conflation of religious fetishism and anarchism within a broader cult of capitalist production. That is to say, through the fetishisation of blood, Zola schematises anarchistic socialism as a form of worship and one that is, ironically, a homologue of the bourgeois consecration of capital. This is a view we know Zola adopted. In response to a surge of anarchistic activity in the 1890s, he remarked to a journalist from *Le Journal des Débates* that ‘[b]loody repression is necessary, inevitable [but it] only fortifies the doctrine one wishes to combat, or rather the religion one wishes to destroy. Yes, I say religion, for anarchists so consider their doctrine, and

⁹³ ‘il faut tout détruire, ou la faim repoussera. Oui! l’anarchie, plus rien, la terre lavée par le sang, purifiée par l’incendie!...’ p. 159

⁹⁴ ‘les planches trouées et sciées, la fosse saignée au cou et râlant’ p.454

⁹⁵ ‘lâchait ainsi le sang de la veine, parce qu’on lui avait tranché une artère’ p.474

⁹⁶ ‘Il s’acharna au hasard contre le cuvelage, tapant où il pouvait, à coups de vilebrequin, à coups de scie, pris du besoin de l’éventrer tout de suite sur sa tête. Et il y mettait une ferocité, comme s’il eut joué du couteau dans la peau d’un être vivant, qu’il exérait. Il la tuerait à la fin, cette bête mauvaise du Voreux, à la gueule toujours ouverte, qui avait englouti tant de chair humaine!’ p.442

⁹⁷ ‘On ne demand pas à un homme de s’egorger lui-même, n’est-ce pas? et que je vous donne cinq centimes ou que je vous laisse vous mettre en grève, c’est comme si je me coupais le cou.’ p.300

when they mount the scaffold, they proclaim themselves martyrs'.⁹⁸ The religious ecstasy Zola ascribes to the anarchists in a nonfictional capacity, he deploys again in *Germinal* to describe the fervour experienced by the striking miners in response to Lantier's address (which, by this time, bears evidence of his ideological 'progress towards anarchy' (272)).⁹⁹ Like the early Christians, Le Voreaux's miners congregate secretly at *Plan-des-Dames*, a clearing in the forest beyond the village. Lantier, arousing support for continued strike action, moves his audience to a state of devotional rapture:

It was now a paroxysm of blind faith, the impatience of a religious sect [...] These people, lightheaded with hunger, saw red, had visions of fire and blood in glorious apotheosis out of which universal happiness was rising before their eyes. The peaceful moonlight bathed this surging swell, and the clamour of blood was hemmed in on all sides by the deep silence of the forest. (277)¹⁰⁰

On this sylvan plane in 'peaceful moonlight', the crowd has the semblance of some pagan cult of blood. In what is both a conspicuously Christological and *fin-de-siècle* construction, bloody sacrifice is extolled as the harbinger of a new age of human happiness. Particularly useful on this synthesis of religion and ideology, Régis Debray posits that in formerly 'religiously governed' cultures, contemporary ideology, including socialism, represents a creative realignment of moribund belief.¹⁰¹ He writes: 'The radiant future of 'scientific socialism' rediscovered humanity's infancy, primitive communism, and the inception of Christianity was the thrilling announcement of Joy at the end, the Resurrection' (255). He continues: 'The socialist and the Christian each had a *destiny* to accomplish' [original emphasis] and they did so with the reassurance of a circular temporality (255). In their own ways, Christianity and socialism sought to 'precipitate the end of days' emerging into a post-resurrection / post-capitalist world (255). Both 'idolized the course of things in the name of progress' (255). According to Debray, the emptying out of Judaic faith into supposedly secular ideology, stemmed from a bisection of God and humanity that began with the Christian narrative of Jesus. Displacing abstract God, Absolute Being was re-fashioned in the shape of mortal man, Jesus Christ. This 'deification of humanity' was concretised by 'modern humanism' which, first led by Auguste Comte, would sanctify mortal life (216-17):

⁹⁸ Particularly attacks occurring between February and March 1892, which affected a number of buildings near Zola's own residence in Paris and those committed by Auguste Vaillant and the Italian, Caserio in 1893. Quoted in Brown, *Zola: A life*, p.687

⁹⁹ '[Souvarine] aurait applaudi ses idées à mesure qu'il les aurait reconnues, content des **progrès anarchiques** de son élève' p.287

¹⁰⁰ 'C'était le coupe de folie de la foi, l'impatience d'une sect religieuse, qui, lasse d'espérer le miracle attendu, se décidait à le provoquer enfin. Les têtes, vidées par la famine, voyaient rouge, rêvaient d'incendie et la sang, au milieu d'une gloire d'apothéose, où montait le bonheur univiseral. Et lune tranquille baignait cette houle, a la forêt profonde ceignait de son grand silence ce cri de massacre.' p.291

¹⁰¹ Régis Debray, *God: An Itinerary*, trans by Jeffrey Mehlman (London: Verso, 2004), p. 255 Further page references to this book are given after quotations in the text.

Their version of Our Father stipulated: ‘Our Proleteriati, who art on earth, hallowed by thy name; thy will be done, thy power come.’ And that power did come with ecclesiastical communism and the secular form of theocracy represented by that red logocracy. The Party as Church. The second coming at the barrel of a gun or at the bottom of a ballot box. (217)

This principle is realised in Lantier’s ‘glorious apotheosis,’ his ecclesiastical leadership of the socialist congregation. Debray’s ‘red logocracy’ – a term that more precisely describes twentieth-century socialist iconography – is, in an anterior sense, present in Zola’s novel as a red or, haematic tonal motif: a motif, which, given its holocaustic significance curiously mirrors events at Golgotha (217). Interestingly, Debray regards the fissure between Absolute God and humanity – imagined as a form of patricide – as particularly exemplified in the French Revolution: ‘The men of 1793, in France, were intent on cutting themselves off from the Father by cutting off the head of the Monarch by divine right, His incarnation on earth, but a considerable number did so in the name of ‘the *sans-culotte* Jesus’ (217). Zola, too, is keen to link the novel’s rhetoric of blood and religiosity to the Revolution. In response to the socialist priest abbé Ranvier’s impugnement of bourgeois egoism, ‘[a] notary declared that this was socialism of the most rabid kind, and they all visualised this parish priest at the head of the mob, brandishing a crucifix and smashing the bourgeois society of 1789’ (357).¹⁰² Indeed, declaring that ‘God would surely side with the poor’ (357) abbé Ranvier articulates the *sans-culotte* Christianity outlined by Debray.¹⁰³ The residents of the village are scarcely less able than the ‘men of 1793’ to contain their desire to ‘behead’ the sovereign that ordains their condition: capital. Indeed, in a mania that followed the Jean-Bart picket, the hordes of angry colliers assail the premises of Maigrat, the village grocer. Wealthy, corpulent and extorting payment in sex, Maigrat personifies the qualities of capitalist enterprise and thus becomes the symbolic target of the miners’ rage. In a bloody turn of events Maigrat falls from the roof of his premises, dashing his head on the floor. The women of the mob take their revenge:

‘You won’t refuse me any more credit. Just wait a minute, I must fatten you up a bit more!’

[Meheude,] [w]ith her ten fingers [...] scratched up the earth, took two handfuls and rammed them into his mouth.

‘Here you are, eat it!, Go on, eat away like you used to eat us!’[...]
Mouquette was already undoing his trousers and pulling them down, helped by la Levaque who lifted the legs. And Ma Brûlé, with her withered old hands, parted his naked thighs and grasped his dead virility. She took hold of the lot and pulled so hard that she strained her skinny back and her arms cracked with the effort [...] [S]he managed in the end to pull

¹⁰² ‘Les dévotes en tremblaient, le notaire déclarait qu’il y avait là du pire socialisme, tous voyaient le curé à la tête d’une bande, brandissant une croix, démolissant la société bourgeoise de 89, à grands coups.’ p.369

¹⁰³ With abbé Ranvier, Zola would certainly have been responding to a general feeling that the pope and Catholic church in general was sympathetic – though never explicitly – to the cause of socialism. In 1894, Zola would go on to study Francesco Nitti’s *Le Socialisme catholique*, which according to Frederick Brown is a: ‘pseudohistorical survey of Judeo-Christian institutions, in which Jesus is portrayed as an 1848-style utopian restoring the collectivist ideal that originally bound together God’s Chosen only to be betrayed by the medieval Church with its immense property [and] tithes.’ Brown, *Zola: A Life*, p.688

away the lump of hairy bleeding flesh which she waved aloft with a snarl of triumph [...] 'Yes, no more paying you with our bodies!['] (350-1)¹⁰⁴

As I have stated, 'beheading' can be read as an attack on the capitalist establishment because of its association with the Revolutionary guillotine. Castration, then, as *symbolic* decollation conflates fetish and resistance. On the one hand Ma Brûlé and Mouquette evoke the biblical beheaders, Judith and Salome. As Julia Kristeva points out, in text and illustration both are construed as wreaking 'revenge against the tyranny of the fathers'.¹⁰⁵ Judith, in particular, responding to the voracious domination of Assyrian general, Holofernes, asserts her 'castrating, merciless, warrior femininity' against that patriarchal oppressor.¹⁰⁶ Like Judith and Salome, whose representational legacy is tempered with the imputation of witchcraft, Ma Brûlé and Mouquette, 'dishevelled' in their 'witches Sabbath', operate in the context of a patriarchal religiosity (307).¹⁰⁷ As the most proximate representative of 'capital, that impersonal god, unknown to the worker' (275)¹⁰⁸ Maigrat, alongside band of brothers, the pit-owners Grégoire, Hennebeau, Négrel and Deneulin, assume esoteric guardianship of this 'private deity' (74).¹⁰⁹ Certainly, 'capital' is the religion of the bourgeoisie, the Absolute entity which they 'extolled with sacred rites as the divine benefactor of their home' (74).¹¹⁰ Like the ministers of the Christian religion, averring god the father and the son but never the daughter, the guardians of capital are men. Thus the women's offence, addressed to the phallus of Maigrat, earthly representative of the god 'to whom ten thousand starving men were offering up their flesh' (67)¹¹¹, should be read as an act of patricide in the theistic sense intended by Debray. Kristeva, remarking on Hebbel's tragedy *Judith and Holofernes* (1839), suggests that '[d]ecapitation, which is a symbolic substitute for castration [...] appears as vengeance against the loss of virginity'.¹¹² In *Germinal*, Zola creates an inversion of this principle. *Castration* as a

¹⁰⁴ 'Je te devais soixante francs, te voilà payé, voleur! dit la Maheude, enragée parmi les autres. Tu ne me refuseras plus crédit... Attends! Attends! il faut que je t'engraisse encore.

De ses dix doigts, elle grattait la terre, elle en prit deux poignées, dont elle lui emplit la bouche, violemment. —Tiens! mange donc!... Tiens! mange, mange, toi qui nous mangeais! [...]

Déjà, la Mouquette le déculottait, tirait le pantalon, tandis que la Levaque soulevait les jambes. Et la Brûlé, de ses mains sèches de vieille, écarta les cuisses nues, empoigna cette virilité morte. Elle tenait tout, arrachant, dans un effort qui tendait sa maigre échine et faisait craquer ses grands bras. Les peaux molles résistaient, elle dut s'y reprendre, elle finit par emporter le lambeau, un paquet de chair velue et sanglante, qu'elle agita, avec un rire de triomphe:

—Je l'ai! je l'ai!

Des voix aiguës saluèrent d'imprécations l'abominable trophée.

—Ah! bougre, tu n'empliras plus nos filles!

—Oui, c'est fini de te payer sur la bête, nous n'y passerons plus toutes, à tendre le derrière pour avoir un pain.' p. 361-2

¹⁰⁵ Kristeva, *The Severed Head*, p. 77

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. p. 76

¹⁰⁷ 'suantes et échevelées de cette cuisine de sabat' p.322

¹⁰⁸ 'Capital, à ce dieu impersonnel, inconnu de l'ouvrier' p.290

¹⁰⁹ '[la mine,] c'était comme une divinité à eux, que leur égoïsme entourait d'un culte, la bienfaitrice du foyer' p.99

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ 'À ce dieu repu et accroupi, auquel dix mille affamés donnaient leur chair, sans le connaître' p.91

¹¹² Ibid, p.78

symbolic substitute for *decapitation*, operates as vengeance against the loss of capital (and through capital, their bodies), according to socialist conceptions of ownership. After removing the phallus from Maigrat's corpse, Ma Brûlé 'stuck the whole thing on the end of her stick, raised it high and carried it like a standard down the street, followed like a rout of shrieking women' (351).¹¹³ This staking of Maigrat's phallic head recalls the aristocratic heads on pikes commonly exhibited during the Revolution.¹¹⁴ Remarking on the iconography of revolutionary beheadings, Paul Friedland points out that '[e]ach aristocratic head on a pike, or held up by the executioner for the crowd to behold, was a graphic expression of what the revolution considered expendable; it was the celebration of the redundancy and powerlessness of the privileged class'.¹¹⁵ Here, the severance of the phallic and cranial heads centred, indicate both an excision of capitalism's specifically patriarchal power and the removal of its ministerial *figurehead*: that is to say, the minister, and administrator of that held-sacred creed.

Significantly, the women's castration of Maigrat parallels the earth's own vengeance on the machinery of capitalist production (and well it might for Zola writes of his narrative ethos that it 'puts the soul on this vast earthly stage and shows it manifesting itself in all the acts of matter').¹¹⁶ Following the collapse at Le Voreux, the returned miners, trapped in subterranean galleries began to call 'upon mother earth since it was she who was taking her revenge by bleeding from her veins because man had cut her arteries' (473).¹¹⁷ Just as Maigrat had penetrated the girls of the village in the name of capitalist exchange, so too the bourgeoisie had scored, plundered and raped the natural landscape. Kristeva, citing Freud's 1917 essay 'The Taboo of Virginity', maintains the latter's contention that in Hebbel's *Judith and Holofernes* 'the act of penetration itself, and even more, of defloration, is often experienced in neurosis as a violation, if not a murder, and unleashes a desire for vengeance in the feminine unconscious'.¹¹⁸ The comparison is appropriate since Maigrat's sexual exploitation of the village's indebted daughters is revenged in an equivalent act of castration. Similarly, the always feminine earth symbolically cuts off or, takes hostage of the miners: the penetrative head of that 'monstrous idol', Capitalism. The fact that it does so in direct response to the cutting or penetration of her surface renders this letting of blood –

¹¹³ 'La Brûlé, alors planta tout le paquet au bout de son baton; et le portent en l'air, le promenant ainsi qu'un drapeau' p.362

¹¹⁴ In particular, this scene recalls The October March, when the women of Paris congregated in the central markets after an inflation in the price of bread left many famished. The women, encouraged by revolutionary agitators, marched on Versailles to demand the return of the King to Paris. The March followed a period of violent action against those involved with the production and distribution of food. For instance, finance minister Joseph Fouché, who was thought to have been speculating in grain, met a similar end to that Zola's Maigrat. As Christopher Hibbert remarks 'accused of having said that the people should be made to eat hay if they were hungry, a collar of nettles was placed round his neck, a bunch of thistles was thrust into his hand and a fistful of hay was stuffed between his lips. He was then hanged on a nearby lampost. [sic]' Christopher Hibbert, *The French Revolution* (London: Penguin, 1980; repr. 1982), p.92

¹¹⁵ Paul Friedland, *Political Actors: Representative Bodies and Theatricality in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), p. 235

¹¹⁶ Quoted in Brown, *Zola: A Life*, p. 542

¹¹⁷ 'ils invoquaient la terre, c'était la terre qui se vengeait, qui lâchait ainsi le sang de la veine, parce qu'on lui avait tranché une artère.' p.474

¹¹⁸ Kristeva, *The Severed Head*, p. 78

the earth's own blood – a kind of hymenaic rupture, an apt revenge upon the system that addresses its abuses to the (female) body. The motifs of blood and dismemberment – as addressed to the virginal body – similarly appear in Vernon Lee's 1915 pacifist allegory *The Ballet of the Nations*. Lee's fable describes how Ballet-Master Death, alongside Satan, director to the music of the passions, choreograph a performance in the manner of 'the finest ballet hitherto': 'the French Revolution ballet'.¹¹⁹ Under the influence of the 'cannibalic' music of the passions – inclusive of such instrumentalists as Self-Interest, Rapine, Lust and Idealism – '[...] the chief Dancers [are] called upon to shift sides or take part in a general breakdown of a highly modern and anarchical style, something like the Paris *impromptu* after the *pas de deux* of 1870, only on a vast scale'.¹²⁰ Lee refers, of course, to the Siege of Paris: an episode that marked an end to the Franco-Prussian war. Rendering the events of, and preceding, the French Revolution as a pinnacle of bloody conflict, Lee adopts an analogous symbolic scheme to Zola. She writes: 'the bodies of the nations are always sound and virginal' as conversely the "'head"' which each Nation calls its Government [...] is very properly helmeted, and rarely gets so much as a scratch'.¹²¹ The Nations intertwine, 'lopping each others' limbs and blinding one another with spirits of blood and pellets of human flesh'.¹²² Thus 'bled and maimed' they 'dance[d] upon stumps': 'a living jelly of blood and trampled flesh'.¹²³ The virginal body reduced to stump, pellet, to a gelatinous slurry of blood, does not exercise the same hymenaic revenge of Zola's earth, but as a victim of that helmeted – and thus phallic – head of state, it similarly lambastes (economic) self-interest by schematizing this activity as a violation of an immaculate somatic body.

Despite Zola's tacit critique of various forms of socialist ideology, *Germinal* was an unqualified success amongst French socialists. As Frederick Brown points out 'Germinal became a proletarian gospel story with little socialist organs all over France requesting permission to serialize it free of charge'.¹²⁴ Across the channel too, Zola's writing resonates with socialist audiences. In the article 'Rousseau and Zola' featured an 1898 edition of *Justice*, a Paris correspondent writing under the name 'Julian Miltone' extols Zola as latter day Rousseau but, through his utopian rhetoric, ironically cuts the figure of the callow Étienne Lantier:

['the mortal enemy of progress' is] a monster sucking the blood of all nations in all times; its food, human flesh; its prestige alas! The evil spirit reigning over humanity since immemorial times. Enough of blood. Thy diabolical mission is finished, we are at the close of the nineteenth century. Thou art doomed to perish, and on thy ruins intelligence and eternal justice are to construct the glorious edifice of human happiness in peace and

¹¹⁹ Lee, Vernon. 'The Ballet of the Nations', in *Women's Writing on the First World War*, ed. by Agnès Cardinal, Dorothy Goldman, and Judith Hattaway (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 234-244 (p. 239)

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 236 & 238

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 242 & 241

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 241

¹²³ *Ibid.*,

¹²⁴ Brown, *Zola: A Life*, p.544

universal brotherhood! We socialists are felicitating you, Zola, the great fighter of human misery, on your being chosen by history as the one to strike the moral blow [...].¹²⁵

Compare with Zola on Étienne Lantier:

[...] his misgivings were dispelled by one idea, a most attractive ambition: to go on with his old cherished examination of basic theory on the first occasion when he spoke in public. For if one class had to be devoured surely the people, vigorous and young, must devour the effete and luxury-loving bourgeoisie? A new society needed new blood. In his expectation of a new invasion of barbarians regenerated by the decayed nations of the old world, he rediscovered his absolute faith in coming revolution, and this time it would be the real one, whose fires would cast their red glare over the end of this epoch even as the rising sun was now drenching the sky in blood. (501)

Conceiving the capitalist establishment as a blood-sucking beast hungry for the blood of man, and the end of the nineteenth century an apocalyptic swan song of capitalist enterprise, the Paris correspondent unwittingly epitomises an ideology of which, through Zola's treatment of Lantier, we know him to be suspicious. Deploying the biblical pronoun, 'thou' and brandishing such shibboleths as 'eternal justice' and 'universal brotherhood', 'Miltone' betrays a religiosity equivalent to that of his fictional counterpart, Lantier, who similarly envisions the old (capitalist) order dethroned in a revolutionary *fin d'un siècle*. While it is ironic that Zola should be extolled prophet of a utopian, practically ecclesiastic, socialism it nonetheless indicates that he, like Tressell writing later, had his finger on the pulse of the socialist rhetoric of resistance.

Foucault's portrait of the symbolic function of 'blood' is appealing precisely because it conceives haematic tropes as prime actors in a constantly evolving 'order of signs'. Yet Foucault's persistent bias is misleading because – with one exception – he speaks of a symbolic order specifically yoked to sovereign power.¹²⁶ This analysis, if anything, teaches us that *fin-de-siècle* socialism constructs a unique symbolic scheme that subverts hegemonic values attached to the blood motif. It does so in two ways. Firstly, it dispels the 'myth' of a 'life administering' sovereign and effectively imputes capitalism with the classical values of blood and tyranny. Indeed, Foucault posits that the West had, since the classical age, undergone a transition from *prélèvement* mechanisms of control (subtraction; levy of taxes, labour blood etc.) to 'a power bent on generating forces, making them grow, and ordering them'.¹²⁷ While the novels of Tressell and Zola are sensitive to the 'administration' of labour and poverty, this kind of regulative tactic is, in the

¹²⁵ Julian Miltone, 'Rousseau and Zola', *Justice*, 19 March 1898, p. 6

¹²⁶ Foucault briefly remarks on suicide as a means to 'usurp the power of death which the sovereign alone [...] had the right to exercise'. This constitutes his sole attempt to interpret the 'symbolics of blood' in what he describes as 'the interstices of power [...] exercised over life.' Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge*, p. 138-9

¹²⁷ Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge*, p. 136

manner of Engels, conceived as egoism masquerading as charity. In fact, both authors lay bare the tax of blood, labour and sex imposed on the working man and furthermore insist on a classical understanding of sovereign power. That is to say, ‘capitalism’, as both monarch and deity, exercises that absolute right of death and seizure associated with classical law. Secondly, blood, historically employed as a symbol of sovereign power through its associations with sword and lineage, is transposed in both novels as a motif of resistance. Within this adversarial order of symbols, blood claims a heritage traceable to the French Revolution: a conflict in which the *instruments* of power (specifically, the guillotine) are mobilised against the *agents* of that power. The narratological development of the blood motif replicates this Frankensteinian model of created (‘cut-throat’ competition) against creator (capitalism).¹²⁸ Of course, Zola, unlike Tressell, applies a level of introspection to socialism’s haematic discourse. On the one hand blood lays bare the *prélèvement* extortions of the capitalist pit-owners and paradoxically, on the other, obfuscates both the vampire-victim paradigm of bourgeois-proletariat relations and, the value of this kind of ‘sanguinary’ rhetoric. Nonetheless, the novel’s reception, typified in ‘Miltone’s’ glowing endorsement of Zola’s (though really Lantier’s) utopic rebuttal of bourgeois vampirism, indicates that its success lies largely in the simulation of certain haematic values.

Commercial Cannibalism

Like the capitalist vampire, the commercial cannibal with its predilection for the flesh and blood of the labour force, has long loomed large in the language of financial exploitation. In Ireland, in the first part of the eighteenth century, the Jacobite press colourfully described the oppressive Hanoverian Whig regime as cannibalistic and in England, in the mid-century, Lord Chatham characterised the London stock-jobbers (responsible for the catastrophic South Sea bubble) as the ‘Cannibals of ’Change Alley’.¹²⁹ Much later, Herbert Spencer, in his 1859 essay ‘The Morals of Trade,’ interprets the financial market as an evolutionary microcosm privileging certain ruthless types (of vocational cannibal). Of this adaptation, Spencer writes: ‘[i]t has been said that the law of the animal creation is – “Eat and be eaten;” and of our trading community it may similarly be said

¹²⁸ Some critics, including Ronald Paulson, Chris Baldick and Lee Sterrenburg, consider that *Frankenstein* was prompted by the French Revolution. Sterrenburg specifically points out that Shelly’s appropriation of conservative tropes, including the anti-Jacobin ‘monsters who destroy their own makers’, serve to identify the revolutionary regime as dangerous and parricidal. This analogy is appropriate since the Revolution, and the patricidal instinct associated with this, runs through symbolic fabric of Zola’s novel. Lee Sterrenburg, ‘Mary Shelley’s Monster: Politics and Psyche in *Frankenstein*’, in George Levine and U.C. Knoepfelmacher (eds), *The Endurance of Frankenstein* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), pp.143-171 (p.145). See also Chris Baldick, *In Frankenstein’s Shadow* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987) & Ronald Paulson, *Representations of Revolution (1789-1820)*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983)

¹²⁹ Ian Higgins, *Swift’s Politics: A Study in Disaffection* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 191.

John Francis, *Chronicles and Characters of the Stock Exchange* (London: Longman, Brown, Green & Longmans, 1855), p. 174.

that its law is – Cheat and be cheated. A system of keen competition, carried on, as it is, without adequate moral restraint, is very much a system of commercial cannibalism. Its alternatives are – Use the same weapons as your antagonists or be conquered and devoured'.¹³⁰ The essay, originally appearing in the *Westminster Review* (1859), was re-printed in sundry periodicals and industry magazines, including *The Bankers Magazine* (1860) and *The Living Age* (1859). Given that Spencer's anthropophagic metaphor stems from a comparison between financial speculation and natural selection, it is unsurprising that the motif became popular in the 1890s after the collapse of Barings Bank: the result of reckless speculation in the competition for Argentinean debt contracts. One article, lamenting the 'undercurrent of fear and apprehension as to the position of a quondam eminent financial house [Barings']' castigates the 'the members of the stock exchange' engaged in a 'species of financial cannibalism'.¹³¹ Shortly after the publication of Darwin's treatise and, in a similar vein, *Punch* comically identified an evolutionary kinship between the 'fan cannibals' of central Africa and the 'uncle hunters' of central England who bleed their wealthy relations through the means of their bankers.¹³² The expansion of the commercial cannibal trope, as evident in this extra-socialistic discourse, would seem to coincide with two related conditions. The first of these is the emergence of an evolutionary account of economic progress. To this end, Herbert Spencer developed a proto-Darwinian model of financial institutions which, with its tacit endorsement of laissez-faire, set up an equivalence between the 'fit' of biological and financial life. With corresponding analogies adopted by Marx, Darwin and later Veblen (though not always with the same agenda) the financier emerged as a species of rapacious evolutionary predator. In the second instance, instability in the financial sector is similarly linked to anthropophagic metaphors; one has only to look back to the South Sea debacle when Chatham's dubious epithet was mobilised against Exchange Alley traders, or forward to our own economic crisis, in which opposition MPs lament our culture of 'predator capitalism,' to understand that this kind of reactionary motif often grows out of economic instability.¹³³

Unsurprisingly, the commercial cannibal trope was adopted by, and particularly popular in, socialist writing at the end of the nineteenth century. *The Clarion*, reporting on the weighty dividends accrued by shareholders of the Brunner, Mond and Co. Chemical manufacturers (known as 'modern shylocks'¹³⁴), states that '[n]o matter whether the capitalist belongs to one political party or another; whether they are called Tory, Liberal, or Radical, they are the same cruel remorseless devils, fiends who devour the poor'.¹³⁵ Similarly, *Justice* remarks that 'the workers are

¹³⁰ Herbert Spencer, 'The Morals of Trade', *Westminster Review*, 71 (1859), 377-390 (p.381).

¹³¹ 'The Money Market', *The Belfast News-Letter*, 22 June 1891, p. 5

¹³² 'Men and Monkeys', *Punch*, 26 December 1861, p. 257

¹³³ See n.10

¹³⁴ For a more detailed analysis of anti-semitism and cannibalistic metaphors see: Jerry Phillips, 'Cannibalism qua Capitalism: The Metaphorics of Accumulation in Marx, Conrad, Shakespeare, and Marlowe', in *Cannibalism and the Colonial World*, ed. by Frances Baker, Peter Hulme and Margaret Iversen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 183-203

¹³⁵ 'The Modern Shylock and his 40 per cent', *The Commonweal*, 12 September 1891, p.378

not regarded as human beings, but simply as food for capital'.¹³⁶ Yet beyond its more customary uses, the socialist media can be seen to harbour far more strategic illustrations of the trope. As I argue, this is a strategy that borrows from a rich philosophical tradition of writing on cannibalism and one intended to fulfil socialism's own 'totalising' ambitions (insofar as we can talk of *fin-de-siècle* socialism as a unified movement). Through Marx, Swift and Montaigne, this writing both annexes the financial cannibal of contemporary capitalism to historic abusers of power and elevates socialism's co-operative model of social organisation. The interpolation of evolutionary ideas attached, for instance, to Marx's critique of capitalism, facilitates the socialist's retrogressive projection of capitalist production (and the savage implications of this).

On 16 October 1886, *The Commonweal* published an article by Henry Halliday Sparling, co-editor of the journal and first secretary of William Morris's Kelmscott Press, titled 'Commercial Cannibalism'.¹³⁷ Sparling, making his debt to the Irish satirist explicit, opens the essay with reference to *A Modest Proposal* (1729) which, he remarks, reflects 'substantially the same state of affairs' 'wellnigh two centuries afterwards'.¹³⁸ Sparling writes:

We are so well accustomed to human bodies being articles of merchandise piecemeal, that it is difficult for the average man, not a Socialist, to see that the whole of our present commercial system is based upon the buying and selling of men and women for the profit or pleasure of the purchaser as literally as though they were bought in open market to be actually eaten. (225)

Swift's satire provides an appropriate model because it articulates a widely-experienced anxiety surrounding capitalism's claims on the physical body. Since the production of commodities depends, heavily, on the somatic investment of the labour force and, since this activity tends to capital gain on the one hand and bodily waste on the other, it is unsurprising that the socialist press represent the marketplace as a platform in which human flesh is offered up alongside other articles of value. Claiming capitalism as an equivalent of the feudalism and Whig oppression under scrutiny in Swift's pamphlet, Sparling invokes, on his side, one of the most iconic and unambiguous critiques of historic economic exploitation (though with considerably less verve and presumably more sympathy for the 'victims' than his eighteenth-century counterpart). Certainly Sparling is not the only of his circle to capitalise on Swift's application of the cannibal trope.

¹³⁶ 'Rather Too Candid', *Justice*, 17 January 1885, p.1

¹³⁷ We know very little of Sparling's life beyond the fact that he would later go on to marry May Morris. By all accounts he was an unprepossessing man who was not greatly liked by his contemporaries. His successor at Kelmscott Press, Sydney Cockerell, notably described him as 'a rather second rate socialist'. His marriage to May Morris broke down after the prolonged residence of George Bernard Shaw (a former admirer of May's) at their marital home. William S. Peterson, *The Kelmscott Press: A History of William Morris's Typographical Adventure* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 166-168

¹³⁸ H. Halliday Sparling, 'Commercial Cannibalism', *The Commonweal*, 16 October 1886, p.225 Subsequent page references will be given in the text.

Justice too, undermining the Lord Chief Justice's grasp of working conditions, reviles the capitalists to whom 'the price of human flesh – man or woman – in the market is cheaper than cat's meat'.¹³⁹ Likewise, *The Socialist*, in the poem 'The Human Auction' (1886), literalises the concept of a human meat market: 'Ho! Here are lives by the score to sell / Up to the platform, gents and bid; /make me an offer, they'll pay you well - / All of 'em ripe for the coffin lid'.¹⁴⁰ With its refrain 'Dying! Gentlemen – dying! Dead!' the poem is redolent of Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market* (1862) which itself has been read as a critique of nineteenth-century industrial capitalism.¹⁴¹ Like Swift, who likened human 'breeders' to 'mares in foal', Sparling, alongside journalists from *Justice* and *The Socialist*, reduces the labour-force to the level of livestock.¹⁴² In so doing, they impute the capitalists with a strategy of dehumanisation; one that modern readers will align with the imperial project.

The motif of the human 'meat market' is equally present in Marx, who applies the epithet 'dealers in human flesh' to the agents of the Poor Law Commission responsible, in 1834, for redistributing surplus labour from agricultural areas to Northern manufactories (*Capital*, 255). Moreover, while it appears that 'in the market [the labourer stands] as owner of the commodity "labour-power" face to face with other owners of commodities,' in reality, he is 'forced to sell his labour-power' to the vampire-capitalist who absorbs every 'nerve', 'muscle' and 'drop of blood' at his disposal [emphasis mine] (285). Sparling is sensitive to Marx's application of the motif; as I shall argue, his narrative of progress – which paradoxically regards economic enterprise as retrogressive and, at the same time, as propelling humanity towards a post-capitalist utopia – corresponds with Marx's own. I further suggest that Sparling adopts the same language of dissimulation that Marx applies to capitalistic 'civilisation' and like Marx, his treatment of colonial motifs – including the cannibal (and his flesh-pot) – serve to inveigh against primitive accumulation.¹⁴³ In his chapter on 'the metaphors of accumulation', Jerry Phillips coins a definition of what he terms Marx's 'primitivism of progress': that is, 'the bloody, vampiric or cannibalistic character of capitalism' within an advancing historical trajectory. Phillips points out that 'on the one hand, capitalism is regarded [by Marx] as an agent of progress because it starkly reveals the necessity of the historical voyage toward utopia; but on the other hand, capitalism is also viewed as a bloody and barbarous system, which gives succour to all that is base in the human

¹³⁹ 'The Thieves Supper', *Justice*, 12 December 1885, p.4

¹⁴⁰ 'The Human Auction', *The Socialist*, November 1886, p.37

¹⁴¹ See Victor Roman Mendoza, "Come Buy": The Crossing of Sexual and Consumer Desire in Christina Rossetti's "Goblin Market", *ELH* 73 (2006), 913-947

¹⁴² Jonathan Swift, 'A Modest Proposal', in *The Essential Writings of Jonathan Swift*, ed. by Claude Rawson and Ian Higgins (New York: Norton, 2010), pp. 295-302 (p. 296 & p.300)

¹⁴³ Of primitive accumulation Marx writes: 'The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines and the indigenous population of that continent, the beginnings of the conquest and plunder of India, and the conversion of Africa into a preserve for the commercial hunting of blackskins, are all of the things which characterize the dawn of the era of capitalist production. These idyllic proceedings are the chief moments of primitive accumulation.' Marx, *Capital*, p.703

animal, greediness, selfishness, ruthlessness, the predatory virtues of the jungle, of all-out war'.¹⁴⁴ We know that Marx often relied on the metaphor of vampirism to describe exploitative economic praxis but, as Phillips points out, he also advanced anthropophagic descriptions of capitalistic enterprise. In 'The Future of British Rule in India' (1853), for instance, Marx remarks that only after social revolution 'will human progress cease to resemble that hideous pagan idol, who would not drink the nectar but from the skulls of the slain'.¹⁴⁵ It is, in the proper sense, 'human progress' that is the 'hideous pagan idol' of Marx's figure, yet given that the contemporary age of predatory enterprise is labelled 'the bourgeois epoch' it is, in my view, metonymically implied that bourgeois man is himself the product of some ghastly apotheosis.¹⁴⁶ At the very least, the bourgeoisie – like Zola's Grégoires – worship at the altar of capital: a deity that cannibalistically sups from the skulls of its captives. In this way, social evolution assumes the primitivism Phillips attributes to Marx's narrative of progress.

As I point out, Marx articulates the parity of savage and civilised through the language of dissimulation: language which, in its approach to capitalist modernity, evokes the qualities of concealment and imposture. Indeed, for Marx '[t]he hypocrisy and inherent barbarism of bourgeois civilization lies unveiled before our eyes, turning from its home, where it assumes respectable forms, to the colonies where it goes naked'.¹⁴⁷ The colonies divest bourgeois society of its robe of respectability because, in the colonies, the bourgeoisie exercise their rapacious (primitive) accumulation of commodities; thus the 'naked' 'unveiled' 'barbarism' of imperial capitalism runs parallel to primitive savagery of tribal cannibalism in a landscape which, putatively, harbours both. Clearly attuned to Marx's analogy, Sparling writes of contemporary civilisation:

Involved and complex as our present system is, it is no marvel that so many fail to see the mutual murder and degrading cannibalism that are its main supports [...] Where the varnish of civilization has not yet veiled the crude savagery of primitive mankind, cultured humanity is horror-stricken to see a wild man, like the Botocudu of South America, drag his slain enemies to some secluded den where they may comfortably be cooked and eaten with triumphant rejoicing [...] Cultured humanity shudders and returns thanks to a God after its own image that it is not as these men are, and resents the truth when told that 'the fair show (of modern life) veils one vast, savage, grim conspiracy of mutual murder' and that it itself subsists thereon. (226)

¹⁴⁴ Jerry Phillips, 'Cannibalism qua Capitalism: The Metaphors of Accumulation in Marx, Conrad, Shakespeare, and Marlowe', in *Cannibalism and the Colonial World*, ed. by Frances Baker, Peter Hulme and Margaret Iversen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 183-203 (p.185)

¹⁴⁵ Jerry Phillips, 'Cannibalism qua Capitalism', p.184

Karl Marx, 'The Future Results of the British Rule in India' in *Marx and Engels: Articles on Britain* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1971; repr. 1975), pp. 195-201 (p.201)

¹⁴⁶ Marx, 'The Future Results of the British Rule in India', p. 201

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p.200

Marx's hypocritical 'respectable forms' find equivalence in Sparling's 'varnish of civilisation'. Through a further series of transpositions – which include, principally, the substitution of industrial capitalism with 'cannibalism' but also the transposition of 'club and spear' with the 'control of land and capital' and the 'fire or flesh-pot' with 'the factory or the mine' (226) – Sparling, like Marx, draws analogues between savage and civilised. To the same end, Sparling cites Edwin Arnold's *The Light of Asia* (1879) which laments 'the fair show (of modern life)': a functional equivalent to Marx's 'respectable forms'. Arnold's narrative poem tells of the life and philosophy of Buddha and this particular episode relates to Prince Siddârtha's [afterwards Buddha] realisation of nature's intrinsically predacious character. The Prince was struck how:

[...] lizard fed on ant, and snake on him,
 And kite on both; and how the fish-hawk robbed
 The tiger-fish of that which it had seized;
 The shrike chasing the bulbul, which did chase
 The jewelled butterflies; till everywhere
 Each slew a slayer and in turn was slain,
 Life living upon death. So the fair show
 Veiled one vast, savage, grim conspiracy
 Of mutual murder [...]¹⁴⁸

This tendency to relate the natural world's system of 'mutual murder' to late nineteenth-century economic operations is not uncommon in the socialist periodicals of the period. In a similar vein, an 1885 edition of *Justice* features a poem, 'The Commercial Dinner Party', which comically describes a series of engorgements at an inter-species dinner party. The host, a wily crocodile who is, we must assume, a capitalist, declares '[e]conomy [...] is chief of all with me'.¹⁴⁹ After an empty dinner platter is revealed to the guests 'Mr Frog' is stealthily devoured by 'Ma'am Duck'; she herself is 'gobbled' by Mr Fox who, in his own turn, is consumed by Mr Lynx and so on. This concept of an economic food-chain derived from organic life would seem to belong to a Spencerian model of social progress. Yet while Spencer argues that the 'organic conviction' to make money 'neutralizes the discipline [...] of religion', Marx, Sparling and Arnold conversely advance, to borrow the words of Phillips, a 'theology of murder'.¹⁵⁰ Marx, for instance, regarding the loss of life resulting from class conflict – and other economically defined exploitation – as a form of ritualised murder in a broader cult of capital, exposes just such a theistic dimension of economic organisation. Sparling, and through him, Arnold, correspondingly imply that our current state of primal enmity stems from the fall from, or ascension to (as in Buddhism), divinity. Certainly, in his statement that '[c]ultured humanity shudders and returns thanks to a God after its own image that it is not as these men are', Sparling derides the view that man's consanguine affinity with Christ

¹⁴⁸ Edwin Arnold, *The Light of Asia or, The Great Renunciation* (London: Trübner, 1881), I, p.21

¹⁴⁹ E.V.Blake, 'The Commercial Dinner Party', *Justice*, 1 August 1885, p.5

¹⁵⁰ Spencer, 'The Morals of Trade', p.385 & 384 respectively.

Phillips, 'Cannibalism qua Capitalism', p.184

elevates civilised man above the savage (226); for in man's fallen state (in a sense this also applies his fall from communistic, and thus purer, modes of living) he is destined to partake in the 'mutual murder' that constitutes species relations. Of this schema, Kilgour writes: '[t]here are many myths, both within Western tradition and outside it, that trace an existing state of dualistic conflict to a fall from a state of oneness. In its most basic bodily form, this myth appears as the story of the breaking of the originally cosmic body of one man who incorporated humanity as members of himself' (10). Kilgour cites Northrop Fry's analysis of Blake's mythology, and the 'consequences of [Albion's] dismemberment' in order to illustrate how a craving for a lost unity belies this kind of dismemberment myth (10). This excerpt from Fry's work is useful for my current argument since it connects the economy of mutual nourishment to an anterior deistic event:

The eternal world is one of mutual co-operation in which all forms of life are nourished and supported by all other forms, as in the economy of the of the individual human body. In this world the reverse is true, and getting food in nature usually involves or maiming life. As all living things are part of the mangled body of Albion, all things are nourished in a mutual cannibalism.¹⁵¹

Western capitalists worshipping 'a god after [their] own image', espouse a faith that ritualises the act of cannibalism in the Holy Sacrament. That original feast of flesh and blood, like the dismembered body of Albion, precipitates, in Sparling's own words, the 'fratricidal struggle' and 'mutual murder' at the heart of economic life. In the same way that in Zola's novel 'ten thousand starving men were offering up their flesh' to the Grégoires' 'private deity' (capital), Sparling regards the capitalist as replicating the forms of the original, Christological sacrifice (which appropriately involves the forfeit of human flesh for consumption). He writes: '[...] there is an ever growing tendency to the formation of a subject class — a caste set apart for exploitation, to be continuously plundered, a tribe consecrated to never ending immolation' (226). In her reading of the anthropophagic dimension of Zola's *Germinal*, Marie-Sophie Armstrong notes a similar – but inverse – motif. Of the scene in which Cécile Grégoire offers brioche to the famished Meheus, Armstrong writes:

The syntagmatic contiguity of the brioche and the girl, as well as the causal link between them (the brioche is for Cécile) connect the food and the sleeping bourgeois child. The baking of brioche runs parallel to the girl's sleep, finishing when she awakes, which suggests a form of equivalence between the girl and the food through the intimation that this body at rest, similar to the dough at rest, is destined to be baked. That morning Cecile

¹⁵¹ Northrop Frye, *Fearful Symmetry: A Study of William Blake* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1947; repr. 1967), p.288

gives the brioche to the Maheu children and their mother in the same way that Christ, in the sacrament of the Eucharist, offers up his body.¹⁵²

In the same way that the Last Supper portends the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, Cécile's gift of brioche prefigures the scene of her death which occurs during a similar act of alms-giving. Zola's motif works as an inverse of Sparling's because it employs a bourgeois, as opposed to proletarian, body of sacrifice, illustrating Zola's non-partisan treatment of class conflict. Armstrong herself remarks that bourgeois benefactor Cécile is obversely doubled by Maigrat, the enterprising *withholder* of alms. Whether or not we support this interpretation, it implies a kind of symmetry typically found in the scenes of murderous antagonism that describe, in Zola's fiction, capitalistic society. Though Sparling alights on the rhetoric of 'mutual cannibalism' found in Arnold and others, his conception of this fratricide is, illogically, unreciprocal.

Since Sparling is concerned with capitalism operating within the context of western Christianity (the adversarial tension between 'cultured humanity' and the savage 'other' assure us of this), 'the tribe' committed by sacred decree to eternal sacrifice is not merely, it would seem, the domestic labour-force but an imperial subject-caste. Sparling continues: '[t]hus begins the "extension of frontiers" and the "growth of empires." in each of these stages cannibalism is plainly perceptible; its form only has been changed (226). Like Marx, Sparling adopts colonial tropes to castigate the violent self-interest underlying western capitalism's primitive accumulation. Yet while we know very little of Sparling's politics, one might venture to say that his concern is primarily with the conditions of the labour-force at home. He demonstrates a detailed quantitative knowledge of the economic conditions of domestic workers, yet his discourse assumes a figurative quality when applied to the imperial question. And certainly, the satisfying result of a specifically *colonial* body of sacrifice, from a rhetorical point of view, is that it shores up socialist conceptions of progress. This is because the native savagery of the colonial landscape holds a mirror to capitalistic enterprise abroad; the sham respectability of Christian forms break down in the space of empire, where the ritual cannibalism learnt from the Eucharist finds its equivalent in native fetish worship. As Ann McClintock points out, 'imperial progress across the space of empire is figured as a journey backward in time to an anachronistic moment in pre-history'. In other words 'geographical difference across space is figured as a historical difference across time'.¹⁵³ Thus

¹⁵² Si la contiguïté syntagmatique de la brioche et de la jeune fille, ainsi que la relation de causalité qui les unit (la brioche est pour Cécile) rapprochent l'aliment et la bourgeoise endormie, le fait que la cuisson de la brioche se déroule parallèlement au sommeil de la jeune fille et s'achève avec le réveil de celle-ci suggérerait une sorte d'équivalence entre la jeune femme et l'aliment en intimant que ce corps au repos, semblable à une pâte au repos, est destiné à la cuisson. Cécile, qui donne ce matin-là de la brioche aux enfants Maheu venus faire l'aumône avec leur mère, ferait dès lors implicitement, comme le Christ dans le sacrement de l'Eucharistie, l'offrande de son corps.' Marie-Sophie Armstrong, "Le chapitre de Jenlain," ou la mise en abyme fantasmatique de *Germinal*, *Nineteenth Century French Studies*, 37 (2008-2009), 81-96 (pp.88-89). Translation courtesy of Jonathan Evans (University of Portsmouth).

¹⁵³ Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (London: Routledge, 1995), p.40

capitalism's 'primitive accumulation', enacted across this retrogressive space of empire, renders socialism's glorious vision of social revolution and collective ownership progressive in contrast.¹⁵⁴

Sparling's application of the cannibal trope reveals, I argue, a desire to expose capitalism's 'totalising' activity. As I note, Sparling wants to think about Marxian class antagonism in terms of a 'fratricidal struggle' between tribal communities (of which capitalism, wielding the same cannibalistic tactics as the colonised savage, is ascendant or sovereign). Of course, many critics have applied imperial 'incorporation' theories to the cannibal trope. McClintock usefully remarks that 'in many imperial scenes, the fear of engulfment expresses itself most acutely in the cannibal trope. In this familiar trope, the fear of being engulfed by the unknown is projected onto colonised peoples as their desire to devour the intruder whole'.¹⁵⁵ In the same way that Kilgour wants to think about hegemonic structures as cannibalistically 'subsuming' the other in order to maintain 'inner stability': a tactic she (briefly) aligns with imperialism, so too McClintock regards cannibalism as an imperialist tactic that, to use *Kilgour's* words 'invert[s] actual relations by projecting a desire for assimilation from a center to a periphery' (5). However, Sparling, in his discrimination between savage cannibals and corporate financiers, to some extent modifies this principle by placing emphasis on the incremental nature of the latter's consumption. He remarks that '[w]here the savage terminated suddenly the existence of his foe and feasted right royally upon the body which had cost so much time and labour to sustain, the civilised monopolist holds many men in subjection and consumes their lives piecemeal'(226). The flash-in-the-pan cannibalism of savage man representing, as it does, the outright consumption of human flesh contrasts sharply with the financiers' slow aggregative ingestion of the labour-force: the 'lingering agonies of slow starvation within the cheerless walls of living tombs' (226).

