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Review: [untitled]

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Reviewed work(s):

Henry James's "Italian Hours": Revelatory and Resistant Impressions by Bonney MacDonald

Source: *Rocky Mountain Review of Language and Literature*, Vol. 45, No. 4 (1991), pp. 261-263

Published by: Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1347843>

Accessed: 27/09/2009 14:28

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publishers and a handful of prestigious (male) reviewers and (male) academic critics? Has MLA become a less influential speaker for the academy because of its greater percentage of women? The stature of journals may shift in relation to their inclusion of the formerly disempowered and so may the prestige of the academic field itself, even when "acceptance" has not meant a satisfactory shift in the total profession. Inclusion can also be used to co-opt "outsiders" to silence challenges, just as special journal issues on women writers may be used to justify the exclusion of women in regular issues.

Kaplan and Rose show that historically the process of canon formation is an organic and ongoing ideological process. They refer to this process as "oscillation" rather than "dialectic" or "progress." Feminist criticism tends to affirm connections between writers and readers, texts and contexts. But the common reader seldom studies literary criticism. Indeed, the reading public today is multicultural and not at all sure that value inheres in the humanities and lists of Great Books. Thus we are left with the more general problematics of the role of canon formation at this historical moment "when the definition, the significance, and the centrality of literature to society are in question" (23).

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**BONNEY MACDONALD.** *Henry James's Italian Hours: Revelatory and Resistant Impressions.* Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1990. 136 p.

It was suddenly as if these figures, or something like them, had been wanted in the picture, had been wanted more or less all day, and had now drifted into sight, with the slow current, on purpose to fill up the measure.

*(The Ambassadors 307)*

This "vivid illustration," framed by a lovely Parisian afternoon, constitutes Lambert Strether's surprising discovery of the liaison of Chad Newsome and Madame de Vionnet. More important, it shows him what his own "famous knowing how to live" (312) really means. Here, "art makes life," as the Jamesian dictum applies. Yet the images flooding into Strether's consciousness suggest that life makes art, as well, and demonstrate the author's debt to phenomenology. I mention Strether in Paris because he is not unlike James himself in Italy, where the Master not only learned how to live, but how "to see," which is the subject of Bonney MacDonald's book (3). She attempts to "rehabilitate the status of primary perception in James' writings" (3) by relating the early Italian travel essays and stories (1869-73) to the later material of the same sort (1892-1909).

MacDonald begins by exploring the Italian travel writings of Hawthorne and Howells. Since James sought all his life to avoid provinciality and to keep himself open to sensory experience, he castigates both writers as narrow-minded Yankees because of their revulsion at the "strangeness, the remoteness, the

Italianism of manners and objects" (32). The next chapter explores James' formation of an aesthetic and theories of perception in the early travelogues, where he combines "narrative structure with attention to visual and factual detail" to "illuminate artistic and epistemological concerns" (37). It is in this chapter that MacDonald reveals her phenomenological methodology, where she relies upon Merleau-Ponty, Thévenez, and Berenson, with a glance at Husserl and William James.

In the third, and best chapter of MacDonald's study, she uses James' aesthetics and theory of consciousness to inform her reading of the early fiction where Italy is background: "Travelling Companions" (1870), "At Isella" (1871), and "The Madonna of the Future" (1873). Her last section skips over the major fiction to *Italian Hours* (1909) itself, where James "attempts to rekindle and evaluate . . . not only a moment in his personal travels but a phase in his career" (95), and "retains an attachment to the revelatory force of Italian beauty first discussed in 1869-70" (107).

The shortcomings of this study are minor, but worth mention. The ponderousness of MacDonald's introduction and the brevity of what should be a much longer book smack of the doctoral thesis on which this work is based. Similarly, I would question MacDonald's (over) use of the adjective "Whitmanian" (11, 39, 90, 97, 98, 99). I do not object to the author's comparison of James' ecstatic wonder at Italy with the notorious catalogues in *Song of Myself*; however, the obvious differences in temperament and psychology between the two authors make the comparison seem gratuitous. For this reason, I would also quibble with the references to Dickinson (17, 18, 88), whose reactions to Italy might resemble Hawthorne's and Howells' rather than James'.

