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PATTERNS OF IMAGERY AND FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN THE NOVELS OF HENRY JAMES, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE AMBASSADORS, THE WINGS OF THE DOVE, AND THE GOLDEN BOWL.

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May this piece of work
be worthy of its
dedication to
Colin James Young.

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ABSTRACT

The central purpose of this dissertation is to set out and analyse James's use of the image-pattern as a stylistic device in the novels. Through constantly regarding the imagery as complementary to theme, it emerges that James's technique in his employment of imagery progresses from an early, rather simple form to the highly complex and mature state of the final novels. In these final works, it is submitted, James's art, especially in the field of imagery, reaches its zenith.

In the Introduction, imagery is defined and stress is laid upon the necessity for always examining imagery within its context in the novel. It is repeatedly averred that the value of imagery should emerge primarily from its function as part of the work of art, and not as a result of any preconceived ideas as to its nature. Also explained in this section of the dissertation are the reasons for choosing the novels actually selected for close scrutiny.

Chapter One contains a survey of critical attitudes to James's use of imagery. It here becomes apparent that those critics concentrating closest upon the texts themselves, approach most nearly the true character of the various image-patterns.

Roderick Hudson and The American are examined in the first part of Chapter Two, and both are seen to contain images predominantly two-dimensional and relatively simple, although small advances in technique are perceptible in the later work. In part two, the image-patterns of The Portrait of a Lady are seen to possess a density and complexity not apparent in any previous novel, but The Old Things, written after The Portrait, displays a lack of cohesion within its image-structure. This disparate quality of the imagery is demonstrated to be at variance with the book's tightly woven thematic content.

In Chapters Three, Four and Five, a very close examination of the image-patterns in The Ambassadors, The Wings of the Dove and The Golden Bowl is undertaken in order to show the progress James made as he advanced from his earlier works, and also the final maturity he achieved in his use of the image.

In the Conclusion the various findings of the dissertation are drawn together. It is then pointed out how James's concept of the

image as a stylistic device is linked to his major themes in a more general and universal sense than merely within the works themselves; in short, that the image-pattern is one of the most rewarding avenues of approach in the examination of James's art.

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PREFATORY NOTE AND ABBREVIATIONS

Throughout this dissertation American spellings have been corrected up to their English equivalents in each instance.

Brackets have been used where the parenthetical statement does not form part of the flow of a sentence. In all other instances they have been omitted.

Abbreviations : The following abbreviations have been used wherever, in the interests of concision, they have seemed applicable:

a) The Art of the Novel for The Art of the Novel by Henry James. Intro. by R. P. Blackmur. London : Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934.

b) Notebooks for The Notebooks of Henry James. Ed. by F. O. Matthiessen and Kenneth B. Murdock. New York : Oxford University Press, 1961.

c) Short Stories for The Complete Tales of Henry James, in twelve volumes. Ed. by Leon Edel. London : Rupert Hart-Davis, 1962 - 64.

d) Henry James : Bibliography for A Bibliography of Henry James, by Leon Edel and Dan H. Laurence. London : Rupert Hart-Davis, 1957.

e) Wings for The Wings of the Dove.

f) The Portrait for The Portrait of a Lady.

g) Critical Essays for Henry James : A Selection of Critical Essays. Ed. by Tony Tanner. London : MacMillans, 1968.

h) The Question of Henry James for The Question of Henry James : A Selection of Critical Essays. Ed. by F. W. Dupee. New York : H. Holt and Co., 1945.

INTRODUCTION

'There are two things which I am confident I can do very well: one is an introduction to any literary work, stating what it is to contain, and how it should be executed in the most perfect manner; the other is a conclusion, showing from various causes why the execution has not been equal to what the author promised to himself and to the public'.

Ben Jonson

In 1909 Henry James wrote :

> We can surely account for nothing in the novelist's work that hasn't passed through the crucible of his imagination, hasn't, in that perpetually simmering cauldron his intellectual pot-au-feu, been reduced to savoury fusion. We here figure the morsel, of course, not as boiled to nothing, but as exposed, in return for the taste it gives out, to a new and richer saturation.[1]

Here then, is the way James imaged the transforming, enriching and unifying power of the novelist's mind. Since an image is primarily a projection of the imagination, in this passage, through the use of the cooking figure, James suggests how closely imagery is connected with the function and inspiration of this artistic faculty. In short, a study of imagery such as the present one, ultimately leads directly back to the source of all creativity, a source to be found in the artist's imagination. Such a study, therefore, sets out to analyse art in the most objective fashion; that is, by measurement solely against the intentions of the mind which has produced it. Only then will its true worth emerge, for 'the deepest quality of a work of art will always be the quality of the mind of the producer'.[2] It is the contention of this dissertation that James's use of imagery in the novels, particularly in his last completed three, bears out T.S. Eliot's assertion that his fellow American 'had a mind so fine that no Idea could violate it'.[3]

In the same way as he thought imagery and the imagination to be closely allied, so James always believed that subject and style were inseparable in a work of art; for him they formed an 'organic whole'. In 'The Art of Fiction' (1884), he discusses how the 'idea' or subject of a novel, and its form, are indissolubly connected, writing that

> in proportion as (a) work is successful the idea permeates and penetrates it, informs and animates it, so that every word and every punctuation-point contribute directly to the expression, in that proportion do we lose our sense of the story being a blade which may be drawn more or less out of its sheath. The story and the novel, the idea and the form, are the needle and thread, and I never heard of a guild of tailors who recommended the use of the thread without the needle, or the needle without the thread.[4]

The noteworthy feature of this passage is James's use of vivid imagery to illuminate what he is asserting. By this method he points

implicity to the close relationship which should exist between imagery and content. Significantly too, the metaphor of the tailors with their needles and thread is used, James here suggesting, in figurative form, the importance of carefully piecing together the various materials which need to be joined so as to fashion a novel suited to be called a work of art. Again, the imagery is even more revealing, for a tailor sews garments from patterns, and patterns of imagery are amongst the most noticeable technical devices James uses to hold together and shape the themes upon which his attention is centred. These patterns of imagery, and their connection with the themes, are the focus of this work.

Since, therefore, imagery and subject-matter are so closely intertwined, a study of the former should lead to a clearer understanding of the central themes of James's novels. As F. W. Marsh says,

> it seems reasonable to suppose ... that a poet's genius will appear most clearly in the figurative images that he creates to convey his meaning, that study of a poet's imagery will reveal the poet's basic intentions concerning reality.[5]

There seems no reason to assume why this should not be equally so for a novelist. Similarly, Northrop Frye regards the 'examination of ... imagery ... with a view to bringing out its distinctive pattern',[6] as the starting point of formal criticism.[7]

Following the impact of these statements, it is the purpose of this dissertation to show how James's image-patterns, expecially those in the later novels, are finely used to illuminate and suggest the particularity, complexity, and ultimately the universality of his themes. Indeed, it should emerge that imagery is one of the most rewarding avenues of entry into an understanding and appreciation of his fine qualifications and subtle ambiguities, particularly in the 'major phase'. But such an understanding and appreciation will only come about if the imagery is examined within the specific context in which it occurs, as a member of a broader image-pattern, and as an element of the whole texture of the work. Only then can it be seen to have its full impact as an integral member of a novel's structure. As W. H. Clemen says, 'every image, every metaphor gains full life and significance only from its context'.[8] In this paper, the focus will insistently be upon imagery as an important and emphatic part of a novel, both specifically where it appears, and then, in its patterns, as part of the whole work.

With imagery therefore constituting the core of this dissertation,

it is important to define exactly what is meant by the literary term 'image'. The earliest meaningful references deal solely with metaphor, but since metaphor is a part of the whole sphere of imagery, in their very generality they are illuminating. Aristotle, for example, writes that 'metaphor consists in giving the thing a name that belongs to something else; the transference being either from genus to species, or from species to genus, or from species to species, or on grounds of analogy'.[9] And Liu Hsieh, a Chinese critic of the sixth century A.D., explains metaphor in terms of 'reasoning by analogy', defining it as a 'description of things used to stand for ideas, and the use of figures of speech to intimate the nature of certain facts'.[10] The broadness of these definitions points already beyond the metaphor towards the wider representational and concrete nature of imagery as a whole.

But a starting-point more relevant to the modern concept of imagery, and certainly to the way in which it was used by James, is an article by Joseph Addison written in 1712. In this piece the author asserts that 'we cannot indeed have a simple image in the fancy that did not make its first entrance through the sight', and goes on to discuss 'the primary pleasures of the imagination, which entirely proceed from such objects as are before our eyes'.[11] The notion that imagery has only to do with one sense, that of sight, as Addison suggests, is very far from what it is understood to encompass in modern literature. That many other senses are involved in an image can at once be illustrated by looking at James's own writings. Discussing the 'form' of a work, he says that it

> takes, and holds and preserves, substance - saves it from the welter of helpless verbiage that we swim in as in a sea of tasteless tepid pudding, and that makes one ashamed of an art capable of such degradations.[12]

An image of this kind appeals at once not only to sight, but also to the reader's sense of movement, touch, taste and smell.[13] As a result it gains enormously in vividness and impact over a figure only apprehensible through sight. And, of course, the imagination is quite capable of reacting, and indeed reacts more fully, to such multiple sense-stimulation than merely to that derived from vision. With this example in mind, it is therefore important to set aside the notion that imagery is only visual; it relates to every sense. As R. L. Brett says,

'each of the five senses has its own kind of image, ... and there is the kinaesthetic image, which relates to our sense of movement or to our awareness of bodily effort'.[14]

At this point, it would be as well to distinguish between metaphor and the kindred but broader world of imagery as a whole. Metaphor is undoubtedly an element of the world of imagery, and one of the most important at that: so important that F. W. Marsh considers it to be central to the whole development of language: 'metaphor is the creative principle in language, allied to the original creative force which in primitive times first precipitated the spoken symbol'.[15] In two aspects at least, those of the representational and concrete, the function of metaphor lies very close to that of imagery. But since metaphor is not the subject of this study, no attempt will be made to arrive at a conclusive statement of its essence. That clearly is beyond the scope of this paper, 'for to attempt a fundamental examination of metaphor would be nothing less than an investigation of the genesis of thought itself'.[16] Nevertheless, a series of extracts from contemporary critics will perhaps give an idea of how rich and various are the functions of metaphor and therefore, by implication, of imagery. The work metaphor does has been detailed as

> a semi-surreptitious method by which a greater variety of elements can be wrought into the fabric of experience. (I.A. Richards)[17]

> the art of heightening consciousness ... (i.e.) our consciousness of any particular experience. (Max Eastman)[18]

> the fusion of the concrete with the abstract. (Northrop Frye)[19]

> comparing worlds, precising ... themes by giving them translations into other idioms. (Wellek and Warren)[20]

> a device for expanding meaning, for saying several things at once, for producing 'ambivalence'. (David Daiches)[21]

> (a means) to express a similarity between something relatively well known or concretely known (the semantic vehicle) and something which, although of greater worth or importance, is less known or more obscurely known (the semantic tenor). (Philip Wheelwright)[22]

The general import of these exerpts is that metaphor is a device which has a great potential for enriching and expanding the scope of any particular work, a function which other imagery is also capable of performing. But since each is a distinct literary device in its own

right as well, the differences between the two must be carefully detailed. In this way, the precise nature of imagery will also be made clearer.

R. L. Gale does not recognise that there is any area of difference between image and metaphor. At the beginning of his book The Caught Image, he writes:

> By 'image' I mean simile or metaphor, in the broadest sense, and not a complex of words evoking a mental picture or a sensory impression. I regard imaginative analogy as a type of simile, and extended personification as a type of metaphor; hence both are subsumed under 'image'.[23]

Gale errs in this definition since he fails to note that an image can stand in its own right, while there is always an additional comparative element in metaphor (or simile).[24] For example, in The Ambassadors when Strether first looks at Chad's house, he sees

> the quality produced by measure and balance, the fine relation of part to part and space to space ... aided by the presence of ornament as positive as it was discreet, and by the complexion of the stone, a cold, fair grey, warmed and polished a little by life ...(XXI,98)

What Strether sees here is clearly an image, one involving both sight and touch; indeed a little further on, the reader is told that this view presents to Strether an 'admirable image' (XXI,99). There is no comparison involved in the description, and therefore it cannot be either a metaphor or simile. Yet to exclude it as not being an image, is to ignore, in this instance, the importance of much of the architectural imagery of the novel,[25] and also to miss the house's later emblematic significance with respect to the quality of European life, a quality reflected in similar terms in the description of Chad's face (XXI,149). At this stage in the story, the image is merely a concrete representation in words, evoking certain feelings of Chad's dwelling. Only at the end of the work does the house, and specifically the balcony, become a symbol measuring, in Strether's easy acquaintance with it then, the extent to which he has developed towards a European outlook. Imagery, therefore, need not necessarily be comparative.

Metaphor, on the other hand, works in its own distinctive way. At the very beginning of The Golden Bowl, the Prince feels that Maggie's attitude has 'sweetened the waters in which he now floated, tinted them as by the action of some essence, poured from a gold-topped phial, for

making one's bath aromatic'(XXIII,10). By the use of an extremely sensory image, the Prince's feeling of luxurious ease not only in Milly's regard for him, but also, implicitly, in the fortune he is marrying, are vividly conveyed. The image, in its metaphoric function, compares the Prince's feelings with those of someone soaking easily and complacently in an aromatic bath. Since this is the Prince's own image, the metaphor measures the extent to which Amerigo consents, at this stage, to be contained in a static medium, how he feels about the material side of his marriage, and how sensuous is his character, all very important character-traits in relation to his actions later in the novel. The comparison therefore plays a vital part in the image.

It might appear from the above two examples that 'pure' imagery is of a far simpler nature than its metaphorical neighbour. This is not necessarily so, and James was well aware of the precise function of each. In the example from The Ambassadors, Strether's view of the house is not presented in metaphorical terms because, at this point in the story, his consciousness had not developed to the extent that he sees Europe in the dual form which is an inherent part of the metaphor. Now he still perceives only surfaces, in the New England manner, Chad's house therefore appearing as a 'pure' image in his mind. The Prince, on the other hand, is already a highly complex European figure to whom comparison and figuration come easily. What he must learn is that there are different forms of metaphor, and that in life, as in the two levels in metaphor, appearance and reality need to coincide for a truly harmonic picture. At the beginning of the novel there is far too much complacency in the way he images his situation.

