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**Social and Psychological Interplay: Henry James's Use of Psychological
Realism**

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This thesis entitled “Social and Psychological Interplay: Henry James's Use of Psychological Realism,” submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Ganesh Prasad Paudel has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Abstract

Interplay of social and psychological factors emphasize the reciprocal relationship between social setting and people environed. Psychological realism is employed to present a fragment of human reality, explores the influential nature of socio-psychological factors. Henry James best explores the governess's inability to fit into her social environment and to deal with her psychological impulses, which result in her madness, in *The Turn of the Screw*. In "The Beast in the Jungle", James presents a paradoxical picture of Marcher's life, a life devoid of passion, because of his inability to experience consciously. James perceives the constant interplay between socio-psychological factors in the Strether's vision of reality in *The Ambassadors*. Thus, 'Jamesian Perception' is immediate and physically connected to the individual and his milieu that builds up into psychological realism.

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Interplay of Social and Psychological Factors

The phrase 'social and psychological interplay' signifies an interplay between social factors – environment (nature) and social, political, historical, ideological, racial, economic and religious aspects of contemporary life – and psychological factors – unconscious or inner self. We find the blend of social and psychological element in almost all fictions. The social setting is the foundation and often the chief reason for the novel. Social and psychological currents emphasize the relationship between social setting and the people envired. Most of the fictions present socio-psychological criticism which is concerned with reciprocal influence between social environment and inner life of people envired. Regarding the amalgamation of social and psychological forces in all fiction, Joseph Conrad says:

Fiction is history, human history or it is nothing. But it is also more than that: it stands on firmer ground, being based on the reality of forms and the observation of social phenomena whereas history is based on documents and the reading of print and handwriting –on second-hand impression. Thus, fiction is nearer truth. (61)

Susan M. Griffin in her essay “The Selfish Eye: Strether’s Principles of Psychology” and William Veeder in his essay “The Nurturance of the Gothic” best explore the interplay of social and psychological factors.

The Selfish Eye: Strether’s Principles of Psychology

Susan M. Griffin says that what the Jamesian eye sees is always in the interest of the Jamesian 'I' (398). Further, Susan views, “To understand Jamesian characters, you should identify the historical basis for their psychologies and

recognize how those psychologies are a function of the environment that surround them” (398). Jamesian character survives in his/her environment by attending actively, by selecting those perceptions which fulfill his/her needs. S/he creates those pictures that suit his/her self-interest. The environment that interests James is, of course, the social environment of civilized society. Nonetheless, Jamesian character survives in his/her world by seeing what s/he needs. Despite this active interest, s/he does not completely determine what s/he sees. Jamesian character’s environment naturally limits what s/he sees. And there are internal constraints as well, constraints so strong that analysis of the mechanics of his/her perceptions must confront the possibility that such perceptions may be nothing more than mechanical.

Late nineteenth- century psychologists' insistence upon studying the mind within its environment and thus, the individual's necessary adaptation to his surroundings, raised the age- old question of determinism with new force. William James finds in evolutionism itself justifications for a belief in the indeterminacy of human behavior. He argues, "'Chance Variation' introduces the potential for spontaneity, the possibility that the cosmos is not a great clock whose motions are mechanical and determined" (306). James also finds strong indications of indeterminacy in the mind's interested relationship with its environment. He says that “What we – attend – to and what – interests – us are synonymous terms” (1164). What we perceive is thus determined functionally, by our needs. Rather than a proof of simple determinism, the biological nature of attention is the possible source of our ability to choose our perceptions. Potential objects of both attention and perception are limited. Our parts, our bodies and

our environment work together to present us with a range of possible perceptions.

In Henry James's fiction, voluntary attention's direction of the associative machinery both connects his characters to, and saves them from being determined by their environment. They survive in their environments by directing their attention towards those perceptions that interest and benefit them. Thus, Susan concludes that James, like the naturalists, analyzes the relationships between characters and their environments. Unlike the naturalists, his work is not deterministic because he describes those relationships as active and reciprocal.

But Jamesian character is the creator as well as creature of his/her environment. Just how selective and active Jamesian seeing is will be clearer if we contrast it with perception in the work of a writer who is in many ways closer to James than Norris or Dreiser: George Eliot. Midway through *Middlemarch*, Dorothea, after a long night of watching awakens to the realization that her crisis is shared by three others (Will, Rosamund and Lydgate). What she sees reflects but doesn't affect her thoughts. The three people that she sees are emphatically not Will, Rosamund and Lydgate because the scene is a symbol for life rather than a part of it. There is no interaction between Dorothea and the world outside the entrance-gates.

Jamesian character perceives more actively and processively, what s/he sees does not merely reflect a question arrived at or even a question answered. Instead, the answering of the question, the problem solving process, takes place in Jamesian character's perceptions. Jamesian character is seeing almost with

what Ruskin calls "the innocence of the eye", that is, seeing "an arrangement of patches of different colors variously shaded" (27).

The Nurturance of the Gothic

William Veeder refusing the binary of Freud vs. Marx, defines gothic Praxis as the interplay of psychological and social forces. He believes that the nature of gothic is to nurture. He infers this belief from "the basic fact of communal life: that societies inflict terrible wounds upon themselves and at the same time develop mechanisms to help heal these wounds" (47). Anglo-American culture develops gothic in order to help heal the damage caused by our embrace of modernity. Veeder explains that gothic's nature is the psycho-social function of nurture : its project is to heal and transform (48). All fiction involves some psychological factors and social forces at work. Gothic is that fictional mode which is concerned with simultaneously liberating repressed emotions and exploring foreclosed social issues since gothic presents most aggressively the desires and themes conventionally considered beyond the pale – incest, familial, dysfunction, the homoerotic. Emphasizing on the social as well as the psychological aspects of gothic, Veeder introduces the question of context. He writes:

Gothicists have focused on political, economic, racial gendered, and religious aspects of Anglo-American life. Gothic can help heal the wounds of repression by putting into play what the discursive system studied by Foucault try to restrict. Through its insistence on the forbidden, gothic acts as a counter-discursive formation that releases repressed aspects and explores foreclosed topics. (48)

Veeder further explains that what gothic does is the self-healing through terror. We regain contact not only with forbidden desires but with desires forbidden because of their terrifying and thus potentially therapeutic- power. A fact of cultural history is that carnival was increasingly suppressed during the nineteenth century. There appeared concurrently three phenomena – hysteria, Psychoanalysis and the ghost story revival. Carnival demonstrates that the private theater of the psyche is hell on earth. Like psychoanalysis, gothic proves to be a site where human being can forego reactive reinforcement and can actively reengage with component thoughts that have been repressed. Gothic has its striking carnivalesque features. It allows hybridization or inmixing in which self and other become enmeshed in an inclusive heterogeneous, dangerously unstable zone.

