THE GHOSTLY SURFACES OF THE PAST: A COMPARISON BETWEEN FORD'S WORKS AND A. S. BYATT'S *THE VIRGIN IN THE GARDEN*

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'For Ford, the past – the English past, the European past, his own past – was an integral part of present experience and understanding'.[1] So writes A. S. Byatt in her 1984 'Introduction' to *The Fifth Queen*. The statement is almost a blueprint for her vision of literature later formulated in *On Histories and Stories: Selected Essays* (2000), where she shows her concern for the recognition of recent British fiction committed to the historical genre – from Ballard's *Empire of the Sun* to Tibor Fischer's *Under the Frog*. Rejecting the view of 'recent British writing' as essentially moribund under the weight of a lively post-colonial fiction, she claims the necessity to re-centre – or at least re-balance – the canon of post-war English literature to include 'purely "British" writers' as well as those, like 'Fischer and Ishiguro', who 'can look at British life from' both 'inside and outside'.[2] Then, as in her comment on Ford, she extends this map to include the European 'tradition', which here she identifies with 'the literary tale, or fairy tale'.[3] In relation to these issues, her piece on *The Fifth Queen* also foregrounds Ford's tendency to itemise, his penchant for the detailed reconstruction of the cultural furniture of bygone centuries. In this context she suggests Ford's (and, indirectly, her own) debt to Henry James's idea, expressed in 'The Art of Fiction' (1884), that '"[r]endering" tends to be concerned with evoking surfaces, especially visual surfaces'; these, she asserts, are conveyed by Ford with 'absolute minuteness' and 'solidity of specification'.[4]

What I will argue is that Byatt's late twentieth-century interest in these qualities of Ford's writing – features with which she feels perfectly in tune – can lead to the reassessment of some seemingly outdated aspects of Ford's fiction. Ford spanned several literary generations both biographically and creatively. Was this coexistence of past and present conducive to incoherence or to rich and fruitful juxtapositions? To what extent does his practice foreshadow the

postmodern appropriation of bygone centuries? This essay will try to answer these questions, by analysing surprising links between Ford's practice and Byatt's aesthetics. A comparison will be particularly instructive in this respect: that between Ford's *Parade's End* (particularly *Some Do Not . . .*) and Byatt's *The Virgin in the Garden* written in 1978 but set in 1952, at the time of Queen Elizabeth II's coronation. The latter work opens Byatt's own *roman fleuve* in four volumes, which narrates the story of a gifted and eccentric Yorkshire family and comprises also *Still Life* (1985), *Babel Tower* (1996), and *A Whistling Woman* (2002). What I would like to broach here is the idea that *Parade's End* and *The Virgin in the Garden* show a similar interest in cultural identity and tradition at times of profound historical change – when England emerged from the First and the Second World War respectively – and that they often find similar strategies to reconcile the old and the new. Extending the discussion also to other works by Ford, namely *Hans Holbein* and *Vive Le Roy*, I will investigate two forms of Ford and Byatt's interest in cultural and individual history: the inventory and the portrait. These epitomise the conception of visual surfaces as ghostly markings, flimsy traces of the plenitude of the past whose retrieval is always uncertain and whose evocation is poised between melancholy and parody. The theme of memory will be explored in association with the issues of creation and trauma.

Inventories

In *Some Do Not. . .* and *The Virgin in the Garden*, concerns about tradition lead to a problematic appropriation of the past (Victorian for both but also Elizabethan for the latter) conceived as a disappeared world of organic knowledge. 'For the Victorians', Byatt argues, 'everything was part of one thing: science, religion, philosophy, economics, politics, women, fiction, poetry. They didn't compartmentalize'.[5] It is no accident that the motif of the cataloguing mind is so obsessively recurrent in and central to both texts: it works as a substitute for such organicism, this being viewed as irretrievably lost – the object of an infinite desire for, and failed attempt at, total repossession.