Metaphor, then, has at its base a comparative aspect. Or, to be precise, 'metaphor is the recognition of a suggestion of one concept by another dissimilar in kind but alike in some strong ungeneric characteristic'.[26] J. M. Leighton writes that 'the metaphor is used for objective comparative purposes, while the image is used to evoke subjective participation in an experience'.[27] This distinction is only partly correct, for the metaphor is quite as capable as the 'pure' image of evoking 'subjective participation' through the use of sense impressions. The difference between the two lies rather in the single-level nature of a pure image, and the dual, comparative aspect of the metaphor.

If, as with Gale, only metaphoric figures are included in a discussion of imagery, then at once many of the physical settings of

the novels must be excluded. As with Chad's house, discussed above, these settings are apprehended by the characters, the author and the reader, in their simplest form, at least from a visual point of view. They ought therefore to be considered images quite as much as the more figurative elements of the novel. In the Lambinet episode in The Ambassadors, for example, the scene is firstly a series of images conveying the nature of the setting. The various parts of the scene form, quite literally, a picture and a highly attractive image. It is only secondly that this picture becomes a metaphor for Strether's progress in the novel up to this point, a picture which is finally completed by the images he sees of Chad and his mistress on the river. Without the physical setting, the metaphoric and symbolic aspect of this scene could never operate. The two are in fact closely interdependent: 'the setting provides the metaphor with a relevant context, and the metaphor enhances the significance of the setting'.[28] Setting must therefore be considered as imagery in its own right, and will be in this dissertation.

In this Lambinet episode, it is noteworthy that the reader's response to the imagery is initially sensory, but thereafter intellectual; all the facts are assimilated and set side-by-side in the mind, as indeed they are in Strether's own consciousness.[29] That the images are intended to be arranged and understood as coherent elements of a conceptual whole, is apparent not only from James's careful narration, but also from the fact that without the organising power of Strether's, and therefore the reader's mind upon them, the drifting of Chad's and Madame de Vionnet's boat into the picture would be meaningless. Amongst a disparate cluster of images, it could not possibly complete the picture as it does. Strether's reaction when he sees the boat is important too, for the sight of it stirs a very deep emotional chord within him. He realises suddenly the truth not only about European standards of conduct, but also about the very nature of man. The reader, seeing the story through Strether's eyes, has the same sense of undergoing an important emotional turnabout, perceiving the completion of the ambassador as a fully conscious man. The whole scene consequently shows James's awareness that the appeal of imagery must be, and is, something more than merely sensory - in addition, it involves the intellectual and emotional faculties of the reader. As Ezra Pound writes, an image is 'that which presents an emotional and intellectual complex in an instant of time'.[30]

As the above discussion has intimated, imagery in literature

fulfils a significant role. It is not, as is sometimes popularly supposed, merely ornamental or a superficial means of heightening interest. Caroline Spurgeon would seem to imply that this is so when she asserts that 'we all know fairly well what we mean by an image. We know that, roughly speaking, it is ... the little word picture used by a poet or prose writer to illustrate, illuminate and embellish his thought'.[31] The rather insignificant adorning function suggested here is true only of the most shallow images.[32] In direct opposition to such a point of view, it should emerge in this paper that imagery plays a profoundly important part in Henry James's prose.

Having established that an image is of great stylistic importance, is multi-sensory in character, can be distinct from metaphor, and ultimately evokes a total response, it would be appropriate at this point to set down precisely what is understood by an image. The definition which will be anterior to any discussion is that, throughout this dissertation,

> A literary image, in its most developed form, is a highly functional device comprising a complex of words designed to evoke a finely regulated sensory response leading to a deeper emotional and intellectual understanding of a piece of writing.[33]

This, then, is the aspect of imagery which can be set down in a relatively simple definition, as here. There is, however, another element, which is not so easy to circumscribe exactly. This is the quality of imagery which extends beyond the scope of the work in which it occurs; namely its universal aspect.

As explained, imagery is representational; or, to put it another way, in James's own words, 'the essence of any representational work is of course to bristle with immediate images'.[34] Imagery uses certain words to evoke a particular subjective impression, thereby heightening the importance of a specific fact or scene. In order to be intelligible, these images must have a recognisable relation to the life with which the reader is familiar. If they do not, of necessity they fail in their primary function. Imagery therefore relies on the correspondences between things observable in the everyday world. That such correspondences do exist, is evidenced by the vast complexity of life, a complexity as apparent in James's time as it is today, and something created by the interdependency of each article in the universe with some others. In its representational facet, therefore, imagery is an

expression and manifestation of this interdependency. As such it suggests a scale of reference far broader than that immediately depicted within a particular work. Ultimately, then, it is the mysterious relationship between imagery and that which it serves, which lends to it a feeling of immense complexity and profundity. As S. J. M. Brown puts it,

> behind this visible, tangible world there is another attainable only to man's intellectual insight, a world of deeper meaning and of spiritual significance, which I have ventured to call the 'world of imagery'. This 'world' is not ... a pure creation of man's imagination. Between it and the world of concrete, sense-perceptible reality there is a mysterious harmony, which is not the less real because we may often fail to account for it. But whatever its foundation in reality, this world is of wonderful variety, richness, significance.[35]

It is also through the very nature or quality of an image that the universal can be implied.[36] Hence the religious imagery in The Wings of the Dove, for example, apart from being fitted to each context, brings to the novel all the ancient connotations of mystery, spiritual values, belief and eternal life that go with religion as it is practised all over the world.[37] So too, strands like water imagery or patterns referring to animals suggest worlds very different from that of the actual work in which they appear. And as the patterns of imagery multiply and become more complex, so the precise spheres of reference become broader and more difficult to localise. Eventually the themes begin to take on an intangibility, and yet a significance, pointing outwards towards some universal aspect.

Closely associated here is the intimate relationship between the image and the symbol. In other words, 'an "image" may be invoked once as a metaphor, but if it persistently recurs, both as presentation and representation, it becomes a symbol, may even become part of a symbolic (or mythic) system'.[38] It is in the symbols that the strongest intimation is given as to the real depth of a particular work. The golden bowl, for example, in the novel of that name,[39] becomes a symbol of the various fractured relationships, and also of the materialistic impulse which is so strong in the Verver world. Once the almost intrinsic suggestiveness of this symbol at the novel's core is felt, it becomes apparent that each image-pattern is capable, even if on a lesser scale, of similar myriad ramifications. This element of infinity, achieved through the imagery, is one of the reasons why James's

later novels seem to be composed of themes drawn from the very pith of existence, and yet reaching out beyond it, while still touching every part. Discussing this aspect of the usually restricted novel of manners, Laurence Holland comments that James's characters and themes have a sphere of reference far broader than is usual in works of this genre:

> They have this extended import and scale because the manner is basically symbolic in function, though implicitly so: its manner is symbolic without being founded on a rhetoric and nomenclature of emblematic signification.[40]

The step from this type of symbolism to the mysteries of myth is a small one in terms of critical thought, but very large in terms of artistic expression. Precisely how an author achieves this mythical content in his works belongs, finally, to the realms of the supernatural, for he does, in a very real sense, transcend the earthly values of the natural world in achieving this effect. Nobody, however, comes closer to a comprehensible explanation of this phenomenon than Giorgio Melchiori in his article on symbolism in The Golden Bowl. Discussing the general nature of symbols he writes that

> objects contemplated as fixedly and sharply ... take on a mysterious quality, a sort of inexplicable intensity which is the characteristic of the symbol. They become, after all, symbols, but with no reference to meaning, symbols which symbolise nothing ... Yet their irrational nature, the lack of logical reference, the impossibility of reconducting the objects contemplated into the world of ideas, means that they lead us back to the original mystical sense of the symbol: a manifestation of an inexplicable mystery, not of a concept capable of definition.[41]

When used most skilfully, as Melchiori says, the symbol becomes 'the concrete but inexplicable expression of a mystery. Such is the meaning of the symbol in the most ancient rituals, such is its meaning in poetry'.[42]

What has been discussed thus far in this introduction is the essential quality of imagery in general literary terms. More specifically, the body of this paper will demonstrate how, at the hands of James, in his 'major phase', the image reached a high point in its role as a stylistic device. It remains now to explain why certain books were chosen for examination, whilst others were omitted.

The primary reason for selecting only seven works from a novel output of twenty-two, is that in this dissertation emphasis is placed upon analysis of the imagery, and not on compiling a broad survey of the types of imagery James employed throughout his creative life. The work is therefore evaluative and not descriptive. The premiss here is that a sure and correct approach to the imagery will be fruitful, no matter which work is under scrutiny.

More specifically, there are a number of novels which could not, by their very nature, be included. Watch and Ward (1871), is not regarded as a full novel, and James himself considered his next work, Roderick Hudson (1875) as marking the start of his career as a novelist. He omitted Watch and Ward from The New York Edition (1909). Apart from these reasons, it was left out because of the fairly superficial nature of its themes; further, its imagery is rather incoherently organised, and it would not, on the whole, have repaid scrutiny. At the other end of James's career, The Ivory Tower (1909) and The Sense of the Past (1911) were both incomplete at his death. Consequently, although they are both densely packed with image-patterns, it would be unwise to draw any conclusion from a study of either. For, not only had James not finished writing them, but also, he is most likely to have revised both - perhaps even as extensively as The American. The end of James's novel-writing career must, therefore, for critical purposes, be taken as The Golden Bowl (1904).

The Europeans (1878) is probably the finest of the early works, rich in imagery and very carefully constructed.[43] The American (1876) was chosen in preference because the earlier composition is sufficiently flawed, while yet remaining immensely entertaining, so as to provide a more revealing backdrop than The Europeans could have done for the development towards the later masterpieces. Confidence (1879 - 80), is short, has a paucity of imagery, and a thematic content which is decidedly thin, whilst Washington Square (1880), although more carefully constructed than Confidence,[44] again lacks real complexity of theme. In any event, it stands chronologically very close to The Portrait of a Lady (1880 - 81), measured against which it is, undoubtedly, in every respect the inferior work.

The Bostonians (1885 - 86) is regarded by F. R. Leavis, along with The Portrait, as one of the finest novels in the language.[45] But since the latter has a far greater density of imagery, and a number of more meaningful figurative patterns than the former, it is clearly more fitted for scrutiny in a study such as this. On the other

hand, The Princess Casamassima (1885 - 86) is relatively rich in imagery but, concerned as it is with the social clash between the upper and lower classes in Britain, it stands alone amongst James's other works from a thematic point of view. Since the relationship between theme and image is a major concern of the present study, The Princess Casamassima presents itself as unsuitable to be analysed against a number of other works with radically different subjects. The Reverberator (1888) was altogether too small and inconsequential, when measured against so many of the other novels, to merit inclusion.

The Tragic Muse (1889 - 90) is a significant work, Nick Dormer's dilemma of choice between a life of art and a life of politics presents many of the themes which thread through James's creations. It does not, however, mark any substantial development in his technique from that shown in The Portrait. And since the earlier novel is the better known of the two, and has received more critical attention, it was given preference. In any event, as mentioned earlier, the emphasis is on method in this study, and it was therefore simply not reasonable or necessary to examine each novel in an output the size of James's.

The Other House (1896), apart from any other factors, lies too close, as far as date of composition is concerned, to The Spoils of Poynton (1896) to warrant examination in the hope that it will show a change in James's approach; and neither does it. Chronologically on the other side of The Spoils lies What Maisie Knew (1897), a work of great depth with a very careful use of image-patterns detailing how the young Maisie reacts to the moral excesses of her elders. The Spoils of Poynton was chosen in preference because of its similarity to The Golden Bowl in having at its centre a symbol around which all the action revolves. What Maisie Knew would not, it seemed, provide a sufficiently contrasting background against which to measure meaningfully the real complexity and depth of the final three masterpieces.

The Awkward Age (1898 - 99) and The Sacred Fount (1901) belong to James's 'dramatic' period, both being comprised almost completely of the characters' spoken words. As such, they differ so substantially from the rest of the novels in technique, that they form a group of their own, repaying study in a field other than that with which this paper is concerned. Further, they are both very close in time to the works constituting the major focus here, and therefore lack the distance required to point significant developments in James's use of

imagery.

More positively, Roderick Hudson (1875), The American (1876 - 77), The Portrait of a Lady (1880 - 81) and The Spoils of Poynton (1896) were chosen firstly because they are all densely packed with imagery which is closely tied to the themes, or else, when contrasted with the later works, show how the latter evidence the great artistry of James in its fullest development. Secondly, they all contain, in common with the three later works, James's major thematic concerns. Each deals, in a significant fashion, from an image point of view, with art and life, the International Theme, marriage, materialism, appearance and reality, perception, quality of consciousness and freedom and independence.

Roderick Hudson is, of course, the logical point at which to commence a study such as this, since it stands at the beginning of James's career as a creative novelist.[46] The American[47] is close in time to Roderick Hudson, and yet shows some significant advances in the handling of imagery. In its concern with romanticism both in setting and in the outlook of its characters, it points forward to The Portrait, and is therefore a useful link in a particular developmental chain. The American is also, like Roderick Hudson, sufficiently far away from the last three novels to provide many forceful contrasts because of the distance it shows James to have travelled in attaining mastery of the image in his 'major phase'.

The Portrait of a Lady[48] is so closely related to The Golden Bowl, The Ambassadors and The Wings of the Dove in theme and treatment, as to be an obvious choice in tracing any development. Being the major work of James's middle period, it serves as a useful bridge across the canon of his novels. Indeed, as one of his greatest pieces, it repays study in its own right. Further, when it is realised that James was able to refine his use of imagery to an even greater extent than that of the consummate mastery he displays in The Portrait, then the magnitude of his achievement in the final three novels is set in its true perspective.

The Spoils of Poynton,[49] although a short work, has great complexity in its thematic material. It was selected chiefly for the inadequate handling which the central image, and symbol, of the spoils themselves receives. It therefore provides, along with its other image-patterns, a useful method of setting off the skill with which the golden bowl is employed at the centre of the novel of that name.