Interestingly, the proposition that antagonistic groups naturally endeavour to acquire, consume or incorporate constituent members of those opposing communities is never in question for Sparling. Rather, he wants to advance an *ethics of incorporation* based on codes of honour derived from Montaigne and others. Certainly, Sparling borrows his concept of incremental ingestion from Montaigne's 'Of Cannibales' in which constructive torture is rendered as a form of protracted cannibalistic dismemberment:

I thinke there is more barbarisme in eating men alive, then to feed upon them being dead; to mangle by tortures and torments a body of lively sense, to roast him in peeces, to make dogges and swine to gnaw and teare him in mamockes (as wee have not only read, but seene very lately, yea and in our owne memorie, not amongst ancient enemies, but our neighbours and fellow-citizens; and which is worse, under pretence of pietie and religion) than to roast and eat him after he is dead.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 27

¹⁵⁶ Michel de Montaigne, *The Essays of Michael, Lord of Montaigne*, ed. by Henry Morley, trans. by John Florio (London: Routledge, 1885), p.96

The comparison is exact; in Montaigne's scheme as in Sparling's, cannibalism, set against the abuses of civilised man, emerges the superior of the two.¹⁵⁷ Like Swift writing later, Montaigne invokes anthropophagic praxis to critique contemporary morality and like Swift he implies there is more honour to be found in a quick death to a cannibal than a protracted one to civilisation. The allusion, however, does more than invest Sparling's ethics of incorporation with Montaignian notions of honour. The piecemeal or additive nature of this commercial cannibalistic practice moreover complicates the stability of individual identity. Kilgour usefully points out that incorporation manifest as 'eating' – particularly in so far as cannibalism is concerned – involves an 'ambivalence' that poses a threat to self-definition. She writes:

[eating] is the most material need yet it is invested with a great deal of significance, an act that involves both desire and aggression, as it creates a total identity between eater and eaten while insisting on the total control – the literal consumption – of the latter by the former. Like all acts of incorporation, it assumes an absolute distinction between inside and outside, eater and eaten, which, however, breaks down, as the law "you are what you eat" obscures identity and makes it impossible to say for certain who's who. (7)

According to this view cannibalism's ambivalence stems from a dual impulse to enforce the polarities of inside/outside, eater/eaten and contrarily effect a communion or, 'total identity' with the other. The practice of cannibalism harbouring, as it does, this conflicting instinct, creates a crisis at the level of identity since the coming together in the act of consumption conflates two formerly independent bodies. Kilgour remarks that 'the history of western tradition [...] is marked by a recurrent desire to resolve uncertainty; and in the struggle between [...] identification and the division that creates power over another, a struggle which is finally that between communion and cannibalism, cannibalism has usually won' (7). Indeed, regarding the 'modern subject' (financier or, capitalist) as victor of the appetitive encounter, some applications of the commercial cannibal trope replicate this model of disambiguation. For instance, in 1833 William Cobbett, adopting Lord Chatham's appellation, avowed to Commons that 'the last drop of the nation's blood may not be poured out to be licked up by the cannibals of Change Alley'.¹⁵⁸ Describing the physical decantation of the Nation's blood, Cobbett places emphasis on the spatial aspect of Chatham's

¹⁵⁷ Montaigne experienced a revival of interest in the first part of the nineteenth century, which as Dudley M. Marchi remarks was 'inspired by the romantic period's concern with personality, self-analysis, and independence of the intellectual spirit'. Of course, Montaigne's writings and 'lay morality' were also significant in the formation of later Victorian conceptualisations of honour, valour and chivalry and therefore we must assume contemporary readers were sensitive to this inter-textual dimension of Sparling's piece. Dudley M. Marchi, *Montaigne Among the Moderns: Receptions of the Essais* (New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1994), p.70

¹⁵⁸ William Cobbett, *Selections From Cobbett's Political Works: Being a Complete Abridgement of the 100 Volumes Which Comprise the Writings of 'Porcupine' and the 'Weekly political register'* (London: W. Tait, 1835), p. 440

metaphor. Through the suggestion of an ‘emptying out’ of resources, Cobbett evokes the inside-outside antithesis linked, in Kilgour’s analysis, to Freud’s oral stage of development. Indeed, Kilgour writes of this model that self-identification occurs at the moment ‘when the symbiotic relationship between mother and child of eater and eaten becomes divided’.¹⁵⁹ That is to say, at the moment disassociation with the other occurs, oral acquisitive behaviour becomes cannibalistic. Cobbett’s metaphor clearly implies a split between individual and collective; the stock-brokers, as devolved entities, cannibalistically profit to the precise degree that the main body politic, or national treasury, loses.

In contrast, Sparling describes a consumptive practice that does little to ‘resolve’ the tension between ‘total identity’ and ‘total control’. While the former involves the identification of a bilateral party as ‘other’, contrarily, a symbiotic arrangement in the manner suggested by Sparling, a relationship of ‘lingering agonies’ and ‘piecemeal’ dismemberment, resists this kind of separation. This is precisely why, in the context of bourgeoisie-proletariat relations, an incremental absorption of the labour-force is considered so acutely distasteful. Aside from the dubious ethics of incorporation this involves, the degrading co-dependence of both parties mean that no autonomous identity can be wrought outside the context of this relationship. In the same way that vampirism, as an asymmetric (or parasitical) symbiotic union, does not allow for the separation of bilateral parties (as in Mina Harker’s psychic union with Count Dracula), piecemeal cannibalistic praxis depends on the same troubling concatenation. As a socialist – vatically elevated above ‘average man’ – Sparling has great cause to lament this status quo (225). Indeed socialism, diametrically opposed to the capitalist body politic, has its own ‘totalising’ ambitions. This is apparent in the concluding lines of Sparling’s article which looks forward to the great ‘social revolution’, when men will ‘come forward’ into the fold and ‘free themselves from the stigma of cannibals and murderers’, from the ‘chains that bind [him]’ to capitalism (226). This ‘social revolution’ promising a realignment of economic systems confers centripetal control to the socialists, who strive to incorporate those bodies lost to the capitalist regime. Viewed laterally, ‘mutual murder’ and ‘fratricide’ – terms applied by Sparling to describe class conflict – are ways of expressing kinship, however reluctantly and it is precisely ‘kinship’, in the socialist narrative of progress, that is to be avoided.

Conclusion

This chapter begins, as it ends, with an impasse. The socialist press and its appetitive rival, capitalism, enact what is, in Kilgour’s terms, a conflict between communion and cannibalism: the one aligned with socialistic models of collective organisation, the other with capitalistic individualism. The struggle between Socialism, the so-called paragon of social unity, and the

¹⁵⁹ Kilgour, *From Communion to Cannibalism*, p.12

insatiate monster, Capitalism, is conspicuous in the visual and textual deadlock between the two figures. In the first instance, I conclude that the ambiguity at the heart of socialist discourse, the ambiguity implied in the conflicting narratives of social progress (positing, in turn, capitalism and socialism as evolutionary victor) result in a compositional indeterminacy or dialectical tension within the illustrations of Crane and others: a tension that bespeaks socialism's embattled relationship with both its rival, capitalism, and the equivocal master narrative of social evolution. In the second instance, Henry Sparling, schematising capitalism as piecemeal cannibalistic dismemberment, conceives class relations as an asymmetric symbiotic union. Through the motif of eating he creates instability at the level of identity which despite Sparling's apparent commitment to the utopic vision of Marx – who correspondingly declares 'proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains' – exposes a similar impasse.¹⁶⁰ The novels of Zola and Tressell, however, indicate that socialist *fiction*, unlike the (mainstream) socialist *press*, applies creative pressure on this embargo. Through the tropes of blood, patricide and dismemberment Zola and Tressell move beyond this stalemate. The symbolic severance of the 'father' economy (Church and State sanctioned capitalism) constitutes a manoeuvre to resolve the ambiguity attached to appetitive or vampiric metaphors. Under the law of 'possessive individualism' Tressell's self-directive violence must be regarded as an attempt to take possession of the body, removing it from the *incorporating* grasp of the capitalist establishment. Otherwise, dismemberment tropes, and the rich symbolic tradition from which they arise, imply the rupturing of a body politic sustained by parasitical class relations. Moving on from socialist writing, the next chapter considers how, in Bertram Mitford's African quest romance, cannibalistic tropes critique a specifically colonial form of enterprise.

¹⁶⁰ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, trans. by Samuel Moore (London: Penguin, 1985), p. 121

2

On Vampires and Cannibals: Bertram Mitford's African Quest Romance

[W]hile brooding over the awful presentation of life as it exists in the vast African forest, it seemed to me only too vivid a picture of many parts of our own land. As there is a darkest Africa is there not also a darkest England? Civilisation, which can breed its own barbarians, does it not also breed its own pygmies? May we not find a parallel at our own doors, and discover within a stone's throw of our cathedrals and palaces similar horrors to those which [have been found] existing in the great Equatorial forest?¹
(William Booth, *In Darkest England*)

Because late-nineteenth century socialist discourses are, as I suggest in Chapter One, predicated on Marxian metaphors, they often sustain – whether intentionally or otherwise – the colonial motifs that are central to Marx's thinking about primitive accumulation. For as far as *fin-de-siècle* critiques of imperial enterprise, and at times, the African quest narrative itself, confront the reality of aggressive imperialism, they, like anti-capitalist discourses after Marx, often extend their critique to economic conditions and behaviours at home (as indeed the one is a corollary of the other). And certainly, much like the 'fat-man' capitalist of the socialist media, the colonising European was regarded as an appetitive predator, devouring the spoils of imperial conquest. Noting, for instance, the Anglo-French scramble for Southeast Asian territory, a journalist at W.T. Stead's *The Review of Reviews*, writes that 'Europe continues to devour the Asiatic artichoke – a leaf at a time. This time it is Siam [modern Thailand] that has suffered and France that has gained'.² Similarly, of the Franco-Siamese War, Holt S. Hallett, writing for *The Times*, remarks 'France desired no buffer, it looked upon Siam not as its buffer but a toothsome morsel which it might some day devour'.³ And of Anglo-French relations in Africa, the territory with which this chapter is specifically concerned, an 1897 *Times* article, citing 'a man of great weight in the matter', reads:

Europe at this moment rather reminds one of Vitellius. It pounces on African territories with a gluttony unexampled in history [...] Each [country] strives to forestall the others, and all literally snatch morsels from one another's mouth [sic] at the risk of overgorging themselves. I make no exception. The French are as voracious as the others and less excusable, for we have not a digestion fit for the heavy colonial dishes we would fain devour. Still, we must not be prevented from having our share of the African cake.⁴

¹ William Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out* (London: Salvation Army, 1890), pp.11-12

² 'The Progress of the World', *The Review of Reviews*, 8 (1893), 117-126 (p.117)

³ Holt S. Hallett, 'France and Siam', *The Times*, 16 June 1893, p. 8

⁴ 'England and France in West Africa', *The Times*, 1 November 1897, p.3

Given that the man of so-called ‘great weight’, regards the colonisation of Africa as an acquisition of ‘what justly belongs to [Britain and France]’, it is curious that he deploys the rhetoric of eating and orality – motifs traditionally reserved for *critiques* of colonising activity – to endorse aggressive imperialistic ends.⁵ What the motif, however, does do, is allow the informant to establish a kind of moral relativism based on national stereotypes that ameliorates Britain’s expropriation of African territories. In other words, the moderate British should not be placed ‘on short commons’ by the greedy French.⁶

The strategy of presenting colonisers and imperialists as orally aggressive appropriators of foreign territory is one that is often reversed by the imperialists themselves. As Kilgour points out, ‘in order to maintain a situation of centripetal control, what is outside must be subsumed and drawn into the center’ (5). With imperialism, ‘this process often appears in the form of an attempt to invert actual relations by projecting a desire for assimilation from a center to a periphery’ (5). So, for instance, tribal cannibalism – which, though it probably existed in some measure in Africa, was nowhere near as wide-spread as it was rumoured⁷ – might be (and often is) read as an attempt to displace the colonisers’ acquisition of the imperial Other onto the cannibalistic savage who consumes the bodies of its captives. An 1891 *Times* article on the Royal Niger Company⁸ reports that ‘the civilized Powers of Western Africa will be fully occupied in holding their own ground against the forces of barbarism that surround them. All must necessarily suffer from checks or humiliations inflicted upon one; and apart from international courtesy, practical self-interest dictates a policy of union and mutual support’.⁹ For indeed, ‘beyond [the Niger Company] to the east [...] is one of the fiercest cannibal districts of the continent, and is likely to linger as one of the last homes of savagery in Africa’.¹⁰ The article sets up a series of binary oppositions – which include savage / civilised and assailant / pacifier – that imply the inversion of the ‘actual relations’; that is to say, though The Royal Niger Company conducted an aggressive colonisation of the West African territory, it is the natives who are seen to encroach upon the civilised territory of the company with their savage man-eating ways.

Focusing primarily on the minor author, essayist and cultural critic, Bertram Mitford (1855-1914), this chapter considers how the appetitive tropes of anthropophagy, vampirism and ‘consumption’ more generally function as a commentary on colonial hostility and capital-violence

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ In her book, *The Voices of the Poor in Africa*, Elizabeth Isichei cites the example of the missionary, W. Holman Bentley, who found scant evidence of the cannibalistic practice he had been led to believe was ubiquitous in the tribal communities of central Africa. In his memoirs Bentley reports that ‘since coming first to the Congo, the further I travelled the further cannibalism seemed to recede: everybody had it to say that their neighbours beyond were bad, that they “eat men,” till I began to grow sceptical’. W. Holman Bentley, *Pioneering on the Congo* (New York : Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1970 [1900]), pp.94-5, cited in Elizabeth Isichei, *The Voices of the Poor in Africa* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2004), p.36

⁸ As Olayemi Akinwumi explains, The Royal Niger Company took over the administration of Nigeria from the British government in 1886 and quickly established a trade monopoly in the region. Olayemi Akinwumi, *The Colonial Contest for the Nigerian Region, 1884-1900: A History of the German Participation* (Münster: Lit Verlag, 2002), p.69

⁹ *The Times*, ‘The Colonies’, 14 September 1891, p.4

¹⁰ Ibid.

(that is, violence performed in the pursuit of capital gain) in British-occupied regions of Africa. Like his contemporary, Henry Rider Haggard, Mitford served in the colonial civil service and spent much time working and travelling in Zulu territories. It is not known in exactly what capacity he was employed, but it would almost certainly seem that he was occupied in a less prestigious role than Haggard, for as Gerald Monsman points out, no record of his appointments exist in the Colonial office records in London.¹¹ While I do not want to suggest that Mitford's quest romance is entirely absent of racial prejudice, his fictions are surprisingly politicised and unlike Haggard *do* contest the morality of the British expropriation of African territories.¹² For the converted Catholic, the African continent is a kind of fallen Eden: an exquisite wilderness which, despite its abundant fertility, dramatises its condition of primal dismemberment through scenes of mutilation and rapine. In other words, Africa is a moral microcosm in which tribal cannibalism holds up a mirror to Western capitalism and its destructive presence in foreign territories. In this way, Mitford adopts a strategy also deployed by Marx who, as Jerry Phillips explains 'pointed out [that] 'civility', as a cultural ethics of negotiating stark human differences, was obliged 'to go naked' in the colonies – revealing itself as a morality of plunder and murder'.¹³ Though Mitford was clearly indebted to Marx, I will argue that he is closer, ideologically, to the American sociologist and economist, Thorstein Veblen, since his engagement with economic progress is evolutionary, positing survivals of a primitive, invidious interest. Mitford's Veblenian pessimism sets him apart from Marx, who imagined that social revolution – and with it the demise of capitalistic savagery – as inevitable. Conflating evolutionary discourses with the Christian motifs of hell and damnation, Mitford's imperial eschatology conversely imagines the Anglo-African encounter as a mutilative end-of-days.

Mitford's 1896 novel, *The Sign of the Spider* describes the 'genteel poverty' of the downbeat Laurence Stanninghame whose various unprofitable occupations – writing and speculative finance, for instance – leave him barely able to meet the material requirements of his class. Thus hardened by 'the cramped life and squalid worry of a year-in year-out, semi-detached, suburban existence', Stanninghame leaves England for Johannesburg to make his fortune in the city's ever pending 'boom'.¹⁴ After initial success in the stock market, Stanninghame suffers financial ruin as the fledgling economy experiences an unexpected slump. Left destitute, he enters into a perilous slave-hunting expedition in the country's interior. Along with his comrades, Hazon, an experienced slaver of Arabic extraction and Holmes, a feckless Brit, Stanninghame encounters a

¹¹ Gerald Monsman, *H. Rider Haggard on the Imperial Frontier: The Political and Literary Contexts of his African Romances* (Greensborough: ELT Press, 2006), pp. 268-284 (p. 273).

¹² Mitford knew many of the Zulu chiefs, including King Cetewayo, and had a tremendous amount of respect for the Zulu people. However, Mitford was a product of his time and his fiction frequently belies eugenic sensibilities. While he regards Zulu 'blood' as sacrosanct, his treatment of other racial groups, including the Khoekhoe people of South Africa, is much less sympathetic.

¹³ Jerry Phillips, 'Cannibalism qua Capitalism: The Metaphorics of Accumulation in Marx, Conrad, Shakespeare, and Marlowe', in *Cannibalism and the Colonial World*, ed. by Frances Baker, Peter Hulme and Margaret Iversen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 183-203 (p. 193)

¹⁴ Bertram Mitford, *The Sign of the Spider: An Episode*, ed. by Gerald Monsman (Kansas: Valancourt, 2008), p. 7 & 42 Further page references to this novel are given after quotations in the text.

number of cannibal tribes whom they slaughter or enslave, as is their will. Stanninghame's luck changes when he is captured by the Ba-gcatya tribe ('the people of the spider'). Indeed, after a long and relatively peaceful residence with the tribe, he is offered in sacrifice to a ten foot arachnid: a blood-sucking spider-god to whom they worship. In the spider's lair Stanninghame finds a large number of uncut diamonds which he appropriates and, with the help of the chief's daughter, Lindela, escapes with his bounty. Back in England where, owing to his small hoard of diamonds, he has become a wealthy man, Stanninghame reflects without remorse that: '[e]very conventionality violated—every rule of morality, each set aside, had brought him nothing but good—had brought nothing but good to him and his' (234).

'The Dark Places of the Earth'

Variouly characterised by the 'awesomeness of its beauty' and, in contrast, its 'grotesque', 'diabolical' aspect (99), the African interior becomes the antithesis of the 'soft, peaceful English landscape' (234). Populated with 'serpents' and 'venomous insects' the territory lies somewhere between a hostile Darwinian wilderness and a garden of original sin and textual allusions to Eden are reinforced during Stanninghame and Lindela's journey back through the country's interior. Mitford reflects that: '[i]t was a primeval idyll, the wandering of these two – the man, the product of the highest *fin-de-siècle* civilisation; the other the daughter of a savage race' (216). Lexically speaking, Mitford's application of '*fin-de-siècle*' evokes a weight of cultural meaning: not merely the end of a century but a decadent finale. As Robert Mighall points out, around the time when Wilde's immortal lines 'fin de siècle, fin du globe' appeared in print, 'fin de siècle' was seen to herald 'an impending collapse in standards', the re-enactment of the fall of classical civilisations.¹⁵ And certainly, Mitford's critique of Western economic enterprise is predicated on a conceptualisation of fallenness that bridges the gap between total individualism as implied by *fin-de-siècle* Decadence and, original sin. Pertinently, in his appendix on Mitford in *H. Rider Haggard on the Imperial Frontier* (2006), Gerald Monsman remarks that Mitford's novels are expressive of his 'Catholic existentialism'; that is, an authorial attitude that 'acquiesces to the tragic circumstances of life with shame and outrage but that, through the instrumentality of forgiving others, confer *upon oneself* the perfect pardon that is perfect peace' [original emphasis].¹⁶ Monsman's observation does much to explain the apparent cleavage between Mitford's internal novelistic and, authorial moralities and I would further add that Mitford's existentialism runs right to the heart of his idea of 'place'. Of the African interior, Mitford remarks 'this is indeed one of the "dark places of the earth"', alluding – as Conrad would later do later in his *Heart of Darkness* (1899) – to Psalm 74:20: 'Have respect unto the covenant: for the dark places of the earth are full

¹⁵ Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, ed. by Robert Mighall (London: Penguin, 2000; repr. 2003), p. 171; for Mighall reference see Notes to this edition, p. 249.

¹⁶ Gerald Monsman, 'Appendix A, Bertram Mitford: Profile of a Contrarian' in, Gerald Monsman, *H. Rider Haggard on the Imperial Frontier: The Political and Literary Contexts of his African Romances* (Greensborough: ELT Press, 2006), pp. 268-284 (p.268).

of the habitations of cruelty'.¹⁷ An example of what Richard E. Engle identifies as a 'prayer of complaint', the Psalm implies that God has denied his covenant to these people who reside in the seat 'of hideous cruelty'.¹⁸ In this way, the supplicants adopt an existential attitude towards their apparently godless habitation. The African landscape is similarly schematised as a pocket of iniquity and moral neglect which would almost certainly have run contrary to Mitford's religious reason, but it is the ironic endorsement of the internal 'preyer or preyed upon' ethos that retrieves it from this offence (133).

It is in this milieu of primordial fallenness that Stanninghame and his comrades encounter a tribal dwelling in which the cannibalistic inhabitants enact their ritual dismemberment of the tribal elders and captives. In the darkness, the moon appeared 'to shed a livid sulphurous glare upon the antechamber of hell' (102) and 'women bearing [...] oblong baskets' teetered 'beneath the weight of limbs and trunks of their slaughtered fellow-species' (101). Thus gorged on their meal of human flesh, the tribe fall asleep and Stanninghame's slaving party, assisted by the ferocious Wangoni tribe, storm the dwelling. Mitford writes:

If this nest of man-eaters was hellish before in its bloodstained horror, words fail to describe its aspect now. The savage shouts of the assailants; the despairing screeches of women and children, who have come forth only to find escape cut off; the gasping groans of the wounded and of the slain; the gaping gashes and the staggering forms; and ever around, grim, demon-like countenances, with teeth bared and a perfect hell of blood-fury gleaming from the distended eyeballs. All is but another inferno picture, too common here in the dark places of the earth. (102-3)

Kilgour points out that in order to justify its own 'cultural cannibalism' colonial discourse depends upon a number of binary oppositions which include savage-civilised and aggressor-victim (83). In the confusion of the siege, Mitford breaks down these binaries, the 'staggering forms' of the assailants being indistinguishable from those of the victims, with both sides exhibiting 'demon-like countenances' (102-3). In Chapter One I argued that, in his article on 'commercial cannibalism', Henry Halliday Sparling schematised the capitalistic *mise en scène* as a fallen world characterised by an ethos of 'fratricide' and 'mutual murder'.¹⁹ This analysis demonstrated that Sparling's cannibal metaphors bear out Kilgour's suggestion that those myths of dismemberment 'trace an existing state of dualistic conflict to a fall from a state of oneness' (10). For instance, in Sparling's socialist theology, collective economic organisation offers the potential to restore the condition of primal unity undone by capitalism. It should equally be said of Mitford that cannibalism and the

¹⁷ It is likely that both Mitford and Conrad had William Booth's *In Darkest England and the Way Out* (1890) in mind when they made reference to the Psalm. As Cedric Thomas Watts points out, Booth's book was written, in part, as a response to H.M. Stanley's *In Darkest Africa* (1890) and famously declared that 'As there is a darkest Africa, is there not also a darkest England?'. William Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out* (London: Salvation Army, 1890), p.11 Cited in Cedric Thomas Watts in, Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness: and Other Tales*, ed. by Cedric Thomas Watts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p.202 (n.105)

¹⁸ Richard E. Engle, 'Psalm 74: Studies in Content, Structure, Context, and Meaning' (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Grace Theological Seminary, 1987), p.2

¹⁹ H. Halliday Sparling, 'Commercial Cannibalism', *The Commonweal*, 16 October 1886, p.226

ancillary trope of dismemberment, which he self-consciously aligns with biblical conceptions of fallenness, were intended, at least in part, as a critique of Western capitalism and its aggressive presence in the colonies. Indeed, troping the human body as currency, Mitford writes of Hazon:

Upon the whole of this wild scene of carnage and massacre the principal leader of the slave-hunters has gazed unmoved [...] he looks upon the tragedy with a cold commercial eye. Prisoners represent so many saleable wares. If it is essential that his hell-hounds shall taste a modicum of blood, or their appetite for this species of quarry would be gone, it is his business to see that they destroy no more property than can be avoided. (104)

Drawing parallels between the savage consumption of human flesh and Stanninghame's acquisition of bodies for consumption in the slave-market, Mitford creates a situation whereby the rise to civilisation has served not to eliminate savage appetites but merely to sanitise them. The cold, unmoved commercial gaze of Hazon is the antithesis of the 'blood-fury gleaming from distended eyeballs' in the face of the savage men (103). Yet the 'material for the [savages'] feast', five human bodies 'trussed, bound' and 'helpless', is the self-same material of the hunter's 'wares': human bodies 'yoked together like oxen'(101). Adopting the language of the hunt, Mitford describes the captors as 'hell-hounds' and the enslaved tribesmen as 'quarry': a now little-used phrase to describe the '[p]arts of the carcass of a deer killed by a hunt [which are] placed on its hide and given to the hounds as a reward' (OED). Interestingly, there are correspondences between 'quarry' as it defines the spoils of the hunt, and quarry, as an excavation of natural resources. In Zola's *Germinal*, Le Voreux mine is both the capitalistic excavation of fossil fuel and an insatiate consumer of men's lives. Likewise here, 'quarry' points to the human bodies of the captives and the terrestrial body of the African landscape: both of which are exploited by the colonial capitalist. Furthermore, in this passage, the evolutionary distance between the cannibal and capitalist mind-set is paradoxically annulled by the singularity of their purpose. Hazon, cognisant of these analogues, reasons that common to all commercial enterprise is a kind of vampire-like cupidity; he remarks 'your British pattern merchant, your millionaire financier, what is he but a slave-dealer, a slave-driver, a blood-sucker?' (134). Certainly, Mitford paints a grim view of man's ascent; each stage of development, from blood-sucking savage to corporate financier, becomes more spurious, the illusion of civilization more pronounced. The dangerous, exploitative manufacturing practices of industrial Britain, the protracted working day and workforce maimed, scalped and killed in office is not, by this rationale, so different to this 'wild scene of carnage and massacre' (103). Yet while Hazon's justification for his savage enterprise is essentially ironic – for, as I will demonstrate later, Mitford takes pains to satirise Hazon's remarks – it applies the same logic of equivalence adopted by opponents of Western capitalism; H.Halliday Sparling and William Booth – from whose *In Darkest England* (1890), the epigraph for this chapter is taken – both, for instance, draw analogues between savagery and industrialism to promote a more 'sympathetic' agenda. On the other hand, Hazon's enterprise is governed only by the desire to optimise capital, an attitude of entrepreneurial depredation that was widely believed to be the privilege of the patriotic Englishman throughout the

nineteenth century. Indeed, the *Economist* of 25 April 1896, reporting on the situation in South Africa, stated that the blacks' effort to 'throw off the yoke of the detested white men' could worryingly result in 'pecuniary losses which would be felt even in London for many years to come'.²⁰

In Darkest England

Similarly noting the analogues between tribal cannibalism and Western capitalism, in his introduction to the 2008 Valancourt reprint of the novel, Gerald Monsman remarks that Mitford's

presentation of ethnic rituals and beliefs in tribal societies is an intentional parable of internal economic and class tensions at the metropolitan centres of empire. The Ba-gcatya cannibals [sic], "The People of the Spider" (Zulu: Ba, they, of + gcatya, 'Venomous spider, which is often seen running numbly about the road), are a dystopian parallel to colonial and European society, the new cannibalism of industrial capitalism.²¹

The Ba-gcatya tribe are not, as Monsman indicates, cannibalistic (though they are warlike) and I would like to suggest that the Kingdom of the Ba-gcatya might profitably be read as an analogue (though not, necessarily, a parable) of the British Empire in part *because* of the stance it adopts in respect to its cannibalistic neighbours. As I will explain later, Monsman's comparison breaks down during Stanninghame's period of residence with the Ba-gcatya, but for my present purpose, I will illustrate how British defences of imperialism are mirrored in the Ba-gcatya's policy towards alien tribes.

The parallels between the Bag-gcatya's bearing towards other tribes and British attitudes towards native Africans can be observed in a conversation between Stanninghame and Lindela, when, following their escape, they encounter a cannibal feast:

"See there, Nyonyoba," [Stanninghame's tribal 'given' name] she said, when they had withdrawn beyond hearing, "do not the Ba-gcatya act rightly in stamping out these foul *Izĩmu* – who devour the flesh of their own kindred, like wild dogs?"

"I think so. And we, who capture them to sell them, do we not send them to a better fate, where they can no more indulge in such repellent appetites?" (217)

Stanninghame recognises that the Ba-gcatya's justification for the extermination of their tribal neighbours is functionally equivalent to the West's 'civilising' defence which itself excuses capital-violence on the grounds of its beneficent influence on the savage natives. Because elsewhere in the novel, Mitford exposes the Europeans' 'civilising' or 'philanthropic' impulse as a pose, Stanninghame's cavalier morality should be read as ironic. Indeed, exasperated about Holmes's compunction regarding their slaving operation, Hazon exclaims:

²⁰ 'The Situation in South Africa', *The Economist*, 25 April 1896, p. 514.

²¹ Gerald Monsman, 'Introduction' in Bertram Mitford, ed. by Gerald Monsman, *The Sign of the Spider* (Kansas: Valancourt, 2008), pp. vii-xxi (p. viii)

“Why, man, we are philanthropists—real philanthropists. And I never heard of ‘judgments’ and ‘curses’ being showered upon such.”

“Philanthropists, are we? That’s a good idea. But where, by the way, does the philanthropy come in?”

“[...] You remember [...] sight of people feeding on the flesh of their own blood relations, and many and many another spectacle no more amusing? Well, then, these barbarities were practised by no wicked slave-raiders, mind, but by the ‘quiet, harmless’ people upon each other. And they are of every-day occurrence. Well, then, in capturing these gentle souls, and deporting them—for a price—whither they will perforce be taught better manners, we are acting the part of real philanthropists. Do you catch on?” (107-8)

Being conspicuously performative – for Hazon is literally ‘*acting the part* of [a] real philanthropist’ – and, espousing a stance of (almost farcical) moral-relativism, the slavers’ dialogue exposes the folly of the philanthropic defence [emphasis mine]. If the reader was in any doubt of this fact, Hazon continues ‘[n]ot that I mean to say we embarked in this business from motives of philanthropy [...] I only cite the argument as one to quiet that singularly inconvenient conscience of yours. We did so, Stanninghame and I, at any rate, to make money [...]’ (108). Interestingly, while Mitford’s protagonists exercise ‘savage’ values in their commercial ventures, there equally exists for their author the notion of the ‘enterprising savage’.²² In *Through the Zulu Country* (1883), a non-fictional account of the battlefields and people of Zululand, Mitford notes that in the aftermath of war, ammunition of English serviceman still litters the ground: ‘you may see where the unexploded cap and the marks of teeth where the enterprising savage has torn open the case to extract the powder and ball’.²³ The image of savage man, deftly extracting the prized substance from an unused bullet, highlights the kinship between ‘savage’ and civilised; this simple, unconscious entrepreneurial act of savage man, stands in contrast to the imbruted account of the African peoples. In this way, Stanninghame’s assertion that their captives ‘would be much better off when the journey was ended and they were disposed of [...] in civilized and Christian lands’ (133) exposes the thinly-veiled irony directed towards (to borrow a pithy phrase from *The Times*) Britain’s ‘coercion policy tempered with beneficent measures’.²⁴

The parallels between the Ba-gcatya Kingdom and the British Empire are not limited to their ‘beneficent’ subjugation of ‘foreign’ peoples. For Stanninghame, the topography, agriculture and temperate climate, for instance, make the territory of Ba-gcatya a little England amidst the ‘dark places’ of the African interior. He observes how the ‘[p]atches of broad, flag-like maize [...] stood out in darker squares, from the verdancy of the grass, and bird voices in glad note made merry among the cool, leafy forest slopes (157). Like pre-industrial Britain, ‘the dreaded Ba-gcatya’ are, in their own territory, ‘a quiet pastoral race, owning extensive herds of cattle’ (165). Stanninghame is at home with the Ba-gcatya precisely because they follow the industrial trajectory of the West. That is to say, Ba-gcatya society supports a feudal hierarchy with the King,

²² Bertram Mitford, *Through the Zulu Country: Its Battlefields and its People* (London: Kegan Paul, 1883), p.106

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ The House of Commons’, *The Times*, 24 May 1892, p. 6.

Tyisandhlu, bestowing land, women and treasure upon the hunters and warriors in return for military services. Showing signs of moving beyond their feudal condition, the people of Ba-gcatya exhibit an aptitude for conquest and commerce, and unlike the cannibalistic 'Izĩmu', participate in trade with 'the northern peoples' (176). Shortly after the arrival of Stanninghame (and, as a result, their introduction to handguns) the tribal community exchange large quantities of ivory for 'fire weapons' enough to 'arm the whole nation' (176).

Though the Bag-catya exhibit the same war-like expansionism as the British Empire, they show themselves vulnerable to the colonising instinct of their captive. Indeed, Stanninghame has an anglicising influence on the Ba-gcatya and, in this sense, his residence with the tribe suggests textual links with Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. As E. Pearlman and others have commented, through his cultivation of an agricultural homestead, Crusoe anglicises his desert island habitation. Pearlman points out that

[l]ike his forbears, immigrants to Britain, Crusoe plants capitalism on his island. He arrives with no goods and no money [...] but gradually he improves his standard of living and reconstructs his island as a simulacrum of bourgeois society. The trappings of the middle-stations – two homes, one described as a "country seat," the storehouses of unneeded goods and money, [...] the yearning for an eventual acquisition of a servant – indicate how deeply Crusoe is indentured to his father's ideology.²⁵

According to Pearlman, Crusoe, bequeathed with the coloniser's radical individualism, is a 'prototype of new economic man' and he 'exploits [the] island with the ruthlessness, smugness and luck that mark the successful entrepreneur'.²⁶ Likewise, Stanninghame, who we know to be an iron-fisted capitalist, reconstructs his tribal lifestyle in the image of the English bourgeoisie. As I point out, he introduces Western technology in the form of the hand-gun, and augments trade links with the 'northern people' by creating a stable demand for firearms (176). Stanninghame's regimen of leisure, consisting mainly of game-hunting, is equally consistent with that of the English gentleman. In fact, he was the 'life and soul of the Ba-gcatya hunting-parties, and his skill and success, together with his untiring energy and philosophical acceptance of the hardships and vicissitudes of the chase, went straight to the hearts of the fine, fearless, barbarians' (165). Moreover, like Crusoe, who 'yearn[s] for an eventual acquisition of a servant', Stanninghame, perceiving that the 'the daughters of the Ba-gcatya are fair', covets a wife though in fact, he is already married (177). Of course, unlike Crusoe, who is sovereign in his Kingdom of one, Stanninghame is a captive in Ba-gcatya territory but nonetheless, he mines the region for commodities, human and otherwise. Much existing criticism of *Robinson Crusoe* gestures towards the proposition that Defoe's tale is a fictional experiment exploring the fallout of *homo economicus*, situated in an isolated state of nature and I suggest that Mitford conspicuously follows suit, positioning the *fin-de-siècle* entrepreneur in an anterior state of development in order to probe

²⁵ E. Pearlman., 'Robinson Crusoe and the Cannibals', *Mosaic*, 10 (1976), 39-55 (pp.41-2)

²⁶ *Ibid.* p. 54 & 41 respectively.

his instinct of exploit.²⁷ Providing ample opportunity for the observation of this, with a make-shift spear of human bone, Stanninghame fatally impales the vampire spider-god that (along with the tribe's erroneously attributed cannibalism) Monsman suggests constitutes a 'dystopian parallel of the colonial and European society'.²⁸ In this way, the analogues between the vampire-worshipping tribe and the *vampiric* colonisers break down as the latter, true to his kin, attacks the totem of native belief and expropriates from the tribe, precious stones and hereditary capital in the form of Lindela, the King's daughter. The reason for this is, I think, clear. Though Mitford would have his readership acknowledge the fratricide and predatory instinct that exists, to some degree, in all cultures, in order for his critique of imperial or colonial enterprise to work, the native needs to emerge out of the colonial encounter, a victim.

The Sign of the Spider was published some three years prior to Thorstein Veblen's *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899), but like Veblen's study, the novel implies that economic man has evolved along two planes. In Veblen's nomenclature, man harbours an impulse either towards exploitation or drudgery. Veblen points out that in higher forms of civilisation these antithetical instincts survive, finding expression in business and labour respectively. Of the pre-industrial stage of development, he writes:

As the tradition [of a predatory and honorific acquisition of materials] gains consistency, the common sense of the community erects it into a canon of conduct; so that no employment and no acquisition is morally possible to the self-respecting man at this cultural stage, except such as proceeds on the basis of prowess—force or fraud. When the predatory habit of life has been settled upon the group by long habituation, it becomes the able-bodied man's accredited office in the social economy to kill, to destroy such competitors in the struggle for existence as attempt to resist or elude him, to overcome and reduce to subservience those alien forces that assert themselves refractorily in the environment.²⁹

Veblen's remarks might as readily apply to the British Empire – which 'reduce[d]' those 'alien forces' retarding the expropriation of African territories 'to subservience' – as to the Ba-gcatya Kingdom, which similarly destroyed its cannibalistic neighbours in the tribal 'struggle for existence'. Intersecting the higher and lower civilisations, Stanninghame is the instrument through which the instinct of exploitation is revealed to be alike in both the savage and the colonial entrepreneur: the latter, in Mitford's words, a 'product of the highest *fin-de-siècle* civilisation' (217). In the honorific culture of the tribe, Stanninghame's bourgeois accomplishments – his profit-instinct and experience of game-hunting for instance – made him 'quite a favourite with the nation' (165). Veblen points out that hunting and fighting are '[b]oth of a predatory nature [with] the warrior and the hunter alike reap[ing] where they have not strewn' (28). Because capitalism

²⁷ Since it wasn't until the nineteenth-century that the term *homo economicus* was coined this application is anachronistic. However, in the sense that it communicates the idea of rational, self-interested actors motivated on the basis of economic gain it is applicable to the kinds of economic behaviour that Pearlman and others observe in *Crusoe*.

²⁸ Gerald Monsman, 'Introduction' in Bertram Mitford, ed. by Gerald Monsman, *The Sign of the Spider* (Kansas: Valancourt, 2008), pp. vii-xxi (p. viii)

²⁹ Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (London: Unwin, 1953), p.29

similarly works to deprive the worker of the products of his labour, it is clear to see how, in Veblen's theory, this principle further applies to industrial communities. Indeed, that Stanninghame's skill in the hunt translates to a financially profitable slave-hunting operation, is consistent with Veblen's idea of a single, enduring predatory impulse.

Attuned to evolutionary economics, Mitford, like Veblen, implies that social life has tended to foment the polar instincts of exploit and drudgery. Taking account of the (im)morality of his enterprise, Stanninghame remarks that: '[i]t was himself or them, and he preferred that it should be them. Preyer or preyed upon—such was the iron immutable law of life, from man in his highest development to the minutest of insects; and with this law he was but complying, not in wanton cruelty, but in cold, passive ruthlessness' (133). Pertinently, though Kilgour's engagement with evolutionary theory is fleeting, she conflates the concept of possessive individualism with 'survival of the fittest'. She points out that in the 'world of possessive individuals [...] relations involving the crossing of individual boundaries are interpreted as acts of violation. All exchanges are regarded as governed by self-interest, which is ultimately the law of the survival of the fittest' (174-5). That is to say, because possessive individualism suggests the total opposition between self (schematised as property) and others, it mirrors the constitutional antagonism implied by 'survival of the fittest', involving, as it does, the opposition between 'eater and eaten', 'victor and victim' etc. The tendency to organise experience into binary oppositions is evident in Stanninghame's Veblenian 'Preyer or preyed upon' antithesis, but elsewhere, in-line with Kilgour, he deploys binaries that explore the ontological fluidity between life and material property. As Mitford points out, Stanninghame had 'got into the habit of thinking there are but two states, death and Johannesburg' (17). Johannesburg of course, built in the midst of the gold rush, is the metonymic representative of wealth and prosperity but it also communicates the possibility of financial ruin and death (and indeed, Stanninghame considers suicide when his investments plummet). With its fatal lure, the South African city has the capacity to propel aspirational incomers to dizzying heights of wealth and comfort, or to consume, break and dispose of life and this largely depends on economic 'fitness'. Likewise, these binary structures or antitheses filter down in the novel's vernacular phraseology. Stanninghame complains to Hazon: 'I'm broke, stony broke, and it's more than ever a case of stealing away to hang oneself in a well. I tell you squarely, I'd walk into the jaws of the devil himself to effect the capture of the oof-bird' (77). 'Stony-broke' and 'stony hearted', Stanninghame's professed deficit is expressed both as financial hardship and anatomical, emotional deprivation. For Stanninghame, to be 'stony', to be bereft of money, is at once to be dispossessed of life, of the means of living. Indeed, 'stony broke' is a *fin-de-siècle* permutation, the first recorded use of the term appearing in R. C. Lehmann's *Harry Fludyer at Cambridge* (1890).³⁰ Originally published in *Punch*, Lehmann's comic university sketch was widely disseminated, his

³⁰ 'Pat said he was stoney or broke or something but he gave me a sov', R.C Lehmann, *Harry Fludyer at Cambridge*, quoted in *OED*

slang and colloquial dialogue being popular with his readership.³¹ ‘Stony’ evidently needed little explanation, despite this being ostensibly its first foray into print. The term accentuates the ‘thingness’, the essential materialism of the condition of financial and bodily deficit. Moreover, the primeval resonance of ‘stony’, evocative of ‘stone-age’, atavism and the un-evolved nature of things implies primal exploitation in the manner of Veblen. Mitford’s 1894 novel, *Renshaw Fanning’s Quest*, adds another potential meaning to the term ‘stony’. An adventure tale in which two down-at-heel Englishmen go in search of the mythic Eye of the Valley diamond, the novel includes an explanatory note (Mitford’s own), to indicate that ‘stone’ is “‘Diamond” in digger parlance’.³² In this way, stony implies a further binary in the opposition of wealth and deficit.

I would like, briefly, to suggest that in *Renshaw Fanning* Mitford deploys the diamond quest to launch a critique of the European conflict over African territories. In the novel, the titular protagonist, Renshaw, is sabotaged by his companion, Maurice Sellon, in their quest for the valuable Eye of the Valley diamond. Escaping with the prize and Fanning’s prospective lover, Sellon leaves his comrade dying to lead a life of luxury in New Zealand (231). Rewarding these merciless, predatory activities with immeasurable wealth, success and freedom, Mitford exposes the systemic flaw that cultivates and privileges economic predators. Yet Mitford’s narratives have implications beyond their evolutionary discourses. Describing how Dirk, Renshaw’s ‘Koranna’ (Khoekhoe) servant, tends to his master after Sellon had abandoned him, Mitford writes:

His comrade – the white man – his friend and equal – had deserted him – had left him alone in that desert waste to die, and this runaway servant of his – the degraded and heathen savage clung to him in his extremity, watched him by his side ready to defend him if necessary at the cost of his own life. (231)

The ‘degraded, heathen savage’, unequal in wealth, civilisation and Christian wisdom, is endowed with nobility far in excess of that evidenced by the entrepreneurial white man. Though in reality Dirk inhabits the same economic milieu as Renshaw, in Mitford’s romantic primitivism the Khoekhoe servant is positioned in a conceptually anterior state of economic nature. In this way Mitford allegorises capitalistic ‘development’ which, like Sellon, is ruthless in its pursuit of economic gain. Indeed, Dirk occupies the state Veblen describes as ‘peaceable savagery’; that is, the moment preceding the onset of a predatory phase of life. According to Veblen, until the conditions of material life produce through their industry ‘a margin worth fighting for’, a group maintains this state of peaceful co-existence.³³ Sellon initially exhibits a more noble spirit in assisting Fanning, then a relative stranger, through a life-threatening malarial fever. However, once

³¹In the *London Illustrated News* and other papers the sketch was declared a hilarious success. James Payn in particular remarked that it was ‘a more accurate and graphic account of the university life of to-day is to be gathered from this little volume...*Harry Fludyer at Cambridge* is really very funny’, quoted in *The Pall Mall Gazette*, January 14 1891, p. 3. The text was later included in the 1902 publication *Slang and its Analogues* for its characteristic use of slang expression (John Farmer and William Henley *Slang and its Analogues Past and Present* (London: Poulter, 1902), p. 273).

³²Bertram Mitford, *Renshaw Fanning’s Quest: A Tale of the High Veldt*, ed. by Gerald Monsman (Chicago: Valancourt, 2007), p.8 Further page references to this novel are given after quotations in the text.

³³Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, p. 30 & p.32

the question of capital gain arises, relations between the men assume a hostile, more predatory character. Mitford would certainly have been aware that in representing these men, equals and neighbours divided by the question of financial gain, he was troping fratricidal British-Boer relations. Indeed just prior to the publication of the novel, the situation in South Africa had reached a new level of intensity. Chamberlain, formerly in opposition to the annexation of Britain with the Transvaal, had, by the 1880s realised the imperative political and economic need, as Iain Smith points out, to ‘curb the expansionist tendencies of the Transvaal Republic’.³⁴ The Transvaal’s violation of the London convention and the arrival of Germany, also exhibiting territorial aspirations, put pressure on the Colonial Office to secure Britain’s economic interests in South Africa. The discovery of gold between the years 1885-1895, amplified the importance of the Transvaal, and resulted in a number of invidious and antagonistic exchanges between and the British and Kruger governments. Whilst the events of Jameson Raid³⁵ did not take place until a year succeeding the publication of *Renshaw Fannings Quest*, the narrative is very evidently coloured by the tensions leading immediately up to it:

They stood there facing each other – there on the brink of that marvellous treasure house – on the brink, too, of a deadly quarrel over the riches which it had yielded to them. To the generous mind of one there was something infinitely repulsive – degrading – in the idea of quarrelling over this question of gain. (201)

Metaphorically and literally ‘on the brink’, Fanning and Sellon are positioned in an attitude of mutual aggression, their gaze betraying the dangerous potentialities of capital-violence. A scene of quintessential high-drama, the incident represents for Mitford, a key moment in the economic histories of man. The theoretical possibility of redemption hangs precariously in the balance; the physical space between men is configured as conceptual space in which the question of a peaceable resolution is suspended only to be vanquished as the reality of the depredatory conditions of economic life become apparent. In his introduction to the Valancourt reissue of the novel, Gerald Monsman points out that in situating the scene in the natural world, an environment heedless to manmade constructions of value, Mitford renders the excavation of diamonds a spurious enterprise; an enterprise that, like a disease, spreads its corrupting influence. He remarks that the ‘evil in this “devil’s eye” which turns Sellon into “judas” is the product of European commodity fetishism that, in contrast to the diamond’s setting in nature, imparts to it the diminished status of a mere saleable object’.³⁶ And indeed, throughout Mitford’s *oeuvre*, a feverish longing for wealth recurs, a revenant inhabiting distinct entities texts and contexts and vocalising Mitford’s distaste for the grasping hand of the Western consumer. Monsman’s focus on the scene revolves around the plight of the

³⁴ Iain R. Smith, *The Origins of the South African War, 1899-1902* (London: Longman, 1996), p.75

³⁵ On 29 December 1895, Leander Starr Jameson (1853-1917), a colonial statesman representing Britain’s interests at the Cape, attempted a raid on the Transvaal republic of South Africa. ‘The Jameson raid’, which was ultimately unsuccessful, came to be known as one of the great *faux pas* of Lord Salisbury’s Colonial office and is believed to have been a contributing factor to the Second Boer War. See R.C.K. Ensor, *England 1870-1914* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936), pp.226-7

³⁶ Gerald Monsman, ‘Introduction’ in Bertram Mitford, *Renshaw Fanning’s Quest: A Tale of the High Veldt*, ed. by Gerald Monsman (Chicago: Valancourt, 2007), p. xxi

individual in the ‘spiritually emasculated society’ of the West, but one surely feels it is the fate of Nations and not merely of individuals that are presaged in this climatic altercation.³⁷ In fact, the Valley of the Eye, located alongside the Orange River, seems to be the fictional counterpart of Hopetown, the diamond-rich territory secured by the British following the Keate award of 1871. Despotising indigenous, Orange state, and Transvaal rule in order to secure economic dominance for the Cape Colony, the British, like Sellon, seize their prize by force or by legerdemain.

Severed Heads

In existing studies of Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* (1899), much critical ink has been spilled over the significance of the severed heads that surround Kurtz’s outpost. As Richard E. Firchow points out, literary critics have generally adopted one of two positions; either they are to be ‘understood in the context of contemporaneous Congolese tribal tradition [as a] “symbolic” expression of a chief’s power’ or they are regarded ‘as gruesome manifestations of Kurtz’s own private genocidal impulses [and] the genocidal nature of the Western imperial power that had [...] sent him to the heart of Africa to do its bidding’.³⁸ Of course, one might argue the same critical breach emerges out of Mitford’s treatment of tribal decapitation. To the contrary, I would like to suggest that Mitford encodes ritual beheading as a grotesque counterpart of Western instruments of power via allusions to the guillotine. At first sight, Mitford’s depiction of severed heads corresponds with Conrad’s. The cannibals’ tribal gateway, which is ‘decorated with a complete archway of human heads’, prefigures the ‘heads on stakes’ ornamenting Kurtz’s habitation and the dried black head ‘smiling continuously at some jocose dream’ on Kurtz’s outpost, resembles ‘the white bleached skull grinning dolefully’ on the gate of Mitford’s cannibal dwelling (100).³⁹ However, where Conrad complicates the severed head motif by linking it to the dictatorial ambitions of a white colonist (my own position in relation to Firchow’s critical bifurcation is thus clear), Mitford deploys the severed head to schematise the legalised killing that frequently occurs in Western culture as a sanitised version of ritualistic tribal dismemberment. Before engaging Stanninghame for his slaving expedition, Hazon inquires

“[...]Ever seen a man’s head cut off?”

