



October 2020

The Virtues of Being Human: Faith, Hope, and Love in James Gray's *The Immigrant* (2013), *The Lost City of Z* (2016), and *Ad Astra* (2019)

John Adair
Dallas Theological Seminary, jadair@dts.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/jrf>



Part of the [Christianity Commons](#), and the [Film and Media Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Adair, John (2020) "The Virtues of Being Human: Faith, Hope, and Love in James Gray's *The Immigrant* (2013), *The Lost City of Z* (2016), and *Ad Astra* (2019)," *Journal of Religion & Film*: Vol. 24 : Iss. 2 , Article 13.

DOI: 10.32873/uno.dc.jrf.24.2.013

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/jrf/vol24/iss2/13>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UNO. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Religion & Film by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@UNO. For more information, please contact unodigitalcommons@unomaha.edu.

The Virtues of Being Human: Faith, Hope, and Love in James Gray's *The Immigrant* (2013), *The Lost City of Z* (2016), and *Ad Astra* (2019)

Abstract

James Gray's three most recent features reflect on the Christian virtues of faith, hope, and love, revealed and developed through encounters with others. *The Immigrant* (2013) reveals the way faith informs familial commitments, social bonds, and a life-giving response to suffering and injustice. *The Lost City of Z* (2016) portrays a dreamer, a man whose hopeful vision of another world animates every aspect of his being. And Gray's most recent feature, *Ad Astra* (2019) traces a man's turn toward relationship as he discovers what it means to love. In each case, as Gray's characters display these virtues, the characters transcend their boundedness, giving us a picture of the way these virtues guide us outside of ourselves, to our neighbors, and ultimately to God.

Keywords

James Gray, Theological Virtues, Thomas Aquinas, Faith, Hope, Love

Author Notes

Dr. John Adair is Assistant Professor of Theological Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary. He has written on both film and historical theology, and has recently co-authored a volume entitled *Urban Legends of Church History* (2020).

Relationships permeate every aspect of filmmaker James Gray’s work—sibling, marital, and especially parental relationships within the family; economic, political, and neighborly beyond it.¹ In a career that now spans seven feature films, Gray returns over and over again to the vast array of relationships humans have with one another, always with some kind of familial structure at the center,² and in the process explores what it means to be truly human. In the filmmaker’s most recent three films—2013’s *The Immigrant*, 2016’s *The Lost City of Z*, and 2019’s *Ad Astra*—Gray has made this relational exploration in the context of three theological virtues rooted in the Christian tradition: faith, hope, and love.³

In his classic work of scholastic theology, Thomas Aquinas wrote that the three theological virtues “have God as their object, inasmuch as by them we are rightly ordered to God . . . [and] are infused in us by God alone.”⁴ The Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church echoes the divine orientation of these virtues: “The theological virtues relate directly to God. They dispose Christians to live in a relationship with the Holy Trinity.”⁵

While the theological virtues are sourced in God and direct humanity back to him, they are displayed in humanity through our works. As Nonna Verna Harrison has said, “The word *arete*, which is usually translated “virtue,” means excellence of action, habits, and especially character.”⁶ In Christian thought, the virtues belong properly to God even as his image bearers have the capability to model faith, hope, and love in the choices we make and the actions we undertake. As people embrace the theological virtues in practice and persevere in those virtues through trials and tribulations, human beings more fully reflect what God intends us to be.

In the theology of the Eastern church, this journey toward rightly imaging God, a redemptive journey toward true humanity in union with God, is called *theosis* (often rendered “deification” in English). Athanasius utters one early expression of this redemptive arc for

humanity, writing of Christ: “he indeed assumed humanity that we might become God.”⁷ This notion of true union with God, or in the words of 2 Peter 1:4, becoming “partakers of the divine nature,” can be a productive foundation from which to think about the way the virtues function to orient human beings toward rightly imaging God.

While Gray certainly is not working from an explicitly Christian position—he has been quite open about his Jewish roots and atheistic convictions⁸—his last three films consistently display expressions of the theological virtues in meaningful ways, and always in the context of relationships. In his portrayal of how we treat and relate to those around us, Gray’s work is reminiscent of something Czech priest Tomáš Halík has written: “The path to our neighbors and to God passes through the same gate.”⁹

The examination of Gray’s work will focus on a key virtue in each film, but as these virtues are never far from one another in these films, all three will consistently shine through as all three work together to orient human beings to God. This article will highlight the vital role that faith, hope, and love play as Gray leads his characters to moments where they find some measure of transcendence over the limitations they have struggled against. As the practice of these theological virtues orients Gray’s characters to people and places outside themselves, the characters transform, ultimately to the point of sharing the virtues with others. This movement beyond themselves, sometimes worldly and sometimes otherworldly, offers a glimpse of the human journey to God, a portrait of the divine-human union of *theosis*, and a vision of the results of that deification as these characters become the means by which others receive or embrace the theological virtues.

THE IMMIGRANT (2013)

The opening shot of *The Immigrant* focuses our attention on the Statue of Liberty. But rather than shoot Lady Liberty from the front, James Gray shows us only her back, turned away from us as if

to deny the sense of freedom we expect upon seeing that glorious landmark. Indeed, the film's plot revolves around Polish immigrant Ewa Cybulska's (Marion Cotillard) struggle to achieve freedom for herself and her sister, Magda, in the early 1920s. Through a series of deceptions, Ewa ends up leaving Ellis Island with a Jewish pimp, Bruno Weiss (Joaquin Phoenix), who eventually draws her into his sordid, economics-above-all-else world of selling her body for a chance at freedom for herself and her sick sister (quarantined on Ellis Island). Bruno even casts Ewa as Lady Liberty in his stage show (a front for prostitution), the troubling irony of the costume never far from the surface.

In Bruno's world—in America—freedom is not granted but bought. Without money, the immigrant is bound to whomever will give them a chance at earning a meager living, and only on the employer's terms. However, in addition to a deep love for her sister, Ewa's devout Catholic faith and the corresponding high view of herself as a dignified human being keeps her from wholeheartedly entering into and accepting her own degradation and dehumanization.

