‘Her Accomplishments Were Wide’: Henry James on George Eliot

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Foreword by Hoda Gindi**

George Eliot (1819-1880) and Henry James (1843-1916) were – literally – worlds apart: she a well-established Victorian writer and he an aspiring American writer at the beginning of his creative life. Furthermore, James’ interest was in the form of the novel and dubbed many nineteenth century English novels as ‘loose baggy monsters’. However, though he did criticise the ‘form’ of Eliot’s major novels, indeed he wrote of Middlemarch *as “not gratifying the reader with a sense of design”, yet from his earliest critical writings to the last volume of his autobiography, he never ceases to admire the ‘great’ George Eliot. He bestowed on her his greatest accolade – “a painter of life’, and marveled that ‘this quiet … English lady … should have produced such rich, deep, masterly pictures of the multifold life of man”.*

What I think particularly drew me to write an article on James’ appraisal of George Eliot was that critics did not give his due as a critic who could put aside his own views on the “Art of Fiction” and recognise Eliot’s great achievements. Indeed, he ranked her amongst the great in the company of Shakespeare and Balzac.

Amongst her achievements, James singled out and remained in awe of Eliot’s unconventional morality and her ability to make “small … female fry, insist on mattering”, and he quotes Eliot: “In these frail vessels is borne onward through the ages the treasure of human affection”. James in turn was to make the “frail vessels” his “fine central intelligences”. This last accomplishment of Eliot’s, recognised by James is particularly what resonates with modern readers.

If I were to write this article now, I think I would have made more of Eliot’s “greatest achievements” – her ‘frail vessels’ – using feminist critical theory. I would also like to trace James’s criticism of Eliot from his earliest writings to his last work, his autobiography. I would particularly like to see whether his views change, as the genre in which he is writing about her differs – since he wrote about Eliot not just in his critical articles and reviews of her books, but also in his letters and in his autobiography.

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"Her Accomplishments Were Wide": Henry James on George Eliot

Hoda Gindi (1981)

Henry James's life-long interest in George Eliot and her work is indisputable, judging from the fact that in every variety of writing he practiced, mention of her name or even echoes of her work are to be found. Thus, in his letters, in his reviews, in his longer critical essays, in his autobiography, even in his own personal notes and in his creative work itself, tribute – conscious or unconscious[1] – is continually being paid to George Eliot. This is not to say that James expressed simple uncritical praise for all her work; on the contrary, James was often unsparing in his denunciations of what he saw as her faults, so much so, that he himself has been criticised for his criticism by critics who have largely ignored his unstinting admiration for, and recognition of, her felicities.

James's first visit to Europe as an adult, a longed-for hope that was finally fulfilled, is made memorable, above all, for his having met George Eliot. Writing in extreme excitement at 'having finally seen Mrs. Lewes' he cites it as 'the one marvel' of his visit to London[2]. His exuberance for the 'great George Eliot'[3] is expressed in almost exaggerated terms, for he speaks of her having 'a most powerful beauty, which, in a very few minutes steals forth and charms the mind, so that you end as I ended, in falling in love with her'[4]. And lest one think that this eloquence is but that of a young man who, burning with the desire to become a great novelist, finally meets his youthful idol, one must turn to the posthumously published (and unfinished) volume of autobiography, *The Middle Years*, written forty-five years later. His sense of awe at having been admitted to the presence of 'so great a celebrity'[5] so many years earlier survives intact, and is conveyed to us by the, now, recognised Master. He writes of finding in her 'a great treasure of beauty and humanity, of applied and achieved art'[6]. Moreover, the fact that her name was to resound through his life, symbolising such beauty and art, without his ever revising this opinion is testified to in his following sentence, very simply stated: he foresaw 'that here was one of those associations that would determine in the far future an exquisite inability to revise it'[7]. Even the wound to his authorial pride inflicted on him on another visit (in 1878) to the Lewes's many years later[8], could not detract from the sense of being 'touched with privilege'[9] at having been permitted to see George Eliot.

James's correspondence is dotted with references to George Eliot's work[10]. As the last major novels appeared James commented on them in his letters to his family, to his friends, and to his American literary colleagues. In 1873, he wrote of *Middlemarch* to Grace Norton and to Charles Eliot Norton and to William, his brother. To Charles Eliot Norton he writes of having sent

him his criticism of the book, adding that if 'you positively don't like *M*. you will probably say such criticism as that ought to be silenced'[(11)]. To Grace Norton, he waxes enthusiastic over the 'truly immense performance', and quotes his brother William as being 'aghast at its intellectual power', commenting 'this is strong – and what one says of Shakespeare'. More significantly still, he makes Miss Norton free of his own ambitions 'to produce some little exemplary works of art which are to have less "brain" than *Middlemarch*; but (1 boldly proclaim it) they are to have more *form*' (sic)[(12)].

James spent the year of 1876 in Paris, steeped in French literature and revelling in the acquaintanceship, even friendship of the French and Russian literary lions. Yet, in the midst of all this cultural and intellectual stimulus so far removed from the England of George Eliot, James found both time and space to devote to brief but illuminating comments on *Daniel Deronda* on February 22nd (1876). Barely three months after having settled down in Paris, he writes to his sister Alice of a visit to Flaubert's, showing his discontent with both the writers he met there and their works, to the extent that he proclaims that he enjoyed *Daniel Deronda* 'more than any of hers – or any other novelist's almost – I have ever read'. He talks of her defects, but 'in this beastly Paris', 'the English richness of George Eliot beggars everything else, everywhere, that one might compare with her'[(13)]. In his five other references to the novel during the same year, he makes more of these defects, going so far as to say that the title character is 'a dead though amiable failure'. However, in the next breath, he says 'but the book is a large affair'[(14)]. And he expresses his wish to write an article on it. In the event he wrote two, one in February 1876 and the second in December of the same year. The former was to elicit a comment from William Dean Howells, for, in answer to him, James wrote, thanking him for his 'good opinion' of it, because he had been afraid that 'you would think its form beneath the majesty of the subject'[(15)].

In his later letters, James used George Eliot as a touchstone by which he measured other writers' achievements. Thus, in writing to two very different novelists, H.G. Wells and Edith Wharton, of their work, he invokes the magic name of the great nineteenth-century novelist. In his own inimitable manner of seeming to praise when in actual fact he is doing nothing of the kind, he tells Wells that his *Kipps* is 'without the picturesque, the grotesque, the fantastic and romantic interference of which ... even George Eliot is so deviatingly full'[(16)]. Even more ambiguously, does he write of Edith Wharton's work having had, fine, benevolent finger-marks of the good George Eliot – the echo of much reading of that excellent woman...[(17)].

