The House, the World, and the Theatre

The House, the World, and the Theatre:

Self-Fashioning and Authorial Spaces in the Prefaces of Hawthorne, Dickens, and James

By

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Literature as well as criticism – the difference between them being delusive – is condemned (or privileged) to be forever the most rigorous and, consequently, the most unreliable language in terms of which man names and transforms himself.
—Paul de Man

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

FOREWORD

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If you are reading these lines, probably you already share one of the author's main assumptions in this book. This assumption, which reading the book will powerfully confirm and reinforce, might be expressed as follows: forewords, prefaces, prologues, introductions are not just page-fillers to help increase the bulk of a volume or avoid those unpleasant blank pages. Rather, they are important textual thresholds that simultaneously mark and blur the boundaries between what is inside—the text with its fictional and discursive world—and what is outside: the real-life author and reader, the historical world surrounding each, the societal pressures that have helped shape them, the manifold factors and accidents that have brought them together. In these contact zones, crucial negotiations are transacted not only between individual writers and actual or hypothetical readers, but more broadly between the acts of writing and reading in their respective imports as fully social and historical processes.

Geraldo Cáffaro does such a wonderful job of surveying, discussing, analyzing, and exposing the manifold functions and subtle implications of prefatory discourse as to make one forever aware of its momentous significance (as well as making at least *one* of his readers rather nervously self-conscious about the act of writing a foreword). His major claim, in fact, is that prefaces carry the same cultural, historical, and aesthetic weight, and consequently deserve the same critical attention, as the texts they precede. The book bears out this claim both on theoretical grounds (with Stephen Greenblatt's New Historicism complementing and tempering Gérard Genette's formalist approach to the genre) and through a successful combination of careful historicization and sophisticated critical analysis. Drawing from an array of existing studies of prefacing as a practice of self-authorization dating back to classical antiquity, and of authorship as both a general theoretical construct and a historically specific practice, Cáffaro highlights the crucial connections between the transformations of the prefatory genre during the second half of the nineteenth century and the reconfiguration of authorship that was taking

place at that time. Prefaces, Cáffaro argues, are one of the major strategic venues where literary authors—and notably novelists, as practitioners of a genre that was not yet fully granted the status of an art form—fashioned the public images that would empower them to face the new challenges posed by the contemporary world. The magnitude of those challenges, whose lasting impact is still with us, can be appreciated even from today's vantage point: the consolidation of the domestic ideology of the middle class, the advent of new forms of surveillance and social control, the rise of a new culture of publicity, the pressures exerted by an increasingly competitive literary market, the rapid expansion of the reach of that market beyond the boundaries of the nation. These social and cultural processes—comprising the forces behind what Pierre Bourdieu (another authority repeatedly cited in this book) described as the creation of the autonomy of the literary field—impelled novelists to seek new forms of legitimization. The preface was prominent among these forms: it offered writers the ideal venue and vehicle for a process of "self-fashioning," as Cáffaro terms it after Stephen Greenblatt, that is, the production of images of themselves for both private and public consumption. Through their self-aware use of prefaces, authors were able to shape and control their identities as both individuals and literary professionals; to claim possession of their work and wield authority over the fictional world; to forge a distinctive style of address and a recognizable "brand"; to captivate and direct the audience, and to establish an intimacy with their readers.

The novelists chosen for the book's investigation—Charles Dickens, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Henry James—were the pioneers and foremost practitioners of this kind of verbal self-construction in the English-speaking world between the mid-nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. Geraldo Cáffaro focuses on the three writers' strategies for performing authorship, identifying in their prefaces a cluster of recurring spatial tropes—the house, the world, the theater—that project different authorial disguises or *personae*, in turn associated with significant cultural or historical turns. Each trope is thus shown to be fraught with momentous, sometimes ambivalent implications.

Take the house, for example: an obvious metaphor for privacy and domesticity, it betrays an anxiety on the author's part, a sense of vulnerability that seeks the reassurance of a place of comfort and shelter against the increasing exposure of a culture of publicity. And yet, the house-related imagery also harnesses an array of other implications: an overlapping of the conventional gender coding of the house as a feminine space of private emotions with a masculine claim for ownership and patriarchal authority; an emphasis on the house as a place of literary

production, entailing a contamination of the sanctity of the home with the logics of the marketplace; an autobiographical insistence on the author as a unique, self-reflective individuality, blurring the boundaries between the authorial and the actorial stance; an invitation for the reader to partake of the author's friendly hospitality, with the latter's hospitable welcome, however, constantly verging on paternalistic manipulation and control. Rather than an unequivocal place of shared intimacy and privacy, in Geraldo Cáffaro's astute readings of the three authors' prefaces the house metaphor becomes the problematic space where the boundaries between privacy and publicity are constantly being foregrounded and questioned, in an ongoing process of negotiation.

