

C. L. R. JAMES'S CARIBBEAN

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And yet no simple, straightforward road opens to an awaiting higher truth. The turn away from the state and toward the realm of language and signifiers could not have been conceived without structuralism and post-structuralism. The two approaches have provided theoretical bases for identifying and analyzing signifiers. This intellectual shift is particularly relevant for a reading of James. Noted post-Marxists such as Cornelius Castoriadis and Jean-François Lyotard were in fact key intellectuals in the 1950s French group *Socialisme ou Barbarie*, which shared a common political orientation and fraternal contacts with James's Detroit-based Correspondence and Facing Reality organizations. Castoriadis and Lyotard, along with Jean Baudrillard and Michel Foucault, have been major figures in the uncoupling of liberation projects from the familiar Marxist formulation and their theoretical recasting on the model of the open signifier.*

The essays by Wynter and Lazarus deftly apply the semiotic approach to a number of James's texts. In doing so they demonstrate the remarkable openness of these texts by revealing the creative tension within their Marxist assumptions. This openness, so rare in older Marxist thinkers and so appealing in James, has prompted critic Sandra Drake to identify James as a precocious postmodernist.[†] In the essay by Henry and Buhle the mode of analysis has been reversed: an evaluation of the post-structuralist reading of post-colonial discourses is attempted through the Jamesian mirror.

* This is not to say that James agreed with the *political* evolution of Castoriadis and Lyotard after the 1950s.

† Sandra Drake, *Wilson Harris and the Modern Tradition: A New Architecture of the World* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood 1986).

Six

Beyond the Categories of the Master Conception: The Counterdoctrine of the Jamesian Poiesis

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C. L. R. James is an exceedingly complex and subtle thinker. His thought moves on several levels and covers a wide variety of domains. This chapter focuses on the deconstructive thrusts in James's works and the counterdoctrine that they produced. James's deconstructive efforts radiate in several directions, simultaneously exploding the theoretical esthetic and metaphorical foundations of the doctrines that sustained Western imperialism. However, James also directed many of these critical darts at earlier formulations of his own thinking, thus subverting their very foundations.

One result of this extended critical analysis has been a methodology that employs a pluri-conceptual framework. In this framework the dynamics of multiple modes of domination arising from such factors as gender, color, race, class, and education are nondogmatically integrated. Consequently, it challenges not only the basic categories of colonial liberalism, but also the labor-centric categories of orthodox Marxism. Displacing but also reincorporating the latter's notion of labor exploitation is a dynamic conception of domination as a process that operates along a number of dimensions. Against these various faces of domination, James pits the creative determination of women, workers, dominated races, and other groups to resist and affirm themselves.

I will call this pluri-conceptual framework the "pieza framework," and will explore its importance for James's fictional and autobiographical writings. This exploration is done in five basic steps. The first is a semiotic analysis of the master conceptions that legitimated European

projects of global capital accumulation. The second outlines James's delegitimizing critique of these master conceptions from the standpoint of his pieza framework. The third examines James's fiction in relation to this framework. The fourth provides a brief summary of the framework, and the final step takes up the implications for a contemporary praxis.

The Legitimizing Concepts of Global Capital Accumulation

The homology between the historical and the fictional universe is not realized at the level of a particular element but at the level of the system. It is the fictional system in its *ensemble* which produces an effect of reality.—Pierre Macherey, 1972

The novel, in its true pedagogical function, Pierre Macherey argues, is not the product of a doctrine, not the form-giving mechanism to an already preestablished content. It is, rather, the condition of possibility of the emergence of a doctrine.

The Jamesian poesis, taken as a system, the theoretics providing a reference for the esthetics and vice-versa, provides the condition of possibility for the emergence of a Jamesian doctrine, one that subverts its own center—the labor conceptual framework. This doctrine—pointing as it does toward a global model of multiple modes of accumulation and of multiple concomitant modes of coercion—begins the relativization of the Marxian factory model of exploitation; it projects the future through conceptions of the past and representations of the now, which lends coherence to all the Jamesian writings. These conceptions of past and present are rooted in a popular pluri-conceptual framework whose praxis erupted in the global national revolutions of the postwar period and in the social revolution of the sixties.

The "doctrine" produced by the autosociography of *Beyond a Boundary* constitutes that act of definition which is itself a part of the social universe it defines.¹ James acts as both the instrument of discovery and of definition because of that self-imposed marginality he chose for himself when, as a bright young scholarship winner, he failed to stay the course by violating the central interdiction, that is, keep your eye on the course and tailor your actions, choices, and desires to fit the course.² The stubborn young boy was pushed into theoretical and esthetic marginality when he blurred the categories—an intellectual wanting to play

cricket, a scholarship winner reading for discovery rather than to pass examinations. These rebellious acts disturbed the governing categories of the colonial bourgeois cultural model, the categories of head/body, reason/instinct, and transgressed the separation between them. The young James lived his revolt against the governing bourgeois "mythology," the mythology with which it attempted to stem the subversive consequences of its own conceptual code, its literature, its organized sports, its globally constructed network of accumulation; the global revolution it had launched upon the world and which it attempted and attempts to control by the development of the metaphors that subtends both its thought systems and its social system.

To grasp the significance of the counterdoctrine that emerges from the Jamesian theoretics and aesthetics taken as a whole, and of the questioning that counterdoctrine represents to the dictatorship of the master conceptions of Liberalism and Marxism, it is necessary to look at the semiotic foundations of bourgeois thought, the monarchical system of power it delegitimated, and the liberal state it helped to establish.

To be effective, systems of power must be discursively legitimated. This is not to say that power is originally a set of institutional structures that are subsequently legitimated. On the contrary, it is to suggest the equiprimordiality of structure and cultural conceptions in the genesis of power. These cultural conceptions, encoded in language and other signifying systems, shape the development of political structures and are also shaped by them. The cultural aspects of power are as original as the structural aspects; each serves as a code for the other's development. It is from these elementary cultural conceptions that complex legitimating discourses are constructed.

To establish its system of power, the European bourgeoisie had to displace the monarchy and the hegemony of the aristocratic classes. To do this, it was not enough to gain politicoeconomic dominance. It was also necessary to replace the formal monarchical system of signification with a cultural model that "selected" its values as normative. The elementary cultural conceptions upon which the monarchical system of signification rested can be designated as the "symbolics of blood."³ They gave order to a social structure whose hierarchy was based on the principle of the possession of noble blood or the nonpossession of noble blood. It constituted what Bateson has called an abduction system.⁴ Based on the fantasy of blood, this system legitimated the aristocracy's ownership

of landed wealth, and the marginalizing of mercantile and artisanal-industrial life activities. Further, this abduction system legitimated both the categories of clerico-feudal thought and the macro-metaphor of the Ptolemaic universe and the hierarchical categories of its social order, legitimated in fact its politicoreligious polis, as totemism legitimated the politicoreligious world of traditional societies.