“Two”

“So? Where was that?” said Hazon, ever so faintly surprised at receiving an affirmative reply.

“In Paris. A Press friend of mine had to go and see two fellows guillotined, and managed to work me in with him. We were as close to the machine as it was possible to get.” (77)

The instrument of the guillotine, alongside Stanninghame’s voyeuristic participation in the spectacle of execution, gesture towards revolutionary France where, as I explained in Chapter One,

³⁷ Ibid., p. xxi

³⁸ Peter E. Firchow, *Envisioning Africa: Racism and Imperialism in Conrad’s Heart of Darkness* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2000), p.113

³⁹ Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, ed. by Robert Hampson (London: Penguin, 1995), p.94

execution by guillotine was ritualised as an almost sacramental rite. As Daniel Arasse and others have explained, guillotine ‘execution[s] [were] meticulously staged’ involving, as they did, a set, actors and audience.⁴⁰ Because of its theatricality, Mitford is able to establish a kind of equivalence between the guillotine and similarly performative tribal decapitations. Later scenes of ritual dismemberment likewise echo revolutionary violence. Following a skirmish with the Ba-gcatya, for instance, the rival tribesmen decapitated the corpses of their victims and [t]he heads [...] stuck upon spear points, were borne aloft above the rabble’ much like aristocratic heads on pikes (122); to these trophies, Mitford continues, ‘all sorts of mockeries [were] addressed’ (122). Probably because Mitford and Zola share the same historical reference-point, this scene resembles the dismemberment of Maigrat in *Germinal*. After Maigrat falls, fatally, from his roof, it may be recalled that the wives of the striking colliers castrated his corpse. Like Mitford’s tribesmen, Ma Brûlé, ‘stuck the whole thing on the end of her stick, raised it high and carried it like a standard down the street, followed like a rout of shrieking women’.⁴¹ Of course, the difficulty of this reading is that in the imperial romance, apparently legitimate allusions to the French Revolution are friable because the Revolution’s own iconography exploits the motifs of savagery and cannibalism (as Carlyle, in his history of the French Revolution, demonstrates).⁴² However, with explicit textual references to the Revolution, it is clear that the symbolism of dismemberment is reflexive in Mitford’s novels, opening up a dialogue between tribal cannibalism and revolutionary violence. Noting the caprice of disciplinary violence, Mitford’s 1894 tale, *The Luck of Gerard Ridgeley*, provides a useful exemplar of this interaction. Ridgeley, a captive of the Igazipuza people, encounters the tribe’s ‘rock of slaughter’ variously referred to as ‘The Tooth’ and ‘the tooth that eats’.⁴³ Ridgeley ‘contemplated [the rock] much as a Liberty, Equality and Fraternity “citizen” during the thick of the Reign of Terror, may have contemplated the guillotine, as an institution with which he might any day be called upon to cultivate a much closer acquaintance’.⁴⁴ There are obvious resonances between ‘The Horror’ – the title of Chapter Twenty-seven in *The Sign as the Spider* (though it is now mostly associated with *Heart of Darkness*) – and ‘The Terror’. More significantly, though, the ‘toothsome’ rock on which tribal justice is delivered, supports an oral appellation that is analogous to the guillotine’s own; that is, the devouring mouth. Indeed, of the guillotine, the philosopher, historian and critic, Hippolyte Taine remarked: ‘the mouth grows more ravenous each day and needs a more ample feast of human flesh’ and similarly, as Eli Sagan

⁴⁰ Daniel Arasse, *The Guillotine and the Terror*, trans. by Christopher Miller (London: Allen Lane, 1989), p.88

⁴¹ Zola, *Germinal*, p.351.

⁴² The journalist, Jacques Hébert, for instance remarked that Marie Antoinette should be ‘chopped up like meat for paté in revenge for all the bloodshed she had caused’. Quoted in Eli Sagan, *Citizens and Cannibals: The French Revolution, the Struggle for Modernity, and the Origins of Ideological Terror* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001), p.349. In volume 3 of *The French Revolution: A History* (1794), Carlyle, for instance, remarks: ‘is man’s civilisation only a wrappage, through which the savage nature of him can still burst [...]?’ Thomas Carlyle, *The French Revolution: A History*, ed. by John Holland Rose, 3 vols. (London: George Bell and Sons, 1902), III, p.189.

⁴³ Bertram Mitford, *The Luck of Gerard Ridgeley: A Tale of the Zulu Border* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1894), p.159-160

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 160

reports, during the Terror a ‘member of the *République* section in Paris excited the meeting of its general assembly, declaring: “The guillotine is hungry, it’s ages she had something to eat”’.⁴⁵ We might also consider that in some eighteenth and nineteenth-century illustrations, the guillotine appeared as a *vagina dentata*, sharing obvious parallels with ‘tooth that eats’.⁴⁶

It would seem clear, then, that Mitford intended ritual tribal violence to be read as a forerunner of the primitivism that survives in mechanisms of Western discipline, but what implications do Mitford’s allusions to the Revolution in France have for a discussion of *fin-de-siècle* economics? I would argue there are multiple. Associated with Enlightenment principles of citizenship and democracy, the French Revolution is generally regarded as the dawn of the modern era. For Kant, though revolution was a violation of the ‘social contract’, the French people’s sympathetic spectatorship was a historical ‘sign’ ‘that mankind [was] improving’.⁴⁷ However, as a number of nineteenth-century commentators have remarked, one of the main contradictions of the Revolution was that though it was intended to deliver social progress, revolutionary violence was atavistic. Consistent with the rebel’s primitive justice, an economy of spectatorship emerged around Revolutionary beheadings with Phillipe Curtius, employer of Anna Tussaud (then Grosholtz), operating a profitable waxworks on boulevard du temple which displayed models of the severed heads of the enemies of the Revolution. With such a public appetite for these grotesque replicas, Tussaud is alleged to have foraged through decapitated corpses to find noteworthy heads to copy. Thus susceptible to the laws of supply and demand, Curtius’s venture required the investment of real somatic capital (and often at short notice; as Pamela Pilbeam points out, Tussaud was often obliged to take impressions of the severed heads immediately they were excised).⁴⁸ Harvesting their heads from the bodies of their adversaries, the cannibal tribesmen’s enterprise is of the same general constitution; both involve honorific acquisitions (and the associated spectacle), and both exploit the raw material of the human body. Mitford was profoundly aware of the body’s presence in the processes of production and economic exchange (as his focus on the ethics of slavery attests). In *The Sign of the Spider*, Stanninghame is guilty of the same morbid craft as his tribal counterparts. In the lair of the spider-god, subjecting human skeletons to ‘the most ruthless desecration’, he constructs a mace of the most ‘serviceable bones’: an article that, on his return to England, is kept in a locked cabinet with his other ‘trophies and curios’ (205, 235). According to Veblen, in primitive cultures, the acquisition of honorific objects indicates that the community has passed from ‘peaceable savagery to a predatory phase of life’:

⁴⁵ Cited in Marie-Hélène Huet, *Morning Glory: The Will of the French Revolution* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), p. 153. Sagan, *Citizens and Cannibals*, p.349

⁴⁶ See Jo Anna Isaak, *Feminism and Contemporary Art: The Revolutionary Power of Women’s Laughter* (London: Routledge, 1996), p.190

⁴⁷ Immanuel Kant, ‘The Contest of Faculties’, in *Kant: Political Writings*, ed. by H.S. Reiss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970; repr. 1991), pp.176-190 (p.181)

⁴⁸ Pamela Pilbeam, *Madame Tussaud and the History of Waxworks* (London: Hambledon and London, 2003), p.42

[t]he activity of men more and more takes on the character of exploit; and invidious comparison of one hunter or warrior with another grows continually easier and more habitual. Tangible evidences of prowess – trophies – find a place in men’s habits of thought as an essential feature of the paraphernalia of life. Booty, trophies of the chase or of the raid, come to be prized as evidence of preëminent force.⁴⁹

It is on the survivals of the primitive instinct of exploit that Veblen’s theory of ‘conspicuous consumption’ is predicated with the ‘specialised consumption of goods’ in contemporary civilisation providing ‘evidence of pecuniary strength’.⁵⁰ In a similar way, Mitford implies that modernity (of which, in the periodisation of modern history, the French Revolution is so conspicuously an exemplar) does little to change the conditions of pecuniary emulation but simply to sanitise them (as, in Julia Kristeva’s words, the guillotine itself was said to make ‘death cleaner and more modern!’).⁵¹ In this complex interaction between tribal savagery, revolutionary violence and *fin-de-siècle* colonialism, Mitford demonstrates that though the expropriation of the human body might change character in the conditions of modernity (as the socialists had demonstrated in their concept of wage-slavery), we are all of us – savages, revolutionaries and entrepreneurs – cannibals in respect to the ruthless antagonism that constitutes economic life.

Because, as Lynn A. Hunt points out, Louis XVI was ‘represented as the father of his people’, the sacrifice of the king has been read as an act of ritual patricide.⁵² That Mitford intended the tribesmen’s own parricidal cannibalism as a coded reference to the Revolution seems optimistic but nonetheless, in the same way that Revolutionary patricide points to a ‘fraternity’ manifesto of economic and administrative reform, the tribesmen’s parricide communicates the structural constitution of the tribal economy and one that in the eyes of the colonising white man, bears invidious comparison to Western imperialism. On approaching the cannibal dwelling, Stanninghame observes that ‘not one there present [...] appears to have attained old age’ (100). The reason, it becomes clear, is that ‘those who are most active in at any rate preparing them [the victims] for the slaughter, are their own children – *their own sons*’ [original emphasis] (101). Rationalising the tribesmen’s apparent absence of pity, Mitford remarks ‘[w]ill not their own turn come in the course of years, should they not be slain in battle or the chase in the interim? Of course. Why then heed such vain sentiment? It is the custom’ (100). Since it offers a suggestive paradigm of the ambivalence inevitably associated with endocannibalism (that is, the practice of eating one’s relations), Freud’s *Totem and Taboo* (1913) is worth consideration here. Freud’s researches indicate that the primitive fraternal tribe grew up from the exiled men of the patriarchal horde (a social group presided by ‘a jealous father who keeps all the females for himself’).⁵³ Making ‘an end’ to the horde, the fraternal tribesmen had conspired to kill their primal father:

⁴⁹ Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, p. 30

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p.60

⁵¹ Julia Kristeva, *The Severed Head: Capital Visions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), p.92

⁵² Lynn A. Hunt, *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), p.8

⁵³ Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo and Other Works*, Trans. by James Strachey, 24 Vols. (London: Vintage, 2001), XIII, 141

Cannibal savages as they were, it goes without saying that they devoured their victim as well as killing him. The violent primal father had doubtless been the feared and envied model of each one of the company of brothers: and in the act of devouring him they accomplished their identification with him, and each one acquired a portion of his strength.⁵⁴

Because it involves the concurrent identification with, and aggression towards, the father, the consumption of his body is intensely ambivalent. Mitford's own scene of patricide harbours the same paradox; after all, 'the custom' of the tribe requires that tribal elders symbolically *re-enter* the community via the act of cannibalism but at the same time, like Freud's totem meal, the feast gestures towards oedipal conflict. Acting out their castrative fantasy, the ascendant sons 'watch the cooking of the disjointed members' with much laughter and shouting while the tribe's women, who do not appear to partake of the feast, collect the 'bones and refuse being flung' at them (101). As a converted Catholic, Mitford would have been aware of the symbolic correspondences between the cannibalistic consumption of tribal elders and the Eucharist. As Kilgour explains, from the time of 1215 Fourth Lateran Council, where the 'real presence' was defined as the established doctrine of the Church, 'outsiders' often figured devotees as cannibals: a motif that gained force in later, anti-Catholic discourses (83). Kilgour points out that in sixteenth-century England, Protestant reformers 'cleverly push[ed] the sacrament to grotesque extremes unimaginable to most Catholics', making 'their own position appear as the only alternative to those who did not wish to be cannibals'. She continues:

This strategy of self-definition against a projected alien group is a version of "colonial discourse," the construction of the savage cannibal as antithesis of civilised man used as a justification for cultural cannibalism that emerged with the discoveries of the New World. (83)

Whatever Mitford's racial biases may have been, he is acutely aware of the ideological power of cannibalism in Western colonial discourses and he consistently seeks to emphasise the hypocrisy of European indictments of the practice. Though the consumption of tribal elders is figured as a monstrous derivation of Eucharistic ritual, the slaver's capital-violence gives rise to a veritable inferno. The assailants taunt their captives: '[b]id farewell to home, O foul and evil dogs who devour each other', but it is their own cupidity or profit-instinct that transforms the already grotesque scene of tribal dismemberment into a genocidal bloodbath (104). Mitford writes that the assailants' weapons 'shear down through flesh and muscle; and the earth is slippery with blood, ghastly with writhing and disembowelled corpses' (102). In the aftermath: '[e]verywhere blood. The ground is slippery with it, the huts are splashed with it, the persons and weapons of the raiders are all horrid with it' (104). In Chapter One, I briefly examined Vernon Lee's 1915 pacifist allegory, *The Ballet of the Nations*, suggesting that the rhetoric of cannibalism, blood and dismemberment were central to the way Lee imagined imperial rivalries during the First World War. Because the international competition for foreign territory, which had been the cause of the

⁵⁴ Ibid., pp.141-2

conflict in South Africa during the 1890s, was also one of the major causes of the World War (again, particularly in Africa where German occupation was generally believed to present a threat to Britain's sea-links with the Empire), it is worth pausing to consider the parallels between Mitford's and Lee's response to these imperial pressures.⁵⁵ Citing the territorial conflicts contributing to the war, Lee's allegory begins:

with the end of the proverbially *bourgeois* Victorian age, there set in a revival of taste, and therefore of this higher form of art, combining, as it does, the truest classical tradition with the romantic attractions of the best Middle Ages. In South Africa and in the Far East [...] the well-known Ballet-Master Death had staged some of his vastest and most successful productions.

“It is time,” said Satan, the Lessee of the World, to “re-open the theatre of the West [...]”⁵⁶

Set to the ‘cannibal music of the Companions of Sin’— which includes such players as ‘Self-interest’, ‘Rapine’, ‘Lust’ and ‘Idealism’— the ballet plays out; under the superintendence of their governments, the Nations, lop ‘each others’ limbs’ and blind ‘one another with spirits of blood and pellets of human flesh’.⁵⁷ Like Mitford, who imagines the colonial entrepreneur bequeathing to the country a devastation of blood-sodden earth and dismembered corpses, Lee describes a ‘slippery and reeking stage’ where the bodies of the Nations are reduced to a ‘living jelly of blood and trampled flesh’.⁵⁸ Lee too, identifies the French Revolution as a symbolic forerunner to the violence carried out in the name of national self-interest. Addressing ‘Heroism’, Satan declares that the French Revolution Ballet ‘was the finest Ballet hitherto with the Marat theme in Paris and the Hoche theme on the frontier’.⁵⁹ Though writing nineteen years apart (and in different literary traditions) both Mitford and Lee are responsive to the sense of ending implied, on the one hand, by the close of the century (*fin de siècle*, *fin du globe*) and on the other, the onset of world war, advancing what I suggest might be read as an example of imperial eschatology. As I will point out in Chapter 3, Lee's application of Christian tropes is invariably profane and so it is in *The Ballet of the Nations*, with ‘that creative connoisseur’, Satan, adopting the rhetoric of Genesis to admire his

⁵⁵ James Joll points out the threat posed by Germany was, at the beginning of the war, generally believed to be one addressed to Britain's ‘freedom of the seas’; ‘the extension of the Empire only became once more a possibility after the outbreak of the war, with the conquest of German's African colonies and especially for the plans for the partition of the Ottoman Empire [...]’ James Joll, *The Origins of the First World War* (London: Longman, 1984), p. 154

⁵⁶ Vernon Lee, ‘The Ballet of the Nations’, in *Women's Writing on the First World War*, ed. by Agnès Cardinal, Dorothy Goldman, and Judith Hattaway (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 234-244. (pp.234-5)

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p.238, p.236 & p.241 Respectively

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.242 & p.241 Respectively.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 239 Lee is referring to the Revolutionary journalist, Jean-Paul Marat (1743-93) who, in his paper *L'Ami du peuple*, endorsed an attack on prisoners incarcerated in Parisian gaols. He famously proclaimed ‘[I]et the blood of the traitors flow. That is the only way to save the country.’ These killings, which occurred in September 1792, came to be known as the September Massacres. General Lazare Hoche (1768-97), had been a private in the *Gardes-françaises* and in 1795, leading Republican troops, he defeated *émigré* forces that participated in a Royalist insurrection in the South of France. Over 700 of the prisoners were shot for high treason. Christopher Hibbert, *The French Revolution* (London: Penguin, 1980; repr. 1982), p.169 & p.281

bloody creation; he ‘rejoiced in his work and saw that it was very good’.⁶⁰ As I have intimated, for Mitford, the colonial encounter has similarly biblical (though not satiric) resonances. The scene of conflict between savage and slave-hunter was ‘blasted by the flame of satanic fires’ and like Revelation-ary apocalypse, the Elements sit in judgement of the iniquitous beings, ‘drunken with the blood’ (Rev.17:6) of their fellow man (100). For instance, ‘the moon soaring high in the heavens looks down, with a gibing sneer in her cold cruel face, upon this scene of a shocking human shambles’ (102). While the political eschatology of the medieval era – which used biblical narratives to justify imperial ends as a pre-ordained scheme of human salvation – the imperial eschatology that I am suggesting characterises Lee’s and Mitford’s *critique* of Western imperialism, imagines international conflict as a mutilative end-of-days or biblical apocalypse.⁶¹

Because Mitford and Lee imagine capital-violence at the imperial frontier as eschatological – that is to say, the aesthetic of these scenes exploits (and in Lee’s case, subverts) biblical images of blood and apocalypse and the associated idea of ‘final things’ – it is helpful to consider Derrida’s critique of *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992) which schematises Fukuyama’s proclamation of the triumph of liberal democracy as ‘Christian eschatology’ in ways that I will argue are inverse to the imperial eschatologies of Mitford and Lee.⁶² Though Derrida reluctantly concedes that ‘the book is not as bad or as naive as one might be led to think by the frenzied exploitation that exhibits it as the finest ideological showcase of victorious capitalism in a liberal democracy which has finally arrived at the plenitude of its ideal’, he is scathing about the method by which Fukuyama arrives at the idea of a liberal-democratic final term.⁶³ Derrida implies that Fukuyama’s use of the ‘biblical figures’ of ‘the Promised Land’ and ‘good news story’ reveal a Judeo-Christian bias which has led to a conceptual slippage between historical reality (the historical record, in fact, reveals that the age of ‘terror oppression, repression, extermination [and] genocide’ is not over) and ‘ideal finality’.⁶⁴ Derrida argues that ‘depending on how it works to his

⁶⁰ Lee, ‘The Ballet of the Nations’, p.241

⁶¹ Dimiter Angelov and Judith Herrin suggest that in the medieval period ‘Christianity [...] fuelled ideas of empire and political universalism through aspects of its teaching about the end of the world’. ‘Byzantine authors’ for instance, saw their own empire as Daniel’s fourth Kingdom’. As Angelov and Herrin explain, in the ‘dream vision of Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 2:27-43)’ the king apprehends a statue which breaks down and is reformed in the image of ‘a great mountain filling the earth’. In Daniel’s interpretation, ‘the various parts of the statue were four great kingdoms which would rise in succession’ and the fourth of these ‘would persist until the end of time’. Dimiter Angelov and Judith Herrin, ‘The Christian Imperial Tradition – Greek and Latin’, in *Universal Empire: A Comparative Approach to Imperial Culture and Representation in European History*, ed. by Peter Fibiger Bang and Dariusz Kołodziejczyk (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp.149-174 (p.171)

In this way, the authors participate in a broader dissident political trend of representing European conflict as a coming cataclysm. In a letter to *The Times*, for instance, one concerned civilian remarks of the Eastern Question that ‘the reason, and the only reason why [all the European nations] are all intriguing and scheming for special alliances [is] to secure support in some coming Armageddon’ and Frederick Ferrar, preaching a service, about South African interests at Canterbury Cathedral, questions ‘what should the result of an Armageddon struggle of the nations, which, apart from some special provision of Providence, could not be long delayed?’. Argyll, ‘The Eastern Question: A Letter to the Editor of The Times’, *The Times*, 28 October 1896, p.6 & *The Times*, ‘The Imperial Yeomanry Hospital, 5 February 1900, p.10

⁶² Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of Debt, the Work of Mourning & the New International*, Trans. by Peggy Kamuf (New York and London: Routledge, 1994), p.60

⁶³ Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, p.56

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 57

advantage and serves his thesis, Fukuyama defines liberal democracy here as an actual reality and there as a simple ideal'.⁶⁵ Moreover, Derrida points out that Fukuyama follows Hegel by conceptualising the liberal state as a messianic coming of god into the world according to the French Revolutionary model of 'self-mastery'; indeed Fukuyama remarks that '[t]he modern liberal democratic state that came into being in the aftermath of the French Revolution was, simply, the realization of the Christian ideal of freedom and universal human equality [...]'⁶⁶ Inevitably, for Derrida, the stumbling block of Fukuyama's 'neo-testamentary' declaration of the 'ideal orientation' towards free markets and liberal democracy, is that neither Europe nor the United States have achieved this 'universal state'. The 'problematics' of foreign debt, pauperisation and overproduction, for instance, undermine the 'ideality' of Fukuyama's eschatology and it is thus that Derrida finds a way in for Marxism. For while Marxism itself contains an 'emancipatory promise' (and is in this way a messianic eschatology without religion), its materialist analysis of economic activity and 'logic of antagonisms' are, contrary to estimation of Fukuyama's thesis, indispensable.⁶⁷ Fukuyama suggests that the French Revolution displaced the hegemonic model of lordship and bondage (monarchy and aristocracy, for instance) with a form of universal Hegelian 'recognition'. Mitford and Lee were not quite so optimistic about the implications of the Revolution, choosing instead to focus on the tyranny enacted in its name. Their application of biblical figures stresses that the *telos* of economic development is an inferno vision of capital-violence in the manner of the Revelations; presided, in Lee's allegory, by Satan (to whom the people worship and call by the name God) and, in Mitford's novel, by a scornful moon that looks down upon the 'shocking human shambles' with a 'gibing sneer', these scenes of blood and dismemberment imply that far from a Promised Land of liberal democracy, the final-term of economic and political progress is an enlarged (international) arena for the exercise of economic self-interest.

For Mitford, the expansion of the predatory instinct into the spaces of empire is proto-Veblenian but I would like to conclude by suggesting that Derrida's reading of Marx is complementary to this. Written in the aftermath of Soviet communism and, as we have seen, shortly after Fukuyama's declaration of liberal democracy as a final term of political and economic progress, *Specters of Marx* (1994) attempts to retrieve ('inherit', in Derrida's phraseology) Marxism from the margins of collective memory. Likewise, writing at the height of *fin-de-siècle* civilisation, Mitford is conscious of both the fragility of the historical record and the survivals of invidious interest assumed, according to the Western narrative of progress, to belong to an evolutionary past. In the preface to his 1893 novel *The Gunrunner*, Mitford writes:

If our narrative deals with history, it is with a vanishing page of the same; and as such we look to it to interest the reader, if only as a sidelight upon the remarkable military power and ultimate downfall of the finest and most intelligent race of savages in all the world—

⁶⁵ Ibid., pp.62-3

⁶⁶ Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (London: Penguin, 1992), p.199

⁶⁷ Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, pp.63-4

now thanks to the 'beneficent' policy of England, crushed and 'civilized' out of all recognition.⁶⁸

The reality of Britain's interference in South Africa vanishes ghost-like into the annals of the past. A 'sidelight', Mitford's fiction illuminates the oblique perspective of *fin-de-siècle* imperial politics; it conjures the apparitional presence of the predatory foreign policies that saw African nations forced into bondage. Mitford's desire to disrupt the illusion of Britain's 'beneficent' patronage of occupied South Africa is, according to Derrida's theory, integral to the act of inheriting, for 'if the readability of a legacy were given, natural, transparent, unequivocal, if it did not call for and at the same time defy interpretation we would never have anything to inherit from it'.⁶⁹ The legacy of Western imperialism makes for a ghastly bequest but one that, through his alignment of tribal cannibalism and the figurative man-eating of Western colonialism, Mitford does much to inherit. Aptly enough, Mitford himself relies on Marxian metaphors (for, as Chapter One demonstrates, the vampire and the cannibal are central to Marx's dramatisation of capitalistic exploitation) but unlike Marx, who imagined capitalist 'savagery' as a necessary, but barbarous step towards social revolution, Mitford supports no such teleology. A Catholic, Mitford embeds his prose with allusions to biblical damnation and in the primeval spaces of empire, Western capitalism and its counterpart, imperial enterprise, through their participation in the mutilative practice of the savage natives, reveal themselves incorrigibly fallen. In Chapter Three, I move away from *fin-de-siècle* imperial politics to consider how the kinds of appetitive motif that describe the vampire-like or cannibalistic character of Mitford's colonial encounter, articulate, in the writing of Henry James and Vernon Lee, violations within the domestic or social economy.

⁶⁸Bertram Mitford, Preface, *The Gunrunner* (1893), quoted in Gerald Monsman's introduction to Mitford's *Renshaw Fanning's Quest* (Chicago: Valancourt, 2007), pp.vii-xiv (p. xv)

⁶⁹Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, p. 1

3

‘That Odd Double-Graspingness of Nature’: Parasitical Intimacies in the Writing of Henry James and Vernon Lee¹

The irony implied in the title of this chapter will not be lost on those familiar with the personal and professional relationship of the contemporaries, Henry James and Vernon Lee. In demonstrating that James’s and Lee’s representation of social life is heavily predicated on the idea of parasitism, the mutual appropriations that troubled their own literary relationship are impossible to overlook. Geraldine Murphy, for instance, points out that James owed the ‘*donnée*’ of his novella *The Aspern Papers* (1888) to Lee and her half-brother (Eugene Lee-Hamilton) though curiously enough, in his preface to the novella ‘James goes to great syntactical lengths *not* to credit his source’.² As a response to this, Lee – who much to James’s embarrassment made him the dedicatee of her novel, *Miss Brown* – lampooned the novelist in her 1892 story ‘Lady Tal’. The tale’s protagonist, Jervase Marion, is a ‘psychological novelist’ and a ‘kind of Henry James’ who undertakes to tutor the aspiring writer, Lady Tal (13-14). Marion exploits the pedagogic scenario for the literary material it affords him, while at the same time remaining quietly critical of his tutee’s potential. There is little doubt that Lee intended Marion and Tal’s relationship to be read as a parody of their own. Indeed, Adeline R. Tintner, who is cited in Murphey’s article, remarks that Lee was indignant about ‘the way [James] greeted her novel and yet fed upon her and her half brother’s ideas’.³ Nevertheless, Lee’s treatment of their relationship in ‘Lady Tal’ implies a reciprocal basis for their intellectual parasitism: ‘Lady Tal, in the first place, was making use of him in the most outrageous way [...] it was only just that he, in his turn, should turn her to profit with equal freedom’ (43). In their fiction, social life is intensely vulnerable to the kinds of parasitical or exploitative impulse that, aptly enough, latterly defined their own literary intercourse.

This chapter explores the ways in which oral or appetitive tropes expose the intrinsic hazards of economic relations between people in James and Lee: specifically, economic relations implied in the fellowship of the sexes and the practice of gift-giving (including the Eucharist, which I regard as a liturgical expansion of the latter). Following Maggie Kilgour, I contend that

¹ Vernon Lee, ‘Lady Tal’, in *Vanitas: Polite Stories* (Doylestown: Wildside Press, nd), pp. 11-84 (p.65) Further page references to this story are given after quotations in the text.

² Geraldine Murphy, ‘Publishing Scoundrels: Henry James, Vernon Lee, and Lady Tal’, *The Henry James Review*, 31 (2010), 280-287 (p.280). As Murphey points out, the *donnée* presented to James was an anecdote told to Lee-Hamilton by Captain Silsbee. The Captain ‘lodged with Claire Clairmont [step-sister of Mary Shelly] in order to acquire valuable papers from his hero Byron’. According to Silsbee ‘a Clairmont niece offered to give him the papers if he would marry her’. p.280

³ Adeline R. Tintner, *Henry James’s Legacy: The Afterlife of his Figure and Fiction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998), p.17 cited in Murphy, ‘Publishing Scoundrels’, p. 283

tropes of eating and orality are symbolically keyed to aggression and, as such, provide both authors with the figurative equipment to describe (economic) violations within domestic or inter-personal intimacies. With Mikhail Bakhtin's analysis of Rabelais in mind, Kilgour remarks that "Man" is fed "at the world's expense". She continues 'the relation between the two terms is not one of reciprocity but one of total opposition, as the eater is not himself in turn eaten but secures his own identity by absorbing the world outside himself'.⁴ For James, as for Lee, reciprocity is *not* at odds with oral aggression (as my analysis of the gift demonstrates, it is complicit with it), but this kind of appetitive drive nonetheless secures individual stability specifically at the expense of other social actors. As I shall argue, Lee gothicises the appetitive motifs already present in New Woman eugenics to negotiate the question of female economic dependency while James explores the oral possibilities of individual subjectivities as they are brought to bear on each other. The authors' preference for motifs associated with eating or consumption stem from divergent impulses but these are deployed in strategically similar ways (which is unsurprising given the intellectual interplay between James and Lee). Since gift-giving is constitutionally equivalent to other 'economic' contracts (including marriage and market transactions) it is a fitting extension to the discussion of parasitical intimacy and more so too because the practice demands an assimilation of what is 'other' (and the potential treacheries this might, in the manner of the Greek gift, involve). It is through the creative 'play of the gift' – to borrow a phrase from Derrida – that the authors destabilise ontological categories associated with giving (donor-beneficiary, alms-acquisition, for example) to reveal the self-interested (and for Lee, patriarchal) conditions that underpin the kind of economic and social praxis that gift-giving is.⁵

1. 'Network of Virtuous Rapacity'⁶

Vividly imagined in the writing of James and Lee, 'social parasitism' is largely schematised as an *economic* violation within domestic relations or intimacies. For Lee, who composed the preface for the Italian version of Charlotte Perkins Gilman's, *Women and Economics* (1898) – an essay reproduced in her own *Gospels of Anarchy* (1908), therein entitled 'The Economic Parasitism of Women' – the theme of sex-parasitism is more explicitly aligned with late nineteenth-century biological and evolutionary discourses. However, in their tendency to regard economic parasitism as a systemic flaw within a broader social network, both authors are confluent in the debt they owe to the nineteenth-century narrative of economic individualism. For both James and Lee, the 'self-maximizing' man of economic relations – the same self-maximizing man of Adam Smith's (later

⁴ Kilgour, *From Communion to Cannibalism*, p.6

⁵ Jacques Derrida, *Given Time: Counterfeit Money*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992; repr. 1994), p. 22

⁶ Vernon Lee, 'The Economic Parasitism of Women' in *Gospels of Anarchy, and Other Contemporary Studies* (London: Unwin, 1908), pp. 263-297 (p.287). Further page references to this essay are given after quotations in the text.

Spencer's) progressive models of individualism and lambasted, in later thinking, as atomistic – features frequently in their prose, exposing social life as a vast nexus of exploitation.⁷ Yet, as I will suggest, both James and Lee exhibit a reluctance to regard the parasitic disposition as explicitly culpable. Rather, the 'economic parasite' arises from, and is produced by, certain inveterate social conditions: conditions summed up in the phrase (taken from Lee's essay): 'network of virtuous rapacity' (287). For the purposes of this analysis, I take this phrase to embody two critical principles. The first of these relates to the 'network'. That is, the conceptualisation of social life as a symbiotic arrangement: an immense, holistic structure on which individual interests are brought to bear. The principle of 'virtuous rapacity' points, either to a kind of inveterate tolerance for parasitic constituents within these social structures – Lee uses the example of man's sacrifice to his parasitic wife (and family): a virtuous impulse that often yields a cost to the larger social unit – or, similarly, to borrow from James, a state of 'blameless egoism': a kind of inculpable selfishness, produced amidst the pressures of an intrinsically exploitative social life.⁸ For example, James's Kate Croy, a parasitic creature – living off the wealth of her aunt and, very nearly, the American heiress, Milly Theale – is launched, blamelessly on her career of parasitism by her egoistic father and sister who, erroneously hold the belief that 'it was through Kate Aunt Maud should be worked'.⁹ Lee's phrase – and the broader ethos enclosing it – evidently succeed George Eliot's own organicist philosophy which, in the Spencerian tradition, regards human lives as operating within a complex network, or social body. In her analysis of Eliot's 'parasitical egotism' Anne-Julia Zwierlein usefully points out that 'Eliot perfected the sensitive web of connections, especially in *Middlemarch* (1871-2), where seemingly detached elements of the social body are shown latently to influence the course of all other elements – in fact multiplying the system's complexity, in the way that parasites [...] generally do'.¹⁰ Zwierlein continues: '[w]hile in Eliot nearly everyone can potentially manifest parasitical tendencies at some time or another, the moral question the novel explores in the languages of biology and parasitology is the relation between egotism and community'.¹¹ For Zwierlein the key instantiation of this attitude occurs in the acclaimed 'microscope' passage where Mrs Cadwallader and her match-making are conceptualised, under the metaphorical 'strong lens', as: 'certain tiniest hairlets which make vortices for these victims while the swallower waits passively at his receipt of custom'.¹² Mediated by her passivity, by the effective want of *mens rea*, Mrs Cadwallader's rapacious enterprise exemplifies the complex vicissitudes of egoism and benevolence, individual and community that, according to Zwierlein, operate under the direction of Eliot's 'web' motif. The first section of this chapter will examine

⁷ Regenia Gagnier, *Individualism, Decadence and Globalization: On the Relationship of Part to Whole 1859-1920* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp.28-60

⁸ Henry James, *The Golden Bowl*, ed. by Virginia Llewellyn Smith (Oxford University Press, 1999), p.405. Further page references to this novel are given after quotations in the text.

⁹ Henry James, *The Wings of the Dove*, ed. by Amy Bloom & Pierre A. Walker (New York: Modern Library, 2003; repr. 2004), p.60. Further page references for this novel are given after quotations in the text.

¹⁰ Anne-Julia Zwierlein, 'From Parasitology to Parapsychology', p. 166

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.166

¹² George Eliot, *Middlemarch*, ed. by Rosemary Ashton (London: Penguin, 1994), p.60

James and Lee's own application of the network trope, which I regard as an evolution of the Eliotian 'web', with specific reference to parasitical economic activity and intimacies.

In 'The Economic Parasitism of Women', Lee is responding to Gilman's contentious proposition that 'women are over-sexed': a condition, according to Gilman, resulting from a 'morbid excess in the exercise of [the sex] function'.¹³ The 'sexuo-economic' arrangements – that is, the economic dependency of women – have, according to this view, hypertrophied the fact of women's sex and atrophied her intellect and power of self-government. On reading Lee's preface, many are struck by the apprehension, one might say the scepticism, with which she regards the Woman Question.¹⁴ Certainly, Lee's vague repugnance towards this 'harping on' about gender exposes a recalcitrant revision of her gender politics (and indeed, she performs the 'duty of a convert') (265, 263). Yet, despite this tension, Lee finds evidence enough in Gilman's study to refigure the Spencerian model of the 'Social Organism' –to which she clearly alludes when she declares 'the supposed organic social whole [is] a mere gigantic delusion' – as a decadent trope (287). In 'The Economic Parasitism of Women', one cannot but come up against a taxonomy that places individuals in a network or rather, holistic paradigm. Lee is concerned with the 'organic social whole', with 'the interest of the individual as against the community', and the fields of 'action and reaction called the universe [and]...the "family circle"' (287, 289, 277). In her recent work, *Individualism, Decadence and Globalization* (2010), Regenia Gagnier points out that 'decadence is not a fixed state but a relation to the whole'; she continues '[i]ndividuation as progress (autonomy) and individuation as decadence (alienation or isolation) are differently imagined relations to the whole'.¹⁵ And indeed, Lee regards the economic dependence of women, their 'sequestration from the discipline of competition', as fostering a movement towards social atomism (268). She describes the 'sacrifice of the community to the wife and children' in what can only be described as retrogressive individualism or, by Gagnier's definition: decadence.¹⁶

This ethos is clearly apparent in Lee's 1887 story, 'Amour Dure'.¹⁷ In the tale, Polish scholar Spiridion Trepka, makes a sabbatical to Italy to carry out research for his book, a 'History of Urbana' (45). Trepka's archival work becomes increasingly dominated by the sixteenth-century

¹³ Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *Women and Economics: A Study of the Relation between Women and Men* (New York: Prometheus, 1994), p. 30. Further page references for this study are given after quotations in the text.

¹⁴ See Christa Zorn, *Vernon Lee: Aesthetics, History, and the Victorian Female Intellectual* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003) p. xxii 'Her [Lee's] involvement with the woman question did not surface in her writing until the 1890s and even then it was with a certain scepticism.[...] Unlike other New Women writer's, Lee does not make gender an issue in her texts'.; Also, Sondeep Kandola, 'Vernon Lee: New Woman?', *Women's Writing*, 12 (2005), 471-484 (p.472): '[...] Lee's new woman credentials are riddled with contradiction. Lee revealed in the 1902 essay "The Economic Dependence of Women" that, until then, the "woman question" had not attracted her attention. However, her private reflections on the differences between male and female sexuality belie this avowed disinterest in the sexual, economic, and political disenfranchisement of women'.

¹⁵ Gagnier, *Individualism, Decadence and Globalization*, p. 5

¹⁶ Ibid. p. 288.

¹⁷ Vernon Lee, 'Amour Dure', in *Hauntings and Other Fantastic Tales*, ed. by Catherine Maxwell and Patricia Pulham (Toronto: Broadview, 2006), pp. 41-76. Further page references for this story are given after quotations in the text.

legend of Medea da Carpi, a woman of infamous character who he likens to *femme fatale* Lucrezia Borgia. According to the history, Medea fatally ensnared three husbands and countless admirers, eliciting from her devotees various malign and hazardous favours. From her final spouse, Duke Guidalfonso II of Stimigliano, Medea unsuccessfully attempts to secure the inheritance of the Duchy for her bastard son, Bartolommeo.¹⁸ Duke Robert II, the younger brother of Guidalfonso and rightful heir to the Duchy, forcibly reclaims his territory and thereafter arranges Medea's assassination. In order that his soul might rest in peace, Duke Robert gives orders that following his death a bronze Antonio Tassi statue, containing 'a silver effigy of a winged genius' – representing his consecrated soul – be erected (71). Some two hundred and ninety-seven years on, Trepka, falling prey to Medea's post-mortem influence, takes a hatchet to the Tassi bronze, releasing Duke Robert's soul from the consecrated vault that shields it from Medea's malign influence. Following the incident Trepka is 'discovered dead of a stab in the region of the heart' (76). On first encountering Medea's portrait, Spiridion describes how her:

[t]ight eyelids and tight lips give a strange refinement, and, at the same time, an air of mystery, a somewhat sinister seductiveness; they seem to take but not to give. The mouth with a kind of childish pout, looks like it could bite or suck like a leech. (52)

Like the economically dependent woman, Medea seductively 'takes' with lips that do not give. She is a vampire, a parasite, a hypersexual creature that, as Maxwell and Pulham note, bears close resemblance to the *femme fatale* of Swinburne and Pater.¹⁹ Moreover, her 'childish pout' is a symptom of her retrogressive state; the material inequality of the sexes makes juvenile dependency more properly the domain of the 'over-sexed' woman.

Conflating appetitive metaphors with sex parasitism, Lee draws on a strategy that is frequently deployed in New Woman eugenics. Gilman, for instance, aligned the accession of woman's 'sex' (concomitant to the atrophy of her intellect) with a desire to eat 'far beyond the

¹⁸ Lee is attuned to the anxiety of paternity in marital relationships. By the end of the nineteenth century, some parties constructed fidelity as an obligation based not on moral precepts but rather the material dependence of women. See E.D.Cope, 'On the Material Relations of Sex in Human Society', *The Monist*, 1 (1890), 38-47 (p. 40): 'The support and protection given by a woman is then clearly rendered as equivalent for the services she renders him in the capacity of a wife. It is universally implied, if not distinctly stated in the contract between them, that she shall not be the wife of some other man, and the children she bears shall be also those of the make party to the contract, or the husband. It is not necessary that such an obligation should be entered into by the man, for the obvious reason he does not bear children. If the woman violates this contract, the man is under no legal or moral obligation to support her'.

¹⁹ Catherine Maxwell and Patricia Pulham, 'Introduction', in Vernon Lee, *Hauntings and Other Fantastic Tales*, ed. by Catherine Maxwell and Patricia Pulham (Toronto: Broadview, 2006), pp. 9-27 (p.11). As Bram Dijkstra points out, by the end of the nineteenth century, the female vampire was ubiquitous; 'she had come to represent woman as the personification of everything that linked sex, ownership, and money. She symbolized the sterile hunger for the seed of the brainless, instinctually polyandrous – even if still virginal – child woman' (Bram Dijkstra, *Idols of Perversity: Fantasies of Feminine Evil in Fin-de-Siècle Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986) p. 351). Dijkstra's colourful description, uncannily describes Lee's own Medea, who is at once polyandrous – technically betrothed to Giovanfranco Pico and the Duke of Stimigliano simultaneously- childlike, and hungry for the capital marriage affords her.

capacity of the stomach to digest'; both, she remarked, exhibited a striking tendency towards 'excess' (31):

In some diseased conditions "an unnatural appetite" sets in; and we are impelled to eat far beyond the capacity of the stomach to digest, of the body to assimilate. [...In a similar sense] The human animal manifests an excess in sex-attraction which not only injures the race through its morbid action on the natural process of reproduction, but which injures the happiness of the individual through its morbid reaction on his own desires. (30-1)

Gilman's frequent references to food and digestion should be regarded as polysemic since her remarks on nutritive consumption also always apply to economic activity. Describing the human child's instinct toward productive industry – voiced in the infantile cry, 'just for the work's sake [...]!' – Gilman remarks that '[h]e does not want to eat. He wants to mark [with pencil]'.²⁰ In the same way that Turley Houston's analysis of *Dracula* notes the fluidity between digestive, haematic and economic principles, Gilman understands the tension between productive and consumptive instincts as entirely congruous across the of range economic and bodily meaning. In her later work, *Women and Labour* (1911), Olive Schriener likewise takes up the idea of an 'appetitive' development in the faculty of sex, drawing a grotesque comparison between the parasitic woman and a species of tick. She explains: '[in] certain ticks, another form of female parasitism prevails, and while the male remains a complex, highly active and winged creature, the female, fastening herself by the head into the flesh of some living animal and sucking its blood, has lost wings and all activity, and power of locomotion; having become a mere distended bladder, which when filled with eggs bursts and ends a parasitic existence which has hardly been life'.²¹ The comparison is not quite exact for Medea exhibits a surprising power of mobility but, as a 'tigress' who 'fastens her strong claws into her victim', Medea is the monstrous equivalent of Schriener's tick, vampirically depleting the man-host to secure the material (economic) wellbeing of her offspring: a manoeuvre which ultimately leads to her death.

The gothic potentialities of 'parasitical' woman in the eugenic discourses of Gilman and others are, perhaps surprisingly, not the target of Lee's essay. Rather it is Alexandre Dumas (fils) and his contemporaries that are central to Lee's critique of sex relations since it is in this literature that we witness the hyper-sexed woman – or *La Femme* – at her most rapacious. Of Dumas, Lee writes:

[B]elieving in her [La Femme] as such, he sees in her a horrible danger to man's moral progress; he sees her attack him, grapple with him, destroy him, in her capacity not of

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 116-7

²¹ Olive Schriener, *Women and Labour* (London: Virago, 1978), p.78n

human being, of competitor of enemy, but in her capacity of woman, mistress or wife.
(285)

Lee argues that for Dumas, as for many of his generation, these narratives merely retell the ‘old, old story’ that is, the story of the ‘damnation of man’s soul through woman’ (283). In her analysis of Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, Kilgour likewise suggests that in the tale of original sin: ‘Eve decides to share the fruit with Adam in order to make him like herself, and she urges him to eat with a veiled threat [...] The rhetoric of sharing and equality disguises what is actually a desire to possess the other totally through the resolution of all differences into exact identity’ (127). According to this view The Fall, precipitated by Eve’s appetitive act, destroys the potential for symbiotic union between the sexes. In this fallen state: ‘mutual nourishment and sublimation degenerate into the cannibalistic encounters between eater and eaten’ (128). With lips that ‘seductive[ly]’ appear to ‘bite or suck like a leech’ Medea’s monstrous orality is strongly keyed to Original sin (52). In one sense this quotation could describe the *femme fatale* of Lee’s own tale; tempting men into mortal sin, murder, neglect and violence, Medea, is just such an adversary to moral progress. However, to believe in the existence of this ‘eternal type’ is, according to Lee, to believe in a benighted or mythologised history of female progress. Far from recreating the patriarchal fiction of Dumas and others, Lee’s story burlesques what is a harmful and persistent cultural motif.

While Lee’s conception of a ‘network of virtuous rapacity’ stems from a confessedly overdue ‘calling’ to the Woman Question, it is my contention that James’s turn towards the idea of an interconnected network of individual interests emerges, in part, out of an earlier trauma: the death of his much beloved cousin, Minnie (also Minny) Temple. Minnie’s death was a source of immense grief for James, and of great fascination. Long after the event his correspondence and notebooks bear evidence of a sustained preoccupation both with her death and the ostensibly unilateral nature of human intimacies. Writing to brother William of his grief, James reflects on Minnie’s sacrificial offering, the strange reversal of their fortunes and the reality that she suffered her final deteriorating illness at a time when James himself experienced great prosperity:

Among the sad reflections that her death provokes for me, there is none sadder than this view of the gradual change and reversal of our relations: I slowly crawling from weakness and inaction and suffering into strength and health and hope: she sinking out of brightness and youth and decline and death. It’s almost as if she passed away – as far as I am concerned – from having served her purpose, that of standing well within the world, inviting me onward and onward by the intensity of her example.²²

²² Cited in Leon Edel, *Henry James*, 5 Vols. (London: Hart-Davis, 1953-1972), I: *The Untried Years* (1953), p. 331

James's retrospective engagement with this loss is complex. It conflates vitalistic imagery, as engaged in the classic vampire trope, with Christological conceptions of sacrifice; it speaks of James's tendency to imagine capital – cultural, vital, financial or psychical – as a finite, transferable resource and, of James conviction that human lives are intensely interlinked (and, in so being, hazardous). Leon Edel points out that the event came to be expressed in the 'Jamesian Vampire theme' inaugurated in the early tale, 'Poor Richard' (1867), and for Sophie Geoffroy-Menoux it is conceived as 'emotional cannibalism'²³ Both motifs are appropriate. While the former is motivated by the aforementioned 'vital' principle, the latter, through its sensitivity to the often oral nature of Jamesian intimacies, unconsciously sets up the terms by which James's parasitism might be described as Eliotian. We know that James reviewed – with mixed praise – Eliot's *Middlemarch* where it would seem he was much impressed by her ability to render a great 'crowded' 'panorama' or 'rounded little world'.²⁴ To a degree, James is concerned with the units of egotism that populate Eliot's narrative microcosm: the 'neutral', 'maximum', 'mouldy' figurations of the egotistic impulse which he seems to regard as reflected in Eliot's narratological sacrifice of her great heroic persons to the mean or 'trivial' inhabitants (who he charges with carrying 'off the lion's share' of the story).²⁵ But this is less striking than the apparent debt James owes to Eliot's consumption metaphor. As we know, Eliot characterises the egoistic Mrs Cadwallader as a 'swallow' spinning 'hairlets' to 'bring her the sort of food she needed' and, furthermore, *Middlemarch* itself is regarded as 'swallowing Lydgate and assimilating him very comfortably'.²⁶ This trope, which subsequently becomes central to James's own work is most evident in the episode of *The Wings of the Dove* where Kate Croy laments that 'it would never occur to *them* [Lionel and Mrs Condrip] that they were eating one up. They did that without tasting' (60). Significantly, both Eliot and James conceive of an egoism that is predatory but without malice; to devour without the consciousness of 'taste' and to 'swallow' 'comfortably' and benignly are, effectively, kindred forms of the 'virtuous rapacity' or 'blameless egoism' principles.