Similarly, the world metaphor, with its accompanying imagery of authorship as travel, sailing, exploration, and spatial conquest, discloses both the pervasiveness of an imperial imaginary of colonial expansion in the Anglo-American culture of the nineteenth century, and the degree of the authors' investment in a set of celebrated figures of heroic conquerors and explorers. By appropriating these emblems of a masculine power deployed in the physical and political space, Cáffaro argues, each of the three novelists was articulating a self-affirmative stance as a way of responding to the historical and cultural factors that undermined his status. Dickens used these images as a way of claiming authority over and control of the fictional universe he had created, thus staking his professional terrain vis-à-vis an increasingly competitive publishing industry and an international literary market as yet unregulated by an international copyright law. Hawthorne voiced his awareness of the hierarchical configuration of what Pascale Casanova has termed the "world literary space," and of the peripheral position occupied by the United States within that global literary order: his adoption of the Frenchified version of his name, Aubépine, was a way of pointing to and compensating for his country's lack of cultural and symbolic capital. James, in the most full-blown development of this imagery, forged for himself a set of performative impersonations that project a sense of mastery by tapping into such a culturally powerful figure of exploration and conquest as Christopher Columbus. Thus, while magnifying his transatlantic career as a professional writer to monumental proportions, he claimed the heroic explorer's masculine authority as a symbolic counterpoise to and compensation for the writer's precarious hold on socially normative versions of masculinity.

Finally, under the critic's scrutiny, the theatrical metaphor proves equally rich and unsettling. From a Bourdieusian point of view, the theatrical analogy may be said to invoke the established authority of the

theater form in order to accrue cultural capital on the more recent and as yet uncanonized novel genre. In formal and aesthetic terms, it highlights the artistic quality of the preface, a type of writing easily perceived as purely referential or prevalently autobiographical. But the metaphor's cultural work is not limited to these functions. By emphasizing the performative aspect of authorship, the theater imagery blurs the boundaries between the author as dramatist and stage manager—a figure of authority and control—and the author as actor, a figure of visibility, literally in the limelights. This duplicity renders the literary author as simultaneously an impersonator, manipulating and controlling the audience through his multiple masks, and a reluctant object of the public gaze, bespeaking an anxiety about social surveillance. Building on John Carlos Rowe's revisionary re-readings of Henry James, and drawing from the works of Joseph Litvak, Eve Sedgwick and Reinaldo Marques, Geraldo Cáffaro shows how the theater as metaphorical locus of enunciation, the preface writer's role-playing, and the multiple author figurations it disseminates through its "theater of images" foreground a tension between self-promotion and self-preservation that looks forward to the reconfigurations and disseminations of author icons through today's media and technologies.

The book thus offers an exploration of the genealogy of now naturalized forms of public identity and self-display. By offering a number of convincing interpretations of the prefaces of three hypercanonical writers, Geraldo Cáffaro does not simply illuminate their individual positions in the literary field of their place and time: he makes them compelling to a new generation of readers by changing the critical questions and placing them in a renewed interpretative framework. By bringing these three authors together under a comparative lens, Geraldo Cáffaro's book is an important chapter in the history of the transnational reconfiguration of authorship, fiction, and the literary market, and an astute reading of literary prefaces as documents of this complex and ongoing process. Once you have read this book, you will never want to skip a preface again.

Rome, October 27, 2015

INTRODUCTION

THE PREFATORY SITE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF AUTHORSHIP

> Few great writers have not placed before one of their books a verbal doorstep to help readers leave the ground they usually walk on and allow them a glimpse of the interior.
> —Alasdair Gray

One of the myths attached to books – illustrated in Alasdair Gray's maxim – is that they are special places that allow readers access to alternate realities. Notably, writers have often reinforced this myth by using a variety of spatial metaphors in their prefaces. In the epistolary preface to *The Snow Image* (1851), for example, Nathaniel Hawthorne observes that "on several occasions, he has seen fit to pave the reader's way into the interior edifice of a book."[1] Also relying on a spatial metaphor in the preface to *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1844), Charles Dickens compares himself with "a troublesome guest who lingers in the Hall after he has taken leave" and who "cannot help loitering on the threshold of [his] book."[2] While these metaphors illuminate the role prefaces have traditionally played in offering a transition to the books they antecede, they also call attention to the authors that either "build" or "occupy" the figured spaces. In this book I propose to discuss the ways in which these figured spaces help authors in the construction of authorship.

The specific texts to be discussed are autographic notes, addresses, prefaces, and introductions by Nathaniel Hawthorne, Charles Dickens, and Henry James. By examining specific metaphors and cultural references, I seek to establish relationships between those introductory texts, their historical context, and some of the ideologies and discourses circulating in the nineteenth century. The period covered in this book extends from

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1. Nathaniel Hawthorne, preface to *The Snow Image*, in *Tales and Sketches* (New York: The Library of America, 1982), 1154.
2. Charles Dickens, *Martin Chuzzlewit* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 841.