It was these elementary cultural conceptions of power and their abductive extensions that had to be uprooted by the bourgeoisie if the whole system of monarchical power was to be overthrown. The rise of the liberal state and bourgeois hegemony were the results not only of a revolution in economic production, but also in the cultural conceptions of power. If the organizing and legitimating discourses of the aristocracy were based on the symbolics of blood, those of the bourgeoisie were based on the metaphors of natural reason and lack of natural reason. This represented a displacement of theological justification by the new notion of natural right. This notion was a construction within an abduction system that was based on an analogy with a representation of nature as opposed to concrete nature in the case of totemism.

Abductive extension of this state of nature metaphor provided the categories that structured the middle class social order, particularly its system of power and prestige. Accumulated property (capital) displaced "landed wealth" as the source of legitimacy, and this new property was represented in the Lockean formulation as having been acquired in the state-of-nature outside the "compact" of the state-of-society. Those who had property only revealed the high degree of "natural reason" that nature had endowed them with; those who lacked property revealed the degrees of lack of reason that nature had endowed them with. Thus after the English Civil War, to protect their newly acquired property, the Independents forced through and the Levellers acquiesced a social division based on men-of-property. Men-of-property-as-men-of-reason got the vote, and were governed only by their consent and were therefore "autonomous." The "servants and almstakers," dependent on others, without property, without natural reason, were excluded from the vote. They became the signifier of the body to the signifier of the reason of the propertied. The central division of categories was repeated at the level of the individual. This head/reason part of the meta-natural state-of-nature government controlled his body/instincts, part of brute-nature, that part of nature which lacked the reason of nature-as-ideal-model.

The colonial systems of power established abroad were also shaped by these cultural conceptions. Thus, if internally, the servants and almstakers category represented lack of reason in relation to the middle class, then at the global level, it was nonWestern cultures and peoples that represented varying degrees of the lack of reason. In the great chain of being which was thus erected, the zero-term-of-reason and therefore of social being was the "Negro": the zero-term-of-culture, the cultures that merged with brute nature as the "Negro" merged with the apes, were the cultures of Africa. Consequently, the cultural categories of the colonial social orders embodied the ratio of human value represented by each group. In this ratio, value for the bourgeoisie had replaced the blue blood of the nobility as the status-organizing principle.

In sum, the governing cultural categories of the social orders in both center and periphery became the governing categories of their systems of knowledge and of aesthetics. Further, both knowledge and aesthetics systems constituted the sociocultural environment as an environment which encoded its conceptions in the very structure of social relations. These structural encodings of cultural conceptions are made possible by the fact the structure serves as the abduction system for the thought-systems and vice-versa. Consequently, for fundamental change to take place, it must take place both in the conception and in the pattern of relations. Such changes must therefore call into question both the structure of social reality and the structure of its analogical epistemology; they must involve "shifting our whole system of abductions. [To do this] we must pass through the threat of that chaos where thought becomes impossible."⁵

The Jamesian journey took place through the Scylla and Charybdis of that chaos. His poiesis has been a constant and sustained attempt to shift "the system of abduction" first of colonial Liberalism, later of Stalinist and Trotskyist Marxism, and, overall, of the bourgeois cultural model and its underlying head/body, reason/instinct metaphors.

Delegitimizing the Master Conceptions

[This] class [the bourgeoisie] must be seen . . . as being occupied, from the eighteenth century on . . . with forming a specific body . . . a class body with its health, hygiene descent and race. . . . There

were doubtless many reasons for this. . . . First of all, there was a transposition into different forms of the methods employed by the nobility for marking and maintaining its caste distinction . . . for the aristocracy had also asserted the special character of its body . . . in the form of *blood*.—Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1

James was aided in the task of deconstructing these conceptions by his identity as Negro. Here one must contradict James and suggest that it is not only nor even primarily because he is an adherent of the Leninist "policy" that his solution to the Negro question emphasizes the autonomy of the race question, however much he insists on the hegemony of the labor question. Rather, it is because of the multiplicity of his consciousness, a multiplicity shaped by the complex structures of both the British-Trinidadian social system and the historical processes that had shaped this system.

The Jamesian consciousness growing up, as adult, was molded by the "morphogenetic fantasies"⁶ that shaped an intricate permutation of color, levels of education, levels of wealth, and levels of "culture." It was a permutation in which these specific systems of values themselves took value from the a priori categories based on the abductive system of a Head/Body, Reason/Instinct analogy. These multiple permutations gave rise to multiple identities: to the "ecumenicism" then of being a Negro—of being Caliban.

The relatively small number of white settlers in British colonial Trinidad lead to a social hierarchy based on a cultural model in which the heraldry of degrees of whiteness permuted with other value systems and translated the race question into a color question. The latter was, however, premised on the former, that is, on the social value of whiteness, the non-value of blackness. Black as the original sin could however be "redeemed" by degrees of education and wealth. The latter could "make up for" degrees of blackness, which could devalue levels of education and of wealth. Whiteness functioned—exactly as money—as the Marxian general equivalent of value.

This social hierarchy was unlike the rigid prescriptive white/black categories of the United States "native model." As Asmaron Legesse has pointed out, "one of the many immutable prescriptive rules in America is the classification of human beings into Blacks and Whites. These are mutually exclusive categories in the sense that one cannot be both Black and White at the same time. One cannot help but be impressed by the

rigidity of this native model. It denies the fact that Blacks and Whites enter into elaborate illicit sexual liaisons. The myth of the two races is preserved by the simple rule that all the offsprings of interracial unions are automatically classified as Blacks."⁷

In Trinidad, color, wealth, education, and culture dynamically interacted not only as markers of differential social status, but also as legitimating value systems in which the ratio of distribution of the national wealth—engendered through the life activities of production, consumption, and circulation of all Trinidadians—was a ratio adjusted to the degrees of color/wealth, or education, one had accumulated. In other words, the living standards for each group was equated with the group's value standing in the pluri-defined social totem pole.

A central motif of *Beyond a Boundary* is the analytics of the permutation of race/education/culture and skill. Ownership of "White-value" paid dividends in the kinds of jobs that were reserved for whiteness regardless of merit, jobs that were logically equated with mental (head/reason) rather than with manual (body/instinct) labor. And James gives several examples of this in *Beyond a Boundary*.⁸

Color, then, acted as another kind of merit, an unearned social merit. A system of color value existed side by side with capital value, education value, merit value, and labor value. To single out any of these factors was to negate the complex laws of the functioning of the social order, the multiple modes of coercion and power relations existing at all levels of the social system. Because of the multiple modes of coercion and of exploitation, the factory model was only one of many models. Thus there could be no mono-conceptual framework—no pure revolutionary subject, no single locus of the Great Refusal, no single "correct" line.

Given the pluri-consciousness of the Jamesian identity—a Negro yet British, a colonial native yet culturally a part of the public school code, attached to the cause of the proletariat yet a member of the middle class, a Marxian yet a Puritan, an intellectual who plays cricket, of African descent yet Western, a Trotskyist and Pan-Africanist, a Marxist yet a supporter of black studies, a West Indian majority black yet an American minority black—it was evident that the Negro question, and the figure of Matthew Bondsman that lurked behind it, could not be solved by an either/or—that is, by either race or class, proletariat or bondsman labor, or *damnes de la terre*, Pan-African nationalism or labor internationalism. The quest for a frame to contain them all came to constitute the Jamesian poiesis.