What gothic does have is a consistent commitment to release repressed affects and reopen foreclosed issues. Gothic text hold us because their express role in culture, certainly by the 1890's, is to help reveal and heal the wounds caused by the dropping and smothering widespread in Victorian culture. Gothic nurturance is two-fold effort. An individual text draws strength from not being individual, from being part of a tradition committed to nurturing. Tradition fosters the individual talent, even as it fosters readers' creativity. Tradition is a good enough parent. We readers in turn, are part of a nurturing community within a wounding repressive society, at the same time that we are citizen of that society. There is no us vs. them. There is only our self-fostering and our self-damaging proclivities. Thus, gothic fiction shows an interplay between socio-cultural factors and psychological forces.

The themes that Henry James cherishes could be called 'long themes' since they rely heavily on development and a slow process of unfolding.

Regarding his themes, H.G. Ruthrof says:

His theme, in order to be aesthetically satisfying, requires the careful presentation of characters with different cultural backgrounds and the portrayal of whole social groups. The psychic conflict of seeking experience or avoiding illumination, the juxtaposition of conventions, growing love or decay – these demand the detailed and delicate treatment of which James is an unquestionable master. (370)

Fiction mostly reveals the social conditions and psychological truths.

Regarding the importance of socio-psychological elements in fiction, Ernest Boll says, “Fiction must arise in part from ideas relating to social conditions or psychological truths” (208). He further explains, “The subject of the novel must be lived life, with the utmost possible perception and understanding of people, the circumstantial materials of everyday lives, the understanding of one's own existence, and one's inner life” (208-9).

Thus, socio-psychological forces seem dominant in almost all fictions of Henry James.

Social and psychological interplay: A study of psychological Realism

An interplay between social forces – context – and psychological forces – mind – builds up into psychological realism. Basic mental and physical functions verging on the gothic, as well as fundamental cultural questions are the sources of Jamesian psychological realism. The moment of perception is a moment of engagement with the problems of life. Jamesian characters' active perception tie

them firmly to their environment which ultimately results in psychological realism.

Observation and experience contributes in the formation of psychological realism. 'Visual perception' that is immediate and physically connected to individual and his environment ultimately helps in the building of psychological realism. Gothic experience is the outcome of interplay between psychological elements and social forces which ultimately results in psychological realism. Thus, we can deduce that psychological realism is the outcome of interplay between several social and psychological forces. Socio-cultural elements, gothic experience, mental vision, physical environment, individual human being etc. are component parts of psychological realism.

II. Looking from the Perspective of Psychological Realism

Psychological realism is employed mainly to present one revealing human situation, a fragment of human reality, not a full-scale picture of a complex world. The term 'psychological realism' denotes the psychological nature of reality. Psychological realism is made up of two words 'psychology' and 'Reality'. 'Psychology' refers to inner self or mind whereas 'Reality' denotes outer world or nature/environment. Hence, the combination of environmental forces and psychological forces contributes to the make up of psychological realism. A psychological novel is a work of prose fiction which places more than the usual amount of emphasis on interior characterization, and on the motives, circumstances, and internal action which springs from, and develops, external action. The psychological novel is not content to state what happens but goes on to explain the why and the wherefore of this action. In this type of writing character and characterization are more than usually important, and they often delve deeper into the mind of a character than novels of other genres. The psychological novel can be called a novel of the "Inner man", so to say.

James's remarks on the techniques of fiction are all the more significant and can be regarded as a turning point between the 19th and the 20th centuries.

Focusing the method of psychological realism, H.G. Ruthrof says:

In 20th century literature the short story adopts more and more as a general underlying theme an attitude of skeptically questioning, of psychologically analyzing. In Jame's art, this attitude finds its expression through a method commonly referred to as psychological realism. Traditional narrative techniques stressing the succession of external events are replaced by the presentation

of subtle psychic nuances. This new manner of handling a given reality is an attempt to gain meaningful insights into a precarious existence, which declares traditional tools of interpretation inadequate. (369)

Obviously, the method of psychological realism in itself is neither typical of the short story nor of longer types of prose fiction. The final difference in form is a result of an emphasis either on themes which require expansive treatment or on ones which demand extreme compression. James's emphasis is clearly on the development of complex psychological structure which entails great detail and suffers under rigorous compression.

Regarding the James's method of presentation H.G. Ruthrof further comments:

Seen from the perspective of fiction's relation to reality James's means of indirect characterization justly deserve the term psychological realism, for as in real life, our knowledge about somebody's personality is not gained by descriptions, but by accumulating gradually more and more minute and subtle indications, hardly recognizable aspects and fragments of his psyche. (371)

In rendering subtle nuances James develops and demonstrates a new type of characterization. Intentions and feelings are conveyed with a refinement unknown to fiction before. But his preoccupation with character reaches a point at which any incident worth literary treatment imparts a story through which a portrait can be revealed. As a result, the carefully presented process of the unfolding of a character interests James infinitively more than incidents.

Keeping an eye on the effects of minute observation of emotions and thoughts, H.G. Ruthrof further explains:

James's sheer talent of filling in a multitude of psychological details eventually also affects the relation between 'narrating time' and 'narrated time.' Instead of the traditional fast narrative pace, the minute depiction of emotions and thoughts tends to slow down the flow of time to suspended time so that, in certain passages, it takes the reader longer to read what would have taken the fictional persona very little time to experience. (372)

In addition, James usually prefers directing a broad stream of thought towards moments of recognition, and thus giving a full portrait of an individual, rather than grasping one significant human situation its density and poignancy.

In context of Jamesian fiction, Susan M. Griffin also best analyzes psychological realism in her essay "The Selfish Eye: Strether's Principles of Psychology." Susan says that many critics discuss 'Jamesian Perception' but few have analyzed what it actually is. Paul Armstrong characterizes aptly James's position: "I'm not the spectator, I am involved whenever I perceived" (13). In James, 'visual perception' is not detached intellection. Perception is immediate, physical points of connection between the individual and his environment. Seeing is an active means of adapting to the world. Jamesian perception is (like Jamesian thought and Jamesian sentence) an intricate process.