For Ford the war meant the end of the self-complacent Victorian parade of such an integral and homogenous knowledge; a self-satisfied exhibition in which the encyclopaedic Tietjens of *Some Do Not . . .* still indulges. Welding countless items into formidable

wholes is one of his favourite pastimes: 'chaffinch, greenfinch, yellow-ammer', chimes his encyclopedic imagination during a walk in Valentine's company, '(*not*, my dear, hammer! *ammer* from the Middle High German for "finch"), garden warbler, Dartford warbler, pied-wagtail, known as "dishwasher". (These *charming* local dialect names)' (*PE* 105) and so on and so forth. '[I]t's the way' his 'mind works', thinks Valentine. 'It picks up useless facts as silver after you've polished it picks up sulphur vapour; and tarnishes! It arranges the useless facts in obsolescent patterns and makes Toryism out of them'.[6] As Saunders contends, therefore, *Parade's End* is 'a more thorough inventory of bric-à-brac – both people's material and mental furniture – than any of [Ford's] writings since *The Fifth Queen*'.[7] It is almost superfluous to notice that, as testified by Valentine's thoughts, a note of parody rings in Christopher's taxonomic endeavours. This suggests that his cataloguing obstinacy might have been inspired by *Bouvard et Pécuchet*, Flaubert's last, unfinished novel, which, in the mid-nineteenth century, systematically mocks the inconsistencies, irrelevances, and massive foolishness of received opinions. As Ford himself reminds us in *The March of Literature*, '[i]n the attempt to demonstrate the folly of accepted ideas to an indifferent world, Bouvard and Pécuchet had taken All Knowledge for their province, and […] pursued each department of human folly with the determination of rats clinging to the jugular vein of terriers'.[8]

Hardly less prominent, in *The Virgin in the Garden*, are the inventorying and 'mathematical'[9] powers of Marcus's mind, which can provide just as painstaking, long catalogues of the world around. At its most synthetic, when the compositional order is simultaneously disclosed, his 'gaze' is like that 'of Argos, with a thousand foveae held motionless to a thousand points on the canvas'[10] of the world:

> He had played a game called spreading himself. This began with a deliberate extension of his field of vision, until by some sleight of perception he was looking out at once from the four-field corners, the high ends of the goal-posts, the running wire top of the fence. It was not any sense of containing the things he saw. Rather he surveyed them from no vantage point, or all at once. (*VG* 30)

Marcus is endowed with eidetic faculties, that is, the ability to perceive and recall a highly detailed image of a complex scene or pattern. The most convincing documentation of this ability is a case study conducted by Charles Stromeyer in 1970 and reported in *Psychology Today*.[11] The subject was a woman called Elizabeth who

could memorise two separate grids of 1000 dots randomly placed, and then mentally merge them into a 3-D image that most people needed a stereoscopic viewer and both grids to see. In *The Virgin in the Garden*, the references to grids and Marcus's 'eidetic, stereoscopic visionary eye' (*VG* 211) testify to Byatt's knowledge of these experiments. But what is surprising is that, in *No More Parades*, Tietjens too is repeatedly credited with a similar capacity for an expanded field of mental vision: '[e]laborate problems' 'went before his eyes and ears', '[t]he whole map of the embattled world ran out in front of him – as large as a field' 'a ten-acre field of *papier mâché*' (*PE* 493).