It should finally be made clear that the emphasis in this study

is on James's achievement in his final three completed novels. The reason for their choice is therefore self-evident. The four earlier works were selected primarily so as to complement the central purpose of the dissertation, as well as to give an indication of how James's image-techniques developed; the intention was not to provide a comprehensive survey of every image-use. And at any rate, in an oeuvre of novels so consistently brilliant as that of James, inevitably some of his finest work has had to be overlooked.

The very earliest editions of the first four novels chosen have been used in order to heighten the contrast between themselves and the finally revised texts of the three late works which appeared in The New York Edition (1909). Also, some standard text had to be found so that meaningful comparisons could be made between these works and the later, comparisons not qualified by the revisions of an author on the same production, but at a later stage of his development. This was necessary since James's revisions were indeed extensive; he even made alterations between the first serial publications in journals, used here,[50] and the book form which usually appeared soon after.[51] The finally-revised texts of The New York Edition were employed for The Ambassadors, The Wings of the Dove and The Golden Bowl in order that James's ultimate work in its most complete form could be examined.

It should further be noted that not every image or pattern has been mentioned. Only those most suited to the purposes of this study have been analysed. This is not to say that those omitted are at all inferior to those set down; it means simply that the method of analysis used could equally, and with the same rewarding results, particularly in the later works, be employed on the images and patterns which have been left out.

The images have been dealt with in patterns book-by-book because this has been found to be the approach which, when the imagery is analysed, gives it its fullest contextual impact. Some critics, most notably Alexander Holder-Barrel,[52] prefer to look at the imagery according to patterns dictated by subject or tone. This tends, however, to divorce images not only from their specific contexts, but also from the wider ambit of the other patterns and themes of the novel in which they appear. Since contextual examination is the method of criticism stressed in this study, the book-by-book approach has emerged as the most suitable.

Indeed, critical attitudes to James's imagery differ so widely in

methods and conclusions, that, before embarking upon a study of the various patterns within the novels, it would be as well to examine the body of critical writing on Jamesian imagery. The following chapter is devoted precisely to such an undertaking.

CHAPTER ONE

A Survey of Critical Attitudes

Critics are like brushers of noblemen's clothes.

English Proverb.

The criticism of Jamesian imagery is often characterised by an inability or unwillingness to focus upon a specific image in a particular context. In fact, the most trenchantly adverse comments are invariably accompanied by the widest generalisations. Hence F. R. Leavis, an implacable critic of the late novels, turns to their imagery as a weakness; he writes:

> but what goes characteristically with the developed Jamesian style is a more deliberate and elaborated kind of figure, the kind exemplified at its most elaborate by the famous pagoda that opens Book II of The Golden Bowl or by the caravan later in the same volume. We are conscious in these figures more of analysis, demonstration, and comment than of the realising imagination and the play of poetic perception. Between any original perception or feeling there may have been and what we are given there has come a process of judicial stock-taking; the imagery is not immediate and inevitable but synthetic. It is diagrammatic rather than poetic.[1]

This type of dogmatic statement is of no value whatsoever in assessing the function of an image, especially one as complex as that of the pagoda. This particular figure has so many elements, and is so carefully placed at the watershed of Maggie's developing consciousness, that anything short of a close contextual analysis must fail to do it justice. But the waywardness of Leavis's generalisation is crystallised by his similar dismissal of the caravan image.[2] A closer look reveals that it is extremely forceful, and with its vibrant life, noise and colour, it produces an immediate synaesthetic effect which is far closer to poetry than the trivial synthetic quality adduced for it by Leavis. Its unexpectedness for the reader vividly conveys the jolt which Maggie feels as she realises the full implications of her situation which must be faced. She knows she has no choice but to square up to the marriage tangle. At this stage she cannot turn away. As P. K. Garrett expresses it, 'the exotic quality (of the image) is deliberately chosen to express the foreignness of this option to her nature'.[3]

To be fair to Leavis, it should be noted that he does quote an example from The Golden Bowl of an image which he says has 'concrete immediacy'.[4] It occurs when Mr. Verver gives Maggie the idea of shipping Charlotte off to American City. His daughter suddenly realises how fitting a fate this would be for her step-mother: Leavis quotes, 'Ah then it was that the cup of her conviction, full to the brim, over-flowed at a touch!.... the writing had come out still larger than she hoped'.[5] But with no critical analysis following, a quotation such

as this has almost as little value as a broad, damning generalisation.[6]

This refusal to examine closely an image in its context, exemplified most noticeably by Leavis, seems to spring from a fear that too much can be read into any one image through over-concentration upon it. Of such excessive reaction, Richard Poirier writes:

> To analyse a metaphor at a given moment in the novel, to assign it a significance in some metaphorical pattern garnered from the novel as a whole, and then to claim as a result that the experience of that particular moment is the same as the significance heaped upon the metaphor is too pervasive a practice in literary criticism to need illustration.[7]

To be sure, more should never be imputed to an image than what it contains in itself, and yet those images which do form part of a pattern must be seen as such.[8] It would be a negation of their unifying and emphatic function not to do so. Precisely because there is a general critical feeling akin to that expressed here by Poirier, commentators such as Leavis feel free to generalise about imagery in relative ignorance as to how each particular figure is important both in itself and as part of a wider image-web.

The tendency to be vague about imagery is carried to its logical conclusion by Gorley Putt, who comments upon Roderick Hudson and The American, without devoting a single sentence to imagery in either.[9] On The Portrait of a Lady and The Spoils of Poynton he is scarcely more forthcoming. In the former he quotes a number of tropes, especially the vivid (revised) images in which Henrietta Stackpole is seen by Isabel and Ralph,[10] but only in the most offhand and illustrative fashion. The only reason more images are mentioned in the discussion of The Portrait, would seem to be because that novel has a far greater image-density than its predecessors. The Spoils[11] suffers equally from a lack of attention to its imagery or symbolism.

It could be surmised that Putt is uncertain as to the exact meaning of imagery in relation to James's fiction; he clearly cannot distinguish between plot and theme. He writes that 'from The Wings of the Dove one could extract something like this theme', and then goes on to give a detailed account of the plot.[12] Certainly The Ambassadors and Wings, according to his commentary, have nothing noteworthy in the category of imagery. In The Golden Bowl, if only because it simply cannot be missed, he mentions the bowl as 'an omen of a flaw in his (the Prince's) forthcoming marriage.'[13] Also noted are the figures of the 'outlandish Pagoda' and the Palladian Church.[14] Having remarked,

without so much as a quotation, that the scene with Amerigo and Charlotte at Matcham 'glows with a sudden baroque imagery reminiscent of the ebullient entertaining James of ten or twenty years earlier,[15] Putt does quote with some feeling for mood and situation, the images of Charlotte as an enraged beast on the balcony outside the centrally important card-playing scene.[16] But this critic's real inability to come to terms with imagery in The Golden Bowl in a meaningful fashion, or even to notice what types of imagery frequently occur, is illustrated by his summary of the novel's final section. He writes: ' The coda, Part Sixth, is a near-miraculous tour de force, sustaining in muted form yet in a subtly changed key all the major tensions of this truly symphonic novel'.[17] The almost complete lack of musical references or imagery within the work (or the Preface, for that matter), tends to belie the idea that James was composing 'musically' when at work on The Golden Bowl. Consequently, to suggest a musical form for the work as Putt does, is to evidence uncertainty as to the finer elements of the book.

Such uncertainty in respect of Jamesian imagery, particularly in the later works, does not stand alone; indeed, it seems to be part of critical observation stretching back to before James's death. In 1912, Mr. M. Sturge Gretton, having given a sensitive and sympathetic review of the later works, then goes on to comment on their imagery. 'Why are the parts so often greater than the whole?', he asks, and remarks further that,

> in reading Mr. James's later novels one cannot but be impressed by want of perspective. Every successive mood of his characters is moulded and crystallised into sharp and resonant images. These images have in themselves extraordinary beauty and appositeness, but the employment of them, normally, in transitional passages, puts the very greatest demands on the subject.[18]

Firstly, the final novels are so interfused with vivid imagery at every stage, that to localise figures in 'transitional passages' is to ignore by far the greater part of the image structure. Secondly the later works are characterised by structures in which each part plays an important role in the development of the plot. Transitional passages are few and far between, and those that do exist (e.g. Maggie's contemplation of her 'outlandish pagoda' in Book II of The Golden Bowl) are so integral to the story that their value cannot be minimised in

the manner of Mr. Sturge Gretton. Finally, the last point made in this quotation is extraordinary in view of the fact that it occurs in an article dealing with the Prefaces and their relation to the novels. In those very Prefaces James writes that

> The enjoyment of a work of art, the acceptance of an irresistible illusion, constituting, to my sense, our highest experience of 'luxury', the luxury is not greatest by my consequent measure, when the work asks for as little attention as possible. It is greatest, it is delightful, divinely great, when we feel the surface, like the thick ice of the skater's pond, bear without cracking the strongest pressure we throw on it.[19]

A comparison of this passage with that of the critic is illuminating. Mr. Gretton says that the novels suffer because strain is placed upon the subject-matter, notably by the imagery. James carries the argument a step further by contending that this very pressure, critical or artistic, is what reveals the deepest-seated values of a work of art. It is therefore by ignoring the consequences of the strain to which he refers, that Mr. Gretton errs. The very closest examination, for which James pleads, would have revealed to him just how consonant the imagery is with every facet of the later work's production.

Van Wyk Brooks's thesis, propounded in 1828, that James's expatriation was responsible for what was seen as a decline in his later works, has largely been set aside as incorrect, and at any rate irrelevant to the artistic content of each production.[20] His views on imagery and metaphor, stemming from this viewpoint, have not been given sufficient attention. Of James's first reactions to England as a 'reality' he writes that

> his (James's) desire overrode his intellect; the images that had fixed themselves in the fancy of his childhood prevailed over the actualities that met his eyes; he could not quite believe in the reality of the real. The consequences of this double vision were to manifest themselves in the works of his later life.[21]

These images of childhood, Brooks asserts, are one of the reasons for James's loss of the clarity evidenced in his earlier works. The bifurcated vision they produced, one area of which they formed the focus, intruded, according to Brooks, between the artist and life within his productions. The critic complains of the final productions: 'The reason we find these strains so oppressive is that they do not follow

the lines of life'.[22] One of the causes of this, he asserts, was that, in the mind of the later James 'metaphors bloomed there like tropical air-plants, throwing out branches and flowers; and every sound was muted and every motion vague',[23]... for, 'behind his novels, those formidable projections of a geometrical intellect, were to be discerned now the confused reveries of an invalid child'.[24] In other words, the childlike idealisation of a Europe which did not exist in reality, produced art, and more specifically imagery, which were not grounded in actual life.

Backed by only sketchy biographical detail, and largely unsupported by quotation and analysis from the novels themselves, van Wyk Brooks's ideas immediately lose much of their impact.[25] They are further discredited when their instigator shows a clear lack of understanding of at least one important figurative aspect of the later works, namely the fairy-tale motif, so prominent towards the end of James's creative life.[26] According to Brooks, James's idealisations of Europe led him into a fairy-tale world which was divorced from life.[27] The misunderstanding here is significant. To be sure, James is concerned with the world of magic and fairies in his later works as the imagery abundantly illustrates. But notably, the concern is central to the novels, and adds, rather than detracts from, the movement in towards a fuller realisation of life. To criticise a work of art in terms which do not take sufficient note of the very elements which constitute that work, is to perpetrate a grossly unfair attack. In this instance, Brooks is guilty of just such an attack.

At almost the opposite pole from critics such as Brooks and F. R. Leavis, stands a writer like Quentin Anderson. Instead of doing James an injustice by generalising about imagery at the expense of particularity, he reads into the works preconceived ideas formulated outside their artistic ambit. Behind all his criticism lies the notion that Henry James Snr.'s Swedenborgian philosophy had a profound and lasting influence on Henry James Jnr., the artist. Just how far astray this approach can lead Anderson, may be judged from his analysis of the vitally important 'moulds' image in The Ambassadors.[28] He says the image means

> that Strether feeds on phenomenal delusions from beginning to end. He has no opportunity to confront his selfhood, for he is never willing to abandon his righteousness, and departs declaring that he wants nothing for himself - which, from the point of view of the elder James, is equivalent to saying that he wants everything - all the moral credit available.[29]

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To see Strether as self-righteous at the end of the novel is to deny virtually the whole impact of the work. The Ambassadors is the story of Strether's gain in perception to the point where he sees the shortcomings of the Parisian as well as the Woollett outlook on life. And that he does not take anything at the end is proof of his selflessness, which stands in sharp contrast to the rigid Woollett attitude, representative of perception which reaches little beyond a narrow interest in self and the strict New England code.

Denying Strether any development means also that the strands of imagery concerned with boats and with water must be ignored. Both, amongst others, clearly iterate Strether's progress towards a broader consciousness and deeper self-realisation.[30]

The point of the moulds image is to define the limits within which Strether must seek to develop freedom of vision and a broadened consciousness. Speaking of Strether 'feeding' on 'phenomenal delusions' is merely complicating the issue by the use of broad philosophic terms which have little to do with the context in which the image occurs. For one thing, feeding is barely hinted at in the figure through the 'jelly reference', and does not even seem to be generally latent in this scene of the novel.

The mistake of trying to fit images into systems which are not those of the author, is illustrated most forcibly when Anderson discusses the symbolism of the golden bowl. Instead of playing down or criticising its symbolism, he plugs it into his thesis in such a way that it takes on a significance very general and unclear; and this to the extent that it loses all particularity as first and foremost an object handled and touched by the characters in the novel. For example, Anderson writes that, 'associated with the bowl and its division into cup,stem, and foot are the root-stem, flower and sea, river, fountain paradigms'.[31] Exactly what is meant by this is never made clear in terms of the work itself.[32] In brief, Richard L. Gale, at his best never the most perceptive critic on James's imagery, does however lend weight to the argument against Anderson's unfortunate attempt to read the imagery in the light of his central idea, by noting that 'Adam and Eve - vitally important names for James's Swedenborgian father - are not named'[33] in the whole of the fictional output. Clearly, religious ideas, particularly those centering around Genesis, are behind much of the work, but if James was as Swedenborgian as Anderson suggests, then it seems likely he would have been more overt in his use of religious symbolism.