Susan examines placing James's work in the context of late nineteenth-century psychology allows us to transpose the observation- experience dichotomy into one between associationist and functionalist psychologies. Susan identifies that:

James's perceptual psychology is functionalist rather than associationist explains why and how his characters are not passive observers. We can study how James's characters see, without being forced to regard that seeing as detached, cerebral and passive. (397)

The associationist school, whose origins were Aristotelian and whose systematization was usually credited to Hartley and Hume, had dominated eighteenth and nineteenth-century studies of the mind. Associationist psychologists described a mental life composed of discrete sensations. The mind was merely a 'tabula rasa', a place where these atoms of sensation combined and recombined. The critical common place that James's characters are 'Passive observers' is based upon this associationist model: perceivers are the passive recipients of atomistic sensations.

Functionalism, while acknowledging the explanatory power of the associative mechanism, attempted to alter the study of the mind in light of Darwin's discoveries. The new evolutionary biology was a system in which every organ and function was understood in terms of its history and its relation to the life of the creature which displayed it. Psychology must begin to understand the mind in just this way, as an organ which, like any other organ has been evolved for the benefit of its possessor. Mind and body are not to be the parallel objects of separate studies (Metaphysics and Biology), but are both to be analyzed functionally. Functionalist psychologists, like James Ward and William James, argued that psychology should study unified subjects, not units of sensation, that these subjects should be not in isolation but functionally, (that is, as engaged in

adaptive interactions with their environments), and, finally that such subjects are active, not passive, in nature.

The question of whether perception is best described by an associationist or a functionalist model is, then, a question of whether atomistic sensations impinge upon a passive subject and build into larger units of perception or an active, unified subject selects its perceptions in the course of an interested, adaptive relation with its undifferentiated environment. This question is answered in James's fiction: Perception is functional.

Susan further adds that Jamesian character could not experience anything so crude as a 'stream of consciousness', every thought is expressed in a sentence, and every sentence closed by a period. Instead, James prefers 'center of consciousness', viewing all the action through the consciousness of one major character. In his *The Art of the Novel: Critical Prefaces by Henry James*, he says:

Using an abstraction or a concrete incident, he meditates upon it, lets it develop compresses and pares the development until he has found the method by which he can dramatize it, give it a central intelligence whose fortune will be his theme, and shape it in a story as a consistent and self-sufficient organism. (Preface XVI)

The reader is offered a quasi-reality, a reality which has been filtered through the consciousness of a created intelligent centre. The subject, therefore, is no longer what happened but what a highly perceptive mind feels and thinks about what happened. Or, to state the phenomenon more technically, the presentational process has become the presented world. As a result, action in the traditional

sense is replaced by a string of reflections on reality experienced and directly conveyed by the central persona.

Susan likes to use the word 'controlled thought' to describe Jamesian language. To a modern reader, long accustomed to the idea that much of consciousness operates below the level of language, the very look of Jamesian meditation on the page suggests a mind in which the intellect is very much in control. For the unconscious does not, we suspect, obey the rules of grammar and of syntax, and James's men and women think in sentences which no more resemble the unpunctuated flow of words. Though the Jamesian sentence strains, it does not break: no stream of consciousness, the critics all agree, flows through the pages of James's late fiction. Henry James does not write in what literary critics have defined as 'stream of consciousness'. In nutshell, intellectual artistic control is coupled, in James, with the unrulier force of creative imagination.

William James proposes the analogy of the stream as a replacement for associationism's 'chain' of distinct, atomistic ideas. He explicitly disagrees with Alexander Bain's insistence that the 'stream of thought is not a continuous current, but a series of distinct ideas. Instead, James calls for the 're-instatement of the vague' to its proper place in our mental life. And he argues that not only are most of our thoughts vague 'feelings of tendency', but even the stopping-places, the nouns, are continuous with the surrounding 'water of consciousness'. Every definite image in the mind is steeped and dyed in the free water that flows round it. With it goes the sense of its relations, near and remote, the dying echo of whence it came to us, the dawning sense of whither it is to lead.

William James's point is that all thinking takes the form of a stream: a continuous flow with stopping places. Perception is a stream. James further explains:

The simple impression of Hume, the 'simple idea' of Locke is both abstractions, never realized in experiences. Experience, from the very first, presents us with concentered objects, vaguely continues with the rest of the world which envelops them in space and time, and potentially divisible into inward elements and parts. These objects we break asunder and reunite. (461)

William James says explicitly that this discrimination is direct and perceptual. Indeed, he argues that even conceptual divisions, which result from our knowledge about things, can be ultimately traced to perceptual discrimination. Yet those critics who recognize that the movement, the continuity, the 'vagueness', to use William James's term, in Henry's sentence are the very terms of analysis and discrimination, do not regard these complexities as perceptual. Instead, these attributes are ascribed to a rational intellect that is seeking to control the raw materials of direct perception. The failure to recognize that both Jamesian thought and Jamesian perception are streams obscures the fact that James's perceivers are unified, not despite but in their perception.

According to William James, associationism, by focusing on sensations and relegating the subjects to the role of passive receiver, had virtually ignored this potential source of individual power. James find associationism insufficient, but not irrelevant.

The spontaneous activity is a constant in Henry James's descriptions of visual perception. What Susan calls picturing is the work of an active, attentive

subject, who selects and arranges. James's characters do not passively receive a succession of discrete visual sensations that combine into longer structures.

Rather, confronted with what William James calls 'an undistinguishable, swarming continuum', James's perceivers discriminate those things that interest them, compose pictures that will serve their needs.

III. Henry James's Use of Psychological Realism

Psychological Realism in *The Turn of the Screw*

Henry James's intensifications and complications of social vision as well as psychological intricacy make *The Turn of the Screw* (1898) another major moment in the gothic tradition. The narrative of *The Turn of the Screw* reveals a truth that is not necessarily empirical, but whose lack of empirical verifiability is not transparently self-incriminating insofar as the governess sees the ghost, but her susceptibility – rather than equaling madness – can be viewed as a figure through which James links inner experience to the social expectations that are brought to bear on the character's construction. The governess's unreliability serves as a stylistic marker of James's psychological realism. Considering the governess's madness a symptom of a psycho-social gap, an 'imbalance between the envisioning self and the environing world', Susan Crowl writes, "We may read *The Turn of the Screw* as allegory about the way in which the intensities of experience felt as deeply private are also another kind of publication of private vision" (114).

To summarize briefly, the novella's main plot consists of a first- person narrative by a young governess, whose proper name remains enigmatically hidden behind the generic I. She is in charge of two precocious children, Flora and Miles, to whom she believes to be visited by the ghosts of two former servants/mentors, Peter Quint and Miss Jessel. Miles's mysterious expulsion from school adds to the overall suspense. In her attempt to solve the puzzle, the governess ends up sending Flora away, while remaining at the Bly estate with Miles, who, in the final scene of exorcism, expires in her embrace. Her story is framed by two additional narrators: Douglas, and an unnamed narrator.