James's early writing career was, in the main, devoted to the reviewing of books for a variety of American periodicals. His reviews and critical articles on George Eliot appeared in some of the most prestigious of those, such as *The Nation*, the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *North American Review*, and the *Galaxy*,

the same periodicals to which he sent his imaginative works. James wrote his first review of a George Eliot novel in 1866; this was a review of *Felix Holt*, published the same year. This was followed by a longer article (in the same year) entitled 'The Novels of George Eliot' which dealt with what James called the four English novels – *Scenes of Clerical Life* (1857), *Adam Bade* (1859), *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), *Silas Marner* (1861), and *Romola* (1862–1863). Thus, by the end of 1866, he was up-to-date, so to speak, with George Eliot's works. The remainder of his critical writings on her followed the pattern of the first review: the review or article was written almost immediately after the publication of the work. This argues both James's recognition of the importance of, and his enthusiasm for, the quality of George Eliot's works. Indeed, his enthusiasm so overcame him on one occasion that he wrote a review of one of these after the appearance of one instalment only! On February 24th 1876 (at about the same time as he was writing to his sister about the novel[18]) an appraisal of *Daniel Deronda* appeared in *The Nation*, written more in the nature of a heartfelt welcome for 'so fine and rare a pleasure'[19] afforded by the publication of the first instalment, than as a piece of reasoned criticism. Thus he disarms any possible critics of the review, by disclaiming that he is doing anything more than demonstrating his 'pleasure in the prospect of the intellectual luxury of taking up month after month, the little clear-paged volumes…'[20]. He adds that it is only George Eliot's work which reconciles him to such a method of publication 'to which in general we strongly object'[21]. One can feel his genuine love for Eliot's work pulsating through the short review, impelling him to write about it, 'putting criticism aside'[22].

Another instance of his being an enthusiastic admirer is the fact that the very first critical article which he allowed to appear under his name was 'The Novels of George Eliot' 1866. All his previous critical writings on French, English, and American writers were published anonymously. Finally, one must remember that James reviewed not only the major novels but also the minor tales and the poetry. Thus it is obvious that he felt that everything written by George Eliot, however slight, was of paramount importance and of great value. He states as much in his first review of 'The Spanish Gypsy' in 1868:

> The appearance of a new work by George Eliot is properly a cause of no small satisfaction to the lovers of good literature. She writes little compared with most of her distinguished comrades, and, still compared with them, she writes admirably well [23].

And he hails the republication of 'The Lifted Veil' and 'Brother Jacob' as a 'novelty' 'in the absence of anything new from George Eliot's hand'[24].

George Eliot in fact is 'the subject of his first extended essay, and of one of his most mellow and inspired of the later studies'[25].

James's first review of George Eliot was written when he was twenty-three and still in the throes of becoming a creative writer while living in a country which he considered as separated from the hub of literary life; his last article – in 1855 – on Cross's *George Eliot's Life* was written by a mature London habitue who had himself become one of the literary circle at which he had gazed with awe from so far away and so long ago. Thus, for a span of about twenty years, during the most important years of his creative life, James was occupied, intermittently, admittedly, with George Eliot and her works. During those twenty odd years, he wrote ten reviews or articles on her, which surpass in number, though not in length, his critical writings on any other writer, French, English, or American[26]. Furthermore, he was to allude to her on many occasions when discussing or criticising other writers, both in his letters (as has already been demonstrated), and in his critical articles on other writers and in the essays on the art of fiction in general.

James had only two of his articles on George Eliot reprinted during his lifetime – in *Partial Portraits* 1888. These are '*Daniel Deronda*: A Conversation' 1876 and 'The Life of George Eliot', which first appeared as 'George Eliot's Life' in 1885. James, therefore, felt that his last article on George Eliot and the conversation on *Daniel Deronda* (now generally acknowledged to be among the best of his criticism) were the only two worth being included in a volume that was to have, as its concluding essay, the seminal 'The Art of Fiction'. The *Daniel Deronda* 'Conversation', significantly, is the only article in *Partial Portraits* that dates from the 1870s; all the others were written between 1883 and 1888. Furthermore, it is the sole essay devoted to a particular novel rather than to an individual author, as a glance at the titles of the other essays will demonstrate[27]. It is quite comprehensible why James believed that only these two essays were worth preserving for posterity in book form, since much of his other writing on George Eliot was in the form of instant reviews or sketches written 'out of the confused and disordered situation which is the literary period as it happens'[28], rather than well considered weighty pronouncements written years later. A look at the dates of even his earliest articles on French writers will show that this was far unlike his writing on such French giants as Flaubert, Balzac, and Zola.

In the most comprehensive analysis, to date, of James's criticism of George Eliot, W.J. Harvey discusses only five of James's ten reviews and shows James as exposing more of his own peculiar interests in the process of criticising George Eliot than in truly interpreting and understanding her achievements. It cannot, of course, be denied that many of James's views about the art of the novel are revealed in his writings on George Eliot.

However, they are not as dogmatic as Harvey seems to think they are, nor do they preclude James from a true appreciation of George Eliot, though Harvey contends that 'James was in many ways baffled by the kind of achievement represented in George Eliot's novels'[29]. Moreover, it is not surprising that James should be occupied with the problems of the art of fiction, since during the time he was reading and writing about George Eliot, he was also thinking and writing about the novel and practicing his theories. What is astonishing is that his views remain remarkably consistent from his first reviews of 1866, before he had formulated any theory of the novel and the last article of 1885 written after 'his seminal'[30] and definitive essay 'The Art of Fiction' 1884. Thus in 'The Art of Fiction', James wrote 'the only reason for the existence of a novel is that it does attempt to represent life'[31] and in his earliest review, in 1866[32], the brash young critic wrote 'it is as a broad picture of midland country life in England' that he found *Felix Holt* 'most interesting'[33]. Critics have tended to point the finger of scorn at this review of *Felix Holt*, quoting it as an instance of James's inability to understand George Eliot and always selecting the unconsidered remark that Eliot was 'a secondary thinker and an incomplete artist'[34], in vindication of their view[35]. Unfortunately, such critics have not taken into consideration the rest of the review, which finds more to praise than to dislike. It is also obvious from this review that from the very beginning of his critical and creative life, James was to see that the representation of life was the raison d'etre of the novel.

He remained faithful to this belief all his life, as can be seen from even a random reading of his critical articles, be it on individual authors or on the art of fiction in general. Perhaps the most formulated and yet most succinct expression of it is to be found in the letter he wrote in response to an invitation to the Deerfield Summer School in 1889, to discuss the art of the novel:

> What I should say... is: '... do something with life. Any point of view is interesting that is a direct impression of life…' There are no tendencies worth anything but to see the actual or the imaginative … and to paint it[36].

Sixteen years later, when lecturing on Balzac, he speaks of 'the palpable proveable world'[37] invoked by that French writer, who, like all novelists worthy of that name, was a 'painter of life'[38] and among the 'successors' of Balzac, he lists George Eliot, in the illustrious company of Zola and Tolstoy[39].

James found the 'painter of life' in all of George Eliot's works, prose and poetry, early and late. In 'The Novels of George Eliot' he sees her as 'unmistakably a painter of *bourgeois* (sic) life...'[40]. *Adam Bede* strikes him 'as a picture, or rather as a series of pictures'[41], and Dinah Morris, though of

a 'high key ... morally' retains 'the warm colors of life'[42]. And *Felix Holt*, though it still does not meet with the young critic's complete approval, has 'not a single figure, of however little importance, that has not been caught without a certain reflection of life'[43].

Middlemarch 'is a picture – vast, swarming, deep-colored, crowded with episodes, with vivid images...'[44]. Again, he stands wrapped in wonder, at 'the generous scale of the author's picture and of the conscious power of her imagination...'[45]. James is almost overwhelmed by 'the vastness and variety of human life'[46] 'the deeply human little world'[47] that George Eliot manages to encompass in the confines of that novel. All of *Middlemarch*, though discursive and not 'gratifying the reader with a sense of design and construction'[48] speaks 'of the superabundance of the author's creative instinct'[49], and is, therefore, 'a contribution of the first importance to the rich imaginative department of our literature'[50].

