

**Structuralism and Its Aftermath**  
**in**  
**The Fiction of Henry James**

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of Ph.D. in American Studies  
to the Faculty of Philosophy and Humanities  
of the Free University of Berlin  
(Departments of Culture and Literature  
of John F. Kennedy-Institute for North American Studies)

by

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Berlin, October 10, 2011



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**Date of Defense: 26<sup>th</sup> of January, 2011**



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## **Acknowledgements**

In June 2006, when I started my doctoral studies at the John F. Kennedy Institute of Free University of Berlin, I had no research grant, and was receiving my salary only as an instructor member of the English Department of the Iranian Razi University. But in December, when my application was accepted and I started to receive a research grant from the Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology (MSRT), I could arrange for my family to join me. In this way, my anxieties soon started to relieve, because after that I could give almost all my time and attention to my studies. Therefore, I am very grateful to the Scholarship Office of the MSRT of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Without the grant, it would definitely be impossible for me to do this project.

My heartfelt thanks go to Prof. Dr. Winfried Fluck. For he not only accepted my application to do a doctoral program under his guidance, but also has been, in all my readings in Berlin, a kind friend, a reliable advisor, and a source of inspiration to me. He has helped me to find my way in the fiction of James and in the modern literary theory. He has showed me many useful guidelines, and suggested many key sources to read for my project. He has carefully read all my chapters one by one, and has given many kind and scholarly feedbacks. After reading each chapter, he has given it back to me to consider his feedbacks in my next readings. Then, his secretary has considered time for me to visit him in his office to discuss the details of his feedbacks on each chapter. His close contributions with my researches have excited me to work for better results.

However, his help has not stopped here. When the Graduate School of American Studies started working, I had passed the first year of my studies, and therefore was not a member of it. However, Prof. Fluck accepted my request to attend the doctoral seminars that he taught in the winter semester 2007: "American Exceptionalism" and "Advanced Disciplinary Methods." Prof. Fluck's kind disposition, the possibility of easy contact with him, his honest respect to the ambitions of his students, and his intensive care for their timely progress, in addition to his wide knowledge in American culture and literature, and his useful contribution to many teaching and research programs make of him a real source of confidence for all his students. Also, his long and intimate experience as a teacher and scholar, and his wide publications on American culture and literature make of him a reliable source of objective judgment and academic discipline.

My deep gratitude goes to Prof. Dr. Ulla Haselstein also. In the winter semester 2007, when she and Prof. Dr. Heinz Ickstadt were teaching the MA seminar "Lessons of the Master: The Late Work of Henry James," she kindly accepted my request to help me as the second advisor of my project. Since then, she has read all my chapters one by one. After reading each chapter and giving many kind and scholarly feedbacks, I have regularly visited her in her office, and she has discussed the details of her feedbacks with me. She has also given me interesting suggestions which I have attempted to use in my next readings. Each time I visited her, she has encouraged me, with her critical advices and scholarly suggestions, to work for a next chapter. In addition, she kindly accepted me in the graduate seminar "Reflections on Contemporary Literary Critical Theory" that she taught in the summer semester 2008. In Prof. Haselstein, I find all of what a best teacher of American literature needs: great perseverance, comprehensive knowledge, steadfast purpose, practical skill in interactive communication.

My sincere thanks go to Prof. Dr. Heinz Ickstadt too. He is an emeritus Prof. of American studies and a former chair of the Department of Literature. In summer 2007, when I was attending the seminar on James, he kindly suggested to read my chapters as a help. Although he had had a hectic life with his own studies, he has read three of my chapters and has given many interesting feedbacks on them. He has also accepted to help me as a member of my dissertation committee. Prof. Ickstadt has widely written on American literary criticism and theory. My sincere thanks go to Prof. Dr. Laura Bieger and Mr. Dr. Andrew Steven Gross also. They have kindly accepted to help me as members of my dissertation committee. I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Bärbel Tischleder for accepting me in the MA course that she taught in the summer semester 2008: "American Realism and Naturalism: Historical Contexts and Literary Form." I would like to thank Priv.-Doz. Dr. Catrin Gersdorf also. She accepted me in the BA courses that she taught in the summer semester 2007: "American Novel" and "American Renaissance."

I am grateful to the secretaries of the departments of culture and literature. Mrs. Sabina Riefler, Mrs. Regina Wenzel, and Mrs. Anja Cortes were very kind and helpful to me, and very interested in the progress of my studies. Before I came to Berlin, Regina and Sabina arranged for my phone contacts with Prof. Fluck. And after I started my studies in the institute, and repeatedly needed to visit him, they arranged my visits as easily as possible and as many times as I needed. Also, whenever I needed to visit Prof. Haselstein for my

readings, Anja was there in her office to help me without any hesitation. My sincere thanks go to Mr. Rune Reyhe. He kindly helped me with "Deutsche Zusammenfassung" which is available here as an appendix.

I think that in all the achievements of the JFKI, the role of its affiliated library is beyond question. The generous mobilization system of the library has equipped it with the most recent publications in all fields of American and Canadian studies. All facilities of the library, with its open circulation system of the reading materials, have changed it into a most competent research center in American studies. However, a part of such a great prestige is the result of the steady contributions of all the people who are concerned with it: the kind and serious contributions of the director Mr. Benjamin Blinten, of his ex-assistant Mrs. Barbara von Roël, and of all the kind and hard-working library assistants: Jutta Opatt, Elisa Tellbach, Angelika Krieser, Stephanie Kühne, Hans Michael Friedrich, Franziska Salzmann, Sabine Keyser, Uta Thiel, Anja Harenkamp, and those whose names I may have forgotten. I am grateful to all of them for their kind and sincere helps in the whole of my working period in the library.

Last, but not least, I am grateful to my wife, son, and daughter. Leyla, Behrouz, and Mahnaz have helped me a lot in my Berlin years. Many times they have overlooked their own interests to let me concentrate on my researches. When I started to live in Berlin, I had some problems with life in the new situation. However, when my wife suspended her teaching job in Iran, and joined me with my daughter, I could pursue my studies more intensively. Each time I have tripped in reading to the ethereal world of a Milly Theale, a Lambert Strether, or a Maggie Verver, I have got rather anxious and frightened. But, with their heavenly elixir of love my family has endured my embarrassed looks, have relieved my anxieties, and have changed them to hope and excitement for a next trip.



## **Preface One**

### **The Status of Teaching James in Iran**

I do not know how many English departments work in Iranian universities. But I think that the Department of Foreign Languages and Linguistics of Shiraz University, which was established in 1956, is a first department. Since then, an "English Department" has started working perhaps in each state university. In addition, the branches of Azad Islamic University, which was founded after the 1979 Islamic revolution as a nation-wide but non-state higher academic organization, have started to work in almost all cities and towns. It can be estimated that the English departments of this university have started working, if not in all of its branches, at least in the majority of them.

However, it seems that the English departments are still focusing their main attention on British literatures rather than American studies. Or if they have recently started to offer some courses of American literature, they are limiting them to their undergraduate programs. On the other hand, from the 1950s or 1960s, the development of humanities and social sciences has been extraordinarily rapid in America: historical studies, political sciences, psychology, economics, linguistics, literary theory and criticism, cultural studies, film studies, sociology, grammatology, narratology, anthropology, semiotics, and many other disciplines. In such a context, and also in the context of the current increasing globalization, I would like to propose that the Iranian schools of advanced research and higher education in letters and humanities including English departments and the departments of cultural studies re-structure their graduate programs, and offer more aspects of the American culture and literature, and in more comprehensive modules. I think that the department of North America of the Faculty of World Studies of Tehran University, which was established in 2007 as a graduate school, can provide advice for defining and modeling the activities of other departments and institutes, because its inter-disciplinary program of teaching and research is an amalgamation of literary, cultural, historical, sociological, and political aspects of American studies.

I have always been very interested in the fiction of James and contemporary literary and cultural studies. However, before applying for an admission to the Kennedy Institute, I was sure that for doing a doctoral project in James and narrative theory, I need (1) a close access to a modern research library, and (2) the supervision of a professor who is highly knowledgeable in American studies. After I started working in the institute, and for centralizing my work, I applied for a working room and other essential research facilities like a computer linked to the internet, for I thought in this way I would have more time to continue reading in the closing times of the library. But when I was informed that the institute can consider no room for me, I was surprised and a little bit discouraged.

However, after working a longer time in the reading halls of the library and becoming more familiar with the institute, I realized that it was the same with what in search of which I had come to Berlin. Part of this, was because in the library, that is "the greatest research center for American studies in Europe," all researchers can place their work in "private" and cozy corners of learning while they are sure that they will be bothered in no form. In addition, as a ph. D. student, I have enjoyed excellent advantages in the institute: the membership to a really multicultural situation where the people come together from different parts of the world and pass a friendly academic life, the membership to a modern research center where one has easy and fast access to almost all reading materials that one needs, and access to the close, kind, and scholarly advices of many scientists who have wide knowledge in American studies.

In addition to "Bibliothek des John F.-Kennedy Instituts," the students of FU Berlin, can centralize their studies in many other libraries: in Universitätsbibliothek (University Library), in Philologische Bibliothek, and in departmental libraries of Psychology and Education, Art, Philosophy, Law, Social Sciences, as well as in the libraries of many Art-Historical institutes like the Institutes for Islamic Studies, Iranian Studies, Classical Archeology, Protestant Theology, Arab (Arabic) Studies, Egypt Studies, and Theater studies. The students have online access to many important gateways, and link

database collections with reference to North American studies: American Studies Crossroads, Virtual Library of Anglo-American Culture, Database of Online Canadiana, USA Library Mainz, Internet Public Library. They are also linked to a number of universal library catalogues and book traders: Online Catalog of FU Berlin, Digital Library of FU Berlin, Library Cooperative Berlin-Brandenburg (KOBV), Karlsruhe Virtual Catalog (KVK), Periodicals Database (ZDB), The Library of Congress, Library and Archives Canada, WorldCat, Amazon database, Book Catalog, Central Index for Second Handbook, Booklooker/Disklooker, Film Literature Index, etc.

It is said that some parts of the present research are “repetitious.” I apologize to my readers for this. But I doubt if they can be called repetitious, because however some of its themes and ideas are discussed more than one time, and however one can find some similar sentences in it, the second discussion of the theme is at the same time different from the first, because it wants to be an expansion or elaboration of it, to discuss it in more details, and, in this way, to give the reader a more comprehensive reception of it. In addition, the Iranian scholars and students of James and narrative theory, for whom this project is mainly written, are non-native speakers of English. So, they can make them feel inferior and embarrassed, because both of them are quite complicated and abstract, and James is bizarre and eccentric also. But I hope that my “repetitions” help my readers not only to find their ways in James but also to proceed with their studies in narratology. Through expounding on certain parts and ideas, I have intended to help them as they try to demystify the later phase of James and appreciate the intricacies of the modern theory.



## **Preface Two**

### **Plot Summaries and Major Characters**

This preface provides a plot summary for the works of James which the present project will analyze, and a sketch of who is who in those works. The plot summaries and character sketches have been extracted from Robert L. Gales's *Plots and Characters in the Fiction of Henry James* (1965), and Glenda Leeming's *Who's Who in Henry James* (1976).

#### **A. "The Real Thing" (1892)**

The painter-narrator agrees to hire as models Major and Mrs. Monarch, handsome, sociable, and destitute. But he soon finds these real things too inflexible to help him in his trial illustrations for a de luxe edition of Philip Vincent's works. So he relies more and more on Cockney model Miss Churm and, later, on a lithe Italian named Oronte, whose poses are eloquent. The real thing lacks plasticity. The narrator is harshly warned to this effect by his critical friend Jack Hawley. The impoverished Monarchs mutely ask to be retained as his servants; but, unwilling to assent to this demanding, the narrator pays them literally and they leave.

**Monarch, Major:** a model for the painter-narrator who proves ineffectual because he is too real and inflexible.

**Monarch, Mrs.:** the wife of Major Monarch; a model for the painter-narrator who proves ineffectual because she is too real and inflexible.

**Churm, Miss:** the painter-narrator's adept Cockney model.

**Oronte:** an Italian model-valet of the painter-narrator.

**Vincent, Philip:** the imaginary author whose belated de luxe edition the painter-narrator hopes to illustrate; he is the author of *Rutland Ramsey*.

**Artemisia:** the fictional character in Philip Vincent's *Rutland Ramsey*, which novel the narrator is commissioned to illustrate.

### **B. "The Figure in the Carpet" (1896)**

Critic George Corvick assigns the critic-narrator the task of reviewing a new novel by Hugh Vereker, whom the narrator is happy to meet later at a party. Vereker apologizes for his remark to a dinner companion that the narrator's review contained only routine twaddle, which remark the narrator overheard. But then Vereker seriously continues by saying that there is a "figure in the carpet" of his fictional production which no critic has discovered. The narrator conscientiously re-reads Vereker's works but cannot trace any figure. He tells Corvick who after much study professes to have the secret, which he will confide only to his fiancée Gwendolyn Erme and only after their marriage. On their honeymoon Corvick is killed in a dogcart accident. Gwendolyn has the secret, she claims, but will not share it with the narrator. Instead, she marries an inferior critic named Drayton Deane. Vereker dies of fever in Rome, and then his widow dies. Gwendolyn dies having Deane's second child. When the narrator asks Deane about the reputed figure, the imperceptive man claims any knowledge about it.

**Vereker, Hugh:** The novelist whose "figure in the carpet" of his works challenges the critic-narrator and his critic-friend George Corvick; he dies of fever in Rome.

**Corvick, George:** A literary critic friend of the critic-narrator; he claims to have traced out "the figure in the carpet" of Hugh Vereker's works; he marries Gwendolyn Erme and dies before he can publish his discovery concerning Vereker's works.

**Erme, Gwendolyn:** The fiancée, then wife, and then widow of George Corvick, the critic who claims to have discovered "the figure in the carpet" of Hugh Vereker's works; she marries the third-rate critic Drayton Deane and then dies without revealing the figure.

**Deane, Drayton:** The third-rate literary critic who marries Gwendolyn Erme Corvick but who can tell the critic-narrator nothing about "the figure in the carpet" of Hugh Vereker's works.

### **C. *The Wings of the Dove* (1902)**

Lionel Croy agrees that his daughter Kate should appear to ignore him, go to her aunt Maud Lowder, and let that massive woman negotiate a fine marriage for her. Then Kate

visits her widowed sister Marian Condrip, who urges her to drop Merton Densher, a London journalist soon to visit America temporarily, in favor of Lord Mark, Maud's choice. Rich, dying Milly Theale and her traveling companion Mrs. Susan Stringham go from New York, where the girl chanced to meet Densher, to Italy and Switzerland, then on to London. Mrs. Stringham soon introduces Milly to her old school friend Mrs. Lowder, at whose home the girl quickly becomes friendly with Kate and attracts Lord Mark, whom Maud, however, still wants for her niece Kate. Through Kate, Milly meets Marian and learns from her of Densher's love for Kate; Milly says nothing about it, however, because Maud does not want Densher mentioned. Nor does Kate ever speak of him. Lord Mark is intrigued by Milly when he points out her resemblance to a Bronzino portrait. Milly enlists Kate's confidence by having Kate accompany her to the eminent physician Sir Luke Strett, who tells the girl to make the best of her short time remaining. Densher returns to London; Milly is puzzled by seeing him with Kate in an art gallery since soon thereafter (at Kate's instigation) he calls upon and is most attentive to Milly. Kate hopes that he can marry rich, dying Milly, inherit her money at her death, and then defiantly marry Kate. On Sir Luke's advice, Milly goes for the winter to Venice, accompanied by Mrs. Stringham, in addition Kate and her aunt briefly, and Densher somewhat hesitantly. To assure himself of Kate after the consummation of their unsavory plan, he gets her to visit him in his room privately. He is later so charming to Milly that she quickly falls in love with him. However, Lord Mark, also in Venice now, has proposed to Milly, been rejected, and later in bitterness and frustration – Mrs. Stringham soon tells tardily remorseful Densher – informs worsening Milly of Kate's permanent liaison with Densher, which somehow he learned of. Back in London, Densher cannot bring himself to go and see Kate. He hears on Christmas Day through Maud at Sir Luke's home of Milly's death in Venice. He then receives a letter in Milly's hand, takes it unopened to Kate; ill at ease, they burn it, sensing that it contains an offer of money so that they can marry. Later a letter comes to Densher from a New York law firm. He sends it unopened to Kate, who comes to him with it. He will marry her without the money but not with it; she will not marry him

without it. Kate now knows that Densher loves Milly's memory, wants no other love, and like her has changed.

**Croy, Kate:** A beautiful English girl, slender, graceful, and fine with dark hair, dark blue eyes and a character strong enough for heroic deeds, though perhaps therefore lacking in finest delicacy. Rescued from poverty and her father's disgrace by her Aunt Maud Lowder, who plans a great match for her, Kate is secretly engaged to a poor journalist Merton Densher, who hopes Aunt Maud or some good fortune will raise above the genteel poverty she hates. When her new, rich American friend Milly Theale falls in love with Densher, Kate and he pretend he loves Kate in vain and may turn to Milly, partly to deceive Aunt Maud, partly to help Milly in her increasingly obvious illness, and partly in hopes of Milly's money, even if Densher has to her widower to get it. This bold, daring scheme is Kate's, and she is brave enough also to visit Densher in his rooms, his condition for complying. However Milly's generosity, when discovering the deception and dying in despair, she nevertheless leaves him in large fortune, places Kate's comparative self-interest in an unfavorable light. Refusing Densher's challenge to marry him without the money, she also refuses the money alone: she is not entirely mercenary, but she has been changed by the long deception.

**Densher, Merton:** A longish, leanish, fairish young man, 'only half a Briton' being educated, as the son of a chaplain working abroad, mainly in Swiss schools and a German university, though followed by Cambridge. As a journalist his lack of income and puishiness means he will never be rich, especially not rich enough for his cautious, determined fiancée Kate Croy. To placate Kate's rich aunt and to help her new, rich, and very ill American friend Milly Theale, Densher pretends to be unsuccessful with Kate and susceptible to Milly, Kate's plan being that Milly shall leave him money. Initially rebellious, he agrees on condition that Kate comes to him in his rooms. His indifference to Milly changes to affection, but when the truth is guessed and betrayed by his rival Lord Mark, Densher is unable to deny Kate outright—even though his denial might have Milly's will to live. However, understanding and forgiving this, Milly leaves him a fortune when she dies. At last appreciative of her, he is repelled by Kate's more self-interested courage, and challenges her to marry without his inheritance, 'as we

were'. Kate refuses both this and the money alone, and they part for ever: he has been saved from the sordid effects of the plot by his own sense of honor and Milly's example, but the result is that both have changed too much to be 'as we were'.

**Theale, Milly:** A young American girl, whose beauty is arguable: she is 'constantly pale, delicately haggard, anomalously agreeably angular', and has hair 'somehow exceptionally red even for the real thing'. Only survivor of the successive tragic deaths of her whole family, she is now very rich but something prompts her to travel through Europe (with her Boston friend Susan Stringham) increasingly hastily *en route* to consult an eminent doctor in London. Rightly interpreting his comment that she is well and must live to the full, as meaning that she will get worse and should make the most of her short span, she falls in love with Merton Densher. This is threatened by his secret engagement to her friend Kate Croy, but Kate and he pretend that his suit is unsuccessful, partly to her Milly, partly to deceive Kate's hostile rich aunt, and partly in hopes that Milly will enrich Densher, even if he has to marry her. But a suitor of both girls, Lord Mark, guesses their interest in Densher, and betrays the deception to Milly, thus turning her new will to live to despair and death. Generously appreciating Densher's motives, however, she leaves him an enormous fortune. Too late he reacts against Kate's ruthless courage and loves Milly's memory. Dove-like in her innocence, Milly also has great strength: her unselfishness cannot save herself but perhaps saves Densher's self-respect.

**Mark, Lord:** An unemphatic man of indeterminate age, being bald and rather dry (or even stale) but with candid, clear boyish eyes: also indeterminate as to the frivolity, intellectuality or thoughtfulness of his character; and indeterminate even as to talent, with which he is credited on trust rather than on actual achievement. First proposes to Milly Theale and is refused. Later, being refused by her friend Kate Croy, he guesses both girls' interest in Merton Densher. He also guesses Kate's prior secret engagement to Densher, and betrays this to Milly; instead of intriguing himself by this act, he destroys her will to live. His blind egotism is more culpable than Densher's self-aware, compassionate double game.

**Lowder, Mrs. Maud:** A powerful and impressive woman whose very vulgarity is fresh and beautiful. Big, bold, clever and bland, she can afford to like Merton Densher, her favorite niece Kate Croy's suitor, while firmly intending Kate to make a much better match. When Susan Stringham, who knew her as a large florid exotic schoolgirl at Vevey, visits her after many years bringing the beautiful American heiress Milly Theale, Maud not only uses Milly as a social attraction but connives at Kate's pretended matchmaking between Densher and Milly—partly deceived, partly hoping any insincerity may become reality. However Kate is deeper and cleverer than she, and Densher's eventual separation from her is due to other factors, not to Aunt Maud.

**Stringham, Mrs. Susan Shepherd:** A small, elderly Boston lady, who, having lost husband and mother and being childless, lives 'sharply single' on her small income, writing short stories for the best magazines, aimed at the non-domestic literary woman. Intrigued by the striking heiress Milly Theale, she is thrilled to be invited to travel in Europe with her. It is her own old schoolfellow Maud Lowder who introduces them successfully into London society and provides a friend for Milly, her own niece Kate Croy. Quaint with 'the new quaintness', Susan bores Kate but has immeasurable powers of perception about her adored Milly. She has guessed Milly's incurable illness, and connives in the attentions of Kate's fiancé Merton Densher, in the hopes that he may make her happy or even save her. However, she is generous enough to realize his passive benevolence cannot extend to denying outright his secret engagement to Kate, and she bears no resentment when Milly, learning the truth, despairs and dies.

#### **D. *The Ambassadors* (1903)**

In Chester on his way to Paris, to rescue Chad, his widowed fiancée Mrs. Newsome's son, from some woman, and to return with him to America, Lambert Strether first meets Maria Gostrey and then his old friend Waymarsh. After sampling the theater in London, Strether goes on to Paris, soon meeting Chad and noting great improvement in him. Chad's fellow-American friend Little Bilham reassuringly tells Strether that any attachment with a woman which Chad has is virtuous. Next, at sculptor Gloriani's garden party in Paris Strether meets beautiful Madame Marie de Vionnet, strangled from her husband, and her daughter Jeanne. Strether is uncertain whether the object of Chad's

virtuous affection is mother or daughter; meanwhile, he continues to relish lovely Paris and to delay attempting to rescue Chad. In reply to irate Mrs. Newsome's cable, he writes a letter and tears it up, cabling the next day his intention to stay another month. Now more ambassadors come: Mrs. Newsome's daughter Sarah, her common husband Jim Pocock, and his gentle sister Mamie, who according to family plans is to marry Chad when he returns to his senses and to the unspecified family business. Now it is revealed that Jeanne de Vionnet is getting married to a Frenchman whom Chad helped Madame de Vionnet select. Strether feeling that life in Paris has improved Chad and should therefore continue to hold him, suggests unsuccessfully to Little Bilham that he marry Mamie. Meanwhile Waymarsh, although he is picking up with Mrs. Pocock, puritanically urges Strether to quit his association with Chad's friends and to persuade the young man to return home to his duties. Sarah Pocock is viciously critical of Madame de Vionnet and denies seeing any improvement in her brother Chad. One day sacrificial and somehow lonely Strether takes a train from Paris into rural France and wanders with muted pleasure into a personal picture whose beauty is suddenly shaken by the sight of weekendng Chad and Madame de Vionnet in a boat. After an embarrassed conversation, Strether leaves the couple. Later he sees Madame de Vionnet and promises to do what he can to help her, then sees Chad and in the strongest terms urges him never to abandon Marie, and finally says goodbye to responsive Maria Gostrey, who has been watching from the sidelines the development of his vision.

**Strether, Lewis Lambert:** An American of five-and-fifty, with brown face, thick dark moustache, thick greying hair and a nose of bold free prominence—he always wears glasses. From lack of opportunity or opportunism he has failed in every relationship and half a dozen trades, leaving him with not a crowded experience but memories of `dreadful, cheerful, sociable solitude`. Therefore, when he arrives in Paris and is struck with its charm and all the joy of life he has missed, his advice to a young friend is, positively, `Live!` Mrs. Newsome, not only his fiancée but also, as owner of the review he edits, his employer, has sent him to Paris to reclaim her son Chad from rumoured entanglement with a Parisienne. Amazed however by Chad's new grace, polish and

sophistication, and later charmed by the married Mme. de Vionnet who has transformed Chad, Strether ends by opposing rather than encouraging Chad's offer to leave her. Though Mrs. Newsome withdraws her confidence and, sending her married daughter Sarah Pocock for a more reliable opinion, remains sure that no social polish can excuse immoral relationships, Strether remains converted to Parisian values of living life to the full. None the less, to prove his conversion is a considered one and not mere laxity, he decides to return to argue with Mrs. Newsome instead of remaining to develop his own relationship with his devoted confidante, Maria Gostrey.

**Gostrey, Maria:** A brown thin American lady, expensively but reticently dressed, wears spectacles and has greying hair, befriends Lambert Strether, a fellow traveler from America, and bestows on him her experience—it is her hobby—of introducing Americans to Europe and its culture, especially in Paris, now her home. Thus Strether, instead of fulfilling his mission to bring home his young compatriot Chad Newsome, becomes more appreciative of Paris even than she is. She knows, but does not betray, the passionate love affair underlying Chad's ambiguous attachment to her old school friend, Mme. de Vionnet. Though Strether's growing affection for her supersedes his reverential attachment to his fiancée Mrs. Newsome, and even survives his dazzlement by Mme. de Vionnet, he resists her invitation to remain in Paris and let their relationship grow—he has to renounce her to prove his disinterestedness. Her attitude to Paris, less roseate than Strether's and less rapacious than Chad's, is like her attitude to life: she is the ideal confidante and mentor.

**Vionnet, Mme. de (Marie):** Beautiful and still youthful though mother of a debutante daughter. Formerly a sensitive, audacious child of nature she is married straight from school to the unsavory Comte de Vionnet. Judicially separated from him she settles in Paris to bring up her daughter, but is now a charming, civilized woman of the world, and thus captivates the rough young American Chad Newsome, completely remoulding his manners and taste along Parisian lines. More in love than he, she struggles to keep him against his mother's summons and his own qualms. She and Paris captivate his mother's ambassador Strether, but for all Chad's excellent manners Paris cannot give him—perhaps destroys—an excellent heart, and he will probably leave her for the attraction of the commercial world.

**Newsome, Chad (Chadwick):** Son of the rich American widow Mrs. Newsome, he goes to Paris as a wild, bold, rough young man and resists summons to return, because, it is romoured that he is involved with an immoral woman. Strether, his mother's fiancée, is sent to retrieve him but finds him amazingly improved—prematurely grey but possessed of perfect *savoir-faire*, grace, polish, and taste. His mistress Mme de Vionnet has achieved this, but Chad, though grateful, has uneasy longings for a more regular relationship. When he offers to leave her, Strether, instead of encouraging him, forbids it. Chad's renewed loyalty to her, proved by arranging her daughter Jeanne's marriage, is none the less suspect, his attachment being the conventional, sophisticated, ultimately superficial one that she, ironically, has familiarized him with. This, and his unexpected fascination with his commercial inheritance, reveal the limitations of polish, beneath which he is still 'only Chad'.

**Waymarsh:** A selected, successful American barrister with a large handsome head, large sallow seamed face, a great political brow, thick loose hair and dark fuliginous eyes: he resembles some great American statesman of a primitively simple era. Because of overwork and illness he is traveling in Europe, which he dislikes for its sophistication: he warns his old friend Lambert Strether (who has come to snatch Chad Newsome from Paris but is becoming involved in European sophistication himself) to 'Quit it!' Nicknamed Sitting Bull for his impressive silent disapproval, even Waymarsh at last succumbs to the Parisian atmosphere to the extent of developing a sentimental flirtation with Chad's sister Mrs. Sarah Pocock, and his departure from Paris with Mrs. Pocock's party is less patriarchal than his arrival.

**Bilham, John little:** Commonly known by his middle and last names (being, in fact, little). Coming from America to Paris to paint, he is inhibited by the study of great paintings and left without anything, 'but his beautiful intelligence and his confirmed habit of Paris'. A friend of the greatly polished Chad Newsome, whose apartment and reputation he is caretaking when Strether arrives to take Chad back to America. Fond of Strether (who gives him his famous advice 'Live!'), Bilham lies to him like a gentleman to protect Chad's mistress Mme. De Vionnet, and he accompanies the pretty American

Mamie Pocock and her party off on a European tour probably more to oblige Strether than with serious intentions.

### **E. *The Golden Bowl* (1904)**

Prince Amerigo, engaged to Maggie Verver, visits their London friend Mrs. Fanny Assingham and learns that Charlotte Stant, his former innamorata, will attend his wedding. Charlotte and the Prince in a shop resist buying a golden bowl as a wedding present for Maggie, since it is probably cracked. A couple of years later, married and with a baby boy, Maggie laments that her widowed father Adam Verver, immensely rich and an avid collector, is lonely, and hoping that he will remarry, persuades him to write Charlotte an invitation to visit. She comes to Adam's British state at Fawns and quickly drives away his harpy-guests. He decides to wed her to give his daughter the sense that he misses her less. Seemingly accepted by Maggie and her Prince, Charlotte agrees to Adam's proposal, and they marry.

Soon ignored by Adam, who appears to prefer his daughter's companionship, Charlotte is thrown into the Prince's company at parties, to the terror of Fanny Assingham, who frequently communicates her fears to her husband Colonel Bob. One rainy day in London, the Prince and Charlotte, agreeing that their *sposi* care inordinately more for each other, embrace. Later they attend – without their *sposi* – a glittering party at the state of Matcham; feeling ever more confident, they stay on to visit Gloucester, refusing distressed Fanny's invitation to return in the same train with her. Now Maggie begins to feel left out, gives a party, and at its conclusion suggests that the Prince take distant, seemingly docile Adam off on a trip – to which the Prince says that Charlotte should make such a proposal. Able to talk with Adam when he visits their sick baby, Maggie urges him to take the Prince off somewhere; but he counters with the suggestion that both couples spend some time at Fawns. Tormented by more doubts, Maggie is temporarily relieved by Fanny's lying denial of any sense of suspicion.

But one day Maggie wanders into the shop where the golden bowl is, and buys it for Adam; later the remorseful shopkeeper comes and explains its flaw, adding details which inform Maggie that the Prince and Charlotte went shopping together just before his marriage. Fanny, to whom Maggie tells all this, denies Maggie's interpretation of

events and throws the bowl to the floor, breaking it into three pieces. The Prince enters at this point, hears Maggie's story of the bowl, and is left to wonder what Adam may have learned. At Fawns later, Maggie feels a degree of pity for her husband, who, she tells Fanny, has lied to avoid telling Charlotte. That forceful woman demands of Maggie whether she is silently accusing her of anything; serenely lying, Maggie senses that thus she is closer to the prince, who has also lied to Charlotte. Adam tenderly tells his daughter that he and Charlotte will move to his American City if doing so will help Maggie. Without saying so, they inform each other of the supremacy of their mutual regard over any other affections. Later, at the close of a huge party at Fawns, Charlotte pursues Maggie into the garden to say that she is taking Adam away because Maggie has opposed their marriage and has failed. Self-sacrificially, Maggie professes to admit failure. The Prince now passively stays in London with Maggie, who at his approaching once to embrace her tells him to wait. Adam and Charlotte come for a farewell tea. Charlotte seems regal, but Adam knows, and says goodbye gently; the Prince returns and sees only Maggie.

**Amerigo, Prince:** Handsome, refined but impoverished member of an old Italian family, falls in love with Charlotte Stant, but cannot marry her as she is also penniless. However, when a mutual friend, Fanny Assingham, introduces him to Charlotte's sweet, pretty, very rich friend Maggie Verver, he marries her and rejects very honorably Charlotte's last minute hints of a future liaison. The even greater challenge of Maggie's father marrying Charlotte is at first also met with noble intentions, but eventually their partners' over-complacent neglect provokes their long-delayed love affair. However Amerigo's admiration of Charlotte is slowly eclipsed by appreciation of Maggie's concealed suspicions, enigmatic countermoves and heroic dignity; these hidden depths make him transfer his confidence to Maggie so that though he behaves as well to Charlotte as possible, her departure is relief, and his new recognition of Maggie's qualities is his reward for his more honorable scruples.

**Stant, Charlotte:** A tall, strong, charming girl whose unusual narrow face, large mouth and tawny brown hair make her unexpectedly beautiful. Her poverty prevents her

marrying debt-ridden Prince Amerigo, and she leaves precipitately for her native but hated America. Meanwhile he becomes engaged to her rich, gentle friend Maggie Verver. Charlotte arrives suddenly in England, ostensibly to buy a wedding present, actually to testify to her continuing love to Amerigo. (And while considering as a present a golden bowl with a hidden crack she hints at a future liaison: The Prince honorably rejects both the bowl and the suggestion.) After hesitating, Charlotte agrees to marry Maggie's widowed father Adam. Both she and the Prince begin with good intentions but, exasperated by their spouses' complacent withdrawal into habitual domesticity, they decide merely to hide hurtful evidence of their belated love affairs. Charlotte covertly demands tolerance from the eventually suspicious Maggie, for Adam's sake, but she underestimates her husband: he not only has perceived the whole situation but acts decisively, taking the dangerous Charlotte back to America. Charlotte suffers secretly, especially as the Prince has come to prefer Maggie, but claims that her exile is her own plan to remove Adam from his possessive daughter. Maggie compassionately accepts this role, and thus Charlotte's assumption of a dignified position augurs well for her new start with Adam.

**Verver, Adam:** Fabulously rich widowed American industrialist, unobtrusive in appearance but for very striking, deep blue, changeful eyes, whose passion for his 'interests' is later superseded by a passion and taste for beautiful antiquities and *objects d'art*: he is building up a priceless collection for his museum in American City. These passions however are always secondary to his love for Maggie, his daughter and devoted companion since her childhood. After her marriage to Prince Amerigo, seeing her perpetual worry about him, he decides to marry her girlhood friend Charlotte Stant. This results not in his devotion to Charlotte, but to his and Maggie's resumption of their old companionship, leaving the Prince and Charlotte together, dangerously, as the latter two were once secretly in love. Altered by Maggie's eventual uneasiness, Adam shows himself less vulnerable in his gentle honesty than the others imagine. Decisively and inexorably he takes Charlotte back to America, which she hates, away from his beloved daughter, ruthless to himself and his wife in protecting Maggie's happiness. His amiability, which many take advantage of, seems inconsistent with his financial exploits, until his underlying force is revealed: 'he knew coldly. Quite bleakly, where he

would, at the crisis, draw the line', and his honesty, integrity and sensitivity do not therefore make him a victim of the less scrupulous.

**Verver, Maggie:** A slight, pretty, almost nun-like girl, heiress of Adam Verver. After growing up as her devoted father's companion she marries Prince Amerigo, not knowing, he has just broken off a hopeless love affair with her friend Charlotte Stant. Ironically then, still concerned for her father's loneliness, Maggie welcomes his marriage to the young, penniless but beautiful and clever Charlotte. This solution somehow results in her spending more time with her father, throwing Charlotte and the Prince much together, but eventually Maggie realizes her danger. Believing at first that she can prevent an incipient affair, she learns, by buying a golden bowl from a man who remembers Charlotte and the Prince nearly buying it together, of their old-established relationship. Her bitterness is alleviated by a sense of the Prince's new appreciation of her; this, and concern for her father, make her apparently submit to Charlotte's veiled demands for complacency. Encouraged by gaining the Prince's allegiance from Charlotte, and effectively saved by her father's ruthless decision to take Charlotte to America, she accepts the pretence that Charlotte wishes to have Adam to herself, thus launching her in a more dignified role, though at her expense. Maggie's powers of self-control grow as her experience widens, and though remaining sweet and gentle she becomes more mature.



# Chapter One

## Introduction

The only person either of us needs is the other of us.  
(Henry James)

### I. A Background to Literary Structuralism and Post-Structuralism

The general purpose of the present research is to analyze the fiction of Henry James structurally and post-structurally. Although it is generally agreed that the founding father of structuralism is Claude Levi-Strauss, it is nevertheless suggested that there is no centre of structuralism. Four other people are also said to have occupied leading positions in different fields of structuralist thought: Jacques Lacan in psychoanalysis, Louis Althusser in Marxist philosophy, Roland Barthes in literary criticism, and Michel Foucault in philosophy, sociology, and history. In a general sense, structuralism includes, among other things, the narratological studies of Tzvetan Todorov and Gerard Genette, the semiotic studies of Yuri Lotman and Charles Sanders Peirce, the deconstructive studies of Jacques Derrida, Paul de Man, and J. Hillis Miller, and, in a wider sense, the new-historical studies of Michel Foucault and Stephen Greenblatt. Structural linguistics appeared in the academia in the second half of the twentieth century with the works of Ferdinand de Saussure, and grew to become one of the most popular approaches in academic fields concerned with the analysis of language, culture, and society.

A feature of the work of a structuralist critic is that he does not limit himself to the social or historical considerations of the work under criticism. Instead, he regards the work as a structure, that is, as an object each part of which has meaningful relations with every other part. The result of this focus on structuring relations is that the structuralist critic often gets more ideas of the work itself than of its author or his historical period. In dealing with a reading object, if such propagation of relations is a function of the mind, one can understand why Barthes says “structuralism is essentially an *activity*, i.e., the controlled succession of a certain number of mental operations (Barthes, 1964: 83). A structuralist analyst reconstructs a narrative in a way that he understands the structuring rules of it. If the narrative is a natural (reading) object, in his reconstructing activity the structuralist analyst creates a simulacrum of it.

This simulacrum has something additional in it which is the intellect of the reader. Therefore, what he produces is more than a simple copy or imitation of the reading object.

Structuralism does not search to discover the content of the things but attempts to analyze the functions or structures of a text. For doing this, the structuralist analyst takes two steps: he firstly breaks any object (the mythologies of Levi-Strauss, the folktales of Vladimir Propp, or the themes of a genre, for example) into its units, and then describes the associations of these units. Let's call the first and second steps respectively dissection and articulation. In dissection, he breaks the natural object into units and posits them. A number of units which are both similar to and different from each other make a paradigm for him. He investigates the parts of a paradigm to discover such relations in them as affinity and dissimilarity, because he thinks it is such relations that give meaning to the single elements. In articulation, he discovers certain rules of association in the parts of a paradigm. He searches to discover how he can return such units back to their normal arrangement, because by doing this he realizes that their original order was not the result of chance but the guarantee of a construction. In other words, it is the establishment of forms of (logical) relations in the object that endows it with meaning, because the contiguity of the elements of a form cannot be the effect of a chance.

The sixth decade of the twentieth-century, when post-structuralism emerged, was a period of political anxiety in Europe. With the downfall of the French government in 1968 and the support of the Communist Party, and also with the disillusionment of orthodox Marxism because of the oppressive policies of the USSR, there was an increasing interest in alternative thoughts and philosophies like feminism and race and gender studies. Although these perspectives were disparate, all of them were critical of dominant Western philosophy and culture; and post-structuralism offered a way of justifying these criticisms by exposing the underlying assumptions of many Western norms. From this perspective, "post-structuralism" is an umbrella term that covers all contemporary thoughts and philosophies.

Post-structuralism, which seems basically antinomian, can be understood as a body of direct responses to structuralism. The linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure

and the anthropology of Claude Levi-Strauss make it clear that structuralist thinkers believed in the shaping power of previously-available underlying structures. But post-structuralist thinkers maintain that the study of such structures is itself culturally conditioned and they are therefore the subject of inevitable misinterpretations. It tried to pose itself attempting to invert the principles of the structuralist tradition, so that whereas structuralism regarded the signifier as independent from the signified and superior to it, post-structuralism considered them as inseparable (but not united), and assumed the meaning as inherent to the play of difference. Another basic tenet of post-structuralism is rejecting the inheritance of traditional analytic standards that were inclined to discover absolute truths about the world.

The most notable contributors to post-structuralism are Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, and Julia Kristeva. The reliance on the transcendental signified was a major shortcoming of structuralism, and it was on this shortcoming that Derridean deconstruction mainly focused. In "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Science," Derrida proposed a thesis of an apparent rupture in the former intellectual cosmos from the time of Aristotle which Derrida called "metaphysics of presence." Before Derrida the West used to accept a metaphysical core of meaning as the center of absolute truth. All knowledge and meaning was a development of or divergence from this metaphysical site of meaning. However, Derrida decentered this cosmos. He showed that meaning resides in no pre-existent site but is the result of the "play" of the sign. He showed that there is no "transcendental signified." Another major hypothesis in the theory of deconstruction is the relation between the genesis and the structure of experiences. From a phenomenological point of view, an experience can be understood by comprehending the process of its evolution from an origin, while from a structuralist perspective, it is an effect of structures which are not themselves experiential. But Derrida claimed that neither structures (synchronic phenomena) can be without genesis nor origins can be without structures. Origins cannot be simple unities, but should be articulated so that diachronic (historical) processes can emerge from them. He believed that this complexity must not be regarded as original positing but more like a default of origin.

Before 1968, when Barthes was concentrating on the importance of language in writing, he was a major contributor to structuralism. But in “The Death of the Author” (1968) he argues that effective, productive, and engaged reading of a text depends on the suspension of preconceived ideas about the character of a particular author or human psychology in general. This article showed Barthes’s inclination to post-structuralist views. It celebrates the birth of the reader and explores the consequences of the freedom of reading from fidelity to an origin, a unified meaning, an identity, or any other pre-given exterior or interior reality. Barthes suggests that a (literary) text is not knowable, it has no ultimate end, and no ultimate explanation can be considered for it, because its language and the mind of its author are the sources of a great proliferation of meaning. In this way, the concepts of text and reading received new definitions, and the task of producing meaning was transferred from the author to the reader (and cultural norms, other literatures, etc.). A literary work was no longer only a device for passing the time conveniently. It was not a space for the activity of the proponents of unitary disciplines of knowledge. It was no longer a work for naive reading, for consumption. On the contrary, it came to be considered a space for creating meaning through analytical interpretation. It was an area of the maneuver of language, a realm for the play of the signifier. It was a region of interdisciplinarity, a space for the simultaneous activity of the adherents of a number of disciplines like Marxism, psychoanalysis, and structuralism. In addition, in *Elements of Semiology* (1964), which is another seminal post-structuralist work, Barthes advanced the concept of metalanguage.

A basic assumption in post-structural practices is that “self” is a fictional construct. Self is not a stable entity but is discursive, for its formation is the result of the opposition between conflicting knowledge claims like gender, race, and class in the process of reading. As a separate, singular, and coherent entity, it is constructed in a discursive process. Therefore, to properly read a text, the reader should understand how it is related to his or her own personal concept of the self. Another basic assumption is that meaning is not a package of codes already available in the text but is the result of the interaction of the sign and subject (self). This, in turn, leads to the assumption that the author’s intended meaning for a text is secondary to the meaning

that the reader perceives. Therefore, no ultimate meaning or existence can be regarded for a literary text, because every individual reader creates a new and individual purpose, meaning, and existence for it. Such a multifold existence of a literary text is itself a further post-structuralist reading assumption. It suggests that in variable reading situations, the meaning of a text necessarily changes.

A variety of post-structuralist approaches to literary texts is deconstruction. Deconstructive method of reading is based on pursuing the meaning of a text by undoing the binary oppositions in it on which it is assumed to have been founded. A binary opposition is a pair of elements (terms) one of which was regarded as the dominant while the other as the submissive (male/female, speech/writing, light/darkness, ...). But Derrida suggested that the dominant relation between the elements of such pairs was unstable and impossible, because it was not given but was only an illusion. Therefore, he claimed that the accuracy of such binary oppositions can and should be rejected, since the existence and function of the apparently dominant element in fact depends on the apparently submissive element. For a literary text, such a dominant relation would certify only one singular meaning. But deconstruction has proved to be a useful way for rejecting the illusion of any singular meaning, because it illuminates how the reversal of binary oppositions can also be meaningful, that is, how male can become female for example, or speech can become writing.

Formalistic approaches were being applied to literature mainly from the introduction of New Criticism in the 1920s to when Derridean deconstruction started to be attacked in the late 1970s. On the one hand, there was the impact of New Criticism that would analyze the text as an autonomous and self-sufficient object without the need to make any relation with its social and political environment. On the other hand, there was deconstructive criticism which wanted to show how the text demolishes its discourse as it turns its unacknowledged premises against themselves. However, in the 1980s the scholars began to feel that the true nature of literature is historical but Anglo-American literary studies are too formalistic or text-oriented to analyze it in its historical environments. Such inconveniences soon started to create a real sense of impasse in literary criticism, and scholars started to resolve this impasse

by exceeding the narrow limits of formalistic approaches and studying literature in the context of history. It was in such circumstances, and in response to the excessive literary formalisms of the past half century, that the New-Historical approach was adopted in the 1980s. New historicism was a reaction to the huge lack of historical considerations in literary scholarship, that is, to the exclusion of social and political circumstances in the study of literature.

The rapid acceptance of this movement in English departments, the regular publication of the journal *Representations* as its official organ, and the wide publication of the works of its founders (the works of Stephen Greenblatt and Catherine Gallagher for example) that also taught and encouraged historical research helped it to get established. Literary critics started to (re)-clarify their understanding of history and to reflect their impression of social and cultural environments. In this mode of criticism, literature is not considered as irrelevant to social and cultural realities, but is perceived as a discourse both for making a society and controlling it, for its subjugation and empowerment. If it searches close connections with the church, the parliament, the court, the market, and the labor syndicates for example, it is not only for controlling the society and subjugating it to the ruling power, but is also for helping the society promote itself through discourse.

New-historical critics base their works mainly on four principles. The first principle is that literature is historical. It is not the result of the attempt of one man to solve a problem, but is a construct which a society produces on the way of development. And the best way to understand it is therefore through the culture and society that produces it. The second principle is that literature is neither a distinct category of human activity nor is it detached from history. It must be understood as interwoven with history. The third principle is that history is full of ruptures, crevices, and historical eras are therefore not in tune with each other. The man living in each era necessarily belongs to that era but not to any other era, since he is the product of social and political forces of that certain era. Ruptures separate each historical age (and its human beings) from any other age. And the last principle is that in attempting to understand the past, the critic is trapped by his own historicity, that is, by the fact that his ideology, in the light of which he evaluates history, is itself a product of

cultural and social forces. In this way, new-historical critics believe that a modern reader can never understand a text as its contemporaries understood it. Consequently, new historicists suggest that literature should be used for reconstructing past discourses and ideologies.

## **II. Purpose and Scope of the Present Project**

### **A. Purpose**

The present research intends to approach the late style of the fiction of James in the light of structuralism and post-structuralism. It will attempt to see how James's novels are constructed as texts, and how structuralism can help to analyze their working. I think that structuralism is clearly helpful in reading James because, for example, it has developed a large systematic and scientific vocabulary for critical analysis of literature. A reason for my interest to read James structurally is that structuralism employs a scientific method for studying literature. In *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, Terry Eagleton explains how structuralism rebutted the claim of literature that it is a unique form of discourse, and notes that a facet of structuralism is its scientific treatment of literature with the purpose of demystifying the discourse of it. He argues that like any other product of language, a literary work is a construct whose mechanisms can be classified and analyzed. In any piece of literature, the analyst digs out deep structures, and by patterning how the meaning works in it, shows that any ontologically privileged status can no longer be attributed to it. The structuralist emphasis on the constructedness of human meaning has caused literature to lose its status as a privileged experience or a divinely ordained occurrence. Thus, I assume that the teachers and scholars of American fiction can use this analytical advantage, for it helps them to use effective methods for studying literature scientifically. And the fiction of James, which is fully analytical and complex, is perhaps a better space for structuralist activities than other nineteenth and twentieth century English literary texts in the style of realism.

The other reason for my interest in approaching James structurally has two aspects. Firstly, James is not simple to appreciate. It is so complicated in language, discourse, point of view, characterization, etc., that for appreciating it one should have

a wide knowledge of nineteenth and twentieth century literary criticism and narrative theory. Thus, by reading it structurally and post-structurally, I intend to involve myself at the same time in both James and contemporary narrative theory. I also intend to help the Iranian graduate students of narrative not only to appreciate James critically as a milestone in the English novel, but also to apply the modern narrative theory in the analysis of fiction. Another aspect is the rather poor condition of James studies in my country. On the one hand, the work of James is an important contribution in the development of American culture and literature. On the other hand, in Iran it is taught in very limited ranges and perhaps only in a single university so far. Therefore, as a student of English who has gone through B. A. and M. A. programs in different universities, and also as a member of the English Department of still a third university who has about ten years of experience in teaching English language and literature to undergraduate students, I would like to recommend that the English departments in Iran appreciate the fiction of James more widely. However, I am not suggesting that the late style of James be exposed to undergraduate students, for I guess it is beyond their language and literary competence. But I suggest that if James is included in the graduate syllabi of our English departments, it will open new and unexpected perspectives not only for students of English, but also for professional literary critics and for readers and writers of fiction.

I should read the fiction of James to realize why it is so masterful and technical and to understand how it works as fiction. I read it to understand how (and how far) its meaning is conveyed by its structures. James fully celebrates the concept of "relations" in his work. For example, in the preface to *Roderick Hudson*, which is contained in the volume 1 of the New York Edition of his works, he says "Really, universally, relations stop nowhere, and the exquisite problem of the artist is eternally but to draw, by a geometry of his own, the circle within which they shall happily appear to do so." For the structuralist critics the concept of relations is seminal also. Thus, I believe that the use of relations in the fiction of James renders it a good space for "structuralist activity," because meaning in him comes from relational signification and is an in-between entity, whether an entity between the author and the reader, the character and the narrator, or the subject (the consciousness) and the text. The reader

of James is responsible for producing the meaning and for (re)producing the text. And the meaning is not necessarily what the author (or text) has originally decided to produce but is the outcome of the interaction between the text and the reader. In such a context, I will attempt to show how the play of relations gives birth to meaning in James. To discuss the origins and mechanisms of meaning in his stories, I will address a number of topics including: the contextual relations in his fiction as the result of which his characters come to life; the absolute cause of his fiction which Tzvetan Todorov says is always absent; the virtual reality that J. Hillis Miller says James creates in his narrative which Miller compares to an “untrodden field of snow;” the edges of intelligibility in narrative that Jonathan Culler says are the origins of meaning when the reader interacts with the text; the ambiguity in James’s fiction that Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan suggests that makes his fiction fertile for producing meaning; and the theory of transformational meaning provided by American structuralism.

But the present research does not intend to stay throughout with structuralism, because its heyday has already come to an end. Structuralism used to conceive a narrative as a system whose organization the analyst would discover through responsible interactions with the text. In *Structuralist Poetics*, after likening a literary work to “an onion,” Jonathan Culler brings a short translated quotation from Barthes’s “Style and Its Image” that is telling enough in this regard. Barthes says a (literary) work is

a construction of layers (or levels, or systems) whose body contains, finally no heart, no kernel, no secret, no irreducible principle, nothing except the infinity of its own envelopes – which envelope nothing other than the unity of its own surfaces (Culler, 1975: 302).

Now, if we assume with structuralism that such a system, as a particular set of rules, limits the activity of the reader’s free imagination in a significant way, it shows a major shortcoming of structuralist theories of literature, because no system or structure should cancel or limit the free activity of the creative imagination. It is thus that post-structuralism has grown doubtful about literature as a systematic discourse. Another major flaw of structuralism is what is called “literary competence” which was

coined under the influence of Noam Chomsky's theory of language. If this notion implies that by reading literature widely man develops an intuition and becomes the source or centre of meaning, it is not likely to be accepted by post-structuralists, because they insist that the way we read and understand literature is always influenced by our culture and ideology. Therefore, in addition to reading James structurally, in the present research I will attempt to read him in the light both of deconstructionism and new historicism also.

### **B. Scope**

Intending to be theoretical and critical, the present project will attempt mainly to analyze Henry James's later style in the light of Structuralism, Deconstructionism, and New Historicism. First of all, and to help the reader, it has provided 2 prefaces. The first discusses the status of teaching James in Iran. The second offers a plot summary for each of the stories of James discussed in the project, and a sketch of who is who in these stories which describes only the more important characters. After that, it provides, in chapter one, a theoretical background to structuralism and post-structuralism in literature as well as a critical overview on Henry James as a story writer and literary critic. In chapter two, it will outline the main theories and methodologies of literary structuralism, while in chapter three will provide a survey of literary realism. Then, in each of the chapters four to seven, it will offer a structuralist and/or post-structuralist analysis of a major work of James in his late style. Chapter four will discuss "The Figure in the Carpet" and chapter five *The Wings of the Dove*. Chapter six will discuss *The Ambassadors* and chapter seven *The Golden Bowl*. The last chapter will provide a conclusion of the whole project.

Chapter one offers a general introduction to the fiction of James, and attempts to discuss the application of structuralist and post-structuralist methods in the analysis of his fiction. A short outline of this chapter is as follows: firstly, a short discussion will be provided about the backgrounds of literary formalism before Ferdinand de Saussure. After that, I will focus on the emergence of the Saussurian linguistics and its impact in the development of the 20<sup>th</sup> century structuralist and post-structuralist narratologies. The ideas of Tzvetan Todorov and Roland Barthes will be described in

more details. I will argue that with the introduction of literary structuralism, literature started to lose its position as a privileged discourse, because structuralists considered it a pure system of language which they claimed can demystify. However, although Derridean deconstruction is a more developed version of Saussurian structuralism, it further complicated the theories of language and literature.

Chapter two will outline the ideas of some more influential thinkers of literary structuralism insofar as it is essential for a critical reading of James. In a long history of analysis and appreciation, the fiction of James has been evaluated as traditional, modernistic, as well as post-modernistic. Chapter three is an investigation of the conditions of literary realism in Europe and America, and will discuss the concepts of realism and representation in the novel. It will also clarify the limits of reading James as a realistic and/or non-realistic story-writer. In a close reading of “The Real Thing,” I have attempted to provide a critical base for the analysis of the concept of the “real” in James. After that, this chapter tries to compare the ideas of Ian Watt and Erich Auerbach as two eminent scholars on literary realism, and will analyze the concept of realism in the work of some major nineteenth-century French novelists.

Chapter four reads “The Figure in the Carpet” both structurally and deconstructively. This hyper-narrative is a cornerstone in the house of the Jamesian fiction. But the chapter will attempt to illustrate the figure in the whole carpet of James’s fiction. It also discusses the intellectual themes of authorship, revision, artistic creation, and representation in his oeuvre. Chapter five, which intends to be a deconstructive analysis on *The Ambassadors*, will analyze the transcendence of the consciousness of Lambert Strether in and out of the environs of language. In the times of James, the thinkers believed that consciousness is capable to undertake unknown initiatives and started to define it in new ways. For example, Henry James’s brother William, a pragmatic psychologist, no longer considered it an entity with linear movements of perception but a multi-levelled phenomenon the circular movements of which would enable man to show different perceptions at the same time. The chapter will read the novel as an artistic study of William’s pragmatism regarding the human consciousness as capable of developing beyond the horizons of language and covering all or our perceptions and associations.

Chapter six analyzes *The Wings of the Dove* in the light of a different mode of deconstructionism. It reads the novel as in the business of deception. Illustrating the role of language in narrative representation, it discusses how the novel poses the problems which twentieth-century deconstruction found in language and which the fiction of James tried to tackle in its own way. Drawing upon Saussurian linguistics, this chapter confirms the work of language in James both as arbitrary and autonomous; that is, as endowed with no positive potential to present something in the real world. In this way, the chapter illustrates the work of language in this novel for the two opposite purposes of representing the meaning and canceling it. But it also shows the influence of the Derridean research project that built on the Saussurian project and took it a step further to show an opposition of signifiers that is no longer stable.

The next chapter intends to be a new historical analysis of *The Golden Bowl*. Drawing mainly upon the ideas of Michel Foucault, Stephen Greenblatt, and Mark Seltzer, it will discuss the themes of experience (knowledge), discourse, and power. To attain this goal, it will explain the application of power in the novel not only for suppressing the subjects (characters) but also for producing knowledge and discourse through an economy of love and care. In addition, it will clarify the representation of the subject-making processes in the novel, and will illustrate how man changes through the modification of his experiences that are themselves the products of his interaction with a wide range of cultural discourses. In this way, another major theme in this chapter is the dichotomy in the consciousness of the major characters in the first and second parts of the novel, and the emergence of prevailing appearances as in the second part of the novel Maggie Verver nullifies the discourse of her rivals and makes them consider her own thought as the dominant discourse.

In the nineteenth-century, the novel wanted to be a realistic imitation of life, and the people expected to become better citizens by reading novels. However, the present reader believes that the modern English novel uses the sources of language not for the betterment of morality, but mainly for creating spaces and structures where the sign plays freely and the reader finds occasions for practical criticism and interactive interpretation. Standing in the midway between the English traditionally realistic story

and the modern unrealistic novel, which is mainly psychological also, the fiction of James serves to make people more civilized not through imitation but mainly through revision, criticism, and thoughtful meditation and interpretation. To achieve this important goal, it puts more emphasis not on action and plot but on point of view, characterization, language, and discourse. Thus, in James we learn how to think about what we read, to interpret our readings, and to re-write them while we use our own language and develop our own perspectives.

James's novels do not necessarily have a social or political point. They are neither stories of character nor stories of situation, and are not sociological treatises in which we read about our duties to other people. They are art. They are stories mainly for critical appreciation and interpretation. And James the artist of interpretation is tirelessly interested in the formal properties of his work. If not for the complex knowledge about his international theme or for the psychological enlightenment that he can give us, we can read him for his wit and for the pleasure of his language. In this way, the existence of the following features in his work makes it approachable structurally and post-structurally: that his real preoccupation as a writer is not telling but showing, that he is more interested in the how of storytelling—point of view, style—than in the what of it—events, narrative progression, and the details of what happens.

### **III. Twentieth-Century Linguistics**

An aspect of nineteenth-century philology was that it was symbolic. The words were regarded as the symbols of external objects (referents), and there was a one-to-one relation between the symbol and the referent. Nineteenth-century philology was diachronic also, i.e., the philologists focused their attention on the changes of language over long spans of time. They paid more heed to the comparative studies of languages than to the meaning of certain languages. Thus, their researches seldom exceeded the etymology, grammar, and the vocabulary of languages.

But twentieth-century structural linguistics is synchronic, ahistorical. Instead of etymological, lexical, and grammatical developments of language through long times, the zoom of this new system of language study is on "studying a language at one

particular time in its evolution and emphasizing how the language functions" (Bressler, 1994: 60). A sign is like a coin with two sides: the signifier and the signified. The written mark or uttered sound is the signifier and the concept or meaning is the signified. Between the signifier and the signified there is no natural link, but the link between them is only conventional and arbitrary. In the objective world, a word does not represent a referent but a concept in our mind. Saussure divided a language into two levels of *langue* and *parole*. *Langue* is the system or the mental understructure of a language. It is the structure of language which is mastered by all members of a language community. However, *parole* is the actual performance of language, the real speech utterances of an individual language user. A member of a language community can generate countless examples of utterances but all such utterances are governed by the language system, by the *langue*.

The linguistic sign, that is arbitrary, relational, and conventional, makes the structural linguist curious about the source of meaning in language. In the view of Saussure, meaning is differential, the result not of a one-to-one correspondence between symbol and referent, but the result of sign differences. Therefore, the language scholar should not study the isolated entities of a language, but should study the whole interrelationships among them. He believes that in language and other systems of communication like fashion, sports, and friendship, meaning is generated through a system of signs. Borrowing their linguistic vocabulary and their theory and methods from Saussure, and from Charles Sanders Peirce to a lesser degree, structuralists believe that codes, signs, and rules govern all human social and cultural practices, including communication. Thus, meaning is the result of the relations among the various components of a system.

#### **IV. Roots of Literary Structuralism**

The Russian formalism of the early twentieth century and the linguistics of the Swiss Ferdinand de Saussure prepared the ground for structuralist thought in its modern application. For formalists, words in poetry do not function only as signifiers but as signifieds also. Literature is a functional system, a set of devices whose value is determined by other devices which are played off against them (those of other genres,

past styles, and so on). A certain literary work presupposes other works, and other conventions, styles, genres, and structures of meaning which go beyond it. These early structuralists argue that literature is a langue of which each specific work is an instance or parole. In 1960s and 1970s, the French structuralists developed these thoughts and carried them to new stages.

But if “structuralism” can be used in the broad sense of (making) forms and/or structures, perhaps it can be traced back to the time of Plato and Horace. Here it should be noted that what I call “structuralism” in this chapter is different from the twentieth-century structuralism. By this early (or pre-20<sup>th</sup> century) “structuralism,” I mean the analysis of the form and structure of literary works, the reading approaches and critical practices that would define the general form, system, or structure of a work of poetry from the classical times to the time of T. S. Eliot. A formal/structural analysis of poetry would focus, among other things, on its prosody, its generic features, its rhythmic patterns, its metrical system, and its internal divisions. But in prose fiction, structural analyses were expected to answer the questions of style, language, action, plot, setting, characterization, etc. And while structure was the internal aspects of a literary work, form was closely connected to its external features. In this way, structure was the ground on which the scholar would stand to dissect the work and to theorize about it. It was the stronghold where he could open the numerous windows of the work to look at it critically and from his own perspectives.

The Platonic "structuralism" could perhaps be realized in the process of imitation that Plato believed would make poetry servile and untruthful, and as a consequence, was deserving to be exiled from his commonwealth. However, Aristotle's "structuralist" poetics lies in his emphasis on the logical and ethical forms of poetry, and also in his differentiation between diegesis and mimesis<sup>1</sup>. In *Poetics*, where he has

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<sup>1</sup> In *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* by Chris Baldick, we read diegesis is “an analytic term used in modern narratology to designate the narrated events or story (French, *histoire*) as a `level` distinct from that of the narration. The diegetic level of a narrative is that of the main story, whereas the `higher` level at which the story is told is extradiegetic (i.e. standing outside the sphere of the main story). An embedded tale-within-the-tale constitutes a lower level known as hypodiegetic. In another sense outlined in Aristotle's *Poetics*, diegesis is the reporting or narration of events, contrasted with mimesis, which is the imitative representation of them: so a character in a play who performs a certain action is engaged in mimesis, but if she recounts some earlier action, she is practicing diegesis. The distinction is often cast as that between `showing` and `telling`” (Baldick, 2008: 90). In the fourth edition of *A Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, J. A. Cuddon says diegesis is “a narrative (as opposed to a *mimetic*, (q.v.)) account. In drama and in film diegesis can take the form of a voice-

discussed the epic structure, he differentiates between diegesis and mimesis: the first is a history that is retold by a narrator, but the second is a history that is shown in a dramatic form. Poetry should have a logical form that is a beginning, a middle, and an end. Such divisions should be logically interrelated to each other, and the result of such interrelations is an organic whole. In addition, the tragic hero of poetry should be a man whose downfall is not the result of his vice or depravity, but the result of his error or frailty. However, with the start of Roman civilization, the "structuralism" of Horace could perhaps be illustrated in his "sugar-coated-pill theory of poetry" (Hall, 1963: 15). Moreover, Longinus (the first or third century A. D.) argued that the form of poetry is not so important and poetical sublimity is only the echo of a great soul. But when he includes "the proper construction of figures" and "the notable language" in the five sources of eloquent poetry, it seems that he is analyzing poetry structurally<sup>2</sup>.

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over, choric intervention, and on-stage description of mimetic action. Similarly, music or sound-effects not emanating from the mimetic action but superimposed on it: sonnets and songs performed by characters in Shakespeare are mimetic; atmospheric background music is diegetic (Cuddon, 1998: 225). In Baldick we read "A literary work that is understood to be reproducing an external reality or an aspect of it is described as mimetic, while mimetic criticism is the kind of criticism that assumes or insists that literary works reflect reality" (Baldick 2008: 207). In Cuddon we read mimesis "has almost the same meaning as mime (q.v.) but the concept of imitation (q.v.) in this case has wider connotations. Aristotle, in *Poetics*, states that tragedy (q.v.) is an imitation of an action, but he uses the term comprehensively to refer to the construction of a play and what is put into it. We should rather use mimesis to mean representation, which relates to verisimilitude (q.v.). The outstanding work on this topic is Rric Auerbach's *Mimesis* (1957)" (Cuddon, 1998: 512).

<sup>2</sup> Vernon Hall considers Longinus not only "the first romantic critic, but also the first comparative critic." He also hails him as "the first real critic of general literature." He argues that Longinus used to look at literature of the far past, that he considered poetry not from a philosophical, political, or aesthetic perspective, but mainly from the perspective of pleasure. He considers Longinus as quite different from Aristotle, because, unlike Aristotle, he used to study literature not for its natural history but for its sublimity or excellence. For example, Longinus was more interested in quoting and criticizing passages from the Genesis that were of the utmost degrees of excellence. Unlike Aristotle, he believed that the form of poetry, whether it is epic, tragedy, etc., is not as important as the pleasure that it gives to the reader. He used to consider pleasure as the most criterion of excellence in literature, because it is pleasure which guarantees the immortality of it. The impact of elevated language of poetry is that it modifies the consciousness of the reader, and by opening new horizons or perspectives to him, conveys him to new realms of imagination and equips him with different frames of producing meaning. If the language of poetry is elevated, it reigns over the reader so magnificently that he cannot free himself from its impact. Genius is superior to education; it is that which stands above all rules of composition, and sources sublimity as the display of the power of the poet. When Longinus attempts to define true excellence in poetry, he considers, in addition to "notable language" and "proper construction of figures," three other sources for it: "a firm grasp of ideas," "vehement and inspired emotion," and a "general effect of dignity and elevation." He does not accept Aristotle's theory of catharsis also, for he believes that the feelings of pity, worry, and fear are not at all the marks of sublimity, for they are mean. No mean soul can produce sublime poetry. True sublimity originates not from skill and education but from a great imagination, from great ideas, from genius. He considered the selected passages (from the Genesis) as sublime only when intellect and senses and will responded together in them. Another reason that he considered sublimity as important is that we all like it, that we are all aspired toward it. (Hall, 1963: 16-20).

In the Renaissance times, structuralism *avant la lettre* had its roots perhaps in the structure of a really class-conscious society, because it was, among other things, the tripartite dramatic poetry that would render society as hierarchical. Tragedy was the literature of the highest class of the English society, while comedy and farce were the literatures of the middle and lowest classes. And decorum, which was truly desired, meant the appropriateness of the genre to the society that it mirrored. In the Neo-classical era, the emphasis that the poet-critic Alexander Pope put on "Those rules of old discovered, not devised/ Are Nature still, but Nature methodized" (Pope, "An Essay on Criticism," 1987: 1092), the dialogue that John Dryden put in the mouth of his men in "An Essay of Dramatic Poesy" where Neander<sup>3</sup> proposes that the English Renaissance drama is more honorable than the ancient Greek and Roman drama and the modern French plays, and the significance that Dr. Samuel Johnson ascribed to the unity of action in the Shakespearean drama signify perhaps different modes of a "structuralist" perspective before the 20<sup>th</sup> century structuralism.

However, the Romantic poet-critics rejected the Neo-classical "rules" and "decorum," and ascribed more values to individual creativity and poetic imagination, for they believed that the neo-classical rules would make poetry artificial. But if one realizes the four elements which the romantic critics considered influential in a poetic creation (the poet's imagination, the natural manifestations, the language forces, and the reader's feelings), one admits of structuralist inclinations in the poetry of that period also. And when the turn comes to the Victorian times, especially the time of Hippolyte Taine, the seeds of formal structuralism are already germinated. Taine approached literature perhaps as scientifically as a biologist approaching his specimen could be scientific in method. And the twentieth-century poet-critic T. S. Eliot was no less scientific in his approach to literature than Taine, and no less disinterested. The piece of platinum he would introduce into the gas chamber of the poet's mind in a process of poetic creation, well incarnated his concept of the poet's depersonalization in such a creation. Because, as he proposed, in a process of poetic creation the mind of

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<sup>3</sup> In Dryden's work "Crites praises the drama of the ancients; Eugenius protests against their authority and argues for the idea of progress; Lusideius urges the excellence of French plays; Neander, speaking in the climactic position, defends the native tradition and the greatness of Shakespeare, Fletcher, and Jonson." (The Norton Anthology of English Literature: Fifth Edition, Major Authors, New York and London: Norton & Company, 1987, p. 886, footnote 1).

the poet remains as unchanged as platinum remains unchanged in a chemical process, for although it is the platinum of the poet's mind that helps the gas of feeling and emotion to make the sulphurous acid of cleansing poetry, the poet can and should be detached from the process.

The school of New Criticism stands in the midway between the early formalism/structuralism and twentieth-century structuralism; and seems to have some common features with the latter. The ideas of Barthes about the freedom of the reader, which results from the lack of authorial influence in the process of reading, is in concert with the autonomy of the text in New Criticism. However, New Criticism seems divergent in some points from structuralism. For the New Critics a work of fiction is an autonomous object; and the process of reading is ontological. When reading a work of literature, a New Critic only focuses on its internal elements: its organic unity and its language, diction, ambiguity, paradox, irony, tension, rhythmic patterns, etc. The outcome of these features is the very structure of the work about which the critic is then able to pass a judgment. For these critics, neither the author nor the reader is central in the reading process, but it is "the text and the text alone" (Bressler, 1994: 33) that is of prime importance.

Here I discuss the nature and function of twentieth-century structuralism in the ground of ideas of the Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget (1896-1980). Structure can be observed in any arrangement of entities which embodies the fundamental ideas of wholeness, transformation, and self-regulation. Wholeness means a sense of internal coherence, transformation implies the dynamism of structure and its capacity to permanently renew itself, and self-regulation means to validate its transformational procedures, structure appeals not to what is beyond itself but to what is interior to it. Like language that is divided into *langue* and *parole*, literature has two parts: competence and performance. Structuralism brings language and literature together to analyze literature linguistically. But it studies language a-historically rather than historically. A novel, a short story, or a drama is a text with a closed, singular, and complete system. It is a semiotic space that is objectified in a linear fashion and is accessible to the reader. Meaning is not an absolute entity or an inherent or natural feature of language, but is structural, relational, and subject to change.

## **V. Henry James**

### **A. James the Man**

The grandson of Irish millionaire William James, Henry James, JR. (1843-1916) was born in the New York City near Greenwich Village. His father was an anti-Calvinist minister and a permissive parent who raised his children to think of themselves as citizens of the world. In 1884, Henry James the senior moved his family to London to be near Thomas Carlyle and other distinguished thinkers. In the next year they moved back to New York. But Europe had already made an indelible impression on the infant James, who retained vivid memories of Paris and London. The James family continued traveling abroad during the formative years of the children; and proximity to the authors and artists encouraged Henry's literary interests, stimulated his imagination, and made him an indifferent student as well as a voracious reader. Later, he became proficient in the French language and got great professional expertise in interpreting the French literature.

With the outbreak of the Civil War (1861-1865), when the family James returned to the States, Henry set aside his art classes for more practical studies. He enrolled in the Law School at Harvard, and kept his literary contacts and added to them. When he was putting out a fire in the Newport stables, he received a severe injury due to which he was exempted from military service. Therefore, while the others his age were serving in the civil war, he could attend college. But neglect of his wound led to a permanent injury in him which some people conjectured was castration and others said was slipped disk. Like his father who had lost a leg after being burned in a stable fire, James the junior became a keen observer of life and human character. Henry James never married. Instead, he divided his time between travel and seclusion for the purpose of writing.

### **B. James the Critic**

When James became a British citizen in 1915 to show solidarity with British and French soldiers, he was perceived as disloyal to his American heritage, and was denounced by his former countrymen. By the time of his death in 1916, he had become, for all practical purposes, an unread author. Interest in fiction by James did

not revive until decades later when the outbreak of World War II compelled readers to seek his insights on international relations. T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, Rebecca West, R. P. Blackmur, and other distinguished American writers led a campaign that restored James to literary prominence. He spent a great deal of his mature life in England and continental Europe, and his literary criticism reflects his cosmopolitanism: in England and Europe he was called on for his expertise in American fiction, while in America he was desired for his European perspective. His contribution to both *Harper's Weekly* and the British periodical *Literature* in the late 1890s affirms this claim.

James's critical productions can be divided into two categories: (1) the reviews, which are fundamentally evaluative, and (2) the critical essays, that are more analytical and theoretical. His criticism is directed toward a disinterested enrichment of culture, and is associated with the literary or academic world. His *French Poets and Novelists* (1878) is a collection of critical essays, and his *Hawthorne* (1879) is a full-length critical study. *Partial Portraits* (1888), *Essays in London and Elsewhere* (1893), and *Notes on Novelists* (1914) are volumes of criticism in which James offers theoretical discussions of literature, particularly of prose fiction. And his *Literary Criticism* (1984) is a two-volume edition that includes nearly 300 literary essays and reviews.

In "The Science of Criticism" (1891) James differentiates between review and criticism. Review is more commercial, dogmatic, and conventional; while criticism is truth-oriented and more speculative and intellectual. "The Art of Fiction" (1884) is a turning point in James's career. Here he reflects on the art of the novel and speaks as a major writer. It not only shows his moral attitudes as more complex, refined, and analytical than before, but also marks his true entry into literary criticism. James here turns from reviewing to essay writing, absorbs the attention of a more scholarly and intellectual audience, and establishes new relationships between himself and his readers. James the reviewer passed judgments on individual literary works, but James the essay writer creates a new audience that believes in the seriousness of prose fiction as an art form and can be attuned to the technical strategies of its presentation. If this treatise does not provide the poetics of the novel, at least it provides the background out of which the poetics of the novel is later to be formulated. About 20 years before

writing “The Art of Fiction” James had warned literary scholars that American fiction lacks any acceptable critical basis. But in this work we see him successfully attempting to fill in the gap.

The wide range and variety of James’s critical productions mean that he was aware of a lacuna in his fictitious writings. He insisted that his fiction should be understood from the right perspective. Therefore James’s prefaces to his tales and novels do not want to elucidate the difficult references or allusions in his work, or to be in the nature of a philosophical debate or a critique of the contemporary English novel, but want to satiate his desire to design a formula for the appreciation of his fiction. Explanatory and vindicatory as they are, they want to provide a justification of his fiction, and to offer a rationale for his theory and view of the novel.

### **C. James the Author**

James was also a great novelist. In letters and politics, he preferred Europe to his home land. His characteristic themes—including the relationships between American and European cultures, the psychological make-up and affairs of wealthy characters, and women’s roles in the society—reflect his cosmopolitan outlook. The critics are right when they say James’s “neutrality of tone” means the elimination of any moral attitude in his fiction. He often does not color his subjects, but is as objective in dealing with them as possible. Between his fiction and the work of some twentieth-century British novelists like Joseph Conrad close affinities are traceable, because they pass judgment neither upon their characters nor upon what their characters say and do. Instead, they leave their readers to analyze the work in an interactive process of interpretation. The result of this strategy is that the critical reader produces meanings that are different or even opposite to what the author may have primarily had in mind. These authors do not ask their readers to pass judgment on the story, but simply invite them to the enjoyment of their pictures. For doing so, they present the whole action from the point of view of their characters.

Another feature of James’s narrative technique is the way he produces suspense. Even in his third stage, when he is deeply concerned about the psychological problems of his characters, James manipulates suspense in such a way that it can be compared to

the suspense in a romance or a detective story. To perceive the subtle effects of his fiction, we should pay close attention to his prose style. Although James's values engaged him in serious conflicts with other critics, his contributions to literature influenced the form and direction of contemporary fiction. He is so much preoccupied with form in the novel that form touches the idea or theme itself. Many times, he conceives his motive as the subject of a picture. This means that he is deeply involved aesthetically. The novelists contemporaneous to him may be rather philosophically biased, but James's main bias is the aesthetics of the novel.

Telling stories is what James calls "a process of vision." His stories are the records of seeing, not of doing. In his late style, he usually does not tell a story through the mouth of an omniscient narrator. In the preface to *The Ambassadors* (1903), where he refers to the enlightenment of Strether as the main character, he says "the business of my tale, and the march of my action, not to say the precious moral of everything, is just my demonstration of this process of vision" (Veeder and Griffin, 1995: 362). In a story so conceived, a matter of prime importance is naturally the point of view from which this vision is to be had. In 1864 James made his debut in print with a short story in the *Continental Monthly* and a review in *North American Review*. The next year saw the appearance of his first signed story in the journal *Atlantic*. And his friendship with William Dean Howells, the assistant of the editor of the publication, helped him to establish his fame as a writer and critic. His travel diaries, *Italian Hours* (1909) and *A Little Tour in France* (1885), are much admired.

Fascinated with culture and informed by his travels, James wrote a number of novels that show different cultures and social classes in conflict. His first important fiction was "A Passionate Pilgrim" (1871), in which he deals with the first of his great themes, the reaction of an eager American 'pilgrim' confronted with the fascinations of complex European art and affairs. A number of his works in this early phase show the beginnings of a motif called "the sacred fount" in which intimate relationships are shown to contain one resourceful person who is exploited by the other. His first published novel, *Roderick Hudson* (1875), shows an artist taking advantage of his patron in order to live an undisciplined life in Europe. Both *The American* (1877) and *Daisy Miller* (1877) show young Americans whose romantic endeavors end poorly

because their naïve behaviors in foreign cultures clash with the expectations of the society.

In *The American*, Christopher Newman and Claire de Cintre, an American businessman and a young widow respectively, meet in Paris, fall in love, and decide to marry. However, after some time, and under the influence of Madame de Bellegarde and Marquis Urbain who are her mother and younger brother, Claire rejects Christopher's love. But Valentin, her much older brother, who is ashamed of his family, supports Christopher in his love. He informs him that Mrs. Bread, a servant of the family, has a secret which he may use to put them under pressure for making them allow him to have Claire. The secret is that Madame de Bellegarde has murdered her husband. Christopher firstly plans to use the evidence for his purpose. But when both Madame and Urbain strongly defy him, it is because of his good will that he decides not to go through with the unsavory plan. At the end of the novel, when we see Christopher burning the evidence of Madame's murder, he is more disgusted than noble. Some major themes of this novel are: the role of good will in due behavior, the cultural divide between Europe and America, personal happiness versus familial duty, and the depth and force of cultural differences. In *Daisy Miller*, Daisy represents the new world of America in contrast to the older but more cultured world of Europe. Her spontaneity and naturalness, and her ignorance and disregard for decorum are among the elements that render her suitable for James's purpose. Therefore, it is not for nothing that she has been called an archetypal American character, an American spirit on the order of Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn.

James's later works such as *The Tragic Muse* (1890) and *The Real Thing and Other Stories* (1893) increasingly examine the relationship of the artist to his art. Foremost among the stories with a plot based strictly on psychological development is *The Turn of the Screw*, a classic ghost story which defies interpretation. A governess is in charge of two children in a remote country house who appear to be haunted by former employees who are now supposed to be dead. But are they dead? The story is full of complexities including the question whether the narrator is reliable at all. This novella can be seen as a subtle, self-conscious exploration of the haunted house of Victorian culture that is filled with echoes of sexual and social unease. James was also

one of the first male authors to examine women's roles in Western societies. In *The Bostonians* (1886) for example, the heroine Verena Tarrant is an 'inspirational speaker' who is taken under the wing of Olive Chancellor, a man-hating militant suffragette. Pulling her in the opposite direction is Basil Ransom, to whom she becomes increasingly attracted. The dramatic contest to possess her is played out with some witty and often rather sardonic touches, and as usual James keeps the reader guessing about the outcome until the very last page.

Other books by James treating women's issues include *Washington Square* (1881), *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881), and *The Princess Casamassima* (1886). *Washington Square* is a superb early short novel. It is the tale of a young girl whose future happiness is being controlled by her strict father. She has a handsome young suitor of whom her father disapproves. There is a battle of wills. The novel is a beautifully written work with which James has created a small masterpiece of social commentary, with a sensitive presentation of a woman's life. *The Portrait of a Lady* is regarded as James's masterpiece in his middle period. Isabel Archer is a young American woman with looks, wit, and imagination who arrives to discover Europe. In chapter 6 of this novel Isabel has

a certain nobleness of imagination which rendered her a good many services and played her a great many tricks. She spent half her time in thinking of beauty, and bravery, and magnanimity; she had a fixed determination to regard the world as a place of brightness, of free expansion, of irresistible action; she thought it would be detestable to be afraid or ashamed (James, 1997: 47-48).

Turning aside from the suitors who offer her their wealth and devotion, she follows her own path. But in chapter 42 we read that her reaction leads to her disillusionment and a future that is as constricted as "a dark narrow alley with a dead wall at the end" (ibid: 391). James here explores one of his favorite themes - the Old World in contest with the New. *The Princess Casamassima* and *The Tragic Muse* are remarkable for the audacity of their subject matter and for the moral delicacy with which it is explored. They are triumphant in their depiction of the social forces that shape not only the destiny of James's characters but the moral sensibility of the modern world.

Prolific but not popular, James chose topics and wrote in a style that limited the size of his audience. Depending upon the accumulation of subtle effects that unraveled slowly, his stories and novels appealed most to readers who enjoyed the intellectual challenges and were not put off by his themes. A reason for the unpopularity of his fiction when he was living was that he seldom dealt with external social realities but was particularly interested in the psychological growth of his characters in imaginary situations that are almost impossible exactly to recognize.

As a novelist, James contributed developments in technique and content that were expanded by later important novelists. One of his major contributions to fiction writing was the "scenic progression" technique in which he would follow one character's preconceptions through a sequence of settings. A precursor of stream-of-consciousness technique that was later explored by novelists such as James Joyce and Virginia Woolf, "scenic progression" was a direct result of James's foray into playwriting during the 1890s. This technique is best exemplified in *The Ambassadors* that displays James writing at the full height of his powers. Here James makes a nominal reference to Balzac, but by the time the novel is published, the "Balzac" period of his writing is already over. The bulk of the narration in this work is interior psychology even though the plot involves multiple characters who are quite active. The central figure, Lambert Strether, stands out among the characters as an imbalanced person, and thinks much more than he acts. Suspense does not come in the details of what happens, but in the details of how the happenings come, why they have occurred as they did, and what might have happened in a different scenario. The main themes of this novel are: strategy and success, youth and age, and truth and beauty.

The novella "The Beast in the Jungle" (1903) is the tragedy of the unlived life. The Englishman John Marcher, the main character, is relieved from the necessity of working because of his secure financial situation. May Bartram is in deep love with him, but he cannot return her love. It is love that makes our life meaningful, and Marcher's lack of love metamorphoses him to a beast that crouches in wait in the jungle and is quite obsessed with disillusionment. The story is a product of the final phase of James's career, and is perhaps a representative of his whole work in this phase. Although James's tales and short stories are not as subjective in method as his

novels, and although each shorter work represents only one episode or one slice of life, this work successfully illuminates the psychology of obsession and the difficulty of understanding one's own motivations.

The other two long novels that James wrote at the turn of the century are *The Wings of the Dove* (1902) and *The Golden Bowl* (1904). The first is one of his late great masterpieces. It features many of his main themes including American innocence pitched against European cunning. It is the story of a complex love triangle which strains at the limits of what is acceptable. Heroine Kate Croy thinks she can enhance her lover's financial prospects by pushing him onto a rich American heiress who is dying, but Kate hasn't anticipated the results of her cunning. Part of the story is reported in a setting of Venice that includes the usual correlatives of disease and death. It shows a social depth that is unusually concerned with issues of money, social status, and class mobility. In *The Golden Bowl*, the climax of James's late period, writing is mannered, baroque, complex, and focused intently on the psychological relationships of his characters. The novel shows very little 'plot' in the conventional sense. The bowl in the title is a gift from one couple to another, but there's a lot more to it than that, of course. It concerns an American heiress as she becomes aware of a secret affair between her husband and her father's young wife. In these later works James begins to explore the interesting possibilities of an 'unreliable narrator', that is, someone who tell stories but does not know or reveal the truth. In this story, James explores the subtleties and moral complexities of social life in ever-increasing detail.

James's ideal novels were neither shapeless nor bulky with social or personal protest. And they would not hold up a mirror to chaotic reality. They were with balanced parts, and with tidied appearances that would please through subjective probing and unusual artistic tension. In addition, his subject matter anticipated the concerns of literature in the late twentieth century: perception limiting awareness, the freedom of the individuals against social pressures, and the women's roles. Such themes were among the major questions addressed in the social movements of later generations. Furthermore, James tentatively explored imaginative quests through time, nihilism, eroticism, and absurdist disorientations.

## **Chapter Two**

### **An Outline of the Theories of Literary Structuralism**

#### **I. Robert Scholes: The Notion of Structure and the Idea of System**

A structure is a set of any elements between which, or between certain sub-sets of which, relations are defined. For a sociologist, structure is what the analysis of a totality supplies - the elements, the links between the elements, and the arrangement of links. Since this structure is not observable, it is derived from abstract analysis. The notion of system seems integrated to the idea of structure. In *Structuralism in Literature*, Robert Scholes sees structuralism as a response to the need for a coherent system that would unite modern sciences and make the world habitable for man again. It is a way of looking for reality not in individual things but in relations among things. At the heart of structuralism is the idea of system which is a complete self-regulating entity that adapts to new conditions by transforming its features while it retains its systematic structure. For creating such a system, structuralists attempt to understand the configurations of our mind by isolating the fundamental structures of narrative and relating them to other fundamental structures like logic and grammar. Every literary unit, from the individual sentence to the whole order of words, can be seen in relation to the concept of system. In particular, we can look at literary genres, at individual literary works, and at the whole literature as related systems. We can also look at literature as a system within the larger system of human culture. If we study the relations available among these systematic units, we are working structurally.

#### **II. Formalism versus Structuralism**

“Formalism” is an umbrella term for New Criticism, Russian formalism, reception aesthetics, and perhaps even narratology. But as a school of thought, it is historically very close with structuralism. In effect, the latter can be seen as a more systematic version of literary analysis than the former. However, there are major differences between them: structuralism cannot say anything about the aesthetic value of a literary work, about why some literary works are considered good and masterful while others are considered bad and unsuccessful. But formalism tries to explain this problem. For example, it claims that the Jamesian novels are masterful because they use blanks very

skillfully. However, formalism runs into a major problem: that one can select masterful literary works in more than one way which suggests that our ideas of aesthetic value are shaped by dominant cultural discourses (= New Historicism), and by politics (Race and Gender Studies) in a larger sense. Thus, the contemporary criticism of the fiction of James has moved beyond both traditional versions of formalism and structuralism. But this does not necessarily devalue a literary critical approach like structuralism (because we can still use it to explain how Jamesian novels are crafted), while it provides us with a clearer sense of its limits.

Russian Formalism as a linguistic movement began in the 1920s. In the 1930s, it went from Moscow and St. Petersburg to Czechoslovakia, and was continued by the members of the Prague Linguistic Circle including René Wellek and Roman Jakobson. Formalism rests on the assumption that literary language is fundamentally different from ordinary language, and that literature uses language in a special way. Ordinary language refers to something other than itself, and is therefore used mainly for communication. But literary language refers to itself, and is used to draw attention to its own formal features, to interrelationships among the linguistic signs themselves. Formalism holds literature as the subject of critical analysis in modern linguistics where literariness is a significant feature of literature. Victor Schklovsky's "defamiliarization" is an important contribution to it. He argued that as the time passes and we grow more familiar with language, we become more unconscious and less sensitive to it, but a work of literature defamiliarizes language by a process of "making strange." Another major contribution to formalism is Mikhael Bakhtin's concept of dialogism. In a dialogic work of literature—the fiction of Henry James or Feodor Dostoevsky for example—no worldview is given superiority over the others, and there is a polyphonic interplay of the voices of various characters. The most engaging or persuasive voice is necessarily neither the voice of the author nor the voice which is identified with that of the author.

Form and structure, formalism and structuralism, can be distinguished in some ways: both focus on the text, but in different ways: A structure is a system of equivalences and oppositions which one needs in order to produce meaning. Therefore, any text, whether it is a newspaper article, a political speech, or a literary

text, has a structure. In contrast, form is a term usually reserved for literary works that have a successful composition. There are literary texts with good form and bad form, but there are no good and bad structures. Literary works which are considered bad are, as a rule, not considered bad because of their theme but because of formal shortcomings. If formalism emphasizes the linguistic literariness of the text, structuralism mainly deals with the ambiguity of literature and how the text refers to itself. The former rejected such critical modes like expressionistic, impressionistic, and historical-biographical criticism, and asserted that it is the literary work itself, but not the feelings and attitudes of its producer, that can be objectively evaluated. The author's intention is not equal to the meaning of the text, for the meaning is determined by a cultural framework of which the author is an element.

Formalism is a mode of textual criticism that is directed not toward the maker of a work but toward the work itself. The poet or author does not infuse the work with his own feelings, but uses the language in a way that incorporates or mingles the impersonal feelings and emotions of all mankind within it. The main task of formalism is to analyze the individual texts, but that of a structuralism is to analyze the grammar (the system) of literature. For formalists, a literary work or a poem is an autonomous (ontological) aesthetic object, whereas for structuralists, stories and poems are systems of codes, signs, and rules that govern all human social and cultural practices. For the former, a proper study of literature is the study of different poems or fictions, but for the latter, literature is a systematized combination of codes. Structuralists believe that literature has no magical powers or unknown secrets, and if we analyze it objectively, we can demystify it. Thus, for understanding how literature conveys meaning we should study the system behind literary practices.

### **III. Ferdinand de Saussure: Structural Study of Language**

Modern proponents of structuralism all acknowledge allegiance to Ferdinand de Saussure as the founding father of structuralist method. Four of his ideas are especially relevant to literary criticism: (1) Language is a social system that is coherent, orderly, and susceptible to understanding and explanation as a whole. (2)

The link between the signifier and signified<sup>1</sup> is neither intrinsic nor stable, but is arbitrary and conventional (3) Langue is the institution of language but parole is the particular and individual act of linguistic expression. Together, they make up language. (4) Language is a system of contrasts, distinctions, and oppositions, because the elements of it never exist in isolation but exist always in relation to one another. Lilian Furst acknowledges that in the linguistics of Saussure, language "should be studied synchronically, i.e. ahistorically in terms of the relationships between its parts" (Furst, 1992: 9).

#### **IV. Claude Levi-Strauss: Structural Study of Myth**

For Claude Levi-Strauss the unit of investigation is the myth. A myth is a body of materials, mainly narrative, which deals with a particular aspect of a given culture. When he was a professor of sociology at the University of Sao Paulo, Levi-Strauss was concerned with the myths of the American Indians. He began his work on their mythic narratives by breaking them down into units. Each unit expressed a relation in the whole story. After that, he sorted the units in some arrangements. Levi-Strauss treated a myth as a bilinear system and not as a unilinear one. He argued that in a certain myth the analyst should discover a series of mythemes each of which would correspond to a same bundle of relations. Such mythemes should be arranged vertically and horizontally at the same time. To give an example, in "The Structural Study of Myth," where he analyzes the Oedipus myth, he argues that arranging mythemes in a double scheme makes it possible for the analyst to discover the logic of its working. He shows that the structure of a myth is like the structure of a sentence or

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Ryan simplifies the theory of signification (in the Saussurian linguistics) in this way: "Saussure isolated the study of language as a structured system of interrelated parts from the world of objects that words name. Language, rather than a collection of names for objects, is an autonomous system of signs whose relation to objects is entirely arbitrary. Signification occurs not as a link between words and things but as the association of signifiers (sound images) and signifieds (concepts). Signifiers are constituted through their relations with other signifiers within the linguistic system and not by their relations to objects. Two axes define the relations between signifiers: the paradigmatic, which names the vertical pole of possible substitute terms usable at any given place in a sentence, and the syntagmatic, which names the way individual elements are combined in contiguous chains to form meaningful sentences. A paradigm set would consist of a group of nouns such as cat, horse, and dog that can all fill the subject position in a sentence such as "the cat fell asleep." Each noun could substitute for the other. A syntagm would consist of any one part of the sentence that can be isolated from another, with the subject "the cat" and the predicate "fell asleep" being the two major syntagms in the example sentence (Ryan, 1999: 27).

language. Therefore, to analyze the structure of a myth one should locate both vertical and horizontal axes in it. To sum up, after cutting a whole story into some units of meaning, a structural analyst discovers the relations between its vertical and horizontal axes. Then, as he finds the common features of such relations, he describes the formulas of its working.