The uncle's strange command along with the children's unwillingness to reveal their past at the governess's request, contrast sharply with the latter's preoccupation with the past. How past (lived life) haunts the Jamesian character, especially the governess, and helps in the formation of her psychological make-up is best analyzed in the following textual evidence:

They had a delightful endless appetite for passages in my own history, to which I had again and again treated them; they were in possession of everything that had ever happened to me, had had, with every circumstance the story of my smallest adventures and of those of my brothers and sisters and of cat and the dog at home, as well as many particulars of the eccentric nature of my father, of the furniture and the arrangement of our house, and of the conversation of the old women of our village. (45)

The governess is preoccupied with her past and desires to know her master's as well as pupil's background. She becomes obsessive and suspicious about her own past after she fails to get sufficient information about them. Being unable to deal with her own psychological impulses, she expresses:

When I thought of such occasions afterward gave me so the suspicions of being watched from under cover. It was in any case over my life, my past and my friends alone that we could take anything like our ease – a state of affairs that led them sometimes without the least pertinence to break out into sociable reminders. (45)

Each body of experience is qualitatively different, being an amalgam of memories, fantasies and sensations, tempered by nature and nurture. It is

impossible to escape the effects of the environment on genetic coding and constitutional fluidity. Governess precipitates ups and downs of mood, her limitations and incompetencies as teacher, her self congratulation and self-affirmation, her flights of fancy and imagination, her insecurity with the children, her infatuation with the master, and most of all, her overwhelming fear of doing anything that will damage her reputation in his eyes – all contribute to a picture of emotional liability. Regarding the reciprocal relationship between individual and environment, Mark Jones says:

Reality and imagination are factors in mental self-control, affected by biology and mechanisms that cannot be precisely defined in terms of the id, ego and super ego. James's tale and Freud's research remind us that different kinds of mental awareness coexist in people who share the same environment. (2)

The governess is frantic, wanting to know everything and nothing. The story's casting of sexuality in the mode of gothic terror and its thematizing of the fear of going public are response to the climate of anxiety surrounding non-normative sexuality in England in the 1890's. By means of this gothic language, James dramatizes the construction of private desires and pleasures as potentially monstrous and sets up the lurid scandal implicit in the possibility of that sexuality being made public.

The Turn of the screw enlists socio-cultural studies and psychological elements in the service of close analysis. From the beginning, it is the extent of Henry James's subversion of Victorian realism in the novella that intrigued many critics: the work is not horrible in any grotesque or realistic sense, correctly speaking, the artistic method of Mr. James is realism as opposed to idealism. The

abuses of power that enabled domination in imperial Victorian culture and gender relations are the causes of governess's madness.

Shoshana felman's work with holding resides in her ability to implicate the reader in the protagonist's desire to possess. Felman says, "To hold the signifier (story's meaning) is in reality to be held by it" (184). Felman's allegory of the signifier is limited by its strengths, however. So intense a commitment to deconstruction occludes not only specific phenomena (Such as something) but also the more general phenomenon of context or rather, contexts. What Henry James called, 'The spoils of poynton' – 'a small social and psychological picture' (notebook entry, 24 December 1893) – characterizes also *The Turn of the screw*. Holding is a social and a psychological phenomenon whose intricacies are suggested in James's novella through a comparable intricacy of over determined detail. The governess confess:

I learned something – at first, certainly – that had not been one of the teachings of my small, smothered life; learned to be amused, and even amusing, and not to think for the morrow. It was the first time, in a manner that I had known space and air and freedom, all the music of summer and all the mystery of nature. (13)

Here, James contrasts governess's small smothered life at the parsonage with her every days at Bly. Miles dies in the smothering hold of the governess. She exclaims at last, "I caught him, yes, I hold him" (79). By attending to specificities of pain as they relate to particularities of the governess unnurturing social and domestic environment, we can understand better why she drops and smothers –and thereby how her final act accrues political valences that comment back upon the repressive force which have produced her.

Gender discrimination is also one of the cause of governess's madness. She is poor, inexperienced and star-struck. The violence inherent in gender-inflected class negotiation is clearly shown in the statement, "He struck her, inevitably, as gallant and splendid" (4).

James seems to be pointing out the costliness of the social arrangements. Even pastoral Essex is not safe from the violence of Empire. British society drops and smothers those who most need holding is evident in the following narratorial comment: "He had been left, by the death of their parents in India, guardian to a small nephew and a small niece, children of a younger, a military brother, whom he had lost two years before. These children were, by the strangest of chances for a man in his position" (4).

The social world of the governess cannot hold her. Authority as manifest in the uncle is appropriative, irresponsible, and disingenuous; in Douglas, it is appropriative, defensive and rhetorically slippery; in the narrator, it is appropriative, insecure and sedulous. What is the governess to do? The patriarchal will to power that has co-opted India, subordinated younger sons, and jeopardized orphans, has restricted safely the governess's life.

James's social tale has a psychological and domestic component because the governess emerges into professional life only in her twentieth year. Her psyche has been profoundly shaped by the Hampshire parsonage, so how she raised Miles and Flora will depend substantially upon that upbringing. How facilitating was the governess's domestic environment? To explore the above question, we need to take the clues we're given and construct what might have been the governess's past – in order to comprehend better what seems to be her present. Douglas's characterization of the governess presents her as "The

youngest of several daughter of a poor country parson” (4). These words provide an interesting and brief revelation of her background. It explores the relationship between the governess’ past and her behavior at Bly. The present thus reenacts the past. Sense of not being good enough goes back to her 'whimsical father.'

Having explored how domestic and social environments malfunction, how holding becomes dropping and smothering, we can now focus on the young women's psychological state. Dennis Grunes writes. “The young woman has brought her troubles with her” (227). She seems to have problems interpersonally as well as intra-personally. Governess's capacity for interpersonal relationship is crucial to her holding of Miles and Flora. Why does controlling her desire for sex and power prove so difficult that she ends up seeing ghosts and killing Miles? Characters particular difficulties are, in turn, caused by particular problems in the mirroring environment.

I believe that the governess's anxiety derives not simply from her desire to be seen, but from her inability to acknowledge the particular person whom she wants to be seen by. Her love is hopeless, inaccessible, the object of her affection being one socially out of her sphere. Her inexpressible and unrequitable love is best analyzed in the following dialogue between the narrator and Douglas:

“Who was it she was in love with?”

“The story will tell.” I took upon myself to reply.

“Oh, I can't wait for the story!”

