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– Yashoda Chaulagain,

Rendering of Impressions in Ford Madox Ford's *The Good Soldier*

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Rendering of Impressions in Ford Madox Ford's *The Good Soldier*

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By

Yashoda Chaulagain

Central Department of English

T.U., Kirtipur, Kathmandu

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**Tribhuvan University**  
**Central Department of English**

**Letter of Recommendation**

Ms. Yashoda Chaulagain has completed her thesis entitled “Rendering of Impressions in Ford Madox Ford's *The Good Soldier*” under my supervision. She carried out her research from August 2009 to April 2010. I hereby recommend this thesis to be submitted for Viva Voce.

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Dr. Birendra Pandey

Supervisor

Date: -----

**Tribhuvan University**  
**Central Department of English**

**T.U., Kirtipur**

**Letter of Approval**

The thesis entitled "Rendering of Impressions in Ford Madox Ford's *The Good Soldier*" has been submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Yashoda Chaulagain has been approved by the undersigned members of the Thesis Committee.

Members of the Research Committee:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Internal Examiner

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
External Examiner

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Head  
Central Department of English

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Yashoda Chaulagain

## **Abstract**

Ford Madox Ford's *The Good Soldier* is a rendering of impressions as the major characters have no external reality but are simply the projections of the author's creative imagination. Rather than following a linear plot, it enters the mind of storyteller and follows his associated ideas in a tangled stream of consciousness. In the novel, the narrator expresses only his limited knowledge, impression, and perception about the characters in front of the reader. Most of the time, narrator tells his past experiences and the events which merely shocked him. There is a fusion of colors with the impressionist language, plot, narrative techniques, experiences, and limited knowledge of the narrator. The narrator John Dowell shows only his experiences, impressions, knowledge and events of the story which are shocking for him. The whole story weaves only narrator's perception.

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## I. Ford and Impressionism

The novel *The Good Soldier* (1915) is generally regarded to be one of the greatest novel. The author of the book Ford Madox Ford was born in London on December 17, 1873, he was named for his maternal grandfather, Ford adopted his subject's name and took it as his own. Ford was educated at the Praetorious School, Folkstone. Though he never attended college, he was fluent in several languages and was a prolific writer.

Ford's first novel, *The Brown Owl*, was published when he was eighteen, which was folk story illustrated by his grandfather. He got married in 1894, at the age of twenty-one, to Elise Martindale. Ford was notoriously unfaithful and had an affair with Elsie's sister, so, his marriage was not success. Because of this tension he suffered from mental breakdown in 1904, leading to his hospitalization. Although he and Elsie separated in 1908, they did not divorce, because but of the tenents of Catholicism.

In the early years of the twentieth century, Ford met the author Joseph Conrad and formed a friendship. They collaborated two books: *The Inheritors* in 1901 and *Romance* in 1903. Ford went onto write *The Fifth Queen* and other several novels after his friendship with Conrad. He also started a newspaper *English Review* in 1908. He was able to persuade some of the country's most recognized literary stars to publish their articles in it but Ford was forcefully dismissed from this magazine—in 1910. In the same year, in the charge of unable to pay child support to Elise he spent eight days in prison. Soon after, he started working on *The Good soldier*, and published it in 1915.

Ford moved to Paris and started another publication, *The Transatlantic Review* with the help of the writers from *Lost generation* that they are Ernest Hemingway,

Ezra Pound, Jean Rhys and Gertrude Stein. Ford had also colored his life with poetic experiences Ford's poetry was frequently published and he was included in the *Imagist Movement* that was started by Pound. After becoming involved with an American artist, Janice Biala, Ford began dividing his time between Europe and the United States. He died in Deauville, France, on June 27, 1939 at the age of sixty-six.

From the initial phase, the book, *The Good Soldier* got the new height of popularity thereby from 1915 to till now several publication houses have made their efforts to publish the book through different editions. Had the book not gained so much popularity, it would not have published in so large quantities and even by so many publications.

Ford's writing suggests generally the messy personal life that Ford must have been, living while writing his voluminous works. Ford's *The Good Soldier* is one of the masterpiece of modernism, a major experimental novel of enormous historical and artistic novel. In this sense, the novelist Rebecca West praised the book in a daily news article, noting that "It is as impossible to miss the light of its extreme beauty and wisdom as it would be to miss the full moon on a clear night. West goes on to praise the novel's cleverness and the obvious loveliness of the color and cadence of its language" (44).

Here, Rebecca praises in the style of the book and language of it. He says the book *The Good Soldier* covers the light and beauty like the full moon of the night in the sky. Likewise there is another critic Theodore Dreiser—who tells about the book by saying that "With all its faults of telling, it is an honest story, and there is no blinking of the commonplaces of our existence which so many find immoral and make such a variant effort to conceal" (155). However, Dreiser talks about the quality of the story.



He says there is not blinking of the places and existences of the people rather find immorality which makes the effort to the text.

Ford's tetralogy, *Parade's End*, *A Man Could Stand Up* and *The Last Post* are also major works in the modernist revolution, more massive than *The Good Soldier*. After these novels, there is a considerable drop in the quality of Ford's remaining fiction. Among his many voluminous works such as *A call* reward the reader with surprisingly high quality. Ford's achievement, then, was as a man of letters whose diverse contribution to modern literature is particularly as an editor and as a champion of modernist writers.

The novel *The Good Soldier's* literary importance has grown over the years, and in 1951, there was a resurgence of interest in Ford marked by the release of new editions of all his major works. Critics Mark Schorer, in an introduction to a reprinted edition of the novel, poses the question of whether *The Good Soldier* should be considered a “‘novelist's novel’ or something that would be more pleasing to writes than to members of the general public. His own answer to the questions is that the books power is not limited to writers. *The Good Soldier*, like all great works, has the gift of power and remorse” (49).

Schorer's view shows *The Good Soldier* is powerful book of the writer. This book pleases the writers rather than the other member who is reading it. So, he says the book is the gift of power of the writer. Ford's writings follow a cyclical pattern with each outburst of creativity triggered by the introduction of a new love into his life. The enduring power of the text is evident in the fact that critics continue to return their attention to it Critics and novelist A.S. Byatt wrote in *Passions of Mind* (1991) that she considers the tone of Ford's prose in *The Good Soldier* to be particularly powerful, noting that “the combination of the precisely, evocatively lyrical, or vivid,

with the flat tone of normality ... is one of the glories of the book. The others are the manipulation of the time shift, and the difference between revelation by dialogue and terrible act" (104).

Byatt says the tone of the Ford's novel hold the powerful position rather than other technique. She too says, the time shift and revelation of dialogue of the characters play the vital role to make the book famous and mysterious than others. Ford Madox Ford is an impressionist writer after Joseph Conrad, he covers the whole impressionist movement. This masterpiece *The Good Soldier* covers most of the features of the impressionism. As an impressionist writer, he has introduced the characters subjectively. In this point Nicholas Brown says that, "*The Good Soldier* derives the power not from any particularly surprising or profound exploration of subjectivity but from a mode of narration in which history is approached in the mode of the sublime, as the unnamable" (83). Here, Brown's focusing on narrative technique shows, the writer's experiences reveal by narrator. To get popularity of the book and to relief of the writes trauma, he jot the experiences through narrator in the book.

Ford has written all his experiences and has used his creative imagination in his text. *The Good Soldier* declared a new technique in his writings at the end of the author's career he says life does not narrate, but makes impressions on our brain. Ford's whole book is only his impression of his personality which reveal through narrator John Dowell. The Good soldier is not chronicle story rather it is fragmented in form because impressionist says the impression of a person not be corrected chronicle. That is why, this is the impressionist novel where the narrator Dowell tells the story chronologically he does not connect each chapter with other. He tells only

his impression and understanding of the characters. The readers have to believe only narrator's understanding of the characters.

Therefore, the novel *The Good Soldier* is impressionistic novel where narrator reveals author's personality and impression in front of the reader. David Kelly says in the critical essay, on *The Good Soldier* about the significance of the book brief final segment and how it affects the reader's understanding of all that came with its technique; he opines that, "If Dowel had directly explained that he saw his friends intention to commit suicide, readers could find this lack of action morally questionable, especially in the link established in the last scene was not preserved" (qtd. In Milne, 111).

Ford's narrative technique is more significant than others Kelly, too, says that Ford's narrator Dowell's incomplete and suspending nature makes the text different than other 19<sup>th</sup> century novel. All the character in *The Good Soldier* are appear significantly. Characters make the text different than other 19<sup>th</sup> century novel. Characters make the text good or bad and readers take character's activities in significant way. So, the characterization is more important in the text. In this way, Michael Livenson criticizes on the basis of success of prose fiction of Ford's method of characterization used in the novel. He opines:

He begins with presuppositions typical of much Victorian characterization the individual conditioned by circumstance, composed of intelligible motives, susceptible to moral analysis the justified self. Then, confronted with the singularly of desire, his "generalizations" totter and fall. (376)

There are some critics who comment on the characterization, some found the structure is confusing while others objected on moral grounds. Moreover, some takes *The Good*

*Soldier* is the art of ambivalence. Dowell the narrator of the novel has been contemned by critics who fault him for naïve and obtuseness in his marriage and friendships. In this sense, Eugene Goodheart explicates, “Ford's language at times brings Freud to mind. He wonders, for instance, how it is possible that he does not know whether a remark Leonora makes is that of a harlot or a decent woman and moves immediately to generalize his ignorance to 'one'—that is to 'every one'” (619).