The conclusion is inevitable that the imagery is so carefully employed by James in each precise context, that it will not bear to be taken out and fitted into a preconceived philosophical system having little bearing on the subjects of the various novels.[34]

The same Richard L. Gale, quoted above, is one of the most prolific writers on Jamesian imagery, and has published one of the two full-length works dealing with the subject.[35] Unfortunately, the extent of his writings is no indication of his ability to come to grips with James's imagery. At the start of The Caught Image, Gale sets out the purposes of the book:

> My study of imagery in the fiction of Henry James, I hope, will throw varied lights upon his personality and on the modes of his thought; say much about what in reality especially engaged his attention; and finally, help explicate his texts by showing that his imagery habitually points setting, characterises, foreshadows, implements plot, and reinforces theme.[36]

The first of these intents, following the footsteps of Caroline Spurgeon,[37] Gale fulfils adequately, if rather irrelevantly; the second, concerned with function, is barely touched.

Attempting to extract biographical details from the imagery, Gale is led to some curiously speculative conclusions. In his second chapter, entitled 'The Great Wave', and dealing with water imagery, the author writes:

> If James enjoyed watching the pleasantly spraying fountains of the various gardens he knew, the fact comes out very little in his imagery, even though one might have predicted more fountain similes in the works of an author so devoted to Hawthorne's fiction as James was.[38]

Such a statement demonstrates forcefully the dangers inherent in seeking to reconstruct James the man from his imagery. The passage tells the reader nothing about the images of fountains, except that they do not occur, nor about Henry James, since conclusions cannot be drawn from an image which hardly appears.[39]

This instance of biographical speculation without regard to text is not isolated. Concerning the greater frequency of animal images in the later fiction, Gale suggests that 'as James grew older and his dream of conquering the London stage turned to a nightmare, he consciously thought of even his own fictional dramatis personae as increasingly bestial'.[40] Milly Theale, the dove in The Wings of the

Dove, has only to be called to mind for it to be realised that, hardly 'bestial', she immediately suggests the flaw in this generalisation. Further, a close scrutiny of the animal images reveals that each use is carefully determined by situation and character, and not by an authorial mind supposedly obsessed with images of animality.

In spite of obviously having at his finger-tips each image in James's fiction, Gale is remarkably insensitive to the particular nuances of usage which are so important to James's art. Discussing money imagery, he quotes Stephen Spender's contention that gold in James's works 'is at once the symbol of release from the more servile processes of the world in which we live, and also supremely the symbol of the damned'.[41] He then comments that 'the ambivalence of James's obsession is not, I think, evident in the money imagery'.[42] Plainly, Gale has not examined the money imagery closely; if he had, he would have observed that James makes a careful distinction between money used for base materialistic purposes, and that used as a means of escaping 'getting and spending' in order to accomplish higher things. The careful opposition of coin and medal imagery, particularly in The Ambassadors,[43] shows this most clearly.

At times, Gale does not even attempt to draw a conclusion, however wrong, from his reading of the imagery; he seems to labour under the misapprehension that a critic's task is fulfilled once quotations have been set down. For example, he begins his discussion of cup imagery as follows:

> What does James intend to symbolise in general when he repeatedly describes characters as holding cups too full for easy carrying? Does he suggest thus the brimming sensitivity of his 'supersubtle fry', and their concomitant almost neurotic surface tension and desire not to jar shifting relationships? Whatever the answer, here are a few examples ....[44]

This type of weak reliance upon multiple reference without attempting to draw a firm conclusion serves no critical purpose whatsoever.

Broad generalisation, with scant regard for the particular image, is Gale's worst fault.[45] In his article, 'Art Imagery in Henry James's Fiction',[46] he writes that 'fairy tales are used in figures to dismiss inexplicable relations as magical, to describe ineffably blissful situations, and to show what the world looks like to a child ..!'[47] Each specific image needs only to be examined closely for it to be seen that this statement is so broad as to be virtually meaningless. One thing is certain - James never uses fairy tale imagery merely in order

to gloss over a relation which would otherwise be inexplicable; he was too conscientious an artist for that.

In the same article he casually tosses aside the remark that 'images drawn from architecture, like those from dancing, are ornamental rather than vital to the fiction'.[48] Obviously he has omitted to look closely at Osmond's house in The Portrait of a Lady, Chad's balcony in The Ambassadors or Maggie's 'outlandish pagoda' in The Golden Bowl, to name but a few images which are vitally functional. The generalisation is immediately discredited by reference to the particular, as indeed are most of Gale's broadly sketched conclusions.

At the end of his book, and each of his articles, Gale feels the necessity for drawing together his conclusions on the imagery discussed. Unfortunately, he does this in such a way that only a generalisation of his generalisations within the texts is produced. For example, he ends the article on art imagery by writing :

> and so it may readily be concluded that Henry James used his knowledge of many of the arts, especially literature, painting, and the drama, in elaborating a large proportion of the metaphors and similes which add glints of colour to his celebrated texture and throw added light upon his absorbing characters.[49]

Robert Gale, then, exemplifies criticism of Jamesian imagery at its weakest. Generalisations abound, and quotations are left to stand by themselves, isolated from their context, with little or no attempt made to explicate their function at each stage in the novel. It is a pity Gale did not heed more carefully the sentence with which he ends The Caught Image. There he urges that

> it is the fiction in all its varied complexity of style and content to which we must return, for it is this which lastingly mirrors the image of the curious world which passed before the profoundly penetrating vision of Henry James.[50]

A closer scrutiny of the texts would undoubtedly have given Gale a more penetrating vision of James's imagery.

Oscar Cargill, in his The Novels of Henry James,[51] is also guilty of vague generalisation when discussing James's imagery. Admittedly, he has not set out to use the imagery in such a way as to require very close analysis but that in no way excuses unsupported pronunciations such as: 'James's deliberate limitation (in The Ambassadors) on the

uses of imagery is suggested by his handling of what might be called the secular metaphor ... He uses figures for their immediate, not their ultimate, effect upon the reader'.[52] Cargill only sees the images as immediate, and therefore generalises in this fashion, because he has failed to look closely at the images themselves. A thorough examination of the water imagery, for example, would reveal both the immediacy of each particular image, as well as the broader archetypal associations which adhere to the pattern when seen as a whole.[53]

A critic whose technique in handling James's imagery bears some relation to that of Robert Gale is Lotus Snow. She, like Gale, has a tendency merely to quote images in general contexts without any exposition as to their finer details. Discussing the theatre imagery in The Golden Bowl, for example, she cites the passage where Mrs. Assingham assures Maggie that she is behind her in her painful task;[54] Fanny is

> like the kind lady who, happening to linger at the circus while the rest of the spectators pour grossly through the exits, falls in with the over-worked little trapezist girl - the acrobatic support presumably of embarrassed and exacting parents - and gives her, as an obscure and meritorious artist, assurance of benevolent interest (XXIV, 301).

This passage occurs after the final instance of Maggie's development is portrayed by the drama imagery, when she sees herself as the author of a play which includes the others in the famous card scene at Fawns (XXIV,236). Placed so, the above circus image shows only the low and rather vulgar character of Fanny's intentions. Her desire to help is genuine enough, but, as the image demonstrates, she has fallen way behind the younger woman as far as the context and sophistication of her performance is concerned. Further, the image conveys something of Fanny's condescending attitude in offering assistance, an attitude which contrasts sharply with the fineness and nobility of Maggie's efforts. Lotus Snow merely quotes the image, and therefore loses the central fact of its import, namely its careful counterpointing with the other theatre and drama imagery.

Similarly, when dealing with Roderick Hudson, Miss Snow cites the two images used for the artist's genius: that of the watch and that of his talent as a sum of money in the bank.[55] Used by both Rowland Mallett and Roderick, the images illustrate their misconception as to the true nature of genius, which is neither a mechanical entity, as the watch, nor a commercially exchangeable commodity as money. It is this type

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of misconception which leads ultimately to Roderick's downfall, for the story is really about his inability to understand and foster his tremendous talents. For the critic in this instance, the images are merely illustrative character figures, no attention being devoted to their finer nuances.[56]

A substantial part of Miss Snow's writing on James's imagery is characterised by this technique of quoting without analysis following so as to suggest the intricate subtleties of the figures. When dealing with the complex tropes of the later works, this technique is seen to be particularly inadequate.[57] Where this critic's work departs from, and rises some way above that of Gale, is in her ability to steer clear of generalisations which reduce the images to nothing more than out-of-context concepts. Miss Snow is scrupulous in quoting the figures as integral facets of the novels, and within their peculiar patterns.

With only two full-length critical works published on James's imagery, it is inevitable that a significant part of the criticism is to be found in writings dealing with broader topics, referring only incidentally to imagery. In spite of this rather subordinate position, much of the criticism is of a far higher standard than that dealt with thus far. For one, there is a greater reliance on the functional significance of images either in a specific context or in patterns.[58]

Sister K. Morrison, through the manner in which she focuses upon the window image, demonstrates the care needed in looking at any figure.[59] Discussing James's point of view in the novels, she notes that, among other considerations, his employment of 'visual and spatial metaphors' to illustrate the artist's view of life and his subject, is important. Quoting the passage in the Preface to The Portrait of a Lady of the artist at a window - the 'pierced aperture' of the literary term - looking out on the human scene,[60] Sister Morrison remarks that the window image serves as a figure of the subject bounded by the artist's view of it. Citing James on R. L. Stevenson, Balzac, and to Howells,[61] as representative of how he uses the window image, she goes on to say that

> the idea behind these various 'windows' is of course James's propensity to think in terms of picture and visual art, to draw an analogy between the spatial frame of the picture and the 'boundary' of the subject in the story[62]

Using James's ideas on the window image, which she has examined in detail,

the writer proceeds to differentiate between Lubbock's and James's points of view. It is this type of close examination which, although it only occurs here in relation to the critical writings, is called for when an image from the novels is to be considered.[63]

J. A. Ward, in his study of evil in James's fiction, evinces a proclivity for either focusing closely upon an image and drawing its full meaning from it, or else merely glossing a pattern and forming a general conclusion.[64] He comments, on the description of Gloriani as a tiger in The Ambassadors,[65] that 'the image of the tiger stands for sexual passion. Gloriani symbolises the whole of European culture, and, as physical beauty is inseparable from sexual energy in him, the same is true of Europe as a whole ...'[66] Here, Ward has drawn the broadest, most meaningful associations from the figure of Gloriani, not by bringing preconceived ideas to bear in the form of generalities or systems, but rather by centering upon the images used to depict that artist.[67] Even Ward's short comments on imagery, although broad, are carefully grounded in a textual base. For example, he writes that in 'Madame de Mauves' (1876) James employs very simple imagery of black and white to convey moral values. A scrutiny of the images shows this to be true in each case.[68]

Sallie Sears, on the other hand, provides some useful insights into image-use, but diminishes the impact of her conclusions by allowing her statements of meaning or sense to hang in the air without a firm anchor in the text.[69] Attempting to define the tone and texture of The Golden Bowl, she says that

> The characteristic mode of rendering reality throughout the novel ... is ... the objectification of the consciousness of the (principal) narrators by means of elaborate extended metaphors; images - really almost metaphysical conceits - for their apprehension of the world and their relation to it. These images - prolonged, intensely vivid - create a dreamlike tapestry of other figures and places (other than the 'actual' ones in the book) that form a continuous backdrop, a ghastly reflection of the reality in the novel; the novel is literally 'haunted'.[70]

The feeling of the work is very subtly evoked in this passage, and the general impression of the novel is unmistakably present. But missing here are the carefully differentiated nuances of tone and colour which set each image, even those within the same pattern, apart from another. Without pointing to the widely disparate image-sets which James uses in order to achieve the effect described by Miss Sears, much of the

impact of his variety is lost.[71]

In his essay 'Henry James: The Poetics of Empiricism',[72] J. H. Raleigh is prepared to quote specific images in support of his main contention. Trying to show how James's characterisation changed with his style, Raleigh compares, at three different stages of the artist's career, 'the same psychological process, the conscious mental substance being acted upon'.[73] He shows that Newman's shock at Clair de Cintre's decision to become a nun is conventionally imaged (The American, II,418), affecting the central character 'as if she had told him she was going to mutilate her beautiful face or drink some potion that would make her mad'. Raleigh then demonstrates how e metaphors and images which dramatise Hyacinth Robinson's mind, in The Princess Casamassima, become more complex, approximating to the 'late' manner. He uses Hyacinth's impressions of London (VI,266) in this instance. In dealing with The Golden Bowl, the highly pictorial and vital 'eastern caravan' image is cited to show Maggie's approach to her problem (XXIV,236 - 7). The colour, noise, strangeness and latent power of this figure give the incident in the novel a dramatic quality vibrating with life. Raleigh goes on to show how the images become progressively more savage, until finally Maggie, on the sofa in the card-playing scene, feels as if a 'beast might have leaped at her throat' (XXIV,235).[74]

Through the careful juxtaposition of these images, all used in similar situations, Raleigh is able to show an important facet of James's development, namely the growth from essentially flat, static imagery, to highly dramatic figures. The quotations of each image are of a length sufficient to give them their full weight in context, an important factor in the persuasiveness of the argument, relying as it does on the broad impact of each trope. While omitting to analyse the particular images in order to distil out even greater significance from them, Raleigh, in this article, by drawing on selected figures, shows how the images have a meaning and function as technical devices within a specific work.