“The story won't tell”, said Douglas, “not in any literal, vulgar way.” (3)

What we question about the present governess is not her virginity but her self-awareness. Women are made violent by the way we nurture our daughters and treat our adult females. The word 'awkward' links governess and employer because she is made furious by the same domestic/social system that makes him callous. This link with the uncle indicates a more than personal, a social/political valence to the governess's rage at the little boy. Together they destroy Miles. Miles the heir to patriarchy, perishes – and there is no one to replace him. James particular version of the autumnal chill, and thus his socio-political vision, can be gotten at by attending carefully to the agent of the heir's extirpation.

Neill Matheson suggests, “Governess finds relief from intolerable new suspicion by turning again to the sheer charm of the children “(715). Governess says about the small girl Flora, “I had simply, in other words, plunged afresh into Flora's special society and there become aware – it was almost a luxury! – that she could put her little conscious hand straight upon the spot that ached” (31). The above mentioned textual lines invite our imagination on its knotting of pleasure and troubled desire and ultimately establish the interplaying nature between human psyche and his environment.

The Governess claims near the end of the story that she has needed:

[...] rigid will, the will to shut my eyes as tight as possible to the truth that what I had to deal with was, revoltingly, against nature. I could only get on at all by taking ‘nature’ into my confidence and my account, by treating my monstrous ordeal as a push in a direction unusual, of course, and unpleasant, but demanding, after all, for a fair front, only another turn of the screw of ordinary

human virtue: No attempt, nonetheless, could well require more tact than just this attempt to supply, one's self, all the nature. (72)

In the above mentioned lines, we find a conflict between human mind (psychology) and outside nature (environment). Governess might be referring here to a sexual violation of nature. The tense interplay between concealment (inner) and revelation (outer) comes to a head in the climactic scene of interrogation, in which the governess tries to force Miles to confess, to bring out what has been concealed. Miles says, “[Y]ou wanted me to tell you something” and governess responds, “That's it. Out, straight outer” (74). Many Victorians, including both social reformers and men of letters felt that there is ultimately only one way to preserve innocence in the young: they must be removed from the contamination of this world.

The whole story has been primarily centered to the governess, her vision and the way she behaves about them, her revolt with nature, her reciprocal relation with the environmental forces, as soon as we look at them from the obverse side, present a solid and unmistakable picture of the poor country parson's daughter, with her English middle class class-consciousness, her inability to admit to herself her sexual impulses and the relentless English authority which enables her to put over on inferiors even purposes which are totally deluded. In this way, the constant interplay between repressive Victorian environment and governess inability to deal with her psychological impulses result in her madness.

Psychological Realism in “The Beast in the Jungle”

Using the device James called a 'central intelligence he reveals the world through the silent thought of one of his character, John Marcher, proceeding at a

stately pace, through constant self-examination and self-analysis in “The Best in the Jungle”(1903). This story dramatizes a great negative adventure, the life of the only 'man in the world to whom nothing whatever was to happen', because of his 'sterilizing habit' of analyzing his experience and failing to find it good enough and thence to appropriate it.

Willam James, in his *The Varieties of Religious Experiences*, interspersed reflective passages with case studies – includingly written testimonies from the tortured lives of John Bunyan and Leo Tolstoy – that strikingly parallel the pioneering psychological realism of “The Beast in the Jungle”. Especially in the chapter “The Sick Soul”, *Varieties* provides a paradigm for the character of John Marcher, that most pathologically anxious of Henry James’s creations (140) . “The Beast in the Jungle”, indeed, is Marcher's tale, and it develops a theme of the dread of emotional insularity. William James defines, “Sick Souls are those oppressed by the ordinations of a closed universe over which humankind has no control” (140). John Marcher fits this category of Sick soul. He is an epitome of William's philosophical opponent; a priori – that a special end awaits him. He allows the intellectual development of his grand 'Idea' to disturb the counterpoise between his mind and heart. His impeccable manners and outward selflessness constitute his character. May is living for the worldly and human love she bears for Marcher, whereas Marcher's life is perpetuated by the cloistered secret of his Sick Soul. The above mentioned idea is best supported by following dialogue between May and Marcher:

“I don't know why it shouldn't make me – humanly which is what we're speaking of – as right as it makes you.”

“I see,” Marcher returned. “Humanly, no doubt, as showing that you're living for something. Not, that is, just for me and my secret.” (17)

Osborn Andreas argues that Marcher offends against life through 'the rejection of experience' that he had repressed his life (121). He is a man who discovers too late that his egoism has caused him to miss the passion of life he might have had. James informs us that Marcher's pleased sense of his capacity for discovery is, like his memory, distinctly faulty: in stating here that “He had with his own hands dug up this little hoard, [. . .] so long forgotten” (10). Marcher's culminating view of his life is experientially poverty-stricken, as an existence lived out at zero degree. May connects Marcher's view of the Past and shares with him her knowledge of their previous relationship. She is possessed of an intelligence – that is, of a knowledge of their experience and the power to analyze it – unavailable to Marcher. At Weatherend, it is May who provides the gloss by which we must evaluate Marcher's recollections and judgments. The information about the past which she relays is correct and creates a bond in the present between her and Marcher. She watches, learns, sets experience against experience. By virtue of her ability to recall and assess accurately Marcher's and her own past and present, she eventually comes to know the future. On the contrary, Marcher fails to experience consciously. James describes May as “the picture of serene and exquisite but impenetrable sphinx” (21). Marcher suggests, “You know something I don't” (22). He asks if he will consciously suffer, She promptly shook her head, “Never” (24).

“Experience, James wrote in “The Art of fiction”, is never limited and it is never complete” (10). When Marcher sees the face of the man who has clearly

felt pain and shows it, he is envious, envious of the man's visible grief and of the passion it betokens: Marcher says, "He showed [the ravage of his features] – that was the point" (23). As May foretold, what he fails to do is suffer consciously or with any sense of self-awareness. He has learned less about himself in a lifetime than has the man who notices him for a moment. Marcher fails entirely to see or to remember that he has loved and suffered. Through the years he has become dependent upon her for his very belief in his own existence. Marcher does not fail to live, love, suffer; with his consciousness trained obsessively on the future, he fails to realize that he has lived, loved, suffered and that he is continuing to do so with every breath he takes.

We may see Marcher as a man without passion, a man so all – consumingly aware of himself alone that he feels nothing apart from his own pulse. His life can be seen as utterly mundane and without real occurrence – as overloaded with consciousness but empty of experience – poor in consciousness or poor in memories of observation and understanding of experience. John Marcher is the man in the world to whom nothing whatever was to have happened. May as more than a pathetic victim who has lived her life through Marcher; she becomes, equally, a compassionate and intelligent woman who has allowed Marcher to live his life through her.