On Ellis Island

Bruno initially feigns respect for Ewa, but he quickly pushes her to prostitute herself. While Ewa initially resists, her uncertain immigrant status and desire to help Magda forces her into these degrading acts. When she tries to escape Bruno and find security with her Aunt and Uncle, her Uncle calls the police on her, effectively sending her back to Ellis Island with the threat of being deported back to Poland.¹⁰ Gray incorporates a wide shot from the top corner of the cell, the bunks filled with sleeping or listless or terrified people dominating the shot. Even in such confined space, Ewa stands small behind these bunks, minimized and powerless. As the guard leaves, Ewa briefly speaks with another Polish would-be immigrant:

Polish Immigrant: [speaking in Polish] You're Polish? We're from Lodz. It's terrible, the way they treat us here. Like we are nothing.

Ewa: I am not nothing.¹¹

Cotillard delivers her line with quiet conviction, her character clear about her fundamental dignity as a human despite suffering indignities such as rape, forced prostitution, and imprisonment. Ewa's Catholic faith affirmed that she was a precious creation of God, imbued with dignity as one of God's image bearers. Of course she is not nothing. Interestingly, Ewa does not say "I am something," a more direct statement of her value. This rings true psychologically. As Gray has put it, "'I am something' is a very self-possessed claim. 'I'm not nothing' means something else. It means, 'Please treat me with respect and love because I am a member of the human race.'"¹² Ewa's faith engenders a humility in her in which she refuses to become a doormat and which allows her to relate to others from a position of quiet strength.

The scene continues with Ewa at a sink in her cell, trying to make herself look lively for the examining board (those who will determine her fate). The faint sounds of boat horns and seagulls drift into the room, reminding us that freedom still exists, though not for the imprisoned Ewa, who is sealed away from life, with the strong likelihood of being deported back to Poland to face the same fate as her parents experienced: death. As she prepares herself, a funeral procession walks by outside her room murmuring prayers as John Tavener's "Funeral Canticle" plays non-diegetically.¹³ The song's lyrics tell the story of the Christian's life—from birth and baptism to life under God's lordship and finally to death and rest in him. The film plays a segment from the chorus:

What earthy sweetness remaineth unmixed with grief?
What glory standeth immutable on earth?
All things are but shadows most feeble
But most deluding dreams

Yet one moment only
And death shall supplant then all
But in the light of thy countenance
Oh Christ, and in the sweetness of thy beauty
Give rest to him whom thou hast chosen
Because thou lovest mankind¹⁴

The film only plays a couple of these lines, but the whole chorus is worth citing for its thematic significance: it is a statement of faith in Christ and the movement of life toward God, that in our facing death, he will grant solace to the one whom he has chosen. Death hangs heavy over this moment in the film. As the funeral procession moves away, the song continues in the background while Ewa prays to Mary that she might find Magda that night at the refugee gathering on Ellis Island. Ewa's turning to prayer and her loving, single-minded focus on rescuing her sister from sickness and imprisonment reveals her continued faith in the face of the death.

Later that evening, Ewa attends an evening of entertainment for the refugees at Ellis Island. The primary performer during this scene, Orlando the magician (Jeremy Renner), exudes a good-hearted optimism. His first trick, a levitation with arms extended, reveals the possibility of defying the forces that hold us all down. His second trick is also thematically significant. In a straightjacket and sealed in a standing coffin, he escapes before a guard fires a gun several times into the box. As planned, Orlando escapes certain death. Ewa initially ignores Orlando's tricks as she looks for her sister, but at the sound of the gunshots and the immediacy of death, she turns her attention back to Orlando.

At this moment in the film, when Ewa might be tempted to despair, Orlando offers a vision that transcends the dark circumstances of potential deportation. As Gray says of Orlando, "We also know that in the worst place that Ewa has been in in her life, he gives her a rose and shows her that there's something transcendent out there."¹⁵ Orlando's rose is the first thing she receives

in the United States without strings attached. As he returns to the stage, he tells the whole crowd: “Don’t give up the faith. Don’t give up the hope.” This encouragement, coming at just the right time and from a man who, by kneeling, has lowered himself to her level in order to speak with her, provides Ewa a complement to her abiding faith and love: a hopeful vision of a good beyond the confines of her painful existence. She stands with the crowd and applauds as Orlando leaves the stage.

Confession at Candlemas

Armed with her faith in God and the corresponding conviction that she is not nothing, Ewa falls once more into Bruno’s hands. Again she begins to sell herself for the money she needs to free Magda from the Ellis Island infirmary. After a period of some weeks, she attends church for the first time, at Candlemas.¹⁶ Significantly, Candlemas highlights the purification of Mary after giving birth, in accordance with the Mosaic Law. Having prostituted herself, Ewa comes to church looking for purification. She and the rest of the congregation each hold a candle during the service, a significant biblical homage to Simeon’s “light for revelation to the Gentiles” (Luke 2:32), a line which signifies the saving power of the Messiah, Jesus. With a desire for purification and the light of Christ before her, the film focuses especially on the confessional portion of the mass, as the priest concludes with the confession of sin, “mea culpa, mea culpa, mea máxima culpa (through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault).”

Gray then follows Ewa into the confessional.¹⁷ Just before disappearing into the confessional, Cotillard looks directly, albeit briefly, at the camera. Gray has directed his actors to look at the camera before, in his previous film, *Two Lovers*. The effect there is revelatory, drawing the audience into the experience or perspective of each of the leads. The same is true here with Ewa, during her most intimate scene of the film.

Once inside and with downcast eyes, Ewa confesses to lying, stealing food, and trying to steal money. Gray appears to use a handheld camera for the first portion of this confession, the camera bobbing ever so slightly left and right. The technique adds an air of intimacy, but also undergirds our sense of sympathy with Ewa in this moment. As Gray cuts away to an increasingly pained Bruno listening to her confession, she describes her dehumanizing journey to America via ship: she and Magda lived like animals and men forced themselves on Ewa. Eventually, Ewa comes to the most significant element of her confession:

Ewa: I use my body for money. I let him use me and I stay with him.

Priest: God punishes you for your sins, my child.

Ewa: I know I do not go to heaven.

Priest: My child, doesn't God rejoice when one returns to the fold? You must have faith in your own salvation; but you must find a way to leave that man.

Ewa: So maybe I do go to hell.