In the longest speech, critical of George Eliot, made by Constantius in '*Daniel Deronda*: A Conversation', he says that though she developed 'an exaggerated attention' to 'general considerations' yet 'her spontaneous part is to observe life and to feel it, to feel it with admirable depth'[51]. Furthermore, he asserts that 'George Eliot always gives us something that is strikingly and ironically characteristic of human life, ...'[52]. As for Gwendolen, she is 'the very stuff that human life is made of'[53]. Constantius is, of course, the voice of reason in the argument, and when he winds up the argument with his reiteration that 'the book is full of the world' and that there is 'a vast amount of life'[54] in *Daniel Deronda*, his opinion is meant to carry weight. Theodora, the ardent advocate, who will brook no criticism of George Eliot, is, however, not so besotted that she cannot argue cogently, and her main contention is that *Daniel Deronda* is indeed a picture of life:

> A book like *Daniel Deronda* becomes part of one's life; one lives in it or alongside it. I don't hesitate to say that I have been living in this one for the last eight months. It is such a complete world George Eliot builds up; it is so vast, so much-embracing! It has such a firm earth and such an ethereal sky[55].

Even Pulcheria, critical of all aspects of George Eliot's work, cannot refute with much conviction that she is a 'painter of life.'

Both the poetry and the tales evince signs of the 'reflection of life', even though James is more concerned with the quality of the poetry in the first instance and with the humor in 'Brother Jacob' in the tales. Exhibiting his own views, he expresses quite frankly his preference for the small group of verses entitled 'Brother and Sister'[56] because of the 'warm reality'[57] to be discovered in them. The characters of 'The Spanish Gypsy' are 'all elaborate

full-length portraits'[58] and James uses the language of portraiture throughout the two reviews he devoted to that poem[59]. The protagonist in 'Brother Jacob' is also a 'real portrait', an 'admirable picture of unromantic malfeasance'. So too is the 'fatal Jacob', who, James writes, is of the very warp and weft of idiots[60]. 'The Lifted Veil' is less successful because to James's mind, it seems to lack those touches of reality, of the real world, that he finds in even the romance of old Spain, 'The Spanish Gypsy'.

James's essay on Cross's *George Eliot's Life* naturally concentrates on the light shed by Cross on George Eliot, the individual rather than the novelist. Hence, he writes admiringly of her enormous capacity for work and study, her seriousness and her moral earnestness. All these qualities he finds reflected in her imaginative works, sometimes to their detriment, although he yields to no one in his conviction, and in spite of her detractors, that even her last novel contained, in the persons of Grandcourt and Gwendolen, 'a kind of superior reality'[61]. Taken all in all, therefore, 'though her nature came first and her work afterwards',

> What is remarkable, extraordinary … is that this quiet, anxious, sedentary, serious, invalidical English lady, without animal spirits, without adventures, without extravagance, assumption, or bravado, should have made us believe that nothing in the world was alien to her; should have produced such rich, deep, masterly pictures of the multifold life of man.[62]

And in *The Middle Years* he proclaims, unequivocally, his allegiance;

> I was to become, I was to remain – I take pleasure in repeating – even a very Derondist of Derondists, for my own wanton joy: which amounts to saying that I found the figured, coloured tapestry always vivid enough to brave no matter what complication of the stitch.[63]

Thus in his last public utterance on the art of George Eliot and in his last unfinished volume of autobiography his belief in George Eliot as 'a painter of life' is declared, not in defiant, but in triumphant notes.

In his most elaborated contributions to the art of fiction, his Prefaces to the New York Edition of his works, James writes of 'the five painters of life'[64], once again placing George Eliot firmly in those ranks in the company of, amongst others, Shakespeare and Balzac. He never, as has been demonstrated, simply dismissed any of George Eliot's works because they seemed not to conform to his own ideas of what a novel should be; in a word, he did not, in

the case of George Eliot, intrude his own notions on the importance of *form* in the novel. In all his writings on George Eliot, his sense of the life portrayed supersedes any criticism he may have of the form of the novel. It is not, as Harvey sees it, 'the issue of "form" versus "life"'[65]; for contrary to Harvey's estimate 'of the limitations of James's view'[66] is James's often repeated belief that one should have '*a priori* (sic) no rule for a literary production but that it shall have genuine life'[67], or, as F.R. Leavis put it in his 'James as Critic', James expressed 'his charged sense that the creativity of art is the creativity of life'[68]. Had James really been so obsessed with his own views, he would never have attested to the fact that George Eliot was always 'vivid' however complicated her novels may have been. In other words, he would have categorically condemned her novels as 'large loose baggy monsters'[69] as being 'vast formless featherbediness(es)'[70] or 'fluid pudding(s)'[71], thus branding himself as an insensitive, intolerant, and less than serious critic. However, above all else, he found 'life' and a 'sense of the universal'[72] in George Eliot's works, and, as he amply demonstrated, no praise was too high for such an achievement.

In his analysis of James's George Eliot writings, taking five of James's reviews for discussion, Harvey maintains that James exhibits his own peculiar creative interests almost to the exclusion of all else; that what he had perhaps only adumbrated in these reviews was revealed in the fulness of time in his Prefaces. That James was not quite as dogmatic as that in his role as critic has already been demonstrated in the issue of 'the antithesis between "form" and "life"'[73]. Harvey's further contention is that James, in his criticism of George Eliot, is James, the 'frustrated artist'[74], rewriting the novels according to his own conceptions. Hence, Harvey sees his praise of Maggie Tulliver, of Gwendolen Harleth, of Dorothea Brooke, as James 'groping towards the conception of … a fine central intelligence which was to play such a major role in the shaping of his own novels'[75]. James is indeed indicating one of his preoccupations in his preference for these characters, not so much because they could be fine central intelligences, but, significantly, because the *central* figures are women not men, heroines not heroes. That he was fascinated by George Eliot's ability to make 'small … female fry, insist on mattering'[76] is obvious from his Preface to *The Portrait of a Lady*. He quotes George Eliot's realisation of it in these terms:

> George Eliot has admirably noted it – 'In these frail vessels is borne onward through the ages the treasure of human affection'[77].

To James, not only had. George Eliot 'admirably noted it', she splendidly executed 'it', in the company of such a consummate artist as Shakespeare.

Lesser writers, even 'many an expert painter'[78] such as Dickens, Walter Scott, R.L. Stevenson, recognising the difficulty of creating such women 'preferred to leave the task unattempted'[79]. Still others, knowing their art to be unequal to the task, 'assume it to be not worth their attempting'[80].

'The frail vessels' portrayed by George Eliot are discussed by James in all his studies of her work, thus exhibiting his profound belief, long before he had evolved a coherent expression of his critical views, that Eliot's heroines were as important, if not more so, as their male counterparts. The first review of *Felix Holt* mentions Hetty Sorrel, en passant, as being 'the best drawn of her young women', adding, almost disconsolately, that Esther Lyon 'has great merits of intention, but the action subsides without having given her a "chance"'[81]. The discussion on *Adam Bede* seems to center on the women: Hetty Sorrel is 'the central figure of the book'[82] and 'the person immediately evoked by the title of the work;'[83] furthermore, 'the part of the story which concerns her is much the most forcible'[84]. James accepts the characterisation of Hetty without reservations, extolling especially the fact that 'she is vain and superficial by nature: and she remains so to the end'[85]. Hetty, is seen by James to be a 'frail vessel' in all senses of the word, and yet carrying the burden of the action. After Hetty, James finds Dinah Morris as being the most important character in the novel[86]. She is not such a marvellous character as Hetty is, nevertheless James 'thankfully accept(s) her portrait'[87]. To Maggie Tulliver, James devotes a great deal of space in the same essay, 'The Novels of George Eliot'. She is, after Hetty, 'the most successful of the author's young women'[88] to date, and he 'respect(s) Maggie profoundly'[89].