1836, when Dickens published his first address to one of the serial numbers of the *Pickwick Papers*, to 1909, when Henry James published the last volume of the New York Edition. Although Henry James is an intermediary figure and his prefaces were written in the early years of the twentieth century, he was born in 1843 and some of his works, themes, and experiences intersect with those of Hawthorne's and Dickens's. By adopting the "nineteenth-century" designation, I can establish dialogue with the many scholars who have studied this period and contributed to the understanding about these three authors.

The general argument is that authorial identity in the three authors' prefatory texts is intimately bound up with a spatial imaginary and with a multiplicity of related authorial figures. This *imaginary* can be understood both as synonymous with "imagery," that is, as a group of images that enhance visual and other sensory aspects of texts; or in ideological terms, as used by Larry J. Reynolds and Gordon Hutner in *National Imaginaries, American Identities* (2000), or by Rob Wilson and Wimal Dissanayake in *Global/Local: Cultural Production and the Transnational Imaginary* (1996). These authors draw from, but also re-signify Jacques Lacan's early formulation of the imaginary as the images, conscious and unconscious, perceived or imagined, which form the *imago*. Although I recognize the importance of Lacan for discussions on the construction of identity, a central topic here, I have not adopted his psychoanalytic theory in my analyses and my use of *imaginary* as a noun is more in consonance with the way contemporary cultural theorists employ it.

The three keywords composing the spatial imaginary to be explored – house, world, theatre – are associated with three important aspects of the prefatory production of the authors under consideration. These aspects are, respectively: 1) the appeal to privacy, intimacy, domesticity, and origin; 2) the reliance on narratives of dislocation, exploration, and conquest of space; and 3) the deployment of the theatrical analogy as a means to give the author visibility and control. Among the authorial figures I analyze in these "spaces" and situations are: *friend, confidant, guide, host, architect, aeronaut, navigator, stage manager, and dramatist*. I treat these figures as part of *self-fashioning* processes and also as instruments in the quest for authorial legitimacy and autonomy. The power of these figures is best understood in relation to ideologies such as domestic individualism, "the world literary space," imperialism ("planetary consciousness"), and also to the nineteenth-century culture of vigilance and visibility. Articulating these three groups of ideologies with the texts to be analyzed will help foreground the complexity of prefatory writing in the pre-modernist

period, a complexity derived from the tensions between interiority and publicity in artistic life.

Louis Althusser's definition of ideology as "the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" has some bearing on my understanding of the term.[3] But the "real conditions of existence," as Althusser conceives it, cannot be applied to all the groups of ideologies I examine. While these groups comprise images and metaphors which can sustain "imaginary relationships," their materialist basis is not so easy to determine in all the cases (the best example of this is perhaps the ideology identified as "the world literary space"). Furthermore, I subscribe neither to the notion of "false consciousness" formulated by Althusser in his theorization of ideology, nor with the idea of a superstructure according to the classic Marxist model. I complement the basic definition of ideology offered by the French philosopher with critic Lora Romero's own appropriation of the term as something that "give people an expansive logic, a meaningful vocabulary, and rich symbols through which to *think* about their world."[4]

While ideology and historical context play a major role in the readings proposed, it is also important to consider the inextricable relationships between prefaces and the texts they precede. Prefaces are immediately associated with Gérard Genettte's *paratexts*, defined as a series of "verbal or other productions," including the name of the author, the title, dedications, and illustrations that "*present*" the literary work or "*make*" it present."[5] If on the one hand Genette underlines the unstable situation of the paratext through the notion of *threshold*, on the other hand he insists on a hierarchy between pre-text and main text which this work challenges. According to the French theorist "the paratext in all its forms is a discourse that is fundamentally heteronomous, auxiliary, and dedicated to the service of something other than itself that constitutes its raison d'être."[6] In my view, both paratexts and literary works in general are enmeshed in intertextual ties of various natures. Furthermore, it is my

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3. Louis Althusser, "From Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," in *A Critical and Cultural Theory Reader*, ed. Antony Easthope and Kate McGowan (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2004), 44.
4. Lora Romero, *Home Fronts: Domesticity and its Critics in Antebellum United States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 19.
5. The definition comes from Genette's *Seuils* (1987), translated into English by Jane E. Lewin as *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 1. Throughout this book I refer to the English version of the book.
6. Ibid., 12.

contention that prefaces do more than simply present the works they antecede; they also produce aesthetic effects, promote images of their writers, and exert influence in the public sphere. Thus, they hold intrinsic value and should be seen as imbricated in the same web of cultural references and social experiences as the "main" texts.

