

## John Marcher's Self-Becoming in Queer Temporality in Henry James's "The Beast in the Jungle"

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**Kim, Hera. "John Marcher's Self-Becoming in Queer Temporality in Henry James's 'The Beast in the Jungle.'" *Studies in English Language & Literature* 46.3 (2020): 41-59.** Ever since Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Leo Bersani showed two ground-breaking analyses, criticism of the male protagonist John Marcher in Henry James's "The Beast in the Jungle" has followed their two main leads. Between Sedgwick and Bersani, this essay on Bersani's side keeps a critical distance from psychoanalytical approach that probes into Marcher's identity as a hidden secret, what Sedgwick calls homosexual panic in heteronormativity. Employing recent queer theory's discussion of queer temporality, this essay examines Marcher's alternative mode of selfhood that does not follow the dominant timeline of heteronormativity. In the frame of queer temporality, I focus on how James undermines the factual sense of timeliness through the failed remembrance of past in Marcher and May's first encounter in the first half of this essay. Doing so, I illuminate the significance of the blurred timeliness in the past temporality on account of its destabilization of the legitimacy of the hidden truth in the past in psychoanalysis. In the second half of this essay, I examine how James pushes the complexity of the temporality through Marcher's mobilizing consciousness in the immediacy of present moment. Along with Marcher's intensified sense of mobilizing consciousness, I conclude that such psychic mobility in the consciousness only in the present is James's profound means of inventing the self as becoming in its constant revision of the past. (Chonnam National University)

**Key Words:** Henry James, Leo Bersani, Queer Temporality, Psychoanalysis, Selfhood

## I. Introduction

For long decades, Henry James's "The Beast in the Jungle" (Henceforth BJ) has been read as "a quasi-tragic account of unfulfilled, because [of] unrecognized, heterosexual love" (Benjamin Bateman 85), and critics have claimed the male protagonist John Marcher's egotistic self as the cause of failed heterosexual love. Later, such moral reading centered on the critique of the male protagonist's egotism have turned to new directions by two ground-breaking theorists, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Leo Bersani. On the one hand, as Matthew Helmers points out, in discovering the hidden beast - the homosexual panic in Marcher's closet - Sedgwick has helped readers identify Marcher's "secret of the beast in the jungle" (101). On the other hand, Bersani challenges the centripetal orbit of the hidden secret, argues for James's "indeterminate use of 'it'" in which Marcher's "it" mobilizes as "a free-floating pronominal signifier" (22), and suggests his "ontological distinction" as "the embodiment of a refusal of all embodiment" (23-4). After Sedgwick and Bersani, critics have tended to follow either Sedgwick or Bersani in analyzing Marcher's "it."

In fact, one of the primary issues in discussions of Bersani and Sedgwick revolves around whether the self is understood in a psychoanalytic way or not. Whereas Sedgwick identifies Marcher's "it" with the hidden secret grounded in psychoanalysis, Bersani liberates the "it" from "it"'s being confined "in prior, hidden or unconscious" (David McWhirter, "Bersani's James" 213). Doing so, Bersani problematizes the psychoanalytic principle that explores the self-identity in terms of the hidden truth of past. Here Sedgwick and Bersani are separated from each other in the use of the institutional notion of hidden secret in psychoanalysis in understanding Marcher's self. In this essay, following Bersani's liberation of the self from the hidden secret, I aim to enrich criticism of *BJ* by considering the recent issue of queer temporality and its impact on the self. In discussions of "[q]ueer theory's involvement with time" (E. L. McCallum and

Mikko Tuhkanen 6), queer theorists have paid attentions to the importance of queer temporality in its relation to self-identity. McCallum and Tuhkanen introduce to queerness and highlight "its untimely relation to socially shared temporal phases" (6), namely, the queerness's disruption of social temporality. Defining the queer temporality not in "*chronos*, of linear time ... [but in] the time of *kairos*, the moment of opportunity" (italics in original 8-9), McCallum and Tuhkanen employ the non-linear queer temporality to critique the constructed identities in the dominant temporality of the "biopolitical schedule of reproductive heterosexuality" (5). In regards above, the queer temporality for McCallum and Tuhkanen plays a pivotal role in challenging against the reproductive heterosexual temporality and in imagining a queer self that slips out of the dominant temporal phase.