James's admiration for the 'genuine creation' which is Dorothea knows no bounds; she is 'the great achievement of'[90] *Middlemarch*. Yet again he seems spellbound by the fact that George Eliot chose 'an ardent young girl' to be 'the central figure' and here he seems to be approaching the 'frail vessel' concept when he speaks of the creation of Dorothea as being 'a most remarkable one when we consider the delicate material in which she is wrought'[91]. But, giving credit where it is due, he mentions that this is not a departure from George Eliot's usual practice, for

> her heroines have always been of an exquisite quality, and Dorothea is only that perfect flower of conception of which her predecessors were the less unfolded blossoms[92].

In his note on the first instalment of *Daniel Deronda*, James unashamedly confesses that he 'shall be hanging upon this young lady's (Gwendolen) entangled destiny with the utmost tension of our highest faculties'[93]. In his second study of *Daniel Deronda*, Theodora and Pulcheria, with Constantius commenting judiciously at various intervals, argue about Gwendolen

incessantly, thus exhibiting James's sense of her importance in the novel[94]. In short, 'Gwendolen is a masterpiece'[95] even 'more than masterly'[96], and again James is amazed at 'the weight of interest she has to carry'[97].

James further demonstrates that even in her poetry, George Eliot presents 'frail vessels' through whom 'the treasure of human affection' is transmitted. Fedelma in 'The Spanish Gypsy' is a 'very lovely and perfect creation', there is 'no purer and more radiant figure'[98]. In the October 1868 article on the same poem, James puts Fedelma in the company of the other Eliot heroines 'Dinah Morris, Maggie Tulliver, Romola, and Esther Lyon', because of her 'decidedly over-active conscience'[99]. In his discussion of 'Armgart', James makes even more apparent his belief that George Eliot's main contribution to the novel is her presentation of women as heroines. Though Armgart is merely outlined, 'she is a very superior girl' and

> may be added to that group of magnificently generous women, the Dinahs, the Maggies, the Romolas, the Dorotheas, – the representation of whom is our author's chief title to our gratitude.[100]

No other contemporary critic[101] seems to have recognised or even realised the significance of George Eliot's use of female characters as protagonists. James, alone, perhaps because of his own interest in the 'frail vessels', which, however, in his early years as an artist had not yet played a considerable part, remarked, consistently, on George Eliot's heroines. In every single study, as has been demonstrated, his perception of the importance of the role of women in the novels is expressed. Moreover, he never once attributes the phenomenon to the fact that Eliot is a woman novelist[102].

'A decidedly over-active conscience' as a characteristic of her heroines was what caused James to rank the heroine of 'The Spanish Gypsy' amongst her other heroines[103]. At the end of the 1866 article 'The Novels of George Eliot', he wrote, 'what moves her most is the idea of conscience harassed by the memory of slighted obligations'[104]. Thus very early in his critical career, James identifies George Eliot's concern with a morality that was far removed from any ordinary nineteenth century view of morality. In furtherance of this, James shows that Maggie's decision to give up Stephen does not stem from a narrow conventional morality but from her 'honesty and generosity'[105]. And it is these qualities that make for the elevation of 'the moral tone'[106] in *The Mill on the Floss*, not the return of Maggie, without Stephen, to town. Similarly, Daniel Deronda's 'moral temperament' has nothing in common with what was usually defined as morality; it is 'his elevated way of looking at things, his impartiality, his universal sympathy, and at the same time his

fear of them turning into mere irresponsible indifference'[107], that show him to be 'a moralist with a rich complexion'[108].

Faithful to his belief that George Eliot's morality was at variance with the conventional kind currently prevalent, James never criticised or cavilled at the presentation of so-called immoral characters or scenes. This is borne out by his attitude to 'Janet's Repentance'. James conceded that the theme was 'almost *scabreux*' (sic)[109] but he viewed it almost solely from an artistic point of view, understanding and declaring Eliot's choice of a drunken woman as heroine to be perilous, not on the grounds of morality, but because of the difficulty of doing justice to such a heroine and subject. Moreover, instead of indulging in futile remonstrance against such an immoral heroine[110], he observes that 'the story deals less with her lapse into disgrace than with her redemption'[111]. Similarly, not once does he allude to the description of Hetty Sorrel's seduction as immoral. For the creation of the character of Hetty Sorrel itself, he has nothing but praise, and true to his calling as critic and creator, he congratulates George Eliot for not falling victim to the conventional morality of redemption through suffering, of conversion after sin.

> Hetty's conduct throughout seems to me to be thoroughly consistent. The author has escaped the easy error of representing her as in any degree made serious by suffering[112].

In 'Janet's Repentance' James perceives that the heart of the matter is Janet's redemption and therefore it is right and fitting for the tale to concentrate on that aspect; in *Adam Bede*, on the other hand, it is the contrast between the 'prosaic life of the good people around her … and the dusky sylvan path along which poor Hetty is tripping, light-footed to her ruin' that is the most forcible' and 'infinitely tragic' part of the story[113]. It is therefore, inconceivable, artistically, that Hetty Sorrel 'vain and superficial by nature' should not 'remain so to the end'[114] regardless of any conventional moral considerations. Other contemporary critics, unlike James, however, almost berated George Eliot for the creation of a character and the description of a seduction and its consequences that, to them, were morally objectionable and artistically indefensible[115].

James's first and final appreciation of George Eliot's moral quality is not only that it is elevated but also indefinable. In the study of *Middlemarch*, James writes of 'an indefinable moral elevation'[116] as being the most marked quality of Dorothea and other 'admirable creatures; and of the representation of this quality … the author seems to have in English fiction a monopoly'[117]. In his earliest criticism of George Eliot, that much execrated short study of *Felix Holt*, the young critic made virtually the same extraordinary claim for

the 'morality' to be found in the pages of that novel. He cannot, he writes, 'qualify it':

> It is apparently the fruit of a great deal of culture, experience, and resignation. It carries with it that charm and that authority which will always attend the assertions of a mind enriched by researches, where it declares that wisdom and affection are better than science[118].

And every reader who 'has felt its influence for himself'[119] must make of it what he can. In his last essay on George Eliot, James makes one last effort to elucidate his concept of the kind of morality exuded by the great writer. Once again he cannot quite grasp it, but he sums it up as:

> a kind of fragrance of moral elevation; a love of justice, truth, and light; a large, generous way of looking at things; and a constant effort to hold high the torch in the dusky spaces of man's conscience [120].

James, therefore, without the benefit of hindsight, perceived that George Eliot had a 'distinctive moral preoccupation'[121] that was evident in all her writings. Nowadays, this, of course, is a truism, but in the nineteenth century, much critical debate centered on what were assumed to be both immoral and irreligious ideas supposedly promulgated in her work[122]. James, almost alone among her critics, never presumed to discuss her philosophy independently of her art, and never made the mistake of thinking that her later humanist and scientific ideas automatically branded George Eliot as a destroyer of traditional morality and religion. On the contrary, James, very perceptively, pointed out that, whether moved by Christianity or science, it was 'still the religious idea that colored her thoughts'[123], and 'serious … George Eliot continued to be to the end'[124]. To James, she was always a moralist – not quite of the common order, for the 'elegant'[125] moralist was 'a rare moralist as well as a rare story-teller[126]', and her works were 'romance(s) of a high moral tone'[127].