Genette's *Paratexts* contains other controversial points I address in my work. One of these concerns his view that prefaces have not evolved over time and that writers simply recycle the "formulae" used as of the sixteenth century.[7] One of my specific arguments is that the images and rhetorical strategies seen in the prefaces of Hawthorne, Dickens, and James are related to a specific world view and result from historical, material, and social transformations taking place as of the late eighteenth century and affecting patterns of authorship in the prefatory discourse of the mid and late nineteenth century. The question, thus, is whether critics should consider only the universal forms and functions of that textual modality – as does Genette – or also tune in to its figurative dimension to find out what is specific about it in a given period of time.

Another debatable point in Genette's theory has to do with one of the taxonomical divisions he offers to establish distinctions among the different types of prefaces. Genette's classifications are helpful tools to the analyst and I shall discuss them in more detail in Chapter One. My specific reservation is about the distinction between the *authorial* preface (written by the alleged writer of the work) and the *actorial* preface (written by a character in a story). The idea of *authorial performance* running throughout this book and elaborated in Chapter 6: "The Preface-Turned-Stage," as well as the ambiguous (and multiple) forms of self-fashioning authors employ, suggest that the authorial and actorial modes may actually coexist in the prefaces without their being necessarily *fictive* (in the Genettian sense of imagined or not coincidental with the implied author). This is the other specific claim I make in this book.

Other theorists offer elements to think about prefatory writing. I shall examine different perspectives coming from literary sociology (Claude Duchet), deconstruction (Jacques Derrida), poststructuralism (Antoine Compagnon), and frame theory (Werner Wolf), among others. I contend that while these authors employ spatial metaphors to define the position of paratexts in a book, they devote relatively little attention to symbolic space and figuration in their discussions of these texts. By contrast, scholars writing separately on Hawthorne, Dickens, and James, especially Laurence B. Holland (1964), Pamela Schirmeister (1990), John H. Pearson (2004),

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7. Ibid., 163.

and Mario Ortiz-Robles (2011), among others, have devoted careful attention to these aspects of those authors' prefatory writing and thus provide support to my study.

Henry James stands out, among the three writers included here, as the one whose prefaces have received the most critical attention. The reason for this is that the author's prefaces to the New York Edition – the 24-volume collection of his works published between 1907 and 1909 –gained the status of theoretical treatises after Richard P. Blackmur collected them in *The Art of the Novel* in 1934. Interest in James's prefaces has increased with time, culminating in the 1995 decisive collection of essays edited by David McWhirter, entitled: *Henry James's New York Edition: The Construction of Authorship*. McWhirter's collection is a remarkable effort to reassess the monolithic image of modernist "Master" James envisioned for himself and which some of his early critics endorsed. By comparing Henry James's prefaces with those of two of his antecedents, I dislocate the focus from theory to a discussion of modes of authorial consciousness rooted in an earlier period than 1907-09. This does not mean I disregard the specific context of James in comparing him with Dickens and Hawthorne. The contexts of the three authors (Antebellum New England, Victorian, *Fin de Siècle*) are brought to bear on the analyses but they are eventually reconfigured within the scenario identified with the more fluid terms *pre-modernism* and *proto-modernism*.

Hawthorne, Dickens, and James were all impacted by transformations occurring in the nineteenth century, such as the proliferation of newspapers and periodicals, the rise in literacy rates, and the expansion of the literary market. They all wrestled with the constraints imposed by the market on their production and sought to attain recognition in their respective literary fields. Additionally, they participated in the "celebration of personal difference as itself the growing institutionalization of authorship"[8] and adopted ambivalent attitudes towards the demand for the private author that celebration brought about.

Hawthorne, Dickens, and James also participated in the nineteenth-century internationalization of literature. The internationalization of literature manifested in movements for the International Copyright Law, in the growing perception of a world literary space, and in the rise of cosmopolitanism. Although James is regarded as the quintessential cosmopolitan novelist, a status he conquered, among other things, by consigning Hawthorne to the position of provincial writer, his ideas

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8. Josephine Guy, "Authors and Authorship," in *The Cambridge Companion to English Literature*, *1830-1914*, ed. Joanne Shattock (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 10.

concerning the insufficiency of the United States in cultural terms are anteceded by his New England precursor. Dickens's campaign for the International Copyright Law and his reading tours in Europe and in the United States helped promote his books outside the United Kingdom and offer a counterpoint to his close identification with the British national space.

The relationship between Hawthorne and James has been the subject of a large number of appreciations over the years. James himself paved the way for such comparisons when he wrote his controversial biography of Hawthorne for the English Men of Letters Series. Controversies aside, one may find in this biography a specific connection between Hawthorne's prefatory writing and James's, specifically when James writes: "…I may say that there is always a charm in Hawthorne's prefaces which makes one grateful for a pretext to quote from them."[9] The connection goes beyond the simple expression of admiration; a prominent topic in James's prefaces is the distinction between "Novel" and "Romance," a distinction Hawthorne had continuously made in his prefaces as well. It is surprising, therefore, that no extensive work has taken the two authors' prefatory *corpora* as objects of inquiry.