Mainly through the Russian formalism and the Prague Circle of Linguistics, the mythological studies of Levi-Strauss are linked with the linguistics of Saussure. One of his main subjects of study was the system of kinship among American Indians for which he defined a structure or grammar. Among the Indians, the incest-prohibition is neither natural nor cultural but is justifiable only in a context of kinship structures. To justify this prohibition both as natural and cultural at the same time, Levi-Strauss compared it to a similar system of phonology which Roman Jakobson, a key member of the Prague Circle, had theorized. He discovered some common features in these two structures: both of them are systematic, and in both of them every item or member can be defined only on the basis of its differences with every other item. He argued that a myth does not have any deposited meaning, but its meaning is the outcome of the reciprocity of its elements, that is, of the juxtaposition of its elements each of which is different from any other element in that same system or in any other system. This is to mean that every element in a system gets its identity from a negation, not from what it really is, but from what it is not.

Another major concept in the studies of Levi-Strauss is culture as differential. A culture can be defined not in separation from other cultures but if it is related to and differentiated from them. In the history of Western culture, he recognizes three stages of humanism. Stage one is the Renaissance humanism which was recognized through the recognition of its differences with the humanism of classical times. Stage two was the bourgeois humanism in the time of which the West discovered the East and defined itself as superior to it. And the last stage, the stage of democratic humanism, is when the Western culture defines itself by treating other cultures with pacifism, compromise, and respect. Thus, in all stages of the Western humanism new cultures could emerge and develop only if they were juxtaposed with other cultures and were compared with them.

## **V. Roman Jakobson: Language Communication**

Roman Jakobson was a leading figure of the Moscow Linguistic Circle which he founded in 1915, and through which he played an important role in the establishment of Russian formalism. But after the political upheavals in Moscow in 1920, Jakobson joined the Prague School of Linguistics to continue his researches on the Slavic languages. His studies in this period mainly included language communication, morphology, literary criticism, and literary theory. However, when Czechoslovakia was incorporated into Nazi Germany in 1939, he fled to America where he met and collaborated with Claude Levi-Strauss who would become a key figure of structuralism. The work of Saussure was central to the work of the Prague School of which Roman Jakobson was an influential proponent in the 1930s. However, when he realized that the Swiss linguist believed in an absolute dichotomy between linguistic synchrony and diachrony, he moved beyond his ideas.

A major contribution of Jakobson to language studies is his model of language communication. He acknowledged that in any language event at least three factors are at work: (1) an addresser, (2) a message, and (3) an addressee. Addresser is one who sends the message, message is the (ultimate) meaning that is sent, and addressee is the one who takes the sent message. This is the simplest form of communication. But he argued that in any effective communication three other factors are also at work: (4) a context, (5) a code, and (6) a channel. Context is the ground that determines the nature of the message, code is a collection of (language) signs and symbols with which both the sender and receiver of the message are familiar, and channel is the element that helps the receiver to understand the message. In any effective communication, each of these factors serves a special function. The function of the addresser is emotive, that of the message is poetic, and that of the addressee is conative. The function of the context is referential, that of the code is meta-lingual, and that of the channel is phatic. Poetry is the aesthetic function of language that makes the reader more conscious about the linguistic dimension of the message.

## **VI. Roland Barthes**

### **A. Narrative Codes**

The publication of *S/Z* (1970) marks a turning point in Barthes's relation to structuralism. This work is a multilevel analysis that structures the text by cutting it into hundreds of little pieces of varying lengths which he calls *lexis*. He also identifies five broad functions which he calls codes and which he says are at work in the text.

(1) The proairetic code, which deals with the actions and behaviours, and governs the reader's construction of plot. He assigns this code to the voice of Empirics. (2) The Hermeneutic code belongs to the disclosure of truth. It is the story-telling code by means of which the narrative raises questions and creates suspense and mystery. This code is concerned with distinguishing enigmas of the plot. To this code Barthes assigns the voice of the Truth. (3) The Symbolic code refers to the architecture of language. It guides exploration from text to symbolic and thematic readings. It is the code of recognizable groupings or configurations that are regularly repeated in various modes and by various means in the text. To this code he assigns the voice of the Symbol. (4) The Semic (Semantic) code, to which he assigns the voice of the Person, is the code of connotations which utilize hints or flickers of meaning generated by certain signifiers. The semic code contains indications of themes, and deals with what the Anglo-American criticism familiarly thinks about as themes of structures. (5) The Cultural code (Reference code) examines the stock of social knowledge on which the work draws. This code is constituted by the cultural background to which the text refers. To this code Barthes assigns the voice of Science. It manifests itself as a 'gnomic', collective, anonymous, and authoritative voice which speaks for and about what it aims to establish as accepted knowledge or wisdom.

### **B. Structural Study of Narrative**

In "An Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative" Barthes discusses the structure of narrative perhaps better than elsewhere. Linguistics does not go beyond the sentence, because from a linguistic point of view, there is nothing in the discourse that is not matched in the sentence. Yet, he believes that discourse lies beyond the limits of linguistics. Discourse has its rules, its grammar; and although it consists of

nothing but sentences, it must naturally be the object of a second linguistics which must be studied from the vantage point of linguistics. Discourse is a large sentence in the same way that a sentence is a small discourse. Therefore, it is most reasonable to postulate a homologous relation between sentence and discourse. The main categories of the verb, that is, tense, aspect, mode, and person, have their equivalents in narrative. This kind of homology between sentence and discourse implies an identity between the two. Language never ceases to accompany discourse, holding up to it the mirror of its own structure.

Another part of Barthes's structuralism discussed in this chapter is the theory of levels. A sentence can be described on phonetic, phonological, grammatical, and contextual levels which stand in hierarchical relations to each other. No unit pertaining to a certain level can be endowed with meaning unless it (can) be integrated into a superior level: a phoneme, although describable, partakes in meaning only if it is integrated to a word; and a word itself must in turn be integrated into the sentence. The theory of levels provides two types of relations: distributional and integrative. A structural analysis of narrative cannot be horizontal only. It must also project the connotations of the horizontal axis onto an implicit vertical axis. Thus, to read a narrative is not only to pass from one word to the other in the text, but also from one level to the next in the whole of it. It is in this way that meaning eludes any unilateral investigation.

### **C. Levels of Narrative Analysis**

A structuralist critic of narrative should analyze it at three levels. The first is the Level of Functions. A narrative is pure system. Analyzing a story, the first step is to break it into the smallest narrative units which must be determined on the basis of meaning. A narrative is made solely of functions. A function is a content unit, the meaning of an utterance. The soul of any function is its seedlike quality which enables the function to inseminate the narrative with an element that will later come to maturity. And it is the functional character of certain segments of the story that makes units of them. It is the meaning of an utterance, but not how the meaning is made, that constitutes a functional unit.

The second is the level of actions. In Aristotelian poetics, the notion of character is secondary and entirely subordinated to the notion of plot. But in the later times, the character took on psychological consistency and became a fully constituted being, an individual, or a person. In this way, character was no longer subordinated to action, but became the instant embodiment of a psychological essence. On the other hand, structural analysis has shown from the outset the utmost reluctance to treat the character as an essence. It has done its best until now to define the character not as a being but as a participant, as the agent of sequences of actions which belong to him. Structuralism defines a character by his participation in the sphere of action that is limited in number, is typical, and is subject to classification. But the problems of classifying characters are still partially unresolved. However, narratology agrees that innumerable characters in narrative can be subjected to rules of substitution and that one single figure, even in a single work, can absorb different characters. A real problem here is the location of the subject in any actional matrix, whatever its formulation.

And the third is the level of narration. There is a giver of narrative and a recipient of narrative. In linguistic communication, the pronouns “I” and “you” are presupposed by each other. Similarly, a narrative cannot take place without a narrator and a listener. But here the question is “who is the giver of the narrative?” Three answers have so far been given to this question: The first is the author as narrator, the second is an omniscient impersonal consciousness in the story as narrator, and the third is the character as transmitter of the narrative. However, Barthes says all these conceptions are inadequate, for they seem to consider the narrator and the characters as real living persons. Both the narrator and characters are, for him, “essentially paper beings.” Here it should be noted that the living author of a narrative should not be mistaken for its narrator.

## **VII. Gerard Genette: How to Approach A Fictional Text**

Gerard Genette suggests that narrative discourse consists of three distinct levels which must be recognized in any critical approach: story, recit, and narration. Story (or *histoire*) is the chain of happenings, recit is the sequence in which the happenings take

place, and narration is the way in which the account is presented. For example, when Odysseus tells the story of his adventures to the Phaeacians, the situation in which he, as story-teller, faces his audience is the narration, the actual discourse he presents is the recit, and the events presented in that discourse, in which he appears as a character, is the story. Genette's distinction between story and recit is similar to the Russian Formalists's distinction between story and plot (or fable and sujet). But there are differences as well. For the Formalists, both story and plot are abstract, whereas for Genette story is abstract but recit is real. It is the words on the page from which the reader constructs both story and narration. The recit narrated by Odysseus is contained within the *Odyssey*, a recit narrated by Homer.

Examining the relations among these dimensions of fiction, Genette considers three aspects of narrative discourse which are based on three qualities of the verb in language. These qualities are: time, mode, and voice. Time is the relations of chronology between the recit and histoire. Mode is the forms and degrees of mimetic narrative "representation," and voice is the relations between the verbal actions and the subject who reports them. Under the heading of tense, Genette considers the temporal relations between the story and recit—the gaps, re-arrangements, and rhythmical devices of the recit through which we perceive the story. The moods of a fictional work involve questions of distance and perspective, scene and narrative. Like time (tense), mode (mood) is a function of the relationship between story and recit, but mode is concerned with perspectives, not with events. Voice involves the third level of fiction, which is narration, and its relationship with the other two levels: primarily the situation of the narrator with respect to the story and to audience, but also with respect to the audience he is addressing, which may be the reader, if the narrator is outside the story, or a character if he is inside. Genette's separation of voice and mood usefully breaks the question of point of view in half. There is a great difference between the question of mode ("who sees?") and the question of voice ("Who speaks?"). And this difference is perpetually obscured by our traditional way in designating fictional viewpoint either according to speech or according to vision. In the study of narration, we need to attend to both questions of voice and perspective.

Genette rejects the very notion of pure imitation or pure showing. No narrative can show or imitate the action it conveys, since all narratives are made of language, and language signifies without imitating. All a narrative can do is creating an illusion of mimesis, but it does it through diegesis. Therefore, the crucial distinction is not between telling and showing, but is between different degrees of telling. He distinguishes between a “story of events” and a “story of speech.” A story of events is a story, not an event, a verbal transcription of a (supposedly) non-verbal occurrence. Language is not a duplicate of the world. But if it were, “story” would lose all meaning. But although the language of fiction does not “recopy” the sentences uttered by the character in “reality,” it can report them in three main ways, that imply three degrees of distance from a rendering of “pure reality”: (a) “imitated” or “reported” discourse—the reproduction of dialogue by the narrator, (b) “narrativised” discourse—the summing up of dialogue by the narrator, and (c) “transposed” discourse—rendering dialogue in a free indirect style of the narrator while he preserves the words of the interlocutors.

### **VIII. Vladimir Propp: Narrative Functions**

Attempting to distinguish between constant and variable elements in a collection of a hundred Russian fairy tales in his *Morphology of the Folktale*, Vladimir Propp arrives at the principle that although the personages of a tale are variable, their functions are constant and limited. Describing the *functions* (features) of a character from the perspective of its significance in the course of action, Propp developed inductively four laws: (1) Functions of characters in a tale serve as stable constant elements, and are independent of how they are fulfilled and by whom (2) The number of functions known to the fairy tale is limited. (3) The sequence of functions is identical. (4) In regard to their structure, all fairy tales are of one type. Comparing the functions of tale after tale, he discovered that his total number of functions never surpass thirty-one. He also realized that although a tale may have many of these functions, the functions of a tale always appear in a same order. In addition to the 31 functions, he located seven spheres of action which involved eight character roles of the fairy tale: the villain, the donor (provider), the helper, the princess and her father, the dispatcher, the hero

(seeker or victim), and the false hero. In this way, Propp essentially constructed the grammar of a certain kind of narrative which the later theorists have modified and applied to more kinds of story.

### **IX. A. J. Greimas: Narrative Analysis Based on Binary Oppositions**

For A. J. Greimas, signification starts with binary oppositions. Just as the elementary sounds of speech are differentiated from one another, so are the elementary concepts of thought. Up and down, left and right, dark and light, etc. are defined in relation to one another. Then, Greimas postulates a level of thought prior to language, in which these rudimentary oppositions are given anthropomorphic shape, through which purely logical or conceptual oppositions become actants in a polemical situation that, when allowed to develop temporarily, becomes a story. These actants, if they are given social or cultural qualities, become roles in fictional actions. If they are given individuating qualities, they become actors, or, as we would say, characters. But in any case, this beginning of narrative in a semantic opposition leads to situations and actions which are characterized by this same opposition. The basic number of actants in a narrative is two, and the basic actions are disjunction and conjunction. Narratives consist essentially in the transfer of value. The typical narrative consists of a descriptive utterance that characterizes a subject and his situation. It is followed by a modal utterance in which the subject's wishes, fears, and beliefs are made known, and it implies an action that is related to them. Then there is a transitive utterance in which some transfer of value or change of situation is affected. Greimas divides the actants into three sets of opposed pairs from which all the individual actors of a story may be derived: the first category is composed of subject and object, the second of giver and sender, and the third of helper and opponent.

### **X. Tzvetan Todorov: Poetics of Fiction**

It was the Bulgarian-born French scholar Tzvetan Todorov who coined the term *narratologie*. In *The Poetics of Prose* (1977) and "Structural Analysis of Narrative" (1969), the second of which he has co-authored with Arnold Weinstein, Todorov has discovered striking analogies between the grammar of narrative and that of language.

Grammar is universal, for it is the same for all men. In addition, it cannot be limited to the language alone, because it has a psychological reality. He suggests that the object of grammar is to establish the correctness of discourse. In this way, he has extended the universal grammar to symbolic activities like literary prose; and has tried to illustrate the problems that arise in the attempt to describe narrative. He has discussed the narrative structure in two stages:

### **A. Stage One: Parts of Narrative Speech**

The question of parts of narrative speech must be answered on the basis of the distinction between description and denomination. If I say "the child," this word serves to describe an object and to enumerate its characteristics; but at the same time it permits me to identify a spatio-temporal unit. These two functions are irregularly distributed within language. Proper nouns, pronouns, and articles are chiefly denominative; while common nouns, verbs, and adverbs are descriptive. The phrase "the king of France," serves at the same time to identify a unique person and to describe certain of his properties. Such an expression is, for Todorov, equivalent to an entire proposition: its descriptive aspects form the predicate of the proposition, whereas its denominative aspects constitute the subject. If "X" is a proper noun, "The king of France sets out on a journey" contains two propositions: "X is king of France" and "X sets out on a journey." The grammatical subject is always devoid of internal properties, because these derive only from a temporary junction with a predicate.

Todorov keeps descriptions solely within the predicate for which he considers several classes. The minimal complete plot consists in the passage from one equilibrium to another. An ideal narrative begins with a stable situation which is disturbed by some power of force. The result is a state of disequilibrium. By the action of a force directed in the opposite direction the equilibrium is re-established. The second equilibrium is similar to the first, but they are never identical.

Therefore, in a narrative there are two types of episodes: those that describe a state (of equilibrium or disequilibrium) and those that describe the passage from one state to another. The first will be relatively static and iterative in principle, the second dynamic and non-iterative. This definition of two types of episodes permits Todorov

to relate them to two parts of verbal speech: the adjective and verb. "Narrative adjectives" describe states of equilibrium or disequilibrium, "narrative verbs" describe the passage from one state to the other. After that, he observed the transformations of mood within the grammar of narrative. The syntactic unit superior to the preposition is sequence. Two marks of sequence are incomplete repetition of the initial preposition and intuitive reaction on the reader's part. Describing the structure of narrative sequences is the subject of the same regulations with those of narrative parts of speech.

### **B. Stage Two: Narrative Discourse**

At the level of discourse the problems of narrative analysis are more complex, for there is hardly any linguistic theory of discourse. However, Todorov has analyzed some of the stories of *Decameron*, and has provided a number of narrative formulas on the basis of them. From the perspective of the sequence, we can distinguish three types of propositions which correspond to the logical relations of exclusion (either-or), disjunction (and-or), and conjunction (and-and). The first is alternative, the second is optional, and the third is obligatory.

The relations between prepositions can be of three types. The first is temporal in which events follow one another in the text because they follow one another in the imaginary world of the book. The next is logical. Narratives are habitually based on implications and presuppositions while non-narratives are based on the movement from the general to the particular, and vice versa. The third is spatial insofar as the two prepositions are juxtaposed because of a certain resemblance between them. Thereby, they indicate a space proper to the text. Parallelism is a subdivision of the spatial type of relation between prepositions.

The study of the novellas of the *Decameron* led Todorov to discern two types of story in this collection. The first type was "punishment-evaded," for a complete trajectory (equilibrium--disequilibrium--equilibrium) was followed in them. The next type, in which only the second part of the narrative is present, was "conversion." We start from a state of disequilibrium to arrive at a final equilibrium. As an example of structural approach to literature, Todorov discussed the abstract literary concept of

plot. The ordinary reader reads a book above all for plot. But interested in theoretical problems as structuralism is, Todorov suggested useful categories for examining and describing plots. Plot consists of action, character, and recognition. He has provided this scheme for a number of plots of the *Decameron*: X violates a law, Y must punish X, X tries to avoid being punished, Y violates a law, Y believes X is not violating the law, Y does not punish X.

Todorov argued that the grammar of narrative is like the grammar of language, and theorized some analogies between the categories of narrative and those of language. He also explained the plot schemes of the stories of the *Decameron* in 8 formulas which I attempt to describe in some details. (1) The minimal scheme of plot can be shown by a clause. (2) If we analyze a narrative clause, we discover two entities that correspond to the “parts of speech”: (a) the agents, which here are designed by X and Y, correspond to proper nouns and serve as the subject and object of the clause, (b) the predicate, which is always a verb. The semantic characteristic of narrative verbs is that they denote an action which modifies the preceding situation. However, analyzing more stories, he showed a third part of narrative speech: the adjective, which corresponds to qualities and does not change the situation in which it appears. (3) Narrative action can have a positive and a negative form. Thus, we need a category of status also, and negation is a possible status. (4) The category of modality is also important. When we say “X must punish Y,” we denote an action that has not yet taken place but is present in a virtual state. This means that although Y has not been punished yet, we are virtually putting her at the risk of punishment. (5) In the sentence “Y believes that X is not violating the law,” the verb “believe” differs from other verbs, for it is not a question of a different action but is the question of a different perception of the same action. Therefore, we can speak of a kind of “point of view” which refers not only to the relation between reader and narrator, but also to the characters. (6) The relations between the clauses should be considered too. These are (a) causal relations, as in the relation between X violating a law and X being put at the risk of punishment; (b) temporal relations, which means that a narrative pattern implies a sequence in time, for each certain clause in a narrative comes before and after another certain clause; (c) spatial relations, which imply that a narrative pattern

can show actions taking place at the same time also. (7) If we study how the clauses in a narrative succeed one another, we discover a syntagmatic pattern. However, the reader perceives the pattern as a finished story. It is a modified repetition of the first clause that produces the impression of completion. Although the first and the last clauses are identical, in mood and status they are different, and will be seen from different points of view. In our example, it is “punishment” that is repeated. However, in each repetition, a different mood or status is given to it: firstly it is avoided, then it is denied. (8) We can apply these abstract formulas in the study of individual tales also. There are three suggestions here: (a) syntactic study of the narrative pattern (b) thematic study of the narrative pattern, for example, studying the concrete actions in the stories of the *Decameron* that incorporate in the abstract pattern of each narrative (like the laws that are violated in them or the punishments that are meted out); (c) rhetorical study of the narrative pattern, that is, examining the verbal medium which composes such a pattern. In the abstract pattern of a narrative, actions can be expressed by dialogues, by descriptions, and by the figurative and literal discourse, and each action can be seen from a different point of view.

## **XI. Northrop Frye: Anatomy of Criticism**

### **A. Narrative Categories**

Northrop Frye’s *Anatomy of Criticism* gives teachers and critics of literature a powerful incentive to think about their work more systematically. His system of genres begins with his acceptance of the basic Aristotelian division of poetry into lyric, epic, and dramatic. His ways of organizing the possibilities of fiction proved most interesting and fruitful. Frye presents two different generic systems relating to fiction — a system of modes and a system of forms. He organizes his modes according to the hero’s power of action in relation both to the other men and to the environment. In myth, the hero is superior to others both in kind and degree; in romance, he is superior in degree; in epic and high mimetic modes of tragedy, he is superior to other men in degree but he is not superior to the environment; in realism and low mimetic modes of comedy, he is equal to other men; and in satire and irony, he is inferior to them. Frye also subdivides narrative into two categories of epos and

fiction. The distinction between these is based on what he calls the radical of presentation. Epos is delivered orally, while fiction is written to be read.

### **B. Theory of Mythoi**

Frye's four mythoi of spring, summer, autumn, and winter are at the same time stereotyped plots and thematic structures or visions of the world. To the mythos of spring, corresponds the comic plot of triumphant love. A restrictive society creates obstacles, but as one overcomes such obstacles, one passes into new and integrated states of being. The tragic plot of autumn involves a negative alternation of contract. Obstacles triumph and opponents gain their revenge. The mythos of summer has as its plot the romance of the quest with its perilous journey, the crucial struggle, and the exaltation of the hero. And the mythos of winter reserves in an ironic mode, the plot of romance: society is not transformed, quest proves unsuccessful, and the hero must learn that escaping from the world leads to death or madness.

## **XII. Jonathan Culler: How Novels Produce Meaning**

In *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics and literature*, Jonathan Culler discusses how novels produce meaning. The structuralists think that in the novel they can most easily study the semiotic process in its fullest scope; that is, the creation and organization of signs not only in order to produce meaning but to produce a human world charged with meaning. They believe that the novel produces a world. In a novel, words are composed in such a way that through the activity of reading a social world emerges. In this way, structuralist method is concerned with models of individual personality, models of the relations between the individual and society; and, perhaps most importantly, with the significance of such aspects of the world.

Structuralism is interested to discover how novels participate in the production of meaning. But the representation of the world in the novel is different from poetry. The reader of a novel expects to be able to recognize a world. Thus, it becomes a place where models of intelligibility can be exposed, challenged, and deconstructed. In poetry, deviations from verisimilitude can easily be justified in the name of metaphor, epiphany, prophetic stance, etc. But in novel, conventional expectations make such

deviations more troubling and therefore potentially more powerful. Now it is here, on the edges of intelligibility, that structuralist interest has come to focus. In *The Pursuit of Signs*, Culler argues that all narrative theorists agree on one thing at least: the theory of narrative requires a distinction between ‘story’ and discourse. Story is the sequence of actions or events, conceived as independent of their manifestation in discourse, while ‘discourse’ is the narration of the presented events.

### **XIII. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan: Scientific Approach to Narrative**

In *The Concept of Ambiguity: The Example of James*, Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan delicately discusses the concept of ambiguity in the fiction of James. She mentions five propositional operations one of which is monary while four others are binary. The monary operation is that of negation (the “not a” operation). The binary operations are: conjunction, disjunction, implication, and equivalence. If "a" and "b" signify individual propositions, conjunction is "a" and "b" ( $a \cdot b$ ), disjunction is "a" or "b" ( $a \text{ or } b$ ), implication is "a" implies "b" ( $a \supset b$ ), and equivalence is "a" = "b" ( $a \text{ is equivalent to } b$ ). When “or” expresses a disjunction, it can have two meanings, corresponding to two kinds of disjunction: weak or inclusive and strong or exclusive. In a strong disjunction one or the other or both disjunctions are true, whereas in a weak disjunction either one or the other, but not both of them, is true. Ambiguity can be the coexistence of contraries or the coexistence of contradictories. The degree of finalization varies from story to story. In detective stories, the end discloses one and only one solution to the problem which it sets out to solve. But sometimes we close the book with more than one finalized possibility in mind. It is here that the propositional operations are relevant to define a variety of possible relations between hypothesis “a” and hypothesis “b” (or between “a”, “b”, “c”, and “d”, if more than two hypotheses exist). When two hypotheses are mutually exclusive, and each is equally coherent, equally consistent, equally plenary and convincing, so that we cannot choose between them, we are confronted with narrative ambiguity. Rimmon-Kenan also describes the differences of ambiguity with vagueness, indeterminacy, multiple subjectivity, double meaning, multiple meaning, plurisignation, complexity, symbol, paradox, oxymoron, and irony.

In the second chapter of her book, Rimmon-Kenan discusses four aspects of narrative: actional structure versus texture, language versus parole, deep structure versus surface structure, and totality versus basic armature. The distinction between actional structure and texture overlaps other useful distinctions, notably the Formalist's *fabula* versus *sjuzet* and the structuralist's *histoire* versus discourse. *Fabula* is the sum total of events in their chronological and logical order, while *sjuzet* is the sum total of the same events in the order of their representation in the work. The distinction is temporal arrangement: *fabula* is composed of events arranged in the order of occurrence, while *sjuzet*, however may follow the same order, may also decompose and deform it for artistic purposes. Like the Russian *fabula*, the French *histoire* is the basic story stuff, governed by the chronological and logical order of its own. It is similar to that of "real life" and independent of its artistic shaping. Discourse, on the other hand, corresponds to the artistic construction into which the events are modelled. Whereas formalism is not explicit about the linguistic or pre-linguistic status of the *sjuzet*, structuralism emphasizes the medium of language.

But instead of a binary classification, Rimmon-Kenan proposes a ternary classification consisting of *fabula*, *sjuzet*, and discourse. *Fabula* is the totality of actions in their natural, chronological, and logical order. It is a pre-medium and pre-composition level. *Sjuzet* is the artistically shaped but pre-linguistic presentation of the *fabula*. It is a higher level than *fabula* because it is already subjected to artistic construction. But it is still abstracted from the system of signs which is finally constructed by us. *Sjuzet* is the pre-linguistic but not the pre-compositional level. The main devices for making a *sjuzet* of a *fabula* are: handling the time, selecting the point of view, and using analogy and digression.

#### **XIV. American Structuralism: Functional Transformations**

The notion of plot is based on causation. "The king died then the queen died" is not a narrative, but "the king died then the queen died of grief" is. This is the *fabula* of the causal narrative: first there is a cause, then there is the effect of it. First a mosquito bites you, then you feel pain. However, Friedrich Nietzsche says this sequence is not given, and you cannot take it as true. He says this sequence is only constructed by a

rhetorical operation. Nietzsche asks what will happen if we firstly feel a pain and look round for some factor that we can treat as a cause. In this case, the real causal sequence may be something like: first pain then mosquito. It is the effect that causes us to provide a cause. This is a (Derridean) deconstructive approach to narrative. Derrida deconstructs causality. In *Deconstruction for Beginners*, he is quoted by Jim Powell, “There cannot be a cause without an effect—and if the ‘effect’ is what causes the ‘cause’ to be a cause or origin, then the effect is actually the cause” (Powell, 2007: 129). In American structuralism, a network of relations takes the place of a chain of causes and effects. An example can be taken from *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles. Someone has killed Laius, and the problem is to discover what has happened at that fateful moment. For Sigmund Freud, a narrative event is conceived as prior to and independent of its discursive representation, because it is the logic of signification that determines its meaning. In the Sophoclean drama, when the event is revealed, Oedipus accepts the meaning that it imposes on him. It makes him guilty, and he attains tragic dignity.

However, another possible way is that instead of the revelation of a prior deed that determines the meaning, we could say it is meaning, the convergence of meaning in the narrative discourse, that leads us to posit this deed as its appropriate manifestation. Oedipus must be found guilty; otherwise, the play will not work at all. Oedipus, too, feels the force of two logics: it has been prophesized that he will kill his father; he admits to have killed an old man at what may have been the relevant time and place, so when the shepherd reveals that Oedipus is in fact the son of Laius, Oedipus leaps to the conclusion, and the reader leaps with him, that he is the real murderer of Laius. His conclusion is based not on a new evidence concerning a past deed but on the force of meaning, the interweaving of prophesies and the demands of narrative coherence. The convergence of discursive forces makes it essential that he become the murderer of Laius, and he yields to this force of meaning. Therefore, instead of saying that there is a sequence of given past events which the play reveals with certain detours, we can say that the crucial event is the product of signification. In American structuralism, meaning is not the effect of a prior event but is the cause of it. Oedipus becomes the murderer of his father not by a violent act that is brought to

light but by the demands of narrative coherence. If we look from this perspective, we realize that the two forces of narrative follow a contrary logic, that is, they go counter to one another. They cannot be brought together in harmonious synthesis, because each of them works by the exclusion of the other one. Event is not the cause of the theme, but is the effect of it.

Another feature of American narratology is its interest in the problems of point of view. Here, the main concern of the reader is with identifying and discriminating the narrator and describing what belongs to his perspective. Although the American tradition of narratology does not deeply concern itself with the formalization of its categories and does not erect a grammar of plot, it has relied on the basic distinction formulated by the European narratology. To make a narrative the object of study, the analyst must distinguish it from non-narratives. If a narrative is the representation of a sequence of events, the analyst must identify these events. This is not to mean that narratologists believe the events of a Balzac story actually took place or he firstly conceived the events and then embodied them in a narrative discourse. Instead, it is to claim that narratological analysis of a text requires the reader to treat the discourse as a representation of events which are conceived independent of any particular narrative perspective and which are supposed to have the properties of real events. Thus, the analyst must assume that there is a real or proper temporal order, and that the events in fact occurred simultaneously or successively. This is a fruitful mode of narrative analysis. It is indispensable even to the analysis of the contemporary fiction that rejects the very notion of "event."

## **XV. Distinctive Features of the Structuralist Method**

The first distinction of structuralism is inclusiveness. Its scope includes all human social phenomena, the humanities, and the fine arts. This is made possible by the belief that all manifestations of social activity constitute languages in a formal sense. Hence their regularities may be reduced to the same set of abstract rules that define and govern what we normally think of as language. All social codes, like natural languages, have a 'lexicon' or 'vocabulary'. The next feature of structuralist method is its emphasis on wholes, on totalities. It gives a logical priority to the whole over the

parts. The whole and the part can be properly explained only in terms of the relations existing between the parts. The third feature of it is that it seeks structures not on the surface at the level of the observed, but below or behind empirical reality. What the observer sees is not the structure, but simply the evidence and product of structure. Structuralism is innate to man, and its mechanisms are genetically transmitted in him. A further characteristic of this method of (literary) analysis is that it is centrally concerned with synchronic as opposed to diachronic structures. This means that it focuses on the relations across a moment in time but not through time. A synchronic structure is seen as constituted not by any historical process, but by a network of existing structural relations. Therefore, still another feature of structuralism is its effective anti-causality. Pure forms of structuralism do not use the notions of cause and effect. In favor of "laws of transformation," they reject this conceptualization of the world.

## **Chapter Three**

### **A Survey of Literary Realism**

“The whole of anything is never told.”  
(Henry James)

#### **I. Romance and Novel**

Realism refers to the rise of the novel in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, and this is why it is narrative. A dimension of realism is the rise and development of novel in the English language. Another aspect of it is the relation between literature and reality, between what the word says and what the life is. This aspect is usually dealt with under “representation” which has psychological, cognitive, and anthropological dimensions.

If it can be argued that the novel is the literature of the bourgeoisie, and the romance, which is a major precursor of the English novel, was the literature of feudalism. In the present study, a question is what type of literature the romance is, and how it should be compared with the novel. Romance, or chivalric romance, takes elements from legends, fairy tales, and history. It is a form of heroic prose and verse story that was popular in the aristocratic circles of the medieval and early modern Europe. The romances typically narrated the knightly adventures of a valiant hero who fell in love with a beautiful lady from a noble family with ancient pedigree. To take the hand of his beloved and gain the honor of knighthood, such a warrior-lover had to prove that he can defend the values of chivalry and heroism, that he is faithful to the tradition of courtly love, and that he can defeat all the enemies of society. Therefore, he had to quest for a brave errand of heroism that included a series of dangerous adventures. The romance, which was highly elevated in form and content, was a suitable type for the presentation of the manners of the gentry: kings, soldiers, lovers, etc.

However, in its rise and role, the English realistic novel was in sharp opposition to the romance. If the romancer felt free from the moral reality, and if he would therefore compose a story that was quite subjective and had nothing to do with the real human society, the realist novelist would feel a heavy load on his shoulder to provide an objective rendition of the meaning of humanity. From the outset, the English realistic novel objectively concerned itself with the daily life experiences of common

men and women who came from the lower and/or middle classes of the early modern society in Europe. In addition to the presentation of the heart-felt experiences of the usual man, which was totally lacking in the romances, the novel was much different from the romance. The fact that the novels were written in prose or in language of the people, made it possible for the writer not only to free himself from the monotonous formalities of poetry that had little relation to real problems, but also to free himself from the necessities of the elevated language of the romance. Instead, the simple flow of prose into the smallest nooks and corners of the human consciousness, allowed the story writers to represent the minutest details of life experiences of the average man.

The appearance of female society, the increase of wealth, the mandatory education, and the development of journalism had also significant roles in the rise and development of the English novel as a product of realism. The higher class women, who had a lot of free time to pass at home, started to be regular consumers of the novel, because for passing their leisure time conveniently, they needed something to read. In such a situation, compulsory education led to a rapid increase in the number of men and women who could read (prose) fiction. And the development of journalism, which was itself a result of compulsory education, was influential not only in the technical promotion of story-telling, but also in making the readers more interested in the novel, because the publication of the life stories of novelistic characters in sequential issues of the magazines made it possible for the readers to follow the stories of such characters. These factors, in addition to the invention of the printing industry, the development of public health, the increase of leisure time, and the progress of public transportation, etc. changed the novel from a minimally- or privately-supported medium of culture and education to a publically-supported medium. And this, in turn, helped it to become more deeply integrated to the development of realism in Western culture.

In addition, the romance is more subjective while the novel is more objective. This is to mean that the romancer feels greater freedom from the social standards; whereas the realist novelist feels committed to represent the reality of the human experience. In the following, Robert C. Post remarks on Richard Chase's distinctions between the romance and the realist novel:

“The main difference between the novel and the romance,” he asserts, “is the way in which they view reality.” It soon becomes apparent, however, that what Chase means is that the novel describes objective reality, while the romance does not. Chase claims that the novel “renders reality closely and in comprehensive detail.” In the novel, character “is more important than action and plot,” and character is realized in its “real complexity of temperament and motive.” Characters are “in explicable relation to nature, to each other, to their social class, to their own past.” Events in the novel, “will usually be plausible.” The reality of the romance, on the other hand, is described in terms that are largely negative. The romance, Chase contends, “feels free to render reality in less volume and detail.” It prefers action to character, “and action will be freer in a romance than in a novel, encountering, as it were, less resistance from reality.” Romance action will feature “astonishing events” which “are likely to have a symbolic or ideological, rather than a realistic plausibility.” Despite the fact that “character may become profoundly involved,” characters in the romance are “somewhat abstract and ideal,” not “completely related to each other or to society or to the past.” In short, “being less committed to the immediate rendition of reality than the novel,” the organizing principle of the romance is not objective social reality, but the use of literary devices such as “mythic, allegorical, and symbolic forms” (Post, 1981: 370-371).

Whatever the standards of the bourgeois society in the rise of the English novel are, some of the important features of the realistic novel are the absence from it of the great people of romance and their elevated deeds and wars and heroic actions. Novel is not a suitable means for the representation of the manners of aristocracy. Heroism and courtly love, that are integral to the aristocratic tradition, cannot be dramatized in a novel which is not interested in representing the superhuman characters of romance and their incredible and fantastic incidents. Instead, the realistic novel dramatizes the life experiences of average men and women who are involved with the real ups and downs of daily life. Its characters represent the members of lower and middle classes. The representation of such classes of people in the novel implies, as Sir Walter Scott says, that it speaks “the dialect, the language” that “most” people “know—the language of unaffected people everywhere” (Perry, 1967: 265).

Therefore, the language of the novel is as diversified as the real speakers are, and is prone both to lexical and grammatical deviations from the standard dialect. This means that the language of a novel can be fully slangy, conversational, and colloquial.

The diversity of the people represented in the realistic novel guarantees that it can be widely inclusive in plot, theme, and characters, for in their humor, motivations, inclinations, etc. the people of the novel can be as different from one another as real people are different. Thus, depending on the people involved in the realistic story, “everyday life” means different things and includes a whole range of concerns: love, hate, death, pride, greed, poverty, failure, success, struggle, sexuality, etc. And the characters are shown in their real attempts to develop their lives, or even to survive, in a (transient and paradoxical) society that is sometimes harsh and inhuman.

In this way, for a highly ambitious and fully aspired young man like Robinson Crusoe, “everyday life” means how to tame the wild nature on a remote island and how to pass a new life there for twenty-eight years for which he needs, among other things, the application of his power and wisdom to surrender the native settlers and to exploit them to his own advantage, to manufacture the things he most needs, to open a plantation, and to restore his own sovereignty in his privately-established state. For an orphan like Oliver Twist that appears in a novel with the same name, “everyday life” means all the misfortunes which the 19<sup>th</sup>-century English society, in the process of industrialization as it is, imposes upon him and through which he has to find his ways to maturity and prosperity. For another Dickensian character like Stephen Blackpool that appears in *Hard Times* (1853), “everyday life” means all his struggles against social injustice in Coketown where the utilitarian society treats its people like “pitchers” and educates them only on the basis of the logic of the mind. It also means all the pains that this society inflicts on him, all the disasters that he has with his ever inebriated wife, and all the pleasures that he enjoys with Rachel who is his companion and faithful beloved. However, for a Jamesian character like Kate Croy “everyday life” means the application of a sequence of clever strategies to win the love of a man and get rid of her great poverty. To achieve these things, she has to use her intelligence firstly to get rid of her wretched reprobate father who even insists that she has to share her mother’s small bequest with him and not with her sister. After that, “everyday life” for Kate means to compromise with her sister and aunt to get the benefit of their advice and support, and to arrange for winning the love of Densher and for lawfully possessing the fortune of Milly Theale after her death.

In romance, between good and bad there falls a void. Thus, romance characters are easy to classify, for they are either good or bad. But in the novel, the characters can be both good and bad, and are thus not as easy to categorize. This means also that as the novel has moved forward to modern times, the characters have grown more difficult to identify and deal with. Therefore, reading and appreciating a novel needs more mental energy and critical appraisal than reading a romance. In the romance there is more escapism and fantasy, while in the novel there is more involvement with real life issues. One reads the former mainly for experiencing a sequence of incidents, for knowing the suspense, denouement, resolution, and for knowing if the story ends with justice, while one reads the latter as an act of understanding and appreciation. One could read a medieval romance perhaps mainly as a pastime, while one should read a novel for understanding and appreciating it critically. One reads a novel not only to understand what the characters do and why they do it, but also to pass a judgment about what they do.

The next issue in the present chapter is the connection between romance and novel in England and America. The English novel is a later and more developed stage of romance, so that with the publication of *Don Quixote*<sup>1</sup>, in which Cervantes had satirized the chivalric romance, almost no more romance appeared on the stage of the European literature. However, in America the romance is not separate from the novel. This claim is in agreement with Richard Chase's viewpoint when he contrasts the English and American romance. He affirms that,

Although most of the great American novels are romances, most of the great English novels are not ... [and]<sup>2</sup> that the tradition of romance is major in the history of American novel but minor in the history of the English novel (Chase, 1957: xii).

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<sup>1</sup> Published in two volumes in 1605 and 1615, *Don Quixote* is a picaresque novel by the Spanish Cervantes. Since its publication, it has been an important source of inspiration not only in literature but also in art and music. A central theme of it is a contrast between the tradition of courtly love and romantic idealism on the one hand, and the daily-life concerns and world-weariness of the exhausted modern man who is starting to lose his confidence in those medieval traditions. In this novel, that is a satire of nationalism, Cervantes goes beyond mere story-telling and explores the individualism of his characters. He also helps move beyond the narrow literary conventions of the chivalric romance literature that he proves. That convention consisted of straightforward retelling of a series of acts that would redound to the knightly virtues of the hero.

<sup>2</sup> My addition.

Chase also assumes that “the American novel is obviously a development from the English tradition” (ibid: 3). However, he approves that the English imagination has followed “a middle way” through cultural contradictions to produce a fiction of unities and harmonies, while the American imagination has captured the cultural opposites and disharmonies to produce a fiction of extremes and contradictions. It is perhaps for the illustration of such contradictions in the American humor that the American novel has actively involved itself with romantic elements, the elements which it has perhaps not attempted to reconcile. Such involvement with polarities excited Nathaniel Hawthorne to admit in the preface of *The House of the Seven Gables* (1967) that although the realist novelist feels committed both to the probable and the possible, the romancer feels freer from them. This is to mean that while the truth-seeking imagination of the novelist impels him to show fidelity to the minutes of man’s experience, the opinion of the romancer is more latitudinal, and his truth is the result of his own choosing or creation to which he shows an indirect fidelity through a range of language resources like myth and symbolism.

Before the Civil War in America, the romancers attempted to break away from the romantic tradition and compose stories in the style of Dickens and Thackeray for example, that had dominated the American market. However, to speak with Perry Miller, a “cultural lag” kept them back from doing this. Comparing the English and American fiction from this perspective, Miller says,

In England we can see how the rapid urbanization forced upon the generation of Dickens and Thackeray themes arising from the turmoil of London, the black smoke of Manchester and Birmingham, the social competition of Barchester and Grosvenor Square. But the creative imagination of this country had taken shape amid the single reality of vast, unsettled traces of wilderness. Crowded and noisy as New York seemed to country visitors in 1850, it was still not sufficiently a pile of “civilization” to make imperative a writer’s forsaking the wilderness for the urban scene. The dream of Arcadia died hard. A civil War was required to shatter it (Miller, 1967: 258).

If the lack of "civilization" was a major reason for the jointly presence of romance and realism in American fiction, “local colour” fiction was also influential in their

embedding. This kind of story implies man's nostalgia to unify with his regional environment, and shows how he manages his relations with (external) nature, how he comes to terms and feels at home with it (when it is fierce and hostile). Of the external landscape, the writer of a local colour story creates all the paraphernalia of an imaginary situation. Now, if it can be suggested that in the practice of reading one internalizes the values of such a created fictitious world, it can also be proposed that the local colour fiction has been effective in preserving the romance in American fiction.

## **II. Reality and Representation**

The present chapter intends to discuss the relation between reality and representation also. Here the main idea is realism as a way to suggest reality to the reader. This idea was nourished mainly by Christopher Prendergast as he admitted that narrative orders live by giving structure to the story. Outside of narrative, life is disorderly and chaotic. It has no clear beginning and ending, and no logical continuation. But in the story, the writer gives structure to the materials of life and brings them into logical connection. By giving structure to the materials of life in his story, the writer helps the reader to perceive it as ordered. He uses the knowledge that we have about life, and this is a kind of in-built order that realism has. Quoting from *Studies in European Literature* by George Lukacs, Prendergast confirms that when, in the "context" of mimesis, an author represents "the isolated facts of social life as aspects of the historical process and integrates them as a *totality* can knowledge of the facts become knowledge of reality" (Prendergast, 1986: 25). This is because the author mixes the fragments of disorderly life with a sense of form and logic, and helps the reader to realize them as structured, orderly, and meaningful. Outside of the story, life is a confused maze that brings us to nowhere. It is like a heap of formless materials where things are neither proportional nor functional. But by creating causality in them, the writer shows them as in a sequence where each material comes logically either before or after another material. By doing this, he also creates proportion between these materials, and renders each material as a part of a total and meaningful system with certain goals and uses. In such a process of selection and arrangement in the mimetic work, life is

represented as intelligible. Therefore, to speak for Prendergast again, “the text is to world what microcosm is to macrocosm, a system of interrelated parts whose internal relations yield a model of the set of relations organizing the wider totality of the world beyond” (Prendergast, 1986, 26).

Another important subject in realism is the difference between story and discourse. Therefore, the present chapter focuses on the condition of literary realism in Europe and America, and attempts to discuss the concept of realism in the novel. Reality can better be represented in story than in poetry, for poetry is basically not narrative but meditative, emotional, and reflective. Ian Watt, Erich Auerbach, and Roland Barthes have suggested interesting ideas about the representation of reality in novel. After discussing some differences between the ideas of Watt and Auerbach, and shortly illustrating this concept in the work of some major nineteenth-century French novelists, I will provide an analysis of James’s short story "The Real Thing" to show some aspects of his realism and explain its differences from the work of other writers in the American realistic tradition like Mark Twain and William Dean Howells.

Realism is an international phenomenon. At the beginning of *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* (1946), Auerbach compares the representation of the world in the Bible and in Homer’s *Odyssey*. He argues that the representation of reality in the modern times is a mixture of these two modes. In the Homeric mode, where language is rhetorical, reality is mainly the outcome of language, but in the Biblical mode, where language is direct, reality is mainly the impression of the writers, and is more truth-oriented. For providing a comprehensive theory of literary representation of reality, he closely reads many major texts of the ancient Greek and Roman writers, through those of early Christian and medieval writers, all the way up to those of Renaissance writers, seventeenth-century writers, Enlightenment writers, and nineteenth-century and twentieth-century writers. His method of evaluation is similar to the method of historicist critics, since his concern is the representation of reality in different historical periods and in close connection with the social and intellectual conventions of each period.

In the classical times, rhetorics and stylistics were quite rigid in division, and each literary form and/or style was invested with certain subject matters. For instance, farce

and comedy were regarded for representing the lower classes of people, while the sublimity of epic and tragedy would render them suitable for representing the upper classes. Thus, the writers of the Bible were kept from composing their sermons and portrayals in such genres, simply because their subjects fitted perhaps with none of them. However, some Biblical stories were composed in a language that mixed tragic sublimity with comedic humiliation. In medieval times, the influence of the Bible and the tradition of courtly love resulted in the formation of a middle style of realism. In the later periods also, such a bipolarity led to the emergence of a mixed or “antithetical style.” Likewise, the modern realism of the nineteenth century has its roots in the mixed style of writers like Victor Hugo and William Shakespeare.

But Ian Watt concentrates mainly on the fiction of Daniel Defoe. If Auerbach is more experimental, Watt is more theoretical. For the English theoretician, realism began in the 18<sup>th</sup> century but for the German analyst it began in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For Auerbach the narrator is still there in the story although he necessarily does not speak from the perspective of morality. It can be suggested that from his viewpoint history and society are really significant, because the terms “historical” and “social” repeatedly occur in his work. However, Watt is mainly concerned with: the philosophical backgrounds of the novel, the emergence and meaning of experience, individuality and how the individual makes sense of life, and how society constructs reality. Watt argues that *Robinson Crusoe*, *Moll Flanders* and *Tom Jones* experience self-education and self-growth. French realism began much later than the English. Society allows the individual and the people to experience life. But in Flaubert and Stendhal we are, after all, creatures of habit. We have to see the world, to see the society and ourselves according to a certain type and formula.

### **III. A French Model of Realism versus an Anglo-American Model**

The French novelists produced a history or a cultural paradigm for themselves. From their perspective, literature is closely connected to society. When tradition is no longer as important, telling by showing in the descriptive mode slows down the plot. Thus, the author composes his work in the descriptive mode, and creates a social situation. Although details of narrative may have no function in the structure, but in the whole

story they are of crucial importance. Descriptions of the minor things in a story, for example, those of the pieces of furniture that somebody uses, are important in terms of the social position he is holding, because they signify his tastes and personal attitudes. They also show his psychological situation. Reading realistic fiction is a process of problem solving. The reader should understand how the people in the story think and feel, and what their interiority is. In contrast to the epic tradition, realism is no longer as deeply concerned with celebrating the deed of the hero as it is with highlighting why he does the deed. Therefore, two features of some versions of realism are focalization and differentiation. Such forms of realism want to show how human life is a pattern of different shades. Another contribution of realistic fiction (of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century) is the fusion of the voices of the narrator and character. The narrator is an analyst who may describe both the details of the story and the interiority of the character in a certain language.

In *The Rise of the Novel* (1967) a key question is how life is actually managed in the realistic story. In question is the ability of the hero to fulfill the requirements of the every-day life, how he or she acquires knowledge about life and manages it. Daniel Defoe, Samuel Richardson, and Henry Fielding examined the real in the sense of the life that the middle and lower classes were living, in the sense of the daily problems of the mass people. However, the difference between the novel and the (pre-eighteenth century) romance is more than the real versus the unreal. Another difference between them is in the way they represent reality. Richard Chase implicitly admits, it seems to me, that romance is not as sincere with reality as the novel. The former portrays life more distantly than the latter, and gives only a general impression of reality, for it does not describe life in enough details, but touches it perhaps only on certain levels. The novel represents reality more comprehensively than the romance, yet helps the reader to develop his knowledge about reality and to become a better citizen. The presentation of the details of life in the novel makes its discourse more plausible than that of the romance. Also, the novel takes its plot from a present-day problem, from a daily-life issue with which the reader is familiar and feels full sympathy, while the romance takes its plot from a far removed history, from the history of the Medieval times, for example, with which the reader may be quite unfamiliar and may feel no

sympathy. If the romance can be read mainly as a pastime, as a space for the idle rambles of fancy, the novel can be considered, among other things, as a space for education, as a treatise to illustrate how cultures do things.

The individual, who is free from the authority of past assumptions and traditional beliefs, starts to examine his experiences of life. In such a critical temper, the relation between life and language also becomes central; and truth loses its metaphysical origin to become corporeal, external, subject to the personal perception, and accessible to all humans in principle. If in romance a major test of truth was conformity with the established norms and values of the classical times, the novel depicts the departure of a courageous and calculating individual from the previous assumptions to inaugurate the office of a new life. If the plot of the classical epic and the Renaissance tragedy was derived from history, legend, or fable, the plot of the novel is mainly the creation of an author as he or she perceives life in the context of everyday experiences. Also, if in the romance decorum was faithfulness to the hierarchical system of values of feudalism, in the novel a mark of distinction is the originality and uniqueness of the represented experience.

The purpose of the novel is to convey the impression of fidelity to human experience. Therefore, another mark of distinction of the novel is the newness of its subject matter. This adds to the role of the author also, because representing the variety of the modern life goes counter to the repetition of the previous plots and needs the creativity of the author. Such valuation of the individual means that learning is a reliable source of inspiration which can take the place of the sources of collective tradition whether they be scriptures, legends, or histories. Thus, it is logical that the novel is more formless than the romance, tragedy, or epic. It can perhaps be as formless as individual experiences can be limitless in type and number. For example, the story of *Robinson Crusoe* is free from tradition, and flows as spontaneously as Defoe plausibly imagines the daily lives of his characters. This is to mean that if a Medieval text, *Roman de la Rose* for example, was composed on the basis of the French tradition of courtly love, the plot of Defoe's novel develops as the hero narrates the incidents of his own life and history when he sets sail from his hometown in York, England, for an unknown destination in search of a new life. This is a wholly

invented plot that originates not from tradition, legend, mythology, or history. It emerges, among other things, from the personal experiences of the author who was a journalist, from a series of fictive adventures when the hero ventures to go on a tumultuous journey to establish a state in the foreign lands.

The actors in a novel are also quite different from those in past literatures: the general human types of epic and romance are replaced by particular people who arrange their lives in particular circumstances. It is not the accepted universals of life, but the experiences of certain men and women, that define reality or facts of consciousness. Thus, in the rise of the novel the concept of "reality" also changes. The original material of modern realism will emerge from the immediate sense impressions of the individual man. However, although Robinson Crusoe has a lot of knowledge and experience, neither his knowledge of an accepted tradition is the base of truth, nor the outcome of an individual sense impression in the particular sense. Thus, for the recognition of reality, the individual man has an intellectual responsibility: he has to give shape to the unshapely flood of sense impressions by filtering them through his consciousness.

But if this new form of literature should be widely appreciated, the critical tradition should also change, for in the culture of the readership the new aesthetic values of originality and particularity should take the place of the classical values of repetition and universality. However, the dissatisfaction and departure implicit in originality, along with the power of the novel to depict the state of thought and feeling of the past generations, make the novel appealing enough to the newly emerging readership, for they could read the life story of particular men and women who were like themselves. The new critical atmosphere will give birth to new methods and standards for characterization and for the presentation of environment. In the act of reading, it is essential that the reader collaborates with the story, for in the act of composition, and by taking distance from the characters through observation, the author registers them on our consciousness as real and independent human beings. Thus, for preserving the illusion of reality in the story, the reader should infuse his own experiences with those of the characters. It can be suggested that the English realistic novel is a drama of intellectualization, for it depicts not only the state of

intellect of the past generations, but also that of the readers. In the space of the novel, we not only frame our feeling and structure our intelligibility, but also discover how we are integrated to our society. Winfried Fluck perhaps means this when he describes realism as an optimistic project in America. He claims that it is a cultural project for the individual to communicate with himself and about himself.

However, Erich Auerbach combines two contradictory conceptions of realism: one might be called existential, the other historical. Existential realism, which originates from the philosophy of Soren Kierkegaard, sees man as thrown out of the context of history. Existence cannot be examined historically, for reality is outside of history. Man is detached from history to make free decisions with great effects. He is exposed to the world while he is confronted with the collective forces of history; while he is disoriented and confused and naked and alone, and while he is restricted from the benevolence of human society. But historical realism is mostly derived from the philosophy of Friedrich Hegel and from the works of nineteenth-century French writers: Stendhal, Balzac, Flaubert, Zola. Historicism is the emergence of a (radical) curiosity about the social and political realities. French historical and social realism has much in common neither with eighteenth and nineteenth-century English individual and didactic realism nor with nineteenth-century Russian realism. Man lives in the history from which he is not free but to which he is related, for it is the forces of history that determine what he is and what he can be. French realism is basically social and historical, and emphasizes the impact of the social environment, temporal situations, race, and, in the case of Zola, heredity.

Auerbach describes Stendhal's realism as the outcome of his confrontation with the post-Napoleonic world which he sees as a problem. Yet, his discomfort with it and his inability to become part of it are not important motifs of his realism. He neither condemned society nor withdrew from it, but started to search for engagement in practical reality. He attempted to master history and society, for his ambitions and dreams depended upon it.

Balzac, who, Lilian Furst says, together with Stendhal "can be regarded as the creator of modern realism" (Furst, 1992: 65), took it as his main job to represent the contemporary life of his society. Like Stendhal, he relates the destiny of human

beings, and places them in their historical and social setting. But for Balzac every milieu becomes also a moral and physical atmosphere which impregnates the landscape, the dwelling, furniture, implements, clothing, physique, character, surroundings, ideas, activities, and fates of men; and at the same time the general historical situation reappears as a context which envelops all its several milieus. He did this often for the circle of middle and lower Parisian bourgeoisie and for the provinces; while his representation of high society is often melodramatic, false, and even unintentionally comic. His atmospheric realism is itself a part and product of his period. In the hands of Balzac, biology was finding its way to sociology, because his realism was inspired by biology also. There was an underlying poetic principle that inspired him to shift from the real in nature to the real in human society, from a biological to a social model of characterization. He did not conceive the type as the allegorization of innate forces, but conceived it as a product of social powers. His assumption was that even if the exterior of a character and the interior of another one are defined somewhat differently, the singular interior of the character expresses itself in his exterior. The various species or categories of human life were given, not as changing within the course of history, but only as external formalizations. Thus, in Balzac's realism there is a transition to human history where he starts to consider the long-neglected history of manners. Here he feels encouraged mainly by the work of Walter Scott where we are in a world of completely romantic historicism. In this phase, Balzac considers his activity as history. He writes the novel of manners as philosophy of history, and considers all his work as a single whole for the presentation of the nineteenth-century French society. In the work of Balzac, the source of investigation is not free imagination but the real life as it presents itself everywhere.

The realism of Flaubert, which takes the real everyday occurrences of a low social stratum, is objective, impartial, and impersonal. Such occurrences are accurately and profoundly set in a definite period of contemporary history. In these basic characteristics, Stendhal and Balzac and Flaubert are at one. But there are two differences between the first two writers on the one hand and Flaubert on the other: in the fiction of Stendhal and Balzac, we constantly hear what they think of their characters and events and what their characters think and feel, often in such a manner

that the writers identify themselves with their characters. But in the work of Flaubert both of these features are lacking. His opinion of his characters and events remains unspoken, and when his characters express themselves, the writer never identifies himself with their opinion, and does not seek to make the reader identify himself with it. We often hear the voice of the writer. However, he expresses no opinion and makes no comment, but limits his role to selecting the events and translating them into language, because he is convinced that if one is able to express every event in the story purely and completely, the event interprets both itself and the persons involved in it far better than any judgment appended to it. This is to mean that Flaubert does not tell us what the world of the intelligent is to be. Notwithstanding this impartiality, for Flaubert reality is there, in the writer's language.

#### **IV. Barthes's "Reality Effect" in (Modern) Realistic Fiction**

The general structure of narrative is essentially predictive, but descriptions seem to lack any predictive feature. They also seem to hinder the logical movement of the mind. The descriptive language incorporates neither in the presented communication of the story nor in the forward movement of its action. In addition, M. H. Abrams ascribes no cognitive role to the descriptive mode in narratives. He quotes John Ruskin as saying that descriptions do not represent the "true appearances of things to us but the extraordinary or false appearances when we are under the influence of emotion, or contemplative fancy" (Abrams, 1993: 142). Thus, in the process of signification the descriptive mode seems isolated and futile.

However, Roland Barthes does not believe in the futility of descriptive language in realistic narrative. In "Reality Effect," where his theories are both structuralist and post-structuralist, he discusses the employment of the descriptive mode in the works of fiction. He considers three or four roles for the descriptive mode in realistic literature. The first role is aesthetic, since although descriptive details seem to be a "narrative luxury, lavish to the point of offering many futile details and thereby increasing the cost of narrative information," they are "likely to connote the atmosphere" of the story. (Barthes, 1968: 141). This role is justified, "if not by the work's logic, at least by the laws of literature" (ibid: 145). In an aesthetic sense,

descriptive passages provide an atmosphere in the story in which the reader perceives it as readable. If the abundance of rhetorical language in the story can make it annoying, and if understanding it can therefore be problematic, by adding to the embellishment of the story, and by bridging between the present language of it and the language that is ideal for the reader, descriptions render it more beautiful and more acceptable to the reader.

The second function of descriptions in realistic novel is semiotic, because through a condensation of “concrete reality,” they throw signification to a far off distance. They represent the real by causing it to appear “as a resistance to meaning,” and thus justify speaking in search of meaning. On the one hand, the descriptive mode causes the real reach the threshold of signification, while on the other hand it never lets it pass the threshold. This means that a realistic story refers us to an abundance of concrete realities while it suspends signification at the same time. Thus, it can be proposed that in modern realistic fiction descriptions are for the privilege of form rather than content, that they are in the service of language, but not in the service of meaning. To say it in another way, they are for speaking, but not for meaning. Being there for the creation of language, they give the character and reader a chance to speak, an occasion to embody the function of language. In Barthes we read,

All this shows that the “real” is supposed to be self-sufficient, that it is strong enough to belie any notion of ‘function’, that its ‘speech-act’ has no need to be integrated into a structure and that the *having-been-there* of things is a sufficient principle of speech (ibid: 174).

The descriptive mode takes role to blur the presented picture in the story so as to make decoding a more professional process. It is as if the abundance of concrete data wants to transmute the narrative into a system of non-signification. The great abundance of concrete reality around us justifies the abundance of descriptive language in the realistic story. This is to mean that the abundance of insignificant information in the novel is not to salvage life from its overwhelming nastiness but mainly to help the reader realize the existence of an abundance of trite and trivial things in it.

Lilian Furst admits with Barthes that any thorough analysis of modern narrative fiction should give a place to the function of descriptions. She suggests that the

descriptive mode is, for Barthes, the use of "notations which no function (not even the most indirect) will allow us to justify" (Furst, 1992: 135). In her view, what is regarded in realistic fiction as "useless details" (ibid) gives it not only a structure, but also a luxurious atmosphere. She claims that the structure guarantees the existence of the story, while the luxurious atmosphere makes it more digestible (understandable) for the reader. Descriptions give a chance to the writer to show how good she is in her work. Such "superfluous" details also characterize the protagonist.

Realism is achieved through the analysis of the minute details of life in a work of fiction. Furst believes that for Barthes description is like a photograph, for he considers the matter of textuality as a main division between narrative and history. Fiction produces a model or an effect of reality, not reality as such but an effect of reality. But such an effect tries to deny that it is an effect or a model. But history is a kind of resistance. Things occur, and we wonder what sense we can make of them. The realist writer produces a model of reality in which he tries to make his readers believe. Barthes believes that descriptions make the fictive world recognizable to us.

To produce a plausible sense of reality, the writer provides a lot of details and descriptions in his work. But this task is not at all easy to carry out. If an aspect of reality is (an effect of) randomness and superfluousness, how can a story-teller produce such an effect? For this purpose, he may show the everyday life like a pile of ruins. By doing this, he conveys the impression that a major part of life is (like) a pile of ruins, and is therefore useless, superfluous. Thus, we read descriptions in the novel perhaps in order to forget the ruins of life, to relieve our pains about life as ruin. However, after reminding us that there are many ways in literature to use language in the business of deception, J. Hillis Miller takes a similar position to that of Barthes regarding "the reality effect" of the details in the story. Miller argues that superfluous details add to the verisimilitude of the story, and thereby persuade its reader to believe that he is reading a realistic story. For example, the details of Kate's room at the beginning of *The Wings of the Dove* excite the reader to believe that the narrator is describing a real room that he, James, has already seen. Miller says,

This piling up of detail, even thematically irrelevant detail, creates what Roland Barthes called *l'effet du réel*. This superabundance, even if it has no thematic or symbolic function, operates, as Barthes said, to tell the reader she is reading a “realistic novel,” a novel, that is, that undertakes to obey certain conventions of verisimilitude, just as certain other conventions in other works alert an adept reader that she is reading a work of science fiction or a romance (Miller, 2005: 154).

Thus, the convention of the reality effect adds to the truth-dimension of the discourse. It renders the lie as fiction<sup>3</sup> more believable. By mentioning real times and places that are known to the reader, and by referring to exact histories, (it is as though) the story refers the reader to the external world. In this way, the writer makes a connection between the world of reality and the world of narrative, and produces some effects of reality in his or her story. Such an effect provides a feeling of certitude or security in the reader, and adds to the readability of the work, because in this way the reader thinks that he or she has the first tool for recognition.

Realism hides the character of the text as model, and it is the ideological implications of the model that makes it a model. For example, Strether in *The Ambassadors* makes a correct model of reality that cannot be considered as a model. Art has the capacity to re-enliven our lives, to transcend our presence and our modes of being. Through visualization, the narrator attempts to create a situation, not only by narrating it but also by describing it, to make the reader fully imagine the typical situation. Visualization is seeing things, and to see is to understand.

Lisa Zunshine ascribes cognitive roles to the descriptive mode in fiction. In *Why We Read Fiction: Theory of Mind and the Novel*, she discusses the function of those parts of fictional narratives that have ostensibly nothing to do with reporting or with guessing the minds of the characters. By such non-functional parts, Sunshine preferably means descriptions of nature in the story. Descriptions of nature are quite

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<sup>3</sup> Another convention of the realistic novel that Miller says James obeys in *The Wings of the Dove* is what Miller calls the “echo of person and milieu” (Miller, 2005: 155), the reflection of the interior lives of the characters in the things and situations that surround their lives. In realism, the things and situations that surround the lives of the characters mirror their personality and suggest the qualification of their beings. Miller gives some examples in this regard. Kate’s vulgar room and the vulgar little street that its window looks at at the beginning of this novel suggest the shabby life of his father with the failure of his honor that Kate and reader deeply feel. Other examples are the correspondence between the life and personality of Aunt Lowder and her grand home in Lancaster Gate, as well as the affinity between the person of Milly and the grand Palazzo that she rents in Rome.

scarce even in those works of fiction where they seem to be overrepresented. Descriptive passages are brief and few; and they are, more often than not, shot through with pathetic fallacy and personification. When it does not explicitly ascribe human thoughts and feelings to natural events and objects, the descriptive mode is frequently focalized so as to provide an indirect insight into the feelings of the characters that perceive them. We like reading fiction because it lets us try on different mental states and provides us with mental access to the thoughts, intentions, and feelings of the real and/or illusory people in real and/or illusory social environments.

Descriptions can also derive their meaning from the social context of a typical scene in a work of fiction, as they set off various emotional states experienced by several characters. They accentuate the states of mind of the character; and this requires the reader's cognitive effort to understand how the discourse works. The reader may find some descriptions superfluous and/or tedious. But as his taste gets vitiated by hard working, he takes them into stride and enjoys them. Thus, if we conceive of the fictional narrative as a cognitive artifact in progress, we can suggest that narrative constantly diversifies the ways in which it engages the working of our mind or our theory of it. Imagined landscapes, with their pathetic fallacies, personifications, and anthropomorphizing, and with their tacit illuminations of human minds perceiving those landscapes, prompt us to exercise our theory of mind. The relative popularity of such descriptions depends on the specific cultural circumstances in which they are produced and disseminated.

Another dimension of the realistic novel is that it is a process of 'problem solving'. It is a portrait of the interiority of a people, of what is inside them. In this sense, a key question is how a character thinks and feels, or how he manages to solve the problems in critical situations. A realistic novel is also a space for the fusion of the voices of narrator and characters. The narrator may take the function of an analyst who describes the details of the story and the interiority of the characters in a certain language. The novel provides us with a fictive interiority of the character in the medium of observation. In reading such a novel, a main subject is the identity of the main character, if he is life-like, and if he can manage a crisis and lead it to a solution. Thus, in order to recognize the truth or plausibility of certain discourses in the story,

the reader has to use his own knowledge and experiences also. By producing characterization and atmosphere, and even by providing the redundant details of life, the novel makes a realistic copy everyday life.

Representational art puts us in the context of something that is visible and invisible at the same time. The Spanish painter Diego Velazquez has illustrated such incompatible states of being in *Las Meninas (The Maids of Honour)* (1656) which is available in Museo del Prado in Madrid. At the beginning of *The Order of Things* (1973), where Foucault thickly describes this work, he admits that the subject of it is the act of representation and the possibility of a simultaneous presence and absence,

The painter is standing a little back from his canvas. He is glancing at his model; perhaps he is considering whether to add some finishing touch, though it is also possible that the first stroke has not yet been made. The arm holding the brush is bent to the left, towards the palette; it is motionless, for an instant, between canvas and paints. The skilled hand is suspended in mid-air, arrested in rapt attention on the painter's gaze; and the gaze, in return, waits upon the arrested gesture. Between the point of the brush and the steely gaze, the scene is about to yield up its volume (quoted from Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1982: 21).

In realistic novel, this double capacity of representation, this suspension between visibility and invisibility, makes it perhaps even more qualified than painting, because the realistic novel is more deeply concerned with characterization than with plot. Its unique concern renders it a space for the fulfillment of a social commitment of representation. This means that for creating meaning, a realistic text circulates concrete knowledge of every-day life, and presents us with certain constructions of reality, with certain orders of shared knowledge. On the one hand, we realize the presence of an authoritative writer in the story who stands at the apex of "the triangle of representation" and supports it.

On the other hand, there is the subject of representation as a space of interactive interpretation in which the author and reader come to a mutual understanding on the basis of a set of social and generic conventions. There is also the reader (and characters) who not only absorbs the provided knowledge by representing the scene to himself but also evaluates the represented life and symbolically controls the

appearance of the new modes of intelligibility. In this way, a realistic novel provides us with a higher degree of knowledge, and helps us uncover the deeper secrets of the existence. It helps us, it seems to me, to visit the geist of existence and keep it in ourselves, because a goal-oriented interaction between the three factors of representation creates a space for a concrete illustration of the most internal orders of life. Therefore, realistic representation is the possibility of a collective consciousness to set itself into action and create order out of chaos. Like a poet, the writer of a realistic novel is a cultural institution, a cultural office. He uses the human capacity to make a full realization of the imitative capability which every man has. But it is only the poet and the novelist who are conscious of their advantage. They have the romantic idea of a genius that recreates order. This is perhaps what Prendergast means when he speaks about the idea of totality in realistic novel.

The subject of representation can also be discussed. How can we recognize the reality in a text? The characters do not exist on the bases of cause and effect, or motivation, or the norms of stereotype. They should be created for specific purposes. They need to be composed and set to interaction with one another. They are compositional units that are created in a way that we understand them. A realistic literary text helps us understand stereotypes in the character. Realism is prescriptive as well as descriptive, a learning exercise and a civilizing practice. A realistic story educates us how life goes on in the cultural world. Such an educational dimension is not necessarily moral, but is important for the issue of knowledge also. The novel helps us to undermine the previous frames of thought and reform our systems of intelligibility, because although the characters have limited knowledge and can make mistakes, many of their mistakes are corrected. The novel makes (is) a system for the characters to meditate on the meaning of life which perpetually faces them with dilemmas.

## **V. Literary Realism in America**

European realism does not apply neatly in America. Although European realism was a neoclassical movement, American realism was not, for contrary to the former, which originated mainly from the classical Greek and Roman heritage, the latter borrowed

almost nothing from it. Instead of reflecting back to the antiquities, American realism was concerned with the reality of the American life in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Although Alexis-Charles Tocqueville (1805-1859) had already observed individualism in America of the 1830s, in the nineteenth-century no widely accepted definition could be bestowed upon American realism, for it was yet quite new. In this century, there was still no series of concepts available for American realism, and no manifestoes, literary models, or schools of thought that could organize and differentiate the upcoming original works and scholarships. Thus, it can be suggested that American realism used to grow by trial and error, by accumulation rather than by design, and for explaining its influence on the American fiction, it would be advisable to consider different stages of its development. In this way, when we discuss American realism, we should deal with a course of development rather than a collection of concepts and theories.

This kind of fiction in nineteenth-century America goes in divergent ways. But its more significant writers have many things in common. Romance is not yet a genre of the past times, and the naturalistic and realistic story is getting established by making its social repertoire, defining its subject-matter, and addressing a middle-class consumer. The romancer has occasion to re-enliven the ideals of a feudal hierarchical society through portraying the fantastic and superhuman characters of heroes, warriors, kings, and courtly lovers in a series of fabulous incidents. However, the realistic novel is beginning to find its way to the reading public by opening up new areas of subject matter that belongs to the lower and middle class people. Mark Twain and William Dean Howells are perhaps the most well-read story writers in the realistic mode in America of this century. But Henry James is quite different from them, because he deals with the realism of the human consciousness in a most subtle and eccentric way. Consequently, when American realism was taking shape, James was perhaps the least popular writer. He is sometimes criticized for what is usually called the immorality of his fiction or the restricted rank of the subject-matter in his work. Harold H. Kolb reports that the romantic novelist Amelia Barr had in mind many girls including Daisy Miller when she attacked realistic fiction for "depicting girls who were not 'nice', girls who were frank, highhanded, freethinking, and contemptuous of

authority," or when Charles Dudley Warner condemns it for portraying "the silly and weak-minded woman, the fast and slangy girl" (Kolb, 1969: 46-47).

Before discussing the work of these authors, I am about to set forth a view on the emergence of American realism. In finding solid footholds and formulating itself, it should have had hard times. After the civil-war, the writers with their critics and audience started to feel interested in a culture that was to be exclusively American, the ways of life and thought that were native entities rather than imported products. If this did not necessarily mean that the American new generations had firstly to reject all cultural folds imported by their forefathers from Europe, at least it meant that for creating a specifically American civilization, they had to address American thought and feeling. However, the new empirical vision in the 1860s that was the outcome of the triumph of science and patriotism, and that would mingle with a heightened national consciousness, is another ground for the emergence of realism.

If, as Bernard R. Bowron JR. quotes from William Dean Howells, in America of the late nineteenth century the new life was a "commonplace prosperity," (Bowron, 1951: 268), a sharp break between the past and the present would be another meaning of realism. Rejecting the past as unreal and as irrelevant to the present, would imply that the real is limited to the tangible, to the palpable, to whatever man could learn only through his sense impressions. In this way, the here-and-now becomes not only the object of dramatization but also the great source which inspires the realistic storyteller through his own intelligence. The author would necessarily zoom in on the foreground where there are the smiling aspects of life, for in the background are the streaks of the past life that is full of hazards and wanderings.

European culture did not ignore the past as dead or insignificant. On the contrary, Europe would embed one cultural period within another so that the past was contained in the present. This meant that a cultural continuum was the novice of realistic literature which would hold up a mirror for reflecting the whole history of civilization. However, in America, although there was a meaningful involvement with the past, but fiction would re-enliven the spirit of the past in the context of the present which the modern reader, in his turn, could recognize only with the sensibilities of his own time. This policy of embedding the past in the present had a certain reason: that, as Roger

Salomon says, “the picturesque tradition was unable to deal with the present, and so realism made a religion of newness and contemporaneity” (Salomon, 1964: 537). The fiction of Mark Twain opens a way for the reader to comprehend a meaningful relationship between past and present by representing the past as reduced from the heroic to the sordid. The ambitious look of Americans to the future, that focused on their rapid scientific and technological developments, caused its realism to ignore the romantic heroisms of its past, for the American republic was fascinated mainly with innovations in science and technology. It is this diversion of realism in America away from the moral (past) that Salomon calls "the aesthetic of disinheritance" (ibid: 533).

If Howells shows the present as inadequate to renovate the soul of the heroic past, Salomon admits that "Twain eventually gave up trying, and Henry James, by and large, never made the attempt" (ibid: 539) to do so. The realist Twain perhaps does not even remain split between past and present. He mainly zooms in on the present life. In his realism there is no feeling of nostalgia about a lost past that was full of heroic and romantic values. In his fiction we may come across some nostalgic characters, but it is obvious that they never grow to maturity. They are denied the possibility to unite imagination and rational experience to develop a socially integrated personality. However, Salomon sees Twain as nostalgic also:

We are face to face, of course, with Twain's *nostalgia*, his 'homesickness' for the home that had been destroyed, his sense of wondering in exile from a 'lost country'. The sentiment is common to the century and is the product of the same forces that were to produce realism: change, disorientation, the 'hateful' sense, as James put it of 'personal antiquity', of being able to trace in one's lifetime where 'an age has come out'. ... The crucial fact to remember about Twain is that he was intellectually committed to realism and emotionally committed to a nostalgic sense of the past (Salomon, 1964: 540).

But the fiction of James wants to remove the divisions between past and present, and to bring the spirit of history to the modern times. Salomon discusses James's concern with the past in this way:

Though he had moments of being swept away with nostalgia, James' most profound vision is not of escape to an ideal past of dreams and fantasy but of the preservation of a real past as a dimension of the living and active present. For James the present could literally *incorporate* the past: make it, that is, one in body. Without a past, an individual or a society had no identity—no "tone" to use James's favorite word (ibid: 542).

Thus, we can and should revitalize the past as a source of meaning for our present existence. Such inclusion of history in the present explains the Jamesian verdict that human relations are "the essence of history" (ibid). This makes the Jamesian concept of human experience increasingly complex, and a question is how his modern reader can conceive of this sense of continuity of experience in a time of rapid changes. In view of Salomon, James's solution was "a testimonial of the value of memory and imagination" (ibid). The fiction of James allows the reader to intensify his experiences through the use of all his imaginative faculties for turning the past of his characters into imaginative simulations. However, James's realism means the way he conceives of characters and the tasks he ascribes to them. He considers them as real – living – people who not only propel the narrative but also really perform the action of it. "You" and "I" are absolutely presupposed by one another. Without "you" there is no "I" and without "I" no "you". In the fiction of James, the narrator and character (the teller and listener or reader) are as real as "you" and "I" who relate our narratives. However, like us, the people of James are limited to what they can observe or know.

No mode of knowledge is central and no hierarchical relation is available between the levels of knowledge. Instead, some classical ontologies want to be represented and to play roles. Instead of arborescent frames of intelligibility, structures of relations are often nodal, interconnectiveness is a key function, and reference is often to the external, to the beyond, to otherness. In a cultural environment, this rhizomatic structure is made of horizontal and trans-species interconnections that want to form a multiplicity of simultaneous realities. This in-between structure founds itself nowhere, for it is always on the move. It is not only always in transmutation but is also an agent of metamorphosis. Like James's house of fiction that has several outlooks for the exchange of negotiations, this structure has perhaps numerous slots through which new epistemes can be inserted.

## **VI. Realism in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn***

In *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* as a realistic story, Mark Twain takes use of the advantages of the vernacular, point of view, setting, satire, irony, and innocence portraiture to produce the tale of a young boy whose disrespect to overwhelming conventions helps the reader to envision a world where there is not only no inequality between humans but also no ignorance, greed, and cruelty. However, this story does not move from plot to character, for the author creates a picaresque story that is based on a series of extraordinary incidents undertaken mainly by Huck Finn whom the story exposes to various social worlds. The fact that the viewpoint of this young boy is the central perspective at which the reader has to look implies a decrease in the role of any kind of authorial omniscience. The reader has an occasion to look at the thoughts of Huck who writes his story in the first-person point of view. As well as a successful search for freedom, reading this novel is a process of interpreting the consciousness of a main character who has started to see the world in his own way. As Huck and Jim voyage down the Mississippi river, the reader can see them in moral conflict with the received values of their society. The reader can also realize the dramatization of their consciousness through the medium of talk. Interpreting their outlooks is perhaps the most important job of the reader of this novel. Huck and Jim travel southward as a quest for rejecting slavery, patriarchal authority, and the restricting catechisms by which the author thinks their genuine humanity is suppressed. When Huck encounters Jim in the wilderness along the river, at first he opposes Jim's trying to escape slavery. After they talk, Huck changes his mind about life, which illustrates the modification of an individual mind in a process of talk. In fact he encounters with another different human being and his life-situation.

Also, presenting the life of innocence in human society, Mark Twain's realism is convenient to the representation of what is called "the mask of the naivete" (Kolb, 1969: 73). Integral to the mission of the main character is his escape from the overwhelming conventions of society and his attachment to the natural rhythms of life. The main character is an unsophisticated fourteen-year-old boy who is quite innocent and has no experience about the decadent life of the adults who believe that slavery is just. His "freedom ride," is for eradicating whatever segregates man from

man and puts one man in a socially privileged position over another. Huck's naive unawareness is the author's effective reason to avoid evaluating what the characters do, interpreting the story, and motivating the reader to rewrite it in the process of reading. In this way, to represent the inhumanity of segregation, the novel shows that the struggle against slavery is not an aspect of convention but is quite natural to man.

Irony in this novel has more than one level. Although the author does not use primarily verbal irony, he makes effective use of the advantages of structural and situational irony to represent man as a mixture of good and bad. At the end of the novel, when we realize that although Jim is black in skin, he is, as Kolb puts it, as "white inside" (ibid: 76) as the white people, we understand why the author has accepted to look at man through the innocent eyes of a young boy whose symbolic long voyage on the river leads us to a utopia of peace, brotherhood, and social reconstruction. All religions of the Mississippi Valley (the religion of the Widow Douglas, the catechism of Miss Watson, the preaching of Silas Phelps) support slavery. But it is ironical that Huck cares for none of them, and that his childish carelessness for them should cancel their function because they condemn Jim to slavery.

If this novel is the story of a series of extraordinary adventures where Mark Twain gives us a chance to see the world through the eyes of a young boy, in *What Maisie Knew* James provides us with the occasion to understand how the consciousness of an infant girl develops to maturity and moral sense in a world of promiscuity, selfishness and enmity. For F. O. Matthiessen, the novel is "typical of the later writer's refinement of skill and sophistication" (Matthiessen, 1968: 279). He also says that in this novel James

would set himself the complicated problem of having both parents divorced and married again, of making the child the innocent meeting ground for a liaison between the step-parents, and of confining his report on the situation entirely to what could be glimpsed through the child's inscrutable eyes (ibid).

For doing this, James chooses the consciousness of Maisie Farange, because, as he suggests in the preface of the novel, "the sensibility of the female young is

indubitably, for early youth, the greater, and my plan would call, on the part of my protagonist, for 'no end' of sensibility" (Veeder and Griffin, 1986: 318-319). Maisie is introduced to a chaotic familial and social environment where the good and bad of life stand in sharp contrast. Such oppositional life frightens her faculties. On the one hand, we see the development of things in her limited consciousness as central intelligence. On the other hand, and not to exceed the law of probability, the author carefully controls the expansion of her understanding. The result is that although from the outset she appears promising, but she never understands much more than what her age allows her. The reader sees things in and through her mind, but he is allowed to understand much more than her.

If Huckleberry Finn rejects the pleasures of society to practice another kind of life where the logic of nature teaches us how to live more humanly, Maisie struggles to develop her immature perspective about the world while she actively interacts with family and social life. Huck tells us his own story in the first person point of view. On the contrary, James's novel is neither the story of Maisie nor is told by her, and is fully restricted to her innocent and limited vision. However, the immoral life that her natural and foster parents live, allows us to learn not only how her mind develops a moral sense of life in spite of chaos, but also how fraud and hatred can destroy us. Both Maisie and Huck succeed to leave their decadent societies behind and find a solution for themselves: the first in the form of a moral idealism which leads her to precocious knowledge and insight, the second by undertaking a chain of picaresque adventures that put him at the threshold of conversion since they are in sharp opposition with the norms and ideas of his community. Although Huck is not, from the beginning, quite conscious about the conflicts of the society, he is, perhaps unconsciously, aware that for the salvation of this society certain of its personal and collective codes should be canceled out. But Maisie's development is more unconscious. The more actively she interacts with adolescent people, the more positive of their corruption she comes to be. And her moral sense gets deeper. If Mark Twain's story shows the external fact of American mass life in need to alert itself to the necessity of love and brotherhood, *Maisie* deals with the realism of a developing

human consciousness as it struggles not to get corrupted by the widespread moral decadence shown in the environment.

Realism is most interested in whatever a novel faithfully reflects about external reality. Accordingly, literary criticism wants to see if by reading a novel one can comprehend the genuine reality of a social situation represented by a story. In *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, Wayne Booth, who is a member of the Chicago school of criticism and a pre-structuralist theoretician of the novel, took into account the interdependence of some formal and non-formal elements of fiction. Formulating such original notions as "implied author,"<sup>4</sup> "unreliable narrator," and fictional distance, Booth examined how the narrative text is a field of meaningful argument for the reader. He also distinguished four kinds of realism. The first kind is the naturalistic realism that represents the ugly and unpleasant aspects of life. He admits that "For many of the so-called naturalists, no picture could be real unless it did justice to the unpleasant side of life" (Booth, 1961: 55). However, he argues that the realism of William Dean Howells as a social realist, shows the "smiling aspects of life" (ibid).

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<sup>4</sup> In *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* by Chris Baldick we read "Implied Author" is "a term coined by Wayne C. Booth in *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (1961) to designate that source of a work's design and meaning which is inferred by readers from the text, and imagined as a personality standing behind the work. As an imaginary entity, it is to be distinguished clearly from the real author, who may well have written other works implying a different kind of persona or implied author behind them. The implied author is also to be distinguished from the narrator, since the implied author stands at a move from the narrative voice, as the personage assumed to be responsible for deciding what kind of narrator will be presented to the reader; in many works this distinction produces an effect of irony at the narrator's expense" (Baldick, 2008: 166). In *A Concise Glossary of Contemporary Literary Terms*, Jeremy Hawthorn says, "Clearly on a simple level an author is a person who writes a work: Emily Bronte is the author of *Wuthering Heights*." However, Hawthorn argues that the relationship between a scientific theory and its writer is different from the relationship between a literary work and its composer. Although we cannot call the writer of a scientific work an author, a literary work does have an author, because the relationship between a literary work and its writer "is more than a certificate of origin." The "author-function" has something to do with "the mode of existence, circulation, and functioning of certain discourses within the society." Hawthorn presents Foucault's argument that it is due to what the writer of a literary work puts in his product that he becomes subjected to punishment, and it is due to such a punishment that the work starts to need an author. Like Baldick, Hawthorn remarks that the living person who has written a literary work should not be equated with its author. Author is a function that gives rise to several selves, subjects, and positions none of which can be bestowed upon a certain writing individual. In addition, Hawthorn provides Barthes' argument about "The Death of the Author" by which he means to free the work from the prison of the author's overwhelming presence, because, as Barthes points out, in the process of interpretive readings the work renews itself and goes out of the control of its individual producer. A similar movement is the distinction Barthes makes between "work" and "text." If a work is dependent on a sole maker with whose death it also dies, a text is the product of a contribution between author, audience, and critic. If a work limits itself to the realm of the signified, the text expands itself to cover the whole area of the play of the signifier. At the end of Hawthorn's discussion, we read: "The term *implied author*, along with the matching term *implied reader*, comes from Wayne C. Booth's *Rhetoric of Fiction* (1961). The term has entered into current critical vocabulary and is used to refer to that picture of a creating author behind a literary work that the reader builds up on the basis of an image put in the work by the author him or herself. The implied author may be very different from the real-life individual responsible for writing the work in question" (Hawthorn, 1922: 9-11).

The second kind of realism is presented in the work of those writers who ignore the visible conditions of life and show a metaphysical truth, the ambiguities of human or universal condition. The third is the realism of the French "anti-novelists" who search reality in the transcription of sensation. And the last kind is illustrated in the work of those writers who concentrate on the relation between the reality that the characters show in a story and the reality of their model in real life. Social realism pays the most attention to subject matter, while metaphysical realism is mostly interested in the structure of the work. And the French anti-novel is mostly interested in technique, while for imaginative realism the main factor is the effect or purpose of the work. The work of James is in the mode of imaginative realism. From his perspective, reality is an effect that should be realized in the reader through the use of whatever realistic subjects, techniques, and structures can be devised. This effect is more important than any other particular novelistic means which might serve it. Structure, technique, and subject matter are not genuine in themselves, but are devices in the hand of the author to achieve an intense illusion of reality as the ideal purpose.

## **VII. Realism in Howells**

When Booth considers Howells a social realist, the present writer thinks that he is right, because Howells considered literature as an outcome of physical and social conditions of life. In his time, American life was subject to progressive evolutions, and he saw the radical developments in literature in good harmony with such social changes. He recognized literature as a product of life, and as lawful as its other manifestations. His other postulate about literature is that like life, literature changes for better. As life moves from primitive to more civilized conditions, literature is also mutable, and it progresses internally as well as externally. Internally, it develops in form and technique, while externally it progresses in subject matter; and it devotes itself to truthful accounts of the human life.

In *Realism and Naturalism in Nineteenth-Century American Literature*, Donald Pizer argues that literature for Howells was to embody a truthful description of contemporary life, but that he advocated a scientific role for literary criticism. Howells denied the right of judgment to criticism, because he believed that it is marred by our

taste, prejudice, and wit. Criticism is not to direct or control the progress of fiction, but is to describe and analyze fiction on the basis of a realization of the law of progress as it operates in society. In other words, criticism should want to determine to what measure fiction is in harmony with the expected developments in society. For Howells, contemporary criticism was a failure, because it was retarded and backward, and could not recognize the intrinsic relationship between life and literature.

In his view, the literature of the past is anachronistic; while modern literature is more truth-oriented and life-like. He refuted two charges against American fiction. One was the idea of sex. He admitted that American novel dealt with sex less openly than both the eighteenth-century English fiction and the contemporary French fiction. But he also claimed that by subordinating sex, American fiction represented its true position more accurately. The second charge was that American literature was too narrow. But Howells saw this rather as an advantage, since it indicated a truthful representation of the conditions of American life. The American novel is a thorough account of life, and its depth is vertical rather than lateral. Such depth is more desirable than a horizontal expansion in a civilization like America, where the differences are not of classes, but of types. He also deals with the relation between literature and democracy. In democracy man feels sincerity, and the writer searches for measures of improvement and for responding to the spirit of brotherhood that is implicit in it. American democracy has paved the road for its expansion and variety. In the wide and various environment of it, literature has been encouraged to study and appreciate the common man, and to portray the finer and higher ties which unite rather than sever humanity.

Howells does not always stick to the pleasing dimensions of life. He does not idealize reality. On the contrary, he is a great opponent of the ideal and a decisive advocate of the real. As well, he dramatizes the ugly scenarios of life. However, an aspect of such a strategy of amelioration is not to represent life as lacking violence, but to control and undercut violence in fiction. In the "Editor's Study" column at the *Atlantic Monthly*, and later at *Harper's*, where he formulated and publicized his theories of realism in literature, Howells clearly defends the real, and opposes the ideal. The standard of reality is the taste of the common man, what the average man

admires and selects. Reality is admirable because of its simplicity, naturalness, and honesty. The real is true to life and sincere with man, and man can stand in direct relations with it. The genuineness of the real and its organic wholeness render it faithful to life. The real delivers itself from the evils of the romantic and the heroic and the impassioned and the sentimental; from the self-devoted and the adventurous; from the trite, and the obsolete. The real is always new, fresh, absorbing, and life-giving.

Howells takes no use of what inspired moments may grant him. His method is observation for which he carefully studies every detail with force. His native gifts constantly develop, and he continuously grasps the facts more strongly. A major theme of his work is the problems of character and social life. Thoughtful readers of his work realize an inspiration in the quiet but resolute progress of his art and gift which is the result not only of success but doubtlessly also of a high and disinterested ideal. The work of Howells is the product of patience and effort rather than original power. The virtues and effects of realism are very clearly brought out in his work: its clearness of sight, its fixed adherence to fact, its reliance upon honest work; and, on the other hand, its hardness, its lack of vitality, its paralysis of the finer feelings and higher aspirations, its fundamental defect on the side of imagination. His fiction is crowded with characters of realism: people with whom one avoids to come into contact in real life, people without native sweetness or strength, people without any acquired culture or accomplishment. He portrays characters without force, beauty, aspiration, or any of the elements which touch and teach men. And he delivers grave portraiture of frivolous, superficial, and often vulgar conceptions of life. In *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, the method of realism is external and superficial. The novel is an endeavor to enter into the recesses of character and to learn its secret, not by insight, the method of imagination, but by observation, the method of science. It wants to produce character under the forms of art, not by identification with it, but by skilful adjustments of traits, emotions, passions, and activities which are the result of studies more or less conscientiously carried on.

## **VIII. James's Theory of Novel**

### **A. Theory of the Novel**

In the fiction of James, amusement is the outcome of discovery and demystification, for each of his works seems to have something in another work so that, as Robert Marks says, his whole work is "a shapely crystal box of compartments, springs, and tricks" (Marks, 1960: 159). No main road is there in his fiction to lead the reader to the very center of the story. Instead, his whole production is a labyrinth where the reader has to find his way in a maze of different roads and interests. His fiction gives a maximum of different kinds of enjoyment: the enjoyments of communication, interpretation, recognition, appreciation, etc. The values of (reading) his fiction are vivid and clear; and its payment is large. If reading is an exercise of penetration, it gives out the most numerous secrets. Understanding and enjoyment need critical perception. They depend on how far we get into it and how much we are interested to do it.