Tony Tanner shows even greater sophistication than J. H. Raleigh's explanation of James's use of architectural imagery, when he demonstrates that Isabel, in The Portrait, is a character who moves from narrowness to relative breadth and then to terrible restriction as a result of her trembling folly, a folly stemming from a deep-seated fear she has of her ability t act correctly.[75] Moving from Isabel's remark about one of her early suitors that she doesn't 'care anything about his house' (III,295), to the dwelling at Albany, the house and setting at Gardencourt, and the Palazzo

Roccanero, Tanner gradually builds up a background for Isabel's development which is very rich in its suggestiveness.[76] T[illegible]h his use of setting, and a careful attention to the smallest det[illegible]ls of each house, the critic not only shows Isabel's progress in the [illegible]vel, but also illustrates one aspect of The Portrait's extraordinary depth, a depth in which each element fits congruously with some other. In this case the image-pattern, so closely tied to character, illuminates the theme of a young girl destined to affront, but never to shape, her own destiny.[77]

The type of careful analysis leading to an illumination of themes, so neatly demonstrated by Tony Tanner can, unless rooted firmly in the text, lead to conclusions concerning the imagery at complete variance with the preceding examination. R. McLean uses the imagery in The Spoils of Poynton to bolster his central contention that the story is seen through the unreliable eyes of its main character, Fleda Vetch.[78] For example, quoting a long passage on Fleda's reactions upon Owen's answer to her letter from Ricks, which contains a number of flight images, the writer carefully sets out other flight, height and depth figures. He then goes on to suggest 'that these metaphors of height and flight, depth and diving, are chiefly indicative of Fleda's winged imagination - her self-delusion and wishful thinking'.[79]

Using the related image-patterns of religion, the desert, and the rather sparse one of fire,[80] McLean succeeds in providing a useful element in the argument for his thesis in the essay. Taken together with his analysis of four crucial dramatic scenes between Owen and Fleda, his contention becomes extremely persuasive. The reader can only agree that 'the fire (at the end), a symbolic equivalent for the burning away of illusion and the lighting up of the truth, makes her (Fleda) - and coincidentally the reader - realise that her quest was illusory'.[81] But when McLean departs wholly from the novel's context and attempts to summarise the end of the work in imagery which simply does not exist at its close, he destroys many of his carefully laid points which have gone before. He writes:

> Tempted by the 'bitter tree of knowledge', Fleda fell, victim of pride and ambition. Now expelled from her private Eden, she is forced, literally, to worship in a barren desert. She crawls with broken wing to a bleak existence as companion for an ageing woman, bereft of the beliefs that could have made such a future tolerable.[82]

This mythic-religious summary, finding its immediate cause in the denial

to Fleda of the Maltese Cross,[83] and following the pattern of religious imagery in the work as a whole, detracts from the poignancy of Fleda's ultimate failure. Unable to reconcile her personal with her idealistic motives, she falls victim to the more single-minded aspirations of the other characters. Although Mrs. Gereth's struggle for the spoils has been so absorbing as to be seen as religious, (the imagery here has an ironic twist, as McLean shows), it is Fleda's intensely human struggle with herself, (again demonstrated in the article), which forms the novel's pivot of interest. To describe her final disappointment in such imagistically religious and melodramatic terms, therefore, is to detract from the essentially personal, human and subjective nature of Fleda's progress through the work, and particularly her defeat at the end.

Naomi Lebowitz provides an equally image-orientated summary of The Golden Bowl when she writes:

> In both the Eden of Genesis, where marriage is a beginning, and the imaginary garden of the fairy tale, where marriage is an end, squats the real toad, who is the catalyst of metamorphosis: and the real princess, to recover her golden ball (her golden bowl), must be willing to expose herself to the rights and riches of the metamorphic state.[84]

But unlike McLean, Miss Lebowitz demonstrates how the imagery of The Golden Bowl lends a magic, fairy-tale quality to the novel's themes, reinforcing at every stage the change, in herself and her circumstances, with which Maggie must come to terms. By juxtaposing the flat pattern of Mrs. Assingham's mind, so predominant in the first book, (a mind which produces only romantic or conventional images), with the growing ability of Maggie to shape her own images and to use the larger scenic settings for her own purposes, Miss Lebowitz shows Mrs. Verver, through the imagery, gradually taking control of her destiny.[85] While the First Book, seen largely from the Prince's point of view, contains images essentially descriptive and ornate, the Second, seen through Maggie's eyes, carries the same patterns of imagery as the First, but now they have an active quality, in harmony with Maggie's purposeful efforts at resolving the marital tangle.[86]

As Miss Lebowitz says, Maggie must learn always to resist the 'easy magic'[87] which conjures the type of image characterised by the Prince's picture of himself as languidly afloat in 'sweetened waters'.[88] She must so control the patterns of imagery that eventually she can be swept along with the Prince, albeit only on a plank on the 'great sea' (XXIV,353).

It is this type of change, from stasis to action portrayed in pictures of the imagination, which provides the magical quality of the novel. A fairy-tale is, after all, a highly imaginative form of story-telling, not only narrative and entertaining, but often with a moral and gently didactic purpose as well. Seen thus, The Golden Bowl, as Miss Lebowitz shows, springs to life with all the interest and zest it undoubtedly had for James, and which he intended it to hold for the reader. At the same time, none of its impact as the depiction of a bitter struggle for balanced relationships by a solitary woman, is lost.

Hence, by careful scrutiny of certain types of images, Miss Lebowitz is able to support her reading of the novel in terms of magic. By following each aspect of Maggie's change in the imagery surrounding her, and by not taking imagery out of context in order to generalise, (except in terms of forgoing discussion), the writer is able to provide a coherent and satisfying interpretation of an important aspect of the work.

The dangers inherent in discussing imagery, (in an incidental fashion) particularly that in the later works, are exemplified by Dorothea Krook when she examines The Golden Bowl.[89] Discussing the melodramatic and violently pictorial quality of the novel, she says that the pagoda image at the opening of Book Two 'is one instance of an unsuccessful pictorial image. Another and more serious failure is the central "symbol" of the golden bowl'.[90] Quite what is meant by a 'pictorial image' is never made clear. Surely it cannot mean something akin to 'plastic' or visual, as it usually does, because the pagoda, as Maggie slowly examines and touches it, is both of these.[91] The image is, in fact extraordinarily successful as a pictorial creation.

The essay continues that, in spite of the passage from Ecclesiastes, where the symbol probably takes its origin, forming a 'splendid epigraph' for the book,

> the golden bowl remains here a scissors-and-paste image, in no way organic to the poetic structure of the novel; but, rather, adhering artificially to the living tissue as a compendious, and rather obvious and rather clumsy, illustration of what is already so magnificently exhibited as to stand in no need of illustration.[92]

If Dorothea Krook had stopped to examine not only the bowl, but also the complex of images which it draws to a centre,[93] she would perhaps have formulated her statement in different terms. Firstly, the imagery of

the novel is undeniably poetic, and the bowl, as a very clearly focussed image, is therefore part of the poetic quality. Further, it is organic to the structure, being the concrete image which emerges from the Prince's and Charlotte's shopping expedition before the former's marriage to Maggie.[94] It is the physical manifestation of the flaw which is to appear later in the marriages as a result of the Prince and Charlotte once more embarking upon a liaison. And Maggie only comes to possess it physically when she has already realised the nature of the tie between her husband and stepmother: its function as image and symbol fits congruously with the action at every point, right up to its breakage, and even afterwards, when the reader realises that, as a static image, it no longer expresses the dynamic quality exemplified in Maggie's actions, and therefore must be destroyed. Lastly, the critic acknowledges that the 'scattered allusions to the collecting passion and the commercialism of the spirit that it induces ... make their effect with much force'.[95] Since these images, so bound up with those of gold and money, are vividly drawn together by the golden bowl,[96] this last image must inevitably be seen as part of the poetic structure of the novel. Considered in such terms, the terms of the novel itself, the bowl ceases to be a 'clumsy illustration ... adhering artificially to the tissue' of the story; it becomes rather a central point of reference, integral to the unity of image and structure, and illuminating the flux of complex personal relationships depicted.

Dorothea Krook is more sympathetic towards the images of desolation and violence, probably because she has had three of the most important analysed for her by Stephen Spender,[97] and because she quotes a fourth directly.[98] Concentration upon the full impact of the imagery as it stands in the novel in all its facets would have lent her a deeper insight into the work's richness. It is curious that she does not look at the imagery as a whole since she asserts quite forcefully at the conclusion of the essay that

> it is ... the first business of the attentive and disinterested reader to take into account all that is there, to stop short of no effort that will render this possible, ... and to submit himself, all the time, to his author's expressed meanings. An interpretation arrived at in this way will not necessarily be free of imperfections and errors; but it will at least have the merit of not impeding the common pursuit of true judgement in the interests of a work as greatly achieved as The Golden Bowl.[99]

The Portrait of a Lady is vividly described by Laurence Holland in

The Expense of Vision [100] in terms of its visual impact, when he explains how, from the opening sketch of the tea on the lawn at Gardencourt, right through to Isabel's central recognition scene in Chapter Forty-two, the visual is always prominent. Holland shows that the first scene is not only pictorially complete, but also concentrates, through images of eyes and seeing, on how the various characters observe each other: the process of vision is central to the work.[101] He shows, in her recognition scene, Isabel finally seeing exactly where she is in her marriage with Osmond; namely in 'the house of darkness, the house of dumbness, the house of suffocation'.[102] Also carefully noted by Holland are the many architectural images of houses, churches, convent rooms, galleries and ruins which are 'rendered in distinct detail', their 'tangible solidity felt in being seen'.[103] As he says,

> the numerous scenes in galleries and the metaphor of painting not only serve the functions of setting, characterisation, and theme but help transform the inky prose, the bare printed sequence of chapters, into visual form ...[104]

At the close of his chapter on The Portrait, Holland gives an excellent explication of the imagery involved in Casper Goodwood's last, frightening kiss which he forces on Isabel.[105] He demonstrates how the various tropes combine together in the incident to provide a powerful impression of the conflicting forces and passions with which Isabel struggles and finally overcomes as she dashes to the house. Holland's analysis here is close and careful, and as a result the full force of James's art is illuminated. The method Holland employs here shows Jamesian imagery criticism at its best.

In his discussion of The Spoils of Poynton, Holland makes the important observation that the fire at the end which destroys the treasures has a clear symbolic meaning. But, he points out, it is inadequately prepared for by fire imagery, which 'begins in the first chapter to play sporadically and too feebly in the texture of the prose'.[106] As he shows, this weakness in the fire imagery is characteristic of a number of other strands, and results, it would seem, from the novel's lacking a centre, namely the image of the spoils, around which it may significantly coalesce.[107]

On the rich imagery of the later novels, Holland is especially perceptive, being able to draw both the immediate and the broader meanings from specific images and patterns. He draws attention to the

drama of life in the Europe of The Ambassadors, a drama which 'encompasses life on stage but life behind the painted scenes as well'.[108] And carefully tracing the thread of boat imagery, he illustrates how Strether's shocking vision in the Lambinet scene is the result of a number of past impressions, disparate up to that point, but which then suddenly coalesce.[109]

In his discussion of the Bronzino scene in The Wings of the Dove, Holland observes that Milly is reminded

> of her own death that she fears is imminent, but the reader is also reminded of a sense in which any work of art, no matter how brilliant, is dead, all art being lifeless in a way which the gestures, postures, and high finish of Mannerist painting display in a particular and extreme version.[110]

The second half of this reading is extremely acute, for as James wrote to H. G. Wells after the Boon controversy, 'It is art that makes life ...'.[111] The point of Milly's emotional upheaval when gazing at the portrait, is precisely that she sees the immortality of the lady in the picture, who has been given eternal life in the most beautiful way possible; by enshrinement in an art form. As a result, the realisation of her own mortality is painfully strong. And the scene reverberates even more with meaning at the end of the novel, for by then Milly is actually 'better than' the portrait, for, an artist-figure herself, she has shaped, by her tender magnanimity, a place where she can live in the memory of Densher quite as meaningfully as in any art form. Also, of course, the power of her portrayal in the novel itself gives her life in art a form which she finally comes to transcend as a living, struggling woman in her own right. Hence it is directly to the point for Holland to assert that Milly is 'glazed by the novel which takes her to use as the subject of its chilled embrace, and arranges ... that "her death" shall have "taken place"! She is betrayed by the very fiction that enshrines her'.[112]

On The Golden Bowl, Holland explains carefully the manner in which the architectural images and settings function, not only as figures in the imaginative world of the novel, but also as structures in the 'House of Fiction' which helps to shape the environment of the characters.[113] He sees them as some of the vital blocks with which the whole edifice of the novel is built. And focusing on the 'pagoda' in particular, he suggests that it images not only the tangled marriages, but also, being a figure of the imagination, it represents 'the fictive process which

formed them (the marriages) and more particularly, the crisis in their development which the novel is constructed to focus on as its very centre at the opening of Vol.II'.[114] Seeing it in this form, Holland accords the image the importance due to it as a pivotal figure which meaningfully points the dilemma of Maggie as she begins her active quest for stability and happiness.

Seen as a whole, then, Laurence Holland makes an important contribution to the field of image-criticism in James's novels. By tracing significant patterns, and linking them closely with plot and theme, he succeeds in showing the imagery to be an integral part of each work. Such a demonstration can only enhance the reader's appreciation of the novels.

Another critic, who in many ways writes very much after the fashion of Quentin Anderson, is R. A. Durr. In his article, 'The Night Journey in The Ambassadors',[115] he tries to shape the whole novel in terms of a dark, mythical journey from the blackness of the restrictive womb to the light of life's 'cosmos'. As a result, his reading of the book, and more particularly of the images, is highly coloured.