Several elements are worth noting about this sequence. First, Tavener's Funeral Canticule returns as she gets to the most significant elements of her confession. The possibility of death hangs over her as she confesses her deepest sins in accordance with her Catholic faith. Second, Gray cuts away from Bruno and back to Ewa during the above exchange with the priest. This time, however, the camera appears to be locked in place above her, her humiliation highlighted as she confesses to prostitution. Third, Ewa owns everything about her previous actions. She pursues purification completely. She holds nothing back, everything about her words speaking to her heartfelt participation in this sacrament. Fourth, the priest, despite his pronouncement of judgment, repeatedly addresses her as "child." While Ewa has been forced into a twisted family of pimp and prostitutes, joined together in dehumanizing activities, the priest who calls her "Child" reminds

her of her fundamental identity as a valued member of God's family. Finally, as the priest tells Ewa she has to leave Bruno, she looks up above the camera after holding her eyes downcast throughout the confession. The effect of seeing her eyes is striking, as if she were looking directly to God before the final line of her response. Indeed, the image echoes Falconetti's Joan in Dreyer's *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (1929). Ewa's pronouncement that she may go to hell indicates her rejection of the priest's advice to leave Bruno. She feels she must continue in her sin and open herself to damnation in order to save her sister. This act of love for Magda is faithful to the loving Christ at the center of her faith—who also subjected himself to degradation on behalf of others—even as her actions conflict with the priest's advice.

New Life

As the police close in on Bruno and Ewa (for a murder Bruno committed), Ewa pays a brief visit to her aunt, in order to get the funds needed to get her sister out of Ellis Island quarantine. Ewa asks her hesitant aunt “to believe I can be saved.” Ewa's faith that she is not nothing, that she and Magda deserve to live beyond the abuse and mistreatment they've endured, is now pointed outward. Ewa's aunt is her first convert, the first besides Ewa to share her hope that there is a good life beyond this struggle. But Ewa's aunt will not be her last. As Ewa explains to her aunt: “God has sent me to someone so very lost, someone who made my life a sin. Now this person suffers for me, so I am learning the power of forgiveness.”

The final scenes of the film find Ewa and Bruno together, putting in motion the plan to get Magda off the island. Bruno sacrifices his health and future business for her. He buys her train tickets to California so she can have “a new life.” Once on the island, waiting in a storage room with the wind blowing outside, Bruno admits to the murder he has committed: “I will confess.” Bruno has learned from Ewa. He makes a full confession: “I love you, but I used you.” He tells

her that there is no good in him, that there is only poison in his heart, and that because he took everything from her, he is nothing: “I gave you nothing because I am nothing.”

As he completes his confession, Bruno breaks down in heaving sobs. Ewa moves toward him with fists raised. But almost as soon as the blows land on Bruno, Ewa embraces the fullness of her humanity. She forgives. She holds him as he sobs. The similarity to Michelangelo’s *Pietà* should not be missed—as she has prayed to Mary, now she has become Mary, chaste and pure in her service of Magda and her forgiveness of this repentant abuser. And in case her forgiveness is in question, she speaks words of life to Bruno as he sobs in her arms: “You are not nothing.” While Ewa’s actions in this final moment might be questioned as overly idealized—a chaste woman absorbs suffering from a sinful man and finds comfort through forgiveness—the striking act of forgiveness actually empowers Ewa to cut the cord of this relationship and walk away in freedom with her sister.¹⁸ Ewa shares her abiding faith in her own humanity with him, squeezes his hand, and leaves him to greet her sister.

THE LOST CITY OF Z (2016)

The Lost City of Z, based on David Grann’s book of the same name, tells the story of early 20th century British geographer and explorer Percy Fawcett (Charlie Hunnam) and his search for a lost city of gold in the Amazon jungle. The film portrays the initial motivation for Percy’s exploratory adventures as a need to reclaim the family name and to advance his family fortunes. Out of love for his family and because Percy felt bound by the British class system, he went to extraordinary lengths in order to break out of his low place in the old, rigid hierarchies perpetuated during the Victorian era and beyond.

An emphasis on social class has been evident throughout much of Gray’s career. In discussing his second film, *The Yards*, Gray notes that he “really wanted to make a movie about

social class in New York,” believing that “social class plays a major role in how our lives unfold.”¹⁹

More recently, Gray expanded on the role of class (and World War I) in *Z*:

I thought it was very important to introduce this idea of mechanized death, and that this is a product of a so-called “civilized” society. I thought it was centrally important to the idea of the movie, the central question being: What does it mean to be civilized? I found that the class structure of the UK and [Fawcett’s] lack of ability to break out of it is connected to this central idea. Is it civilized to have their hierarchy where we rank people in terms of social standing, class, gender, ethnicity?²⁰

The British class system is not just stifling to Percy’s hopes for advancement. It also puts him on the road to death—whether that be through taking substantial risks in his exploring the jungle half a world away or by signing up to serve in the trenches of France. The impetus for Percy’s journeys beyond England comes in answer to a question: might there be something better than a meager living as the son of a disgraced army officer? Percy’s hopes are modest as he sets out on his exploration, but grow in surprising ways as the film unfolds. As Gray suggested in promotional material upon the film’s release, “I hope ‘The Lost City of Z’ becomes an emotional experience that moves audiences and suggests, in the end, some kind of transcendence.”²¹

The Explorer

After Percy makes the decision to work for the Royal Geographical Society (RGS) in “Amazonia,” his wife, Nina (Sienna Miller), writes to him in South America. The letter contains a piece of a Kipling poem. In voice over, Nina reads the following words:

Something hidden. Go and find it. Go and look behind the Ranges—
Something lost behind the Ranges. Lost and waiting for you. Go!²²

These lines serve as something of a mission statement for Percy as he heads to Amazonia. Kipling’s position as essentially aligned with colonial power means these words take on an ironic character in the mouth of Percy, who—at least in his conception of the natives of Amazonia—

takes a position aligned in contrast to the standard English hierarchical narrative.²³ Kipling's words on their surface speak to Percy's being able to properly map the jungle border between Brazil and Bolivia. But as these words hang over the rest of the film and his multiple journeys to Amazonia, they take on a measure of transcendence. While he doesn't understand it initially, Percy is looking for something more than a border or river mouth. He is on a journey that he comes to hope will change him and change the world.

This hope begins to take on a more concrete reality as rumors of a lost city of gold deep inside the jungle crop up during Percy's first journey. When Percy and his traveling companion, Mr. Costin (Robert Pattinson), stumble upon pottery and carvings near the very end of his journey for the RGS, Percy becomes convinced of an advanced civilization that might even predate British civilization.