Foucault was the first to describe the construction, in the so-called 'classical age' (roughly the eighteenth century), of disciplined and disciplinary spaces. According to him, the naturalist, the physician, and the economist are dazed by immensity, stunned by plurality, in that the numberless combinations resulting from the multiplicity of objects are too heavy a burden for them to carry. Their descriptions, prescriptions, organigrams are meant precisely to organise disquieting multiplicity and thwart chaos.[12] It is no accident that for Marcus the production of perfectly arranged mathematical visions amounts to a therapeutic technique 'for avoiding thought' (*VG* 74). This sounds close to Ford longing for states of 'profound lack of thought, of profound self-forgetfulness'[13] as well as reminding us, in *It Was the Nightingale*, that the creation of Tietjens owed much to Ford's close friend Marwood and his vision of arithmetic as soothing: '[w]hen he talked of Higher Mathematics it was as if he were listening to the voice of angels. I suppose […] he saw resurrections when he thought of recurrent patterns in numbers'.[14] Yet, the more intractable the matter is, as Foucault describes it, the more its mastering involves psychosomatic strains; which is the reason why Tietjens and Marcus are often represented as deeply suffering in their efforts of omniscience. In *No More Parades*, Christopher's mind is plagued by the'[f]ragments of scenes of fighting, voices, names' which go 'before his eyes and ears' (*PE* 492-3) and become a form of torture.

Indeed, I think, we are not wide of the mark if we say that Tietjens foreshadows the role played in some postmodern novels by harassed, traumatised psyches on the verge of derangement and whose omniscient powers provide the only connecting principle of the narrative. I am thinking, for example, of Geoff Ryman's *The Child Garden* (1989) or Michael Moorcock's *Mother London* (1988). In the

latter, the narration moves between WW2 and nowadays and enacts three traumatised psyches struggling to deal with the cacophony that is the life of the city; each of them spending time in hospitals and on medication because the city voices they hear telepathically are a painful perpetual presence. History and memory are conceived here as strongly marked by the experience of the individual and collective trauma of the Blitz.

But even more interesting is the fact that, for Byatt and Ford, the issue of memory is closely and similarly related to the act of creation. After all, was not *Mnemosyne* (the goddess of Memory) the mother of all the muses in Greek mythology? She represented the mental power which preserves and arranges the phenomena of experienced time, because, as Mitchell reminds us, '[t]he pictorial aspect of poetry is not simply its imagery but the patterns of order which allow its storage and retrieval in the mind'.[15] Sigmund Freud believed that in mental life nothing which has once been formed can perish. Everything you have ever experienced is there in the subconscious. The question is not whether you can retain memory, the question is whether you can retrieve it. If you wanted to mentally process the material and data collected from the smallest details of knowledge, you should develop the functions of eidetic memory and imaginative thinking. Rare or unlikely though these mnemonic powers may be, they are precisely what Ford claims to have used when writing *Parade's End.* Recalling the genesis of his tetralogy, he finds he still knows 'every "detail"' of military practices and incredibly every single feature of the landscapes he crossed during the war: 'I went over in my mind every contour of the road from Bailleul to Locre, Locre-Pont de Nieppe, Nieppe down to Armentières – and of all the by-roads from Nieppe to Ploegsteert, Westoutre, Dranoutre. And I found I could remember with astonishing vividness every house left, in September, 1916, along with the whole road, and almost every tree – and hundreds of shell-holes!' (*IWN* 205).

The Spectrality of the Veil

In this commitment to thoroughness, Ford admits,

> my mind is cluttered up with an amazing amount of useless detail. But to me it is not useless, for without it I should feel insecure. I may – and quite frequently do – plan out every scene, sometimes even every conversation, in a novel before I sit down to write it. But unless I know the history back to the remotest times of any place of which I am going to write, I cannot begin the work. And I must know –

> from personal observation, not reading – the shapes of windows, the nature of door-knobs, the aspects of kitchens, the material of which dresses are made, the leather used in shoes, the method used in manuring fields, the nature of bus tickets. I shall never use any of these things in the book. But unless I know what sort of door-knob his fingers closed on, how shall I – satisfactorily to myself – get my character out of doors? (*IWN* 204)

It is not just a matter of accurate documentation. A moving note of anxiety resonates in these words, as if the attempt to regain the very ontology of past existences and material circumstances were at stake. This is doubly poignant, in that it implies both mental exertion and the unexpressed awareness, or fear, that, as the pre-Socratic philosopher Gorgias stated, even if something were ontologically knowable, it would be neither expressible nor communicable. Ford is precariously suspended between two uncertainties: the possibly unattainable being into which he is delving and the ambitious attempt of its resurrection in the reader's inner eye.