Not only did James recognise the morality inherent in George Eliot's work and its rare quality, he also, well in advance of the event, foresaw that its reputation would suffer considerably because of that very morality denied by many conventional nineteenth century critics. Thus, as early as 1876, in the 'Conversation' on *Daniel Deronda*, Constantius sums up Pulcheria's (the name of course being symbolic!) refusal to be swayed by any argument in favor of George Eliot and her remaining adamant in her-condemnation of Eliot, in these simple words, 'I am afraid Pulcheria's sadly aesthetic'[128]. In

this manner, James foreshadows the movement that was to be all the rage and which was to consign, with one flick of its languidly negligent finger, George Eliot to outer darkness until Virginia Woolf's article ushered in a new dawn!

In 'The Art of Fiction' James makes a statement about the artist that seems to have been formulated, at least in part, from his close reading of George Eliot's work. He reaches the conclusion that 'the moral sense and the artistic sense lie very close together':

> that in the light of the very obvious truth that the deepest quality of a work of art will always be the quality of the mind of its producer. In proportion as that intelligence is fine will the novel … partake of the substance of beauty and truth... No good novel will ever proceed from a superficial mind; that seems to me to be an axiom which, for the artist in fiction, will cover all needful moral ground! ... [(129)].

James here puts forward his belief that the artist's mind is the source of both art and morality in the created work. Two years earlier, in his essay, 'George Eliot's Life', writing of the 'faculties nature had given her', he made clear that:

> The great foundation, to begin with, was there the magnificent mind, vigorous, luminous, and eminently sane [(130)].

As a sign of his preoccupation with 'the great foundation' from which all else was derived, and which was a substantial part of George Eliot's genius, James mentions her 'rich and complicated mind'[(131)] on almost every page of his last article on her. Furthermore, the linking of the moral and intellectual aspects of the creative work, formulated in 'The Art of Fiction', is here touched upon more than once, for 'one of the noblest, most beautiful minds of our time'[(132)] could not but create a world that was 'first and foremost … the moral, the intellectual world'[(133)]. James had detected this phenomenon even earlier when writing of 'The Spanish Gypsy' as being 'the production of a noble intellect, of a moral vision equally broad and deep...'[(134)]. Similarly, James noted that the 'dominant will' in her early novels was 'the love of the moral', which James explains as 'the reaction of thought in the face of the human comedy'[(135)].

Intellect and morality are again almost indivisible in the depiction of character, particularly unsympathetic characters. The 'way in which the author has apprehended' the character of Mr. Casaubon makes James enthusiastically applaud it as 'something very noble'[(136)], for:

> To depict hollow pretentiousness and moldy egotism with so little narrow sarcasm and so much philosophic sympathy is to be a rare moralist as well as a rare storyteller [137].

The use of her 'brilliant mind'[138] in her portrayal of characters in general makes her superior to her fellow artists. Thus, even that great creator of characters, Dickens, is improved upon, for Mr. Brooks and Mr. Garth 'are drawn with the touch of a Dickens chastened and intellectualised'[139]. A further comparison is made with Fielding, Thackeray, and Charles Reade in an assessment of George Eliot's ability to draw male characters. The three male artists, James writes, won acclaim 'for their figures of women' but James regards this as being due 'to a meaner sort of art based on 'an indefinable appeal to masculine prejudice'; George Eliot, on the other hand, scorned such demeaning tactics, and made her portrait of Lydgate just as 'concrete or ... picturesque', by drawing it with a 'more philosophic – more broadly intelligent hand'[140] than that of the others. As for the character of Gwendolen Harleth, it merits almost a panegyric from, the often less than totally committed, Constantius, for 'it is the most *intelligent* (sic) thing in all George Eliot's writing, and that is saying much'[141]. In his analysis of the characters in 'The Spanish Gypsy' James is rather ambiguous. All the characters are put 'into action very successfully, but on the whole she thinks for them more than they think for themselves'[142]. However, 'she thinks … to wonderfully good purpose'[143]. The characters of Don Silva, Zarca, Fedelma, Juan et al. are all living human representations indeed, but they tend to be 'the offspring of a strong mental desire' on the part of the author, rather than 'the common stuff of human feeling'[144]. Don Silva has 'natural passion and weakness' but 'he, … is largely a vision of the intellect'[145]. Zarca, too, the '*pere noble* (sic) in perfection' 'belongs to the world of *intellectual*[146] dreams and visions'[147].

James's attitude to George Eliot's poetry was one of ambivalence. On the whole, he disapproved, and Constantius's condescending 'I even enjoy her poetry, though I don't approve of it'[148], probably expresses James's own feelings about it. This statement occurs in a passage which extolls and expounds on 'the intellectual brilliancy'[149] of *Daniel Deronda*, thus leaving it to be inferred that his enjoyment of the poetry is derived from the fact that 'in whatever she writes I enjoy her mind, her large, luminous, airy mind'[150]. James's own scarcely concealed doubts as to the advisability of Eliot's turning from fiction to poetry occur in all his reviews of the poetry. In *The Nation* review, he compliments Eliot for not succumbing to the flattery of critics 'who would fain persuade her … that she is at once a great romantic, a great poet, and a great philosopher'[151]. That she was the first and the last is beyond question, but she had never 'struck us as possessing the poetic character'[152]. However, he later states, firmly and categorically, that 'George Eliot could not

possess the large and rich intellect which shines in her writings without being something of a poet'[153]. Thus, what seems to be a deviation on the part of the great novelist becomes acceptable because of 'the superior quality of her mind that impresses its distinction even upon works misbegotten and abortive'[154]. (He hastens to disclaim that 'The Spanish Gypsy', the poem under discussion, is either the one or the other!) James winds up his argument of 'The Spanish Gypsy' by attributing both its success and failure (for he remains unconvinced that 'The Spanish Gypsy' is of the first order) to the fact that it is 'an eminently intellectual performance'[155]. The final word on 'The Spanish Gypsy' in the second article on the poem is in a similar vein:

> I shall indicate most of its merits and defects, great and small, if I say it is a romance, a romance written by one who is emphatically a thinker' [156].

James seems to further placate his critical sensibilities, with the thought, in 'The Legend of Jubal', that 'in whatever George Eliot writes, you have the comfortable certainty, infrequent in other quarters, of finding an idea, and you get the substance of her thought in (even) the short poems'[157]. And, notwithstanding the fact that, to him, her poetry is undeniably inferior to her fiction, 'we must admit that they are characteristic products of the same intellect'[158].

Not only are her characters and her poetry in general 'eminently intellectual performances'[159], but her style is what it is because of her 'rich and complicated mind'[160]. In that somewhat puzzling study of *Felix Holt*, James calls her 'a secondary thinker'[161] at one moment, only to follow up that remark – in the same paragraph – with a commendation of her 'intellectual culture' which is reflected in her style:

> a style the secret of whose strength is in the union of the tenderest and most abundant sympathies with a body of knowledge so ample and so active as to be absolutely free from pedantry [162].