Upon his return, Percy prepares to share his findings with the RGS. Gray lights these scenes dimly, an indication of the social constraints upon the characters, the boundedness of their thinking, but also, paradoxically, indicating the mystery all around them. Percy describes these native Amazonians in a way that conflicts sharply with the RGS members' notions of "savages" or "primitives." The English bought into a hierarchical vision of humanity, with English or European society at the top of the pyramid. Percy's openness to finding advanced peoples in other parts of the world speaks to an openness to see the world in fundamentally different ways. Percy's wife, Nina, underscores this point further. She discovered a centuries-old letter about the lost city from a Spanish conquistador. Her scholarly contribution, as well as Percy's willingness to publicly credit her, reveal Gray's concerns with pushing back against class hierarchies.²⁴ When pressed to characterize this lost city, Percy describes it as "Zed, the ultimate piece of the human puzzle." As Gray says, "The jungle was not the locus of madness. It was Percy's chance to repair a broken part

of his soul.”²⁵ The lost city takes on a profound significance for Percy, becoming much more than a would-be discovery of ruins. His hope of discovery reorders his conception of his own flourishing and human flourishing in general. Where he initially sought to better his position for his family in the existing English class system, Percy increasingly takes on a prophetic voice, speaking the truth to power in the hopes of seeing a more just accounting of and society for non-English or non-Europeans as well as women. In following this prophetic path, Percy’s pursuit of discovery among the Amazonians draws him ever-nearer to a true home of life and peace that transcends the death-dealing class system of the English system.

The Reading

After a second trip failed to discover Zed, Percy’s obsession had to wait. World War I had broken out. Gray cuts from a spearhead in Percy’s home to a sword sticking up on the French battlefield and explosions going off in the background. The European killing system is far more advanced than the simple Amazonian spear. Dead bodies lay unburied in the establishing shots of the battlefield. Percy’s road has indeed led to meaningless death and profound inhumanity.

At this point in the film, a Russian palm reader has been brought into the trenches. As Mr. Costin brings Percy into the room to have his fortune read, he welcomes Percy “to the world beyond.” As he sits down with the palm reader, Percy asks her for spiritual aid in preparation for battle. She guesses that he wants to be in a forest, and after telling her of his wish to discover a lost city, she asks him to picture it in his mind:

Percy: Yes. I can see it.

Palm Reader: You cannot blind yourself to this vision. What you seek is far greater than you ever imagined. A vast land bejeweled with peoples. Your soul will never be quiet until you find this new place. It is your destiny. With it, you will illuminate the world.

Percy: Our world has set itself afire. I must look elsewhere to quench the blaze.

As this exchange proceeds, Gray brings in quiet violins and focuses on the faces of the men listening. The moment transcends the death all around. The background behind Percy and the palm reader becomes a jungle as Percy imagines Amazonia. His hopes take shape and soon after Percy articulates his belief: place and rank are not the makings of a man. Rather, he says, “such ambitions are mere phantoms.” Percy dreams of a world where a person is assessed not on rank or whether someone is a “savage,” but on what a person actually accomplishes. Given the realities of English society, Percy’s wife, Nina, should be honored for her scholarship. The Amazonians should be respected for their ancient technology. However, Percy comes to believe that such a vision of equality cannot be reached in hierarchical English society. He must look elsewhere. He must transcend this class system that has led to such injustices and the war that will temporarily blind him.²⁶

The Final Journey

Healed from his war injuries, Percy’s final journey to Amazonia comes about from the prompting of his now-adult son, Jack (Tom Holland). They plan a trip together, both eager to satiate their hopes for further discovery. Percy tells the men at the RGS that he will send his compass just in case he decides not to return, a possible intimation that Percy suspects his own death. Might it also be a suggestion of hopes fulfilled, that Percy may find his glorious destination and leave his old life behind? The RGS, in turn, give him their highest honor, the Founders Medal. And yet, Percy has long since moved beyond desiring such rewards. The rewards he seeks are in the dedication of his life to something beyond himself. As Gray notes:

If you were searching for something your whole life and you finally found it, what does that mean? . . . finding the city was not really what the movie was about at all. The movie is ultimately about the search, and how you dedicate your life to the idea of a goal.²⁷

Once they arrive in Amazonia, Gray's choice of music—the *Lever du jour* section of Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé*—evokes reunification, renewed life, and optimism for the future.²⁸ Percy's love for Amazonia and its people, and the ability to share that love with his son, mark this section of the film. After visiting with peaceful natives, Percy notes that “we are all made of the same clay.” He has embraced a simple faith in a common humanity.

The film's bitter irony is that the natives do not also share Percy's vision of the world. A tribe captures him and Jack, and these natives see Percy differently than themselves, calling him a Christian. However, they are not without compassion, conferring among themselves and deciding to find a home for his spirit. This compassion is rooted in their belief that he is not like the other Europeans, likely meaning a death-dealer. Where the Europeans and the Amazonians were associated with the places they come from, Percy seems to have no home.

In the midst of a native ceremony, much of it shrouded in darkness, Percy tells Jack that life is a mystery but that they have made a journey which has “given understanding to our hearts.” They tell each other, “I love you,” and as the mysterious ceremony progresses, Percy reaches upwards. The film cuts directly into a distant memory of a letter his wife read in case she did not survive Jack's birth:

Consider our son, and the love you must show him. . . . Always teach him to dream, to seek the unknown, to look for what is beautiful is its own reward. . . . A man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a Heaven for?

Percy had followed his wife's advice. He and his son had sought, with all their hearts and strength, to look for the beautiful lost city. With hope as their guide, they sought life in the unknown both in space (Amazonia) and time (the future). More importantly, they discovered the value of all

people—no matter their rank or name or origin. And all of this happens under the framework of Nina’s words, a search for heaven, the place where God dwells. In seeking a lost city and finding the value of all people, the hopes that Percy has carried has pointed him to God.