Still, when comparing Hawthorne's prefaces with James's or Dickens's one needs to be aware of the enormous differences in length, scope, and circumstance separating them. Hawthorne's autographic prefaces (13 in total) were appended to his collections of short stories and novels as they were published. James's prefaces (18) were all written for the single commemorative Edition of his works and consist of long meditations and retrospective accounts of events taking place years, and sometimes decades, before they were put to paper. Dickens's prefaces (13, not including the slightly altered versions of each of them, nor the "addresses" to the serial numbers) bear the imprint of the serialization fever of Victorian times and are much shorter and more direct than either Hawthorne's or James's. But, like James, both Hawthorne and Dickens wrote prefaces to later and collected editions of their works and indulged in retrospective narratives.[10]

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9. Henry James, *Hawthorne* (New York: Harper, 1901), 34.

10. For a complete list of all the prefaces by the three authors, see the Appendix on page 197. In the bibliography list, references for Hawthorne will include only the two anthologies of his works published by the Library of America and containing all of the prefaces analyzed. These anthologies are: *Tales and Sketches* and *Collected Novels*, henceforth abbreviated *TS* and *CN*. Dickens's works will be organized in the bibliography according to the title of the novels or collected works; references to the prefaces will appear only in the text. Henry James's

All in all, these three collections reflect the same obsession with the prefatory medium and the same impulse to create spaces for fashioning authorial selves and communicating with the public. Arguably, writers such as Herman Melville, William Makepeace Thackeray, Mark Twain, and George Eliot were not as prolific, obsessed with the prefatory medium – or even as successful in using it to construct authorial identities – as the writers included here. Still, these writers are part of the same context I am concerned with and some of the conclusions I reach could apply equally to their prefatory writing. Instead of providing an overview of a large number of nineteenth-century authors and their prefaces, I opted for a more focused and detailed study of recurrent metaphors in some of the prefaces of three representative (and interrelated) writers in Anglo-American literature.

The methodologies I adopt in this book encompass genre criticism, literary history, and new historicism. Some specific issues require an expansion of the methodological scope toward other theoretical perspectives (such as poststructuralism, deconstruction, and queer theory). Whereas new historicism (from which I draw the concept of self-fashioning and the rationale for a historical analysis of prefatory writing), is discussed in a separate section of Chapter 3: "Authorship, Self-Fashioning, and Authorial Spaces," the other methodologies are introduced and discussed in the first section of each of the chapters containing the analyses of the selected prefaces. This structure is justified by the fact that each of the three major topics of the book (house, world, theater) is related to different issues and ideologies.

As Marysa Demoor has observed, although *self-fashioning* is identified with Stephen Greenblatt's *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*: *From More to Shakespeare* (1980), "the term has now entered critical jargon with respect to any period in which individual artists choose to self-mythologize, to, that is, construct an identity in and through language."[11] Still, I follow Greenblatt's specific critical method and some of his reflections in that book in addressing prefatory writing in the nineteenth century. One of Greenblatt's key points for the analyses to be carried out is the relationship he identifies between self-fashioning and power. In a statement I shall get back to further on, he claims that "the power to impose a shape upon oneself is an aspect of the more general power to control identity –that of

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anthology of prefaces *The Art of the Novel* (containing all the prefaces to the New York Edition) are abbreviated *AN* in the notes.
11. Marysa Demoor, *Marketing the Author: Authorial Personae, Narrative Selves and Self-fashioning, 1830-1930* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998), 14.

others at least as often as one's own."[12] As we shall see in the prefaces selected, this power is enhanced by the establishment of authoritative (symbolic) settings (*loci* of enunciation, *poetic* or *representational spaces*) from which the author can speak and captivate audiences.

This book expands the knowledge about the construction of authorial identities in the nineteenth century and offers readers the opportunity to reflect about some antecedents to our own obsession with self-display in a world increasingly dependent on media technologies and on supports such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, among others. Being alert to the implications of the images constructed in prefaces – and by extension in those modern technologies and supports – can allow for a more critical attitude towards naturalized modes of perception and forms of authority. While this work foregrounds the ways in which authors strove to install authority in their prefaces and relates these ways to their afterlives in contemporaneity, it is not a celebration of their mastery and resourcefulness as writers. Instead, it shows how that authority is plural, unstable, and elusive.

Chapter 1 is dedicated to the history and theory of paratexts and prefatory writing. It is meant to situate the prefaces of Hawthorne, Dickens, and James within a tradition of introductory texts, and to present and discuss different perspectives, concepts, and terms used in studies of the genre.