Here, through characterization, Ford tries to show the reality of the world. Techniqually he has used characterization, in such a way where, all of the characters move with the intention of the writer or author. Goodheart says about *The Good Soldier* that, Ford's language shows the character's nature what types of he / she. Likewise, Ford used the particular character's particular world / language and culture. There are more characters who present the particular culture and language of the country / place. Marguerite Palmer examines the significance of Nancy's use of the word “Shuttlecock” to describe her situation, pointing out how the word was used to describe women's clothing with religious significance in colonial India, where Nancy lived. He opines, “our understanding of the term, “Shuttlecock” as a statement of Nancy's predicament is facilitated by its context. It underlies the colonial, patronizingly humorous paternalism of the British, which Ford may have been criticizing” (qtd. In Milne, 118).

Ford techniqually projects his imagination in writing. In *The Good Soldier*, He used his imagination through the narrator of the novel. There are more dialogues and monologues of the narrator which show the fantasy of the characters. In this case, Bruce Bassoff explains, “Dowell's vision of Joyment is that of 'three figures, two of them clasped close in an intense embrace and one intolerably solitary' (p70). Although

Florence is the solitary figure in this vision, each character fulfills that role equally well since each in turn feels excluded from happiness by the others” (45-46).

Whole novel depends upon the narrator's limited knowledge and perception. Bassoff says, there is narrator takes Florence is the solitary figure it is reliable or not reliable for the reader. But narrator takes it is true. So, *The Good Soldier* covers the author's personal experiences and his imagination. To reveal his psyche he presents the narrator as a path of his own. Julie Gordon Duek takes *The Good Soldier* an passionitic novel. He says “several literary qualities in *The Good Soldier* reflect Dowell's struggle to accept and synthesize the shadow more fully into his personality. The story's full title *The Good Soldier: A Tale of Passion*, already embodies Dowell's central conflict. The word “good” connotes the concept of the personal, while “passion” suggests the shadow” (114).

The above criticisms are based on various ways of interpretation of the text *The Good Soldier*. Ford's *The Good Soldier* is an example of the novels having the qualities of literary impressionism. In this text, we can make more topic to study by applying literary impressionism. But the present researcher has been study by applying the theoretical tool impressionism under the topic of a rendering of impressions. Impressionism deals with subjectivity and human consciousness. It focuses on perception, knowledge, and experiences of the narrator in the text. The impressionist novel does not narrate or report but a rendering of impressions. Impressionism focused on internal qualities rather than external one. So, Ford's *The Good Soldier* can also be regarded as the text having the qualities of subjectivity and human consciousness thereby ends with the theme of impressionistic one.

## II. Impressionism

Impressionism is a movement in literature which begins in late 19<sup>th</sup> century from France along with realism and naturalism. Basically impressionism deals with subjectivity and human consciousness. Impressionism emphasizes the interaction between consciousness and its objects which is dependent upon the existence of both subject and object. It believes that works are actually more realistic and representational. As a literary movement, impressionism perceives or portrays things through particular consciousness and point of view from objective appearances.

Lohani and others opine, "Impressionism is a movement in literature in which things are portrayed as they would be perceived by particular consciousness and point of view rather than as they objectively appear" (54). Perceiving of objects results in the reproduction of a fleeting impression upon the mind of how something momentarily looked or felt.

Impressionism is a style in painting developed in France in late 19<sup>th</sup> century that used color to show the effects of light on things and to suggest atmosphere rather than showing details. The credit goes to Monet, Renoir and Pissarro who believed to have started the movement of impressionism from 1870. Venturi writes about the story of the origin of impressionism he writes:

In the years just prior to 1870, three young men, Monet, Renoir and Pissarro used to [...] paint landscapes. They were realist painters, greatly interested in rendering the reflex of light on the water which showed continual movement and gave a new life to the water [...] For some time they painted water in this new way, and hills, trees, houses, and sky in the old realistic tradition. But this resulted in unbalanced canvasses. To avoid this mistake, they then tried to portray everything

even human figures, in the same way they painted water. [...] They had selected only one element from reality-light—to interprêt all of nature, But then light ceased to be an element of reality. It had become a principle of style, and impressionism was born. (35-36)

Impressionism most probably functions with the presentation of the perceived quality of a particular things and the expression of responses or impressions by feeling that is, from the impression of a number of things on the mind. Impressionism is the synthesis of a number of dualities, an artistic world in which one must learn to change and adopt to a changing environment. It makes to realize that appearances are the only reality. Impressionism is the co-relation between subject and object which always exists between perceiver and perceived thereby synthesizes the apparent contradiction with mood. Impressionism can be characterized by the consciousness of the object or outward things into the mind. So, it is related to phenomenology. Stowell is also of the view that, “Impressionism is firmly grounded in phenomenology” (qtd. in Maxwell, 114).

Some critics define impressionism similar to realism and naturalism. Realism, like impressionism, aims to attain truth which is attainable objective. Scientific treatment to represent material objects and subject matter just as exactly as possible. In this respect, impressionism is related to realism. Both deal with objective reality; in both observation and imitation play a major role; and in both minute details are important. Nevertheless, in their very similarities, there are differences so great that impressionism takes on distinct characteristics. By explicating such differences and similarities Jean Gibbs writes:

In realism, the whole object is carefully observed in all its detail and if the artist succeeds, the result will be an exact replica of the original. In

impressionism, the observation is shall we say,' of shorter duration—it is a “Vistazo,” a flash perception of an outstanding aspect of the object, and the sensation of gained from this instaneous perception is reproduced just an carefully and in just as great detail as is the total object of the realist. Therefore, contrary to realism, in impressionism, there is an element which is entirely subjective and this element is the sensation itself. (176)

Individuality and subjectivity is evidenced in impressionism, where as it is exclude from realism and naturalism. Impressioniam is a subjective phenomenon distinct from expressionism. Impressionism is related to inward flow and expressionism is related to outward flow. Gibbs also opines that, “What the artist receives from the material world shall be known as impressionism and what the world receives from the artist as expressionism” (176). In impressionism the mind receives something from the material world and in expressionism it is the material world which acts as a receptor and gains something from the mind of the author.

So, in the case of impressionism an object is involved which acts as a stimulus in order to produce the sensation which the observer receives. And in the case of expressionism there is also an object acting as a stimulus. However, in this instance, the artist imposes himself upon the material thing and absorbs into himself in its exact form. Impressionism is this transformed sensation which is the outward flow of expressionism. Everything referring to speculation and intuition is expressionistic. In expressionism external objects merely transmit the artist's psyche and are not significant in themselves. Expressionism in drama is characterized by symbolic and antirealist staging, and in fiction takes the form of stream of consciousness narration and dreamlike situation.



It is difficult to find a more adequate representation of impressionism than the simple apprehension of the form of an object without the knowledge of the object and with reference only to the subject. Impressionism as the another movement in literature, which is similar to epistemology and epistemology too, deals with the mind and knowledge of a person thereby aims to end in subjectivity. Epistemology, like impressionism, is characterized with subjective entity which takes sublime as entirely subjective. Sublime is related to pleasure principle, and apprehended by the form of an object Kant opines "pleasure is related to the simple apprehension of the form of an object of intuition without referring this apprehension to a concept directed toward certain knowledge, the representation does not refer to the object but only to the subject" (qtd. In venturi 137). Regarding the features and history of sublime, Abrams explicates:

In the eighteenth century an important tendency in critical theory was to shift the application of the term, "the sublime," from a quality of linguistic discourse that originates in the powers of a writer's mind, to a quality inherent in external objects, and above all in the scenes and occurrences of the natural world. (317)

According to Abrams it was the era of 18<sup>th</sup> century which paved the way for the shifting of the term sublime from linguistic discourse. In the same way by relating sublimity with subjectivity or human consciousness. Burke defines sublime as, "Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain, and danger, that is to say whatever is in any sort terrible, or is a source of the sublime; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling" (189).

Likewise, some critics also analyze impressionism in relation to causalism. In impressionism visual perception plays a dominating role, but in causalism there is a

hypervisual perception. Gibbes opines; [...] In *Causlism* as in impressionism, in order that there be any representation, the visual object must be present, actually or mentally, but in the former there must be a known agent to have produced the effect which has caused the sensation” (178). Some critics even take impressionism somewhere in middle of symbolism and realism Venturi writes, “In the history of French literature, [...] symbolism appeared after realism. But in painting, there was an interval of a few years between Realism and Symbolism during which there was neither Realism nor Symbolism, but Impressionism” (38).