For example, commenting on the religious imagery in the scene in Gloriani's garden,[116] Durr writes that

> he, (Strether) feels this "assault of images" as "sweeping away, as by a last brave brush, his usual landmarks and terms". For the crossing of the threshold of this Garden-Sanctum is a form of self-annihilation, a dying into life.[117]

The very first thing to be noticed about this comment is that in the novel itself Strether has the 'last brave brush sensation' before he has 'presently the sense of a great convent ...'(XXI,196). The one sensation is not connected to the other by James in the manner posited by Durr above. So keen is the critic to prove his thesis, that the facts of the novel have to be bent to conform. Secondly, Strether is never seen as engaging in self-destruction in the book. His is a process of growth and development from the start, as is shown by the boat and natural imagery closely associated with him.[118] He begins to develop away from his restrictive Woollett consciousness the moment he alights in England. The scene in Gloriani's garden is but one stage towards the inclusive view which Strether finally gains of life in Europe, as opposed to that in Woollett. It is an incorrect reading of the novel, and of the travel images in

particular, which prompts the observation that 'the hero's adventure begins when his life's cosmos, once protective, becomes restrictive'.[119]

Bringing his mythico-religious ideas to the work, Durr introduces vivid images in his own discussion which have no basis in the story itself. By rejecting Mrs. Newsome, he says, Strether 'rejects his wish to remain in the spiritual correlative of the intra-uterine state of protected bliss. She is the ogre who guards the treasure and she must be slain'.[120] The relevance of this statement to the text itself is somewhat obscure, and only has meaning insofar as it seems to suggest, in a vague way, that Strether determines to seek a view of life untainted by the shadow of his restrictive Woollett existence. And it is not primarily Mrs. Newsome who guards the entrance to the precious faculty of seeing clearly and therefore living fully, but Strether himself. The novel is the story of his attempts to unlearn the prejudices and strictures imposed upon him by a New England background.[121]

What Durr seems to be trying to do through this interpretation, is to demonstrate the wider significances of the story in terms of timeless mythical patterns. He has, however, failed to realise that the novel suggests a broader sphere of reference than the immediate setting, not through any framework of ideas placed upon it, but by the very particularity of its details. These details are so surely chosen and depicted that they make each character and scene recognisably immediate to the extent that each is raised beyond the scope of the 'individual', and onto the level of 'type'. The imagery is one of the most important structural and technical devices used by James in order to achieve such an effect.[122]

Another critic who tries to fit ideas onto the text, is Daniel J. Schneider. In his essay on The Ambassadors, he shows how the images and symbols, more than anything else, convey James's intention of portraying a central character who gains an inclusive consciousness, and not merely a biased liking for either Woollett or Paris.[123] He writes: 'A close study of the novel's imagery and symbolism discloses a pervasive irony that deeply undercuts even the most extravagant praise of Paris and of its chief jewel, Mme. de Vionnet'.[124]

Examining the work book by book, Schneider points out how various images lend the European scene an ambiguity which Strether only comprehends in its entirety when he sees Mme. de Vionnet and Chad on the river together. On the first image of Maria Gostrey's rooms, for example, he comments that 'the chiaroscuro of her chambers, the duskiness, the glints, the gloom, the light of the low windows, symbolise the ironic and ambiguous admixture

of beauty and corruption, appearance and reality'.[125] In assertions such as this, which he makes thoughout the article, Schneider is undoubtedly correct, for one of the novel's central concerns is to show how Strether's initial view of a wonderful Europe is gradually modified.

In focusing so strongly on the ambiguity of imagery, however, the critic does, at times, overplay ironies which are meant to qualify rather than balance. He quotes Strether as watching, just after his arrival in Paris,

> little brisk figures, figures whose movement was as the tick of the great Paris clock, take their smooth diagonal from point to point; the air had a taste as of something mixed with art, something that presented nature as a white-capped master chef (XXI,79).

Schneider comments: 'the white cap conceals an unspeakable darkness of slavery and automatism'.[126] Firstly, the image must been seen as part of the whole passage in which it occurs. The tone of the passage is one of warm, easy enjoyment, and this is the predominant tone of the image. The fact that the figures walk diagonally from point to point is not surprising since they are merely following the paths of the gardens, and the image need not necessarily, therefore, indicate inflexibility or rigidity. Further, that their movements are like the tick of the Paris clock is, in fact, indicative of their easy Parisian quality, since in Europe, time is a very different and more flexible thing from that which rules and measures in America. Again, connected with art, certainly here a positive quantity, ... wearing a white cap, it is difficult to see how Schneider derives the 'unspeakable blackness' which is supposed to be hidden.

The author is similarly awry in his interpretation when he suggests that the image of the medal which Strether sees as characterising the people around him at the theatre is negative and indicative of a corrupt materialism.[127] Although ambiguous, the image of the medal is very positive when measured in relation to its fellow image of the coin.[128] This latter is the overt symbol of materialism, and is always associated with the Americans, while the former denotes an easy acceptance of wealth which has passed beyond the stage of 'getting and spending'. In brief, then, the imagery, because of its multi-faceted and poetic character, is undeniably one of the prime means used to convey ambiguity. Nevertheless, the qualifications it places upon Strether's

outlook are of a far finer and less extreme nature than those put forward by Schneider. Indeed, looking too hard for ambiguity often leads him to find it where it does not exist.

The approach through the imagery towards a feeling for the mythical content, as evidenced by R. A. Durr, particularly when dealing with the final works, is one adopted by Austin Warren.[129] He argues that one 'truth' about the novels can be arrived at by a cerebral, dialetic, intellectual process. Another, he asserts is

> not to be arrived at socially, intellectually, or analytically but personally, intuitively, imaginatively, -through images and symbols ... The Jamesian equivalent of myth lies, I think, in the metaphors...[130]

He also distinguishes between two 'modes of figuration' in the later works, the first being the 'extended conceit', usually 'proverbially trite', or 'conventionally beautiful'.[131] The second is the 'emblematic perception, symbolised intuition, - in form an original image, sometimes comic, sometimes horrendous, often grotesque'.[132]

Both his conclusion on image and metaphor in relation to myth, and his last distinction as to the quality of images, are viable. But the backing they receive in actual analysis in the essay is very scant indeed; so scant, in fact, that the relati n between myth and image is never really established. For example, Warren quotes three metallic metaphors associated with Mrs. Lowder in The Wings of the Dove, those of her in her cage at Lancaster Gate (XXIX,78), at dinner table as a steamboat (XXIX,161), and later as a great, loaded projectile. While these are all metallic images, they are so disparate in quality and function that grouping them together serves rather to confuse the reader's impression of Mrs. Lowder, than to crystallise it. Again, focusing on the image of Maggie as the 'overworked little trapezist girl', in The Golden Bowl, he says that the book traces her development from 'a child to being the lady in spangled skirts who can keep her balance while she capers on the back of a circus horse'.[133] In actual fact, Maggie develops further than this, becoming not the rather public, manipulated circus performer, but the author of her own play on the formal stage.[134]

The rather unformed quality of this article is perhaps adequately expressed by Warren himself when he attempts a concluding thought. He writes that 'the tension in James between the dialectic and the mythic is an epistemological way of naming that rich interplay and

reconciliation of impulses which constitute his great achievement'.[135] The vagueness of this statement, with its too easy generalisations, proves to be an accurate reflection of the somewhat diffuse quality of the essay itself.

Greater attention than that shown by Warren, is brought to bear on the imagery by Miriam Allott, who says that there is such a difference in quality and feeling between the earlier and later works 'that one is reminded of the difference between a prose writer and a poet'.[136] She goes on to discuss in detail, not only the images and patterns, but also their wider significance as poetic symbols. Her discussion of the significance of the portrait images and symbols is detailed and excellent, while her conclusions on 'the predatory life of the jungle' images, animal imagery in general, and circus figures in the late works, are sound.[137]

Realising that in the final analysis, the quality of James's art depends upon the sensitivity he brings to bear on his subject, and the degree of universality he is able to achieve thereby, Miss Allott comments that 'the value for his artistic achievement of such qualities is dependent on the degree to which his poetic imagination, functioning freely in the symbols and imagery of the late works, assumes control'.[138]

Using the same clear reading of the text as Miriam Allott, but examining more closely specific image-sets within one work, Jean Kimball succeeds in showing how carefully the images of the abyss and the dove are used in The Wings of the Dove.[139] At the outset she says that

> these two images are the two revelations, the two symbolic lights on Milly Theale. If the abyss and her position at the edge of the abyss define her "practical problem of life", the dove, with its wonderful wings, is the symbol for her final solution.[140]

Showing how the abyss first appears in the Swiss Alps scene, where Milly gazes over the great chasm before her, she notes that the image of Milly thus sitting has for Mrs. Stringham 'the character of a revelation',[141] a character which the image retains throughout the novel. Tracing the pattern further, Miss Kimball focuses on Milly remarking, at Mrs. Lowder's dinner party, on her hostess's disapproval of Kate's and Densher's relationship. Milly says that there could be abysses in the situation:'"I want abysses"'(XXIX,186), she confirms. Soon after, she is faced with an abyss in the form of the

Bronzino portrait which shows her just how mortal she is in her sickness.

The critic then goes on to show how Milly, when told of the nature of her illness by Sir Luke Strett, in her lonely wander about London, faces her own personal abyss, gaining some comfort in realising finally that she is not alone.[142] There follows, as Miss Kimball points out,[143] a series of conversations in which Milly's desire and ability to live are illuminated, together with her growing entanglement in the machinations of Kate and Mrs. Lowder. Then Kate provides Milly with the symbolic aura which is to carry her through the rest of the novel, and finally beyond it, when she says, 'you're a dove' (XXIX,283).

At this point,[144] the critic points out that the dove is a symbol on at least two levels: on one it is the disguise Milly uses in the future to hide her 'full-blown consciousness'; the other it is a symbol of her desire to overcome her inabilit, 'live', and to strengthen herself for a life beyond death - 'in this connection the wings are vital'.

From this stage she shows how the two images interlock repeatedly. For example, Milly's not coming down from her palace (XX,147) mirrors the desire she has formed of soaring above the common world, of not allowing the abyss of mortal life to claim her. Finally, of course, as Miss Kimball demonstrates, her beauty of spirit and her magnanimity do raise her way above the paltry materialistic aspirations of Kate Croy after the inheritance money. It is in fact Kate, and not Milly, who is isolated in the abyss when she realises that Densher and herself cannot marry. Densher, as it emerges, in perceiving Milly's quality and his sin, is saved from the abyss. As an image therefore, the abyss, frames the novel, for, as Miss Kimball points out,

> The view of Milly Theale begins with Mrs. Stringham's perception of the abyss as the "relevation" of Milly and ends with Merton Densher's understanding of the abyss as a revelation, not only of Milly, but also of himself.[145]

The image of the abyss therefore becomes central to the novel's meaning, since 'only to the degree in which the oth characters in The Wings of the Dove have been really aware of her consciousness of death and of the universal abyss do they benefit from her life'.[146] In this manner Miss Kimball shows how an image, drawn from the action itself, and continued metaphorically, becomes a unifying element which illuminates each scene in which it appears. By contrasting it with the image of the dove, she

throws each into sharp relief, demonstrating the careful contrapuntal function of each in relation to the other. In so doing, she brings to light the finest nuances of James's highly developed image-techniques in the later works.

In sharp contrast to Jean Kimball and Dorothy van Ghent, Richard Poirier comments on the imagery in a far more general fashion.[147] But his observations are, in spite of this, no less valuable, in that he is the only critic who seems to be keenly aware, not only of the broad humour in the early novels, but also more particularly of the humour in the metaphors and images themselves. He contends strongly that the intellectual analysis of a metaphor often deprives it of its initial dramatic impact, which is total, rather than one of parts. The element of comedy is often lost, he asserts, when this impact is broken down analytically. He writes:

> In talking about comedy, it is necessary to stress that in dramatic literature the primary concern of literary criticism is the <u>way</u> we apprehend the meaning, our experience of it rather than the meaning itself, abstractly considered.[148]

Poirier's basic point here is obviously sound, although it is dangerous to plead too strongly for a non-analytical approach to the imagery. But if, for example, the image which the Prince in <u>The Golden Bowl</u> formulates of himself at the beginning as 'a chicken, at best, chopped up and smothered in sauce; cooked down as <u>cremé de volaille</u>, with half the parts left out',[149] is scrutinised too closely for its elements and function, it loses the easy comedy which, at that stage of the novel, is so important a part of the Prince's wry complacency about the fortune he is to marry. In spite of this, however, it seems reasonable to assert that an examination of an image, conducted in a sufficiently sensitive fashion, should not materially harm even its finest shades of comic impact.

Poirier's perception of the comic in James's imagery is very important in that a change is often to be observed in a work from comic to serious, as the action progresses. In <u>The American</u>, to take one example, he notes that

> the novel moves from comic emphasis on the entertaining aspects of the metaphors to serious melodramatic emphasis on their portentous significance ... Looked at another way, the novel is about the conflict between the predominance of the pleasant images about openness and the threatening images about enclosure.[150]

A realisation of this movement adds immensely to the sense of Newman's options for choice in Europe, so wittily exercised at the start, being gradually restricted, until finally his most serious choice, that of a wife, is shut away behind the blank wall of a Carmelite monastery. And since this tendency for change in the images from comic to serious may also be observed in The Portrait of a Lady and The Golden Bowl, to name but two of the most noteworthy, a perception of James's finely-tuned humour, as evidenced in the imagery, is vitally necessary for a full appreciation of his art.

The technique used by Jean Kimball of relating the image-patterns closely to the development of themes, is also imployed by Dorothy van Ghent in her essay on The Portrait.[151] She chooses as the centre of her interpretation the image of the eye, and relates it not only to its physical aspects and vision, but also to the broader aspect of perception, that is, the ability of the 'inner eye' to pierce beyond appearances to reality. As she says,

> the informing and strengthening of the eye of the mind is the theme - the ultimate knowledge, the thing finally "seen" having only the contingent importance of stimulating a more subtle and various activity of perception.[152]

Having noted the very prevalent eye imagery throughout the work, she proceeds to a number of sensitive observations about the quality of Isabel's perception. She points out, for instance, that through the young Isabel with her romantically coloured vision, the reader sees the picture-gallery at Gardencourt as but a blurred, hazy scene; but when she has come to a bitter realisation of her mistake in marrying Osmond, and wanders sadly amongst the Roman ruins, the scene is sharply focused and congruent with her greater insight and direct perception.[153] It is this type of sensitivity which yields such perceptions, that the carefully modulated Jamesian imagery insistently calls for.

Through the close pressing of an image, such as that in which Isabel first appeals to Osmond as being 'as smooth to his general need of her as handled ivory to the palm', (IV,128),[154] Miss van Ghent gradually broadens the opposition and dialectic she traces in the work between the aesthetic and the moral. And using the imagery of doors, and the very prominent architectural figures, she extends her contention that seeing, aestheticism and morality are closely linked in the novel.[155]

As the critic clarifies and explicates the various image-patterns,

it gradually emerges, in concrete form, as she contends, that a perception of the aesthetic quality of an object does not imply a moral sense. Non-utilitarian in its pure form, aestheticism divorced from life actually becomes immoral, as in Osmond's case, because he can see no further than his own self, and has no perception of Isabel as a person in her own right. The growth of Isabel's perception, paralleled by the growth in clarity of the images she sees, eventually results in her performing the most moral act of the whole book. In other words, she returns to Osmond because she sees that that is where her moral duty lies.