If Bersani's James is centered on the critique of the psychoanalytical use of secret in the past and suggests a glimpse of "the alternative selfhood" (McWhirter 215) in which the self mobilizes beyond Freudian narrative of the psychological truth, I will show a fully-fledged analysis of Marcher's alternative selfhood; the self not just as a static being but as becoming in Jamesian realignment of temporality. Doing so, because of Marcher's unconventionality, I consider and analyze his self in the terms of selfhood—"the quality that constitutes one's individuality" (*OED*) rather than self-identity, the "set of qualities or characteristics ... in relation to social or cultural context" (*OED*).

In the story, James abandons the clock-time-based linear temporality by evoking the "temporal awkwardness" (Helmets 104) between Marcher and May Bartram in their failure of remembering the past. By rendering Marcher and May's cacophonous memories of their first meeting in the past, James undermines the authenticity of what has happened as fact in the past. Rather than allowing Marcher and May to explore their past, James relocate them in the present moments with the immediately pressing concerns. If the first half of the essay focuses on James's complex use of temporalities of past (in memory) and present (in consciousness),

the second half of the essay attempts to incorporate Jamesian non-linear fragmented temporalities of past and present into a different law of time, which renders Marcher as the queer self. This is to say, in the latter part of this essay, I interpret that Marcher's excessively mobile consciousness only in the present deprives him of the teleological mappability between past and present. Twisting the dominance of the chronological past and present, James undermines the static mode of self confined in the teleological mapping of the past and present, and he more significantly imagines an alternative mode of selfhood as becoming that keeps reconfiguring self without an unchanging core identity. On the grounds above, my final argument is that Jamesian queer temporality in the oddest way liberates Marcher's self from the teleological map of selfhood in which the self is designed to follow the prescriptive temporal narrativity of psychoanalytic institution.

## II. Queer Temporality in the Unlocatable Past

Previously, critics such as Bateman, Helmers, and Christopher Looby have examined the issue of queer temporality – or, queer time – in *BJ*. Exploring the congealed triangulation between “intersubjectivity, knowledge, and time” in Sedgwick's “The Beast in the Closet: James and the Writing of Homosexual Panic,” Helmers unpacks “the role of time” (103). He probes into the issue of time and reveals that “the numerous pronouns with ambiguous antecedents” in *BJ* elicit the “temporal awkwardness” that serves to “destabilize the fixity of the proffered subjects” (104-5). Because the “temporal awkwardness” prevents the past temporality from being factual timeliness as de facto knowledge, what has actually happened, it causes the temporality to “[remain] ambiguously in the present” (105). Helmers more provocatively argues that the “temporal awkwardness” makes the distance for Marcher from “the historicity of the house [Weatherend]” (106) with which Helmer equates the historicity of

heteronormativity. For Helmers, Marcher's "queer-time of stutters, lapses, and quasi-obliterated pasts ... causes him to leave both the house and its promises of heteronormative coupling" (106). Looby, too, sets out his analysis from Sedgwick yet with a different issue; the historicization of the beast in the closet in Sedgwick's interpretation. Looby first "historicizes" (266) Sedgwick's context, "the terrible time of the AIDS" (270), and seems to acknowledge the legitimacy of Marcher's secret of homosexual panic in the specific historical context. However, Looby's fundamental question is the nature of historicization in which "[t]ime and intersubjectivity are indeed of the 'essence' ... of a secret" (266). In other words, it is time that determines the "essence" of secret or what should be secret.

Along with Helmers and Looby, Bateman's queer messianism shows yet another perspective—Marcher and May as a queer "ethical pact" (88)—and argues that their queer love without a name doubts "the given-ness of the categories, relationships, and identifications" (89) in the heterosexual convention. Pondering on the resistant potential in "a love without a name" (89), Bateman argues for the queerness in the relation wherein Marcher and May do not recognize each other as husband or wife, and suggests that their relational queerness can be realized only in the "messianic temporality" (83) "whose time had decidedly not arrived" (89). Bateman elicits the queerness of the "messianic temporality" (83) from the relation between Marcher and May, and he employs it as a critical means of disrupting the continuity of the heterosexual normativity, even if the "messianic temporality" will never come.