This reminds me of the sketch by Hogarth which Ford reproduces in an essay on writing techniques to explain what Impressionism is. The 'drawing', which the painter 'made […] for a bet', represented a 'watchman with the pike over his shoulder and the dog at his heels going in at a door, the whole being executed in four lines'.[16]

> Now, that is the high-watermark of Impressionism; since, if you look at those lines for long enough, you will begin to see the watchman with his slouch hat, the handle of the pike coming well down into the cobble-stones, the knee-breeches, the leathern garters strapped round his stocking, and the surly expression of the dog, which is bull-hound with a touch of mastiff in it. (*CW* 37)

The Impressionist writer's vocation is to 'make you see'[17] the being behind and through the scanty traces left by words on the surface of the page or behind the fugitive touch of the character's hand on the door-knob. These ghostly markings should work as conductors to revivify buried histories. But if Impressionism has to do with visual evocation, what it conjures up is ghosts, not real beings; in Byatt's own words, referring to the characters in *The Fifth Queen*, they are 'part solid, part emotion'.[18] Indeed, the term Impressionism could be read also in this spectral light.

In an interview Byatt refers to her novel *Possession* as 'a kind of palimpsest or veil. It was going to be the images on the veil […] through which my readers would guess that the shapes of the things that were hidden behind the markings were not the same as the

markings'.[19] Here Byatt, who has always been deeply interested in painting, might be evoking the classical tale of the competition between the two Greek painters Zeuxis and Parrhasios (which, in any case, is worth mentioning, if only because it so exemplifies my point). Initially, 'Zeuxis has the advantage of having made grapes that attracted the birds'; 'his friend Parrhasios triumphs over him for having painted on the wall a veil, a veil so lifelike that Zeuxis, turning towards him said, *Well, and now show us what you have painted behind it*'.[20] At the same time, the reference to the palimpsest identifies Byatt's surfaces – painted surfaces, make-up (the whitening on Queen Elizabeth I's face), theatrical clothes, fabrics, all of them recurrent images in *The Virgin in the Garden*) – as the surface of a Freudian *Wunderblock*, or 'mystic writing pad', which, now and then, by adherence to the matrix below, retrieves the faint traces of the mnemonic, cultural reservoir beneath. It is symptomatic of this that, for Byatt, the 'ghostliness' 'of a biography' – which constitutes its inherent 'beauty'[21] – is the fact that the huge amount of facts it painstakingly collects are but the spectral tracings of the forever irretrievable personality behind the veil. Likewise, a plausible interpretation of her vision of *The Fifth Queen* is that the 'solid portraits' of Henry VIII are the real thing – ontologically – 'haunt[ing]' Ford and his reader not directly but through their spectral fictional projection: a 'phantasmagoria of almost featureless flesh', which is 'vague' in that, precisely, 'part solid, part emotion' (*PF* 17). As in Derrida's pun, ontology turns into hauntology, the paradoxical state of the spectre between being and non-being, alive and dead, presence and absence.[22] Unlike in George Eliot's *The Lifted Veil* (1859),[23] no curtain will be drawn. The work of art, for Byatt and Ford, is the curtain itself and the *ombres chinoises* projected on it.

According to the Derrida of *Specters of Marx*, ghosts are symptoms that insist their singular tale be retold and their wrongs acknowledged; the crime they suffered is their having been dispossessed of life, substance and full meaning. This is the reason why inventories can so easily turn into the void geometric grids of Marcus's vision: deprived of its contents, the space of the inventory – where every object falls into its compartment to celebrate the fiction of the whole – is nothing more that an empty pigeon-hole case. But one should consider also how Tietjens's solipsistic inventorying builds around him what Ford had earlier called a 'house of observations', which is itself ghostly, in that it is a pale phantom of