William James describe in *Varieties* how the most outwardly successful man may be covertly victimized by fears of mediocrity. Giving Judgemental opinion William says, "Either man's ideals in the line of his achievements are pitched far higher than the achievements themselves, or else he has secret ideals of which the world knows nothing, and in regard to which he inwardly knows himself to be found wanting" (116). In similar fashion, the world knows nothing

of Marcher's belief that he is “being kept for something rare and strange” (6). His overweening mindfulness of a select destiny brings about his emotional stasis and consequently circumscribes his life.

Marcher exemplifies someone who, on a psychological level, loses his life, and certainly May's: on a philosophical level, he degrades appearance (Physical world) and exalts Idea (doubly tragic as an instinctive image! the beast in the jungle) to a suprasensory realm (the future unique). Marcher's worry over May's illness seems to highlight and epitomize the whole work's philosophical concerns in the depths of its psychological portraiture. How the thought of character is influenced by his active participation with environment is best analyzed in the following lines:

The dream of acquisition at Weatherend would have had to be wild indeed, and John Marcher found himself among such suggestions, disconcerted almost equally by the presence of those who knew too much and by that of those who knew nothing. The great rooms caused so much poetry and history to press upon him that he needed some straying apart to feel in a proper relation with them.

(1)

Marcher's personal epiphany, sudden realization, comes with a rush produced by the sight of a stranger's face. The face of the stranger embodies “Scarred passion”, “letters of quick flame”, “a smoky torch”; it is “something that profaned the air” that illustrate “in sharper incision than ever the open page of his story” (34). The hallucination ultimately summoned forth by this chain of associations is the Beast – a retributory apparition of his failed affections – before which Marcher capitulates and falls upon May's tomb.

Finally, we can see Marcher as having an intense revelation at the end of his life, yet still – like the rest of us – a bit skew-eyed and shortsighted, missing the full complexity and ambiguity of his life. James builds ambiguities into the story, ambiguities that point to the richly paradoxical quality of Marcher's inability to experience consciously builds into psychological realism of his life, a life devoid of passion.

Psychological Realism in *The Ambassadors*

Henry James's great attempt to read the mind of his character, Strether, in *The Ambassadors* (1903), results in the interplaying nature of social and psychological forces in the psychological realism. Focusing on the constant interplay between Strether's mind and his environment, James's shows us, how Strether's perception changes from Woollett to Paris or from new world to old world. At first, Strether is preoccupied with the idea of Woollett and takes Madame de Vionnet as “wicked women” (II,31) and defines Chad and her relationship as vulgar. When Strether comes in touch with Parisian environment, he begins to take their relation, as “virtuous attachment” (IV, 108). The revelation scene in the Parisian country Lambinet provides Strether the real knowledge of Chad's relation with Madam de Vionnet and at last he declares, “Virtuous attachment was but a technical lie” (XII, 353). Thus, Strether considers the importance of environment as well as the person's psychological status in the formation of his/her psychological realism.

In *The Ambassadors*, Strether's transformation of perception and understanding dominate the account. These transformations are instantaneous and visual, rather than temporal and analytical. Strether has long been recognized as the prototypic Jamesian perceiver, and indeed attributes of

Strether's vision are characteristic of Jamesian perception in general. Strether's Perception take the form of a unified stream. The stream of perception is functional: it is a means of adjustment to environmental conditions. And this emphasis on the function of perception explains the active nature of Strether's seeing. He survives in his environment by attending actively, by selecting those perceptions which fulfill his needs. Perception, is a stream, a stream which Strether's first viewing of Maria Gostrey's apartment illustrates:

[. . .] it was the innermost nook of the Shrine – as brown as a Pirate's cave. In the brownness were glints of gold; patches of purple were in gloom; objects all that caught, through the muslin, with their high rarity, the light of low windows. Nothing was clear about them but that they were precious. (III, 70)

What he sees is a continuous whole. There are stopping places (the glints, the patches, the objects), but they are immersed in their surroundings (in the brownness, the gloom, the light). Gradually, Strether begins to discriminate certain objects more clearly, and eventually he is “bent, with neared glasses, over a group of articles on a small stand” (III, 73). Strether's discriminations are perceptual here, not 'Cerebral.' He still sees a continuous whole, yet his perception now entails analysis. The stream of perception flows towards discrimination. The failure to recognize that both Jamesian thought and Jamesian perception are streams obscures the fact that Jamesian perceivers are unified, not despite but in their perception. Strether works out the correspondences between things in his perception of Maria's apartment.

What is the function of these unified perceptions? We can answer this question only by recognizing the fact that Strether is an active perceiver, not a

passive observer. From the very start, he selects and arranges in the very act of seeing. To perceive in James's fiction is to compose reality into pictures. But such pictures are not proof that Strether is blinding himself to knowledge of the material world in order to make an ideal version of that world. Instead, the Jamesian perceiver creates those pictures that suit his/her self-interest. Parisian afternoon in the sculptor Gloriani's garden offers superabundance of perceptual triggers that vastly exceed whatever definable insight they may contribute to. Gloriani's garden speaks to Strether of "names in the air, of ghost at the windows, of signs and tokens, a whole range of expression, all about him, too thick for prompt discrimination" (V,116). This thickness approximates the flurry of sensations Strether experiences.

Strether's perceptual pictures are always self-interested – even when they seem self-sacrificing. For example, he constructs a series of pictures of Marie de Vionnet that portray a lady in mild, romantic distress and thus in need of noble yet limited saving. These pictures permit Strether to become safely, restrictedly, involved with her. The fact that Strether needs to think of himself as noble does not mean he cannot act nobly. Strether's selfish eye is not the mark of a villain because it is not an organ peculiar to him. His perceptions are structured by the very conditions of seeing. In *The Sense of the Past*, James describes Ralph Pendrel as 'all selfishly' asking another for help, and then goes on to say, "immense and interesting to show him as profiting by her assistance without his being thereby mean or abject or heartless" (328). Our understanding of Strether's self-interested seeing needs to be equally 'immense.' Despite this active interest, Strether does not completely determine what he sees. Understanding the activity of his perception means first defining the limits of that activity. Chad and Marie

de Vionnet arrange many of the visual details that Strether uses for his compositions. Strether's environment naturally limits what he sees. There are other constraints so strong in the analysis of the mechanism of Strether's perception. They are internal-constraints.