Chapter 2 consists of an overview of criticism on Hawthorne, Dickens, and James. It covers the historical background common to the three authors and defines some lines of convergence among them. This chapter also contemplates the critical history of the three collections of prefaces examined.

Chapter 3 offers a more detailed discussion on the history of authorship, including the social, historical, and ideological questions pertaining to this history and the changing roles of authors in the nineteenth century in particular. This chapter also looks at new historicism, some of its tenets, its relevance as a methodology, and the concept of *self-fashioning*. This concept is articulated with aspects of the notion of power in Foucaultian theory. The chapter ends with the presentation and discussion of a few concepts and theories of "space." Emphasis is given to the idea of *loci* of enunciation, to Henry Lefebvre's definition of *representational space*, and also to Gaston Bachelard's *poetic*

12. Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1980), 3.

space, all of which support the approach to space adopted. The section ends with a series of reflections on the choice of the sequence of metaphors in "house, world, theater."

Chapter 4 departs from Gaston Bachelard's view of the "house" as a "body of images" to explore the themes of intimacy, domesticity, and origin in a selection of prefaces by the three authors. This exploration focuses on the figures of *friend*, *guide*, and *host*, as they are used by Hawthorne and Dickens; and on James's use of the "house" metaphor as a means to assert authority or as a an access to the origins for his stories.

In Chapter 5 the figures examined are dislocated selves, such as the *aeronaut* in Dickens, the French writer in Hawthorne, or the *navigators* and *explorers* in James. The ideologies with which these figures are articulated are identified by the terms "world literary space" and "planetary consciousness." These concepts allow for a discussion of the different forms by which authors sought empowerment in transnational systems of reference and imperialist models of authority. The figures used by the authors also connect to the idea of *autonomy*; an emerging concept in the nineteenth century and a staple of modernist discourse, autonomy can be seen from different perspectives, and is part of the model of world literary space offered by Pascale Casanova.

Chapter 6 focuses on the theatrical analogy and on the topic of authorial performance in the prefaces. This chapter consists of a theoretical and historical analysis that helps understand the way the three authors imagined and portrayed their anxieties concerning self-revelation and publicity. Hawthorne and Dickens are discussed in relation to the figure of the *stage-manager* and James is discussed in light of the figure of the "dramatist," recurrently used in the Prefaces to the New York Edition and affording different interpretations.

PREFACE HISTORY AND THEORY

The "Antique Fashion of Prefaces:"
Prefatory Writing in History

> The antique fashion of Prefaces recognized this genial personage as the 'Kind Reader,' the 'Gentle Reader,' the 'Beloved,' the 'Indulgent,' or, at coldest, the 'Honoured Reader,' to whom the prim old author was wont to make his preliminary explanations and apologies, with the certainty that they would be favourably received. I never personally encountered, nor corresponded through the Post, with this Representative Essence of all delightful and desirable qualities which a Reader can possess.
> —Nathaniel Hawthorne

This excerpt from Hawthorne's preface to *The Marble Faun* offers a number of possibilities of interpretation. As a meta-commentary, it contains a definition of the prefatory genre, whose aim should be to woo the audience and guarantee a favourable reception for the work. As a personal testimony, it registers the author's dissatisfaction with the reader, an elusive entity who does not correspond to the qualities attributed to him/her in the formulaic epithets used by other preface writers. From a historical point of view, the situation described illustrates the widening gap between authors and readers following the expansion of the book market in the nineteenth century. Nonetheless, the passage above does more than illustrate the literary conditions in Hawthorne's time, register a complaint, or provide a definition. With his irony and parody of common prefatory formulae, Hawthorne invites a retrospective glance and evokes the long tradition of preface writing going back centuries before his time.

Readers may catch glimpses of "the antique fashion of prefaces" in anthologies such as *Prefaces and Prologues to Famous Books* (1909), *Anthologie des Préfaces de Roman Français du XIXe Siècle* (1962), or in the more recent: *The Book of Prefaces: A Short History of Literate Thought in Words by Great Writers of Four Nations from the 7th to the 20th Centuries* (2000). In these anthologies, readers can have an insider's

perspective of the world of literary production. They can learn, among
other things, about the material conditions surrounding the publication of
books, the authors' struggles for legitimation, their relationship with their
audiences or with the works they antecede, and the aesthetic positions
taken in different times. Some famous examples of prefatory material
selected by the editors of the anthologies published in English include:
William Caxton's allographic prefaces to the first books printed in
England (*King Arthur* and *The Golden Legend*, for example); Chaucer's
Prologue to *The Canterbury Tales* (1475); Spenser's "Letter of the
Authors" from *The Faerie Queene* (1590); and Wordsworth's Preface to
Lyrical Ballads (1798).[1]

These examples show that "the antique fashion of prefaces" does not
constitute a homogenous body of texts. Prefaces have played different
roles and come in the form of letters, narrative frames, dedications, or
theoretical treatises. Notably, the list of alternative terms for "Preface" can
be quite mystifying: "Introduction," "Foreword," "Preamble," "Proem,"
"Note," "Advertisement," "Prelude," "Prologue," "Prolegomenon."
Although each of these variations carry their own specificities with regard
to length, tone, and usage (the genre which they precede), in this section I
follow Gérard Genette's use of *preface* to "designate every type of
introductory (preludial or postludial) text, authorial or allographic,
consisting of a discourse produced on the subject of the text that follows or
precedes it."[2] This simplified approach will help in the identification of
possible origins for the type of writing under consideration and in the
establishment of links between older forms of introductions and their
subsequent counterparts.