nineteenth-century treatises of natural sciences. The naturalist, according to Ford, does not examine the rabbit, the weasel or the chaffinch to understand the outer world. Rather, '[h]e is building up his little house of observations; he is filling in the chinks of the wattle-wall that shuts out for him the monotony of his life'.[24] This process is not cognitive but aesthetic: it does not fathom the depths of reality, but cuts out its images and sets them in the crevices of the grill-work, putting together its reassuring, meaningless patchwork surface. Patterns are a substitute for meaning once it has flown away. As Marcus's visions, which order reality into modern geometric forms, Ford's inventories are at the junction between old taxonomies and modernist art. In 'A Day of Battle', for example, the enumeration of instructions which assemble the soldiers on the ground turns into a fantastic, as much as vacuous, pointillist dance: 'I myself seemed to have drifted there at the bidding of indifferently written characters on small scraps of paper' such as a 'WO telegram'; 'a yellow railway warrant; a white embarkation order; a pink movement order'.[25] Abstract textures intersect the taxonomies of the material world.

Similarly, in Byatt's *The Virgin in the Garden*, the cultural interconnections between the present and the past are like patterns drawn by intertwined threads: repeated, interrupted, taken up, altered, used and reused over the centuries and through social strata:

> In London thousands of small seed pearls and crystals were being sewn into a shimmering work on the Queen's coronation dress of white slipper satin. Emblems of Commonwealth and Empire were being embroidered in coloured silks, roses and thistles, maples and acorn, on the hem of this garment.
>
> Felicity Wells, co-ordinating the artistic efforts in Blesford, saw herself at the spinning centre of endless threads of culture, reknit, reknotted. (*VG* 137)

The projection of historical depths and cultural stratification onto the spatial plane of the patterned textile imaginatively conjoins two apparently opposing aspirations: on the one hand the pre- and post-modernist preoccupation with realism and history, on the other hand the two-dimensionality of modern abstract and decorative art.

The Portrait's Hauntology as Parody: Ford beyond Modernism

Inventories are not the only spectral surfaces for Byatt and Ford. Portraits, clothes and (for Byatt) even make-up, conceived as theatrical masks, play a similar role. In *Hans Holbein*, for example, Ford suggests that '[i]t is a common belief and possibly a very true

belief that painters in painting figures exaggerate physical and mental traits so that the sitters assume some of their own peculiarities'; so '[o]ne might argue from the eyes of Holbein's pictures that the man himself was a good-humoured sceptic' (*Holbein* 43). The portrait points to something behind it: the original perception in which the surface is luminously bathed; but also, further behind, the juxtaposing body of the painter, the purest essence of all. Artists are, in Ford's words, 'mystical doubles' (*Holbein* 8), infinitely irretrievable and desirable because disclosed to our gaze only indirectly, through the infinite mediation of their sitters' physiognomies. The more these somehow replicate the original, the more they distance him from us, '[a]s some women', suggests Byatt, 'might desire unknown actors at first, and through them Benedick or Berowne or Hamlet, and through them a dead playwright' (*VG* 430). Past and present intersect and juxtapose their uncanny symmetries. In Ford's *Vive Le Roy*, Cassie 'descended the wooden steps, going down, a queen into her kingdom… As the King of here had once descended into the streets to walk among his faithful people'.[26] In *The Virgin in the Garden*, in the enactment of *Astrea*, a play on Queen Elizabeth I, Stephanie 'saw the symmetry of the' young actress 'spread-eagled on the grass in the warm sun, and the old woman [Queen Elizabeth I] laid out in the gathered dark as the ladies-in-waiting pulled the folds of her nightgown, after her death-struggle' (*VG* 479).