For James, the social network is rendered in more explicitly economic terms. It is not quite a question – as it is for Eliot or Lee – of an 'organic social whole', threatened by atomistic, economically parasitic units (though Donald L. Mull does legitimately regard money as an 'organic center' in the late work) but rather, a fact that James construes social life as an immense market platform, on which social exchanges are, more properly, transactions. Similar critical observations have been made before.²⁷ Alfred Habegger, in his – now somewhat belated – work on the principle

²³ Edel, *The Untried Years*, p.239; Sophie Geoffroy-Menoux, 'Professor Fargo (1874): Henry James's Spirit-Rapper and Body-Snatcher', *Journal of the Short Story in English*, 28 (1997) <<http://jsse.revues.org/index97.html#ftn4>> [accessed 28 November 2012] (para. 14 of 20)

²⁴ Henry James, 'Middlemarch, by George Eliot (1873)' in *The Critical Muse: Selected Literary Criticism*, ed. by Roger Gard (London: Penguin, 1987), pp.74-81 (p.75, 80) [Originally published in *Galaxy*, March 1873]

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.76,79,80 & 76 respectively.

²⁶ Eliot, *Middlemarch*, p.60, 154

²⁷ It is important to note that there is no dearth of material concerned with the 'economic motif' or predominance of financial metaphors in James's work. Early work includes: Bradford A. Booth, 'Henry

of reciprocity in late James (1971), argues that his ‘moral sense’ is most evident in the economic coding of his late work; starting from the understanding that human interactions become, for James, market exchanges, Habegger cites James’s morally aspirational condition as one of total reciprocity or, ‘symmetrical form’.²⁸ The social market is for Habegger, a ‘system of mutual exploitation’, the participants of which he inelegantly dichotomises into self-maximizing consumers and “‘ethical” (economically disinterested) parties. Habegger is also keen to render ‘contract’ and ‘gift’ as polarities in James’s work; part two of this chapter employs gift-theory to account for why this contradistinction, too, is unsuitable. While Habegger is certainly accurate in his assessment of the ‘social realm’ as a ‘literal market’, his determination to schematise the moral constituent of ‘reciprocity’ in these circumscribed terms deprives James of the complexity that makes his economic motif interesting. Despite the clear limitations of his analysis, Habegger alights on some key moments of social free-enterprise. Notably, in his analysis of *The Wings of the Dove*, Habegger attends to Kate Croy’s report of London society: her frank avowal that ‘everyone who had anything to give [...] made the sharpest possible bargain for it’ (201). Remarking that ‘the characters engage in a clandestine barter and trade in hopes of increasing their social capital’ (459), Habegger notes James’s insistence that ‘the worker in one connexion was the worked in another’ (201). Certainly, for James, the ubiquitous self-interest instantiated in the worker-worked dichotomy, bespeaks the totality of his social economy. James makes clear that ‘the working and the worked were in London, as one might explain, the parties to *every relation*’ [italics mine] (201). Indeed, imagining the entrepreneurial state-of-mind as systemic, James remarks: ‘the wheels of the system, as might be seen, [are] wonderfully oiled’ (201). In *The Golden Bowl* (1902), the market, a byword for social life, trades almost exclusively in precious ‘objects’: objects of which the Prince is most costly. Maggie, herself victim of Amerigo’s parasitical scheme, inspects the ‘state of the ‘books’ of [her] spirit’: the ‘human commerce’ (485) that presides over her conscience and furthermore, Fanny Assingham considers ‘how strange it was that [...] it should befall some people to be so inordinately valued, quoted, as they said in the stock-market’ (196). The novel’s object market is most successfully explicated by Stephen Arata in his essay ‘Object Lessons’.²⁹ Arguing that the novel is infused with a ‘skiascopic [ocular] sensibility’, Arata reads the novel’s internal economy alongside the historical frame of the fine arts museum and points out that ‘fully human relations are [...] replaced by the relations that obtain between responsive “beholder” and aesthetic object’³⁰. However, any attempt to locate James’s human intimacies within a systematic economic

James and the Economic Motif’, *Nineteenth Century Fiction*, 8 (1953), 141-150; Donald L. Mull. *Henry James’s “Sublime Economy”: Money as a Symbolic Centre in the Fiction* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1973). More recently is Penny McCormack’s ‘The Semiotics of Economic Language in James’s Fiction’, *American Literature*, 58 (1986), 540-556. None of this work is concerned specifically with James’s economies of exploitation.

²⁸ Alfred Habegger, ‘Reciprocity and the Market Place in *The Wings of the Dove* and What Maisie Knew’, *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 25(1971), 455-473 (p.456). Further page references to this article are given after quotations in the text.

²⁹ Stephen D. Arata, ‘Object Lessons: Reading the Museum in *The Golden Bowl*’, in *Famous Last Words: Changes in Gender and Narrative Closure*, ed. by Alison Booth (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993), pp.199-229

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p.208

framework, must swiftly be succeeded by a recognition that James himself finds the economic motif unwieldy, fluid, often unanswerable to the rules of financial exchange.

This is perhaps most evident in James's earlier work, *The Sacred Fount* (1901). The tale, set in the Newmarch estate, follows the arduous attempts of an unnamed narrator to identify the ostensibly vampiric relations between weekend guests. Guy Brissenden whose wife is notably older than himself, is drained of vital essence, whilst Grace is reinvested with the bloom and beauty of her youth. Similarly, May Server offers up her abundant wit and intellect to obtuse lover Gilbert Long. Observing a discrepancy between May Server's outlay of intellect and Long's inordinate gain the narrator professes that:

It put before me the question of whether, in these strange relations that I believed I had thus got my glimpse of, the action of the person "sacrificed" mightn't be quite out of proportion to the resources of that person. It was as if these elements might really multiply in the transfer made of them; as if the borrower practically found himself – or herself – in possession of a greater sum than the known property of the creditor.³¹

The conundrum of the multiplied capital is indicative of James's struggle to assimilate human operations, by which I mean exploitations of the body and of interpersonal intimacies, with the functional demands of the market place. In short, the exchange is not defensible on economic grounds; it doesn't add up. In remarking the narrator's intellectual challenge, Sheila Teahan points out that 'since metaphor is structured around a constitutive tension between sameness and difference, one should not be surprised that this figure wreaks havoc with the narrator's determination to account for the changes he believes to have detected at Newmarch'.³² Yet it is not merely a fact that the 'constitutive' disparity between transfers of a financial, as opposed to somatic or cerebral nature render the trope unworkable but, also, that James here grapples with his *own* immensely variegated tropological scheme: the breadth of which is clearly apparent in his retrospective on Minnie's death. Certainly, we know that James had an intensely difficult relationship with the book. In a letter to Mrs Humphrey Ward, James describes how the tale, originally intended to be a modest eight or ten thousand words, grew unconscionably, taking on, as it were, a life of its own.³³ Writing to William Dean Howell, James describes how the novel, an 'accidental book', 'depleted' him, how despite its fantasticality, it was 'preoccupied with half a dozen things of the altogether human order now fermenting in [his] brain' (185,159). In his early correspondence James declares the work 'close and sustained', 'calculated to minister to curiosity'

³¹ Henry James, *The Sacred Fount*, ed. Leon Edel (New York: New Directions, 1995), p. 49. Further references to this novel will be given in the text.

³² Shiela Teahan, 'The Face of Decadence in *The Sacred Fount*' in *Henry James Against the Aesthetic Movement: Essays on the Middle and Late Fiction*, ed. by David Garrett Izo and Daniel T. O'Hara (Jefferson: McFarland, 2006), pp.109-122 (p. 112)

³³ Cited in *Letters [of] Henry James*. ed. by Leon Edel, 4 vols (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), iv (1895-1916), p. 185-6 Further page references to letters from the edition will be given in the text.

(154-5). Then later: ‘the book isn’t worth discussing’; it is a ‘consistent joke’ (186). Wilson Follett, in a 1936 article, amusingly entitled ‘Henry James’s Portrait of Henry James’ asserts that: ‘the I of the story is patently Henry James in propria persona’; he furthermore remarks ‘it is Henry James deliberately turning a searchlight on Henry James’.³⁴ Indeed, the narrator’s quest is to schematise a system of relation and exaction and appears to be paralleled with James’s own. While he may not have esteemed his book – and this is reflected in his decision not to include it in the New York edition – it nonetheless appears to provide a sandbox or delimited space for James to enact hazardous intimacies as hazardous economies, with all the interpretative difficulties that entails.

Where Teahan’s analysis is particularly striking is her reading of James ‘privileged metaphor of the fount’ as a theoretical equivalent to the ‘rhetorical figure’ of anastomosis.³⁵ Anastomosis, she explains, is derived from the Greek, ‘astomeuin’, meaning to ‘furnish with a mouth’.³⁶ The OED, cited in Teahan’s analysis, defines the term as a series of ‘cross communications between the arteries or veins, or other canals in the animal body’ and, moreover, any ‘separate lines of a branching system’ (OED). Citing J. Hillis Miller, Teahan points out that anastomosis usually operates in literature as a ‘figure for the way the self becomes itself, maintains itself, or grounds itself in the other’.³⁷ Teahan writes that ‘in so far as its characters’ relations are defined as vampiristic depletion rather than mutual completion or fulfilment, *The Sacred Fount* conspicuously ironizes the last [Miller’s] element of anastomosis’.³⁸ She goes on to trace the trope through the story’s linear images, skilfully noting the spillage of the anastomotic motif into the physical environment: a characteristic she casts as a kind of pathetic fallacy. But the reason this rhetorical figure is so particularly apposite, is that it not only describes the mostly symbiotic arrangement of characters in James, the interconnected web or ‘network’ of individual self-interest but, through the visceral or haematic image of artery and vein, successfully delineates the dynamic movement of ‘matter’ critical to James’s vampire trope. The furnishing ‘mouth’ evokes the consumption motif present in the narrator’s accusation, directed towards Grace Brissenden: ‘you gulp your mouthful down, but hasn’t it been served on a gold plate?’ (175).

If, as I argue, social life is figured as an immense economic network for James, then it is a network subject to international interests. James encourages us to see the fate of nations presaged in ordinary human intimacies; moreover, to regard the egoistic impulse as analogous with global fiscal operations. In *The Wings of the Dove*, for instance, Kate Croy, in her private reflections, places Aunt Maud in the position of Britannia:

³⁴ Wilson Follett, ‘Henry James’s Portrait of Henry James’, *The New York Times*, 23 August 1936, p. 2

³⁵ Teahan, ‘The Face of Decadence in *The Sacred Fount*’, p. 112

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Cited in Teahan, ‘The Face of Decadence in *The Sacred Fount*’, p.113

³⁸ Teahan, ‘The Face of Decadence in *The Sacred Fount*’, p.113

She talked to herself of Britannia of the Market Place – Britannia unmistakeable, but with a pen in her ear, and felt she should not be happy till she should add to the rest of the panoply a helmet, a shield, a trident and a ledger [...] She was a complex and subtle Britannia, as passionate as she was practical, with a reticule for her prejudices as deep as that other pocket, the pocket full of coins stamped in her image, that the world best knew her by. (57)

Arming Maud with the accoutrements of Britannia, Kate evokes the wealth and aggression of the Empire. Like, Britannia, Maud is an acknowledged force and likewise the economy of her relations with others is based on a principle of force or seizure. Interestingly, Kate discerns that her prejudice, like her money is privately amassed and producible at any time; her diplomacy, it seems, is part of a larger strategy of extraction. Yet, Kate is not the only one of James's characters to regard the social world as a global market. Conceiving an Anglo-American 'special relationship' between Kate and Milly, Aunt Maud considers the girls to be international allies:

It was for Kate of course, she was essentially planning; but the plan enlarged and uplifted now, somehow required Milly's prosperity too for its full operation, just as Milly's prosperity at the same time involved Kate's (236).

James must surely have been aware that in painting the impoverished, yet noble protégé of Britannia in advantageous alliance with the wealthy American heiress – the 'flower' in fact, of New York wealth and the 'heir of all ages' – that he was drawing analogues with Anglo-American relations at the end of the nineteenth century. Acknowledging Britain's status as an Empire in decline and of diminishing resources, Lord Lansdowne (Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1900–1905) and his Foreign Office attempted to bring Britain into an alliance with America that would not only secure her interests in the west, but also protect the future of Eastern trade.³⁹ Aunt Maud, like Lansdowne, recognised in the American connection an opportunity for profit and fortification. Even Densher, who was 'but half a Briton', regards his correspondence with the American Mrs Stringham, as a kind of cross-trading; he describes the connection as 'his transatlantic commerce' and reflects on it 'it as one connection in which he wasn't straight' (117). The recognition of the economic basis of relations coupled with the removal of the action to Venice, the "gateway of Eastern trade" and a medieval hotbed of exchange, reveals James's inclination to situate his exploitative relationships in an international market: a market in which his characters regard themselves, to a greater or lesser extent, as players.

Arguing that economic globalisation formed part of 'how the *fin de siècle* experimented with part and whole' Regenia Gagnier states that 'many writers [...] viewed western civilization

³⁹ Lestyn Adams, *Brothers Across the Ocean: British Foreign Policy and the Origins of the Anglo-American 'Special Relationship' 1900-1905* (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2005), pp. 9-18

itself as the egotism of a part that threatened the survival of the whole'.⁴⁰ Citing historian Gordon Johnson's *Times Higher* article 'Red on Maps, Grey on Minds', Gagnier considers that the British Empire is most properly understood in terms of the 'shifting relationships in dynamic trans-national webs'.⁴¹ And Johnson himself points out that 'if the British Empire is a species of global networking, then it requires for explanation not just the dynamism from the metropolis, but interaction with dynamic developments elsewhere'.⁴² In the sense that James situates parasitical individualism within a global economic network and, in the similar sense that human intimacies reveal a dynamic relationality that runs parallel to the 'trans-national webs' of Empire, James certainly appears to owe allegiance to the body of writers who, as Gagnier points out, regard Western individualism as egoistic. In James's fiction, trans-national parasitism is rather more frequently rendered as occidental in-fighting. *The Golden Bowl* in particular, configures Europe as a hub of rapacious economic activity, in which wealthy, naïve Americans are ravaged and consumed. Even Adam Verver, one of James's most financially astute Americans, finds that 'a couple of years in Europe [...] refreshed [his] sensibility to the currents of the market' (108). Pertinently, Anna Kvenstel writes of the late novels' Anglo-American fiscal relations: 'American magnates, heirs and heiresses go hungry [...] until they succumb to the European mode of self-consumption. The immaterial forms of production and affluence associated with America emerge in their relation to psycho-cultural consumerist hunger focused on the organic material plenty of Europe'.⁴³ That is to say, whilst James's Americans are sometimes motivated by the cupidity for material possessions – evident in Adam Verver's costly acquisition of Amerigo for 'his collection' – only upon contact with the improvident commodity-rich markets of Europe, can they consume and consequently, be consumed. Nevertheless, James is rather more neutral about the ethical implications of this kind of individualism than, for instance, writers like the socialist Edward Carpenter who, as Gagnier points out 'tried to understand East-West relations by comparing Western individualism, private property and, commercialism with Eastern nonDifferentiation, communism and spiritualism'.⁴⁴

This is not to say that James did not create oppositions between New and Old World economic praxis but these oppositions are rarely simple or, as Habegger implies, binary. Certainly, James wants to align (economic) interests with geographical territories but unlike national frontiers which are – overlooking their historical migration – mostly stable, the ontological categories implied in the interaction of these interests, for instance worker (Britain) and worked (America), are mutable. Beyond its function as symbol of the social network, the web motif undermines the

⁴⁰ Gagnier, *Individualism, Decadence and Globalisation*, p. 20, 25

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p.25

⁴² Gordon Johnson, 'Red on maps, grey in minds', *Times Higher Education*, 27 May 2005
 <www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?storyCode=196318§ioncode=40> [accessed 14.11.12]
 (para. 10 of 12)

⁴³ Anna Kventsel, *Decadence in the Late Novels of Henry James* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p.13

⁴⁴ Gagnier, *Individualism, Decadence and Globalisation*, p.21

integrity of these categories. For instance, Densher, on making the realisation that he, like Milly, is ‘just such another victim’ of Kate’s scheme, declares that ‘he was in a wondrous silken web’ (383). As applied to the trans-national encounter, James’s web motif resonates with the imperial relations discussed in Chapter Two, which are mediated, in part, through the spider motif. There are obvious correspondences between the vampiric spider-god of Mitford’s 1896 novel and blood-thirsty European nations spinning a web-like network of railways and borders across the African landscape. In James’s writing the question of victimhood is never as straightforward as this. Describing both Densher’s immolation and his complicity in Kate’s operation, the web, through its image of entanglement implies a breakdown of the exploiter-exploited dichotomy. As a willing victim to Kate’s plan, Densher is a direct inversion of *The Sacred Fount*’s Grace Brissenden who is conversely the *unwilling* or rather unknowing exploiter of her husband’s youth:

‘And she doesn’t see then how her victim loses?’

‘No, she can’t. The perception, if she had it, would be painful and terrible – might even be fatal to the process’ (35)

‘Eating poor Briss up inch by inch’, Mrs Brissenden is a patent caricature of the *fin-de-siècle* femme fatale, ‘her fixed beak and claws’ as she settled on her ‘prey’, a flagrant satirisation of the literary trope (101). But in the manner of Lee’s ‘virtuous rapacity’ principle, Grace Brissenden’s lack of awareness de-stabilises her status as ‘exploiter’ in the conjugal relationship and, more specifically, the concept of enduring feminine evil. In a sense, the critique James’s novel poses to ‘*La Femme*’ is the contingent result of his desire to relocate the malignity attached to individual actors within the social network: a system, for both himself and Lee, defined by mutual exploitation.

2. The Gift

In his ethnological study *The Gift: Form and Reason for exchange in Archaic Societies* (1954) Marcel Mauss examines the principles of economic self-interest and obligation which he argues are intrinsic to, yet latent within, the gift.⁴⁵ Concerned primarily with cultures operating within a ‘system of total services’– archaic institutions in which articles of economic use, and other services, are offered and exchanged in the ostensibly voluntary form of the gift – Mauss concludes

⁴⁵ Mauss’s study was originally published under the French title ‘Essai sur le don. Forme et raison de l’échange dans les sociétés archaïques’ in *L’Année Sociologique* in 1925. It was published in book form by Presses Universitaires de France in 1950.

that gift-giving is rarely *aneconomic* or, outside of economic interest.⁴⁶ These platforms, he argues, insist on absolute obligation (both to give and receive) and operate within a moral framework dependent on participation within this scheme. Given that Kilgour's work focuses on the potential ambivalence involved in various forms of 'incorporation', she spills surprisingly little ink over the question of the gift. In her brief discussion of the gift in Greek culture, Kilgour positions herself *against* Mauss, but her position is based on a misunderstanding of Mauss's analysis. She remarks: '[b]ut in terms of early Greek social arrangements, the notion of the gift in fact covered a variety of relations that we would consider trade and even bribery. Gift-giving could be read as a benign cover for real hostility [...]' (21). In fact, Mauss's study seeks to highlight the ways in which contemporary economic life contains survivals of a more primitive economic scheme. Bribery (in the form of obligation) and 'trade' (in the form of gift-giving) are actually fundamental ways in which the 'system of total services' manifests itself. In this section I want to demonstrate that the 'gift' is not merely a purposeful analogue of hostility in an ambivalent Homeric oral culture; for James and Lee, too, the gift is a mechanism through which to explore the hostile demands inscribed in various forms of cultural exchange (and, as I will demonstrate, in ways that are occasionally 'oral'). Indeed, nowhere in the work of James and Lee are objects more pernicious than when figured as gifts. Ostensibly beneficent acts of giving rather more frequently emerge as baited offerings; offerings that have the potential to draw the recipient into a complex web of obligation, debt and depletion.⁴⁷ The authors' treatment of the gift event by no means contributes to a systematic philosophy of giving, but as I argue, both James and Lee raise questions that would later become central to gift theory.

In Lee's story, 'Prince Alberic and the Snake Lady' (1896), three figures at the court – Jesuit, Dwarf and Jester – attempt to secure the Prince's patronage with an extravagant medley of gifts, believing that 'Alberic must be turned to profit'.⁴⁸ Exposing a philosophy of giving that is both rivalrous in nature and which malignly seeks to create obligatory attachments, the narrative confirms Lee's mistrust of the practice of gift-making; a mistrust which culminated in an attack on 'making presents' in her 1904 work *Hortus Vitae*.⁴⁹ Here, Lee's own 'philosophy of presents'

⁴⁶ Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: Form and Reason for exchange in Archaic Societies*, Trans. by W.D.Halls (Oxford: Routledge, 2002; repr.2010), p.16 Further page references to this volume are given after quotations in the text.

⁴⁷ Because much of Lee's short fiction might be classified as fairy or folk tale, the stories deploy an internal morality that might be said to skew the natural law of gift and giving. In *The Gift: Imagination and the Erotic Life of Property* (1979), Lewis Hyde identifies a number of the peculiarities of gift-exchange in fairy-tale. The 'genuine' gift, for example, is often disguised as something worthless (e.g. ashes, coal, leaves or straw) while 'gifts from evil people must [...] be refused' since the proffered connection is 'tainted, dangerous or frankly evil' (73). In this way, fairy or folk tale complicate what might otherwise be regarded as a straightforward social operation. With this in mind, though my analysis of Lee's short fiction rests on the assumption that the fantasy genre allows her to embellish, Gothicise and critique real social conventions and attitudes, it is also necessary, when drawing parallels between gift-giving in James and Lee, to recognise that they are writing in different genres. Lewis Hyde, *The Gift: Imagination and the Erotic Life of Property* (New York: Vintage, 1983).

⁴⁸ Vernon Lee, 'Prince Alberic and the Snake Lady' in *Hauntings and Other Fantastic Tales*, ed. by Catherine Maxwell and Patricia Pulham (Toronto: Broadview, 2006), pp. 182-228 (p.196)

⁴⁹ Vernon Lee, *Hortus Vitae: Essays on the Gardening of Life* (Teddington: Echo Library, 2008)

which laments the ‘specious air of [...] disinterestedness’ attached to the gift, anticipates Mauss in his conviction of a ‘polite fiction’ that conceals ‘obligation and economic self-interest’: the driving force of gift-exchange.⁵⁰ Lee’s polemic, she reveals, is borne of the ‘dreadful complexity of making a present to a rich woman’, likely having in mind Baroness Elena French Cini, dedicatee of Lee’s collection *Vanitas: Polite Stories* (1892).⁵¹ Aptly enough, it is *Vanitas* that contains the satire ‘Lady Tal’ (a story that, as I shall demonstrate, develops the theme of giving in relationship to female economic dependency). Lee’s relationship with French Cini appears to have been fraught. After an apparent dispute over the nature of their mutual obligation, the Baroness, in an 1899 letter (housed at Somerville College, Oxford) attempted to defend her position: ‘You say why should I amuse this grand lady who might have learned to amuse herself? [...] Don’t you think that many by birth, position, the way they have been bought up [...] feel bitterly the void which they cannot fill?’⁵² She continues ‘Are we not to be after all a society of mutual help? [...] so if [this grand lady] is glad to give you the charity of her comforts and her beautiful forms, you rejoice to be able to give her the much grander charity of intellectual height...’⁵³ Adopting the position of cultural philanthropist, French Cini imagines herself advancing a ‘charity’ of ‘beautiful forms’, a charity which Lee, according to the logic of reciprocity, must remunerate with quantities of intellectual ‘amusement’. It is clear, from the tone of her letter that Lee did not approve the contractual nature of their arrangement and yet her sensitivity to the self-interest latent within the gift is, by no means, the sole basis of her mistrust of the practice. For Lee, gift-giving moreover exposes a rather negative development of the economic order: namely, the escalation of human appetites with a lack of productive investment (also noted by the neo-classical economists). She writes:

Now, *my manuals of political economy* (which were of course not presents to me) make it quite plain that whatever we spend in mere self-indulgence, is so much taken away from the profitable capital of the community; and sundry other sciences, which require no manuals to teach them, make it plainer still that the habit of indulging, upon legal payment, our whims and our greediness, fills our houses with lumber and our souls with worse lumber where there might be light and breathable air.⁵⁴

Ostensibly drawing on Jevons’ work on the ‘fallacy of consumption’ – which regards excessive expenditure as detrimental to personal investment and thus community-profitting enterprise – Lee laments the set of conditions that both atomise economic interests and debase man’s desiring instincts. This cupidity, situated within the specifically late nineteenth-century rhetoric of

⁵⁰ Lee, *Hortus Vitae*, p.66; Mauss, *The Gift*, p. 4

⁵¹ Lee, *Hortus Vitae*, p.66

⁵² Somerville College, Oxford. Letter to Vernon Lee from Baroness French Cini dated 2 Sept 1899, Box II. No.3

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Vernon Lee, ‘Making Presents’ in *Hortus Vitae: Essays on the Gardening of Life* (Teddington: Echo Library, 2008), pp. 66-68 (p.67)

consumption – a rhetoric which regards economic progress as a kind of Maslowian self-actualisation – reveals Lee’s willingness to align the problems of gift exchange with the advancing tide of consumerism announced by the neo-classical economists. Interestingly, then, Lee’s short fiction, often set in Renaissance Italy, positions the gift-exchange not (as one might expect) within the discourse of economic *progress* but conversely, within a *retrogressive* economic milieu: a system of exchange that is at once primordial, honorific and profoundly symbolic. Nowhere is this more evident than in her 1888 story, ‘A Wedding Chest’.⁵⁵ This tale opens with the catalogue entry for an artefact housed at the Smith museum: the panel of a fifteenth century Umbrian wedding coffer, entitled, after Petrarch, ‘The Triumph of Love’ (229). Returning to its Renaissance setting and the narrative underlying the dismantled relic, the story reveals how Desiderio of Castiglione del Largo, craftsman of the coffer commissioned by a Messer Troilo Baglioni, is engaged to his employer’s daughter, Monna Maddelena. Troilo, harbouring a libidinous desire for the affianced Maddelena and having the misfortune to see his advances rebuked, gives orders for her abduction on the eve of their wedding. A year following her disappearance, Maddelena is returned in the coffer, ‘naked as God had made [her], dead, with two stabs in the neck [...] having on her breast the body of an infant recently born, dead like herself’ (237). Attached to the coffer is a parchment bearing the inscription: ‘To Master Desiderio; a wedding gift from Troilo Baglioni of Fratta’ (237). After a period of exile in Rome, the aggrieved Desiderio returns to exact revenge on Messer Troilo. Taking sacrament, Desiderio vows ‘never to touch food save the Body of Christ till he could taste the blood of Messer Troilo’(240). True to his word, on appertaining Troilo, who is ‘going to a woman of light fame’, Desiderio delivers a fatal stab to his chest, declaring: ‘This is from Maddalena, in return for her wedding chest!’ (241). Then, he ‘stooped over [Troilo’s] chest and lapped up the blood as it flowed’ (241).

Substituting the comparatively whimsical meditation on ‘making presents’ advanced in *Hortus Vitae* with a praxis of giving more characteristic of the North American Potlatch, Lee invests the exchange with the qualities of honour, antagonism and rivalry. Notably Troilo, in his efforts to win Maddalena’s favour, delivers, through his squire a succession of curios, including the ‘knot of ribbons off the head of a ferocious bull, whom he had killed *singulari vi ac virtute*’ (235).⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Vernon Lee, ‘A Wedding Chest’ in *Hauntings and Other Fantastic Tales*, ed. by Catherine Maxwell and Patricia Pulham (Toronto: Broadview, 2006), pp. 229-242

⁵⁶ In an ‘Account of the Spanish Bullfights’ featured in an 1823 edition of *The Gentleman’s Magazine*, an anonymous correspondent explains how ‘[t]he bulls each have a knot of ribbons of different colours fixed near to their shoulder, so that referring to a printed list, this badge declares their breed and province [...] The Piccadore will sometimes snatch the ribbons from his shoulder, which is considered as highly dexterous and greatly applauded’. It is possible that Lee, aware of this ritual, deploys the anatomical knot of ribbons as gift, not merely to evince Troilo’s skill in combat, but as a symbolic reference to the honour and dexterity of the Picador. In this sense, the knot is at once trophy and a more complex symbol of provincial or, perhaps more accurately, feudal, hierarchical structures. ‘Account of the Spanish Bullfights, in a Letter to a Friend’, *The Gentleman’s Magazine and, Historical Chronicle*, 93 (1824), 299-302 (p.301)

Maddelena, not unaware of the contract embedded within the gift, ‘showed herself very coy and refused all presents which he sent her’ yet, in so doing, poses a challenge to the natural economy of giving and one that would prove unwittingly fatal (235). As Mauss points out, ‘to refuse to accept is tantamount to declaring war; it is to reject the bonds of alliance and commonality’ and certainly for Lee, the gift more frequently harbours an act of treachery than of beneficence (17). It is unsurprising, then, that the story contains a sub rosa key to the pattern of self-interest and dissimulation that will characterise the tale’s subsequent gift events. The key resides in a panel depicting the region of happy love, one of ‘four phases of amorous passion’ that ornament the wedding coffer (230-1). Here, Troilo is ‘depicted in the character of Troilus, son of Priam, emperor of Troy’ (233). The story of Troilus, as we know, varies between sources, but one element these accounts share is the prophecy that Troy would survive should Troilus advance to the age of twenty. Cast in the figure of Troilus, Troilo’s fate is thus aligned with the ancient city of Troy; both receive a gift that would signal their fall. The sequence of exchange – initiated with the return of Maddalena’s body, ‘a gift of unspeakable wickedness for the father’ and terminated with Desiderio’s fatal blow, ‘from Maddelena, in return for her wedding chest’ – is, more properly, a series of assaults in a larger context of conflict: a conflict that culminates, aptly enough, in a stratagem. Desiderio, on returning to Perugia, ‘dyed his hair black and grown his beard, after the manner of the Easterns, saying he was a Greek coming from Ancona’ (240). In this Trojan horse disguise, the craftsman makes a final, unequivocal return on Troilo’s own bloody offering, advancing figuratively, and literally, a Greek gift.

The ‘specious’ or ‘fallacious’ character of the gift described in *Hortus Vitae* is, in ‘A Wedding Chest’ more perniciously false (66). Lee’s return to a pre-industrial economy is an attempt to reinvest the gift with the symbolic value central to primitive or, archaic society. Certainly, Lee castigates the contemporary gift, rendered as ‘bullion’ or ‘lumber’, for its bulky want of symbolic value: a value without which, the gift economy must operate as an insidious nexus of ‘false positions’ (66, 67). Pertinently, in her analysis of Mauss’s *The Gift*, Mary Douglas points out that primitive gift exchange as exemplified in the Potlatch, operates as a ‘theoretical counterpart to the invisible hand’.⁵⁷ In other words, the market, like Mauss’ system of total services, sustains equilibrium between self-interested parties in a broader social network. However, according to Douglas, the market and gift exchange differ, for Mauss, in one important respect; that is ‘in being directly cued to public esteem, the distribution of honour and the sanctions of religion, the gift economy is more visible’.⁵⁸ *Hortus Vitae* and ‘A Wedding Chest’ as approximately parallel treatments of the gift (both were published in 1904), function similarly, for Lee, as theoretical counterparts; on the one hand, the contemporary gift tied up with notions of ‘good will’ and ‘amiability’, conceals, as we witness in Lee’s relations with French Cini, contract frivolity and self-

⁵⁷ Mary Douglas, ‘foreword’ in Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: Form and Reason for exchange in Archaic Societies*, Trans. by W.D.Halls (Oxford: Routledge, 2002; repr.2010), pp.ix-xxxiii (p.xvi)

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.xvi

interest. On the other hand, in its Renaissance context, the gift more conspicuously bears the marks of honour, contract and aggression. As the market economy is to Mauss so the contemporary gift-exchange is to Lee: a less symbolic, less candid circulation of goods and one that is abased, in Lee's eyes, by the movement of what she regards as arbitrary items of luxury between subjects scarcely aware of, or indeed moved by their transaction. Thus, in making a return to the pre-industrial climate of 'A Wedding Chest', Lee divests the gift of its trifling 'fallacies' and reaffirms the ascendancy of the symbolic order. In this way, Lee adopts a position later to be occupied by Jean Baudrillard. Like Lee herself, who condemns the 'vicious circle' of consumption in which 'superfluities are turned into things one cannot do without' (68), Baudrillard, writing in the context of late capitalism, is alert to the 'rapturous satisfactions of consumption that surround us'.⁵⁹ Viewed in this way, their respective economic conditions, noted for the hitherto unprecedented levels of consumption, are drained of meaning, trading on empty symbols that, for Lee, point to the erroneous and unmeaningful nature of the contemporary exchange. This corresponds roughly to Baudrillard's notion of hyperreality. Positing the collapse of the symbolic order consequent on the rise of the semiotic one, Baudrillard explores the ways in which 'the law of value' as both a semiotic and economic determinant, terminates the 'historical dialectic' between production and consumption.⁶⁰ Identifying the sign (or item possessing exchange value) as divorced from a material signified, Baudrillard writes: 'The emancipation of the sign: remove this 'archaic obligation' to designate something and it finally becomes free, indifferent and totally indeterminate, in the structural or combinatory play which succeeds the previous rule of determinate equivalent'.⁶¹ 'Designation' then, is of an old, archaic pre-industrial order, concretised and symbolic where the new structural system of value operates in the hyperreal. For Lee too, articles of gift exchange, – 'peacocks' 'apes' and sundry 'material tokens'– fail, unreservedly, to designate anything outside of their own arrant status as 'superfluities', not least a consequential and symbolic bond between recipient and donor. Lee sets up a dialectical tension between the 'false', 'specious' and the 'genuine' gift (66, 68). The former is aligned with the contemporary economic context and 'a sign of the recent importation and comparative scarcity of honest livelihoods' (67). But Baudrillard and Lee differ, with respect to the symbolic order, in one important sense; that is, their position on the 'arbitrariness' of the material object of exchange. Baudrillard points out that:

⁵⁹ Jean Baudrillard, *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*, Trans. by Charles Levin (New York: Telos Press, 1981) p.63

⁶⁰ Mike Gane, 'Introduction' in Jean Baudrillard, *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, Trans. Iain Hamilton Grant (London: Sage, 1993), p. xi.

Baudrillard points to Saussure in his conceptualisation of 'value'. Conflating the referentiality of the linguistic sign with exchange value in the monetary system, Saussure offers the groundwork for Baudrillard's contention that economic exchange, in its post industrial context, constitutes a kind of semiosis. This production and re-production of signs in the capitalist system originates, according to Baudrillard with Marx's structural law of value. Ascribing equivalence between human labour time and value, this so called 'classical' economics of value', because of historical changes pertaining to the nature of production, merely sustains the myth that signs are exchanged 'against the real' (7). The semiotic order is thus seen to displace, or in Baudrillard's terms, attack, the symbolic (pre-industrial) order.

⁶¹ Jean Baudrillard, *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, Trans. Iain Hamilton Grant (London: Sage, 1993), p. 7

In symbolic exchange, of which the gift is our most proximate illustration, the object is not an object: it is inseparable from the concrete relation in which it is exchanged, the transferential pact that it seals between two persons [...] it [the gift] is (relatively) arbitrary: it matters little what object is involved. Provided it is given, it can fully signify the relation.⁶²

Thus for Baudrillard, gift exchange derives its 'symbolic' status not from any quality inherent within the material object but rather, the symbolic implication of the exchange: the so called 'transferential pact' that the offering, in a Maussian sense, demands.⁶³ Conversely, Lee wants to institute a symbolic order based not (primarily) on relational bonds, but on archetypal indicators intrinsic to the gift-object itself. In 'A Wedding Chest', for instance, the gift operates in an economy of exchange (as we understand the term in its usual sense) and, moreover, a symbolic economy of blood. Actors in the triad formed of Troilo, Desiderio and Maddalena's father, Ser Piero Bontempi, pay and are restituted for their enterprise in blood; Troilo, makes a return on his seizure with the bloody remains of Maddalena, Desiderio 'laps' up Troilo's blood in order to amortise (by proxy) the debt owed to Maddalena and Ser Piero, for his craven relinquishment of Maddalena, is struck 'on the mouth till he bled' (236).

In the mid to late-nineteenth century the blood-money analogy is often linked to economic distribution and circulation; notably, Herbert Spencer, in his essay 'The Social Organism' (1860) aligns the 'blood-discs' of the biological organism with coins or, money in the social one.⁶⁴ In recognition of the fact that in 'the lower animals, the blood contains no corpuscles; and in societies of low civilization, there is no money', Spencer posits that 'circulation' becomes apparent 'only at a certain stage of [evolutionary] organisation'.⁶⁵ 'Circulation', then, insignia of biological and civilisational progress, operates in a sophisticated 'body-politic' quite apart from the primordial economy of blood characteristic to Lee's gift-exchange. While Lee offers a consonant model of circulation, her tendency is not, as Spencer, to analogise but rather to *realise* the equivalence between blood and money in a de facto somatic currency.

In Chapter One of this thesis, I argued that in socialist fiction, blood, keyed to (French) revolutionary conflict, articulates resistance. In Tressell's *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, for example, the cutting of one's own throat is rendered as a symbolic opting-out of capitalistic

⁶² Baudrillard, *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*, p.64

⁶³ Paradoxically, once the gift is assimilated into the exchange, it becomes 'absolutely singular' in the 'unique moment' of giving. That is to say, the symbolic bond between recipient and donor is concretised in the item selected for exchange.

⁶⁴ Herbert Spencer, 'The Social Organism' in *Essays: Scientific, Political and Speculative*, V.I (London: William & Norgate, 1883) pp. 388-432, p. 418.

⁶⁵ Spencer, *The Social Organism*, p. 419 For a more detailed analysis of the blood-money homology – with special consideration to George Simmel, Arrthur Crump, H.D Macleod and George H. Pownall – see: Gail Turley Houston, *From Dickens to Dracula: Gothic, Economics, and Victorian Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) p. 118-19.

society. Because the spilling of blood is an act of physical decantation, this self-directive act interrupts the endless circularity of economic exchange emblematised in the body. Contrarily for Lee, the figures of blood and circulation are related to reciprocity and as I will argue, critique the exclusive character of male-dominated economic cultures. In ‘A Wedding Chest’, for instance, the circulation of blood points to a haematic adaptation of the gift-exchange and is linked to some striking moments of physical consumption and abnegation. Ser Piero, robbed of his daughter, ‘wept, and cursed wickedly, and refused to take food’ (236) and likewise Desiderio vowed ‘never to touch food [...] till he could taste the blood of Messer Troilo’ (240). Fasting was certainly common in Renaissance Italy (in various seasons, including Lent) but while this physical abstention has a clearly Christological basis (to which I shall return), it is equally connected to economic circulation, specifically a violation of rules of economic exchange.⁶⁶ As an unlawful seizure of capital, Troilo’s abduction functions for Ser Piero and Desiderio as a direct inversion of the ‘consumption’ principle whilst Maddalena’s doll-like passivity renders her more properly commodity than human agent. This is true not simply because physical abstention becomes the figurative expression of economic loss but the revelation that Ser Piero, being ‘the father of other children [...] conquered his grief’ (and with it, his appetite) points to the fact that Piero’s estate, possessed of surplus offspring is capable of absorbing the cost of Troilo’s extortion in a way that Desiderio, a mere craftsman, cannot (236).

Desiderio’s own fast is conversely broken in a moment of vampiric mania when he ‘lapped up [Troilo’s] blood as it flowed’ from the wound in his chest (241). Patricia Pulham, in remarking the potentially homoerotic relations between Troilo and Desiderio, states that ‘Desiderio’s vampire-like lapping of Troilo’s blood arguably functions as an act of introjection which, given the ‘two stabs’ that mark Maddalena’s neck, suggests a form of vampiric consummation of his relationship with Maddalena mediated via the androgynous body of Troilo’s corpse [...]’⁶⁷ While Pulham’s reading conflates the vampiric with the homoerotic, her analysis has important implications for a reading of the *economic* or, symbolic exchange. Indeed, once we arrive at the understanding that the interchange between Troilo and Desiderio constitutes an explicitly vampiric consummation, it seems clear that Lee, drawing on the established literary trope of the vampire, seeks to endow the transaction with archetypal significance. The Jungian archetype is expressed, in ‘On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry’, as ‘a figure [,] be it a daemon, a human being or process – that constantly recurs in the course of history and appears where creative fantasy is freely expressed’.⁶⁸ Jung goes on to state that ‘the work of art [...] as well as being symbolic, has its source [...] in a sphere of unconscious mythology whose primordial images are the common heritage of

⁶⁶ Elizabeth S. Cohen & Thomas V. Cohen, *Daily Life in Renaissance Italy* (Westport: Greenwood, 2001), p.103

⁶⁷ Patricia Pulham, *Art and the Transitional Object in Vernon Lee’s Supernatural Tales* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), p.86

⁶⁸ Carl Gustav Jung, *The Spirit in Man, Art, and Literature*, trans. by R.F.C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966; repr. 1978), p.81

mankind'.⁶⁹ Lee's tales are rich with these symbols; the spectre, serpent, *femme fatale* and Madonna – to name a few – engulf the 'creative fantasy' of her work, attesting to its symbolic genealogy. The vampire and its analogues, as the enduring archetypal symbol of parasitism and larceny, align Lee's gift-exchange with a more primordial mode of economic violation. Interestingly, contemporary literary criticism tends to equate the late nineteenth-century vampire with the economic activities of the time, chiefly: market centralisation and corporate monopoly.⁷⁰ Certainly, following Marx's 1867 conceptualisation of capital as vampire (sucking the 'living blood of labour'), the vampire figure is seen both to allegorise contemporary economic conditions, whilst also – in line with the rise of evolutionary economics in the latter part of the century – highlight a retrogressive or, devolutionary, movement in *fin-de-siècle* pecuniary arrangements.⁷¹

Eucharistic Economies and Votive Offerings

Evoking a range of quasi-Christian ritual, the literary vampire invariably assimilates the Eucharist or Holy Sacrament into the broader economy of blood (capital). In 'A Wedding Chest', it is the Eucharist that emerges as the main tropological constituent, of which 'the vampiric' is but one form of expression. Desiderio's final return on Troilo's 'gift of unspeakable wickedness' is significantly prefaced by the communion he receives from Ser Piero's brother, the priest of Saint Severus (n.237):

And he went to the priest, prior of Saint Severus, and brother of Ser Piero, and discovered himself to him, who although old, had great joy in seeing and hearing of his intent. And Desiderio confessed all his sins to the priest and obtained absolution, and received the body of Christ with great fervour and compunction; and the priest placed his sword on the altar, beside the gospel, as he said mass, and blessed it. And Desiderio knelt and made a vow never to touch food save the Body of Christ till he could taste the blood of Messer Troilo (240).

⁶⁹ Ibid., p.80

⁷⁰ Both Franco Moretti and Gail Turley Houston, draw parallels between Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) and end-of-century economics. Moretti states that: 'If the vampire is a metaphor for capital, [and for Moretti, it is] then Stoker's vampire, who is of 1897, must be the capital of 1897. The capital which, after lying 'buried' for twenty long years of recession, rises again to set out the irreversible road to concentration and monopoly'. Similarly Houston points out that '[t]he term "Dracula" is [...] an amalgamated corporation of vampires of which he is the brains; a process or procedure of (capitalist) infinite circulation (of the commodity of blood); and the extensive hybrid streams of consciousness (and blood) of a group of accountants (Van Helsing, etc) who attempt to bankrupt the artificial personality of the incorporated Dracula'. Franco Moretti, *Signs Taken for Wonders: Essays in the Sociology of Literary Forms* (London: Verso, 1983), p. 92 & Gail Turley Houston, *From Dickens to Dracula: Gothic, Economics and Victorian Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 117

⁷¹ Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, Vol.I, part I (New York Cosimo, 1973), p.257

For Desiderio, the Eucharist operates as the symbolic settling of accounts. To receive the ‘gift’ of sacrament is to enter a state of divine reciprocation. Indeed, according to the Christological economy of salvation, the self-sacrifice of Jesus Christ serves to discharge man’s debt, in order that he stand free before God. Adalbert Hamman, writing on Saint Irenaeus, an early Christian thinker and Bishop of Lyons, points out that:

For Irenaeus, the eucharist is the sacrament of the economy, or the unfolding divine plan, as revealed to us in the person and work of Christ. Faith and eucharist, eucharist and faith are inseparable and reciprocal: “our manner of thinking is conformed to the eucharist and the eucharist confirms our manner of thinking” (Adv, Haer.IV, 18,5). The eucharist is the center and the content of faith and contains the whole economy of the son of God.⁷²

Thought of in these terms, the Eucharistic economy is necessarily a gift economy. The tautology ‘Faith and eucharist, eucharist and faith’, as a statement of equivalence, affirms the principle of reciprocity built up around the divine beneficence of Christ. Like Mauss, who posits the absolute obligation to give and receive, Irenaeus, acknowledges the tacit *quid pro quo* of the Eucharistic ritual. Proclaiming that ‘the savior redeemed us with his blood and gave his soul for our soul, his flesh for our flesh’, Irenaeus demands from the collective beneficiaries of this, the ultimate sacrifice, a faithful and commensurate return: flesh for flesh, soul for soul. Lee’s Desiderio, in what should properly be regarded as an act of debt-consolidation, receives sacrament and in so doing enters into a binary exchange that vanquishes all others. Thus pledging himself to God, Desiderio receives divine favour in the object of his sword, which is placed by the gospel and blessed. The fact that divine favour *is* conferred upon Desiderio is evident in the triadic structures that manifest around the sequence. Indeed, the tripartite significance of Troilus’s name, at once triad troil and Trojan, prefigures the trinity to be revisited upon him; for ‘three days and nights [Desiderio] watched and dogged [Troilus]’ and on appertaining him, ‘ran his sword three times through his chest’ (240, 241).

That divine favour is granted to Desiderio in his act of retributive blood-letting is certainly profane and for Lee profanity is both a source of intellectual play and a medium through which she negotiates the problematic ethics of giving. In her preface to ‘The Virgin of Seven Daggers’ which appeared in the 1927 collection *For Maurice: Five Unlikely Stories*, Lee addresses Maurice Baring, dedicatee of the collection, on the subject of the somewhat incongruous pairing of Don Juan and the Holy Virgin. She writes: ‘it does seem a trifle, shall we say? *profane* to bring these two

⁷² Adalbert Hamman, ‘Irenaeus of Lyons’ in Willy Rordorf (Ed.) *The Eucharist of the Early Christians* (New York: Pueblo Publishing, 1978) pp. 86-98 (p. 95)

celebrated characters into such friendly relations'[original emphasis].⁷³ She continues: 'And natural, furthermore, that he and that knife-riddled Spanish Madonna should be united by common ancestry in the wickedness of man's imagination, but also by a solemn compact that Don Juan's one and only act of faith in his career of faithlessness should be towards her, and be what deprived Hell of his distinguished presence' (247). In the tale, which is essentially a revision of the Tannhäuser myth, Don Juan (Gusman del Pulgar) pledges himself to a Grenadian Madonna of 'lesser fame': 'Our Lady of Seven Daggers'. In 'ex-voto dans le Gout Espagnol' (a votive offering in the Spanish style) Don Juan declares he 'will maintain before all men and all the Gods of Olympus that no lady was as fair as our Lady of the Seven Daggers' (252). Shortly after and with the help of the Jew, Baruch, Don Juan discovers the subterranean palace of King Yahya, which holds his fortune and the 'moorish infanta', who has lain sleeping for four hundred years (271). Called upon by the Chief Eunuch and Duenna to declare the infanta more beautiful than his erstwhile lovers, Don Juan gladly obliges. Asked finally 'Does your lordship consider her more beautiful also than the Virgin of Seven Daggers?', Don Juan, in accordance with his vow, responds in the negative and undergoes the 'punishment usually allotted to cavaliers who are disobliging to young and tender princesses': beheading (271, 272). Fleeing to the Church of Our Lady, the disembodied Don Juan, in fulfilment of the Virgin's vow, ascends to heaven amidst a 'cloud of stale incense' and the sound of 'exquisitely played lutes and viols' (277). It is clear from Lee's preface that she is much gratified with the comic irony of the pairing and her playful denigration of the Catholic institution (for which she also professes a certain fondness) articulated in the profane allegiance of villain and virgin, avenger and Christ, doubly serves to highlight the analogous contrariety of the votive offering. Indeed, the votive gift is merely a transposition of the Eucharistic gift; while the former – in the case of Don Juan – is an offering from mortal to deity, the latter is inversely a divine gift tendered to mortal man. For Lee, both orientations harbour a sacrilegious imperative to return the offering and, this being so, neither the votive nor sacrament can resist the sordid touch of the market. This is particularly evident in Don Juan's votive address: 'Give me [...] the promise that thou wilt save me ever from the clutches of Satan [...] Grant me this boon and I will assert always with my tongue and my sword [...] that although I have been beloved of all the fairest women in the world [...] no lady was ever so fair as our Lady of the Seven Daggers of Grenada' [252]. Despite the votive's claim to a higher (devotional) motive it emerges, at best, as a common bargain and at worst, as a pact of vain and nefarious parties (a pact more characteristic of the gods of the Greek pantheon whom, incidentally, Lee *does* invoke).⁷⁴ The story echoes a commonly held anti-Catholic sentiment: that the pledging of votives (in the Spanish style) constitutes a venal – and thus irreligious – attempt to secure absolution. Indeed, in a *Christian*

⁷³ Vernon Lee, 'The Virgin of Seven Daggers' in *Hauntings and Other Fantastic Tales*, ed. by Catherine Maxwell and Patricia Pulham (Toronto: Broadview, 2006), pp.243-278 (p.243) Further page reference will be provided in the text.