In 'The Spanish Gypsy' he sees that 'the richness of the ... style' is a result of the interplay of learning and diction:

> She is so much of a thinker and an observer that she draws very heavily on her powers of expression, and one may certainly say that they not only never fail her, but that verbal utterance almost always bestows upon her thoughts a peculiar beauty and fulness, apart from their significance[163].

There is modified praise for her style in the articles on *Middlemarch* and *Daniel Deronda*, but in both, style is once more linked with mind. Thus, it is due to George Eliot's 'preminently, contemplative, and analytic (mind) that her manner should be discursive and expansive'[164]. Because 'the greatest minds have the defects of their qualities'[165], her style, rich and flexible, as it is, is apt to betray her and become 'obscure'[166]. In '*Daniel Deronda*: A Conversation', Constantius both commends and criticises her style, again indicating the connection between style and intellect: the style is 'admirable':

> it has the most delightful and the most intellectually comfortable suggestions. But it is occasionally a little too long-sleeved.... It is sometimes too loose a fit for the thought, a little baggy [167].

James was not oblivious of the problems posed by a novelist having such a 'deep, strenuous, much-considering mind'[168]; he was not slow, therefore, to point out that, sometimes, George Eliot's mind overwhelmed her imagination to the detriment of the work, be it fiction or poetry. In 'George Eliot's Life', he declares that George Eliot wrote 'verse which is *all* (sic) reflection'[169], laying the blame for her so doing on Lewes's influence. That James had always worried that 'reflection' might overpower 'perception'[170], and was not now being wise after the event following the publication of Cross's *Life*[171] – is revealed from a glance at his earlier critical articles. In 'The Novels of George Eliot' he, hesitantly, suggests that her 'reflection (which) never flags', may 'occasionally … make her tedious'[172]. In the next sentence, however, he retracts even this mild criticism, noting that, 'she is so little tedious', because she combines 'the keenest observation with the ripest reflection'[173]. Nevertheless, he has hinted at a possible shortcoming stemming from too powerful a mind. The article on *Middlemarch* takes this further in an assessment of *Romola*: *Romola*, 'sins by excess of analysis; … (by) too much reflection'[174]. He qualifies this, once again, by adding, parenthetically, that it is '(all certainly of a highly imaginative sort)'[175]. What he has to say about *Romola* in 'George Eliot's Life', after the discovery that 'her daily stint of arduous reading and writing was of the largest'[176], is not really different – even in degree. For, in this, his last study, he merely reiterates his conviction that in *Romola* there is an 'excess of reflection'[177]: 'it is overladen with learning, it smells of the lamp, it tastes just perceptively of pedantry'[178]. In '*Daniel Deronda*: A Conversation' James has Constantius voice his concern that her mind sometimes affects her art adversely:

> Thanks to her admirable intellect she philosophizes very sufficiently; but meanwhile she has given a chill to her genius. She has come near spoiling an artist [179].

Yet, notwithstanding this unease at too much 'reflection' not only does he always temper his criticism, but he finds there is more gain than loss in George Eliot possessing 'a full mind. ... at the command of no other English writer'[180]. In fact, because of its excellence, one is in danger of overpraising her work:

> It is so new a phenomenon for an English novelist to exhibit mental resources which may avail him in other walks of literature; to have powers of thought at all commensurate with his powers of imagination, that when a writer unites these conditions he is likely to receive excessive homage[181].

Thus, in his earliest assessment of her gifts, James shows what, to his mind, constitutes her superiority to other writers. A specific comparison between George Eliot and two earlier fellow novelists, Dickens and Thackeray, is made in James' second study of her works: she has 'the great advantage' over them because 'she is also a good deal of a philosopher'[182]. This superiority is emphasised in the *Middlemarch* review in which James writes of his conviction that Eliot is unique 'among English romancers' because of the 'constant presence of thought, of generalizing instinct, of *brain*, (sic), in a word'[183] in all her works, so

> Fielding approaches her, but to our mind, she surpasses Fielding. Fielding was didactic – the author of *Middlemarch* is really philosophic[184].

Moreover, it is this philosophic element that dispels the suspicion or even the certainty – that novels are 'so trivial' because 'they had no general ideas'[185]. It is precisely by the incorporation of 'general ideas', so often descried and deplored by other critics[186], that George Eliot enlarged the conception of 'what one may do in a novel'[187]. So, even that minor tale 'Brother Jacob', 'of a humorous cast' though it may be, is nonetheless, 'like everything of George Eliot's (to be) credited with something of a philosophic insight'[188]; and a 'veritably mulish domestic flower' such as the 'painful fireside scenes' between Lydgate and Rosamond, are rendered 'more powerfully real', because there is certainly nothing more *intelligent* (sic) in all English fiction'[189]. Perhaps Theodora sums it all up in her simple rhetorical question: 'So long as she remains the great literary genius that she is, how can she be too scientific?'[190].

James did not blind himself or his readers to what he considered to be George Eliot's faults, yet he makes it very clear that they are faults of

execution rather than of creation. He acknowledged her failures in characterization – Will –[191] and her discursiveness[192], but he did not fall into the trap of condemning her for either her immorality or her morality as successive generations of critics managed to do! And only in his very early articles[193] does he sometimes accuse her of being deficient in imagination. On the other hand, he recognised and admired her great gifts, and identified what he saw as her original contributions to the art and content of the novel. These, above all, as one learns from the articles, were, first of all, the tenable theory brilliantly put into practice that fragile, restricted young girls unable to compete on equal terms, because of their sex, could and did carry the whole action of the novel and maintain its tenor. This, regardless of whether they were the over-conscientious, idealistic Dorotheas or the flighty and superficial Hettys. Equally important to him, was the way in which she allowed her magnificent mind to penetrate and invest every aspect of her work in a manner hitherto unprecedented. The 'fine controlling intelligence' which James was to use in his own creative work, was here George Eliot's own, and, in the last analysis, the work was none the worse for it. Indeed, James wholeheartedly welcomed it, for it was 'the constant play of lively and vigorous thought' that clothed her novels with 'a surprising richness of color and a truly human interest' [194].

That James singled out these – the 'frail vessels and their intelligence' –as George Eliot's bequests to the novel may have been due to a bias in his own mind towards these achievements, but it can never be said that his judgment was distorted by his prejudices[195]. On the contrary, as Leon Edel wrote, 'no writer so authoritative was ever less doctrinaire'[196]. James, himself, saw his duty as a critic very early on, when, as an earnest young man, he asseverated in the opening paragraph of 'The Novels of George Eliot' that 'the critic's first duty' is 'to seek out some key to (the author's) method, some utterance of his literary convictions, some indication of his theory'[197]. This is what James exacted himself to do in all his subsequent critical articles. This statement of the critic's duty, self-imposed so early in his life as a critic, he was to emerge as 'the figure in the carpet' in his later years as creator. Thus, to George Eliot, in part at least, he owes both his vocations of critic and creator. In George Eliot, James the critic and James the creator truly coalesced, for on the altar of *Daniel Deronda* he offered his greatest tribute, a critical essay that was at one and the same time a work of creation; a thoughtful literary discussion, full of insight, and also a one-act play with a cast of three distinguishable fictitious characters! Neither the beloved Turgeniev nor the 'prodigious'[198] Balzac elicited such a performance from James. Furthermore, the sense of life that he found even in her 'loose baggy monsters' led James to the critical theory and to the demonstration in his own creative works that what is of paramount

importance in a work of art is 'life' and that all other requirements pale into insignificance if 'life' is attained. In 1891, James wrote of and in 'Criticism':

> Any vocation has its hours of intensity that is so closely connected with life. That of the critic, in literature, is connected doubly, for he deals with life second-hand as well as first; that is, he deals with the experience of others, which he resolves into his own, ... He has to make them as vivid and as free as the novelist makes *his* (sic) puppets, and yet he has ... to take them as they come(199).