A novel by James is a unified work where various sources of interest come together and give it a unique structure. Its individual voices are functional only if they converge to a central light. In this way, although different parts of a Jamesian story cling together so that we can listen to a friendly voice, the story can leave us unappreciative. Reading James is a task of appreciation. Yet he casts no immediate spell over the reader. His novels are typically multilateral. They can put a lot of things in the shadow, behind the curtain, or at the back of the reader so as his perceptive eyes do not see them. However, they can shed enough light on many parts for the reader. Its numerous sides make it into a phenomenon the beauty of which comes from the form, the meaning, and the atmospheric truth which it delivers.

A feature of the best work of James is a historicity that links the past times to the present. In other words, it shows the past time, the times of Renaissance for example, moving forward and reaching the frontiers of the present time (of James) to give its plentiful graces to it. The present cultural manifestations seem trite and inadequate in magnificence. Therefore, for the trust and credibility of its affluent material consumerism, the present civilizations should model themselves on the Renaissance Roman ideals where the things of life were not the products of peace and technology

but perhaps the spoils of plundering. It is to this purpose that James provides enough grounds of intelligibility in his later fiction that is supported in a reading process, for the consciousness of the reader is thereby expanded to encompass a composite of landscape, of social situation, and of the weight of history. The character of the dying Milly Theale in *The Wings of the Dove* and the gilded vessel in *The Golden Bowl*, that infuse the impressions of morality and beauty and wealth, are the products of such synthetic operations. The lack of any omniscient point of view in some fictions of James provides the reader with the possibility of achieving such synthesis, because his reflecting mind, which acts as the central consciousness, should give shape to the characters and action.

A novel is a system for the representation of a meaning; and composition is a prerequisite of representation, the principle that the totality of a novel should hang together and nothing should be irrelevant to the other things. But the structure of a Jamesian novel in his late style is unique. It can have no core, perhaps no center at all; or if it has a center, it is in perpetual pain of an unavoidable vacancy, so that the center always de-structures itself. Typical novels give additional dimensions to our lives. We love them for what they show us: they give us education, they give us new forms; and they vivify our lives. They bring us to visit those regions of our consciousnesses with which we usually are not confronted. Novels are the mediums for the fertilization of our understanding. They renew our lives and give new meanings to them. They help us to deepen and broaden our consciousnesses and to develop our mentalities.

Many times life is ugly and unsavory, for it is devoid of any blessing, generosity, honesty, etc. For example, it is seldom completely satisfactory for James's characters or for the people who read James; and it is always full of waste and confusion. But literary art makes it bearable and beautiful by putting it into form and order. Art changes the confusions of life to balance and harmony. A novel is, for James, an artistic representation of (slices of) life, of life looked from different perspectives. It is a guided movement for turning life into a subject of representation in a prose style. To James, a novel is not a theory of life, or the manifest of an ideology, for no certain ethical, moral, or political system finds immediate and consistent voice in it. Instead, it is the voice of a dreaming personality, the life story of an unhappy temperament.

What is of primary importance in a Jamesian novel is the field of life, the state of soul: the mind picture of a main character, the texture of his feeling, and the atoms of his sensation. And theory or ideology is secondary in his fiction. What makes the reader of James excited is not the movement of (external) action but the evolution of the mind of the (main) character. What is more important in a Jamesian story is how the main character starts to see things differently from the way he used to see them at the beginning. In the treatment of its subject, the Jamesian novel typically deals with the human relations, and the identity of the character is formulated mostly through his relations with other people.

### **B. The Scenic Method**

In his late period, James was surely more inspired by dramatic art, and the thought behind the scenic method originated from his experiences when he tried to compose drama. The scenic method is, as Robert Marks says, "the utility for a narrative plan of the principle of the scenario" (Marks, 1960: 165), the application of a method that fits in both narrative and drama. It implies the approximation of a general rhythm of the narrative form to the successive acts of a play. He modeled the movement of the action in his narrative on the basis of the movement of action in the play, and the order and sequence, each stage, tint, and shade of his subject, and each joint and hinge in its place is, like in a play, life is a close march of cause and effect. We know the characters dramatically, not directly by referential narrative but via the picture they show us of what they are, and as they unfold their action, we know them more comprehensively. Each act of a play or each book of a novel is like a light that illuminates a phase of the subject. Each division has its own philosophy and systematic movement, its own question, and its own development and promise, and each incident takes the action a step forward toward the main climax. The main force, which is antithetical, comes from a sharp contrast, and the novel is the drama of a conflict. The struggle or tension is acted out around a loss or gain, it hangs in the balance of power and it dissolves into a solution in case of imbalance. Then there comes the essential question: what will happen, who will suffer, who not suffer? In

any picture of a conflict, a figure has his decisions to make and his consequences to meet.

To speak with Robert Marks again, James organizes the novel "as an action to give it bony structure, to give it *line* on which to string the pearls of detail" (ibid: 167). His compositional procedures as novelist and dramatist are ruled by the march of action, the rise, progress, culmination, and solution of a crisis. In the novel, there is a sequence of thoroughly expressed occasions that are, like dramatic act, architecturally combined; and each occasion presents a piece of the construction and corresponds to the well-structured act of the drama. What a character says or does in a given social occasion is the result of his sense of the situation or his sensibility to the crisis. It is the culmination of a process of vision, feeling, or consciousness that has been working within the person. But that which puts such a scene to a real and direct test, is not this very act of vision, but is its consequence.

Dramatic art is direct and objective, and the playwright is therefore prevented from "going behind" the spoken word for the representation of a character who simply and motionlessly sees, without leaving a chair or being approached by another person. But as Marks puts it, the art of the novelist is with "directly subjective picturing of an 'existing' inner life, an under-lying soul state, with going behind to compass explanations and amplifications, motives and sentiments" (Marks, 1960:168). Marks affirms that with these arts the playwright "has nothing whatever to do" (Marks, 1960: 168).

For treating his occasion the playwright has only one choice: dialogue. But the logic of the playwright is a one-way logic. It is the logic of the characters who are intensely confronted and talking, the logic of the really constructive dialogue, dialogue organic and dramatic, speaking for itself, representing and embodying substance and form. But the novelist has more than one choice. In addition to dialogue, he has access to narrative representation and foreshortening also. So, the novel is more flexible in form than drama. The situation represented in the novel depends both on the situated person and on the mind of the situated person, because the reader would like to recognize the world, the history, and the functioning of this

person, because he would like to understand how this person visions the world, and how he perceives and analyzes it.

The best way for the reader to know a character is if the author (the story) gives a direct picture of the complicated consciousness of the character, if he enables him to probe into his deepest experiences, and if he impels him to understand the obscurities of his motives in his various actions. James, particularly in his last phase, stayed in the mind of his characters for examining their interests, illustrating their reflections, and letting them as the center of his stories to determine the things and rules of their being. Meanwhile, for the effect of his process of vision, and in order to make no reluctant halt in it, the novelist should stick to what the reader knows as the center of vision. In a narrative the main character may have a usurping consciousness, whereas in a drama the consciousness of the hero is exhibited in the same way as that of the other characters. What happens in a drama happens only to those who are concerned and refers only to them. But in his "house of fiction" the novelist employs at the same time a number of successive centers which work in alternation in such a way that the resulting construction is made of many building blocks.

A play is made exclusively of the spoken word. But in a novel, the report about the spoken word is also seminal. Such a report directly illustrates something that is given us by another method, by picture, for example. Picture suggests what a character sees, it is a gate through which the reader enters the mind of the character. It serves as survey of the ideologies and the impressions of the character. It allows the reader to perceive how the character feels about the situation, and helps him to realize what he sees in the appointed circumstance. And picture lays bare the fermentation in the heart of the character as the outcome of different sensibilities. It provides the ground for a full solidification of the values of the scene, for its contrast allows our appreciation of the values take full attestation. The reported situation is typically not the account of the novelist but is what he perceives of somebody's impression of the account. The form of the report also excites the interest and sympathy of the reader. Attempting to illustrate the perception of the character and to represent his reflected appreciation in the appointed situation, the picture makes it possible for the author to shed enough light on him.

The novelist cannot prefer common or simple characters. His characters should be clever and competent, and their consciousness should have much value. A novelist who is a novelist feels weakness if he is without experience about the meaner conditions (like if he does not know about the lower manners and types, ...) but a good novelist prefers to make his reader sensible as to the full and the rich rather than the poor and the meager, so as the reader feels kinship and sympathy with the good character. The character in the foreground is a field of common interest between author and reader, for the author searches in her for the values in which the reader is also interested. Such a character, whom the critical situation has tested, and the test she has passed, can expose the reader to (all) the values she wants to equip herself with. The main character has an excited feeling about these values. In addition, her passion, her curiosity, her intelligence, her sincerity, as well as the force of the critical moment are enough perhaps to drill all her values into the reader. In such a situation, direct reporting can be a great danger, for it shows the main character as wanting sincerity. But a great author reports always indirectly, in a detached manner, and as Robert Marks says, "only through the reflective imagination and moral nerves of the troubled life at the center of his subject used as the basis of vision" (Marks, 1960: 175).

The indirect method of representation, what the main character has, and our sympathy with her render her impact significant enough. Such a kind of representation is not only the story of a hero but is also the story of a story. If art confuses meaning with form, it is not genuine art; and the point of the picture is highlighting the contrast between the too, not losing the distinction between them. When we read a novel, we are under the impact of the author who works on us, but we take the author for granted insofar as she makes us forget her. She may have no personal interest in the deeds of her character. However, her interest comes from the fact that she reports what she appreciates of the experiences of her character. Henry James is perhaps the greatest expert to make "the reader addicted to seeing through."

### C. The Real in James

In "The Real Thing" James transforms the daily life experiences of a painter-narrator into pieces of fictitious truth. Adam Sonstegard says the idea for this short story "began when two Londoners, who were down on their luck, applied as models to George Du Maurier, a personal friend of James's who drew satirical society cartoons for the magazine *Punch*" (Sonstegard, 2003: 173). Sonstegard reports that the cartoonist shared the anecdote with James, who developed the idea into the story known as "The Real Thing." The whole story is a vision.

Major and Mrs. Monarch have fallen on hard times, and should urgently do something for their lives. So, they want the narrator-painter to sketch them off for the illustrations which he draws for the society novels dealing with the English aristocracy. But the painter, who "looked to a different branch of art," is disappointed with them, because he searches in them for something which he does not find: something that goes beyond the realm of the real and is on the side of the imaginary. Mrs. Monarch is so like a "Beautiful Statue" that her sketch will not appeal to the senses of the consumers. As the story expands, it shows a dichotomy between the real and the represented, and the narrator prefers the represented, perhaps in an anti-mimetic sense, over the real. Art does not reproduce the world with the so-called photographic realism, but it also adds to the beauty and refinement of its truth, and makes it inclined toward the transcendental that is superior to the daily life. If real life is ugly and static and disorderly, the artistically represented life is clarified and methodic and transformed.

Miss Churm, who is a freckled cockney girl, is a model of the older times than the Monarchs. When she comes in, and the narrator starts describing her, the reader is left to design a formula for a sharp opposition between art and truth, or appearance and reality. On the contrary to Mrs. Monarch, she is "such an ample heroine of romance" (Baym et al, vol. 2, 1994: 322). She represents a "Russian Princess," but Mrs. Monarch readily admits that she cannot turn it around. And when we read that the latter is "too insurmountably stiff, ....., the real thing, but always the same" (ibid: 324), it becomes clear that she is essentially different from the former. In this way, the story draws a dividing line between them: Churm has all the faculties needed for the

play of art to convert her into an artistic representation, while in the person of Monarch the density of the real does not allow for the function of "the alchemy of art." In addition, "the close union" of her and her husband makes them inadequate for the purpose, because their radical devotion to each other paralyzes their imagination, limits their outlook, and makes them radically detached from the imagined "reality" of the history.

The different levels in the lore of the narrator and Mr. Monarch, about which we read in chapter 3 of the story, exemplifies the difference between verbal and visual art, or between the real and the imaginary, in the application of imagination for idealization. The deadened imagination of the latter has transferred him back to a comfortable world of negligence, and he cannot be transferred to the high level of the painter's transcendence. If abstraction, arrangement, and idealization are integrated into the painter's transcendence, the presence of Monarch is the context of a historically aristocratic reality which is replete with the practical features of an uncultivated life.

Thus, this story addresses the problem of realistic representation. There is a difference in the mode of representation between the Renaissance times of "Raphael and Leonardo" and the present time. The Renaissance tradition of mimesis, which would basically avoid the variety of everyday life and current experiences, was used to re-enliven the established types and characters. The everyday life would not come into the compass of such art, because it was not elevated and true enough. Art would cover a small range of life where the result of representation could be a typicalization of the norms and values not of the mass people but of the privileged classes of hierarchical society. But in modern times representation is a different concept, and is more ambitiously demanding. Modern representation is more committed to the reality of everyday life. If Renaissance representation would imply mimetic idealism, modern representation is committed to the actors of daily life, and to their knowledge, experience, and psychology.

"The Real Thing" is also the story of how the life around the narrator is portrayed. The current life intrudes his imagination in the form of a series of pictures, and he organizes them into the context of a story. The model Oronte, an Italian street-vendor,

is as well-suited as Miss Churm, because he is, for the painter of life, the source of a number of simultaneous pictures as the watersheds of representation. In the story we read,

Suddenly it struck me that this very attitude of expression made a picture; whereupon I told him to sit down and wait till I should be free. There was another picture in the way he obeyed me, and I observed as I worked that there were others still in the way he looked wonderingly, with his head thrown back, about the high studio. He might have been crossing himself in Saint Peter's. Before I finished I said to myself "The fellow's a bankrupt orange-monger, but a treasure (Baym, et al., vol. 2, 1994: 326).

The question is: how can an "attitude of expression" make a picture? Is it "the way he [Oronte]<sup>5</sup> obeyed me," or "the way he looked wonderingly," or even the very report of the narrator about these acts that makes it? If such a picture is photographic, it is also (the source of) an artistic creation, the product of representation. However, representation is clearly more artistic than photography. It is photography plus artistic imagination, photography plus verbal signification. In other words, in the position of a painter, the narrator makes a picture of his impressions of the actions of the model, but in the position of a narrator, he develops these pictures further into portraits, into materials of verbal representation.

Now let's see what happens in the act of telling. Jonathan Culler admits that "language performs actions rather than merely reports on them" (Culler, 2000: 505). So, in the act of telling stories take place. In telling, whether it is done by the author in writing or by the reader in the act of reading, the words are enacted in a way that they perform a whole world with its own logic and attributions. Also, telling, as a social act, implies that not only the author interacts in the making of story but also the text as well as the reader. This means that story as text is intertext also. It is the string that binds all productions in the historical institute of literature. In this sense, every fiction is a playground where a number of separate social forces symbolically interact for the emergence of new facts and identities. But literature as reading makes it as diversified as the readers themselves. And when, in the introduction to *A Portrait of a Lady*,

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<sup>5</sup> My adding.

James claims that the house of fiction has numberless windows in the forefront, he perhaps also means literature in the sense of a material for reading. James says these windows are so numerous that we cannot count them. Appealing to his imagination, or under the pressure of his will, every reader opens a window for critical observation. In addition to the possibility of offering a horizontal accumulation of all human cultures, these numberless thresholds mean that a culture can be reconstructed in more than one way.

In "The Real Thing," when the Monarchs visit the painter for a second time, they find that Oronte is posing as model. When they see the portraits that he has drawn of him, they are stricken. However, the narrator says when he was drawing the Monarchs he "couldn't anyhow get away from them—get into the character I wanted to represent" (Baym et al, vol. 2, 1994: 327), for there is nothing in them of the falsity or fakeness that is needed for representing truth. The problem with the Monarchs is that they are too real to suggest reality, that their severe reality undermines or wrecks the strategy of representation, because what is needed for representation is not naked reality, but is sign, figuration, or appearance. A copy is different from representation, and although they are the reality of English gentry, they cannot represent it, for they are too inflexible to perform the transference that is essential to it. There is a resemblance between the self of something and the copy of it. But a representation of something can be quite far from it. Yet, it is more complete than a copy; because a copy is only photographic, but representation is artistic. This is to mean that photography lacks the humanistic elements that are vital in representation. A copy is mechanical, but representation is something achieved.

Then there is the dichotomy between picture and text. The fact that in "The Real Thing" the painter is a story-teller also signifies that a narrative is double. If what a painter produces is real in the sense of representing a self, what a writer produces is unreal in the sense of being an illusion. However, when one sits as a model, one wants to be showy, false, and fake; one wants to represent somebody that one is not. In the "deceptive atmosphere of art" the most useful bricolage is appearance rather than reality. Therefore, the Monarchs can inspire only bad illustrations, for they are on the side of the real rather than appearance, and lack the elasticity needed for an artistic

process. Also, the simultaneous presence and absence of the represented gives ample effect to the story and mobilizes it with enough technique and velocity for undertaking exceptional humanistic commitments and then shirking any obligations in the politically catastrophic situations. This feature of the story has historically equipped the human soul with the possibility of renovation. In life, it is tangible reality that is so vital, but in art, it is the illusion, the unreality, that is of great value.

What does it mean to say that something is real in fiction? Does it mean that such a thing is not a report but just fiction? That it is not a truthful account of something in the external world? That on the contrary to a historical account or a geographical description, it has no reference in the world but only appears to have such a reference? But if fictional reality has no reference in the world, how does it make sense? What is the law in realistic fiction? Every thing in fiction turns on the principle of possibility, on the principle that whatever we can imagine is categorically possible. This means that the reader knows that if this or that description is true, such and such a thing will happen. But such a law does not exist independently of fiction. It is neither nonsensical nor impossible but is fictionally possible. Notwithstanding, if it is fictional, the question is about the root and meaning of its realism.

The possibility of talking emerges, among other things, from the nature of language with its semantic rules, and the possibility of cognitive operations about the human world takes root from fictionality and narrativity. Also, a general sense of metaphor implies the existence of a world with a system of shared values which is the possibility of bestowing meaning upon our expressions. Now, a text of realistic fiction, where the minutes of life are subjected to the microscopic analysis of reading, makes the reader set aside his knowledge about the fictionality of his dealings. Thus, a division takes place in the consciousness of the reader. He knows that he is reading only a fiction. But he also accepts the illusion of the textual discourse, because he reconsiders his own ideas about the world. This is not to mean that realistic fiction dissolves the consciousness of the reader as epics or fairy tales do, but that the verisimilitude in the realistic fiction is highly functional, that the content of such a story, where consecutive pictures of the here and now are exposed to the reader, excites him to link the textual content together with the world outside it.

If a story is to be a reframing of the models of intelligibility, the author overlooks whatever elements in the cultural field that is trite or outdated. But if it is a realist representation of life, he feels committed to his story, for its plot should follow the logic of the real life. However, in the fiction of James a peculiar subjectivity converts the minutest contents of life into the experience of a story. The elements most solidly specified in his fiction suggest that his representations are faithful to life: the problems of Maisie in coping with the folks around her before developing a moral sense, the pressures of Isabel Archer when she understands that she has to endure a cruel husband whom she no longer loves, the agonies of Lambert Strether when he discovers that he has mistaken about the affair between Chad Newsome and Madame de Vionnet, the jerks of Merton Densher when he continually fights with poverty or when he is crippled by the impediments of his love to Kate Croy, or the pangs of Milly Theale and Maggie Verver when they realize that they have been deceived by the people who are (or are not?) like themselves.

In James's fiction the represented experience is nourished from the raw materials of the real. However, a problem is that unshapely reality is larger than life, and is therefore inadequate for the represented experience. Thus, in the process of imaginative realization a great author like James adds something to the real to represent it effectively in the form of a novelistic discourse. A dimension of this realization is that his characters are, although not limited in the ordinary, typical and inclusive: Kate Croy for her ability to arrange things and exploit the people for her benefit, Lambert Strether for his minute discernment that allows him to change his mind as many times as he feels appropriate, and Charlotte Stant for her outstanding courage to pass over the social norms and go as far in pursuit of her pleasures as to commit adultery with her beloved who is the son-in-law of her husband.

Another issue is the representation of life in James. Poetry deals with the universals of life, but prose fiction deals with the particulars of it. Now, the question is how the prose style of James shows the particulars of life in a narrative that is like poetry, if not in verbal usage, at least in intention and effect. J. M. Cameron proposes the idea of "the concrete universal: that distinguishable entity which despite its particularity embodies in itself the features of a class" (Cameron, 1984: 305). By this

feature in the work of James, Cameron means that he uses the particular to represent the universal: using what constructs our common sense; using the advantages of the universal types of literary writing like a fable or a legend; using archetypal kinds like the cruel father, the social trespasser, or the intellectual onlooker; using artistic environments like studios, museums, and art galleries the function of which depends mainly on the imaginative power of man; using situations in which friends and families come together around a tea table or in a card game to partake in intellectual negotiations; using imaginary situations in which a character leaves his home land to open his eyes to the secrets of a foreign history or culture, etc.

Seeing how Aristotelian tragedy is different from Jamesian fiction leads to another side of realism in the work of the American novelist. In *Poetics*, plot is more important than character which is designed mainly to perform a series of actions, because without plot there is no story. It is only in the significance of the performed action that the character absorbs the attention of the reader and defines himself. But in the preface to *The American* we read that the character supremely matters:

The interest of everything is all that it is his vision, *his* conception, *his* interpretation: at the window of his wide, quite sufficiently wide, consciousness we are seated, from that admirable position we "assist." He therefore supremely matters; all the rest matters only as he feels it, treats it, meets it. A beautiful infatuation this, always, I think, the intensity of the creative effort to get into the skin of the creature; the act of personal possession of one being by another at its completest (Veeder and Griffin, 1986: 283).

Of prime importance in a story is the representation of the consciousness of a character, and it is the consciousness over which the action spills. When Milly is on her deathbed in Venice and Merton excites her to fall in love with him, or when she turns her face to the wall, is represented as "a New York history, ..., a New York legend....., a set of New York possibilities" (James, 2004: 130). A main intension of the story is perhaps to illustrate her consciousness as the encapsulation of the whole history of a culture. If her performance is not as heroic as those of Hamlet or Romeo, her consciousness is the large window through which we look to the whole human world.



## Chapter Four

### A Structuralist and Post-Structuralist Reading of “The Figure in the Carpet”

“It was a carpet with a figure of its own.”  
(Henry James)

#### I. The problem of the Tale

The problem of “The Figure in the Carpet” is typical of many tales and novels of James. It is the problem of representation, of meaning, of reading and interpretation. The famous novelist Hugh Vereker has recently written a story. The critic George Corvick advises the un-named narrator to write a review on this story. Early in the story, and after the publication of the review in a journal, the reviewer and novelist visit a party. The novelist remarks that the review is only a “routine twaddle,” but also seriously ensures the reviewer that there is “a figure in the carpet” of his story. Thus, both the reader and the reviewer get excited to discover it. However, when the novelist affirms that no critic has yet discovered the figure, the enigma becomes thicker, and the reader realizes that no traditional mode of reading can help him in doing this. The narrator and reader are anxious about the figure of the story, because on the one hand they are sure that it definitely has a meaning, while on the other hand they know that it always suppresses its meaning. The death of all the characters who know the secret of the story (Corvick, Vereker, Vereker’s wife, and Gwendolyn Erme) is an effective closure of signification. And the imperceptiveness or negligence of those who do not die (the narrator and Drayton Deane) adds to the effect of this closure. As a result, the act of reading embodies a search for a meaning which is always absent. And when reading finishes, one feels that what is always present is the absence of a certain meaning. To say it another way, what the story always embodies is (the necessity of) searching through reading. Therefore, I will argue that this story, like many other stories of James, should be read not for plot, but mainly for structure, because meaning is integrally interwoven with structure.

The present chapter intends to discuss this tale in light of structuralism and deconstructionism. A part of the discussion will be mainly hermeneutic. Meaning is

textual and relational, and the story is read as a “writerly” text, and as a system of relations. However, meaning is not a relation between an object and a pre-existent concept, or a relation between an idea and an object in the real world. Meaning occurs in the text, and is the result of difference. As a structuralist analyst, I will intend to understand how the story works as a structure, and to formulate its rules of working. Therefore, to formulate a poetics for this text, I will also deal with the devices it has used. However, as a deconstructive critic, I will attempt to apply the logic of “difference” in it, and to discover how the play of the sign leads to a perpetual postponement of signification. I will locate places in the text where the logic of the binary oppositions are cancelled and the conventional movement of the sign is halted. In this way, I will argue that like a game of hide and seek, this story structures a figure of impossibility. James’s story is a proper space for the abortion of the frames of understanding and the emergence of new "modes of intelligibility."

The reconstruction of meaning in this story is also through "supplementation." "The logic of the supplement" promises the priority of the written sign over the oral, and an inevitable relation between presence and absence. But by supplementation, I preferably mean how in each reading the discourse of this narrative complements itself by its other, by what is repeatedly absent from it. This story is a space for the practice of a (double) game of presence-absence. The sign is both differed and deferred as a consequence of which meaning is suppressed. In the endless play of the signs, what always comes up is not a signified but is a new signifier, so that the story, as a process of structuration, presents an empty structure that although gives no unary meaning, is the spectrum of many different meanings. Meaning is never unary or absolute, but is always subject to change, under erasure, and prone to plurality. This story is a double text: a text of absence (hiding) and a text of presence (searching). One text is in perpetual argument with its counter-text. In the last section of this chapter, I will discuss this story in the light of “postclassical narratology,” and will argue that story is also a tool for thinking and interpretation.

## II. Meaning as Structural (Poetics and Hermeneutics)

The fiction of James opens a way for revealing the structure of the text. For doing this, a hermeneutical reading is perhaps as effective as a structural mode. Structural poetics aims to discover the grammar of literature. It argues about the devices, conventions, and strategies of literature. It searches to discover how literature works as text or how a certain narrative has meaning. But hermeneutics intends to reveal the real meanings of a narrative. In *Structural Poetics* we read that “poetics starts with attested meanings or effects and seeks to understand what structures or devices make them possible, whereas hermeneutics argues about what the meanings are or should be” (Culler, 1975: vii). However, the present reader believes in the argument of Paul Ricoeur when he claims that a hermeneutical understanding is a condition of a structural analysis of a text, because structural poetics builds on the given meanings of a text to formulate the rules of its signification. In this way, if, as Ricoeur argues, a symbol ties the hermeneutic with the structural, we can read James both structurally and hermeneutically. And we can argue that revealing the meaning of symbols, in *The Wings of the Dove* for example, is as much hermeneutical as structural. The archetypal expedition of Milly and Stringham can be examined in the space both of poetics and hermeneutics. For hermeneutics, their expedition symbolizes the meaning of life. They are sent on this errand to help us understand, among other things, the meaning of life and death in a foreign culture. But for structuralism, it can be examined for the function and meaning of the narrative, for narrativity.

In the hermeneutic code there is a structuring force also. When we read a text hermeneutically, we desire to know more about the truth. And as we understand the functioning of its enigma (secret), we discover how it structures itself as text and produces meaning. We can apply the code to reveal whatever seems “insufficiently explained, poses problems, arouses a desire to know the truth” (Culler, 1975: 246). In a narrative text, this code is a site of meaning and an important indicator of structure. Therefore, although the actional sequence of the narrative produces no structure, understanding how secrets are uncovered (how suspense is resolved), is a structuring force.

In addition, the unanswered questions in the discourse, which the reader attempts to answer, add to the structuring force of this code, because as the reader attempts to discover its secrets, he infuses his own perspectives with those of the text in a systematic process. In this sense, it is in the action of reading that the hermeneutic code generates truth. In the openings of the story, we understand that the enigma is a problem of reading. After some time, when an explicit promise is given that it can be solved, we read more eagerly. But when the plot is developed into further stages, occasionally the enigma shows itself more likely to remain unsolvable, and it discourages both the narrator-critic and the reader. But as the story approaches to the end, it turns more solvable. Finally, there comes a solution which is acceptable for the narrator, character, and reader.

In *The Semiotic Challenge* (1973), Roland Barthes considers three general principles for a structural analysis of narrative: “formalization,” “pertinence,” and “plurality”. Regarding formalization, he argues that structural analysis can be compared to all other modes of analysis, for its main concern is with the form rather than the content of narrative. Opposed to the reading models before structuralism, in which the form was divided from and subordinated to the content, structuralism considers form as integral to the content. It claims that meaning and form cannot be divided, and considers the former as the outcome of the latter. In this sense, structuralism is the linguistics of the institute of literature. Its main concern is to investigate the structure of narratives and to devise the grammar of literature. The principle of pertinence underlies searching for how meaning is appropriated by form. Meaning is the outcome of all intra-textual and extra-textual correlations, that is, all features of narrative which refer to another moment of narrative or to another site of culture that is needed for reading it. Meaning is a transferred, relative, and delayed entity.

The principle of plurality adheres to the idea that a narrative does not produce a single or unique meaning but can produce a variety of different meanings. In the modern narrative theory, the possibility of plural meanings is no longer a dream, because structuralism aims at tracing the site of all possible meanings of a literary text. The modern disbelief in logocentrism and the increasing role of the text-reader

contributions are basic insights that certify the signature of structuralism and post-structuralism. Structuralism does not intend to unearth the roots of the text for establishing a hierarchy of meanings and locating the central meaning. It searches for the secret of narrative, for how each reading, as a medium of thought and interpretation, restructures literature. Barthes also suggests that a structural analyst of narrative should perform a number of operations: segmenting the text, taking an inventory of its codes, and providing a coordination of it. The text is cut into a number of working units of meaning. To devise the structures of the text, and to distinguish the more significant units from the less significant ones, he uses the correlations and apertures in the text. He goes from lexia to lexia of the text, harvests the meaning, and makes a possible catalogue of it. In the meantime, he is always fully perceptive to all types of correlation. He should search for meaning in the internal and external correlations available in the text. He separates, superimposes, and mingles the elements of meaning, and weaves them together.

In *Barthes* (1983), Jonathan Culler briefly discusses four modes of structural study of literature: linguistic, narratological, cultural, and reader-response. He radically belittles the function of the author in producing a narrative, and takes it for granted that narrative is created by a grammar or system of transformations that had existed before the narrative was composed. But the novel is, as he says somewhere else, "the primary semiotic agent of intelligibility" (Culler, 2002: 222). It is the discourse by which the world conceives of itself, the language in and through which it articulates the world. And semiotics, the science of signification in novelistic discourse, is the medium by which we inspect the world that a novel produces, for in the process of reading there emerges a world with all its manifestations, a human society in which the members share their own individual and collective hopes, desires, and relations. The reader of a novel conventionally negotiates with characters entangled in situations that are similar to his own situation. The reader intends to understand their world, and to know why a certain character is salvaged and another one is failed. In and through fiction, we invent ourselves and demonstrate ourselves to others. To put it another way, the reader of a novel searches for a model of human world where he can actively participate in the process of sense making.

In the present chapter I will also try to answer two questions: (1) Why is a novel described as a structure for the culmination of a meaning? (2) Where should a structuralist (and/or post-structuralist) reader search for meaning in the text of a novel? If the novel does not go beyond the boundaries of the intelligible, how can the reader transform its discourse for producing new meanings? In search for an answer to these questions, the present chapter performs a tentative structural analysis of “The Figure in the Carpet.” To describe the underlying structures of this story, let’s attempt to apply the aforementioned theories to it. Culler proposes a solution:

And it is here, on the edges of intelligibility, that structuralist interest has come to focus... [E]very ‘traditional’ novel of any value will criticize or at least investigate models of intelligibility and every radical text will be readable and intelligible from some point of view ... Even when the novel is not explicitly engaged in undermining our notions of coherence and significance, by its creative use of these notions it participates in what Husserl would call the ‘reactivation’ of models of intelligibility: that which is taken as natural is brought to consciousness and revealed as process, as construct (Culler, 2002: 222).

This story undermines the current modes of signification and introduces new systems for thinking. The underlying structure of it is like the structure of a game of hide and seek that has two opposing forces each of which nullifies the other one. From another perspective, I will discuss that the author is at the same time inside the text and outside of it. This involves the clarification of a three-dimensional layout of the story: the functions of the author Hugh Vereker, of the critic George Corvick, and of the failed un-named narrator. In addition, from the perspective of a “postclassical narratology” (Herman, 1999: 2), this story is a tool for thinking or a mode of analysis.

The difference between the new novel, which is the novel of rapture, and the traditional novel of pleasure is not as great as it seems. In fact the former is the continuation of the latter. Yet, the third style of James can be categorized as “writerly” fiction, because it challenges the models of intelligibility, and deconstructs them in a number of ways. In whatever direction the reader goes in these texts, he is under the influence of language and is guided by it. Whatever the reader does to provide an absolutist interpretation for them, the sign nullifies his attempt and offers additional

interpretive possibilities. Therefore, no single critical formula can exhaust them. Barthes calls these kinds of texts "writerly." "The Figure in the Carpet" takes to suggest new frames of intelligibility, and James's techniques of characterization fit with such a target. James thought that English fiction in his time was seriously damaged by a humbling "vulgarity." Therefore, the major characters in this tale are not ordinary people but are writers, readers, critics, and editors with more or less critical and creative powers. The life situations of these characters are also not ordinary. The vulgar for James was tasteless literature, the literature that had lost its sense, and was "tainted" perhaps with the non-literary. To elaborate what James thought as vulgar, Shoshana Felman says:

What is vulgar, then, is the "imputed vice," the "offered example," that is the explicit, the specific, the unequivocal and immediately referential "illustration," *The vulgar is the literal*, insofar as it is unambiguous: "the story won't tell; not in any *literal, vulgar way*." The literal is "vulgar" because it stops the *movement* constitutive of meaning, because it blocks and interrupts the endless process of metaphorical substitution. The vulgar, therefore, is anything which misses, or falls short of, the dimension of the symbolic, anything which rules out, or excludes, meaning as a loss and as a flight, – anything which strives, in other words, to eliminate from language its inherent silence, anything which misses the specific way in which the text *actively* "won't tell" (Felman, 1977: 107).

To solve this problem, James the novelist takes it to help literature to take refuge from the vulgar. For doing this, he intends to produce a kind of fiction that is a good field for the cancellation of the current modes of reading and the introduction of new systems of intelligibility. And his characters are in good harmony with his intention to escape from this flaw, because many of them are rather well-educated readers, and have the power of thought, intellect, and discrimination.

Hugh Vereker is more than an average man both in aspiration and imagination. He expects himself to implement new and avant-garde strategies for story writing. But the question is about the structure, the grammar, of the kind of fiction that he intends to produce. It seems that a main feature of it should be dynamic indeterminacy. Hugh Vereker assures the narrator-critic about the objectivity of the secret of his story. It is

quite real, fleshy, and tangible. It is “as concrete as a bird in a cage, a bait on a hook, a piece of cheese in a mouth-trap.” However, he gives him no definite formula about the meaning and form of his story. And although he is overtly concerned with the narrator’s active participation in critical reading, he gives no simple guidelines for the analysis of his work. This story always remains an unresolved enigma, for it perpetually questions its own meaning. Thus, its reader is always in a dilemma. Therefore, one should not read it for meaning, but should read it for understanding how it hides meaning. Its reader should want to know how it structures indeterminacy, how it fails to mean.

The story is a field of negotiations among the arts of writing, criticism, and reading, or among authors, critics, reviewers, and readers. Such negotiations guarantee the formulation of a structure for the narrative. Hugh Vereker is not a sage, and does not provide us with any moral verdict or catechism. However, he is, as face of James, a great author, a professional story-teller. But James shows another face also: critic George Corvick. Accordingly, this work deals not only with literary creation but also with literary criticism. The creative scene is that which is dramatized or manufactured in the real act of story-telling. But the critical scene is an evaluation of or debating over the creative scene. It is the act of creating meaning by reading the story and interpreting it. In this way, the story reproduces itself in our acts of reading and criticism. In addition, this double act of creation and criticism allows James to be at the same time in the text and out of it, for he not only tells stories through the mouths of Vereker and Gwendolen, but also reads and criticizes them in the names of the failed narrator, Corvick, and Drayton. As the writer, he is inside it, overwhelming it. But as critic, he is outside it, only a part of it, and fully controlled by it.

This double position establishes the story as a new kind of fiction. Reading it, we are concerned not with plot but mainly with the meaning or secret of it, and with interpreting the meaning of what the characters say and/or do. Thus, this story is an allegory of literary creation and interpretation. A concern of the narrative is, if not to reject all the current modes of signification, at least to raise doubt about their functionality. The text is for the reader not to consume it but to re-create it in reading. Accordingly, another feature of this story is the role of a perpetual silence. It seems

that in this story there is a registering agent who is always actively silent, not because of his indifference to the ambitions of the reader, and not for confusing him, but mainly for escaping from vulgarity by putting him in the center of the critical appraisal. The agent intends to escape vulgarity via an appeal not only to the pure literary but also to the imaginative insight of the reader, and through the use of non-verbal means of communication in a verbal space. A method for preserving silence here is to produce a symbolic or metaphorical space where things stand not for themselves but for other things. Still another technique for silence is postponing signification so that the meaning is deferred and the enigma remains unsolved.

An impact of reading this story is an effect rather than a knowledge or an insight. This means that who is saved and who is failed in this story is less significant than why somebody is saved and somebody not. This effect is of an insoluble doubt, conflict, and indeterminacy. As the story expands, the things of the imaginary space become more precarious, so that the reader and character attempt to find a way out of doubt and conflict. But their attempt is futile. Therefore, we should read this story not for learning how the conflict is solved but for learning how the story manages not to solve it. This insoluble ambiguity is not to the disadvantage of the story. On the contrary, it is elemental to the structure and constitutive to the meaning of it.

This tale is innovative not only in form and meaning, but also in characterization. Instead of conventional life spaces, James dramatizes spaces of practical thoughtfulness, of reading, writing, and criticizing literature. Many of his characters are members of literary circles, and are among the well-read and thoughtful people. Vereker is careful not to publicize any absolutist culture, and is highly esoteric and innovative. Gwendolen, Corvick, and Drayton are also intellectual people who earn their lives by reading, writing, and reviewing literature. When Corvick goes to Bombay in search of the secret of Vereker's story, he finds it. Gwendolen, who marries Corvick, has written two novels. And Drayton, who marries her after the death of her husband, is expected to review Vereker's last novel in the journal "The Middle." These characters have high literary merits, and are intellectually concerned with the promotion of an aesthetic consciousness by introducing new models of reading. Such illustrations of thoughtfulness imply that the reader of this tale will be

engaged with the yet unresolved problems of composition and reading. Thus, from this perspective too, this story goes counter to the current (Victorian) modes of storytelling and signification. It seems that James's frustration with the Victorian conventions of story writing and his high narrative expertise have excited him to produce a kind of fiction in which two strategies are structural: the strategy of active silence and the strategy of searching for an absence. The application of these techniques provided the ground for a full and goal-oriented interaction between the text and reader on the basis of which he could set the text to speak. Therefore, although "The Figure in the Carpet" is apparently silent, it has perhaps many sounds at the same time.

However, if a story is language, speech act, or a space for communication through telling, why does the story want to be silent? What does silence mean in it? Does it not make it almost a dumb body of writing? Silence is constitutive to the meaning. As a method of communication, it is functional also in producing the desired effect. Silence is a way of speaking but not through voice, a system of communication but not through speech. It is a way of telling with the help of gesture, implication, suggestion, and structuration. In this story, that is a triangular frame of signification, this way reduces the role of the author (and text) and adds a lot to the role of the reader, for she should demystify all those structures of ambiguity or spaces of silence. The Jamesian character cannot be both talkative and salvaged. To take refuge from vulgarity, the character should avoid loquacity. She should hold her tongue, should be silent, because silence is inherent not only to deep thought but also to the structure of this story.

In plot also, this tale was unusual. In the time of James, it was modernistic. At the outset, the first person narrator reports that Corvick has visited and advised him about writing a critical review on a new novel by the intelligent Vereker. The novels of Vereker give a "pleasure so rare" to Corvick. So he wants the reviewer to "try to get at" the author to give the sense of something about which Corvick is fully innocent. At first the narrator goes into raptures about this task. But finally he accepts it, since he thinks he can do it. In this way he also hopes to make acquaintance with the well known author when he will see him next Sunday at a family party. Before Corvick's

departure to India, the narrator sets out to write the review, and he sits up to midnight for it. The issue of the journal in which the article is to be published will soon appear. However, when the article comes out, it is failed, and shows only the "infancy of the art." Although the physical action is trivial, the psychological action is overwhelming, for it concerns with the cognition of the reader and characters.

This story is a search to hamper the old systems of understanding and to suggest new ways for drawing mental inferences. The play of the linguistic sign in the text is similar to the movement of the pieces on a chessboard. And the role of the modern reader, who participates in an interactive process of interpretation, structures a play of seek and hide in the text. In the binary opposition of "seek/hide," each element owes its existence to the other element that wants to demolish it at the same time. Seeking for something suggests that it is in existence but the seeker is lacking it. But insofar as this something is hidden, searching for it is futile. Thus, each member of this binary opposition guarantees both the formation and demolition of the other member. I think that a structure of hide and seek works not only in "The Figure in the Carpet," but also in the whole fiction of James's last phase.

If the play of hide and seek is a feature of the story, it is insolvably enigmatic, for although the hermeneutic code is concerned with solving the mystery of the plot, its ambiguity renders the functioning of the hermeneutic code as futile. Therefore, the meaning of the story is the question it raises but does not answer, the suspense it creates but does not solve. Now, insofar as we read the story only for knowing the sequence of incidents or the end result of them, our reading is not a structure-making interaction, since it is only for the satisfaction of our curiosity, and we are not partaking in the discourse. But if we read to discover how the enigma in the story works, or to learn how it poses questions and postpones the possible answers to them, our reading has a structuring force. In this case, the play of hide and seek structures the story. To give an example, knowing who will attend the party in the Bridges, what will be served in it, when it will be over, why Corvick dies in honeymoon, or how he goes to India, etc. is not structure making. But if we discover "the figure in the carpet" of Vereker's story, and if we understand how the story nullifies its discourse, our interaction is structure-making.

As the first person narrator fails in recognizing the meaning of Vereker's story, James employs certain techniques to help the reader grasp the structures of his own story. Among these techniques are disclosure and postponing signification. Disclosure is a feature of modern fiction that frequently extends the horizons of the story to include the most bizarre realms of our consciousness. It is a dynamics of modern literature that is increasingly unbiased, pluralistic, and productive. The outcome of disclosure in modern times is an exciting space of multiplicity. Disclosure is also a policy of the modern reader to escape from authorial omniscience, and to change the text to a scenario that is proper for the free play of the sign. It is for the possibility of reading the text each time in a new way.

Postponing or halting signification also guarantees the reader's active contribution in untying the text through the implementation in it of a structure of difference, a structure that not only defers the meaning, but also makes the signified differ. This is not the economy of a short cut to the meaning of the story, but is the formula for a circumlocution that turns the idea round and round so as to defer signification and change naive reading to a critical endeavor. In this way, the narrative changes itself to a puzzle, and by re-activating the potentials of dialogue in the text, creates two-way relations between itself and the reader. By doing this, the modern literary text organizes a cultural discourse as the space for a collective compromise that is a priority of democracy and freedom. Another way for postponing meaning in the fiction of James is to use a variety of prose and narrative innovations, for each of such formal and thematic innovations is a deviation from the normal language and prosaic norms of sense making. About the function of James's prose innovations R. W. Short says,

When he has undone the usual ties, his meanings float untethered, grammatically speaking, like particles in colloidal suspension. The finality, the crystallization, that ordinary sentence order and signs defining relationships bestow upon prose has been skilfully foregone in favour of other values. In these peculiar sentences, facts remain tentative, intentions fluid, and conclusions evanescent. Since they are to a degree freed from the limitations of grammatical laws, their variety is endless (Short, 1946: 73-74).

The normal English sentence pattern before James signifies and approves of a chronic logocentrism. But his fiction is inclined to perform a goal-oriented serious combat with it. Although his typical sentence does not possess a handful of ideas, it shows inclination toward looseness; and it can at times be periodic and fully complex grammatically. It seems that his typical sentence wreaks mayhem in the norms of the English sentence structure. In addition, the new techniques of his sentence change the text to a domain for the free play of the sign where the character and reader search for aesthetic pleasure and cognitive enlightenment. Going round the meaning by a huge number of redundant words and expressions makes the sense of any truthful meaning quite unreal. At the end of the family party, when the novelist goes to the room of the frustrated reviewer to appease him, although he answers some of his questions about the meaning of his story, none of his answers is telling enough, and they make the reviewer even more anxious via igniting his thirst which they do not satisfy:

“You a failure—heavens! What then may your ‘little point’ happen to be?”

“Have I got to tell you, after all these years and labours?”

...

“By my little point I mean—what shall I call it?—the particular thing I’ve written my books most for.

...

“This seemed a responsibility indeed. ‘You call it a little trick?’”

“That’s only my little modesty. It’s really an exquisite scheme.”

...

“And don’t you think you ought—just a trifle—to assist the critic?”

“Assist him? What else have I done with every stroke of my pen?” (James, 1947: 184-185)

Here decoding the verbal sign is problematic, because the movement of the signifier is not direct but is like a spiral. Such a lack of immunity in the process of signification is the result, among other things, of a variety of blanks, interrogatives, and uncertain structures and expressions. Although the narrator is careful to ask the novelist about the “point”, the “trick”, the “scheme” of his story, the hermeneutic code makes him curious and exhausted, because for solving the enigma, the reviewer should be quite subtle. Whichever way the reader goes, the text turns him, so that, he ultimately feels the reading is vanquished and the enigma is unresolved. Therefore, the narrator-critic

and reader should not search for the not so well-formed plot that is on the surface, but should search for the structure of the story a component of which is a cause that is perpetually absent.

The hermeneutic code creates a fully extensive suspension. When the narrator returns to town from the party in *Bridges*, he spends “a maddening month” to discover Vereker’s idea. But he says “the exasperation of my search put me out of conceit of them” (James, 1947: 189). In the note that Vereker sends to the reviewer we read,

I had never mentioned, no matter in that state of expansion, the fact of my little secret, and I shall never speak of that mystery again. I was accidentally so much more explicit with you than it had ever entered into my game to be, that I find this game—I mean the pleasure of playing it—suffers considerably. In short, if you can understand it, I’ve rather spoiled my sport (ibid: 191).

Suspense is created, is intentional, and is quite strategic. It is not only the pleasure of the story, but also fundamental to the very existence of (the meaning of) it. It changes the story from a reading material of normal imaginative pleasure to a game that is necessarily for playing and gives pleasure only when played. Like in a game of hide and seek, the secret of the story is that which it hides and upon discovering which it is exhausted. Like the pleasure of a game, which is its gameness, the pleasure of the story is its narrationality, its literariness, that which renders it a space of critical judgment. Therefore, the pleasure of this story is in the act of reading, in thinking how it hides itself, and how it demolishes all maneuvers of decoding; because in the act of reading it turns the reader and reproduces itself.

On the other hand, the hermeneutic code is not retrospective but is prospective. That is, the extensive suspension in the story grounds a full interaction between the text and reader, and makes the reader increasingly critical and creative. The wide interactions between the two open the mind of the reader to new horizons, and help the text also to include new spheres. These new spheres of creative thought add to the treasures of the text and to the interpretive observations of the reader. In the course of critical reading, new modes of thought are introduced, for the space of the story makes

the curious and inquiring mind of the reader arrange for a combat between the old and the new in which the new is always the winner.

The double diplomacy of the novelist is a simultaneous rejection and acceptance. He starts by disputing the currently established discourses. In his work, "faint wandering notes of a hidden music" are traceable which the readers and critics are expected to discover. But the "wonted curiosity" of the narrator only "lives in its ashes," for at the end of his reading his curiosity is obsessed. As one plays out the game of reading, he does a rivalry with the text which is fundamental to its structure, because each part tries to defeat the other part. And the story as game is always original, goal-oriented, meaningful, and pluralistic. We do not read this story only for theories, answers, or solutions. We also read it for questions, riddles, and doubts. It is in the meaningful rivalry between the text and the reader (or between James's narrator and Vereker's story) that the enigma pairs with solution, questions find answers, and doubt is changed to knowledge.

When the critic Corvick goes to Bombay, does he go to make a pilgrimage to "the Temple of Vishnu"? If yes, it perhaps implies that for recognizing the secret of the narrative the reader should fulfill certain requirements. In chapter 6 we read,

He hasn't gone into it, I know; it's the thing itself, let severely alone for six months, that has simply sprung out at him like a tigress out of the jungle. He didn't take a book with him—on purpose; indeed he wouldn't have needed to—he knows every page, as I do, by heart. They all worked in him together, and some day somewhere, when he wasn't thinking, they fell, in all their superb intricacy, into the one right combination. The figure in the carpet came out. That's the way he knew it would come and the real reason—you didn't in the least understand, but I suppose I may tell you now—why he went and why I consented to his going. We knew the change would do it—that the difference of thought, of scene, would give the needed touch, the magic shake. We had perfectly, we had admirably calculated. The elements were all in his mind, and in the secousse of a new and intense experience they just struck light (James, 1947: 199).

First, he reads all the works of Vereker, so that he has the knowledge of the whole of it in his heart. Then, he goes to India that implies change. He goes to India not to get rid of Vereker's work but of Vereker himself, for far from him he can think about his

work in a new way. His goes there for the possibility of freeing himself from the grips of the current norms of reading and taking on new ones. In India, he wants to be no longer concerned with reading his work but with experiencing new things in it. Therefore, he will change the structure of his mind, and will think in new ways. He will see new things and will have new feelings. Now, when new experience combines his knowledge and gives due shape to it, the product, we read, is as natural as the life of a tiger in a jungle. It is, like a tiger, unfamiliar, dynamic, and quite desirous. Although it is expected, it is not gradual but is sudden. In this way, if this figure is the secret or the structure of Vereker's story, it can be described as a combination of knowledge and experience where the first comes mainly from the text and the second from the critic or reader. The substance of it is Vereker's story, while the form of it is the reader's experience, for it is in the inside of the critic that the form and substance mingle to make the structure.

The temple is the home of a self-sufficient fortune-teller the laws of whose job are new and the result of his own dexterities. Such innovations make it possible for the analyst of literature to disregard the non-linguistic approaches (like socio-historical and autobiographical approaches) and to focus on the literariness of fiction. Revealing the "buried treasure" in the work of the novelist is an excitement. There is something unique in this text which makes it like a projection of sky, with the stars randomly scattered on it, while the light explodes as they repeatedly depart from one side to another. The complex patterns of signification makes the sign continually move between the text and the reader. In this sense, the fiction of James combines realism with modernism. Although this "buried treasure" is new and unknown, it is not unachievable. It is simple, because it takes root from the existent literary backgrounds, from the realistic heritage of the English fiction; it is extraordinary, for it is "an experience quite apart." This mixture of sameness and otherness helps the reader to go in opposite directions at the same time.

The structure of Vereker's story is incorporated by reading it, by playing the game of it. But if we do not read it, no game is structured, and we get no pleasure. To put it another way, the story is re-written in the act of reading. It is a product of language the pleasure of which lies in the reactivation of potentials of language that

work in it. This reader is the residue of a historical intertextuality. He organizes a productive dialogue with the text the outcome of which is the reconstitution of the story. In the course of time the sign is fermented, and since no omniscient author controls the meaning of the story, the reader re-enlivens the reality of the text. Thus, one can formulate some of the strategies of "The Figure in the Carpet": it is silent, it is rapturous, it is ambiguous, it reproduces itself through reading, and its meaning is undecidable.

The reader of this story will be concerned with a structural question which has no ultimate answer. James approves that he "aims at plurality." He intends "to keep questions open, unanswered, for as long as possible." The story poses some questions, but it gives no direct and immediate answer to them, because Vereker thinks they close the mind of the reader, cancel the intellectual inquiry, and demolish the critical space.

In this story, the realm of the hermeneutic code is expanded enough to include the meaning, the figure, the rhetoric, and the genre. This code includes, among other things, the title of the work, the bifurcations in plot, the names and identities of characters, and their sense-making of narrative propositions. The title refers to an implied and foreign theme. "Figure" produces a sense of form with a sense of vagueness, and when we consider it in a real "carpet" or in the carpet of a written text, it becomes even more implied, for it is so naturally integrated to the texture, to the wrap and woof of the carpet, that it cannot be separated from it. In narration also, the problem of the story is insolvable. Now a statement is proposed, now a counterstatement, now a thesis, now an antithesis. Such a game of hide and seek, of the now-thesis-now-antithesis, produces a sequence of formation and deformation. The reader feels that the story is at the same time remaking and exhausting itself. However, although the narrator clearly feels obsessed, this bipolarity does not produce any sense of disappointment, but produces a sense of cognitive enlightenment, of epistemological development.

The opposite forces in this story testify a "semiotic challenge" which Barthes has formulated. From his viewpoint, narrative is a form of language which is "essentially marked by two powers: that of distending its signs throughout the story,

and that of inserting within these distortions unforeseeable expansions" (Barthes, 1994: 129). Narrative is a self-sufficient system that reconstructs itself to the expense of its distortions and deficiencies. In such cases, the usual juxtaposition of the sign is disturbed and the linear signification is cancelled. Thus, the synthetic language of narrative changes it to a site of distaxia which is a moment of disturbance. If the units of meaning in a sequence are separated from each other and units from other sequences come between them, distaxia takes place. However, distaxia is a part of narratology the subject of which is language distortions of narrative. "The figure in the Carpet" reproduces itself through distaxia, through its language distortions and insertions.

The mysterious characters also make the story a real enigma: What is characterization? What is a character, Vereker for example, or the general concept of character? Where does a character come from? Where is it before creation? How does it come into existence? Is it real? Is it imitation? Is it representation? How is it related to the plot and action? How is it related to other characters? What is thinking or speaking in/of/for a character? What does writing or reading about it mean? How does it arrange his life? How does he think in critical situations? How does an author/reader/critic-character do when he writes, reads, or criticizes a story? What is the meaning of a character writing or reading or criticizing a story? As the story expands the realm of the hermeneutic code, these and other questions come into the focus of the reader. As he gets knowledge about them, he finds his way to new horizons of knowledge and enlightenment.

Suspense is another form of distortion. On the one hand, it cripples the sense of any truthful idea in the story and opens it to reflection and consideration in a process of delay and repetition. On the other hand, it guarantees the excitement and energy needed for reading. The opposing energies of fear and hope in the text make it comparable to the real life the structure of which the people make and the content of which they experience. Suspense changes reading to a productive structuralist activity. It is, to speak for Barthes again, "a game with structure intended, so to speak, to threaten and glorify it: it constitutes a veritable 'thrill' of the intelligible: by

representing order (...) in its fragility, it fulfils the very idea of language” (Barthes, 1994: 130).

Reading James’s story structurally is not a pursuit of what happens to its characters as psychological entities. It is a perusal of narration, a search for functional units of meaning, and for structuring the narrative. It is mainly for understanding the economy of representation. Its action is typically different from the action of the traditional story in the time of James. It does not involve the characters in the usual conflict between man and nature for example, or between man and man, or man and society. Its main subject is the development of our mind, and it represents the activity of our consciousness. As Joseph Warren Beach says, “from first to last,” James “is preoccupied not with men’s lives but with the quality of their experience; not with the pattern but with the texture of life” (Beach, 1954: 148).

Beach certifies “it is not in the relative terms of cause and effect that he [James] considers human action” (ibid: 149). In Jamesian narrative, it seems that the normal causality goes lame, or if it does not go lame, the relation between cause and effect is changed, so that the end result of the plot is not a dramatization of “the king died and then the queen died of grief,” but is a pre-determined effect or impression upon the reader. As a Jamesian strategy, and to achieve such an impression, the effect can take the place of the cause and be its cause. Neither the cause, nor the effect, nor the relation between cause and effect is taken for granted. Instead, they are the effects of language and representation, the outcome of narrativity. In the story in the service of language, a character comes into existence, performs certain activities, and encourages us to accept or reject him. And whatever the character says and does is not an imitation of the activities of real people but is narrative action which is possible only in language.

Jamesian characters are not obsessed with material problems of life. They do not have any usual material desire or personal ambition, but are concerned with the problem of narrativity, with whatever makes the literariness of literature. Beach says they are concerned with an “absolute standard of the good and the beautiful” (ibid). It is such a cognitive or epistemological mission that motivates Vereker or Corvick in what they do. And the reader is interested not in their success or failure, but as Beach

continues to say, mainly in “their capacity for renunciation—for giving up any particular gratification in favour of some fine ideal of conduct with which it proves incompatible” (ibid). The main action of “The Figure in the Carpet” involves the struggle of the narrator. He and the reader should discover the “little point” in the story of Vereker. Such processionality and mechanical features make a Jamesian story a proper space for structural activity.

In a structural analysis of narrative, a major question is about the essence and origin of characters. Outside of narrative there is no character, and a character is not a being but a becoming. A character is not a psychological entity with her feelings and aspirations which she experiences and shares with other characters in the story. Like the terms “Hugh Vereker” or “George Corvick,” it is a word, a name, or a noun which appears only on the written pages of the story. If as Barthes says, a character is only “a paper being,” it is illusory, and its reality or genuineness is the result of its relations with other beings. Therefore, it is a product of language, a center in which (opposing) human thoughts, ideals, aspirations, etc. come together to be culminated in different forces of the narrative. But in the narrative context a character is the agent that undertakes the action belonging to it. Character is constituted in the narrative, and is defined in the light of its participation in the action. Characters are made by the power of language, and are imprisoned in it. They are the outcome of discourse, and will always inhabit in the narrative space.

However, on the contrary to the Aristotelian poetics, in which the plot is the most important element of the (tragic) story, in James and structuralism character is not secondary to plot, because without character there is no story. We can take a step further and suggest that fiction is the result of what its participants do and what its writer and reader contribute as they exchange codes of meaning. This claim can be supported by interesting evidences: just close the book you are reading, and the characters disappear, representation stops, and discourse is cancelled. Narrative is a construction in language, and character is a participant in the action of the story and a part of the process of tantalization.

But the structure of this story is very intense. It excites complex reaction in the characters and reader. It involves them in imaginative actions of composition the

outcome of which is the rise of their experience: writing and reading and criticizing as acts of creation. Although the reader of this story knows that its things are imaginative, it transfers him from a world of imagination to a world of reality. He discovers some ways for communicating his experiences, for thinking in new ways, producing new knowledge, and for dialogue, interaction, communication, etc. This is perhaps a translation of the claim of Booth: "The author [James]<sup>1</sup> makes his readers" (Booth, 1961. 397). Booth means that James helps his reader to develop new perceptions, expand his vision, and see things he has never seen. The text manifests the arts of composition and dialogue as the mediums of retrieving human experience and transfiguring thought. Composition is the use of all human gifts for the creation of new thoughts and experiences. It is an occasion of creativity, a free space for expanding our world and renewing our perspectives. In addition, dialogue is a space for the formation of new intelligibilities. It is a system that rejects any prejudiced or one-sided solution to the basic human problems, and provides the space for the free interaction of opposite ideologies and perspectives.

Harry E. Shaw discusses some viewpoints of Michael Bakhtin regarding "dialogic imagination" and Booth's idea about authors as making readers. Clarifying Bakhtin's ideas about the fictional world of Tolstoy versus that of Dostoevsky, he argues that Booth may have followed "the lead of the Bakhtin of 'Discourse in the Novel' ... by stressing the possibility of a dialogue between reader and author that passes, so to speak, through the book" (Shaw, 2007: 216). The fiction of Tolstoy provides no opportunity for the action of dialogic imagination. His "monolithically monological" narration invades the reader's belief, cancels his evaluating potentials, and stuns the appreciative background of his active understanding. However, the fiction of Dostoevsky is a space of "active understanding," because its appreciative background excites the character to utter his ideas and evaluate the perspectives of the other characters. Shaw asserts that this strategy supports Booth's idea of authors making readers. Bakhtin disapproves of Tolstoy's use of language to apply force as a means of coercing or disciplining the readers, because its possibilities are beyond the control of power and coercion, the possibilities that enable us to reconstruct our consciousness

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<sup>1</sup> My adding.

and develop our human significance. The ideas of Bakhtin are in agreement with the logic of imaginative interaction in "The Figure in the Carpet." In this story, Vereker and reviewer are engaged in a dialogue involving elements with which they agree to play. Such an imaginative contribution is the possibility of fictive elements that guarantee moments of lucidity and the appearance of new forces in society and history.

For the writer of the editorial introduction of the 26<sup>th</sup> issue of *The Henry James Review*, "what's striking is how ... reading serves, as it does for so many of us, as a medium of thought and feeling" (Griffin, 2005: 207). Reading the late style of the fiction of James is a way of dealing with the problem of aging, because through a challenge of wisdom it helps us imaginatively to go back into the past periods and speak with the bygone generations. "The Figure in the Carpet" is also a proof of professional expertise and personal sensitivity. Reading it critically is a practice of skilled thoughtfulness, a way to negotiate with the impossible through critical wisdom to see how we can establish a balance between the current and the new modes of thought. Reading this text, we connect its past to its present. We read history in the text, that is, we connect between the text as the past and the text as the present. This text is a battle-field of language and reader, a battle-field of the codes that are being decoded. It is a workshop where the sign plays out its fantasies, and as new epistemes come to the fore, new systems of signification renovate our consciousness, and the old systems are stored in the frozen realms of our collective unconsciousness. For demystifying the text, the subtle reader devises its grammar. As he omits the outmoded signifier, he makes the text perforated, and plows it for a new cultivation. In such a system of text modernization, the text is a cultural office, and the reader a cultural agent. The reader allows the characters to emerge in a silhouette where the logic of opposition is vital and the black and white perpetually exclude one another. It is via this opposition in the consciousness of the reader that the story structures itself.

A structural reading on this text is different from a formalistic plot analysis. Formalism reads the text closely for taking aesthetic pleasure by formulating its rhetorical innovations and sentence combinations. But a structuralist analyst formulates the patterns of structuring in the narrative. For doing this, he firstly breaks

it into the smallest meaningful parts or sequences which Barthes calls *lexias*. Then, he determines the role of action in each sequence, finds the relative functions of each action, and discovers the connections among functions. He finds meaningful connections between the vertical and horizontal axes of information, and invents a system for conveying its meaning. As a show of indeterminacy, we can read this tale perhaps as a typical Jamesian story dealing with epistemology. The structure of the tale is a misleading solution, for at the same time it solves and thickens it. The double search that it culminates, solves the enigma and aborts the solution of the enigma at the same time. Thus, it seeks for the fulfillment of something that is never achieved, for answering a question for which there is no answer. Todorov fully describes the structure of a typical Jamesian story as a search for an absolute absent cause:

James's tales are based on a quest for an absolute absent cause. ... There exists a cause—to be understood in the very broad sense. It is often a character, but sometimes also an event or an object. Its effect is the tale, the story which we is told. The cause is absolute: everything in the story owes its presence, in the analysis, to it. But it is absent and we set off in quest of it. And it is not only absent but for most of the time unknown as well; only its existence, not its nature, is suspected. There is a quest: that is, the story consists in the search for, the pursuit of this initial cause, this primary essence. The story stops if it is found. On the one hand then, there is an absence (of the cause, of the essence, of the truth) but this absence determines everything; on the other hand, there is a presence (of the quest) which is simply the pursuit of the absence. The secret of James's tales is, therefore, precisely this existence of an essential secret, of something which is not named, of an absent, overwhelming force which puts the whole present machinery of the narrative into motion. The movement of James's stories is a double and, in appearance, a contradictory one (which allows him to start it ceaselessly over and over again): on the one hand he deploys all his strength to reach the hidden essence, to unveil the secret object; on the other, he constantly moves it further and further away. He protects it up to the end of the story, if not beyond. The absence of the cause (or of the truth) is present in the text; still more, it is its logical origin, its *raison d'être*; the cause is that which, by its essence, gives rise to the text. The essential element is absent; absence is an essential element (Todorov, 1973: 74-75).

Like the ardent reviewer in our story, the reader of the late style of James searches for a cause that is "absolute and absent." Its cause is absolute for the whole of the tale

originates from it, for it is the underlying structure on which James has erected his fiction. This is because wherever you go in James there is language. Language is all before and around James to provide the general pattern of his narrative. As Vereker tells the young critic about the absolute cause of his story, “it governs every line, it chooses every word, it pleases every comma” (James, 1947: 187) of it. And it is only in language, in discourse, that we can search for his cause. Also, the Jamesian cause is always absent because the text employs certain strategies to hide it from the reader and captivate him in the prison-house of his text, so that it is often impossible for him to make an ultimate and truthful judgment about the meaning of this story.

The absent cause of “The Figure in the Carpet” establishes a primary disequilibrium which should be brought back into equilibrium in the act of reading. However, between reading and narrative (reader and author) there is a rivalry, for the latter brings the sought equilibrium back into disequilibrium again, that is, it uses a series of techniques that postpone or suppress any possible truthful meaning. Therefore, like in an exploration, and in a battle with the text, the structuralist critic invades the field of it and brings its inside out. As he reads it, he discovers the function of language and the activity of the linguistic sign in it. He finds out how the text hides its own meaning and how the structure of it exhausts the previous modes of understanding and introduces new systems of recognition. The narrative is a product of language as a social manifestation in which several discourses converge and the borders of intelligibility send the reader into the domain of the hidden.

### **III. Meaning as Undecidable**

So far in this chapter, I have tried to analyze this story structurally. But in the remaining part of it will intend to discuss it post-structurally. Two ideas will be developed. The first is the demonstration of an outstanding undecidability in this opaque text, that is, how it deconstructs itself through halting signification. The next is the story as a “tool for thinking.” David Herman argues that in “postclassical narratology” the lack of any hidden objective signified in the narrative text changes it to a field of interpretation.

A feature of James's story, which is narrated in a limited point of view, is that its meaning is perpetually undecidable. The single narrator is scarcely more professional than the reader: they both pursue the same desires and share the same experiences, and the play of the sign entangles them in the same traps. The voice of the narrator, who speaks for the reader throughout, is always audible in the tale. The language of it is not an intermediary device for moving the reader (or the reviewer) to a virtually real world. Instead, their residence is in language in which they are actually imprisoned. Thus, both the characters and their world are unknown, ethereal, and enigmatic, for whatever we say about it, the real object of this story is language as a set of verbal structures.

The rhetoric of communication is inadequate, and the story is a tale of non-presentation. For the impossibility of its revelation, the figure in the carpet takes numerous shades and colours. When the reader starts to untie the text, the meaning hides itself and he is left to continue his search, perhaps vainly. In this way, what is genuine and meaningful is a continuous search perhaps as the ultimate meaning of the story. Corvick is the only person in possession of the secret of the story. But he dies before revealing it to any one. And the insistence of his wife on hiding the secret from the narrator, Vereker's death, and the death of his wife also, and Gwedolen's death before telling it to Drayton all support this structure of impossibility. Consequently, the narrator is "shut up in my obsession for ever," while "my gaolers had gone off with the key" (James, 1947: 212). The text plays out an intense rivalry with the reader to neutralize his search and keep its secret unlocked. After Vereker's death, Drayton "wrote on a thousand subjects, but never on the subject of Vereker. ... He never told the only truth that seemed to me in these days to signify" (ibid: 213). In his never-ending, frustrated, and futile search, the narrator continually goes astray from the right path. In this way, the story illustrates, to speak with Barthes again, a "production without product, structuration without structure" (Wasserman, 1981: 81). It is a system or structure for production, but its production is no more than a perpetual search.

On the other hand, the fact that the story negates any ultimate meaning is a guarantee of plurisignation. Unlike "readerly" texts which carry a central truthful

meaning, and which the reader and/or character either accept or reject, the “infinite of the signifiers” in this fiction makes it a mysterious story with many, although opposite, significations. The loose and multi-directional movement of the sign, the multileveled ground of signification, the space which the energy of an “as if” construction renders real and unreal at the same time, and the secretive characters who can read their texts in a different way each time turn this tale into a meta-fiction that is “completely, integrally plural, reversible, and frankly indeterminable” (Wasserman, 1981: 81) in sound and sense.

This is a work of art the theme of which is the work itself. The reader is referred not to the external world but to the story itself. If we read it as it deserves, we will observe the figure that James promises is integrated to it. For this purpose, we should take it on our trust, should believe in its logic and discourse, should consider it, meditate on it, and develop its sense and feeling in our inward life. If we read it closely and sincerely, and critically believe in it, we start to think more privately and penetratingly: a decisive agent takes mission in us to support our lucid desire, we begin to find our way through his oeuvre, and knowledge starts to get established in us, we witness the formation of an intruding insight in us, our curiosity gets deeper, and an unknown agent in our consciousness starts producing meaning. However, no ultimate figure is integrated to this story. Its figure is the work itself that is for reading and perusal. If we read it as it deserves, we refuse to get satisfied of our pellucid desire for more knowledge, but start to search more closely for its main secret.

This work is a meta-narrative the point of which is at least the structure of the fiction of James. It is a tale of the structuration of the tale. A. J. Ward says,

Implicit in James’s three-fold standard of excellence is the assumption that experience is most fully revealed when it is made lucid—that is, coherent (Ward, 1965: 420).

If a literary work is successful in the coherence and lucidity of its experience, as a treasure of ideas it should be so rich that it gives both pleasure and knowledge to the reader. Also, every part of it should be intimately connected to every other part, and no part should be irrelevant. Such a work illustrates its subject so organically that

every single idea is logically related to other ideas. Ward argues that the fiction of James mingles neoclassicism with romanticism. In his work the logic and law of the neoclassical literature give place to the romantic freedom and growth. The romantic imagination, that is rather wild and always overwhelming the work, loses its spontaneity and becomes subordinate to the neoclassical restriction. The work of James shows a compromise between the neo-classical methodism and the romantic organicism. This bipolarity is quite clear in James's oeuvre. He is effectively inclined to expand the use of fancy and imagination on the one hand and training and education on the other. Also, the inseparability of form and content in his work, and the subordination of form to content, is the meaning of a full dynamism. However, the dynamism of his fiction is inwardly rather than outwardly. The priority of method and the play of free imagination support the possibility of an objective and interpretable but a not an easy-going content that is integrally solved to a round, pluralistic, and flowing structure with numerous slots and centers. In the fiction of James, such structure is an aftermath of unlimited language pigeon-holes, and guarantees the emergence of opposite discourses.

Mas'ud Zavarzadeh suggests that for producing meaning, the readers "naturalize" the narrative text. "Naturalization" incapacitates the reader to decide if the text is ill-formed or well-formed. So, an intimacy develops between text and reading and reading becomes more productive, because instead of thinking about the form of the text, the reader engages himself with producing meaning. An important part of contemporary fiction is meaningful but ill-formed. However, Zavarzadeh says "In fact it is through their seeming ill-formedness (non-belonging) that innovative narratives challenge the existing modes of intelligibility and eventually modify them" (Zavarzadeh, 1985: 610). In this context, it can be suggested that James's story is incompatible to the narrative forms before him, that his narrative does not belong to the logic of literary understanding before him. An aspect of such incompatibility in this story is that it is strongly self-referential, while another one is that it represents a perpetual absence. In each reading, James's story invites us to undertake new searches. What it highlights is always lacking.

For naturalizing this text the reader should cancel traditional modes of narrative analysis, including plot, characterization, setting, conflict, and denouement; for in each of these components, this story goes to an opposite direction. The author is obsessed with curiosity not only about the situation of current fiction but also about the possibility of critical reading in modern times. On the one hand, he anxiously wants the reader to learn the lessons of his ancestors and to consider the habits and norms of reading. On the other hand, this story is fully inquisitive, and is different from traditional fiction. Through curiosity, inquisitiveness, and difference, James is offering new fields of exploration for the modern author, and new styles of criticism for the reader.

“The Figure in the Carpet” is a tale-making search. It is the tell-tale search where we read the story of an unusual search namely how searching can be the structure of a story. And the fact that the cause of the search is always absent, escaping, centrifugal, and always other than what we may search for, makes it an example of the innovative narrative that is incompatible with previous laws of narrative coherence. In addition, the numerous physical movements of its characters suggest that they cannot centralize their searching maneuvers. Like a spiral, the act of searching leads to increasing circles while it increasingly expands; and like a real broadcast, the story is always intruding, reaching, and always unfaithful to the past and bent to the future.

In the traditional fiction, there was equilibrium between the narrative logic and the interest of the average reader. This would fulfill the expectations of the romantic and the bourgeois societies and provided poetic justice. The general readership expected that the narrative conflict be solved to the benefit of the stronger force or the better side. But in James’s story the conflict is between two human attributes, or preferably two modes of intelligibility. The writer of fiction creates a world where unreal people do unreal things. Virtuality as such makes it appealing to the imagination of the reader, and by transferring its values to him, changes him to a more cultured citizen. Fiction is inclined to map out the ideals and dreams of the reader and control his ideology. Although he knows that what he is reading is fiction, he believes in what the characters say and do. This is because the world of fiction intrudes into his consciousness, suspends his disbelief, and overshadows his world. Such a submissive

reader fully agrees with the discourse of the text and accepts its norms and values. So, any two-way communication is not established between them, for the narrative discourse is intrusive while the reader is submissive. This kind of reading is naïve and unproductive, and leads to no new knowledge. But the fiction of James is not for submissive or naïve reading, but is for critical reading that is productive. "The Figure in the Carpet" is not representational, and shows no clearly represented world. Also, it does not appeal to the disbelief of the reader<sup>2</sup>. If it did, the reader would not be expected to do the "devilish difficult" job of finding the secret of Vereker's book.

Such a reading is rebellious and centrifugal; and, to speak with Zavarzadeh again, is inclined to "eclipse the signified," and to "background" (Zavarzadeh, 1985: 621) it. As a meta-fiction, this novella is a self-reflexive narrative art which displays the signifier and "thematizes narrativity." It sets up a "grammatological interrogation of intelligibility itself, especially the public intelligibility as appropriated and narrated in mimetic fiction" (ibid). Meta-fictional narrative carnivalizes the bar between the signifier and signified. Meaning is not regarded as self-present, self-identical, or self-evident. Rather, it is pre-causational; and is always lucid, relative, absent, and even non-existent. Meaning is not somewhere outside discourse, but is the sum total of the narrative. However, poststructuralist poetics does not search for human control over the process of signification in the text, because signification is only a process, rather than a product, which the text undertakes. Reading is an inspection for discovering the grounds of the authority of narrative, and for foregrounding its signification. But as the signified is backgrounded, the sign becomes escaping and intangible. This feature of the modern narrative increases its remoteness, secrecy, and open-endedness, and makes it difficult for the reader to discover patterns of signification.

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<sup>2</sup> Micheal Ryan argues that structuralism provides a productive way of reading literature, because contrary to the traditional schools of criticism in which literature was supposed as suspending the disbelief of the reader, a structuralist critic is curious to search for literariness of literature. He attempts to understand what literature is and how it works. He wants to discover what Ryan terms as "the manifest level and the latent level" of (literary) language. This means that he wants to understand language not only as every day speech but also as a system underlying it. To understand all this, a structuralist reader cannot suspend his disbelief. Instead, the institution of literature in general, and the literary text that he is reading in particular, is the main subject of his study on which he works not submissively but doubtfully and critically. Ryan says "If literature, as Coleridge claimed, requires a willing suspension of disbelief, Structuralist criticism requires a willing suspension of belief, a putting aside of that primary effect of any work of literature, which is our enlistment in its illusion or in its evocative language. Literature under such scrutiny ceases to work, but precisely what makes it work becomes by that very token more available for study (Ryan, 1999: 29).

A deconstructive reading shows how a text constantly re-structures itself. Now, can it untie the text? The play of the sign produces a huge network of references which no reading can closely control. As the signified is backgrounded, the figure is foregrounded. Therefore, reading is not for meaning, but is for figure, form, appearance. But if the figure is integrated into the carpet of the story, separating the figure from the carpet spoils both of them. “Backgrounding the signified” is a feature of the modern innovative story that adds much, to speak for Joseph Hillis Miller, to its “undecidability” or “unreadability.” Backgrounding the signified is a process through which the narrative “renders choice impossible and frustrates the reader’s expectations of a univocal, definitive meaning” (Rimmon-Kenan, 1980-1981: 186). However, in Miller’s deconstruction, this process guarantees textual relations and creates a strange portrait or figure that is unknown and unknowable. Miller says in the fiction of James such impossibility to know is “the logical impossibility of having both/and, of having something which is A and not A at once” (Miller, 1980: 110).

Miller denies that the reader of James’s story can make a definite suggestion about the nature of its figure. Therefore, “backgrounding the signified” makes it possible for this story to continuously retell itself, and a poststructuralist reading of it is a logical attempt for solving the problem of the limitless; the problem that perpetually renews itself. Miller calls this figure in James’s story, and in fiction in general, “catachresis”, which he says is

the name for that procedure whereby James uses all the realistic detail of his procedure as a novelist to name in figure, by a violent, forced, and abusive transfer, something else for which there is no literal name and therefore, within the convention of referentiality which the story as a realistic novel accepts, no existence. This something else is figure, design, the embroidered flower itself (ibid: 111).

Is this otherness, absence, or non-existence the figure of James’s story? Does the figure suggest the centrifugal or spiral signification? This kind of signification is the outcome of backgrounding signified which makes the story increasingly open-ended and the text inter-textual. It is a possibility for this text to dismantle the traditional modes of reading and to endlessly restructure itself.

Although Rimmon-Kenan maintains that Miller only nominally “replaces my notion of ambiguity by a notion of undecidability or unreadability” (Rimmon-Kenan, 1980-1981: 186), what the former calls ambiguity in James’s story is not, I think, the same as what the latter calls undecidability. The former says ambiguity is “the conjunction of exclusive disjunctions, or—in less technical language—the co-existence of mutually exclusive readings” (ibid). Ambiguity is a state in the modern fiction that renders choice impossible. But In *The Concept of Ambiguity: The Example of James* (1977) Rimmon-Kenan discusses it in more details. Ambiguity is the co-existence of contrary or contradictory concepts or statements. In a weak or inclusive ambiguity, one or the other or both of disjunctive statements are true, but in a strong or exclusive ambiguity either one or other of disjunctive statements, but not both of them, is true. She also differentiates between ambiguity on the one hand, and different forms of conjunction (multiple subjectivity, double meaning, multiple meaning, and plurisignation) on the other hand. She even offers a tentative formula for ambiguity: “ $a \cap b$ ,” when “a” and “b” stand for concepts or statements, and “ $\cap$ ” stands for “or” in a strong disjunction. It means that when two statements are strongly disjunctive, only one of them, but not both of them, is true. Her formula for conjunctive statements is “ $a \cdot b$ ,” when “ $\cdot$ ” stands for the meaning of “and.” This means that when two statements are conjunctive, both of them are true.

But for Miller, undecidability does not, as Rimmon-Kenan says it does, turn “from an impossibility of stating meaning to a statement of this impossibility as the meaning of this particular text” (Rimmon-Kenan, 1980-1981: 187). She takes it for granted that the meanings of the story destroy each other so that it has no ultimate meaning. But what Miller calls undecidability means a constant reversion of ground and figure. By backgrounding the signified and foregrounding the signifier, the narrative plays upon the reader and defers signification. Also, the text is rendered a vague painting. The constant reversion of figure and ground changes the text to an unreadable product in the foreground and background where figures are plural. Rimmon-Kenan believes in the impossibility of meaning in James’s story, but Miller believes in a procedure of undecidability or unnamability in modern fiction, which he says the fiction of James shows in figure. Miller calls this procedure “Catachresis.”

Catachresis is the figure of a procedure of unnamability in modern literature, the figure of something that has no literal name, and therefore no existence, the name of an elseness, otherness, or absence the representation of which is a key feature of modern narrative.

Here post-structuralism is characterized by a major difference with structuralism. Structuralism can achieve mastery over literature and demystify it. The meaning of a literary work is textual rather than transcendental, and the play of the sign in the text leads to a hierarchy of meanings. Deconstructionists also believe in no transcendental signified. They argue that literature is not scientifically approachable, for the signified is perpetually differed and deferred, which causes an undecidability of meaning. In a reply to an article by Rimmon-Kenan, Miller affirms that “deconstruction wants to show the impossibility of mastery” (Miller, 1980-1981: 190). In structuralism, modern literature does not refer to whatever which is other than itself but literally refers to itself. However, deconstruction ascribes a basic absurdity of reference in literature. Literature does not even refer to itself. Miller calls this unnamability, or this lack of referentiality catachresis. In addition, the findings of Todorov and Miller in James signify other aspects of structuralism and deconstruction. For the former, although the absolute cause of James’s fiction is always absent, it is in existence. For the latter, the possibility of the cause may be either absent or non-existent.

The approach of Peter W. Lock to James’s story is like the approach of the present chapter. For him “James’s novella remains a tissue of inexplicable events, even of absurdities, unless it is tackled as an exercise of production and interpretation” (Lock, 1981: 158). The narrator strongly seeks for the secret of the tale, but he does not find it. Reading is the result of a seeking desire for filling in a gap. But the hidden force in the enigma nullifies the seeking. It is a figure, a totality of relations, that re-enlivens the characters, makes their lives meaningful, and puts the searching force to work; and it is the force of seeking that provides the energy of concealment. The unknown figure is the principal “actor” in the narrative. If it takes the role of the protagonist, seeking takes the role of the antagonist.

“The Figure in the Carpet” as parody is another illustration for the cancellation of the seeking project. The narrator, on whose interpretive mission the readers inevitably

depend for understanding, is not qualified to accomplish the task he has taken. He eagerly puts all his energy into the project, but "shut up in my obsession forever" (James, 1947: 212), he is frustrated. For Peter Lock, James in this way ridicules the shallowness of modern literary criticism which has no functional connection with contemporary literature. But Lock admits that reading is not a hobby that we play only for pleasure. Therefore, although the secret of the tale is merely scriptural, and beyond the capacities of the non-named narrator, Corvick and Gwendolen are intelligent enough to undertake this searching mission. Corvick perhaps desires to fulfill what the narrator fails to provide. "The temple of Vishnu" which Corvick visits in Bombay, is, Lock says, "where the pieces fall into place, where the goddess is revealed" (Lock, 1981: 172). It is certain that Corvick's mission is accomplished. The goddess of Vishnu has already put his hand on him, for when the narrator goes to Chelsea, the first thing Gwendolen tells him is: "He has got it, he has got it!" (James, 1947: 199) Corvick cables from Bombay to the effect that he has understood the point of Vereker's story. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the narrative will expose its life-giving figure to all readers of varying degrees of understanding.

For blocking up signification, the story employs a superficial narrator who cannot realize the complicated play of the sign. The story also informs us about the death of three characters that have important communicative roles. Lock expresses this formula in this way: "Vereker dies after transmitting the secret to Corvick, who dies after sharing it with Gwendolen; and the secret dies with her" (Lock, 1981: 173). Communication is conditional, problematic, procrastinated, even aborted. When a character knows a secret that the others do not know, and he is asked for knowledge, he either remains silent or makes revealing the secret a conditional business. For example, when Vereker passes the secret on to Corvick, Corvick is resolved to transfer it only after he has had it validated by the supreme authority. Also, soon after Corvick transfers the secret to his wife he dies; and Gwendolen repulses the narrator's attempts to extract the secret from her.

Hugh Vereker wants to reveal the secret of his story to no person. Corvick, too, who can get at the secret only through suffering the violence of critical reading, will reveal it to Gwendolen only after their marriage. But soon after their marriage, and

after sharing the secret with his wife, he dies. In addition, with the death of his wife, the secret also dies, for she shares the secret neither with the narrator nor with Drayton Dean who is her second husband. Now, in such a space of severe reservation, what does initiation mean? Critical reading, insofar as it goes forward on the verge of the unknown, is initiation. This kind of criticism is deconstructive, for it looks forward to shock the current structures of coherence and establish new modes of understanding. For producing knowledge, critical reading requires deeply to gear all talents of the reader to the text so that he shares in the reproduction of it. Criticism is initiation only after reading imposes on the critic, as it does on Corvick, “an absence of some length and a journey of some difficulty” (James, 1947: 197).

To be productive, criticism should formulate the patterns of cognition. It should be a reflection on the literature of a whole period that has formed the ideology of the reader, and should stimulate the lucid and durable experiences of his life. Yet, can the reader perceive the whole experience of story? We read in the story that the figure is quite concrete. All the images in that context suggest that it is real and concrete. However, the narrative will reveal its figure only to the reader who tackles the sign captured in the context. The function of the figure in this hypertext is like the function of our heart. By circulating the blood of meaning in the whole body of the text, the figure does two services: on the one hand, it guarantees the life and movement of the verbal sign. On the other hand, it makes it vulnerable to the initiative search. Therefore, the figure is not a question of form, but is a question of life; for without it Vereker would not write the story. It is something inexpressible for the expression of which James employs all the advantages of language in his own style. For Vereker, the figure is neither a secret of knowledge nor a secret of science, but a secret of language, of art.

As Leo B. Levy quotes from F. O. Matthiessen, this story “was designed as a plea for ... mature criticism” (Levy, 1962: 457). Part of Levy’s article discusses the awkwardness of James’s situation as a writer of fine and complex intentions faced with readers and critics singularly unequipped to respond to any but the simplest works. But in the narrator, who is numb with inability to realize the figure, James illustrates the odd numbness of the general sensibility of his own time. The critical

history of this tale shows that many critics have had problem with reading it. In this context, a question is how this structure of ambiguity was to ground the development of critical appreciation. It is clear that James was not satisfied with the current critical modes and was anxious to offer new approaches. But what role could this story play in this regard? And why were literary scholars fully absorbed in it and reacted widely to it? Levy also mentions R. P. Blackmur's opinion in this regard: "it would seem actually, as written, to mean no more than that there is a figure in the carpet if you can imagine it for yourself; it is not there to discover. ... Or it may be that the figure in the carpet is necessarily ineluctable; perhaps it only ought to be there" (Levy, 1962: 457-458). The figure is quite objective. But it is also equally subjective and personal. The question is not about the function of the figure, it is about the identity of it. Todorov affirms that the essence of James's fiction is a cause that is at the same time absolute and absent. In line with this argument, the present paper is attempting to discuss this story as an illustration of a game of hide and seek. If the answer to the question above is positive, the figure embodies a process the components of which are quite heterogeneous. These components are at once in promotion and in demotion, becoming but also unbecoming. Can this bipolar movement of the sign be considered both as the formation of different modes of understanding and the abortion of them? To put it another way, the figure is the design of our historical consciousness and historical oblivion. It is the structure of the historical rise and demise of our cognition. Such a structure is a real possibility for the continuation of narrative art.

For Levy the figure is both abstract and personal. Structure is the sum total of relations in the interior of the story that make it into a systematic language product. Levy says that for James such an abstract and internal system is the marriage point of intention and design. Form is not divisible from content. Form is not the means that a story needs for carrying the meaning. It is part of the meaning. The sum total of such formal features, added to James's idea that the figure in the carpet is personal, provides the ground for the absurdity of any unitary ultimate interpretation for the story. The symbolic code frees both the text and the act of reading from established norms, and transfers them to the domain of the plural, the lucid, and the liberal. A totality of internal relations is integral to the life of the text. Such a text structures a

system that is potential to generate many subsystems. In this way, the fact that modern criticism admits of no ultimate interpretation, makes “The Figure in the Carpet” into a fantastic fiction that is always open to restructuring.

For Levy, however, the figure is, among other things, an illustration of obsession in search of meaning. It exemplifies how the narrator is defeated in his search for meaning. He gets no critical authority and the reader does not trust in him. This story shows James the literary analyst, or James the grammatologist, outrunning James the novelist. The new extensions of formal resources excite James to create a narrator in whom the character and reader cannot trust. After Vereker dies, Corvick is the sole possessor of the figure in the carpet. But why does Corvick pass it on only to his wife? Why doesn't he publicize it? Why is the narrator insistently restricted from knowing the secret? Why does the narrative block its knowledge? The narrator and Corvick's wife are quite eager in their search for the secret. But what they display is, to speak for Edward Recchia, their “personal narrowness that renders them incapable of ever really knowing it” (Recchia, 1973: 364). Could it be that the literary experience displayed in this story is incompatible to current taste? Or that searching for something and hiding it complement each other? That the energies of hiding and searching originate from a same source, and they necessarily create and nullify each other? That enlightenment and oblivion are congruous in the underlying structure? That truth innately identifies with untruth? The figure is quite abstract. It is beyond the narrator, Drayton Dean, and even Gwendolen Erme, although she is a successful novelist. The figure symbolizes a “right combination” of all intricate elements of the work in the mind of the reader. The structure of the narrative is not the product of text, but is the product of reading, for only the critical mind of the reader is structure-making. Structure is not something concrete that is already there in the text. But if the figure is concrete, it is our mind that concretizes it, that searches and constructs it. Out of mind there is no figure, no structure. This claim is certified by the difference between the narrator who fails in his job and Corvick who discovers the figure. Although the narrator does not have enough love and courage to carry out his job, Corvick loves structure and actively searches for it, for communion, for life. With his achievement, literary imagination becomes authorized to inspect many regions of the life of man that have ever been closed to

him. If Levy is right when he says the figure is a pattern of "psychic impotence" (Levy, 1962: 463), what Corvick does typifies a structure-making diagnosis.

#### **IV. Story for Thinking and Interpretation**

With the beginning of the third millennium, narratology has not died out. On the contrary, in the profusion of all the models of narrative analysis, which David Herman calls "postclassical narratologies," narrative is discussed from no single perspective, but is totally analyzed as a field of interpretation. Such models are quite personal and diversified. In the remaining part of this chapter, the application of two of these models to James's story will be discussed which render it a field of interactive thoughtfulness. Postclassical narratologies build on the classical models. Notwithstanding, postclassical narratology is not the same as post-structuralist theories of narrative, for the former uses new methods of research and raises new hypotheses and questions which the latter did not use. In application also, the former shows the limits and deficiencies of the latter.

To offer new and different ways of reading stories, postclassical narratology re-thinks and re-evaluates the methods, subjects, and questions of such stories. In the classical modes of analysis, the researcher would describe the grammar, the poetics, or the rhetorical features of a text. In the grammatical model, she would search for the langue of the narrative fiction (like the works of Propp, Bremond, Greimas, Levi-Strauss, Todorov, and Barthes), in the poetical model, she would search for the techniques of fictional representation (like the works of Booth and Genette), and in the rhetorical model, she would search for the function of the linguistic meditation in extracting the meaning and effect of the work (like the work of Jakobson and the Anglo-American New Criticism). But recent developments in cognitive science, linguistic pragmatics, and discourse analysis have helped the classical models of narratology develop interactive dimensions of a single program for narrative analysis under the general title of postclassical narratology. This is much wider than the classical models and includes more trends of theory and criticism. For example, what in the Greimas model comes under the term "actant," which he uses for characters, in the postclassical model is examined as the role of a behavioral perspective in a socio-

cultural context. Also, postclassical narratology pays more attention to the reader's response, whereas in the classical models the role of the audience is rather disregarded.

To reconsider the character of stories and provide new ways for reading and analyzing them, Emma Kafalenos undertakes a research in which "function analysis" (Herman, 1999: 14) is significant. She focuses on the "event" and "sequence" in the narratives to describe how they are different from other kinds of discourse like arguments or descriptions. A description is a sequence of propositions which recount no event, but a story is a sequence of propositions used to recount events which themselves occur in a particular temporal sequence. In this position, James's story can be analyzed as a tool for thinking, for it employs the narrator for undertaking a reviewing job which he cannot do. By the time we have finished reading James's story, the secret of Vereker's story has not been revealed. By suppressing this secret, the story excites the recipient to interpret the discourse. This event is represented in a way that it loses its "eventness" and becomes, to speak with Herman, only "a function of the sequence in which it inheres and the sequence taking its identity from the events that constitute it" (ibid). The verbal event does not complement the action but necessarily complements the verbal structure of the narrative. Herman admits that by "sequence" Kafalenos means both the sequence of actions and a sequence of interpretation that is attached to the primary event-sequence. Such an opaque language event, that has been disjunctured from its primary function, signals further developments in the postclassical poetics of narrative. The narrative action is analyzed as in the service of language. The story is not for exploring a certain meaning but is a space of reading and interpretation, a tool for thinking, because it is the perspective of the perceiver, not of the doer, that is more genuine. When Kafalenos acknowledges that her purpose, like the purpose of Barthes in *S/Z*, is "to remain attentive to the plural as a means to subvert univocal readings" (Kafalenos, 1999, 33), it becomes clear that she wants to elude epistemological closure and situate prose literature on the route of critical interpretation.