In chapter 4, MacDonald finds it "necessary to review the primacy of experience registered in James' early writings to grasp the abstraction of the later works" (7). She thus attributes much of the vagueness of the late style to the early effects of Italy and phenomenology. This is laudable and interesting, nor do I disagree; but no mention is made that James is by this time (1896-97) dictating to a typist because of his arthritic wrist. The abstractions of the late style depend absolutely upon the exigencies of the spoken voice, whether James is in Italy, Boston, or at Rye House.

Nonetheless, the strengths of MacDonald's book are considerable, and make it worth reading. Her understanding of a neglected subject is profound. She is joyfully immersed in James' writing, and lets him speak for himself as much as she can. However, even though MacDonald has burrowed into his prose as well as the depths of phenomenology, her style does not suffer from the vagaries and labyrinthine syntax that characterize such writing—and its explicators. She wants to hold a reader's interest, and is not afraid to state a thesis: "A phenomenological reading of James' travel sketches from *Italian Hours* . . . highlights what James himself suggests: that Italian scenes actively *impress* themselves upon the viewer with a vividness that surpasses the mind's ability to create and project images, and that the seen world of Italy comes to the viewer with a distinct and animated presence" (47).

Again, MacDonald is at her best when she is immersed in James' fiction, especially chapter 3. It would be even more interesting for the author to connect her phenomenological reading of the travel essays to James' conception of Italy

as place in such seminal works as *Daisy Miller*, *The Portrait of a Lady*, and *The Wings of the Dove*, where that "beautiful dishevelled nymph" (Edel, *Untried Years* 295), Italy herself, is as palpable a being as Daisy, Isabel, or Milly.

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**ARTHUR MARWICK, ed.** *The Arts, Literature, and Society*. New York: Routledge, 1990. 332 p.

The growing attendance at the Literature and Other Arts session at the annual meeting of the Rocky Mountain MLA is a sign of the increasing interest in interdisciplinary studies throughout the humanities. For those scholars already taking an active part in such studies—and for those needing a prompt—Marwick's new book will be of great interest.

The collection of ten essays is a product of the annual conference held by the Social History Society of the United Kingdom, the 1988 topic being the title of Marwick's collection. Both the conference and the subsequent book were governed by a series of topics Marwick presented to the participants before the meeting and which set up the various dialogues among the contributors. The overriding question was whether or not it is legitimate to use terms such as *literature*, *art*, or *society*. Can these terms be profitably defined or must they remain simply social constructions defined variously by whatever group retains social and political predominance? Under this umbrella, Marwick identified six topics the contributors were to use to inform their discussions: 1) Methodology; 2) Theory; 3) Style, period, taste; 4) National culture and foreign influences; 5) Autonomy versus social construction; and 6) Cultural production, consumption, and status. The ten chapters are arranged in chronological order based on the subject matter—from the sixteenth century to the present.

Martin Wiggins' essay, "Macbeth and Premeditation," shows how Shakespeare's play was actually in the vanguard of the changing theories about murder in seventeenth-century criminology. Wiggins is using literary texts in an unusual fashion, as a way of informing our historical understanding of an earlier period, rather than using the historical background to inform our reading of the literary text. In the second chapter, Mark Thornton Burnett examines conduct books of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Burnett takes a New Historicist approach in analyzing the relationship between masters and servants in this popular genre.

Marcia Pointon argues for a blending of verbal and visual functions within the career of the nineteenth-century painter J. M. W. Turner. By examining Turner's letters and cultural milieu, Pointon suggests that the artist is as controlled by the forces of the marketplace and the forces of verbal power as he is by an artistic vision. "The overall cultural dominance of word over image needs, therefore, to be examined to discover how the word interpellates the image, how image creation and the making of an artist's reputation respond to the imperatives of the word" (77).