The Jamesian "magical agent" lay in the fact that he had lived all the contradictions. The problematic of race and nationalism, of class and culture was not new. Indeed, this problematic links the individual quest of the young James for theoretical autonomy with the quest of Trinidad for national independence and cultural autonomy. In the structuring motifs of *Beyond a Boundary*, this problematic also mediates Jamesian theoretics and esthetics, fusing them into a counterdoctrine. It is this counterdoctrine that then reveals that the national and racial questions were questions repressed by the master conception of liberalism, repressed precisely in those areas in which the liberal conception realized itself at its best, that is, in its articulation of the "public school code" through the ritual code of cricket: "a straight bat and it isn't cricket became the watchwords of manners and virtue and the guardians of freedom and power" (*B.B.*, 163).

Thus the "literary" system of *Beyond a Boundary* uses James's personal quest for cognitive awareness of the laws of the social order's functioning to reveal the existence of racism and nationalism as a living, breathing part of his social reality and the repressive exclusion of this reality from the "Eden" of the school, its life determined by the public school code.

This code saved the young James from the naked racial distinctions that so harshly mark the American social order. The public school code insisted that the category that separated the colonizer ruling whites from the ruled natives was reason and its lack, rather than merely race. Reason/merit was the prescriptive category, not blatantly race as in the "native model" of the United States. As James recalls: "this school was a colony ruled autocratically by Englishmen. What then of the National Question? It did not exist for me. Our principal . . . was an Englishman of the nineteenth century. [No] more devoted conscientious and self-sacrificing individual ever worked in the colonies . . . [He] was beloved by generations of boys and was held in respectful admiration throughout the colony" (*B.B.*, 38).

For the headmaster as for the other masters, all of whom lived up to and doctrinally passed on the public school code,⁹ questions of race and of nationalism were at best marginal—as for orthodox Marxians—at worst, not cricket to discuss. The operating of this code also made it possible for a scattering of talented native individuals to be cooptable into the lower levels of the ruling elements, but never quite up to the level of the British.

James's schoolmasters were able, for awhile at least, to universalize this code—the apogee of the British Empire as a cultural order was concomitant with this moment of universalization—because they themselves lived up to the "vision of life" embodied in the code. They held strictly to its rules, subordinating their personal prejudices and interests to its demands.

In the context of the code, while there was no question that the colonial relation between Englishmen and natives was in the nature of things, at the individual level things had to be different. Here racial or national origin could not matter. Merit, talent, and the ability to play the game could be found among the exceptional class of natives. These natives could be recruited into the ruling group, could share in the vision of life, and could come to be bound by it, too, to play by the rules.¹⁰

The schoolmasters did their duty according to the categorical imperative of what was cricket and what was not. It wasn't cricket to harp on race—a chap couldn't help being black. What mattered was his natural talent, that he kept a straight bat and kept to the rules. Not the party line, but the public school code.

The race question did not have to be agitated. It was there. But in our little Eden, it never troubled us. If the masters were so successful in instilling and maintaining their British principles as the idea and the norm, [however much individuals might fall away] it was because within the school and particularly on the playing field, they practiced them themselves. . . . They were correct in the letter and in the spirit. When I went back to the college to teach . . . the then principal, a Mr. A. M. Lower, a man of pronounced Tory, not to say chauvinist ideas amazed me by the interest he took in me. Once in an expansive moment . . . he muttered: "We do our work and in time you people will take over. . . . That must have been about 1924 and it was the first and only time in some fifteen years that I heard a word about the national or the racial question. (*B.B.*, 39)

Here the voyage-quest motif of *Beyond a Boundary* functions at the level of theoretical awareness. James was never to free himself from the public school code, nor did he want to.¹¹ He would, however, have to free himself from the master conception that underlay the code, the conception that effected the separation of the "native" elite from the native masses, binding the loyalty of the former not to their own reality but to that of their colonizers.

The Jamesian quest for autonomy would have to struggle against a conception that had accorded the elite, and he among them, a place of privilege, a conception that provided the pastoral protection of code and school against the existential brutalization to which a Matthew Bondsman was condemned, that conceded for a few an Eden in which both mind and body fused, cricket as well as *Vanity Fair*, that excluded the Caliban niggerdom from this life, and that excluded those like Bondsman as the absolute zero of social and metaphysical value.

The paradox was that the public school code, quickened by the revivifying sweep of Marx's critique of the social order, of Thackeray's critique of the aristocracy, was to be related to the Jamesian concern. He would be haunted and impelled by the thought that the differential of life value accorded by the social order to his own life, and to that of Matthew Bondsman, simply "wasn't cricket." Nor was the conception that legitimated such a differential flawed not only by its repression of the key questions of race, nationalism, and class, but also through its representation of the status-quo as in the very "nature of things." "It was only long years after that I understood the limitation on spirit, vision and self-respect which was imposed on us by the fact that our master, our curriculum, our code of morals, everything, began from the basis that Britain was the source of all light and leading, and our business was to admire, wonder, imitate, learn; our criterion of success was to have succeeded in approaching that distant ideal—to attain it was of course impossible. Both masters and boys accepted it as the very nature of things. . . . As for me, it was the beacon that beckoned me on" (*B.B.*, 39)

Here eventually and once again, the Jamesian poiesis would constitute its own ground, Caliban establish his own identity, in a sustained act of separation from the very "beacon that had lead him on." Yet this beacon was also to provide him with the tools of thought to question its pre-suppositions. Like Caliban, he could use the language he had been taught to push into regions Prospero never knew. The tools of thought were such that, violating the interdiction that "decent chaps" do not question the social "nature of things," James could begin his series of sociohistorical actions by posing the repressed question. The national question was theme and motif of his first book, *The Life of Captain Cipriani*, a part of which was reprinted as *The Case for West Indian Self-Government*.

The national question was also to form part of an even more fundamental question—that of the autonomy of the body category. As such, it initiated a calling in question of the abduction system on the basis of

whose analogy the entire polis rested. If, as Cornelius Castoriadis tells us, his *Socialisme ou Barbarie* group was to base its theoretical evolution on the fact that, at a certain moment, they pulled the right string, that of "bureaucratization, and . . . simply and ruthlessly kept pulling,"¹² the string that the Jamesian poiesis pulled was the centrally related question of autonomy, the autonomy of the body categories. Pulling this string, James called into question the entire "socially legitimated collective representations," the social imaginaire (Castoriadis)¹³ on the basis of which both the mode of social relations (i.e., *bourgeoisism*) and its economic expressions private property capitalism and nationalized property socialism, are legitimated. The question of autonomy once posited, James would stand in its truth. It is here that the doctrine that emerges from *Beyond a Boundary* puts into free play the great heresy of the Jamesian poiesis.