Another aspect of Kafalenos's model of narratology is her discussion of "sjuzhet" and "fabula." In traditional models of narratology, in Russian formalism, for example,

or in the early structuralism, fabula was the sum total of events in their logical or chronological order, and *sjuzhet* was the sum total of the same events in the order of their representation. The former was the basic story stuff and the latter the representation of it. But she defines fabula as the “construct that the reader makes from a *sjuzhet*” (Kafalenos, 1999: 37). Here also she ascribes the construction of the fabula not to the giver of the narrative but to its perceiver. This displacement marks a change in the focus of attention, “from the Formalists’ issues,..., to epistemological issues that can fruitfully be pursued” (ibid).

Kafalenos draws upon Propp’s discussion of the structure of the Russian fairy tales in *Morphology of the Folktales* (1968). She also draws upon Todorov’s cyclical pattern of movement in the story in *Poetics of Prose* (1977) where he defines a story plot as a move from balance to imbalance and back to balance again. However, her model involves considerable adaptations. Of Propp’s 31 functions, she selects only 11 which “name stages in the segment of the cycle that extends from imbalance to equilibrium” (ibid: 40-41). These 11 functions provide a vocabulary for talking about interpretations of causality. For example, in America the people are taught that the colors of the rainbow are red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet. These names of colors allow them to look at an object and interpret its color as, for instance, orange. Without such names for colors, they would not be able to interpret them. Similarly, a list of functions provides us with the language that we need for interpreting a particular event. About Todorov’s pattern, although she believes that it helps the analyst to determine the degree of completeness of a plot, in determining its shape it has not any role. Instead, she interprets the narrative events retrospectively, according to their consequences and in relation with other events in the configuration. Thus, she assigns the act of interpretation not to the author but to the reader, to the characters on the basis of whose participations he views the narrative world, and to the people who interpret the events in our world.

In addition, she draws upon Rimmon-Kenan’s analysis of ambiguity in “The Turn of the Screw.” Rimmon-Kenan considers two reasons for ambiguity in this story. One is that we cannot believe in the narrator’s perceptions, for what he says is not independently confirmed. The other is that the story shows both “singly directed

clues” and “doubly directed clues,” while the first kind of them support only one hypothesis and contradict its alternative, but the second kind of them support both alternatives. After acknowledging the validity of Rimmon-Kenan’s analysis, Kafalenos suggests a third reason for ambiguity in James’s story: the “permanently suppressed pieces of information that the introductory framing section has given us reason to assume will be revealed” (Kafalenos, 1999: 45-46). By deferring information, the discourse produces some gaps which the reader will fill in later on when the tale provides enough data. However, there will remain gaps in the tale which will never be filled in. She focuses on the epistemological effects of such missing information in James’s tale. Such vacancies have certain inevitable results: they provide the ground for the reader’s interpretations. In addition, they affect the structure of the story provided in the consciousness of the receiver. Such structural ambiguities ground the configuration of the story by the reader, for depending on which configuration she draws, her interpretation will also change.

Narrative representations shape the reader’s configurations, and what the reader configures, shapes her narrative interpretations. As we read this story and configure the fabula, we interpret the events in relation to our configurations. As we read the story, the fabula grows moment by moment, and the sequence in which events are revealed affects our experience of reading. Also, the element of suspense, as the result of a permanent gap, arouses our desire, withholds our satisfaction, and grounds our diversified interpretations. In classical narratology, the reader would construct the fabula by arranging the chronological sequence of the events revealed in the text. But in postclassical narratology events are interpreted as functions in relation to the configurations established at the moments of revelation. Therefore, a story is a sequence of events and a sequence of interpretations indexed to the primary event-sequence.

Herman discusses a story as a tool for thinking and understanding. The abstract cognitive structure of a story and the material tracing of such a structure that is available in writing, speech, etc. make it possible for the reader to create reality through talking the story out, because telling stories helps us to make sense of our world. We humans experience the things in random and uncontrollable ways. But a

narrative system helps us to devise patterns for our cognition, and structure our experiences. Narrative makes it possible for the external realities of life to be embedded in the abstract structure that the reader makes of life. It structures our consciousness and gives shape to it. Herman also compares the text of a story with a chessboard. In a game of chess, each figure is a representational tool by which the player breaks the stream of experience into limited sections each of which has useable structures and is cognizable. Stories also help us to organize our experiences by enabling us to select from among a set of sequentially and concurrently available inputs, to process those inputs into divided chunks of experience with beginning, middle, and end, and then to base our further cognitive operations on these newly acquired experiences.

Also, we make and establish our identities through telling and reading stories. As we tell and/or read a story, we use a causal order to model the happenings of its world on the changes in nature, on the appearance of its participants, and on its recounted events. By representing a chronological sequence of events, the story establishes our identities over time. Outside of the story, the data are isolated, formless, and meaningless. But in the story, they are structured into "causal-chronological wholes" (Herman, 2003: 176). The story delivers the data in the form of causal networks whose components are systematic and interrelated. Stories also inaugurate a sense of heuristic judgment in us by which we can detect the causal relations among the things of our world, and cluster them in meaningful structures. Such heuristic insight has some additional uses also. On the one hand, it helps the story teller to safely leave the things unstated that would otherwise take far too much time and effort to spell out. On the other hand, it helps him learn to read and to make logical inferences of stories as elliptical and opaque constructions. Narratives provide models for our behavior in the virtual world they decode. This means that they introduce thought processes by which things and events are mentally modelled as being located somewhere in the world.

A further aspect of stories as tools for thinking and understanding is that they help us to connect the strange with the familiar. In other words, narrative is the domain where we decide what is real in our world, define and determine patterns for them, typify them, and through typifying, recognize them, and deal with them in better

ways. In the stories, we manage to have reasonable expectations of the outcomes of our life, for in the absence or failure of our expectations, we learn how to re-typify the criteria of coherence and reorient ourselves with new standards. Moreover, the occasion of a face-to-face communicative interaction that the story provides for us helps us to control the order of our behaviors. A story enables the participants in a conversation to collaborate on the accomplishment of extensive, multi-unit turns. Each time a participant turns her talk to the due of the talk of another participant, she prepares the grounds of interactive understanding through the exchange of perspectives. In this way, the story facilitates the creation of carefully structured and pre-planned discourses. The participants in the conversation reflect on the previous, the ongoing, or the possible experiences, and evaluate them.

## Chapter Five

### *The Wings of the Dove: A Search in the Play of Difference*

Modern man, for Baudelaire, is not the man who goes off to discover himself, his secrets and his hidden truth; he is the man who tries to invent himself. This modernity does not 'liberate man in his own being'; it compels him to face the task of producing himself."

(Michel Foucault)

#### I. The Problem of the Story

*The Wings of the Dove* is the illustration of deception exploiting reality to show and establish itself as truth. Kate Croy, an English girl, and Merton Densher, a journalist from London, are in secret love. They seem honest, but they are so moneyless that they cannot even marry. However, they hope that they can somehow alleviate their poverty and start an acceptable married life. Milly Theale, an American rich heiress who has no near kin and who is on vacation in Europe, is their friend. She has already visited Densher in New York, and is in secret love with him about which she remains silent throughout. But because of an unknown illness, she is doomed to die soon in Europe. In such a context, Kate's problem is how to take advantage of this situation to lawfully possess Milly's fortune after she dies. Merton, Kate's submissive lover, is a powerful lever in her hands, and a major part of the story is how she presses the lever to achieve her aim. On the one hand, she arranges to deceive Milly to think that Kate does not love Merton and will not accept his love. While on the other hand, when Milly is in her deathbed she arranges for her to know that Kate and Densher are in love and engaged to each other. Soon after Milly understands that she has been tricked, she dies. However, the other facet of the problem is that although at the beginning Merton's love for Milly is only a pretension or a craft made by Kate, in the course of their associations the pretense becomes reality. To say it another way, Kate's new problem is that in his love to Milly, Merton is no longer pretending, for he now really loves her. Before dying, Milly leaves a great fortune for him. Sometimes after her death, when Kate and Merton visit to talk about their marriage, it becomes clear that they will not marry: Merton will marry Kate without Milly's fortune, and

Kate will accept him only with it. Milly's power to choose to die frees her, in due time, from Kate's trick. In addition, the dove of the novel that she is, she is powerful enough to play a trick upon trickery. Merton does not want more than one love, and it is Milly's memory that he will love. This is why this story can be discussed as an illustration of pretension juxtaposing itself with reality and ousting it from power to establish itself as truth.

Concealment plays a significant role in this story. An example is provided in Lancaster Gate when Kate and Merton have to hide their love from her aunt because she and Mrs. Condrip disagree with their marriage, as they think that she should drop him in favor of Lord Mark who has also proposed to her. Another example is that Milly not only remains silent to the end about her illness, but also wants Kate to remain silent about it. Or when Lord Mark compares Milly to the Bronzino painting, the outstanding joylessness of the woman in the picture suggests Milly's unhappy heart and near doom. James uses the technique of pictorial representation to change the state of Milly's mind into an enacted play. But how is the picture of her mind? Her mind is shown at the same time under the influence of two forces: a force of concealment and a force of clearness, a power of silence and a power of salience. She remains silent not only about her illness, but also about her love for Densher. But when she bursts into tears, it is as though there is a clearing force in it. In this way, the reader of this story is also expected to discover how her mind is projected onto our understanding. Percy Lubbock argues that James's method is,

“Not to walk straight up to the fact [of Milly's mind]<sup>1</sup> and put it into phrases, but to *surround* the fact, and so to detach it inviolate—such is Henry James's manner of dramatizing it. ... Skirting round and round them, giving one brief sight of her in eloquent circumstances, then displaying the all but untroubled surface of her thought on this side and that, the author has encompassed the struggle that is proceeding within her, and has lifted it bodily into the understanding of the reader” (Lubbock, 1954: 176-178).

Why does Kate think what she has done with Milly is “fair”? She begins her “wonderful system” when she is loved by Densher. But she has neither a good father

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<sup>1</sup> My adding.

nor a good fortune nor a good social life. In addition, she feels unhappy because she knows that she must depend on men: firstly on a father and then on a husband. Therefore, she sets out eagerly for canceling her present situation and establishing a new system.<sup>2</sup> Milly has lost all her close relatives. When she meets Densher in America, he starts a relation with her and links her to Europe. Therefore, she comes to Europe with considerable fortune, while she has almost no one to love. Also, she is handicapped by an unknown illness of which she ultimately dies. But she is limitlessly free. Densher is also without resources.

A great part of the book represents Kate's endeavor to exchange Densher's love with the fortune of the American girl whom she thinks no one loves, so that, as it seems, Milly may experience love before her death, and [Kate] herself develop her social life, and live happily with her Densher. He is Kate's secret lover, but she says by arranging the marriage of Milly to Densher she wants to make her happy. But Milly's happiness is not her sole purpose, because as she knows that she will shortly die, she also wants to find a lawful way to possess her money through Densher. For the possibility of a happy life for both of them, she intends to give Milly the power of love and to take from her the power of money. But she can do so only through Densher with whom both of them are in love. However when he realizes that money is more important for Kate than love, he annuls her plans, and the problem gets more complex. To test Kate, and also to treasure the memory of Milly's love, he offers Kate to live with her but only without Milly's money. But Kate will not accept him like the poor man he has been so far. In the very last sentence of the novel we read: "We shall never be again as we were" (James, 2004: 711).

The method of the present chapter is mainly deconstructive. It hypothesizes that in *The Wings of the Dove* language works at the same time both for revelation and prevarication. This novel is like a well-wrought urn that realizing its whole artistry at

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<sup>2</sup> In his *The Themes of Henry James: A System of Observation through the Visual Arts*, Edwin T. Bowden discusses further backgrounds for Kate's movement. He points to "the sordid background" of her life with her father and sister as compared to "the splendid background" in her aunt's house. To speak for Bowden, "Here she finds wealth and luxury, and a correspondingly massive art, that makes the rooms of her father and sister seem even uglier and more sordid." A shameful feeling of poverty versus a feeling of "dire accessibility" makes her deeply conscious, not of a human crisis but of a social tension. It is also under the influence of this social tension that she sets out for the promotion of her life. Bowden says she "derives not from some overwhelming inherent evil but from the sharp contrast of beauty and ugliness, of wealth and poverty, acting on a certain moral weakness" (Bowden, 1956: 88-89).

the first glance it is often very difficult. However, this does not mean that it can be approached only formalistically. One can analyze it deconstructively also. Mary Cross says,

James's struggle for an organic unity in his fiction can seem merely quaint and naïve, a relic of an age of faith in logocentrism, now deconstructed. Yet, while James was hardly aware of Derrida's concept of deconstruction, the style he developed for his fiction reflects in an uncanny way his attempt to overcome some of the problems deconstruction has now revealed as inherent to language (Cross, 1993: 4).

Therefore, the present chapter attempts to read *The Wings of the Dove* in the light of deconstruction. It intends to discuss the problems that twentieth-century deconstruction believes are inherent in language and which the fiction of James has tried to solve. The poetic language of this novel is surely the most solid ground for a deconstructive analysis. For doing this, this chapter undertakes a research in the play of difference in the novel. It attempts to describe what language does in this text, and to find out how it cancels its own structuration. The "successive centers" of the story is a dramatization of numerous registering powers which implies the existence of several points of view in each of which language is used as a multi-leveled system of difference. If, as Cross quotes from James, a sentence is a "picture of relationships" (ibid: 29), a deconstructive study of fiction celebrates the relations of signs, for no word in a sentence possesses a core of meaning, but the meaning arises from the relations of the elements of the whole sentence or even a whole paragraph.

Thus, to solidify the idea of the present chapter, I will draw upon the Saussurian linguistics which sees the work of language as arbitrary and autonomous. In the fiction of James, the signifier is "unmotivated." It is endowed with no power to represent something in the real world. So, it can be confirmed that in the fiction of James language works both for registration and cancellation at the same time. Story is a proper field for the activity of language which is meaningless out of context. Language is a system that works through difference and relation. Derrida took the Saussurian project a step further and showed that in the realm of the sign, "play" leads to an unstoppable opposition of signifiers. The present chapter argues that

although James had perhaps no idea of the Derridean concept of deconstruction, he was aware of such problems and tried to solve them in his own way.

Literary critics have read the fiction of James in traditional models also. In such models, language would refer not to itself, but always to something out of itself. And it had only one level of meaning. The sign would move in a closed circle, and the story would have clear and decisive influences. On this one level, *The Wings of the Dove* is the story of its main characters. They are psychological identities who pursue their happiness in their own ways. The story is a document of their tensions, and a report of the resolution of their conflict.

But the fiction of James has been read in modernist and postmodernist models also. In such models of criticism, the main purpose of reading is not to understand what happens to characters of the story but what happens to language. Language in James is strongly multidimensional, and the play of the sign, highly open-ended as the story is, often leaves the reader in a critical dilemma where no either-or resolution is provided but the story is suggestive of a full spectrum of different meanings. However, another dimension of language in James is its power of prevarication, of deterioration. Thus, the purpose of this second mode of analysis of James's fiction is to clarify representation in language. Sign differences not only structure the story and give meaning to it, but also deconstruct it for hiding the truth. Thus, every thing in the story, including the characters and incidents, is only a shade, a mirage, or an imagination. At the end of the story the reader feels as if nothing has happened, because by the time it comes to a final resolution, which is itself a subject of deep doubt and refutation, the deteriorating agencies of language have already eliminated its structuring energies.

To achieve this purpose, the present chapter attempts to discuss *The Wings* not thematically but mainly stylistically, from the perspective of the working of language. I will argue that the working of language not only structures the narrative but also at the same time de-structures it. This novel is a language space, and we read it as a double style of revelation and elimination. For clarifying the laws of this double mechanism, I will intend to examine the laws both of signification and deterioration. In this story, language is in the service of deconstruction, and I will zoom in on the

radical syntax of James to illustrate language in the business of deception. I will also argue the application of “difference” in this work, and talk about how “trace” functions in the collapse of signification. James unlocks the established syntax of the English language to spread meaning all over the sentence in order to give it a strong sense of relativity.

Many critical researches have been done on the style of James. To solidify the idea of the present chapter, let us describe some of them. A. J. Ward’s *The Search for Form: Studies in the Structure of James’s Fiction* (1967) is an investigation into the form of some of James’s works, including *The Wings of the Dove*. This work proposes two theses. The first has to do with James’s ideal of shape and the second with the organic development of the “germ,” the idea that “most of James’s structures are determined by logical and spatial conceptions of relationship rather than chronological ones” (Ward, 1967: viii). In *The Later Style of Henry James* (1972), Seymour Chatman discusses, among other things, the sources of a strong sense of intangibility in James’s fiction which provides a solid ground for equivocation and undecidability. Chatman attempts to document James’s stylistic characteristics and to define the features of his style. Among his stylistic features are abstractness and complexity, sources of nominalization like psychological verbs, the structure of cleft sentences, elements of colloquialism, and metaphor. In addition, in *Henry James: The Contingencies of Style* (1993) although Mary Cross holds a “neo-Barthesian” position, she is faithful to the convention of New Criticism. She approaches the novel formalistically, and reads it closely. But to find new ways for describing the function of language, she reads it also in the light of the ideas of Barthes, Derrida, and de Man. Finally, in *Literature as Conduct: Speech Acts in Henry James* (2005), J. Hillis Miller reads James in the light of Speech Act Theory. He claims that his book “explores the relations of literature to conduct by reading Henry James’s work” (Miller, 2005: 2). A superior aspect of the fiction of James is that speech is a form of doing. A speech act is “an utterance that does not name something but makes something happen” (Miller, 2005: 2). In a work of fiction, uttering a speech (a promise for example, a declaration, or a lie) is conducting life by putting things in words. Speech acts may be undertaken in three forms: when an author performs an act of writing, when a narrator or a

character utters a speech, and when a reader, in the act of teaching or criticizing a piece of literature, puts it into words.

But what in the speech act theory solidifies the idea of the present chapter is the thought known under “deconstruction.” This strand is supported by Miller, Derrida, and others. We use the performative power of language to do things with words. However, to know the full meaning of what we do with language is impossible. Thus, it is impossible to bring together the performative and the cognitive functions of language. For Derrida this performative aspect is associated with what he calls the “other” of language. This “other” implies that deconstruction does not suspend reference in language, but implies that it is concerned with the “other” of language. Miller confirms that “A performative speech act for Derrida, is a response to the call of this wholly other. A performative calls or invokes, while at the same time itself being called. It is a use of language `to give a place to the other, to let the other come`” (ibid: 10).

## **II. From Formalism to Structuralism and Post-Structuralism in James**

James the critic defended the same principles that he practiced in his fiction. His critical vision focused on the relations between art and artist, art and life, art and ideals, and art and morals. He applauded literature that was tightly composed, that showed the author achieving difficult effects through mastery of technique, and that required the reader’s close attention. He believed that without form a novel is not a work of art, and this is, I suspect, an aspect of his formalism. He also considered a story as the structural manifestation of a selective and discriminating consciousness. A narrative is a meaningful communication between its giver and its taker. It is a space of interaction between a giver of data and its taker in the form of telling and listening both of which are cultural activities. This is why James ascribes special significance to the act of narrating. However, although the written (dead) body of the story is already there in the book, it will take on soul only in the action of reading when the giver and taker of narrative are resurrected to partake in meaningful interactions. Another dimension of James’s formalism is the significance of point of view in his stories. In his last phase, he showed little interest in authorial omniscient points of view but

showed strong inclination to apply indirect and limited points of view of “unreliable” narrators. This implies also the “death of the author” and the increasing role of the receiver (the reader) of narrative. It is neither on the writer’s draft nor in the character’s mind, but in the consciousness of the reader that the story finally and meaningfully comes into existence.

Such a reader-oriented conception of narrative has caused the reader to be considered not only as the receiver of the story but also as the producer of it, that is, as a structure-making agent. From this perspective, the story is not designed for a naïve unproductive reading, but is for producing new meanings through critical interpretation. No tailor recommends the use of a thread without a needle or the use of a needle without a thread. In the same way, in the fiction of James the subject and treatment, or the story and novel, cannot be separated from one another. Another facet of his formalism is that in a novel he sees close connections between the moral sense and the artistic sense. James says "morality in a novel stems not from consciously implanted ideas but from the whole cast of the artist’s informing consciousness" (Kreiswirth, 1994: 423). Morality is not a didactic question, but is an aesthetic one. To achieve such an aesthetic goal, James creates a world of illusion with which he deeply involves his readers.

Before the appearance of "The Art of Fiction," subjects like realism and romance, realism and naturalism, fact and fiction, and art and science dominated discussions of the art of novel. But with the publication of it, there started a high wave of formalistic studies on the fiction of James. The scholars started to focus their attention seriously on ideas like representation, point of view, the relations between content and form, subject matter and technique, life and art, and narrating in fiction. This means that James highlighted the technique or form of a literary text as much as its life or content. Thus, we can analyze his fiction formalistically. But in highlighting the relationships between art and life, he problematized them also. On the one hand, a novel is a representation of life. On the other hand, it originates from life, for it is supposed that if the idea of it is granted to the novelist, he develops it into a beautiful piece of art. This double relation between life and fiction is another manifestation of

James's formalism. In his world, the moral sense cannot be divided from the aesthetic sense, because they mingle in the mind of the producer.

But the fiction of James can be analyzed structurally and post-structurally also. A structuralist reader wants to find out how the text under his investigation works. He attempts to find a key with which to open and demystify the world of the text. He discovers its symbolism, its design, and its profound thought, and concerns himself with its formal and thematic innovations, and with its incredible images, fantastic characterizations, and wonderful dramatizations. As he gets more experience of the working of its structure, it becomes more accessible to him, and his perplexity decreases.

A structuralist analyst of literature conceives of it as the outcome of the content and style of a text. He connects these components together and produces new meanings. Such a reader is concerned with the "patterns" of the text; and as patterns convey its meaning, he generates still new thoughts. Therefore, in this mode of literary analysis, creating a pattern is essential, because the text is like a labyrinth, but the pattern helps him to find his way through it and realize how it contributes to produce meaning. A literary text is a goal-oriented, dynamic, and understandable system every part of which is in logical relations to every other part. And structuralism helps the analyst to realize how the text structures itself.

A process of differentiation is also seminal, a process which allows the reader to realize the infusion in the text of form and meaning as well as a number of linguistic and cultural structures. In the first stage of such a criticism, which is the stage of decomposition or disintegration, the reader breaks the whole text into a number of building blocks of meaning. However, in the next stage, the stage of re-composition or re-integration, he puts these blocks back together. But if in the process of interpretation he has been active enough, his work constitutes a text that is quite different from the original one. It is the language of the text, not the formal (or formalistic) aspects of it, that is of central importance. The analyst pays close attention to the structure of the relationships between writer and reader, writer and characters, and reader and characters. She thinks as to how these three voices are embedded in the text for the generation of meaning. In a structural analysis of the language of the text,

the reader participates in the production of an interpretive space where she can produce new meanings.

Structuralism hypothesizes that the unconscious laws of man's psychological life are similar to those of his social life. There is a similarity in underlying structures of our various activities like language, education, or sport. Thus, it is the relationship not the substance, the structure but not the concept, from which the meanings significantly emerge. The later phase of James's fiction can be analyzed in the light of such a theory of relationships. In the opening pages of his stories in this phase we should think about their methods of story-telling and differentiate them with his other works in this regard. In his works many facets of this structuralist shift are approachable. For example, the application of the logic of binary oppositions is that in his universe every discourse establishes itself in the evolution of an opposite discourse in the ground of which it ultimately comes to reunion with it also. What helps us to know (the mentality and intention of) Kate Croy is not her self as a detached identity but her relations with other characters like Milly and Densher. We know her in the context of what she thinks and does towards her external environment and the way she uses it to achieve her objectives.

However, this replacement of relationship for substance leads to a more significant shift. In structuralism a character is not a psychological entity, but is, as a noun, a ground for undertaking relations. We identify Kate in the space of her differences from those who are like her and in the space of her similarities with those who are different from her. Reading *The Ambassadors* structurally, we might try to construct patterns of how Strether attempts to transcend his consciousness. We can formulate a pattern for his behavior when he is in a dilemma if to accept or reject Mrs. Gostrey's (marriage) proposal. Accepting it, he will remain in Europe and live with her. But rejecting it, he will go back to his home land for the possibility of its cultural development. Also, we might attempt to design a paradigm of how the characters develop their consciousness not only of the other characters but also of the entire world.

However, post-structuralism attempts to show how the structuring rules of a text neutralize the notion of structure. Derrida argues that structuralism cannot demystify

the world, because through the cancellation of "play," "structure" implies the imposition of a fix and determining picture over the world. Thus, a post-structuralist critic analyzes a literary text to show failures and punctures in the functioning of structure. To do this, she might focus on the marginal acts of a major or minor character which violate the structure-making action of the story. In *The Wings of the Dove*, in response to Kate's malicious damages to Milly, she leaves a fortune for Densher as a token of love. This destroys the up-to-now dominant structure of the story and directs it to a new way, because it encourages him to prefer the memory of Milly to the love of Kate.

As another example, in the second part of *The Golden Bowl*, Maggie takes a complete role in the discourse. She deconstructs the discourse of her rivals and builds the house of the Jamesian fiction on a new structure. Thus, if in structuralism "structure" suggests a hierarchical organization that produces meaning, in post-structuralism, "rupture" cancels any ultimate and absolute meaning. In addition, the linguistic capacities of discourse prevent the formation of any univocal meaning. While structuralism guarantees that a literary text has a meaning, post-structuralism guarantees that there is no certainty about if a text can produce any absolute meaning. To give another example from *The Ambassadors*, to pass from innocence to experience, Strether must go through a labyrinth of puzzles. The most intractable uncertainties can be taken not for puzzles to be solved by the reader but for signals of the chaos of an ever-active consciousness that has been exposed to a dominant civilization, and as a result, has evolved beyond language to make us able to observe the other sides of existence also. If the object of Strether is freedom from a limited moralistic system, or if James wants to help us in a polygonal observation, different kinds of language innovations (like stylistic knots and grammatical intricacies) are for the freedom of the mind of the reader and (main) character from the laws of such a morality. The chaotic psyche of such a man, who has turned his back to a moralistically retroactive culture under the influence of a dominant civilization, enters a new state of being. It creates a decentralized universe, and generates meanings that are ambiguous, dislocated, multiplied, and plural.

As a post-structuralist, Foucault also discussed how the elements of knowledge could be organized together for the production of meaningful patterns. However, if structuralism was interested in patterns of language, Foucault was interested in patterns of discourse. He called such patterns of knowledge "discursive formations," which are concrete and have material effects. He was interested in the reasons of the present state of knowledge, in why knowledge has gone through such and such categorizations, in the source and legitimacy of such divisions, and in how knowledge divisions might be challenged.

Another part of his new historicism is a discussion of how the worldview is embodied in a literary work, and how its reader can understand the dominant values of the age of its production. New historicists do not view a literary work as an aesthetically autonomous or a formally complete object as New Critics thought it was. Instead, they connect it with the world beyond it, with the representational systems of culture which are undertaken outside of the text and from which the text originates. They argue that discourse and representation are influenced by history, and that literature, like the other kinds of discourse, is the result of a dynamic interchange in social life. Thus, new historical studies lay the ground for the entrance of art to human life, and for the insertion of the aesthetic experience into its entirety. On the other hand, as the aesthetic allows us to search out experience, new historicism is a useful mode of epistemological innovation through the study of discourse. In *The Golden Bowl*, what is the aesthetic role of Amerigo's wandering in the market place? What does Adam Verver attempt to collect those artistic objects in his gallery which he will transfer to "American City"? And what is the function of all those tea parties, card games, and other social activities in the space of which the characters come together and exchange viewpoints? Or, in *The Ambassadors*, how do Strether's interactions with Parisian life and language enable him to transcend his consciousness? New historicism is concerned with how we can grasp experience from the social life representations.

### **III. A Discourse with “Successive Aspects”**

The “law of successive aspects” frees the author from the necessities of any pre-determined or determining pattern, and allows the book to shift its centers more than one time. In *The Wings*, a point of view is transferred on the basis neither of the conventional laws of unity and/or consistency nor of the formula of James’s other novels. Instead, he changes it as the novel demands. In the preface to the novel, we read that he has intended it to show the play of the mind of those with “good taste” (James, 2004: vi). The idea of the novel is, for some reasons, quite oblique: (1) Although James introduces Milly as the protagonist, there is a major controversy whether she really is the protagonist. Dorothea Krook and Sherwood Anderson think like James, while Daniel Fogel considers the transformation of Merton Densher from innocence to a transcendent experience as the central concern of the novel. Amy Bloom considers Kate as “the least sympathetic protagonist” (Bloom, 2004: xvi). For Leo Bersani and Ruth Bernard Yeazell the novel has no central figure. Kevin Kohan rejects Krook’s idea of Milly as the present/absent “center” of the novel and as a figure of redemption. At the same time, he argues that the translation of Milly into a signifier of the absent is the novel’s key structural principle. For Kohan, the fate of Milly is James’s most deadly weapon against deception: “Merton is destroyed by the Milly signifier” (Kohan, 1999: 150). (2) Milly is presented in a situation that is vitally contradictory. At the outset, she is in possession of “freedom and money and a mobile mind and personal charm” (James, 2004: viii). But she is “condemned to die under short respite” (ibid: i). When she realizes that she has a short deadline to continue living and therefore has to “put” as much life in herself as possible, much is added to her problem. Now a question is why should she, as the (a) protagonist, be deadly sick? Does her sickness make her disqualified for her position? If yes, is her disqualification the meaning of the failure of which James admits the novel is in pain? Her sickness adds at the same time to the aspect of life and to the authority of truth in combat with deception, for if the “portentous” finds occasion to plot against life, life and truth find occasion more dynamically to combat with death and deception, and via this dynamism, to promote their positions in a process of becoming. The inseparability of life and the portentous makes the challenge of life and truth more dynamic. A secure

life can be static, inertial, dispirited, and exhausting. But life in danger of the portentous is a more dramatic endeavor for survival.

An aim of this chapter is to discuss how *The Wings of the Dove* structures itself around a central policy of absence and negation, and how the powers of absence generate meaning in a process of supplementation. "Half" of *The Wings* is the picture of a woman in catastrophe, the story of Milly who struggles to survive when she is doomed to die young. The other half of it conveys the experience achieved thereby: the vagaries of communication and recognition. Therefore, this chapter has a double load to carry: discussing the structure and function of a meaning-making absence and discussing the vagaries of recognition. In the novel we read that Milly "would found her struggle on particular human interests" (James, 2004: 5): she endeavors for the better of human soul through her perpetual absence and her impending death. Therefore, another aim of the present chapter is to read the novel as an investigation into the possibility of the promotion of mankind.

When Milly arrives in Europe from America, it is likely that she is in a secret love with Densher. But when she improves her relations with the people around her, if it is not mainly for the ideal good, at least it is in struggle against death also. However, some of these people, who know her death is impending, plot to lawfully possess her money after she dies. In the space of such a wonderful maze of relations, the story becomes plausible enough, for opposite forces come to the fore and different discourses get established. Out of this space, Kate would not attempt to possess Milly's fortune, Milly would not leave her fortune as a token of love to Densher, and he would not change the memory of the American girl with the love of the English. And the participation of the people around the American girl "becomes their drama too" (ibid), because as they take roles for and against the achievement of her desire, they make themselves known for the characters and reader. Such a labyrinth involves them with "rare questions" and "new discriminations" that constitute the very scheme of the story.

Whatever the main character is or would like to be, her future is of high value. This makes her life "dazzlingly livable" (ibid). James tells us in the preface that her "strong and special implication of liberty, liberty of action, of choice, of appreciation,

of contact” will make her into a "last fine flower ...of an 'old' New York stem, ... the heir of all the ages" (ibid: 6-7). If she is the flower of liberty that takes root from our past cultures, the story is an artistic representation of a clear dimension of the history of man: liberty on the verge of annihilation. The projected social situation and the conduct of the people in the story have something to do with its plausibility because it makes the reader forget that he is reading a story. Therefore, the task of the reader and writer is mainly representational: our participation in the formation of meaning.

*The Wings* is cognitive and psychological. A part of the present chapter is hermeneutic. But I think the reader of this novel should want to do more than one thing: to ‘watch its turns’ as a process of story-telling, to analyze how the people understand the discourse of other people, to understand how they think and feel and comprehend life, and to recognize how collective society makes sense of itself. James’s realism is perhaps peculiar even to himself, which makes reading his fiction more problematic: how this novel devaluates external deeds of the character, how it slows down the plot to reproduce it in the minds of characters, how the conventions of traditional narrative lose their significance, and how the descriptive mode in it is functional in decorations as well as in recognitions.

Yet, the act of composition guarantees the interest both of the reader and writer. The fictive truth is constitutional to the narrative discourse. Such a kind of truth is not necessarily in opposition with the real truth but is somehow integral to it. The logic of fictive truth may have some thing in common with the logic of appearance or deception. Truth seems not obedient to the logic of conventional causality, and is therefore not easily understandable. The performed action is not what the characters want to do, and it does not take root from what they would like the world to be. The reconstructed situations are not what the characters grasp. And the characters do not explain why the story takes a particular course of action. Instead, the action originates from a system of conventions that gives meaning to it. It is (the necessities of) narrativity, and certain effects that the author considers for narrativity, that determine what should happen in the story as well as how and why they should happen. In such a situation, even the author is not free, but is under the close impact of the narrative forces. When James says "a creature with her security hanging so by a hair, couldn't

but fall somehow into some abysmal trap" (James, 2004: 7), we realize the impact of narrative laws both on Milly and on himself.

If a law here is that the main character should be in predicament, it is vital that the story shows her as such; for otherwise, it will be "to pretend to enter the train, and still more, to remain in one's seat, without a ticket" (ibid: 8-9). This means that from all perspectives including plot and characterization, the Jamesian novel should stick to the conventions of fictive truth. All elements of the story are expected to contribute to its final effect. For achieving this purpose, the thinking subjects are in many situations unfaithful to social reality. In this way, the character also is granted a virtual personhood and recognition that he as an individual needs. Insofar as this interaction (the exchange of obedience and identity) goes between the society and the individual (or the social reality and individual imagination), the social contract is renovated. Under normal conditions, James secures himself a poetic license for the composition of *The Wings of the Dove*.

James admits that a full presentation of Milly's painful engagement with her situation would be impossible, for her engagement is "but half her case." The other half of (her) presentation is how the people around her are affected by her faith and problems. Thus, the author feels free to choose the half with which he should begin: to begin with his central character or with the people around her that he says would make her "circumference." In the preface we read that both of them are "equally" treatable. Then James narrows down the "circumvallations" and begins with his central character. He says that the free hand of story-telling is agreeable to him. Thus, he begins from as far as possible "behind the face of the subject" from which Milly is primarily "superficially so absent" (ibid: 10).

The idea of style is more important than the idea of meaning. For example, the writer of *The Wings* spends all his sources to make it into an effective and beautiful "house of fiction" that can be of fun as well, because it is free from the demands of serialization. Such a house is constructed with exactitude and with "successive centers" which have great impacts on the subject. The windows of this house, through which the reader looks at the far or near perspectives, are significant, for they are metaphorically, the points of view of the story. James insists that in the architecture

of this fictional monument, each building block should have its "weight and mass and carrying power" (ibid: 11). Carefully and attentively, and according to the plan that the builder has prepared in advance, he will put every block in its proper place. Although such a monument will be mechanical enough, every thing will stand in meaningful relation with other things, and nothing will be absurd or irrelevant. Its 'beauty' and 'effect' is the meaning of the causes and consequences of the law of "successive centers": multiplicity of the strongholds of narrativity, independence of each stronghold from the other ones, their logical dynamism, and a high possibility of their association and interaction. In each center of this house, a person with a different perspective stands to look through a new window in the forefront. He looks in a new direction and sees things different from what the other onlookers see. Beauty and effect is the outcome mainly not of the material of blocks but of the construction, of the architecture, of stylization.

An image activates the senses of the reader to see something, to feel it, smell it, hear it, touch it, and taste it in all of its paraphernalia. If a block of James's house is Kate, in what conditions does the novel show her to us? Ambivalent, arbitrary, and fascinating images run throughout the novel. We have overlaps of mental images that people have of each other. Ample images, while overlapping, are integral to Kate's metaphorical manufacture, and the atmosphere is such that these images will show themselves fully and roundly, like through a projector when the images move to show their sides and backs in shade and sun. The story uses images in this way for a more vital dramatization of bright and dark human features that escape the usual reader. However, in the Jamesian imagery, the logic of opposition (like in shade and sun) can assert a full collection of relations the characters may develop with each other. In the context of the relations of opposites, the viewpoints of the reader are repeatedly posed against those of the text. The text propounds numerous themes and subjects which the reader (interpreter) has to consider.

On the other hand, the reader brings many of his or her experiences into the text and asks it many questions which it should answer. Such a dialectic between two perspectives, which Hans-Georg Gadamer calls "the fusion of horizons," guarantees the improvement of our understanding and the invention of a proper language for a

dialogue between text and reader. Not only does somebody read the text, this somebody is read by the text also. Out of the language resources, the text and reader formulate a common ground for mutual understanding; that is, for the understanding not only of what the text means but also of what the reader understands of the text. A fusion of the languages of the text and reader, and the improvement of them through interaction, are the products of such an interpretive process. Thus, understanding is possible only in language, and the formation of such a language is an object of *The Wings*. The fiction of James is a proper space for the improvement of man's metaphorical understanding in verbal occasions. The secret of this language priority is its dialecticality. Each attendant in a dialectic (dialogue) belittles the viewpoints of the other attendant. However, through the abrogation of the belittled perspectives, new thoughts or feelings emerge and new horizons open to the reader and character. Yet, representation in the fiction of James is so exact that he even numbers his building blocks to give "a true enough picture" (James, 2004: 12) of his plan. This is not to mean that his productions are as complete as he may originally have wished them to be. Because, in *The Wings* for example, the ultimate construction of which he compares with its primary plan, he is regretful for "the absent values, palpable voids, the missing links, the mocking shadows" (ibid). While we read this novel structurally, we can also conduct useful comparisons between the ideal plan that James had for the story and the plan which he ultimately accomplished.

In the course of free metaphorical representation, each center of observation is successively examined, and one consciousness is demystified after another. Devising the method of selves like Kate, the story at the same time exhibits superimposing images to illustrate the many external influences upon her. For example, her "compromising" father is shown pervading her life, and "the general poisonous influence of him" (ibid: 13) is far beyond her control. He is shown as an indifferent father whose power of false pretension makes it possible for him to hide his deepest disappointment. But there is a new problem: his scene is so "beggarly" that he cannot be the point of any reference. However, a remedy is in store: "his poor word of honor has had to pass muster for the show" (ibid: 14). The solution James proposes for his problem is in the power of the word, in its performative or representative aspect. A

law of representation is that the *word* even of a beggarly man provides him with enough credit to take share in as magnificent a system as James may have envisioned it. Hillis Miller says the opposition here is between the saying and the deed, between “promising that you could bring something to light and actually doing it, actually ‘showing’ it” (Miller, 2005: 161).<sup>3</sup> A facet of representation is that we amply use the verbal resource to create virtual situations to which only the words give us access. James says that in the representation of Kate’s father, his outside is shown as jealous to his inside and his inside suspicious to his outside. If such oblique representations are to render him as the point of no reference, the verbal referent goes into nonexistence, and the verbal sign is left alone with no signified. However, as a centerpiece of conflict and doubt, he is a subject of dialogue between opposite perspectives, a subject of hermeneutic negotiation the result of which is new knowledge and insight. In the blind alleyways of un compromise, where inside and outside run counter, the story finds good materials for the insertion of new building blocks. Densher is a project for “nymphs and fauns” which is preformed through his participation in a series of sad places. Yet, we recognize him in person, profession, and society. We will also get replete with Mrs. Maud Lowder’s personality, who is, “an explicit ‘Britania’, the allegorical figure of British authority” (Rowe, 2003: 208). In the course of drama she will saturate us. But Mrs. Stringham is a source of enjoyment, for as “the heroine’s attendant friend,” she is a subject of “innumerable touches” (James, 2004: 15). As her name suggests, she is the string for leading us to many places in the dark of the novel. She offers animated reflections of Milly’s experience of the English society, she is the subject for comprehending the situation of

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<sup>3</sup> In another work Miller discusses this idea also. In *On Literature* he argues that the performative energy of the word is for the production of imaginative worlds. Literature takes its life from our talent to use the sign. We use a sign to refer to something which is absent when we speak about it. Referencing is innate to the word. Therefore, the referent, the absent thing to which the word points, is supposed to exist somewhere. We need the sign, verbal or otherwise, to substitute it for the object while it is absent from us. The system of referencing makes the word replete with the power of signification. Even if there is no real thing for the sign to refer to, it can refer to the imaginative referents. Literature is the manifestation of the word’s extraordinary power to signify the things in their absence. The strangest aspect of the power of literature is in the production of virtual reality, the power that makes the reader to visualize a real or imaginative situation. In the opening sentence of *The Wings of the Dove*, we will never know if Kate Croy is a real or imagined woman. Her father’s house in London is in Chelsea which is a real neighborhood. But in Chelsea we will find no real Chirk Street to include the house. It seems that in this neighborhood there should be a street with this name, but there is not. But in a work of fiction nothing can demolish the referring power of the words. This capacity can not be changed into something else. It is only this power of signification in the word that allows the reader to share in the virtual world available in a work of fiction.

the friends in Venice, and a source for realizing the pattern of Densher's final position and fullest consciousness.

#### **IV. Narrative Form**

A. J. Ward says,

*The Wings of the Dove* makes use of a narrative form that is less common in James than that of *The Ambassadors*, but a form with which he had experimented from quite an early date. This is the method of paralleling halves. ... The scheme requires that the first half be located in the mind of one character and the second half in the mind of another—but, as I have mentioned, both "Daisy Miller" and "An International Episode" are *nouvelles* in which the principle of organization is that of balanced halves. In both cases James locates a figure in one setting in the first half of the work, and in a contrasting setting in the second half (Ward, 1967: 165-166).

However, in a footnote Ward mentions that the structure of this novel is also dependent on the technique of balanced halves. Each book or 'piece' of the story has its subordinate or constitutive pattern. There are occasions when Merton is represented as 'swimming' into Kate's consciousness, when Kate's mind and Merton's mind are projected onto one another. There are occasions when her mind is the reflector, and occasions when his mind is the reflector. When a center is postulated, the logic of the treatment has it that it should be selected and fixed as the basis. After the fixation of the selected center, the center will be the ruling stronghold. Also, a related point of view is adopted and a "community of vision" is represented. These strategies burden the story with what James calls "discriminated occasion" (James, 2004: 17), the advantages of those aspects of the subject that can be treated as picture and scene.

The role of the reflector is also significant. It is the insightful, curious, and passionate intelligence through which a "community of vision" is presented to the reader, the checking point somewhere between the implied author and the reader for a translation of narrative discourse and a more clear contrast of the picture on the screen. James presents the story from the point of view of no single character. Instead, he discovers and employs whatever is appropriate to his compositional law. It is Kate

Croy through whose vision the community of friends in Venice is treated. Kate's synthesis of Milly's festive evening in her hired palace is as compact as James's other building blocks can be. And the Kate-Densher relationship is measured by Milly's anxious consciousness. In the art of James's fiction, such a registrar functions for the impersonal attestation of different representative aspects.

The next idea James discusses in the preface is the "regular failure" of which he admits this novel "happens to offer perhaps the most striking example" (James, 2004: 19). The failure seems to be of deformity, of mismeasurements, of bad dimensions; that its formal innovations cannot present the totality of the subject. *The Wings* cannot keep its equal halves, and its middles are misplaced. To clarify the concept of "misplaced middle" in this novel, Miller says it is

too long and too short. It is too long because the whole first half exceeds its predetermined bounds and leaves James not enough space for the second half. ... The second half is just too short to be able to represent adequately what it has to say (Miller, 2005: 160).

Here is where a "luckless theme" has to be processed for a complete revolution. The flaw is a double flaw, for not only the resolution begins too late, but also the second half is necessarily deformed. The failure of the novel is that its middle is not where it conventionally should be. As the theme develops, its difficulties increase: dishonesty entails anxiety, and anguish is the inevitable aftermath of dissimulation.

In the earlier 'reach' of the book, and to clarify the nature of the tie between Kate and Densher, the story adheres closely to a method: the picture shows them far from a common couple. Yet, it shows a sense of their intimate affinity and correlative desires for which they should be passionately impatient of barriers and delays. And they will be shown as of intelligence and character for the enrichment of their relation, the extension of their prospect, and the support of their game. No vulgar art can exhibit them as they are.

*The Wings* is, in part, the story of innocence in the trap of passion and diplomacy. James uses the advantages of literary aesthetic in the service of goodness: highlighting the portentous in the mobilization of its forces to exploit innocence,

exhibiting the shining out of the possibilities of innocence, organizing its liabilities, dramatizing the whole project of its exposure. Aesthetic enjoyment is the highest "not when the work asks for as little attention as possible" (James, 2004: 22), but when, like the thick ice on a pond that bears the most pressure that the skater throws on it, it escapes the greatest technique and attention that the reader-critic pays to untie it, when the battle-ground, that such a text is, has as many strongholds that the critic cannot intrude. Such an aesthetic object will never get boring and stale. In this way, the present reader thinks that *The Wings of the Dove* is an allegory of the unreadable.

The blessed wisdom of the painter of life requires that no corner of his picture should be without concrete images. A further image is Milly on the Alpine height. The actual center of the work rests on "a misplaced pivot" (ibid: 24) which lodges in Book 5. Miller says this figure suggests that it is "unbalanced, likely to fall over, or fail to turn evenly" (Miller, 2005: 160). Here the story will give a direct presentation to Milly. However, when needed, it takes use of indirection also, so that it offers a full circuit of the episode. Now the painter is face to face with his masterpiece, and is watching it, not directly, but via the visions that other onlookers have created of it.

In the opening paragraphs of the story the author puts together the first bricks of his "house of fiction." He determines the genre that he wants to create, and decides about the style of his work. He also discusses the reasons why he has decided to write the story, and provides the reader with the more important information about the story itself. In addition, he gives a certain direction to the story. Thus, for the reader also the opening paragraphs are quite important, because after reading it, she decides if she will or will not read it. On the other hand, two (contradictory) spheres or worlds come together here: a world of reality of which the author and the reader are parts, and a world of virtuality which is the result of the interaction of the text (the words that the author has provided on the pages of the work) and the reader's subjective mind. On the one side of this frontier of composition, there is a great silence or a vast emptiness a mark of which is the white of the paper in the hand of the author. However, on the other side of it there is a strong heteroglossia<sup>4</sup>, a great plenitude of speech and of life

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<sup>4</sup> In Cuddon we read in this way about heteroglossia. "(Gk *hetero*, `other, difference` + *glossa, glotta*, `tongue`) A term coined by Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975) – the Russian is *raznorecie* – to describe the variety and

in the imaginary. In this way, the opening of the story is the space for the author and reader to leave the world of reality behind and arrive at a world of imagination. In addition, here the author and reader compromise on a mutual understanding in a space of goal-oriented interaction. If the author has created a completely far-fetched and alien world with a different set of rules and requirements, the reader will, for the possibility of meaning and pleasure, completely adapt to it.

In the opening paragraphs, Kate Croy is very energetic in her impatience. The chiasmic structure of the very first sentence (“She waited, Kate Croy, for her father to come in, ...”) (James, 2004: 29), suggests a conflict about priority; and gives the reader an idea about how difficult the situation is both for her and for James. In *Henry James: The Contingencies of Style*, Ralf Norrman is quoted as saying "If you understand chiasmus [the reversal or inversion of the second of two parallel structures], you understand James"<sup>5</sup> (Cross, 1993: 10). Can we suggest that by

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diversity of languages used in epic and in the novel (*qq.v.*). He distinguished between the language used to represent the attitudes and opinions of the author and that used by individual characters in fiction and epic” (Cuddon, 1998: 381). In *A Concise Glossary of Contemporary Literary Theory* by Jeremy Hawthorn, we read heteroglossia is “in the writing of Mikhail Bakhtin, that multiplicity of social voices linked and interrelated DIALOGICALLY which enters the novel through the interplay between authorial speech, NARRATOR speech, `inserted genres`, and character speech (1981, 263). The glossary provided in Bakhtin’s *The Dialogic Imagination* notes that the heteroglossia is determined contextually and extra-linguistically as well as intra-linguistically: `all utterances are heteroglot in that they are functions of a matrix of forces practically impossible to recoup` (1981, 428). In Bakhtin’s usage, according to the same source, polyglossia refers more specifically to the co-existence of different national languages within a single CULTURE” (Hawthorn, 1992: 77). However, in the postmodern era, Bakhtin’s view of heteroglossia has often been used, not in the way he used to describe the novelistic dialogism but to criticize art and culture for a monoglossia in them. In *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, two key members of the Frankfurt School, argue that the modern popular culture is a system that produces standardized cultural goods for making the masses passive and docile by manipulating them and neutralizing their powers of resistance. Popular culture produces cheap and inferior pleasures and makes them accessible to the masses. The danger that Adorno and Horkheimer see here is that as the masses consume the cheap and inferior products of the popular culture, they lose their sensitivity for higher and more genuine pleasures like freedom, creativity, and happiness.

<sup>5</sup> Mary Cross gives more elaboration on the role of chiasmus in James: "In a sentence pattern that would eventually be amplified at every point, opened to a play of language that pluralized not only reference but syntax, James attempts to limn in `all the dimensions`. Doubling both the rhetorical and grammatical context of his sentences, he manages not only to open up their field of reference but to defer meaning while it is played at least twice over in reversal and inversion" (Cross, 1993: 10). But in Norrman we read still more about chiasmus: “Chiasmus negates the difference between subject and object, between left and right, between beginning and end, between before and after, between active and passive. In a chiasmus there is properly speaking no right or left; there is no before or after; no beginning nor end. Whatever one half of the chiasmus says, the other contradicts it. Chiasmus creates lability, balance and equilibrium. Chiasmus destroys the distinction between subject and object, because chiasmus is about sequential order, and in English what is subject is determined through word-order. What comes first is subject and what comes after is object, if the sentence is spoken. If the sentence is written what is left in the sentence is subject and what is right is object. Analytical languages, such as English, indicate the subject–and–object functions mainly through word-order, whereas synthetic languages, such as Latin or Finish, indicate them mainly through case. This means that chiasmus is vastly more important in analytical languages than in synthetic. In synthetic languages chiasmus is something primarily *decorative* or *ornamental* – this is why the ancient authors had practically nothing to say on the subject of chiasmus which is

showing Kate in a waiting position in this opening stage, James is attempting to show himself in dramatic doubts and fears of composition also? If yes, waiting shows him in a central compositional dilemma, for he seems entangled between speech and silence (between to say and not to say), between life and death, or between creativity and barrenness. Other dimensions of Kate's waiting are her problem with (the question of) femininity and her total dependency as a woman in her life and social situation. Still another dimension of it is the simultaneous existence of contradicting thoughts and feelings in her. In addition, the opening sentence wants to give different perspectives on the person, as well as to express the contradictoriness of reality. The main focus is on Kate: on the conversation between Kate and her father, and on how to interpret her text. A certain rhythm implies that somebody, Kate for example, is angry. However, to dramatize her anger, James uses the representative power of language. He represents it not in the material language but via the syntactic dimensions of the text for which the reader has to look not at the meaning but at the form of the novel. Hand in hand with a process of formation, a process of dissolution always goes forward. Therefore, in addition to igniting the interest of the reader to read a long and complicated story, the opening sentence of the novel shows the author's endeavor for aesthetic pleasure and stylistic evolution.

*The Wings* is, to quote Amy Bloom, a "great flow of event and understanding, of life yielding to analysis and defying it, of people reaching for what they think they want even as their fingers itch to take the prize and to drop it at once" (Bloom, 2004: xv-xvi). When writing this story, James was perhaps afraid of nothing; and felt free to feel, understand, and express. In consequence, while reading this novel we should also feel free to visualize all the imaginary spaces or non-spaces that it creates, and to make meaningful contacts with the characters. We cannot read it unless we live to the brim in it, for it is art within us. It is the full art of the contradictory humanity (human contradictoriness) which we cannot render unless we put much of us in it, unless we disguise ourselves as sympathizing not only with Milly but also with Kate and

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interesting or relevant to a speaker of English. In an analytical language again chiasmus is something primarily *philosophical* or *psychological* – which is why I think it appropriate to use such words as `psychomorphology` in describing how a chiasmus-addict thinks. Knowledge of the way chiasmus works is a key to the mind of a chasticist. If you understand chiasmus, you understand James" (Norrman, 1982: 190-191).

Densher: for Milly who has the right to try not to die young and not to let the swindlers take her money, for Kate and Densher who have the right to use their only advantage, their subtlety, to continue living in such a harsh world of poverty and lovelessness. This novel is the story of us as humans and as we really are: the faulty, lying, self-deceiving creatures who insistently go wrong in their lives, then insist again that nothing is wrong. Captive to our instincts and passions as the novel shows us, we are blind to the outcome of our miss-behaviors while we are not conscious of the fault. The proud arrogant wishes of Kate to swindle Milly out of her fortune and yet to remain her best friend, the gentle naivety of Milly even when she is dying, and the unreasoned pretending of Merton that there is nothing wrong are the themes that we have painfully to confront when reading this novel.

The text or story of Lionel Croy is as radically metaphorical as the man himself is escapist. The escaping forces in his text are too many for the reader to control. So, the reader may not be able to demystify the whole of it, for the metaphor is quite extended and forceful. Lionel himself is the metaphor of the unknowable, the symbol of what one always searches for but one never finds. It is the mark of what one would always like to vanquish but what overwhelms one, the secret which you always deal with but you never can reveal. He is the father who is pleased that his daughter is handsome, that she is "in any way, a sensible value" (James, 2004: 35). From the foreshadowing here, we can get perhaps no better idea than that of this lying deceiving father. His family is only business, and love is, for him, only a question of power.

In the opening of the story, he has kept his daughter waiting for a long time. The contradictory lexicon and Kate's embarrassed gestures suggest her great impatience and deep conflict. The rhythmical syntax and metaphorical bumpy prose imply that her father is too problematic for her to deal with. Waiting and impatience suggest a heavy load upon the reader, and are likely to lead him to impatience too. Kate feels herself in a state of missing something for which she anxiously searches. A good part of the novel tells the story of her futile search for what she is missing. And a Jamesian irony here is that by the time she can have it, it has produced forces that are enough to undo it. Her next gesture, when "she showed herself in the glass over the mantle" (James, 2004: 29), is also particularly Jamesian. Her conflict is well acted out:

she repeatedly briefly pauses on the small balcony of her place, for she does not know if she will wait for her father or will go away. Yet, the situation in the street is not less conflicting than in her room. The vulgar street can give her nothing more than the narrow black house fronts. Conflict and desire for escape is the translation of her feelings in this very first scene.

But she is angry with her society also, for she feels misused by it too. This part of her anger comes from the idea of femininity, the fact that she has to marry which she hates. The whole discourse is contradictory in structure, sound, and sense. The present reader thinks that such contradictions can pave the way for a deconstructive reading on the story which means to employ a lot of thematic and structural inferences. If Kate's father embodies unreadability, Milly, who is, as James says, "stature without height, grace without motion, presence without mass," (ibid: 31) is the reference to a self-demolishing logic: a structure with no structurality, a self-absenting-presence. The speech of the narrator is quite oblique here. The story-telling subject is creating a space the elements of which run counter each other. One element neutralizes another one, and what remains is a handful of unreadable discourses. Milly is the incarnation of a naïve passivity which makes her quite vulnerable to the plots of man and society. On the other hand, she embodies a kind of raw and native beauty and life that overwhelm all forms and forces of death. Although Milly dies young, it is her (absent) presence that is always capturing her opponents. And her logic ultimately handicaps the whole of their plot.

Kate's family is like a sentence that is broken in form and meaning. Her father is a liar. Although he has already told her in a letter that "he was ill, too ill to leave his room" (ibid: 32), the story says it was only "the sketch of a design" (ibid). The story describes him in this way: he is a liar and deceiver, he cannot touch you even slightly, all relations with him are to your hurt, and there is no truth in him. He is the embodiment of the authority of lie. His relations are all inconvenient, for with him one loses the path of truth. He is not only a liar, but is also the source of a deviational discourse the logic of which is lie and the goal of which is to deceive. The speech in *The Wings* is generally indirect. Many times the sign is quite hollow. However, this does not mean that the story signifies nothing, but that signification lacks self-

sufficiency. Also, the story has more than one displaced center. Therefore, like the micro-discourse of Kate's father, the macro-discourse of the whole novel is difficult to untie, because Lionel illustrates the emptiness or falsity of all its misplaced centers.

If we read the long story of Kate's struggle deconstructively, we realize that her character has a double meaning. She tries to gain the money of a dying girl and to be happy and generous at the same time. In Book 1 chapter 1 the central character is Kate and the central event is her conversation with her father. In this chapter we read,

Lionel: "There's no limit to what your aunt can do for you."

Kate: "Do you mean in the way of marrying me?"

Lionel: "What else should I mean? Marry properly—"

Kate: "And then?" ...

Lionel: "And then—well, I will talk with you. I'll resume relations" (James, 2004: 45).

A primary problem of Kate is that she does not recognize how little her father cares for her and how excessively he is self-centered. But this short verbal game is a possibility for her and reader to become more perceptive: that her father will have no problem if she leaves him, and that it is in fact he that is pushing her out. But the problem of Kate's father is that she will divide "with Marian [her sister]<sup>6</sup> her scant share of the provision their mother had been able to leave them," for "she should have divided it with *him*." (ibid: 51).

In the next chapter, the central character is still Kate, but the central event is her conversation with her sister, when Kate decides to start living with Aunt Maud. However, when her father discusses the child-parent relationships in the past and present, his outlook is primarily gains-based. On the one hand, he feels fully nostalgic about the parental value in the past times. But he is disappointed with the utilitarian behavior of the child toward his or her father in the present times. He thinks that in the past times parenthood was of a "quite distinct value" and familial relations were of prime importance, but that with the disintegration of family at the present times the value of the father goes only so far as the child can utilize his resources. If we accept that it is the novelist who speaks here for Lionel, we can assume that the downfall of

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<sup>6</sup>. My adding.

familial relations and the rise of utilitarian logics were two faces of the "superficial morality" in the age of James. Stylistically too, Lionel's speech seems 'unspeakable'. Although his talk is rather clear and easy-going at the beginning, it cancels the movement of the plot, and the reader's search for a meaning in it is circular and problematic. Thus, it can be suggested that the typical Jamesian story is a verbal game, and the best way to 'play' it is to interact with it as fully as possible, to read it closely and critically. *The Wings of the Dove* makes the reader curious not for what the author thinks about this or that, but for what the characters think and feel about each other. The reader can realize this structural element usually by listening to the characters as they converse. However; listening paves the way for the reader to enter the horizon of the presented outlooks, and to insert his or her own feedback as a new outlook.

In the new situation life is fully magnetic to Kate. But poverty and a feeling of loss make her more anxious and regretful. Yet, "she saw, as she had never seen before how material things spoke to her" (ibid: 54). Widely and rapidly changing in the way she looks upon the things, she starts to develop new frames of thought and to see into new aspects of life and new horizons of existence. This is the beginning in her of a process of reconsideration and observation. And the narrative discourse gets more epistemological. The subject is the situation of knowledge in her, how she changes her mind, and how she feels suspended and stressed. Kate presents the situation of a feminine discourse that struggles for recognition, but is at the edge of extinction. If Kate is history in now, by reading *The Wings* we examine two perspectives in reaction to each other.

But in her new situation she also feels caged. Although she has escaped from the masculine authority of her father, she is not free, for she sees herself under the influence of her aunt Maud. With her fresh vulgarity and her capacity for connivance, her aunt "was London, was life" (ibid: 58), and she exerts no less authority over Kate than her father. Perhaps for the plausibility of what the plot will do later on, the story shows Kate as a sympathetic person. She knows she is poor, but her romantic outlook is a serious struggle for the betterment of life. She is a bit romantic of course. She feels responsible for her father and for her widowed sister and "her portionless little

nephews and nieces" (James, 2004. 59). However, she is very clever. In the context of these pressures, she feels that she is "formed at once for being and for seeing" (ibid). The story wants us to read not for what people do, but mainly for how they reflect on what they do, for how they see and think and feel. We should read to learn thinking about the 'truth' or meaning of the being of people. When a character stands at the center, it is often his or her mind in action in a curious dilemma that is at the center of the reader's attention.

But what does this formation mean? Does it mean that like a magician, the story-teller takes his hand into his pocket or under his arm and brings the character into being through adroitness or dexterity? The answer is "Yes" and "No," because it is in (the power of) the words that she is formed, for she lives only in language, and out of language she will die. Therefore, her life is a condition of language. On the other hand, her being takes root from her interaction in the happenings, in the plot of the story. If plot is a series of narrative action in which there is causality, her existence is a question of relations also, because outside of relations there is no plot, and outside of plot no character and no story. Also, her seeing implies her reflection upon her being through interaction. And our seeing means our reflection through reading and interpretation. Now, if all these technologies and opportunities come from language, it can be suggested that language is the sole state of our meaningful being through reading and reflection.

At the openings of Book 2, Densher is shown as unreal and unsuited to modern life. The prose style is an example for the "Jamesian fuss" (Crow, 1959: 176), and is suitable for showing the void which the modern life produces in some of us: the parallel adjectives ("longish", "leanish", "fairish"); the parallel phrasal structures ("generally sound", "generally pleasant", "neither extraordinary", "nor abnormal"); the parallel sentences ("He was young for the House of Commons", "He was loose for the army", "He was refined for the city", "He was skeptical for the church"); the great repetition of certain phrases which put him at the center of our focus; and the repeated abstract adjectives. Densher's problem is two-sided. On the one hand, he is intelligent. On the other hand, he is good for almost no practical purpose: "he looked vague without looking weak—idle without looking empty," his long legs are "apt to stretch

themselves," his "uplifted arms and interlocked hands" place him "for unconscionable periods in communion with the ceiling, the tree-tops, the sky" (James, 2004: 74-75). His head is too big for the culture of which he is a member. His romanticism excites him to pursue objectives which seem futile. Therefore, he is moving only on the verge of the custom where he is, inevitably, "more a respecter, in general, than a follower" (ibid: 75).

The application of conditional sentences is a major aspect of the Jamesian prose style. It is a means for fusing the real with the unreal, for making the discourse prospective, and for turning reading into a psychological activity. It may free the implied author from any harsh commitment, and exempt the narrator from the necessity of considering any clear result for the story. On the other hand, the reader is left alone to make inference, and he does so only if he can bring lots of solid knowledge and experience into the discourse. Whatever the meaning is, it is the outcome of an interaction between the reader and the text (wisdom and history) as a social deposit. No signified is independent, no meaning is self-sufficient.

The what-clause sentence is another tool in this story for not allowing the discourse to get stale, for while the discourse hereby refers to itself, the signified is deferred and the meaning evaporates. Thus, the result of reading is doubtful consideration and struggle for understanding. We read

"She knew on the spot what she was in the presence of" (ibid: 77),

"Well", said Kate after an instant, "her idea of that is what you'll have from her" (ibid: 87),

"For what they best knew him by at Lancaster Gate was a thing difficult to explain" (ibid: 200),

"It was what had saved her most, what had made her, after the first few seconds, almost as brave for Kate as Kate was for her, had made her only ask herself what their friend would like of her" (ibid: 313).

"Her visitor met it with candour. 'Yes, love, I think he *is*. I mean that he sees what he can do with me'" (ibid: 428).

And,

"It was what he had been all the while coming to" (ibid: 633).

In Kensington Gardens near Aunt Maud's house where Kate has recently started to live with her, when Kate and Densher visit perhaps for the second time, "Densher's perception went out to meet the young woman's and quite kept pace with her own recognition" (James, 2004: 77). The narrative arranges for such a meeting so that the would-be couple can recognize the common grounds of their thoughts and feelings. The meeting is a space for perception for the sake of mutual recognition, and for thought to be given a chance freely to maneuver. But although their mutual reflection is a predicament, reading the novel seems to be a greater one; for if they meet to discover the logic of perception in one another, the reader should discover not only the logic of their perception but also the nature of perception as a whole.

Ruth Bernard Yeazell states that in the late works of James perception is primarily cognition. Although in many of James's metaphors we can perceive the vehicle as based on the senses, the relation between the tenor and vehicle goes mainly beyond the sensuous. Yet, Yeazell mentions some vehicles in his fiction, like "Milly Theale's clinging to the Rockies for dear life," whose "strangeness ... resembles the strangeness of dreams—at once distant and bizarre, seemingly far removed from the ordinary life and startlingly immediate in their implications" (Yeazell, 1994: 177). In addition to enough rhetorical knowledge, for understanding the condition of metaphor and the function of resemblance in it we need cognition also. How one can save his life by clinging to the rocks?! Who does want to save his life by sitting on a most dangerous cliff?! If such a life is saved, what kind of life it will be? If we can suppose that Milly is out of wisdom, can it be suggested that she represents modern man as impotent to discover the secrets of life? That in the egg of wisdom there is also the seed of negligence, in the light of knowledge the dark of ignorance? But if she is doing so for the possibility of proposing a different kind of being, what kind of being it will be? Is James dramatizing the cancellation of signification in certain situations when language and fiction is entangled in what he meant by the superficiality of literature?

In Book 2 Chapter 1 the central character is Densher, while the central event is his conversation with Kate, and the party in the "gallery" allegorizes their love. The party is also perhaps an allegory of reading: reading is inter-subjective, for it is a practice of

socialization, a goal-oriented negotiation between man and society in the context of becoming. Reading is a social act of cultivation, a historical occasion for a dialogue between the individual and the collective perception for the sake of mutual understanding between man and society. By reading, we not only recognize and digest the norms of society, but also reconstruct society and reshape it in imagination. Reading is also the voice of the virtual reality the source of which is but the powers of the word and the imagination of the author and reader. If there is no dynamic reading, there is no virtual reality, or the virtual reality is quite dormant. But in reading the unreal people, who reside in the realm of the imaginary, start to be re-enlivened and to have their own dreams, voices, and identities. In each statement, the narrative invites the reader to make logical connections between the various facets, to fill in the gaps of the text, and to arrive at concrete views about the meaning of it. In this way, no definite meaning is hidden in the text, but meaning is generated as the reader converts the story to discourse. In this chapter we read,

This appearance, she was afterwards to feel, had been all in order for a relation that might precisely best be described in the terms of the baker and the housemaid. She could say to herself that from that hour they had kept company; that had come to represent, technically speaking, alike the range and the limit of their tie (James, 2004: 82).

We also read,

They had accepted their acquaintance as too short for an engagement, but they had treated as long enough for almost anything else, and marriage was somehow before them like a temple without an avenue. They belonged to the temple and they met in the grounds; they were in the stage at which grounds in general offered much scattered refreshment (ibid: 86).

The profound atmosphere implies a serious struggle for knowledge. Wonder, suspicion, and mystery excite interest in reading, and the reader becomes curious to get more insight. As the characters speak, they have to ponder over what they can utter in certain situations, because their talk is for testing the function of language, for the action of mind, for the movement of thought, for reflection, for the activity of consciousness, and for gaining new meanings and experiences.

When Kate and Densher meet again, they are presented with different programs. Her concern is romantic and womanly, while his is masculine, critical, and more intellectual. When he examines the 'scales' of his new life in his own way, he sees that "sometimes the right was down and sometimes left; never a happy equipoise—one or the other always kicking the beam" (James, 2004: 89). He asks himself what he should lose to have Kate. He even gets doubtful if he should marry her at all. *The Wings of the Dove* is the story of a man who searches in the dark room of his mind to come to terms with a hostile environment for achieving salvation. But the story renders true salvation as impossible.

In the same chapter, when Kate talks with Merton about "something wicked" that her father has done, his question is hermeneutic again, for its focus is on nominalization. In the discourse of a "community of vision," the logic is particularly Jamesian:

"It satisfies me beautifully," Densher declared, "but it doesn't, my dear child, very greatly enlighten me. You don't, you know, really tell me anything. It's so vague that what am I to think but that you may very well be mistaken? What has he done, if no one can name it?"

"He has done everything."

"Oh—everything! Everything's nothing."

"Well then," said Kate, "he has done some particular thing. It's known—only, thank God, not to us" (ibid: 94-95).

What is the logic of such a discourse where "everything" can be "nothing"? The Jamesian "thing" is the outcome of relations. Now, if the omnipresence of "everything" leaves no chance limitation or otherness, no relations will take place, and "nothing" (no thing) will come into existence. In the Jamesian discourse, the domain of the absolute is the domain of decadence or disintegration. "Everything" will lead only to "nothing," because it is relation, relativity, that paves the way for an entity, a character for example, to take place. In the domain of the absolute, that is the domain of "everything," where something stands at the center and every other thing is subordinate to it, no meaningful relation can be developed, and no Jamesian "thing" will ever come into existence. "Everything" is totalitarian and absolutist in nature.

However, “nothing” is also as much totalitarian and absurdist. Such “everything,” that demolishes all powers of otherness, will logically lead to “nothing,” for it is the powers of limitation, the powers of “otherness” that is the logic of otherness also. In this way, metaphor is only a machine for making meanings, because it makes something capable simultaneously to remain in somewhere and to escape from that somewhere. Metaphor is a possibility for the sign to stand at the same time for a thing and also for something that is other than that thing. And *The Wings* is the domain of the formation of meaning through dynamic negotiations between opposing perspectives and in such spaces of otherness.

In the next chapter the central character is still Densher, but the central event is his conversation with Aunt Maud the conclusion of which is his engagement to Kate and his departure for America. It is reported that Merton has a one-to-one correspondence with certain things, or that he understands the inmost secret of their being. Can he directly read the logic of things?

It was the language of the house itself that spoke to him, writing out for him, with surpassing breadth and freedom, the associations and conceptions, the ideals and possibilities of the mistress. Never, he flattered himself, had he seen anything so gregariously ugly—operatively, ominously so cruel. He was glad to have this last name for the character; “cruel” somehow played into the subject for an article—that his impressions put straight into his mind. He would write about the heavy horrors that could still flourish (James, 2004: 104).

But before long we realize that the development of his consciousness is based on the logic of difference, the difference between his own life and that of Mrs. Lowder for example, of which he is now fully aware and which is disappointing for him.

Whatever Mrs. Lowder is, she is the performance of Densher’s imagination. The story reports that they had an interview. Then the narrator tells us what Merton has perceived of her in the interview: aggressive and defensive but quite adroit in the use of aggressiveness, and impudently self-natured. The story shows him in the play of his mind when in dramatic action, the way his mind ponders over the things and makes perceptions that lead to inferences. The story is a story of the mind in action. It is an example of what James calls the “scenic” method. Speech is the window through

which the listener or reader can watch the landscape of the mind of the character; and by the time the speech comes to an end, it is as though the curtain falls down, for it has the "effect of the drawn blind" (James, 2004: 109): the reader has had the occasion to watch the characters in the performance of the scenic action. As Mrs. Lowder talks to Merton, James's technique for dramatizing the mind of the character is placing him in a challenging process of thinking, so that the reader can see how he writes his text, that is, how he feels the sense of things and gives meaning to life. Such a process is a test of character. The character walks all round it, deliberates a lot on it, and draws logical inferences from it. Speech is the vehicle by which the character conveys his other ideas to the addressee. Therefore, it is the mind of the character and its power of dramatization that makes the story. And the art of the reader is to interpret the functions of the mind in such curious actions, to analyze how the character measures the possibilities of each scene of the mind. After that, and perhaps for the sake of interpretation, the narrator speaks through the mouth of a character to tell us how the other characters think about him. The speaking person finds occasion at the same time to describe the patterns of the mentality of the character.

"... She's sure of my want of money, and that gives her time. She believes in my having a certain amount of delicacy, in my wishing to better my state before I put the pistol to your head in respect to sharing it. The time that will take figures for her as the time that will help her if she doesn't spoil her chance by treating me badly. She doesn't at all wish moreover," Densher went on, "to treat me badly, for I believe, upon my honour, odd as it may sound to you, that she personally rather likes me, and that if you weren't in question, I might almost become her pet young man. She doesn't disparage intellect and culture—quite the contrary, she wants them to adorn her board and be named in her programme; and I'm sure it has sometimes cost her a real pang that I should be so desirable, at once, and so impossible" (ibid: 114-115).

Each time the story gives the reader plenty of things to consider, plenty of things that are of thought, of consideration, of imagination. In Book 3, it is Susan Stringham who stands in the center. In the first chapter, the central discursive event is her observation of Milly on the mountain. Milly comes from the New York culture and is "the

potential heiress of all the ages" (James, 2004: 134). Young and intelligent and rich and romantic, she is perhaps the gem of the New England history and culture. Although she is not so beautiful, she is in possession of a "charming ambiguous oddity" (ibid), and is boundlessly free. Yet, she is doomed to commit humble-minded mistakes that result in her death when she is quite young and fully enthusiastic to life.

The central event of the second chapter is Susan's conversation with Milly when she decides to go directly to England. When Stringham receives an invitation from her to accompany her on a tour in Europe, the language is quite symbolic, and for reading the story we need to have more than one level of understanding. Yet, narrative technologies, which the novelist masterfully explores in the integration of deep and surface structures, seem to be its main idea. The boating parlance adds a lot to the imagery of the scene which in turn makes the language quite ambivalent in meaning. Here the symbolic code is at work for the embellishment of the narrative speech. The secret of a useful reading is a close correspondence between two levels of structuring, the literal and the metaphorical: ("great new steamers" for great new trends of thought or great new literary debates; "your little boat" for your approach to a literary text; "hovering" for continual meditation and consideration or for transcendental thought; "leviathan" for Milly who will ultimately subdue all plots working against her; "violent rocking of leviathan's companion's" for the people around Milly who will be violated by her sincerity and magnificence or by her perpetually absent presence).

Milly and Stringham are to embark on an exploring expedition. They are on a southern course in the Mediterranean where they wind up at Naples. Their course is a voyage of discovering "the great serious facts of life," of bringing them into light as "objects loom through smoke when smoke begins to clear" (ibid: 140). This is because the pictures in Milly's life are unclear, because, as the story reports, the sustained sea-light has drunk-up them, like the sound of a penny whistle which is annihilated by a Wagner overture. Her life is a landscape of these unknown facts that are muffled and intangible in form. If such images stand for the meanings of the whole life, the innermost secrets of life seem in a process of annihilation, in a position to which the thinking subject has never been privy. Such meanings are always unstable, but are

hidden to man. Therefore, for revealing them, if possible at all, we need to watch Milly's life attentively and objectively.

James's story here is, among other things, allegorizing Stringham's imagination as a "real thing," for in the course of time her imagination will grow comparatively bold and free. Stringham and Milly make a new "community of vision" that is meaningful. Will the first be a string to lead us to the consciousness of the second? The juxtaposition of the intellectuality of the first and the distinction of the second represents the union of thought and soul, and results in a new system that considers the female as a challenging identity. In the fiction of James, it seems that each community of vision is to contribute in the formation of a bundle of experience. In the community of Kate and Merton, if the central experience is marriage for escaping poverty, in the community of Milly and Stringham it is the possibility of history via literature, the formation of a great literary-historical imagination whose purpose is to access an unachievable source of knowledge, an untouchable "perfection." Stringham is a short story writer whose dream is "showing New England without showing it wholly in the kitchen" (James, 2004: 131). If New England is standing for American society, her 'literary mission' is to model it in such a way that femininity is a well-recognized reality. Such a particularly American society will perhaps be far from conventional America in which women had a great predicament as they were dominated by the masculine and/or political power. The modern woman will be represented either in Kate who will expend all her tact and energy to undermine the stale masculine authority, or in Milly who will die somehow to puncture its nasty machinery. Stringham's 'revelation' is meaningful as to all of Milly's womanly opposing sources that she uses for aborting such a masculine dominance: her suspense and designation, her patience and passions, etc. It is "the real thing" for which the major women in *The Wings* search in their own ways. At the same time, here also, like elsewhere in the fiction of James, the "real thing" is a search, hermeneutical or structural, for an absence, an unreality, or a "non-locus."

The truth of *The Wings* is metaphorical. Although Stringham is a woman of the world, the difference between her and Milly is how a princess in a "conventional tragedy" is different from her confidant. The state of Milly is the state of the highest in

whatever comes in, the domain of "the serious great facts of life" (James, 2004: 140). The Alpine rock in Switzerland, where she sits herself on the edge, will give her "a 'view' pure and simple, a view of great extent and beauty, but thrown forward and vertiginous" (ibid: 148). The rock is the reality of dizzy heights of purity and 'perfection', and connotes her sense of daring, her romantic inclination to risk life in her endeavor to access the concealed truth of it. And when Milly is mounting, Stringham will follow her as her "unappeased inquirer."

The slab, placed by good or bad fortune, is visible; and looks onto the "gulfs of air." This is the heavenly seat which only a Milly can take, the realm where Mrs. Stringham cannot arrive; for although "a thousand thoughts, for the minute, roared in the poor lady's ears" (ibid), none of them could reach Milly's. However, Milly's kingdom is a dangerous residence where "a single false movement, by a turn of the head" can cause her fall down into whatever is beneath. Her posture is the overt dramatization of a caprice and an unwillingness to take risks. She is the princess in a state of uplifted and unlimited possession who is "looking down on the kingdoms of the earth" (ibid: 149). Her kingdom is perhaps the perfection of the concealed knowledge to which the speaking subject or the thinking consciousness has never been privy.

But it is not at all the realm for Mrs. Stringham. After she pointlessly waits a little longer for the princess, she sees it would be wiser to withdraw. Milly seats herself there on the kingdom of the earth perhaps to ponder over the great questions of life. If her question is other than "to be or not to be," she is the representation of the assemblage of the whole life. Hers is the kingdom where she dwells to absent herself from whatever is nonhuman in human life. She is there for the possibility of her own discovery and dramatization, to be integrated with the European culture and history. After Stringham discovers that she cannot pull herself up nearer to Milly, she comes back home to the inn. And Milly reappears late in the afternoon.

## **V. Mrs. Stringham the Story-Teller**

It can be argued that the great power of story telling is to manifest itself in Mrs. Susan Stringham, for a faithful friend to Milly as she is, it is through her that the reader can

delve into her mind and recognize her thoughts and feelings. When Book 4 starts, the extreme regularity begins to weaken, and the point of view shifts from Susan to Milly. In Chapter 1 we read about a dinner party in Mrs. Lowder's Lancaster Gate in London where 'Susie' needs only to "wave a neat little wand for the fairy-tale to begin at once" (James, 2004: 167). The party is an occasion for (more than twenty) people to come together for "a light exchange of looks" (ibid:168), and for comparing views. Milly's eyes are "mainly engaged with Kate Croy" (ibid: 169), and her imagination goes to the possibility of friendship with her. Her perceptions are fully involved, and she is completely influenced. She is so fully on the alert that all things in the room are, to her, "touches in a picture and denotements in a play" (ibid: 170). Susie helps the reader to understand the fairy tale as a language product and to take productive roles in the making of meaning through the movement of his mind.

Lord Mark, sitting at the opposite extreme of the table from Milly, is wondering and lost. In his world "everybody was everywhere—nobody was anywhere" (ibid: 172). He always sticks only to his benefit for maintaining which he can be as different each time as his benefit may need. He is a case of people in England "who concealed their play of mind so much more than they showed it" (ibid: 173), the type of men who insist only on 'life' and 'need' and 'intention', of those whose age you cannot say. We read that he is avid, and that one can see his frivolity in his looks. He is of those people who are faithful to no rule or principle, of those for whom the end justifies the means. As a type, he is in the center of Milly's attention. However, through him Milly can discover how she is different from Kate, for he thinks about both of them at the same time.

The party shows Milly and Mark in eager action, because James thinks that knowledge in fiction stems from action. He thinks that a useful mode of dramatizing a story is to show the characters in interaction, because by doing this, the reader finds occasion to process the text by appropriating it. A theme here is the development of Mark's mind as he sees things and takes them in. Kate is the case of a consciousness that takes in whatever she dreams of. Another idea is how Milly will sink into the relations of the people around her, how she is naively affected by the relational networks they develop. James says Milly's is a "crowded consciousness" (James,

2004: 182). The real life is the source out of which huge masses of impression rush upon her mind. If not a cauldron, her mind is the pot where limitless thoughts and perceptions are boiling: the passing of life upon people, their eating habits, their language behaviors, their appearances, the multiplication of their thoughts and communications, their differences, etc. However, the movement of her consciousness is not linear. It is rather a process of alternation and repetition for the sake of a perpetually renewing update. But although she is starting to be beguiled, she seems passive about it: "there was something else she was occupied in seeing" (ibid: 188). When she realizes Lord Mark's certainties about her and her homeland, it protects her wish to keep herself away of him.

The second chapter in Book 2 begins to speak about how Mrs. Stringham perceives things as to her American companion and the English pair. Yet, the narrator says, the American pair know that in Europe they are "caught up by the incalculable strength of wave that was actually holding them aloft and that would naturally dash them whatever it liked" (ibid: 190). Milly is again and again "large" for Susan, as she sees her a "packed mass" of "accumulated contents," a heap of unrevealed perceptions that will perhaps never be revealed. However, the narrator reports that Susan thinks her American friends are spacious, because "they were empty." And she visualizes Mrs. Lowder as spacious, as she is "a projectile of great size, loaded and ready to use." (ibid: 191) Mrs. Lowder is concerned with the things themselves, while Stringham is more concerned with the reason of things, with their thingness.

A further problem with the American pair is that they have "a bad conscience," that in Europe they develop "a sense of immorality," (ibid: 192) because they realize that they are carried away. However, Mrs. Stringham can seek strength in the thought that "she was probably just going to love it for itself—that is for itself and Milly" (ibid: 193). The narrator reports that Milly's fancy jumped together with her American companion's. The former thinks the latter loves the world "not on the score of conscience, only on the score of peace" (ibid). An implicit idea here seems to set the English pair in contrast to the American, or more particularly, Kate versus Milly, for part of this story illustrates how Kate betrays Milly's trust. It is in this context that Peter Brooks says "the theme of betrayal is central in James's fictions" (Brooks, 1994:

29). Brooks notes that James has borrowed the tradition of the villain from the classic French melodrama, and argues that the villain in his fiction is equipped with his subtlety to deny the good character “the means to free realization of his (or so much more often in James, her) full potential as a moral being” (ibid: 30). The evil seems to be autonomous, almost absolute; and it is predominant and evident. However, the good is, in the face of evil, slim and inadequate. Therefore, this novel can be read also as an illustration of a structure erected on a central void, perhaps of the man in whose “heart of darkness” there is a great absence, something that is always beyond the given facts, something that is never the fulfillment of his real desires. Such nothingness is many-layered in this novel. It is, among other things, the void of moral consciousness in Kate that leads her perhaps to regret, the void of extra-independence in Densher that pushes him almost to surrender to Kate in her wrong path, and the void of subtlety in Milly that causes her death, although it can be suggested that Milly, with all her innocence, is very subtle in the end.

*The Wings of the Dove* can also be read as an allegory of writing. Writing as institution takes its deepest roots from convention and imagination, as when, in Book 2 Chapter 2, Kate magically steps out of the painting and actively participates in dialogues. She seems to be as real again as the American “wandering princess” whom she soon befriends but only “on the plane of mere elegant representation” (James, 2004: 193). Writing emerges from the “far back” history of a people; that is, from the archetypal tales, histories, anecdotes, and from a national collective consciousness. It also comes from “old poring over punch,” the historical pile of critical theory; and from “a liberal acquaintance with the fiction of the day,” from convention, from how the people understand the present collective and individual imagination. In the fiction of James, “the real thing” is, in a sense, the “product of a packed society” (ibid: 194). Narrative fiction is a workshop for changing the state of external reality into virtual. However, a point of James’s fiction is that objective pure reality does not exist at all, that reality is constantly in a process of formation and continuation by consciousness and by the chances people encounter. In the process of virtualization, an element of willfulness comes into work that contains the possibility to escape the logic of the real. If concrete (unimagined) reality is familiar, and if it naturally gets stale and

rubbish, virtual (imagined) reality is different from it in nature and logic: strange, abrupt, headstrong, usually volcanic in the opening if a main force like Kate Croy is to establish herself throughout the work. Virtual reality is also unique, unusual, and irresponsible to other virtual realities, and is not at all inclined to compromise with them. Although we know that in the external world there is no real Kate, but, as an imagined creature, as a creature with and of imagination, Kate is supremely real. We know that the real Kate in the story is all imaginary. Before we start to read the novel, there is no real Kate. But as we commence reading it on the first page, she suddenly appears and starts waiting for her father. In this way, the art of writing (fiction) is a medium for a compromise between the real and the imaginary.

In addition, although the reader knows that Kate is only a number of language signs on the paper, he or she believes in the reality of her and tries to understand her problems and sympathize with her. This is because virtual reality has all the energies needed to suspend our disbelief. It is as spontaneous in birth as in death; it can go wherever it needs and can do whatever it wants. Thus, each virtual reality is the affirmation of a new possibility that is yet not objectified, and a complementary to it. All these capacities of virtual reality make it possible for the objective reality to get perhaps limitlessly pluralized. The logic of the imaginary is much different from the logic of the real. But if the ultimate goal of the imaginary is to make a better life in the real world, creative writing is perhaps our most powerful strategy for showing how far our imagination can go, and for making our world satisfy our imagination. It is the best way for practicing imagination in the real, the best way for us to make our social world surrender to us.

## **VI. The Logic of the Supplement**

In the later phase of his fiction, James recreates the world of consciousness in a unique way. Even when he redefines the concept of the real and the manners of its representation, he submits to the strictures of realism. Hillis Miller, John Pearson, and Paul Armstrong are among the critics who have discussed the function of James's prefaces in educating the reader that he required for his fiction. Miller argues that the imagery in the prefaces to the 1906 New York edition of his fiction is typically

complicated and extraordinary. These prefaces show how each work welcomes the reader to a new unreal world that exists somewhere independently from the real world. The 'text' of a story is different from the words the author puts on paper to register it. Those words do not create the story, for what they create is different from what the narrator originally wanted to report. They only discover the world created in the story, report about it, and make it known. James implies that the words in a certain story are like his 'footprints' in a snow-covered plain whose sole purpose consists in transferring the reader there. This image suggests that James also admits of an independent pre-existing virtual world in his own way. For gaining access to the hidden content of the story, we should read it with interest and perseverance. An act of reading is like an act of revising, for each time one reads or revises a text, he recreates it and brings something new to it. Either the written story is incomplete, or it negates itself through narration. Thus, the story is perhaps in need of something like a preface to recreate itself in supplementation. In this way, James's prefaces want to make the ideal reader that James requires for his fiction, the ideal reader who can produce, in the context of the Jamesian fiction, the critical tradition that was lacking in the times of the author. This suggests that the reader of James should be educated for the purpose, because he is expected to (re)construct the story as he reads it. This theory seems to be in complete agreement with Wayne Booth's idea about the fiction of James as making the reader.

If the original text of a prose fiction is outmoded, it is a dead discourse, and all one can do for updating it is to reread it, revise it, or rewrite it in a new way. This is to historicize it. Revising such a text in this way is to plow it for a new cultivation, to make it pregnant to a new offspring. For the content of the story to come into existence, or, to say it another way, for the story to be rewritten, the reader or James should unify with it so that all the borders between text and him, all divisions that make the reader different from the text, diminish. In such a process of revision, an identification will take place between the thinking subject and the discursive world. It is a chance for thought to be given a new birth for its expansion in language. But it is not a simple process. It needs much philosophical speculation via which the reader changes the text to a subject of consideration and argumentation that in turn leads to

new concepts and epistemologies. The absolute ground of textuality is essentially a dynamic historical process of necessity that unfolds by itself in increasingly complicated forms of textual being and consciousness that ultimately give rise to all diversities in the world and in the concepts with which we think and make sense of the world.

Among the games that James plays in his fiction is describing famous paintings. For example, the Bronzino<sup>7</sup> painting in *The Wings* seems unambiguous. But if it is to add something to the perceptions of the reader, he should establish a link between the picture and the text, and should discover how the painting is related to a certain situation in which it appears. This picture, which very much resembles Milly, also enriches the appreciation of the story by helping the reader to recognize the character of Milly and share her experience. With the start of Book 5 the story is no longer well-structured. The structure neither controls its material nor conveys its inward order, but is indicated only in the form of certain scene divisions. While each of the Books 1 to 3 is only in two chapters, Book 5 is almost twice the length of Book 1, and is in seven chapters. Chapters one to four in Book 6 represent a single dinner party at Lancaster Gate. Book 7, two chapters of which are set in London and two others in Venice, is located in the joint consciousness of Milly and Susan.

In Chapter two of Book 5 the novel reads: "Lady Aldershaw meanwhile looked at Milly quite as if Milly had been the Bronzino and the Bronzino only Milly. "Superb, superb. Of course I noticed you. It *is* wonderful" (James, 2004: 243). The thing is a good example of concrete presentation, and catches the pictorial imagination of James in a superb way. If he is not comparing painting with story-writing, he is drawing a direct parallel between Milly and the Bronzino, perhaps to make her a subject for our perpetual scrutiny. In this way, the picture is the ground where history mixes with now to produce a more realistic experience, and Milly becomes a portrait

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<sup>7</sup> In the English Wikipedia Free Encyclopedia we read about this painting: "The portrait of Lucrezia Panciatichi is a painting by the Italian artist Agnolo di Cosimo, known as Bronzino, finished around 1545. It is housed in the Uffizi Gallery, of Florence Italy. Lucrezia di Sigismondo Pucci was the wife of Bartolomeo Panciatichi a Florentine humanist and politician, also portrayed by Bronzino in another Uffizi portrait. Vasari describes the two portraits as: `so natural that they seem truly living`. The show of refined garments and jewelry was intended not only to underline the elite position of the woman, but also aspects of her personality through a complex symbology (as in the write "Amour dure sans fin" on the golden necklace, a reference to a love treatise written for the Grand Duke of Florence."

at which we should look for understanding. The clear connection between the picture and the person who looks at it omits all intermediary elements that want to affect its emotional impact on the onlooker and the close resemblance between the two. Their correspondence is quite meaningful, for while Milly is "looking at the mysterious painting through tears" (ibid: 240), what her tears reflect onto the tapestry is an image that is much like her, her own image. In addition to their resemblance, if Milly in the picture hangs in the mind of the reader, the reader not only can recognize her but can also discover how the other characters are related to her. The picture of Milly in the mind of the reader helps him visualize her and consider what kind of a woman she is. Although the written text considerably restricts the implications of the picture, the picture is probable to provide the reader with freely made experiences about Milly. Thus, this picture makes the reader more alert for new possibilities, because in each relation he searches for new implications, and as he discovers such relations, he can underline new themes. The picture also shows those spiritual features of Milly which no other narrative tool can show. Miriam Allott highlights her "self control" and her "capacity for intense feeling" (Allott, 1953: 24). In addition, the picture is a representation of Milly's capacity for immortal love, a kind of love which at the end of the story Merton reminds Kate that will "cover" them. Moreover, James is rendering in this picture a major theme of the novel, that the wealth of aristocracy is ambiguously unwholesome.