Henry James's functionalist psychology also begins with the mechanism of associationism. One of the technique applied here to form experience is switching between Woollett and Paris. For example, Strether's first perception of Marie de Vionnet owes much to his Woollett past:

She was dressed in black, but in black that struck him as light and transparent; she was exceedingly fair, and, though she was as markedly slim, her face had a roundness with eyes far apart and a little strange. Her smile was natural and dim; her hat no extravagant; he had only perhaps a sense of the clink, beneath her fine black sleeves, of more gold bracelets than he had ever seen a lady wear. (V,124-25)

Madame de Vionnet wears black, like Mrs. Newsome but the European black is light and transparent. He does not simply perceive her hat as 'modest', but rather as, in a negation of Woollett expectations, 'not extravagant'. She wears more bracelets than he has ever seen a lady wear. This is a delicately balanced point: Her jewelry is not that of a Woollett lady, but he can not categorize her as 'not a lady'. New sights are never entirely new but are, rather, elaborations on, or reactions to, old ways of seeing. Strether can never free himself of old perceptual categories; yet new perceptions can modify old categories.

All of these discriminations take place in the very act of perception. Strether does not see Marie de Vionnet and then try to fit this perception into his

Woollett categories. He sees her in terms of those categories. The past organizes and intrudes upon the present. This does not mean that the past is simply a point of objective comparison for the present. In the opening scene of the novel, When Strether sees the Chester city wall, he does not compare this present perception with his original sight of the wall. Instead, what he sees is deeply mixed with and 'enriched' by what he saw which can be made further clear by following textual evidence:

[. . .] the tortuous wall – girdle, long since snapped, of the little swollen city, half held in place by careful civic hands – wanders in narrow file between parapets smoothed by peaceful generations, pausing here and there for dismantled gate or a bridged gap, with rises and drops, steps up and steps down, queer twists, views of cathedral tower and waterside fields, of huddled English town and ordered English country. Too deep almost for words was the delight of these things to Strether; yet as deeply mixed with it were certain images of his inward picture. (I, 9)

When Strether return to Paris and sees yellow books in a store window, he is inevitably affected by the fact that he saw them thirty years ago. The associative mechanism causes his past perceptions to condition his present ones . At the same time, Strether's present perception does not simply replicate his past ones. Free Will is located in the perceptual nexus between past and present. In his youth the books seemed to him symbols of his plans for greatness. Now they appear as emblems of the loss of that youth, an effect which he intensifies by focusing on the glass that shields them. Strether attends. He forbids himself the purchase of any books, insuring that he will see them with “hungry gazes

through clear plates behind which lemon-coloured volumes were as fresh as fruit on the tree” (II,51). He sees not books but books behind a window, Strether makes sure that he sees the pleasure of Paris through a clear but clearly present barrier. His ability to freely select may be circumscribed, but it exists, and he acts upon it. Strether's characteristic turning away and his directing his vision towards safe objects (in moments of stress he repeatedly turns to look at his American letters or watch) are examples of the limited but powerful faculty that William James calls:

'Mental spontaneity': my experience is what I agree to attend to, only those items which I notice shape my mind without selective interest, experience is an utter chaos. Interest alone gives accent and emphasis, light and shade, background and foreground – intelligible perspective, in a word. (380-81)

James's perceivers discriminate those things that interest them, compose pictures that will serve their needs. For example, when Strether needs to be able to think of Marie de Vionnet as a romantic lady in distress, he creates a picture of her apartment that suits his purpose. Chad has prepared for this scene by praising Marie, carrying Strether off to the visit, and leaving the two alone. But Strether's own participation is evident in the description of the apartment. He works hard at what he sees, “ he found himself making out, as a background of the occupant”, “He guessed”; “His attention took them all tenderly into account”, “he quite made up his mind” (VI, 144-45). Although he guesses that the apartment “went further back” (VI, 144), Strether sees it as belonging to the Romantic period so that he can select and arrange its details into a high romantic pictures:

He would have answered for it at the end of a quarter of an hour that some of the glass cases contained swords and epaulettes of ancient colonels and generals; medals and orders once pinned over hearts that had long since ceased to beat; snuff-boxes bestowed on ministers and envoys; copies of works presented, with inscriptions, by authors now classic. (VI, 146)

Once Strether can see Marie de Vionnet ensconced in an heroic, historic setting, he can believe that she is a lady in mild distress and he, a self-sacrificing knight. The picture he creates permits him to become involved with her in a noble, safe way. Of course, Marie has helped to make sure that this picture was available to Strether. She even seats herself on the apartment's one anomalously modern chair so that Strether can see her in the lowly position of supplicant. (Chad, on the other hand, always manages to stand above Strether).

Strether perceives more actively and processively. What he sees does not merely reflect a question arrived at or even a question answered. Instead, the answering of the question, the problem-solving process, takes place in Strether's perceptions. As we have already seen, his first picture of Maria Gostrey's apartment is an analysis. Let us examine the nature of that analysis more closely. What Strether finds in the sight of Maria's down-to-earth *entresol* is a corrective to his puzzlement about Chad and Paris. This clarifying recognition takes the form of the rather blurry picture already quoted. Seeing is an arrangement of patches of different colors variously shaded. Of course, Strether's perceptions are not innocent, as phrase like 'brown as a pirate's cave' makes clear. Comparisons points to a past, to experience. Nonetheless, there is a sense that he is

momentarily stopped by a visual perception that he does not understand. But Strether's picture of Maria's apartment is more than a reflection of his confusion.

The perception is not merely an emblem for the perceiver's state of mind. Instead it is both the statement of and the solution to his/ her predicament. Strether works the problem out visually. He sees Maria's apartment as, like Paris and like Chad, at once confusing and alluring. It is a dark maze in which he can discriminate only the glint of precious objects. That is the problem. But the *entresol* is neither Paris nor Chad's *troisieme*. It is Maria's home. And there in lies the solution for Strether soon sees that “[...] after a full look at his hostess he knew nonetheless what most concerned him. The circle in which they stood together was warm with life, and every question between them would live those as nowhere else” (III, 70-71).

The sight of the apartment's owner transforms the scene into a full, warm circle – still intricate but now accessible. Maria's presence in the midst of the maze brings the scene to order. That the *entresol* is her home explains both her and it. Strether's growing ability to distinguish the bibelots is, again, not simply emblematic. Instead, his perception here is actually the next step in his understanding. What he literally sees in Maria's apartment both allows him to understand Maria herself (her taste, her expertise, her knowledge) and to analyze Chad. The usefulness of Strether is made explicit when the narrator tells us that Strether “glanced once more at a bibelot or two, and everything sent him back” – back ,that is, to the bibelots in Chad's apartment (III, 73). Maria's furnishings remind Strether of Chad's and her homier setting becomes a means to understanding the owner of the 'mystic *troisieme*.'