Philosophers, historians, and poets have always devoted some kind of
attention to the beginnings of their accounts. As Edward Said observes,
"Every writer knows that the choice of a beginning for what he will write
is crucial not only because it determines much of what follows but also
because a work's beginning is, practically speaking, the main entrance to

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1. William Caxton's allographic prefaces are anthologized in Charles W. Eliot, ed.,
Prefaces and Prologues to Famous Books (New York: P.F. Collier & Son
Corporation, 1938); the prefaces by Chaucer, Spenser, and Wordsworth may be
consulted in Alasdair Gray, ed., *The Book of Prefaces: A Short History of Literate
Thought in Words by Great Writers of Four Nations from the 7th to the 20th
Century* (London: Bloomsbury, 2000).
2. Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge
University Press, 1997), 161.

what it offers."[3] Prefaces, as specialized beginnings, became more pervasive with the advent of print culture,[4] but the Greeks had been making extensive use of different forms of introductions and incorporated prefaces (not separated from the main body of the text) centuries before the invention of the press in the Middle Ages. Additionally, classical Greek rhetoric, especially the *captatio benevolentia* technique, had a prominent influence in prefatory culture later on. The modern preface can be even likened to the Greek *exorde* (exordium), a discursive modality which also features *topoi* such as the choice of subject, the speaker's intentions, and the stance he/she adopts.[5]

The word *preface*, however, is linked to the Latin *praefatio* – meaning "words spoken beforehand" – a term used by Livy to introduce a number of the books of his *Roman History*.[6] Livy's account is noteworthy for his use of the first person, a stance "that would become characteristic of the modern preface,"[7] according to Genette. Still, it must be noted that the "I" of the classical period displays different characteristics from the "I" of the early modern or modern eras. Hence the need to examine the different forms of self-fashioning in prefatory accounts as well as their relationship with their historical moments.

It is remarkable, nevertheless, that the use of the first person by Livy adumbrates the authoritative impulse seen in prefaces from later periods. As Kevin Dunn remarks in *Pretexts of Authority: The Rhetoric of Authorship in the Renaissance Preface* (1994), "Self-authorization has always been part of the prefatory project, and the intersection of preface with authorizing strategies is as old as the preface itself."[8] Yet, Dunn makes an important distinction between authorizing strategies in the Middle Ages and in the Early Modern Period. According to him, "for the medieval writer, authority was a textual inheritance, a finite set of authorities who could be adduced and copied but rarely added to."[9] By the seventeenth century, writers became more aware of their power as individuals, and they also started to think of their authority in relation to

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3. Edward Said, *Beginnings: Intention and Method* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 3.
4. As Genette observes: "the manuscript era is characterized by an easily comprehensible economy of means." *Paratexts*, 163.
5. Ibid., 164.
6. Ibid., 165.
7. Ibid.
8. Kevin Dunn, *Pretexts of Authority: The Rhetoric of Authorship in the Renaissance Preface* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1994), 19.
9. Ibid., 8.

communities of readers. Dunn thus summarizes the history of the rhetoric privileged in this period: "The story of this rhetoric is to a large extent the story of humanism. If humanism quickly made its peace with autocracy and courtly culture, it nonetheless had its origins in the Italian bourgeoisie and took its strength from the growing market for books that was created by the printing press."[10]

Dunn locates in the Renaissance some other issues that continue to be relevant in the nineteenth century, such as the ways in which "the private and public roles of the author intersect,"[11] and the emergence of the author-function as a consequence of the threat represented by some texts; that is, the appearance of the "author" when writers became liable to be punished for their works.[12] This is relevant because nineteenth-century authorship emerges in a culture marked by the increasing presence of mechanisms of vigilance and visibility, an issue I shall articulate with the role of the theater in the prefatory discourse of the authors selected.