The Jamesian Fictional System and the Pieza Conceptual Frame

He was genuinely shocked at what Philemon had so carelessly revealed. . . . He had gone on his way, taking it all for granted. To what sacrifices had he put the good woman to feed him regularly while the rest of the household starved. He would have to do something about it.—James, *Minty Alley*

In the Jamesian ensemble, the theoretics is the politics. The politics, that is, the mode of being together in the polis, is shaped by the struggle of groups and individuals to maintain or redefine the terms of their relations to bourgeois domination. The perpetuation of the middle class as a ruling group is a form of politics that deploys recursively both the categories of the esthetics/theoretics and of the economic "as a tactic, a detour, an alibi."¹⁴

Thus an esthetic differential value set up between fine and non-fine arts replicates, and thereby stabilizes and legitimates, the differential value empirically expressed between the life value of the middle class and the life value of the popular forces. This differential value is then validly expressed in the differential of reward, that is, of the differential between the consumption ratio of the middle classes and the consumption ratio of the popular forces.

The esthetic categories of an art critic like Bernard Berenson, diffused through education, act effectively to inculcate in the non-middle class a

sense of their own inferiority, of their own lower life value. In effect, what is diffused, encoded in these critical categories is a mode of measurement according to which both the distribution of the material wealth accumulated and of the new life chances afforded by this global process are accepted as legitimate and valid.

In other words, the categories both of bourgeois esthetics and of its theoretics provide above all a cultural law of value in which the ratio of value between the head/reason and the body/instinct categories legitimates the system of differential rewards necessary to the telos of the accumulation of value, the telos upon which the global middle class bases its class domination, whether in capital or labor form. This continuity between capitalist and Stalinist forms of social organization was important in James's thinking. Thus, he pointed out that "the philosophy of the planned economy and one-party state is distinguishable from that of the bourgeoisie only by its more complete rationalism. . . . It consciously seeks to plan and organize the division of labor as the means to further accumulation of capital. . . . It is a product of the modern mass movement, created by the centralization of capital, and holds its position only because of this movement. At the same time, it cannot conceive the necessity for abolishing the division of labour in production. By a remorseless logic, therefore, representation of the proletariat turns into its opposite, administration over the proletariat."¹⁵ Because of this law of cultural value, the capital and labor conceptual frames cannot by themselves provide scientifically exact modes of measurement or accurate ratios of distribution. Only modes and ratios are seen as valid and are represented as such through the mythologies of the market and the party line.

As Jean Baudrillard suggests, the capital conceptual frame and the labor conceptual frame, which define either capital in the case of the first or labor in the case of the second as the single or primary determinant of value, both function through their privileging of the production end of the multiple processes to set up a mode of calculation that ensures middle-class hegemony through the legitimated accumulation of not only material goods but also power, wealth, and multiple life opportunities.

In *Beyond a Boundary*, the organizational structure implicitly juxtaposes Bondsman and Sir Donald Bradman, both equally talented as cricketers, yet the latter is offered all opportunity to realize his powers, to swim with the current in order to achieve fame and fortune while

Bondsman ends in an obscurity only redeemed by memory, by the stroke he left imprinted in young James's consciousness. A model is thus set up to reveal the existence of an objective ratio of distribution of life value and of opportunities to realize one's powers. In the fictional system of James's novel *Minty Alley* and short story "Triumph," this model emerges to provide the lineaments of a new popular theoretics, of an alternative conceptual frame.

The interplay of color and class in the fictional system of *Minty Alley* reveals patterns of interactions in which a parallel between the global order and the social order of Trinidad, between the middle-class esthetic canons and the non-middle-class ones, between the canonization of the first and the stigmatization of the second, can be clearly discerned. In these patterns are lawlike equivalences between the hierarchical degrees of social value, whether measured in terms of the possession of capital, profession, skills, jobs, whiteness, education, fine arts, "good English," or good hair, and the ratio of distribution of life chances. Between the social value ascribed by the "imaginaire social" and its cultural law of value are the opportunities provided either to "realize one's powers" or to negate this realization, even to debase these powers in a blind quest for self-affirmation, for an aggressive escape, as in the case of Bondsman, from the incredible pressures of this relentless stigmatization.

The fictional systems of both *Minty Alley* and of "Triumph" constitute the site of the yard, that is, a tenement house, overcrowded, its life spilling out into the yard, where people jostle each other, and most are jobless or underemployed in a world ruled by chance and instability. These are people whose societies are reserve societies drawn into the system when the profits of single crops boom, and expelled when the single crop booms burst. In this world, a job becomes not a matter of course, a right, but a magical possession. The identity of labor is not the norm. It is rather a privileged status, as Fanon points out. Bondsman, the Lumpen, and the *damnes de la terre* are the norm. In the value code of the hegemonic system, most of the dwellers of the yard are condemned like Bondsman to accept their inculcated zero value of identity, their own nothingness.

Here the heresy of the Jamesian poiesis places the contradiction not between the progressive productive forces and the backward relations of production as in the labor conceptual frame, but rather in the contradiction between the thrust of men and women to realize their powers, to take their humanity upon account and the mode of social relations

that blocks this thrust in order to perpetuate its classarchy. In 1950 the Jamesian theoretics arrived at the following conclusion: "It is not the world of nature that confronts man as an alien power to be overcome. It is the alien power that he has himself created. . . . The end towards which mankind is inexorably developing by the constant overcoming of internal antagonisms is not the enjoyment, ownership or use of goods, but self-realization, creativity based upon the incorporation into the individual personality of the whole previous development of humanity. Freedom is creative universality, not utility."¹⁶

Similarly, the fictional system of his novel had already enacted this doctrine—the imperative nature of the popular quest for self-realization, for creative universality, and for freedom rather than for utility, as the quest for that by which people live.

The fictional characters of *Minty Alley* and of "Triumph" refuse to accept their value of nothingness. Their lives are spent in constant combat to refuse this negation of their being, to affirm, by any means, fair or foul, usually the latter, that they have a life value and have powers that must be realized. They do this come hell or high water, and to hell with the consequences.

The setting of the drama that they enact is both the global network of accumulation in which they are inserted and the interplay of color, class, and culture value in the context of which they act out their parts. For example, the Nurse, almost white and with a profession however dubious her certification, exercises a certain dominance in the yard. When the showdown comes between herself and Mrs. Rouse, the owner of the house, over whom should have the macho sweet-man Benoit, the Nurse wins hands down. She realizes her own powers and affirms her identity within the only way open in the structure of the system, by defeating someone else. She knows that Benoit will have calculated the points that place her higher on the totem pole than Mrs. Rouse, that is, her color value and her job profession value. Like Mamitz at the end of the short story "Triumph," who plasters her room with dollar notes given to her by her butcher boyfriend and flaunts the pork and chicken cooking in her pot, affirming her "dollar value" as a kept woman and her superiority over her rivals, the Nurse realizes her identity along the lines prescribed by the formal system of signification, on which bourgeois classarchy is based.

The yard and its dwellers, although living partly in an alternative popular cosmology—Benoit gives the Nurse a magic bath to help her find a

job and Mamitz's friend gives her a magic bath to help her find her kind of job, a steady man who can provide in exchange for the labor power of her sexual favors—have had to partly internalize the code of value of the ruling bourgeois in order to survive. And in that conception, as Sparrow puts it in a calypso, "it is dog eat dog and only the fittest survive." The doctrine that emerges from the Jamesian fiction includes, among other things, five points.