What Strether sees continues to be both active and useful. In perceiving Maria Gostrey's apartment for the second time, he confronts the problems of Maria herself. Strether distinguishes the fact that Marie de Vionnet has been there and works his way to a realization of the guilty association between the women. In *The Sense of the Past*, Henry James describes:

[. . .] he was sure within a minute that something had happened; it was so in the air of the rich little room that he had scarcely to name his thought. Softly lighted, the whole color of the place, with its vague values, was in a cool fusion – an effect that made the visitor stand for a little agaze. It was as if in doing so now he had felt a recent presence. (295)

The room is no longer intricate and varied. Strether now sees it as uniformly lit and open to easy understanding. He solves the problem of how to judge Maria Gostrey by looking at her apartment and seeing in the 'cool fusion' and 'vague values' her tie to the other woman. The two phrases are pointed allusions to Marie de Vionnet. In descriptions of her apartment, colors are repeatedly referred to as 'cool' and the painterly term 'values' is used explicitly. And of course, the complicity of the two women has effected a guilty sort of fusion between them just as Maria's values have been, at best, 'vague' – she has silently consented to Strether's deception. Strether does not know all of these things before he arrives. His understanding comes as he composes his picture of the *entresol*. The moment of perception is a moment of engagement with the problems of life. Strether's role as a representative Jamesian perceiver marks him not as a passionless intellect who stands apart and waits for perception but as an active, interested, unified self who survives by seeing.

How is Strether's perception different from others? How does Strether take part actively to formulate psychological realism? What kind of interplay is dominant in Strether's vision? To solve all these curiosities, we have to go through textual lines thoroughly. The distinct quality of Strether's perception or philosophical color of his perception is realized when the narrator tells, "he philosophized, the very condition of perception, the terms of thought" (VII,202). Strether always participates actively and there is constant interplay between mind (psychological forces) and environment (social forces) in his vision which is clearly shown in the following description of the narrator:

[. . .] Strether fancied them, liked them and passing through them met a sharp renewal of his original impression. He stopped, he looked back; the whole thing made a vista. It was doubtless half the projection of his mind, but his mind was a thing that, among old waxed parquets, pale shades of pink and green, pseudo-classic candelabra, he had always needed fully to reckon with. (IX, 247)

Strether's involved experience on the river more completely relates the past to the present and contrast romance with reality which ultimately contributes in the make up of the psychological realism. The landscape he sees also emphasizes ordered silver, greys and greens: "The maroon – colored sanctum, the special-green vision, [. . .] the poplars, the willows, the rushes the river, the sunny silver sky the shady woody horizon" (XI, 321). How Strether gets insight about his being and life through constant interplay of socio-psychological forces is the important question to deal with. Strether considers the importance of socio-psychological forces in the formation of his perception and hovers over the idea of lived life. After his experience of new world and old

world, Strether becomes able to stand above these two prejudices – Woollett's way of perception and Parisian way – and declares:

I don't get drunk; I don't pursue the ladies; I don't spend money; I don't even write sonnets. But nevertheless I'm making up late for what I didn't have early. I cultivate my little benefit in my own little way. It amuses me more than anything that has happened to me in all my life. (VII, 203)

Thus, Strether gets insight into his own being and try to make his life happy with what he did. He gets pleasure in his own way of dealing with life, his active involvement with the problems of life.

Strether begins his engagement with life by learning to live through his experience, individually and coming to understand those experiences on their own ground. Strether's experience of reality, that is to say of other people, and of course of himself, matches the structured dialectic of social and psychological forces, where one is the condition for the other's possibility. Strether allows a mentally produced image to stand between him and a more complete understanding of his experiences. Since he is the 'center of consciousness' through whom all experience are mediated.

At last, we find that Strether neither get the woman he desired nor the kind of identity he thought all important, he has had the deepest of experiences, for he has perceived and come to terms with what he is and what he has to live for. He learns that one can not, by an act of will, break the mold formed by one's heredity and environment. The limit of what Strether can experience of foreign life is symbolized by the frame of the Lambinet painting. Here, one thing needs to make clear is that neither social forces nor psychological elements can

dominate one's experience singly. So that, we perceive the constant interplay between socio-psychological forces in the Strether's vision of reality or experiences.

IV. Conclusion

Henry James felt that experience assumes meaning only when the proper form for its expression is found. One of his favorite words was 'awareness' – awareness of one's environment or surrounding-and he tried to make his 'awareness' encompass everything he could observe, relate, weigh and judge. In the art of observing and rendering one's own process of creation. James is a true successor of Poe. His influence on the 'modern short story' has undoubtedly been considerable. The source of fiction is not mere raw experience but the power to guess the unseen from the seen, to trace the implication of things, to judge the whole piece by the pattern, the condition of feeling, life in general so completely.

We find that Henry James's works either written in social reform stream or in international theme, or in gothic tradition, all are more or less tinged with psychological realism. We find the interplay of socio-psychological forces in the formation of all his work of fictions and they are deeply saturated by social and psychological issues.

In *The Turn of the Screw*, governess's madness is seen as the outcome of constant interplay between Victorian repressive environment and her inability to deal with her psychological impulses. It is a symptom of a psycho-social gap, an imbalance between the envisioning self and environing world. In fact, the governess sees the ghosts which are the outcome of her disturbed psychological status due to repressive social environment. Her unreliability serves as a stylistic marker of James's psychological realism. Thus, James molds the psychologically realistic content of governess's life into gothic garb.

In Henry James's another novella "The Beast in the Jungle", we find Marcher's inability to experience consciously as the psychological realism of his life, a life devoid of passion. In the above mentioned novella, James reveals the world through the silent thought of one of the character, Marcher through constant self-examination and self-analysis. Thus, Marcher's sterilizing habit of analyzing his experience and failing to find it good contribute in the make up of the psychological realism of his life.

In *The Ambassadors*, James directly poke into the Strether's mind and finds that Strether's perception is the result of constant interplay between his mind and his milieu. We further find out that at first, Strether's perception is preoccupied with the idea of Woollett so that he defines Chad and Marie de Vionnet's relation as vulgar. When he mingles himself in the Parisian environment, he finds their relationship as virtuous attachment. The real moment of revelation comes when he finds Chad and Marie de Vionnet in one boat in Lambinet countryside. And after this revelation, Strether finds virtuous attachment as a technical lie. Through these several mode of perceptions, at last, Strether becomes able to find the importance of his environment and the idea of lived life in the formation of his real visual perception.

Thus, we can conclude that "visual perception" in Jamesian fiction is immediate and physically connected to the individual and his milieu. And it ultimately builds into psychological realism through intricate process of observation and experience.

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