⁷⁴ 'I will maintain before the Gods of Olympus that no lady was as fair as our Lady of the Seven Daggers' (252)

Guardian of 1833, one author writes ‘Catholics, [...] have other modes of getting quit of their sins, besides bribing the virgin and saint by their offerings’.⁷⁵ The author is, of course, referring to self-flagellatory practices but what is important here is the conceptualisation of the votive gift as ‘bribe’. Seen as an application of material wealth to ‘get ahead’ spiritually, the votive is regarded as a harmful intrusion of the economic into the spiritual domain.⁷⁶ Pertinently, in *Given Time: Counterfeit Money* (1991), Jacques Derrida considers the phenomenological impossibility of the gift outside of economic activity. He writes: ‘the gift, if there is any, would no doubt be related to economy’ and certainly, if we are to believe Mauss, gift-giving is but another mode of economic circulation.⁷⁷ For Derrida ‘economy implies the idea of exchange, of circulation, of return’ and thus the instant a gift-event commands reciprocal action – whether a symbolic or material return – it ceases to exist *as* gift; it belongs more properly to the realm of economic exchange.⁷⁸ I will consider the Derridean theorisations of the gift in more detail later in this chapter. For the present discussion, though, it suffices to say that the philosophical acknowledgement of the economic basis of the (votive) gift speaks of the compromised integrity of the practice.

‘Dionea’, (1890) one of Lee’s earlier tales, which is written in the epistolary style and set in contemporary Italy, offers a more complex engagement with the votive gift.⁷⁹ Unlike ‘A Wedding Chest’ and ‘The Virgin of Seven Daggers’, which advance a Eucharistic or, votive economy consistent with the reciprocal demands of Mauss’s conception of gift, the votive economy of ‘Dionea’ stimulates the uni-directional forfeit of capital; and one, as I shall argue, that promotes a distinctly feminist agenda. The tale is comprised of the letters of a Dr Alessandro De Rosis to Lady Evelyn Savelli – who is Princess of Sabina – regarding a shipwrecked child found on the shore of Montemirto Ligure. Christened Dionea and receiving the patronage of the princess, the child is placed with Catholic order, the Sisters of the Stigmata. As Dionea matures to womanhood she appears to assert a ‘strange influence’ on some of the villagers who, after contact with the girl, are visited with various afflictions, including irrepressible sexual impulses and unsuitable romantic attachments (86). Friend of the princess, the sculptor Waldemar and his wife, Lady Gertrude, make an extended visit to the Doctor and shortly after their arrival recognise Dionea as a suitable model for the artist. Following a period of intensive activity, Waldemar’s frustration surrounding the ‘superiority of the model over the statue’ peaks; he becomes increasingly volatile and exhibits a

⁷⁵ ‘Letters from Rome –No. VI’ in *The Christian Guardian (and Church of England Magazine)*, (London: Seeley and Sons, 1833) p.462

⁷⁶ In the same article, the author alludes to the practice of offering weapons as votive gifts. This is interesting considering that in Lee’s ‘A Wedding Chest’, Desiderio’s own sword is placed on the altar and blessed. The article reads: ‘[b]esides these little figures, there is another tolerably numerous class of votive offerings, composed of swords and daggers, guns and pistols, which is understood, are generally presented by persons who have a habit of using them contrary to law, in plain language, by robbers and banditti, who, when they resolve to abandon their wicked course in life, thus consecrate as it were their weapons to their favourite saint, and vow to sin no more’. (Ibid.). It is quite possible that Lee was aware of this practice.

⁷⁷ Derrida, *Given Time*, p. 7

⁷⁸ Ibid. p. 6

⁷⁹ *Hauntings and Other Fantastic Tales*, ed. by Catherine Maxwell and Patricia Pulham (Toronto: Broadview, 2006), pp.77-104 Further page references to this story are given after quotations in the text.

peculiar interest in one of the Doctor's antiques: a Venus altar possessing 'two little gutters ... for collecting the blood of the victim' (100-1). One evening, when Waldemar is working late – having 'placed Dionea on the big marble block behind the altar [with] a great curtain of dull red brocade [...] behind her' – Gertrude creeps downstairs to the desecrated chapel, Waldemar's temporary studio (103). A tragedy ensues, as the Doctor reports:

We found her [Gertrude] lying across the altar, her pale hair among the ashes of the incense, her blood – she had but little to give, poor white ghost! – trickling among the carved garlands and rams' heads, blackening the heaped-up roses. The body of Waldemar was found at the foot of the castle cliff. He had hoped, by setting the place on fire, to bury himself among its ruins, or had he not rather wished to complete in this way the sacrifice, to make the whole temple an immense votive pyre? (104)

Sacrificing first his wife, and then himself, in worship of Dionea – whom it is clear, at this stage, is Venus herself – Waldemar's 'rapt[urous] contemplation' of the girl's beautiful form expends itself in what is, essentially, an act of sublime sumptuary destruction (98). For Mauss, and later Baudrillard, sumptuary violence of this kind tends largely towards competitive or, honorific purposes. That is to say, in the Mauss's use of Potlatch culture, accumulated wealth is typically destroyed 'in order to outdo [a] rival' and as Baudrillard states, in his work on modern day 'sacrificial consumption', 'it is a question of the production of a caste by [...] the destruction of economic value'.⁸⁰ In 'Dionea', the sculptor's studio, wife and self are consumed not, as Mauss's study suggests, in the agonistic display of dominance, but Waldemar's actions are nonetheless indicative of a (Hegelian) struggle. Lady Waldemar, who procures Dionea for her husband, cuts the figure of the vampire as a 'pale, demure, diaphanous creature', appearing 'not the more earthly for approaching motherhood' (97). Morbidly anaemic, she scans the 'girls of [the] village with the eyes of a slave-dealer' before alighting, finally, on the fleshly form of Dionea (97). Economically dependent and relatively friendless, Dionea is theoretically vulnerable to the needs of the Doctor's wealthy and influential visitors, and certainly, Lady Waldemar's vampire-like pursuit, and ultimate purchase of Dionea's services (or, more accurately, her naked form) constitutes an act of subordination bordering on prostitution.⁸¹ Furthermore, Lady Waldemar's acquisition of Dionea is presaged in a fairy tale, based on the Judgment of Paris, which Dionea narrates to the village children. As Maxwell and Pulham note, in the original mythological story, Hera, Athena and Aphrodite compete for a golden apple inscribed with the words 'for the most beautiful'.⁸² Attempting to win the favour of Paris, son of Priam and arbiter of the dispute, the Goddesses offer various gifts but it is Aphrodite's promise of the world's most beautiful woman that succeeds in

⁸⁰ Baudrillard, *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*, p. 119

⁸¹ '[Dionea] lives upon the money which I dole out to her (with many useless objurgations) on behalf of your Excellency...' p.93

⁸² Vernon Lee, *Hauntings and Other Fantastic Tales*, ed. by Catherine Maxwell and Patricia Pulham (Toronto: Broadview, 2006), p.99n

securing the apple. Thus, with Aphrodite's help, Paris abducts Helen of Sparta: an act that supposedly ignites the Trojan conflict. Dionea's adaptation of the tale, places Lady Waldemar in a prospectively analogous position to Aphrodite; both appropriate their fellow woman as gift for their male consort or lover. The tale, not only exposes an honorific (and self-interested) aspect of gift-giving – somewhat akin to that presented in 'Prince Alberic and the Snake Lady' – but interestingly, like the figure of Troilus in 'A Wedding Chest', the Judgement of Paris operates as a narrative key centred around the Trojan conflict: source of the original 'Greek gift'. It seems probable that Lee's inclination to advance prognostic clues based on the Trojan war stems from her recognition of the great treachery surrounding the gift-events that both precipitate and conclude the mythic conflict.

Hegel's master-slave dialectic – which serves as an appropriate model for a consideration of the power-struggle operating between Dionea and her 'proprietors' – requires that the anthropogenetic desire or, 'desire that generates self-consciousness', of a potential 'master', assert itself over a 'slavish' consciousness in order to achieve 'recognition' as the ascendant conscious being.⁸³ Alexandra Kojève, explains that '[t]he being that eats, for example, creates and preserves its own reality by overcoming a reality other than its own [...] by the "assimilation," the "internalization" of a "foreign," "external" reality'.⁸⁴ So too does the ascendant party of Lee's tale, Waldemar, validate his own (artistic) consciousness by the consumption of an external reality: Dionea. In the following passage, which includes Kojève's own explanatory insertions, Hegel characterises the enslaved consciousness as:

a consciousness that [being in fact a living corpse – the man who has been defeated and spared] does not exist purely for itself, but rather for another Consciousness [namely, that of the victor]: i.e. a Consciousness that exists as a *given-being*, or in other words, a Consciousness that exists in the concrete form of *thingness*.⁸⁵

That the enslaved consciousness is not recognised as animate and exists, for the master, as mere 'thing' or significantly 'given' thing, has important implications for Lee's tale.⁸⁶ As the Doctor

⁸³ In the struggle that Hegel describes, the consciousness that exhibits a self-preservation instinct becomes, ultimately, the enslaved party in a symbiotic relationship. The desire to survive, notwithstanding potentially compromised conditions, leads the subordinate party to 'recognise' the 'supreme value' or, animal consciousness of the 'master'. This is pertinent for Lee's tale because the material conditions of Dionea's life depend, entirely, on the Princess and her acquaintance.

⁸⁴ Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. Allan Bloom, trans. by James H. Nichols, Jr. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), p. 4

⁸⁵ Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, p. 16 This passage is translated as 'a consciousness which is not purely for itself but for another, i.e. is a merely *immediate* consciousness, or consciousness in the form of *thinghood*' in G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. by A.V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 115

⁸⁶ Kojève translates the German 'Seiendes' to 'given-being' (*être-donné* in the original French) which has important implications for my own reading because it is precisely as a 'gifted' consciousness or being that I read Dionea's involvement with the Waldemars. 'Seiendes' which, more commonly denotes the state of

reports: ‘I could never have believed that an artist could regard a woman so utterly as a mere inanimate thing, a form to copy, like a tree or flower. Truly he carries out his theory that a sculpture knows only the body, and the body scarcely considered as human’ (98) A ‘*given-being*’, the product of Lady Waldemar’s voracious ‘kindness’, Dionea figures, for the artist, as no more than a ‘concrete form of *thingness*’ or, ‘living corpse’. The latter is significant, given the prevalence of the eroticised corpse in Lee’s tales, because it highlights the striking lack of female agency. The master-slave dialectic crucially requires that the enslaved party is not ‘recognised as an independent self-consciousness’; in fact, the slave is the only one of the two parties in possession of this kind of external recognition. The upshot of this, according to Kojève, is that the Master ‘is always enslaved by the world of which he is [ascendant][...] it is only his death that “realizes” his freedom’.⁸⁷ Waldemar’s manifest failure to realise Dionea’s form in clay, and the frustration culminating in his ‘obliteration’ of the ‘exquisite’ but nonetheless inferior duplicate, mirrors, in Hegel’s dialectical relationship, the Master’s inability to recognise the subordinate consciousness. Waldemar’s fatal ‘recognition’ of Dionea’s true identity as Venus is reinforced by the contextual clues provided by her placement; posing the girl in the ‘old desecrated chapel [...] that was once the temple of Venus’, Waldemar illuminates her naked form ‘by an artificial light [...] the way in which the ancients lit up statues in their temples’ and before the altar of Venus procured from the Doctor (102,103). As Dionea is revealed, in this way, as Venus, Waldemar faces ‘recognition’ of another consciousness: a recognition that, as ‘Master’, necessarily leads to his self-sacrifice. Thus Waldemar’s ‘freedom’ is, in Hegelian terms, a fatal and reciprocal recognition of the archetypal female psyche.

The Master-Slave dialectic does not, for the reason of competition, allow for the kind of reciprocal arrangement characteristic to the votive or, Eucharistic economies of ‘A Wedding Chest’ and ‘The Virgin of Seven Daggers’. As Kojève points out ‘the two [parties] do not give themselves reciprocally to one another, nor do they get themselves back in return from one another through consciousness’.⁸⁸ Indeed, the ‘immense votive pyre’ offered in worship, or acknowledgement of Dionea’s ascendancy is, as I point out, a uni-directional movement of capital: Waldemar’s wife, the product of his labour and his props are all absorbed, exigently into an ‘immense’ votive vortex (104). Interestingly, Waldemar takes the life of his spouse in a sacrificial offering that, as gift of blood from wife to idol, has specifically vampiric overtones. Gertrude, found ‘lying across the altar’, seeps blood – of which ‘she had but little to give’ – onto ‘the carved garlands and rams’

being or existence can also refer to the act of coming into or, *giving* existence. It is evidently in this sense of ‘giving’ – which accurately describes the subordination of the slavish consciousness – that Kojève has derived his meaning but we should be aware that, as James H. Nichols Jr., points out : ‘Kojève’s translations of Hegelian terms are not the customary ones, but represent his interpretation of their meaning’. James H. Nichols, Jr, ‘Translator’s Note’ in Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. Allan Bloom, trans. by James H. Nichols, Jr. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), pp. xiii-xiv (p.xiii). Thanks to Anna Pilz (University of Liverpool) for her help with the translated texts.

⁸⁷ Kojève, *Introduction to the reading of Hegel*, p. 29

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p.14

heads', a scene that strangely prefigures the anaemic bloodletting of Stoker's own Lucy Westenra (104). In this sense, Waldemar not only mediates the haematic exchange between Gertrude and Dionea, but reveals himself as proprietor of the 'asset' thus disposed of. The offering, then, serves not to criticise the malign self-interest that debases gift and giving, but operates as an ideological inversion of the patriarchal economy of exchange that so often, in Lee's fiction, claims woman as its sacrificial gift. In Waldemar's moment of surrender, Dionea 'dialectically overcomes' her oppressor and, in Hegelian terms, 'posits [*her*]self as a negative in the permanent order of things, and hereby becomes for [*her*]self'.⁸⁹ This is to say that Dionea, now capable of 'negation', sets 'at nought the existing shape confronting [*her*]' – the shape, that is, of patriarchy in the person of Waldemar – and in so doing becomes *herself*, the archetypal feminine icon: Venus. Dionea's liberation is symbolically affirmed in her escape on a Greek vessel that, set 'full sail to sea', conveys the girl, braced against the mast with 'a robe of purple and gold about her, and her myrtle-wreath on her head' (104).⁹⁰ Gertrude, who is conversely victim of the patriarchy Waldemar administers, is curiously spectral; she is an unearthly 'diaphanous creature' who, in death, resembles a 'white ghost' with little blood to sacrifice to the goddess (97,104). Gertrude's liminality, her wraithlike physicality bespeak of her failure to break free from the bonds of servitude and acquire, like Dionea, phenomenal reality or, in Hegelian terms 'being-for-self'.⁹¹

Transposing the gender of the sacrificial being, Lee imagines a theistic economy in which woman rules sovereign. Her particular reverence for the female gods of the Roman pantheon stems from a desire to re-instate the matriarch who, formerly ascendant, is displaced in the rise of patriarchal Christianity. Régis Debray articulates the demise of the female Gods, staking a position that appears to accord with Lee's own. He writes:

If what was needed, whatever the cost, was a founding act of carnage, a union through murder, Freud, it would appear, confused genders: the cement of monotheism, the law of the Father, was made with the blood of the mother goddesses. The scapegoat strictly speaking should have been a she-goat. Sand and Sign restricted divinity to a regimen of dryness. Until the great turning point, however, divinity had been vitalistic and matrilinear: oral, visual, awash with rain piss and milk, a source of nourishment [...] the matricide occurred later.⁹²

Rejecting Freud's proposition that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ represents an oedipal impulse that is revisited, symbolically, in the Christian Eucharist, Debray argues that the primordial deity was not a stale patriarch, but sundry fertile matriarchs, eliminated in the rise of the Christian religion. Like

⁸⁹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p.118

⁹⁰ Maxwell and Pulham note that Lee's use of the Myrtle is significant because it is dedicated to Venus. Lee, *Hauntings and Other Fantastic Tales*, p.77n

⁹¹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p.118

⁹² Régis Debray, *God: An Itinerary*, trans. by Jeffrey Mehlman (London: Verso, 2004), p. 158

Debray who considers that Artemis is covertly re-imagined in the figure of the Virgin, Lee, in her preface to 1927 version of 'The Virgin of Seven Daggers' similarly writes: '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 [...]?' Not only, then, does Debray share Lee's vision of a nourishing eternal mother centred in the Holy Virgin, but also the conviction that within Christianity's theistic economy, the principal economic 'players' are male. As is evident from the analysis of 'A Wedding Chest', Lee shows herself particularly attuned to the patriarchy embedded not only within votive and Eucharistic practices but in the broader Christological economy. The tale features the circulation of a female gift-object in a triad formed of Ser Piero, Desiderio and Troilus; the Holy Trinity, revealed in these, the tale's triadic structures, is associated with a male esoteric marketplace. Certainly, woman, who is powerless to participate in the exchange, becomes the material commodity circulated in an economy ostensibly presided over, or sanctioned by, God the father. While the Christological economy of salvation does, of course, evolve from an original act of *male* sacrifice, it operates in the context of a prototypical Maussian reciprocity. Freud notes that the Christian Eucharist is a ritual whereby a 'band of brothers [...] eats the flesh and blood of the son and no longer that of the father, the sons thereby identifying themselves with him and becoming holy themselves'.⁹³ He continues: 'the reconciliation with the father is the more thorough because [...] there follows the complete renunciation of woman'.⁹⁴ Thus the Eucharist, through its primitive oedipal aspirations, actively excludes woman. In 'Dionea', Waldemar's self-sacrifice, intended to supply the votive flame, signals Lee's ideological reversal of this principle and works to reinstate the Eternal mother to her antecedent position. Moreover, the sacrifice betokens a grand act of overcoming. In the Hegelian sense I have described, woman throws off the yoke of patriarchy to become, effectively, idol of the marketplace; she is not the passive agent of 'A Wedding Chest' but a locus point of economic activity, vampirically absorbing the gifts of man, life and blood.

In conceiving an economic dimension to the votive gift, Lee is not alone. James too, in his 1895 short story *The Altar of the Dead*, imagines the vampire-like accumulation of human lives, metonymically implied in the votive candle. The tale narrates the plight of the grieving George Stransom who, sometime after the loss of his fiancée, Mary Antrim, appropriates an altar in a Catholic church to commemorate 'his dead' with votive candles.⁹⁵ During his communications with a fellow mourner, a 'black-robed lady' who he believes to share his acquisitive habits, Stransom confesses that 'for me, you know, the more [votive candles] there are the better – there could never be too many. I should like hundreds and hundreds – I should like thousands; I should like a great mountain of light' (24). Conceptualising this accumulation of 'dead' as financial accretion, he

⁹³ Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo: Resemblances between the psychic Lives of Savages and Neurotics*, Trans. by A.A Brill (New York: Moffat, Yard & Co., 1919), p. 254

⁹⁴ Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, p. 254

⁹⁵ Henry James, *The Altar of the Dead* (Sioux Falls: NuVision, 1998) p.8 All further references will be given in the text.

continues: ‘People weren’t poor, after all, whom so many losses could overtake; they were positively rich when they had so much to give up’ (19). At times, Stransom ‘caught himself wishing that certain of his friends would now die’ and coveted ‘just one more – just one’ dead for his collection (18, 45). Like Renfield, the Zoophagous lunatic of Stoker’s *Dracula* whose desire it is to ‘absorb as many lives as he can’ and to do so ‘in a cumulative way’, the vampire-like Stransom cumulatively absorbs human lives into the ‘bounty’ he has aggregated (16).⁹⁶ What’s more, Stransom’s votive offerings serve to invert the material advantage that the recipient, in conventional gift-relations, yields.

Like many Decadent writers of their time, James and Lee were attracted to the Catholic aesthetic; James, as Edwin Sill Fussell persuasively argues, exhibits a Catholicising tendency despite his putative secularism and Lee herself, rejecting orthodox religion, confesses to the ‘secret shrine’ she preserves for the Holy Virgin.⁹⁷ The tales’ emphases on the votive offering certainly participate in what Hilary Fraser describes as the ‘aestheticised forms of Christianity’ that proliferate in the 1890s, yet in these tales, the votive is worth examining beyond its contribution to James’s and Lee’s broader aesthetic attitude.⁹⁸ For one, the votive spectacle present in the tales gives rise to a scene of profanity that is in no way incidental; the ‘votive pyre’ and ‘great mountain of light’ are instances of incendiarism which, because of their acquisitive or self-interested basis, serve to despoil the sanctity of the vow (*vōtīvus*) or contract typically implied in the votive pledge. Particularly Stransom, in his conviction that human lives correspond to capital – and the accumulation of lives to material wealth – profanes both Church and gift with his mercenary aspirations. James makes an irony of Stransom’s endeavours; indeed, he declares that ‘he would snatch [the side-altar] from no other rites and associate it with nothing profane; he would simply take it as it should be given up to him and make it a masterpiece of splendour and a mountain of fire’(16). The profanity Stransom ingenuously imagines absent is, in fact, present in his brazen acquisition of the sacred alcove; his presumption to ‘gild’ it ‘with his [similarly misappropriated] bounty’; and, moreover, the inferno he intends to ignite within its walls. Likewise, Dionea given to sacrilegious behaviour – apparent in her mistreatment of the sacred garments gifted to the convent – and evincing ‘no natural piety’, profanes the votive offering. Given that it can be assumed Lady Gertrude and Waldemar are practicing Roman Catholics – indicated both in Gertrude’s appearance as a ‘snow white saint’ and ‘Memling Modonna’ and the couples’ arrival from Sabina, a Catholic Bishopric (97, 93) – Dionea’s provocation, answered with Waldemar’s incendiary offering, makes

⁹⁶ Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, ed. by Maurice Hindle (London: Penguin, 2003), p.80

⁹⁷ Fussell explains that ‘literary catholicizing means the representation in narrative, dramatic, or poetic form, of identifiably Roman Catholic rites, sacraments, beliefs, practices, and fictive personages, for aesthetic reasons additional to or instead of religious reasons’ (ix). Fussell regards James as intermittently protestant, a religious base that is heterogeneously ‘overlaid with several different and even contradictory religious emphases, chiefly Roman Catholic’ (21). Edwin Sill Fussell, *The Catholic Side of Henry James* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). Also Vernon Lee, ‘Preface to “The Virgin of Seven Daggers”’, in *Hauntings and Other Fantastic Tales*, ed. by Catherine Maxwell and Patricia Pulham (Toronto: Broadview, 2006), pp.243-248 (p.245)

⁹⁸ Hilary Fraser, *Beauty and Belief: Aesthetics and Religion in Victorian Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 186

a sacrilege of the votive praxis, since the idol to which he pledges life, wife and property, is the ‘serpentine’ Goddess: Venus. In this respect Stransom’s ‘great mountain of light’ is the theoretical equivalent to ‘the great votive pyre’ of Lee’s ‘Dionea’; that is to say, both, through their profanation of the votive praxis, defile its sacred gift-relations – properly existing outside the impious economy characteristic to gift – and make vortices into which lives – understood, for James, as capital – are consumed.

Baited Offerings

In her story ‘Lady Tal’ - one of three printed in her 1892 collection *Vanitas: Polite Stories* – Lee lampoons James and her relationship with the novelist in the characters of Lady Tal and Jervase Marion. At eighteen Lady Tal (short for Atalanta) had married the wealthy old bachelor ‘Walkenshaw’ only to lose him a year following their wedding. In the manner of Edward Casaubon, Walkenshaw bequeathed his wealth with a codicil that prohibits Tal from re-marrying without losing her fortune. At thirty, where the narrative begins, Tal lives frugally on her late husband’s money having authored the amateur novel, *Christina*, ostensibly to help her secure financial independence. Against Marion’s better judgement, Tal convinces him to read the manuscript and they fall into an intense pedagogic relationship. Ultimately Tal begins to realise that Marion has been exploiting the scenario for novelistic material (the ‘demon of psychological study [had] prove[n] too great for Marion (39)) and that she, in fact, is not the ‘incipient George Eliot’ she had supposed (75). Nonetheless Tal resolves to ‘finish *Christina*, and print her, and publish her, and dedicate her to [Marion]’ (77).

A baited gift, Walkenshaw’s settlement is a bulwark against Tal’s liberty, serving to circumscribe her activity beyond the context of their marriage. Sadly, Tal’s companions have little difficulty in buying into the pecuniary view of her union, despite her modest lifestyle. In fact, Tal’s frugality is taken as veritable proof that she is ‘feathering her nest with the late Walkenshaw’s money’ and Marion himself, contemplating the ‘odd double-graspingness of [Tal’s] nature’ presumes that she is ‘quite unable to screw up her courage to deliberately forego [Walenshaw’s money]’ (65). With a keen sense of the indignity of her position, Tal explains that:

I’ve been taking only as much as seemed necessary[...] The rest, of course, I’ve been letting accumulate for the heir; I couldn’t give it him, for that would have been going against my husband’s will. But it’s rather boring to feel one’s keeping that boy, - such a nasty young brute as he is – and his horrid mother out of all that money merely by being there. It’s rather humiliating, but it would be more humiliating to marry another man for his money. (69)

As the current incumbent of Walkenshaw's bequest, Tal is merely a custodian of his fortune. She is immured by the conditions of his will and is no more than an obstacle or impediment in the male line of accession. The strict social (and potentially, legal) code attached to gift-giving, however, requires her to withhold the fortune as it is with herself, and not the heir, that the binary contract was formed. In his analysis of gift-giving in Roman law, Mauss notes an equivalent bondage:

[...] in the hands of the *accipiens* [recipient], the thing handled continues, in part and for a time, to belong to the 'family' of the original owner. It remains bound to him, and binds its present possessor until the latter is freed by the execution of the contract, namely by the compensatory handing over of the thing, price or service [...] (64).

Mauss further remarks that the thing given is 'always stamped by a seal, as a mark of family property' (64). The analogy is appropriate since it is in the character of *pater familias* that Walkenshaw devised the codicil to his will. The codicil is the figurative seal that brands his capital and a post-mortem instrument of control over his dependents. Despite the fact that the fortune is now legitimately Tal's own, the pronoun 'her' is never used in connection to the money. As Mauss's statement suggests, the fortune continues to belong the 'original owner'; it binds her and it will continue to do so until she finds a way to discharge the debt. The illiberality of Tal's class demands that she look to marriage as an avenue of economic 'freedom' but humiliation piles on humiliation as she imagines herself once again implicated in a binding economic arrangement.

Walkenshaw's bequest harbours a second level of malice in the deformation of Tal's character. As the recipient of her husband's fortune, Tal is framed as the kind of acquisitive creature that might grace the pages of Marion's own novels: novels that 'turned mainly upon little intrigues and struggles of the highly civilized portion of society, in which only the fittest have survived by virtue of talon and beak' (30).⁹⁹ In Marion's eyes, Tal's voracity exceeds her capital appropriation since she equally makes free with others' intellectual property. Of *Christina*, Marion observes:

The story was no story at all, merely the unnoticed martyrdom of a delicate and scrupulous woman tied to a vain, mean, and frivolous man [...] This particular theme was in vogue nowadays, this particular moral view was rife in the world [...] It was unlike herself because it belonged to other people, that was all. (35-6)

⁹⁹ James's 1901 novel *The Wings of the Dove* centres on a plot to acquire the inheritance of a wealthy American heiress.

Suggesting that ‘Lady Tal sails dangerously close to plagiarism’, Shafquat Towheed appears to accept Marion’s view of *Christina*. He remarks that in the tale ‘Lee is clearly satirizing the vulgar aspirations of contemporary popular novelists’.¹⁰⁰ Given that Tal declares herself motivated by the ‘pots of money’ she imagines the popular novelists in receipt of, this would appear to be a reasonable assessment (38). However, I want to argue that in taking Tal at her word, (and Marion at his) Towheed’s analysis is based on a fundamental mis-reading. Tal’s position is essentially ironic; her droll remarks are comically at odds with the reality of her situation. At one juncture she quips: ‘[i]t is always my policy to conform, you know’, though, from her failure to observe proper mourning ritual to her ‘dreadful strength’ and ‘rather masculine voice’, Tal exhibits scant evidence of conformity (59, 30, and 17 respectively). In fact, she has little interest in material gain and in her position as ironist Tal mocks the frivolity of moneyed society: ‘Have you ever reflected, Mr. Marion, how little there would be in picnics, and life in general, if one couldn’t eat a fresh meal every three-quarters of an hour?’ (73). Given that George Eliot’s *Middlemarch* is the key inter-text of the tale and that Tal herself is a real-life counterpart of Dorothea Brooke, it would appear unlikely if, as Towheed suggests, Lee sought to malign the proliferation of ‘bad’ fiction here.¹⁰¹ Certainly, as Towheed’s article points out, Lee *was* troubled by debasement of the literary marketplace by the abundance of bad fiction; in this episode, however, it is Marion’s (and thus James’s) egotism that forms the primary target of her satire. Despite his apparent expertise in the field of ‘psychological study’, Marion fails to see that *Christina* is semi-autobiographical, preferring instead to interpret Tal’s novel, as Towheed does, as plagiarism (42).

Despite his mistrust of Tal’s ‘acquisitiveness’, Marion recognises Walkenshaw’s bequest is something of an albatross about her neck. Privately, he reflects that: ‘[...] there was but one salvation: to give up that money, to make herself free [...] marry some nice young fellow who will care for [her]; become the mother of a lot of nice children’ (71). As we know, Tal articulated the problematic nature of the kind of freedom that depends on a male provider but ironically Marion has not the psychological insight to appreciate her impasse. In one sense, Marion’s desire to see Tal safely restored to her place in the domestic sphere, resolves the challenge she presents to male-dominated (intellectual) culture. After all, ‘she left on him [the impression] of being able to take care of herself to an extent almost dangerous to her fellow creatures’ (30). On the other hand though, he ‘couldn’t help wincing [...] at the prospect’ of such conformity (72). We should not suppose that Marion’s shrinkage from the expectation of Tal’s return to the office of wife (and potentially mother) as evidence of his feminism; indeed, he has little respect for Tal’s authorship. It

¹⁰⁰ Shafquat Towheed, ‘Determining Fluctuating Opinions’: Vernon Lee, Popular Fiction, and Theories of Reading’, *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, 60 (2005), 199-236 (p. 231)

¹⁰¹ We know that Lee admired George Eliot. Indeed, after the publication of *Miss Brown*, her own first attempt at novel writing (which was generally not well received), Lee wrote to Frances Power Cobbe, who had supportively compared Lee to Eliot: ‘You must not mention my name in the same breath as that of George Eliot [...] there is something in this that perfectly abashes me’. (13 December 1884). Cited in Vineta Colby, *Vernon Lee: A Literary Biography* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003), p.271

is more probable that Lee sought to impugn Marion with the disregard for women's emancipation that she observed in James. In his 1873 review of *Middlemarch*, for instance, James remarked:

Mr. Casaubon's death befalls about the middle of the story, and from this point to the close our interest in Dorothea is restricted to the question, will she or will she not marry Will Ladislaw? The question is relatively trivial and the implied struggle slightly factitious. The author has depicted the struggle with a sort of elaborate solemnity which in the interviews related in the two last books tends to become almost ludicrously excessive.¹⁰²

With the question of Dorothea's re-marriage seen as a triviality, one might assume that James had little interest in the limitations imposed on women through the exercise of that institution.¹⁰³ Elevated in his position of critic, James declares Eliot's treatment of this theme 'factitious': an 'elaborate solemnity' unwarranted by the smallness of Dorothea's choice. Much like the younger James, denouncing Eliot for her want of authenticity in the rendering of Dorothea's dilemma, Marion remarks of Tal's novel: 'a woman who makes up her mind to avoid the temptation of all passion [...] that does seem rather far fetched, you must admit'(57). This statement merely scratches the surface of Marion's egotism. Ventriloquising his ideas in the instrument of Tal – indeed, 'there was not a chapter, and scarcely a paragraph which had not been dissected by Marion and re-written by Lady Tal' (74) - Marion not only re-writes Tal's novel but, in a melding of fiction and reality, her life. He reflects, 'if only Lady Atalanta could be turned into a tolerable novelist, the whole problem of Lady Atalanta's existence would be satisfactorily solved' (73). In this novelistic apotheosis, Marion effectively endeavours to work the 'real' Tal to a satisfactory *denouement*. It does credit to Lee's powers of insight that James, in an 1870 letter to his brother William, had written of Minnie Temple's death 'there is positive relief in thinking of her being removed from her own heroic treatment & placed in kinder hands'.¹⁰⁴ Just as Marion endeavoured to re-write Lady Tal's experience, James narcissistically took on the completion of Minnie's life tale. As Habegger points out, James 'saw [Minnie] as an unfinished manuscript he could turn into a masterpiece' since Minnie, as the '*author of herself*' [original emphasis] was 'too ambitious'.¹⁰⁵

In 'Lady Tal' the (inheritance) gift is problematic not merely because of the punitive function it performs but because the contractual bond underlying the bequest is structured around

¹⁰² Henry James, 'Middlemarch, by George Eliot (1873)' in *The Critical Muse: Selected Literary Criticism*, ed. by Roger Gard (London: Penguin, 1987), pp.74-81 (p. 77)

¹⁰³ Though the question of women's rights and material independence frequently emerge as a theme in James's writing he has largely been read as condescending towards women. His novel *The Bostonians* (1886), for instance, which reads as a satire of the New England feminist movement, is an unflattering portrait and demonstrates little knowledge of the feminist movement itself. Alfred Habegger's *Henry James and the 'Woman Business'* provides a detailed reading of James's attitudes towards women and more recent critical attempts to retrieve him for feminism: Alfred Habegger, *Henry James and the 'Woman Business'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

¹⁰⁴ Cited in Habegger, *Henry James and the 'Woman Business'*, p. 148

¹⁰⁵ Habegger, *Henry James and the 'Woman Business'*, p. 148

gender. For James, however, the gift is a key site of his anxieties surrounding the relational or exploitative nature of human intimacies across the spectrum of human interactions. Indeed, rarely, in James's work, do intended gifts materialise as such: Fleda Vetch is unable to claim the Maltese cross proffered by Owen Garth; Merton Densher relinquishes Milly Theale's financial bequest; and Maggie and Adam Verver fail to receive the golden bowl. All are intended, but never realised, recipients of the gift. The profusion of miscarried offerings in James's late work is indicative of his philosophical engagement with the theory of giving; one that calls into question, the epistemological possibility of the 'pure' gift. The ontological basis of this engagement, I argue, necessitates an analytical alignment with the work of subsequent gift-theorists, Mauss and Jacques Derrida. Whilst Jonathan Warren's article, 'Ricordo, Gift, Golden Bowl' offers a tentatively Derridean reading of the artefact, this analysis – which reads the gift in line with the novel's temporal attachments and contestations – is short of theoretical groundwork and, I believe, fails to follow through on some important considerations.¹⁰⁶ Though recognising the gift's ontological instability, Warren does not consider what these acts of failed or abortive beneficence might mean for our broader understanding of James's economies of exploitation; economies of interpersonal acquisition and loss, that I regard – in Blanchotian terms – a 'privileged theme' in the James's *oeuvre*.¹⁰⁷

Existing work on James's *The Golden Bowl* (1904) often interprets the novel's central object as phallic, uterine, indicative even of American and European relations, and by some accounts the bowl lends shape to an array of nebulous forms and ideas.¹⁰⁸ However, to my knowledge, none of this work notes the bowl's correlation to the theme of parasitism that besets James's work. While not wishing to deny the liquidity of the trope, the bowl as 'drinking-vessel' indubitably evokes the various means by which self-interests are 'consumed' in James's work (84).

¹⁰⁶ Warren, Jonathan. 'Ricordo, Gift, Golden Bowl'. *The Henry James Review*, 25 (2004), 267-275

¹⁰⁷ Warren, 'Ricordo, Gift, Golden Bowl', p. 24.

In 'The Essential Solitude' Maurice Blanchot considers the author's preoccupation with a 'privileged theme', the set of conditions that oblige an artist to engage in an iterative practice of creation. Blanchot postulates a disconnection, or solitude of the work from its creator. The mind, in its infinity, cannot exorcise itself in fixed units but, rather, engages in an organic process of writing and rewriting, in which the author is necessarily distinct from his or her literary output. He writes: 'The writer never knows whether the work is done. What is finished in one book, he starts over or destroys in another'. That is to say, the writer, is condemned to rework the privileged theme because, in his position of solitude, or indeed ignorance he cannot acknowledge its closure.

The obsession which ties him to a privileged theme, which obliges him to say over again what he has already said – sometimes with the strength of enriched talent, but sometimes with the prolixity of an extraordinarily impoverished repetitiveness[...] illustrates the necessity, which apparently determines his efforts, that he always come back to the same point[...]

The leitmotifs of sacrifice or, parasitical intimacy, remarked on by various James scholars – including, most notably, Leon Edel – must, because of their ubiquity in James's *oeuvre*, properly be read in the terms Blanchot here describes. Maurice Blanchot, *The Space of Literature*, trans. Ann Smock (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982; repr. 1989), p. 21 & 24 respectively.

¹⁰⁸ Lynda S. Boren, *Eurydice Reclaimed; Language, Gender and Voice in Henry James* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1989), p.162; Chistof Wegelin, 'The "Internationalism" of "The Golden Bowl"', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 11 (1956), 161-181 (p.162); Laurence B. Holland, *The Expense of Vision: Essays on the Craft of Henry James* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1964), p. 347

During the episode at Matcham in which the Prince and Charlotte contrive an afternoon alone, the Prince remarks: ‘I feel the day like a great gold cup that we must somehow drain together’ (263). Supping at the chalice of Maggie’s abundant wealth and affection, Amerigo’s statement recalls his earlier claim ‘I’m eating your father alive’ (6). That the bowl is tied up with these moments of appetitive, almost cannibalistic selfishness is not in itself remarkable. As an intended gift however, the trope is complicated by the principles of reciprocity and exchange: a difficulty or, corrupting principle that is often not fully appreciated in existing analyses of the novel. Jonathan Warren for instance writes of Charlotte’s gesture: ‘[b]y wanting something in return [an indelible reminder of their shopping trip], indeed by being explicitly motivated by her own want, Charlotte actively corrupts the idea of the gift’ (270). While the gift is certainly corruptible in the specifically Derridean terms Warren describes – and one might wonder which gift-events Warren excludes from this charge, considering that Derrida’s conceptualisation of the ‘pure gift’ requires that neither the donor or donee ‘*recognize* the gift as gift’ – he fails to note that the gesture is inherently and historically bound up with notions of economic self-interest.¹⁰⁹

It would seem, according to this logic, that Charlotte does not so much ‘corrupt the idea of the gift’, as quietly profit from it – though, one might concede as a character she is tremendously adept at imposing obligations of this kind. Her liaison with the Prince, she reveals, stems from a desire ‘that it [their trip] should always be with you – so that you’ll never be quite able to get rid of it’. She continues: ‘Giving myself, in other words, away – and perfectly willing to do it for nothing. That’s all’ (73). And yet, as Mauss would tell us, it is not for ‘nothing’ that Charlotte imparts the indelible gift of herself, her presence that is, and devotion. The ‘[g]iving away’, too acutely redolent of the sacrificial offering, places the Prince under a debt of obligation that he can neither be ‘rid of’ nor repay; it is a reparation impossibly requiring counter-services of equivalent value, requiring of the Prince, in effect to ‘give himself’ back. In this way, the gift gives rise to a continual drawing on obligation: a kind of vampiric economy of exchange. Nonetheless, Charlotte’s gift is itself an abstraction, an economy of movement in psychical matter alone. Concretised in the golden bowl, the gift-event commands obligation, not merely through the sense of something *owed*, but moreover something *appropriated*. This is because, embedded within the gift exists some essence of its benefactor, which gives rise to the recipient’s acceptance of something contingent, unoffered, and acutely personal. As Mauss argues:

What imposes obligation in the present received and exchanged, is the fact that the thing received is not inactive. Even when it has been abandoned by the giver, it still possessed something of him. Through it the giver has a hold of the beneficiary, just as, being its owner, through it he has a hold over the thief. ’ (15)

¹⁰⁹ Derrida, *Given Time*, p.13

Under Fanny Assingham's gaze, the golden bowl 'put on [...] a sturdy, a conscious perversity; as a "document", somehow it was ugly, though it might have a decorative grace' (420). The bowl's active laying-on of character, its peculiar consciousness of perversity, expose the item as both animate and replete with meaning. As a 'document' or missive, the bowl transmits the essence of Charlotte herself and the secret of her liaison with Amerigo. Thus Maggie, the intended recipient of the gift, falls under the hand of her benefactress, and the bowl, a talisman, 'the damnatory piece' on which Maggie imagines her wedding vows sealed, facilitates the gradual sapping of her resources (423). Labouring under this effectively Maussian gift-psychology, Maggie imagines the bowl as actively possessing her, as the reality 'on' which she 'had sacrificed a parent', and by increments, a husband (153). In this diminished state, Maggie finds a 'quantity of further nourishment wanted by her own [secret]': the secret, that is, inscribed in the gift (334). In a moment curiously reminiscent of *The Sacred Fount*, Maggie calculates the 'amount she might somehow extract', 'possess' and 'exploit' to address her shortfall, just as Brissenden, in James's earlier novel, 'tap[s] the sacred fount', to supply the deficit of youth incurred by his wife's inveterate vampirism (334, 34).

A 'certain traceable process'

It is perhaps unsurprising that in the avaricious milieu of James's late-work, Charlotte's gift triggers a sequence of acquisitive action. Yet what is interesting here is not the artefact's participation in James's wider economy of exploitation, but rather the insight the bowl's specifically linguistic character lends to James's conception of gift-giving. As a 'document', the bowl is inscribed with a communication that exceeds, semantically speaking, Mauss's notion of the giver's 'essence', exceeds even the informal linguistic quality of missive or letter (420). As a 'document', the bowl's communication is official, binding and like the artefact itself, weighty. Indeed, the scene in which Maggie reveals the item, bears a curiously legal character. The 'incriminatory' artefact brandished as 'proof' or 'evidence', participates in a courtroom drama presided by Fanny Assingham, who must 'judge' whilst Maggie, as prosecution, 'steadily made her points' (421, 422). As signifier, the bowl seems to attest to the Prince and Charlotte's guilt, is a debenture of Maggie's obligation, and yet, it is foremost an article of munificence. In this sense, the bowl substantiates the antonymic play between the appropriative and gift acts. I suggest that this particular binary points towards a distinctly Derridean formulation: the trace.

Building on Heidegger's work on signification – which regards language as constrained by a 'forgetfulness' of the anterior question of 'being' – Derrida argues that the sign is a 'structure of difference'.¹¹⁰ This is to say, it is not composed of a unity between signifier and signified, but rather the sign exists only in reference to that which is other. As Spivak points out, thought

¹¹⁰ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Translator's Preface' in Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), pp. ix-lxxxvii (p. xvii)

becomes not merely a Heideggerian question of being, but moreover a product of the ‘never annulled’ separation with the radically different.¹¹¹ Thus, the sign necessarily bears the ‘trace’, the ‘absent presence’ of the extraneous signified. As Derrida writes: ‘the sign requires a synthesis in which the completely other is announced as such – without simplicity, any identity, any resemblance or continuity – within what it is not’.¹¹² In this sense, the golden bowl, like the sign, is a ‘structure of difference’. The object is a hieroglyph and signifies – or at least intends – the beneficence or generosity implied within the gift. However, the bowl carries the trace of the radically other, in this instance, semantically opposed configurations of acquisition or seizure. This constitutes a trace structure because the exploitative action is not evoked notionally, but rather exists, to borrow the words of Spivak, only through its ‘relationship of difference’ with the gift act.¹¹³ In more concrete terms, James encourages us to consider the apparitional nature of Charlotte and Amerigo’s appropriation; it is undeniably ‘present’ within the sign – as evident in the bowl’s ‘incriminating’ aspect – and yet is absent, can exist only as a *deviation* from Amerigo and Charlotte’s original purpose: a deviation, that is, from gift-giving venture, to a self-procuring one (421). This trace-like or spectral quality is evident in a variety of circumstances attached to the gift. Fanny, for instance, on first sight of the golden bowl, searches for some ‘floating reminiscence’ of the article, yet ‘[a]t the same time that this attempt left her blank she understood a good deal’ (420). Just as the bowl is a blank, or *absent* in Fanny’s structure of reference, it is also manifestly *present*, communicating what it is that Fanny ‘understood’. Similarly, in *The Wings of the Dove*, following the announcement of Milly’s financial bequest, the subject of her beneficence ‘was made present to [Kate and Densher] – at all events till some flare of new light – only by the intensity with which it mutely expressed its absence’ (398). Again, Milly’s gift becomes an absent present; it has ontological reality, yet, at the same time, it has no reality, is an illusory fragment of Merton and Kate’s collective experience. These examples do not, in the strictest sense, work within the theoretical frame of the trace yet we must nonetheless account for their apparitional quality through a consideration of the instability that exists at the level of the sign. Corrupted by the bonds of obligation the ‘gift’, as signifier, points towards an empty signified. This is to say, the ‘being’ that always, in a Heideggerian sense, precedes signification is apocryphal.

Interestingly, the bowl’s signification goes beyond the specifically linguistic (and ontological) markers at work in Derrida’s trace. Charlotte and Amerigo’s first encounter with the artefact moreover becomes the narratological *signum rememorativum*, *demonstrativum*, *prognostikon* of their future pattern of exploitation: that is, according to Kant, an historical sign

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. xvii

¹¹² Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), p.47

¹¹³ It is, of course, no accident that the gift is instantiated in the form of a golden bowl. Amongst the artefacts brandished before Charlotte, the bowl, evoking the Holy Grail evidently befits James’s ‘sacrificial imagination’ but moreover as a literary allusion to Blake’s *The Book of Thel* it points to the way in which the purity or sacredness of a gesture is annulled in the ritual that surrounds it. Thel’s motto ‘Can Wisdom be put in a silver rod? Or Love in a golden bowl?’ serves to expose the Eucharist as the corruption of a ‘purer’ kind of gift or sacrifice.

which, through its rememorative, demonstrative and predictive faculties, reveals the trajectory of human progress.¹¹⁴ Kant's *signum* is a valuable instrument in establishing the trajectory of exploitation embedded within – or, in a Derridean sense, concomitant with – the gift: a trajectory that, for reasons that will become clear, James particularly accentuates in the novel. Writing of Kant's work on the sign, Michel Foucault remarks that if we are to understand progress – and as I point out, I adapt this formulation to denote a narratological impetus – 'one must isolate, within history, an event that will have the value of a sign' (143). Certainly, in adopting the golden bowl as the title of his novel, in ascribing a linguistic quality to the item, and in declaring it documentary, a communication or missive, James surely intended his readers to be sensitive to the bowl's value as 'sign'. The bowl's prescience, furthermore, marks out the item as a sign of the Kantian order; indeed, during our first encounter with the artefact, the Bloomsbury Street dealer indicates that the crystal underlying the bowl's gold plating, may be shattered by 'dashing it with violence – say upon a marble floor' (87). His remark uncannily prophecies the story's climax in which Fanny 'dashed [the bowl] boldly' upon the 'polished floor' of Portland Place (430). Bracketing the novel's action, this pre-visionary remark and subsequent realisation create a narrative arc that maps out the movement towards a collision of gift – as represented by the bowl – and self-interest, evoked by the marble floor; the latter, associated with wealth and abundance, points to accumulative, as opposed to beneficent, possibilities. Following the dealer's remark, Charlotte reflects:

[...] they were a connection, marble floors; a connection with many things: [...] with the palaces of his past, and, a little, of hers; with the possibilities of his future, with the sumptuosities of his marriage, and the wealth of the Ververs' (87)

For Charlotte, marble becomes a temporal connection; it unites the decadence of Amerigo's past, his ancestors' intemperance and their 'cloud[s] of mortgages', with his future, which similarly augurs an avaricious regard for the Verver millions (121). This is a trajectory from past to future that culminates, literally, with the golden bowl's irreparable collision with the marble floor and symbolically, with beneficence giving way to the 'hard' reality of economic self-interest. The golden bowl certainly answers to Kant's criteria: it is rememorative because, like the 'ricordo' Charlotte and the Prince seek out, it commemorates the couple's 'pretext', the charitable veneer disguising their covetous motive; it is demonstrative because the bowl's concealed flaw illuminates the fractured altruism that characterises these early relations; it is predictive because, presaged in the bowl, is the postliminary self-interest that shadows the beneficence putatively attached to the gift (81). Moreover, in a Derridean twist, the novel's *signum prognostikon*, or predictive sign,

¹¹⁴In 'The Art of Telling the Truth' Foucault explains that Kant's *signum rememorativum, demonstrativum, prognostikon* 'must be a sign that shows that it has always been like that (the rememorative sign), a sign that shows that things are taking place now (the demonstrative), and a sign that shows it will always happen like that (the prognostic sign)' (143).

emerges as an apparitional presence: a presence that heralds Fanny's destruction of the bowl and, in doing so, the ultimate disintegration of the sign.