1. What rules in Trinidad is not so much a ruling group as a ruling conception, a "morality of mores" which, internalized to greater or lesser degrees at all levels¹⁷ is a value system based on the acceptance by all of the higher differential value of the middle class. In *Minty Alley*, after the middle-class Mr. Haynes has had intimate sexual relations with Maisie, the young niece of Mrs. Rouse, she still calls him "Mr. Haynes" and he sees nothing strange in this because the middle class exists as the "reference group," as the general equivalent of social value.

2. The entire social structure is based on the acceptance and implementation of power-relations as the normative mode of relations. For example, Maisie is determined to keep Philemon in her lower place as a "servant" and as a "coolie" (i.e., East Indian indentured labor), yet Maisie is kept in hers by a system that codes her joblessness, refusing her any role but that of a servant. Yet keeping other groups of people below one's own group enables one to realize that differential value central to identity in its middle-class form.

3. The "factory-model of exploitation" and the labor-conceptual framework has little explanatory power with respect to the modes of social coercion and domination, modes that work invisibly, like fate, not only to structure the hierarchical categories of the Trinidadian and the global system, but also to coerce individuals and groups into the categories for which they have been deterministically selected by the ruling value system, by the internalized ruling conception.

4. The system of capital accumulation is not only carried out through labor activity, but through the life activities of the popular groups as workers, as consumers, or merely as signifiers of non-value, that is, those like Matthew Bondman who serve as the "refuse" of the system, as the symbolic inversion of norm value, the liminal category that defines the norm from which social value is reckoned and the mode of measurement of the consumption ratio legitimated.

5. The fictional system of *Minty Alley* enables the emergence of an invisible model of global accumulation, the model whose dynamic needs

to lock each category into its relative place so that the social system can serve as the empirical abduction system of the mode of distribution of differential rewards based on a hierarchical identity system. This global model of accumulation, unlike the factory model of exploitation of the labor conceptual frame, can encompass both the proletariat and the multiple groups and groupings whose mode of coercion and oppression are outside the explanatory power of the labor conceptual frame.

In the frame of the later code, those like Bondsman and the ghetto shanty-town archipelago stand condemned, stigmatized as the lumpen, as "non-productive labor" that is not really exploited. So, too, do Mrs. Rouse of *Minty Alley* and Mamitz of "Triumph" in the strictly orthodox Marxian canons.

Mrs. Rouse, baking cakes and supplying them to the shops, using the hired labor of Philemon and of the yard boy—although she lives on the edge of poverty as they do, eating as little as they do—would definitely be stigmatized in such canons as a Kulak. That is, she would be put in the class of Russian traders who grow rich not by their own labors, but through the labor of others. Solzhenitsyn has shown the way in which this category was used as the moral antithesis of the proletariat to make vast numbers of peasants into exploitable objects. The same would be true of Mamitz, the kept woman selling her sexual labor. She exchanges her sexual labor not only for the chicken and pork in the pot with which she affirms her triumph over her rivals in the yard. Through this exchange she is able to realize her powers in the only avenues open to her strata, both in the global system of social role allocation and in its local Trinidadian variant. In orthodox Marxian canons, such a self-affirmation would be stigmatized as antisocial, the very negation of the "new man" that socialism builds.

In such a conceptual frame, what happens to those like Bondsman—except they are represented as "victims" or sufferers¹⁸—cannot logically be of any concern. They are "outside of history. Nor can what happens to Philemon and to the others of the yard in *Minty Alley* and in "Triumph" be of significance. Yet these are the characters through whom the fictional system reveals the concept of levels of consumption ratio and the dynamics of a global system of social savings accumulated through low cost, not of labor alone but of the lower categories of human lives. These categories reveal the increasingly minimal levels of consumption of food, clothes, shelter, and education to which those like Philemon

and Bondsman are condemned in a global system whose objective telos is the hegemony of the process of accumulation.

In this spare, taut novel, James's most beautifully portrayed character is Philemon, the East Indian coolie servant, the lowest on the totem pole. A startling aristocracy of spirit illuminates Philemon, the aristocracy and grace of a spirit possible only to the truly nonaccumulative psyche. The brief scene in which the young middle-class hero, Haynes, realizes the sparse "eating" of the others in the yard that makes possible his own well-prepared meals has a double significance. First, it extends the Marxian theory of labor value into the pluri-frame of life value and puts the Negro question and the Bondsman contradiction into appropriate frames. Second, this scene also reveals a central aspect of the multiple mechanisms of the process of accumulation as it is carried out through multiple modes of empirical and cultural coercion at all levels of the social order, even at the level of the reserve lives of Bondsman and Philemon.

What the fictional system of *Minty Alley* reveals is precisely the single underlying keel, not of the whaling ship this time, but of the process that had sent the ship to sea in the first place, the bourgeois telos of accumulation, both of capital (the owners) and of self-realization (Ahab), the telos in which they have co-opted all the isolates of the globe, either as active or tacit consenters.

Philemon is a tacit consenter, and so at first is Haynes. The trajectory of the novel startles him into questioning. Haynes, normally shut off as a middle-class Trinidadian from the people of *Minty Alley* due to financial circumstances, violates the middle-class interdiction of separation and chooses "down." He takes a room at No. 2 Minty Alley. During his interactions there, he stumbles upon the realization of the social crime that makes his own standard of living possible. It is one of the most powerful and moving scenes of a novel whose taut sparseness in its portrayal of Philemon would not find its like until Roger Mais's Rastafarian *Brother Man* in the 1950s.

Haynes, in conversation, with Philemon, finds out that sometimes, except for his own meal, there are days when no food is cooked at all in No. 2 Minty Alley.

"Not cook at all for the day!" It was incredible.

"Why! That is nothing."

"But hasn't she to cook for me?"

"Yes, but that is different. She must cook for you. You give her money."

"And what do you all eat?"

"Any little thing. We cook sometimes. But if we only get money to make cake for the parlours, we can't get anything."

"But why don't you credit at the shop?" said Haynes, and knew even before he was told that he had asked a stupid question.

But never once . . . was any meal late. . . . Morning, noon and night everything was ready punctually on the table for him. . . . He had gone on his way taking it all for granted. To what sacrifices had he put the good woman to feed him regularly while the rest of the household starved.¹⁹

Haynes/James was to spend a lifetime doing something about this social crime. The doctrine of the Jamesian fictional system, as well as of the "blurred genre" of *Beyond a Boundary*, therefore goes beyond the Jamesian theoretics, that is, beyond his independent Marxism, in that it altogether displaces the labor conceptual framework [still a middle-class conceptual framework bound to the laws of its code of knowledge] with a popular esthetics, a popular conceptual framework.

Toward a Pieza Conceptual Frame

In fact, the veiled slavery of the wage workers in Europe needed, for its pedestal, slavery, pure and simple.—Marx, *Capital*, vol. 1

If we use Matthew Bondsmen and the Negro question as a point of departure it is possible to sketch the lineaments of the new popular theoretical frame, the new unifying idea that emerges from the Jamesian poesis. This idea takes us on the stage of the Jamesian journey that lead back to Africa, back to the seminal importance of the Atlantic slave trade. The latter in particular takes us back to a painfully constructed multilayered system of global domination characterized by a plurality of points or bases of resistance. As Wallerstein has pointed out, "in the sixteenth century, there was the differential of the core of the European world economy versus its peripheral areas, within the European core between the states, within states between regions and strata, within regions be-

tween city and country, and . . . within more local units. The solidarity of the system was based on ultimately this unequal development, since the multi-layered complexity provided the possibility of the multi-layered identification."²⁰ These details are crucial for any attempt to displace the metonymic substitution of the last phase of this global system for its entire historical development. In other words, they are crucial for any attempt to deconstruct the masterdom of capital and labor mono-conceptions or mono-conceptual frames.