As Helmers, Looby, and Bateman have characterized the queerness in queer time, James's use of time in *BJ* is notoriously intricate. At the beginning when Marcher and May have encountered for the first time at Weatherend, it is subtle yet noticeable that the institutional authority of the past seems to disappear due to their inaccurate and unreliable memory of the past. In the couple's first meeting at Weatherend, we are given to understand that Marcher's secret "it" comes from the past, as May reminds him that he divulged to her his "it"

“nearly ten” (35) years ago. May says to Marcher: “It’s dreadful to bring a person back at any time to what he was ten years before. If you’ve lived away from it, ... so much the better” (37). This means that, the “it” has not even occurred at Weatherend, but “it” emerged long before their first encounter in Italy. Ever since this moment is invoked, Marcher—who has forgotten what he might have said to her and barely even remembers her—becomes preoccupied with the “it” and tries to find out how his secret would affect his fate. Because Marcher’s consciousness seems to gravitate toward the “it”—what he and May have talked about the “it” in the past—readers are, too, easily captured by the “it” in the past. Yet, although the “it” revolves round Marcher and readers, James disturbs the centripetal orbit of the “it” through Marcher and May’s bafflement regarding their memories of what transpired ten years earlier.

James first describes that Marcher dimly recognizes May as “a reminder, yet not quite a remembrance” (34). May, the tantalizing reminder, causes Marcher to feel “something of which he had lost the beginning” (34). Marcher’s dim memory of May, however, is further stretched to an imaginary remembrance by confirming himself that “[she] *was* there on harder terms than any one; she was there as a consequence of things suffered, . . . and she remembered him very much as she was remembered” (italics in original 34). Noticing Marcher’s “devot[ion] more imagination to her” (34), James undermines Marcher’s self-confirmation that he remembers May. Considering Marcher’s imagination of May, the subsequent dialogue when he and May have “at last thus [come] to speech” (34) becomes much more suggestive, since the imaginary memory hinders the “it” from being accurately remembered. Marcher says to May, “I met you years and years ago in Rome. I remember all about it” (35). Marcher’s attempt to remember May, nonetheless, fails, as she re-corrects his memory: “It hadn’t been at Rome - it had been Naples; and it hadn’t been eight years before - it had been more nearly ten”; Marcher “*really* didn’t remember the least thing about her” (italics in original 35). James gives another turn of the screw in the following narrations that

cast doubt even on May's correction of the past memory:

They lingered together still, . . . and both neglecting the house, just waiting as to see if a memory or two more wouldn't again breathe on them. It hadn't taken them many minutes, after all, to put down on the table, like the cards of a pack, those that constituted their respective hands; only what came out was that the pack was unfortunately not perfect - that the past, invoked, invited, encouraged, could give them, naturally, no more than it had. (36)

In using the simile that "the cards of [their] pack" are "unfortunately not perfect," James insinuates the limits of their past memory, as the memory does not work perfectly for neither Marcher nor May. Helmers rightly points out the importance of the memory's having "no more than it had," as he captures Marcher's characteristic queer time that does not have "[the] past to indicate" (105). Unpacking the knotted "grammatical structure" of the sentences, Helmers reveals that "from [the] point of no-past, the tale turns back upon itself with the use of the dash to repeat the appositive phrase twice" (105). Helmers articulates that "[t]he sentence repeats itself, returns to the present moment again, and then moves on to the next present moment" (105) without the indication of past, and claims that "[f]or Marcher, there exists the present moment, renewed and renewing, lapsed and overlapping" (105).

As Helmers's analysis shown, the disappearance of the past causes the present temporality to be more emphasized and intensified especially in Marcher's consciousness that shows his constant engagement with the immediate concerns in varying circumstances. From the subtle transition from the importance of past to that of present, the story seems to move the central narrativity from Marcher's secret "it" invoked from the past to his concerns in consciousness at each immediate present moment. As James doggedly traces Marcher's labyrinth of consciousness, readers become gradually forget that Marcher and May have once talked about the "it" of the past and become redirected to his consciousness in

present. If psychoanalysis pursues to identify the self from tracing back to his or her personal past, James's exploration of the consciousness only at the present moment defies the psychoanalysis's institutional use of past.

### III. Marcher's Mobilizing Consciousness in the Present Temporality

Sharon Cameron has introduced to Jamesian consciousness in *The American Scene*, and I employ her introduction as guidance to explore Marcher's consciousness in the story. At the outset of the introduction, Cameron dissociates Jamesian consciousness "from psychology" (1) and asserts that in *The American Scene* "James wants to disseminate consciousness, showing how much diverse territory it can be made to cover" (2). Cameron's analysis below shows how to fail to locate and comprehend James's voice in *The American Scene*.