It is through her concentration on the 'plastic' nature of the imagery that Dorothy van Ghent is able to highlight the important themes of perception, aesthetics and morality. In doing so, she provides an incisive insight not only into Isabel's character, but also into the very tone and texture of The Portrait of a Lady.

Undoubtedly the most important full-length work on Jamesian imagery is that of Alexander Holder-Barrel, The Development of Imagery and its Functional Significance in Henry James's Novels.[156] In the book, the author attempts to trace, in a selected number of works, how the imagery developed as James matured.[157] He looks closely not only at specific images, but also at patterns within the novels, and even across a series of novels. And Holder-Barrel is concerned not solely with the literal function of the images within the texts, but also with the way in which they extend the boundaries of a novel. His feeling for this aspect of the imagery is important, since he shows an ability to demonstrate this function by reference to the text, and not, like R. A. Durr and Quentin Anderson, by fitting the images to an idea. Of this wider function of the imagery, he writes in his Preface that

> images - particularly metaphors - in James's novels are an essential part in his expression of eternal values. They help considerably in raising and widening his themes to a statement of universal and lasting truths. So Proust's dictum that metaphor alone can give a sort of eternity to style finds its undeniable confirmation in James's work.158

An aspect of this work which deserves note at the outset, is the manner in which the writer has chosen to categorise his images for discussion. While R. L. Gale grouped his according to the central motif in each, Holder-Barrel chooses to collect them under headings denoting their function. He therefore has broad chapter titles such

as 'The Rhetorical Image', 'The Expanding Image', 'The Characterising Image' or 'The Constructive Image'. And under these main headings he treats the smaller categories of theatre, light and key images, to name but a few. Although ultimately there is no final solution to the problem of handling the vast body of James's images,[159] the approach adopted by Holder-Barrel does lead to certain special problems which are not as evident if other methods are used.

For one, dealing with the images in fixed categories which cut across the novels th lves, means that, unavoidably, many figures will be pruned of peripheral connotations often so important to the tone and texture of an image. Sometimes even, when an image has an important dual function, one of these functions is bound to suffer.[160] As an example, Holder-Barrel's sub-category 'States of Dependence', under the chapter heading 'Images Expressing the Abstract in Terms of the Concrete', may be considered. Here he looks at, among other things, 'the dependence of Kate Croy and Merton Densher upon Mrs. Lowder'.[161] He quotes how

> it was impossible to keep Mrs. Lowder out of the scheme ... she came in always, while they sat together rather helplessly watching her, as in a coach-and-four; she drove round their prospect as the principal lady at the circus drives round the ring, and she stopped the coach in the middle to alight with majesty (XIX,62).[162]

The critic makes no comment on the image, since it clearly shows Kate's and Densher's state of dependence on Mrs. Lowder. But unfortunately, the implication of its circus motif receives no mention at all, and this is certainly the most vivid part of the image. That Mrs. Lowder should be seen as a 'principal lady' suggests not only her patent vulgarity and love of 'performance', but also the essentially small ambit of her concerns and, ultimately, of her real power. She never even progresses to the formal theatre, and certainly nowhere near as high as Milly. Her base materialism is adequately suited to the restricted ambit of the public circus-ring. Further, Kate and Merton are seen at this stage as performers in her ring, but they soon move beyond it. Holder-Barrel misses all these extremely important associations.[163]

Another drawback, not nearly as noticeable as the foregoing, is that any method of categorising images according to function, tends to tear them away from their immediate contexts in the novels, depriving them of the qualities gained by reflection against other images grouped around and within a particular context. Robert L. Gale's work

also suffers from this defect.

In his discussion of The Golden Bowl, for instance, Holder-Barrel quotes a number of the child images which refer to Maggie or her father. He says that the images indicate that whatever Mr. Verver or Maggie do 'they have no bad intentions, and if their actions affect others as wicked, horrid, or disgusting, they themselves believe that their deeds are perfectly justified, that they are doing right and harming no one'.[164] This is undoubtedly so, and yet it is only part of the truth. For one, Adam Verver is continually surrounded by images of gold as well as those of children. These gold images link him to the bowl and to the world of acquisitive materialism. This connection with the bowl suggests that he is not as uniformly innocent or ingenuous as Holder-Barrel argues, and that there is at least one flaw in his character; his associations with the business world have unmistakable connotations of power-wielding and acquisitiveness. And when he is depicted leading Charlotte around on a figurative 'silken halter', it is finally realised that the innocence of childhood images needs to be seen in relation to these other patterns in order for it to settle into its proper position in the perspective of the work.

On the whole, however, this book is valuable in any study of Jamesian imagery, for it attempts, in a meaningful way, to come to grips with the actual quality and functions of the images. And the developmental factor which he considers, throws into relief not only the unrevised images, but also the earlier image-uses when measured against the late. Its relative lack of really close examination of the images is to a large extent offset by the breadth and meticulous detail of the work. In short, the book marks an important stage in the criticism of James's images.

In contradistinction to Holder-Barrel, P. K. Garrett considers the imagery novel by novel as he attempts to show how it develops from The Portrait to The Golden Bowl, and the position James holds in relation to such authors as George Eliot and James Joyce.[165] As a result of dealing with the imagery novel by novel, Garrett is able to examine every facet of the images upon which he focuses his attention. A comparison of his views on architectural imagery, with those of Holder-Barrel, demonstrates this very clearly. Both statements are couched in general terms. Holder-Barrel writes that

> Architectural images serve a purpose directly contrary to that

> fulfilled by water metaphors, for they indicate firmness and security, and, sometimes, intimacy and confidence between two persons.[166]

Garrett recognises a far broader sphere of function:

> In James ... the architectural imagery is a larger system than the spatial metaphor and includes other thematic problems, such as the relation between a character's facade and inner nature. The result is a complex cluster of intersecting analogies rather than an illustrative embodiment of a single general category.[167]

Continuing his discussion of architectural imagery, Garrett goes on to consider the 'debate' between Madame Merle and Isabel in The Portrait of a Lady on the question of 'externals and self'.[168] He perceptively points out that both women are shown by the novel's action to be, in a measure, correct.[169]

Apart from such sensitivity as this, Garrett looks very closely at many of the major patterns of imagery, particularly in the late novels. His discussion of the imagery is always relevant and perceptive. But aside from explication of the imagery, which he has in common with so many other critics, he is set apart by his observation of one very important aspect of the development in James's image-technique. That is the significance of images formed by the characters themselves. He writes that

> the creation of images by the characters in speech or meditation is an important part of their efforts to discover and create meaning. To image a situation is to move towards mastery of it, to make it more firmly possessed by the consciousness ...[170]

Moving on to discuss how certain characters image their various situations and relationships, Garrett refers to Strether's participation in the Lambinet scene in The Ambassadors.[171] He notes that the images which Strether has up to then created for himself of Europe, suddenly coalesce to form a whole picture, as he (Strether) grasps the full significance of Chad's and Mme. de Vionnet's liason, and of life in Europe in general. The scene 'carries to its highest point the development of his visual and aesthetic sense ..'[172]

In The Golden Bowl this type of development is taken a step further. Garrett draws attention to the similarity of the card scene in this

novel, and the Lambinet in the earlier, in that they are both 'pictures' and recognition scenes. The difference, he points out, is that while the Lambinet scene involves a recognition of reality, the card scene involves rather a recognition of appearances. 'This is a more imaginatively advanced recognition, for it reveals how the consciousness which achieves it may become not the victim but the remaker of reality'.[173]

And in Book Two, Maggie becomes more and more adept at forming images as she gains control of her situation. This trend is most clearly exemplified in the sequence of theatre and drama images, where Maggie moves from a spectator to the author of the play herself.[174] Finally, then, Maggie pulls the various disparate elements of her life together, and shapes them into a coherent pattern, very much in the manner of an artist. The way in which she shapes images, reflects this movement towards control: she becomes a kind of artist in both fields, and therefore an analogue of James himself. Noticeably, she is the only character in all the novels who actually manages meaningfully to shape her own destiny. And this has a wider significance, for, as Garrett points out,

> the analogy between Maggie and the artist, partly created by her own images, is from her point of view a means for understanding her personal situation, but in the total context of the novel it also develops a thrust in the opposite direction, creating implications concerning art in general.[175]

In much the same way as Garrett tries to give a fairly complete picture of the image-sets in James, so R. W. Short takes the whole body of imagery and attempts to provide an approach to the consideration of this vast topic.[176] He writes at the outset: 'The problem is that one cannot draw close to James's vital imagery of any single sort without knowing something about the other sorts, so co-operatively do the major image-areas complement each other'.[177] This recognition that each image has an effect on every other, is important for a complete appreciation of the fine tonal nuances which James achieves in the later works.

And Short's approach to this problem seems to be the most desirable method of attempting to deal with imagery. He writes that he will 'not try for watertight compartments, nor to fill up the traditional, nor to invent new compartments, but to relate the most operative kinds of images to what they seem to be doing where they are found'.[178] As advocated and applied throughout this dissertation, such an approach

will yield the fullest appreciation of James's imagery, since the images do not stand by themselves, but are patterns in a closely woven fabric including also such elements as plot, character, themes, setting and technique. Any analysis must inevitably detract somewhat from a work of art's total impact, since analysis is, by definition, partitive in effect. But by considering the image within its immediate context, least violence will be done to it through analysis.

Short also points out, by illustration, that James's imagery changed from expressing a rather 'keen, bare,' observation, towards a far more multi-dimensional effect. Using a vivid image himself, he expresses colourfully and very graphically, the difference between the early and late imagery. Referring to the later figures, he writes that

> in themselves they contain many sense-seizable facts, but so obliquely applied that the subject is left floating and breathing, instead of pinned and wriggling as the earlier images sometimes left their referents.[179]

Short manages to demonstrate this obliquity in the late images by looking closely at war, machinery, cage, beast and water figures, together with how they interrelate.[180]

The method of image-explication advocated by Short, is brought to bear in the most incisive fashion possible by Priscilla Gibson in her essay 'The Uses of James's Imagery: Drama through Metaphor'.[181] Asserting that 'changing functions of the image in different contexts are what help to dramatise the subtlest movements of the mind',[182] she outlines how, after writing The Awkward Age, James used increasingly refined image-techniques in the dramatisation both of scene and of the subjective minds of his characters. As she notes, James's characters in the later works are distinguished from one another by their 'metaphoric understanding' or their use of complicated figurative speech.[183] Imaged predominantly as 'seeing', his characters therefore communicate their feelings to the reader and to other characters by the 'felt insights'[184] which they provide through the use of images.

Just how finely a change in attitude is conveyed through imagery, is superbly illustrated by Miss Gibson in discussing Strether's use, in The Ambassadors, of religiously figurative language. The critic carefully points out each stage: early in the novel Strether refers to the 'sacred rage' of Waymarsh (XXI,46) and the'sacred hush' of Mrs. Newsome (XXII,47). Both terms are approbatory. And in a conversation with Maria Gostrey, he

says that the New England conscience is 'sacred', an 'expiation' (XXI 63 - 67). Further on in the novel, talking to little Bilham, he says that because he has been 'sacrificing to strange gods' (XXII, 167) and has got his hands sullied with 'the blood of monstrous alien altars', he wants to atone by finding a suitable husband for Maria. His reversal is, however, as Miss Gibson shows, revealed in his next statement in this vein when he says that it would be an 'expiatory' action to remove New England from Chad's path.

With similarly detailed examinations of the money imagery in The Ambassadors, and the visual, artistic quality of Milly's party in The Wings of the Dove, Miss Gibson demonstrates how dramatic the smallest variations in image - patterns can be.[185] When focusing on images that foreshadow or later come to have an ironic application, she is equally sensitive to the finest changes in tone and meaning.[186]

This article remains one of the clearest expositions of the subtleties which James employed in his figurative and image-techniques. It demonstrates that no examination can be too keen for the image-patterns of the later works. The only drawback of this type of scrutiny is that it loses the equally dramatic and portentous significance which the larger image-sequences take on as they become more and more complex in the mature novels.

Also concerned with the dramatic quality of imagery, William M. Gibson looks at what he considers to be the two main ends to which James uses imagery.[187] They are 'to dramatise and make vivid key stages in the developing action, and to make increasingly explicit the moral significance of Strether's experience to himself and to the reader'.[188]

Beginning with the various historical references, which refer to the women only, it is shown how the recurring comparisons contribute 'to the continual redefinition of the essential conflict'.[189] Following the pattern further, Gibson then shows how Strether, having once thought of Mrs. Newsome as Queen Elizabeth, now sees Maria Gostrey as Mary Stuart (XXI,51), while Madame de Vionnet is seen as very different again, most meaningfully as Cleopatra (XXI, 270 - 1).[190] And in his final talk with the Frenchwoman, Strether envisions her, tragically and appropriately, as Madame Roland ascending the scaffold during the Terror of the French Revolution (XXII,275).

Gibson also discusses the golden-nail, boat, train and moulds images as they occur throught the novel.[191] After remarking that 'with the same regard for organic fitness, James chooses his settings and elaborates them metaphorically in order to reveal step by step the

moral significance of Strether's whole experience',[192] the author demonstrates how James uses four balcony and garden scenes[193] as important stages in Strether's development, together with various interior settings to define carefully the European milieu.[194] In short then, the careful choice of images which are both dramatic and illustrative, and the perceptive way in which they are analysed, marks this essay as one of the most useful on James's imagery.

While W. M. Gibson discusses the boat and water imagery in The Ambassadors as on a par with the other image-patterns, Richard Chartier finds in the water imagery of that novel, one of the most pervasively unifying elements in the work.[195] Through tracing and examining the water imagery in great detail, Chartier concludes that the transformation in Strether at the end is the result of 'a sea change, wrought by Mme. de Vionnet who has freed Chad from Woollett's "Sacred Rage"...'.[196] He goes on to justify this Tempest-orientated view :

> That the change is a sea change is established by James's association of freedom, enjoyment, and refinement, the components of that change, with water imagery so pervasive and complete that it may be tabulated at the rate of about one every other page.[197]

That Strether's change is in the order of a sea change, and that the water imagery therefore logically plays a large part in illuminating it, is not in dispute. But that freedom and enjoyment are the elements of that change, is questionable.