Impressionism believed to have started with the painting; painting of Monet, Renoir, and Pissarro. These artists started the very movement impressionism because as Venturi opines, “Impressionists were well aware that what they painted was not reality, but the appearance of reality” (36). The only possibility of maintaining taste in art is to impress on artists and the public is the importance of irregularity.

Impressionists opposed reason thereby dissimilar with Plato and his philosophy.

Because Plato takes artist as an imitator not a creator. But impressionist takes the artist as a creator and translator too. Artist often celebrate the pure perception of objects in their mind. But they can not be taken as whole and sole imitator of an object in their paintings. Roque is also of the view that, “The impressionists do not imitate; they translate, they Interpret. They set out to extract the result of the multiple lines and colors that the eye perceives at a glance before an aspect of nature” (27). The representation which the painter has to give of the lights and color of his object as a general rule, it can not give a copy true in all its detail. This is opposed to the altered scale of brightness which the artists must apply in many cases. It is not the color of the objects, but the impression which they have given, or would give, which is to be imitated.

The impressionist is independent in nature, through their use of the light color in their painting. Through the light color they find subject within not beyond their own scope. Their main ideal consists within the transformation of subject matter. In this regard Venturi remarks:

Impressionists painted simple trees instead of monumental trees; peasant cottages instead of places; plain girls instead of great ladies; working men instead of noble man. This was not for the purpose of advancing a political issue, but the expansion of a natural sympathy towards the lower bourgeoisie or working class to which they themselves belonged and with which they were completely satisfied. They felt a human dignity in humble personalities; they found them the most natural people because it was natural what they should like and praise them. (41)

Impressionistic painting is not picturesque rather pictorial. The true works of the impressionists is, if they absorb the personal style of an artist in the picturesque, fragmentation of nature, there would be the resulting is a pictorial painting. Here seems picturesque is never the attribute of perfect art.

A certain credit can be given to the impressionists from the beginning of their paintings. They clarify their palette, some aestheticians believe that the contingency of color drawing is essential to painting. In this way, there is occurring the similarities and differences in impressionism which from various fields of art. Venturi remarks:

The Goncourt and considered Impressionist writers but pride of their nobility, passion for elegance, virtuosity, artificiality formed a barrier between them and the impressionists painters. Their taste delighted in XVIII century painting. Japanese paints and Raffaelli, a secondary

follower of the great Impressionists. They lacked the popular, spontaneous, natural seriousness of the Impressionists. (43)

The reality of impressionism is very complex and can not be limited to moral attitude. But the modesty of the impressionists in their approach to nature accounts for their satisfaction with appearances and their lack of intellectual artificiality. Their faithfulness to appearance resulted in their finding a new form of appearances. Moreover, without pretending their form of appearance is the form of reality. To them, reality meant an ideal vision of space, conceived as light and color. When the impressionists arrive at light and color in order to avoid virtuosity they stop finishing. Venturi says, "They reduced the subject matter to the state of a work of art in the state of sensation" (44). However real painters include the impressionistic ideal in their painting. This ideal should be included in different mediums like, sculpture, musicians and poets, without it there cannot be work of art. So, impressionism is a necessary moment in the eternal process of art.

By relating impressionism with the aesthetic ideas of the art and painting. the effect of the impressionism in scientific world and impact of the science upon it, is important. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century there occurred the science and scientific methodology to provide the backdrop for many of the revolutionary challenges to conventional thinking. Science believes in 'facts' which objectively verifiable and hence true. In this moment, there occurs scientist who brings new view of the power of science evolved into scientific positivism. This is the movement which based upon the belief that all knowledge could be obtained through scientific methodology. In this point Peters says:

[...] The wake of science, some disciplines adopted scientific methodology, while other were either influenced by it or reacted

against it. Psychology, sociology and anthropology, for example, adopted scientific methodology and strove for the perceived certainty of scientific inquiry. While some branches of theology and philosophy reacted against science's privileged position and influence. (8)

The fundamental presuppositions and artistic techniques of realism and naturalism are scientific. More striking than the influence of science on artistic movement is its influence on how society conceived of human existence. Like science all the realist novels believe in fact. The science's growing prominence brings the fear to the people because the society based on facts. By applying scientific methodology, to all phenomena simply oversimplified reality. By quoting Dickens and his novel *Hard Times*, relating it with impressionistic aspects, Peters opines, “ [...] *Hard Times*, Charles Dickens questions utilitarian education [...] whose underpinning was scientific methodology” (9).

Almost all the texts of 19<sup>th</sup> century are impacted by the science, those texts are related to facts. Writer presents the character in the novel who believes in the objectivity of fact rather than subjectivity or reason. Most of the writers take the language related to science and the society that introduced by science. So, the writers of that particular period presented that critical situation of the country or society in their texts. In the same time, the scientific impactation seemed in literary field too. In the sense of link between natural science and human culture, there is an inquiry which can never bring about knowledge in any effectual manner because the fact cannot be separated from its context. Scientific methodology can not lead to knowledge of human beings because facts alone can never bring about knowledge of events involving human beings.

By the end of late 19<sup>th</sup> century instead of the appearance in literature, there was the time for beginning the resistance of the privileging of science; as a result, science moved outside the boundaries of the physical world and entered the sphere of human experience. So, many critics began to question the wisdom of borrowing science and its method of analyzing humanity. Some critics accepted it and some felt that scientific methodology could not explain human experience satisfactorily. Because they think human phenomena are fundamentally different from physical phenomena. In the same way, impressionists responded to scientific positivism by demonstrating that reason and science alone are insufficient for analyzing human problems and human existence. They sought to access reality while recognizing that reality comes through the medium of human subjectivity. Moreover impressionism is a response to scientific positivism in this way impressionism's presuppositions, methodology and product all are very different from the realism. Because they take realism is a child of science. In this point Peters remarks that:

[...] Impressionists, both artistic and literary, viewed the epistemological process as an individual and not a universal phenomenon. In this way, impressionism ran a middle course between science's opponents and proponents and developed a unique relationship to science. Its work is both a produce of and a reaction against science. Its methodology is essentially scientific in its attempt to reproduce exactly the way human beings apprehend objects of consciousness; [...] impressionism recognized that knowledge always comes through the medium of human subjectivity. (13–14)

However in the case of language used by impressionistic writers, there are some categories. Language itself is not impressionist but distinct from the classical use of

language. The language of impressionist is the schematic syntax as opposed to the classic, structured syntax. In the case of voice, there is active voice which would predominate over the passive because of the nature of impressionism and passive voice in the writing of impressionist. Gibbs says that, "Since there is no agent or cause considered in impressionism, and since there is an agent either expressed or understood when the passive voice is used, it would seem quite illogical in passages dealing with the impressionistic reproduction of sensations that the two could occur concurrently" (179). Unlike historical present tense, the using of impressionist tense gives the reader the event which is descriptive. It is also because of the nature of impressionism.

Fantasy and imagination are often important in the writing of impressionism. language is not fantastic or unreal itself but it is the image of the content. Elyen Learch opines:

[...] It must be inferred that [...] for the artist these hallucinations or fantasies lose their imaginarily character when they have been expressed and become actual reality. [...] not only is the language real, but so are the impressions in the opinion of their writer. I am, Inclined to regard this as an extremist point of view which in its entirety lacks validity. I feel that the language which the writer employs is of course real but that the content is not that imagination or fantasy serves merely as a device to call forth a particular image, and that the writer himself looks upon these as such and not as reality. (qtd. in Gibbs 179-80)

The impressionist makes use of figures of speech. They use metaphor and simile most By the means of metaphor the artist can reproduce a sensation in such a way that the

same impression which he/she receives will be transmitted to the reader. It is possible in painting where image reflects the world. By the means of metaphors and similes new and unusual image can be expressed. Instead of those elements the impressionistic writers try to do with color what the impressionistic painters do with the effects of light and shade. In impressionism there is purely individual matter of the style of expression of individual artist.

Some writers often celebrate impressionistic qualities in their texts. From the beginning phase of literary movement the texts having the feature of impressionism have been existing in literary scenario. Such texts specially deal with the subject matter of inherent human consciousness, human experience, perception of an objects and the like. Joseph Conrad, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, Walter Pater and Ford Madox Ford are some of the writers whose emphasis goes toward impressionistic qualities in the texts. Some of them focus subjectivity excessively and some of them do not, rather their writing in some or the other way tries to undermine the subjectivity as if it looks like not an impressionistic text.