Thus James has rebuked New York—for the 'pitch of all the noises,' for the 'February blasts,' for the 'character of the traffic,' for its buildings, and its values—only himself to be rebuked: 'It's all very well,' the voice of the air seemed to say . . . 'to 'criticize,' but you distinctly take an interest and are the victim of your interest.' And the air (still talking after two pages) expansively registers both its 'own' point of view, 'New York . . . is always forgiven,' *and* James's challenge to it: 'On what ground 'forgiven'? of course you ask.' Finally, the air is not simply projected by James. Nor does it simply anticipate James. But, more vertiginous still, the air, as presented, corrects James: . . . Finally the air is represented as bullying by disputing a disclaimer James has not yet spoken . . . It is precisely the point that in this cacophony of voices, we be unable to say which voice is James's (italics in original 5-6).

In the passage, although James as the subject of the impression seems to rebuke New York, the air imperceptibly penetrates into the narrations, scatters James's point of view, and intensifies its vocality in the narrations almost in "bullying" manner. Accordingly, in the "cacophony of voices," as Cameron puts it, readers

fail to locate either "which voice is James's" (6) or which voice is the air's. By fusing his voice with that of the air, James characterizes his consciousness with its "versatility" as well as "its defiance" of coherence, as he declares that the consciousness "cannot be bound by the singleness of function" (2). By demonstrating that the "consciousness, a pure subject, becomes empowered outside the structures of psychological realism" (Cameron 7), James presents the consciousness as a means of challenging the psychological coherence. Jamesian consciousness, in this light, is employed for both "celebrating the versatility of consciousness" and defying "a consistency" (2). Such consciousness as "a subject outside of psychological confine[ment]" (2) resonates with Bersani's perspective later that "the late Jamesian text frustrates realism's desire for psychological depth, coherence, and mappability in order to reinvent itself as a kind of machine for producing new desires, for 'invent[ing] *other* pleasures'" (italics in original McWhirter 213). Both Cameron and Bersani's attention to Jamesian consciousness show its potential to liberate the locked self from the institutional narrative of hidden secret and truth in psychoanalysis, as James's characters and narrators slip out of the mappable narrative and engage with the immediacy of present in the mobilizing consciousness.

Returning to *BJ*, such mobility of consciousness is well played out in part II of the story, when Marcher and May try to find out the meaning of their extraordinary relationship (43), and when they differentiate their relation from the conventions of heterosexual relationship in the world. The narrator gives commentary on unconventionality in Marcher's understanding of his relation with May.

All this naturally was a sign of how much he [Marcher] took the intercourse itself for granted. There was nothing more to be done about *that*. It simply existed; had sprung into being with her first penetrating question to him in the autumn light there at Weatherend. The real form it should have taken on the basis that stood out large was the form of their marrying. But the devil in this was that the very basis itself put marrying out of the question. His conviction, his apprehension, his obsession, in short,

wasn't a privilege he could invite a woman to share; and that consequence of it was precisely what was the matter with him. (*italics in original* 43)

In the passage, insinuating the cultural consciousness of the marriage imperative during his era, James implies that Marcher does not share the marriage culture. Presenting Marcher's side of understanding of the relation, James informs of May's side, too; she has her own "wonderful way of making it [Marcher's secret] seem, as such, the secret of her own life too" (45). In "the stupid world [which] never more than half-discovered" their relation, May mingles and adjusts "the apertures" of her eyes, and has achieved the visions that "give shape and colour to her own existence" (45). While Marcher's "conviction," "apprehension," and "obsession" of the "it" prevent him from sharing the conventional heterosexual relationship, May's perspective of the relation seems distinguished, too, due to her own visionary aperture. The "it" here elicits different meanings from Marcher and Bartram, respectively.

Instantly, however, the distinct meanings of the relation between Marcher and May move to a different concern, whether Marcher is a "heroic" "man of courage" who is not afraid of the beast-like secret (49). This is to say, even though the "it" hovers over the question of the meaning of the relation between Marcher and May, the "it" subtly floats toward another concern, whether Marcher is the "man of courage" (49). Because of the unrecognizably subtle transition from one concern to another, readers barely grasp the referential certainty of the "it." Rather, readers vaguely perceive that, although Marcher's consciousness of the "it" seems to center around certain point, it soon floats through the situations with which Marcher has just engaged. Put briefly, Marcher's consciousness of the "it" does not focalize on a certain definite point, but, the "it" as the "free-floating pronominal signifier" (Bersani 22) always mobilizes through time only in the present with which the "it" has been concerned in the narration.