As for the work of art, Constantius in '*Daniel Deronda*: A Conversation' may be allowed to have the last word:

> Yes, I think there is little art in *Deronda*, but I think there is a vast amount of life. In life without art you can find your account; but art without life is a poor affair. The book is full of the world (200).

Hence, both as critic and creator, James owed an immense debt to George Eliot, which he acknowledged, plainly or tacitly, in his critical essays, his letters, his *Autobiography*, and last but not least in his creative works.

Notes

(1) Everyone is, of course, familiar with F.R. Leavis's discussion of James's address to George Eliot in *The Great Tradition*, London, Chatto and Windus, 1955. Leon Edel writes of *The Portrait of the Lady* as being a George Eliot novel written by James in the way he believed she should have written. *The Conquest of London*, London, Rupert Hart-Davis, 1962, p. 373.

(2) Letter to Henry James Sr., May 10, 1869 in *Henry James Letters 1843–1875*, edited by Leon Edel, Volume 1, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1974, p. 116

(3) "Notes of a Son and Brother" in *Henry James's Autobiography* edited by F.W. Dupee, London, W.H. Allen 1956, p. 514. The word 'great' often precedes her name whenever James has occasion to mention it, even when criticising her. See, for instance, the articles 'Matilde Serao' & 'The Novelin', 'The Ring and the Book' in *Notes on Novelists* London, J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1914. See also *Autobiography*, p. 583.

(4) Edel, *Letters*, Vol. 1, p. 116.

(5) *Autobiography*, p. 575.

(6) Ibid. p. 574.

(7) Ibid

(8) As he was leaving their villa at Witley, his *The Europeans* was thrust into his arms, Lewes being totally oblivious of the fact that he was flinging the volumes back into their author's embrace. See *Autobiography*, pp. 583-84; and Leon Edel, *The Conquest of London*, p. 371.

(9) *Autobiography*, p. 583

(10) See Edel, *Letters*, Vol. 1 & Edel, Letters Vol. 11 London, Macmillan Ltd. 1978 and Percy Lubbock, editor, *The Letters of Henry James*, 2 Volumes, London, Macmillan & Co. Ltd. 1920.

(11) To C.E. Norton, March 31st (1873) Edel, *Letters*. Vol. 1 p. 363.
(12) To Grace Norton, Rome, March 5th (1873) Edel, Ibid., p. 351
(13) Edel, *Letters*. Vol. II, p. 30.
(14) To William James, Etretat, July 29th, Ibid. p. 59.
(15) October 24th, (1876) Edel, *Letters*. Vol. 11, p. 70.
(16) Lamb House, Rye, November 19th, 1905, Lubbock, *Letters of Henry James*. Vol. 11, p. 41.
(17) To Edith Wharton, Lamb House, Rye, December 4th, 1912, Lubbock, op. cit. p. 295
(18) See above p. 39
(19) *The Nation.* Vol. XXII, p. 131
(20) Ibid.
(21) Ibid.
(22) Ibid.
(23) *The Nation*. VII, July 2nd, 1868 p. 12.
(24) Op. cit. XXVI April 25th, 1878, p. 277.
(25) Morris Roberts, *Henry James's Criticism*. Cambridge. Harvard University Press, 1929, p. 8.
(26) See Leon Edel & Dan H. Lawrence, *Bibliography of Henry James*. London. Rupert Hart Davis 1961.
(27) See *Partial Portraits*. London. Macmillan & Co., 188x.
(28) David Carroll, editor, *George Eliot. The Critical Heritage*. London. Routledge & Kegan Paul 1971, p. 2.
(29) W.J. Harvey, *The Art of George Eliot*, London, Chatto and Windus 1961, p. 21.
(30) Ibid. p. 20.
(31) Leon Edel, editor. *The House of Fiction*, London. Rupert Hart-Davis 1957, p. 29. See also pp. 31 & 33.
(32) Reprinted in Carroll, op. cit., pp. 273-277.
(33) Carroll, op. cit. p. 275.
(34) Ibid. p. 273
(35) When James wrote of his delight on first reading *Felix Holt* in his *Notebooks* (Matthiessen & Murdock editors. *The Notebooks of Henry James*. New York OUP, 1961, p. 320) and in *The Middle Years* (*Autobiography*, p. 574), some critics have tended to regard such statements as either being wise after the event or simply not recollecting his initial criticism made about fifty years earlier. See Albert Mordell, editor, *Literary Reviews and Essays by Henry James*, New York, Grove Press, Inc. 1957, pp. 388-89.
(36) Leon Edel, editor, *Selected Letters of Henry James*, London, Rupert Hart-Davis 1956, pp. 122-123.
(37) 'The Lesson of Balzac', 1905 in Edel, *The House of Fiction*, p. 73.
(38) Ibid. p. 70.
(39) Ibid. p. 79.
(40) *Atlantic Monthly* XVIII October 1866 p. 480.
(41) Ibid. p. 487.
(42) Ibid.
(43) Ibid. p. 488.
(44) *Galaxy* XV March 1873, p. 425.
(45) Ibid. p. 426.
(46) *Galaxy* XV March 1873, p. 427.
(47) Ibid. p. 428
(48) Ibid. p. 425
(49) Ibid. p. 428.

(50) Ibid. p. 429.
(51) *Atlantic Monthly* XXXVIII December 1876 p. 690.
(52) Ibid. p. 689.
(53) Ibid. p. 692.
(54) Ibid. p. 694.
(55) *Atlantic Monthly* XXXVIII December 1876 p. 685. See also p. 689. p. 691. 693
(56) *The Legend of Jubal and Other Poems*. North American Review XIX October 1874 p. 485.
(57) Ibid. p. 486.
(58) *The Nation* VII 2nd July 1868 p. 14.
(59) *North American Review* CV11 October 1868 p. 632, pp. 634-35.
(60) 'The Lifted Veil', and 'Brother Jacob'. *The Nation* XXVI 25th April 1878, p.277
(61) 'George Eliot's Life', *Atlantic Monthly* LV May 1885, p. 674.
(62) 'George Eliot's Life' *Atlantic Monthly* LV May 1885, p. 678.
(63) *Autobiography*, p. 584-85.
(64) Henry James. *The Art of the Novel*. London and New York. Charles Scribner's Sons 1934, p. 67.
(65) Harvey, op. cit. p. 24.
(66) Harvey, op. cit. p. 31
(67) 'Mr. Kipling's Early Stories' 1891. Le Roy Philips. *Views and Reviews by Henry James*, Boston. The Ball Publishing Company 1908, p. 227. See also *Notes on Novelists*, p. 89, p. 234.
(68) Morris Shapira, editor, *Henry James. Selected Literary Criticism*, London. Heinemann Educational Books Ltd. 1963, p. XVIII.
(69) *The Art of the Novel*, p. 84.
(70) To Hugh Walpole, Rye, May 13, 1910, *Selected Letters of Henry James*, p.193
(71) To Hugh Walpole, *Reform Club*, Pall Mall, SW, May 19, 1912. Lubbock, op. cit., Vol. 11, pp. 245
(72) *Daniel Deronda*, *The Nation* XXI11'24 th February 1976 p. 131.
(73) Harvey, op. cit. p. 27.
(74) Ibid. p. 20.
(75) Ibid. p. 27.
(76) *The Art of the Novel* p. 49.
(77) Ibid.
(78) *The Art of the Novel* p. 49.
(79) Loc. cit.
(80) Loc. cit.
(81) *The Critical Heritage*, p. 275.
(82) *Atlantic Monthly* XVII1, p. 485
(83) Ibid. p. 486.
(84) Ibid. p. 487.
(85) Loc.cit.
(86) *Atlantic Monthly*, XVIII, p. 486
(87) Ibid. p. 487.
(88) 1bid. p. 489.
(89) Ibid. p. 490.
(90) *Galaxy*, XV, p. 425.
(91) Ibid.
(92) Ibid. p. 425.
(93) *The Nation*, XXII, p. 131.