Likewise Conrad's *The Heart of Darkness* can be taken as the text having impressionistic subject matter. In this text, Conrad by portraying the character as Marlow, speaks about the psyche of his own and also about the psyche of African people thereby experiences traveling from Congo to Britain. By describing the experience of the characters in Heart of Darkness, Peters says:

The storm's suddenness forces the narrator to perceives the rain, and the event as a whole. With minimal mediation. As he suggests, a storm “comes along, making noise,” so noise is a precursor to storms and is part of the narrators past experience that provides the mediating material for perceiving storms. Without that precursor, the narrator



experiences the immediate sense impression of the storm. Furthermore, the storm is unexpected because a deadly calm has engulfed the ship for so long. (41)

Perception is another feature of the impressionism. Perception represents an initial sense impression before the observer organizes it into a meaning that accords with past experience. Human beings receive initial sense impression of the flow of phenomena that are without inherent meaning. They organize, categorize, and transform those impressions into something consistent with past experience. There is two types of perception, civilized perception, and primitive. Civilized perception can be useful to help individual's function in a social group where consensus exists concerning the identity of a particular object or event. It obscures primitive perception and implies that a particular meaning for the flow is inherent.

Primitive perception demonstrates that such a meaning is not inherent but constructed. It focuses our attention on how human beings experience the external world which perceives from an individual point of view. The mediating of civilized perception and primitive perception influence of the subjective past experiences may appear as public past, private past, or both. Joseph Conrad emphasizes primitive perception in his works in order to demonstrate that all phenomena filter through human consciousness either of public past or recordings of delayed decoding.

By applying this primitive perception in *Heart of Darkness* Peters writes, In *Heart of Darkness* during the attack on the steamboat, Marlow remarks, "'sticks, little sticks, were flying about,' shortly, afterward he sees these same objects as, 'Arrows, by Jove'" (37-38). In this regard in *Heart of Darkness* "Sticks," that the other people surrounding Marlow perceives, and immediately transforms them into "arrows" but during the process they forget the first impression and assume they have seen only

arrows all along. In the reading of impressionism, perception is taken as universal phenomena rather than individual.

In the same way, Chekhov is also known for his impressionistic impression upon the reader through his writings especially dramatic writings where his characters freely appear in the stage with internal monologue and the changing situation of the country aroused political upheavals. His most of the writings carry impressionistic aspects. Some of the remarkable dramas, like *Three Sisters*, *Cherry Orchard*, *Marriage Proposal* and fictional work *Vanka* carry entirely impressionistic features. By observing his position in literary movements Arnold Houser opines, "Chekhov can be the purest representative of the whole movement, impressionism" (qtd. In Stowell, 113).

Walter Pater as an impressionist, celebrates the subjective experience, perception in his writings. By celebrating Pater's fictional qualities, Zietlow remarks, "Pater's fictional, impressionistic method enables him to reveal the complexity of forces [...], a complexity that can best be rendered by dramatizing its multiple impacts on consciousness differently circumstanced" (162). Pater's impressionistic reconstruction does not merely evoke a historical moment but it exposes the variety of hedonism, and criticizes a whole movement. In this way Zietlow opines that:

Pater's candid fictional technique for dramatizing the effects of culture on a consciousness and for revealing indirectly his own values would seem to be at least tolerable by objectivist critical standards, but the impressionism of his discursive essays is another matter, and in this area the most that a critic can do is to [...] explain the rationale for them, in the hope of touching a responsive chord in the reader. (163)

Pater's impressionistic criticism is not mere, he reveals his own secrets as well as those of another, by subjecting his susceptibilities and values to the test of experience. His version of his subject is an entirely a new creation merely inspired by what he sees. In this way, Zietlow opines, "For Pater, creative response to vital enemies in culture and the natural world is not a matter merely of books and critics and artists" (166). Passionate and terrifying vision are the main theme that Pater often used in his impressionistic writings. By explicating his themes in his writings Zietlow writes:

Everyone is subject to the flux everyone is condemned to death, and Pater threatens the reader with the hall of a diminished here and now; a life of wasteful lassitude is its own punishment. In his various impressionistic portraits, Pater offers the imaginative achievement of the ancients as a source of revival of and reawakening. [...] He offers his own passionate, terrifying vision of the perceptual wasting away of life of demonstrate not merely the value but the necessity of active watchfulness. (167)

For Pater, perception struggles against death, and each moment of experience can be a fulfillment instead of passing away. So, the contribution of the Pater in impressionism is so great. Likewise Joseph Conrad is great impressionist writer because many impressionistic features found in his literary works.

The problem of the existing work on literary impressionism is that, it either restricts the movements, subject matter and methodology which ignoring crucial characteristics of impressionist literature. To prove whether the text is impressionist or not, there is a certain way of referring the objective impressionists. Some impressionists emphasize subjectivity more while other emphasizes it less. So, the difficulty in defining literary impressionism lies in two areas: first determining the

relationship between the technique of impressionist painting and those of impressionist literature and second, determining the relationship between objects of consciousness and their representation in impressionist art and literature. The similarities between impressionist art and literature result from similarities in philosophy not technique. Impressionists not simply represent visual perception rather they render a much broader epistemological experience. Impressionism originates in the visual arts and most of the critics of impressionist literature have looks at it in the light of technique of impressionist visual arts.

In the impressionist writing the techniques are most importantly derived from the impressionistic paintings. In this way, Calvin S. Brown remarks, “ separate fleeting impressions can not be built up into an organic whole of sufficient size, nor can a single fleeting impression be maintained and developed long enough to produce a major work” (qtd, in Peters 15). By relating Brown's view in impressionist writing it can be claimed that the impressions of perceiving consciousness must be rendered uniquely. Literature is not painting, some of the techniques of painting are translated into writing. Impressionist, whether in the literary or visual arts sought to represent the interaction between human consciousness and the object's of that consciousness. The interaction appears as sensory perception. Despite the particular objective consciousness, impressionists represent an individual human consciousness interacting with phenomenon at a fixed point in space and time.

There are many critics who see, the impressionism as objective as well as subjective in literature. For some, objective view sees impressionists presenting an object as it project itself into human consciousness. On the other hand, subjective view sees impressionists rendering only emotional responses to the object.

Impressionists merely paint what they see in outside the world. By commenting on the

view of Sichel, Peters opines, "For Sichel, impressionism is vivid glimpses of emotion and emotionally charged objects that represent only the artist's own subjectivity not the object itself" (qtd. In Peters 17). In the impressionism the objective view eliminates part of the subjects subjectivity. It represents the artist's subjectivity which does not simply present artist's emotional response to an object rather present the perceptions or experiences too. In this sense there is tension between objective and subjective link. Some critics observe, some impressionist writers are subjective and some are objective. But impressionist's representation lies neither solely with the subject nor with the object rather in the space between two. In this way, impressionism diverges from positivism and idealism, positivism sees reality in the object, the external world. On the other hand idealism sees reality in the subject, the internal world. But impressionism takes object from positivism and subject from idealism and merges these two. By merging object and subject, impressionism posits the necessary existence. Impressionism represents change opening in the interaction between subject and object.

There are differences among the impressionism, positivism and idealism. For positivism reality exists outside the subject objects may change the subjects. On the other hand, for idealism reality exists within the subject, subject may change the objects. But the subject themselves do not change because all objects are part of the subject however impressionism presents subject and object in constant change through their mutual influence. The blurring of the boundaries between subjectivity and objectivity is important in impressionism. Here, when the people see the object he/she urgently internalize this object with their subjectivity. An object of consciousness is different for different subjects in impressionism Peters explicates that:

[...] changing circumstances of space and time, affects the way an object is experienced. Recognizing this highly contextualized interaction between subject and object impressionism tried to recreate the experience of a single subject at a specific point in space and time. For impressionism, all experience is individual and every experience of objects of consciousness is unique. (20)

Impressionism neither emphasizes the object nor subject rather it believes that object got altered by its physical surrounding from which subjectivity is influenced. Instead of representing the individual point of view through objects of consciousness, impressionist writers have employed a variety of narrative techniques. Some of the narrative techniques which impressionist used in their text are as follow: achronology, *in Medias res*, central consciousness, limited point of view, and multiple narrator.

Impressionist writers believe that the life of human being is not chronicle that narrates the story chronologically rather the life do not narrate but make impressions on our brains. Human beings collect the experiences from one place to another and from one time to another. Through impressionist narrator, the collected experiences join one to another and tells the story achronologically. The experience of human beings is not on frame rather it becomes fragmented or it becomes the form of piece. while narrating, those pieces joint and appear in front of the reader. The narrator not tells the story by connecting the events of the characters from different place and different time rather tells in episodic style. Impressionist narrator represents the both manner; a storyteller and sometimes introduces details out of sequence and to make the story real for the reader. Some of the novels make the reader, time sequences are radically dislocated and force the reader to put together the events achronology. To support this point Peters argues:

For impressionism, traditional narrators do not present phenomena the way human beings experience them. The temporal distance such narrators evoke necessarily alters the initial experience, and they lose the immediate workings of consciousness. In contrast, the impressionist novel tries to represent the immediate epistemological experience, so the reader almost becomes the one encountering phenomena, just as the characters do but not in the after-the-fact reflection of traditional narrators; rather the impressionist novel tries to place the reader into the scene at the actual moment of experience. (24)

The impressionist novel tries to convenience the reader by focusing the events of the character which is the experience of the narrator imprint in the mind.