Thus, in historicizing the genre, it is important to consider the developments of one specific modality of prefatory/paratextual writing; I am referring to prologues and epilogues to dramatic works. A plausible starting point is Genette's "pre-history to the prefatorial situation of communication." In his account, he explains that

> the term *prologue*, which in ancient drama designates everything that, in the play itself, precedes the entrance of the chorus, must not mislead us: its function is not to make a presentation, and still less to comment, but to provide an exposition in the dramatic sense of the word – most often (for example, in Aeschylus and Sophocles) in the form of a scene in dialogue, but sometimes (in Euripides) in the form of a character's monologue. Apparently only comedy can endow this monologue with the function of warning the public, in a slick and possibly polemical or satirical comment about fellow playwrights, so that here the monologue must be regarded as a true theatrical paratext necessarily anticipating one of the most artful forms of the modern preface: the actor's preface, delivered by someone we assume is outside the action of the play but who then turns out to be one of the characters. Examples are the monologue of Xanthias at the head (or

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10. Ibid., 9.

11. Ibid., xi.

12. For an account of the emergence of the "author-function," see: Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. Donald F. Bouchard, trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1977).

almost) of Aristophanes' *The Wasps*, and many of Plautus's and Terence's theoretical-polemical prologues.[13]

As Genette clarifies in his exposition of the notion of *threshold*, the position of paratexts in relation to what they introduce is an unstable one: "a zone between text and off-text, a zone not only of transition but also of *transaction*: a privileged place of a pragmatics and a strategy, of an influence on the public."[14] When it comes to the actor's preface, the unstable and transactional aspects of the prologue gain special relevance, and dramatists and authors alike capitalized on them to keep their hold over audiences.

Douglas Bruster and Robert Weimann make some important observations about the role of audiences in determining prologue strategies. According to them, prologues shape audience's expectations "by appealing to potentially common interests and experiences. They thereby seek temporarily to project or control a socially significant space."[15] I shall get back to this crucial passage of Bruster and Weimann's *Prologues to Shakespeare's Theatre: Performance and Liminality in Early Modern Drama* (2004) when I discuss the role of space in Hawthorne's, Dickens's, and James's prefatory self-fashioning; for the moment, I will focus on other points of historical interest in Bruster and Weimann's account of the prologue.

The prologue, in Bruster and Weimann's words, is "a multifaceted phenomenon and term" as it can operate as "text, actor, and performance."[16] Notably, some of the introductory pieces of the Elizabethan theatre did not come to us in printed form, while others, such as the prologues to Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (1597), *Henry V* (1600), and the epilogues to *As You Like it* (1623) and *The Tempest* (1623), have become key elements of those plays, being often reproduced in their adaptations. Bruster and Weimann observe that while some of these prologues were targeted at the public at large, others were written to be performed at court and included explicit addresses to members of the monarchy.[17] It must be noted that the patronage system, according to which artists acquired privileges or financial rewards from nobles or monarchs, was largely

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13. Genette, *Paratexts*, 166.
14. Ibid., 2.
15. Douglas Bruster and James Weimann, *Prologues to Shakespeare's Theatre: Performance and Liminality in Early Modern Drama* (London: Routledge, 2004), vii.
16. Ibid., 1.
17. Ibid., 11.

established in the early modern period, and the relationship between authors and their patrons determined much of what was written and censored.

Therefore, establishing one's individual authority as an artist was a challenging task in prologues from this period. This was complicated by the fact that prologues were delivered by actors, and the author-function of the dramatist had little importance to the success of a play. Still, in writing about the delivery of prologues, Bruster and Weimann observe that costume as well as particular characterization cues and visual signs could communicate authority to the actor.

> The early modern prologue's outward show appears to have routinely included a 'long, black, velvet cloak,' hat, and beard, as well as papers, book, scroll, or other property conveying authority behind the information communicated to the playgoer. The various items here draw on diverse realms of authority. The prologue's black velvet robe, for instance, suggests academic, or ecclesiastical, or judicial authority. The bay garland he may have worn on his head symbolizes poetic authority and tradition. The items that the prologue may have held – whether book, scroll, papers, or staff – could have signified not only literary authority but the *skeptron* of political power extending over theatrical affairs as well.[18]

Writers of subsequent periods, and of other genres, such as the novel, may have felt the same impulse to "dress up" to address their audiences, that is, to project images of themselves; we may observe this in the imagery used by Hawthorne, Dickens, and James. Understanding how these later images also convey power has been one of the goals of this study since its inception.

While Elizabethan prologues were restricted to the audiences who attended the performances, to a few readers who had access to them in manuscript form or in the few (and expensive) printed editions of dramatic works available at that time, by the eighteenth century this situation had changed. As Mary E. Knapp informs us in *Prologues and Epilogues of the Eighteenth Century* (1961): "In the eighteenth century the turning of a prologue or epilogue attracted writers differing as widely as Addison and Sheridan or Fielding and Horace Walpole. Written as acting pieces to be spoken in the theatre, the prologues and epilogues were also a popular form of literature, appearing constantly in the magazines and, after the middle of the century, in the newspapers."[19]

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18. Ibid., 25.
19. Mary E. Knapp, *Prologues and Epilogues of the Eighteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), v.