Even though Christopher Bollas is a psychoanalyst, his examination of human

psyche as a random travel in the object world interestingly intersects with the perspectives above. Bollas argues that human psyche travels beyond "a conscious intention" and raises a challenging question to what extent the self follows the law of Freudian Oedipal Complex conscious (13). If Jamesian unmappable thereby unlocatable consciousness is relevant to the critique of the teleological map of the psychoanalytical construction of self-identity, Bollas's exploration of self-experiencing resonates with James's reshaping selfhood. Bollas introduces to the object world and its relation to the self; "[m]oving through our object world, whether by choice, obligation, or invitational surprise, evokes self states sponsored by the specific objects we encounter" (19). This means that the self states are affected by the objects we encounter in an unfixed way. In fact, Bollas's observance of the object has been inspired by Donald Winnicott's "subjective objects" in which "we psychically signify objects" through the "particular type of projective identification" (20). Yet Bollas develops Winnicott's term by emphasizing on its potential of becoming "an independent existence" (23) in the particular type of intermediate experience between the self and "the subjective objects" (20).

Bollas's theory of self-experiencing and its being influenced by the objects in random way elicits further provoking conclusion. That is, the object's movement "mirrors the ambiguity of being that constitutes the human, who experiences himself both as the arranger of his life and as the arranged" (27-8) according to the object's random arrival in the consciousness. The "hundreds, thousands" "sequential self states" (30) arising from the human psyche's random travel in the object world eventually points to the profoundly indeterminate self and puts Freudian psychoanalytical narrativity in question. As Cameron has shown, Bollas's capturing the transformative object in the human psyche also enables us to think about the random transformation of the "it" in Marcher's consciousness rather than the centripetal orbit of the "it."

#### IV. Marcher's Identity as "Open Page"

While the part I in the story seems to evoke a type of gravitational force toward the secret content in the "it," the part II seems to release the gravity of the secret "it" by placing Marcher's consciousness in random circumstances and concerns instead of the locatable consciousness. Toward the late stage of the novella, the expansion of versatility in Marcher's mobilizing consciousness becomes layered with a different law of time; "Since it was in Time that [Marcher] was to have met his fate, so it was in Time that his fate was to have acted. ... It all hung together; they were subject, he and the great vagueness, to an equal and indivisible law" (53-4). From this point, what takes in charge of Marcher's consciousness is not the matter of specific content of the "it" but the nature of the mobilizing "it" in time. In comparison with the early narrative of the beast-like secret "it" in the story, toward late phases, James juxtaposes with another narrative that more vividly disturbs the coherence of the secret "it." In part III the narrator confirms the transformational "it" evoked by the law of time to which Marcher's fate is subject. In part III, therefore, the central theme of the secret "it" has been transformed into Marcher's consciousness of the "it," which is controlled by the "equal and indivisible law" of time.

According to McWhirter, James's fourth phase of writing career characterizes his "pervasive desire to revisit his personal, cultural and literary pasts"; namely, his "re-engagement with the past" (149). Capturing "[t]he varied, contradictory nature of James's responses to the past ... manifested in the New York Edition," McWhirter points out that James was "looking on [his] novel as 'a poor fatherless and motherless'" with "his practice of extensive revision" (150-1). James's revisions of his "fatherless and motherless" fictions written in the past become more meaningful, because such revisionary process complicates and unsettles the "relationships between 'what it was' and 'who I am'" (153). This is to say, James's revision of his early works—"what it was"—is associated with

the matter of self, "who I am" (153).