The film ends with a brief coda focused on Nina. She meets with one of the men from the RGS to tell him that a man reported seeing Percy and Jack in South America. She will not “lose confidence” that they are alive, making it her life’s work to find them. In the final shot, through a mirror, she walks away from the camera, out of the building, and into a jungle. Percy’s hopes that rested in something other than the death-dealing of English civilization have been transferred to his wife. With the sounds of faint church bells slowly being overtaken by the trilling of the jungle, Nina, too, plunges into the unknown, looking for life beyond. Nina’s story is more tragic, for as the one left behind, and as a woman, she is limited in her ability to undertake the journey as Percy had. Of this ending, Gray says, “I wanted to create the idea of two different realities for these people. One which was uncertain and transcendent, and one which was considerably less optimistic.”²⁹ Implicitly, then, the finale is itself a call for justice, a reminder that while Percy may have found spiritual solace for himself, the realities of life today continue in their fractured state. Are we bold enough to hope that Percy’s equitable vision of humanity might win out?

AD ASTRA (2019)

If one were to choose a film about “love” from James Gray’s work, the obvious choice might be 2008’s *Two Lovers*, which traces the dual loves of the depressed and confused Leonard.³⁰ The focus in that film, however, is specifically on desire and romantic love,³¹ while *Ad Astra* includes romance among a more diverse palette of loves. This broader scope makes the later film the better choice for the limited purposes of this article.

After the title card, which speaks of this future era as “a time of hope,” Gray opens the film with a shot of light refracting from the sun. As the camera pans to the right, circles of light move across the screen, changing size and color. Eventually the camera finds the earth and stops its movement. This simple pan sets up the narrative arc of the film—an astronaut, Roy (Brad Pitt), will go to the stars in search of “intelligent life and the promise of progress,” but find only isolation and death, prompting him to return to the love and life of earth.

Psychological Evaluation

The film opens with Roy receiving a computer-led psychological evaluation. Gray sets up Roy’s isolated and compartmentalized life by intercutting scenes of Roy speaking to the computer robotically with scenes of a woman (who we come to discover is Roy’s wife, Eve [Liv Tyler]) walking toward the door and leaving a house:

Roy: I slept well, no bad dreams.

[A woman walks away from the camera]

Roy: I am focused on the essential, to the exclusion of all else.

[The same woman continues to walk, this time right to left]

Roy: I will only make pragmatic decisions. I will not allow myself to be distracted.

[The woman, in the background of the shot, walks from right to left, but halfway through the frame stops and turns toward Roy sitting in the foreground and focused on a screen]

Roy [in voice over]: I will not allow my mind to linger on that which is unimportant.

[Roy turns to look at the woman, but says nothing. The jarring sound of keys drop on the table, and then she turns and leaves the house.]

Roy: I will not rely on anyone or anything.

This sequence sets up Roy's fundamental relational problem—his isolation from meaningful relationships. Roy's complete faith in himself and his singular focus on the search for intelligent life beyond the earth leaves him blind to the grandeur and beauty of life right in front of him. However, his memories of Eve suggest that Roy has already been touched by a true love in his life. His wife's leaving has shaken him. Memories of Eve break in on him, which will eventually lead to self-examination. Gray focuses on this absence of relational love to demonstrate Roy's need for it. As Gray says, "The point is, how do you show love, I don't think that can ever be an ambition. I think if you show, as much as you can, an honest depiction of our struggle and what it means to be a human being, then love is going to be part of the equation."³² Roy's journey in this film is a struggle to be authentically human, and love sits at the very center of that struggle.

Distant Relations

Roy's mission involves sending a message to and later retrieving his father, Cliff (Tommy Lee Jones), who is in a broken-down ship near Neptune. When Roy hears that his father might be alive—Cliff's mission left 29 years prior and Roy, in his compartmentalizing way, believes him dead—Roy starts to go back and listen to old messages from his father. One such message, sent only a year or two into the mission, finds Cliff talking about how he thinks of his young son, but also of God: "I think of God. I'm overwhelmed at seeing and feeling his presence so close. I love you, my son." The close connection between sensing the presence of God and expressing love for another is striking, and certainly evocative of Christian teaching that love of God and love of others are closely linked.

As Roy draws nearer to Neptune, he learns more about his father. Other messages relayed to Roy reveal that Cliff has isolated himself by disabling all external communications. After a

shocking incident answering a mayday call from a nearby ship where Roy is forced to kill murderous baboons, he takes another psychological evaluation, reflecting on the rage he inherited from his father: “I don’t want to be that guy. I don’t want to be my dad.” Roy aligns himself and his father with the baboons in that reflection, suggesting an ill-formed or deformed humanity in them. Once Roy discovers that his father has become a killer, the final destination of Roy’s journey is the isolation and death associated with Cliff. But Roy wants something else. As Gray says, “The opposite of death is to love, to be loved, that is a richness, the richness of the human experience is the opposite of death, not just living.”³³

Roy’s other encounters also highlight his distance from real relationship. The first is an old friend of his father’s, Col. Pruitt (Donald Sutherland). Pruitt and Cliff had been close thirty years prior. Pruitt feels some kinship with Roy even though the latter does not really know him. Relational invitations from Pruitt cannot penetrate Roy’s well-established relational walls. Pruitt asks how Roy feels about talking to his father; the latter deflects and states his belief that his father is dead. Pruitt sets out on this difficult journey to Mars despite a heart problem; Roy wonders, “why can’t he just let go?”

Roy’s self-sufficiency contrasts strongly with his other traveling partners—the crew of the ship taking him to Mars. This light-hearted group laughs and jokes together, makes conversation with Roy, and are nowhere near the astronaut Roy is. Perhaps their limitations have prompted them to realize their need for others outside themselves. This leads even to their expressed Catholic faith. The captain prays to St. Christopher upon takeoff. Later, when one crew member dies, another offers a prayer that evokes the Catholic “Song of Farewell”: “May the angels and the saints come to meet you as you go forth from this life.” In this crew, religious faith goes hand in hand with their love and care for one another.

One other encounter proves especially meaningful on this theme, with Helen (Ruth Negga), who runs the Martian base. Gray's camera focuses on her approach to Roy in a Martian hallway: she walks directly toward the camera. The unsettling effect of her in a direct close up suggests Helen breaking through Roy's defenses. After a brief interaction, Roy leaves, but again the camera stays with Helen. She walks directly toward the camera as it moves backward, staying with her in close up. When she returns to Roy's orbit, after he has successfully sent a message to his father, she engages him in conversation, telling him about her one visit to earth. Roy tells her he wants privacy—isolation—but she refuses to follow his lead. She finally breaks through by sharing news about her parents, members of Cliff's crew that Cliff has since killed. Roy responds hopefully and helpfully to Helen by saying, "I will deal with him. I will deal with my father."

