

This essay offers up a provocative new theoretical tack on the topic area of the dialectic of capital, the dialectic of cruelty, and the dialectic of power and of their intricate inter-relationships and forms of being, in selected narratives of two Occidental novelists, Henry James and his key paper friend Honoré de Balzac; it does so from a genuinely inter-disciplinary perspective that draws from heterogeneous waves of critical theory broadly conceived, having thus something to say to contemporary culture both of general and of academic interest alike.

Concepts elucidated in the work for the first time in a systematic way in the study of the humanities, include the theoretical concepts and arguments of true power and capital as ‘un-power’, ‘non-power’, ‘un-capital’, and ‘non-capital’, which attempt to meet theoretical and practical requirements for a twenty-first century increasingly submitted to the logic of capitalist power. The present study thus also offers new ways of thinking about the age-long subject of big power and capital that would align itself with such traditions of thought as what Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari have termed ‘the New Earth’.

“This book makes fascinating and long-overdue connections between Balzac’s and Henry James’s literary treatment of money—money both as an economic fact and as a metaphor and symbol. Dr Roraback’s astute analysis is pioneering and should be read by all experts on these two authors as well as by anyone who has an interest in the post-1800 novel”.

—Alison Finch, Professor and Senior Research Fellow,
Churchill College, University of Cambridge

“very sensitively and well written [...] a most interesting project”

—Stephen A. Erickson, Professor of Philosophy and the E. Wilson Lyon
Chair of Humanities, Pomona College

“an important new vision of Henry James [...] Roraback’s compelling use of contemporary theory pitches his book to a wide reading audience [...] an important work of literary scholarship, which will contribute significantly to a number of intellectual fields”

—Henry B. Wonham, Professor of English, University of Oregon

Erik Sherman Roraback teaches critical theory, international cinema, James Joyce and U.S. literature in Charles University (est. 1348) and in F.A.M.U. (The Academy of Performing Arts, Film and TV School) at Prague. He holds degrees from the University of Oxford (D.Phil.) and from Pomona College (B.A.) and has been Visiting Professor in the Université de Provence.

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Erik S. Roraback

The Dialectics of Late
Capital and Power

THE DIALECTICS OF LATE CAPITAL AND POWER



James, Balzac and Critical Theory

BY

Erik S. Roraback

CSP