In displacing these conceptions, James developed a pieza theoretic framework in which the pieza served as a general equivalent of value for the variety of groups whose labor could be exploited within the capitalist world system. The pieza was the name given by the Portuguese, during the slave trade, to the African who functioned as the standard measure. He was a man of twenty-five years, approximately, in good health, calculated to give a certain amount of physical labor. He served as the general equivalent of physical labor value against which all the others could be measured—with, for example, three teenagers equaling one pieza, and older men and women thrown in a job lot as refuse. In the Jamesian system, the pieza becomes an ever-more general category of value, establishing equivalences between a wider variety of oppressed labor power.

The starting point for James's displacement/incorporation of the labor conceptual framework is his insistence on the seminal importance of the trade in African slaves. In particular, he wants to end its repression in normative Western conceptual frames. Along with this repositioning of Africans, James also resolves the class/race and class/sex dispute by revealing each as aspects of the language of the other.

Second, the pieza framework required a repositioning of the mode of production in relation to the mode of domination. The former becomes a subset of the latter. That is, economic exploitation only follows on, and does not precede, the mode of domination set in motion by the *imaginaire social* of the bourgeoisie. Consequently, the capitalist mode of production is a subset of the bourgeois mode of accumulation which constitutes the basis of middle-class hegemony.

Third, what Wallerstein has called the world system was constituted by James as above all a single network of accumulation. This network can be divided into three phases: (1) circulation for accumulation, (2) production for accumulation, and (3) consumption for accumulation. In each

of these phases, the *pieza*—the source of extractive value—is different. In the first, it was the African slave; in the second, the working class; and in the third and current phase, it has been the consumer. Just as the *pieza* role reduced the African from the specificity of his/her multiple identities to quantifiable Negro labor, so too has this role in different ways reduced the working class and consumers to productive value through unending cycles of consumption. Thus, in all three phases, the *piezas* (blacks, labor, consumers) were locked into passive, coerced identity roles, as well as a social rather than a technical division of labor. This division of labor was legitimated as natural by the metaphors of the head/body opposition, and as historical by the representation of the party's vanguard as the consciousness of the proletariat.

Fourth, this international network of accumulation leads to the abductive elaboration of a differential ratio of distribution of goods and of rewards, which in turn provides additional legitimacy. The institutionalizing of this ratio results in its lawlike functioning to code differentiated identities, which will need the differential ratio of rewards in order to realize status identity, as opposed to simple identity. Consequently, this ratio functions to separate layers of identities, and must be changed into a ratio that supports a greater sharing of common experiential grounds.

Further, the cultural categories that legitimate this ratio also distort and minimize the contributions of various *pieza* groups to the process of global capital accumulation. Within the discursive constructions of this categorical framework, accumulation is represented largely as resulting from production, as opposed to the coordination of the broader life activities of the peoples of the globe. Thus it minimizes their real productive activities, their participation in processes of exchange, and their lifestyles and cultural patterns. This displacement of the mirror of accumulation by the mirror of production is sustained by the same categorical system that displaced and repressed the importance of African slavery in the first phase of capitalist development. It is also the same categorical system that in the present constitutes black *piezas*—the Matthew Bondsmen of the world—as useless and therefore expendable.

Finally, because it recognizes the historical constitution and subordination of a variety of *piezas*, this framework recognizes multiple points of resistance. These points of resistance need to be specifically coded as trans-race, trans-class, trans-group, to enable a popular cultural revo-

lution to emerge from the whole body of the people. Thus, rather than the Negro or women's struggle being included under the rubric of labor, the rubric of *pieza* includes all the experimental categories of the coerced, the non-norm. The mode of oppression must dictate the specific mode of organization to fight that oppression. There is no universalized mode of organization which is scientifically correct since the modes of oppression are multiple. Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze made the same point:

as soon as we struggle against *exploitation*, the proletariat *not only leads the struggle*, but also defines its targets, its methods, and the places and instruments for confrontation; and to ally oneself with the proletariat is to accept its positions, its ideology and its motives *for combat*. This means *total identification*. But if the fight is directed against power, then all those on whom power is exercised to their detriment, all who find it intolerable, can begin the struggle on their own terrain and on the basis of their proper activity (or passivity). In engaging in a struggle that concerns their own interests, whose objectives they clearly understand, and whose methods only they can determine, they enter into a revolutionary process.²¹

Whatever the Game: A Praxis for Matthew Bondsman

I hope this book will convince . . . that it isn't cricket to sell a game at baseball or basketball or whatever the game may be. This hail and farewell to the ancestral creed may be of some use . . . and in any case it can do no harm.—James, *B.B.*

The "cultural revolution" which responds to the radicalized logic of capital, to "indepth" imperialism, is not the developed form of an economic-political revolution. It acts on the basis of a reversal of "materialist" logic. . . . Species, race, sex, age, language, culture, signs of either an anthropological or cultural type—all these criteria are criteria of difference, of signification and of code. It is a simplistic hypothesis that makes them all "descendants" in the last instance, of economic exploitation. On the contrary it is truer to say that this hypothesis is itself only a rationalization of an *order of domination* reproduced through it.—Baudrillard, *The Mirror of Production*

A pluri-conceptual theoretics, a universal based on the particular (Cesaire) is the logical result and outcome of the Jamesian poiesis. It is the product of the journey that he took to bridge that early separation between himself and Matthew Bondsman, of the effort to chart the lineaments of their common distress and of their common destiny.

Such a pluri-conceptual theoretics leads necessarily to a praxis that is correspondingly plural in nature. More specifically, it is a praxis that will not sell out the game because of blind or strategic commitments to particular monoconceptual frames. It is in this context that we must understand James's act of separating himself from the 6th Pan-African Congress, a congress he had worked hard to organize. He negated both the congress and its doctrine and moved the national and the class question into the wider dimensions of the popular question.

The doctrine that had come out of the congress was astonishing. When Sekou Touré described Pan-Africanism as a "kind of racism based on a so-called Black Nation," he was backed by Mozambique's Frelimo:

The Vice-President of *Frelimo* reiterated President Samora Machel's denunciation of Black Power and warning against the "fascist" tendency of defining the enemy on the basis of skin color. And from Julius Nyerere himself, "If we react to the continued need to defend our position as Black men by regarding ourselves as different from the rest of mankind, we shall weaken ourselves." Observer Lerone Bennett reports the leader of one delegation as expressing to him personally a concern about "being committed to questionable political positions by the perceptions of Black Americans who were, he said, obsessed by race."²²

The final declaration of the congress summed up the definitive triumph of the Marxist-Leninist interpretation of the African and black experience: "The General Declaration of the Congress fully endorsed the Marxist, or progressive position as it has come to be called, and pronounced definitively and astonishingly that Pan Africanism therefore excludes all racial, tribal, ethnic, religious or national considerations."²³

The identity of racism, capitalism, and imperialism undid the Jamesian dialectic of the autonomy of the black question. It undid it, even if under the hegemony of the labor conceptual frame (i.e., the frame of the struggle against capitalism) that firmly subordinated racism to laborism. This enabled the repression of the popular question, both in its black expression in the United States and in its class expression in Africa itself, that is, the

growing disillusionment of the popular masses with their increasingly totalitarian elites.