Likewise in impressionist novel *in medias res* narrative technique is too, important. In impressionist novel the role of *in medias res* is that, both the characters and the reader are ignorant of the events. It is altered by the fact that the information is gathered without the benefit of encountering the events from their beginning. Central consciousness is another technique that literary impressionists sometimes employ in their texts. According to impressionist writers, central consciousness is a rendering of the workings of a single consciousness rather than appear to be an omniscient narrator. Central consciousness appear only in third person narrative and usually employs a single consciousness to filter phenomena.

Like this, limited point of view can appear either first or third person narration. In limited point of view, the relationship between perception and knowledge becomes prominent. It encompasses subject and object so the subject's and object's physical location in space is important. When it appears as a third person narrative it moves from one consciousness to another. However, the multiple narrators

technique is too important. It is significant departure from traditional narration in which a single narrator guided the reader through the course of events. The multiple narrators show the subject and objects alteration affects by the context in which they occur. Both multiple and limited point of view, narrators dramatize the limitations of a single consciousness to comprehend phenomena other than individuality. And knowledge itself is revealed to be limited as well.

All of these narrative techniques shows that its individual, fully contextualized epistemology is precisely what previous movements in art is ignored. And its return to that idea is a radical departure from most earlier art and literature. At the same time literary impressionism provides bridge between realist and stream of consciousness literature in the same way, it brides subject and object. Moreover impressionism leads to an epistemological and representational process because of its highly individual nature which is relative rather than absolute. A process that depends upon individual experiences and subjectivity necessarily leads to a theory of knowledge that questions universal.

To wrap up, impressionism as a literary movement, always works with human consciousness, way of perception and celebration of experiences but that perceived from objective world. Literary impressionism, basically, characterizable in terms of the use of colors, impressions from music, sculpture, quality of art and even of language. It is known for its inherent feature of narration in general and achronology in particular. Perception, language, monologue, past experiences and other entire subjective qualities are always related to impressionism. The impressionistic discourse can be analyzed in terms of the quality that any text systematically, intentionally and masterfully carry within. The impressionists novel should not be narrate, but a rendering of impressions. The focus of the novel is internal rather than external.



### **III. Rendering of Impressions in *The Good Soldier*: An Analysis**

Ford Madox Ford's *The Good Soldier* (1915) is considered to be his best work, as well as one of the best novels of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. *The Good Soldier* should be taken as a rendering of impressions with the major characters having no external reality at all but being simply the projections of the author's creative imagination. The book tells the story of two wealthy couples, one from England and one from America, who befriend each other at a resort town in Germany and return there over more than a decade to continue their friendship. Over the course of the novel, the narrator, John Dowell, finds out more and more details about the complexities of his friends' marriage, and of the strains and responsibilities that life imposes on those who have been born to a life of privilege. Ford's original title for this book, *The Saddest Story*, captures the sense of melancholy that surround the events that he relates. Though Edward Ashburnham, the English husband, does hold commission in the army but Ford never relates any combat experiences. The title ironically refers to the propensity of Edward, and of all members of his social set, to behave according to the implied rules of social behavior and not their emotions.

In *The Good Soldier*, Ford Madox Ford rejects the linear structure and substitutes for it the "affair," a shocking set of events has already occurred before the book begins, and the narrator weaves back and forth in his memories related to the affair. Gradually, in concentric circles of understanding, the reader learns the complicated situation underlying the superficial first impressions he/she may have formed. The drama of the story shifts from the events of the tale to the process of the telling, such stories necessarily contrast first appearances with deeper realities revealed in the narration. The novel is written in a first-person, reflective voice. The narrator, John Dowell, is telling a story that happened to him sometime in a past

which is demonstrably separable from his present-stance as narrator. This is clear from the very opening of the novel:

My wife and I knew captain and Mrs. Ashburnham as well as it was possible to know anybody, and yet, in another sense, we knew nothing at all about them. This is, I believe, a state of things only possible with English people of whom, till today, when I sit down to puzzle out what I know of this sad affair, I knew nothing whatever. (3)

The above extract shows the past experiences of the narrator which he is telling in present situation. Here, the narrator Dowell says 'we knew nothing' and at the same time he uses 'This is, I believe, the word 'This is' signifies the narrator is telling the story in present but he is telling the story of past which is imprint in his mind.

However, there is nothing particular significant about this sort of narration. There is no sense that the reflective stance of the narrator will interfere with the action of the remembered 'I' of the story. When the narrative present does break into the story, its purpose is directly connected to the past story being related and is undifferentiated from the narrative stance at any other point in the novel.

Dowell's voice is different since he opens his narrative with direct reference to his present. By noting that, "Florence's people, as is so often the case with the inhabitants of Connecticut, came from the neighborhood of Fordinbridge, where the Ashburnham's place is. From there, at this moment, I am actually writing" (5).

Dowell relates the present implicitly to his past story. Then, he specifies again, telling us where he is and what he is actually doing at this moment. Then, however, Dowell specifies again and relates a kind of mini-action which comes directly from the present, activating the narrative frame apart from the remembered story. The narrative present is realized as a process within its own time frame, distinct from the reader's

abstract present as he or she experiences the novel. That is, we are not only concerned with Dowell's attempt to relate the newly defined past events, we are doing so within a constantly changing experiential frame. The convention of an omnitemporal reflective narrator, immune to a constantly changing present, is broken, and the reflective first person is himself operating within an experimental time frame, as he writes the novel that we are reading. This is easy enough to demonstrate simply by recalling the novel's original time reference. At the opening, Dowell can say that "six months ago I had never been to England" (4). Yet, in chapter five of the novel's final section, he tells us that, "I am writing this, now, I should say, a full eighteen months after the words that end my last chapter" (148). There are instances of time and new knowledge breaking into a reflective narrator's abstract present. But here, the focus on process, on puzzling out through multiple experiential frames, is constant and crucial to the meaning of the novel.

The narrative recounting, then has its one time frame. It, too, is an experienced action. It is this action, the process of creating the novel where all the readers can directly see. There are four sets of events, four experiences. First, there is Edward, Leonora, Florence, and Dowell's story as Dowell experienced it. Second is the same story as it really happened: "That was the impression that I really had until just now. When I come to think of it she was out of my sight most of the time" (88). Dowell's understanding of Florence is true impression for him. But his true impression is going in vein after hearing the true story of Florence which is related to fact. Here, narrator is confusing, he neither believes the true impression nor in true story.

Third is the true story as Dowell heard it from Edward and Leonora, "She had known ... that Florence was making eyes at Edward" (189). Dowell knows the reality of the Florence and realizes why she is ignoring to live together with him. His failure

to understand Florence's nature shows the limited knowledge of the narrator in the story. He presents only his impression which is recognizable to him through out the story. And fourth is the narrative itself, the only experience that the reader sees directly. Although the passages above are indications of the three earlier' time frames, they are parts of the narrative and are principally significant according to their place in the creation of the narrative by Dowell.

The reader is removed from the events of the story by three perspectives. Those are Dowell's Changing attitudes, impressions, and feelings as he experiences to relate the story. Dowell is not telling what happened to him from the point of view of his participation in events. Rather, he is telling about a non-participatory revelation that he has received concerning events in which he was once involved. And his feelings about these events has radically altered in such a way as to comfort him with the fundamental question of reality and the verification of meaning. The question is arising where Dowell's own sense of separation from the earlier, story where he involved who although was a part of the story was not part of the story. He was not part of its meaning as communicated by Leonora and Edward. This particular manifestation of the epistemological distancing inherent in the novel's narrative structure explains bitterly humorous tone of much of the narrative and perhaps, the multiplicity of critical responses to Dowell's character.

As Dowell recreates his own actions in the original story from this removed, more knowledgeable perspective, he looks upon events which he had once taken quite seriously as reflections of a comically inferior character. "He was sent off somewhere else and of course, Mrs. Basil could not stay with Edward. Edward ought, I suppose, to have gone to the Transvaal. It would have done him a great deal of good to get killed. But Leonora would not let him...." (109). Now, if the action that the

reader sees, is the action of the process of narrative itself, we may wonder what is significant about the development of the process. The true understanding of this magnificent complexity are two facts: one, Dowell changes in the course of his narrative, and two, Dowell sets out to tell a story that has not yet reached its conclusion. These two points are crucially interrelated. This is the story of Mr. and Mrs. Basil which is related to Edward Ashburnham which is shocking for the narrator. Among them, the given passage shows the cleverness of narrator. The narrator Dowell thinks that, Leonora do not want to sent the Edward in war because of fear. Leonora wants to save Edward and Edward too wants to make affair with Mrs. Basil in the absence of major Basil. From the beginning to the end of the novel, the narrator Dowell telling to the readers only his impressions. The story of Mrs. Basil and Edward, too, is the impression and knowledge about the events. In this chapter the narrator gets shocked by seeing the affair of Edward and the activity of the Leonora who is trying to save his husband from the war but not from the extra marital affair. This event touches the narrator's mind and he recollects it from the past and he is telling now, in the present situation.