When Milly wants firstly to visit the doctor Sir Luke Strett, she asks Kate if she would render her "a great service" by accompanying her to him. She emphasizes that Kate must tell nobody about it, and Kate promises her to keep it a secret. However, it is perhaps the most tragic error in the story that she lets the English girl know about her illness, because as the story expands, we find Kate a deceiving guy who loves to "do something bad" with her. Hereafter the story will hinge on this fatal error. Although it is surely for love that Kate accepts Merton's marriage proposal, she accepts it also as a possibility to lawfully possess the fortune of the American heiress after she dies. Previously, when Milly mounted up the Alpine, if she hadn't known herself "unmistakably reserved for some more complicated passage" (James, 2004: 150), she even would have committed suicide. However, she is really conflicted again.

When she visits her doctor for the second time, she is alone. She tells him that the people around her can do nothing for her, and that it is no difference for them what may happen to her. She seems waiting for kindness, because she informs him that she feels quite alone. She wants him to see her as she really is, or at least to care to know her real situation. Although she is too proud to cry in public, but she tells the doctor that it is herself that her situation concerns. She is in great pain again. When she asks Kate to tell nobody about her visits to the doctor, Kate replies “that’s the kind of thing I love. Do let us do something bad” (ibid: 246). If Kate is the enrichment of the underground machinations that search for their own benefits, Milly is the aesthetic reaction against “national and social asymmetries.”

However, although Kate and reader are much curious about Milly’s illness, the narrative reveals neither the reality of it nor the diagnosis that her doctor makes of her. And this is a representation of the narrative secret that is, to borrow from Todorov again, always “absolute and absent.” The story has its own strategies to make Kate and the reader always curious about the question. A technique is that each time Kate asks Milly about her problem, she gives her a vague answer. Although in form their talk is functional, in meaning it is all confusing for Kate:

Kate: “What in the world is the matter with you?”

...

Milly: “I thought, ..., you would like to help me. But I must ask you, please, for the promise of absolute silence” (ibid: 247).

And,

Kate: “Is that out?”

...

Milly: “He’s a dear, I’m to come again.”

Kate: “But what does he say?”

...

Milly: “That I’m to worry about nothing in the world “ (ibid: 251).

...

Kate: “But does he allow then that you are ill?”

Milly: “I don’t know what he allows, and I don’t care. I shall know, and whatever it is, it will be enough” (ibid: 252).

...

Kate: "All I want is that you shouldn't keep from me how you find out you really are."

Milly: "Well then, I won't, ever. But you see for yourself, ..., how I really am. I'm satisfied. I'm happy" (ibid).

Although Milly has come to London to be "found out about," but 'doubt' and 'fear' always hinder her way to reveal her ailment, for she does not know if even her doctor does not want to take advantage of her precarious situation.

Another technique for holding revelation back is the use of linguistic elements (phrases, sentences, periods, paragraphs, passages) in which reference is perplexed and perplexing. Such unclear and shaky references not only put obstacles in the course of reading, but also produce a strong sense of insecurity and confusion<sup>8</sup>. An example of unclear references is the use of the pronoun "it" in his later style. Seymour Chatman distinguishes between two functions of the pronoun "It" in English. The first is deictic and the second is expletive. He says,

In the first, *it* stands for something in the nearer or farther environment. The reference may be to a specific word, or words, or, as frequently in James, it may be vague—a whole phrase or sentence or paragraph or even more or less an implicit idea. The expletive *it*, on the other hand, is a more anticipatory grammatical slot-filler; it occupies the position of grammatical subject when for some reason the real subject needs to be put in a later position, as when one says 'It's a nice day', rather than 'The day is nice'. James' heavy use of both deictic and

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<sup>8</sup> Ralf Norrman discusses the application of a number of techniques in the fiction of James that produce a sense of uncertainty and insecurity. They include: (1) ambiguous references which are the pronouns in the style of James that can be considered as having more than one referent, (2) "end-linking," which is the linking of the end of one linguistic unit to the beginning of the next. Norrman considers "the figure of anadiplosis" as a variety of this technique. He says another variety of it "on the textual level, is theme-to-theme repetitional linking of sentences. This type of intersentence link, which is a favorite in James's textual grammar, is a resumptive, backward-looking device, which testifies to the insecurity of a mind which could never regard anything as finished." (3) "the use of emphatic affirmation," which ranges from a simple "yes" to a word-for-word repetition of the most elements in the preceding question. This implies that the person repeating the linguistic unit thinks that there is a strong emphasis on each word. (4) The "the finding a formula – formula, which involves a tendency on the part of James's characters to half-believe in a magic power of language over reality, so that if only something can be formulated in the right way the magic inherent in words will mysteriously make reality confirm language. James's characters are primitives who make use of euphemisms, spells and incantations. They long for a world governed by a special brand of William James's pragmatism – i.e. a world in which things become true when you say them. To create reality by verbal magic is the monopoly of the privileged literary artist. In life, alas, reality tends to remain reality and language." (5) "Chiastic inversion." Elsewhere I have quoted Norrman in this regard. (All quotations in this note are from the "Introduction" of Ralf Norrman's *The Insecure World of Henry James's Fiction: Intensity and Ambiguity*.)

expletive it is frequently a reflection of his preoccupation with intangibles—relations, aspects, conditions (Chatman, 1972: 55).

A third technique for postponing meaning is nominalization. Nominalization is turning an adjective into a noun that is followed by an ‘of’. The noun stands for the self of an entity rather than an attribution to it. Therefore, it allows the reader to escape the trivialities of the adjective, for he will focus instead on the entity as the thing, the object of understanding, the space of observation. The following examples are taken from Chapters 3 and 4 of Book 5.

“He was familiar even with the possibilities of *their* familiarity” (James, 2004: 262-263),  
and,

“In the depth of one of the polygonal peepshows” (ibid: 263),  
and,

“It touched her, the way he controlled his impatience of her” (ibid: 265),  
or,

“And that her only field must be, then and there, the grey immensity of London“ (ibid: 266).

In addition, in opposition to what the reader may at first believe, the use of an “unreliable narrator” in the later style of James is, as Raman Selden says, “more true to human experience than the omniscience of the conventional ‘authorial’ narrator,” for the ‘unreliable narrator’ can not only “provide a peculiar point of view, but also convey the sense of bewilderment” (Selden, 1989: 31-32). Wayne Booth calls the narrator reliable “when he speaks for or acts in accordance with the norms of the work (which is to say, the implied author’s norms), unreliable when he does not” (Booth, 1969: 158-159). He admits that the unreliable narrator is, like many of those created by James, “potentially deceptive,” but he also agrees that such a narrator is “mistaken” in the sense that “he believes himself to have qualities which the author denies him” (Booth, 1969: 159). The sense of bewilderment is, among other things, the result of such a narrator’s departure from his author’s norms, the false suppositions and superficial judgments of the modern reader, and the continually changing thought of the story. In such a space of amazement, things become increasingly complicated and

undecidable. This, in turn, makes the reader get lost in the complexities of life. It also provides the energy for departure from the normal intelligibilities to arrive at new realms of observation. Thus, the limited participation of such a character in the story can guarantee the trial of modern man to attain genuine knowledge of truth. For the reader, such space is far from the paternal diffusions of an all-knowing narrator, and he must therefore stand on his own for recognizing different voices, the limitations of each voice, and the values of the implied author as divided from those of the narrator. While reading James, our bewilderment can also be the outcome of different kinds of vacuum in the major characters, as well as the gaps in the textual form. If Kate's howling vacuum is injustice, and that of Densher insincerity and passivity, Milly's existential vacuum is perhaps her dramatic artlessness. In this way, it can be suggested that in the fiction of James the form is integral to the content, for if the reader always searches in futile for a good treatment to the moral inadequacies of his people, he is also always in pain for the formal vacuums of the story, the black holes in which great lumps of meaning can be lost unless the reader discovers them. Milly's doctor thinks she will soon die. Therefore, he advises her she has "the right to be happy," that she must make up her mind to it, and that "she must accept any form in which happiness may come" (James, 2004: 262) to her. To gain happiness, Milly can do exactly what she likes: she can stay in London, can go to the North Pole, or return to the continent. But her doctor will 'send' her nowhere, because, to speak for Robert Marks, "she cannot flee from herself and travel is not a remedy" (Marks, 1960: 48).

In the next chapter, when Kate and Milly sit together in the National Gallery, their fantasies multiply and cluster, but the anticipation of a danger as fantasy is widespread. Is Kate, as her aunt has told Milly in Matcham, to "practically conquer the world" with which Milly is concerned? The American girl will soon know that she is being dealt with. But she will surrender to exploitation, and Kate will freely take whatever step she needs for exploiting her. The narrative is a report of both the exploiter and the exploited, and also of the role of Densher in paving the road of exploitation. The exploitation is, symbolically speaking, "the monster" that "will loom large" in the course of reading. Is *The Wings of the Dove* a story of the American mind breaking down in a process of European discovery (in London)? Is it an

exemplification of the impossibility of peace through genuine knowledge and mutual understanding?

Writing and reading is for redemption through mutual understanding. We see Kate as the agent of exploitation, and Milly as its victim. We also understand that the lead of the English girl leads to alienation while the lead of her American friend brings her, if even via death, to redemption. More importantly, the novel seems also to establish the possibility of redemption. However, the terms of this redemption and whether it can be separated from manipulation (since Milly manipulates Densher and Kate beyond the grave) indeed create an abyss of interpretation. Since Kate at the end will lose Densher's love, Milly understands the principle of creation, "the art of seeing things as they were" (James, 2004: 296), and her insight will be limited by no bias or blindness.

Man's nature is what the social reality has formulated. If culture can be figured as an aspect of language, man is the product of language for it is by and in language that he thinks and feels and communicates with others. Milly is in agreement with Kate's epistemological theory. She replies, "what's a man, ..., especially an ambitious one, without a variety of ideas?" (ibid: 298) Man is a system of meanings, of ideologies that is culturally-based and culturally directed. What man says and does can be interpreted only in relation to what the other people, the other nodes in a wide net of relations, say and do; and also in relation to the general scale of the social and cultural discourse. On the plain of the codes that is as wide as the whole human society and as old perhaps as history, his social existence is like the movements of a piece on a chessboard. What man is, is what he says and does in relation to the totality of the society.

*The Wings of the Dove* can also be read in the context of cultural studies. In the Gallery, they exchange viewpoints about man. Man, as they suggest, is a structural phenomenon, a culturally coded entity. Kate acknowledges that "one is doing that one is. But one remains, all the same, but one of his ideas" (James, 2004: 298). Being is ideological, structural. Man is a system of codes, a cultural product, for all aspects of his identity including his values, inclinations, prejudices, and behaviors are determined by culture. A man is a culturally-coded identity. In a process of spiritual

expansion, Milly's identity is represented as the outcome of what she does. Between her history and her psychology there are strong relations. It is a sequence of ideas, a long variety of ideologies, that guarantees the formation of historical man. Therefore, he is the total of history, a historical context. He is identical with his knowledge, his epistemology.

But the impact of the social system upon man is not one-sided. It is two-sided. On the one hand, it provides a 'standing' for his existence as a phenomenon or a relational product, and recognizes him as a human identity. On the other hand, it disciplines her identity by introducing her to a system of codes and by imposing a set of coercions on her. Therefore, if somebody is an outsider to a social system, as Kate says Milly in London is, she "can do anything ... can do, ... lots that we can't" (ibid: 299). Narrative discourse is a powerful cultural apparatus for recognizing the individuals and submitting them to the patterns of culture. Thus, it can be argued that Milly in Europe is the representation of a human being beyond all identities, a human being close to the abyss, in a cultural vacuum. Hence, she is as free as the wind in the desert, the "princess with whom forms were to be observed" (ibid: 301). If the English girl represents the negative forces of society, the American heiress is its positive force, the invigoration that human society needs to renew itself by looking to the unlimited. If she is submissive, gentle, and vulnerable enough to die young, she is also the queen of forms, the energy of formation, the force of observation. She is the Jamesian embodiment of a human being who stands in the now but looks to the future.

Chapter 7 in Book 5 leads to a more perplexed reading, and the narrative remains precarious. It is not easy to understand if its main theme is the National Gallery or the 'idea' of Milly's going there. And, it is hard to say if by 'plea' the narrator means Milly's visit to the museum or her turning back to the idea. One should also understand how the three persons whom Milly sees in there "seemed to show her for the time the right way to live" (James, 2004: 306). Then a significant question may be if Milly is choosing a certain way to 'live', if she prefers to lead a life like the objects in the gallery, only aesthetically. If yes, the museum is the space of (her) aesthetic promotion. It is the occasion for her escaping into a life the logic of which is different from the worldly and material life. In such a realm she can stay beyond

feebleness, and can be “impersonal and firm” (ibid). Milly desires to escape to the unknown remote worlds where the possibility is at hand for her enlargement. Thus, she takes refuge in the National Gallery to search for “vistas and approaches” whereto she can be transferred.

### **VII. A Hyper-Discourse**

For gaining more intensity through squeezing two incidents into one, the events in *The Wings*, which are mainly language events, are more frequently discussed or recollected but not presented; they are reflected upon rather than dramatized. Inside the Jamesian discourse there is a vacuum, for it is not more than a plurality of appearances, a collection of palpabilities in relation to each other. Although the discourse has many centers, none of them is self-sufficient, because they come into existence only in a close and continuous interaction between text and reader. Yet, the appearances of the text are even more genuine and functional in making the story. This is why in the gallery Milly “fixed her eyes more than elsewhere on the appearance” (ibid: 307). The Gallery is the space for gaining experience, for metamorphosing reality into appearance, for rendering reality merely as representational. But insofar as it is appearance, it is qualified perpetually to live, to be; for its case is escaping from the mass, from existence. In the Gallery, Milly gazes on appearance and vagueness. Her consciousness is under the severe impact of the reality of circumstance and knowledge.

In Book 6 Chapter 2, when Merton asks Kate if she takes him as he is, she gives no clear answer. As a new riddle, this question adds to the reader’s bewilderment, for so far a major question has been if Kate will accept his love, but hereafter knowing Merton will also be significant. Thus, the reader’s attention is divided between Kate and Merton. And the riddle is “of handling their immediate future ... in a subtle spirit” (James, 2004: 323). When he is on the water from the States to England, he thinks he will say to Kate “their mistake,” perhaps that celibacy “must end,” for he thinks the impatience of celibacy, when prolonged, can make a man sick. On his landing in Liverpool, he sends a wire to Kate who meets him at the Euston station. From the station she drives with him to the door of his lodging. On the

way to his home, when they think they can order a tea for a ‘stopgap,’ the wish for marriage seems to be great in both of them. Tomorrow at six o’clock Kate is to attend Aunt Maud’s party at the Lancaster Gate. When they reach his place, he shouldn’t ask her to come in; for if he does, it will be disrespectful to her. As these ideas intrude the mind of Kate, they are accompanied by a suspicion, a shadow. She asks him to leave her now “to meet it in her own way” (ibid: 326). A major theme of *The Wings* is how our consciousness behaves in a process of recognition.

In their new situation, their communication is the source of more problems. Strange new thoughts flood into their minds. In retrospect, Densher realizes that Kate’s acquaintance with Milly has more dimensions than he has known. He is reconstructing his previous thoughts, and the narrator reports that he is, like Milly in the Regent’s Park yesterday, under “the force of thought” (ibid: 332). Is Densher starting to feel close to Milly? If he is, the missing explanations about the two ladies and many other thoughts rush up to the reader’s consciousness. But the story can fully bewilder the reader, because discovering the narrative secrets needs great endeavor. To discover the secrets of the narrative, or to structure the discourse, the reader, like the would-be couple, must roam in the nooks and corners of the text. More than once the text refers us to a previous situation which adds to the decoding load. The reader is always on the verge of a ‘missing’, of a silence, and the act of reading moves between the two ends of a deep abyss. An additional load is to answer many questions that the narrative asks the reader: how Kate and Merton can talk to Aunt Maud about their love and get her support for it, how Kate understands, and Densher wonders about, Milly’s recent coming to the foreground of the picture.

James’s fiction is for learning, teaching, and critical writing. *The Wings of the Dove* is structured around a secret to which there is no clear solution. For reading the novel productively, one needs to enter a contract of active participation with the narrator. For example, the changes from direct to indirect discourse, from reported conversation to textual quotation, entail changes in the mode of discourse and in the type of the epistemological abyss. The unexpected short presence of another speaker somewhere in a passage when the narrator is uttering a long monologue, is another factor that adds to the difficulty of reading James, for it can confuse the reader about

the function of such a technique, the source of such a quotation, and its relation to the quotation before and after it.

At the party Aunt Maud will give at the Lancaster Gate in this chapter, Kate is to perform something like the role of a character in a drama to which Densher is the spectator. Due perhaps to her illness, Milly will absent herself from it, and Mrs. Stringham will arrive alone. The drama-in-party (drama-as-party) will give the English lover, who is a journalist, “a social case” to “put his pen—oh, his ‘pen!’—at the service of private distinction” (James, 2004: 356). He will speak for the ear of society, because he, like his inventor, perceives the dreams that the characters have. Once again James illustrates how he reaches beyond the limitations of positivistic logical intellectualisms. Such an area is not realistic. It opens to the reader an extraordinary world of passion, a state of tranquil emotion where silent observation is elementary. However, in the Jamesian world of silence, exploring genuine knowledge is perhaps impossible, for beyond our perception there are always unknown horizons. Knowing the real Milly is almost impossible, because while one sees her, she always moves beyond the borders of one’s knowledge. She is far beyond our sensual perception, beyond the realms of a positivistic empiricism.

Any reading on *The Wings* can therefore only be inconclusive. It is a matter of trials and errors. As the story moves forward, unknown images and pictures come to the fore one after another, the reader constantly observes the characters as they pass judgments about each other with which he is expected to formulate his agreement or disagreement. And by making daring inferences about the story, the reader re-writes it. However, it seems to the present reader that in the deep structures of the novel, an abyss is always present. Sudden changes of the sign and innumerable thoughts and images that are “as inscrutable as ocean currents” (James, 2004: 363), are likely to cripple every decisive and logo-centric reading. In Book 6 Chapter 3 for example, “the huddled herd” may suggest the crowd of people in the Lancaster Gate who blindly drift to Milly without a fitting judgment about her. As they drift out to her, ever new associations deviate them from the true path of knowledge. This formula suggests that Milly is the queen of the realm of silence, the sovereignty that will be the subject of no exploration. Such a formula is a sub-structure of *The Wings*, since for the journalistic

hand of Merton Densher, or to say better, for the pen of James, it makes a good 'matter'. Such a reality gives fresh impetus to a self-negating process that leads to a perpetual gap. This is where in the fiction of James the creative power of the story brings, in an oblique yet believable way, absence and presence, or gap and mass, together. In chapter 3 of Book 6 we read:

Anything was boomable enough when nothing else was more so: the author of the "rotten" book, the beauty who was no beauty, the heiress who was only that, the stranger who was for the most part saved from being inconveniently strange but by being inconveniently familiar, the American whose Americanism had been long desperately discounted, the creature in fine as to whom spangles or spots of any sufficiently marked and applied sort could be loudly enough predictated (ibid: 363).

In the next chapter, when Kate and Densher enter Aunt Maud's drawing-room, they give false information to her to conceal their marriage intention from her. Milly is always the object of their curiosity, and her absence there, be it for her illness or for whatever reason, leads their curiosity into an obsession. Kate informs Densher that the American heiress loves him and that she has made up her mind not to lose him before returning to the continent. On this occasion Kate is in her real element in staging appearances. She proposes to her lover to marry Milly to "console her" for all she will see destroyed in case she is deadly sick. She advises him to do so because she wants "to make things pleasant for her" (ibid: 372). Therefore, Kate's conscience is also a store of opposite ideas; that is, good and bad thoughts integrate in her to make her qualified for engineering the plot, and she will always have her lover at her disposal to carry out her intentions. She says Milly "has no natural sense of social values, doesn't in the least understand our differences or know who's who or what's what" (James, 2004: 379). She means that Milly is an American who does not clearly understand the distinctions; that she is rich, and so can marry Densher even though he is a poor nobody (without social value). She perhaps thinks that the American girl is too naïve to understand (European) social values.

Kate can do things with words. Uttering her words, she creates reality. But she is perhaps conscious that her behavior is erroneous, and the effect of her speech is

falsity. However, the narrator reports that Densher “could go too far, if it *was* too far, without being false” (ibid: 405). This can be taken to mean that he does not reflect on the consequences of his behavior. But he does not lie or consciously betray someone. He embodies the modern intelligentsia, the educated imprudence of the modern times in whose knowledge there is a vacuum of insightfulness. His knowledge seems to have given him no insight into the things for his romance nullifies his wit. In this way, Kate and Densher represent opposite narrative positions: Kate is, to some extent at least, conscious of her falsifications while Densher seems to be totally unconscious.

Milly goes to get ready for a drive with Densher while he is sitting alone in her carriage waiting for her to return. As he drifts in and out of silence by talking to himself about the relation between her and freedom for example, his thoughts are far beyond his control. He thinks about Milly’s extreme spontaneity in comparison with Kate who is not spontaneous at all. The presence of the American girl is uncontrollable for him. Her love is beyond time and place, the omnipresent effect out of which he cannot move. Wherever he is, her presence and love leap into his being. But it is frustrating that under the influence of Kate, it is only his impotency, or his passivity, that comes to the fore. Now he seems in love with both Kate and Milly. However, although Kate has great power over him, she is limited in her influence upon him. Milly’s love is the pure love of a young girl who is full of life, but who is on the verge of dying. It is perhaps unconsciously and naively radical. On the contrary, Kate’s love is that of a young woman who, being poor and having no one to be supported by, decides to be strong through her wit and subtlety. In Kate’s love exploitation should be added to unconditional recognition, for it will probably lead to her lover’s exploitation as well. In contrast, the love of the American girl would provide him with full freedom, freedom from poverty, exploitation, treason. Also, the novel says Kate’s love is ‘backward’ while Milly’s is ‘forward’. The English girl does not stand face to face with Densher in her love. It seems that her love is hiding something from him. It seems retarded, sour, obsessed, and perhaps not pure enough. Milly’s love, however, stands face to face with him, and is so unalloyed and so deep. Heinz Ickstadt believes that James takes Kate’s love for Densher seriously; that his

sexual desire for Kate is in the end replaced by his spiritual appreciation (or love) for Milly, with which Kate can no longer compete.

Kate and Densher, who are in love, are arranging to deceive Milly. When he is waiting for the American girl, Kate appears. She wants Milly to believe that Kate doesn't care for Densher, so that she feels free to love him. And, it is as a partial fulfillment of Kate's plot that Densher also pretends he loves Milly:

By the time he had dropped her hands he had again taken hold, as it were, of Milly's. It was not, at any rate, with Milly he had broken. "I'll do all you wish," he declared as if to acknowledge the acceptance of his condition that he had, practically, after all, drawn from her—a declaration on which she then, recurring to her first idea, promptly acted. (ibid: 414-415).

When Kate appears, she says she wants to visit Milly and understand if she is still sick. But after a short time, and in order to prevent the American girl from making a right inference, she departs. Densher is quite submissive to Kate and will do only what she wants. Therefore, when Milly reappears in her dress like a 'priestess', it is only to complete Kate's policy of deception that he promises that Kate "hadn't known she would find me" (James, 2004: 415) here. The narration in *The Wings* is too oblique for the reader to decide if Densher is not torn between the English and the American girl. Although he is submissive to Kate, to Milly he also says "I'll do all you wish" (James, 2004: 414). Thus, his love for both of them can be true or false. In this way, it is almost impossible to say if the American girl is a redeemer, a victim, or as recent critics argue, even a manipulator. Deception makes the questions of redemption and Densher's love undecidable.

### **VIII. The Making Power of the Narrative**

In Book 7 Chapter 1, when Milly asks "why I shouldn't have a grand long life" (ibid: 423), the narrative shows society renewing its values. The American heiress, with her youthful interest in life, her personal freedom, and great fortune, is now entangled in a complex system of dissimulation. In her situation, narrativity requires that she die young for the representation of a new possibility for disabling all fraud. Her death is

what the narrative needs to guarantee her salvation, and through her to illustrate the salvation of society. Thus, she is the victim not only of society but also of narrativity. Although death is no new idea, the narrative represents her death with new values, like when darkness declines and the sun starts shining to create a different condition. The present reader thinks that in Milly's situation death is no longer annihilation but is a way to magnificent immortality. It is the power of salvation through a metaphorical nullification of the whole play of the cunning. From a world of hypocrisy, Milly departs through death to where hypocrisy is no longer functional. Therefore, her death is all aesthetical; for like the Bronzino painting, that freezes our virtues for their durability, death is the way for achieving measurement and beauty and salvation that are constitutive to narrative.

For a real integration of every human being, he or she should be in harmonious interaction with society as an organic whole. The monophony of the omniscient narrator in the Victorian story has given way to the polyphony of the modern narrative where different voices are called into meaningful interactions, and power is invested not in a single but in a number of strongholds. James's "unreliable narrator" and "limited point of view" are good substitutions for such authorial omniscience, because they render possible the interaction in narrative of all characters and of the reader, and thereby metaphorically the interaction of all people in restructuring the society. In this way, the Jamesian fiction paves the way for a meaningful re-structuring of the (narrative) society from within, because it requires that the character and reader know as much as possible about the text and their lives. James's characters and readers participate actively in the making of the discourse. Reading is highly professional, and it is in the practice of reading as a process of real interaction that the reader is made, trained, and the society is narratively reconstituted.

In the monopolies of power no modern narrative can be composed and no novel can be written because monopoly and omniscience are inclined to ban the way to harmony and dialogue, to mutual understanding, and to meaningful interaction. For harmonizing themselves with the character and reader, the author and narrator must limit their knowledge and other compositional advantages, so that the characters and reader have their independent standing in (re)producing and analyzing the narrative.

And what is a story if not a practice of dialogue, a space for interactive reasoning in language? The modern story is, in structure, not an allegory of a dominant power that rules over subordinate subjects. It should be a possibility of confederacy, a metaphor of the interaction of comprehensive but scattered social powers for re-establishing it and engineering a transformational (narrative) structure that perpetually renews itself. Therefore, it is structured on no full-grown central wisdom, but can renew itself only through the interaction with common social experiences. It is the outcome of all powers that should act in equilibrium with each other.

Thus, the ruling power of modern narrative is internal rather than external. And its secret is conflict, polyvocality, silence, and the absence of any pre-invested meaning. However, it searches, as it seems, for transformation, measurement, harmony, and equilibrium. It should typically be a system of concordance, co-thinking, and plural references. In the concord of narrative powers, a new kind of character is given birth to who thinks and listens and sees and tells and makes at the same time. All these powers in such a human being will thus be harmonious not only to each other but also to the whole social and/or narrative world. The category of the harmonious can be discussed in more than one phase. On the social level, it implies the concord of all powers and institutions that are influential in the making of a society. On the ethical level, it means a compromise of modern man not only with himself but also with others and with the (universal) society. And on the aesthetic level, which the present writer thinks is the most influential one, it means re-structuring our selves, our consciousness, in and through art. Harmony is the outcome of the aesthetic, and it is perhaps only the aesthetic that no monopoly can put under coercion or limitation.

Mark Seltzer argues that Jamesian fiction is an apparatus of power and surveillance. His fiction represents a policing system of the individual and the society that illustrates the application of power in a disciplining process. By reading James, we symbolically participate in the enactment of power. But Winfried Fluck rejects this idea. He says,

It is in the late novels (of James), and especially in *The Golden Bowl*, however, that all the elements of social interaction with which James experimented throughout his career, are

finally brought together. In this return to a basic theme and concern of his work, *The Wings of the Dove* establishes a basic shift in emphasis. The benevolent guardian becomes a remote, shadowy figure, while the scheming Old World couple gains in prominence so that the novel, in large parts, becomes the story of their manipulative skill, but also of their trials and tribulations. This does not take anything away from the innocent American, however, who not only reaches a 'breakthrough' in the awareness of manipulation to which she has been exposed, but also acts on that knowledge in a way that, for the first time, constitutes a subtle imposition in reverse. By turning the tables on Densher and Kate Croy, Millie Theale reasserts the power of her own imagination and entraps them in an exceedingly clever and 'creative' scheme of her own (Fluck, 1997: 28).

Thus, it seems to the present reader that if *The Wings* does not run counter to the structure of power and manipulation, at least it can also be read as a story of ignominious defeat of the struggle for manipulation. Firstly, it is not clear whether the outcome of "social interaction" is manipulation or subjugation, for social interaction is a mechanism for distributing power by exchanging opinions and perspectives in a space of productive contribution. The more negotiations the partakers in an interaction conduct, and the more opinions they exchange, the less they are likely to be manipulated, for it is through speech, through the application of language for directing the addressee, that power is applied to his or her behavior. Secondly, the fact that the "guardian" in *The Wings* is a "remote shadowy figure," that she takes distance from her would-be manipulators to reside in a far unknown place, can decrease the possibility of imposing their power upon her. And her figurality implies the abortion of exploiting power and the cancellation of manipulation. Thirdly, the fact that the American heiress leaves her fortune for her manipulators suggests that she is not on the side of manipulation. Instead, she dies for canceling manipulation. James's fiction seems to illustrate the formation of a self-sufficient culture or civilization, not through surveillance or manipulation, but via the illustration of a symbolic system of genuine compromise, a system that wants to highlight the equal authenticity of all discourses, ideas, and perspectives.

It seems that the book authorizes no central unlimited power to rule over us in and out of the story. The novel wants, in metaphor, to dole out the social power to all nooks and corners of the society. Its imagination is the possibility of dialogism. It

does not aim at the evaporation of individual thought to the benefit of a central all-knowing power, but aims at a multiplicity of voices and an occasion for the individual man to have his voice heard. Monopoly is no longer to be desired. Instead, dialogism and reference are beautiful and desirable, for it is in fact the plural wisdom that systematizes the narrative and gives structure to it. The individual man is an independent structure-making agent who plays independent roles in the structuration of the text. Yet, he is in equilibrium with the plural wisdom; for he is integral to the structure. Narrative transformation and the plural relations in it, provide the background for perpetually renewing structures. However, it is not structurally self-efficient, for it is manifested only in the action of reading. Narrative is the possibility of the universal wisdom in miniature, the universal experience in which the characters and readers fruitfully share.

A feature of narrative transformation is that it frees morality from freezing, from the entanglement in a certain ideological monopoly. Narrative is the background for the expansion of the borders of ethics and perpetual renovation of moral values. Criticism and knowledge are the outcome of man's challenging wisdom via which he evaluates the (fictional) world in his rebellious spirit. Experience is the outcome of no submissive reading, but the result of daring and goal-oriented positioning. Dialogism, which is based on the abolition of all top-down relations, nourishes sincerity, union, admixture, and discord. It leads to the negation of obedience, cruelty, fear, and horror. It is the possibility of a perpetual renaissance in man via criticism and interpretation.

Therefore, the symbolic world of narrative is not the godly act of the author. It emerges from the seed of creation that is perhaps innate in man, from man's free conscience, from the character that has the power of creation in his psyche. This seed of creation in man and character always wants to appear and grow. By critical reading, we want to give birth to this goddess of creativity in us, for it is always inclined to flow into our thoughts and feelings. Narrative is a form that renders this creativity possible in text and dialogue. It is an appropriate space for the manifestation of this creative power in man and for man, for the emergence of the world and its structuration.

Our mind always opens to the present, because in our free consciences the present always takes the place of the past. Man's free conscience continually archives the paraphernalia of the past, swims in the waters of the present, and always flows on the waves of the now. Thus, reality, in the sense of the perceptions of our mind, cannot freeze in the files of the past. The free thought that produces fluid reality runs counter to the concept of eternal or absolute truth which is unknown and unknowable. Thus, truth is not eternal and homogenous; it is transient, fragmentary, interzonic, and rhizomatic. It is the result of communicative thought. And the unreliable narrator is well congruent with such unstable reality, for his unreliability decreases the truth and authenticity of his ideas. This reduction paves the way for the introduction of new ideas into the domains of the mind.

In Jamesian fiction, reality always remains dubious, for as the dominant discourse flows into the present time, reality loses its previous logic and harmonizes itself with new times. A text by James presents no established umbrella thought, but opens the mind always to new intelligibilities. And the narrator's sincerity allows the reader and character to vanquish their own previous ideologies and reconstruct their consciences. The Jamesian text is not a treatise on absolute and unchangeable beliefs. It is rather an exercise in thinking to achieve new experiences and insights. Thought is shown in a process of renewal, in a process of becoming; and the reader witnesses its reconstruction as he participates in thinking. He can always deconstruct a discourse and introduce new ideas. The Jamesian discourse is both finite and transitory. It does not want the reader to be overwhelmed or coerced by it. It wants no obedient reader, but expects him or her to play a role in an active process of discursive evaluation and re-invention. In this way, a typical Jamesian story dramatizes the development of our consciousness. It expects us to make long-term commitments not with what could or should have been done but with what can be done preferably according to our nature and temperament. If it is history, it is the history of becoming, of the mutations in the logic and structure of our thoughts and ideologies. His fiction is the commitment of what can be done, a commitment for creativity.

The Jamesian discourse is both exciting and embarrassing, for its discursive clashes want to negate the present modes of thought and reconstruct consciousness.

However, opposite discourses do not seem to nullify the resisting powers of the reader, but to excite the reader to elucidate them and decide about their accuracy. The reader and character are expected to consider the opposite thoughts and to synthesize them into new discourses. The discourse is quite exciting, for it helps the reader to think dialectically. It allows him to develop his suppositions into systemic and generative thoughts. No discourse can be logically deleted or devaluated, for its conflict is integral to the story. Therefore, the dialectic is observed to the end of the discourse and sometimes even beyond it. The variety of James's ideas is not for making the reader feel humble or captivated. But the fair treatment of his ideas motivates the reader to add his own independent critical thought to the running discourse for synthesizing them into a complete whole. However, the present reader thinks that the Jamesian narrative preserves its powers for the annulment of the dominance of any single and central discourse. The reader of James feels empowered through his integration into culture and history through narrativity. A part of this history-making power, which is the result of a mutual understanding, comes from the stylistics of the Jamesian stories, while another part of it comes from the sharing of the reader in the creation of meaning.

In *The Wings of the Dove* for example, part of this generative power comes from the representation of social activities in the Lancaster Gate parties. Not only can each social interaction be as genuine and generative as the others, but also the experience behind each social interaction is as authentic as the other experiences. His fiction accredits the idea of no ultimate truth, because ultimatum is absolutist and recognizes no compromise. On the other hand, no idea is considered as false unless it is proved so in a process of interactive evaluation and consideration. Thus, no perspective can vanquish or marginalize the other ones by pretending that it is ultimate and absolute truth.

As the narrator slips from the state of absolute truth to the state of relative experience, all thoughts become equally valuable in principle. Now, the primarily equal authenticity of the proposed thoughts and ideas in a space of genuine interaction implies a self-managing mechanism in the allotment of narrative and social power, for it grants the characters in interaction the occasion to share, with a spirit of indulgence,

in the making of narrative realities. In addition, the independent individuality of the characters requires that their thoughts and ideas be granted equal authenticity and value. But for the establishment of such individuality, each man should respect the other men as independent individuals, because the independence of his own personhood follows the same logic as that of the others. Therefore, they can actively share in the making of their symbolic world, for it means the guarantee of their independent individuality. In the fiction of James, this self-managing system of cultivation is innately and internally energized.

However, the fiction of James shows such cultures only in miniatures. *The Wings* shows them in the Bronzino painting for example, or in the ceremonies of the Lancaster Gate; *The Ambassadors* exemplifies them in the workshop of Mrs. Newsome or in the negotiations between Mr. Strether and Mrs. Gostrey which lead in part to the development of Strether's mentality; and *The Golden Bowl* illustrates them in a shopping center at the beginning of the story where Prince Amerigo and the reader are introduced to an environment of cultural modification, or in the art gallery of Adam Verver where one can find a great quantity of antiques that stand for different aspects of European history and culture. We can read James's fiction for devising a nodal system of cultures where modern identity is shown not as monotonous but as miscellaneous. That is, in his work we can discover, re-enliven, and historicize pre-modern cultures and histories, and can realize the integration of historical identities into modernity. The reader searches for something the presence of which he always feels but which is yet always absent. His fiction illustrates on the one hand the perpetual presence of an absence, and, on the other, an endeavor for a compromise between a previous and a present culture. Such illustrations in his fiction add much to the pleasure of reading. In James it seems that the pleasure of searching and the pleasure of compromise are elemental, because they excite his readers to share in the making of narrative with its large amounts of high-class interactions. James's characters are members, not followers (are persons, not things), of narrative as a social contract which they change not only as a necessity but also as a pleasure. Their right and power to impact the social contract mean that they are truly members of the narrative social community. Such a capability is the advantage of a self-organizing

culture that not only borrows from previous cultures but also employs modern man to re-structure it.

Another theme is the opposition between Kate and Milly. They both combat the real to extend their powers. But each combats the real in her own way. We can recognize what is real for Kate because the story shows her mainly on the surface. Although she has Densher in her control, she has neither the will nor the power to cancel the real. She fights with the rough material realism of her society but cannot change it, because she is a part of it. If a great part of the story represents her struggle, it is a futile struggle of lie and dissimulation for dominance, and a major theme of the tale is her ultimate frustration and alienation. Whatever she does is part of the realism of her society. But in contrast to Kate, Milly does not fully show herself, for although she has the will and power to shatter the cruel reality to which she is a victim, her goodness is, as Peter Brooks says, “tenuous, privatized, interior, and complex” (Brooks, 1994: 30). Here in Europe, she recognizes the reality of English society, but this realism is not to coerce her, for her death is the manifestation of her values, the substantiation of her transcendent realism.

In *The Wings of the Dove*, the narrator makes things with the words. He narrates dramatically, performatively. Narration is not for meddling in the way the characters think and speak, but for communication, for the possibility of creation through discourse. The narrator neither thinks for other characters, nor speaks for them, nor passes a judgment on them. Instead, the characters perform things and judge them as they share in discourse. The unreliability of the narrator encourages us to take a cautious approach to the meaning of what he tells us. What he alone says may reveal no truth, for truth is the tail of no single discourse. Meaning is intermediary, only a go-between. It is included not in thoughts but mainly in the vacancies between thoughts, in the borders of ideologies, the black holes where discourse goes into funk. Milly’s silences are meaningful. With the rise of her thought in James’s magnificent language, the story appeals to the reader’s aesthetic sense also. Her thought is subject to much doubt, criticism, and denial; but her special approach to her predicament and to morality also, ultimately makes her stand in a predominantly metaphorical reality.

### IX. Experience versus Logos?

Christopher Norris and Peter J. Leithart approve of Derridean deconstruction as a turning upside down of the western "metaphysics of presence." They deny that logocentrism includes the seed of any fresh and genuine thought, meaning, or experience. Norris asserts that deconstruction is the necessary "knock-down argument against" (Norris, 2002: 140) any logocentric discourse. They both argue that marginalizing literature by philosophy is not more than a 'wet dream', that reason and metaphor are one embedded in the other, that within any kind of reasoning there is some style, and that without literature philosophizing is impossible. Also, what Leithart says in "Derrida and Metaphor" is perhaps a strong confirmation of Norris's argument: "deconstruction carries on the critique of established (...) modes of perception or conceptualization which has characterized philosophy in the tradition from Aristotle to Descartes, Kant, and Husserl."<sup>9</sup> In *The Wings of the Dove* the priority of experience over script, of spontaneous thought over logocentrism, is meaningful. It creates a space for the symbolic formation of relational and interactive experience as wisdom, as enlightenment. Water as metaphor is a certain ground of recognition. In Book 8 Chapter 3 the novel compares the people in the Lancaster Gate to the fish in a pool.

There was a deeper depth of it, doubtless, for some than for others; what he (Milly's doctor), at any rate, in particular knew of it was that he seemed to stand in it up to his neck. He moved about in it, and it made no splash; he floated, he noiselessly swam in it; and they were all together, for that matter, like fishes in a crystal pool (James, 2004: 527-528).

For F. O. Matthiessen this image belongs to the variety of images in James that implies the people of a same social group whose collective experience in the flux of life is the meaning of their being and humanity. It also shows human experience as fully complex, dynamic, and as the subject to perpetual examination and refutation. He says,

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<sup>9</sup> . Peter J. Leithart /LEITHART.COM/ "Derrida and Metaphor." posted on Friday, December 23, 2005, at 5:30 PM.

What James seems to want most to suggest through such an image is the denseness of experience, the way in which the Jamesian individual feels that he is held into close contact with his special group, the slowly circulating motion of their existence all open to an observing eye, and, particularly as Densher develops this image, with an oppressive sense of the complexities in which he is immersed, of being plunged into an element “rather more strangely than agreeably warm” (Matthiessen, 1944: 63).

It is as if in water that the relations among the members of a social community can be meaningfully restored and the collective experience can grow to full recognition. Narrative incidents are like a flowing river where the characters swim to reconstruct themselves via getting new experiences. Like when one washes himself or herself in water, we can recognize the becoming of the consciousness only by swimming in the river of experiences. Unlike the logos, that is the meaning consolidated in the word, experience is flowing and spontaneous. Like a whale in the ocean, which dies out of water, out of the waters of spontaneity experience gets stale; for it is only in the flow of life that it can fully develop. Thus, the modern concept of experience, as illustrated in James also, runs counter to what Derrida called the “logocentrism” of the Western thought. “Logocentrism,” which Derrida refuted, is the perceived tendency of the Western thought before him to locate the center of any text or discourse within the logos, within word, reason, or spirit. It is to assume a transparent relation between signifier and referent, or between language and intended meaning.

In the Jamesian sense, experience is centrifugal and spontaneous. It is an in-between phenomenon. While logos is the meaning deposited in the word or the meaning that reason has produced, experience is the meaning by or between the words, the in-between or relational meaning produced through the interaction of the discursive agents. Deconstruction defines its main task as questioning or deconstructing the metaphysical tendency in the Western thought that has desired, from Aristotle up to the present, for immediate access to meaning, and for accepting the privilege of presence over absence. Derrida calls this tendency “metaphysics of presence” which he has successfully sought to problematize and puncture. He does this because, as he argues, the logos contains the seed of no meaning or spontaneous experience but is parasitic to any originary involvement with the world for achieving

new experience. Therefore, *The Wings* can be analyzed deconstructively also, for it is an implicit illustration of the refutability of “logocentrism.” James and Derrida consider experience as an in-between entity and as spontaneous because it is not already invested in the word but grows in a process of interpretive interaction. The fiction of James is what Derrida would describe as a creative mode of writing, as a space for practicing free and spontaneous thinking. They both would admit that it is through writing and reading, through criticism, that man’s free conscience, like a ship on water, navigates through the stormy waves of life to achieve recognition.

In Book 7 chapter 3, Milly resides in Palazzo Leporelli in Italy till she dies. Eugenio, her courier, dedicates himself to her and develops personal but superficial relations with her. Milly is presented with a “renewed flare of fancy” (James, 2004: 452). The semantics of the story make her identity and function all enigmatic, for the discourse lets the reader sway between reality and phantom. Why does Milly, as metaphor, in the event of her death, take refuge in the solitude of such a relic of the past? She does so soon to depart to the unlimited eternity, to the frozen plains of death. She also symbolically withdraws into a past culture that is no longer alive. She goes to the stillness of the palace perhaps to listen to the up-to-now unheard voices scattered on the long plateau of the past history of mankind. She is now the hinge-point where a multiple of cultures meet.

When Lord Mark visits her in the palace, she is in her “excluded disinherited state” which is different from the ‘naturalistic’ Kate. Under the charm of this position, she sees a ‘face’ that speaks for her about “a possible but forbidden life” (James, 2004: 465). She is absorbing a new ‘light’ that helps her discover different modes of previous cultures as material for building the culture of modernity. In addition, like in the Bronzino painting, which is, to speak with J. A. Ward, “emblematic of Milly’s ultimate beauty’s emerging after her death” (Ward, 1967: 189-190), she uses such devices (the face, the light) to express her overflowing imagination, because (expressing) her imagination is beyond what language gives her. When Mark asks her if she is “really not well” (James, 2004: 466), she realizes that her value for her would-be lover may be “precisely in the ravage of her disease” (ibid: 467). After she draws inferences about his incapability of pure love, she decides she will not marry

him; because she thinks his love is mingled with pity and self-interest. She admits that she is ill and Mark offers to take care of her, but she says he is not good for her present situation. On the one hand, Mark admits that his suppressed life has made him tormented. On the other hand, he tells her she was born to make her lovers happy. His remarks reveal that he thinks of marriage not as love but as bargain. But Milly cannot marry him, for she does not think that marriage is a bargain. Here the reader can rarely decide if the talk is an interior monolog or if some people are leading a real conversation. In this way, the logic and structure of speech in this story are different from *The Ambassadors* (1903). In movement, *The Wings* (1902) is more irregular, in centers of consciousness more varied, and in structure more unbalanced than *The Ambassadors*, while no straightforward reading is adequate for the 1902 novel. Its numerous disproportions and shifts of mode and texture need scrupulous analysis. Nicola Bradbury compares these novels in the following way:

Where *The Ambassadors* uses duality, *The Wings of the Dove* has multiplicity, contraries which are not reconciled, but challenge and supersede each other; different approaches are tried and abandoned, both in the narrative, for the reader, and in the characters' understanding or their own story. Hypothesis and extravagance characterize *The Wings of the Dove*, and resolution comes not from reconciliation, but from the rejection of excess. The process and effect of the novel are much less poised than in *The Ambassadors* (Bradbury, 1979: 73).

The fiction of James in his late period is quite delicate. He compares his intended audience to the "fish rising to more delicate bait." He has written for certain audiences, and the reader of *The Wings* should be highly eager and fully equipped with the techniques of reading. James's late novels, the products of his full prime, are in a sense exercises in hermeneutic competence that want to educate the reader in the art of reading. Certain long passages in this novel can mystify the reader and make him irritated. Yet, what makes it a 'symptomatic' case of interpretation is perhaps its masterfully metaphorical representation. D. W. Jefferson says "Nothing in Jamesian criticism is more remarkable than the widespread failure to appreciate Milly. This may be partly due to the reader's unpreparedness for so thoroughgoing a case of Americanism" (Jefferson, 1964: 202). Milly is, although not to a great extent, what

she is. But a problem is that she must mainly be considered for what she is not. She is a meek American girl whom the narrative requires that she be deceived by another woman. But she is, as Jefferson says again, “among those on whom little or nothing is lost” (ibid: 205).

In Book 8 Chapter 1, the story suggests that Densher wants to connect thought to experience, to come further out from the realm of thought to the realm of life. But when he understands that Kate has close control over him, he doubts “whether he had really no will left” (James, 2004: 493). He realizes that he is being controlled by Kate’s strategy that is only false, appearance; and that there is no far distance between life and lie. Kate has absolute control over him, but he has almost no control over her. This new situation for Densher is like a test of will the outcome of which is anger and shame. His abstract, passive, and impersonal language suggests that he is feeling suppressed. But he decides to move on his own account. To speak with Nicola Bradbury again, Densher’s “terms are the recurrent elements of the novel: question, knowledge, and will” (Bradbury, 1979: 110).

The third chapter of Book 8 mystifies both Densher and reader. On the one hand, there is the question of the health of the American innocent. But there is also the question why there should be no allusion to her sickness. In such a complex mystification, the plot gets looser, and both the reader and character are more likely to be left alone to determine the right path. So, they want to devise a “useful function“ of consideration. However, it is reported that Densher hasn’t “even the amount of curiosity” he needs about Milly, for he is “acting for Kate, and not, by the deviation of an inch, for her friend” (James, 2004: 519). Now he is deeply concerned with Milly’s situation, but his carelessness, ignorance, and passive honor are running counter to his involvement.

However, as the time passes, the relations between Kate and Densher grow shakier; and a part of the two remaining books will show how each of them doubts if the other one really loves him/her, and how this prevents their trust and understanding; so that ultimately their marriage is surely not a resolution. To achieve her ideals, the English girl is represented as making her feelings follow her intellect. This makes her a more problematic case for Densher, for she is able to accomplish a “heroic ring.”

Although the narrator seems to be speaking ironically, Densher feels more incapacitated, because in relation with Kate, he always feels under-recognition, feels that something is in her that he needs to make out, and he will struggle more severely for independent knowledge and voice. Kate is afraid Densher may lose his confidence in her. Thus, to regain his confidence, her discourse is delivered in a more self-sufficient style. Although his doubt makes him curious for independent knowledge, it also makes him submissive to the discourse of Kate. The virtuality of this situation, however may at first suggest that the things are improbable, but nevertheless also implies their possibility. Densher's thoughtful questions, Kate's decisive retorts, that "touched the truth" (ibid: 544), and Milly's repeated silences suggesting her solitary considerations, make the narrative discourse into a subject of deep reflections.

The remaining part of this chapter will discuss the irony of Kate's salvation. Her success necessarily entails her failure also, and it can hardly be suggested that she is saved. Milly, who is dying, is in love with Densher, but Densher is already engaged to Kate. However, Kate's plan is that he should marry the American girl so that Kate and Densher can lawfully possess her fortune after her death. They are now in Venice where Milly is in her deathbed in the Palazzo Leporelli. The English girl will soon go back to London; but she wants his lover to stay with the American dying heiress so that, as he asks Kate, it be "possible she may offer marriage?" (James, 2004: 544) But as he is full of (sexual) desire, he tells her he will stay with the American girl only if Kate comes to his rooms to sleep with him.

Kate: "And if I do understand?"

Densher: "I'll do everything."

...

Kate: "Well, I understand."

Densher: "On your behalf?"

Kate: "On my behalf."

Densher: "You'll come?"

Kate: "I'll come" (ibid: 546).

In the end, however, Kate will have neither him as husband nor Milly's fortune through him; and soon she will feel deeply exhausted and alienated.

Book 9 immerses Densher into a more detached process where musical and theatrical images help him to feel perhaps the real fluidity of a "supreme recognition." As he realizes that he should depart for the palace, the experience of his possible marriage to a dying girl to snatch her money is traumatic, as he feels himself always swaying to and from Kate: "When he closed the door behind him for an absence he always shut her in" (ibid: 550). On the one hand, the narrative has it that his salvation should be in his absence from Kate. But in Kate's absence his sense of inadequacy is so overwhelming that he cannot sweep her presence from the realm of his being. Now that Kate is "*all* in her poor rooms" (ibid), although he feels "the mercy of the beneficent chance," he also admits, on reflection, that in his inward senses he feels the improvement of a fallacy.

Densher is to remain with Milly in the palace for some time; for, as Kate remembers having said in a talk, Milly "had really seen no way but to require it of him" (James, 2004: 553). Her deception puts him also on the fringe of lying. But the energies of the discourse go counter so squarely that neither the reader, nor Densher himself, can guess if he will be exempted from the inevitable lie. It is here that the energies of the discourse start going counter to Kate's dissimulations. Densher feels that Kate has restricted his freedom by making him not only to pretend that he loves Milly but also to endeavor to take her fortune. On the other hand, such malicious policies of Kate inflict on Milly some unbearable damages all of which Densher charges to Kate's account. Among these damages is that Milly feels deep humiliation because they have treated her in such a cruel way, because, as she feels, they have denied her humanity. And, to complete the narrative procedure, these deceiving actions of Kate, her false pretensions, swindling, and imposing humiliation upon Milly through blotting her humanity cause Densher in due course to take his love back from Kate. Thus, Kate will soon feel humiliation, for there remains no longer any more love between Densher and her. Still on the other hand, the victory of the dying Milly is a bright reality. She informs Densher that "If I want to live, I can" (James, 2004: 558). But the life she will lead is a metaphor. It is definable perhaps only in

terms of “light and sound,” in terms of what help us to see and to hear. She will reach, through her virtual death, into the core of freedom. Her death will make her “the least coercible of creatures.” On the verge of death, she is “the freest person” who has “got everything,” for it is her “way” to “peace and plenty” (ibid: 560).

But can Milly deal with the Densher whom Kate has adapted for her purposes? His internal conflict is a crisis; and he feels snubbed and frightened. In Kate’s project that he is carrying out, lying is strategic. His remaining with Milly is, in reality, ‘against’ Milly, but Kate has made him to pretend that it is ‘for’ her. Also, his distance and negligence render the strategy more inapplicable. In the second chapter, when Densher sits in Florian’s café to refresh himself, we see him in an impossible situation, because indecision, frailty, fear, and terror are among his shares. The images illustrate his great trauma: the image of somebody who must untie a most confused coil, or of someone who is “shut up to a room” and must witness as long as possible the remaining on the wall of a painting that is hanging most precariously. The atmosphere is of non-communication. Many linguistic and literary signals suggest a deep stasis: that the air is “a virtual non-conductor” (ibid: 567), that Pasquale is dormant, that “vacancy is but a nest of darkness” (ibid: 568), or that the force of veto is laid there in the house. To quote Bradbury once again, “what the reader experiences are the leaps of recognition Densher makes, not explanation” (Bradbury, 1979: 114).

In *The Wings of the Dove*, the discourse should be discussed preferably from within rather than from without which involves, among other elements, a number of syntactic and semantic factors for providing fluidity and relationality. The great use in the story of indefinite pronouns like “something” (256 times), expressions of negation like “nothing” (329 times), those of possibility like “might” (530 times) and “might have” (145 times), and modal adverbs like “as if” (292 times) suggest its large centrifugal energy in the play of the sign to provide a high range of indeterminacy and fluidity and deference of meaning. Such indeterminacies support the suspicion of conspiracy. When Densher sees Lord Mark in the café in Venice, he remembers part of his past. Several weeks ago, when they had come for their first visit to Milly’s palace, he had seen him. Why Mark should be in Venice again keeps Densher’s mind “going and going,” and he is all “restless.”

In the meantime, Densher more insistently continues his self-deceiving considerations. For example, he thinks Mark's visit to the dying girl is a "descent, an invasion, an aggression," and decides that "the only delicate and honorable way of treating" her is to "treat her as he, Merton Densher, did" (James, 2004: 577). The contrast or difference between these two strategies of treason is highlighted: One opponent wants to pierce a hole in the game of his rival to immediately cancel its function, while the other one intends to play his game round and round in order that he ultimately finds a short cut to his goal. In his renewed entanglement, and as he remains in his place or roams about the square, Densher searches apologies perhaps for the expiation of his shame: slow walking in the rain, "peeping into the shops," and considering what he can get out of a possible meeting with the people around there. Although his stay with the American innocent to grab her fortune (for Kate) goes counter to "the agreeable," Densher says it "would be his one way;" and he will surely remain "to mark his virtue beyond any mistake" (ibid: 579).

The conversation between Densher and Mrs. Stringham in Venice in chapter 3 is mainly about if Milly "should like to see" Densher. Although Kate has wanted him to stay with Milly to excite her to propose marriage, he pretends he will see Milly only in case he can help her, and also if she wants "it first herself." Then they negotiate as to whether Sir Luke Strett will come to visit the dying girl. As she is on her deathbed, they might suggest she needs their real help; but they talk only about the luxuries, rather than the fundamentals, of their experiences: what they know about the doctor, for example, or if they like him. Such a piece of talk seems rather irrelevant to this critical occasion, and interposing it into the imaginative argument needs guessing. Yet, their thoughtful negotiation is the celebration of intellectual reflection and the hermeneutic code, for it implies that Densher is incapable of any action and prefers, instead, as Kevin Kohan says, an "intensity of concentration" (Kohan, 1999: 147). When Stringham tells him she has come to let him know that Mark has returned to Venice to tell Milly "you've been all the while engaged to Miss Croy" (James, 2004: 596), he guesses "it was of himself that he was afraid" (ibid: 593); and his fear increases. Densher needs to understand perhaps more than this simple fact. He is pressed under the necessity of recognition; and the narrative shows the turns he takes

to achieve such a depth of knowledge. His dialogue with Stringham is a significant maneuver, for it is an exercise of insight. They also analyze why Mark has uncovered the secret of Kate's engagement to Densher, and consider of what benefit searching this half-measure may be. However, to speak with Kohan again, a function of his measure is that it "apparently brings about a deadly difference for the spectral figure on the 'elegant plane of representation'" (Kohan, 1999:146). From now on, and because Mark divulges the secret of their engagement, Milly will come down, from the domain of the divine to that of a dying girl and a victim of deception, for whom the mortal creatures have pity. Kohan argues that by this act of realization James provides the narrative with a more "general economy," and adds to its plausibility. The narrative intends to suggest how the real is embedded in the imaginary, and how the imaginary can make our lives into logical units in form and meaning. After Mark's maneuver, Milly the "incarnate being" will come from the remote world of the imagination to the harsh world of the real where man can intrigue against man for his own advantage.

Chapter 4 begins with Venice as rejoicing in the nice weather when Densher goes to see Milly's doctor at the train station as he has come to visit her. For Densher, the truth about Milly is the great reality. As the time dies out, truth becomes more aggravated in him, and he can touch and hear it more closely. Here a major representational aspect is Densher under the huge pressure of their "wonderful system." When he is with the American girl, Mark visits her to punch a hole in their game. Then, Stringham visits Densher to inform him that Mark has uncovered to Milly his secret engagement to Kate. And then, the great doctor, going back to London, informs Densher at the station "I'm commissioned to ask you from her (Milly)<sup>10</sup> to go and see her" (James, 2004: 618). As this sequence approaches its end, Densher's love for Kate seems more clearly precarious and inclined to alternation, for he feels the truth about Milly is of "quite another value." Is he changing his mind about his engagement with Kate? And his absurd waiting in Venice has perhaps made him qualified even for further spiritual changes after Milly's death by the memory of her love. In addition, he is better realizing how dark his future can become. These

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<sup>10</sup> . My adding.

inferences are the result of his radical inactivity, and will lead to the failure of Kate's plan against Milly. In the fiction of James, it is the reader who should discover the typical situation that can usually include the external setting as well as the internals of the character. The text always offers only some hints by which the reader should guess not only the purpose of the characters but also the structure of the story. However, these hints can be rather far-fetched and inclined to escape the attention of the reader. The reader realizes that the result of their "wonderful system" is Densher's avoidance, neglect, and fear. But Kate prefers not to realize the irony of her system. What has happened is the outcome of her dishonesty, but she still pretends nothing important has really happened. However, she is mainly unaware of the consciousness of her dishonesty, because she still believes in the function of "the beautiful system." Yet, it seems that she is rather aware of her dishonesty. The novel shows her a poor girl and a monster, and this makes the story too complex.

Book 10 begins the presentation of Densher at Lancaster Gate again where he is "gathering everything up, everything he should tell" (James, 2004: 622) Kate about his Venice days. Kate asks him, at the tea-table, if the American girl is still alive. When he is describing his situation there, Kate is "divided between the wish and the reluctance to hear it" (ibid: 626). Is she reluctant because she guesses Densher may be really in love with Milly? When he reports that the American girl "has turned her face to the wall" because Lord Mark has told her Kate and Densher have been secretly engaged all the while, she asks him "wouldn't it have been possible then to deny the truth of the information?" (ibid: 630-631) Kate's wonderful suggestion of such a denial stupefies him so much that he wonders if she thinks they are still engaged. The remaining part of the story illustrates how the energies of this possible denial change it to a clear necessity. When Densher makes up his mind that for Kate the end justifies the means; that is, when he understands that to achieve her goal Kate has taken use of whatever tool at her disposal, he loses his confidence in her and takes his love back from her. At this point, the story has come full circle. Densher says "I'm just where I was" (ibid: 656), and thinks that Kate also has no better situation. In chapter 3 of this last book, when Kate differs with her Aunt Maud, and goes back to live with her

original family where her father is living with her sister Maria “for refuge, for safety” (ibid: 667), her frustration is obvious.

Kate’s wonderful manner (in negotiation with Densher) to achieve her goal is “the manner of at once having it all before her and yet keeping it all at its distance” (James, 2004: 632). This system of paradoxes is expected to enable her to consume all her resources and to preserve them at the same time. It also characterizes the way James tells his story; for although each time he gives a considerable part of it to the reader, he effectively abstains from giving it fully. The text perpetually defers signification and determinacy. Densher’s increasing stupefaction in his endeavors to fulfill Kate’s system can stand for the bewilderment of the reader. Milly is perhaps the incarnation of the secret of narrative in the fiction of James, the incarnation of a perpetual search for something that is always absent. She embodies the value of a continuous enquiry, a search for nothing other than the search itself, a kind of search which is itself the meaning of life. In this sense, she is a Jamesian incarnation of the hermeneutic code.

After Lord Mark reveals to Milly the secret of the engagement of Kate and Merton, Merton visits her in Venice only once which is a very short visit. When he is back in London again, Kate asks him if he has denied Mark’s information. But Densher replies that even if he had time enough for the purpose, he would not have denied it; for had he done so, he says, he would have stuck to his denial and would break with Kate to make a truth of his denial. And when Kate infers that he is in love with (the memory of) the American girl, he does not deny it. In his last visit to Milly, she insists that he should not “stay any longer” than twenty minutes, so that he be absent when she dies in order perhaps that he does not endure the grief of her death. Such a moral measure affects Densher deeply enough. However, it is also a measure of veiling as a technique on the part of the author that keeps Milly in the center of our attention. In addition, it is for preserving her memory in the heart of Densher and the reader. Milly shows her truly reserved love to Densher in her gentle dependence in their last excursion together. She is also excessively hesitant to show her severe illness. As long as she is visible, she is reluctant to let the people know that she is ill. When Densher visits her the last time, he reports that she received him “just as usual: in that glorious great *salone*, in the dress she always wears, from her inveterate corner

of her sofa” (James, 2004: 637). She shows herself sick only when her death is impending. On the other hand, when she is dying she finds out that Merton has seen his salvation in something other than leaving. Days later, when she understands that he is still there waiting, Merton says “This ... affected her.”

Therefore, the outcome of Densher’s experiences in Venice is different from what Kate has been dreaming; and she guesses that they are now really in love. However, these occasions of excessive wonder and reflection have left Densher bereft of all his potentials; for, as Bell Millicent says, “the opposing forces of “the naturalistically definable and the transcendently undefinable young woman are going counter in his inside” (Millicent, 1991: 308). These frustrations have robbed him of all his abilities for action. He can find no middle action, for whatever he may do is acting against truth. His incapacity is so salient that beyond pondering on “the difference between acting and not acting” (James, 2004: 396), he scarcely can do anything.

At the end of this book there is a power game that prevents any ultimate solution to the problem. Densher receives two letters the second of which is from an American law firm. He gives it, unopened, to Kate to test her. But she fails to pass this test, because he understands that money is more important for her than love. Can love and money come together to make one happy? In order to get out of his marriage contract with Kate, Densher gives her the money that Milly has left for him. But Kate also will not have it and leaves it on the table. Love and money are intertwined, but Kate and Densher will not marry.

He visits her once again, but this time in Mrs. Condrip’s, to give her the letter he has received from Milly and to find out how Lord Mark knew about their engagement. Could it be that he thinks Kate (or Aunt Maud) may have uncovered the secret to Mark (so that he might reveal it to Milly)? Kate replies that she doesn’t “pretend to know” the connection between Mark and her aunt, but she says Mark is “clever enough, apparently” to understand what a riddle hides and to change it to the logic of his behavior. The letter of the American heiress, which Densher does not read but gives to Kate with the seal unbroken, perhaps allegorizes reading James. Who can assert to know the real content of the letter? For shortly after breaking the seal of the letter, Kate had “turned to the fire, ..., and, with a quick gesture, had jerked the thing

into the flame” (James, 2004: 694). She thinks that Densher now owns, at least part of Milly’s fortune. Therefore, she imposes this restriction on him perhaps to make him forget the memory of Milly’s love, and thereby to possess his whole heart again. After the letter is put into fire, he cannot but stare at it burning. The burning letter represents something for which we search but which we always miss. And the passive Densher embodies the modern reader whose “editorial mind” makes him incapacitated in reading the text of Kate?

Densher’s ultimate renunciation of both Kate’s love and Milly’s money is a due response to his desire to “escape from everything.” This can be compared to Lambert Strether’s fantastic renunciation at the end of *The Ambassadors*. The responsive Maria Gostrey offers herself to Strether and suggests that he stay in Europe and live with her. But he also renounces all the advantages of life in Europe with her. Soon he says good bye to her and departs for America. Densher’s and Strether’s heroic renunciations are Jamesian solutions to achieve goodness through the rejection of the material gain for the sake of spiritual excellence. They are also among the Jamesian strategies to avoid any crisis in reading and interpretation; for through renunciation, the intellectual Densher provides the ground, not for the cancellation of this ugly reality, but for the application of his social consciousness to provide virtual spaces where our private and social experiences can be re-structured. Densher’s renunciation also gives the reader of *The Wings* the opportunity to apply the free play of his mind to reread it in the context of his or her new social awareness. It means the freedom of the sign from conventional signification, and the free interaction of all discursive forces to value dialogic understanding. It is also perhaps James’s formula for the imaginative possibility of the impossible. Kate can possess the money only through Densher, and Densher can renounce it through Kate. Such a discursive dead-end can take function perhaps only through the free play of the imagination with the intention of opening its eyes to the horizons of the impossible.



## Chapter Six

### Language and Consciousness: A Deconstructive Reading of *The Ambassadors*

The novel is the perfect paradise of the loose end.  
(Henry James)

#### I. The Problem of the Story

Throughout his career, James was conscious of the significance of the Civil War, and used his writing to help America develop a new sense of self. For doing this, he re-examined in his fiction the relationships of America with Europe. In many of his stories, he compared the true spirit of contemporary Americans with their European peers, and showed the active engagement of Americans with life in Europe, or of Europeans with life in America. However, when Percy Lubbock confirmed that James gave “a fresh life” to the novel, he meant that he was “the first writer” in whose work “the language of the novel, ..., gives a possible scope to a novelist which he is evidently bound to take into account” (Lubbock, 1954:172-173).

Chadwick Newsome is in Paris. But there is a rumor that he is involved in an affair with a Parisian woman. Therefore, his widowed mother sends Lambert Strether to Europe to rescue him by returning him to America where he is expected to run his family business. In a hotel in Chelsea, Strether visits his old friend Waymarsh who is a successful American barrister. And when, on the way to Paris, Maria Gostrey visits him in London to introduce him to Europe and its culture, the party goes to watch a play.

Strether has passed the majority of his life in Woollett, America, and when he arrives in Paris, his thought is completely Woollettian. However, when he sees Chad, he realizes that he is much different from the Chad in Woollett, because the Parisian culture has improved his senses and tastes and interests. When he finds out that it is in the space of Parisian civilization that he should search for all the roots of Chad’s radical promotion, “the curve in the unexpected adventure of his imagination” is such that, Percy Lubbock says, “he finds himself wishing that his young friend would refuse to be rescued” (Lubbock, 1945: 147).

This becomes clear when he advises Little Bilham in a famous speech to “live all you can” when it is not yet too late for him. A significant force in the development of Strether’s consciousness is the role of the Parisian culture: Miss. Gostrey’s associations help him understand more achievements of European culture, or the influence of Gloriani’s garden party, for it is such occasions that he can acclimatize to this new culture. When Mrs. Newsome wants him in an irate cable to go back with Chad to Woollett, he replies that he intends to stay another month. This implies that he has lost her trust; and that to the Woollettian culture he is perhaps an outsider now. Another facet of his cultural acclimatization in the Parisian space is the role of its easy-going, subtle, and satiated language that allows him to invade all the nooks and corners of its culture.

A major theme of *The Ambassadors* is the development of the consciousness of Strether: how his opinion of life changes in the Parisian culture, that is, how, contrary to his prevision, he loses his belief in the Woollettian “world of commonplace” and shares the Parisian “life of freedom,” and how, as the result of such a radical change in his vision, he ultimately inverts his purpose. On the one hand, the novel takes to illustrate all his mental transformations by means of language. On the other hand, it must use language not to dramatize Strether’s predicament but rather to pictorialize it, because it includes almost no series of actions but depicts only a state of being.

Considering that literature is an aspect of culture or a story is a language construction, the problem of *The Ambassadors* is perhaps the representation of the transcendence of Strether’s consciousness in and out of language. Therefore, a major question is: What does it mean for Strether to transcend his consciousness? He is an adult intelligent person who thinks that under the influence of the closed culture of his Woollett he has lost his life. But when he comes to Europe, he attempts to clean his mind from the grips of his native culture to celebrate the achievements of the open human culture of Paris.

The present reader thinks that we can trace the evolution of Strether’s mind along two broad paths: one is the contrast between Woollettian and Parisian language and culture. Parisian culture helps him to improve his insight by freeing his mind from the grips of the closed, moralistic, and rigidly hierarchical culture and take the subtle

effects of the more humane civilization in Paris where things are relative and relational. However, the other path is the open mind of Strether as a uniquely intelligent man. When he finds himself in the Parisian context, he belatedly but earnestly attempts to amend the damages inflicted on him by his native culture. However, if on any occasion the development of his mind is limited by any aspect of language, he attempts to expand his consciousness even beyond the limits of language.

## II. From Structuralism to Post-Structuralism in Literature

When applied to literature, structuralism becomes radical. Twentieth-century literary criticism, which is based mainly on functional theories of language, is in explicit opposition with nineteenth-century mimetic and expressive theories of language. It devalues any view that regards literature as a means of communication between the author and reader. A proper study of literature is not, structuralists say, a close reading of the isolated literary text. Instead, it is an inquiry about the conditions influential in the act of interpretation. They argue that any separate work of literature is an expressing agent of the social and cultural system of which it is a part. Thus, instead of focusing their attention on individual texts, they deal with the system of signification in that social and cultural situation. They investigate the systems whereby texts relate to each other, because they believe that it is their task to study the "grammar" of literature, i. e., the system of rules which govern literary interpretation. Structuralists search for the deep structures common to all literary productions of a certain period or at least a certain author. This is because they believe any text<sup>1</sup> refers

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<sup>1</sup> In "From Work to Text," Roland Barthes outlines the differences between "work" and "text." A summary of his discussion is: (1) in method: "The work is a fragment of substance, occupying a part of the space of books (in a library for example), the Text is a methodological field. ... , the work can be seen (in bookshops, in catalogues, in exam syllabuses), the text is a process of demonstration, speaks according to certain rules (or against certain rules); the work can be held in the hand, the text is held in language, only exists in the movement of a discourse ... , the text is not the decomposition of the work, it is the work that is the imaginary tail of the Text; or again, *the Text is experienced only in an activity of production.*" (2) in genres: "The text does not stop at (good) Literature; it cannot be contained in a hierarchy, even in a simple division of genres. What constitutes the Text is, on the contrary (or precisely), its subversive force in respect of the old classifications. ... If the Text poses problems of classification, (...), this is because it always involves a certain experience of limits. ... the Text is that which goes to the limit of the rules of enunciation (rationality, readability, etc.). ... the Text tries to place itself very exactly *behind* the limit of the doxa. ... Taking the word literally, it may be said that the Text is always paradoxical." (3) in signs: "The Text can be approached, experienced, in reaction to the sign. The work closes on a signified. There are two modes of signification which can be attributed to the signified: either it is claimed to be evident and the work is then the object of a literal science, of philology, or else it is considered to be secret, ultimate, something to be sought out, and the work then falls under the scope of a hermeneutics, of an

to other texts and meaning is intertextual. They argue that only after discovering the deep structures of the whole production of an author, and actively interacting with them, the critic can usefully interpret literature. In this way, the signs of language and the codes of culture are regarded as constituting the systems of which the separate

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interpretation (...); in short, the work itself functions as a general sign and it is normal that it should represent an institutional category of the civilization of the sign. The Text, on the contrary, practises an infinite deferment of the signified, is dilatory; its field is that of the signifier and the signifier must not be conceived as 'the first stage of meaning', its material vestibule, but, in complete opposition to this, as its *deferred action*. ... The Text is *radically symbolic: a work conceived, perceived, and received in its integrally symbolic nature is a text*. Thus is the Text restored to language; like language, it is structured but off-centred, without closure." (4) in plurality: "The text is plural. Which is not simply to say that it has several meanings, but that it accomplishes the very plural of meaning: an *irreducible* (and not merely an acceptable) plural. The Text is not a co-existence of meanings but a passage, an overcrossing; thus it answers not to an interpretation, even a liberal one, but to an explosion, a dissemination. The plural of the Text depends, that is, not on the ambiguity of its contents but on what might be called the *stereographic plurality* of its waves of signifiers (etymologically, the text is a tissue, a woven fabric). The reader of the Text may be compared to someone at a loose end ...; what he perceives is multiple, irreducible, coming from a disconnected heterogeneous variety of substances and perspectives: lights, colours, vegetation, heat, air, slender explosions of noises, scant cries of birds, children's voices from the other side, passages, gestures, clothes of inhabitants near or far away. All these incidents are half-identifiable: they come from codes which are known but their combination is unique, founds the stroll in a difference repeatable only as difference. So the Text: it can be it only in its difference (which does not mean its individuality), its reading is semelfactive (...) and nevertheless woven entirely with citations, references, echoes, cultural languages." (5) in filiation: "The work is caught up in a process of filiation. Are postulated: a *determination* of the work by the world (by race, then by history), a *consecution* of works amongst themselves, and a *conformity* of the work to the author. The author is reputed the father and the owner of his work: literary science therefore teaches *respect* for the manuscript and the author's declared intentions, while society asserts the legality of the relation of the author to work. (...) As for the text, it reads without the inscription of the Father. Here again, the metaphor of the Text separates from that of the work: the latter refers to the image of an *organism* which grows by vital expansion, by 'development' (a word which is significantly ambiguous, at once biological and rhetorical); the metaphor of the Text is that of a network; if the Text extends itself, it is the result of a combinatory systematic (an image, moreover, close to current biological conceptions of the living being)." (6) in reading: "The work is normally the object of a consumption; ... The Text ... decants the work ... from its consumption and gathers it up as play, activity, production, practice. This means that the Text requires that one try to abolish (or at the very least to diminish) the distance between writing and reading, in no way by intensifying the projection of the reader into the work but by joining them in a single signifying practice. The distance separating reading and writing is historical. ... In fact, *reading*, in the sense of consuming, is far from *playing* with the text. 'Playing' must be understood here in all its polysemy: the text itself *plays* (like a door, like a machine with 'play') and the reader plays twice over, playing the Text as one plays a game, looking for a practice which reproduces it, but, in order that that practice not be reduced to a passive, inner *mimesis*, (the text is precisely that which resists such a reduction), also playing the Text in the musical sense of the term. The Text ... asks of the reader a practical collaboration. Which is an important change, for who executes the work? ... Nowadays only the critic executes the work (accepting the play on words). The reduction of reading to a consumption is clearly reasonable for the 'boredom' experienced by many in the face of the modern ('unreadable') text, the avant-garde film or painting: to be bored means that one cannot produce the text, open it out, set it *going*." (7) in pleasure: ... Certainly there exists a pleasure of the work (of certain works); I can delight in reading and re-reading Proust, Flaubert, Balzac, even,—why not?—Alexander Dumas. But this pleasure, no matter how keen and even when free from all prejudice, remains in part ... a pleasure of consumption; for if I can read these authors, I also know that I cannot *re-write* them (that it is impossible today to write 'like that') and this knowledge, depressing enough, suffices me to cut me off from the production of these works, in the very moment their remoteness establishes my modernity. ... As for the Text, it is bound to *jouissance*, that is to a pleasure without separation. ... the Text is that space where no language has a hold over any other, where languages circulate. ... The discourse on the Text should itself be nothing other than text, research, textual activity, since the text is the *social* space which leaves no language safe, outside, nor any subject of the enunciation in position as judge, master, analyst, confessor, docoder. The theory of the Text can coincide only with the practice of writing" (Barthes, 1971: 1470-1475).

literary texts are only a part. Therefore, it can be suggested that structuralism is a search for the langue of literature, a search for its basic foundations that come together to make a certain literary system.

(The language of) literature is a systematized combination of codes which structuralists attempt to discover. They say such codes give meaning to all our social and cultural systems including our customs and behaviors. Literature is a self-enclosed system of rules that is composed of language. Like language, it needs no outside referent, because it functions as its own rule-governed and socially constrained system. Therefore, structuralism is a scientific study of literature, a critical project the task of which is finding the grammars of literature and understanding how such grammars produce meaning. Another facet of structuralism is its claim to demystify literature. It denies literature any mystical or magical power or any privileged position that may heretofore have been bestowed upon it. Structuralism does not take the text for an autonomous object. It assumes that in the examination of the meaning of the text the intention of the author has no significant role, for meaning is determined by the overall system that governs the author too. Thus, at the expense of the author, structuralism enables the critical reader of literature to unmask its secrets and locate its deep structures.

A structuralist critic attempts to analyze individual literary texts, and his goal is to provide an objective criticism of them. The means of his interpretations is basically the language of the text. What the writer has created as concepts, the structuralist critic deals with as signs. He never ignores the meaning of the text but treats it as mediated by signs. He reads the text as a cultural production that is constructed according to various perceptions, routines, and traditions of that culture. Thus, structuralism is the policy of an intrinsic reading that is free from subjectivity. Analyzing the text, structuralist critics organize its elements of signification into a series of opposition which they then search to correlate to further oppositions. They also analyze the texts not as separated and self-sufficient entities but as in relation to a long series of other cultural products. They search in the text for the principles of order, coherence, and meaning. This means that their readings lead them to topics (“topoi” or the culturally-

constructed sites of meaning) that underlie the way human beings think and talk about things in culture.

But Derrida, who is more a philosopher than a literary critic, is entirely post-structuralist. He was very interested in, and much inspired by, both the philosophy and philology of Nietzsche. For the German philologist, life involved a struggle between Dionysian and Apollonian elements in which neither side could ever prevail over the other, because each side contained the elements of the other side also. Thus, Nietzsche's Dionysus was both male and female. Likewise, he believed that truth includes a dramatic dichotomy that makes it unidentifiable. This obscurity would originate from the metaphorical nature of language. Nietzsche used metaphor as a medium of "translation", as a device for transferring a concept on the basis of which a word could be used in place of another word or a group of words in place of another group. He believed that in such a process of gap and difference, we use a metaphor to translate a sense impression to a mental picture, and then we use another metaphor to change that mental picture to word as a language sign. Thus, in its evolution the meaning departs from its original form, and each time that it arrives at a new horizon, it takes a different form. So, it becomes clear that metaphor is basically epistemological, for it has an energy that directs knowing and carries it forward. Language for Nietzsche is artificial and illusory, but it is metaphor that renders it shapely. In the becoming of what we perceive as truth, metaphor is the main element. In any verbal act that we perform, we refer to a truth beyond that act, and as we carry the meaning forward from one to another horizon, we assume unequal items as equal. Now, if every idea originates from equalizing the unequal items, what we consider as truth is only a sequence of metaphors, metonymies, or other rhetorical forgings. Such a truth is a series of illusions that man has forgotten that they are illusions. It is nothing more than the possibility of the representation of forms. Therefore, Nietzsche would say that interpretation is only a threshold or a going through to the meaning, but not an arrival at it.

Derridean sense of "differance" has much in common with Nietzschean sense of metaphor, for the former implies the same as what "gap" and "difference" implied for the latter: that truth is no essence, that it is metaphorical, representational.

“Difference” renders every text as a complicated system of representation that suggests not only how every text differs from every other text, but also how it defers signification in such a way that it becomes the contract of its own cancellation. In “Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Science,” Derrida argues that structuralism has closed up signification. He also proposes that by giving a center or a point of reference to structure, Western philosophy has neglected the free play of the sign, or as he says, the “structurality of structure.” He argues that the structuralist belief in discourse as system and in the function of “binary oppositions” hinders the free play of the sign. Thus, he suggests that for the possibility of signification, the belief in the center as an embodiment of a presence should be removed. It is such a point of reference that determines the rules of the play, but since the point itself is out or beyond the play, it closes up signification. Therefore, he suggests that

Henceforth, it was necessary to begin thinking that there was no center, that the center could not be thought in the form of a present-being, that the center had no natural site, that it was not a fixed locus but a function, a sort of nonlocus in which an infinite number of sign-substitutions came into play. This was the moment when language invaded the universal problematic, the moment when, in the absence of a center or origin, everything became discourse—provided we can agree on this word—that is to say, a system in which the central signified, the original or transcendental signified, is never absolutely present outside a system of differences. The absence of the transcendental signified extends the domain and the play of signification infinitely (Derrida, 2001: 353-354).

Derrida exemplifies the occurrence of such decentralization in the Nietzschean critique of the concepts of being and truth, the Freudian critique of consciousness, and the Heideggerean destruction of metaphysics. But he claims that these destructive discourses “are trapped in a kind of circle” (ibid: 354), because in all of them the signifier is conceived as “referring to a signified, a signifier different from its signified” (ibid: 355). After that, he suggests that a solution to this problem is erasing the difference between the signifier and the signified, and suggests it is a good way if the latter reduces itself into the former. As a result of this reduction, binary oppositions will no longer be possible, or if they are possible, they are so only in the

domain of the signifier. Then, he puts into question the opposition between the sensible and the intelligible (the natural and the cultural) on which Levi-Strauss had concentrated in his ethnological studies of native South Americans. He asserts that Levi-Strauss also was doubtful about the use of such oppositions, because he “has experienced the necessity of utilizing this opposition and the impossibility of accepting it” (ibid: 357).

Derrida asserts that in addition to his double belief in the possibility of this binary opposition, Levi-Strauss notes that it is contested in the “incest-prohibition” also, because the prohibition is at the same time both natural and cultural. Now, this embedding of nature and culture might excite us to investigate how language criticizes itself. For doing this, Derrida discusses the concept of “bricolage” which Levi-Strauss had used in *The Savage Mind* as the base of mythological thought. For Levi-Strauss, bricolage suggested the spontaneity of thought and action in mythology. It implied that a myth is produced of whatever is at the disposal, and that it embodies no clear ultimate intention. He believed that a myth is the assemblage of heterogeneous thought materials in a project with no previous design. In this way, the formation of a myth is like in a child game when the child installs the discordant pieces of his toys one upon another without intending to build a certain construction. Now, if mythological thought emerges from human imagination, it is based on personal experience, and is the result of whatever is already present in the mind of the imaginer.

Derrida then extends this notion of bricolage and applies it to the criticism of (structuralist) discourse: “If one calls bricolage the necessity of borrowing one’s concepts from the text of a heritage which is more or less coherent or ruined, it must be said that every discourse is bricoleur” (Derrida, 2001: 360). He compares human sciences in this regard with pure sciences, and points out that the discourse of anthropology and human sciences is, like the discourse of pure sciences, based on bricolage or engineering. To say it another way, both pure and human sciences are based on gap and difference. However, the thought based on bricolage is more conscious about the falsity of “metaphysics of presence” (or belief in meaning) than the thought based on engineering, because pure sciences are submerged in their

dreams to acquire positive knowledge about truth. However, Derrida suggests that it is good if we search for a way of reading that shows the meaning absent or detached from us, which he suggests is a deconstructive reading.

### III. The Jameses and the Consciousness<sup>2</sup>

With the development of psychology in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the pragmatist psychologist William James started to look at “consciousness” from new perspectives. He did not consider it as a universal human essence, and was not concerned with the moral dimensions of it. In *William James: Selected Writings*, we read that human consciousness is “a teeming multiplicity of objects and relations” (William James, 1995: 170). To clarify this verdict, he considers a number of characteristics for it: (a) Consciousness is a sequence of feelings, perceptions, associations, etc. that flow to us

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<sup>2</sup> "Consciousness" ("Khodagahi" = self-knowing or self-knowledge) denotes that not only (every) man evidently knows about his own existence but also about the qualifications of his existence. Thus, the being (the existence, the presence) of the consciousness is evident both for the divine and the materialist philosophers. However, about the essence (the entity) of the consciousness these philosophers have different views which need some arguments. Up to now, it has become clear that the validity of the Cartesian argument "I think, therefore I am" is in doubt, because the being of every man is, like the act of knowing, evident. It is even more evident than knowing, since to become conscious of thinking (I think) is derivative (secondary) to the being of consciousness itself. There are two main theories about the essence of consciousness: (1) the materialist (the sense) theory, (2) the divine (the spiritual) theory. For materialists, consciousness is a consecutive series of different kinds of perceptions (impressions) which a man receives through his senses, feelings, fancies, associations, etc. without any pause and while they are totally out of his control. However, the divine philosophers believe that consciousness, which every man evidently finds in himself and of the being of which he is confident, is a divine essence (a personified godsend) which, with all its specifications, is the subject neither of frequency, nor plurality, nor decadence, but is permanent (stable, immovable) and immortal. The reasons why these philosophers believe that consciousness is a spiritual being (and not a series of random perceptions) are: (a) consciousness attributes all such perceptions to itself and differentiates the attributed from the attributor (I think, I see), and as it is conscious of the being of itself, it is also conscious of this differentiation, and does not doubt about it. (b) Every one knows with his conscience that he has been, in the past and present, only one person but not more, while if he were more than one, he could not recognize such a sense of unity (oneness). In addition, without recalling its past memories, consciousness can admit that it has always been a same essence. This means that consciousness can recognize its past memories, because every man can admit that he is the same person with the person that he was in the past (times). (c) On the basis of the materialist theory, our perceptions generally are the activities and products of the cells in us which create our nerve system. With all its contents, this system constantly changes, because some of its cells die and new ones take their place, while every one evidently recognizes that he is the same person that he was in 60 or 70 years ago for example. In short, for the divine philosophers, it is evident that what man knows as his consciousness is a divine and stable essence which is abstracted and clean from all the general features of the matter. They believe that consciousness is aware not only of the being of itself but also of the qualifications of its being: through attribution (although man attributes the perceptions to his consciousness, he does not take these perceptions as the same with his consciousness), through unity (every man admits that he is only one person but not more), through identification (every one admits that he is the same person that he was in the past), and through stability (every man recognizes that no change happens in his consciousness). (This is a reading on "Khodagahi" ("Consciousness") in Majmoo'e-ye Asar-e Ostad Shahid Motahari, No. 6, Vol. 2: Osool-e Falsafeh va Ravesh-e Re'alism. Chap-e Yazdahom, Tehran: Entesharat-e Sadra 1386, pp. 140-147.) (A Collection of Motahari's Works, No. 6, Vol. 2: *Philosophical Realism: Principles and Styles*). 11th Edition, Tehran: Sadra Publications, 2006, 140-147).

while they are out of our control. In other words, it is the post with no known origin that loosely intrudes our mind and gives random shapes to it. (b) It is a multiple category, a collective entity that is made of no central nucleus but of atoms each of which is a separate entity. These atoms of thought are as various and numerous as they can be, and as random in shape. (c) It is personal, that is, the mechanism that the mind of every man uses for producing meaning is different from the mechanism that the mind of every other man uses. One and the same object stimulates the consciousness of every man differently from the consciousness of every other man. The consciousness of every man is unique. (d) It is unstable and it constantly changes. It does not get stale, and it is always in the now. (e) Yet, it is little independent because it all belongs together: it is owned only by humans, and is itself interrelated. Out of man there is no consciousness.

In this way, James has provided us with a new definition of consciousness. He considers it no longer as a unilateral entity. Metaphorically speaking, the machine of consciousness no longer moves only to one direction but is able to move in many directions at the same time. Thus, the Jamesian consciousness is able to perceive a multiplicity of feelings and associations, to analyze them into logical categories of thought, and to synthesize them again into new results.

In 19th century America, these psychological demystifications had to be formulated and applied to the work of scholars and readers; and William and Henry James took to do it. William was to provide the theoretical foundations of such innovations to make them applicable to the problems of the real life. And Henry was to apply them in the symbolic world of fiction. By doing this, they dreamed to recognize new identities for modern man, to define truth in new ways so that it could be considered no longer as singular but as plural and multiple, and to provide new intelligibilities. Through the application of the pragmatic psychology of his brother, Henry provided us with characters who however can control their logical thought, but are not able to control their pulsating consciousnesses.

The present chapter will attempt to be mainly deconstructive. I take the task to analyze the transcendence of Lambert Strether's consciousness in *The Ambassadors* in the light of four theories. A short outline of these theories is: (1) James G. Moseley's

outlook on the basis of which both Puritan and cultural backgrounds are effective in Strether's transcendence, (2) William Veeder's theory of the role of a loose language in Strether's development, (3) J. Hillis Miller's theory of Henry James's hyperbolic use of the Victorian modes of story-telling that changes the novel to an economy of "going behind," (4) Julie Rivkin's formula of a kind of reversal supplementation in James's novel that perpetually renders it in need of further readings. The present reader does not suggest that Strether's transcendence can be analyzed in the context of James's Puritanism, but that it can be considered in the context of Parisian life and experience. In the light of the three last theories, the present chapter attempts to describe Strether's transcendence in the background of his gradual divest from the Woollettian restricted codes of morality and the development of his Parisian language and experience.

Moseley considers three stages for Strether's transcendence. Although he justifies the first stage in the context of James's Puritanism, he considers the next two ones on the background of Parisian culture and experience. Likewise, the present chapter attempts to discuss Strether's transformation in the context of his great imagination and to justify it in the background of Parisian language, culture, and civilization. Therefore, this chapter is an investigation on the relations between language and consciousness. The hypothesis is that the novel is the story of thought struggling to transcend in and out of language. A part of the story illustrates a great mind trying to transcend itself by escaping from the restrictions of grammar and semantics. But after its attempts are shown as futile or incomplete, a greater part of the story illustrates how it deliberately attempts to free itself from the prison-house of language as a prospect for transcendence.

This is not surprising or unbelievable, because in many of our life situations we find language inadequate to express our thoughts and feelings, and note that there are dramatic disconnections between thought and language. In addition, we can search, in Saussurian linguistics, for the reasons of Strether's hysteric attempts to expand his consciousness beyond the limits of the systematic language. Saussure claims that language is unconscious, and admits that the reality of it is no function of the speaking subject. In this way, it is in the state of such a disconnection between the two that at

the end of the novel Strether takes refuge in the outskirts of Paris, perhaps to secure himself from the pressures of language. Life in Paris is under the full impact of the two-sided and unreliable language. But in the rural side, language and culture are much less dominant, and his consciousness can therefore be restored in a looser and more original layout. Language as system, form, or structure cannot carry all the complications and contingencies of human thought. Because of two reasons thought cannot be equated with language: (1) the flow of thought is random and eruptive and spontaneous, whereas language is a body of signs in systematic relations, (2) thought is a universal entity, but what we know as language is the representation only of particular languages. Therefore, with regard to language, thought has an independent position. And it seems that if we limit thought to language we abuse the former and overload the latter. Through Emile Benveniste, Jacques Derrida concludes that the overall structure of a language is only a “conceptual projection of a given linguistic state.” (Derrida, 1979: 105). He asserts that in addition to what Aristotle has defined as 10 categories of thought,<sup>3</sup> there are concepts (thoughts) that have no essential link with the form of a particular language. He provides us with two examples: the concept of “being” and the concept of “transcendental.” Derrida quotes Benveniste in this way:

Beyond the Aristotelian terms, above that categorization, there is the notion of “Being” which envelops everything. Without being a predicate itself, “being” is the condition of all predicates. All the varieties of “being-such,” of “state,” all the possible views of “time,” etc., depend on the notion of “being.” Now here again, this concept reflects a very specific linguistic quality (ibid).