McWhirter's exploration of Jamesian selfhood in James's late writing period goes further with Paul Ricoeur's term of the two contrasting conceptions between "identity as *sameness*" and "identity as *selfhood*" (154) which does not rely upon the sameness without the essence. Ricoeur theorizes the concept of identity in the contrasting narratives between "[a] lower limit" and "an upper limit";

A lower limit, where permanence in time expresses the confusion of [sameness and selfhood]; and an upper limit, where [selfhood] poses the question of its identity without the aid and support of [sameness] . . . And it is at this upper limit—where the continuity of 'keeping one's word' unfolds without the support, and without the disabling immobilizations, of sameness—that James is exploring his own selfhood in the fourth phase. (155)

In Ricoeur's oppositional identities—"identity as *sameness*" and "identity as *selfhood*"—James identifies his selfhood with the latter case that does not substantiate the essence, and, therefore, Jamesian selfhood is the matter of "politics of nonidentity" (McWhirter 157) on account of its independence of the sameness from the past. Although Jamesian selfhood as the "politics of nonidentity" (157) is associated with the past—"the sense of continuity with the past"—to certain degree, the past is not rendered as what it was or what I was. Rather, James understands the meaning of the past in its rendering "the self as an ethical continuity" (156) in the form of the constant revision of the self over time. Accordingly, instead of the dependence on the fixed sameness from the past, Jamesian selfhood envisions a revisionary self in which the selfhood is conceived as an open page.

As McWhirter guides, James in his late writing career grapples with the alternative mode of selfhood. James presents the experiment of the alternative mode of selfhood through the experiment of time, his revisionary re-engagement with the past. In order to imagine the alternative mode of the revisionary

selfhood, James imbues Marcher's past memory with the invalidity of the essence, and instills Marcher's consciousness in the present with the mobility. And he pushes forward his doubtful yet expectational visions of the alternative selfhood by leading Marcher at the ending to pose a question about his own life.

In the final phase of the novella when Marcher feels an acute "pang" (69), both readers and Marcher may remind of May's death. At the grave, Marcher encounters the middle-aged man "in mourning" (68). Looking at the mourning man and feeling a "pang," Marcher suddenly realizes that "[n]o passion had ever touched him, for this was what passion meant" (69) and has "stood there gazing at . . . [the] void of his life" (70). In this last scene, Marcher's pang from feeling his life as a "void" seems attributable to his recognition that "[May] was what he had missed" (70). As Bersani points out, James through this ending scene "seems willing to conclude his story with [the] strangely flat moral—'had never thought of her . . . but in the chill of his egotism and the light of her use'" (17). Interestingly, however, right before Marcher's sudden recognition of his passionless void at the ending, James's insertion of the law of time, in which Marcher's consciousness busily shifts, betrays a flip side of the "void," which is the experience of his life as the "open page" (68).

The last part of the story begins with Marcher wandering around "the depths of Asia" (66), in which he makes a distance from his past with May, and feels the world differently. Previously when Marcher's consciousness has been centered on the "it," he has considered his life as extraordinary. In the last part, however, James adds a subtle psychic tapestry to Marcher through his journey on the East where Marcher loses "a distinction"; "the things he saw couldn't help being common when he had become common to look at them"; "[h]e was simply now one of them himself" (66-7). Marcher "had lived, in spite of himself, into his change of feeling, and in wandering over the earth had wandered . . . from the circumference to the centre of his desert" (67). Marcher's altered sense of the world from "the circumference to the centre of his desert" implies his new sense

of belonging to the world in comparison with his previous self who keeps failing to belong to the world due to the extraordinary obsession with the "it." James goes on to narrate about Marcher's change in the East.

It's accordingly not false to say that he reached his goal with a certain elation and stood there again with a certain assurance. The creature beneath the sod *knew* of his rare experience, so that, strangely now, the place had lost for him its mere blankness of expression. It met him in mildness – not, as before, in mockery; it wore for him the air of conscious greeting that we find, after absence, in things that had closely belonged to us and which seem to confess of themselves to the connexion. . . . He had not come back this time with the vanity of that question, his former worrying "what, *what?*" now practically so spent. (italics in original 67)

What is implied in the passage is that Marcher no longer identifies himself with what "the creature beneath the sod." Rather, "the creature" sends a mild greeting to him so that he can feel a sense of belonging to, or "connexion" with, the world (67). Accordingly, Marcher's previous obsessional question, what is lurked in his life, has been "practically" expired (67). At the point above, the expired question of "[t]he creature beneath the sod" (67) is newly marked by Marcher's altered sense of belongingness to the world. Marcher "none the less never again so [cuts] himself off from the spot" (67), but his repeated returns to the question evokes "the oddest way, [as] a positive resource" (67); "in [Marcher's] finally so simplified world this garden of death gave him the few square feet of earth on which he could still most live. It was as if, being nothing anywhere else for any one, nothing even for himself, he were just everything here" (68). All of these changes explain that Marcher now "scan [the world] like an open page" (68). With Marcher's new belongingness to the world as well as his being "like an open page," James unprecedentedly refers to "identity"; "Thus in short [Marcher] settled to live—feeding all on the sense that he once *had* lived, and dependent on it not alone for a support but for an identity" (italics in original 68).