These important exchanges establish that Roy comes by his isolationism honestly, that he practices it faithfully, but that there is still some hope that he can change if only he would reach out. Interestingly, when Roy arrived on Mars, he passed a sign for Crisis Counseling that encourages just that: "There is hope/ Make the call." His need for love in his life is strong and his single-minded pursuit of his work has not filled the void.

Neptune Sequence

Roy's increasing vulnerability propels his journey to find his father. Early in the film, Roy believed his father dead. But as evidence accumulates to the contrary, Roy decides to engage in an act of striking vulnerability. Rather than read the canned message Space Command has prepared for Roy to transmit to his father, Roy goes off script, telling his father that he'd like to see him again, that he remembers them watching musicals together, and that he chose a career in space exploration that he knew his father would be proud of. When completed, Gray frames Roy in close-up, with

Roy's teary eyes faintly visible in the dim lighting of the sound-proof booth. To heighten the sense of vulnerability in this moment, Gray slowly pulls the camera away from Roy, creating a sense of loneliness that often comes in the moments after being vulnerable. When it appears that those in charge have received a response from Cliff, they immediately move to shuttle Roy out of the room and off Mars, telling him he cannot continue due to his personal investment in this situation. In other words, to be good at his job, Roy must be disconnected and invulnerable; precisely the qualities that prevent true expressions of love and real relationships with others. Roy's anger boils over in this scene and immediately after—being good at his job is no longer the most important thing in his life. As Brad Pitt wondered with James Gray while shooting, “Does true strength come from vulnerability?”³⁴

When Roy reaches Neptune and enters his father's ship, the sequence echoes Roy's earlier encounter with baboons. Evidence of distress on the ship is everywhere, with blood splattered on walls and dead bodies floating in corridors. When Roy reaches his father and wants to take him home, Cliff reveals himself as a man without a home, saying he has not thought about home in nearly 30 years and that he knew he was essentially widowing his wife and orphaning Roy. Roy responds, “I still love you, Dad.” This expression of love from Roy, in the face of complete rejection from his father, speaks to the depth of change that has taken place in Roy.

Roy then reaches out to take his father's hand, to share his love with his father. Gray's camera focuses on Roy's hand. From there, the camera switches back and forth between Roy's hand and Cliff. As Roy's hand reaches, Cliff shrinks back into a corner. Gray's camera cuts back to Roy's hand coming closer, while Cliff's hand twitches away. Finally, back to Roy's hand once more; Roy grabs his father's hand to take him from the ship. Tommy Lee Jones plays Cliff very

much like a hurt animal here—after years of isolation, Cliff has lost much of what has made him truly human, as he's unable even to speak in this moment, only to cower, lash out, and whimper.

In one last flourish, Cliff, the man of isolation and death, tries to convince Roy to work with him and pursue scientific discovery. Relationship for Cliff comes only through finding intelligent life in space, which he has not done and believes has made him a failure. This leads Roy to proclaim Cliff's journey a success, because “now we know, we're all we've got,” an invitation to human relationship. As they exit the ship connected by a safety strap, Cliff resists. Roy must decide to force him back to earth or to let him drift off into space. Roy chooses to let go of his father and his ways, turning back toward life.

As Roy prepares to return to earth using the momentum from an explosion, he describes his father's work:

He captured strange and distant worlds in greater detail than ever before. They were beautiful, magnificent, full of awe and wonder. But beneath their sublime surfaces there was nothing. No love or hate. No light or dark. He could only see what was not there and missed what was right in front of him.

The tragedy of Cliff's life is not that his work was meaningless. It was that he could not see the meaning in it. Roy can see the awe and wonder precisely because he has love in his life. This draws Roy back to human relationship. In contrast, Gray states, “the tragedy of Tommy Lee's character is that he never found a pleasure in the beauties that he discovered. He never found beauty in the idea that human beings are what matter.”³⁵

The film concludes with Roy giving a psychological evaluation. The words echo almost completely the evaluation from the film's opening, with a few key changes. Gray again intercuts images, this time of Roy sitting in a coffee shop and looking over to see Eve coming in to join him:

Roy: I'm steady, calm. I slept well, no bad dreams. I am active and engaged. I'm aware of my surroundings and those in my immediate sphere. I'm attentive.

[Cut to Roy in the coffee shop, stirring his beverage]

Roy: I am focused on the essential, to the exclusion of all else.

[Roy turns to see Eve looking in at him through the window of the shop]

Roy: I'm unsure of the future but I'm not concerned. I will rely on those closest to me . . .

[Eve enters the shop and begins walking toward the camera]

Roy: . . . and I will share their burdens, as they share mine. I will live and love. Submit.

Several visual cues give this scene even greater significance in the grand scheme of Gray's vision. Roy's sitting with an actual cup of coffee *on earth* suggests the importance of his physical presence for relationship. His turning to look at her without any particular cue from her suggests his interest in relationship with her. And her direct walk toward the camera, similar to Helen on Mars when Roy's defenses are broken down, *and* completely opposite of Eve's walk away from the camera in the beginning, speak to the remarkable human ability to continue in love and relationship despite the hurts that come in life.

The final word of the film, spoken as Roy sends the message, is "submit." This is a call to action, for there is no relationship and certainly no love, that lives and thrives without a willingness to submit ourselves to another.

CONCLUSION

The Immigrant speaks deeply to the reality of the life-giving power of faith and its importance to the human condition. Ewa's Catholic faith provides the backdrop for her faith in herself as a human being with inherent dignity. As a person of faith, Ewa's deep love prompts her to fight for her

sister's well-being, even at a significant cost to Ewa herself. And finally, Ewa's faith is not only life-giving for her, but it draws those around her toward the hope of life and liberty as well. *The Lost City of Z* speaks to a hope for a more human and a more humane (i.e. equitable) world. Initially out of love for his family, and broadening to a care and concern for justice and an equitable vision of human work and achievement, Percy sacrifices all for the sake of this vision. And while he finds some measure of spiritual solace in fostering and pursuing this hope, the damage to his family makes his tale a more complex or cautionary vision of hope lived out, one that recognizes the costs of putting our hope into practice, even while lauding the vision of a better world. For Roy in *Ad Astra*, earth is the locus of relationship. Space is the locus of isolation. He is thrust back to the earth at the beginning and at the end of the film. While he is open to it, the "gravity" of the universe is pushing him toward earth, toward relationship. He ends up giving up his faith in his own abilities and following those forces greater than himself, forces that push him toward a truly human existence of loving others and depending on them that allows a fuller appreciation and experience of the world.