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<sup>3</sup>. These categories are: (1) “substance,” that which neither can be predicated to anything nor be said to be in anything (“this particular man”, “that particular tree”); (2) “quantity” (how much), which is the extension of an object (“three cubits”); (3) “quality” (of what kind), the determination which characterizes the nature of an object “white”, “educated”); (4) “relation” (relating to what), the way in which one object may be related to another (“double”, “larger”); (5) “place” (where), the position of something in relation to its surrounding environment (“at the market”); (6) “time” (when), the position of something in relation of the course of events (“today”, “last year”); (7) “position” (to be in a position), a condition of rest resulting from an action. Position may be taken as the end point for the corresponding action (“he is lying down”); (8) “State” (to be in a condition, to have), a condition of rest resulting from an affection (“he is shod”, he is armed”); (9) “action” (to do), the production of change in some other object (“he cuts”, “he burns”); (10) “affection” (to undergo), the reception of change from some other object (“he is cut”, “he is burned”) (Extracted from *The Wikipedia English Encyclopedia* under “Categories (Aristotle)” and from Derrida, 1979: 93).

The concept of “being” is not included in the list of Aristotelian categories, for it is quite different from other concepts. “Being” is not a category, but is the possibility or postulation of all categories. At the same time, it has the features of more than one category. The features of “being” cross over the limitations of every single category to mix with those of other ones. Its state goes beyond all categories, for it is a supra-category, what Derrida calls a “trans-categorical” concept. He says it is not a “concept of something which could be added to the concept of a thing: It is merely the positing of a thing, or of certain determinations, as existing in themselves” (Derrida, 1979: 107). And transcendental consciousness is perhaps the state of mind when it goes beyond whatever categories of thought to focus on the activity of itself. Derrida says,

Here we are using the word “transcendental” in its most rigorous sense, in its most firmly established “technicalness,” just as it has been defined in the development of the Aristotelian problematic of categories as well as for what stands beyond the categories: “what transcends every genus.” (ibid).

#### **IV. Transcendence of Strether’s Consciousness**

In “Conversion Through Vision: Puritanism and Transcendentalism in *The Ambassadors*” James G. Moseley considers three stages for Strether’s transformation: preparation, abandonment, and revelation. The first stage deals mainly with the influence on Strether of his friends Maria Gostrey and Chad Newsome. In this stage he prepares to abandon his Woollettian morality, to recognize the benevolences of his new situation in Europe, and to interpret the Parisian experience on the basis of new standards. However, at the end of this stage his outlook is still quite Woollettian: moralistic, judgmental, and detached.

In the second stage, he undertakes a real process of abandonment. This stage comes to an end when he sees Madame de Vionnet in Gloriani’s garden and understands how much he has missed by living in the way he has lived. He abandons his ambassadorial mission and begins openly to enjoy the Parisian pleasures and beauty. It is in this stage that he delivers his magnificent speech: “Live all you can, it’s a mistake not to” (James, 2003: 215). He redirects the energy of his moralism, and

starts to absorb a visual passion for life and self-understanding. He redefines his mission and pledges to 'save' Vionnet.

But for the logical fulfillment of his transformation, this stage should be followed by a complete shock that comes in the third stage when, in the Parisian rural side toward the end of the novel, Strether sees Chad and Vionnet as lovers in a skiff on water. This is the stage of revelation, for he realizes his mistakes and accepts the total destruction of his innocence. He admits that he can no longer judge the people around him on the basis of his old moral standards. He starts to redefine himself and re-establish his relations with the people around him.

It is through interaction with the Parisian culture that Strether's consciousness achieves transcendence, because in his transformation he realizes that this culture is too fat while language as system is too narrow to include all cultural concepts because language is in pain of a large lag. He produces the acts of language (the statements), but the figures and concepts come from culture and history to put their limitations on his judgments and give form to his (non-formed) thoughts and experiences. Like a bee that takes the nectar on the flowers and transforms it to honey, it is in the environment of Parisian culture that Strether collects the material he needs for his transcendence. Due to his creative imagination and powerful personality, he is a hero who starts such an experience in an interactive dialogue with history, language, and culture. In addition, a logic of supplementation is at work which requires the story to be read and interpreted differently each time, for each new reading on the novel reveals new inadequacies of it. The story wants to create new experiences, but through the negation of what it wants to create, it is always in need of more supplementations, and wants to be interpreted differently. In such a deconstructive reading, experience is not conceived as ultimate and absolutist but as the result of juxtaposition and comparison.

In "Strether and the Transcendence of Language," William Veeder suggests that Strether's consciousness transcends the logic of language development in his mind. He admits that both Puritan and Parisian forces are at work in his transformation, but that an important part of the progress of his mentality is "the use he himself makes of words" (Veeder, 1971: 116). Throughout an important part of the book, Strether is guided by two misleading thinking habits: (1) of embedding his experiences in fragile

religious codes, and (2) seeing humans through the eye of an artistic idealism and considering women as pure and innocent. These tendencies in the hero limit him from realizing Parisian civilization. However, when he learns to overlook the limits of these habits, he starts to reject the restrictions of certain life styles and to doubt the functionality of words.

One aspect of the hero's transcendence is his gradual freedom from the Woollett codes. Up to the middle, the novel shows Waymarsh and Little Bilham and Chad Newsome and even Strether himself under the influence of the Woollett codes that limit their perceptions to a large extent. But afterwards Strether's consciousness starts to emancipate itself from the Woollettian codes of mind and behavior. He becomes more simplistic about his Woollett moral biases and language codes, gives up ideas altogether, and even goes beyond the realm of ideas and language. In this stage of puzzling flexibility "the Bright Babylon" stands for his further developments. This is the stage when he starts to become much different in outlook from Waymarsh, for in a radical dilemma, when Waymarsh's pietistic morality does not allow his consciousness to plunge into the current of the Parisian culture, Strether allows Miss. Gostrey to lead him to the depth of it that is knowledge, experience, and pleasure.

Examining the changes in the speech of the main character, Veeder claims that his education is so paradoxical, and his attitude toward the words so "two-sided" that he can no longer trust language. Through his radical distrust of language he takes a further step in his transformation. When he has newly started to be exposed to Paris, he doesn't understand anything of it. But the more he continues divesting himself of the old Woollett vocabulary, the more new words he learns in the new language. This policy of submergence into new environments of the Parisian language paves his way to absorb new influences. As he increases his mastery over language, he starts to get more meaningful impressions, and his visual insight gets more developed. Some times after he starts using Parisian language, he can rival with his teachers, and later on he even leaves them behind. However, after he realizes the inadequacies of language, he develops a sense of contradiction. He conceives experience as two-sided, and his contact with Chad and Gostrey sharpens his sense of contradiction.

To show language as unreliable for Strether, this novel uses some additional methods also. A method is the use of puns and doubles and ambiguous language. Another one is the use of proper nouns which has more than one function in the text. For example, the name “Chad” suggests that the holder of the name is a cad. But although Chad may be a cad, he is surely other than a cad also, for he possesses many aristocratic virtues. And although the name Gostrey suggests going astray, Miss. Gostrey has always kept Strether on the right path. The application of these nouns in different meanings implies that Strether has started not to rely on language, because it is inadequate for covering the perceptions of characters and the formation of experience. Thus, truth goes through a stage of silent communication that lies beyond language, because language involves a complete process of disintegration. It is in this stage that Strether’s consciousness starts to develop beyond language. When he becomes more indifferent about Woollett’s restricted language and fragile morality, “certain words would easily lay to rest” (James, 2003: 489), and he resides “really behind everything” (ibid: 488). This stage grounds more aspects of his moral integrity. He successfully searches for communication without language, and gets a higher degree of integration. His adoption to new experiences is too widespread even for Maria to recognize. She admits that

‘you were wonderful—you were beautiful, as I’ve had the honour of telling you before; but if you wish really to know’, she sadly confessed, ‘I never quite knew *where* you were. There were moments’, she explained, ‘when you struck me as grandly cynical; there were others when you struck me as grandly vague.’ (ibid: 493).

As a process of development beyond language, this stage turns the novel into a good subject for post-structural analysis, for although Strether repeatedly adjusts himself to new experiences, the logic of supplementation renders his adoption as incomplete.

Another deconstructive theory that I would like to apply to *The Ambassadors* has been formulated by J. Hillis Miller. Miller argues that in his three great climactic novels James elaborates the “use of various forms of going behind” (Miller, 2005: 105) the Victorian models of story-telling by using the requirements of omniscient narrator and indirect discourse in a hyperbolic way. For Veeder, Strether’s

transcendence meant the development of a concept of language in his mind that was loose and escaping, or a kind of experience that was two-sided and deconstructive. But for Miller, it means, among other things, the application of a confidant character who is a trustable friend to the hero to whom “he or she confesses intimate thoughts, problems, and feelings” (Abrams, 1993: 35-36).

This technique enables James to access his character’s state of mind not directly but indirectly. He stands aside and looks through the eyes of the confidant to see how the character sees and feels. In the talks between Milly and Mrs. Stringham in *The Wings of the Dove*, between Mrs. Assingham and Maggie Verver in *The Golden Bowl*, between Maria Gostrey and Strether in *The Ambassadors*, and between the governess and Mrs. Grose in “The Turn of the Screw” James makes it possible for us indirectly to evaluate and interpret the thoughts and feelings of the main characters. Thus, the confidant is a meaningful device for saving the mind of the other characters from the intrusions of the all-knowing omnipresent author of the Victorian novel. In the fiction of James it provides them with the possibility of thinking about life seriously and securely enough, and to express their thoughts. It also changes reading from a submissive act of appreciation or a lazy and pleasure-seeking pastime to a critical and interpretive activity. The presence of Gostrey as ‘ficelle’ or confidant at the end of the tale makes it an artistic search for formal consistency, a history whose function is to add nothing but to express as vividly as possible certain things that are already of fixed and appointed measures.

However, Miller informs us that this rule of indirect evidence can often be “problematic or ambiguous” (Miller, 2005: 15), because although in each episode the modern novel provides the reader with abundant evidence, the direct guidelines are often rare and narrow, and the reader is left alone to assess the characters and decide about the truth of things. At the outset of the story, the reader is allowed to introduce his own discourse into the novel and search for its acceptance. But in the fiction of James the discourse of the novel decisively challenges that of the reader. Thus, a serious and goal-oriented talk is resumed between two discourses, because the action of reading is a search for something that we do not find. Paul de Man may have meant this when he claimed that “Reading is argument (...) because it has to go against the

grain of what one would want to happen in the name of what has to happen” (ibid: 99). We read James’s novels not for submissively accepting the authorial thoughts and meanings but to be provided with argumentative occasions where we can express ourselves and search for our new identities. The tension of discourses, and the reader’s continuous attempts to design a formula for solving it is perhaps what Miller means when he says by reading James one puts himself “in the pickle of judgment,” for on the one hand the reader is expected to formulate the structures of reading, but on the other hand the story undermines the possibilities of structuring. Therefore, Miller’s version of deconstruction is a double search: a search for the liberties that James takes with the conventions of the Victorian realistic novel, and a search for the possibilities of unreadability.

The last theory in the light of which I will attempt to discuss the novel is by Julie Rivkin. If for Miller this novel is a tale of extravagance, for Rivkin it is a “tale of deviation from authority and of mediation of experience as the story of the novel’s own composition” (Rivkin: 1986: 820). Rivkin argues that the preface of the novel is not a logical re-writing of the story but a second reactivation of it. The preface is a supplement to the main text, and wants to reveal the power of it. If, as James teaches us, editing and narrating the story is only half of the job of the story-teller, the preface wants to complete this job, for without it the story is incomplete. Rivkin proposes that the preface is the story of the composition of the novel, and is a supplement to it. However, in addition to this complementary analysis, she admits that the preface has a reverse effect also, for the more forward it goes, the more it reminds us about the things that are absent from the novel; and it reveals an insufficiency in the story that the novel conceals. The preface reminds us that a story was supposed to be composed but that it has not been composed. This means that the things the novel discusses are not those which the author sees, because the things that he sees are absent from it. This version is at the same time similar to and different from the one Miller proposes. Their similarity is that they both admit that reading is searching for something that is absent from the story. However, their difference is that in Rivkin it is the discourse of the author that is absent from the novel, while in Miller what is absent is the discourse

of the reader. Rivkin reads this novel as a story of its own cancellation, while Miller reads it to discover the mechanism of the impossibility of meaning.

*The Ambassadors*, which James says is “frankly, quite the best, all round, of all my productions” (James, 2003: 35), was published in 1903. It has been the subject of exceptionally much critical evaluations of different kinds. In *Henry James and the Evolution of Consciousness: A Study of The Ambassadors*, Courtney Johnson compares two scenes in this novel that he says show Strether in two different psychological positions. The first scene, which appears in Book 5 chapter 1, shows him expecting to watch “the most special flare, unequalled, supreme, of the aesthetic torch, lighting the wondrous world for ever” (ibid: 200). Here he is “in the matter of his accepted duty” (ibid), and his mind is fully active. He knows that something special must happen, and is expecting it. He comes to contact with the totally unnamed for recognizing which he has “the consciousness of opening to it, ..., all the windows of his mind” (Johnson, 1987: 199). He will be exposed to the effect of new insights; and his soul will absorb the total communications of the agencies of Parisian culture and experience. Thus, he is expected to dig deep in his soul.

But the other scene, which appears in the third chapter of Book 11, shows Strether’s mind as in full transcendence. It shows the French countryside when he, sitting by the river and remembering the Lambinet painting, looks back over his Parisian experiences. Here he can have felicity and amusement, and “could alight anywhere” (James, 2003. 453), because everything is what he wants. To compromise with nature, he can even pass some time in an idle sleep. There is no tension in him, and he has “a sense of success, ..., of a finer harmony in things” (ibid: 454). “The Kubla Khan caverns” of peace and silence and freedom are fashioning his aesthetic insight, and as he realizes the supremacy of the Parisian pleasure, his detachment from his Woollettian backgrounds gets complete. Now all doors of the new world are open to him, and his consciousness will extend even beyond language. His heart is fully content, and we find him in real peace with the past and present, with his inside and outside, with ‘the Woollett phrase’ and ‘the Paris code.’ Quoting Rhoda Orme-Johnson, Courtney Johnson Jr. suggests that to “merge with Woollett” and “through the experience of the work of art,” Strether is making use of the two elements of

harmony with nature and charming experience. At the end of the novel, he will go back to America although physically to die, but symbolically to provide the American character with the possibility to be “transformed into a fuller and more integrated individual” (Johnson, 1987: 45). He will go there also to equip the American reader with applicable tools for the transcendence of his consciousness.

The pattern that Johnson designs for the movement of Strether’s mind is like this: “it dips into the Second Level (depth level) then returns to the surface afterwards” (ibid: 46). This pattern reminds us of William James’s definition of consciousness as a spontaneous flow of random associations into our minds. The consciousness of the main character is like a flow that can be ordinary or extraordinary, and waking or transcendental. Johnson distinguishes five states of human consciousness: sleeping, dreaming, waking, transcendental, or enlightened. In the first three states, the mind takes its food from the images and experiences of daily life, but for a transcendental mind images and experiences are no food. Johnson compares the action of the usual mind to the action of light in a projector that comes to the screen through a film and helps us see many images, shapes, and colors on the screen. But what will happen if we remove the film and allow the light to come directly to the screen? The role of a transcendental mind is like the role of the projector light that comes to the screen through no film. In this case, Johnson says the light only makes a frame on the screen with no figure in it, and we see only an empty space. Daily (Usual) consciousness develops only in the development of the masses of life, but the pure or transcendental mind transcends as it frees itself from the domains of low life and resides in the ivory tower of ‘silence.’ Such a pure mind deals only with its own existence, for it has already transcended the corporeal world and has dwelt in the dimension of the abstract. In the realm of silence, this mind abstracts itself from the world of images, dwells in its own presence, and is conscious only of its own existence. The mind of everyday-life moves to the inside from the outside, but the pure mind moves only in the inside. The first can be the outcome of sense experience and intellectual inference, while the second comes from deep observation and meditation.

By the transcendence of mind from the corporeal world, the present writer does not mean its departure from the material dimensions of everyday life to a realm of

religious or puritan seclusion. Instead, he means the possibility of a kind of vertical development of the mind that allows it to disentangle itself from the typical thematics of the pre-modern English novel and deal with the problems of the discourse-making consciousness. This is perhaps another aspect of what Miller calls James's hyperbolic use of the dimensions of Victorian novel. In such a modernistic discourse, it is the producing consciousness, not the material life, which is represented in the novel, and the character and reader will therefore deal with it in reading. Instead of the dimensions of the real life like war and peace and justice and hunger, the fiction of James takes us one step further to deal with a kind of phenomenological existence that is as real only as is conceivable to the mind.

Strether's silent consciousness in the Paris countryside is a good illustration of the activity of such a mind. His sleep embodies the escape of his mind from all the entanglements of the material sides to a realm where it will zoom in on itself. Johnson's "surface-level consciousness" gives only external knowledge, knowledge about what is outside of itself. But his "depth-level consciousness" gives self-knowledge, internal insight. Strether's quest is, from the beginning, internal not external. It is a quest of the mind by the self of it, for the self of it, and to the self of it. It is "a breakthrough into reality of one's own true nature" (Johnson, 1987: 51). This state of silence is not a state of "active reasoning." It is the state of "passive enjoyment." Strether's voyage is directly to the depth of truth, a dive into "the ocean of being" perhaps for residing in naked truth.

Johnson proposes a formula for how Strether's mind overcomes confusion in the process of transcendence:

Within a few moments his mind opens to the possibility of a solution to this confusion. Within the contrasts, certain values appear to be similar. They line up on one side, the underside of a coin, so to speak; the others line up on the top side. The opposed qualities of "depth" and "surface" offer a kind of key to the rest of the pairs. The underside values are: the "mythological poet"; the "goddess"; the "mysterious law"; and the obscurity or depth. The underside qualities imply a creative power, a permanence, and a potential self-awareness that as a whole contrasts with the changing, worldly, glittering, conventionally-bound values of the other, opposed, items in the pairs. Thus one side of the coin represents, in a particular

sense, certain capacities that he discovers as his mind opens to the light of transcendence. And the two-sided representation begins to hint that the final answer might lie in a balance of these opposite forces (ibid: 88).

This is the function of a mind that is opening to the world of opposites and can design a solution to the problems of a complicated process of recognition. It can evaluate the concepts, categorize them, and register their similarities. Two dimensions of it are a creative power and a balancing capacity between opposite qualities. It deals with abstraction, and opens to “the light of transcendence.” This dimension is the working agent of Strether’s transcendental mind. His mind arranges the ideas in a way that he discovers some similarities in opposite items: depth and surface, and mythology and convention. When the dialog hinges on the concept of trust, we understand that Strether discovers the deep side of himself and that he trusts Madame de Vionnet, for the story gives no opposing terms to trust. More than once, he submerges into depth and then goes back to the surface again. In each of his dives he absorbs new experiences and resides in new modes of being.

Strether realizes these different states of consciousness. Binary oppositions stem from the energies of language and the structures of his mind. The Jamesian fiction unravels the various advantages of human consciousness. His fiction plays the institutional role of public relations perhaps to set up foundations for the possibility of compromise and renovating (the American) identity. The result of his techniques for developing the possibilities of consciousness is that Strether, trusting Miss. Gostrey who strongly advises him, surmises that it might not be so bad to “jump” from the precipice of one level of consciousness to another level; and he repeatedly does so: “the sound of it lingered with him, making him fairly feel as if he had been tripped up and had a fall” (James, 2003: 260). As the relations get publicly established between these different levels of consciousness, he can perhaps be simultaneously not two but multiple persons; and the relations are, as shown in the whole galaxy of Jamesian fiction, truly limitless. The possibilities of his mind grow, in each jump his mind moves downwardly and upwardly, and to the right and left. Many scenes in *The Ambassadors*, including the present one, describe experiences of transcendence as

they contain a falling, a raising, a relinquishing of control, and a reaching to a subtler level of his mind. He starts at an ordinary level, goes beyond all boundaries, and enters an adjacent unknown place that he has never been able to enter before this.

Another scene that shows Strether in transcendence is in Book 7 chapter 1 when he goes to the Notre Dame cathedral. Inside the church represents one side of his double mentality: its depth-level side. But outside of it shows another side of his mind: its surface-level. He goes to the church perhaps not to worship or to sanctify himself, but “to drop his problem.” Whatever his problem is, he drops it “at the door very much as if it had been the copper piece that he deposited, on the threshold, in the receptacle of the inveterate blind beggar” (ibid: 272). Out of the church makes his mind conscious only on the surface: “Justice was outside, in the hard light, and injustice too” (ibid.). But inside it, where “the things of the world could fall into abeyance” (ibid.), the hero seeks refuge in the depth-level consciousness. Inside Notre Dame, the story portrays his mind beyond all mysteries and anxieties where it can take rest in the realm of silence and oblivion. When he is inside the church he has “the desire not to be, for the hour, in certain other places” (ibid.). He can no longer go on a diplomatic errand, for inside the church is the realm of his safety and pleasure, the abode of imaginative meditation. His present situation is transitional: before long he will forget about the Woollettian codes, and will start submerging himself in Parisian system of pleasure and experience. The contrast between inside the church and its outside symbolizes his multifarious consciousness. If in the outside he finds himself under the influence of the Woollettian language and morality, in the inside he finds his creative imagination free from the restrictions of language.

When Madame de Vionnet comes onto the scene once again, Strether’s transcending consciousness moves farther up to a new level where transcendentalism mingles with romanticism.

It was, to Strether’s mind; as if she sat on her own ground, the light honours of which, at an open gate, she thus easily did him, while all the vastness and mystery of the domain stretched off behind. When people were so completely in possession they could be extraordinarily civil; and our friend had indeed at this hour a kind of revelation of her heritage. She was romantic for him far beyond what she could have guessed, and again he found his small comfort in the

conviction that, subtle though she was, his impression must remain a secret from her (James, 2003: 275).

“Uneasy for secrets” as he is to reveal the ‘heritage’ of his friend and teacher, he will draw on his imagination to reach the state of the deepest secrets. Thus, here he is the embodiment of curiosity and confusion and romance and transcendence. The place of entertainment where they afterward go for a luncheon is a site of “pilgrimage for the knowing.” In Paris, language has neither authority nor is it reliable, because it is two-sided. And supremacy is not with a certain culture but is with the free imagination. This is why the hero is now “in the matter of letting himself go, of diving deep, (why)<sup>4</sup> Strether was to feel he had touched bottom” (ibid: 278). He goes into another deep revelation, and his romance multiplies.

A difference between this “depth-level” of his consciousness and its “surface-level” is that he needs no justification for his recognition. The logic of the average mind is inadequate to absorb this high level of consciousness. But a transcendental mind can fulfill the requirements of this unbelievably intrusive soul, for the innermost streams of perceptions freely and spontaneously flow into it. In this way, it seems that his mind is now beyond all intellectual or philosophical interference. His escape from all the paraphernalia of human reasoning, added to his probable love for Miss. Gostrey, cause his consciousness fully to vibrate to all potential stimuli. And when he “touches the bottom,” this implies his full preparation to absorb as much of Parisian pleasure and beauty as possible.

Love is the pleasure of (sexual) desire, but transcendence is the pleasure of escape from desire. And Strether the lover does not run counter to Strether the transcendentalist, for love and transcendence both guarantee pleasure and happiness. Such a binary is the possibility for the characters and readers of James to be torn between daily life and what is beyond it. It is the site of peace and silence. Such a consciousness is the domain of full activity while it is also connected to a ‘source’ of light. Strether’s “two natures” (Johnson, 1987: 59) allow him to preserve a distance from either of these realms of mind. He always moves through the ‘treasure’ to the

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<sup>4</sup> My adding.

'source' about which James speaks, as Johnson says, in the immortality essay. Strether's problem is that both 'compartments' of self (silence) and activity develop in his mind, and that he manifests his transcendental self on the level of the active self. Consciousness goes beyond space, causation, and time; but in Strether's consciousness the compartment of silence is adjacent to that of activity, and they perhaps follow the same rules. In *The Ambassadors* James's characters and readers can perpetually change their minds to re-discover their selves.

When Strether arrives at the hotel in Chester street, he is mainly concerned about his friend Mr. Waymarsh. Although he understands in the office that his friend will not join him before evening, he does not get disconcerted. When he receives a letter from him, he realizes that he has already rented a room in the hotel. The office has by now replied to the letter, and the room is reserved for him. A "secret principle" prompts the ambassador not to desire the immediate presence of his friend. Yet he feels he can still wait without disappointment.

The principle is the adjacency of desire and postponement about both of which he hopes to find out. It is a polemical power that draws him to opposite directions. On the one hand, there is the influence upon him of the Woollettian conventions and the requirements of his ambassadorial errand. On the other hand, he is beginning to be excited by the principles of Parisian life. At the beginning of the work of this two- or multi-leveled consciousness, his comprehension seems rather crippled. Although he is under the control of his now strongly active senses, he understands nothing clearly enough. In this opening of the novel, the use of many abstract words such as 'learning', 'understanding', 'desire', 'presence', and 'enjoyment' signals that this story is a portrait of Strether's mentality as he enters Europe from America.

Strether advises Little Bilham not to lose the memory of freedom. Therefore, in this novel a key question is about the nature and function of freedom: it is integral to the evolution of the mind; it is the mother of idea, it is the genesis of knowledge. And the illusion of freedom, symbolic or fictional as it is, is the possibility of the soul of the universal man to escape from all restrictions to fashion itself in history. Another key question is how one can be too intelligent to be without the illusion of freedom? The illusion of freedom guarantees the sanitation of the collective consciousness.

This is why “the business of the tale and the march of the action” in this novel is the possibility of reparation from the injury done to the character of somebody. This somebody, who does not feel free, stands at the centre of the tale deliberately to attempt for its repair. He knows that his consciousness is injured and its reparation is not simple, but he uses all his energies to renovate it. The method of the narrative is illustrating various levels of such a consciousness as it observes and recognizes Parisian life and differentiates it with life in Woollett. At the outset, the mind of the main character is bound to Woollettian language and tradition. But in the course of the story, as more aspects of Parisian culture are exposed to him, he finds himself increasingly free from the restrictions of his native conventions and gets more inclined to open up to Europe. When he gets more mastery of the new language, and learns more about its two-sidedness, he realizes that language is inadequate and is therefore rather not trustable. In this stage, when his consciousness starts to develop beyond language, we realize the full transcendence of his consciousness. Feeling restricted in language, handling the signifier and decoding it, finding language two-sided and unreliable, and the going of a consciousness beyond language are integrated in such a process of self-renovation through experience.

The creation of the hero in this novel is not a happy accident. “The painter of life” desires to create a man of imagination, and Strether, with his thickened motive and accumulated character, is the incarnation of his obsessed desire. This tale, which welcomes the reader to the zone of the unseen, is the reported speech of observation. There is much suspense in it, and its language game is full of thrill. For renovating his damaged consciousness through the initiation of new systems of thought, Strether seems concerned with the function of discursivity also.

But telling Strether’s tale is only half of the process. This novel is also a tale of telling; how the relations, multiplied as they are, make it possible for a tale to be told. The logic of the story is the logic of the probable, for nothing is certain in it. But as the story suspends our disbelief, the most general of its probabilities are counted as certain. After the author makes up his mind about the origin of Strether, why he is coming, and what he wants to do, he keeps his local area under inspection to see if it reveals some of its secrets. After he decides that he should have come from New

England in America, many secrets are revealed to him. Now he has a handful of ideas, and can sift and sort the building blocks of his narrative structure.

As the result of all assaults and aspirations, Strether's subjectivity is never stable. In the process of figuration, his mind radically changes; because, as James says in the preface, "as the painter of life" pours his "liquid into the cup of application, once exposed to the action of another air, had begun to turn from green to red, or whatever, and might, for all he knew, be on its way to purple, to black, to yellow" (James, 2003: 40). The ground of all these spontaneous and sensitive adaptations, which seem out of the control of the artist also, is his vibrating consciousness which guarantees his great imagination, his great perception, his great knowledge of violations, counter-goings, abnormalities, as well as his excessive daydreams. Such a great dynamism is the outcome of the play of extremes in his intrusive mind which classifies its perceptions into opposing categories and then makes them into parallel divisions and renders them as applicable frames of understanding. However, the Jamesian artist is fond of 'application', and wilderness or extremity cannot seclude him from every-day life situations, because he should take realistic pictures of such different modes of being.

On the one hand, the reader may feel alienated or frightened, because the hero is different from the person he expects and his story is undesirable. On the other hand, the narrative shows him as fully rejoiced, because the impudence that he believes should be in the story makes it graceful and alluring; and because the story is, as James says in the preface again, "the spoiled child of art," a fully artistic creation. Story, the child, is unfaithful to its reverend mother, for although it takes life from art, it is faithful to no artistic tradition. The life of art is secured only when it goes beyond all conventions of the possible. The literary art of James will be realistic and unrealistic at the same time. After the machine of the old and monotonous life has made us perplexed and exhausted, and when we are fed up with it, the fiction of James cancels its mechanisms so as to regenerate it and justify it for current applications.

How can Strether's consciousness be analyzed? He stands in the centre of the narrative and everything in it is within his reach. The reader should understand how he resolves the Woollett-Paris tension in himself, how he is influenced by Parisian culture, how he re-defines his relations with the people around him in the new

situation, and how he develops new outlooks about language. The reader should also realize how each of the other characters is connected with him, how he maintains his independent identity, how he pursues his own opinions, how he performs his specific roles, and how he formulates his relations with the leading motive of the tale.

The author says he knows what he knows only through the groping knowledge of the hero. Such a character, whose thinking the author faithfully follows, should possess an active mind, and should be exceptionally knowledgeable. Therefore, to get insight into his consciousness, the narrator and reader should involve in the most energetic interplays with him. As the other characters are defined in their relations with Strether, the reader should also trace the development of his mind. With the 'death' or disappearance of the author<sup>5</sup>, the modern reader has got occasion to engage in meaningful dialogues with the characters and to set up functional discourses with them.

When Strether comes to Europe and finds Chad not lost, "a new issue altogether, in the connexion, prodigiously faces them" (James, 2003: 43). In James's art of hyper-realistic narrative, that is photographic also, one new slide always succeeds the other, and each snapshot is functional, because each allows his characters and readers

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<sup>5</sup> A significant feature of the modern fiction is the use of the indirect method of narration. A facet of such indirection is what many critics have called the absence of the authorial voice from the story. However, Susan Lanser finds Percy Lubbock among the few critics of the modern fiction who "recognize that the `indirect` method did not dispense with the authorial voice. In deed, he argued that the superiority of this mode lay precisely in its capacity to blend the author's voice with that of a character, in effect `doubling` and strengthening the authorial perspective" (Lanser, 1981: 26). Lanser argues that the indirect mode is more appealing not only to the critics but also to the authors and audiences. In the modern era, the indirect mode of narration has proved to be more convenient with the increasing individualism and the development of the cultural consciousness of the masses. However, in the stories narrated indirectly, it is more likely that the concern of the critic shifts from the thematic questions to the technical ones, or as Lubbock himself calls it, "to the question of point of view—the question of the relation in which the narrator stands to the story" (Lubbock, 1954: 251). As the author hides himself from the reader and starts to speak through the mouth of the narrator, the narrator is allowed not only to narrate the story, but also to see it, modify it, develop it, focalize it, etc. In this way, the story that we are reading is, to speak metaphorically, ostensibly the meal that the narrator has cooked for us. Now, considering that the narrator is present only in the imaginary, the nature of story as a linguistic structure becomes more believable. On the other side, the use of language in the story is so masterfully that the reader forgets that what he is reading is only a sequence of linguistic signs and symbols. The narrator stands face to face with the reader and tells him what he has seen. In the course of reading, they exchange ideas. The experiences are conveyed quite fluently, and the portrayed scene becomes so appealing to the reader that he should believe in what he sees and hears. Lubbock argues that when the narrator is a character, that is, when in addition to relating the story he takes a part in the action also, the author dramatizes himself. Therefore, it is not clear if the indirect method of narration in the modern era has reduced the authority of the writer. On the contrary, as the author mixes his ideas with those of the character/s, the reader finds them more believable. The indirect mode of presentation guarantees the self-sufficiency of the modern narrative, because it makes it possible for the author to support his ideas by those of the character, and therefore the story needs no one from out of itself.

to look at life from new perspectives. The affluence and transience of these perspectives is the possibility for his characters to look at the world differently.

It is said that the art of James is a “positive beauty.” Instead of reading James merely for plot, we read him also for the creative forces of his composition, and for how meaning results from the dialogic aspects of his discourses. James’s adventures call upon the attention of the reader, for they are, like “the old intentions that bloom again and flower,” always transposing. Yet, by adventure James does not necessarily mean what the characters do or what happens to them, but “the thrilling ups and downs, the intricate ins and outs of the compositional problem” (ibid: 44). Therefore, in addition to the transcendence of the mind of the hero, this story is also concerned with the questions of grammatology in the modern sense; with the idea of the supplement, of writing, or of deconstructive discourse, not as a device for verifying the meanings of a series of established transcendental truths, but as a guarantee of story-telling through an economy of negation, of what the story wants to say but does not or cannot say.

The point of view is loose. The story is told from the perspective of a central character that mobilizes it with the advantages of composition and justifies it with some pre-determined objects. The tale sticks closely to the central figure and constantly follows the patterns of the development of his consciousness. By the arrival of Strether in the Chester Street hotel, James has considered a dreadful fate for him, for even the brightest creators may quail at telling a tale with “no end.” And James feels deep agitation as he addresses himself to an alternative policy on story telling. At one point, he thinks that he can perhaps make other persons tell each other about Strether but he decides this technique is out of use, for although it is a blest resource of the drama, its paths of unity are “absolutely opposite to the paths of the novel” (James, 2003: 45). In this novel, an experience tells the tale of its absence or disintegration, and it is this same denial or dispossession that is the energy of its perpetual re-telling.

The affluence of the relations of this central figure with other characters and things make a muddle of this compositional exhibition. However, the token of story-telling in James is implication but not explication, and it shows only the

consequences. Although the tale sticks mainly to the central character, the artist asks why he is not using the "large ease" of autobiography as in *Gil Blas* and *David Copperfield*, for James admits that in an autobiography "a single mouthful of method" is enough, since it equips him at the same time with "the double privilege of subject and object" (ibid.: 46). However, he argues that autobiography is an impasse, because it is more naïve than critical: autobiography prepares the author "NOT to make certain precious discriminations" (ibid.), because it has "the merit of brushing away questions at a sweep" (ibid.). Charles Dickens and the author of *Gil Blas* had direct access to the minds of their characters which they have described for their readers and upon which they have passed definite judgments. Therefore, their characters were only mediums of story-telling. But the characters of *The Ambassadors* are more than mediums of emplotment, for they attend the story mainly to assert and realize themselves.

But what are the "precious discriminations" that James attempts to make in this story? It is perhaps the way that he, both as a traditional and a modernist novelist, represents reality. In the traditional novel, reality was illustrated as a genuine entity that was independent from interpretation and from the consciousness of human beings. However, in *The Ambassadors* reality is perhaps what Strether's consciousness provides in his participation in different episodes of Parisian life. A standard technique for the construction of such a phenomenological reality is the longlasting space of negotiation that James has provided in this story for the characters. In a first-person narrative the discourse is addressed directly to the reader, and the characters can therefore evaluate it only scantily. But James has provided Strether with modernistic techniques of exposition and interpretation. One of these techniques is the confidant character. The confidant usually stands somewhere in the midway between the hero and the other characters (or the reader) and helps them to participate actively in the making of the discourse. In this way, the confidant makes it possible for the other characters to evaluate the discourse and interpret it more openly, because in addition to providing freedom and security for them, the confidant helps them develop their own perspectives, have their own ideas about the hero, and improve their outlooks with the improvement of the story. The application of the confidant (along with other techniques like the unreliable narrator) renders this story as a hermeneutic

object where the main role of the characters and reader is practical criticism and interpretation for making new realities through the production of new thoughts and meanings. James writes realist and modernist stories, but this feature makes his fiction modernist. In "Reading, Representation, and Realism in *The Ambassadors*" we read,

The paradox here—that reality is both one and many, both independent of and dependent on interpretation—shows how James is a novelist of both the nineteenth century and the twentieth. James's faith in the real makes him one of the last great members of the long and distinguished tradition of verisimilitude in the novel. But James also challenges the epistemological assumptions of mimesis by questioning the stability, uniformity, and independence of reality. And in doing so he announces the modern preoccupation with meaning and interpretation. The last realist, James is also the first modernist (Armstrong, 1986: 114).

*The Ambassadors* is an amalgamation of pictures, expressions, and representations; and every thing in it is either a scene or a synthesis of a picture. The presence of Miss. Gostrey as confidant is a space for the continuation of the earlier discussion of the international theme of Europe-America relations. Also, the connection between Strether and Waymarsh is a stylistic device which helps the reader to compare them to measure the hero's transformation in Paris. In addition, the material of this novel was taken for drama, and the author was feeling he should take advantage, as in *The Wings of the Dove*, of the "scenic" method to put enough consistency in this last tale.

The narrative shows some under-the-surface connections between Strether and Gostrey. The reader can find some similarities between them and also "a residuum of difference." The main question in this regard is perhaps what Strether thinks Maria knows. But the story does not tell us what she knows about him: It is only the reader who has to understand it. In Book 1 chapter 1, when the hero is speaking with her in the inn hall, a huddle of wild images and pictures, the delight of which is "too deep almost for words" (James, 2003: 64) to clarify, rushes into his consciousness. He goes back in his mind into a "far-off time" when he was twenty five, and his delight copes with his inward pictures. The city is too wild and too far-off in time for full recognition. Is James the historian re-enlivening the ancient English times and

exposing them to us? Or is the city like Strether's brain of which the numerous disk drives, dark and dense as they are, are too tortuous for the modern reader to open and read? Whatever it is, Strether concretizes it when he "leaned back on this support with his face to tower of the cathedral" (ibid: 65).

The double consciousness of Strether is much problematic for him, because one level of his consciousness reflects the conventions of his Woollettian homeland, while another level of it is developed by the manifestations of Parisian civilization. At the beginning of the story, his consciousness is definitely shaped by the restricted morality of Woollett. But in the course of the story he re-constructs his mentality, and the more the story expands, the more definitely his consciousness is intruded by the experience of Paris. There are episodes that show him thinking opposite thoughts, about Maria Gostrey for example, or about the meaning of his ambassadorial mission. It is said that he knows what she is, but it remains a secret how he sees her. Therefore, it is the task of the reader to understand how Strether observes things. But his consciousness is illustrated as extravagant also. Yet, it can be suggested that by reading *The Ambassadors* we practice discovering a modern multilateral consciousness. The mind of the characters is swollen with images, implications, and hidden meanings. However, the way to reveal them is to listen, wander, weigh, hesitate, think, and wait again for more insight.

A method of story-telling makes Strether unique: "I am always considering something else; something else; I mean than the thing of the moment" (James, 2003: 67). He always looks for something that is on the verge of coming but that does not come, for a presence that is absent. Through temporization, he always gets more time to say nothing. In this way, the story always deconstructs itself. The story is a discourse, but the discourse that the story is, is always different from the discourse that it intends to be. Whatever is written in the story is other than what is supposed to be written. Therefore, the story is an economy of silence, a system of not-saying, for it introduces us to a flux of time for perpetually postponing meaning. Strether's consciousness always leads the reader to the beyond, for he is curious for something different from what the reader may have invented. Although this kind of reading or interpretation guarantees the becoming of the tale, but there is always another tale that

we should wait for. The perpetual absence of meaning provides the narrative with a dimension of terror which in James can have more than one side: the author feels terror lest he lose his readers because of absence of meaning. He also feels terror because he thinks he is the butt of attack from critics. And the reader feels terror to read a long novel with no certain theme. *The Ambassadors* is the report of a quest for knowledge and recognition, a story of non-saying that dramatizes the development of consciousness.

### **V. A Comparison of Two Minds**

Relations take significant roles in the refreshment of the hero's memory. Experience flows into his mind in the form of prompt and lucid allusions and enquiries. His social activity and public partaking engrave such impressions onto his mind. At the beginning of chapter 2 in Book 1, when Waymarsh comes onto the scene, Strether thinks about how much relations Waymarsh may develop with Miss. Gostrey. However he postpones thinking about this subject. After Gostrey goes behind the scene, Strether and his American friend go to the hotel garden. Then the hero accompanies Waymarsh into his room. After a half hour, he leaves him and repairs to his own room. When he starts thinking about the effects of their union, he is so obsessed with relations that he feels his place, which before this was large enough for him, cannot accommodate him. He feels his body as weak a vehicle for the tenor of his spirit. He feels odd, excited, and wonderful; because his mind is spontaneously and uncontrollably exploding.

The story also wants us to see the effects of Europe on Waymarsh from the eye of Strether. The American barrister is newly feeling deep discomfort. He admires neither the smoking room nor his bed. When Strether conducts him to his room he shows disapprobation and despair. His friend thinks his discomfort may be a menace to his own "consciousness of the agreeable" (James, 2003: 70). Then he suggests "Europe ... had up to now rather failed of its message to him; he hadn't gone into tune with it" (ibid). However, he apprehends him "with a freshness of taste" (ibid). His mind is not static at all, and his approach to his friend is subject to rapid changes, for the impressions about his life in Europe easily flow into it. These impressions are "like a

railway-coach” with a forward inclination. They randomly, abruptly, and uncontrollably intrude his consciousness. But none of these effects is permanent, for the novel says the logic of his mind is “prolonged impermanence” (ibid: 71). Waymarsh is the angle through which we should look at the ordeal of Strether’s consciousness.

Strether’s consciousness is like a stream: flowing, renewing, and always as loose as language itself. When he meets his friend, and his mind moves back into far-off times, he is exposed to a huge wave of free associations which his mind cannot bring into order at first: Waymarsh’s dislike of Europe, his marriage, his wife, the letters of his wife and her relations to him, etc. Strether starts to be different from Waymarsh, and to look differently at the experience of Paris. His mind goes beyond any limitation and surrenders itself to no one-way force. But we read that his friend is as different from himself as a basin is from a jug. Strether’s consciousness is the basin that takes in many impressions and changes them to new relations. But, with its narrow mouth, the mind of Waymarsh is the jug that neither can store a heap of impressions nor can change them into new results. It is not, as Strether’s mind is, the agent that takes in the data, analyzes them, and synthesizes them into new up-to-date formulas. The impact of a same situation in Europe is different upon them, for Waymarsh is yet bound to Woollettian tradition, while Strether’s is open to the huge variety of Parisian civilization. When Strether sets sail in Woollett, he is dog-tired. But in Europe, and as the time courses upon him, his relations multiply themselves, the limits of his consciousness start to recede, and he finds himself on a process of perpetual renovation. However, Waymarsh rarely gains new impressions, because nowhere does he feel in tune with this new culture. Soon after arriving in Europe, he starts to feel uncomfortable, and before long he informs his friend that he will go back to his homeland.

In Book 1 Chapter 3, Strether and Gostrey come together again in the garden of the hotel to eat breakfast. She claims that her mission is to civilize him by introducing him to European culture; while Waymarsh, deserted on the brink, is watching the force of the current on Strether. The story reflects also Waymarsh’s perspective on the Catholic Church in England. Like a “monster of bulging eyes and far-reaching

quivering groping tentacles” (James, 2003: 81), the church has Waymarsh in its absolute control. Through maintaining complex formalities, undertaking multi-layer ceremonies, and following complex conventions, the church practices omnipresent authority upon people like Waymarsh. Europe is too sophisticated, worldly, and wicked. In the glitter of Europe, Waymarsh is, as in behind a jeweler’s front, “lost to view” (ibid: 82). When Strether and Gostrey are speaking, his “unexplained absence” embodies the absence of a final meaning in the fiction of James.

Strether has meanwhile “to find names for many other matters” (James, 2003: 89). On the third night of his short stay in London he goes with Maria to the theatre, but Waymarsh does not join them. The narrator says in the theater their moment is full to the brim. He has a meal with her as he has had some meals with Mrs. Newsome in Woollett. The tale compares the effects of Strether’s experiences with these two ladies. With Mrs. Newsome he had “no little confronted dinner, no pink light, no whiff of vague sweetness” (ibid). But with Maria he can sit

Face to face over a small table on which the lighted candles had rose-coloured shades; and the rose-coloured shades and the small table and the soft fragrance of the lady – had anything to his mere sense ever been so soft? - were so many touches in he scarce knew what positive high picture (James, 2003: 89).

His relations with Mrs. Newsome were defined and limited by the Woollettian conventions. They were bound to the codes of a restricted morality. Their relations were also subject to the hierarchy of this community by which they were perhaps closely inspected and controlled. Thus, his Woollettian consciousness is not at all free to go beyond the literal; and nothing is therefore vague with it. Although their relations could perhaps result even in marriage, the tale says nothing of sex in it. However, little of Strether’s relations with Maria can be defined by non-individual factors like the social hierarchy or the church authority. Their relations are, in nature and scope, mainly the outcome of their own inclinations. Therefore, they are pragmatic, democratic, and vague; and are more abrupt, and faster in blooming.

Reading the last works of James is conditional, for the text and reader delegate one another. It is a voyage on no one-sided road, but is a movement on a two-sided

road where a good outcome is conditional only to active interaction. To do a useful job, the reader should bring his own knowledge into the work. Illumination is the aftermath of a shuttling back and forth of knowledge between text and reader, between history and now. Strether's social interactions make his vision quite complicated because every situation introduces him and the reader to new enigmas. Each perception gives Strether "fresh backward, fresh forward, fresh lateral flights" (ibid: 90). All aspects and features of Miss Gostrey come over him and make free uncontrollable associations and perceptions in him: the red ribbon round her neck, her smile, the complexion of her lips, her teeth, and her eyes. And the reader, like him, can feel the "so many touches" that Maria's paraphernalia make in Strether when she is sitting face to face with him.

Strether's Parisian consciousness is the outcome of his understanding of relations. His impressions in the new environment make a net of relations in his mind, and each relation is like a node that functions if it stands in relation to other nodes. In the relational net of his consciousness no node can exist independently. Each node leads to another node, and this process can endlessly repeat itself so that no node is final. Such nodes are pluralistic and repetitive. He feels "as if the play [of relations]<sup>6</sup> itself penetrated him with the naked elbow of his neighbour" (James, 2003. 92). The play of relations implies the prowling of his imagination and guarantees the development of his consciousness. And if his consciousness means the formation and development in him of the new language and cultural relations, it is as loose, flowing, two-sided, and intrustable as language itself. Now, the consciousness of the reader is also shaped in the game that he plays with the text. Or else, it is the outcome of his observation of Strether's consciousness as he compares the American and European "types."

When Strether in Europe doubts about the wickedness of the woman with whom Chad has relation, he has either to stay there and change his idea about her or to go back to America. On the one hand, his judgments, and those of the reader, should be based on facts. On the other hand, the story shows that the facts are always the result of juxtaposition and comparison, and are, in consequence, not absolute and self-sufficient. In this story James wants simultaneously to make different meanings and to

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<sup>6</sup> My adding.

defer these different meanings. His objective is not only the annihilation of any ultimate signification, but also writing the story of the negation of any superlative experience.

But Strether is rapid to change his mind, for a little bit afterwards his consciousness becomes the window through which Miss. Gostrey looks at that of the Newsomes. Making fine judgments about them, he says he admires Mrs. Newsome for she is wonderful, says he does not like Chad for his obstinacy, and says he is afraid of Mrs. Pocock. Therefore, when he decides about the Parisian and the American ladies, his base is juxtaposition and comparison. This kind of experience is the outcome of contact and relation. It is also the result of projection, because for its formation the story projects the people around Strether onto the consciousness of other people, and helps the reader to observe how Strether's mind develops in these projections. Strether suggests that Miss Gostrey, or the European woman in general, is more courageous in contact than the American woman. The "ideas" of Mr. Newsome are the raw material for the symbolic article that the workshop produces. Can it be suggested that the monopoly of Newsome's workshop stands for the Jamesian fiction? It is a monopoly, because it is a "little thing they make – make better, it appears, than other people can, or than other people, at any rate, do" (James, 2003: 96). The article it produces is a real "thing," an identity that is as real and tangible as you can develop for yourself through reading James.

But the narrative gives no clear answer to Maria's question when she asks Strether what the workshop produces. He always defers any telling answer to a "next time." His delay in answering makes her wonder about the nature and effect of the industry. He gives us only some features of the article, and to formulate an answer to this question, the reader should establish a close interaction with the text. It can also stand for the American identity in a process of transformation. It is not only nameless, it is unnamable also; because names restrict things, and make obstacles to the expansion of identities. If names make things restricted, dispirited, and static, they cannot fluidly slide into other things and roll them up. "The production at Woollett" is nameless also because the "abstension" of names guarantees the incoming of new names, new readings and interpretations. Its namelessness, its unnamability, makes it

into a subject of criticism and interpretation that is, in its turn, the meaning of the renovation of our consciousness as well as the psychological renewal of the human society.

## **VI. A Mechanism for Resistance**

This chapter now wants to discuss if *The Ambassadors* shows any possibility for resistance in modern times, to show how it describes the potentials of modern man for resistance against the dominant power. Strether repeatedly reviews his Woollettian experience in Paris. What is a review, and what does it do? Is James the reviewer of American civilization? A review is a medium for the clash of the “ideas.” It is, in this sense, a method for synthesizing modern opposing ideas for the psychological sanitation of the modern man, or a mechanism for taking the pulsation of modern society and controlling it. If it is Mrs. Newsome, who has “plenty” of money, that “magnificently pays for” the Review, the present reader suggests that behind the scene power and discourse go hand in hand to control human society and nullify all resistance against the dominating power. If it is power that makes the (current) discourse, can critical discourse restrict it? Or discourse supports the power by making it tolerable?

The dominant power, as the novel suggests in Book 2 chapter 1, pursues its policies for naturalizing all kinds of resistance in different walks of the society. Such techniques include negation, renunciation, perpetual postponement, prevarication, and the technique of the unnamable. Ignorance is multifunctional: it plays on our fancy, deviates our curiosity, and causes it to fade; and by doing so, it provides illusory freedom. It converts the nameless to the unnamable, renews the potentials of criticism, integrates the people into the dominant power, and turns them into submissive citizens. Strether says his name on the cover of the Green Review was a “presentable little scrap of an identity” (James, 2003: 101). When power is not equipped with “delicacy,” and when “discretion” becomes a swell and makes one “efface” oneself, power is likeable to demolish all the possibilities of the collective and individual identities, and prevent them from acting out their wishes. Such a power can wreck all

hopes and ambitions and make it impossible for the identities to be recognized. It makes “a refuse-heap of failures.”

The zigzag movement of the narrative in Book 2 chapter 1 makes the tale more puzzling. However, it is not only because of the many negations, replacements, recedes, and attacks in the conversation, but also because of different perspectives of Strether and Gostrey. She speaks rather tellingly but he is very deep and implicit. Yet, the expression “as if” implements a policy that makes things vague, unreal, and imaginary. Mingling the affirmative with the negative, it creates a doubtful environment in which all structure-making energies are exhausted. In this way the narrative undermines all resisting desires in the reader, for “as if” catapults everything into a past unreal time. The novel is, in this sense, a discursive means for integrating people into modern imperial cultures by changing them to submissive citizens.

It is thought that Chad can be saved by going back to America. But Miss. Gostrey considers Mamie Pocock for him to marry and stay in Paris. Strether says he “with Mamie’s aid” will save him. At the end of Book 2 chapter 2, when Miss Gostrey asks Strether what he is to lose, he firstly says “nothing.” But shortly after that, when she is in her four-wheeler, he confesses that he stands to lose “everything.” After losing everything, he shall succeed, for Maria shall be his “till death.” This implies that for renewing his consciousness, he should firstly forget about all the measures of his Woollett tradition. But what can Maria symbolize? When Strether has lost everything, what will he get through her?

Two days ago he departed from London. At the beginning of this chapter he is passing his second day in Paris, and while attended by Waymarsh, is visiting the Rue scribe. The great favorite avenue, like a “spur to his spirit,” serves him to “begin business with” (James, 2003: 109). Another sequence of chaotic impressions rushes into his consciousness. When he goes into the reception room of the bank in Paris, an impulse reminds him of the post office at Woollett which brings into his mind the image of a “transatlantic bridge.” His mind is the store of many missives that have been randomly superimposed and make him quite restless. It is the “elaborate engine” that intakes all unrelated impressions and images, and re-structures them into a certain logic of restlessness, an economy of decentrism. When he starts roaming, his

consciousness is like an oversensitive photographic slide, because whatever is exposed to it makes a deep impression on it: “the soft breeze of the Paris morning and its sprinkled smell, the light flit of the bareheaded girls, in the people basking in terraces, in the officialism of the humble rakers and scrapers, in the deep references of a soldier” (ibid: 111). His mind is the workshop where “these little brisk figures ... take their smooth diagonal” (James, 2003: 111). It mingles air with art, nature with nurture. His consciousness, as his names suggests, will stretch everywhere. It is the “master-chef,” full of knowledge and experience about the nature of the eatables and tastes of the people who each time provide the best of the meals that are to the benefit of the body and the spirit of the clients. As he gazes into the “irremediable void” of the palace, “the historic sense” freely plays in him. His mind often shuttles back and forth between the past and present of European culture. Like a drift, it aimlessly wanders in the realms where the components of time and place, or the historical and geographical dimensions are “composed together” to make it into a “consciousness of difference.”

His roams in “the wonderful Paris spring,” makes numberless figures, and changes them into imaginary artistic creations. The strong engine of his freedom is his restless mind and fluid imagination with a logic based on perpetual escape. The geometry of such a creation is like the polygon erected by his spontaneous perceptions and intruding impressions. But these building blocks can surely be made only in the workshop of the Parisian polyhedral social life with all its variety, complexity, and fluidity. In search for new ways of becoming, he lingers in the garden of life where art will guarantee its perpetual renovation so as the monotonous life will no longer exhaust our human soul. His policy is, among other things, the celebration of defamiliarization via the elixir of art. In Book 2 chapter 2, we read

In the garden of Tuileries he had lingered, on two or three spots, to look; it was as if the wonderful Paris spring had stayed with him as he roamed. The prompt Paris morning struck its cheerful notes – in a soft breeze and a sprinkled smell, in the light flit, over the garden-floor, of bareheaded girls with the buckled strap of oblong boxes, in the type of ancient thrifty persons basking betimes where terrace-walls were warm, in the blue-frocked brass-labelled officialism of humble rakers and scrapers, in the deep references of a straight-pacing priest or

the sharp ones of a white-gaitered red-legged soldier. He watched little brisk figures, figures whose movement was as the tick of the great Paris clock, take their smooth diagonal from point to point; the air had a taste as of something mixed with art, something that presented nature as a white-capped master-chef. (ibid).

The process of change in Strether's mind, and in the mind of the reader, is not quite unconscious. Yet, it is not the process only of a focused thought. Once again, when he is sitting in his nook in Luxemburg Gardens, "the waves of the single day" bring the image of Mrs. Newsome to bid him that he should be worried about nothing that was not of the essence of his task. He feels "so distinctly fagged out," but at the end he lights on a happy form. He feels he has arrived at the real truth and that in the flood of his imagination such a truth can take on significant functions. If he can maintain his grasp of it, he may do everything he wants. But the fiction of James does not show truth as independent and self-sufficient. Truth is formal and an aftermath of relations. It is relational and relative; it is suppositional, temporary, and phenomenological, because if Strether does not light on it, there will be no truth. And it is evasive, smuggling, and is always open to fermentation. Truth is a man-made identity, for out of man's consciousness, there is only a limitless void or vacancy. It is we who suppose something as factual.

Strether begins "to take things as they come" (James, 2003: 114). He looks at them and appreciates them in a new way. He feels regretful that he has spent his best years to subjugate himself to the abuses of a restricting moral regime the radical closure of which has put unmovable obstacles in the transcendence of his consciousness.

"The long ache" that he feels is perhaps neither because he has lost an achievement, nor because he has accepted a light yoke or has gone a short road. It is the ache of going on a "long crooked course," the fact of failure in each relation. The outcome of this sense of failure, which is solidly standing in his mind, is no more than an empty presence. The fact that he has lost a young wife and a son makes him sorrowful, but this sorrow has already become habitual, because it has slowly given way to time. His ache is the tail of an "opportunity lost." Whatever this opportunity is, the story says it is like a leprosy that eats his spirits away and makes a void, an

emptiness of it. It is the ache of having lost so much and having done so much for so little.

With his “short gusts of speculation—sudden flights of fancy” (James, 2003: 116), Strether is the great architect who will erect the monument of a new kind of truth. At his back, when perhaps no innovation was possible in the American experience of life, he sees “the great desert of the years.” There are sequences that Strether, the would-be stretching projectile of American consciousness, has missed, and there are “great gaps in the procession” of his European citizenship. In the air of this new truth, his mind “hovers” for long times. If he wonders and laughs and sighs, it is all for the sake of this achievement. He provides a full program for such a process of European citizenship. He thinks how fluid, unbiased, and conclusive it is; and waits to see if for its applicability to the modern life it needs any further proofs. Yet, his “fairly open sense of the irony of things” (ibid: 118) will make his predicament bristle. His vibrating imagination and straying consciousness let him appreciate the oblique existence of things. The Jamesian truth is not elemental. It is ironical, compositional; and one faulty relation in it can, and will, gangrene other relations. In Woollett, identity was sharply defined in narrow ways and in terms of separated factors. The ways of life and being were limited by division and rivalry. And consciousness was mainly linear and was a one-level structure. However, in Paris different things mingle to provide the state of consciousness which is mainly embedded in and by language. Experience is the result of togetherness, intersection, and compromise. And it is often circular and multi-lateral.

There is not so much of narrative in this novel, but there is so much of observation. James wants us to bring the experience of thinking into our lives. Another main theme in this novel is how we render thought. Our process of thinking is never very ordered. James wants to show that our thought is vague and scattered but that it can be illustrated. On the one hand, James shows that we have a limited knowledge. On the other hand, his fiction invites us to discover the whole truth. What we have is the thought of a character, and there is no way for us to know what the case really is. In James we have no objective dimension. Everything is seen through an opaque filter that also forces us to interpretation. Strether does not know what the

other characters do. However, the reader sees them only through the eyes of Stretcher. Therefore, what we get is reflected experience, a kind of the experience that is already gained and represented.

It is rather hard to give word to Strether's problem that is a real theme of the story. He needs to understand the relation between Chad and Madam de Vionnet. If narrative is, as Todorov says, the movement of a plot from a state of equilibrium to a state of inequilibrium and back to equilibrium again, in *The Ambassadors* the change of a consciousness, or the reversion of an identity, embodies such a movement. In Book 5 chapter 2, when Strether is advising Little Bilham to pass a full and free life, we do not know the form of the narrative unless we shape it in life. Such a tension between openness and closure, between real freedom and its illusion, or between a closed mentality and an open subjectivity is Strether's main tension. What he wants his friend to do is try to live actually to the best. The novel shows a positive structure-making energy and a deferring deconstructive mechanism that hinders the becoming of things. But the relation between Chad and Madame de Vionnet is only a part of the effects that come into his consciousness. He basically intends to renew his consciousness, to live as we want to do, and to map the transcendence of human subjectivity.

His imagination is flowing as fully as the fluid life. It is unstoppable, always reacting to whatever it perceives from the external world; and it can be brought to no halt. He is a victim to such a flood of impressions, for they are too intrusive, and he cannot control them. The signified freely streams beyond the signifier. It is the energies of the narrative discourse that create meaning. The Jamesian narrative can typically be regarded not as the result of the omniscient knowledge of the author but as the result of a close interaction among different social forces. In the transcending consciousness of Strether, the meaning is the result of the interaction of signifiers or narrative strategies.

Strether's consciousness is, to speak metaphorically, the balcony of observation and recognition. But he observes the mechanisms of his mind possibly to reconstruct it; and this is what guarantees the transcendence of his consciousness. The numerous affirmative statements that put a hidden seal of negation on the things prevent any

ultimate interpretation. For example, in the scene of Boulevard Malesherbs, when Strether is passing by and sees someone in a flat balcony, they both stand and look at each other. The reader at first thinks that the person in the balcony is Chad, but a little bit later we read otherwise: “the interest was affected by the young man’s not being Chad” (James, 2003: 124). Then Strether thinks he may be “Chad’s friend.” After that he thinks it is Miss. Gostrey. However, the narrative nullifies this fancy also. Toward the end of this scene we read: “Waymarsh, and Waymarsh alone, ..., struck him [Strether]<sup>7</sup> as the present alternative to the young man in the balcony. When he did move it was fairly to escape that alternative” (ibid: 125).

What is the source of authenticity in narrative? If Strether finds out that “I don’t know anything” (James, 2003: 131), where does the authenticity of this tale come from, and how can we believe in the claims of its characters? It is clear that the narrator is other than Strether. And if Strether knows nothing, can it be said that the story is about nothing? Or that it is about the might of ignorance? Is it right that Strether is very curious about finding things out, about more knowledge? He seems to be exhausted of his excessive curiosity and would like Waymarsh “to come down on me and squash me” (ibid: 133). On the other hand, he says his interest lies in his not being squared, in the idea that his cognitive hard drive will be demystified with no certain tool. He says he likes to be anticipated or to be outrun, yet the story escapes his being recognized and postpones understanding. Such a narrative method makes the reader actively respond to the necessities of interpretation.

What does Strether mean by marriage when he says “if I’m squared where is my marriage, if I miss everything I’m nowhere” (ibid: 135)? The logic of squarity runs counter to the logic of marriage, for marriage is the state of elasticity, compromise, and intercourse, while squarity is the logic of exactitude and demarcation. Marriage is the intersection of self and other, the possibility for one to exist in whoever is other than one. But square is the state of rigidity and repulsion. In marriage it is as if one can be everywhere, but in square is circumference and limitation. Marriage is a quest to the beyond, square allows you to move only within certain limits. The former is the celebration of relations, the latter is to be restricted from relations.

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<sup>7</sup>. My adding.

Once again Strether's consciousness goes out of the control of language. His subjectivity is open to a flood of impressions which is too spontaneous and immediate for him to control. Although he reads the book of Parisian experience as irregular and intrusive, or like a sea in which "the range of reference was merely general," he does not "shirk the dilemma of reading;" and of anything that comes up he hears a "roundabout echo." Is it the echo of nerve excitation when he attempts to express himself in words, or is it the echo of his thought to defeat the signifier and to go beyond it? Whatever it is, he puts to himself to read this text of life and to formulate its "logic." In Woollett the moral experience, one-sided as it was, was taken for granted. But in Paris he reads the book of life differently, for he is "in the presence of new measures, other standards, a different scale of relations (James, 2003: 137). Knowledge and recognition is a gradual and permanent process where the first step is to doubt about things and necessarily annihilating the previous norms and conventions. Life is relational and structural the geometry of which Strether will design in his intrusive consciousness. The way he looks at the things makes life into a "delicate marvel" that is full of indirect relations and consonant with a grateful enjoyment.

Strether's reflections are never stable. They are always uncontrollably changing, and each reflection entails a riddle which he attempts to solve in order to format his Woollettian consciousness, that conventionally has only one level, and develop it into a multi-level structure. In such a changing situation, he is sure "he mustn't dispossess himself of the faculty of seeing things as they were" (ibid: 140). Can it be suggested that he knows about the illogic and deteriorating power of language and that he wants to squash or control it by infiltrating the law of nature into himself? Metaphorical language is illogical and therefore quite rash and intrusive. However, his great imagination allows him to exceed the illogical powers of metaphor, delve into the nature of things, and make one-to-one relations with them without the interference of language. Unlike the realism of Mark Twain and William Dean Howells, the realism of James in his last great novels is not, as it seems to me, the realism of daily mass life. It is the realism of higher levels of life, the realism of human consciousness, and

of the abstract laws of nature. Yet, these features turn Strether's searching into a loose and intrusive job, for he is anxious for more demystification and recognition.

With the re-arrival of Miss. Gostrey onto the scene in Book 3 chapter 2, a new phase of life starts in the consciousness of Strether. He starts to dramatize the notion of "civilized behaviour" more artistically. Civilized behaviour is the meaning of the ideal beauty of goodness. It is the possibility of invoking action to raise artistic faith to its maximum. It is in this respect that one can gain material and spiritual salvage through the artistic objectification of his or her theme of life. Civilized behaviour is perhaps the idea behind Strether's "a thousand flights and funny little passionate pounces" (James, 2003: 141). Ultimately, he is settled in his "final nest" of artistic creativity, the ivory tower of formulaic recognition. He has already gone so far in this way, and the story shows him in the very remote realm of art the norms of which are not, in the fiction of James, so different from those of real life. Through the elixir of artistic vision, he desires domination over language. He sees this artistic vision as helpful in assuring the ascension of his soul. "Civilized behaviour" is the notion of mingling artistic vision with the raw materials of life and solving the riddles of life artistically. Art re-enlivens the stale life and makes it bearable. It is a process for defamiliarizing the insipid hollow life, and for exhilarating it.

The "ivory" and "brocade" that Strether sees signal his artistic vision. Yet, we are not familiar with the topography of this new level of his consciousness. He already sees himself 'in' the realm of art where he makes one-to-one relations with the "empire of things." And his vision gets more enlarged till he will soon reach "the very innermost nook of the shrine." Here is the private residence of his wondering imagination where he can satisfy his curiosity to see life spirited to its maximum. This shrine is where the stretching hero of *The Ambassadors* has waywardly gone to see the polygon of life with new eyes. It is perhaps the hyper-realm of a creative imagination, where Strether will disrespect the established lexicon and grammar, and will inaugurate new laws for the possibility of defining a notion of life that is as artistic as possible. In the gloom of life he is capable to see "the glints of gold, patches of purple." Here is the absolute kingdom of art. However, he seems in deep alienation from this artistic realm of life, and nothing is yet quite clear to him.

The story provides Strether with an agency that speaks through his mouth but that is totally out of his control. His consciousness has mustered all its powers. It makes everything into a cause of knowledge and recognition. Yet everything in his consciousness is only promptly determined. It changes him to a “man to whom things had happened and were variously known” (James, 2003: 166), a man with the ability to read history in the form of a new narrative structure which deconstructs itself. It shows him as the incarnation of subtlety and smoothness: “it had retouched his features, drawn them with a clear line” (ibid). Here again we read a story that does not want to narrate or illustrate truth, but read the story of the transcendence of a truth-oriented consciousness that wants to be narrated. Strether is perhaps the Jamesian embodiment of the subtlety needed for the new American mind. If the Woollettian tradition is rough and uncivilized, James’s solution is that through the subtlety of our mind we can “make the future the real right thing” (ibid: 167).

Authority makes stasis via hindering innovation and promotion. The dominant conservative power keeps individuals from acting out their potentials and fulfilling their expectations, and so keeps them from the possibility of promotion and development. But if to guarantee development we need departure from authority, departure itself needs freedom. Strether’s consciousness is the agency for upraising symbolic freedom, because freedom makes it possible to deconstruct all taboos and generate supra-ideologies. His multiplied imagination allows him to synthesize things into formulas that can be used to answer the most difficult questions. In his wondering mind he can see a single man both as pagan and gentleman; for in paganism he sees something of a gentleman and in gentlemanliness he sees something of a pagan. His mind is the canvas on which “the painter of life” has mingled his impressions to produce opposite nuances and shades of meaning. This is the realm where good and evil or black and white meet for synthesis and unification. His consciousness has already moved not only beyond the horizons of the usual mind but also beyond those of language. In the realm of his consciousness, the product of artistic creation is not

opposition between good and evil but is a formula for compromise<sup>8</sup> and mutual understanding.

In Gloriani's garden, when Gloriani shows Strether "a fine worn handsome face" (James, 2003: 199), the condition of his mind is Parisian. It is a "dazzling prodigy of type, and Strether has the consciousness of opening to it, for the happy instant, all the windows of his mind" (James, 2003: 199). It is a great source of inspiration; and he has mobilized all the capacities of his consciousness to grasp the utmost insight from this figure. He stands briefly face to face with Gloriani whose eyes are holding his looks. They are "the source of the deepest intellectual sounding to which he had ever been exposed" (ibid: 200). Now his consciousness is beyond any ordinary condition, and he is capable to receive "the greatest of the mysteries ... the most special flare, unequalled, supreme, of the esthetic torch, lighting that wondrous world for ever" (ibid). His fancies are not hopeless, because this situation gives him a new light for deeper looks and more enjoyment. In the cumulative pot of his consciousness what is melting is the "illustrious spirit" of the universal man.

To celebrates the experience of a transcendental consciousness, *The Ambassadors* gratifies a kind of relation that takes advantage of the non-lingual signals also: the air of their sitting, the delicate room, all the world outside, the First Empire; the matters far-off and quite near that are in the service of the relation between Strether and Madam de Vionnet. All history is filtered through his mind, for relations are the main narrative medium and a means for the explosion of Strether's mind. His mind converts everything into a reasonable relation to the benefit of the narrative that vivifies our life structures. Such a relation can profit by "a mass of things," by elements that are even external to it. His mind can delve deep into the substrata of history and come up to the surface again to establish a net of relations: in his excessively active mind a relic of

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<sup>8</sup> But Ralf Norman argues that the logic of chiasmus in James runs counter to the logic of compromise. He says, "The results of my investigation of James's psychomorphology has some consequences for my view of James scholarship. Like Shlomith Rimmon, Dorothea Krook and others, I too can no longer believe in the efforts of those critics who try to argue cases based on compromise. These critics hope for sanity; but chiasmism does perhaps not quite allow it. Dualist extremism plus vacillation is the structural backbone of chiasmism, and although chiasmists constantly long for compromise, union, fusion, synthesis, *via media*, etc., they can never reach any of these because it is in the nature of chiasmism both to create the longing for them and at the same time to frustrate that same longing. Chiasmists dream of synthesis, but they visualize it in terms of a middle between two extremes, so that the very idea nevertheless presupposes the poles, and therefore constantly defeats itself. Hence the sterility of James's world. In the world of a chiasmist opposites seldom meet and unite; and a chiasmist sees most things in life as opposites – including men and women (Norman, 1982: 192).

the “First Empire” or an unbroken clasp on the hand of woman living now can make a relation. In every subject and situation he requires “relations and relations,” like those between Chad and Madam de Vionnet, because recognition should be the natural aftermath of relations. All these relations, and the numerous questions that he asks Madam de Vionnet, help him to get a handle on the situation. In this way, Madam de Vionnet is a source of relations for Strether. But revelation will come when the reader critically examines these relations and makes them into logical results. Now the question is what relations Strether finds in her?

In Book 11 chapter 4, the supremacy of the vocabulary of delay makes the narrative into a process of reflection and interpretation. The result of Strether’s strange meditations over the nature of the relations between Chadwick Newsome and Marie de Vionnet is that he feels “verily, verily his labour had been lost” (ibid: 468). As the story approaches ending, their relations become a block to begin a new phase of this construction, and his “spiritual stomach” is now vividly enduring whatever the story has to offer. Vagueness is natural in this process. In consequence, the erected structure is not unlike when “a little girl might have dressed her doll” (ibid): the presence of asymmetry, certitude versus possibility, positiveness versus vagueness. Strether has investigated the possibility in vagueness, and is feeling “the pity of its being so much like lying.” Feeling lonely and cold, he decides to talk about these things perhaps only with Miss. Gostrey. Tomorrow, when he sees her, he asks her “what on earth – that’s what I want to know – had you then supposed?” (ibid.) Although he tries to suppose nothing about the relations of Chad and Vionnet, but his transcending consciousness is well out of his control, for he finds himself “supposing innumerable and wonderful things.”

But what is the use of Strether’s visiting Madame de Vionnet? Although the story states what he imagines by visiting her, Vionnet wants to “set something right, to deal in some way with the fraud so lately practiced on his presumed credulity” (James, 2003: 476). The story offers no clear suggestion about their fraud or “eminent lie.” However, it is perhaps because of his credulity that he imagines “he could trust her to make deception right” (ibid: 477). The powers of the narrative produce in him a measure of braveries and fears, of art and innocence. But suspense is perhaps at the

peak here, because he will soon get worried, for Madame de Vionnet will appeal to him to let her risk in telling him the truth.

When de Vionnet asks Strether in a telegraph to see her and he presents himself to her, he is “mixed up with typical tale of Paris” (ibid: 472): on the one hand, he likes her place and takes pleasure of seeing the picture there. On the other hand, he feels a danger because there is an aching sense in him that “somebody was paying something somehow and somewhere” (ibid: 473). His idling, lounging, smoking, sitting in the shade, drinking lemonade, and consuming ices perhaps signify his mixed mind. Although he strikes himself “much as a loafer,” there are times when he believes himself “touching bottom.” A “historic sense” starts in him, once more he is subjected to “sudden gusts of fancy,” and odd suppositions and divinations rush upon his consciousness. Hopes and omens are broken out for he notices the “smell of revolution ...or perhaps simply the smell of blood” (ibid: 475). This Parisian rural side provides him with all he needs for remolding his consciousness. But in the scene after that, when he visits Mme. Vionnet, all his pleasures are destroyed because he realizes his great mistake: that he has been being ‘had’ by her.

The truth Strether discovers here erupts no volcano in his mind; and at the very end of the story, when Miss. Gostrey offers herself to him, his “only logic” is, as J. Hillis Miller says, the logic of “renunciation.” Miller says the reason behind James’s renunciation is “to avoid sprawl,” and mentions that it is both a matter of form and theme, because “Form, for James, is mirrored by theme. Each is the allegory of the other” (Miller, 2005:139). And James Moseley is perhaps in agreement with Miller when he proposes that Strether’s forbearance is both a matter of form and meaning. He confirms that although Strether has lost the affection of his intended wife (Mrs. Newsome) and has failed as her ambassador, “he feels inwardly renewed and triumphantly right.” Moseley affirms that Strether re-embarks for America to complete this movement of his mind, for “All of the external incidents and events are there for the sake of representing his internal action, and the fullness of the internal action gives a strong sense of completeness to the work as a whole” (Moseley, 1975: 475). Therefore, the present reader sees Strether’s abstention as double-sided. If he should go back “To be right,” he will not accomplish his internal mission unless he

goes back. His departure for America is perhaps the logic of the commitment an intellectual feels for the moral betterment of a society at the threshold of modernism and for the development of its literary imagination. He goes for the possibility of the transcendence of the American mind, and for the development of the American fiction after James.

In Book 11 chapter 3, when we find Strether in the café in the Parisian rural side, the spell of 'scene' and 'stage' intensify "the illusion of reality," for, among other things, "the rustle of the willows and the tone of the sky" (James, 2003: 458) excite our interest to change reading to a real interpretive interaction. In *The Rhetoric of Fiction* Wayne C. Booth discusses how in the Jamesian fiction, unlike the works of the other story-writers like Gustave Flaubert and Guy de Maupassant, "the illusion of reality" does not stay in the level of bodily senses but goes beyond it and reaches the level of mind. Illusion in James is perhaps not to excite 'laughter' or 'tear', but is the "intensity of illusion, most often the illusion of experiencing life as seen by a fine mind subject to realistic human limitations" (Booth, 1961: 42). The intensification of the illusion of reality on the level of mind implies that the narrative makes numerous correspondences with the real world out of the text, like in a 'play' where the audience make real relations with the actors on the scene. These conditions naturalize the compositional reality; and make it right, easy, and pleasant to put up with. On the one hand, such a compositional reality is complementary to external reality. On the other hand, the supposed materiality of such a construction adds to the complexity of the illusion of reality, and makes it possible to understand only for a "fine mind." Material as 'the thing' is supposed to be, it is "the thing that implied the greatest number of other things" (James, 2003: 458). The Jamesian virtual realities cannot stand as alienated and remote from each other and from the non-textual realities, and they imply numberless relations with the outcome of the text where both kinds of reality can simultaneously be created. Such intensified illusions of reality, crafted by the story-teller with as fine a mind as that of James, added to the use of live elements of nature as the sources of aspiration, and added also to the sharp eyes of the character and reader for observation, can be the possibility of modernistic discourses in texts like *The Ambassadors*. They make the experience of reading, like life itself, replete

with implication. Such a productive relation between the narrator speaking through the mouth of the author, the character talking for the possibility of the text, and the reader interpreting the text to produce new meanings and make new lives each time, is another feature of the multi-lateral art of story-writing in James.

Booth believes that James's realism is different from the other realisms. He writes,

James began at a different place entirely, with the effort to portray a convincing mind at work on reality. Feeling as he did that the most interesting subject was a fine but "bewildered" mind dealing with life (pp. 63-64, 66, for example), he was disturbed by Flaubert's choice of stupid minds as centers of consciousness "reflecting" events. Emma Bovary as a reflector was for him clearly a mistake, and Frederic in *The Sentimental Education* represented an almost pathetic failure of insight, even a failure of mind in Flaubert himself (Booth, 1961: 43).

Booth acknowledges that James is quite faithful to the notion of the real. Then he describes his realism as a "higher order" than in the fiction of Maupassant and Flaubert, for James "seeks the intensity of illusion rather than the illusory reality." He reminds us of James's suggestion that "the intensity of illusion, ..., is the ultimate test" (ibid). Take the following extract from Book 11 chapter 3 in *The Ambassadors*, for example:

It [the pavilion]<sup>9</sup> consisted of little more than a platform, slightly raised, with a couple of benches and a table, a protecting rail and a projecting roof; but it raked the full-grey blue stream, which, taking a turn a short distance above, passed out of sight to reappear much higher up; and it was clearly in esteemed requisition for Sundays and other feasts. Strether sat there and, though hungry, felt at peace; the confidence that had so gathered for him deepened with the lap of the water, the ripple of the surface, the rustle of the reeds on the opposite bank, the faint diffused coolness and the slight rock of a couple of small boats attached to a rough landing-place hard by. The valley on the further side was all copper-green level and glazed pearly sky, a sky hatched across with screens of trimmed trees, which looked flat, like espaliers; and though the rest of the village struggled away in the near quarter the view had an emptiness that made one of the boats suggestive. Such a river set one afloat almost before one could take up the oars – the idle play of which would be moreover the aid to the full

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<sup>9</sup>. My adding.

impression. This perception went so far as to bring him to his feet; but that movement, in turn, made him feel afresh that he was tired; and while he leaned against a post and continued to look out he saw something that gave him a sharper arrest. (James, 2003: 459-460).

The pavilion with all its paraphernalia at the edge of the garden and hanging over the water seems like a real one. Yet, the movement of the full stream, with its turns in short distances that brings it out of and into sight, can make the effect of the portrait as limpid, vibrating, and transient as the clear water of the stream. The fact that the water “was clearly in esteemed requisition for Sundays and other feasts,” changes it to a happy feature of life, for doesn’t it generate something like the full dynamism of the real life? Now let us see how the other elements in this picture add to Strether’s peace as he is sitting by the floss to meditate on the variety and dynamism of life: the lap of the water, the ripple of the surface, the rustle of the reeds, and the rock of the boats excite him and us to absorb the uttermost impression we can take from nature. The interaction of illusion and reality is radical: the water conveys the greatest degrees of peace and confidence into his psyche; and he will, hereafter, take in all these correspondences. In its inclusiveness, “the illusion of reality” is intensified by a number of stylistic devices also: the dramatic composition is so effective on the reader’s curiosity that it, like Strether’s curiosity, spills over the cup. The illusion of reality is so intense that it can hardly be determined why the main character feels tired. Such an intensified illusion is perhaps the result of the overall easy-going language, the reasonable application of punctuation marks, the use of well-made grammatical structures like parallelism, the emphasis on the use of past verbs, the techniques of situation-making, including the employment of a main character to sit in the center to negotiate with the real open nature, and the sincerity of the speaker.



## Chapter Seven

### Reconstitution of the Self through Social Experience in *The Golden Bowl*: A New-Historical Analysis

The opposite of good writing is not necessarily bad writing: today is perhaps just writing. Literature has entered a situation which is difficult, restricted, mortal. It is no longer its ornaments that it is defending, but its skin: I rather fear that the new Neither-Nor criticism is one season behind.

(Roland Barthes)

#### I. The Problem of the Story

To illustrate the possibility of noble compromise is perhaps a common goal of all three Jamesian novels discussed in the present project. However, each of these novels illustrates this possibility in a different way. Lambert Strether chose to fail in undertaking his ambassadorial mission, Milly Theale chose to die for opening the way for Kate Croy and Merton Densher to start an acceptable married life. But towards the end of *The Golden Bowl*, when Maggie Verver dissembles and announces, in a (white) lie, that she thinks her husband and mother-in-law have done nothing injurious against her and her father, her aim is also to access noble compromise, yet not through failure as in the case of Strether, and not also through death as in the case of Milly, but through defeating the evil in the hope of life.

For its general purpose, the present chapter intends to be a new-historical analysis on *The Golden Bowl*. It attempts to discuss the representation of the subject-making processes in the novel, and to explain how we are changed through the modification of our experiences that are themselves the products of our interaction with a wide spectrum of cultural discourses. A part of the discussion is about the representation of the clash in the consciousness of the major characters in the first and second parts of the novel, and the dominance of Maggie Verver's discourse. It will also involve the chapter with how the novel artistically acts out the story of the renovation of consciousness.

There is a common agreement that *The Golden Bowl* has four main characters. Stephen Spender divides these characters into two binary groups: on the one hand, there are Maggie Verver and her father Adam who is her companion (AB).

On the other hand, there are their future moneyless “*sposi*”, Prince Amerigo and Charlotte Stant (CD). But when Mrs. Fanny Assingham, a minor character, comes unto the scene, she engineers the marriage of Prince and Maggie. After some time, Adam and Charlotte marry too. Thus, the primary grouping is broken into (AC) and (BD). Although the Prince and Charlotte were in love in the past, after their marriage they forget about their love and start to live honestly with their marriage partners. However, a transition brings the grouping back again to its primary state: after the marriage of both couples, when Maggie and her father start to continue living with each other instead of living with their married partners, the suppressed love between Amerigo and Charlotte throws them to each other, and the grouping of the characters takes the primary configuration again. Thus, from the outset, the model of their grouping is like this: from (AB and CD) to (AC and BD), and back again to (AB and CD).

It seems that this social problem emerges from a more important moral problem. The Ververs seem devoid of sexual love. Adam is too old not only to have a child but perhaps also to fulfill the sexual expectations of his young and beautiful wife. And Maggie, although she excessively loves her husband, cannot satisfy him sexually, so that he is respectfully but entirely tired of her. The love between Maggie and her father, that seems to be thoroughly platonic<sup>1</sup>, keeps them detached from almost all other people including even their immediate partners. Up to this point, it may make only a little problem. But when they extend their Platonism to their marriage partners it compounds. Even after the pair of marriages takes place, the mutual love between them as father and daughter keeps them so nearly together that it detaches them from their roles as husband and wife. To say it another way, their own Platonic love is the

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<sup>1</sup> Ralf Norman says "there are three relations between people who are lovers in what we may call the technical sense. There are Amerigo – Maggie, Adam – Charlotte, and Amerigo – Charlotte. Of these three the first two are 'legitimate' and the third 'illicit'" (Norman, 1982: 7). However, describing what he calls a "knit pattern of devotions," Norman claims that the relation between Maggie and her father is "incestuous." He says, "Doubtless, if a certain kind of combination-happy modern author could have laid hands on the idea of *The Golden Bowl* he would not only have made the relationship between Maggie and Adam incestuous but would also have managed a homo-erotic subplot Adam – Amerigo and a lesbian interlude Charlotte – Maggie. Well, James is not far behind, for at least as far as the interest of these relationships can contribute to the plot the relationships *are* there" (Ibid.: 9). Norman argues that James's reason for using such odd patterns of devotion (like the Maggie – Adam pattern, the Amerigo - Adam pattern, or even the Maggie – Charlotte pattern) is that they intensify our interest.

ground for the suffocation of the spiritual and/or sexual love of their married partners. In such a context, Maggie's Platonism means that she has married the Prince not as a husband but perhaps mainly as a possibility for a connection to the cultural heritage of the Renaissance Italy. Also Adam's Platonism means that for him the Prince is only a wonderful piece in his art gallery which he will later on transfer to "American City." This is how Charlotte and Amerigo destroy the social order by abdicating their marriage responsibilities. After their sexual desires get suffocated, the step-mother and son-in-law resume their undefinedly intimate relation and dupe their lawful partners.

Now, and mainly through Maggie, the story wants to bring this chaos back into order, in a way that finally she possesses her husband, her father possesses his wife, and their society symbolically salvages its moral idealism. But a major question here is about the background in the novel of such effective resources of reformation. For Stuart P. Sherman, James can solve this problem in the background of a "highest society" where the people "have wealth, beauty, exquisite taste, and ability to tell a lie with a straight face (Sherman, 1917: 88). Thus, it can be argued that some techniques that *The Golden Bowl* uses to achieve this goal are: using excessive indirection with a high percentage of stylistic mastery and discursive subtlety, wrapping the human evil, the misdeed of Charlotte and Amerigo for example, in a sublime discourse that is full of images and tropes, and creating an atmosphere of awareness of which silence and lucidity are two components. Such techniques of representation make the reader and characters perpetually conscious about the ugliness of evil in us, while at the same time, and in an economy of compromise, they transfer the impression of evil to a world of vagueness where it is forgotten in the collective unconscious of Europe.

## **II. The Purpose of this Chapter**

A base for the argument in this chapter will be the logic of ideas in the preface of the novel. To exemplify the interdependence of cultural formations, this chapter contrasts the original version of *The Golden Bowl* with its revised version which James provided for the New York Edition of his stories. Such differences are illustrated by the opposition between Prince Amerigo and Maggie Verver as the central consciousness respectively in the first and second parts of the book. A further part of

the discussion illustrates the (symbolic) renovation of the self in the novel. The formation of several communities of vision in this novel illustrates the inconsistency of discourses, and is thus a means for the formation of individual or collective selves through the act of reading as a method of interactive communication. In each part of the story, we see James's "lucid reflector" as his 'witness' or 'deputy' in the business of representing a major character. The preface of the novel is a record of James's re-visiting or re-reading the novel as he attempts to develop a central consciousness for his composition. His act of re-reading seems like Maggie's job when she restores Amerigo's consciousness and establishes her own text through re-reading the texts of her rivals.

Thus, the argument of the present chapter starts with a comparison between some aspects of Derridean Deconstruction and Foucauldian "new historicism." After that, I attempt to analyze the novel in the light of new historicism. My background discussions take their point of departure from some works by and on Michel Foucault, by Stephen Greenblatt, and by Mark Seltzer. Three main themes in the works of Foucault, which I wish to trace in the novel, are knowledge (experience), power, and discourse. I will discuss the formation of discursive spaces in the novel where human experience is shaped through the interaction of a variety of social and cultural matrices.

The thought of Foucault is quite innovative. It can be categorized neither as phenomenological, nor hermeneutical, nor structuralist, nor Marxist. His thought is not phenomenological, because he does not search for the meaning-making activity of a free and autonomous consciousness. It is also not hermeneutical, since he does not believe in any deep or ultimate truth discoverable in history. He is not a structuralist thinker either, because he searches for no abstract or formal structures in history or society for human behaviors. And he is also not inspired by Marxism, because he does not put emphasis on any general history-making constituent such as 'base', 'superstructure', and 'class consciousness'. An important part of Foucault's studies is the disrupted and disconnected epistemes or historical frames of knowledge. He is interested in the processes through which power is inscribed into the human consciousness and thereby subjects the individual. He believes that humanities and

social sciences are a part of an authority system or mechanisms for the exercise of power in human society. Therefore, his main subject of study is the formation of different types of scientific discourse as systems of power relations.

In *The Archeology of Knowledge* Foucault talks from the radically retrospective perspective of a historian of ideas who is doubtful about the fundamental assumptions of human thought and knowledge. He takes it to “oust those forms and obscure forces by which we usually link the discourse of one man with that of another” (Foucault, 2002: 24), and perhaps to provide new theories about the emergence of disconnected histories and the selves and experiences of man. Although his standpoint in this book is perhaps mainly structuralist, he intends to justify the cancelation of fundamental notions in the history of ideas on which Western thought has been based from the outset. He considers the history of knowledge different from what it has so far been considered, that is, not as unified and continuous, but as dispersed and disconnected.

Believing in the historical discontinuity of human discourses, Foucault argues, for example, that what articulated literary and political discourses in the nineteenth century was different from what articulated them in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In addition to suspending the usual concepts of thought, ideology, discourse, etc., he also discusses the abandonment of the notion of book as a unified object of thought in the modern times. Although the materiality of a book renders it as a unified (cultural) object, he admits that within the network of its discourses the unity of it is “variable and relative” (ibid: 26). By suspending the continuity of such concepts and discourses, about both the origin and the end of which we are unconscious, he leads us to a project that describes the formation of discursive events as a subject of research. However, the project advised by Derrida for such a program would necessarily be only linguistic. And although the project of Foucault works in a linguistic domain also, it is not exclusively linguistic, for as he claims, a linguistic project cannot answer a basic question: “how is it that one particular statement appeared rather than another?” (Foucault, 2002: 30).

Now I can perhaps explain how my approach to *The Golden Bowl* is new-historical. The work of Foucault describes the reconstitution of the history of knowledge, not in the way knowledge is supposed to have reached us in history but

only in language spaces and by the means of discursive formations. The language spaces that James creates in his later work provide typical occasions for the emergence and evolution of a kind of structural or discursive experience that Foucault suggests is dominant instead of the knowledge which was regarded, before Foucault, as the product of human reason. It is in the condition of such language structures, or discursive formations, that Maggie Verver in the second part of the novel recognizes her advantages. The fiction of James creates the possibility of experience, not as content or meaning but as form or structure; and this is an important reason why his fiction is well approachable to a structuralist and/or post-structuralist analysis. By structurality of experience I mean the statement of the promotion of Maggie's subjectivity can happen not as meaning or ideology but only in a space of structural interactions, for example in the juxtaposition of language structures and their mutual impact upon each other.

In the works of Foucault discourse is among the most important themes. In "discourse" "dis," which originates from the Indo-European languages, signifies negation, while "kers" means a "way" to somewhere or a "path" to something. Thus, "discourse" is the space of the operation of a double force of direction and deviation, or acceptance and rejection. This is why in *The Archeology of Knowledge* Foucault says his work is a discourse about discourse. Literary discourse searches for such a dialectic of acceptance and rejection.

Foucault classifies the history of man's dealing with language into three periods: In the Renaissance period people believed in the magic of words. In this era the word was supposed to be the thing itself. The signified was not the presence of something in the mind but was the thing itself. In the Age of Reason the words were no longer seen as identical with things, and people were inclined to realize the order of things in the order of language. However, in Modern Times things are out of signification, out of literary language, for language refers to nothing other than itself. In modern times man is subordinate to, or imprisoned by, a kind of language game the rules of which he does not understand. Thus, there remains no more correspondence between the word and the meaning, or between language and life.

In the Renaissance knowledge and also in that of the Age of Reason man had no place, for he was neither the subject of knowledge nor the object of it. However, modern knowledge is the space where man is born in language and by the power of discourse, because he occupies a mysterious position both in the subject and object of knowledge. This is the time when man sees himself for the first time in the act of thinking and gaining recognition from the world of perceptions, when he makes his subjectivity an object of knowing and cognitive thinking. Modern discourse shows man recognizing not only the object of his perceptions but also himself as perceiver. It is in modern knowledge that man realizes the presence of his consciousness in the object of himself.

This is in agreement with the idea of experience as structure in the fiction of James. Knowledge is possible only in language. However, language values are neither epistemological nor cognitive; and it does not take referencing or transferring roles. Instead, the functions of language are ‘only’ literary. In this way, in literary language external signification has given place to internal signification. It is through (the analysis of) discursive rules that meaning is produced, through the analysis of discursive gaps and transformations.

In *Practicing New Historicism* Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt discuss some transformations on the basis of which I attempt to provide another framework for my arguments. Firstly, they argue a mutual embeddedness of art and history. This transformation is in agreement with the notion of “culture as text” (Gallagher and Greenblatt, 2000: 9) which is a major priority in new-historical studies of literature. Human civilization is not a unitary phenomenon but is a diversified one which is periodical also, because in the course of history it has gone through many transformations; and it is therefore full of gaps and ruptures. Such a great cultural diversity suggests that humans are different and no unitary formula can be proposed for the representation of their civilization. This is why new historicism refuses any universal aesthetic norm, and why it is so fascinated with the particular and individual instead of the general and universal. For discovering the most genuine potentials of humanity we must move retrospectively through all the specific documents of the buried cultures in each of which we can reveal a “distinct culture.” Therefore, for a

new-historical study not only should we carefully review all the classic texts of culture in a historical context, but also should closely analyze the minor texts, whether they are literary or non-literary.