Considering Marcher's identity as the open page in the East, James's ending comment on Marcher's life as the void can be re-read. As the description shows, Marcher apparently might have felt the "pang" (69) before May's grave and might have felt his life as the passionless void, while looking at the passionately mourning man. Yet, as James has revised his earlier "poor fatherless and motherless" works in later period (McWhirter 150), Marcher's "pang" would be soon "fatherless" emotion and even could be lost. Although this does not say that Marcher's "pang" would be entirely extinguished, the acute emotion may not accurately remember the original "pang" in different time and place. And this is the way of how Marcher turns another page of his self without the unchanging essence. At some point, Marcher's open page "was the tomb of his friend [May], and *there* were the facts of the past, there the truth of his life, there the backward reaches in which he could lose himself" (italics in original 68). Instead of "the facts of the past" in an immobilizing way, however, the past is rendered as the "appreciable" "other" through time, while evoking the profoundly unexpected multitudinousness in "present 'intensity of thought'" (McWhirter 154), as we have seen through Marcher's consciousness.

In *Anti-Oedipus*, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari explore an alternative desire distinguished from the desire constructed in the Oedipal complex, which internalizes repressive authority. To come up with the alternative desire, Deleuze and Guattari analyze the schizophrenic tendency in which the desire exists as the continuous thereby indeterminate becoming rather than being fixed. Marc Roberts suggests a term, microphysics, as the principle that encapsulates Deleuze and Guattari's alternative desire in the schizophrenia. Challenging against the macrophysics of social-production of Oedipal complex, Deleuze and Guattari's desire evokes "a molecular or a micromultiplicity" in "the realm of 'microphysics,' of 'waves and corpuscles, flows and partial objects that are no longer dependent upon the larger numbers'" (120). Microphysics in this regard is opposed to the Oedipal "repressive representational structure" (Roberts 124). Being

inspired by Deleuze and Guattari's alternative desire, Claire Colebrook conceptualizes queer vitality that embodies her version of micropolitics. As Deleuze and Guattari's microphysics generates "waves," "corpuscles," and "flows" that are independent of the larger structure, Colebrook's micropolitics slips out of the "persons and norms," moves to "the thousands of souls from which we are effected" (55), and aims to maximize our potential to "attend to all the minor, less than human, not yet personalized desires that enter any field of social relations" (87). Deleuze, Guattari, and Colebrook's micro-maps resonate with James's painstaking tracing down Marcher's mobilizing consciousness, which further potentializes Marcher's queer being as the mobilizing becoming in *BJ*.

As I have noted early in this essay, after the dominant reading *BJ* as the moralistic didactic tale, critics have explored and suggested the new ways of understanding Marcher as the queer being, who diverges from the social standard in many ways. What I have complicated in this essay is that such reading of Marcher as the queer being can be developed alongside recent queer theorists' attention to the queer temporality, its potential to undermine the dominant timeline as well as the recommended social identities embedded within the standard timeline. Jamesian queer temporality in *BJ* is rendered mainly in two ways. On the one hand, in the earlier phases of the story, James blurs the factual sense of timeliness through the cacophonous memories of the past in Marcher and May's first encounter. Doing so, James, more significantly, problematizes the psychoanalytical quest for the hidden truth in the past in order to destabilize certain essence in the institutional notion of self-identity. On the other hand, later on, James develops the complexity of the temporality through Marcher's mobilizing consciousness in which he engages with the present moment with the circumstantial immediacy. In order to evoke the mobilizing potential in his alternative mode of selfhood, James inserts the psychic mobility into Marcher's consciousness, exclusively focusing on the present immediacy. As James puts it, Marcher periodically returns to his past, especially his past times with May, yet

his returning to the past will never be the same before. Through his queer mapping of temporalities, the past without the sameness essence and the present with wave-like mobility, James at the ending suggests that Marcher's sudden recognition of the "void" (70) is only for the temporary moment before turning into another page of his self in his constant becoming.

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논문접수일: 2020. 06. 30 / 심사완료일 2020. 08. 12 / 게재확정일: 2020. 08. 12