In each of these films, the move toward true humanity is not simply a private concern of personal faith, hope, or love. In every case, the theological virtues work themselves out in relationships with family, friends, communities, and even places. The virtues are inherently expansive, pushing individuals to sacrificially serve others more or less powerful than themselves; to dream of a better world not marked by abusive treatment, oppressive class hierarchies, or isolation; and to make love of others fundamental to their flourishing.

In short, faith, hope, and love lead these characters beyond themselves. As Gray's characters transcend limitations that life has wrought in them, these characters find something of what they are looking for: a sister, a spiritual home, a spouse. Even though the final moments of

these movies are not always an explicit encounter with the divine, they always lead to a neighbor, which, according to Tomáš Halík, is on the path to God.

¹ For an excellent treatment of some of the familial dynamics in Gray's work, see Manuela Lazic, "James Gray's Obsession with Father Figures Lives on in 'Ad Astra,'" *The Ringer*, September 18, 2019. Accessed September 16, 2020. <https://www.theringer.com/movies/2019/9/18/20871004/james-gray-ad-astra-director-fathers-sons>.

² "Family" can be loosely defined in Gray's films, not limited to blood relationships. While most of his films do in fact have a traditional family at their core—think parents and their sons in *Little Odessa* (1994) or parents and children in *The Lost City of Z* (2016)—a couple of them broaden the notion of family by including other social contacts, such as the "family" of corruption in *The Yards* (2000) or the "family" of performers and prostitutes in *The Immigrant* (2013).

³ "So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love" (1 Corinthians 13:13).

⁴ Thomas Aquinas, *Treatise on the Virtues*, trans. John A. Oesterle (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), 119.

⁵ Catholic Church, *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1993), 1812.

⁶ Nonna Verna Harrison, *God's Many-Splendored Image* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 67.

⁷ Athanasius of Alexandria, *On the Incarnation* 54 (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1996), 93.

⁸ For example, see Adam Cook, "Love & Sincerity: A Conversation with James Gray," *Mubi*, October 5, 2013. Accessed September 16, 2020. <https://mubi.com/notebook/posts/love-sincerity-a-conversation-with-james-gray>; Jordan Mintzer, *James Gray*, (Paris: Synecdoche, 2012), 228. For an interesting look at the "Jewish-ness" of Gray's first four films, see Robert Alpert's, "The Films of James Gray: Old Testament Narratives," *Senses of Cinema*, December 2012. Accessed September 16, 2020. <http://sensesofcinema.com/2012/feature-articles/the-films-of-james-gray-old-testament-narratives/>

⁹ Tomáš Halík, *I Want You To Be* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2016), 96.

¹⁰ Poland for Ewa is associated with death, as she tells the story of her parents being beheaded by soldiers. In this context, America holds the promise of life.

¹¹ The author has transcribed all quotations directly from the existing film, unless otherwise noted.

¹² Adam Nayman, "Words Matter: James Gray on The Immigrant," *Cinema Scope*. Accessed September 16, 2020. <https://cinema-scope.com/cinema-scope-online/words-matter-james-gray-immigrant/>.

¹³ John Tavener, "Funeral Canticle," *Eternity's Sunrise* (Harmonia Mundi, 1999), CD.

¹⁴ "Funeral Canticle." *Genius*, accessed September 16, 2020, <https://genius.com/John-tavener-funeral-canticle-lyrics>.

¹⁵ Adam Cook, "Love & Sincerity."

¹⁶ Candlemas is a Christian celebration of Mary and Joseph's presentation of Jesus in the temple, described in Luke 2:22–38 and celebrated on February 2.

¹⁷ That Gray's form is an homage to Robert Bresson's *Diary of a Country Priest* only furthers the significance here. In Bresson's film, a young, sinful girl is prompted into the confessional by the priest with whom she has been speaking. As she steps backwards into the confessional, Bresson pushes the camera forward toward her, a move Gray mimics here.

¹⁸ Girish Shambu has raised concerns about the ending. After quoting Gray, who explains the empowering nature of forgiveness in the context of Jewish survivors of the holocaust, Shambu disagrees: "And the momentous narrative gesture of forgiveness that the film pivots on – and exalts – seems exactly wrong-headed at this moment in time and history. Today, when sexism, racism, xenophobia and hatred of every stripe have inscribed themselves into the fabric of everyday American life, Ewa's act of forgiveness cannot *help* but strike us as being untimely and naïve, with little meaningful to say to us at this difficult moment. One thing is clear: Forgiving the heinous actions in our midst will not 'empower' us right now. Only fighting them has the possibility of doing that." See Girish Shambu, "James Gray A-Z," *Lola*, <http://www.lolajournal.com/7/gray.html> (Accessed September 16, 2020). Shambu also wonders if Gray is simply trying to reflect the times. No doubt, but Gray is also trying to reflect the religious reality that, in my view, is as true today as it was in the 1920s—a person of Christian faith, forgiven by God themselves, understands that forgiveness is fundamental to life. Without it, death will always reign.

¹⁹ Mintzer, *James Gray*, 88.

²⁰ Kristen Page-Kirby, "The Savage, 'Civilized' World of 'The Lost City of Z,'" *Washington Post*, April 21, 2017. Accessed September 16, 2020. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/express/wp/2017/04/21/the-savage-civilized-world-of-the-lost-city-of-z/>.

²¹ "The Lost City of Z: The Story Behind the Film," *The New Yorker*. Accessed September 16, 2020. <http://paidpost.newyorker.com/lostcityofz/>.

²² Rudyard Kipling, *Collected Verse of Rudyard Kipling* (New York: Doubleday, 1915), 19.

²³ For a contrasting perspective, see Carter Ringle, "Fear and Loathing in the Americas: White Fanatics and the Cinematic Colonial Mindset," *Terrae Incognitae* 51.3 (2019): 276.