Sumptuary Destruction

The gift's ontological uncertainty stems not merely from its 'ungiven' status, but through the acts of 'sumptuary destruction' that often, in James's late fiction, serve to annul the gift's *material* presence. The scene in which Fanny Assingham tempestuously 'dashed' the golden bowl is perhaps the most iconic of James's late work, but we must also recall the incineration of Milly Theale's letter of bequest and similarly, the Maltese cross consumed by the fire at Poynton.¹¹⁵ For Marcel Mauss, sumptuary destruction is essentially honorific; it is invested with the same principles of 'antagonism and rivalry' that Thorstein Veblen, in his earlier work *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1901), ironically claimed as the root of the bourgeoisie's 'destructive and pecuniary traits' (162). Of the tribes of the American Northwest, Mauss writes:

[W]hat is noteworthy about these tribes is the principle of rivalry and hostility that prevails in all these practices. [...] they even go as far as the purely sumptuary destruction of wealth that has been accumulated in order to outdo the rival chief as well as his associate. (8)

While James's 'human commerce' is, by necessity, a hierarchical arrangement – with Aunt Maud at its apex, extolled as 'Britannia of the Market Place' – there is little evidence of an honorific basis for gift-giving here (37). This is not to say this sumptuary form of destruction is never ritualistic for James. In *The Wings of the Dove*, Kate Croy's 'quick gesture that jerked the [the letter of bequest] into the flame', is memorialised by Densher as 'the sacrifice of something sentient and throbbing, something that, for the spiritual ear, might have been audible as a faint far wail' (397, 402).

At once visceral, somatic and ritualistic, Densher's propitiation has obvious parallels with the incendiary sacrifice of Lady Gertrude in Lee's 'Dionea'. Yet because Gertrude is the disenfranchised double of Dionea, her sacrifice arguably performs a corrective strategy; conversely here, Densher's destruction does little to negate the indelible bonds that tie him to Milly. Pertinently, Susan Mizruchi regards James's early encounter with a work of the Pre-Raphaelite

¹¹⁵ It is important to note that these are not isolated instances of incendiarism in James's work. Notably, Miss Tina of *The Aspern Papers* (1888) burned the sought-after documents of Jeffrey Aspern 'one by one'. In *The Treacherous Years*, Leon Edel reminds us that fire is a pervasive motif in James's work, one that most likely ensues from the stable fire that resulted in Henry James Sr's leg amputation and, co-incidentally, another in which James himself incurred a back injury. Edel, Leon. *Henry James*, 5 Vols. (London: Hart-Davis, 1953-1972), IV: *The Treacherous Years* (1969) (p.156)

artist, Holman Hunt, as the provenance of what she terms James's 'sacrificial imagination'.¹¹⁶ This piece, *The Scapegoat* (1854-6), depicts a sacrificial goat, abased and cowering amidst a bleak Dead Sea setting. The painting was inspired by an Atonement Day tradition that involved releasing a goat – believed to be carrying the sins of the community – and subsequently plaguing the creature so that it meet its death or, be driven into the wilderness. The propitiation, it was believed, would absolve the sins of the congregation. Mizruchi identifies *The Scapegoat* as an 'image of initiation and exile that would remain vivid to the end of his [James's] life'.¹¹⁷ Certainly Milly's letter, itself a 'sentient' helpless creature, – offered up (and offering) – attests to the tenacity of this impression. In many ways the sacrificial goat of this narrative, Milly and her letter bespeak of ritual killing and the spectacle associated therewith. Indeed, as the article kindled 'in the little vulgar grate at Chelsea', Densher and Kate 'stood together watching the destruction' of the 'sacred script', complicit in their iconoclastic gaze (398, 397).

While keeping in mind the primitivistic or ritual basis of the sacrifice, for James, sumptuary destruction is more of an attempt to eschew the vampire-like bond of obligation attached to the gift. Densher, in relinquishing the financial bequest, regards himself released of the debt incurred through his dealings with Milly. During Kate's incisive cross-examination, she enquires:

"Your desire is to escape everything?"

"Everything"

"And do you need no more definite sense of what it is you ask me to help you renounce?"

"My sense is sufficient without being definite. I'm willing to believe the amount of money's not small" (406)

The debt, from which Densher imagines himself discharged, is both financial and emotional. To accept Milly's monetary gift is effectively to mortgage his affection to the dead girl. Densher's dilemma resonates interestingly with Lady Tal's since the bequest represents some considerable weight of obligation. Anticipating the unliquidated quantities necessarily involved in the acceptance of such a gift, and the attendant impossibility of pledging marriage thus indebted, Densher's desire is rather to 'escape everything', to enfranchise himself by yielding the missive to Kate. Recognising the threat to Densher's position, Kate remarks: 'if you're in love with her without it [the bequest], what can you be more? And you're afraid' (406). Identifying its power to instigate a sequence of (damaging) reciprocal action, Kate incinerates the item. Furthermore, in an artful attempt to obfuscate the source of Densher's obligation, she declares 'you'll have it all from New York' (397). Here Kate transfers agency from Milly to her executor; to 'have' is not primarily to receive news from, but rather to profit at the hands of, the New York agent. What Kate fails to appreciate, however, is that the letter is no more than a harbinger of Milly's offering. To be

¹¹⁶ Susan Mizruchi, *The Science of Sacrifice: American Literature and Modern Social Theory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), p.195

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 189

released of his bond of obligation, according to Densher's sumptuary logic, he must annul both the letter and the gift itself. Interestingly, Julie Rivkin, in her work on the novel's 'dual economy', argues that 'in giving up Milly's letter to compensate Kate, Densher has not so much paid back his debt so much as created a never ending and never to be satisfied sense of loss'.¹¹⁸ For Rivkin, Densher's sumptuary tactics are effectively useless because the value of Milly's gift appreciates following the destruction of her letter. Milly's gesture, by this account, is sufficiently magnanimous to motivate Densher's reciprocation, irrespective of his forfeit. And certainly, Densher *does* reciprocate Milly's offering. Following the destruction of her letter, he 'kept it [the thought of Milly's munificence] back like a favourite pang'; it became his 'intimate companion' and 'hunger[ed]' for his time (402). In this way, Milly's sacrifice, 'like a maimed child' nourished by his sense of wrong-doing, continually draws on Densher's time and affection (402).

As I point out, James's gift economy synthesises financial and emotional values. This is particularly true of the novel's final episode, where the 'immense' worth of Milly's financial gift is rendered equivalent to the emotional debt due to her memory. This fluidity of value is a particular concern of James's earlier work: *The Sacred Fount*.¹¹⁹

'...one of the pair,' I said, 'has to pay for the other. What ensues is a miracle, and miracles are expensive [...] Mrs. Briss had to get her new blood, her extra allowance of time and bloom, somewhere; and from whom could she so conveniently extract them as from Guy himself? She HAS, by an extraordinary feat of legerdemain, extracted them; and he, on his side, to supply her, has had to tap the sacred fount. (34)

In possession of only a finite quantity of the 'vital' commodity, Guy Brissenden must move beyond the closed economy that limits the exchange to 'borrow' from the body. That is to say, he must 'tap the sacred fount' in order to fund his wife's insatiable desire for youth. The tale operates with an extraordinarily flexible economy; where the limitations of one system threaten the abasement of the victim, another system emerges to fund the continued exchange. Laurel Bollinger writes of the passage: 'the immediate sense of a 'fount' as a fountain creates the fluidity metaphor that circulates through the passage, with that fluid simultaneously becoming, blood, semen and water' (54). Indeed, the metaphor's fluidity stems, in part, from the somatic vicissitudes Bollinger describes – and, incidentally, the fount recalls the expectoration of mucus and blood certainly associated with Minnie Temple's consumption – but it is the synthesis of the financial and bodily, the narrator's insistence on a pecuniary rationale of this vampiric activity, that really elucidates the duality of James's 'human commerce'. Acceding to this philosophy, Mauss himself claims that the

¹¹⁸ Julie Rivkin, *False Positions: The Representational Logics of Henry James's Fiction* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), p.118

¹¹⁹ 'Fluidity of value' relates to value that finds equivalence in alternative systems of exchange. For instance, capital of a social, somatic, and financial nature is not only, for James, substitutive but often consonant.

‘intermingling’ of fiscal and psychical capital is an historical determinant of contemporary economic activity. He writes: ‘souls are intermixed with things, things with souls. Lives are mingled together [...] This is precisely what contract and exchange are’ (25-6).

What is interesting about this comparison is that whilst intimacies are often parasitical in *The Wings of the Dove*, the novel nonetheless exhibits an attempt to mediate or control the complex demands of obligation and exchange. Sumptuary destruction, we note, is not an effective exit strategy yet, it strives for a certain stoppage or contractual release that is curiously absent in *The Sacred Fount*. In this, the earlier of the two novels, James imagines a beneficence unimpeded by the psychological investment in principles of reciprocity and exchange. Guy Brissenden, ‘the author of the sacrifice’, offers up his youth because ‘he loves her [his wife] passionately, sublimely’ (35). His charity, unchecked, will deplete him entirely; he ‘can only die of the business’ (34). Meanwhile, Grace Brissenden, unheeding the means by which she accrues, does not return Brissenden’s generosity, but ‘quietly’ and ‘selfishly, profits by it’ (35). Her blindness to Brissenden’s sacrifice is further evident in the previously cited dialogue in which the narrator posits that Grace ‘can’t [see how her victim loses]. The perception, if she had it, would be painful and terrible – might even be fatal to the process’ (35). James, like Derrida, requires the beneficiaries to remain unconscious of their acquisition in order that the gift should exist as pure, unadulterated offering. To apprehend Brissenden’s gesture is to injure the spirit of altruism underlying it, to lay bare the obligatory demands of contract and exchange through the simple consciousness of something owed. When the narrator reveals that ‘the agents of the sacrifice are uncomfortable [...] when they suspect or fear that you see’, it quickly becomes apparent that the benefactors conduct their activity surreptitiously in order to protect the integrity and, more crucially, the substantive reality of their offering (35). Evidently conscious, here, of the gift’s ontological instability, James imbues his ‘agents of sacrifice’ with a misgiving of the same; he has them labour to create an extra-economic space, a vacuum, to safeguard their beneficent act. In *Given Time*, Derrida endorses a similar logic:

For there to be a gift, *it is necessary [it faut]* that the donee not give back, amortize, reimburse, acquit himself, enter into a contract, and that he never have contracted a debt [...] It is thus necessary, at the limit, that he [the recipient] not *recognize* the gift as gift. If he recognizes it *as* gift, if the gift *appears to him as such*, if the present is present to him *as present*, this simple recognition suffices to annul the gift (13). [original emphasis]

For Derrida, economic activity, predominantly represented by the circle motif, is marked by the continual return, reinvestment and rotation of capital: a formation Derrida terms ‘the odyssean structure’ (7). The gift, if it is to retain the semantic value traditionally ascribed to it – that being something offered without expectation or obligation to return – must interrupt this circularity. This is to say, it must exist outside of economic interest. Derrida points out that like Odysseus, the gift is most often advanced with the intention of ‘repatriation’; it merely perpetuates an interminable

cycle of exchange (7). Just as the recognition of Brissenden's sacrifice is potentially fatal to his offering, the equivalent recognition, for Derrida, serves to annul or expunge the gift at the level of the sign.¹²⁰ Yet where Brissenden's offering stops perilously short of this danger, for Kate Croy and Merton Densher, it is ineluctable. Indeed, to return to the passage where 'the subject [of Milly's gift] was made present to them [...] only by the intensity with which it mutely expressed its absence', it becomes clear that her offering is not only trace-like, but undergoes precisely the kind of annulment Derrida describes (398). Timed for Christmas Eve, 'the season', as Kate cheerfully remarks, 'of gifts!', Milly's letter announces itself *as* gift; the semantic absence produced by Kate's casual arson is amply supplied by the cues it derives from this temporal placement (396). As the communication of a dead girl, the letter already possesses somewhat of an apparitional quality, yet through a further series of annulments, – including Kate's incineration and Densher's renunciation – the material reality of Milly's offering becomes, itself, spectral. This is both true in the sense that the gift is materially absent and notionally present but also, according to the system of contract and exchange that James expounds, is annulled at the very apprehension of gift as gift. As Derrida writes: 'its very appearance, the simple phenomenon of the gift annuls it as gift, turning the apparition into a phantom and the operation into a simulacrum' (14). And certainly, it is unsurprising that after the exceedingly unworkable conditions Derrida prescribes to the 'pure' gift, those gift-events of a phenomenal kind must dissipate into phantoms of an impossible ideal.

In many ways, Guy Brissenden and Milly Theale are merely 'types', simulacra of the original sacrificial figure: Minnie Temple. James's own words respecting Minnie's death, 'she passed away [...] from having served her purpose', are reanimated through the martyrdom of these, her fictional counterparts; it appears Minnie's gift becomes a spectral trace in the James canon (and fittingly Leon Edel recalls how James himself conceived Minnie as a 'shining apparition' (229)). Though Milly Theale evidently benefits from an expansive and more sophisticated treatment than her predecessor, Guy Brissenden, her complexity moreover stems from a critical development in James's thinking about the gift and beneficence more generally. Where Brissenden's offering is characterised by a linear movement – interrupting the circularity that Derrida insists is the basis of economic activity – the same *aneconomic* status cannot be claimed for Milly's own, loaded bequest. Existing critical opinion, however, tends to regard Milly as typically outside the novel's

¹²⁰ Heidegger regards the circle motif as originating from the Aristotelian (later Hegelian) concept of time. According to this rationale, time as circle is composed of minute *stigmè* (geometric points) representing the *nun* (now / present) (qtd. in *Given Time* 8-9). The aggregate of these infinitely divisible moments is what forms the continuum, or cycle of time. For Derrida, these points represent a 'paradoxical instant' because they are both a linkage between past and future, but also a moment of disjuncture; in other words the 'now' makes a division of continuity (9). It is precisely within these paradoxical moments – 'the instant an effraction of the circle [has] taken place' – that the gift is possible (9). Otherwise, the circle 'precipitates both time and the gift toward the possibility of their impossibility' (6). This is to say, once the gift tends towards 'circulation', it ceases to be gift.

prolific profiteering. Alfred Habegger, for instance, argues that Milly does not participate in the ruthless bazaar that is Lancaster Gate. Citing her rebuttal of Lord Mark as the primary expression of this forbearance, Habegger points to the fact that Milly, in her refusal, declares: 'I give and give and give [...] only I can't receive or accept [...] I can't make a bargain' (276). And yet, Milly's statement serves only to illustrate her reluctance to 'do business' with Lord Mark, a man she does not love. However, I suggest Milly *does*, in fact, strike a bargain; it is her final bargain, her one-time foray into Aunt Maud's inclement Market Place, but it is a bargain nonetheless: in offering up her life and her fortune to Densher, Milly places a bid that must, through its magnitude, trump Kate and her prior claim to their common object of desire. As Kate points out, 'she died for you then that you might understand her. From that hour you *did* [return her love]' (406). Milly's gift: her sacrifice, is calculated to elicit Densher's requital and is evidently successful in its attempt.

Conclusion

The danger of incorporating 'the gift' into a discussion of economic exploitation is its potential to stretch this network of vampiric, and otherwise appetitive tropes beyond their meaningful, elastic limit. Yet the discreet play of obligation frequently produces discreet textual results. In Chapter One we have seen how socialist writing and illustration deploys often paradigmatic vampire imagery — Walter Crane's bat-winged capitalist, supping blood from the chest of a prostrate labourer (pickaxe and spade in hand), is an iconic example. Since this chapter takes, for its subject, small-scale social and domestic intimacies, we might profitably apply Eliot's 'stronger lens' to reveal the operation 'of certain tiniest hairlets which make vortices for [...] victims'.¹²¹ On a basic level, what this 'micro' analysis reveals is that under the operation of a 'virtuous rapacity' or 'blameless egoism' principle, the binarisation of aggressor-victim, apparent within more representative articulations of vampiric enterprise, breaks down. The ambivalence of the phrases themselves reveal the linguistic instability of such concepts as 'virtue' and 'egoism' but moreover, within the systemically flawed (social) economy, exploitative activity of the kind discussed in this chapter, falls within an expected range of behaviour and is a reflection of the culture that produced it.

Lee, for whom the idea of citizenship is important, constructs her network of self-interest around a specifically gendered form of exploitative operation. She points out that, through its removal of woman from the sphere of competition, social evolution has propagated a species of parasitical citizens. By means of her gothic tales, Lee dramatises this 'morbid [social] development' in ways that are consistent with the New Woman eugenics but with one important qualification: that whatever woman's present condition may be, the concept of enduring feminine

¹²¹ Eliot, *Middlemarch*, p.60

evil is apocryphal. Though James is unconcerned about citizenship, the social economy of his novels does bear comparison to Lee's 'network of virtuous rapacity'. That is to say, on the one hand, James's social scene is a web of self-interested actors that are adept in the art of exchange; on the other, James seeks to undermine the notion of culpability and he does so by revealing all social transactions (which are thinly veiled market transactions) to be mutual, reciprocal and infinitely self-perpetuating. In the following chapter, I will build on the Christological themes considered here, to consider how Lucas Malet develops the trope of cannibalism within the Catholic framework of her novels.

4

Lucas Malet's 'Universal Economy'

If Henry James's 'human commerce' placed social intimacies within an economic framework, it had done so with a complex and equivocal gesture towards Christological expressions of economy, debt and remuneration. For Lucas Malet (Mary St. Ledger Kingsley Harrison, 1852-1931) – the daughter of Charles Kingsley and author of seventeen popular novels in her own right – human, divine and evolutionary operations converge in a 'universal economy': a kind of *cocordia discors* in which the industries of God, man and nature operate on a common economic platform.¹ For Malet, a convert to Catholicism and an admirer of Darwin, the 'machinery' of evolution, Creation and capitalistic production is of the same general constitution and she applies the rhetoric of gyration and dismemberment to the economy of matter both in the natural world and in human industry. As I shall demonstrate, the trope of an anatomised physical world filters down from Christian and Pagan mythologies which similarly describe a divine economy in which created life, through its Fall from a condition of original unity, is likewise considered to be maimed or, fragmented. The closest analogue to Malet's universal economy is Thomas Hardy's 'literary cosmology', which similarly situates mankind in unsympathetic relation to universal law.² Like Malet who imagines the cosmos as loaded with 'energy, force [and] drive'³ but essentially remorseless and indifferent to the fate of man, Hardy correspondingly represents 'terrestrial conditions' as blighted by the unsympathetic operation of cosmic, evolutionary and astrophysical laws.⁴ On the one hand Malet's universal economy describes the interaction and correspondence between the enterprise of nature, God and human industry, and on the other, Hardy's cosmology, as Pamela Gossin explains, involves 'the nexus of human existence: [the] *interaction between* the inner life of conscious awareness, perception, psychology, and personality and the outer life of nature and culture' [original emphasis].⁵ We know that the authors were acquainted and their warm correspondence indicates that they exchanged copies of their novels, but although existing critical work suggests that Hardy may have appropriated ideas from Malet,⁶ it is extremely unlikely that there was any 'foul play' here since the authors' correspondence and notebooks reveal a sustained,

¹ This excludes her illustrated children's book, *Little Peter: A Christmas Morality for Children of Any Age* (1888) and her unfinished novel *The Private Life of Mr Justice Syme* (though this was later to be finished by her cousin and adopted daughter Gabrielle Vallings).

² Phrase borrowed from Pamela Gossin, *Thomas Hardy's Novel Universe: Astronomy, Cosmology, and Gender in the Post-Darwinian World* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), p.45

³ Lucas Malet, *The Wages of Sin* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1908), p.254.

⁴ Thomas Hardy, *Jude the Obscure* (New York: Bantam, 1996), p.360

⁵ Pamela Gossin, *Thomas Hardy's Novel Universe: Astronomy, Cosmology, and Gender in the Post-Darwinian World* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), p.230

⁶ See Talia Schaffer, 'Malet the Obscure: The Politics of Literary Modernism', *Women's Writing*, 3.3 (1996), 261-86. Schaffer also remarks that Henry James 'revised' Malet's novel *The Gateless Barrier* in his *The Sense of the Past*. See Talia Schaffer, 'Some Other Chapter of Some Other Story: Henry James, Lucas Malet, and the Real Past of The Sense of the Past', *The Henry James Review*, 17.2 (1996) 109-128

independent enquiry not only into the existence and nature of God but also the science of human evolution.⁷

While Malet's 'universal economy' – containing, as it does, monetary motifs and placing emphasis on oral aggression and human parasitism – superficially resembles James's 'human commerce', she, unlike James or Hardy, looks for a way to restore unity to a humanity in perpetual antagonism.⁸ Illustrating this tendency, James Colthurst, the artist-protagonist of Malet's 1891 novel *The Wages of Sin*, despairs that '[t]he great millstones turn and turn on themselves eternally, grinding down each generation – man, beast, all living things alike – into the food for the coming generations'.⁹ Colthurst describes nature's regenerative action as a 'universal economy' which is apt, since, in this view, nature deploys the apparatus of human enterprise (the millstone) in its own productive activity. Likewise, in her later novel *The History of Sir Richard Calmady* (1901) Malet describes how an eighteen year old factory hand is caught and maimed in a rotating mechanism. 'By the loose gearing into the merciless vortex of revolving wheels' she writes, 'and there without preparation, without pause of warning [...the boy was] converted into a few horrible seconds from health and wholeness into a formless lump of human waste': a fragment of 'broken human crockery'.¹⁰ Just as nature regenerates matter through the revolution of its machinery, so too the factory lays waste to the boy's body, the metonymy of his occupation (a mere 'hand') providing a grim foretaste of his bodily dismemberment.

Applying Kilgour's theoretical work on 'primal corporate bodies' in literature and myth, to novels published during Malet's pre and post conversion period 1891-1911, I suggest that her attempt to reconstitute a fallen or fragmented society assumes multiple identities (the for-profit corporation, for instance, or socialistic enterprise). Despite their corporate potential, these models offer a less totalising and therefore, less satisfactory, solution than the reconciliation with a one God (or hypostatic union), as recognised by the Catholic Church.¹¹ Concomitantly, I argue that in Malet's fallen world, it is the economic status quo, with the misdeeds and inequalities it supports, that constitutes the primary expression of our current state of atomisation and enmity. Malet, for instance, particularly emphasises woman's damning acquaintance with financial life; either she is *aneconomic* – by which I mean, she has no first-hand experience of money or business – in which

⁷ Pamela Gossin's painstaking monograph, *Thomas Hardy's Novel Universe: Astronomy, Cosmology, and Gender in the Post-Darwinian World* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007) examines Hardy's lifelong engagement with science and astrology through his novels, correspondence and notebooks, in great detail. It also offers a nuanced reading of Hardy's search for God. Patricia Lorimer Lundberg's "*An Inward Necessity*": *The Writer's Life of Lucas Malet* (New York: Peter Lang, 2003) though rather partisan, contains a mine of information (largely correspondence) about Malet's reading, which included Darwin, and the development of her religious beliefs which culminated in a conversion to Catholicism.

⁸ See note 5.

⁹ Lucas Malet, *The Wages of Sin* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1908), p.254 Further page references to this novel are given after quotations in the text.

¹⁰ Lucas Malet, *The History of Sir Richard Calmady: A Romance* (New York: A.L.Burt, 1901), p.640 & p.661 Further page references to this novel are given after quotations in the text.

¹¹ Patricia Lorimer Lundberg indicates it is likely that Malet's conversion occurred in 1902, though no record exists in the parishes that she knew well. Lundberg remarks that Malet had been drawn to Catholicism for a long time and that her conversion had been the subject of rumour for many years prior to date it is believed to have occurred. Patricia Lorimer Lundberg, "*An Inward Necessity*": *The Writer's Life of Lucas Malet* (New York: Peter Lang, 2003), p.265

case she is liable to be consumed or appropriated or, she enters economic life on her own terms, where she is seen as performing a kind of prostitution. For Malet, woman's analogues are the imperial subject and the slave because, amongst other common characteristics, misogyny and imperialism are expressions of the same appropriating drive.

Although there is no evidence that Malet explicitly supported Theistic Evolution, an undated letter to her brother-in-law, Clifford Harrison, reveals that her religious faith in no way compromised her reading of Darwin; she writes:

I am reading Darwin with a great deal of interest [...] I talked to W— [William Harrison, Malet's husband and rector, during this period, at Clovelly Parish, North Devon] about it [...] But he can't quite swallow the purely natural point of view and admit the cousinship through his own animality [...] To me this endless fertility and power of development in nature seems more hopeful, more consolatory, than anything else I know. If we begin with spirit and with morals, one seems to end in despair, everything is so hopelessly dark, mysterious, unsatisfactory, unproveable. But if you begin with the idea of a single cell containing life countless ages ago, and see where it has worked up to by now, one gets a glimpse of the possibility of everlasting progression.¹²

Significantly, Malet attributes the 'consolatory' power of the Darwinian narrative to the condition of oneness implied by the 'idea of a single [original] cell'. In this way, evolution is a structural equivalent to the Judeo-Christian account of Creation which contends that all life originates from one primordial father-creator. However, unlike the Judeo-Christian narrative, evolutionary schemes of progress do not involve a Fall from oneness or unity since, by this view, created life is unified through the 'cousinship' of common ancestry. Pertinently, Kilgour's study considers the 'nostalgia' for 'oneness' that Malet's letter implies she experienced, as an expression of the foundational inside /outside binary: a major part, she explains, of the psychological apparatus used to construct identity. Of this nostalgia, she writes:

There are many myths, both within Western tradition and outside of it, that trace an existing state of dualistic conflict to a fall from a state of oneness. In its most basic bodily form, this myth appears as the story of the originally cosmic body of one man who incorporated all humanity as members of himself. When this body was broken – in some versions eaten – and its limbs scattered, the separated members found themselves in a relation of complete opposition or cannibalistic antagonism. [...] Redemption from this fallen world, where inhabitants are divided into the roles of eater and eaten, is imagined as the re-membering and reincorporation of that primal symbiotic body, as through the restoration of original bodily wholeness the cosmic "Intestine War" (*Paradise Lost*, 6.259) can be ended.¹³

Malet's fiction bears out this model of nostalgia and atomisation because, within it, humanity exists more or less in a condition of 'cannibalistic antagonism' or dismemberment. If this fallen state is to be resolved it must be achieved through the ephiphanous apprehension of a single, benevolent god or, the experience of collective organisation (though the latter is, as I shall demonstrate, fraught

¹² Cited in Lundberg, "An Inward Necessity", p.96

¹³ Kilgour, *From Communion to Cannibalism*, p.10

with difficulties). This pairing is hardly surprising given that Malet's father, Charles Kingsley, was a leading proponent of Christian Socialism: a movement that sought to unite the cooperative success of schemes like The Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers with more democratic aspects of Christian doctrine in order to establish, in the words of Colwyn Vulliamy, 'a system of brotherhood and mutual help'.¹⁴ Malet's own experience as a rector's wife in a large country parish also appears to have aroused her socialist sympathies. In an undated letter to Clifford Harrison, Malet confides:

I am afraid I am becoming a bitter radical, socialist, anything. It makes me rage to see people actually want fire, food and clothes. I am thankful to say we are able to feed two or three people every day... [O]ne's own food would choke one... if we didn't do that. [...] Of course, it is all a matter of degree. All we of the comfortable classes have more comfort in many ways than we really need. But the fine folks really do seem to have an excess of comfort. I don't see how it is to be justified. They present an absurdity to the intelligence.¹⁵

Though Malet's socialist philosophy is somewhat undetermined, she craves some more equitable model of economic organisation: an inclination that becomes clear in her 1901 novel, *The History of Sir Richard Calmady*. This story offers perhaps the most vivid example of Malet's nostalgia for oneness and it does so through the image of bodily dismemberment. The novel describes how, 'during the closing years of the commonwealth [a] young royalist gentleman, Sir Thomas Calmady [...] relieved the tedium of country life by indulgence in divers amours' (31). The forester's daughter, whom Sir Thomas had seduced, bore him an illegitimate son who was killed in a tragic accident: crushed beneath Sir Thomas's 'lumbering' carriage [32]. '[H]olding the mangled and dying child in her arms' the forester's daughter placed a curse on Sir Thomas and '[...] his descendants, to the sixth and seventh generation, good and bad alike'. She declared 'moreover, that as judgment on his perfidy and lust, no owner of [the estate] should reach the life limit set by the Psalmist, and die quiet and christianly in his bed [...]'. (32). In 1842, after generations of tragedy in the Calmady family, Sir Richard II, the current incumbent of the Calmady estate, is born with a deformity. Terminating just above the knee, Sir Richard's legs are reduced to 'stumps' in which are 'embedded', feet of normal size (71). The novel describes the trials of Sir Richard's life, his attempts to re-member his malformed body first, through the act of procreation (a foredoomed undertaking) and later through the reallocation of his fortune in a communal home for the maimed and deformed. Following a broken engagement with the infantile Lady Constance Quail, Richard undertakes a reactionary (and debauched) tour of the continent which concludes in Naples. There, he suffers a malarial fever in which he is visited by a

[h]ideous apprehension of universal mutilation, of maimed purposes, maimed happenings, of a world peopled by beings maimed as he was himself, but after a more subtle and intimate fashion—a fashion intellectual or moral rather than merely physical—so that they

¹⁴ Colwyn Edward Vulliamy, 'Charles Kingsley and Christian Socialism', in *Fabian Tracts 140-175, 1908-1914* (London: Fabian Society, 1923) Tract 174, pp.2-17 (p.3)

¹⁵ Cited in Lundberg, "An Inward Necessity", pp.95-6

had to him, just now, an added hatefulness of specious lying, since to ordinary seeing they appeared whole, while whole they truly and actually were not (508).

Richard's 'universal mutilation' linked, as it is, to morality, is a figure of fallenness of which he is the physical representative. For Richard, the human world is a hideous spectacle of incompleteness, reinforced by the apprehension of a primordial whole. He reflects that '[...] the radical weakness of all human institutions [...] resides in exactly that effort to select and reject, to exalt one part as against another part, and so build not upon the rock of unity and completeness, but upon the sand of partiality and division [...]' (537-8). '[S]ooner or later' he remarks, the Whole revenges itself [...]' (538). This conflict of parts in the context of lost 'wholeness' conflates the myth of The Fall with conceptualisations of decline and degeneracy associated, at this time, with Decadence. Certainly, as the last enervated product of an historical line of wealthy aristocrats, Richard resembles Wilde's Dorian Gray who, upon inspecting his ancestral portraiture, imagines that his 'very flesh was tainted with the monstrous maladies of the dead'.¹⁶ Through the dual image of aristocratic individualism and biological degeneration, the Wildean dandy, like Richard, becomes emblematic of the *fin-de-siecle* fragmented self.¹⁷ In *Sir Richard Calmady*, however, the ethos of excess and decay aligned, in Decadent culture, with aristocracy, is countered by a socialist teleology which aims to 're-member' this fragmentation through the enterprise of social revolution. Still under the influence of his malarial fever, Richard attends a performance of Verdi's *Ernani* where he imagines the boxes in the dress circle and gallery – province of the aristocratic patrons – refashioned as wax chambers within a beehive:

Down there upon the *parterre*, in the close-packed ranks of students, of men and women of the middle-class soberly attired in walking costume, he recognised the working bees of this giant hive. By their unremitting labour the dainty waxen cells were actually built up, and those larvæ were so amply, so luxuriously, fed. And the working bees—there were so many, so very many of them! What if they became mutinous, rebelled against labour, plundered and destroyed the indolent, succulent larvæ of which he—yes, he, Richard Calmady—was unquestionably and conspicuously one? (527)

Richard's nightmarish delusion of a 'mutinous' swarm girded against 'succulent larvae' contributes to a broader historical body of writing deploying the beehive as an analogy for human organisation. Notably, the theatre scene resonates with Bernard Mandeville's *The Fable of the Bees*. Containing the allegorical poem 'The Grumbling Hive' and a number of long explanatory annotations, Mandeville's verse, subtitled 'Private Vices, Publick Benefits', argues that vice is an essential element of economic prosperity since 'Fools only strive / To make an honest hive'.¹⁸ In the poem,

¹⁶ Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, ed. by Robert Mighall (London: Penguin, 2000; repr. 2003), p.137

¹⁷ Of course, there are several versions of the fragmentation narrative. Decadence as social atomisation, the discovery of the unconscious as psychological division and speciation as biological disjunction for instance, are different expressions of fragmentation in *fin-de-siecle* culture. Here, I am interested in the fragmentation implied by Decadent and Judeo-Christian accounts of decline or fallenness, specifically in respect to an original (social/biological or, theistic) whole.

¹⁸ Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees*, ed. by Phillip Harth (London: Penguin, 1989), p.76

an internal revolution, which aims to ‘rid / The bawling Hive of Fraud’, takes place. This reform results in the impoverishment of the hive because, on the one hand ‘[...] vice nursed ingenuity’ and on the other, as Phillip Harth points out, ‘the elimination of so many occupations concerned with the prevention or punishment of dishonesty gives rise to unemployment’.¹⁹ Though Malet doesn’t endorse capitalistic individualism of the kind posited by Mandeville (in fact, she is diametrically opposed to it), she similarly regards the hive as a microcosm of national economic interests and the internal (class) conflict this necessarily involves. As a scene of apian antagonism or revolution, Richard’s delusion similarly echoes Book IV of Virgil’s *Georgics* (c29 BC). Virgil’s poem describes how the fighting swarms assemble for battle. ‘On their beaks [the bees] hone their stings’ and congregate about their leader.²⁰ Of the candidates for ascendancy, ‘there are two kinds’²¹: ‘the one aglow with golden flecks — the one you want — / its bright distinguished reddish mail; the other a sight, / the picture of pure laziness, its sagging paunch distended to the / ground’.²² Much like Richard, who considers that his aristocratic privilege renders him one of the number of ‘luxuriously fed’ larvae occupying the boxes, the defeated candidate will be sacrificed (or so he believes). Richard anticipates that:

time being fully ripe, the bees would swarm, swarm at last,—labour revenging itself upon sloth, hunger upon gluttony, want upon wealth, obscurity upon privilege,—justice being thus meted out, and he, Richard, cleansed and delivered from the disgrace of deformity now so hideously infecting both his spirit and his flesh. (533-4)

The bees, Richard imagines, are possessed of ‘corporate intelligence’, ‘corporate strength’ and ‘corporate action’ and it is precisely by way of this *corporate* enterprise that the bodily ‘oneness’ of the socialistic bees ‘mete[s] out’ the physical deficiency of the disabled aristocrat. The swarm restores, in Kilgour’s words, ‘original bodily wholeness’, revenging itself upon the iniquities of a fallen, capitalistic society. The rhetorical character of Richard’s delusions resembles that of Marx and Engels in *The Communist Manifesto* (1848); the *Manifesto*’s teleological certainty of social revolution and its emphasis on a unionised, incorporated resistance, for instance, is mirrored in Richard’s description of the swarm. Interestingly, Malet’s novel was published in the same year as Maurice Maeterlinck’s *The Life of the Bee* (1901): a poetic description of the social organisation of the hive. Like Malet, Maeterlinck’s prose is inflected with Marxist ideology.²³ For Maeterlinck, as for Marx, social revolution and the redistribution of wealth are the *inevitable* result of industrial

¹⁹ Phillip Harth, ‘Introduction’ in Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees*, ed. by Phillip Harth (London: Penguin, 1989) pp.7-43 (p.19)

²⁰ Virgil, *Georgics*, IV. 74, trans. by Peter Fallon, ed. by Elaine Fantham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p.76

²¹ *Ibid.*, 1.91

²² *Ibid.*, II.92-4

²³ In *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* and in *Capital*, Marx himself used the bee to explore the differences between human and animal labour. Unlike Maeterlinck, though, Marx is reluctant to regard the hive as an analogue of human industry because of the serious functional and creative differences between the two. The impulse to generate ‘surplus’ is, for instance a distinctly human phenomena. Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Trans. By Martin Milligan (Moscow / London : Foreign Languages Publishing House / Lawrence & Wishart, 1959), p.75

development. ‘Modern Industry’ Marx points out, ‘cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. [...the bourgeoisie’s] fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable’.²⁴ Similarly, Maeterlinck says of the hive that:

[t]he exile has long been planned, and the favourable hour patiently awaited [...] They leave it only when it has attained the apogee of its prosperity; at a time when, after the arduous labours of the spring, the immense palace of wax has its 120,000 well-arranged cells overflowing with new honey, and with the many-coloured flour, known as “bees’ bread,” on which nymphs and larvae are fed.²⁵

It is at this ‘hour of the Swarm’ he remarks, that ‘we find a whole people, who have attained the topmost pinnacle of prosperity and power, suddenly abandoning to the generation to come their wealth and their palaces’.²⁶ In the hive, as in human industry, it is (the bourgeoisie’s) agglomeration of capital that ironically sets the conditions favourable to social revolution. We know that Malet was reading Maeterlinck around the time of *Calmady’s* publication because she is one of the signatories of a 1902 letter to *The Times* criticising the censorship of Maeterlinck’s play, *Monna Vanna* (1902).²⁷ Though *Sir Richard Calmady* wasn’t published until September 1901 (*The Life of the Bee* was published in May), given the timescales involved, it would seem unlikely that Malet was directly influenced by the book but her ‘universal economy’ suggestively corresponds with Maeterlinck’s ‘the spirit of the hive’: a term he uses to describe the organising principle or internal economy of the hive. Like Malet, Maeterlinck points up the proximity of human and animal life and regards their industry as essentially kindred. In *The Intelligence of the Flowers* (1906), for instance, he points out that the ‘traps’ and ‘machinery’, which in the name of commerce and combat humans construct, parallel the often unperceived enterprise of flowers.²⁸ ‘All’, he remarks ‘exert themselves to accomplish their work, all have the magnificent ambition to overrun and conquer the surface of the globe [...]’.²⁹

In her chapter ‘Apian Aestheticism: Michael Field and the Economics of the Aesthetic’ Marion Thain argues that, at the *fin de siècle*, the motifs of bee and hive were used to negotiate Aestheticism’s problematic positioning between the cultures of aesthetic production and mass consumption. She points out that ‘apian discourse is founded on the age-old duality of bees and honey which are, after all, archetypal emblems of both economies of production (the busy worker

²⁴ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, trans. by Samuel Moore (London: Penguin, 1985), p.233

²⁵ Maurice Maeterlinck, *The Life of the Bee*, Trans. By Alfred Sutro (New York: Dover, 2006), pp.17-18

²⁶ Ibid. pp.16-17

²⁷ Malet’s name appears alongside William Archer, Pearl Craigie, Richard Garnett, Thomas Hardy, Frederic Harrison, Maurice Hewlett, Henry Arthur Jones, George Meredith, Algernon Charles Swinburne, Laurence Alma-Tadema, and W.B Yeats. William Archer., et al. ‘Maeterlinck and the Censor’ [a letter to the editor], *The Times*, 20 June 1902, p. 7

²⁸ Maurice Maeterlinck, *The Intelligence of the Flowers*, Trans. By Alexander Teixeira de Mattos (New York: Dodd Mead, 1907) p.9

²⁹ Ibid.,p.8

bee) and consumption (the gift of sweet honey)³⁰ Thain briefly considers Malet's theatre scene, of which she writes: 'the economic realm of production and the aestheticist realm cannot coexist. One supports the other, but also threatens to devour it. The insatiability of this dual economy, once recognised, resolves itself into a turn to the masses and mass culture at the expense of a rarefied aesthetic world'.³¹ Certainly, the 'bright-hued' drones exhibit a form of sartorial flamboyance that is at odds with the 'soberly attired' working bees but the consideration that these 'indolent, full-fed' drones specifically emblemise Aesthetic culture is, I think, doubtful. The larvae embody a form of indolence or *aristos* that is consistent with Decadence, but it is the working bees that are endowed with an *aesthetic* appreciation of the Opera. As Malet writes: '[t]hey were buzzing, buzzing angrily, displeased with the full-fed larvae in the boxes, because these last were altogether too social, talked too loud and too continuously, drowning out the softer passages of the overture' (527). Considering the interplay of class and (aesthetic) culture, one might well find evidence of an Arnoldian conflict (the Populace are poised between the will of their 'severer selves' – characterised by 'bawling, hustling and smashing' – and the alien instinct of aesthetic appreciation, for instance). Yet, since the 'brainless' larvae, careless of the 'softer passages of the overture', cannot legitimately be regarded as ambassadors of Aestheticism, it is unlikely that the proletariat's 'mutiny' bespeaks the triumph of mass culture over the 'aesthetic world'. Of course Malet was concerned about the adulterating influence of mass consumption and economic necessity upon artistic production (and certainly the latter was a blight on her own career) but the rhetoric employed here is specifically Marxian.³² Arriving at the 'ripe' historical moment of social revolution, the proletariat bees rise up against a decadent, enervated class of economic parasites and not, as Thain suggests, a 'rarefied' aesthetic culture.

Chastened by his experiences in Naples, Richard repairs to the Brockhurst estate where he invests his fortune in a care-home for the maimed and disabled. It is in this spirit of collective organisation that he grows intimate with his future wife, the feminist socialist Honoria St. Quentin. Responding to Richard's plans for the care-home, Honoria reflects:

Verily Richard Calmady's sad family was a terribly large one, well calculated to maintain its numbers, even to increase! For neither the age of sacrifice nor of cannibalism is really over, nor is the practice of these limited to savage peoples in distant lands or far-away isles of the sea (640).

As I point out earlier, Kilgour suggests that in the mythic, 'fallen world [...] inhabitants are divided into the roles of eater and eaten' and Honoria, using the metaphor of cannibalism, appears to

³⁰ Marion Thain, 'Apian Aestheticism: Michael Field and the Economics of the Aesthetic' in Margaret D. Stetz and Cheryl A. Wilson (eds.), *Michael Field and Their World* (High Wycombe: Rivendale Press, 2007) pp. 222-235 (p. 224)

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 233

³² Separated (though not formally) from her husband, the rector, William Harrison, Lucas Malet relied on the income of her published work to pay for European travel that allowed her to live independently. Later on, Malet and her sister Rose would be encumbered by the debt of their brother Greville who died in poverty in Queensland, Australia. Increasingly in her career Malet was required to write out of financial necessity. Lundberg, *An Inward Necessity*, p. 34 & p. 150

sustain Kilgour's statements regarding the portrayal of fallen humanity. Honoria's observation equally replicates the rhetoric of cannibalism that, as Chapter 1 of this thesis demonstrates, is prevalent in *fin-de-siècle* anti-capitalist literature. It is unsurprising that Honoria's discourse should do so, since she is a self-proclaimed socialist remarking that 'wherever the great systems of trade and labour, which build up the mechanical and material prosperity of our day, go forward, kindred things [i.e. mutilations] happen' (640). With reference to the familial nature of Richard's organisation, Honoria's declaration more specifically resonates with Henry Halliday Sparling's comment that, in capitalistic society, 'there is an ever growing tendency to the formation of a subject class [... :] a tribe consecrated to never ending immolation'.³³ Certainly, imagining a familial attachment between the victims of industry committed to Richard's care, Honoria sees them emerge as a 'subject caste' or 'tribe' of the kind occasioned by British imperialism: a parallel that might be reinforced by Richard's reference to his deformity as a form of 'black-ness' (636). The emphasis on consanguinity is particularly important because it is through the dual focus on socialistic organisation and family attachments that Richard aims to 're-member' the mutilated contemporary self. He explains to Honoria:

I look at such unhappy beings from the inside, not as the rest of you so, merely from the out. I belong to them and they to me. It is not altogether a flattering connection [...] [I]t seems only reasonable to look up the members of my unlucky family and take care of them, and if possible put them through—not on the lines of a charitable institution, which must inevitably be a rather mechanical stepmother kind of arrangement at best, but of the lines of family affection [...]. (636)

Redemption in the form of consanguine affinity is, for Richard, redemption through the restoration of primal unity. He is clearly anxious about the degrees of separation between himself and his disfigured comrades. For instance, he rejects the role of 'stepmother' because it doesn't suggest a blood relationship (and presumably because it also inscribes a form of hierarchy). Though Richard's deformity is congenital, and the factory hand's the result of an industrial accident, he nonetheless considers them kindred products of the 'universal economy'. Richard suggests that '[b]ecause in essential respects, mankind remains—notwithstanding modifications of his environment—substantially the same, from the era of the Pentateuch to the era of the Rougon-Macquarts, there must always be a lot of wreckage, of waste, and refuse humanity' (663-4). It is fitting that Malet alludes to Emile Zola's *Les Rougon-Macquart* series here (1871-1893) since her concept of 'waste humanity' owes much to the Naturalist's rendering of heredity and evolution.³⁴ Notably in *Germinal* (1885), Jeanlin who, as Zola states, 'resembled some degenerate with the instinctive intelligence and craftiness of a savage', is injured in a collapse at Le Voreux

³³ H. Halliday Sparling, 'Commercial Cannibalism', *The Commonwealth*, 16 October 1886, p.226

³⁴ In a magazine interview for *The Young Woman: A Monthly Journal and Review*, Malet cites Zola as one of a number of French writers that have shaped her writing. She remarks '[...] I am much more given [...] to reading French than English fiction, and any little knowledge I may have of style and method I have so learnt'. Frederick Dolman, "Lucas Malet" at Home: A Chat with the Daughter of Charles Kingsley', *The Young Woman: A Monthly Journal and Review*, 4 (1896), 145-149 (p.149)

mine. Conflating the adaptive evolutionary basis of his degeneracy with the industrial milieu responsible for his injury, Zola writes: ‘the pit had made him what he was, and the pit had finished the job by breaking his legs’.³⁵ Concentrated, the enterprise of nature and capitalistic industry break Jeanlin’s bones in much the same manner that, in her later novel, the ‘great millstones’ of Malet’s ‘universal economy’ mutilate both aristocrat and factory hand. Of course, Malet qualifies the novel’s Naturalistic impulse by mitigating the role of biological adaptation; this is the inevitable result of her faith which, to some degree, requires her to regard all men as simulacra of an original (and therefore incomplete) fallen being. I might also mention that Malet’s concept of a mutilated, waste humanity anticipates Vernon Lee’s pacifist allegory *The Ballet of the Nations* (1915) which, as I explain in Chapter 1, describes the bloody manoeuvres of national bodies in world conflict. ‘Bled and maimed’, Lee writes, the nations ‘dance upon stumps, or trail [themselves] along, a living jelly of blood and trampled flesh’ while the ‘Head, which each Nation calls its Government [...] is very properly helmetted, and rarely gets so much as a scratch’.³⁶ Malet would later adapt the theme of dismemberment for her post-war novel, *The Survivors* (1923) but there are parallels, too, between this earlier representation of a factory hand, maimed in interests of a bourgeois proprietor and, the mutilated citizens of Lee’s allegory, operating under an immaculate head in the object of its Government.

In her book *Art and Womanhood in Fin-de-Siècle Writing* (2011), Catherine Delyfer points out that Malet reconceptualises disability along the lines of Darwinian speciation. Explaining how random mutations potentially produce permanent, positive changes in a species, speciation is a fitting analogue of Richard’s disability because it offers a solution to the inherited curse infecting the Calmady family. Delyfer comments that ‘[i]n *The History of Sir Richard Calmady*, Malet [...] asked the reader to recognize the fecundity and revolutionary potential of non-normative bodies, which she envisioned as the true vessels of the new, the makers of the future’.³⁷ Certainly, Richard’s ‘non-normative’ body delivers him from the indolence and privilege that is his inheritance from the aristocratic line of Calmadys preceding him. As Malet writes, ‘[b]y the fact of his deformity he was emancipated from the delusions of his class, was made one, in right of the suffering and humiliation of it [...]’ (607). Further to Delyfer’s reading of Richard’s disability, I want to suggest that his body, capable of supporting multiple meanings, is self-reflexive; it is a site of ambiguity that, through the *fact* of its ambiguity, countermands the anatomy of containment or individualism that Malet aligns with fallenness. Describing the movement towards a more ‘autonomous although self-divided individual’ from the seventeenth century onwards, Kilgour suggests that:

³⁵ Émile Zola, *Germinal*, Trans. by Leonard Tancock (London: Everyman, 1991) p. 260

³⁶ Vernon Lee, ‘The Ballet of the Nations’ in Agnès Cardinal, Dorothy Goldman, and Judith Hattaway (eds.), *Women’s Writing on the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 234-244. (p. 241)

³⁷ Catherine Delyfer, *Art and Womanhood in Fin-de-Siècle Writing: The Fiction of Lucas Malet, 1880-1931* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2011), p.107

Whereas the grotesque body has been imagined as open, with flexible boundaries, orifices, and protuberances that could transgress themselves as well as take others in, the Renaissance anatomy is seen in terms of containment [...] When the ambiguity of the grotesque body is resolved, the anatomy assumes a single, but essentially negative, meaning (141).