(94) *Atlantis Monthly* XXXVIII, pp. 690-693
(95) Ibid. p. 686.
(96) Ibid. p. 692.
(97) Ibid.
(98) *The Nation*, VII, p. 14.
(99) *North American Review*, CVII. p. 628.
(100) *North American Review* CXIX p. 489.
(101) See Cartoll. *The Critical Heritage* and Gordon S. Haight, editor, 4 Century of George Eliot Criticism. London. Methuen & Co. Ltd. 1966. Haight republishes eight of James's reviews of George Eliot in his collection.
(102) James, very rarely, alludes to that fact.
(103) Sec above, p. 37.
(104) *Atlantic Monthly*, XVIII, p. 492.
(105) Ibid.
(106) Ibid.
(107) *Atlantic Monthly*, XXXVIII, p. 689.
(108) Ibid. p. 688.
(109) *Atlantic Monthly*, XVIII, p. 482.
(110) Black wood. Eliot's publisher was profoundly disturbed by the fact that the heroine was a drunkard. Carroll, *The Critical Heritage* pp. 7-8.
(111) *Atlantic Monthly*, XVIII, p. 482.
(112) *Atlantic Monthly*, XVIII, p. 487.
(113) Ibid.
(114) Ibid.
(115) See Carroll, op. cit. p. 11 and pp. 75-6.
Anthony Trollope writing to Thackeray refuting the latter's accusation of immorality, directs Thackeray's attention to 'the existence of a woman not as pure as she should be in English fiction'. Amongst those he lists is 'Hetty Sorrel with almost the whole story of how the child was gotten'. B. Allen Booth, editor. *The Letters of Anthony Trollope*. Oxford University Press. 1951 p. 78.
(116) *Galaxy*, XV, p. 425.
(117) Ibid.
(118) Carroll, op. cit. p. 274.
(119) Ibid.
(120) *Atlantic Monthly*, LV, p. 177.
(121) Leavis, op. cit. p. 29.
(122) See Carroll, op. cit. especially pp. 2-3 and pp. 104-105, and Haight, op. cit.
(123) *Atlantic Monthly*, LV, p. 670
(124) Ibid.
(125) *The Nation*, VII, p. 13.
(126) *Galaxy*, XV, p. 427.
(127) *Atlantic Monthly*, XXXVIII, p. 688.
(128) Ibid. p. 693
(129) *The House of Fiction*, p. 44.
(130) *Atlantic Monthly*, LV, p. 675.
(131) Ibid. p. 668. See also pp. 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 677.
(132) Ibid. p. 373.
(133) Ibid.
(134) *The Nation*, VII, p. 14.
(135) *Atlantic Monthly*, I, p. 374.

(136) *Galaxy*, XV, p. 427.
(137) Ibid.
(138) *The Nation*, VII, p. 13.
(139) *Galaxy*, XV, p. 428.
(140) *Galaxy*, XV, p. 427.
(141) *Atlantic Monthly*, XXXVIII, p. 692
(142) *North American Review*, CVII, p. 624.
(143) Ibid.
(144) Ibid. p. 626.
(145) Ibid. pp. 626-27.
(146) My italics.
(147) *North American Review*, CVII, p. 630.
(148) *Atlantic Monthly*, XXXVIII, p. 686.
(149) Ibid.
(150) Ibid.
(151) *The Nation*, VII, p. 13.
(152) Ibid.
(153) Ibid.
(154) Ibid.
(155) Ibid.
(156) *North American Review*, CVII, p. 635.
(157) *North American Review*, CHIK, p. 485.
(158) Ibid
(159) *The Nation*, VII, p. 13
(160) *Atlantic Monthly*, LV, p. 668.
(161) (An ill-considered remark that has never been forgotten or forgiven!) *The Critical Heritage*, p. 273.
(162) Ibid. p. 274.
(163) *North American Review* CVII p. 622.
(164) *Galaxy* XV p. 425.
(165) Ibid.
(166) Ibid. p. 428.
(167) *Atlantic Monthly*, XXXVIII, p. 689.
(168) *Atlantic Monthly*, LV, p. 671.
(169) *Atlantic Monthly*, LV, p. 674.
(170) Ibid.
(171) Other critics, however, after the appearance of the Life, disparaged the novels, the later ones especially, for what they saw as her rampant scientific philosophy. See Carroll, op. cit. pp. 37-38, pp. 448-460, pp. 464-484; Haight, op. cit. p. XII.
(172) *Atlantic Monthly* XVIII p. 488.
(173) Ibid.
(174) *Galaxy* XV pp. 424-25.
(175) Ibid.
(176) *Atlantic Monthly* LV p. 675.
(177) *Atlantic Monthly* LV p. 671.
(178) Ibid. p. 675.
(179) *Atlantic Monthly* XXXVIII p. 690.
(180) *The Critical Heritage* p. 276
(181) Ibid. pp. 276-277.
(182) *Atlantic Monthly* XVIII p. 488.

(183) *Galaxy* XV p. 428.
(184) Ibid.
(185) *Atlantic Monthly* XXXVIII p. 687.
(186) James, in *The Middle Years*, noted:

> "It was the fashion among the profane ... either to misdoubt the latter's backing of rich thought, or else to hold that this matter of philosophy, and even if but of the philosophic vocabulary thrust itself through to the confounding of the picture. But with that criticism I wasn't ... to have a moment's patience ...." *Autobiography* p. 584.

(187) *Atlantic Monthly* XXXVIII pp. 6 & 7.
(188) *The Nation* XXVI p. 277
(189) *Galaxy* XV 427.
(190) *Atlantic Monthly* XXXVIII p. 690.
(191) *Galaxy* XV p. 426.
(192) See 'George Eliot', *Atlantic Monthly* LV, pp. 668-678
(193) *Felix Holt* and 'The Novels of George Eliot', 1866
(194) *Atlantic Monthly* XVIII, p. 488
(195) C.L. Harvey, op. cit.
(196) *The House of Fiction*, p. 19
(197) *Atlantic Monthly* XVIII, p. 479
(198) *French Poets and Novels*, London, Macmillan and Co. 1884, pp. 89
(199) *Essays in London and Elsewhere*, London, James R. Osgood, Macmillan and Co. 1893, pp. 278
(200) *Atlantic Monthly* XXXVIII, pp. 693-694.