Physiognomies co-present *in absentia* reverberate all the way down to us through the centuries. '[T]he "here" of presence is taken from' their successive reincarnations 'since the' subject 'is not only this one, in this place, but the others in many other places' and times.[27] In *Holbein* Ford remarks: 'you will be astounded to see how exactly' the 'sketches at Windsor' 'resemble the faces you will pass in the Windsor streets' (*Holbein* 158). Likewise, at the beginning of Byatt's novel, visitors to the National Portrait Gallery in 1968 are 'the peripatetic folk with the new ancient faces'; the young women like 'several George Sands' and 'Mesdemoiselles Sacripant, in trousers' (*VG* 8). 'Under English macintoshes, English tweed, English cashmere, American tourists edged doggedly forward' (*VG* 89). The Jamesian and Fordian theme of the Europeanised and Anglicised American, as one may find in *Daisy Miller* (1878) or *The Good Soldier*, is revived here to show that surfaces can reveal but also, above all, mask, problematising individual and national identity. Consequently, even the real thing behind becomes suspect; or else

tinted, according to a typically postmodern practice, with parody. 'Turn' Elizabeth 'out of her kingdom in her petticoats and handy-dandy, which is the actress, which is the queen?' (*VG* 14); strip the royal persona (its imagined sacredness working as a sort of apotheosis of the ontology of the human being) of his sumptuous clothes: which is *le roi*, which is Leroy? Ford's *Vive Le Roy*, written in 1936, is a novel on a king who is present only in other people's words and, finally, in the actor impersonating him: Walter Leroy. Art itself is represented in the novel as ghostly: always evoked but hardly ever physically present. With World War Two looming large on the horizon, art is more and more the hostage of a power depicted as variously sinister, grotesque, and farcical.

The novel is Ford's last version of the theme – haunting him throughout his career – of the royal effigy. But here parody is setting up a trap. The display of mistaken identities, the dressing-up of Leroy and Cassie as king and marquise, is, at heart, playful: it undoubtedly prompts the reader to indulge in fantasies of royalty – '"[i]f I were the king…"' is 'the question that every man sooner or later puts to himself' (*VLR* 11) – and participate in the game. Clothes are powerful conductors to prompt identification with fictional characters. Consider the scenes preceding the meeting between Cassie and Walter, where, through ludicrous disguises, great metamorphoses seem possible to Cassie: Leroy will be the king, she his secret lover. The crescendo of excitement and expectation is conveyed by the ever-changing, dreamlike scenarios through which Cassie slides, in the infinitely procrastinated approach to the fulfilment of her desire:

> They were in front of an illuminated cavern…. The vocables TU-LU-LU blazed…. They were in the hall of a theatre…. In vestibules where men stood about…. In a corridor papered with purple damascene… In the shadows of a box with before it a wall of light…. Seated in gilt chairs, out in the full light; lounging as if they had sat there all their lives. The Sergeant Carr, got up like a congressman, looked very gentlemanly for a congressman…. She herself was a Jewish maharanee…. What have you?… Feathered nudes down below…. Posturing voluptuously out of time with the exciting music. (*VLR* 285)

These final scenes are interspersed with the strange, slightly irritating echo of the crowd of Paris repeatedly 'whispering' (*VLR* 292) and 'laughing' (*VLR* 287, 293). Such flashes of people 'determined to rejoice' (*VLR* 288), while Cassie's comic drama and sexual arousal is going on, give us the unpleasant and embarrassing feeling that,

besides her, we ourselves, who have identified with her ambitions, are being laughed at. Enticed by the game of disguises promising the transfiguration of Leroy into the king, the readers are turned from spectators into protagonists. The writer may thus unmask *their own* desire, denude them of the wish in which they are clad and leave them metaphorically naked before a whispering and laughing crowd, as in Hans Andersen's fairy tale *The Emperor's New Clothes.* '[Biala] remembered [Ford]' in his late years, 'toying with' the idea of 'a detective novel in which the murderer was the reader' (Saunders, vol. 2, 493) – a project he would never realise. Yet what Ford does manage to turn the reader into here is, more playfully, the laughed-at co-protagonist of his detective farce.