According to Kilgour, following the contributions of Ruskin (a nineteenth-century connoisseur of the grotesque) the Renaissance has been conceived as a Fall 'in which the isolated atom was discovered at the cost of an earlier experience of community' (140). Kilgour's rationale is that, for Ruskin and others, the Renaissance 'quest for perfection' is a form of containment that becomes 'ultimately deadening' (276 n2). Though I am not concerned with the *chronology* of the modern, autonomous individual, Kilgour's analysis supplies a suggestive explanation of how the boundary lines of the body are imagined in Malet's novel. Indeed, doubled in a Velasquez painting of a 'misshapen dwarf', Richard's disfigurement emerges as a responsive or synergetic counterpart of the grotesque body described by Kilgour. The portrait, situated in the Brockhurst library:

represented a hideous and misshapen dwarf, holding a couple of graceful greyhounds in a leash—an unhappy creature who had made sport for the household of some Castilian grandee, and whose gorgeous garments, of scarlet and gold, were ingeniously designed so as to emphasise the physical degradation of its contorted person [...] The desolate eyes, looking out of the marred and brutal face, met [Richard's] own with a certain claim of kinship. There existed a tragic freemasonry between himself and this outcasted being, begotten of a common knowledge, a common experience.

Following Richard's epiphany, Julius March, an inhabitant of Brockhurst and cousin to the late Richard Calmady Sr, imagines that the painting is 'no longer harshly evident either in violence of colour or grotesqueness of form. It had become part of the great whole, merely modulated to gracious harmony with the divers objects surrounding it' (34). Richard is 'made one' by his deformity just as the Velasquez portrait appears to coalesce with the 'great [spiritual] whole'. Like the grotesque body of Kilgour's study, with its open, 'flexible boundaries' and 'protuberances', Richard's deformity opens up a channel of communication or 'freemasonry' between himself and his inanimate double: the Velasquez dwarf. Richard's disfigurement indicates a disintegration of the frontier between the individual body and external world which runs parallel to the disintegration of property in the context of socialistic organisation. As Kilgour points out, the delimited lines of the immaculate body point to a spiritual and economic Fall from grace:

It is the discovery that [...] there are boundary lines around private property and around the even more private territory of the individual, lines that divide him from the outside world and introduce the possibility for an antagonistic relation with this external surrounding environment, that constitutes the fall (20).

The disintegration of private property augured by Richard's democratic body is paralleled by the geographical dissection of territory in Sandyfield village. For instance, Richard's home for the maimed and disabled interrupts a succession of affluent properties: an interstice that 'the

aristocracy of the Row laments [since] [i]t shies at the idea of being invaded by more or less frightful creatures' (671). Declaring that his 'waste humanity' must 'neither hide themselves nor be hidden' he selects a property located 'on the highroad, at the entrance of the [...] town' (671). Thus situated at the mouth of the community – the point from which all traffic circulates – Richard places his disfigured 'family' in organic relation with the town's inhabitants. It is from this vantage point that the residents break down the boundary lines of property maintained by the aristocracy: a move that might be read as an attempt to restore the territorial unity that, just three centuries before, the Acts of Enclosure had served to destroy.

Delyfer maintains that *Calmady* is a 'socialist fable not unworthy of William Morris' and it is certainly true that Richard finds solace in the redistribution of his wealth and experience of collective organisation. Yet, for Malet, socialism is only ever an approximation or likeness of that greater 'oneness' found in the reconciliation with God, the father. Explaining his system to Honoria, Richard concedes: 'I rejoice in the [...] whole-hearted agitator, who believes that his system adopted, his reform carried through, the whole show will instantly be put straight [...]' (663). However, 'no reform is final this side of death. And no panacea is universal, save that which the Maker of the Universe chooses to work out' (663). According to Richard, unity in the form of socialist activity is foredoomed 'because material conditions are perpetually changing, while man in his mental, emotional and physical aspects remains precisely the same' (663). In many respects Richard's appraisal of socialistic reform mirrors the criticisms levelled at Charles Kingsley's Christian Socialist project. In his article on the subject, Colwyn Edward Vulliamy points out that:

The failure [...] of the Christian Socialist experiment was due to a misconception of the real economic conditions of the time, an exaggerated belief in the spirit of brotherhood, and the absence of a thorough knowledge of the market. It was found to be impossible to eliminate competition.³⁸

In Richard's critique as in Vulliamy's, it is man's intrinsic individualism and the difficulties posed by a dynamic economic culture that precipitate the failure of socialistic enterprise. Malet's view of socialism would certainly have been shaped by the inefficacy of her father's own intervention but, as also seems probable, like Zola, she was uncomfortable with the hostile demonstrations of anarchist factions of the movement. Her 1906 novel, *The Far Horizon*, examines the transgressive, as opposed to cooperative, qualities of socialist anarchism in more detail.

One of Malet's more conspicuously 'Catholic' novels, *The Far Horizon* describes the spiritual crisis of the recently retired bank clerk, Dominic Iglesias. Dominic, who had spent the larger part of his life in the service of his now deceased mother, unsuccessfully attempts to combat the *ennui* of his retirement. Striking up an unlikely friendship with the actress Poppy St. John, and financing the work of an ungifted and parasitical playwright (who is, unbeknownst to either party, Poppy's estranged husband), Dominic finds consolation in Catholicism: his mother's faith. During this time, Dominic experiences a number of vivid dreams relating to his childhood and the

³⁸ Vulliamy, 'Charles Kingsley and Christian Socialism', p.12

disappearance of his father, who it appears was a social anarchist. In one particularly striking episode, Dominic's dream takes the form of a socialist allegory featuring Pascal Pelletier, a friend of his father's and a fellow anarchist. The dream depicts a 'heavy ill-favoured tabby cat' that resembles Sir Abel Barking, the manager at Messrs. Barking Brothers & Barking – Dominic's former workplace – pouncing upon the sparrows washing at a stone basin in Dominic's childhood garden.³⁹ Merely a boy, Dominic tries, unsuccessfully, to intervene but 'the pillar broke and the basin toppled over, pinning [the cat] across the loins' (38). Pelletier, who had been witness to the spectacle, sermonises:

“Do not weep over the fallen basin, very dear one,” he said. “Rather sing aloud *Te Deum* in praise of the glorious goddess of Social Revolution who has delivered the enemy of the people into our hands. This is no affair of cat and bird, but of the capitalist and the proletariat on which he battens. So for a little space let the unholy creature lie there writhing. Let it understand what it is to have a back broken by the weight of an impossible burden. Let it try vainly to drag its limbs from beneath an immovable load. Observe it, let it suffer. Very soon we will finish with it, and explode the iniquitous system it represents. See, in the name of humanity, of labour, of the unknown and unnumbered millions of the martyred poor, I set a match to this good little fuse, and, with the rapidity of thought, blow blasphemous tyrant Capital into a thousand fragments of reeking flesh and splintered bone!” (39)

It may be that Malet's view of social anarchism owes much to Zola. Certainly, Pelletier's address, an exalted prophecy of capitalism's bloody demise, mirrors the rhetoric of the anarchist Souvarine, who in *Germinal*, avers that '[h]e would kill the foul beast in the end, this pit with the ever-open jaws that had swallowed down so much human flesh'.⁴⁰ Moreover like Zola's Souvarine, Pelletier makes a religious fetish of social revolution, singing the prayer 'Te Deum' in exaltation of capitalism's almost certain demise. Régis Debray, who I cited in Chapter One, usefully points out that in 'formerly religiously governed cultures' Christian rhetoric and imagery spills out into various other ideologies, notably socialism.⁴¹ The 'deification of humanity' was, for instance, modern humanism's way of assimilating god into its secular philosophy.⁴² Declaring that he acts 'in the name of humanity, of labour, of the unknown and unnumbered millions of the martyred poor', Pelletier adapts the Trinitarian phraseology of 'in the name of the Father, the Son, and the holy ghost' to similar ends. However, the details of Iglesias's anarchism are, at best, shadowy. According to the internal chronology of the novel, the family fled Spain, amidst the 'sound of canon and sight of blood', some time after 1846 (7). It was in 1860 that Dominic's father 'left [London] on one of those sudden journeys the object and objective of which were alike concealed' (9). 'For about a year', Dominic recalls, 'letters arrived at regular intervals, hailing from Paris,

³⁹ Lucas Malet, *The Far Horizon* (London: Hutchinson, 1906), p. 38 Further page references to this novel are given after quotations in the text.

⁴⁰ Zola, *Germinal*, p. 437. 'Il la tuerait a la fin, cette bete mauvaise du Voreux, a la gueule toujours ouverte, qui avait englouti tant de chair humaine!' Émile Zola, *Germinal*, Chronologie et preface par Henri Guillemin (Paris: Flammarion, 1968), p.442

⁴¹ Debray, *God: An Itinerary*, p. 255

⁴² *Ibid.* pp.216-17

Naples, Prague and Petersburg. Then followed silence' (9). In the context of political dissidence these are suggestive locations, but Iglesias's correspondence does not specifically correspond with anarchist or radical socialist activity occurring at this time.⁴³ Since it was not until the 1870s that the anarchists emerged as a distinct branch of socialism in Britain and also, as Murray Bookchin points out, because mutualism and federalism were the 'dominant social philosoph[ies] of the Spanish republicans' until the 1860s (long after Iglesias's departure), it would appear that Malet's chronology is premature if not anachronistic.⁴⁴ Yet, this does not undermine Malet's critique since her principal motive is not, like Zola's, to undermine the tactics of social anarchists (though she might well distrust them), but to expose socialism as an inferior 'corporate' model to the divine conciliation with one god. The 'fat-cat' capitalist and dynamite-loving anarchist are, in debates relating to working conditions, frequently the material of satire and Malet makes free with these allusions. Curiously though, she locates socialism and capitalism within a structurally equivalent, though ideologically inverse, corporate framework.

In her work on the corporate personality in *Dracula*, Turley Houston names the landmark 1897 case, *Salomon v. Salomon & Co. Ltd.* As she explains, Salomon, a shoemaker, converted his business into a limited liability company. Keeping all but 6 of the shares, (at this time limited liability companies were required to have at least seven shareholders) Salomon sold those that remained to family members. When the company was placed in liquidation one of its creditors attempted to sue Salomon, the principal shareholder, for outstanding debts. Initially the court ruled on behalf of the claimant but this decision was repealed at Lords because, in law, the limited liability company is what is known as a 'corporate personality': a single, consolidated personality regarded as distinct from its individual members. Though Salomon was, in 'common sense' terms, proprietor of the company, its legal constitution was such that he could not be held liable for the debt. Turley Houston points out that the ruling had serious implications for the public image of corporate enterprise at the end of the nineteenth century and she suggests that the concept of corporate *impersonality* – that is, the deindividuation of members within a corporate structure – is one of the central anxieties articulated in Stoker's novel. The story, for instance, features 'two incorporated entities (*Dracula* and his vampires and Van Helsing and his followers), competing to

⁴³ For instance, The French Revolution and the 1848 Revolution enacted, largely, in Paris establish the city as a symbolic site of social insurgency. In Prague, following the Spring of Nations, the Pan-Slav Congress (1848) took place aiming to establish political autonomy for Slavic groups within the Austrian Empire. The Congress was followed by violent riots in the city. Finally, just a year prior to the publication of Malet's novel, St Petersburg witnessed the Bloody Sunday Massacre in which many disaffected workers and peasants were shot while presenting a peaceful petition to Nicholas II. Prior to this, anarchist socialists like Pyotor (Peter) Kropotkin (1842-1921), had been politically active within the city. Kropotkin was incarcerated in the Petropavlovskaya Krepost (The Peter and Paul Fortress) but managed to escape to England. Of course, these examples offer a extremely 'potted' history of social revolution in Paris, Prague and St Petersburg but do, I think, offer some explanation as to why they were selected as destinations of the anarchist absconder Iglesias senior. Bradley F. Adams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), p.42; Paul Avrich, *The Russian Anarchists* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), p. 41 & pp.26-34

⁴⁴ Murray Bookchin, *The Spanish Anarchists: The Heroic Years 1868-1936* (New York: Free Life Editions, 1977), p.21

the death for a complete monopoly on circulation and consumption'.⁴⁵ I want to argue that *The Far Horizon* is Malet's own experiment in 'corporate impersonality'. The novel anatomises a life in which the lion's share of the social, professional and emotional activity has been undertaken within, and in the service of, a corporate body. Moreover, Malet wants to posit an institutional dynamic within the banking sector that is a correlative of the socialistic hive-mind explored in her earlier novel, *Sir Richard Calmady*. Indeed, like the proletarian bees of Richard's hallucination, Dominic Iglesias is a worker in the corporate hive: Barking Brothers & Barking. He admits to actress Poppy that after his years of service, 'I have lost [...] my humanity. I am a machine now, not a man. To the machine, work is life' (31).⁴⁶ Employing Malet's omnipresent rhetoric of waste, he continues "Unluckily there is no rag-and-bottle shop where superannuated bank clerks of five-and-fifty have the very modest value of scrap iron!" (31). Sacrificing his life in service of the corporate entity of the bank Dominic becomes, like Richard, 'refuse humanity'. The bank

had eaten up the best years of his life, it is true. But, even in so doing, by the mere force of constant association, the interests of the great banking house has come to be his own, its schemes and secrets his excitement, its successes his satisfaction. Fortunately the human mind is so constituted that it is possible to have an esteem, amounting to enthusiasm, for a body corporate, while entertaining scanty admiration for the individuals of whom that body is composed [...]. (22)

By his own admission, Dominic is deprived of his 'humanity'. He is not merely witness to the spectacle of corporate impersonality but an expression of it — is effectively 'eaten up' or assimilated into the operational and ideological territory of the Barking house. Certainly the concept of corporate personality is present for Dominic as he supports the view that Sir Abel Barking's parasitical proprietorship in no way compromises the integrity of the 'body corporate'. Through his allegiance to the house, Dominic submits to the 'spirit of the hive' and, like the proletarian bee, pledges his labour to the greater good of the corporation. In many ways Dominic's activity within the corporate structure of the bank anticipates the concept of swarm intelligence; that is: 'the collective behaviour of systems composed of many individuals that interact locally [...] and that rely on forms of decentralized control and self-organization'.⁴⁷ At first sight, the hierarchical structure of the city banking house might not appear a particularly convincing exemplar of decentralised organisation. Yet right down the structure of the bank individual agents are seen to act, without direction, on behalf of the corporation. As a clerk, Dominic features

⁴⁵ Gail Turley Houston, *From Dickens to Dracula: Gothic, Economics, and Victorian Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p.117

⁴⁶ Catherine Delyfer suggests that Dominic's claims of a machine-like existence resonate with Adam Smith, John Ruskin and William Morris. She points out: 'In *The Wealth of Nations*, Smith had observed that "the man whose life is spent in performing a few simple operations [...] generally becomes as stupid and ignorant as it is possible for a human creature to become," while in the second volume of *The Stones of Venice* (1853) Ruskin had blamed laissez faire economics for reducing the working man to the condition of a machine'. Catherine Delyfer, 'The Aesthete, the Banker, and the Saint: Economies of Gift and Desire in Lucas Malet's *The Far Horizon* (1906)', in *Libidinal Lives: Economies of Desire in the Literature and Culture of the Fin de Siècle*, ed. by Jane Ford, Kim Edwards Keates and Patricia Pulham (forthcoming).

⁴⁷ Claude Sammut and Geoffrey I. Webb (eds), *Encyclopaedia of Machine Learning* (New York: Springer, 2011), p.946

relatively low in the company's pecking order but he nonetheless works to secure Barking's interests against reckless speculation in South Africa even after his retirement. Alighting on a 'long and evidently inspired article dealing with the floatation of a company just now in the process of acquiring control over extensive areas in South-east Africa' (156), Dominic begins to suspect that Barking Brothers & Barking have invested too extensively in the speculative projects in Africa. As Catherine Delyfer points out, Barking Brothers resonates with the merchant bank Baring Brothers & Co., which in the 1880s similarly over-invested in Argentinian debt contracts.⁴⁸ This ill-advised investment led to the bank's collapse and, in turn, the Panic of 1890, as contemporary readers would have been aware. Presciently, to Dominic, Barking's 'enterprise [...] presented itself as one of those gigantic modern gambles of which the incidental risks are emphatically too heavy' (157). He reflects that:

The mere phantom of the thing hurt him as unseemly, as a shame and dishonour to those in their corporate capacity has benefitted him, and therefore as shame and dishonour, at least indirectly, to himself. The thought agitated him. He needed to take council with some one; and so pushed by a necessity of immediate action uncommon to him, he [...] set forth to talk matters over with his old friend and former colleague, George Lovegrove. (162)

This quotation is perhaps misleading since Dominic's allegiance to the bank is not an expression of reciprocal altruism but of corporate loyalty. Operating under a sense of 'necessity' that is 'uncommon' to him, Dominic exhibits a protective instinct that is consistent with hive-mentality. Without mandate, the two former employees collude in a decentralised effort to protect the interests of the bank in the same way that agents within emergent systems act independently and instinctively to protect the integrity of that system. Following an invitation from Sir Abel, Dominic later returns to the bank in order to direct the effort to save it from financial collapse after investments in South Africa run awry. At first considering his decision to return, Dominic recalls his dream of Pascal Pelletier's 'very crude methods of adjusting the age-old quarrel between capital and labour' (302). The childhood Dominic, 'had not [in this dream] hesitated to save the ill-favoured chunk-faced grey cat - which bore in speech and appearance so queer a likeness to Sir Abel Barking [...]' and nor would the adult Dominic turn his back on the banker. '[T]he road to the far horizon', Dominic reflects, 'instead of leading in the opposite direction to the city banking-house [...] led directly into and through it' (302, 303). His resolution to assist, Dominic acknowledges, will mean 'time, labour, unremitting application, a wholesale sacrifice of leisure' (303). In order to rationalise Dominic's forfeit and his support for a corporation that, by his own admission, suffers from 'wealth apoplexy', I would like to return to Maeterlinck's analysis of the hive (156). On the nature of the domestic bee, Maeterlinck avers: '[h]er whole life is an entire sacrifice to the manifold, everlasting being whereof she forms part' (11). However:

⁴⁸ Delyfer, 'The Aesthete, the Banker, and the Saint: Economies of Gift and Desire in Lucas Malet's *The Far Horizon* (1906)', forthcoming

[In apian civilisation] we find the humble-bees [wild bees], which are like our cannibals. The adult workers are incessantly hovering around the eggs, which they seek to devour [...] Among the humble-bees, for instance, the workers do not dream of renouncing love, whereas our domestic bee lives in a state of perpetual chastity. And indeed we soon shall show how much more she has to abandon, in exchange for the comfort and security of the hive, for its architectural, economic, and political perfection [...]. (12-13)

‘The aim of nature’ Maeterlinck suggests ‘is manifestly the improvement of the race’ and by means of her absolute subordination and chastity, the domestic bee approaches evolutionary perfection (12). Despite Maeterlinck’s rejection of Catholicism, his prose is coloured by this faith; indeed, the rhetoric of oneness, sacrifice and everlasting perfection deployed here, might as easily describe the liturgy of the Eucharist as apian evolution. Of the former, Kilgour points out: ‘[i]n the host, as in the Trinity, different persons meet. The individual bodies of the members of the community are identified with the corporate body of the Church, which in turn is identified with the individual body of the sacrificed Christ’ (80). In its pilgrimage to the Celestial City of evolutionary fulfilment, the individual bee is sacrificed to, and assimilated by, the ‘manifold, everlasting being whereof she forms part’(11). This, of course, reflects the Christological economy of salvation which describes the sacrifice of Jesus Christ; as Kilgour points out, Christ is similarly incorporated by the whole (of humanity) through the act of eating as symbolised in the Eucharist. Conversely, the humble-bee (analogue of the human savage) exists in a state of primal antagonism in which the bee’s aggressive orality is figured as cannibalism and not, as in Christological model, communion. And so it is with Malet. ‘The age old quarrel between capital and labour’ is, for her, an expression of primal enmity. Though a transposition of socialism’s ‘commercial cannibal’, the capitalistic cat is no unchallenged predator, but rather one party in a ‘quarrel’ as old as capitalism itself. Like Maeterlinck’s bee, Dominic’s journey towards the ‘far horizon’ – a term that might, itself, describe a spiritual or evolutionary *telos* – lies in the way of total identification, subordination and self-sacrifice. Interestingly, Barking Brothers & Barking is located on Threadneedle Street: home of the London Stock Exchange and Bank of England (and Barings Brothers were situated round the corner, in Bishopsgate). Commonly associated with the adage, ‘It is easier for a rich man to go through the eye of the needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven’ (Matthew 19:24), Threadneedle street is, ironically, the egress Dominic must thread ‘into’ and ‘through’ in order to arrive at the far horizon.

If Maeterlinck’s cannibalistic humble-bee is an expression of primal aggression then its equivalent in the corporate structure of Barking bank is Sir Abel’s nephew, Reginald Barking. Joining the corporation from America where he had undergone ‘a phase of commonplace but secret vice’, Reginald, a rampant individualist, applies his ‘fiercely driving ambition’ to the practice of speculative investment (159). Figuratively ‘hovering around the eggs [that he] seek[s] to devour, Reginald endorses an investment policy that exploits the colonial territories:

Early in his career he recognised that the great sources of wealth and power lie with the younger countries, in the development of their natural and industrial resources, of their

railways and other forms of transport [...] His dreams of power and speculative activity directed themselves, consequently, to the British Colonies, and to those as yet unappropriated spaces of the earth's surface where British influence is still only tentatively present. (159)

Financially involved in the extirpation of colonial capital, Reginald participates in a form of primitive accumulation; that is, the promotion of capitalistic industry through the original seizure of capital which might include natural resources. Just as the 'millocracy' described in Marx's 'The Future Results of British Rule in India' (1853) recognised the 'vital importance' of transport links for British industry in India, so too is Reginald aware of the logistical requirements of his colonial enterprise. Marx points out that '[t]he day is not far distant when, by a combination of railways and steam vessels, the distance between England and India, measured by time, will be shortened to eight days, and when that once fabulous country will thus be actually annexed to the Western world'.⁴⁹ Yet, at the *fin de siècle*, Reginald's sights are set not on India but on Africa where, at this time, the development of rail links similarly served British interests. As the colonial historians Peter Duignan and Lewis Henry Gann remind us: 'during the Boer war of 1899-1902 [the period in which *The Far Horizon* is set] when Southern Rhodesia had been settled by whites for little more than a decade, the Bulawayo railway workshops already made a small but welcome contribution to the Rhodesian war effort by fitting out several armoured trains [...]'.⁵⁰ Yet despite Reginald's aggressive colonising instinct, his speculation in South East Africa lands the ordinarily solvent institution in financial difficulty. It is implied that the events of the second Boer War – for instance, the defeats of 'Black Week', during which time Barking's losses are situated – had arrested British enterprise in the gold-rich Witwatersrand.⁵¹ Unlike Dominic who subordinates his own interests to those of the firm, Reginald contrarily 'employ[s] the unimpeachable respectability and solvency of [Barking Brothers & Barking] as a lever towards the realisation of his own far-reaching ambitions'.

The cooperative model of social or evolutionary development authorised by Malet and Maeterlinck is largely consistent with Herbert Spencer's law of organic progress, which, as Regenia Gagnier explains, posits a kind of universal division of labour. Gagnier points out that '[u]nder the influence of Darwinian biology [...] Spencer had biologized the division of labor, making differences between people evolutionary or organically purposive'.⁵² She continues, 'the logic of his system with respect to what he called the "higher races" was toward increasing individuation, voluntary cooperation, and mutual aid in a division of labor and markets'. The

⁴⁹ Karl Marx, 'The Future Results of the British Rule in India' in *Marx and Engels: Articles on Britain* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1971; repr. 1975), pp. 195-201 (p.197)

⁵⁰ Peter Duignan and Lewis Henry Gann, 'Introduction' in Peter Duignan and Lewis Henry Gann (eds.), *Colonialism in Africa, 1870-1960: Economics of Colonialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975) pp. 1-32 (p.27)

⁵¹ During one week in December 1899 the British suffered three crushing defeats in the battles of Stormberg, Magersfontein and Colenso in what is now known as 'Black Week'. See André Wessels, *Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902: White Man's War, Black Man's War, Traumatic War*. (Westdene: Sun Press, 2011), p. 43

⁵² Regenia Gagnier, *Individualism, Decadence and Globalisation: On the Relationship of Part to Whole, 1959-1920* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2010), p.31

savage, on the other hand, displayed ‘an impulse for immediate gratification’.⁵³ A central metaphor of Malet’s book, the ‘far horizon’, describes a teleology of spiritual salvation that is paradigmatic. Replicating the model of corporation implied by hypostatic union, the bank like the hive, moves towards more cooperative ways of operating and in so doing ‘rid[s] itself of a canker’ in the form of Reginald Barking. Reginald’s financial practice, described variously as ‘reckless’, ‘strenuous’ and ‘self-seeking’, is as retrogressive as his biology is degenerate. Indeed, ‘a lizard-like young man’ and the father of ‘two dry, pale children, whose contours were [similarly] less Raphaelesque than gnat-like’, Reginald’s bruising, corner-cutting methods of capital accumulation tend to the direct gratification of his financial appetite (159). In this way Dominic, a financier of intrinsically cooperative character, represents the evolutionary future of Spencer’s teleology while Reginald, the degenerate individualist, characterises the past. There are, however, important differences between Spencer’s treatment of the corporate body and Malet’s. In Spencer’s body politic, for instance, individuals are driven towards social cooperation through the operation of self-*interest* and not, as in Malet’s salvation-model of corporate unity, through the exercise of self-*sacrifice*. Spencer argues that ‘[t]he corporate life must [...] be subservient to the lives of the parts, instead of the lives of the parts being subservient to the corporate life’: a statement which, though it implies corporate unity, describes a relationship of part-to-whole that is an inverse of Malet’s.⁵⁴

Interestingly, the excision of Reginald, a ‘canker’ in the corporate body of Barking Brothers & Barking, mirrors the elimination of individualism in the English national body during the Boer conflict. With respect to the war, Dominic considers:

A few persons, it is true, remembered [the battle of] Majuba Hill, and doubted the small boy’s [the Boer’s] immediate reduction to obedience. A few others dared to suspect that English society was suffering from wealth apoplexy and the many unlovely symptoms which, in all ages of history, have accompanied that form of seizure, and to doubt whether blood-letting might not prove salutary. Dominic Iglesias was among these. [...He had a] suspicion that the sobering and sorrowful influences of war might be healthful for the body politic, just as a surgical operation may be healthful for the individual body. (155-6)

In an apoplectic condition, the national body, like the financial body, operates under the effects of organic disease, the names of which are greed and individualism. The excision of the cankerous Reginald, and the letting of national blood at the Transvaal likewise protect the health of the organism. The English, Dominic reflects, are ‘a nation of individualists, each mainly, not to say exclusively, occupied with his own private affairs’ (206). ‘With the vast majority’, he continues, ‘unity of sentiment is suspect, and patriotism a passive rather than an active virtue’ (206). Yet the ‘stress of repeated disaster’ inspires ‘unity of sentiment and patriotism’ (206). Because Malet describes a form of social cohesion accomplished through the selective evacuation of elements from within the body politic and not, as in Kilgour’s analysis, the absorption of external elements,

⁵³ Ibid., p. 31

⁵⁴ Spencer, Herbert. ‘The Social Organism’, in *Essays: Scientific, Political and Speculative*, V.I (London: Williams & Norgate, 1883) pp. 388-432 (p.401)

the motifs of expulsion and abscission appear to invert Kilgour's 'total insideness' thesis. For instance, describing the Freudian (oral) foundation of her narrative of corporation, Kilgour suggests that, on a basic level, 'what is outside must be subsumed and drawn into the center until there is no category of alien outsidersness left to threaten the inner stability' (5). But Malet's novel attributes that corporate stability attendant on the elimination of individualism to an *expulsion* of national blood. An imperial haemorrhage, the Anglo-Boer conflict brings about a shrinkage or consolidation of the body politic that may well endorse de-colonisation.

The motifs of bleeding and abscission that appear in connection to the Boer war recur elsewhere in Malet's fiction. In the later novel, *Adrian Savage* (1911), the lunatic artist René Dax, redecorates his studio in the manner of Huysmans's *Des Esseintes*, replacing its 'tender, tearful blues and greens', 'caressing pinks' and 'luscious mauves' with a 'harshly symbolic triad' of black, white and red. Of the latter, Dax comments:

[...] red – red, the horrid whipper-in and huntsman of us all, meaning life, fire, lust, pain, carnage, sex, revolution and war, scarlet-lipped scorn and mockery – the raw, gaping, ever-bleeding, ever-breeding wound, in short, upon the body of the cosmos which we call humanity.⁵⁵

'[E]ver-bleeding' and 'ever-breeding', the 'wound [...] upon the body of the cosmos' is both menstrual and uterine. The dual images of laceration (menstruation) and generation (procreation) within a cosmic body – which itself indicates system – link Dax's tonal free-association to the concept of a universal economy. Certainly, as one element of a chromatic triad and a likeness of stigmatic affliction, 'red' implies a state of lost sanctity and the predative metaphors of 'huntsman' and 'whipper-in' reinforce the image of fallenness and primal enmity.⁵⁶ Like the gyrational motion of the 'great millstones' which, in *The Wages of Sin*, grind down organic life into 'food for the coming generations', the generative womb conducts a cyclic economy of life-giving and dismemberment. Meanwhile mankind, waging war and revolution becomes, like nature, a mutilating force. Of course, these associations are the ravings of a lunatic, but the story revisits the theme of dismemberment, using it as a means by which to explore the (economic) subjection of women.

In the novel, *Adrian Savage*, the proprietor of a 'leading [Parisian] bi-monthly review', courts the beautiful but unobtainable widower, Gabrielle St. Leger (7). Having 'passed straight from the obedience of young girlhood to the obedience of young wifeness', Gabrielle has no desire to 'be the property of any man' and becomes actively involved with the women's emancipation movement (27). As the named executor of his uncle, Montagu Smyrthwaite's will, Adrian is called to England to tie up the Baurhurst estate where he unwittingly attracts the affections of his 'meager' cousin, Joanna (94). Following an epiphanous apprehension of the true nature of Adrian's

⁵⁵ Lucas Malet, *Adrian Savage* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1911), p. 175 Further page references to this novel are given after quotations in the text.

⁵⁶ According to the OED, in blood sports a 'whipper-in' is 'a runner whose business it is to keep the hounds in order'.

feelings, Joanna commits suicide. Meanwhile Adrian, on his return to Paris saves Gabrielle from an attempt on her life by the madman, Dax, and convinces her to abandon feminism in favour of marriage. By her own admission, Joanna is 'like some blighted, half-dead thing' and is rendered so by the 'dominating personality' of her father (77). Montagu 'looked at [his daughter] as his private property', used her for 'amanuensis' and capitalised on her 'sound commercial instinct' (88-9). After his death, Joanna is awakened to her father's 'devouring' autocracy:

Something which Mr Savage said to-day at luncheon about individualism – though I do not think he meant it to apply to papa - suggested to me that there are other forms of cannibalism besides that practiced by the degraded savages who cook and eat the dead bodies of their captives. In civilized communities a more subtle, but more cruel, kind of cannibalism is neither impossible nor infrequent – a feeding upon the intelligence, the energies and the personality of those about you [...] I am haunted by the remembrance of the classic legend of Saturn devouring his own children. It is monstrous and it is shocking, yet it does haunt me. (77)

Like Honoria St. Quentin who declares that the age of cannibalism is not yet over, Joanna, after the suggestion of Adrian, begins to regard her subjection as a form of parasitism that 'leaves its victims sterile' (77). As 'a meager, flat-bosomed' figure of 'joyless', 'Northern' temperament, Joanna is such a specimen of sterility and certainly no-one could 'picture her with a healthy baby on her lap' (89). Compared to her continental double, the womanly Gabrielle, Joanna is dry and business-minded though Gabrielle, too, has come to regard men as 'tyrants, [...] whom to sustain [their] own insolent, masculine supremacy schemed to enslave her, to rob her of her intellectual and physical freedom, of her so jealously cherished ownership of herself' (40).

As Kilgour's study successfully demonstrates, cannibalism has been closely associated with identity, and Montagu's *endocannibalism*, is figured as an attempt to endow Joanna with his own, utilitarian, character. Montagu's cannibalistic individualism inverts Freud's theory of tribal anthropophagy which posits that, '[b]y incorporating parts of a person's body through the act of eating, [the tribesman believes he] acquires the qualities possessed by him'.⁵⁷ Montagu's piecemeal consumption of his daughter's character (and services) implies none of the ambivalence usually associated with the assimilation of matter external to oneself but Joanna is already so enervated by Montagu's despotic influence that she poses little threat to the integrity of his person. In Chapter 3, I applied Alexandra Kojève's reading of Hegel to Vernon Lee's story 'Dionea' (1890). I explained that, by drawing parallels between eating and the 'negating' activity of the master in master-slave dialectics, Kojève supplies a suggestive paradigm for nineteenth-century sex relations: relations in which woman, very often conceived as a slavish consciousness, is liable to be consumed or deindividualised. For instance, Kojève argues '[t]he being that eats, for example, creates and preserves its own reality by overcoming a reality other than its own [...] by the "assimilation," the

⁵⁷ Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo: Some Points of Agreement between the Mental Lives of Savages and Neurotics*, Trans. By James Strachey (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1950; repr. 1961), p. 82

“internalization” of a “foreign,” “external” reality’.⁵⁸ Kojève’s comments clearly apply to Montagu’s cannibalistic treatment of Joanna as he protects his legacy by ‘overcoming a reality other than [his] own’; as a result, Joanna can neither produce nor reproduce the peculiarities of her character and biology. It is thus, as a person evacuated of all individuality, that Adrian encounters his cousin, and in her affection for him (which she wrongly imagines is returned) she ‘is ‘resolved to exterminate [her] pride and submit to be nothing, so that he may give everything’ (220). Montagu’s consumption – or, in Hegelian terms, negation – of Joanna’s individuality addresses itself to her physical body which is curiously without definition or character. In the ‘blurred’ light streaming down through the leaded glass of the Tower House, Adrian watches his cousin descend the ‘broad staircase’ observing, ‘though he didn’t in the least want to’, that ‘both her feet and hands, though comparatively small, were lacking in individuality and in [...] sharpness of outline [...] (94). He speculates that ‘they might have been just anybody’s hands and feet’ (94) and later that her ‘fingertips’ and the ‘outline of her lips’ similarly appeared as though ‘frayed’ (373, 251). Pertinently, in her analysis of Vernon Lee’s supernatural tales, Patricia Pulham argues that ‘Lee’s women’ *deliberately* ‘elude the constraints of the frame’.⁵⁹ Pulham points out that Alice Oke, the protagonist of Lee’s 1886 story ‘Oke of Okehurst’ confounds the narrator, a portrait artist who is unable to commit her likeness to canvas and remarks that as ‘merely ‘a wonderful series of lines’, [Alice] refuses the restraint of Apollonian form’.⁶⁰ *Adrian Savage*, however, offers no such affirmative statement. Joanna’s oblique figure merely signifies her tenuous phenomenality and Gabrielle, Joanna’s double, falls victim to a Browningsesque plot to imprison her within a portrait. That is to say, Dax uses Gabrielle as the model for a painting entitled ‘Madonna of the Future’ (incidentally, the title of an 1873 James story) which he uses for his own, exclusive, contemplation. Dax explains to Adrian, ‘she is fixed, my Madonna. She can’t run away happily. We can always return and, though she is mine, I will permit you to take another look at her’ (174).

Joanna conceives of two distinct forms of cannibalism. The first, as I note, conforms to the broader popular application of the trope which, throughout the nineteenth century and beyond, has served to undermine the civilising myth by suggesting parallels between contemporary industrial or social praxis and tribal cannibalism. The second, through the allusions to the myth of Saturn, is more ambivalent. Though describing the cannibalistic consumption of offspring, the myth of Saturn situates oral aggression within a Golden Age milieu of total identity and mutual nourishment. Edgar Wind (cited in Kilgour) remarks that ‘the myth of Saturn eating his children was greeted as a promise of redemption: the Many returning to the One, a reversal of the primeval ‘dismemberment’’.⁶¹ And Kilgour herself points out that ‘the idea of return is both idealised as a return to communion with an originary source and a primal identification, and demonized as

⁵⁸ Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. Allan Bloom, trans. by James H. Nichols, Jr. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), p. 4

⁵⁹ Patricia Pulham, *Art and the Transitional Object in Vernon Lee’s Supernatural Tales* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), p. 135

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ Edgar Wind, *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance* (London: Faber and Faber, 1958), p. 116 n.2

regression through the loss of human and individual identity: one returns to the father by being eaten by him' (11). It is unsurprising, then, that Joanna's sensation of being 'haunted' by the myth foreshadows her ideological return to her father. Just prior to her suicide Joanna confesses that:

I have felt singularly near to ['papa'] in spirit and sympathy. I know that I have rebelled against his methods; and have both thought and spoken harshly of him. I am sorry for this. I see now that, in his position and possessing his authority, I should have acted as he did. He valued wealth as lightly as I do; though he was interested in the acquisition of it. Business to him was an occupation rather than an end in itself. He craved for entire self-expression [...] That, I think, is why he disliked the idea of dying. (422)

In an Odyssean-like return to the philosophy of her father, Joanna relinquishes all claim to individual identity. Earlier in the novel, she had declared that she, her brother and mother 'were devoured [...] by papa's love of power and pursuit of self-exaltation' (78); as she now regards Montagu's appropriation as a fitting expression of his 'position' and 'authority', it would seem that she has arrived at the view that, as *paterfamilias*, she is her father's property to dispose of. As a totalising narcissist, though, Montagu is not satisfied that his daughter originates from him; his desire for 'entire self-expression' [emphasis mine] requires that she *becomes* him. In this way, Montagu fears death because it means the extinction of individual personality. Joanna's return to her father replicates the paradigm of salvation, which teaches that the children who, in God's likeness are discharged into world of mortal sin, return to (and are made whole by) an original father-creator. Certainly, her statement, 'I will go back to him in death; and lie beside him in the rain and snow and wind', though it refers to her intended burial site, resonates with Psalm 23: 'He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters', '[...] and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever' (423).

In respect to the business personality that, after her father, Joanna has assumed, Adrian considers that:

It seemed to him he touched on something new here in human tendencies and human development; something which, in the coming social order, might very widely obtain, especially among Protestant English speaking peoples. —A democratic, scientific, unsparring self-knowledge, physical and mental, on the one hand, and a narrow, sectarian, self-sufficiency, on the other; a morbidly cold-blooded acknowledgement of fact and application of means to ends [...]. (91)

In many ways, Adrian's observation mirrors Max Weber's Protestant Ethic Thesis. Published originally as two articles appearing between 1904-5, Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, argues that the expansion of capitalism had required, for its success, a reconceptualisation of virtue and one that in R.H.Tawney's words, meant that 'the pursuit of wealth' was not merely regarded as 'an advantage but a duty'.⁶² The Protestant faiths, particularly Calvinism, began to regard business enterprise as a calling which might be pursued 'with a sense of

⁶² R.H. Tawney, 'Foreword' in Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Trans by Talcott Parsons (London: Unwin, 1930; repr. 1971), pp. 1-11 (p.2)

religious responsibility'.⁶³ The qualities of rationality, piety and industry, for instance, described both commercial and spiritual virtues in an emerging Protestant morality. Montagu's empirical mind, his cold-blooded asceticism and his morbid application of fact in the pursuit of 'means to [financial] ends', correspond with Weber's Protestant ethos. As a Unitarian dissenter, Montagu is not a Protestant but Weber's definition is broad enough to encompass other ascetic denominations of Christianity. Pertinently, though, Unitarians, do not believe in the consubstantial existence of the three persons of Christ in the godhead. As someone who is singularly unsympathetic to non-Catholic Christianity, Malet might well have intended that Montagu's pathology, distinguished by a desire for absolute sovereignty and self-expression, be read as an expression of his faith (or his faith as an expression of his pathology) since his general aim is to extinguish all heterogeneity by the affirmation of a single, monotheistic Father. When Joanna does return to her father, it is in the spirit of asceticism and a mind bent towards business administration. Amidst the 'juiceless' volumes of Adam Smith and David Hume, the early years of Joanna's adulthood had featured 'long joyless hours' spent 'reading to and writing for her father' but on the eve of her death she revisits the 'mechanical' work of accounting, a task she finds 'soothing' (97,420). Aptly, Joanna shows herself aware of the improvident economy of nature which she, like James Colthurst from the *Wages of Sin*, recognises as essentially destructive; she remarks: '[n]ature is certainly no economist. She destroys as lavishly as she creates' (72). Within this natural or somatic economy of created life, her father's 'personal equation [is left] unrecorded' indicating, perhaps, that her own suicide leaves a void on the procreative balance sheet (422).

Malet's feminist credentials are hardly unequivocal. Her 1905 essay, 'The Threatened Re-subjection of Women' weighs up a woman's right to education, occupation and financial independence against the imperative of the Nation to maintain a large and healthy population. Though Malet generally supports women's emancipation – concluding that 'it is impossible that, though she devote her life to the bearing of children [...] she should ever decline again, unless she herself wills it, to the level of a mere play-thing, chattel or squaw' – she also harbours less progressive views on male-female sex relations.⁶⁴ Claiming not to identify as a 'féministe', Malet suggests that 'though [man] does not always use his power very pleasantly, the man's way, on the whole, is best'.⁶⁵ Moreover, like Vernon Lee who was sceptical about radical feminism, Malet, in Patricia Lorimer Lundberg's words had 'conflicting feelings' about suffrage and 'decried its violent campaign'.⁶⁶ *Adrian Savage* articulates many of the contradictions contained in Malet's gender

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Lucas Malet, 'The Threatened Re-Subjection of Women', *The Fortnightly Review*, 83 (1905), 806-819 (p. 819)

⁶⁵ Ibid., p.807 & 809

⁶⁶ Lundberg, *An Inward Necessity*, p. 9 Through her reading of Lee's unpublished correspondence, Patricia Pulham establishes that Lee 'disagreed with the militant action advocated by certain members of the women's movement'. Her correspondence with Ethel Smyth, for instance, reveals a repeated refusal to write an article for *The Suffragette* on, it would seem the grounds of its militancy. Patricia Pulham, 'A Transatlantic Alliance: Charlotte Perkins Gilman and Vernon Lee', in *Feminist Forerunners: New Womanism and Feminism in the Early Twentieth Century*, ed. by Ann Heilmann (London: Pandora, 2003), pp. 34-43 (p.39-40)

politics but its critique of the prejudice associated with woman's involvement, and relationship to, economic life, is decisive. Because the male population of the novel tend towards the view that 'women have no idea of money', that in fact 'it's not *in* them' (emphasis mine), Joanna's financial competency poses a threat to her gender identity (53). Indeed, soon after Adrian arrives in England Andrew Merriman, the manager of the nearby Priestly woollen mills, declares: 'Joanna Smyrthwaite's all right. She has sound commercial instincts if she's allowed to use them. It's an all-fired pity she's a woman' (88). Evidently uncomfortable with Joanna's skill in matters economic, Adrian replies: 'she should have married' (88). Joanna's commercial facility is, lamentable only in so far as it poses a challenge to her sex and this is perhaps why, for Adrian, her gender becomes unstable as the novel progresses. Encountering some drawings of Joanna's brother – a vagrant alcoholic – in Dax's studio, Adrian mistakes the downbeat figure for Joanna 'masquerading in man's attire' (393). Subsequently, he could not banish this image of slipshod masculinity from his thoughts of his cousin, demonstrating exactly how far, in Adrian's mind, she has transgressed accepted standards of womanhood.

To a greater or lesser extent, the men of *Adrian Savage* are in the market for women. The artist, Rene Dax, claims that '[w]omen have neither soul nor intellect, only bodies, bodies, bodies' (329), his Browningsque pathology leading him to believe that '[e]verything that I looked at belonged to me' (299). Though not a sociopath, Monsieur St. Ledger, the late husband of Gabrielle, considers himself somewhat of a 'connoisseur in women', acquiring the 'unique specimen' of Gabrielle Vernois via that form of 'legal appropriation' known as marriage (28, 49). Even Adrian takes pains to counter the suggestion that he is a 'devouring monster' though he longs for some kind of 'marriage by capture' (151, 8). This status quo places woman at an *impasse*; either she submits to the status of consumed object or, as an independent financial player, she performs a type of prostitution. Falling into the latter category, Joanna is aware of the advantage her wealth brings to any potential alliance with Adrian. She considers: 'I have at least that to give – I mean, a not despicable amount of wealth, and the dignified ease which wealth obtains [...] I do not go to him an empty-handed beggar in material things' (225). Joanna's incisive awareness of the value of her wealth is transposed as prostitution in a telepathic episode where she comes to learn that her affection for Adrian is not returned. Experiencing a vision in which she shares occupation of the body of a Parisian prostitute, Joanna solicits Adrian. In her diary, Joanna recalls:

I shared this experience with a woman of different antecedents, of a lower social position and inferior education to myself. Our two personalities inhabited one and the same body [...] This association was very frightful to me. I felt soiled by it. And, not only did I in myself feel soiled, but hopes, emotions, aspirations which until now I had believed to be pure and elevated, assumed a vile aspect when shared by this woman's mind and heart. Still I knew that of necessity I must remain with her, continue to be, in a sense, part of her [...] (418)

To them both, Adrian damningly declares '[i]t is no use. I do not want you. Poor woman, I do not want you. It is impossible that I should ever want you [...]' placing, as he said this, money in the

prostitute's hand. Uncannily, at the moment of Joanna's vision this exact scene of repudiation occurred for Adrian, who had returned from Baughurst to Paris. As he uttered the words, he 'could not tell' whether they were intended for Joanna or the prostitute. He felt as though the 'passing of money was to him symbolic, setting him free' (411).

That Joanna should, by 'necessity', remain in this degrading dualism and her thoughts of marriage - tied up, as they are, with her fortune - assume the 'vile aspect' of sex work, testifies to the fact that within Malet's novelistic world women cannot afford to show themselves acquisitive or business-minded in the manner of men lest their enterprise be transfigured as prostitution. The fact that Joanna finds herself consubstantially attached to a prostitute, despite disparities in class, education, and nationality, is consistent with the idea of the 'eternal feminine' because, occupying 'one and the same body', they are of a single, fallen, feminine essence. Indeed, Adrian repeatedly imagines Gabrielle - who, through her womanhood, he concedes, is 'essentially nearer' to Joanna than himself (92) - as a kind of living Mona Lisa: an artistic subject that Walter Pater, in his *Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*, famously described as a vampire that had 'been dead many times, and learned the secrets of the grave'.⁶⁷ Malet adapts established femme fatale figures - Salome, for instance, and as I point out, the Mona Lisa - for her own 'feminist' ends, using them as leitmotifs that conspicuously designate the exigencies of woman's relationship to economic life. In *The Wages of Sin*, with its titular gesture towards the theme of prostitution, the artist, James Colthurst, encounters a suitable subject for a painting: a working-class child, dancing for the pleasure of her peers:

upon the dusty pavement, close by, a little girl was engaged in dancing a *pas seul* for the edification of a row of children seated, as in a stage-box, along the steps of one of the line of dreary porticoes. [...] Here was a telling subject, if faithfully rendered, for a picture on one side of London life [...] "Call it Theodora of the Pavement, or A Coming Daughter of Herodias," he said to himself. (176-8)

Colthurst is at first unaware that the little girl, who 'postured, attitudinized [and] pirouetted with almost painful mimicry of some *première danseuse* of *opéra bouffe*' (177), is his illegitimate daughter, Dot. The girl's precocious sexuality and the spectacle of her gymnastic body, beheld with 'impish delight' by the young audience, align her with *femme fatales* Salome and Empress Theodora: both of whom formed the subject of *fin-de-siècle* dramas, engaging Sarah Bernhardt in the lead role.⁶⁸ Because Dot's mother had made, out of financial necessity, a one-time foray into the world of prostitution, the scene has an Ibsenesque quality; that is to say, the sins of the mother are thus revealed to be visited upon the daughter. It is certainly no coincidence that Dot is destined for a career on the stage since the profession absolutely epitomises the compromised position of women at the frontier of commercial culture. As Mary Louise Roberts points out, even at the *fin de*

⁶⁷ The original owner of my 1911 edition of the book (who had inscribed their initials, A.A.P, and the date) had glued a magazine clipping of the Mona Lisa on the title page of the book which attests, I think, to the conspicuous nature of the motif.