The second transformation discussed by Gallagher and Greenblatt is when ideological critique gives its place to “discourse analysis.” This transformation means that new historicism never turns its back on the study of art and literature and gives a privileged position to language. Man produces not only language but also discourse through the articulation of language. However, for different historical periods new historicism describes language differently, and therefore considers different types of subjectivity (which were shortly discussed earlier in this chapter with reference to the ideas of Foucault).

*The Golden Bowl* is the story of the emergence of Maggie Verver’s subjectivity in the context of culture. Maggie starts to experience her subjectivity in cultural structures: in the space of language, art structures, discursive formations, and the institutions of trade and marriage for example. The use of Prince Amerigo and Charlotte Stant in commodification services, that are, I think, for lubricating American capitalism, exemplifies what Greenblatt terms “improvisation of power.” By this he means that a feature of (American) capitalism is investing in unforeseen situations and transforming the given materials into its own advantage. The old exhausted love between Charlotte and Amerigo, and the fact that James arranges for their re-visiting just on the threshold of Maggie’s marriage with Amerigo, provide the ground for their change to objects of sex and trade as a possibility of capitalism. Another act of improvisation in this novel embodies what Greenblatt calls a principle of “vacancy.” Charlotte does not possess what she needs for the realization of her innermost inclinations: she is a young woman, very beautiful, and perhaps full of sexual energy; while Adam is much older than her, is not so handsome, and is sexually excessively weak. Although sex and trade are additional structures for the production of experience in this novel, the novel shows that like other structures they are also spaces of care and surveillance for the simplification of the practice of power upon society.

Another source of the ideas on which I will base my reading on *The Golden Bowl* is “Foucault and the Study of Literature” by Dieter Freundlieb. Freundlieb discusses

the development of the thought of Foucault in four phases. In an early archeological phase of his thought, Foucault “regarded literature as one of a number of ‘counter-discourses’ partly associated with the experience of madness and opposed (as an ‘Other’) to an all-encompassing Reason (Freundlieb, 1995: 301). In this phase Foucault believes that “the being of language” emerges in avant-garde literature which shows itself in sharp opposition to established norms of thought. In this phase language breaks with the traditional philosophy of consciousness and finds its complete freedom in literature.

Freundlieb argues that in the second phase of his thought, which is a later archeological phase, Foucault “recognized the concept of literature itself as historically variable and, like that of the author, as playing a specific role in the discourse of literary studies” (Freundlieb, 1995: 317). In this phase of his thought, Foucault believes that literary criticism “should not look for the internal structures of literary texts, but look at how these texts acquire the status of literature” (ibid: 318). He considers literary discourse like many other kinds of discourse, and conceives of it as a “treasure house of cultural wisdom” (ibid: 319). Therefore, the business of a Foucauldian literary critic is to interpret the literary text in the space of its relations to other discourses that produce genuine knowledge, and in the space of the history of such discourses.

The third phase in the thought of Foucault includes his shift from an archeology of knowledge to a genealogy of knowledge or power. Freundlieb says in this phase he shifts from “an analysis of discursive formations in terms of anonymous sets of rules to an analysis of discursive practices as one of the ways in which power and the will to truth manifest themselves” (ibid: 329). He deals with “the origins of human sciences and their involvement in the ubiquitous operation of the powers which shape and normalize individuals into subjects” (ibid). Literary criticism is a mechanism for ethically controlling the society and helping the individuals to change themselves into normalized citizens. Freundlieb argues that literature is, in this sense, a tool for the reproduction of traditional values of bourgeois society. Teaching literature and criticism in schools and universities is, in fact, a subtle way of exercising power in the name of truth. It is no longer for conveying certain long-lasting cultural truths that

have been revealed in canonical texts, but is mainly for undertaking a certain ethico-political process that, in the name of truth, practices power over the individuals and keeps control over society both in its physical and spiritual manifestations. In this sense, Foucault implies that the will to truth in the modern humanities and social sciences is also a disguise, for in fact they provide the ground for imposing the will to power, and are a tool for policing the society through surveillance. However, he does not regard power as exclusively repressive, but sees it as productive also, because in addition to policing the society, power gives pleasure and produces reality.

Foucault changes his track more than once. In the last phase of his thought he mainly deals with a new subject: the aesthetics of subjectivization. In this phase he regards the formation of the subject not in the context of a ubiquitous network of power relations but mainly as a self-disciplining process. However, the thought of Foucault in this phase is more paradoxical, because on the one hand he believes in a self-determining process of subject formation, while on the other hand he suggests that subject formation is possible in a cultural context. Although he suggests that subjects are formed in a space of liberty and in a self-managing mechanism, he also verifies the faith that says subjects are constituted on the basis of a number of structures, rules, styles, and inventions that can be found in a cultural environment. His main idea here is how one can constitute her self and establish good and beautiful relationships with it, so that history provides her with the needed ground for changing her life to an artwork. Foucault perhaps deliberately does not clarify whether by this he means that one can create works of art in her life or one can promote her self by searching dignity, beauty, and wisdom, and can, in this way, make her life into a piece of art. Whatever kind of artwork he means, he reminds us that literature and criticism are suitable contexts for such aesthetic developments.

In the first part of *The Golden Bowl*, Maggie Verver is shown as quite naïve, and therefore as unable meaningfully to cope with other characters. However, her success in the second part is an aesthetic achievement. Through a series of subtle policy of silence and other language maneuvers, she succeeds to cancel the plans of her husband and mother-in-law in a way that they cannot resist the impact of her subtleties. She can set up her own plan of (moral) transcendence and excite the reader that she is a

major force in the development of the story. Although the golden bowl is already broken, at the end of the novel the life of Maggie is realized as a golden artwork.

### III. From Deconstruction to New Historicism

Derrida was a critic of deconstructionism at Yale, and Foucault is referred to as a practitioner of new historicism at Berkeley. But they have much in common. In “Exteriority and Appropriation: Foucault, Derrida, and the Discipline of Literary Criticism” Jeffrey T. Nealon suggests that literary critics have to read both of them,

As they do—Derrida as the last in a transcendentalist philosophical line and Foucault as the last in a materialist historicist line, as the founders of a “textual” deconstructive criticism and a “worldly” new historicism (Nealon, 1992: 104).

However, their differences are perhaps not less than their similarities. Nealon says “Foucault is somehow a champion of historical *praxis* over Derrida’s purely textual *theoria*” (ibid: 98).

When we are on Derrida, we are wholesale captivated in the “prison-house” of language to search for the play of the sign, for the formation of meaning through signification. However, when we are on Foucault we generally go through language to the exterior social and cultural fields to investigate for the possibility of surveillance through the formation of discourse. If it can be argued that deconstruction is purely theoretical, new historicism can perhaps be described as the practice of deconstruction. However, it should be noted that new historicism builds on deconstruction not for the formation of meaning in language but for the conceptualization of power that is generated, instead, in discursive war and battle. For Derrida the meaning lies exclusively in the interior of language: in its grammatical features, formal structures, and objects of discourse, while Foucault believes that meaning is formed in a series of statements that are exterior to language, and are therefore diffused and prone to multiplicity.

In traditional literary criticism the movement of thought is from the outside of the text to its inside. This kind of criticism would arrive at meaning as it goes from the

biography of the author or from the historical situation of the text to the text itself. In deconstruction the thought starts and terminates its movement in the very interior of the text. However, in new historicism the movement of thought is from the inside of the text to its outside. If in deconstruction the world is, as Nealon puts it for Derrida, only “a galaxy of texts” (ibid: 97) which is a unitary and general space of signification and out of which there is nothing, new-historicists believe that a text is not free from the historical and cultural backgrounds of its production. A text is never stable or static, but is a system of relations, an in-between entity that always pushes its frontiers backward and expands itself. There is always something shuttling back and forth between each text and other ones, so that a text is more than the object that we have on our library shelves. In *The Archaeology of Knowledge* we read,

The frontiers of a book are never clear-cut: beyond the title, the first lines, and the last full stop, beyond its internal configuration and its autonomous form, it is caught up in a system of references to other books, other texts, other sentences: it is a node within a network. (Foucault, 2002: 25-26).

The margins of a text do not put it in a closure, but link it to a vast sea of other texts where each text should be examined as part of a whole culture that employs many devices for policing the behaviour of subjects. In “Truth and Power” Foucault says,

Here [in discursive events]<sup>2</sup> I believe one’s point of reference should not be to the great model of language (*langue*) and signs, but to that of war and battle. The history which bears and determines us has the form of war rather than that of language: relations of power, not relations of meaning. History has no “meaning,” though this is not to say that it is absurd or incoherent. On the contrary, it is intelligible and should be susceptible to analysis down to the smallest detail—but this in accordance with the intelligibility of struggles, of strategies and tactics. (Foucault, 1984:56).

If Foucault is interested in “reference and reality,” in the world of action and institutions, Derrida thinks there is nothing outside the text. New historicism is inclined to turn the text inside out and demystify it so thoroughly that nothing in its

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<sup>2</sup> My adding.

inside is out of the reach of the outside. In addition to the concept of power, Foucault's contribution to new historicism resulted in the notions of self and knowledge. It also resulted in the notion of history as disorderly or discontinuous. Under or behind what seems a meaningful and goal-oriented movement of history, new historicism always and everywhere feels a sense of incoherence and disorderliness.

#### **IV. New Historicism in Theory and Method**

Here it should be noted that in new historical studies history has a double meaning. It signifies both what has happened in the past and our knowledge of what has happened in the past. This is to mean that in addition to the past happenings, history signifies also our retelling or representing of such happenings in language. Any kind of discourse is, in this sense, primarily a language event that is linked not only to the gesture of writing or to the articulation of speech, but also to the situation that has provoked it, to its consequences, and to the statements before and after it.

New historicism has taken its main roots perhaps from old historicism, from the historicism of Johann Gottfried von Herder for example. Nevertheless, the contributions of Foucault are the main base of the arguments in the present chapter. Old historicists regarded history as an objective discourse, and as linear and teleological; and believed that a unified and consistent worldview of any given society or historical situation can be formulated. But Foucault's researches in the 1970s and 1980s excited the English and American Renaissance scholars to regard history as subjective, non-linear, and as having no definite goal in its movement. Thus, it is here that new historicism parts company with old historicism. New historicism regards literature not as superior to other human discourses like philosophy, religion, politics, sociology, etc., but as a discourse that is, like them, the product of human imagination, subject to the dominating ideology, and a means of control by the power-structure in the time of its production. Due to the subjectivity of history, new historicism formulates no single universal set of principles, and proposes no unitary theoretical model of research. Instead, it suggests particular models of investigation that are appropriate to certain times and places.

However, the subjectivity of history and the severe impact of power relations upon its narration make it not into a unified body of knowledge in logical connection with a unified and inclusive purpose for the whole body, but into a number of disrupted and disconnected epistemes the logic and purpose of a succeeding layer of which may go even counter to the logic and purpose of a preceding layer. For example, the discourse of the sixteenth-century Shakespearean poetry is different, both in form and content, from the discourse of the seventeenth-century metaphysical poetry, romanticism is different from realism, and modern aesthetic consciousness in the fiction of the first half of the twentieth-century is different from the postmodern discourse in contemporary fiction. A big reason for such disruptions or discontinuities is the influence of the power structure on history and on the process of historicizing discourses. Such subtle effects make the literary scholar quite doubtful about the authenticity of such historical formations. In addition, the blind and non-linear movement of history should make the critic analyze the art object only in the context of the certain historical time period when it is produced. In this way, new historicism says that the disrupted and disconnected nature of history makes it essential that culture and literature be analyzed in the certain context of their production.

Opposite to New Criticism that believes in the complete autonomy of the literary work, and that the realities of the author's life have, in consequence, no significant role in its interpretation, new historicism regards a discourse as interconnected to all other kinds of discourse in the making of which the social and historical situations of the time and place have important roles. In *The Archaeology of Knowledge* Foucault says,

The book is not simply the object that one holds in one's hands; and it cannot remain within the little parallelepiped that contains it: its unity is variable and relative. As soon as one questions that unity, it loses its self-evidence; it indicates itself, constructs itself, only on the basis of a complex field of discourse... (Foucault, 2002: 26).

Thus, in new historicism a piece of fiction is not an autonomous object, but a product of culture which is itself a totality of forms, tools, mechanisms, etc, that are devised mainly by the power structure for controlling the behavior of subjects. This leads to

Foucault's refusal to accept that knowledge is simply there for liberation. He says "knowledge is not made of understanding; it is made for cutting" (Nealon, 1992: 111). New historicism sees knowledge, including literary knowledge, as in the business of surveillance, as in the service of the authority for easing the exercise of power for the subjugation of citizens. In such a context, criticism takes mission only to direct knowledge and to formulate the individual and collective consciousness. Thus, new historicism believes that we cannot expect that reason or criticism open a way to our freedom.

The purpose of a new-historical study of literature should be to analyze the work in the historical context of its production. An aesthetic object, a story by James for example, is the product of a cultural system of which (1) the author, (2) the text, and (3) the reader are major components. The importance attached to the author's life is that the aesthetic object reflects not only the concerns of the author but also those of the society in which the object has been produced. What makes a Henry James, for example, is itself part and parcel of the culture in which he lives and produces his oeuvre. The fact that the young James has often traveled between Europe and America, the various teachings that he has received from his tutors in great European cities like London, Paris, and Bonn, as well as what he has picked up from the social and artistic opportunities in Europe like museums and libraries and artistic galleries which he used to visit, have much expanded his imaginative outlooks and made him universal enough to produce, later on in his life, a prose fiction a central theme of which is the comparison of the transatlantic civilizations. Another example of James's subjectivity as a product of the social culture is the change of his course of study when he was an undergraduate student. He firstly attended Harvard Law School to study law. But shortly after that he preferred reading literature to which he devoted his life. The reason of this radical adjustment can be seen both in his personal interests and in the social backgrounds of the time and place of his living. Personally, after reading law for some time, he makes up his mind that he is more talented and more interested in literature than in law. Socially, he realizes that American fiction and criticism are in a chronic state of extreme shallowness which he imagines can help to put right.

A New-historical study of fiction pays close attention to the text for showing the reflection of social rules and standards in it. There is not any universal culture or aesthetic norm, new historicism says, but there is a wide spectrum of cultures and norms that are much different from each other. A literary text is a cultural product and is culturally bound. Like any other kind of aesthetic object, it takes root from the innermost resources of a people in a certain time and place. It reflects not only the influence of the culture upon the author but also the social norms and etiquettes and the standards of feeling and behavior of the culture of which it is a product.

The third new-historical principle of literary analysis is the fictional text as a piece of culture in history. A new historical investigation of literature searches for how the text reflects a certain historical situation; that is, how a certain series of past happenings is narrated in language situations and how the reader reconstructs them in the act of reading. Both fiction and history are narrative discourses where the text interacts with its historical culture to produce meaning. This indicates that history is subjective, for it is written or narrated by man. It also indicates that discourses are not hierarchical, and that they are neither moral nor immoral but are amoral. There is no simply good or bad discourse, but there are neutral discourses. Literature, history, and criticism are examples of discourses between which no dividing line can be drawn, because to produce meaning a great text of fiction interweaves them so artistically that they cannot be un-woven again.

The “periodicity” of history has excited the pioneers of new historicism to insist that the analyst should undertake her job like an archeologist. To provide information about bygone peoples, the archeologist digs into deep layers of the earth and uncovers the (symbolic) leftovers of a lost civilization. Likewise, in order to develop a formula for the emergence and function of a system of signification, a new-historicist attempts to dig into different epistemes, the past regimes of knowledge, and to connect different aspects of a culture to each other. Like what Greenblatt has done in his Shakespeare and Renaissance studies, the new-historicist searches for meaning in the substrata of history and culture of a nation. However, new-historicists argue that there is not any general or universal episteme, for epistemes are to a large extent under the

influence of power, and are therefore fully disrupted and quite disconnected in logic and content.

The disruption of history, its being influenced by power, and its interconnection with other kinds of discourse imply that human nature is not independent from culture, that experience is the result of our interaction with culture, and that the former is earned in the act of reading where the reader finds occasion to learn about how the characters feel and think, and how they experience the world around them. In the first part of *The Golden Bowl*, because of her extreme naivety and the inadequacy of the connection between her own outlook and the other ones provided in the novel, the discourse of Maggie Verver is unable to compete with those of her rivals. However, in the second part of the novel, in order to historicize the first text, Maggie produces enough connection between her moral discourse and other cultural discourses like marriage and the celebrations in the Lancaster Gate. In her magnificent language performances she creates a dynamic space for canceling the plots of her husband and mother-in-law and compelling them to admit the development of her newly established discourse.

In addition, through an analysis of some of the contributions of Dorothea Krook, Stephen Donadio, Winfried Fluck, and Joan W. Scott the present chapter attempts to clarify the symbolic production of experience in the fiction of James. Donadio discusses the similarities between the philosophy of Nietzsche and the art of James to show how art justifies our experiences and gives value to them. Krook discusses the bipartite structure of James's novel, the indivisibility of the beautiful and ugly in human life as represented in it, and how the concept of otherness in the novel grounds the artistic restoration of our historical identity. Scott explains the formation of experience through historicizing fiction. Fluck formulates a notion of the aesthetic to elucidate the disciplinary function of the fiction (of James) through the circulation of power in and beyond the novel. And Stuart Hall distinguishes the formation of experience in a structuralist context and the formation of experience in a culturalist context.

Donadio remarks that although William James knew the work of Friedrich Nietzsche, Henry did not. However, he sees "a number of unexpected but significant

correspondences" between the thought of the German philosopher and the art of the American novelist. Both of them see human experiences as disorderly and chaotic, and think that art gives order and justification to our experiences and makes them valuable. Donadio says,

These parallels are clustered chiefly, though by no means entirely, around a central belief held increasingly by both the novelist and the philosopher: the belief in art as a sole means of ordering and justifying the chaos of our experience in the world, and of endowing that experience with value. For both Nietzsche and James, the activity of art—or perhaps more precisely, the exercise of taste—becomes a means for the continual reassertion of personality and the mastery of experience. It is seen as a way of preserving the integrity of individual identity, and is consequently valued as the ultimate (and indeed the only) form of power over what would otherwise be simply a meaningless and menacing existence, a chaos threatening the obligation of individual personality at every moment (Donadio, 1978: 16).

He finds the New York Edition works of James a source of contemplation on the development of taste in man. He also finds the 35<sup>th</sup> chapter of Nietzsche's *Thus Spake Zarathustra* ("The Sublime Ones")<sup>3</sup> a treatise on the certainty of taste and tasting in man and its function in the evolution of his personality. The work of James is a continuous whole and cannot be divided into phases. The difference between "historical" and "inner" culture for Nietzsche is like the difference that James sees in the European and the American cultures. In this way, the themes and techniques in the typical Jamesian story, including the 'lucid reflector', 'unreliable narrator', and 'communities of vision' seem to be complementary to Donadio's argument regarding Nietzsche's ideas about "Will to Power" or the eighteenth-century theory about

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<sup>3</sup> *Thus Spake Zarathustra*: (Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None = Also Sprach Zarathustra: Ein Buch für Alle und Keine) is a poetico-philosophical novel by the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. The hero is a man with the name of Zarathustra (Zartosht) from whose mouth Nietzsche expresses his beliefs. The book was composed in four parts between 1883 and 1885. Parts 1 and 2 are each in 22 chapters, while part 3 is in 16 chapters and part 4 is in 20 chapters. The titles of some of them are: "Reading and Writing", "Chastity", "Neighbour Love", "The Virtuous", "The Land of Culture", "Redemption", "The Vision and the Enigma", "The Great Longing", and "The Higher Man." It is often said that this work is the most complete explanation of the Nietzschean theory of "Superman." Zarathustra, who has come down to the town from a 10-year period of solitude in the mountains, and who is therefore "weary of my wisdom," intends to let the people taste the concentrate of it by teaching them the Superman. But "in the land of sleepers" no one will accept to listen to the voice of inspiration, for they are preparing themselves to attend the performance of a rope-dancer. Therefore, he has to search for some "living companions who will follow me," and unto whom he can narrate his discourse (This is a reading on Zarathustra's Prologue in Nietzsche, 1928: 1-17).

“Death of God.” *The Golden Bowl* illustrates the formation of Maggie’s experience on the basis of a number of social and cultural structures. It also illustrates a series of disrupted discourses where different kinds of selves emerged in the course of history. The elimination of a universal canonical discourse grounds the emergence of a reader in a next historical era who knows perhaps even more than the author about the text, for such a reader can use the hidden potentials of language to expand the horizons of the text to the present time. The emergence of such a reader is complementary to the death of the author which Foucault believes is the ground of the nodality of book in a network of cultural discourses.

Dorothea Krook admits that *The Golden Bowl* is highly metaphorical, that everything in it stands for everything else. Then she argues that such a genuine possibility of restoration is rooted in the fact that these "people are measured by the touchstone of taste—by their free play of mind, by their sense of the irony of things, by the high style in which they conduct their lives" (Krook, 1962: 242). It is this noble and genuine artistic aspect, this otherness, which like the otherness between the Prince and Princess as the central consciousness in the first and second parts of the novel, that grounds historicizing the self, reality, or experience. This chapter intends to show how this otherness is the possibility of such a great power of aesthetic subjectivization or artistic salvation.

## **V. Indirect Representation**

Henry James is a realist as well as a modernist in *The Golden Bowl*. In the first part of the novel he makes a text, while in the second part he makes a counter-text. To state it another way, in the first part of it he exposes a problem while in the second part he offers a solution to the problem. A central question in this novel is how James describes the Prince Amerigo and represents his consciousness. Reading this story, we can watch how James reflects on the narrator as the mediator between the text, characters, and reader. Representing the consciousness of the characters, the narrator is not neutral. We often see him omitting and selecting details, creating sympathy with the characters, and offering explicit and implicit clarifications on the story. This aspect

is rather simple, since the narrator concentrates on the consciousness of only two characters: the Prince Amerigo and the Princess Maggie.

An aspect of its modernity is that a major part of it is deliberately kept in the dark. Although the novel shows the human consciousness as chaotic and unshapely, we see James's narrator giving words to our thoughts, emotions, and memories. He is able to pin down the patterns of consciousness, to give shape to it, and to make it structured and logical. The narrator makes sense of the things, and imagines the characters and their consciousness. He brings together the broken pieces of the story, and gives form to those patterns. It is the narrator who develops meaningful relations in such parts of the golden bowl of narrative. The characters may think something and do something else, but the narrator intervenes between their deeds and thoughts to make the story understandable for us. Many times we see the Prince wondering what to do. At this juncture he behaves quite decently as a son-in-law, but on the fringe of his consciousness he can and will do otherwise. He will act decently only as a son-in-law but not as a husband; that is, he marries Maggie not for herself but for the millions of her father. In this novel, patterns of pursuit and capture, and also of lock and key, are evolving.

Throughout the first part of the novel Maggie's consciousness is under attack, and she cannot defend herself adequately, for her recognition has not developed enough. But with the beginning of the second part, when she learns to expand her consciousness and to gain new experiences, the situation begins to change. She begins to see through the deceivers and to recognize their tricks. However, the analytical method she uses to expand her consciousness makes this text quite opaque, because she uses her method at two levels at once. On a surface level, she effectively tries to penetrate the position of her opponents and establish her own stand. But on a deeper level, she does so through a somewhat silent or negative strategy. Although this double (or two-leveled) method makes the text difficult, for Maggie it is a way to turn her life into an aesthetic object by searching beauty, dignity, and justice.

The pagoda in chapter 25, which the novel says stands for the first touch of something, embodies the solidity and strength of Maggie's consciousness which has newly started to reconstruct itself. There is a great accumulation of the act of seeing

here. The metaphorical sequence of tower, pagoda, and mosque is quite meaningful. Such metaphors stand for Maggie's thought which the narrator invents and clarifies. They imply that Maggie has started to solidify her stand, and that her opponents can no longer attack her stronghold. Fully active in her mind, she would like to touch the pagoda and to open the door (the real door in the structure and also the symbolic door of her consciousness). But when she opens the door, she sees her husband standing there. James tries to show the solidification of her consciousness. In chapter 25 we read:

They were there, these accumulations; they were like a roomful of confused objects, never as yet 'sorted', which for some time now she had been passing and re-passing, along the corridor of her life. She passed it when she could without opening the door; then, on occasion, she turned the key to throw in a fresh contribution. So it was that she had been getting things out of the way. They rejoined the rest of the confusion; it was as if they found their place, by some instinct of affinity, in the heap. They knew in short, where to go; and when she, at present, by a mental act, once more pushed the door open, she had practically a sense of method and experience. What she should never know about Charlotte's thought – she tossed that in. It would find itself in company, and she might at last have been standing there long enough to see it fall into its corner. The sight moreover would doubtless have made her stare, had her attention been more free – the sight of the mass of vain things, congruous, incongruous, that awaited every condition. It made her in fact, with a vague gasp, turn away, and what had further determined this was the final sharp extinction of the inward scene by the outward. The quite different door had opened and her husband was there (James, 1995: 240).

The pagoda may represent the end of Maggie's infancy and the beginning of her maturity. It is her edifice of revelation, the bifurcation where she starts to open the door of her consciousness, and to see the things in a new way. On the way of the development of her imagination, the pagoda is the stage in which she starts to "sort" the confused roomful of her ideas and to give shape and logic to them. Now she will disregard previous conditions and reservations, and will unravel the innermost secrets, for she is starting to become a new person who will succeed to read her own text of her opponents. Although Maggie's consciousness continues for some time to be under attack, the pagoda represents her start to gain superiority by the use of her

imagination. The sounds that she hears from within suggest that her imagination can newly reach the realms where she has so far not been allowed. The secret and energy of her spiritual 'elevation' is in her repeated "passing and repassing along the corridor of her life," in her helpless "stare and wonder," in her endeavour to think critically to realize new appearances and to prove the conditions of her existence in relation with them. This is the occasion when she can act like an interloper, when she will trespass to the snug space of a real solitude where one has access to the possibility of intellectual meditation. It is why James says these recent changes in Maggie's life are "a measure of relief from the idea of having perhaps to answer for what she had done" (James, 1995: 234).

James sometimes mixes the real with the imagined which makes the reader quite confused. In many places in the second part Maggie is seen talking and thinking, but what she experiences is not just perceptible reality. A question is what she thinks and talks about. However, no clear answer can be given to such questions; and she sees herself entangled in a confused accumulation of secrets the door of which she expects herself to open. A main theme of the novel is how human subjects think and experience. Language in this novel is performative, and the characters endlessly put the words into action, perform action in words. Thus, the unspoken thoughts, the silent dialogues, and the verbal gestures have significant communicative meanings. Such unuttered communications are as powerful as the uttered ones, or even more powerful. It is on this ground that Maggie's father talks about the necessity of not speaking.

*The Golden Bowl* is not as much interested in the outside world as it is interested in the inside. It is more concerned with the working of the stream of consciousness, with the interior world of man. To lose Maggie is, for Amerigo, to lose money which he needs a lot. In the first Book of the novel there is no balance, no reciprocity; and Maggie has to submit to the hegemony (of the thoughts) of her opponents. There is a possibility of a happy ending in this novel. A possible solution is to engage with the idea that we all live with cracks and we have to cope with them. What changes through the course of the novel is Maggie's consciousness that can generate superior tricks in the second part for neutralizing the discourse of her opponents. In the time of James, institutional forms had much power. At the end of the story Maggie sticks to

the institution of marriage to defeat Charlotte. Thus, her power is the power of form, of institution. She handles Charlotte as if she had power over her. For taking revenge of her, Maggie chooses to appeal to the power of the institution of marriage.

This novel is an allegory of how society works, and the reader should also think about what the structure of the story looks like, and about the configuration of the characters. One aspect of a new-historical analysis of it is the configuration of Maggie who is always analyzed in the context of her togetherness with others. The novel is also an allegory of love. In the second part of the novel Maggie is able to think about what the others want. She begins to understand the possibilities and codes of conduct in others, not in their individuality but in their positionality, in the context of their relations to the other people. When she begins meaningfully to contribute to the situation, she comes to be a crucial force in the game of the story and in the realization of her possibilities.

It is a problem that love and money seem to be indivisibly interconnected to each other. In Amerigo there is powerlessness with sexual power, but in Adam Verver there is powerfulness without sexual power. The novel shows that the emotions of possession and love and jealousy cannot be separated. The Assinghams are limited reflectors, and are not very intelligent. By smashing the bowl, Fanny Assingham forces Maggie and Amerigo to speak about their relationships as husband and wife. In the fiction of James one finds a linkage between economy and sexuality; and marriage is the backbone of *The Golden Bowl*. The two strongest social discourses in it are money (power) and sexuality (love). We all acknowledge the power of love which makes this story like a meta-novel in the sense that there are many discourses in it each of which is in the business of canceling the others.

There are two main discourses here: a bourgeoisie working reality and an aristocratic sense of life. This novel represents the consciousness in a metaphorical argument. It seems trying to compress the whole world into the consciousness, symbolically to contain all the stuff of the world. Thinking is acting in a certain way, for it shows the functioning of the mind, the expansion of consciousness through configurations. Working within consciousness is a kind of transcending the here and now. The novel somehow merges being with doing and thinking. An essential topic in

this novel is acting right and magnificently in such a way that the magnificent and the good become interchangeable. Another major question for Maggie is how to behave in an aesthetic manner. It is said that tones lead to manners, manners to morals, and morals to civilizations; and they are inseparable. The Prince can play a game because he knows the manners. But the crack is always there. For James correct manner and good form keep together, and this is a premise of the novel although it may not be understandable to us. A condition to behave beautifully is self-controlling and self-behaving which is what Maggie is actually doing.

On the other hand, the novel shows us what is actually going on in the inside while its focus is on the ability to create a beautiful outside; and this is the magnificence of form. There are many figures and objects in James that embody his aesthetic observations. When something, a crystal for example, is broken, can it be made into a whole again? If it can, and if its renewed wholeness is the natural outcome of overlooking its deficiencies, then the aesthetic elevates the moral. A theme in this novel is struggling for form, for perfection, the idea of behaving well and honestly. Everyone wants to be magnificent but no one wants to be vulgar, and the novel appeals always to something better. Performance is perhaps the essence of this book, and Maggie performs beautifully. She seems more intelligent than Charlotte, for she understands her but Charlotte does not understand Maggie. Or if she understands her, she does so in her own way, that is, not in her positionality. Amerigo is recognized through Maggie's consciousness, Maggie and Adam through Amerigo's, Charlotte through Adam's, and perhaps everybody through the Assinghams'. This double or treble reading of mind makes Maggie the superior even in her empathy. The others remain what they are but Maggie changes a lot, because she ultimately adopts a peaceful resolution for the main conflict. Therefore, the discourse of Maggie will survive while the other discourses will soon lose their strength. Also, this technique of story-telling is a possibility of the infusion of different horizons which in turn backgrounds freedom and democracy.

*The Golden Bowl* mingles story and analysis, interior action and interpretation. The presentation of its action is oblique and indirect. The story-teller says that he is interested to present the action through the sensibility of an interested and intelligent

witness or reporter who however is detached, but contributes certain amounts of criticism and interpretation to the case. The story is not something that has passed upon the person of the author, but is, as James says in the preface, "my account of somebody's impression of it" (James, 1995: xvii). The protagonists, especially the Prince, Charlotte, and Maggie observe, reflect, and act upon reflection and provoke the others to act according to their own plan – like in a game of chess. The Assinghams are "interested" and "intelligent" but also, as their name suggests, limited. However, James's remarks at the beginning refer to his late mode in general, especially to his "shorter tales." His manner of indirect representation is a de-emphasis of "the muffled majesty of authorship" (ibid: xviii) by dramatizing the process of knowledge through the interaction of several perspectives and centers of consciousness. The reader cannot recognize this someone, because he is the "unnamed, un-introduced and ... unwarranted participant, the impersonal author's concrete deputy or delegate, a convenient substitute" (ibid: xvii) of the story-teller. Eileen H. Watts suggests that the indirect representation of the act of recognition in this story accelerates the richness and ingenuity of our knowledge about truth: "Not only does the teller-tale relationship suggests the connection of Maggie to the truth, but the more indirectly we discover knowledge, the richer and presumably more accurate the knowledge will be" (Watts, 1983: 170). The indirect connection between the represented things and the understanding subject often produces a blurred 'sense of seeing,' a precarious sense of knowing; and our produced knowledge of the story is always vague. However, the excessive subtlety of representation is the ground of some strong arguments. In chapter 16 of the novel we read,

The sense of seeing was strong in her, but she clutched at the comfort of not being sure of what she saw. Not to know what it would represent on a longer view was a help, in turn, to not making out that her hands were embued; since if she had stood in the position of a producing cause she should surely be less vague about what she had produced. This, further, in its way, was a step toward reflecting that when one's connection with any matter was too indirect to be traced it might be described also as too slight to be deplored (James, 1995:159).

Another aspect of it is how the author concretizes his presented action and makes it recognizable to the reader. How somebody sees something and how his doubt about what he sees expands his consciousness. A main job of the reader is to understand how the 'imagined observer' arrives at the facts and realizes them. But to make this abstraction interesting enough for the reader, the story makes it romantic and pictorial also. This is why Melanie H. Ross argues that in the preface of this novel James "describes the transformation of his consciousness into words and images" (Ross, 2005: 250).

## **VI. Revisionism and New Historicism**

James's prefaces teach us how we can read his stories, and from the preface to this novel I want to unravel a theory of reading and composition. It theorizes about how the novel spaces two texts or discourses one of which goes counter the other one so that the superior text finally demolishes all the traces of the inferior one and erects its own logic and structure. From a naïve girl in the first part of the novel, who cannot even understand the patterns of Charlotte and Amerigo, Maggie develops to a girl with discriminating power of mind who not only unweaves the patterns of her opponents and regains the love of her husband, but also helps them understand all her subtle techniques of silence in such a way that they cannot resist them. Maggie's techniques of silence invite the characters and reader to fill in the textual blanks so that at the end of the novel although in our hand we have James's book, in our mind we have a story that is re-told by the reader and character suggesting the renovation of their identity or consciousness.

The preface is also the author's report of his revising the novel. In the original story there was a 'case' which was to be represented. There was also an 'individual view' of the case which was to be accounted for. If it is right to suggest that in the composition of the original story the writer was feeling 'irresponsible' to his 'ideal', in the revision of it he says "I track my uncontrollable footsteps, right and left, while they take their quick turn" (James, 1995: xviii). The revised story is bound in movement to the original. The author of *The Golden Bowl*, who is painter and poet also, exposes us to the deepest truths pictorially and most poetically. There is an

"embarrassed truth" through which the story-teller remembers he has already glanced. But the story takes its main 'amusement' from how the teller recognizes the original truth "betrays itself," how it makes the reporter to filtrate a new outlook into his consciousness. A part of the game is an indirect report how the imagined agents succeed in "disavowing the presence of" a previous outlook and replacing it with a new one. It shows the persons involved in the process of an embarrassing understanding when they have to take side with its antithesis, with the opposing meaning of the discourse.

The game is a struggle for recognition in which the characters are imaginatively involved. The people of the story take their existence from their participation in the act of recognition. These acts of recognition are to be represented mainly in "the consciousness of but two of the characters" (James, 1995: xviii): that of the Prince Amerigo in the first half of the book, and that of the Princess Maggie in the second. A certain set of relations is represented in the name of Amerigo, while another set is shown in the name of Maggie. The concerns and interests of the Prince are like our own concerns and interests. The mirror that he holds up is perhaps as clean as that of the reporters in James's other works, and his system of representation is similar to that in his 'short stories'. But he is shown entangled in a deep embarrassment. The Princess Maggie is the representation of a "highly individualized *though* highly intelligent" (James, 1995: xviii) consciousness. She "becomes a compositional resource, and of the finest order" (ibid). However, almost nothing is calculable in her presentation because the implied author has a great variety at his disposal, and he feels quite free.

We, as readers, enter these centers of recognition mainly in two ways. One is the door the Prince opens to the Princess and the door the Princess opens to the Prince. The other is the movement of the action of recognition. In the first half of the story everything and everyone is to function like the ways which the Prince uses to hand himself over to the reader. This formula repeats itself also in the second half of the story where we read mainly to know the Princess. This close consistency, and the very fewness of the persons involved, will make the story into a "coherent literary form" (ibid: xix). However, this is not to mean that the game is already complete; for a

‘consummate application’ by the reader of all these structural techniques is also fundamental. The texts of Prince and Princess will unravel their mysteries only in a process of attentive reading.

Images and pictures add to the hallucination of our being in literature, and make it into a more vivid experience of reading. The author invokes such images into figures and scenes for adding to the curiosity of the reader about the nature of experience so that the interior can reveal itself to us in the form of visible appearances. Literature is the medium for such a hallucinated life to flow into the consciousness of the reader and make his soul ‘artistically’ more competent to absorb the truth of life and to render it as understandable methods and formulas.

*The Golden Bowl* illustrates how image and picture can develop, in the imagination of a great author, into visible appearances that shake the columns of a previous historical era and certify the logic and principles of new individual and social beings. James suggests that the ‘garden’ of story-writer differs from that of the painter: story is a more dramatic illustration of the imaginative being than painting; a more deeply enacted representation of life, and more suggestive. Picture is more transient in value than story, and it sooner becomes stale and rigid. Picture cannot be modified to different situations and applications. But the vivid imagination of the writer allows him to use the high ‘plastic possibility’ of the story in unlimited ways for the formation of a new imagined existence. Story is a freer emulation of the truth of life than painting, and it is more critical. The increasing unfaithfulness of the signifier to the signified in the modern era opens up a possibility for the story to create numberless imaginative environments where the invented people pass virtual lives and communicate in virtual discourses.

In the preface to this novel James says that for the composition of his story he has used "the street-scenery of London" which is

a field yielding a ripe harvest of treasure from the moment I held up to it, in my fellow artist's company, the light of our fond idea--the idea, that is, of the aspect of things or the combination of objects that might, by a latent virtue in it, speak for its connexion with something in the book, and yet at the same time speak enough for its odd or interesting self (James, 1995: xxi-xxii).

In this story the idea of literature emerges from the idea of life, that is, from the idea of things as they really are, and as the author translates their existence into appropriate form and content for his story. Thus, an understanding of the London life as it is represented in the mind of his characters is a major subject of it. It is to the convenience of the modern reader to search active membership in such virtual interactive environments and to "back the prodigious city" (James, 1995: xxii) of London, for in this way the change of history guarantees the renovation of our experience, our being.

This novel is the story of how life can be translated into a typical subject of imaginative research. On the one hand, literature takes its subject from the city where man is face to face with the realities of life. On the other hand, by turning life into fiction and giving surprise and amusement to the reader, the imaginative story-teller vivifies life and adds an additional dimension to it. Fiction is a world-wide-webcam for rendering the feelings and sensibilities of universal man in a long sequence of images, and adding these images to new ones in a never-ending sequence, so that the reader is exposed to an increasingly unlimited series of images on the monitor of the written page. The pages of fictitious prose are replete with whatever the mind needs for its freedom and artistic transcendence, because fiction steps into the domains of both the real and imaginative and, in the expansion of its dimensions, helps the reader to push back the frontiers of naivety, superficiality, and death. Reading fiction is *the* way to live imaginatively and to interpret the imaginative life.

In every nook and corner of this novel, the reader, who is expected to act like the author in a certain sense, should make a "shop of the mind" (ibid) to participate in the exchange of ideas. A special feature of this kind of projection is that no single part of representation can stand detached from the other ones. There is an active interconnection among all things, and the represented reality becomes a unified object. This is to mean that each Jamesian world makes a meaningful totality. But a feature of such a reality is that it lacks almost any center, and it will never cease to continue its becoming. Thus, the meaning of a typical story by James, which is a mode of reading for interpreting the life of certain men and women, changes in the course of time. Its reader should want to understand the impression of life as projected onto the

consciousness of imaginative people who belong to the middle or upper classes and who are rather knowledgeable, intelligent, and insightful. If life is the material aspect of the soul, literature is the spiritual side of it. Reading literature is the incarnation of our curiosity to create meaningful texts of our lives.

As James re-reads the text of *The Golden Bowl* for the New York Edition of his works, he says in the preface that the pursuit of the plot is secondary to the idea of re-reading the tale. He realizes that re-reading the story he can be faithful to the movement of the performance in the original tale: "the march of my present attention coincides sufficiently with the march of my original expression" (James, 1995: xxiii). Revising the text of this novel does not mean that James re-writes it, but only that he re-reads it. The author as reader is paradigmatic for the reader as author. He does the revision perhaps without any 'bewilderment or anguish'. Retelling the story, James is "passive, receptive, appreciative, often even grateful" (ibid) to his previous footprints. In opposition to the revision of his earlier texts, now he needs to make few amendments, because he does not see any 'disparity of sense' between the original composer and the reviser of the text. His act of revision is as similar to that of the original story-teller as the paper puppets are applicable to the shadows on the wall (in a puppet show). Therefore, the consciousness represented in revising this story is similar to that in the original version: in the rhythm of the motion as well as in the system of representation. The metaphor that James creates here is extraordinary: the previous virtual environment is like "a shining expanse of snow spread over a plain" (ibid), on which the reviser is treading. On the substructure, there are the footprints of the original walker. But these prints are just hidden under a solid layer of fresh snow that is perhaps the incarnation of new (social) changes, the problems of modernizing the text and adapting it to the needs of the modern reader. James says he could occasionally have deviated from the original track, but suggests that in the justification of his new steps to the previous footprints he had, on the whole, little problems.

However, some amendments are appropriate to the dramatic 'necessity' of the new times. In the act of revision, James seems to have acted quite intuitively, under the impact of a "sudden large apprehension of the Absolute" (James, 1995: xxiv). He

seems to have freed himself from the influence of all theories of writing or philosophies of mind to find a short cut to the innermost regions of human consciousness. A good source of inspiration for James the reviser of his novel, as well as for the reader of James, is the emergence, and the increase, of "deviations and differences" between an original text and its revision that appear in the act of reading. Such innovations can be the source, logic, and direction of new knowledge. In this sense, story reading is equal to story telling, for in the act of reading, one wrestles with the problems of composition, and renovates himself or herself through an infusion of his or her perspectives and those of the text. It is in such horizon infusions, when a previous logic of experience is revised or modified, that the conditions of our previous being are demolished, and history regenerates itself through deviation from its previous course.

The Absolute is, as Donadio puts it with reference to Hegel, the activity of the artist who "corresponds in essence to the striving of the spirit to realize itself completely in the world" (Donadio, 1978: 60). This absolute condition allows the reader's unfamiliarity or alienation to grow, and he therefore becomes interested to tread on new ways. The appearances or foundations of the new history welcome him to unrecognized horizons. In such a "flat interregnum" the reader consciously waits, and actively partakes, in the set up of new systems of thought. The previous statements are cancelled and new norms, institutions, and systems of value appear. In the expanse of intellectual history new ways are discovered, and the imagination of the reader flies over the altitudes that are necessarily other than the previous ones. In this sense, it is through the art of revision that man historicizes literature and re-creates himself. Art makes man, and man (re-)makes history. And the Jamesian "Absolute" is the space for the redemption of the material man in the temple of his consciousness, the application of his reason and imagination to free his self from compulsion, and to attain a complete freedom of choice. It is perhaps the struggle of man with his natural self to develop it into a super self, a superhuman. The absolute helps the novelist to apply the ultimate promise of his art fully and completely. In the domain of the absolute, the revisionist novelist as a (verbal) artist, like his characters and readers, consciously endeavors to change himself.

Rereading a text can be an act of enlightenment in the Kantian sense. It is an 'ausgang', a 'way out', a quest for new knowledge. It gives an occasion to the author to leave behind all the previous norms of composition and to introduce new logics of meaning. Thus, can it be suggested that 'the sense of the absolute' implies the application of the power of god, or of God, in re-reading a great text, the use of the free human conscience to renew the grammar of a previous epistemology? The 'absolute' is the ground for deviations and differences to increase in the text, the possibility to go into the exterior of the text to see what the text originally wanted to say but has failed to say. It is therefore the logic of hatching the eggs of a new text in the shell of the previous one(s). Revising a text is to renew its narrative by removing the dust on the face of it, to turn characters into new persons whom the reader can know and with whom he can sympathize.

If, as Mary Cross says, "There is an increasing disproportion between whatever she (Maggie)<sup>4</sup> says and the accumulation surplus to what she means" (Cross, 1993: 185), re-reading or revising *The Golden Bowl* is to load its discourse up with new implications so as to enable her to interfere between the word and its referent. It is a strategy for looking over the text to see how it can be introduced to new realms of meanings. The problem of James and Maggie is artistic controlling of meaning, and their solution is "to preserve the word, the appearance, even as she makes off with or replaces its reference" (ibid). They try to understand the language, not as an absolute essence, but as a virtual apparatus; and they want to fill in the gaps between the word and its referent. Maggie is waiting to exercise her power over the text by interfering with the meanings that the words produce. She will create her text within the text that Charlotte has already written for her. She wants to possess the text in a way that it affirms her recently renovated self. Revising the text of a novel seems to be similar for James with re-reading it either by the novelist himself or by another reader, for in both cases the conscious play of their mind will free all the energies of the word and restore the narrative discourse.

There are two additional metaphors in the preface: revising the text excites the "alert winged creatures, perched on those diminished summits and aspired to a clearer

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<sup>4</sup>. My adding

air" (James, 1995: xxvi) in the environment. The imagination of the reader suddenly comes to sit on the deserted strongholds of the text for the importation of new codes and circulation of new meanings. Rereading a text is an intellectual challenge for the transcendence of experience. The next metaphor is even sensual: "perforating as by some strange and fine, some latent and gathered force, a myriad more adequate channels" (James, 1995: xxvi) in the matter of the old text for inputting new ideas and asserting new values. Such holes are for inserting new meanings into the text to charge it with unfamiliar perspectives and new intelligibilities. Revising a story is not necessarily rendering its previous meanings futile, but to engineer the emergence of a mixture of a present and a previous discourse, the possibility of a mutation of the 'archeology of knowledge' to apply it to new conditions. Re-reading or revising a text is a possibility for historicizing literature by injecting new life into it.

## VII. Charlotte Stant: The Voice of the Oppressed

However, a work of fiction (by James) may never open all its treasures to the reader. If it hides its functioning, the art in it is not wholly calculable. The reader of such a text can be but dimly aware of its laws of representation. At the end of the preface James discusses the relation of life and literature, of reality and metaphor. The things we do are interminable and interrelated. However, they are subject to our negligence, for in the course of time they move to the blind regions of our collective unconsciousness. But as literature metaphorizes our deeds, we will not lose them. Literature redefines the human life, and is the watchdog to the human truth. Fiction wants to freeze the historical truth of the human deeds and preserve it as long as possible. But when one reads a story, the truth of human life starts to be reactivated perhaps more appreciably than life itself, and more universally.

Alwyn Berland discusses the obscurity of *The Golden Bowl* not as a consequence of James's highly mannered style but as the outcome of his opacity of treatment.<sup>5</sup> He argues that the novel can be read both straightforwardly and as a satire, but there is something in either case that makes it untouchable, obscure, and difficult to understand. The relationship between art (culture) and acquisitiveness should be

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<sup>5</sup>. In *Culture and Conduct in the Novels of Henry James*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

studied as represented in the novel. If the novel is read straightforwardly, Adam and Maggie are heroic figures. But if it is read as a satire, they are villains, the vultures of American greed. But the novel is a failure in both cases. If the Ververs are admired as heroes, the novel fails to sustain such a feeling in the reader, because they at the same time employ Amerigo and Charlotte as the beautiful objects in their art gallery. However, the novel is a failure as satire also, for if we see the Ververs as vultures of acquisitiveness, we also see the Prince and Charlotte mostly exploiting them.

Berland suggests that the novel can be provisionally read also in the light that glimmers through its obscurity. The symbolic name "Amerigo" rings the name of the European man who is said to have discovered America and who claims it. But which America has he discovered and will he claim? Amerigo is perhaps nothing more than a tool in the hands of the American characters in their initiatives. He responds splendidly when Fanny Assingham wants to arrange a handsome marriage between him and Maggie, when Charlotte wants to arrange adultery with him, and when Maggie wants tactfully to win him back to suitable terms.

Charlotte Stant is a complete outsider. She stands for the desire of absolute freedom, for the forms and experiences that do not emerge from institutional power but from our innermost impulses and predilections. What she mainly does is the gratification of an aesthetic taste at the expense of the limited American moral sense: In chapter 14 of the novel we read,

This was the little history of the vision, in her, that was now rapidly helping her to recognize a precious chance, the chance that mightn't again soon be so good for the vivid making of a point. Her point was before her; it was sharp, bright, true; above all it was her own. She had reached it quite by herself; no one, not even Amerigo—Amerigo least of all, who would have nothing to do with it—had given her aid. ... The direction was that of her greater freedom—which was all in the world she had in mind (James, 1995: 146-147).

But what Maggie does to re-possess her husband, and thereby her child also, is to mingle taste, love, and wisdom to cling to European culture as the source of typical American salvation. She understands that for doing so she has to pack her father off who incarnates the American cultured acquisitiveness. In this way, she also paves the

way for Amerigo to discover himself by getting rid of the temptations of the aesthetic and undertaking to provide what is needed for the gratification of the moral.

Adam is the man in whom James brings together the possibility of American culturedness with American unlimited acquisitiveness. His ability to possess (in unknown ways), added to his extreme interest in the objects of art that symbolize culture and civilization, make him a genuine manifestation of “American Exceptionalism.” He is a very special “Jamesian” construction – not exactly the “real manifestation” of an American businessman. But to fulfill his mission and acquire his real identity he has to go back to the American City, for he understands that extreme avarice in Europe goes counter to the cause of culture. However, this does not mean that “avarice” describes his character, for he is a collector of “priceless” objects. Can it be suggested that he and James see the treasures of art as integral to civilization? And that they think that detached from their real environment, such objects can be of no value? Yet, there grows a slight suspicion in the reader about Adam, because in the whole novel he is systematically ransacking Europe to fill his museum in American City. We don’t know anything about how Verver made his money. We only see him making “use” of it.

Eileen H. Watts differentiates the relationship between metaphor and reality for Emerson and Thoreau on the one hand, and for James on the other. The American transcendentalists insist that knowledge about reality is possible only through direct contact with the world. But

James’s eyeball is not transparent. It reflects the world to the extent that what one knows about reality defines that reality. However, James is concerned with the knowledge ‘by the way’, that is by individual perspective and interpretation which informs the relationship between metaphor and reality and between vehicle and tenor (Watts, 1983: 172).

Jamesian reality, quite personal as it is, has no predetermined process for its formation. It is something spontaneous, the outcome of the perspectives of the individual man, the result of his interpretation of the given data. It is always blurred, never clear enough for us to recognize it wholesale. To suggest the relationship

between mind (language) and reality in *The Golden Bowl*, Watts clarifies some points in the following extract from chapter 12 in the novel:

Just these things in themselves, however, with all the rest, with his fixed purpose now, his committed deed, the fine pink glow, projected forward, of his ships, behind him, definitely blazing and crackling—this quantity was to push him harder than any word of his own could warn him. All that she was herself, moreover, was so lighted, to its advantage, by the pink glow (James, 1995: 129)

The glow, which James imagines or produces in his mind, and which then becomes natural in belonging to the ship, shines afterwards on Charlotte to show her more magnificent to Adam. Watts correctly believes that this novel does not show the relationship between reality and mind, or life and language, as simple and direct as "the conventional A is like B metaphor" (Watts, 1983: 171). The Jamesian metaphor is rather the ground where A (the tenor) moves into the realm of B (the vehicle), becomes part of it, gives all its vitality to it, and makes it as natural as if it were a part of nature. In such a process of naturalizing metaphor, the mind uses the material language to produce reality or truth. As the result of such a close juxtaposition between reality and language, which Eileen calls the "sustained contiguity between tenor and vehicle" (ibid: 173), the mind and the real share their features and the conventional distance or difference between them loses its meaning. Such a reality is as slippery as metaphor itself, and as problematic to realize.

Jamesian reality is not at all an absolutist central essence but the result of an increasing convergence between two opposing points of view projected onto the mind of the character and reader. It is a site of discourse, an outcome of language relations. *The Golden Bowl* makes an outstanding space for the representation of such a decentralized reality. The double structure of the novel (two major male characters, two major female characters, two marriages, two major themes of moral judgment and aesthetic judgment, the essential duality of its language where X is Y, or the Prince the Princess), the quality in the story that never allows things to solidify but puts them in a process of perpetual metamorphosis, and the relationships between the double theme of life and art are among the grounds of such decentralizations of reality. In the

metaphorical language of the novel, the figure of speech always wants to change everything into another thing, but the absence or the magical escape of the tenor (the implicit meaning) denies the reader the realization of the true meaning of the analogy. Chapter 22 reads,

But it was at the same time precisely why even much initiation left one, at given moments, so puzzled as to the element of staleness in all the freshness and of freshness in all the staleness, of innocence in the guilt and of guilt in the innocence. There were other marble terraces, sweeping more purple prospects, on which he would have known what to think, and would have enjoyed thereby at least the small intellectual fillip of a discerned relation between a given appearance and a taken meaning (James, 1995: 205).

The golden bowl of the central meaning is always cracked, always shattered. We should not read the novel for a final synthesis as the ultimate result of a rivalry between a thesis and an anti-thesis. We should read it to understand how a thesis poses itself against an anti-thesis to produce a synthesis that is never the final product of the double structure.

Another theme of *The Golden Bowl* is the differences between the European and the American cultures. European culture is historical. It emerges "in bringing oneself into a proper relation to the accumulations ... of the past" (Donadio, 1978: 19), while for the Americans it basically means "the cultivation of the self, the creation and 'rendering' of personality as a work of art" (ibid). If it can be suggested that European culture is diachronic, American culture may be said to be synchronic. The European character looks like an empty vessel that is attached to a great body of past values to fill itself to the brim. He can search his self in whatever has come to him from his forefathers, in whatever he can get from the glory of his past inheritance, from a great collection of monuments and museums and galleries for example. However, for the American character culture means the necessary and perpetual recycling of his own self as he sets it in active relation with his thereabouts. As the American man has the glory of almost no past civilization, it is not cultural if he searches himself in history. Instead, it is his consciousness that he should always search to restore or remodel.

This novel suggests that because of its power to establish new relationships in the historical life of man, art can be used to redefine reality. Seen from this perspective, art is a means for the application of the will of man to gain worldly power. Such art is inconsiderate and intrusive, because for gaining power it is inclined to overlook present choices and to search for new possibilities. On the one hand, art takes inspiration from life. On the other hand, it wants to modernize life, to re-shape it into something other than the previous life. Such a necessary interfusion of art and life, and such an impossible juxtaposition of one with the other are symbolized in the preface of novel as 'lamb' living adjacent to 'lion'. If real life is harsh and ugly, and if it is always inclined to devour art for its meek survival, art takes nourishment from real life, changes its qualifications, and makes it bearable.

Through changing the sensibilities of the beholder in a process of defamiliarization, art renews his consciousness to base his understanding on new formulas and help him see in a new way. This changing quality of artistic experience seems simultaneously to affect the realms both of life and art; for seen from this perspective, the border line between the two is no longer distinct. The result is that actuality is a condition for the enhancement of artistic illusion. However, it is the illusion, or the imagination of the artist, that has to find its proper subject from the context of life. Art metamorphoses the tangible fleshy slices of life, ugly and meaningless as they may be, into situations of considerable beauty and excitement. It is here that James's "lucid reflector" finds great significance. James wants this reflector to stand aside from the narrative action but curiously to examine the significance of the events of life in which he is involved. Donadio believes that the awareness of such a reflector about the nature of his predicament is the central experience of *The Golden Bowl*. It is the method and value of James's art. Setting up such a central clear intelligence is the content of James's technique. According to him, R. P. Blackmur thinks that in the fiction of James this central intelligence must be understood as both the end and means. He says,

Seen with respect to its technical function, it is a means, a device which allows for the unfolding of the story with maximum effect, intensity and energy; but it must also be seen as

an end to the extent that it represents the ideal of intelligent perception in relation to which the lesser perceivers in the story are judged (Donadio, 1978: 125).

“The death of god” is the background to renew our beliefs in a central intelligence within us which is as plural and various as we ourselves are. It is, in turn, the way for the production of numberless realities to escape happily from the monotonous life in the dominance of god. In this way, the character of reality or truth is determined only by the will of man which functions to defeat the will of God and wants to manifest a new order in which gods are absent. It is the gratification of the belief that to render the world as coherent is possible only via the free play of man’s will. In this case, the individual man has the occasion to give order to things as he desires. Hereafter the world, the society in history, is the creation not of the single will of a unique God, but of the interacting will of the plural man. It is the creation of the collective man who actively contributes in the making of it and arranges for it to be supported by better possibilities. Donadio quotes from Nietzsche as he teaches us how such a new man can come into being who knows how not to be dealt with like "puppets in an absolutely senseless play" (Donadio, 1978: 36) but who can impose his power on life and history. However, this powerful or power-seeking man should use certain techniques for the perpetual reformation of his thought, because it is through it that the American character, as James portrays it, undertakes a cultural attestation for gaining a mature identity.

For Hegel history is a linear process of development that is gradual but reasonable. He believes that the spirit of man is like the culture of people. Human culture and intellectual history are the manifestations of spirit. The world history, as a rational process, is governed by an ultimate design. Even God is the outcome of history, for it is in a long process of ups and downs, or of defeats and victories in the history of man that the belief in God is established in man and he comes to accept His authority. Hegel suggests it is the consciousness of freedom that makes the nations free, and the freedom of nations goes only so far as their conscious realization of freedom goes. World history is the story how man has come to realize freedom, how freedom has developed, and how it has worked.

But if for Hegel man is "historical," for Nietzsche he is "supra-historical." If history is, for the former, like a text with a beginning, middle, and an end; it is, for the latter, a blind and senseless mechanism that can collapse in every single moment. In the thought of Nietzsche, the values of this a-historical man cannot be derived from history but from the application of man's free will to history and nature for the acquisition of freedom and power. If, as Donadio says, Nietzsche possesses the conviction that "in the end there is only one 'truth,' one reality of things, there is only one world, and this is false, cruel, contradictory, seductive, without meaning" (ibid: 221), art should be greatly functional in the life of man. It is, to speak for Donadio again, the manifestation of the "good will to illusion" (ibid: 222) to help us get rid of truth as an intruding liar. The pragmatic or utilitarian aspect of truth excites Nietzsche to think it is ultimately sickening and unendurable, and he therefore confirms that art is "a means of constructing an illusion (...) powerful enough to protect us from the truth" (Donadio, 1978: 222). There is a vacancy or a hole in existence to fill in which man needs the systems of knowledge like metaphysics, science, and religion. Looked upon it from this perspective, even knowledge is insincere, for it denies man the salvation of a genuine understanding by preventing him from realizing the big deficiency of existence. But art, as the product of man's illusion, can fill in this gap and add to the beauty of man's life. Although art is pretentious, it is the best lie that man needs to escape from the reality of things and make his life bearable. It does not want to reveal life as it is, but rather to hide its frightening aspects from us. Therefore, if the gift of art is salvation, it is salvation through pretension and deviation. It is only by giving new order to our experiences and transforming them in accordance with new patterns of meaning that art shows human life as meaningful and coherent. However, this is not to mean that the present reader takes James as Hegelian or Nietzschean. James modifies truth via experience, via what his brother William called the importance of the vague relations that never end. However, Henry James never completely substitutes art for truth.

It is not seldom that art cannot endure reality; and between art and reality there is always a tension. Genuine art has an innate curiosity to look away from the order of things. As Donadio asserts, art deceives man lest he might realize his "powerlessness

and fear in the face of his bewildering experience so that once again he believes in life" (ibid: 223). Man creates truth as he participates in the transformation of reality and experiences it. And James's statement about expression as equivalent to creating reality is an artistic affirmation of this thought of Nietzsche. The patterns of rejoicing in man show that they are the same everywhere. They also show that man can rejoice only through the power of art. In this sense, man's happiness is a function of art, of his ability to pretend. Such a gratification of man's illusion makes it invulnerable to the assaults of reality. And it is in such a collision between illusion and reality that man is introduced into new patterns of experience or new forms of life. Also, it is here that the artistic imagination finds new subjects. And this is the meaning of the artist's "will to power," the power to reconcile the opposites. In this way, the function of art is to metamorphose tension into agreement and violence into concord.

The novels of James before *The Golden Bowl* used to develop a relation between consumption and sexual desire by emphasizing the exchangeability of the female body. But this novel presents such a connection through an emphasis on the masculinity of the Prince Amerigo. One aspect of the double structure of this novel is that Amerigo has two opposite functions: he is capturing and he is also captured. In the opening scenes of the novel he is seen as a "rake" for wielding the oppressive powers of a patriarchal society. But he is also seen in a contrasting status, as an object of consumption that is brought up by the Ververs in their imperialist appropriation. The marriage between Maggie and Amerigo makes it possible for her father to acquire him for his art collection. Therefore, their marriage, unromantic enough as it is, is an act of purchase. Adam marries his daughter to him in support of American cultural capitalism. His behavior symbolizes what he does to bring together a collection of wonderful cultural products in his art gallery to carry them over to his "Palace of Art" for the enactment of American imperialism.

To show how the logic of commodification changes the Prince into a feminized figure for the animation of the American cultural and economic capitalism, Guy Davidson mentions some similarities between the Prince and the objects in the shops of Bond Street where the Prince prowls in the openings of the novel. Like those "instrumentally useless objects" (Davidson, 2007: 28), he will be shown as evacuated

from his innate purposes and as appropriated to the benefit of the superior culture. In the second shopping scene, with which the Prince and Charlotte are involved in Bloomsbury, the novel shows sexual and economic values as crossing in their application for the salvation of imperialism.

When Charlotte offers herself to the Prince for sexual intercourse, if many people consider her action as a violation, it is, to speak for Davidson again, "as a gratuity" (ibid) in explicit exchange of what he has already done for her in their early days in Rome. And when he proposes to buy a gift for her which she can wear "under" her clothes, the hidden feature of this something reminds the reader of the illicitness of their sexual transgression. To represent the Prince and Charlotte as objects of commodification, James sends her to seduce him when Maggie is absent. If at the outset of the novel the Prince is a consumer, he is now Charlotte's object of desire that she will consume for his objectification. However, he is a tool for the implementation of modern imperialism, because he also objectifies women; and by doing this, takes their soul away and makes them into passive and neutral goods. And the open door of the cabinet in chapter 3 of the novel allows him to take "the relics out one by one" (James, 1995: 29) that are there perhaps to symbolize a luxuriant abundance which is the result of the success of American imperialism. Regarding the relation between Adam and Amerigo, the question is if the art collector, or the American in general, needs to base his identity primarily on exploitation of European or even universal man. In other words, the present reader is wondering if the American culture wants to be established on the spoils of the universal cultures.

Appropriate to such American monopoly of cultural power is an intrusion in subtle ways into the global culture for collecting its wonderful objects in the "Palace of Art" in America. A number of elements including consumerism, eroticism, human assimilation, and human commodification seems integral to the structure of these prospective imperialisms; and the novel shows how the Ververs, as designers of this monopoly, mingle such elements to produce new kinds of human identity they need for the configuration of their system. It is even suggested that the presentation of a hidden (social) homosexuality between Amerigo and Adam can add to the variety and predominance of such a system. The "pure and perfect crystal" (ibid: 81) that Adam

says Amerigo is, surely makes him into a good piece in his art collection; for his delicate breeding or courtesy excite him to pursue only what he desires in his innermost consciousness. In addition, the fact of Adam's sexually exciting expressions about Amerigo, when he says he is "variously and inexhaustibly round" (ibid: 80) for example, and the exclusion of Maggie from such expressions, suggest that the logic of homosexuality is essential in the system that he intends to introduce into his symbolic American Palace of Art.

The Ververs want Amerigo objectified, cheap, and obedient. Due to some of his characteristics early in his married life, he is shown as restricted from the social role or cultivation: his being an outsider in the community of the Ververs, his unexpected feminized identification, his passivity and objectivity, and his exclusion from the rank proper to a man of his class. Thus, his real values are no longer recognized, because he is like "some old embossed coin of a purity of gold no longer used" (James, 1995:15). In other words, Maggie and her father throw him into the remoteness of lost cultures and values. His new values are mainly aesthetic, the values of an antique that is to show only the status of its owner.

When the Prince is denied access to his social role, he starts to feel a gap between reality and truth, between the body that is in the front and the mind that is in the back, or between the social appearance and the innermost calls of his consciousness. The outcome of this course of collision for him is an identity that is far from wholesale, an identity with no star, with no subtlety in it. Although, his anatomy is already acted upon in a process of feminization to be devalued to the level of an aesthetic object in the Ververs' cultural show, the hegemony of their system will not stop here. His interior is also to be ravaged, because his psychological metamorphosis is one component in the abortion of all his potentials of resistance. As a result of this process he feels curious, impatient, and afraid; and he feels futile and humble.

In modern imperialism, with its strong 'will to power', a way for the representation of the objectification of the feminine figure is to show her as closely connected to desirable objects. By doing so, we humans inject our souls into the object, and the onlooker notices an identification between the object and the feminine. Now, a method for evacuating the masculine figure from his real identity is to show

the feminine as pervasively dominated in the social environment and to represent the masculine in a feminine form or as subordinated to it. However, the commodification of the feminine figure is tested when the man is represented as showing a radical tendency to have a woman about him for his consummation, just as he finds it highly agreeable if he possesses an article of luxury. In doing so, it seems that the fiction of James wants to justify, as Guy Davidson says, "a social and economic structure based on the circulation of women as representational commodities" (Davidson, 2007: 34). He suggests that in the conduct of the Ververs to Amerigo who reduce him to "the identity of objecthood," there is an "implication of subjectivity in the exchange economy" (Davidson, 2007: 36). It can be argued that Amerigo's return to himself or to his interiority is an escape from the pains of imperial modernity. In this context, it is understandable why Adam is mainly concerned with the aesthetics of life. The tight, plain, and self-sufficient art in modern times is to help individual humans to be relieved of their radical feelings of diminution, objectification, and alienation. Therefore, idealization of art in *The Golden Bowl* has double and contradictory functions: it is both for harmony and alienation, for isolation and integration, for destruction and for rejuvenation. The hollowness of the bowl in the title signifies a liquidation that makes it capable to absorb a variety of (opposite) values, for if it has been conventionally considered for its ugly aspects, modern critical discourse likes to consider it as a figure of renovation.

### **VIII. Morality as High Intelligence**

In *Henry James's Psychology of Experience*, Granville H. Jones discusses how Maggie Verver goes from the state of innocence to the state of experience and accepts life as full responsibility. Jones claims that among Maggie's stages to reach spiritual maturity are pretension and renunciation. Although for re-structuring the broken bowl of her marriage she has to lose the genuine love and support of her father, in what she does she searches moral promotion. To fully accept her moral responsibility, she can no longer be stupid, and it is through the accomplishment of her responsibility that she proves herself wise and moral. But morality is more than a series of codes of behavior. For example, pretension is integral to her social existence, for without it she is cut off

from her social roles that make her life meaningful. But pretension is a function of the aesthetic in her. However, it seems that in the fiction of James a certain sense of the moral is superior to the aesthetic. In other words, a theme of *The Golden Bowl* is morality as a guarantee of man's salvation in the dangerous perplexity of his or her life. In the life of a man who is aesthetically grown up, the moral is the function of wisdom. In the perfection of man's life, morality is the practice of mature wisdom.

If morality is, as Fanny Assingham tells her husband Bob, nothing but "high intelligence" (James, 1995: 53), our personal good judgment, in opposition to certain systems of thought however it may be, is the necessary meaning of our moral life. Morality in this sense is the fulfillment of man's free will in the application of the utmost degrees of his or her imagination and wisdom for the possibility of enlightenment, and for the betterment of human culture and civilization. Jones believes that life betterment makes the Prince and Charlotte follow the imperatives of their "transcendental idealism" (Jones, 1975: 180). He argues that if fate is strong enough to divide them while they love each other, they should not be regarded as sinners for their deed, but should be regarded as the "abjectly innocent ... victims of fate" (ibid). What they do can perhaps be termed as the gratification of mutual trust and love, because it is an immediate reply to the call of their innermost natures. Their deed is the practice of their free will to their nature as the base of human culture and civilization. Therefore, it is ironical that the Ververs separate them at the end of the novel, for in this way they make them atone for their genuine love that has so far been repressed. They are the victims of a frightened and shaky civilization that is expected to develop on the basis of free consciousness. Morality supported by or harmonious with aestheticism is as exceptional a 'rarity' as Maggie says Amerigo is.

However, it is clear that Charlotte is not without any moral sense. If the first strike of the Prince and Charlotte makes the gilded but not the so artistic bowl of the Ververs' morality to shatter into pieces, it seems to the present reader that the daring conduct of the Prince and Charlotte is beautifully functional in the establishment of the "American City" in search of which Adam is in Europe. Therefore, it is logical that Maggie's fragile scheme of morality should not be able to cancel the functioning of such a solid base of human culture and civilization, for as Dorothea Krook says, "it

is the touchstone of taste that Maggie must annihilate in order to accomplish her task" (Krook, 1962: 268). And in chapter 36, when the other characters are playing cards and Maggie is hovering over them in the terrace, she realizes that there is perhaps no way for her angry prejudice against the application of such a truthful love. The chapter reads,

Such a glimpse of her conceivable idea, which would be founded on reasons all her own, reasons of experience and assurance, impenetrable to others, but intimately familiar to herself—such a glimpse opened out wide as soon as it had come into view; for if so much as this was still firm ground between the elder pair, if the beauty of appearances had been so consistently preserved, it was only the golden bowl as Maggie herself knew it that had been broken. The breakage stood not for any wrought discomposure among the triumphant three — it stood merely for the dire deformity of her attitude toward them (James, 1995: 370).

Maggie's psychological evolution is extraordinary here. She understands that her kind of love, exclusively moral as it shows to be, cannot triumph the world because the moral can neither annihilate the aesthetic nor transform or replace it. She realizes that what is good is not necessarily beautiful also, and that therefore if man is to be salvaged, the moral must cooperate in him with the aesthetic, for the good seems to have no control over the infernal. By neglecting the trespassing of her husband and her mother-in-law, she guarantees the victory of life over death, the victory of true love as a mingling of the good and the beautiful. Her act of forgiveness is the use of humility and selflessness to celebrate the powers of suffering and forgiving for the visible victory of human civilization.

### **IX. The Subtle in Man**

However, to make such a civilization exceptionally American, James brings its building-blocks from America. The role of Charlotte in this regard is not less than that of Amerigo. The relation between her and him is also the outcome of the subtle in man. It is the active contribution of their heart-felt sensibilities for constructing a realm of complete privacy as a unique institution for the manifestation of man's innermost desires and inclinations. When they are alone with each other, they feel

absolute security from the grips of the Ververs' conventional morality. If the Prince can be considered as a cornerstone of the Jamesian civilization in America, what his mistress Charlotte does with him is perhaps for the gratification of the human side of it.

It seems that their 'sinful' reunion is the outcome of their strategic policies to be immune from the cruelties of fate when a lack of fortune in earlier times limited their marriage. For the cancellation of the American excessive conventionalism, they now feel responsible to enchain their freedom to insert a new kind of meaning into the life of characters. In other words, they feel responsible to make use of what they can for the confirmation of the natural demands of humans as the real builders of civilization. These subtleties, with which the Prince and his lover want to provide for their community, are constitutional in the pluralistic but elitist American culture that James obliquely illustrates in *The Golden Bowl*. The logic of such a culture will require that man be recognized as he really is. Such a culture is anxious about how society can be salvaged from the harsh grips of history and conventional morality, from the embarrassing holds of the past mind. What Charlotte and Amerigo do is escape from the grip of such authorities. In chapter 20 the novel reads,

What was supremely grotesque, in fact, was the essential opposition of theories—as if a galantuomo, as he at least constitutionally conceived galantuomini, could do anything but blush to 'go about' at such a rate with such a person as Mrs. Verver in a state of childlike innocence, the state of our primitive parents before the Fall (James, 1995: 193).

Dorothea Krook remarks that James suggests "adultery" as a gallant behavior, a method of renovating experience and imagination, a way to avoid the superficiality of primitive man, and more importantly, a positive reply to the innermost motives of men and women. She says:

There merges what must be one of the most curious — and most subtle and persuasive — justifications of adultery to be found anywhere in imaginative literature. It is precisely because the Prince is a *galantuomo* — a Galant Man, a man of spirit, a man who guides his life by 'the touchstone of taste,' by the standard of 'a higher and braver propriety' than any that the dear, innocent, ignorant, incorrigibly incorruptible and totally unimaginative Ververs

could so much as dream of; and because, being such a man, he cannot bear the sheer ignominy of going about indefinitely 'with such a person as Mrs. Verver in a state of childlike innocence, the state of our primitive parents before the Fall', that he becomes Charlotte's lover. And this is how the touchstone of taste is seen not merely to sanction adultery but positively to insist on it — as the only intelligent, the only brave, the only decent thing to do in the circumstances (Krook, 1962: 249).

Is Krook finding adultery in James as a solution to the ache of primitivism?! Is she suggesting that under certain circumstances, if practicing true love is hindered by the institution or the bond of marriage for example, adultery is a mark of gallantry, a way to gentlemanliness, a method for gaining intersubjectivity through understanding and care for 'Self' and 'Other'?! Is she suggesting that it is a possibility of practicing genuine love and thereby for restoring human spirit?! If adultery is, for Krook, the incarnation of love and care, it also seems to be a condition for the evolution of American culture through variety and plurality, for it is from this point of view that *The Golden Bowl* illustrates how culture can reconstruct itself through the renovation of body and mind. Additionally, the Ververs' outstanding procrastination (over bringing to the fore the reality of the adulterous relation between the husband of Maggie and her mother-in-law) is perhaps the stepping stone to the high tolerance of this cultural imperialism to provide the leniency conventional society needs to come to terms with it in the course of time.

James's characters are typically as universal as James himself liked to be; and recognizing universal man as clean from sin makes it possible for him to efface the authority of the totalitarian regimes, theologies, or discourses. This is not to say that James is a romantic pre-lapsarian, but that he is very aware of 'sin.' However, he doesn't look at it theologically. He is totally aware of sexual corruption which, in most cases, is a form of social corruption: But he is certainly "tolerant" — as in the case of Mme Vionnet and Chad in *The Ambassadors* — when he places 'sin' in a context of relation and experience. Although Strether broadens his Woollett-consciousness in Europe, at the end of the story he returns to Woollett. In *The Golden Bowl*, what the Prince and Charlotte do and the Ververs insistently put off to uncover is to acknowledge that "they are good children, bless their hearts, and the children of good

children" (James, 1995: 193). Decorum searches for universal and harmonious excellence; and the question of morality in the Jamesian sense is if man uses his talents to salvage his material and spiritual happiness. Morality is therefore necessarily *vraisemblable*, and the moral man of James does not feel humble.

If Maggie receives implicit applause in the second Book for regaining what she and her father lose in the first, Charlotte can be praised for contributing in the emergence of a man who struggles for his natural rights, for the recognition of his humanity, and for the acknowledgement of his free consciousness. And if some readers still regard them disloyal for what he does with Charlott, it is not because the novel wants to reject them for their deed or to sympathize with Adam and his daughter, but because James wants to show the deed as a matter-of-fact reality.

There remains a word to say about James's techniques to increase the factuality of this act of love. Some critics, Heinz Ickstadt for example, believe that the point of Maggie's silence about the misdeed of her husband and her mother-in-law is precisely that there should be no cause for rumor. But the present reader thinks that the Ververs' procrastination to speak about this misdeed is for changing it into a potential subject of continuous rumor, and thereby bringing it from the subconscious mind of the reader up to his consciousness, and to change his doubts into solid conviction. The continuous rumor reactivates the reader's imagination and makes him or her more curious about the reality of the deed. If Maggie says nothing openly about it, her negative silence does not imply the wrongness of it as a hypothesis but implies a hidden insistence on the reality of a deed which must be disproved. This is to mean that it is only the openness of the deed, but not the reality of it, that she wants to disprove. Her perpetual negations are to increase the matter-of-factness of the hypothesis. It is another meaning for the Jamesian presence in absence, and is a kind of search that, although it may lead to nothing in particular, yet is desirable in form and meaning. It is like the search for a love that will never be satisfied, like a researcher whose anxiety makes him perpetually to start anew, or the love of the people to a messiah who will never come. In this particular novel, silence implies that there are things that are inexpressible, things that are beyond the capacity of the sign, and that words therefore cannot express. In chapter 18 the novel reads,

It brushed aside the question of where he was or what he knew; it seemed to keep the ground clear for the question of his visitor herself, that of Charlotte Verver exactly as she sat there. So, for some moments, with their long look, they but treated the matter in silence; with the effect indeed, by the end of the time, of having considerably brought it on. This was sufficiently marked in what Charlotte next said. "There it all is — extraordinary beyond words. It makes such a relation for us, I verily believe, was never before in the world thrust upon two well-meaning creatures. Haven't we therefore to take things as we find them?" (James, 1995: 174)

Such incapacities of the sign mark the innermost desires and inclinations of individual man that the language, culturally limited as it is, is not authorized to express. These inadequacies of the sign justify the characters' complete freedom and the authority of their imagination as well as the genuine and sublime meaning of their actions and behaviors.

Another technique in this regard is related to the character of Maggie. The rumor about the misdeed mainly occupies the consciousness of a young woman who is so limited in mind and skill that it does not suffice for her purposes. In this way, the novel hangs the reality of the action somewhere in the minds of the characters and readers in a way that their prejudice is not excited against it, and they therefore do not find it hard to cope with. If such a renovation can be the subject of rejection or retribution, the character of Amerigo and Charlotte can add to its security in another way also. The novel is, among other things, a portrait of them as new incarnations for modern American imperialism. Neither Amerigo is fully known and respected in London society nor Charlotte. Their outsidership makes the people less critical about their deed. Also, the fact that they are of different races, traditions, and educations, helps the Londoners to tolerate it more easily. In this way, it can be suggested that they accept a certain situation in this culturally vibrant cosmopolitan city, perhaps to excite us to disregard our previous dogmatic ideologies and think more free-mindedly, to start searching for new identities on the basis of our cultural similarities and discursive potentialities.

Truly tormented by the affair between her husband and her mother-in-law, Maggie sees herself entangled in a dangerous whirl of suspicion. However, if the story

wants her to perceive the creation of a new historical situation by the improvement of her self, the main energy of it is her "passionate prudence played over possibilities of danger" (James, 1995: 281), her ability to overlook the misdeed of her opponents. On the one hand, Charlotte becomes increasingly curious about what Maggie wants to do against her (misdeed). But Maggie is reluctant to let her discover her intentions, because she is well aware that for disarming her opponents, she must hide her intentions from them. By her acts of concealment, Maggie will capture the mentalities of her rivals who will increasingly speculate about her and her arrangements. In addition, by suspending their minds, she prevents them from making new arrangements against her or her father. In this way, she will always have the higher hand in this rivalry, for Charlotte and Amerigo cannot understand her intentions or cancel her plots. In chapter 30 of the novel we read,

Our young woman's idea, in particular, was that her safety, her escape from being herself suspected of suspicion, would proceed from this friend's power to cover, to protect and, as might be, even showily to represent her—represent, that is, her relation to the form of the life they were all actually leading. This, would doubtless be, as people said, a large order (ibid: 290).

Experience leads to new worlds of idea, or as Winfried Fluck puts it, to "reconstructing the world on a new epistemological base" (Fluck, 1986: 105). Experience is more than a series of scattered pieces of knowledge or information. It is the possibility of remaking our consciousness. It is the culmination of the renewal of our being and the renovation of our world, a process for the formation of coherent knowledge, an epistemological system with the needed variety, contingency, and functional interconnections with other systems of knowledge. In the territory of the individual person, experience is what he earns as he pays close attention to the very details of every-day life.

Thus, experience makes the mind to shuttle perpetually on the way to the other and back to the self, to move from the now to the history and back again to the now. This double function of experience as exemplified in *The Golden Bowl* is the meaning of rupture and connection at the same time. In the deed of the Prince and Charlotte

there is rupture and there is union too, union with conventionality and also rupture from it for the constitution of new epistemologies. From what is conventional, the new experience will take authority, sacredness, and referentiality. But by rupturing from conventionality and reaching to the present, it wants to take new forms, to preserve its independence, to fill the (modern) mind, and to direct or redirect it. All great epistemological ruptures in the history of English literature have something similar: the rupture from the Renaissance thought to Neo-classicism for example, from Neo-classicism to Romanticism, or from the Romantic thought to Realism. Although the independent renovation of the self was a cornerstone in these ruptures, for their survival they had to be duly connected with history. Hence, a simultaneous rupture and institution is in the nature of experience. The marriage of Charlotte and Adam is the experience at the same time of a rupture and an institution. It is a rupture from the out-of-date in order to create an institution on the verge of the now and future. It seems that their marriage is not necessarily for love but is also the way James can help us realize the formation of a new experience. Such an experience helps us to leave the obsolete behind ourselves and search our regeneration. However, if there is no renovation in their marriage, it is at least a possibility for new arrangements which set consciousness in motion.

But the Jamesian renovation is different from previous novelistic ruptures, for it has something to do with the mind and perspectives of the reader also. It is a genuine rupture in our consciousness which comes mainly from ambiguity. The closure in ambiguity (N and the not N) seems insolvable, for its elements are in sharp opposition. No side is supposed to tolerate the other side, and no compromise is possible between them. However, omission is no solution to their enmity. The Jamesian ambiguity is a dead end which must be avoided in certain ways. His art to solve such ambiguity is that he deploys the exceeding wisdom to formulate a solution which should always reside somewhere between the sides in the ambiguous, between the elements of the binary opposition. The fiction of James not only brings the characters and reader into internal clash with themselves, but it also makes a character understand the things in a way opposite to other characters. Thus, to find an in-between status should be the goal of both the characters and readers of James. Such an in-between status is the logic or

place of experience for which the Jamesian story mobilizes characters, wisdoms, positions, or oppositions. In this way, and with the passage of time, consciousness becomes more polygonal in its search for the unlimited; and something is added to the variety and complication of the experience of life.

A further essential to the experience in a Jamesian sense is man, if not as sacred, at least as "the children of good children" (James, 1995: 193) who feels special responsibility. If for the production of an experience a thought should challenge with its counter-thought, it needs the close contribution of all those who are involved in it, for otherwise the clash between thought and counter-thought will be futile, and the discourse will go to a dead end. This kind of experience requires that no involved member feel as an outsider or alienated. Such blessed men readily absorb a wide range of perspectives and react to contingent experiences responsibly. Also, their active participations in experiencing add to the qualifications of experience and make it invulnerable to the hazards of monologue and non-discursivity. The end of *The Golden Bowl*, when Charlotte unwillingly accepts to return to America with Adam, I think, exemplifies her significant responsibility for the well-being of discourse and also for the accomplishment of what the novel implies that Adam will do in America. In addition, the Prince and Charlotte feel responsible to hide their affair from the Ververs not only for their own respect, but also because they want to respect the Ververs and to preserve their happiness. If moderation is the method of peace and compromise, and if experience is the outcome of contingent epistemologies, coherent and interconnected responsibility is the policy of psychological refinement, mutual understanding, and mutual respect. Responsibility is crucial to the renovation of experience, for it breaks the monopoly, defeats distrust, annihilates resentment, and systematizes freedom.

In this way, patience is instituted, reconciliation is enforced, and the consciousness is given transcendence; commitment prods the man into good action, and love becomes the logic of things and events. Maggie cannot imagine that Amerigo be for Charlotte; and when she feels certain about their affair, she uses all her tact to take him back from her. All her text is directed by the codes she has learned via her close relations with her father who is, although aesthetic also, conventionally moral.

Her script seems in full opposition with that of Charlotte, for Charlotte's main criterion in her connection with Amerigo is physical passion and unconscious imperatives. However, to provide the characters and reader with the possibility of new experiences, Amerigo, whom both Maggie and Charlotte easily use to pursue their goals, is to level the naive moral outlook of Maggie with the brave aesthetic pragmatism of Charlotte. As he comes into the text of Charlotte from that of Maggie and goes back to Maggie again, the indications of their discourse loom large in the mind of the reader. In addition, Adam's text that, as Jones says, "weighs everything against the standards of taste and value" (Jones, 1975: 187) wants to save these new experiences from interdiction and to provide them with enough grace and dignity. With his high respect and aesthetic idealism, Adam issues a permit for the exhibition in his art gallery of the not so handsome effect of Charlotte.

In "The Salt that Saves': Fiction and History in the Late Works of Henry James" Heinz Ickstadt says "design" and "symmetry" are the key words in *The Golden Bowl* that imply the formation of "order" which can be dealt with "on two levels" (Ickstadt, 2001: 143). The emergence of order in this novel is, for Ickstadt, like the formation of experience for Granville H. Jones and Joan W. Scott. On one level it is the 'pre-established and ideal' symmetry which James takes for granted and with which the story begins. This story portrays how social and cultural anarchy takes the place of a primary structural symmetry, and how order and symmetry are again re-established in the second Book of the novel. If "peculiar cyclical emplotment" (ibid) of the story means its return to the original arrangement, order should take root mainly from our consciousness. It is the sense of a utopia where our minds can freely and interactively share in the formation of new realities or new experiences. Such a high standard is the measure of aesthetic knowledge and recognition the background of which is a consensus of a cultural and social elitism that closely contributes to a process of dynamic interaction. This aesthetic evolution of experiences, which Ickstadt terms the second level of order in this novel, is the attestation of good manners, the inauguration of an active system of social relations, and the celebration of the American dream of cultural imperialism.

Money is another base on which James implies civilization should be structured, for if civilization survives only in the improvement of culture and transcendence of spirit, it is the financial means that can be changed to cultural products for attaining spiritual pleasure. Such a possibility is like that of Adam whose financial privileges make him capable of any arrangement for providing such a great collection of European artifacts. The economic furniture can be changed to cultural products which give us imagination as spiritual rejoicing. The fiction of such a complex civilization is James's ideal in this novel.

The representation of the Bond Street in the 'City' of London as a great center of economic exchange is an emblem of consumerism as a component of modern cultural and economic imperialism. Here the objects are "massive and lumpish" (James, 1995: 3) in the shop windows, and are "applied to a hundred uses and abuses" (ibid). In such a context, it is understandable why the Prince should be as excessively passive and commodified as the objects in the shops; and why he is shown even as deeply feminized. And if such a civilization is to emerge by re-enlivening a sense of the Renaissance Italy, it can be suggested that civilization or the cultural imperium will be based on aesthetic consciousness also.

### **X. A Strategy of Silent Awareness**

When Maggie realizes that the affair between her husband and her mother-in-law is too ugly or "too unspeakable" (Leibowitz, 2008: 17), she decides to establish an economy of non-verbal communication with them, for she understands that if she talks with him in a face-to-face confrontation, she may exceed the limits of the sublime language through falling prey to vulgarity. She knows that for proving herself she needs not the sympathy of others but their understanding and approval. She is also certain that any vulgar communication will damage her eloquence. Hence, she selects to reserve from speaking with her husband about the matters, but starts to communicate with him silently, through looks and thoughts and gestures.

In the fiction of James reticence has social and aesthetic functions. Karen Leibowitz binds reticence in him with other ways of omission in English fiction like

“hesitation, ellipsis, euphemism, and preterition (paralipsis)” (Leibowitz, 2008:16).<sup>6</sup> These techniques allow James’s characters to restrain themselves from direct communication while they make use of the privileges of deep reflection. They also allow the character to speak metaphorically, to carry out expert surveys of the social language, and to discover the limits of their freedom. Thus, in the fiction of James these features insert a function of limitation on the borders of language to ground a respect for the English novel. Leibowitz also claims that by reticence James represents the mobilization of English society with aesthetic dimensions of "gentility, chastity, and consideration" (Leibowitz, 2008: 16). In addition, such scenes of silent communication have a reading-response function, for they invite us to consider the high capacity of the characters to understand correctly the silent communications.

Soon after his marriage, Amerigo worries about his relations with the Ververs in the new situation. When he asks his wife how she and her father think about him, she gives no direct answer. Her vagueness makes the readers also curious about his function in their system, and while reading it, they have to formulate an answer for it, for the meaning emerges from the act of reading. If this hypothesis is right, it is neither the text nor the author, but the reader, who is the source of meaning. Reading *The Golden Bowl* is an act of cultivation, and the novel involves us in an active process of civilizing the community of the readers. Outsiders stand on the verge of cultures, and conceptualize no real social reformation. As modern civilization is complicated, it needs the interaction of a consensus of experts who pave the way for its perpetual promotion by providing it with evaluative interpretations. A good example for outsiderdom as ineffective in structuring the culture is Maggie’s

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<sup>6</sup> In *Dictionary of Literary Terms* by Harry Shaw, we read “Also spelled paralepsis or paralipsis, pareleipsis is the suggestion, by abbreviated treatment, that much of significance is being omitted. Papaleipsis (from Greek terms meaning ‘leaving to one side’) is illustrated by such phrases as ‘not to mention other ...’, ‘overlooking, ‘and so forth.’” ( Shaw, 1972: 276). The Wikipedia Free Encyclopedia defines Preterition (Paralipsis) in this way: "Paralipsis, also known as praeteritio, preterition, cataphasis, antiphrasis, or parasiopesis, is a rhetorical figure of speech wherein the speaker or writer invokes a subject by denying that it should be invoked. As such, it can be seen as a rhetorical relative of irony. ...The device is typically used to distance the speaker from unfair claims, while still bringing them up. ... Proslepsis is an extreme kind of paralipsis that gives the full details of the acts one is claiming to pass over." In *Dictionary of World Literary Terms* by Joseph T. Shipley we read apophasis is “seeming to deny what is really affirmed. Feigning to pass it by while really stressing it: Paralepsis. Touching on it casually: metastasis. Pretending to shield or conceal while really displaying (as Antony with Caesar’s will in Shakespeare’s play): parasiopesis” (Shipley, 1970: 18).

performance in the first Book of the novel when she is too naive to position herself in meaningful relations with the two major characters.

For the betterment of his situation, Amerigo also needs to develop meaningful relations with the Ververs for which he must have, to speak with George Herbert Mead, a "reflective consciousness" (Mead, 1899: 371).<sup>7</sup> There are two parts of Amerigo of which he tells Maggie that she and her father know only the historical, since they are innocent about his "personal quantity" (James, 1995:7). If by history he means his Renaissance heritage of Rome, everyone already knows it, because it is accessible to them in "rows of volumes in libraries" (ibid: 6). As Hayden White would say, history has much in common in method and material with fiction. In both of them imagination is at work in the emplotment of some materials to lead to a denouement on the basis of a structure. But Amerigo implies that (reading) history is inadequate for the creation of identities that can interact in social and cultural evolutions. It is in fiction that the 'single self' can emerge and interact in the making of civilization. *The Golden Bowl* represents history in a certain way to show how new identities and experiences can be shaped in the course of reading as a way for the application of the Meadean "reflective consciousness."