Finally, it could be said that in *Vive Le Roy* Ford draws his conclusion about the theme of the past and royalty which has possessed him throughout his literary career, deciding that the final note to strike, when dealing with history, is parody. Such an emphasis foreshadows the postmodern appropriation of bygone centuries. For Ford as for Byatt, the past is the object of both a melancholic, ghostly reconstruction and a mocking re-enactment – a poetics which makes their works both realistic and experimental. Therefore, Ford's retrieval of the past and his juxtaposition of different times should be regarded not as a shortcoming but as an imaginative resource, as well as a technique akin to today's aesthetics. Our idea that poetry can ensue from the juxtaposition of the old and the new was, indeed, also his.

NOTES

1 A. S. Byatt, 'Introduction' to Ford Madox Ford, *The Fifth Queen*, London: Penguin, 1999, p. vii. The introduction first appeared in *The Fifth Queen* published by Oxford University Press in 1984.
2 A. S. Byatt, *On Histories and Stories: Selected Essays*, London: Chatto and Windus, 2000, pp. 3-4.
3 *Ibid*, p. 4.
4 A. S. Byatt, 'Introduction', pp. viii, xiv.
5 Mira Stout, 'What Possessed A. S. Byatt? A British Novelist's Breakthrough Surprises Everyone but the British Novelist', *New York Times Magazine*, 26 May 1991, p. 14.
6 Ford Madox Ford, *Some Do Not . . .* in *Parade's End*, Manchester: Carcanet, 1997 – henceforth *PE*; p. 135.

7 Max Saunders, *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, vol. 2, p. 154.
8 Ford, *The March of Literature*, New York: Dial Press, 1938, p. 712.
9 A. S. Byatt, *The Virgin in the Garden*, London: Vintage, 2003 – henceforth *VG*; p. 74.
10 Norman Bryson, *Vision and Painting. The Logic of the Gaze*, London: Macmillan, 1983, p. 121. A fovea is an area consisting of a small depression in the retina where vision is most acute.
11 C. F. Stromeyer, 'Eidetikers', *Psychology Today*, 4 (November 1970), 76-80.
12 See Michel Foucault, *Surveiller et punir. Naissance de la prison*, Paris: Gallimard, 1975, p. 150.
13 Ford, *Hans Holbein the Younger: a Critical Monograph*, London: Duckworth, 1905 – henceforth *Holbein;* p. 152.
14 Ford, *It Was the Nightingale*, London: Heinemann, 1934 – henceforth *IWN;* p. 203.
15 W. J. T. Mitchell, 'Spatial Form in Literature: towards a General Theory', *Critical Enquiry*, 6:3 (Spring 1980), 558-9.
16 Ford, 'On Impressionism', in *Critical Writings of Ford Madox Ford*, ed. Frank MacShane, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964 – henceforth *CW*; pp. 36-7.
17 'My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel – it is, before all, to make you *see*'; Joseph Conrad, 'Preface' to *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'*; *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'/Typhoon and Other Stories*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985, p. 13.
18 A. S. Byatt, *Portraits in Fiction*, London: Vintage, 2002 – henceforth *PF;* p. 17.
19 Margaret Reynolds and Jonathan Noakes, *A. S. Byatt: The Essential Guide*, London: Vintage, 2004, p. 17.
20 Jacques Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*. *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XI*, New York and London: Norton, 1998, p. 103.
21 Reynolds and Noakes, *A. S. Byatt*, p. 20.
22 See Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*, London: Routledge, 1994.
23 Byatt's interest in George Eliot is well-known. She edited and introduced Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss* (1978) and co-edited, with Nicholas Warren, *George Eliot: Selected Essays, Poems and Other Writings* (1990), both for Penguin.
24 Ford, *The Heart of the Country*, London: Alston Rivers, 1906, p. 102.
25 Ford, 'A Day of Battle', in *War Prose*, ed. Max Saunders, Manchester: Carcanet, 1999, p. 38.
26 Ford, *Vive Le Roy*, Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1936 – henceforth *VLR*; p. 33.
27 Bryson, *Vision and Painting*, p. 122.