The Negro question, a question compelled to challenge not only the economic expression of bourgeoisie, [Capitalism] but also bourgeoisie itself, to challenge its *imaginaire social*, one in which the "Negro" functioned as the central symbolic inversion of human value, had always imperatively been a popular rather than a primarily national or class question. As such, its mode of revolutionary transformation would have to question bourgeois hegemony itself, and the new African elites are the new bourgeoisie.

As the earlier *comprador* bourgeoisie had locked themselves into a liberal macro-conception and served as the satellite areas of the West, so the new *pensador* bourgeoisie ensured their class hegemony by locking themselves into the master conception of a Stalinist Marxism and its legitimated totalitarian formulations. Thus they and some of the governing elites in the Caribbean logically refused to allow any nongovernment-sponsored delegations to attend the conference.

Although James was specially invited, he refused to attend. He made no fanfare. But in his talk in 1976 to the First Congress of all African writers, in Dakar, Senegal, he first dismissed the conference and then in his plans for the Seventh Pan-African Congress transformed the Pan-African national quest into a popular quest and laid the explicit basis of a popular theoretics.

His plans are explicit because the implicit theoretics is there everywhere in the Jamesian poiesis. These plans parallel James's return to the calypso tents and the reevaluation of Sparrow's art. In particular, the recognition that his art had evolved its own conception of the world, its own forms, and its own imagery was a violation of a childhood interdiction that marked the crucial rubicon of James's return to Bondsman.

Similar in its significance was his quick salute to the seminal significance of the popular theoretics involved in Fanon's constitution of the hitherto invisible Bondsman—*les damnés de la terre*—as an agent of history. His recognition of the thrust was the new dramatic spectacle of the popular forces in the streets, in motion, demanding a reinvention of the world, and reinventing for themselves a counter-*imaginaire*. Thus James was one of the first to see the significance of the great Orphic heresy of the Rastafarians, to understand that Bondsman today would be a Rastafarian, to understand under the apparent absurdities of their alternative cosmology, a determined refusal of the "great fictions that pour

in upon them from every side." He was also among the first to grasp that they were reinventing the imaginaire social, refusing that of Babylon, and creating a new vision of life for the whole body of people.

It was from outside the productive process, from those expelled from it, liminal to its categories, that the revivifying prescriptions must emerge, as they emerged from the Roman Catacombs of a dying world—from them and the men of the word, the diffusors who provide the unifying frame, the theoretics of their symbolics. So James concluded his review of Fanon: "the work done by Black intellectuals, stimulated by the needs of the black people, had better be understood by the condemned of the earth, whether they are in Africa, the United States or Europe. Because if the condemned of the earth do not understand their pasts, and know the responsibilities that lie upon them in the future, all on the earth will be condemned. That is the kind of world we live in."²⁴

In sketching his plans for the Seventh Pan-African Congress, James, who had struggled with Nkrumah for national independence, now struggled with the uneducated masses to initiate a popular social transformation. The act of separation from the ruling elites was discreet. It was there, nevertheless. Thus, refusing to "sell the game" even for the sake of his past comradeship with the now firmly installed ruling elites, James zeroed in on the clash of interest between the African elite and the peasantry. "There is an African elite in every African territory which had adopted the ways and ideas of Western civilization and is living at the expense of the African peasant. And we, in talking about the Seventh Pan-African Congress must make it clear that this African elite is what we have to deal with, and that the African peasant must be our main concern." He then insisted on the centrality of the *damnes de la terre*: "*We have to be concerned with the masses of the population. . . . The masses of the population matter in a way that they did not matter twenty-five years ago. . . . We of the Conference are looking forward to a new relation of leaders and masses in Africa and in countries of African descent.*" He then takes away the "national basis," projecting a series of federations: "In other words, we are not going to hold a conference and hold up the national state as an ideal anymore. That belongs to the last century."²⁵

James's proposed federations are: (1) A West African Federation, a southern African Federation with Angola and Mozambique; (2) a West African Federation with Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania; and (3) a North African Federation, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, and Libya. Here he reinvents Pan-Africanism in contemporary terms but above all conceptu-

alizes like Padmore long ago, and Césaire later, a relation in which the solidarity of the labor code, that is, of the world proletariat, must not negate the imperative solidarity of the African people. The road to the universal passes through the realization of the particular—at least in the popular conceptual frame.

The great unifying forms of our times are no longer, as in the case of cricket, coded, under the hegemony of middle-class cultural mores. What we are experiencing is a cultural shift of historical magnitude, a shift that James pointed to in the lectures on modern politics given in Trinidad. The great unifying cultural forms of our times, beginning with the jazz culture and its derivatives, are popular. This is the significance of calypso and Carnival, of the reggae and Rastafarianism. This is the significance of the Jamesian poiesis. In the dimensions of the popular code of knowledge that our work as functional intellectuals, rather than as a ruling element, now lies. We, too, must initiate the return that James spelled out at the end of his talk to the writers' congress:

Our repudiation of the national state, our repudiation of the elite, our respect for the great mass of the population and the dominant role that it would play in the reconstruction of society, our recognition that our elitism is morally responsible for what is happening to the ordinary man, our recognition of the capacity they have in them, our recognition of the need to release the enormous energies of the mass of people, in particular in women and peasants, such a congress could be the Seventh for Pan-Africanism, but—for that very reason—the first of new world-wide social order.²⁶

He gives the theoretic representation esthetic dimensions by quoting George Lamming's lament for that separation of experience that marked out a different destiny for Lamming's own version of Matthew Bondman—Powell. Powell is now a thief, murderer, and rapist; Lamming, stamped by the heraldry of education, escaped Powell's fate by becoming a writer. Yet Lamming knows in his bones that his escape from the ghetto of nonrealization of his powers had impelled Powell to realize his power of action in the only ways open to him, to measure up if negatively. Lamming mourns the price of this separate peace. James quotes:

I believe deep in my bones, that the mad impulse which drives Powell to his criminal defeat, was largely my doing. I would not have this explained away by talk about environment, nor can I allow

my own moral infirmity to be transferred to a foreign conscience labelled imperialism. Powell still resides somewhere in my heart, with a dubious love. Some strange nameless shadow of regret, and yet the deepest nostalgia, for I have never felt myself to be an honest part of anything since the world of his childhood deserted me.²⁷

The significant form, the "flow of motion" of Bondsman batting, was, for James, his memory of another Powell. And on the basis of that memory James makes, in *Beyond a Boundary*, an esthetic demand that by itself redefines the mode of desire, the code of what humanity lives by.