It is clear from the beginning of the narrative that Dowell will contradict himself as he grapples for explanations and appropriate symbols. "Now, by God, it is false! It wasn't a minuet that we stepped; it was a prison-prison full of screaming hysterics tied down so that they might not out sound the rolling of our carriage wheels as we went along the shaded avenues of the Taunus Wald" (5). Dowell is struggling to understand and is quite willing to admit that, it is all darkness and yet as his narrative develops, he keeps trying. His attempts to impose order upon the events in questions are the primary structural connections in the narrative. Rather than continue to control the story from the beginning, he constructs various schemes that he attempts to use as

mechanisms towards an ordering and understanding of the significance of his experience. Dowell's experience much as it can be seen in creating a new frame by which to attempt his narration at the opening of the third chapter. This explains, for example, his concern with Catholicism as a determinant particularity of Leonora's actions. Dowell's careful detailing of economic balances of the Leonora's to her husband is more important, which can be seen through following liens:

... It struck him that Leonora must be intending to manage his loves as she managed his money affairs and it made her more hateful to him –and more worthy of respect. Leonora, at any rate, had managed his money to some purpose. She had spoken to him, a week before, for the first time in several years about money ... (112)

Here, we can see that, Dowell's managing of the narrative. He, first of all talking about the story of Edward and Florence and slowly he begins to reveal his experiences which are internalized in his mind in the past. Dowell tells the story of Edward and Florence's affair at first but later he tells about Edward's family life and his activities. It shows that the past experience of the narrator is not come out chronologically rather he reveals those past experiences in fragmentally. Dowell tells the story of affair from the beginning of the second chapter and he too tells the story of marriage of the Edward and his wife in the fourth chapter. But, there is happening extra marital affair. So, there is gap between these two chapters. There is not connection of the story of the same person.

Such details have no particular purpose as parts of a related action, but do reflect Dowell's desperate attempt to order experience, to create appropriate symbols. He uses sums and transactions as an attempt to communicate something about the nature of Edward, Leonora, and their relationship. Having thrown away the

convention of chronology, Dowell, no less than the reader, is looking for a way into the story. He is looking for meaning in the past events, in his newer knowledge and in the process of putting that knowledge on paper. Here is the single point during the original events when someone tries to tell Dowell what was really happening.

Leonora's outburst sticks in Dowell's mind for this very reason, and his subsequent concern with Catholicism as a possible vehicle toward understanding derives solely from Leonora's response.

Religious and temperamental differences soon cause their marriage to cool. Because of different religion Leonora become cool immediately. Edward belongs to protestant whereas Leonora belongs to Catholicism. Catholics were viewed as being socially inferior. Catholicism was associated with poverty which some viewed as being caused. At least some what, by the church's doctrines against birth control and divorce which shown through this passage; the narrator John Dowell says:

Leonora's English catholic conscience, her rigid principles, her coldness, even her very patience, were, I cannot help thinking, all wrong in this special case. She quite seriously and naively imagined that the church of Rome disapproves of divorce, she quite seriously and naively believed that her church could be such a monstrous and imbecile institution as to expect her to take on the impossible job of making Edward Ashburnham a faithful husband (39).

This shows that the catholic girl cannot break the rule of church, and she cannot divorce with her husband at any case. Leonora too as a catholic girl so she cannot divorce her husband. So, she save her husband any time in front of society. She is not talking with him in front of other people, people takes them a model couple in the world. Leonora is not happy with Edward but because of the rule of church she cannot

leave him. So, she always compromise with him. Even Edward involves in many affair with other women. The concerns of religion of the narrator shows there is contrast between appearances and reality of the characters in the novel.

Later, Dowell returns to the incident and underscoring his new epistemological conclusion, “Well, she was a tortured soul who put her church before the interests of a Philadelphia Quaker” (191). The structure of his narrative depends upon the process of his own attempts at ordering and understanding. Dowell shifts focus according to the success or failure of each epistemological construct economics, good solidarism, using selected events that he misinterpreted during the original action as the bases for his process of exploration. The reader sees a constant process of recall, signification, symbolization, attempted verification, rejection, and recall as Dowell experiences his own action of writing. The events of the story depends for their meanings upon the particular moment at which Dowell is actually writing about them. Dowell’s narrative is always in process. The experiential frame of the narrative itself allows him to reflect equally upon his own previous narration and to restructure the epistemological process according to what he has already written.

Although, the original action contains the events involving Dowell, Florence, Leonora, and Edward up to eight days after Edward’s death. When Leonora reveals Florence’s and Edward’s affair and tells Dowell the “Saddest Story,” the events preceding this revelation are the action about which Dowell is writing for most of the novel. He is writing from a realized, hence moving, point in present time, but that present is separated from, a reflection upon, a story which he considers past. In chapter five of part four, however, the events of the original experience overtake the present moment of the narrative:



I am writing this, now I should say, a full eighteen months after the words that end my last chapter. Since writing the words “until my arrival”, which I see end that paragraph, I have seen again for a glimpse, from a swift train, Beaucaire with the beautiful white tower, Tarascon with the square castle, the great Rhone, the immense stretches of the Cran. I have rushed through all province – and all province no longer matters. It is no longer in the olive hills that I shall find my heaven; because there is only Hell ... (233-34)

Reflecting on events in the past, Dowell is suddenly thrust back into these events as an actor. Ford relates, in this chapter, that what Dowell was writing. It was his own narrative at the point where it broke off, “the words that end my last chapter” (233). Dowell was in the midst of creating a reflective narrative about a past action that continued beyond what he had thought was its conclusion and interrupted his present reflections. The reader has been dealing with two separate threads of time that have moved at different places and have at last caught up with one another. With chapter five, part four, one sees Dowell reflecting upon new events that were not part of his narrative up to this point. Yet because they are manifestations of the same story, they become components of the narrative. These events, most notably Nancy’s insanity and Leonora’s marriage to Rodney Bayham, again shift his focus.

One significant change in the story is Dowell’s attitude towards Leonora. It has been clear throughout the initial narrative that Dowell is fond of her. Leonora, and a good deal of the shifting construction of meanings has depended upon this as a constant. Now that the story has caught up to him, with the mad Nancy always in his presence. Dowell creates another interpretive structure to explain the events:

The end was perfectly plain to each of them—it was perfectly manifest at this stage that, if the girl did not, in Leonora’s phrase, “belong to Edward”, Edward must die, the girl must lose her reason because Edward died—and coldest and strongest of the three, would console herself by marrying Rodney Bayhn and love a quiet, comfortable, good time. (233)

From this point of view and his new hostility toward Leonora, Dowell tells of Edward’s last days and the girl’s departure and leads up again to the point at which the present breaks into the summary of the past. “I cannot conceal from myself the fact that I now dislike Leonora” (252). This, at least, Dowell knows about the present. It is his narrative attempts to puzzle out the past. Here, the narrator John Dowell weaves back and forth in his memories. He tells the story in present time but he recalls the past and he moves back to remember those past events which are cogitate in his mind. Here, he says first of all “The end was perfectly plain,” (233) which is in past form. It is past events which is internalized of the narrators mind. At the same time he uses “this stage,” the word ‘this’ suggests the present. The narrator is telling the story in present but he is telling by moving back and forth. Sometime he continues present story but at the same time he links the past events. So, there is achronology in plot, and the narrator tells the story about the experiences of his life. Such experiences are really happened in his life. The narrator makes the reader impressive; the story is real and truthful. The reader cannot find out that is only impression of narrator or real story happening in past. Moreover, there is an experience, knowledge and impression of a person, which makes the story fruitful. The readers have to believe the narrators impression.

The novelist Ford Madox Ford concerned with developing an artistic epistemology that recognizes the momentary individual perspective, or impression, as the fundamental personal reality. There is not way for an individual to know more about a person or event than his own present impression. If there is an objective reality beyond one's subjective perception there is no mechanism by which one can grasp that reality. It is always contingent upon individual perspective. Ford, however, pushes this concept to its extreme. His *The Good Soldier* demonstrates that narrator itself does not narrate. Dowell is unable to remove himself from experiences and relate subjective, complete impressions of a unified tale, because the act of narration necessarily takes place within human experience, collecting its own subjective impressions as it proceeds. The narrator, that is, as his narrative, and the story will necessarily catch up with its reflection.