⁶⁸ Oscar Wilde's *Salomé* (1893) and Victorien Sardou's *Théodora* (1884)

siècle, Rousseau's idea that acting is a form of prostitution was still current, and material conditions (particularly in France) meant female actresses often *did* cross the threshold into prostitution.⁶⁹ Cast as the 'Coming Daughter of Herodias' or, Salome, Dot dramatises the impasse between consumer and consumed object and elsewhere in her fiction Malet shows herself aware of the imperial tensions embodied within the literary history of the character. *The Carissima* (1896), a shorter novel written during a period of illness between *The Wages of Sin* and *The History of Sir Richard Calmady*, describes the post-traumatic psychosis of Constantine Leversedge: an imperial entrepreneur with interests in South Africa and a fiancée with designs on a minor poet.⁷⁰ Here, the plight of women is implicitly aligned with the imperial subject or slave who is similarly regarded as abject in their subordination to their white male masters yet rapidly acquisitive. One of Constantine's party, the magazine editor, Percy Gerrard, malignantly says of contemporary woman:

the degrading fiction of the equality of the sexes is already exploded [...] the fin de siècle [sic] woman, true to instinct, though false in idea, mistakes the badge of her servitude for the brevet of her emancipation, and, to prove the completeness of her liberty, dances, like any slave-girl of the harem, for the entertainment of her hereditary masters.⁷¹

Like Salome, a racialised commodity that has been unsympathetically transposed into literature (mainly) by men, the *fin-de-siècle* woman is rendered whore by means of her participation in consumer culture. 'Not one woman in a million is public-spirited' Gerrard continues, 'the vast majority have a *savage* rage for their own little possessions. We give it as the rope, the enough rope, which enable these dear foolish female creatures very effectually to hang themselves' [emphasis mine] (145). Gerrard's dehumanising rhetoric and reference to woman's specifically 'savage' rage for possessions runs parallel to nineteenth-century colonial discourses. Indeed, in an equivalent remark about the native Indian population, Mrs Perry, the mother of Leversedge's fiancée, exclaims: 'I'm sure it's a very shocking thing we should be benefiting so by those poor black people's bad habits [...] the doctor here's been explaining to me all about those poor Indians and the opium' (153). The logic is, that in supplying enough rope for the acquisitive woman to hang herself, *fin-de-siècle* man becomes an analogue of the British enterprise in the form of the East India Company which had, from the 1840s, created a demand for opium among the 'insatiable' natives.⁷² As Jayeeta Sharma explains, 'for western observers opium was the definitive sign of the profligate native' and this opium-eating profligacy clearly corresponds with the mania of consumption laid at the door of *fin-de-siècle* woman.⁷³ Regretting her decision to marry Leversedge, Charlotte Perry laments that:

⁶⁹ Mary Louise Roberts, *Disruptive Acts: The New Woman in Fin-de-Siècle France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), pp.54-6

⁷⁰ Lundberg, *An Inward Necessity*, p.10

⁷¹ Lucas Malet, *The Carissima: A Modern Grottesque* (Gloucester: Dodo Press, nd), p.144 Further page references to this novel are given after quotations in the text.

⁷² Jayeeta Sharma, *Empire's Garden: Assam and the Making of India* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), p.65

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p.64

If a woman leaves her home because the demands made upon her are degrading, or because her husband is wicked [...] society looks doubtfully upon her, other women flout her and draw aside their skirts. [...] But if she leaves her home because she pleases some other man, society looks not so very hardly on her fault [...] in the eyes of the great, coarse, everyday world we are your slaves yet. (83-4)

Total passivity is implied in the fact that woman is the grammatical subject, and not the object, of the clause 'she pleases some other man'. As a 'slave' woman's dynamic movement from one man to another assumes a respectable form because it obeys the rules of property within economic exchange; yet, by evading the arrogating grasp of husband or lover, she relinquishes her status as consumed object, upsetting the patriarchy of the domestic economy. Theorising the single impulse that contributes to the conceptualisation of women and colonial subjects / territory as unappropriated assets, Kilgour points out:

The misogyny underlying the Western tradition depends on a sexist version of colonial discourse and is connected with a view of women as outsiders, aliens within society who must be controlled, as they are duplicitous (a characteristic also applied to wily untrustworthy foreigners). The female body is a subversive *mons veneris* that must be turned into a *hortus conclusus*, a piece of nature to be ordered and fenced in so that what should be private property is not held in common. (243-4)

Because Malet is motivated on both fronts – that is to say, colonialism and gender politics – *The Carissima*, does not so much advance a 'sexist version of colonial discourse' but a *parallel* discourse in which woman and slave reveal to each other their chattel-status. At the end of the eighteenth century, the Zong Massacre had demonstrated that men could so utterly disregard the humanity of their captives, they felt justified in claiming for lost cargo – in fact, ailing slaves they had thrown overboard – under the jettison clause of the slave-ship's insurance. In *The Carissima*, and elsewhere in Malet's fiction, woman is regarded as just such an item of cargo. Even Richard Calmady – who is not, by Malet's standards, particularly misogynistic – acknowledges his dehumanising treatment of Lady Constance Quale, conceding that he and his mother 'proceeded to traffic for this desirable bit of young womanhood, of prospective maternity, – to buy her from such of her relations as were perverted enough to countenance the transaction' (402).

The representation of bourgeois woman as a voracious consumer is, at the *fin-de-siècle*, fairly common. Zola's *Au bonheur des dames* or, *The Ladies Paradise* (1883), which centres on a Parisian department store is, for instance, often cited as a consummate exploration of *fin-de-siècle* consumerism in fiction, and one that is not altogether flattering to its female subjects.⁷⁴ As Rita Felski points out, the women of Zola's novel symbolise 'the regressive dimension of modernity as exemplified in its unleashing of an infantile irrationalism of unchecked desire'.⁷⁵ Though Malet *does* express some reservations about consumer culture in 'The Threatened Resubjection of

⁷⁴ See Chapter 3, Imagined Pleasures: The Erotics and Aesthetics of Consumption, in Rita Felski, *The Gender of Modernity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), pp. 61-90

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p.69.

Women', the accusations levelled at *fin-de-siècle* woman in *The Carissima*, are very evidently parodic, being intended instead to expose a male anxiety about women's participation in economic culture. As Kilgour points out, totalising regimes tend to 'invert actual relations by projecting a desire for assimilation from a center to a periphery' (5) and the image of the rapid female consumer serves as an ideological ploy to conceal the real mischief associated with marriage, a species of 'legal appropriation'.

Conclusion

Despite the titular decoy, Malet imagines a more consoling trajectory of female emancipation in her essay 'The Threatened Re-subjection of Women' than in her novels. Here, she aligns the plight of woman with the agricultural worker who, by means of the National Agricultural Labourers' Union, was 'raised [...] up from the position of a serf', giving him 'weight and importance in the corporate life of the nation'.⁷⁶ Though the Union was, by 1896, dissolved, Malet suggests that 'its effects are [...] permanent and very beneficial' and imagines that the female population will similarly divest itself of the ideological apparatus of its emancipation – that is, the 'Woman's Movement' – as conditions improve. Declaring that 'it is impossible that [...] [woman] should ever decline again unless she herself wills it', Malet appears to advance a feminist teleology that parallels Marxist or Darwinian narratives of progress, themselves implying a gradual movement towards political or biological perfection.⁷⁷ In contrast, Malet's novels offer no promise of an egalitarian 'corporate life' this side of death; her 'universal economy' instead inflicts upon the novelistic world, a mutilating enterprise befitting of fallen humanity. As this chapter demonstrates, the novels offer an experiment in terrestrial corporation but neither socialistic commune nor its reverse, the for-profit corporation, provide a tonic for the conditions of cannibalistic antagonism that characterise industrial modernity. It is rather the *Christological* economy of salvation, which posits the return to a single father-creator, that restores humanity to a condition of primal, democratic unity.

⁷⁶ Malet, 'The Threatened Re-Subjection of Women', p.819

⁷⁷ Ibid.

Conclusion

Gothic tropes of the kind described in this thesis are often unwieldy; in their representation of monstrosity they have the potential to develop a monstrous life of their own. Hobbes's *Leviathan* is a case in point. As I stated in the introduction, the central metaphor of Hobbes's state theory, the leviathan or biblical sea monster, was never intended as a pejorative expression of state tyranny. However, as the political philosopher, Carl Schmitt, points out, '[Hobbes] failed to realise [...] that in using this symbol he was conjuring up the invisible forces of an old, ambiguous myth'.¹ He continues, 'what could have been a grand signal of restoration of the vital energy and political unity began to be perceived in a ghostly light and became a grotesque horror picture'.² Indeed, there is plenty of evidence that Hobbes was not entirely in control of his metaphor; notably, he himself came to be known as the 'monster from Malmesbury' and 'leviathan' has since become a by-word for state despotism.³ In different ways, the vampire, particularly its most popular example, Stoker's *Dracula*, has been read as a monstrous embodiment of sexually transmitted disease, racial impurity, female sexuality, imperialism, corporate monopoly and so on. This vast, waxing *corpus* of criticism itself starts to look like a monstrous body as a congested critical field puts creative pressure on the limits of this discourse. Therefore, in approaching a network of metaphors that are, themselves, shape shifting and often ambivalent, the challenge of this thesis has, in part, been to avoid replicating this reflexive strategy in its analysis. I have tried to do so by reading the economic vampire motif and its cognates *teleologically*. In my introduction I explained that on a basic level, I interpret these motifs as antagonistic figures, articulating binary conflicts such as bleeder / bled, coloniser / colonised etc. By placing emphasis on the tropes' teleological design, that is to say how, in their conflictual curve, these figures resolve (or potentially don't resolve) an exploiter-exploited binary, three general means by which *fin-de-siècle* writers processed the concept of economic self-interest and exploitation have emerged.

The first is the dialectical method. Most clearly evident in the historical materialist narrative of class conflict, dialectical forms posit, in Engels's terms, the 'continual conflict of the opposites and their final passage into one another or into higher forms'.⁴ This thesis explores both idealist (in the form of Hegel's master-slave dialectic) and materialist dialectical forms of resolving conflict as it is articulated in various kinds of predatory economic motif. In socialist writing and illustration, these motifs do generally assume the form of a binary antagonism between a blood-sucking capitalist establishment and devitalised labour class (and this may often be seen to precede a glorious socialistic end-term). Yet surprisingly, the ambivalence of these metaphors – which are

¹ Carl Schmitt, *The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes: Meaning and Failure of a Political Symbol*, trans. by George Schwab and Erna Hilfstein (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), p.81

² Ibid.

³ George Schwab, 'Foreword', in Carl Schmitt, *The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes: Meaning and Failure of a Political Symbol*, trans. by George Schwab and Erna Hilfstein (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), pp.vii-xxvii (p.xi)

⁴ Friedrich Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, trans. by Clemens Dutt (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1972), p.211

appetitive and therefore involve the merging of two previously separate entities – often creates an instability in the binary structure of the trope that compromises the dialectical method. Notably, H. Halliday Sparling’s journalistic treatment of ‘Commercial Cannibalism’, describes a cannibalistic praxis which, through the ‘piecemeal’ consumption of human flesh is rendered as a grotesque form of symbiosis; that is to say, the ‘civilised monopolist’ *sustains* a labour force in order continually to ‘feed’ on it.⁵ This degrading co-existence means that no entirely autonomous identity can be wrought outside the context of this relationship. Similarly, in Zola’s *Germinal*, the coal mine, which is the appetitive mouth of bourgeois capitalism, figuratively gesticulates the colliers, who are refashioned in its own, voracious image. In Chapter Three, however, Vernon Lee’s short story, ‘Dionea’, is read profitably in terms of master-slave dialectics. Here, the enslaved consciousness (Dionea) and the artist that attempts to hold her in a state of subjection (Waldemar), engage in a death battle for ‘recognition’. Dialectically overcoming her oppressor, Dionea becomes a ‘being for self’: a being set free from a condition of servility and economic dependence.⁶ Though Lee may not have intended to locate the struggle between Dionea and Waldemar in a specifically Hegelian framework, her involvement with Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s *Women and Economics* meant that she had had exposure to the (New Woman) eugenic theory that woman, forced out of the evolutionary arena of competition, had become a mere extension of man. In obvious ways this approximates the model of recognition and servitude which we find in Hegel.

The second way this thesis suggests *fin-de-siècle* writers process the binary antagonisms implicit within vampiric and other appetitive economic metaphors, is eschatological. As (converted) Catholics, Mitford and Malet both conceptualise acquisitive capitalistic society as a scene of The Fall. A godless world peopled with isolated actors in pursuit of their own self-interest, the narrative microcosm, in the manner of Hobbes’s ‘war of all against all’, is a milieu of cannibalistic dismemberment. Describing the place that ‘is touched by the glory of the Uncreated Light’, the central metaphor of Malet’s 1906 novel, ‘the far horizon’ belies the eschatological framework that infuses all her pre- and post-conversion works.⁷ Though Malet experiments with various terrestrial means of working out the ‘universal mutilation’ that besets human society, she rejects the possibility of neutralising the conflictual or predatory operations that characterise human relationships (including industrial and imperial interactions), since ‘no reform is final this side of death’.⁸ With a similarly pessimistic view of worldly conditions, Mitford discreetly embeds his novels with biblical quotations and, as Conrad would do later, deploys Psalm 74 – ‘Have respect unto the covenant: for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty’ (74:20) – to conceptualise the African landscape as a god-neglected habitation where, to borrow a phrase from Jerry Phillips, western capitalists are ‘obliged to ‘go naked’’.⁹ Indeed, Mitford’s application of

⁵ H. Halliday Sparling, ‘Commercial Cannibalism’, *The Commonweal*, 16 October 1886, p.225 & p.226

⁶ G.W.F. Hegel. *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. by A.V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p.112

⁷ Malet, *The Far Horizon*, p.33

⁸ Malet, *Sir Richard Calmady*, p.508 & p.663

⁹ Phillips, ‘Cannibalism qua Capitalism’, p.193

biblical figures stresses that the *telos* of economic development is an infernal vision of capital-violence in the manner of Revelations.

Finally, I would like to suggest that in some instances, binary conflicts such as eater and eaten are managed through an ‘Odyssean structure’. So named because, in the manner of Odysseus, ‘the law of economy is the [...] return to the point of departure [...]’, this term, which I borrow from Derrida, defines the always reciprocal composition of economic operations.¹⁰ In Chapter Three, for instance, I suggest that there are clear correspondences between Mauss’s ‘system of total services’ – which describes a multifaceted social system in which commodities, circulated as gifts, conceal often pernicious forms of obligation – and Henry James’s social economy: a vast nexus of exploitation of which ‘the gift’ is one expression. Through the form of the gift, James is able to demonstrate that the binary assumption involved in figures such as vampire and victim (figures he himself deploys) are unstable. This is because gifts, like other forms of exchange, participate in a ubiquitous, circular network of self-interest; as Kate Croy, of *The Wings of the Dove*, observes: ‘the worker in one connexion was the worked in another’.¹¹ In this way, James writing possesses a self-reflexive or meta-critical dimension.

Evidently, there are points of convergence between the dialectical, eschatological and Odyssean strategies of reading the network of economic metaphors at the centre of this thesis. Malet, who positions the tropes of cannibalism and dismemberment in a terrestrial phase of the journey towards a ‘far horizon’, offers an example of how, when the conflictual arc of the trope is followed through, we arrive at an eschatological end. However, Malet’s ‘universal economy’, which reflects the circular dynamic of Thomas’s theology, becomes an Odyssean operation; in *The Wages of Sin*, for instance, James Colthurst imagines that: ‘[t]he great millstones turn and turn on themselves eternally, grinding down each generation – man, beast, all living things alike – into the food for the coming generations’.¹² These imbrications aside, by creating a taxonomy to describe how these metaphors are *progressed*, I want to offer two conclusions. Firstly, that despite impediments of genre, there are often surprising commonalities in how *fin-de-siècle* writers filter the idea of economic self-interest and exploitation within the framework of the vampire or cannibal motif, and secondly, I want to emphasise the multiplicity of these tropes. I began by stating that this thesis attempts to nuance Kilgour’s erudite, but nonetheless monolithic study, which posits a single historical trajectory from communion to cannibalism. The tripartite classification outlined above reveals some of the ways in which these metaphors refuse to accommodate themselves to a simple unified vision.

¹⁰ Derrida, *Given Time*, p.7

¹¹ James, *The Wings of the Dove*, p.201

¹² Lucas Malet, *The Wages of Sin*, p.254

Bibliography

Primary Texts

- James, Henry. *The Altar of the Dead* (Sioux Falls: NuVision, 1998)
- *The Golden Bowl*, ed. by Virginia Llewellyn Smith (Oxford University Press, 1990)
 - ‘Middlemarch, by George Eliot (1873)’, in *The Critical Muse: Selected Literary Criticism*, ed. by Roger Gard (London: Penguin, 1987), pp.74-81
 - *The Sacred Fount*, ed. by Leon Edel (New York: New Directions, 1995)
 - *The Wings of the Dove*, ed. by Amy Bloom & Pierre A. Walker (New York: Modern Library, 2003; repr. 2004)
- Lee, Vernon. ‘Amure Dure’, in *Hauntings and Other Fantastic Tales*, ed. by Catherine Maxwell and Patricia Pulham (Toronto: Broadview, 2006), pp.41-7
- ‘A Wedding Chest’, in *Hauntings and Other Fantastic Tales*, ed. by Catherine Maxwell and Patricia Pulham (Toronto: Broadview, 2006), pp. 229-242
 - ‘The Ballet of the Nations’, in *Women’s Writing on the First World War*, ed. by Agnès Cardinal, Dorothy Goldman, and Judith Hattaway (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 234-244
 - ‘The Economic Parasitism of Women’, in *Gospels of Anarchy, and Other Contemporary Studies* (London: Unwin, 1908), pp. 263-297
 - *Hortus Vitae: Essays on the Gardening of Life* (Teddington: Echo Library, 2008)
 - ‘Lady Tal’, in *Vanitas: Polite Stories* (Doylestown: Wildside Press, nd), pp. 11-84
 - ‘Prince Alberic and the Snake Lady’, in *Hauntings and Other Fantastic Tales*, ed. by Catherine Maxwell and Patricia Pulham (Toronto: Broadview, 2006), pp. 182-228
 - ‘The Virgin of Seven Daggers’, in *Hauntings and Other Fantastic Tales*, ed. by Catherine Maxwell and Patricia Pulham (Toronto: Broadview, 2006), pp.243-278
- Malet, Lucas. *Adrian Savage* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1911)
- *The Carissima: A Modern Grotesque* (Gloucester: Dodo Press, nd)
 - *The Far Horizon* (London: Hutchinson, 1906)
 - *The History of Sir Richard Calmady: A Romance* (New York: A.L.Burt, 1901)
 - ‘The Threatened Re-Subjection of Women’, *The Fortnightly Review*, 83 (1905), 806-819
 - *The Wages of Sin* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1908)
- Mitford, Bertram. *The Luck of Gerard Ridgeley: A Tale of the Zulu Border* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1894)
- *Renshaw Fanning’s Quest: A Tale of the High Veldt*, ed. by Gerald Monsman (Chicago: Valancourt, 2007)
 - *The Sign of the Spider: An Episode*, ed. by Gerald Monsman (Kansas:Valancourt, 2008)
 - *Through the Zulu Country: Its Battlefields and its People* (London: Kegan Paul, 1883)

Sparling, H. Halliday. 'Commercial Cannibalism', *The Commonweal*, 16 October 1886, p.225-226

Tressell, Robert. *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, ed. by Peter Miles (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005; repr. 2008)

Zola, Émile. *Germinal*, trans. by Leonard Tancock (London: Everyman, 1991)

— *Germinal*, Chronologie et preface par Henri Guillemin (Paris: Flammarion, 1968)

Manuscript Materials

Somerville College, Oxford. Letter to Vernon Lee from Baroness French Cini dated 2 Sept 1899, Box II. No.3

Secondary Texts

'Account of the Spanish Bullfights, in a Letter to a Friend', *The Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Chronicle*, 93 (1824), 299-302

Adams, Bradley. F. *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004)

Adams, Lestyn. *Brothers Across the Ocean: British Foreign Policy and the Origins of the Anglo-American 'Special Relationship' 1900-1905* (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2005)

'A Family Murdered at Tooting', *The Times*, 8 March 1895, p.11

'After Nineteen Centuries!', *The Labour Leader*, 19 December 1896, p.1

Akinwumi, Olayemi. *The Colonial Contest for the Nigerian Region, 1884-1900: A History of the German Participation* (Münster: Lit Verlag, 2002)

Angelov, Dimiter and Judith Herrin. 'The Christian Imperial Tradition – Greek and Latin', in *Universal Empire: A Comparative Approach to Imperial Culture and Representation in European History*, ed. by Peter Fibiger Bang and Dariusz Kołodziejczyk (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012)

Arasse, Daniel. *The Guillotine and the Terror*, trans. by Christopher Miller (London: Allen Lane, 1989)

Arata, Stephen. D. 'Object Lessons: Reading the Museum in *The Golden Bowl*', in *Famous Last Words: Changes in Gender and Narrative Closure*, ed. by Alison Booth (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993), pp.199-229

Archer, William. et al. 'Maeterlinck and the Censor' [a letter to the editor], *The Times*, 20 June 1902, p. 7

Armstrong, Marie-Sophie. "Le chapitre de Jenlain," ou la mise en abyme fantasmatique de *Germinal*', *Nineteenth Century French Studies*, 37 (2008-2009), 81-96 (pp.88-89)

Arnold, Edwin. *The Light of Asia or, The Great Renunciation* (London: Trübner, 1881)

Avrich, Paul. *The Russian Anarchists* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967)

- Baldick, Chris. *In Frankenstein's Shadow* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987)
- Barber, William J. *A History of Economic Thought* (London: Penguin, 1991)
- Barreca, Regina. *Sex and Death in Victorian Literature* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990)
- Baudrillard, Jean. *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*, trans. by Charles Levin (New York: Telos Press, 1981)
- *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, Trans. Iain Hamilton Grant (London: Sage, 1993)
- Beiser, Frederick, C. *Hegel* (New York: Routledge, 2005)
- Bentley, W. Holman. *Pioneering on the Congo* (New York : Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1970 [1900])
- Blake, E.V. 'The Commercial Dinner Party', *Justice: The Organ of Social Democracy*, 1 August 1885, p.5
- Blanchot, Maurice *The Space of Literature*, trans. Ann Smock (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982; repr. 1989)
- Blatchford, Robert. *Not Guilty: A Defence of the Bottom Dog* (London: Clarion, 1906)
- Bookchin, Murray. *The Spanish Anarchists: The Heroic Years 1868-1936* (New York: Free Life Editions, 1977)
- Booth, Bradford A. 'Henry James and the Economic Motif', *Nineteenth Century Fiction*, 8 (1953), 141-150
- Booth, William. *In Darkest England and the Way Out* (London: Salvation Army, 1890)
- Boren, Lynda. S. *Eurydice Reclaimed; Language, Gender and Voice in Henry James* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1989)
- Brown, Frederick. *Zola: A Life* (London: Macmillan, 1996)
- 'Capitalists as Murderers', *Justice: The Organ of Social Democracy*, 11 June 1898, p. 4
- Carlyle, Thomas. *The French Revolution: A History*, ed. by John Holland Rose, 3 vols. (London: George Bell and Sons, 1902), III
- Cobbett, William. *Selections From Cobbett's Political Works: Being a Complete Abridgement of the 100 Volumes Which Comprise the Writings of 'Porcupine' and the 'Weekly political register'* (London: W.Tait, 1835)
- Cohen, Elizabeth S. & Thomas V. Cohen, *Daily Life in Renaissance Italy* (Westport: Greenwood, 2001)
- Colby, Vineta. *Vernon Lee: A Literary Biography* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003)
- 'The Colonies', *The Times*, 14 September 1891, p.4
- Conrad, Joseph. *Heart of Darkness*, ed. by Robert Hampson (London: Penguin, 1995)
- Crouzet, François. *The Victorian Economy* (London: Methuen, 1982)
- Danto, Arthur. 'The Art World', *Journal of Philosophy*, 61(1964), 571-584
- 'Darwinism and Labour', *The Labour Leader*, 8 September 1900, p.248
- Debray, Régis. *God: An Itinerary*, trans. by Jeffrey Mehlman (London: Verso, 2004)

- Delyfer, Catherine. *Art and Womanhood in Fin-de-Siècle Writing: The Fiction of Lucas Malet, 1880-1931* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2011)
- Delyfer, Catherine. 'The Aesthete, the Banker, and the Saint: Economies of Gift and Desire in Lucas Malet's *The Far Horizon* (1906)', in *Libidinal Lives: Economies of Desire in the Literature and Culture of the Fin de Siècle*, ed. by Jane Ford, Kim Edwards Keates and Patricia Pulham (forthcoming)
- De Montaigne, Michel. *The Essays of Michael, Lord of Montaigne*, ed. by Henry Morley, trans. by John Florio (London: Routledge, 1885)
- Derrida, Jacques *Given Time: I. Counterfeit Money*, trans. by Peggy Kamuf (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992; repr. 1994)
- *Specters of Marx: The State of Debt, the Work of Mourning & the New International*, trans. by Peggy Kamuf (New York and London: Routledge, 1994),
- Dickens, Charles. *Bleak House*, ed. by Stephen Gill (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998)
- *Little Dorrit*, ed. by Harvey Peter Sucksmith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982; repr. 1999)
- Dijkstra, Bram. *Idols of Perversity: Fantasies of Feminine Evil in Fin-de-Siècle Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986)
- Dolman, Frederick. 'Lucas Malet at Home: A Chat with the Daughter of Charles Kingsley', *The Young Woman: A Monthly Journal and Review*, 4 (1896), 145-149
- Douglas, Mary. 'foreword', in Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: Form and Reason for exchange in Archaic Societies*, Trans. by W.D.Halls (Oxford: Routledge, 2002; repr.2010), pp.ix-xxxiii
- Duignan, Peter. and Henry, Gann, Lewis. 'Introduction', in *Colonialism in Africa, 1870-1960: Economics of Colonialism*, ed. by Peter Duignan and Lewis Henry Gann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), pp. 1-32
- Eagleton, Terry. *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983; repr.1993)
- 'The Eastern Question: A Letter to the Editor of The Times', *The Times*, 28 October 1896, p.6
- Eaton, George. 'Why Labour Should be Wary of Attacking Osborne Over Borrowing', *New Statesman*, 25 June 2013, <<http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2013/06/why-labour-should-be-wary-attacking-osborne-over-borrowing>>, [Accessed 18/07/13]
- Edel, Leon. *Henry James*, 5 Vols. (London: Hart-Davis, 1953-1972), I: *The Untried Years* (1953)
- Edel, Leon. *Henry James*, 5 Vols. (London: Hart-Davis, 1953-1972), IV: *The treacherous years* (1969)
- Edel, Leon. *Letters [of] Henry James*, 4 vols (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), IV (1895-1916)
- Eliot, George. *Middlemarch*, ed. by Rosemary Ashton (London: Penguin, 1994; repr. 2003)

- Engels, Friedrich. *Dialectics of Nature*, trans. by Clemens Dutt (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1972)
- *The Conditions of the Working Class in England*, ed. by David McLellan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993; repr. 1999)
- Engle, Richard E. 'Psalm 74: Studies in Content, Structure, Context, and Meaning' (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Grace Theological Seminary, 1987)
- 'England and France in West Africa', *The Times*, 1 November 1897, p.3
- Ensor, R.C.K. *England 1870-1914* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936)
- Farmer, John. and William Henley. *Slang and its Analogues Past and Present* (London: Poulter, 1902)
- Felski, Rita. *The Gender of Modernity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995)
- Ferri, Enrico. and La Monte, R. R. *Socialism and Modern Science (Darwin, Spencer, Marx)* (Fairford: Echo, 2006)
- Firchow, Peter. E. *Envisioning Africa: Racism and Imperialism in Conrad's Heart of Darkness* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2000)
- Follett, Wilson 'Henry James's Portrait of Henry James', *The New York Times*, 23 August 1936, p. 2
- Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality: I The Will to Knowledge*, trans. by Robert Hurley (London: Penguin, 1990; repr. 1998)
- Francis, John. *Chronicles and Characters of the Stock Exchange* (London: Longman, Brown, Green & Longmans, 1855)
- Fraser, Hilary *Beauty and Belief: Aesthetics and Religion in Victorian Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986)
- Fraser, James George. *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*, ed. by Robert Fraser (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994; repr. 2009)
- Freud, Sigmund. *Totem and Taboo and Other Works*, Trans. by James Strachey, 24 Vols. (London: Vintage, 2001), XIII
- Friedland, Paul. *Political Actors: Representative Bodies and Theatricality in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003)
- Frye, Northrop. *Fearful Symmetry: A Study of William Blake* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1947; repr. 1967)
- Fussell, Edwin Sill. *The Catholic Side of Henry James* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993)
- Gagnier, Regenia. *Individualism, Decadence and Globalisation: On the Relationship of Part to Whole, 1959-1920* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2010)
- Gane, Mike. 'Introduction', in Jean Baudrillard, *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, trans. by Iain Hamilton Grant (London: Sage, 1993)

- Gaskin, John. 'Introduction', in Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. by J.C.A Gaskin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996; repr.2008), pp. xi-xliii
- Gasman, Daniel. *The Scientific Origins of National Socialism: Social Darwinism in Ernst Haeckel and the German Monist League* (London: MacDonald, 1971)
- Gelder, Ken. *Reading the Vampire* (London: Routledge, 1994)
- Girard, René. *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. by Patrick Gregory (London: Athlone Press, 1995)
- Godfrey, Richard. Jack, Gavin.and Jones, Campbell. 'Sucking, Bleeding, Breaking: On the Dialectics of Vampirism, Capital, and Time', *Culture and Organization*, 10 (2004).
- Godwin, William. *Mandeville: A Tale of the Seventeenth Century in England*, 3 Vols (London: Archibold Constable, 1817), I
- Gossin, Pamela. *Thomas Hardy's Novel Universe: Astronomy, Cosmology, and Gender in the Post-Darwinian World* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007)
- 'The Grinning Ape', *The Commonweal*, 23 February 1889, p.61
- Habegger, Alfred. *Henry James and the 'Woman Business'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989)
- Habegger, Alfred. 'Reciprocity and the Market Place in *The Wings of the Dove* and *What Maisie Knew*', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 25(1971), 455-473
- Halberstam, Judith. 'Technologies of Monstrosity: Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', in *Cultural Politics at the Fin de Siècle*, ed. by Sally Ledger and Scott McCracken (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 248-266
- Hallett, Holt. S. 'France and Siam', *The Times*, 16 June 1893, p. 8
- Hamman, Adalbert. 'Irenaeus of Lyons', in *The Eucharist of the Early Christians*, ed. by Willy Rordorf (New York: Pueblo Publishing, 1978), pp. 86-98
- Hardy, Thomas. *Jude the Obscure* (New York: Bantam, 1996)
- Harth, Phillip. 'Introduction', in Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees*, ed. by Phillip Harth (London: Penguin, 1989), pp.7-43
- Healy, Nicholas. M. *Thomas Aquinas: Theologian of the Christian Life* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003)
- Hegel, G. W. F. *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. by A.V.Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977)
- Hibbert, Christopher. *The French Revolution* (London: Penguin, 1980; repr. 1982)
- Higgins, Ian. *Swift's Politics: A Study in Disaffection* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994)
- Hobbes, Thomas. *De Cive or, The Citizen*, ed.by Sterling P. Lamprecht (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1949)
- Holland , Laurence. B. *The Expense of Vision: Essays on the Craft of Henry James* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1964)

- Huet, Marie-Hélène. *Morning Glory: The Will of the French Revolution* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997)
- ‘The Human Auction’, *The Socialist*, November 1886, p.37
- Hunt, Lynn. A. *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992)
- Hunt, E.K. *History of Economic Thought: A Critical Perspective* (Belmont: Wadsworth, 1979)
- Hurley, Kelly. *The Gothic Body: Sexuality, Materialism and Degeneration at the Fin de Siècle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996)
- Hyde, Lewis. *The Gift: Imagination and the Erotic Life of Property* (New York: Vintage, 1983)
- ‘The Imperial Yeomanry Hospital’, *The Times*, 5 February 1900, p.10
- Isaak, Jo. Anna. *Feminism and Contemporary Art: The Revolutionary Power of Women’s Laughter* (London: Routledge, 1996)
- Isichei, Elizabeth. *The Voices of the Poor in Africa* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2004)
- Jackson, Rosemary. *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion* (London: Methuen, 1981)
- Johnson, Gordon. ‘Red on maps, grey in minds’, *Times Higher Education*, 27 May 2005
- Joll, James. *The Origins of the First World War* (London: Longman, 1984)
- Jung, Carl. Gustav. *The Spirit in Man, Art, and Literature*, trans. by R.F.C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966; repr. 1978)
- Kandola, Sondeep. ‘Vernon Lee: New Woman?’, *Women’s Writing*, 12 (2005), 471-484
- Kant, Immanuel. ‘The Contest of Faculties’, in *Kant: Political Writings*, ed. by H.S. Reiss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970; repr. 1991), pp.176-190
- Kelly, Dorothy. *Reconstructing Woman: from Fiction to Reality in the Nineteenth-Century Novel* (University Park, Pa.: Penn State Press, 2007)
- Kilgour, Maggie. *From Communion to Cannibalism: An Anatomy of Metaphors of Incorporation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990)
- Kinna, Ruth. *The Art of Socialism* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), p. 157
- Kojève, Alexandre. *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. Allan Bloom, trans. by James H. Nichols, Jr. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980)
- Kristeva, Julia. *The Severed Head: Capital Visions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012)
- Kuhn, Alvin. Boyd. *A Rebirth for Christianity* (Wheaton: Quest, 1970; repr.2005)
- Kventsel, Anna. *Decadence in the Late Novels of Henry James* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007)
- Lawson, Dominic. ‘Goldman was doing its job, you muppet’, *The Times*, 18 March 2012, p. 22
- ‘Letters from Rome –No. VI’, in *The Christian Guardian (and Church of England Magazine)*, (London: Seeley and Sons, 1833)

- Lewis, Linda, M. *Dickens, His Parables, and His Reader* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2011)
- Lorimer, Lundberg, Patricia. “*An Inward Necessity*”: *The Writer’s Life of Lucas Malet* (New York: Peter Lang, 2003)
- Macpherson, C.B. *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962; repr. 1972)
- Maeterlinck, Maurice. *The Intelligence of the Flowers*, trans. by Alexander Teixeira de Mattos (New York: Dodd Mead, 1907)
- Maeterlinck, Maurice. *The Life of the Bee*, trans. by Alfred Sutro (New York: Dover, 2006)
- Mandeville, Bernard. *The Fable of the Bees*, ed. by Phillip Harth (London: Penguin, 1970)
- Mandeville, William Godwin, *A Tale of the Seventeenth Century in England*, 3 Vols (London: Archibold Constable, 1817), I
- Marchi, Dudley M. *Montaigne Among the Moderns: Receptions of the Essais* (New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1994)
- Marx, Karl. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, trans. from the third German edition by Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling, ed. by Frederick Engels, 3 vols. (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1954; repr. 1977), I
- Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels. *The Communist Manifesto*, trans. by Samuel Moore (London: Penguin, 1985)
- Marx, Karl. *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, trans. by Martin Milligan (Moscow / London : Foreign Languages Publishing House / Lawrence & Wishart, 1959)
- Marx, Karl. ‘The Future Results of the British Rule in India’ in *Marx and Engels: Articles on Britain* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1971; repr. 1975)
- Marx, Karl. ‘Letter from Marx to Frederick Engels, 19 December 1860’ in *Karl Marx, Frederick Engels: Collected Works*, 50 vols. (New York: International, 1975-c2004), XLI [1985], pp.231-3
- Massart, Jean and Émile Vandervelde, *Parasitism, Organic and Social*, trans. by William MacDonald, rev. By J. Athur Thomson (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1907)
- Mauss, Marcel. *The Gift: Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans. by W.D.Halls (Oxford: Routledge, 2002; repr.2010)
- Maxwell, Catherine and Patricia Pulham, ‘Introduction’, in Vernon Lee, *Hauntings and Other Fantastic Tales*, ed. by Catherine Maxwell and Patricia Pulham (Toronto: Broadview, 2006), pp. 9-27
- McClintock, Anne. *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (London: Routledge, 1995)
- McCormack, Penny. ‘The Semiotics of Economic Language in James’s Fiction’, *American Literature*, 58 (1986), 540-556.
- McGrath, Alister. E. *Christian Theology: An Introduction* (Malden: Blackwell, 1994; repr.1997)

- ‘Men and Monkeys’, *Punch*, 26 December 1861, p. 257
- Mendoza, Victor, Roman. “Come Buy”: The Crossing of Sexual and Consumer Desire in Christina Rossetti’s “Goblin Market” *ELH* 73 (2006) 913-947
- Miles, Peter. ‘Introduction’, in Robert Tressell, *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, ed. by Peter Miles (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005; repr. 2008), pp. ix-xxxvii
- Miles, Peter. ‘Notes’, in Robert Tressell, *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, ed. by Peter Miles (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005; repr. 2008), pp. 615-49
- Mill, John Stuart. *Essays on Some Unsettled Questions of Political Economy*, 2nd edn (London: Longman, Green, Reader and Dyer, 1874)
- Miltone, Julian. ‘Rousseau and Zola’, *Justice: The Organ of Social Democracy*, 19 March 1898, p. 6
- Mizruchi, Susan. *The Science of Sacrifice: American Literature and Modern Social Theory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998)
- ‘The Modern Shylock and his 40 per cent’, *The Commonweal*, 12 September 1891, p.378
- ‘The Money Market’, *The Belfast News-Letter*, 22 June 1891, p. 5
- Monsman, Gerald. *H. Rider Haggard on the Imperial Frontier: The Political and Literary Contexts of his African Romances* (Greensborough: ELT Press, 2006), pp. 268-284
- Monsman, Gerald. ‘Introduction’, in Bertram Mitford, *Renshaw Fanning’s Quest: A Tale of the High Veldt*, ed. by Gerald Monsman (Chicago: Valancourt, 2007), pp.vii-xiv
- Monsman, Gerald. ‘Introduction’, in Bertram Mitford, *The Sign of the Spider*, ed. by Gerald Monsman (Kansas: Valancourt, 2008), pp. vii-xxi
- Morals of Trade’, *Westminster Review*, 71 (1859), 377-390
- Moretti, Franco. *Signs Taken for Wonders: Essays in the Sociology of Literary Forms* (London: Verso, 1983)
- Mull, Donald L. Henry James’s “Sublime Economy”: *Money as a Symbolic Centre in the Fiction* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1973)
- Murphy, Geraldine. ‘Publishing Scoundrels: Henry James, Vernon Lee, and Lady Tal’, *The Henry James Review*, 31 (2010), 280-287
- Mutch, Deborah. *English Socialist Periodicals, 1880-1900: A Reference Source* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005)
- Nelson, Brian. *Zola and the Bourgeois: A Study of Themes and Techniques in Les Rougon-Macquart* (London: MacMillan, 1983)
- Nichols, James H. Jr, ‘Translator’s Note’, in Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. Allan Bloom, trans. by James H. Nichols, Jr. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), pp. xiii-xiv
- O’Malley, Patrick. *Catholicism, Sexual Deviance, and Victorian Gothic Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006)
- ‘On Fatmanism’, *The Clarion*, 16 January 1897

- ‘Our Cartoon’. The Vampire, *Justice: The Organ of Social Democracy*, 22 August 1885, p.1
- Paulson, Ronald *Representations of Revolution (1789-1820)*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983)
- Pearlman, E. ‘Robinson Crusoe and the Cannibals’, *Mosaic*, 10 (1976), 39-55
- Perkins Gilman, Charlotte. *Women and Economics: A Study of the Relation between Women and Men* (New York: Prometheus, 1994)
- Peterson, William. S. *The Kelmscott Press: A History of William Morris’s Typographical Adventure* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 166-168
- Phillips, Jerry. ‘Cannibalism qua Capitalism: The Metaphorics of Accumulation in Marx, Conrad, Shakespeare, and Marlowe’, in *Cannibalism and the Colonial World*, ed. by Frances Baker, Peter Hulme and Margaret Iversen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998)
- Pilbeam, Pamela. *Madame Tussaud and the History of Waxworks* (London: Hambledon and London, 2003)
- ‘The Prime Minister at Leeds’, *The Times*, 10 October 1881, p.7
- ‘The Progress of the World’, *The Review of Reviews*, 8 (1893), 117-126
- Pulham, Patricia. *Art and the Transitional Object in Vernon Lee’s Supernatural Tales* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008)
- ‘A Transatlantic Alliance: Charlotte Perkins Gilman and Vernon Lee’, in *Feminist Forerunners: New Womanism and Feminism in the Early Twentieth Century*, ed. by Ann Heilmann (London: Pandora, 2003), pp.34-43
- ‘Rather Too Candid’, *Justice: The Organ of Social Democracy*, 17 January 1885, p.1
- Rivkin, Julie. *False Positions: The Representational Logics of Henry James’s Fiction* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996)
- Roberts, Mary. Louise. *Disruptive Acts: The New Woman in Fin-de-Siècle France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002)
- Sagan, Eli. *Citizens and Cannibals: The French Revolution, the Struggle for Modernity, and the Origins of Ideological Terror* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001)
- Sammut, Claude and Webb, Geoffrey, I. (eds), *Encyclopaedia of Machine Learning* (New York: Springer, 2011)
- Schaffer, Talia. ‘Malet the Obscure: The Politics of Literary Modernism’, *Women’s Writing*, 3.3 (1996), 261-86.
- Schaffer, Talia. ‘Some Other Chapter of Some Other Story: Henry James, Lucas Malet, and the Real Past of The Sense of the Past’, *The Henry James Review*, 17.2 (1996) 109-128
- Schmitt, Carl. *The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes: Meaning and Failure of a Political Symbol*, trans. by George Schwab and Erna Hilfstein (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008)

- Sharma, Jayeeta. *Empire's Garden: Assam and the Making of India* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011)
- Schmidt, Oscar. 'Science and Socialism', *Popular Science Monthly*, 36, 14 (1879), pp. 577-91
- Schreiner, Olive. *Women and Labour* (London: Virago, 1978)
- 'The Situation in South Africa', *The Economist*, 25 April 1896, p. 514.
- Smith, Adam. 'The Theory of Modern Sentiments', in *The Essential Adam Smith*, ed. by Robert L. Heilbroner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp.57-147
- Smith, Iain. R. *The Origins of the South African War, 1899-1902* (London: Longman, 1996)
- 'Special Announcement!: Our Cartoon "The Vampire"', *Justice: The Organ of Social Democracy*, 22 August 1885, p.1
- Spencer, Herbert. 'The Morals of Trade', *Westminster Review*, 71 (1859), 377-390
- Spencer, Herbert. 'The Social Organism', in *Essays: Scientific, Political and Speculative*, V.I (London: Williams & Norgate, 1883) pp. 388-432
- Spencer, Isobel. *Walter Crane* (London: Studio Vista, 1975)
- Spivak, Gayatri. Chakravorty. 'Translator's Preface', in Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), pp. ix-lxxxvii
- Starkweather, A.J. and Wilson, S. Robert. *Socialism: Being a Brief Statement of the Doctrines and Philosophy of the Social Labour Movement* (New York: John W. Lowell, 1884)
- 'The Starvation Wage', *Justice: The Organ of Social Democracy*, 14 February 1885, p. 2
- Sterrenburg, Lee. 'Mary Shelley's Monster: Politics and Psyche in *Frankenstein*', in George Levine and U.C. Knoepfelmacher (eds), *The Endurance of Frankenstein* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), pp.143-171
- Stoker, Bram. *Dracula*, ed. by Maurice Hindle (London: Penguin, 2003)
- Stuart, Robert. *Marxism and National Identity: Socialism, Nationalism and National Socialism during the French Fin de Siècle* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2006)
- 'Survival of the Fittest', *The Clarion*, 27 November 1897, p.384
- 'The Survival of the Fittest', *Justice: The Organ of Social Democracy*, 19 December 1885, p.2
- Swift, Jonathan. 'A Modest Proposal', in *The Essential Writings of Jonathan Swift*, ed. by Claude Rawson and Ian Higgins (New York: Norton, 2010), pp. 295-302
- Swinburne, Algernon. Charles. 'The Eve of Revolution', in *Selected Poems*, ed. by L.M Findlay (Carcanet: Manchester, 1982; repr. 1987), pp. 95-107
- Tawny, R. H. 'Foreword', in Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Trans by Talcott Parsons (London: Unwin, 1930; repr. 1971), pp. 1-11
- Teahan, Shiela. 'The Face of Decadence in *The Sacred Fount*', in *Henry James Against the Aesthetic Movement: Essays on the Middle and Late Fiction*, ed. by David Garrett Izo and Daniel T. O'Hara (Jefferson: McFarland, 2006), pp.109-122

- Thain, Marion. 'Apian Aestheticism: Michael Field and the Economics of the Aesthetic', in Margaret D. Stetz and Cheryl A. Wilson (eds.), *Michael Field and Their World* (High Wycombe: Rivendale Press, 2007), pp. 222-235
- 'Their Other Selves', *Justice: The Organ of Social Democracy*, 23 April 1898, p.2
- 'The Thieves Supper', *Justice: The Organ of Social Democracy*, 12 December 1885, p.4
- Thompson, William. *A Prospectus of Socialism, or, a Glimpse of the Millennium* (London: W. Reeves, 1894)
- Tintner, Adeline. R. *Henry James's Legacy: The Afterlife of his Figure and Fiction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998)
- Towheed, Shafquat "'Determining Fluctuating Opinions': Vernon Lee, Popular Fiction, and Theories of Reading", *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, 60 (2005), 199-236
- 'The Trade-Rivalry of Nations', *Tinsley's Magazine*, August 1869 – January 1870, p. 384
- Turley Houston, Gail. *From Dickens to Dracula: Gothic, Economics, and Victorian Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005)
- Van der Linden, Harry. *Kantian Ethics and Socialism* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1988)
- Veblen, Thorstein. *The Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions* (London: Unwin, 1970)
- Virgil, *Georgics*, IV. 74, trans. by Peter Fallon, ed. by Elaine Fantham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006)
- Voltaire. *Works: A Contemporary Version*, trans. by William F. Fleming (New York: St Hubert Guild, 1901)
- Vulliamy, Edward. Colwyn. 'Charles Kingsley and Christian Socialism', in *Fabian Tracts 140-175, 1908-1914* (London: Fabian Society, 1923) Tract 174, pp.2-17
- 'The War', *The Times*, 18 October 1899, p.5
- Watts, Cedric. Thomas. 'Notes' in, Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness: and Other Tales*, ed. by Cedric Thomas Watts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002)
- Warren, Jonathan. 'Ricordo, Gift, Golden Bowl'. *The Henry James Review*, 25 (2004), 267-275
- Wegelin, Chistof. 'The "Internationalism" of "The Golden Bowl"', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 11 (1956), 161-181
- Wessels, André. *Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902: White Man's War, Black Man's War, Traumatic War* (Westdene: Sun Press, 2011)
- Weston, Jessie. *From Ritual to Romance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920)
- Wilde, Oscar. *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, ed. by Robert Mighall (London: Penguin, 2000; repr. 2003)
- Wilson, Elizabeth. *Bohemians: The Glamorous Outcasts* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2003)
- Wind, Edgar. *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance* (London: Faber and Faber, 1958)

- Wintour, Patrick. 'Ed Miliband Says Tax Changes Will Benefit 'Predator' Capitalism', *Guardian*, 31 October 2011 <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2011/oct/31/ed-miliband-tax-changes-predator-capitalism>>, [Accessed 21/11/11]
- Zorn, Christa. *Vernon Lee: Aesthetics, History, and the Victorian Female Intellectual* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003)
- Zwierlein, Anne-Julia. 'From Parasitology to Parapsychology: Parasites in Nineteenth-Century Science and Literature', in *Unmapped Countries: Biological Visions in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture*, ed. by Anna-Julia Zwierlein (London: Anthem Press, 2005), pp. 155-172