If *Beyond a Boundary* as genre cuts across the lines set up and drawn between the individual and the social, as theory and as esthetic, then the chapter referred to as the Summa of the Jamesian poiesis completes the Jamesian quest for Bondsman. It sets the frame in which we know Bondsman differently from the start, because we know ourselves more. We know in the frustrated nonrealization of Bondsman's powers the loss to be personal. There is no way to cut that loss, no way to deal it. The division of this "coordinated" loss cannot be made—the loss that is universal. It can no more be done than a scientifically accurate division of the cumulative economic value of human/coexistence and global fitting together can be done. Then as now the lines are arbitrary and logical only in relation to the bourgeois social imaginary.

This bourgeois imaginaire social—creative in its time, purely destructive in its decline, dangerous now with the atom split, the social solidarity of humanity and the biosphere we inhabit—has become the primary imperative. It calls for an imaginaire social able to link everyone. Thus we live the dark age of its meaninglessness as James points out at the end of *Beyond a Boundary* (190):

What little remains of "It isn't cricket" is being stifled by the envy, the hatred, the malice and the uncharitableness, the sharelessness of the memoirs written by some of the cricketers themselves. Compared with these books, Sir Donald's ruthless autobiography of a dozen years ago now reads like a Victorian novel. How to blind one's eye to all this? Body-line was only a link in a chain. Modern society took a turn downwards in 1929 and "It isn't cricket" is one of the casualties. There is no need to despair of cricket. Much, much more than cricket is at stake, in fact everything is at stake. If and when society regenerates itself, cricket will do the same. The owl of

Minerva flies only at dusk. And it cannot get much darker without becoming night impenetrable.

The Jamesian summa of a popular esthetics opens a sunlit clearing in our present impenetrability: a vision of life that unfurls new vistas on a livable future, both for ourselves and for the socio-biosphere we inhabit.

"Prolegomena," James writes of Grace, "is a tough word but my purpose being what it is, it is the only one I can honestly use. It means the social, political, literary and other antecedents of some outstanding figure in the arts and sciences. Grasp the fact that a whole nation had prepared the way for him and you begin to see his status as a national embodiment" (*B.B.*, 168). The same can be said of James—with one crucial difference. If W. G. Grace embodied a national process, James embodies an entire world historical process. And so, too, does his poiesis. With its ease and certainty of phrase, its refusal at whatever price to fake the game, it establishes the new identity of Caliban. The region is not only new. It evokes a shared "Ah!" of recognition and delight.

Notes

- 1 C. L. R. James, *Beyond a Boundary* (London: Hutchinson, 1963). Further references to this book [*B.B.*] will be given parenthetically.
- 2 "All I wanted was to play cricket and soccer, not merely to play *but to live the life*, and nothing could stop me. When all my tricks and plans and evasions failed, I just went and played and said to *hell with the consequences*. Two people lived in me. One, *the rebel against all family and school discipline and order*; the other, *a Puritan who would have cut off a finger sooner than do anything contrary to the ethics of the game*. To complicate my troubled life with my distracted family, the Queen's Royal College ~~for~~ the other two of my obsessions, English literature. . . . I discovered in the college library that besides *Vanity Fair*, Thackeray had written thirty-six other volumes. . . . After Thackeray there was the whole bunch of English novelists . . . the poets. But in the public library in town there was everything" (*B.B.*, 37) (*italics mine*).
- 3 Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality* (New York: Random House, 1978), 1:36.
- 4 Gregory Bateson has emphasized the centrality of abduction systems to all human thought and representation. He calls abduction the "lateral extension of abstract components of description. . . . Metaphor, dream, parable, allegory, the whole of art, the whole of science, the whole of religion, the whole of poetry, totemism (as already mentioned), the organization of facts in comparative anatomy—all these

- are instances or aggregates of instances of abduction, within the human mental sphere." See *Mind and Nature* (New York: Dutton, 1979), 142.
- 5 Bateson, *Mind and Nature*, 143.
- 6 Ibid., 140.
- 7 Asmaron Legesse, *Gada: Three Approaches to the Study of African Society* (New York: Free Press, 1973), 258.
- 8 "My father's father . . . as a mature man worked as a panboiler on a sugar estate, a responsible job involving the critical transition of the boiling cane juice from liquid into sugar. It was a post in those days usually held by white men" (*B.B.*, 17) [italics mine].
- 9 "It [the public school code] came doctrinally from the masters, who for two generations, from the foundation of the school, had been Oxford and Cambridge men. . . . [Inside] the classroom the code had little success. . . . [We] lied and cheated without any sense of shame. . . . But as soon as we stepped onto the cricket or football field, more particularly the cricket field, all was changed. We were a motley crew. The children of some white officials and businessmen, middle-class blacks and mulattos, Chinese boys, some of whose parents still spoke broken English, Indian boys, some of whose parents could speak no English at all, and some poor black boys who had won exhibitions or whose parents had starved and toiled on plots of agricultural land and were spending their hard-earned money on giving the eldest boy an education" (*B.B.*, 34-35).
- 10 James came to be bound by the "vision of life," by the rules: "Before very long I acquired a discipline for which the only name is Puritan. I never cheated, I never appealed for a decision unless I thought the batsman was out, I never argued with the umpire, I never jeered at a defeated opponent, I never gave to a friend a vote or a place which by any stretch of imagination could be seen as belonging to any enemy or to a stranger. My defeats and disappointments I took as stoically as I could. If I caught myself complaining or making excuses I pulled up" (*B.B.*, 35).
- 11 As he points out, to acquire the code he paid a price—the forfeiture of reaching the room at the top and the title of Honourable. "[In] order to acquire this code, I was driven to evasions, disobedience, open rebelliousness, continuous lies and even stealing. . . . I was not a vicious boy. All I wanted was to play cricket and soccer, not merely to play but to live the life" (*B.B.*, 36-37).
- 12 Dick Howard, *The Marxian Legacy* (London: Macmillan, 1977), 265.
- 13 Howard, *The Marxian Legacy*.
- 14 Jean Baudrillard, *The Mirror of Production* (St. Louis: Telos, 1975), 142.
- 15 C.L. R. James, *State Capitalism and World Revolution* (Chicago: Charles Kerr, 1986), 115-16.
- 16 James, *State Capitalism*, 117.
- 17 Cf. "The tremendous labor of that which I have called 'morality of mores' . . . the labor performed by man upon himself during the greater part of the existence of the human race, his entire prehistoric labor, finds in this its meaning, its great justification, notwithstanding the severity, tyranny, stupidity and idiocy involved in it: with the aid of the morality of mores and the social straitjacket, man was actually made calculable." Walter Kaufman, ed., *The Basic Writings of Nietzsche* (New York: Modern Library, 1968), 495 [italics mine].

- 18 As in the Jamaican situation under Manley where the representation of the jobless as "sufferers" not only perverted Marxism, which insisted on the contribution of labor and on its right to a decent standard of living, but also enabled the rise of redemptive messiahs who realize their own powers through manipulation of a peculiarly ugly blend of Marxist Labourism and black (in its biological rather than social category sense) nationalism.
- 19 C.L. R. James, *Minty Alley* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1936), 168-70.
- 20 Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System* (New York: Academic Press, 1974), 64.
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