Implicit in this merging of story and narrative is the concept that the past does not exist as a reality except through present recollection, which immersed in subjective experience as it is, is only a reflection of itself. Beside this, Ford does not provide a narrative in *The Good Soldier* rather he provides a character who produces, word by word, the novel which we are reading. At the same time, Dowell is attempting to realize the essence of the events that have occurred to him. Ford places his narrative and the resultant narration within a moving present, exploding the convention of an unrealized present from which a narrator can reflect upon a finished action. *The Good Soldier* is an exercise in the possibilities and limitations of the medium of language. It explores the questions by presenting a form of "constant reduction," the language in its role of "actually" being used. Ford, while presenting only the immediate process of Dowell's writing moves the reader backward and forward through the contrapuntal frames of recollection that Dowell experiences. In

other words, Ford has created a novel which, on the one hand, exists only as itself and on the other hand, is an exploration of meaning beyond the process its own creation which shows that: "This is the saddest story I have ever heard" (164).

There is epistemological problem in Ford's character Dowell's, "If for nine years I have possessed a goodly apple that is rotten at the core and discover its rottenness only in nine years and six months less four days, isn't it true to say that nine years I possessed a goodly apples?" (7). Dowell is consistent in his attempt to discover significance in the sets that have already transpired. He fails, on the one hand, because he insists upon a significance intrinsic to the events themselves. The succeeds only in the process of writing down his thoughts. Form this point of view the created object as all that one sees each of Dowell's attempts at symbolic formulations, like, Catholicism, economics and etc; is valid, is only an element in the process of writing itself. The destruction of meaning in the viewed object and insistence upon the essential reality of the created object produces new object reflects the meaninglessness. And it stands as a new object to be viewed and to elicit response a collection of new meanings. This duality is clear in Dowell's narrative. His constant references beyond his own words; "you will gather ..., you may well ask ..., I leave it to you" (5) furthermore, the reader never sees the events of the past story as direct actions. He does see them as materials within the creation of the present narrative, and so as constant reflections of Dowell's present dilemma; "Was it a goodly apple, or is it a rotten apple? (7)

The texture of the novel invites the reader to consider the conflict between appearances and reality. For most of the nine years period of the action, John Dowell believes that his wife is suffering from a heart ailment which confines her travels and

requires her to be shut in her room under peculiar circumstances from time to time.

Dowell first of all, believes that his wife is true to him and says:

Her room door was locked because she was nervous about thieves; but an electric contrivance on a cord was understood to be attached to her little wrist. She had only to press a bulb to raise the nons. And I was provided with an axe—an axe!—great gods, with which to break down her door in case she ever failed to answer my knock, after I knocked really and several times. (89)

John Dowell believes that his wife has a problem so, he has of impression that Florence is not wanted to sleep together. Dowell never enters her room without knocking fearing that her heart problem may trouble her. He says that Florence will die ten times a day but he cannot enter her room without her permission. Every night 10 o' clock Florence closes the door by saying or wishing good night to him. And she wakes up early morning at the fresh moment. So, he never raises the question towards the Florence and he never tries to live together. Always he thinks that Florence have a great problem but Florence deceives him by saying she has a heart problem. But, he subsequently learns that her heart is sound and that these arrangements are necessary to allow her to commit adultery; first with a young man named Jimmy and later with Edward Ashburnham himself. Dowell imagines Ashburnham to be a model husband. Only gradually learning that he has engaged in a series of affairs and that his wife does not speak to him except when required to do so in public. This novel is like a hall of mirrors, and any statement by the narrator must be doubted.

Here, Dowell seems everything is well in surface level but in deeper level there hidden the true realities. That is seen in his own life too. Dowell found the

reality of his wife Florence in part III chapter one through Leonora. Leonora says everything about Florence with Dowell which shown in this passage:

And the secret weakness of Florence the weakness that she could not bear to have me discover, was just that early escaped with the fellow called Jimmy. Let me, as this is in all probability the last time I shall mention Florence's name, Dowell a little upon the change that had taken place in her psychology. She would not, I mean, have minded is I had discovered that she was the mistress of Edward Ashburnham.

(75/76)

John Dowell is trying to come out with false impression of the heart problem of his wife Florence. When Dowell marries to her, she says, she has a heart problem. And Dowell believes her and consult the doctor to cure the problem. But in deeper realities, there is not any problem neither heart nor mind rather she is taking the advantage of the Dowell's peace nature. And Florence came with her fellow Jimmy in London. The marriage of Florence with Dowell is only for to go to London with Jimmy not other than it. The naive nature of narrative broke out when he knows reality about the Florence. When Dowell knows about the affairs of his wife with other man and his friend's Edward. He first of all surprises and says, "Florence was very clever she never revealed her secret, by saying she has heart problem"(79). The blind believe of Dowell towards Florence is breaking. When Dowell knows the secret reality of Florence through Leonora, here, seems there is contrast between first appearances and deeper realities. The reader, first of all, knows the first impression of the narrator but later when narrator himself breaks down, she/he becomes shocked.

Because readers are accustomed to novels with linear plots, the novel is more easily understood if the plot is rearranged into the customary linear sequence of

events. Edward Ashburnham is from an ancient Anglican landholding family who owns the estate Branshow Teleragh. As the novel opens, he has recently returned from serving as a military officer in India and arrives at the health spa, Bad Nauheim, in Germany, where he meets Dowel for the first time. Although he appears to be brave, sentimental, and heroic, like the knights in ancient romances. This is the first impression of the narrator. But, the reader learns that Edward has been involved in a series of unfortunate affairs with women.

While riding in a third class carriage, Edward tries in a blundering way to comfort a servant girl and is, arrested for sexual misbehaviour in what is called the Kilsythe case. This misadventure leads him for the first time in his life to consider himself capable of bad conduct. His next affair involves a short lived passion for a Spanish dancer, la Dolciquitta, who demands cash for spending week with him at Antibes. His wife, Leonora makes herself the guardian of his estate and sets out to recover their financial losses. These all events are only impression of the narrator which cogitates in his mind. He never goes through the external reality rather he follows a stream of consciousness which is the quality of the impressionism. This shows, there are differences in appearance and reality of the characters in the novel.

Dowell's failure is the result of his misinterpretation of the 'facts' which he has been given, after the event, by Leonora and Edward, Dowell thinks he is telling a story of innocence and romance. According to Dowell, when Edward had married with Leonora, a woman "who was cold, or, rather, well behaved" (159). "At the time of their marriage and for perhaps a couple of years after,' Edward put and Leonora 'did not really know how children are produced'" (147). Dowell tells the fact about the characters in the story when he sees reliable. In his perception the relation between Edward and Leonora is good but reader already knows about the fact that their

relation is not good rather compromiseable. But, at age of twenty-seven, while traveling in a third-class carriage in order to prove to Leonora he was capable of economies, Edward puts his arm around the waist of “to do something to comfort her, and was astonished when the girl pulled the emergency cord and he was arrested for attempted seduction” (150). Narrator’s interpreting of the character Edward Ashburnham is reliable and good for him. Gradually his knowing facts about Edward’s affair makes him shocked and says “Deliberately looking for some women who could help him and found several ... in his set” (183). It shows the fragmented knowledge about the characters in the mind of narrator.

Dowell first of all takes the events are real but slowly when he knows about other characters his vision or perception would be change and he shocked. After this, he begins to tell the story of Edward, "In India, the lady who really confronted the unfortunate Edward was the wife of a fellow army officer, major basil, who barrowed a good deal of money from Edward” (164). Thereafter, Edward had gone “deliberately looking for some woman who could help him,' and 'found several ... in his set,' but he assumed Dowell he only wanted someone 'to talk to about ideals” (183). In India, the lady who really comforted the unfortunate Edward was the wife of a fellow army officer, Major Basil, who “‘borrowed a good deal of money from Edward,' although Dowell declares 'it was difficult to know why he wanted it” (165). Here, narrator is confusing and says why Edward wants to make borrow money to Mr. Basil. His limited knowledge and perception can not find what he wants about it. And to whom Edward continued to make “loans after the major had got hold ... some letters and things” (172). In Dowell’s account, Edward remained faithful to Mrs. Basil—quite a long time, before Maisie’s Maidan came along, Leonora volunteered to



pay Maisie's passage to Europe in company with Edward. This all are only impressions of the narrator

However, Dowell was blissfully unaware that until, Leonora told him of the affair and that his wife had killed herself. Even after he learns the truth from Leonora, Dowell is unaware of the implications of the events he describes, maintaining to the end a conviction that Edward Ashburnham is innocent. The reader on the other hand, sees the account as a farrago of seduction, black mail, prostitution, cuckoldry, and suicide caused by Edward Ashburnham's uncontrolled and until the tragic conclusion uncontrollable sexual passion—"It is odd", Dowell declares referring to Ashburnham, "how a boy can have his virgin intelligence untouched in the world" (137). The reader, confronted, that naïve account, knows that the only "untouched virgin intelligence" in the book is Dowell's own. Dowell is apparently unaware that his narrative reveals Edward to be a flagrant who conquests have been concealed by hypocritical social conventions. His confusion is compounded by sentimental self idealization. He declares that, "I cannot conceal from myself, the fact that I loved Edward Ashburnham, and that I love him because he was just myself" (253).