²⁴ Gray does not ignore the inherent complexity of Fawcett's positions. When Nina asks to travel with him on his second journey to Amazonia, Percy says no, pulling the patriarchal trump card on her, as she would be needed with the children, and she would not be hardy enough to endure life in the jungle. Thus, while Percy sees clearly in the abstract the need for a less hierarchical society, what that looks like in practice is still difficult to work out.

²⁵ James Gray, "Making 'The Lost City of Z': 'The Odyssey Swallowed Me Whole,' Says Writer-Director James Gray," *Los Angeles Times*, January 4, 2018. Accessed September 16, 2020. <https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/envelope/la-en-mn-on-writing-lost-city-z-20170104-story.html>.

²⁶ Percy as dreamer hearkens back to the writing of Fyodor Dostoevsky, who employed the notion in multiple places, nowhere more powerfully than in his semi-autobiographical, *Memoirs from the House of the Dead*. Freezing and starving in a Siberian prison, Dostoevsky writes that "everybody here was a dreamer." Dostoevsky's dreamers would not share their dreams for fear of being mocked, but Fawcett opens his dreams to his men, becoming an inspiration for them as they rush toward the French lines.

²⁷ Bilge Ebiri, "What the Hell is Going on in *Ad Astra*? James Gray Explains Himself," *Vulture*, September 25, 2019. Accessed September 16, 2020. <https://www.vulture.com/2019/09/ad-astra-ending-james-gray-explains-his-movie.html>.

²⁸ During the *Lever du jour* (sunrise) in Ravel's ballet, the titular characters (and lovers) are reunited after Chloé was kidnapped by brigands.

²⁹ Ignatiy Vishnevetsky, "James Gray Found More than an Adventure in *The Lost City of Z*," *AV Club*, April 12, 2017. Accessed September 16, 2020. <https://film.avclub.com/james-gray-found-more-than-an-adventure-in-the-lost-city-1798261069>.

³⁰ The set-up of being enamored with a “loose” woman that Leonard can see in an apartment across the way carries a striking family resemblance to Krystof Kieslowski’s important *A Short Film About Love*, or the shorter version that appeared as *Decalogue VI*.

³¹ I would be remiss not to note the important (though largely silent) witness of parental love in *Two Lovers*, the pinnacle coming in a scene between Leonard and his mother near the film’s conclusion.

³² Adam Cook, “Love & Sincerity.”

³³ Adam Cook, “Love & Sincerity.”

³⁴ Nathan Heller, “James Gray’s Journey from the Outer Boroughs to Outer Space,” *The New Yorker*, September 16, 2019. Accessed September 16, 2020. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2019/09/16/james-grays-journey-from-the-outer-boroughs-to-outer-space>.

³⁵ Bilge Ebiri, “What the Hell.”

References

Alpert, Robert. “The Films of James Gray: Old Testament Narratives.” *Senses of Cinema*, December 2012. Accessed September 16, 2020. <http://sensesofcinema.com/2012/feature-articles/the-films-of-james-gray-old-testament-narratives/>.

Aquinas, Thomas. *Treatise on the Virtues*. Translated by John A. Oesterle. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984.

Athanasius of Alexandria. *On the Incarnation*. Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1996.

Catholic Church. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1993.

Cook, Adam. “Love & Sincerity: A Conversation with James Gray.” *Mubi*, October 5, 2013. Accessed September 16, 2020. <https://mubi.com/notebook/posts/love-sincerity-a-conversation-with-james-gray>.

Ebiri, Bilge. “What the Hell is Going on in *Ad Astra*? James Gray Explains Himself.” *Vulture*, September 25, 2019. Accessed September 16, 2020. <https://www.vulture.com/2019/09/ad-astra-ending-james-gray-explains-his-movie.html>.

Genius. “Funeral Canticle.” Accessed September 16, 2020. <https://genius.com/John-tavener-funeral-canticle-lyrics>.

Gray, James. “Making ‘The Lost City of Z’: ‘The Odyssey Swallowed Me Whole,’ Says Writer-Director James Gray.” *Los Angeles Times*, January 4, 2018. Accessed September 16, 2020. <https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/envelope/la-en-mn-on-writing-lost-city-z-20170104-story.html>.

Halík, Tomáš. *I Want You To Be*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2016.

Harrison, Nonna Verna. *God’s Many-Splendored Image*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010).

Heller, Nathan. “James Gray’s Journey from the Outer Boroughs to Outer Space.” *The New Yorker*, September 16, 2019. Accessed September 16, 2020. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2019/09/16/james-grays-journey-from-the-outer-boroughs-to-outer-space>.

Kipling, Rudyard. *Collected Verse of Rudyard Kipling*. New York: Doubleday, 1915.

Lazic, Manuela. "James Gray's Obsession with Father Figures Lives on in 'Ad Astra.'" *The Ringer*, September 18, 2019. Accessed September 16, 2020. <https://www.theringer.com/movies/2019/9/18/20871004/james-gray-ad-astra-director-fathers-sons>.

Mintzer, Jordan. *James Gray*. Paris: Synecdoche, 2012.

Nayman, Adam. "Words Matter: James Gray on The Immigrant." *Cinema Scope*. Accessed September 16, 2020. <https://cinema-scope.com/cinema-scope-online/words-matter-james-gray-immigrant/>.

New Yorker, The. "The Lost City of Z: The Story Behind the Film." Accessed September 16, 2020. <http://paidpost.newyorker.com/lostcityofz/>.

Page-Kirby, Kristen. "The Savage, 'Civilized' World of 'The Lost City of Z'." *Washington Post*, April 21, 2017. Accessed September 16, 2020. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/express/wp/2017/04/21/the-savage-civilized-world-of-the-lost-city-of-z/>.

Ringle, Carter. "Fear and Loathing in the Americas: White Fanatics and the Cinematic Colonial Mindset." *Terrae Incognitae* 51.3 (2019): 271-280.

Shambu, Girish. "James Gray A-Z." *Lola*. Accessed September 16, 2020. <http://www.lolajournal.com/7/gray.html>.

Tavener, John. "Funeral Canticle." *Eternity's Sunrise*. Arles: Harmonia Mundi, 1999. CD.

Vishnevetsky, Ignatiy. "James Gray Found More than an Adventure in *The Lost City of Z*." *AV Club*, April 12, 2017. Accessed September 16, 2020. <https://film.avclub.com/james-gray-found-more-than-an-adventure-in-the-lost-city-1798261069>.