After their violation, Amerigo and Charlotte start to feel the presence of Maggie as an overwhelming force of interpellation. However, they do not feel shocked, for they agree that although Fanny Assingham seems 'uneasy' about their mistake, she can say nothing against them. On the contrary, they find her a good protection for institutionalizing their conduct, because it is she who has arranged for the marriage of the Prince and Maggie. In chapter 21 we read,

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<sup>7</sup> Heinz Ickstadt quotes from George Herbert Mead's "Working Hypothesis in Social Reform" in *The American Journal of Sociology*, 5 (3), (Nov. , 1899), p. 371. Mead discusses "the function of reflective consciousness in its attempt to direct conduct." He argues that we dream the world as it should be, and we "fashion our conduct" to give order to the world. To be able to direct our conduct into reasonable ways, we should not consider the idea of the world as a fixed and stable phenomenon, for it is not only a failure but also pernicious. But we must consider the world always as changing, as different from what it is. In our entanglements in "some specific problem," we readjust the world, not for making a complete world but for the solution of our problem. Now, if we are able to solve our problem in a way that is in agreement with the world as it is, we are successful in our endeavor. Reflective consciousness is the meaning of our thoughts and deeds that are evolutionary, perpetually changing. It is a "process of development."

‘What in the world can she [Fanny]<sup>8</sup> do against us? There’s not a word that she can breathe. She’s helpless; she can’t speak; she would be herself the first to be dished by it.’ And then, as he seemed slow to follow: ‘It all comes back to her. It all began with her. Everything, from the first. She introduced you to Maggie. She made your marriage’ (ibid: 196-197).

Fanny is the articulation that brings the (opposing) forces of culture together for the simplicity of the movement of civilization. She is a double force: a reliable source of information as well as a major source of problematic designs. When Amerigo is with her, she informs him that Charlotte has arrived in London from America to partake in her marriage ceremony. She as well encourages him to stay there long enough to see Charlotte when she will soon come back from the train station. Fanny is to receive Charlotte and take care of her as long as she stays in London. All these ingredients are enough to re-involve him and Charlotte in their passionate but futile love relations of the past. In this way, and with the evolution of the story, two complications are expanded that need closer attention of the reader: the outcome of Amerigo’s marriage and Charlotte’s stay in London.

In chapter 30, after Maggie has discovered the sinful connection between her husband and her mother-in-law, she also visits Fanny to break the seal of her silence and reveal her deep unhappiness only to her. She does this to see if she can help her to give a form to her chaotic imaginations. She has already been feeling ‘jealous’ on account of her husband; and now she asks her advices to escape from helplessness. She tells her, "if I’m both helpless and tormented I stuff my pocket-handkerchief into my mouth, I keep it there, for the most part, night and day, so as not to be heard too indecently moaning" (James, 1995: 296). Maggie is terribly unhappy, but her friend helps her regain her happiness by making her believe that what she thinks her husband and her mother-in-law have committed is too impossible even to imagine in their situation. She describes the action as so far-fetched, so ugly, and consequently so unimaginable that hereafter Maggie will consider it absolutely impossible. In chapter 30, the novel reads:

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<sup>8</sup> . My adding.

What your idea imputes is a criminal intrigue carried on, from day to day, amid perfect trust and sympathy, not only under your eyes, but under your father's. That's an idea it's impossible for me for a moment to entertain (ibid: 301).

The crack in the bowl has multiple implications: if at first it was considered symbolic of the moral deviations of Charlotte and Amerigo, Mrs. Assingham directs the mind of Maggie in such a way that she considers it as a sign of her own wrong ideas about them. Thus, the crack in the vessel stands for whatever that is far from perfection, for whatever should be neglected if man is to salvage his happiness. It stands not only for the misdeed of the lovers but also for the disbelief of Maggie as the scapegoat. This is why Mrs. Assingham should arrange for its annihilation after much lessening its value in the eye of Maggie. In chapter 33 the novel reads,

Fanny Assingham, who had been casting about her and whose inspiration decidedly had come, raised the cup in her two hands, raised it positively above her head, and from under it, solemnly, smiled at the Princess as a signal of intention. So for an instant, full of her thought and of her act, she held the precious vessel, and then, with due note taken of the margin of the polished floor, bare, fine and hard in the embrasure of her window, she dashed it boldly to the ground, where she had the thrill of seeing it, with the violence of the crash, lie shattered (James, 1995: 336).

But this is perhaps the end of Mrs. Assingham's teachings to Maggie, because after it she can cast no doubt or pessimism on them. By the time she breaks the bowl, Maggie is expected to have learned how to correct her belief about them.

If Amerigo wants Assingham to show him how he can avoid injuring his wife and delve more deeply into things, it is ironical that her interior is the site of another complication also. Upon Charlotte's arrival at her home, she finds the Prince there. This is the beginning of a major complication about which the story tells us a lot. We do not know how long Charlotte will stay in London. In addition, when we understand that the Prince and Charlotte had previous love relations in Rome, the problem goes through more contortions. But the Jamesian silence is a solution perhaps to many such problems. Silence provides a space of solitude where man can negotiate with his self to add to the meaning of life. In the insecure environment of his story that is at times

frightening, multiple voices are simultaneously to be heard. If his story shows characters lost in the bustle of represented life, and if they can therefore fall prey to a corrupted reality, silence is a way through the lies of life, a way to re-store our hidden beings that are more genuine. In such a context, thoughtful silence is a natural association with the self: it helps the character to find his or her self that is not confused but is clear and truthful. The character will find his genuine self, will unite with it, and will reactivate it. Silence makes an occasion for our critical thinking and for adding to the intensity of our commitments. It is an occasion where one can turn the cases of life over and make up his mind. In the meantime, silence is the force of a vivid connective issue where the characters and reader can bring everything in the text together to provide meaningful structures for the possibility of changing themselves. If there is something unique in each person, silence lets them listen to their better selves in more genuine dialogues. It is in silence as a way of life that one comes face to face with what is in the core. Therefore, it brings one to the heart of the matter. In *The golden Bowl* there is a sharp and complicated rivalry among different texts that is to provide the individuals with good occasions to express themselves. However, silence may mean that the participant is introvert and therefore would like to stop dialogue. But in the play of the texts, silence is the possibility to ponder the problem and pose more complicated perspectives. In chapter 3 of the novel we read,

Mrs. Assingham took it up with an irony beyond laughter. "You'd like her for your honeymoon?"

"Oh no, you must keep her for that. But why not after?"

She had looked at him a minute; then, at the sound of a voice in the corridor, they had got up.

"Why not? You're splendid!" (James, 1995: 27).

Here there is irony, there is laughter, enquiry, negation, there is silence, gestural communication, and there is also a sound signaling the arrival of a further person whom the speakers will soon 'take in.' However, this is a communicative strategy that wants to reach the level of something like a consensus that is to guarantee, as Winfried Fluck says, an "expressive individualism ... as a dominant system of cultural values in Western societies" (Fluck, 1994: 37). The meaningful participation of the character in

such novelistic complications is symbolically to supply the background of a radically liberal culturalism. With the arrival of Charlotte into the context, and after Amerigo sees her, the complication for him becomes even more complex, for Charlotte's person and presence immediately catapults him into the past years when they were in futile love. When Charlotte tells him, "you see, you're not rid of me" (James, 1995: 29), he feels really hunted, and finds himself in a number of entanglements.

A meaning of his complications is that he will be expected to nourish two loves one of which is known and lawful while the other is hidden and unlawful. These loves are similar perhaps in neither of their features. Maggie's love is, as Krook says, "poor in spirit, submissive; even weak and wretched — prostrating itself before the beloved, seeking that which it lacks, longing only to be fulfilled by that which is the object of its desire" (Krook, 1962: 255-256). In his love with Maggie, the Prince is not only quite careless, lazy, and escaping; but also superior and at times even frightening. But in his love with Charlotte, he is inferior, frightened, and trapped. The strange way in which the "things, in Charlotte Stant, now affected him" (James, 1995: 28), and his deep appreciation of her, imply that he will be quite submissive to her, because he romantically loves her. In addition, her person and stature remind him of the works of the "Florentine sculptors, in the great time" (ibid: 29) of Renaissance when the Roman civilization was at its peak. The narrator tells us "If when she moves off she looked like a huntress, she looked when she came nearer like his notion, ... , of a muse" (ibid). Charlotte is not only to satisfy the aesthetic needs of the Prince but also to extinguish his natural passions. When Mrs. Assingham leaves them alone to create some 'domestic order,' a conflation of 'pity and profit,' of etiquette, desire, and curiosity excites him to start an immediate verbal and gestural communication with her. She is a queen of appearances and formations; and he will be always "nice to her, nice about her, nice for her" (ibid: 31).

## **XI. Reconstructing History**

These contortions do not stop at the level of sexual love or historical remembrance. They are extended to the circulation of political power also, for a future aspect of them is that they turn the story into a multifold text where the reader and characters see

themselves involved in a labyrinth of consciousness through which they have problems in finding their ways. In her introduction to the 1995 Wordsworth Classics edition of *The Golden Bowl* Nicola Bradbury suggests that there are more than two stories at work in this novel,

There is not only a story behind the story here as the former lovers meet, but a story behind that, of why their romance failed in the past and must still conceal its hidden flaws. It is the reader's part not only to infer this unspoken story, but also to place it in relation to what is being shown and said. If the text proceeds obliquely yet in the very straightest way possible, the reader is expected to keep the balance; and this turns out to be a strenuous exercise, which scarcely leaves us any time or energy to devote to simple judgment (James, 1995: ix-x).

The circulation of power in and by the novel among the characters and readers is a way for establishing discipline and regulation. Amerigo's insistence to "find out something, something he wanted much to know" (James, 1995: 30) shows that he feels an anarchy here, or a conspiracy which he wants to uncover and bring into order. It also implies that there is an accumulation of energy in him to do so, for he wants to prove his existence as a person. In addition, it suggests that this story will be a space for improving our knowledge, recognition, and insight. As the novel illustrates how Amerigo attempts, successfully or pointlessly, to allocate his resources for improving his existence, things are appropriated. And we the readers, who like the characters watch them on the scene, are disciplined to control our minds and behaviors on the basis of certain codes and cultures, for as we judge and interpret the activities and negotiations of the characters, we are also judged and criticized.

With all her "ramifications and other advantages," Charlotte will be a "social capital" (ibid: 33), the stepping stone on which we shall pass on to new formations in life. She is a centerpiece for the activity of new industries of culture and civilization, the incarnation of an institution of human inter-relationships with its own logic, mechanism, and function. She will represent an institution in which even the suppressed individual can advertise his existence through a radically aesthetic representation that allows him perpetually to propose new formations.

Charlotte seems energetic enough to change the person that she is, for she tells her beloved "there are things, of sorts, I should be able to have — things I should be able to be" (ibid: 35). She also says her position as a single woman is a favor to her because it allows her to adore Maggie and thereby to feel connected to Amerigo. It is in and by him that she can become what she wants to. However, it is natural to the bipartite structure of this story that an arrangement runs counter to another one. Charlotte has come to London to re-enliven her previous (futile) love to Amerigo. But she also adores Maggie by arranging with him to buy her a present at the threshold of her wedding. And although we know that the former is just pretending, she says they "must talk it well over" (James, 1995: 37). The Jamesian reality is the result of (discursive) experience, the practice of talking, and the exercise of collaborative judgment. Such a discourse helps the character and reader to put things in a desired order.

Mrs. Assingham has a number of functions in the story. She is a plot-maker, a guide to the characters, and she registers the reader in the consensus of the onlookers. If Charlotte has plotted to restore her love, Assingham involves us in a process of evaluation by advertising the truth of her plot. Her method is to involve us in two sad stories. One of them is the story of her alienation from American society. This is the story of her poverty and homelessness. The other is the story of her lovelessness, the story of her having no one to love her. She comes to London as a center of world culture to provide it with new history-making negotiations between the perspectives in clash: love and lovelessness, wealth and poverty, the good and evil. In chapter 4 the Assinghams speak about the 'cases' of negotiation in this way:

"There's Maggie's and the Prince's, and there's the prince's and Charlotte's."

"Oh yes; and then," the Colonel scoffed, "there's Charlotte's and the Prince's."

"There's Maggie's and Charlotte's," she went on—"and there's also Maggie's and mine. I think too that there's Charlotte's and mine. Yes," she mused, "Charlotte's and mine is certainly a case. In short, you see, there are plenty. But I mean," she said, "to keep my lead" (ibid: 45).

These communities of vision or cases of negotiation create a sense of reality in the reader by symbolically re-enlivening the history and helping the character participate

in historical processes. They turn the novel into a spectrum of cultural criticism. In each negotiation, the participant will not be a passive listener but is quite polemic; that is, she presents her own new perspective and defends it by re-reading the past historical situations in the possibility that fiction offers her. New-historical study of literature is a way to criticize the present by resorting history. Each case of negotiation is a labyrinth of the interiors which the participant displays. In each case, it is language as a centerpiece of culture that is James's medium of creation. He disregards traditional novelistic forms for the aesthetics of a more complicated one where the reader takes advantage of all Jamesian techniques of story-telling not only to realize the reflections of characters but also to acknowledge how the author mixes the materials of language and literature to create the golden bowl of his new form. A new-historical analysis wants to show how experiences click together, outlooks are exposed to criticism, and meaning sheds skin in the reproduction of discourse. And one is perpetually to renovate his mentality as new experiences come to the fore.

How does Charlotte offer to the author such 'good chances' for making new meanings and new forms through the art of story-telling? A certain background is her outstanding personality. In chapter 10, when Maggie is negotiating with her father about his marriage, they speak in this way:

"No, father." And the Princess was almost solemn. "Because she's so great."

"`Great` — ?"

"Great in nature, in character, in spirit. Great in life."

"So?" Mr. Verver echoed. What has she done — in life?

"Well, she has been brave and bright," said Maggie. "That mayn't sound like much, but she has been so in the face of things that might well have made it too difficult for many other girls (James, 1995: 105-106).

In addition to Charlotte's extreme poverty, there is her great forbearance in the face of poverty. In the same chapter Maggie says,

'...She has a great imagination. She has, in every way, a great attitude. She has above all a great conscience.' ... 'She has only twopence in the world — but that has nothing to do with it.

Or rather indeed’— she quickly corrected herself — ‘it has everything. For she doesn’t care. I never saw her do anything but laugh at her poverty. Her life has been harder than anyone knows’ (ibid: 106).

It can also be suggested that Charlotte provides a field of fun and knowledge for those who pay close attention to the meaning of her love. A considerable part of the story discusses it and its aftermaths. She successfully arranges things for her beloved, and he follows her submissively. She is a source of new forms, for she not only wants to have him but she also wants him to know that she wants to have him. She is the reality of a hidden but intrusive meaning, and is as energetic a showpiece as her text is immediate, challenging, and exciting. Behind her mask of feminine charm and beauty she has a history-making energy.

James insists on the difference between life and art: life is all chaos and confusion while art is order and discrimination, and art makes life more interesting and more important. However, transcending the form and appearance in Charlotte perhaps means that there cannot be a great distance from life to art or from good to evil. It suggests that when one is on the verge, it is as though one has a foot on the ground of the good while he has another foot on the ground of evil; and that he therefore can proceed into the realms of both good and evil. This means that a same energy runs in both life and art, for not only does art define life by specifying its negative limits, and not only is the boundary between the two a shifting one, but it seems that they both operate within a same economy. Therefore, a good policy to value them is perhaps that one allows himself to be seduced by a display of the mask in order not to see the crack in the underneath, the crack that although the gilded cover hides from you but you can take its existence for granted.

The shifting role of players in the Jamesian games of power opens a further landscape for a new-historical analysis on *The Golden Bowl*. If Amerigo and Charlotte were, in the first Book, busy with manipulating Maggie and her father to possess what they had not, from the beginning of the second Book it is Maggie who is the superior force due to her role relations. Also, if Maggie and Charlotte are similar in superiority, they are different in the way they are superior: the former is moral, while the latter is

a-moral or immoral. On the one hand, Maggie knows that she has been manipulated. Yet for escaping from manipulation she neither takes revenge of her manipulators nor retreats from social roles but takes new roles through communication and active interaction. On the other hand, it is conditional for her to remain morally uncorrupted because in this way she not only can nullify the manipulating scheme of her opponents but also can stand superior to them even if they morally reconstruct themselves. Thus, her real art should be renunciation, not from what she should be or have, but from revenge. A dramatic outcome of her act of renunciation is a softening, if not cancelling, of moral oppositions between good/evil, manipulated/manipulator, etc. Instead, the fact that the characters may repeatedly change their roles is the ground of, according to Fluck again in another work, "a semantic transformation" (Fluck, 1997: 29) through a continual change of the position of the key characters in the endless games of power.

If the moral has already changed its meaning to allow Charlotte to pursue her innermost inclinations, for Maggie too it now means something new: active social interactions through which she will be recognized. Such interactions, and the changing roles of the participants, will be the ground for a number of 'semantic transformations': manipulation, for example will be no longer condemned, for as a part of the social interaction it will lose its previous moral effect, and will take a reciprocal connotation. 'Love' and 'care' also take new implications. The relation of Maggie and her husband in the second Book for example, the care that Adam takes of Charlotte, and even the affection that Mrs. Assingham has for Maggie have elements of manipulation and possession as components of the Jamesian disciplining regime.

Discipline is critical to the moral act in its conventional sense. It puts radical emphasis on the liberties which it is said the fiction of James has not achieved. If discipline is integral to human civilization, imposition and coercion are also parts of the net of social relations that makes up society. Salvation through social interaction is a main theme in *The Wings of the Dove* and *The Ambassadors*. Kate Croy and Merton Densher, like Maria Gostrey and even perhaps Madame de Vionnet, are not moral representatives of their societies, because they search their fortune in the occasions of social interaction where they can manipulate others through communication.

However, it seems that in these last works of James the aesthetic is a new strategy of discipline. The aesthetic wants to be bilateral in its effect: it facilitates imposition and coercion for the simple fact that it pleases the beholder and amuses him so that he often becomes unconscious of his manipulation. Also, the ethereal and exciting space of the aesthetic often puts the beholder on the move to a utopia where the beautiful or the artistic is a determining factor of life and existence. Although the experience of such a utopia may be unreal, it facilitates discipline in the simplicity of the changing roles.

The rich variety of social and cultural practices represented in this novel is the source of a continuing tension and perplexity. And this is, in turn, perhaps why renunciation is so strategic in the fiction of James. For him renunciation is more than an act of sacrifice. It is the framework for achieving an ideal of perfection where the aesthetic provides the needed space for the production of the best features of civilization via a most vivid exchange of meanings. What Charlotte does is more than a personal struggle out of spite and vindictiveness. It is also not exclusively for sexual pleasure. It is for the institution of a cultural convention for the acceptance and advertisement of new meanings. Henry James understands culture as abstract in the activity of consciousness, in the exchange of ideas, and in the expansion of relativism in a vast space of the most delicate practices, mores, and folkways. His culturalism threads many practices in the substructure, and includes a diversity of human energy bestowed upon patterns of organization for the proposition of unexpected identities, correspondences, and discontinuities. To analyze his culturalism is to see to the nature of the organization as the complex of a vast expansion of relationships which can be represented in an aesthetic space. Such relationships are implied in the silent dialogue of a position with alternative positions: those exhibited in a (tea) party for example, in a visit to an art gallery, or those shown in a trip of a major character to the outskirts of a great city.

In *The Golden Bowl* James intends to produce civilized spaces where new positions can negotiate for their promotion. There is usually something absent in such positions, and their negotiations are therefore necessarily eccentric and likely to be misunderstood. But in the fiction of James it is perhaps only the ideal position that can

survive, though it seems virtually nonexistent. However, the solution his fiction seems to suggest for the renovation of such historical foundations is a real interaction between the social and the literary not for its content but for the structures of mentality. This novel is the representation of such interactionisms. If these structures are created individually, they can be assimilated to produce a cultural substructure. When a Charlotte Stant, for example, or a Kate Croy in *The Wings of the Dove*, understands that her social being is in contrast with her consciousness, the story arranges a number of structurally history-making inter-connected practices to bring the ideal consciousness into contact with the concrete reality. The fiction of James is, in a symbolic form, a systemic conceptualization of culture as the interconnection of all social practices via which men and women make history.

Some critics like Frank Lentricchia believe that Foucault looks exclusively at the repressive influences of power. They argue that he believes in an omniscient power structure that demolishes the whole resisting potentials of the subjects and by doing so makes them approve of the power structure and faithful to it. Perhaps like a leviathan, such a power structure engages the subjects in a “totalitarian narrative” that makes them into submissive adherents. However, saying “no” is not the whole of what Foucault has found in power. He also believes in power as productive; that is, in happy and fortunate outcomes of power which testifies, among other things, the production of “pleasure and freedom.” In “Truth and power” Foucault says,

If Power were never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but to say no, do you really think one would be brought to obey it? What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression (Rabinow, 1984: 61).

In “James, Pleasure, Power” Mark Seltzer reads *The Golden Bowl* as strongly political, because he says in James we read “a different story—a story of power told as a story of love and freedom” (Seltzer, 1984: 200). Seltzer deals with the presentation of power in this novel both as repressive and productive. He firstly testifies that there

is a basic opposition between “the literary” (art) and “the political” (power): the former is mainly liberating because it is inclined to subvert the structure of power while the latter is conservatively oppressive. However, he argues that art and power are, “like the two sides of a horseshoe” (Seltzer, 1984: 201), fundamentally interchangeable. He admits that Foucault also sees power both as negative and positive, but claims that there is another mechanism of power about which Foucault was perhaps unconscious. Seltzer argues that the working of such a double mechanism is observable in the fiction of James, for it is an apparatus of regulation through managing difference. The fiction of James represents the exercise of power not in the form of violence but in the form of love and regulation.

Seltzer believes that it was under the influence of Balzac that James produced such a kind of fiction which enforces power as love. He mentions some techniques which James uses for this purpose: one is clarification for which each of his stories represents a slice of daily life in great details. The abundance of details implies, among other things, that the reader and/or character is never left without love and protection but is always taken care of through an economy of love and regulation. Another technique is the use of love for characters. James is never zealous to tease his characters, to limit their freedom, or to make them feel humble or incapacitated. As he produces and manages them, he gives them joy and pleasure. In this way, his fiction represents love as a tool of control and surveillance.

If in *The Golden Bowl* love and power are not finally opposed, the Ververs can be called both characters of love and characters of power. In the form of social practice, the novel creates spaces where the characters see and know and exercise power. The acts of caring, curing, instructing, and nurturing performed in the relations between parent and child, doctor and patient, or teacher and pupil define the domain of power relations in the novel. In each kind of relation, on the one side there is a protector while on the other side there is a person who needs protection. The protector-protected correspondence testifies exercising power in love and regulation.

A further form of exercising power is the social programs of normalization affected in the institutions like the bureau, the university, the clinic, and the family where deviations and abnormalities are put right. In the modern times, the goal of such

practices of power is not discipline or punish but is to protect the social body by caring for its health and supporting the relational equilibrium of its members. The social abnormalities provide occasions for the exercise of power, like the adultery of Charlotte and Amerigo that provided Maggie with the occasion to undertake a normalizing procedure. This implies that power and resistance originate from each other, for power can be exercised in the realm that something resists it. But where does the power of norm in Maggie come from? Seltzer argues that it does not come from the person of Maggie, but from the organic and self-rectifying structure that puts itself always in the right order. The power of norm originates from the power of equilibrium. However, the power of equilibrium cannot be exercised through violence but can be exercised through love and in the gestures of care and compassion. This leads to the realization of novel as an institution of power that acts through regulation. The social practices illustrated in this novel provide occasions for the production of freedom and pleasure through a mechanism of decentralizing and/or individualizing power that it shows working in the acts of chatting, gossip, dialogue, evaluation, rejection, admission, criticism, interpretation, and all other kinds of verbal and gestural interaction. The fiction of James is a vivid expression of the freedom of different characters, and provides suitable environments for the emergence of distinctive social groups and classes who handle and respond to the conditions of their existence.

The recognition of a condition (or a real space) and how it can be promoted into an ideal consciousness is a long imaginary process the outcome of which can be a series of ever-changing experiences which randomly march into and out of the mind of the character and reader. Culture is therefore the intersection of all the given positions and their identification to provide a cumulative system in which the practices are interrelated on the level of substructure. When a sequence of hopes and aspirations are put into action, a conceptual spectrum appears in between and a structure is realized which mingles matter and manner. It is the cultural and social practices that the fiction of James conceptualizes as the framework of thought and language through which different communities classify their conditions of existence. And language, as a system of signification, is the means by which these mental frameworks are produced

and transformed. However, such representations do not impose themselves upon men as fixed ideologies but in the form of specific consciousness where experience is quite shaky and transitive. What Maggie does in the second Book is the incarnation of a cultural consciousness and the result of some renovating agencies to make her own history. Yet, it can be regarded structurally also, for it is a formative dialect with consciousness, a recognizing of the complex relations in the body of the real. The salvation of her text means the development of her consciousness, and this also needs her power of abstraction and conceptualization, her talent of making structure. Experience should also be regarded as the interrelation between different levels of abstraction where arguments can be nourished. But experience is not an absolutely theoretical practice, for when Maggie tries to alternate her situation in the text, for example, an obvious materialization will result from it. The thought of Maggie does not reflect reality but it only articulates and appropriates reality. Her thought is the editing factor for the renovation of reality and for changing it to usable presentations.

## **XII. Cultural Restoration of Subjectivity**

As the practices of different people in the story fluidly move in and out of one another, they make an expressive totality. It is in the extended domain of these structures of expressiveness that the values of human practices are revealed not by their similarities but by their differences, by the role they have in the making of structures. Such a liberal and increasing space of differences leads to a radical centrifuge of experiences. The fiction of James can be culturally approached also by considering the moments of struggle for the sake of conceptual formations to make history and consciousness. In an unconscious background, a dialogue can take place between the social categories and the conscious (ideal) organizations where man is an active historical force. It is here, in the restoration of subjectivity, that culturalism differs from structuralism. The subject here is not, as in structuralism is, a deteriorated or contradictory entity. It is a position or a concept in language and knowledge that guarantees the expression of culture. Maggie's subjectivity is the agent that analyses her concrete position, nullifies it, and holds a new position in which she can develop herself into a privileged context.

Peter Buitenhuis says that civilization is, for James, a devotion to 'refinement' for practicing what is the best in human nature. He suggests that in different phases of his authorship James meant different things by culture. The early American James used to believe in the civilizing features and normative values of popular culture because of, among other things, its "taste," its pleasure in the "grand" and "heroic," and its devotion to "refinement." To discuss how James used to hold this post-war American popular culture in high esteem, Buitenhuis refers us to a short passage from James's review of Walt Whitman's "Drum-Traps":

This democratic, liberty-loving, American populace, this stern and war-tried people, is a great civilizer. It is devoted to refinement. If it has sustained a monstrous war, and practiced human nature's best in so many ways for the last five years, it is not to put up with spurious poetry afterwards.<sup>9</sup>

His idea is that in his early years James naively believed that the American popular culture could be the source of education and could nourish a great civilization. However, after long years James decides that if American culture is to educate the people, it should give no place to "the crude democracy of trade, ... the new, the simple, the cheap, the common, the commercial, and, all too often, the ugly" (Buitenhuis, 1970: 203), for popular culture lacks the refinement and subtlety and imagination that the Americans need for their education. And when James begins to notice the development of an American identity, he moves away from the normative sense of art and starts to appreciate a mixture of impressionistic and naturalistic art. Thus, by culture he no longer means popular culture but culture in a "wider, anthropological sense, as well as in the narrower sense of high culture" (ibid: 199). In this period James portrays life as directly as he experiences it; that is, he allows no abstract thought to intervene his direct and natural impressions. In this way, for observing all kinds of experiences in the current of real life, he develops an "academic and Ruskinian<sup>10</sup> view of art." Now he prescribes a democracy in which all American

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<sup>9</sup> From "The Walt Whitman Archive, Folsom Kenneth M. Price, "Drum-Taps," University of Nebraska, 1995, (<http://www.whitmanarchive.org>).

<sup>10</sup> John Ruskin (1819-1900) was an English art critic and social thinker who is also remembered as a poet and artist. In his early works, he used to defend the work of the English Romantic landscape painter Joseph Turner

voices are heard. Such a democracy should emerge from the common school education and is necessarily newspaper-based. It is also necessarily aesthetically concerned; for it is perhaps only through the aesthetic that it can homogenize such a variety of American races and idioms into a uniquely American civilization. In other words, this high culture is to be the product of artistic presentations and forms. It will be compositional, and proportion and taste will be integral to it. However, this is not to mean that James was exclusively democratic in the way of the American gentry, for in the promotion of democracy he also believed in the social responsibility of a cultural elite. For example, the "hermeneutic education" that Paul Armstrong says his late novels provide against a superficial mass literature and culture, is an expression of this sense of responsibility which also defines the social function of his art.

Another feature of such American high culture is its discursivity. It is necessarily formed in a language space and its development is possible in the evolution of discourse. And satisfying (the English) speech as "the great homogenizer of all the races" (Buitenhuis, 1970: 203) is essential to it. Therefore, for the evolution of culture the English language should be trimmed of all its historical corruptions. Such a purified idiom, easily as it flows on the tongue, easily also trims away the undue conducts in men and changes them to civilized and civilizing agents, because conversation conveys sincerity and shows linguistic accuracies. The perceptions and

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(1775-1851), and believed that an understanding of art depends upon rejecting the conventions for understanding the nature through direct observation. He insisted that the artists should observe the nature deeply, directly, and objectively. He believed that it is with truth that art should communicate. However, he insisted that in addition to skill, communicating with truth needs a moral outlook also. In this way, in his later works Ruskin showed more inclination to the interconnections of the cultural, social, and moral problems. He distinguished the "Aesthetic" from what he called the "theoretic." The "Aesthetic" is the sensual and intellectual beauty while the "Theoretic" is spiritual beauty. Pure beauty is not a question of the mind or intellect but is mainly a question of the heart and feeling. It is pleasure, but not intellect, which is (more) beautiful. Perfect taste is the ability to take the greatest degrees of moral pleasure and satisfaction. Therefore, the beautiful and the moral are similar in quality, but they are opposed to the modes of judgment which falls within the realm of the intellect. It is the moral, but not the sensual or the intellectual, that should determine the beautiful. Thus, Ruskin considers the sensual and the moral in a single category. Artistic pleasure is within the boundary of the moral. He described the sense of the "theoretic" not as the ability to perceive and appreciate custom, but as the ability to perceive and appreciate the ideas of beauty. This is so because the aesthetic is more concerned with the sensual, with the sensibilities, because when we are concerned with it we sink into amusement; and although our morbid senses get pleasure, but our souls go to sleep. The aesthetic is "the animal consciousness of the pleasantness" but the theoretic is "the exulting, reverent, and grateful perception" of pleasure. Theoria is a gift of god, it is a full comprehension and contemplation of the beautiful. Pure beauty is dependent on a sensual pleasure which is accompanied with joy, with love, with intelligent kindness, and with thankfulness and veneration towards that intelligence itself. Therefore, the sensation of beauty is neither sensual nor intellectual, but is dependent on a pure, right, and open state of the heart. (This footnote is a reading on Shrimpton, 1999: 131-151).

sensibilities stored in language are a key to the mysterious lock of the consciousness where, as Buitenhuis quotes from James again, "the interest of tone is the interest of manners, and the interest of manners is the interest of morals, and the interest of morals is the interest of civilization ..." (ibid: 205). It is through speech that the standards of behavior are maintained and transferred to the next generations. (The English) language, when purified, animates our taste, restores our discipline, and savors our critical spirit.

### **XIII. Historicizing the Subjectivity in Experience**

In "The Evidence of Experience" Joan W. Scott acknowledges writing not as a source of knowledge but as a reproduction of the knowledge earned through experience. In re-enacting past history, the historian directly communicates with the other subjects and experiences. His direct communication with historical subjects and positions makes experience into a self-evident truth, for it is the outcome of the historian's close contact with the referent of experience. This implies a direct and immediate interaction between the present and previous narratives which documents past experiences. Therefore, it adds to the dimensions of life and makes it into a vivified reality. This shared and self-sufficient experience is an original, referential, and uncontestable source of resistance. However, such a merit of resistance is no discursive attribution. It is not a location in the written history but in the subject of experience, in the consciousness that nourishes the experience. And the subject of experience is the reification of the agency to call the past histories into question.

This process of experience authorization is the rhetoric for reading history, for an economy of change through the annulment of overwhelming translations of the real. Insofar as experience is considered in this sense, the vision of the subject (of experience) is beyond the questions of language and history (like how the subject is made or how it develops its vision), because difference should be a plea to the experience itself. The vision of the subject of experience should also be the criterion. It has the needed agency, and its authority is an innate attribution in it. Such a self-sufficient authoritative experience is the meaning of reproducing the history through inventing institutions for the recognition of the (hitherto) repressed subject-positions

like gender, ethnicity, race, and sex. In this way, although these positions cannot be limited in a certain history, history is the context where experience makes itself visible. This visibility of experience means to discover the hidden logic of history, to discover for example that femininity and masculinity are constructed in a same space and are put into a same system (in a system for example the logic of which is the absence or presence of the phallus). In this way, it seems that history constitutes difference only relationally. Therefore, we need a process for re-enacting history, for historicizing experience; that is, we need to establish discursive spaces (processes) where the historically repressed experiences can express themselves. This is not the dialogue of individuals but the interaction of experiences or subject positions.

A further face of experience is seen in a 'foundationalist' discourse to which there is a recent turn of interest. Like categories and presumptions, experience is, in this sense, a foundation of history without which it cannot be analyzed. If the presence in history of some presumptions, ideologies, or moral perspectives can make it ordered, the lack of such positions will impose nihilism and anarchy on. The purpose of the sociology of knowledge, cultural anthropology, and feminist theory is to analyze the formation and development of history. However, the connotations of experience are more varied and elusive than all this: how people make their mentalities, how they behave in economy, in society, and in culture, and how they are influenced in thought and action by their unconscious motives. The history of socialism searches for how a certain discipline is internalized in a society, and for the formation of 'agency' in people. Cultural history takes use of symbolic analysis to study the behavior. Political history is the study of rational action, while intellectual history is interested in how thought originates in the mind of individuals. All these areas of research hold that experience is integrated to the formation of history.

Scott attempts to clarify the historical meanings of 'experience' as Raymond Williams has discussed it in *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (1976). In the eighteenth century, 'experience' implied the knowledge that the humans used to produce through analyzing the past events by conscious observation. After that, it came to mean "a particular kind of consciousness" (Scott, 1991: 781) that could be different from 'reason' or 'knowledge.' However, in the twentieth century it firstly

suggested a "full and active awareness" (ibid) that included both thought and feeling. As a 'subjective witness,' it was spontaneous, truthful, and trustworthy, and was a subjective process that the individuals consciously developed in themselves. But later on it came to mean "influences external to individuals" (ibid). It was the influence of the social, political, cultural, ... spaces over people. Such spaces included the prevailing conditions, institutions, and ideologies in which they would pass their lives. Such environments, outside of the individuals as they were, did not include their thoughts or considerations, but the individuals would react to them.

The formation of experience in the subjective means the existence or constitution of the individual and his consciousness. But if experience is objective, the external impressions of the individual are the materials on which his consciousness acts. Speaking about experience makes us take the presence of the people for granted, for it is the ground for the formation of subjectivity and the meaning of the naturalization of certain categories (man/woman, black/white, ...) by treating them as the given characteristics of individuals. Experience is also the starting point of ideological systems; and is thereby history-making. This is the way the individual is situated in social reality and becomes part of it through pursuing his pleasures and implementing his desires. In doing this, and as he also comprehends social relations, the individual is socialized into appropriate outlooks and behaviors. Experience is the transmutation of structure into process. It is the way the subject re-enters into history, implements himself or herself in the social reality, and supports his or her social being. It is the occasion when the thought and feeling of the individual influence her social space and are influenced by it, the time when she is integrated into her social being and her consciousness starts to get realized. This is the occasion the individual joins the structural for making a coherent whole.

Scott claims that "through a direct contact between the historian's perception and reality" (Scott, 1991: 789) man re-enacts past experiences. Such regular contacts change the historian to an autonomous source of knowledge when autonomy is the result of his absolutely free and independent initiations. This means that the statements and actions of the historian are standard only so far as he thinks independently. To put it another way, it is his power of independent creation in a free

space that makes him not only an autonomous but also a trustworthy source of knowledge. In this case the historian is the owner of his thought. To think independently means that one is independent, and one's independence means one's ability to read the (past) history and the authority of the knowledge that one produces. To think independently makes an independent person and grounds the identity of the individual. As a universal foundationalist discourse, experience is the creation of an independent status for human agents by providing something which Scott calls "intersubjective communication" (Scott, 1991: 789). Is it the reaffirmation of the existence of individuals as thinking beings outside of language? What Scott calls "rational consensus in the community of free individuals" is the guarantee of a continuous confluence of adolescent and independent perspectives for the possibility of a variety of criticisms, commentaries, and forms of life. It is here that experience gets multiplied, and different meanings are bestowed upon it. Experience is also the guarantee of our self-understanding. It enables us to make a unified whole of our past, present, and future. This continuous quality of history is the realm where experience is historicized.

Historical experience helps us to understand the positions and categories of a society, and to uncover and relativize them. It is a discipline for recognizing the processes in which such categories and subject-positions are constructed. This reconstructive (or deconstructive) status of literary experience implies the potential rebirth of the individual, society, and history. But in the experience of literature, the agency of the history-making subjects (actors) is situational and positional rather than autonomous. In other words, these subjects are not self-sufficient but take their power through undertaking situational roles and by the relations they develop with others in that situation. Subjectivity means to be the subject of certain circumstances of being when a subject is at the same time endowed with agency through the functions she performs in that condition, i.e., through the (ideal) perspectives that the subject develops in the concepts of her existence on the basis of which she defines the circumstances of her being. These subjects are discursive in constitution, and the formation of experience is a linguistic event. Since discourse is a shared process,

experience is both collective and individual. It is constitutional as well as reconstructive.

Winfried Fluck links this subject-making feature of literary experience with a "revisionist view," with a "neo-historical" perspective where the literary experience implies that there is "a secret complicity" between "the autonomous artist" and the "dominant values" (Fluck, 1994: 41). This idea is, I think, in agreement with Scott's viewpoint about "the ability of the historian to reenact past experience" that she says "is tied to his authority" (Scott, 1991: 783). Scott believes in the historian's ability to (re)make history. Fluck also believes that the artist (literary or whatever) can give order and discipline to the individual and society. But if the latter quotes from R. G. Collingwood to attribute the historian's autonomy to his "own initiative," the former suggests that the power of the artist is the outcome of an aesthetic ground. However, if Scott's experience is (sometimes) a linguistic event, Fluck's aestheticism is also perhaps mainly linguistic; for he suggests that one of the real manifestations of the aesthetic disciplinary power is the literary space.

To show "the circulation of a faceless power through the literary text in order to reverse existing hierarchies" (Fluck, 1994: 42), Fluck discusses some aspects of the literary aesthetics of Henry James. Such aspects include the power both "in and of the novel": how characters make their subjectivity through the exercise of their power upon each other and also through the implementation of their power to construct the novelistic reality, and how the reader (who watches the scene in the dramatization of the story as he reads it) is civilized and disciplined to certain conducts of behavior as he realizes the circulation of the symbolic power among the characters. If for Scott experience is primarily the result of vision, for Fluck it also takes root mainly from vision in language, because it is in "the act of seeing" that the power in and of the story is conveyed to the character and reader. He suggests that the relations between theater and seeing add to the disciplining power of the fiction of James:

Just as theatricality within the novel invites watchfulness, so the Jamesian text in its deliberate staging of acts of seeing constitutes the reader as spectator and makes him reenact the disciplinary practices which pervades the text: "In the largest sense, to be seen is to be encompassed by a right of supervision" (*Art of Power* 41). Whatever stages itself, also invites

surveillance. The aesthetic power of the text, embodied in skillful theatricality, thus enhances the novel's effectiveness as a training ground for the art of surveillance and disciplining (Fluck, 1994: 43).

Scott suggests that experience and knowledge shared by the majority of the individuals in a social reality increases the forms of life by helping them to expand their perspectives and trust in the interpretations of other individuals. However, Fluck considers both good and bad effects for aesthetic pluralism, because on the one hand, it decreases mutual understanding, threatens consensus, and shakes the foundations of the social reality. On the other hand, it is the background of a culture of "expressive individualism" where self-realization is fundamental. In such neo-historical outlooks, the literary text itself is not the object of study. Instead, the study wants to propose new ways for analyzing discursive productions of the social and political reality as complex and contradictory processes. New historical studies of literature are involved in historicizing the notion of experience. In this way, some of the questions of literary representation in new historicism are: the social categories, the concept of language and personal understanding, the connection of the personal identity with the social constraint, the production of knowledge about the self in discourse, the connection between the private and the public, and the determination of the subject by the social and the economic. A new historical study struggles to track the appropriation of language, and to situate and conceptualize it.

Thus, a neo-historical reading of literature is mainly a study of change. In a study of the literary text for locating the relationships between words and things, the neo-historical analyst intends to pass to a kind of study that takes, as Scott says, "all categories of analysis as contextual, contested, and contingent" (Scott, 1991: 796). Such an analysis is for discovering how literature represents the cancellation of a historical period and the emergence of another one. Experience in this sense is interpretive, and the new historical subject is formed via the imposition of new directions on history when history takes the new will for granted and ascribes new games to it. The formation of neo-historical experience is processional. Such experiences are neither self-evident nor straightforward. It is individual as well as

collective, and is always inclined to call its origin into question to disfigure the prevailing history and offer new historical bases.

The present reader believes that the fiction of Henry James gratifies the aesthetic through blurring the possibility of referencing, reasoning, and philosophizing, and through limiting "the dictates of the will." James often makes it difficult to discover the meanings and references of "it," and the aesthetic transfers us closer to the real. "It" is a riddle which often remains unsolved to the end of the story, and what we can do about it often remains the subject of an uneasy guess. If the discourse is formed by discovering the meaning of such references, the meaning of the story is vague, relative, and paradoxical. This leads to the idea that the consciousness (the self, the will) is also a riddle. We know that the consciousness is already there in us, but we never know its true state. Therefore, in reading James a key question is how the self or the subject is constituted.

The question of experience in Foucault seems not identical with that of the self or identity. Life is a flux of change, and experience is a process of problematization. Our experiences are constructed as we engage ourselves with real life, pose problems to our thought, and struggle to solve them. Such a process is like the spiritual movement of Maggie when she starts to deconstruct the texts of Amerigo and Charlotte by thinking about how she can solve her own problems. The novel shows her entangled in a series of problems; and she can prove her self only if she develops a series of experiences by solving her problems. Representation is therefore a series of problematizations, and means a totality of discursive practices that introduce something as an object of thought. In the fiction of James a representational question is how one controls oneself and integrates his control into practices with others. This is also related to how one can practice his freedom.

Nietzsche and Foucault believe that experience is constructed by customs, practices, and institutions in which one lives and grows. They historicize the self and experience, and think that we can modify our social being because our social environment is subject to change. Self is not a given or a metaphysical essence that should be discovered, but is an identity that should be constructed. For example, I am other than what I now do, think, or desire, but am the creature which is made in the

social context. As the social and cultural forces shift, my self is also unstable and mysterious.

At the end of *The Golden Bowl*, Maggie knows many things about the affair of Charlotte with her own husband. But when Charlotte and Adam are at the threshold of their voyage back to America, Maggie meets her, not to take revenge of her by informing her that she knows everything about her misdeeds, but to pretend that she thinks Charlotte is a good and moral woman and that she does not think anything wrong about her (or if she meets her to take revenge, she does so in her own way which is Jamesian.). Maggie's renunciation is a method of remaking her identity through the promotion of her perspective, for perhaps a good thing is now to ask what the outcome would have been if Maggie had done otherwise. Such renunciations guarantee epistemological initiations which provide the character and reader with good occasions to think about how they can change their being, how they can insert themselves in the social context through their critical thinking; for their minds could otherwise be misguided and their energy misused. To put it another way, if Lambert Strether in *The Ambassadors* had accepted Maria Gostrey's offer of herself and had accepted to live with her in Europe, or in *The Wings of the Dove*, if Merton Densher had chosen to have the money of Milly Theale and to marry Kate Croy, or if Maggie, in *The Golden Bowl*, had not pretended negligence about the affair of Charlotte and her own husband, we would have lost the chances to think critically about their and our better choices. That would mean the deterioration of our social beings and the cancellation of our histories. In the fiction of James, acts of renunciation guarantee the making of critical selves, for we find the space to conceptualize our selves and to care for our selves.

A major feature of James's fiction, and of *The Golden Bowl* in particular, is that no unitary meaning can be considered as central to it, and it can serve different kinds of reading. Every reading of it conceptualizes it differently and produces different meanings. It also gives the reader no full set of data but gives the data partially while its reader should produce the missing part. The end of a dialogue, a chapter, or even a whole novel is not necessarily where the meaning gets completed or a process of contextualization terminates. In many situations a typical process of inference should

continue after the termination of a speech, a dialogue, or a whole reading. An example for such compulsory uninterrupted thoughtfulness is the very end of chapter 34:

'Then I've told you all I intended. Find out the rest-!'

'Find it out - ?' He waited.

She stood before him a moment - it took that time to go on. Depth upon depth of her situation, as she met his face, surged and sank within her; but with the effect somehow once more that they rather lifted her than let her drop. She had her feet somewhere through it all--it was her companion absolutely who was at sea. And she kept her feet; she pressed them to what was beneath her. She went over to the bell beside the chimney and gave a ring that he could but take as a summons of her maid. It stopped everything for the present; it was an intimation to him to go and dress. But she had to insist. "Find out for yourself!" (James, 1995: 350).

This passage is an amazing reading. It makes us curious about why Charlotte and the Prince have been snubbing Maggie so decisively, and creates in the reader a space of genuine intellectual bewilderment where the consciousness operates on the structures of language to produce virtual reality. However, it gives no clear answer to such questions but leaves the reader alone to discover how Maggie succeeds in reading the text of their conspiracy through the economy of her silence, for example. It is only in such a space of intellectual bewilderment, aroused by James's reality-making language, that the reader can realize the role of Maggie's uninterrupted silence in adding to her thoughtfulness and irrigating her intelligence. In other words, the fiction of James is for us to read. However, it is not for taking the meaning but is for making the meaning. It is, as the bridge playing scene in chapter 33 seems to be for Maggie, "no more, after all, than a matter of interpretation, differing always for a different interpreter" (James, 1995: 372). In that dialogue, Maggie understands that her husband is feeling guilty for his past conspiracies and misdeeds; but she is now full enough of experience to make use of his compunction in a reasonable way, not for defaming him but only for helping him to "Only *see*, see that I see, and make up your mind, on this new basis, at your convenience" (ibid: 339). In this way, it is perhaps not vain to suggest that although Amerigo's or Charlotte's gilded bowl of conspiracy is already

shattered but the golden bowl of Maggie's noble patience and virtuous intelligence is as solid as the history of man's life is solid.



## **Chapter Eight**

### **Conclusion**

Henry James (April 15, 1843 – February 28, 1916) was a very prolific writer, and his narrative fiction is a voluminous case of reading. The work in his major phase, on which the present project mainly focuses, is formally and thematically quite complicated and eccentric, and seems almost bizarre. On the other hand, modern literary theory and criticism, in the context of which I have attempted to read James, is a huge network of complicated ideas of which every nodal point, every theory or style of reading and thinking, has a link to every other nodal point. Therefore, reading James in the context of modern literary theory is beyond the scope of a doctoral research project, and needs perhaps the whole lifetime of a scholar.

However, I have taken to write a doctoral research project on his fiction, because I think it has opened new ways to the institution of literature and its affiliations. The work of James has changed the ways of English literature, and has added much to its potential. Thanks to his contribution, a literary work is no longer only a store of information for passive or submissive reading, but is a space for interactive interpretation and critical appreciation. That is, James used language not as a means of communication but as a space of signification, a realm of representation. I attempt to present the arguments of this conclusion in two lines: (I) James, (II) structuralism and its aftermath. Firstly, I will sketch the influence of James in modernizing the "house of fiction" in two phases: (A) his stylistic innovations and technical skills, (B) his ideas about reading and representation. After that, I will discuss the applicability of some theories of (A) structuralism and (B) post-structuralism to the fiction of James.

In this research "structuralism" is discussed as a general term which also laid the ground for deconstructive and new-historical ideas. At a glance, the American Henry James and the Swiss Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) may be found as having little in common. But the fact that they were contemporaneous is perhaps not accidental. When World War I ended in 1918 (two years after the death of James and five years after that of Saussure), their contributions to literature and linguistics had provided the ground for a new series of innovative approaches to language and fiction. In this context, in the second part of this conclusion I will argue that the application of new

ideas of language in the fiction of James is complementary to the structural theories of Saussure about language as a system of signs and relations, and that his fiction can therefore be analyzed structurally and post-structurally.

## **I. James**

### **A. James's Stylistic Innovations and Technical Skills**

In the later style of James the reader is usually less concerned with meaning. Instead, his main concern is the narrative form and technique, that is, how the story works. The application of the following and other narrative strategies and representational techniques in the fiction of James turn it into a perpetual search not for "substance" or meaning but for style and method: an "absolute and absent" search, the unreliable narrator, the indirect presentation, the "misplaced middle," the strategy of silence, the high capacity of dialogism, the confidant character, the nature of suspense, the circular movement of discourse, the changing "community of vision," nominalization and abstraction, the 'in-between' mode of discourse, the role of relations in his discourse, the "as if" technique that undermines perception as an epistemological certainty, the use of the past participle that makes perception inaccessible, and the characters who remain unknown to the end of his story.

Searching for something in the story that is "absolute and absent" implies, in short, that a narrative does not have any single exhaustive meaning but is a design or a map for searching, a blueprint for interpretation. It is assumed that there is neither a final reading nor a final meaning, because a narrative is a language construction with many hidden layers of meaning which can be revealed in different (individual) readings. Nevertheless, the forms of modern narrative perpetually hide the meaning, so that reading means searching for something that is always absent. What is present is the absence of a final meaning, and what is absolute or genuine is the act of searching. In this strategy of reading James, central roles should be considered both for the reader and language.

Sometimes the author prefers to absent himself from the scene of discourse and speak, instead, through the mouth of a first-person or third-person character who is an unreliable deputy. One novelist may employ a drunkard person for this purpose, while

another one may use a mentally retarded guy who does not understand the relation between cause and effect, a negro slave on whom nobody may trust, a 12-year-old boy who is a first-class liar, a precocious daughter who looks at the things quite naively, a loner in whose mind nobody knows what is going on, or a dreamy person whose speech makes you even more confused, etc. One of James's unreliable narrators is the un-named fallible critic in "The Figure in the Carpet." After he accepts to review Hugh Vereker's recently published story, he racks his mind to understand the meaning of it, but he never understands it. Another Jamesian unreliable narrator is the young governess who tells "The Turn of the Screw" and whose feelings about the children, Flora and Miles, nobody knows. When she speaks about the "corruption" of these children, the reader cannot understand if she means they are corrupted by the ghosts of Quint and Jessel or by her own sickly imaginations. However, at the end of the story one thing becomes clear: the desire to possess the human soul has led to a deadly result. In this story James illustrates the two opposing forces of generation and destruction perhaps better than anywhere else. The scenario of an unreliable narrator is a major characteristic of modern fiction that challenges reading to become a serious act of critical appreciation by casting doubt in the reader about the legitimacy and rightness of the talks of such characters. It is also a policy for dispossessing literary discourse of its previously unique rank and bringing it more into the context of real life. In this way, it guarantees the dramatic effect of the story, and its essential verisimilitude.

Wayne C. Booth argues that an unreliable narrator offers three advantages in modern fiction. The first advantage is "the pleasure of secret communication" (Booth, 1961: 301). In the course of story-telling, when the author is silent and out of sight, or when he is sharing his ideas with the narrator, the reader has the occasion to start a hidden communication with the narrator. The author sits in the back and observes the narrator who is in the fore, and the reader is licensed to accept or reject what he hears from the narrator. The next advantage of unreliable narrator is "the pleasure of deciphering" (Booth, 1961: 301). A piece of fiction is a cultural package, and the absence of the author implies that for understanding it the reader and/or narrator should decode its data in the contexts both of its production and its reading. This is a

hermeneutic activity the outcome of which is the possibility of new horizons of knowledge through criticism and interpretation. And the last advantage of an unreliable narrator is "the pleasure of collaboration" (ibid: 302) which guarantees making readers. Different people may read a same story differently. However, the use of a certain set of norms and conventions makes the story into a field of communication in which the users develop new modes of perception and promote their capacity of mutual understanding.

Another technique in the fiction of James is indirect presentation. When the author disappears from discourse and renounces the privilege of direct intervention, the story on the one hand baffles the reader so that he may get confused what he should search and what is the right path to it. On the other hand, it enriches the associations of the story to a large extent. In "The Figure in the Carpet," when it becomes clear that the fallible narrator-critic is deficient to do his job, the relation between the author, the character, and the reader becomes more complicated, and the responsibility of the reader gets enlarged, because the story is presented to him without any authorial evaluation or interpretation. However, in *The Ambassadors* such indirection is more amply beneficial. It frees the narrator from the stronghold of literary conventions and helps him to control the story from the outside. Percy Lubbock argues that indirect presentation allows James to compress discourse while he loses no important detail of it. In this way, the narrator controls the story better than in direct presentation, and the reader activates his senses and shares the ideas of the story with the narrator and characters. Lubbock comments that indirect presentation makes Strether and Raskolnikov<sup>1</sup> able

to project their view of the world, to picture it for the reader, as they might be if they spoke in person. The difference is in the fact that we now see the very sources of the activity within them; we not only share their vision, we watch them absorbing it. Strether in particular, with a mind working so diligently upon every grain of his experience, is a most luminous painter of the world in which he moves—a small circle, but nothing in it escapes him, and he imparts his summary of a thousand matters to the reader; the view that he opens is as panoramic, often enough, as any of Thackeray's sweeping surveys, only the scale is different, with a word barely

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<sup>1</sup> Rodion Romanovich Raskolnikov is the major character in Feodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*.

breathed in space of a dialogue, minutes for months, a turn of hand or an intercepted glance for a chronicle of crime or adulterous intrigue. That liberty, therefore, of standing above the story and taking a broad view of many things, of transcending the limits of the immediate scene—nothing of this is sacrificed by the author's steady advance in the direction of drama. The man's mind has become visible, phenomenal, dramatic; but in acting its part it still lends us eyes, is still an opportunity of extended vision (Lubbock: 1954: 148-149).

A further facet of the fiction of James is that he seldom employs an omniscient narrator but uses precarious and unstable point of views that make reading even more challenging. Although the Jamesian story may occasionally show us the path along which we should search, the collision of different perspectives in the story makes the act of reading greatly risky. Joseph Warren Beach remarks that "The stories of James are records of seeing rather than of doing. ... The process of the story is always more or less what Mr. James himself calls in one case a 'process of vision'" (Beach, 1954: 56). Thus, in such stories the point of view has ample significance. However, in the selection of a point of view James has two criteria at least. One is what Beach calls, "a steady consistency of effect" (ibid: 60). In the opening of the story, the main character usually has a general design or plan in his mind, and the selection and modification of the point of view by the author is so that the selected plan has the most consistent effect upon the reader. Another criterion is the possibility for the reader to closely trace the character's thoughts and feelings. James likes his readers to talk about life with his characters and to live their lives with them.

When the story has more than one commentator or observer, James uses "the device of alternating points of view" (ibid: 66), for he thinks that it helps him to add to the 'unity' and 'intensity' of the work. In *The Golden Bowl*, the first part of the story is given mainly from the perspective of the Prince Amerigo while the second part is given from that of the Princess Maggie. But Maggie has more than one function. As the wife of the Prince, when she understands about his liaison with her step-mother, she performs a series of (speech) acts and regenerates their endangered lives. Meantime, as she is the commentator of the story also, the reader and other characters see everything from her point of view. And in *The Wings of the Dove* the story is (objectively) exposed to the reader from the perspectives of Kate and Milly and

Densher. However, in *The Ambassadors* the principle of composition allows the story to have only one center, and this one center is placed in the consciousness of Strether the hero. This means that the reader is required to see every thing from the eye and mind of this character. In stories like this, the consciousness of the observer is the whole field of which the author provides his materials. In addition, due to the law of "the integrity of the objects represented" (Beach, 1954: 62) in *What Maisie Knew*, the author inevitably represents some of his materials from outside of the consciousness of Maisie the main character, because she is only a very young and naive girl who does not understand the meaning of many happenings.

Another type of point of view in James is the confidant character. He uses it as a technique for crediting the reader and other characters with the privilege to share the ideas of the story more freely and daringly. The reader and characters of James may not be able to contribute effectively in the making of the discourse, because in the immediate presence of the all-knowing author they may feel frightened or humiliated. But intervening in the author-character negotiations, the confidant character, who is often a woman (Mrs. Stringham in *The Wings of the Dove*, Maria Gostrey in *The Ambassadors*, Fanny Assingham in *The Golden Bowl*), defines a secure realm into which the author does not allow himself to enter, and the character can therefore more confidently participate in manufacturing the narrative. In addition, and along with James's commitment to help in the development of the (cultural) relations between Europe and America, the confidant character faithfully advises the hero as he attempts to understand the new situations and expand his cultural consciousness. Miss. Gostrey, who would like to welcome the new comers to European culture, takes the honorary position of a guide in Paris. When Strether talks about his realization of the new situations, she patiently listens to him and encourages him to expand his links with Parisian culture. And Fanny Assingham not only adds a lot to the complication of the story, but also helps the characters to handle their predicaments in their own ways. In this way, the confidant character takes a double role. On the one hand, she is a useful device for the author to engineer his story as a language construction. On the other hand, she helps the hero to convey the idea of the story from his mind to his tongue, to dramatize his perspectives, to realize them and make them ready for the

purpose of the story. The use of such precarious and alternating point of views in the fiction of James has more than one result. One is that his reader must always be a discriminating watcher, critic, interpreter. Another one is the relativity of the presented ideas, so that the right in the story is inextricably interwoven with the wrong. Therefore, the reader of James often feels as if on a precipice, that is, he feels that he is at the risk of falling, making deadly mistakes.

In the later style of James, there is a high degree of conflict among his characters. However, the conflict is of a certain kind, because representing the members of the higher middle classes of the London society, they make polite communities and are eager to follow the requirements of etiquette. The characters who take part in a dialogue do not interrupt each other. Instead, the listener politely and patiently listens to the speaker both to encourage him to talk and to find a way to reject him. The stronger side in the talk does not attempt to disgrace the weaker side. Instead, he rejects him critically but apologetically, and tries to show the superiority of his own speech and the inferiority of the speech of the other party. In this way, it seems that dialogue in James is not for humor or for dramatization, but is mainly for weaving the text of the story and revealing the facts of it.

Many of his characters are almost equal in personality, intelligence, and in social rank. They speak in the (pure) tongue of the London artists, they are not showy in their speech, they do not blunder in talk, and their English is standard rather than colloquial. They can speak in long parenthetical sentences which are in need of analysis and which are occasionally left unfinished. For weaving the text of the story, the Jamesian dialogue is organic and systematic. He uses dialogue to admit his characters into different scenes of the story, and to help them tell their tales. Dialogue is also used for exchanging ideas about these facts. Such a dialogue is held often in questions and answers. Firstly, a participant asks a question. Then, the other participant answers it in the form of another question which should be answered in its turn, or in the form of a tentative explanation of facts. When a participant says something, the other one takes it and passes it back to the first participant with some changes or without any change. And before a series of talks yields a result, it has produced enough energy for a next series. The dialogue continues in this way, and the

reader often mistakes which pronoun refers to which name. He often doubts, he reads again, and he goes forward while he is still vague about many things in the story. Or if the system of references is clear enough, by intentionally changing the reference of a pronoun, the other side of the talk renders it the space of a new interesting interpretation.

### **B. James's Ideas about Reading and Representation**

It seems that James sees a relation between life and representational art. Outside of art, life is as natural as it comes to us. It is an organism of which every thing is naturally arranged and bestowed upon us. There we feel that the truth is with us, that we are witnessing it, touching it. But what does art do with life? What happens to life in a story? The life in a story is not natural. The story re-arranges life and offers it in a new form, so that many aspects of it are highlighted while many others are eliminated. It fabricates or constructs life in such a way that it is more inclined to the cultural, to the beautiful. In this process, the ugliness of life is dominated by the aesthetic, and life gets more virility, more vibration. In this way, the natural real is changed to illusion, imagination, internalized regularity.

On the other side, representation in James depends not only on the author, but on the reader also. The life portrayed in a literary work is not more than a half-representation. It is incomplete, dead in actual fact. However, in the act of reading, this half-represented life keeps its soul alive and gets respiration. Now, a condition for the concretization of such a virtually manufactured life is that the reader compromises with the laws of representation. On the one hand, the reader knows that the life illustrated in the story is fictitious, illusory. On the other hand, the story induces a belief in him about the reality of the illusion. This is due to a selective process that works in representation which has its roots in consciousness, in human perception. In this context, it is argued that James "makes his readers" (Booth, 1961: 397), because each of his stories is a task for the reader to accomplish. And as he reads and re-creates the story, his consciousness develops. In *The Ambassadors*, identification takes place between the consciousness of Strether and that of the reader, and the transcendence of the hero's mind guarantees the transcendence of the reader's also.

But what is the function of language in the fabrication of life in a novel? Does it duplicate life? Does it make a new life different from the life outside of the book? It seems that language is incapable to show all the complexities of human life. However, language helps us to perceive life as a sequence of affairs, a series of aspects connected to each other. This kind of life perceived as a series of connections is vague and indeterminate. It is an in-between space, a quality that always moves to and fro. Such indeterminacy is compatible with the representation of life in great detail in realistic fiction, for it is in the space of its indeterminacies or gaps that language makes the reader use his imagination in the act of reading. Thus, language is the possibility of life to be regenerated in reading. Earlier it was argued that out of art it is as if life is brass: devoid from vividness and vibration. It was also argued that the author promotes the qualifications of life by adding to the dimensions of the aesthetic. And the role of the reader is to concretize the aesthetic, that is illusory, and create a happy life. Therefore, it seems that it is in language, and not in story, that the reader makes life; and the story is a space for the service of language, because out of story language is not applicable enough. Out of story is not life-like or domestic, but wild and far-fetched.

The Jamesian 'real' is different from the ordinary real, from what is surrounding us or what we feel in our day-by-day lives. For him the real is the product of language, the outcome of representation; and it originates from signification. Such a reality is no essence, but is a phenomenon that has reflected upon our consciousness via the activity of the mind in the realm of the sign. Therefore, it is not commonplace or material but is phenomenological, transcendental. Albeit it is perhaps the sequel of the ordinary or concrete real, it starts where the ordinary real ends, since however in logic it is like the ordinary real, in nature it is quite different from that. This implies that in the fiction of James we surpass the level of the commonplace real to study it on a higher and more complicated level. Thus, the real in James is a craft of language and representation.

A feature of the Jamesian transcendental reality is that it originates from a void, an absence, or an unavailability. For example, at the end of *The Wings of the Dove* we understand that Merton Densher can "never, never know what had been in Milly's

letter" (James, 2004: 702) that she has sent to him, because he gives the letter to Kate with its seal unbroken, and she tosses it over to the fire before reading it. Densher also cannot know the "turn" of Milly's act which can stand both for her death and for her decision to make a bequest for him. Kate's act causes him to miss the opportunity to grasp Milly's feelings at the moment of her death. Now, if we can propose that Milly's bequest embodies her experience, then Kate's act makes it wholesale unavailable or unattainable. However, there is a double tendency in Densher toward Milly's experience. On the one hand, he would like to recognize it. But he also never takes use of his privileged grasp of her experience. And the unattainability of her experience makes it capable to move toward the aesthetic. Thus, in James the real is the same as the aesthetic. We will always see Densher longing to be related with Milly. Such a desire guarantees the promotion of cultural status too.

## **II. Structuralism and Post-structuralism in James**

### **A. Structuralism**

Before Saussure theories of language were mimetic. The people believed that language has no structure of its own and therefore it takes its structure from the world. The philology before him used to study the language diachronically, that is, to study its changes over long spans of time. Language was something given, something the reality of which should be taken for granted. Although the philologists used to study the etymology, morphology, phonology, etc. of a given language, their investigations were limited to the performed or written documents of language, perhaps because no connection was yet discovered between mind and language. But Saussure changed the direction and subject matter of language studies, and structuralist theories of narrative originate from his studies of language. He did not reject the synchronic studies of language, but started to study it diachronically also, that is, to study its nature and functioning in certain time situations.

For Saussure language is a system. He investigated it at the two different levels of 'langue' and 'parole': langue is the deep structure of a language which is available in the mind of all its users and which all of them share. It is the blueprint of all language productions. Parole is the performed language, the language that is made and used by

the members of any certain language community. Saussure coined the term 'sign' also which is a meeting point of the signifier and the signified. The signifier is the written mark or spoken utterance, while the signified is the concept or meaning for which the signifier is standing. The sign is not a symbol that is identical with meaning, but is a mark which stands for a meaning. Thus, meaning is not inherent in the word, but is the result of the relations of the signs and their differences. It is arbitrary, conventional, and relational. In this way, if before Saussure language was structured on the basis of the world, after him it is in language, in narrative, that we structure our world.

This world-making power of literature stems mainly from the way it uses language. Structuralism does not intend to describe the meaning of a story, because the arbitrary and conventional relations between the signifier and signified implies that no certain meaning is already invested in any literary text. A literary text is a space only for the play of the sign, for the maneuver of language. Therefore, however the story gives no certain meaning; it is the space for the production of several different meanings. The meaning is an agreement between the text and the reader who is the agent of meaning, while the author is often absent from the text and has therefore almost no role in meaning. Therefore, the job of a structuralist reader of a text is to analyze the structures in it that make the meaning possible. Structuralism is also not interested to investigate individual literary texts. It searches in the institution of literature for a grammar (of it), for the overall structures on the basis of which the meaning of literary texts develops.

However, structuralism started to develop in anthropology perhaps sooner than in literature, because firstly it was Claude Levi-Strauss who discovered significant similarities between the structure of myth and that of language. A phoneme, which is the smallest unit of meaningful sound in a language, takes its meanings in and through its relationships with the structure of language. Likewise, a mytheme, which is the smallest unit in a myth that is shared with other related mythemes, gains meaning within the mythic structure. Therefore, the meaning of a story is dependent on the interaction of its mythemes. And as we can master the structure of language, we can master the structure of a myth also. And both language and myth provide us with spaces to translate our experiences into communicable meanings.

For Tzvetan Todorov, the grammatical model of a sentence can be applied to a narrative also. By applying the grammar of a sentence, the grammatical clause for instance or the subject and verb, we can discover the syntax of narrative. An aspect of his structuralism is a search for a "universal grammar" that is "the same for all men" (Todorov, 1977: 108). Todorov believed that grammar is not limited in language, but is a "psychological reality" which is at work in all symbolic activities of man. He described the minimal complete plot of a narrative as a movement from one equilibrium to another, and illustrated the working of this narrative grammar in some tales of the *Decameron*. Todorov argued that James's ghost stories, "De Grey: A Romance" for example, which came out in 1868 and "The Jolly Corner," which he wrote 40 years later in 1908, are typically the space of a non-homogenous "fantastic hesitation" which is particularly Jamesian. Other things that Todorov's structuralism highlights in James are the state of the real and its relation with our imagination, and the function of a thorough search which not only makes the structure of the story but also expands the consciousness of the reader. In *Poetics of Prose* he describes the work of James in this way:

This author grants no importance to the raw event but concentrates all his attention on the relation between the character and the event. Further, the core of a story will often be an absence (the hidden, the dead, the work of art) and its quest will be the only possible presence. Absence is an ideal and intangible goal; the prosaic presence is all we have to work with. Objects, "things" do not exist (or if they exist, do not interest James); what intrigues him is the experience his characters can have of objects. There is no "reality" except a psychic one; the material and physical fact is normally absent, and we never know anything about it except the way in which various persons can experience it. The fantastic narrative is necessarily centered upon a perception, and as such it serves Henry James, especially since the object of perception always has a phantasmal existence for him. But what interests James is the exploration of this "psychic reality," the scrutiny of every variety of the possible relations between subject and object. ... Here James makes a fundamental thematic choice: he prefers perception to action, relation with the object to the object itself, circular temporality to linear time, repetition to difference. ... for James, on the contrary, the only reality is imaginary, there are no facts but psychic ones. Truth is always a special case, someone's truth; ... We never reach absolute truth, the gold standard is lost, we are doomed to abide by

our perceptions and by our imagination—which moreover is not much different (Todorov, 1977: 184-185).

Roland Barthes believed that a narrative is a pure system. He tried to describe an identity between language and narrative (sentence and discourse), and believed that whatever structures language also structures narrative. He discussed the structure of narrative in three levels of functions, actions, and narration. On the level of functions, and perhaps for a better possibility of dealing with the narrative, it is divided into some units on the basis of their meaning. On the level of actions, a structural analyst should focus mainly on the definition of characters. Structuralism does not regard the character as a being or a psychological essence, but as a participant in the sphere of action. In this way, the character is defined not in what he is or was, but in what he does, in how he interacts with the people or the situation around him. However, on the level of narration, the narrative should be considered as a transaction between its giver and its taker. No narrative is formed unless someone gives it and someone else takes it. But who is the giver of narrative? Whether it is the author, an impersonal consciousness, or a character, Barthes notifies that the narrator of a story should not be mistaken with its real author. He also believes that in any narrative there are five codes at work to form a space of meaning through which the text runs: the proairetic code deals with the actions and behaviors, the hermeneutic code governs the disclosure of truth, the symbolic code controls the architecture of language, the semic code deals with the connotations of signifiers, and the cultural code deals with the social knowledge that the text discloses.

Jonathan Culler changed the direction of structuralism in the 1970s, for he mainly attempted to analyze the act of interpretation itself. He based his studies on an investigation of the text's language which he believed should be undertaken by the reader. Thus, shifting the attention from the text to the reader, he attempted to analyze the act of reading and interpretation to describe how readers read. Still another method of structural analysis of a literary text is the application of binary oppositions to it. For example, in the two binaries mind/body and light/darkness, there is a tendency in our mind to regard mind and light as superior to body and darkness. Some structuralists

assert that by devising a series of such binary operations in any literary text the reader can understand how it works. For example, one can consider whatever the protagonist does and says as connected with mind or light, and whatever the antagonist does and says as connected with body or darkness.

## **B. Post-structuralism**

"Post-structuralism" includes deconstructive approaches, feministic approaches, psychoanalytic theories, Marxisms, new historicisms, etc. after the twentieth-century linguistic turn. However, in the present research, it comprises mainly the Derridean deconstruction and Foucauldian new historicism. Post-structuralism was inaugurated as a reaction against structuralist rules for creating meaning, against the narrow conception of language and literature that it had adopted. Instead, post-structuralism considered language and literature as signifying systems in which the meaning was the outcome of the play (or relations) of the signs. Post-structuralism accepted neither the character as a psychological essence nor any function for the character in the production of meaning. However, post-structuralists believe that language and literature are not complete or closed signifying systems because, as systems, they are always changing. In addition, they search for a subject position that is able to know itself through signification, for if there is no subject position, there is no signification also. Post-structuralists see language and knowledge as problematic questions which the subject must resolve.

For a transfer from structuralism to deconstructionism, it suffices to mention how the studies of Todorov and Rimmon-Kenan on the fiction of James, on "The Figure in the Carpet" for example, differ from those of J. Hillis Miller. For Todorov, the Jamesian narrative is a quest for an "absolute and absent cause." Although this cause is not named, in the general movement of the story it has a significant role. It controls the author, the character, and the reader, and sets them forth on a close contribution. Rimmon-Kenan also approaches the story "scientifically." She argues that the ambiguity in the fiction of James makes it unreadable because every reading on it produces a series of meanings while at the same time it somehow rejects or nullifies those meanings. To say it another way, Rimmon-Kenan believes that the fiction of

James is unreadable because each reading on it is at the same time both true and false. On the other hand, what Todorov calls the absolute and absent cause in Jamesian narrative, Miller calls a "non-existence" or a "phantom projection." Miller argues that in the fiction of James the ground and figure are so integrally interwoven that the text perpetually deconstructs itself and demolishes its own discourse, so that a major concern of the reader is the undecidability or unreadability of the text. Miller terms this feature of James's fiction "catachresis." Rimmon-Kenan's approach (to the fiction of James) is so logical or rational that it does not allow the imagination to play freely in the interpretation of literature. Todorov's and Rimmon-Kenan's structuralisms are (objective) attempts to propose a science of literature, while Miller's deconstruction is an endeavor to see how in the realm of the imaginary scientific analysis demolishes itself.<sup>2</sup>

Structuralism is not only rule-based, but is also time-restricted. It regards the relation between the signifier and the signified as differential, arbitrary, and conventional. Nevertheless, after all these considerations, it considers a restricted one-to-one correspondence between a signifier and a signified. In structuralism there is no play (of the sign), and it is not able to justify itself with passage of the time. This is why it is often said that structuralism is not dynamic enough, that it is, like a skeleton, already out of date. However, post-structuralism is fully dynamic, for it works mainly by play. And it is more culturally inclined than structuralism, since as we pass from deconstruction to new historicism it destroys the prison-house of language and takes root from culture. Post-structuralists struggle against any rule-based logic of narrative, and search for a self-improving mechanism in which the play of the sign guarantees our exemption from stasis. They believe that the privilege in a binary opposition of one element over the other is not logical but is only a cultural construction. In this way, they claim that the binary opposition can be turned upside down so that the superior element becomes inferior and the inferior one becomes superior. If the play

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<sup>2</sup> Another discussion on "The Figure in the Carpet" is by Wolfgang Iser. Miller says that Iser "uses James's story as an opening illustration of the way readers have expected narratives to have kernel meanings which, once reached, will allow the reader to throw away the husk, so to speak, dismiss the surface details as superficial, mere means of access to the deeper significance. Once that is found, the story can be dispensed with as the vehicle of a separable meaning. Iser, of course, wants to argue that the meaning is in the details, but this too, as I have claimed, is part of the metaphysical paradigm" (Miller, 1980: 112, n.).

of the sign guarantees our freedom from stasis, we can adopt ourselves with new life systems through the formation of new experiences.

In the second page of "The Preface to the 25th Anniversary Edition" of *On Deconstruction: Theory and Practice after Structuralism*, Jonathan Culler writes

Deconstruction is never simple, however; it is not, Derrida insists, a school or a method, a philosophy or a practice, but something that happens, as when the arguments of a text undercut the presuppositions on which it relies or ...<sup>3</sup>

In this way, deconstruction is the space where a text is set against itself to see how it can transform its renovation. The purpose of the text in negotiation with its countertext is not, of course, to destroy itself, but is to eradicate its previous institutions and develop itself with the work of new agencies. In other words, in a deconstructive reading, the text decontextualizes and recontextualizes itself. Deconstruction is a mode of reading in which a text unties and re-situates itself. But what does it mean for a text to re-situate itself? It is the economy of its rebirth: the sign plays in it differently, it becomes the space for the activity of a different consciousness, and as new norms of language conform in it, it opens new horizons and resolves new conflicts and problems. The text analyzes its own structures, and in an exchange of discourses with its countertext, it repeats some of its previous structures and eliminates some others.

A deconstructive strategy of reading is reversing the hierarchy which Derrida called "metaphysics of presence." From the Aristotelian era, western thought has expressed itself hierarchically in the form of a series of binary oppositions. However, Derrida says that such hierarchies are neither given (natural), nor do they show the natural inclination of the mind. They are only constructions, the result of conventions that have been taken for granted. Therefore, they can and should be reversed, for they show no innate or natural privilege of one element over the other. For example, in the binary speech/writing, neither "speech" is innately superior to "writing" nor vice

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<sup>3</sup> This preface is in 14 pages. However, in this edition of the book, which was published in 2007 by Cornell University Press, it has received no pagination. Therefore, for easy referencing, the reader is informed that this citation has been extracted from the second page of this preface.

versa. In such a context, a deconstructive reader attempts to reverse such binaries, and show that not only is "speech" not privileged over "writing" for example, but also that "speech" originates from "writing." To give another example, in the later style of James, it is the metaphorical, the imaginary, that is a permanent subject of investigation, while the concrete real is perhaps too trivial to be regarded as a major subject of narrative. Therefore, it is not the concrete reality but the perceptions of the characters of reality that is the subject of investigation. Likewise, in the later style of James 'presence' is given no superiority to 'absence', it is the absence, the absence of a concrete real, the absence of a literal language, that is usually present.

Another mode of deconstructive operation in a narrative is emphasizing the marginal in opposition to the central via which the first is transplanted to the second, and the text becomes mainly decentered. A further mode of it is a reading like Shoshana Felman's on "The Turn of the Screw" where the binary opposition inside/outside is contradicted. Felman argues that the critic of this text stands both inside and outside of it. Standing outside of it, he interprets it with a good deal of control over it. That is, he may feel that his interpretations are really his own. However, such texts have the potentiality to interpret themselves, and what the critic produces as interpretation, is in fact part of the discourse of the text, part of what it has dramatized, so that the reader is in a close control of the text. In this way, the text not only structures and re-writes itself, but it also reads and criticizes itself.

In the 1970s Derrida was decentering the long-term loci of meaning and power in western metaphysics, and the adherents of deconstruction were attempting to prove that the rhetorical language is potential to represent the whole world, and that there is therefore nothing outside of language, outside of the text. However, this claim and the overt detachment of literary studies from history provoked the so-called new-historicists to look at literature as a human discourse that, like philosophy, religion, etc., is determined by the social and cultural situation of its production. When it was inaugurated, new historicism started to re-connect literature to history. However, it had to challenge not only the old-historical assumption about the objectivity of history, but also the New Critical prejudice about the literary text as an autonomous work of art with a self-endowed and definite meaning. New historicism is a mode of

analysis which deals with the historicity of the text and its exercising of power through the medium of culture.

New historicism takes some of its roots from the ideas of the French philosopher Louis Althusser who described the role of ideology in different historical eras of a society. In each society, ideology establishes itself through institutions like culture, religion, politics, sport, and media as state apparatuses, and makes the people subordinated to the power-structure. In this way, ideology changes man from a biological creature to a social subject. Another influence on new historicism is the cultural anthropology of the American Clifford Geertz. For him, culture and behavior cannot be studied separately, for they are naturally intertwined. Culture is therefore a frame or context within which social events, behaviors, institutions, or processes can be meaningfully described. By "thick description" Clifford means a close and exact analysis of the historical, social, and cultural environment in which a text is created and consumed.

However, new historicism is based most strongly on the ideas of the French historian and philosopher Michel Foucault. From a Foucauldian perspective, history is neither linear with a beginning, middle, and end, nor is it teleological with a certain goal to achieve in the course of development. And he ascribes no clear causality to history. He argues that it is not clear why and how a certain historical episteme stops working and another one starts working (for example, why and how the Age of Enlightenment died in the second half of the 18th-century Europe and the Romantic movement originated). New historicists regard history as a series of interrelations of various discourses each of which is a subject to the dominating power-structure of any social and cultural era. On the one hand, they believe that a text is historical, for not only the author, but also the character and reader are social products of any given historical era. On the other hand, they regard history intertextual. The result of this inter-dependence of text and history is that they regard truth and meaning not as absolute and stable but as determined by discourse that is itself subject to power-relations.

Literature is not factual but subjective and representational. A literary text is the site of a number of verbal structures which represent the cultural constructs of a

particular society. Each of such constructs represents a hierarchy of relations, and symbolically reproduces the power relations which characterize a given society. In the act of reading, as one internalizes them, one gets positioned by the text as a means of surveillance that is in the service of the power structure. Literature is historical but not trans-historical. A literary text gives voice to a number of diversified and conflicting thoughts, and suggests the subversive forces in the period it was produced. Therefore, a literary text should be evaluated as influenced by the historical situation of its production. It should be criticized as part of a network of institutions, social practices, beliefs, and customs which mark the history of the era of its composition. Thus, seeing literature as historical implies that the human subject is unfree, that man is an ideological product which is dominated by the power-structure of his society.

For Foucault, the seemingly independent human "self" is the discursive product of a certain form of social power. For Stephen Greenblatt also, Renaissance literature and drama paved the way for the production of new forms of self. Both thinkers believe that such a concomitant emphasis on the power of discourse on the one hand, and discursivity of power on the other, open a way for understanding the function of the self. Self is thoroughly subordinate to the social formations from which it takes its coherence. However, in new historicism power is not perceived as controlling or oppressive only, for if it were so, the people would not obey it. Power is productive also, perhaps even a blessed endowment; and it is the productivity of power that renders it acceptable for the subjects. Power makes things, security for example or welfare. It changes the situations from bad to good, inspires the people to live with pleasure, and produces knowledge through discourse.

Living mainly in the second half of the nineteenth century, Henry James was both a traditional and a modernist story-writer. But the main focus of the present project is his "major phase," where he, perhaps intentionally, loses his interest in the English Victorian novel and adds to the dimensions of the thematics and stylistics of the modern fiction. However, although he has once again started to examine the old international theme of Europe-America relations, he is mainly dealing with new subjects like (the nature and function of) consciousness, reality, and representation, and to use new techniques like the unreliable narrator and the story with a "misplaced

middle." He has started to evaluate certain personal and social situations not, as in the traditional novel, to exemplify the wayward life of a homeless or a tramp for example, to illustrate a labor movement, or to discuss a philosophical subject, but mainly to represent the consciousness of a character through his engagement with different life situations and in the business of producing interpretive reality.

In addition, in the fiction of James such things are dramatized in a way that the reader is often concerned at the same time with the reality of language also. This means that he uses language as a space not only for the expansion of our insight or perspectives, but also for getting pleasure by engaging ourselves in experience-producing processes. All those unfinished and perspectival packages of information in his fiction help his readers and characters to produce new knowledge and experience. When such unfinished aspects or appearances are exposed to the reader, he attempts to complement them by the application to them of all his knowledge and experience. However, the transcendence of a consciousness is not explained or described in a report or through the tongue of an omniscient narrator, but is typically dramatized in the engagement of a character in a virtual life situation or through the analysis of an unreliable narrator. In addition to the factual unreliability of the narrator, the author is often absent from the discourse. The reader of James always needs to re-evaluate the observations of the narrator and characters, for James attempts to engage him in productive language spaces. I have attempted to illustrate his fiction as an effective space for the formation of consciousness in language, and for its activity in the production of interpretive and perspectival realities. In Jamesian narrative, such realities are the result of circular discourses and hermeneutic activities of the reader.

This is why I have ventured to approach James structurally and post-structurally. Structurally, I have undertaken to discuss it as a system of signs, to discuss the setting up of language in it as a social convention or a system of signs that are related to each other, and to show the functioning of the system in the production of meaning. It seems that the underlying structure of the Jamesian narrative is a never-ending search, for the meaning is always absent while what is present is only a perpetual search. I have attempted to discuss the narrative act of searching, and the constitutive rules and regulations that enforce such an activity. Deconstructively, my intention has been to

illustrate the perpetual abolishment of the signified through the appearance of new signifiers. As the result of such a process, in which the discourse perpetually cancels a series of signifiers for the insertion of a new series, the fiction of James proves itself very demanding, because what remains is always a long sequence of signifiers which suggest no certain signified. I have also attempted to discuss the role of signification and the play of the sign in his fiction. Language reproduces and renovates itself perhaps in the best way through the play of the sign, because it dramatizes the contribution of a number of factors that function in the play of it: the giver, the interpreter, and the taker of the narrative, etc. My argument is that the late style of James is not for naïve reading, but is for critical interpretation, since not only it provides many blanks in which the reader has to fill in, but it also always postpones the meaning.

In chapter seven, which is a new-historical analysis on *The Golden Bowl*, the argument is that James reduces history into questions of language and its meaning. Early in this story, he preserves a memory of the past (Renaissance) Rome. As he engages us in a context of past thoughts, conventions, activities, etc., we realize how the concept of value changes in different historical times. For example, in the first part of the novel, when Maggie still has no powerful discourse, the general atmosphere is, if not Victorian, not quite modernistic at least: the fate of the Prince in the new situation, the story of two loves and two marriages, why the first Amerigo-Charlotte love is futile, what will happen to their rekindled but unlawful love, etc. However, in the second part, when Maggie develops her outlooks and starts to communicate with the people in meaningful ways, the atmosphere becomes more modernistic: the formation of experience shown in bundles of appearances like the antiques in Adam's gallery, the (symbolic) representation of a consciousness in and out of language, the function of silent language and noble patience (passivity) in vanquishing an inhumane discourse and securing a damaged morality, etc. And the social ceremonies and cultural customs which the story represents and in which the Jamesian characters take part (like their tea parties, their card games, and their travels) all provide language spaces for the production of epistemological experience in collaborative projects.

When Maggie discovers that her husband and mother-in-law have fallen into a deadly sin, she appeals to marriage as a social (cultural) institution for helping them to regenerate themselves and return to (the state of lawfully married) life. The outcome of my argument is the relativism of history and culture. This concept of history is in agreement with Foucault's idea of "ruptures" implying that history is discontinuous and experience is subjected to historical changes. Also, it has been argued that new historicism regards literature not as independent from history but as a subject that should be studied in historical contexts. This means that reality and truth are political constructions, because they are relative, periodical, historical. New historicism provides the ground for reading literature in history, and for saving literary criticism from its redundant textuality in the 1960s and 1970s, and fusing it together with cultural criticism.

However, although new historicism may have become a history, or we may have arrived at a post-new-historical era, the traces of new historicism are on our critical ways. On the other hand, literature is still with us as "something pleasant" which serves as "the repository of the transcendent" (Porter, 1990: 254). If it is a space of mass education, it should provide us with occasions of applicable discursivity. Therefore, wherever we presently are, it seems that to achieve this goal we have a long way in front of us: to look more comprehensively to see what we can make (or re-make) in the field of language and literature. This does not mean that we should detach ourselves from the socio-cultural and/or historical studies of literature and should study it only textually. On the contrary, it is suggested that we should start to find new ways for evaluating the social, cultural, and historical realism in the context of literature, in the context of discursive structures of the verbal and critical art. This is because in such grounds we can frame useful discursive fields of interpretation and provide our readers with productive critical agenda that originate both from the text and the society (from imagination and reality).

However, for such a revisionary (or revolutionary) and updated look upon language and literature, we need to broaden our social text so that our marginal and subordinated cultures are once again fused with our dominating cultures and are brought together with them into appreciating and critical focus. A method for

constructing such a new model of discursivity is if our present thinkers (philosophers, experts of theology, social and political scientists, literary and cultural scholars, for example) recover the roots of our previous philosophies for providing us with serious epistemological and methodological questions in spaces of critical interpretation where we can discuss a wide spectrum of current questions. It is clear that in the establishment of such a tradition of critical theory the role of our long history of literature should not at all be overlooked, because literature is, in language, technique, and thematic variety, a unique space of discursivity. The virtuality of literary environments, characters, and conversations makes it possible for them to escape decadence. In this way, literature is the blueprint where we can perform the most truthful, the most long-lasting, and the most applicable critical activities in virtual spaces and draw the most realistic maps of the human life. Thus, if our society is in pain of a lack or inadequacy of a theory-making tradition, we should take pain for providing it with such a tradition through critiquing our every day life in the context of literary lives also. By establishing interdisciplinary research programs of social and cultural studies in our faculties of humanities, we can create effective interactions between the life inside and outside literature. As our graduate departments discuss seminars in philosophy, social theory, literary theory, political theory, history, art history, media studies, economic studies, and cultural anthropology, they learn how to appreciate the modern life as a fusion of all these themes and questions.

I hope the present study can excite the departments of English and American studies in Iran to take a more comprehensive look to realize what they can do about the fiction of Henry James. I also hope that it is the first link of a complete series of research projects on his fiction and critical theory. It is perhaps not futile to predict that the art of James will not get old. As long as we will get pleasure from reading fiction, and as long as we will need professional knowledge about language, literature, consciousness, and representation, it will be with us. In addition, it is a most useful space for structuralist and post-structuralist analyses. Therefore, the art of James is that which should be appreciated in Iran. If our students and literary scholars should like to start watching life through the numerous windows in the forefront of James's "house of fiction," I think his art should be included in our graduate curriculums.



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## **Appendix**

### **German Synopsis / Zusammenfassung auf Deutsch**

Die vorliegende Dissertation behandelt eine Auswahl der späten Werke von Henry James in strukturalistischer und poststrukturalistischer Lesart.

Einige wenige Aufsätze von u.a. Todorov und Culler behandeln James in strukturalistischer Weise. Es ist die Absicht dieser Dissertation ihre Ansätze nachzuvollziehen, weiterzuführen und sie durch post-strukturalistische Ansätze zu erweitern.

James war in seinen späten Werken weniger mit Bedeutung und Inhalt beschäftigt als mit Techniken und literarischen Strategien. James sah Sprache nicht als ein Mittel zur Kommunikation sondern als einen Raum für Bedeutungskonstruktion eben so später der Strukturalismus.

Statt eine eindeutige Geschichte zu erzählen, macht James ein Feld der Kommunikation auf, in dem gemeinsame Werte und Vorstellungen die Grundlage des gegenseitigen Verständnisses von Leser, Autor und Erzähler bilden.

Für James gibt die Literatur nicht das natürliche Leben wieder. Die Literatur kondensiert und verzerrt, sie ist ein Konstrukt, eine Fabrikation. Der Leser haucht dem Text Leben ein, indem er sich bewusst auf die Illusion des Textes einlässt. Das Reale bei James ist eine Illusion, ein Produkt von Sprache und Repräsentation, die in der Aushandlung zwischen Autor und Leser anhand des Textes unternommen wird.

Aus strukturalistischer Perspektive erschafft ein Text Welt durch Sprache. Der Text wird zu einem Feld für das Spiel der Zeichen, die zwischen dem Text und dem Leser Bedeutung entstehen lassen. Die strukturalistische Analyse hat weniger Interesse an der Bedeutung des individuellen Textes als an der inhärenten Grammatik der Zeichen und daran wie Bedeutung in dieser entsteht.

Die Relation von Zeichen steht auch bei den Poststrukturalisten im Zentrum. Sie betrachten jedoch nicht geschlossene Systeme. Für sie sind Strukturen fragmentarisch, immer in Bewegung (und somit historisch) und nicht zuletzt von Macht durchdrungen. Geschichtliche, kontextuelle und situationelle Verschiebungen und das „Spiel“ der Zeichen sind wichtig geworden. Ich diskutiere die Unterschiede zwischen

Strukturalismus und Poststrukturalismus anhand des Textes „*The Figure in the Carpet*“ wie er von Todorov und Rimmon-Kenan gelesen wurde gegenüber der Dekonstruktion von James' Werken durch Miller.

Die Neo-Historizisten setzten den Text in seinen historischen und nicht zuletzt machtpolitischen Kontext. Der einflussreichste Neu-Historizist Michel Foucault spricht der Geschichte nicht nur ihre Objektivität ab, sondern auch den historischen Prozessen ihre definierten Anfänge und Enden, Ziele und linearen Kausalitäten.

James beschrieb die Konstruktion von Realitäten von immer wechselnden Gesichtspunkten aus. Man kann seinen Gebrauch von Sprache als System von Zeichen sehen, die im Verhältnis zueinander Bedeutungspotentiale erschaffen. Diese verwirklichen sich erst im Dialog zwischen Text und Leser.

*The Golden Bowl* habe ich in einer neo-historizistischen Lesart gelesen. Wir sehen hier deutliche Veränderungen und Brüche in den Wertesystemen über die erzählte Zeit hinweg. Die Geschichte birgt keine absolute Wahrheit, sondern vielmehr wird die 'Wahrheit' des Textes bestimmt durch ein sich wandelndes Geflecht von Machtrelationen. Wahrheit ist lediglich ein politisches und historisches Konstrukt. Hierin stimmt James' Text mit den Theorien Foucaults überein.

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