That Dowell should identify himself with Edward Ashburnham, as a conigible seducer, is a brilliant and bizarre effect in the novel. Unable or unwilling to recognize the nature and continuing pattern of seduction he is describing, Dowell sees Ashburnham as a creature of sentiment. The reader recognizes Edward as a predator who billed himself because he loved Nancy Rufford, whom he renounced. This suggestion leads to another central question which Dowell is too unimaginative to ask, why does Edward Ashburnham renounce Nancy? There would seem like his earlier seductions, Edward is making Nancy the successor to Florence, Maisie, Mrs. Basil, La Dolciquita, and "quite a number of ladies in his set who were capable of

agreeing with this handsome and fine fellow that the duties of a feudal gentleman were feudal” (158). There is in Edward’s view, no apparent legal or moral constraint to keep him from satisfying his desire for Nancy as he had done with others so often in the past. And Ashburnham says that “‘that he would have hated himself,’ if he had accepted Nancy’s offer to ‘belong to him,’ that ‘it was unthinkable’” (242).

At first, Leonora believes it her ‘duty’ to separate Nancy and Edward, but later when Edward decides to send Nancy away, she tells him “This is the most atrocious thing you have done in your atrocious life” (212), and she urges Nancy to stay “to save Edward’ because he is ‘dying for lover’ of her” (216). Such a plea makes no sense if jealousies are Leonora’s motive. Dowell declares that, God knows what exactly was in Leonora’s mind exactly. It is clear that Dowell does not know anything about her mind. However Dowell implicitly tries to show the inner unloving nature of the Leonora towards her husband. If she loves him, her husband not participate in extramarital affair with others. So, he says what types of character she is, he doesn’t know. Here, confusion in narrative, Ford’s narrator can not declare what is right and wrong. His whole story shows the double quality of the characters. First reality or facts, and second is appearances or artificiality. The whole story depends upon Dowell’s impression, his knowledge about the characters and experiences about the events.

From the exterior, to those who know him only slightly. Edward Ashburnham appears almost superhumanly noble, the ideal of the British country gentleman and good soldier. If the reader believes all that is alleged about him, he is quite the contrary, a raging stallion, recklessly ruining every female he meets. The superficial goodness is merely a veneer masking his corruption. All the other characters, as well, have two sides. Florence Dowell, the respectable wife, has had an affair before her

marriage to John with the despicable Jimmy and may have married simply to get back lover in Europe. She certainly does not hesitate to become Edward Ashburnham's mistress and commits suicide whom she learns in a double-barrled blow that Edward is attracted to Nancy Rufford. And that the man in whose house she committed adultery with Jimmy is now talking with her husband in Bad Nauheim. Leonora is purposeful in trying to manage her husband's estate economically, but she is cruel and unloving. The reader can easily imagine that her husband would be driven to seek other company. John Dowell, the narrator himself, is stupid, lazy and piggy.

Since the story is told entirely from the point of view of John Dowell, and since he is a limited intelligence, the reader can never entirely trust his narration as reliable. Dowell may assert on one page that his character is noble, yet show the reader in a hundred ways that the character is despicable. The reader is caught in the wells of Dowell's mind. Clearly, Dowell sometimes does not tell the 'truth; but since the total work is fiction, the reader is not simply confronted with a conflict between appearances and reality but with the status of competing fictions. The story evaporates into the impressions in Dowell's mind. What Dowell thinks or believes is the truth at that moment in the fiction. It could be seriously argued that Edward, Leonora, and Florence have no external reality at all, that they are simply the imaging of the sickly Dowell as he tells or dreams his story. This approach may shock reader of conventional fiction who are accustomed to reading a novel as if the characters in every fiction are simply projections of the author's creative imagination.

However, Ford Madox Ford's *The Good Soldier* depends upon only the impressions of the narrator. John Dowell tells the story from his limited point of view. The readers know only the limited knowledge of the narrator. The narrator tells only his perception towards the characters, events which are limited of his knowledge

basically his past experiences—whole story depends upon the experiences, perception, limited knowledge and impressions of the narrator. Frequently narrator, John Dowell skips back and forth when he is telling the story. Ford's *The Good Soldier* carry achronological narrative structure. The narrator John Dowell, narrates the story achronologically. He first of all tells the event of present situation and later moves back and tries to give the impression which is imprinted in his mind. His narrative makes confusion to the reader. By narrating, he reveals the reality and appearances of the character in the story. In the process of narrating Dowell is skipping across space and time in collage of memory and imagination. He takes subject as an affairs and cogitate some shocking events which has already happened in the story.

#### IV: Conclusion

Works of any art is always wide open and their meanings vary widely. The meaning of any literature may vary from age to age, culture to culture, and place to place. *The Good Soldier* that is now regarded to be one of the greatest English novel has regularly been drawing attention of a large number of readers and critics since it was published in 1915. Nowadays all aspects of its meaning and structure are explored by critics who take its importance for granted. Their commentaries appear frequently in literary periodicals and occupy space in books about Ford Maddox Ford and his works.

Even after 95 years of its publication, literature have been bringing out a number of essays and periodicals on Ford and his works of art. Yet they seem to be inadequate to expose all aspects of the book and the characters most of the critics have interpreted the significant parts of the text and ignored insignificant parts. Although the critics have applied almost all literary theories ranging from psychoanalytic criticism to feminist criticism while interpreting the text, *The Good Soldier* They have not bothered to interpreter on a narrator's impression shown in the text.

Interpreting a rendering of impressions of the narrator, the text in the frame work of impressionist theory, its association with Ford Madox Ford's imagination has been exploited to some extent. It brings the fact that Ford's impression stands not just for the fictional set of recollected impressions. But it to be conveyed illusionistically by the text and the actual effect of the text on the reader. His impressionism does not primarily attempt to represent the sense data that intellection ordinarily composes into the object world, but to represent the jumbled memories that ordinarily composes into events. *The Good Soldier* is a story which depends upon only the narrators

knowledge and impressions. The narrator, John Dowell tells the events which impressed his mind. First of all, when he met Edward and his wife, he thought that they are the model couple of the world. But slowly and gradually, he knows about them, specially Edward's affair with another women, is shocked him.

The narrator John Dowell tells the story, each event is subjected simultaneously to two competing horizon of interpretation. The first is that of the continual present events are interpreted in real time. The second is the future, events are interpreted with reference to the "four crashing days at the end of nine years and six weeks" (6) . The two suicides collapse of the entire web of lies that had hold together. Dowell says that "I possessed a goodly apple" (7) the women when he possessed a goodly apple, he wants to return to condition where he could regard the rotten apple as goodly.

Dowell is a narrator as a character singularly passive throughout the book. But this seeming passivity is itself effective. Without doing move than referring to the orders of Florence's doctors Dowell prevents a channel crossing that would have allowed her to contrive her affair with Ashburnham on a new footing. The reason for his refusal is the very heart trouble that is her excuse for keeping Dowell out of her bedroom and her affairs, and Dowell turns her own lie against her simply by maintaining it.

Through out most of the book, Ford is telling the general story of the lives of his main character. In the last scene, however, he has an important event to relate. It is a small, quiet moment, but that is all the more reason that he tells the story of Dowell's last meeting with Edward with such care and delicacy. And it is Dowels, passivity that allows Ford to make readers feel what it is like to be Edward Ashburubm. The link between the two men, Dowell notes it in the books final

paragraph, is that they are both sentimental people. The meaning of this is unclear, through it seems to have something to do with the fact that they are each willing to behave according to emotions that they cannot and will be ever express. If Dowell had directly explained that he saw his friend's intention to commit suicide, readers could find this lack of action morally questionable. And Dowell can let Edward die because he knows exactly how he feels.

If readers find this novel confusing, it might be because it is told out of chronological order. Ford uses the novel's structure to stimulate the experience of: As the narrator describes it, a man sitting in a room and talking the events to a friend. As a speaker might do, the narrator Dowell skips backward and forward in time, going over the same stories again and again after details are filled in. The whole book is only the knowledge or impressions of a person who reveals through writing. Ford Madox Ford as an impressionist uses his imagination through the narrator in the text. Here, only a person's limited knowledge and perception are appears throughout the text.

*The Good Soldier* covers the features of the impressionism. There is colored with the impressionist language, plot, narrative techniques, and experiences of the narrator/author and limited knowledge of the characters. There all features are found in this text. Ford Madox Ford as an impressionist, projects all features in his text. In *The Good Soldier*, the narrator John Dowell shows only his experiences and impressions which are mysterious for him. The readers have to understand only his limited knowledge and events which are shocking for him. The whole story weaves only the narrator's perception.

So, Ford's novel *The Good Soldier* has many characteristics of the impressionism. It can offer multiple perspectives of studies. Instead of the narrating or

reporting of the story there is important a rendering of impressions. So, this research work has not only elaborated the narrating or reporting of the story but also made an effort to explore about the rendering of impressions regarding the characters, plot and subject matter.



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