A fact clearly established in the novel by the 'moulds' image, and understood by Strether since he formulates that image, is that the characters have but the illusion of freedom. The river imagery associated with Strether emphasises this. In each image, Strether is depicted as caught up and swept along by the medium. In the figurative river, he is free to move from side to side, or from shallow to deep, but otherwise his course is predetermined.[198] The whirlpool image, in particular, is directly associated with the inexorable power of water over Strether. Hence, even when Strether has attained the 'freedom' of a broad sense of perception, and seen Mme. de Vionnet in the totality of her European character, she 'could still draw him down like a whirlpool' (XXII,373).

Another aspect to notice is that many of the water images are

frightening, either in their power, or in the suggestion they carry of dark evil lurking just beneath the surface of the novel; there is little of the enjoyment Chartier suggests. For example, when Strether hears of Jeanne de Vionnet's arranged marriage, he feels that 'he had allowed for depths, but these were greater ... It was through something ancient and cold in it - what he would have called the real thing' (XXII,129).

Further, the shipwreck images, and those where Strether is cast up out of the sea in an exhausted state, hardly convey a sense of enjoyment.[199] They suggest rather the spiritual hardship and suffering which Strether must endure in order to change from a narrow Woollett outlook to a broadened Parisian consciousness of all the elements of life.

At the end of the essay, Chartier makes the rather surprising statement that the water imagery operates 'below "the levels of plot and character" '.[200] This is somewhat unexpected, since he has exhaustively examined the imagery, detailing extensively how closely it is connected with plot and character. The water imagery, and more particularly the boat imagery, are clearly iterative, and are consequently very much a part of the plot. For Chartier to write, then, that in the novel 'the sublevel (imagery) is clearer than the surface level',[201] is to state what his essay itself has already disproved.

In contrast to Richard Chartier, James N. Wise has devoted an article to water imagery in The Ambassadors, an article in which he exhaustively details almost every occurrence of water or swimming imagery. With very little analysis of the specific images, all this essay really accomplishes is a delineation of the various figures. The article's vagueness is exemplified by its ending:

> with his new knowledge Strether comes full circle by floating off again at the novel's end, but he floats in one and the same motion on both a higher and a deeper level of understanding than ever before. The fermentation has died down and "the terrible fluidity of self-revelation" has been enacted.[202]

What Strether understands and how he comes to understand are the prime concerns of the novel; the way he 'floats' through the action is obvious and of secondary importance. The article never comes to grips with his process of understanding.

An article which displays some of the finest writing on James's imagery, is one by Jean Frantz Blackall entitled 'James's "In the Cage": An Approach through the Figurative Language'.[203] In this essay Miss

Blackall examines the telegraphist's reactions to the central image and symbol of the cage. She shows how the girl's life is governed by her confinement, and how much she desires to escape to the world of society represented by Captain Everard and Lady Bradeen, two people who use her office as a communications interchange. The writer also shows how the cage comes to have an ambivalent meaning for the young lady, since, when Captain Everard invites her to enter his world on a somewhat equivocal basis, 'to be in the cage had suddenly become her safety, and she was literally afraid of the alternate self who might be waiting outside'. Extending her focus, Miss Blackall then goes on to trace the patterns of money and light imagery, each of which illuminates 'the girl's world in contrast to that beyond it', while at the same time allowing 'particularised insights into her condition and character'.[204] By extensive quotation and careful linking to plot and theme, the author demonstrates the manner in which coin imagery is used to heighten the difference between the worlds inside and outside the cage. As she says,

> Collectively, the references to coins identify the telegraphist with her own world and explicitly characterise that world as impoverished both in monetary and spiritual terms in contrast to the more glorious one which she impressionistically envisions in the symbols of the gold coins.[205]

Using the imagery of light and dark, Miss Blackall then points out how James shades in the emotional ups and downs of his central recording character, these variations being central to the nouvelle's concern with the effect which her confinement has upon the telegraphist.

The subjective nature of all these image-patterns, and the light they throw upon the girl's outlook, leads the writer to the conclusion that the story's subject is the limited consciousness of its central character, and the humour resulting from its narrowed view of society.

Such a conclusion, far closer to the felt tone of the story than the social interpretations normally placed upon it, seems, therefore, to be most surely reached through an examination of those parts of the story which reflect the imagination of the girl, namely the images. Carefully analysed in their context, the fine tonal gradations which the images possess, when related to plot and theme, as they are in this article, lead to the most incisive insights into James's intentions.

In conclusion, then, it may fairly be said that criticism of Henry James's imagery embraces a very wide spectrum of approaches. At its worst it is exemplified by the work of writers such as Robert Gale with his

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broad generalisations which have little relation to the images as they appear in their specific contexts. In the same vein, F. R. Leavis's abrupt dismissals of the imagery are little better than Gale's appreciative summaries, in that they display a similar inability to look closely at particular figures.

Another group of critics who do James's image-uses quite as much harm as those mentioned above, are the writers who try to interpret having brought with them preconceived ideas or systems to fit onto the work. Quentin Anderson is the most prolific of this school in his attempts to shape James's whole body of writing, along with the imagery and symbols, into the Swedenborgian philosophical patterns of Henry James Snr. R. A. Durr, and,to a lesser extent A. L. Goldsmith, and Daniel Schneider, are also guilty of this fault of twisting the text to fit an externally adduced idea.

At its best, the criticism of James's imagery relies upon a close contextual analysis of the images in all their parts, as elements of broader patterns, and finally as significant devices in the work as a whole. Jean Kimball, Robert Chartier, Alexander Holder-Barrel, Priscilla Gibson and Dorothy van Ghent are amongst those who are prepared to take the trouble to scrutinise the imagery in this way, secure in the knowledge that it will yield some of the most rewarding insights into James's work.

Through the use of this technique, the simplest images of the earliest works may be fruitfully compared with the most complex of the later. Using this method, therefore, attention is turned, in the following chapter, firstly to Roderick Hudson.

CHAPTER TWO

Imagery in the Earlier Novels

However entrancing it is to wander unchecked through a garden of bright images, are we not enticing your mind from another subject of almost equal importance?

Ernest Bramah Smith

PART ONE

James regarded Roderick Hudson (1876) as his first full-length novel, and certainly, measured against Watch and Ward (1874), it is his earliest major piece of fiction longer than the previously published nouvelles and short stories.[1] Standing thus at the beginning of his career as a novelist, the story of a New England artist in Europe serves as a logical starting-point for an examination of Jamesian imagery. And being, in the time-scheme of James's writing, at the furthest remove from The Golden Bowl (the final work scrutinised in this study) it is hoped that Roderick Hudson will stand as the other meaningful pole around which the world containing James's imagery revolves. The first extended work of James, then, will be the starting-point in this chapter, the aim of which is to provide a contrasting back-drop showing development towards, and throwing into relief, the highly sophisticated image-techniques of the final three works.

The most noticeable pattern of imagery in Roderick Hudson is that dealing with the world of nature.[2] The work is in fact enclosed by references to nature, the first image in Vol. I,[3] showing how Rowland Mallet, setting his cap at Cecilia, and then seeing her married to his cousin, 'seemed to feel the upward sweep of the empty bough from which the golden fruit had been plucked, and then and there accepted the prospect of bachelorhood' (I,1). The novel ends with Roderick dying in a fierce natural storm amongst the Swiss Alps. Being so distinctly positioned, this strand of imagery has a noteworthy role to play in the structure of Roderick Hudson. Its primary function is to bring sharply to the reader's attention that, in spite of the high artistic concerns and idealistic soarings throughout the story, the characters are all members of a natural world which is subject to certain unalterable laws. Through the actual garden and country settings,[4] as well as through metaphor, this aspect of the work's concern is kept prominently in the reader's mind.

More specifically, a recurrent focus of this kind of imagery is on the motif of fruit, the result of productive growth. The metaphor of Rowland Mallet and the 'golden fruit' already quoted, serves as an introductory hint in this respect. This image foreshadows a feeling which dogs him throughout the work, namely that of great opportunities missed. At the end he is deprived of watching the full flowering of Roderick's genius, thus losing what could have been, he feels, the supreme experience of his life.[5] As far as Roderick is concerned, the careful and perceptive Singleton says that the sculptor is 'complete'.

He goes on:

> "we little clevernesses are like half ripened plums, only good eating on the side that has had a glimpse of the sun. Nature has made him so, and fortune confesses to it!"(I,143).

The water-colourist's image here is incisively sure because it pictures precisely Roderick's fate. He dissipates his perfect genius by too rapidly exposing himself to the world: he ripens himself so fast that the process is unnatural. His talent quickly sours and he falls to his death (literally and figuratively), having detached himself from the vital forces of a natural and steady growth.[6]

These references to fruit hint at the Biblical 'forbidden fruit', and indeed this motif is closely allied to Roderick's fall. Christina Light, the beautiful siren who captures Roderick's heart, says to herself, "'I am silly, I am ignorant, I am affected, I am false. I am the fruit of a horrible education sown on a worthless soil"' (I,195). The sculptor is, however, blind to this side of her character and, fatally mixing his personal with his creative life,[7] he eats of the forbidden fruit, thereby damning the high flame of his 'sacred fire' (I,194).[8]

A further function of the natural imagery is to stress that healthy growth is a necessary result of careful cultivation. The practical, if somewhat foolish Mr. Striker pronounces sententiously to Rowland Mallet when he hears that Roderick is going to Rome:

> "The crop we gather depends upon the seed we sow. He may be the biggest genius of the age; his potatoes won't come up without his hoeing them. If he takes things so almighty easy as-well, as one or two young fellows of genius I've had under my eye — his produce will never gain the prize "(I,48).

The rest of the novel shows the artist increasingly neglecting his genius in favour of worldly dissipations, to the extent that it withers and finally dies. And since Roderick's genius is his life and soul, once it dies, by the simplest law of nature, (that of life and death) Roderick, as a product of nature,[9] must die too. This he does, overwhelmed by the elements in an Alpine blizzard.

In sharp contrast to Christina, Mary Garland is the one character finely in tune with nature. On the picnic before Roderick's departure she displays a loving and intimate knowledge of plants and flowers (I,59)(II,147). Unlike Roderick, she has allowed herself to grow quite naturally, neither neglecting nor emphasising any one aspect.

Rowland perceives this and asks of her,'"Your growth, then, was unconscious? You did not watch yourself and water your roots?"'(II,55). In silence, she tacitly assents. Characterised thus, the reader cannot help but feel that had Roderick allied himself closely with Mary's natural understanding, his genius might have fared better than the novel in fact demonstrates. Forcing Roderick to choose between the two women, differentiated as they are by natural imagery, James points to an essential dilemma of the artist: either to select the high beauty of art alone, or to opt for a more earthy association of beauty with the natural forces of life.[10]

A further facet of the novel's natural imagery is provided by the references to animals and insects. Rowland, lazing in the grass beneath Mount Hoylake, images Roderick as

> some beautiful, supple, restless, bright-eyed animal, whose motions should have no deeper warrant than the tremulous delicacy of its structure, and seem graceful even when they were most inconvenient (I,25).

Such an image is revealing in two ways. Firstly, it foreshadows, in its delicacy, that Roderick could well bow and break under temptation - his artistic sensibility is so finely strung that it cannot withstand the pressures of the European social world.[11] Secondly, since Rowland formulates the image, it shows his blindness in thinking such a creature capable of withstanding both the demands of genius and the mellow, sometimes overripe attractions of European society. The image also, of course, conveys the sculptor's very fine artistic consciousness and, at this stage of the story, his close relation with the natural world from which he draws inspiration. It should be noted here that such an image, in its finely honed tonal quality, is virtually the only one of its kind in Roderick Hudson.

This pattern of animal imagery threads its way throughout the novel, and although the allusions are rather thinly scattered and somewhat conventional in conception, they do serve to point out that the characters of the story to whom they are attached have the more basic instincts of animals as well as the finer human attributes. Thus Roderick says his mother wishes him to be all his life'"tethered to the law, like a browsing goat to a stake"'(I,32), while Rowland thinks of him as a 'young lion' (I,78), once he has brought him to Rome. The illuminating quality of these two images is that, while inadequate by themselves in describing Roderick, each contains a part of the truth.

Certainly, a combination of the restraint in the goat image, and the latent power of the young lion figure, would have suited Roderick better than the fate to which he condemns himself; either of these factors taken alone is seen to be ruinous to his genius.

The image of the goat is peculiarly apt, since it looks forward to Roderick's being led around by the nose at the end of the halter of Christina's beauty. He becomes tied to her attractions, not to the law, but the effect is the same. Consequently, when first introduced, Christina's desire for slave-like devotion at the expense of any spontaneous life, is stressed by the image of her ridiculous poodle 'combed and decked like a ram for the sacrifice' (I,71). Ultimately, as the story shows, Roderick is sacrified at the altar of her egotism.

Roderick himself, in a fit of passion, castigates European society, saying,'"they have no real spontaneity; they are nothing but parrots and popinjays. They have no more dignity than so many grasshoppers"' (I,205). And while the empty Mr. Leavenworth looks at the sculptor 'like a large drowsy dog snapping at flies' (II,75), Mrs. Light rants about the treacherous Christina, saying,'"to have nourished a serpent, sir, all these years! To have lavished one's self upon a viper that turns and stings her own poor mother!"'(II,94). Again, Mrs. Hudson's Maddalena shows 'her teeth at you like a cheerful she-wolf' (II,128), and Roderick, in his characteristically uncharitable fashion says that Singleton reminds him of'"some curious little insect with a remarkable mechanical instinct in its antenna"'(II,160). The error in this image becomes apparent to the young sculptor when he is seen as realising that the modest landscapist's 'unflagging industry' has 'an oppresive meaning for him' (II,160).

What emerges, therefore, from this pattern of natural and animal imagery, is that each picture, while precise and of some local importance, nevertheless has a one-to-one relation with its referee or context which leaves a flat and two-dimensional impression. The images therefore, arranged in somewhat haphazard formations, seem to fulfil in the main a straightforward illustrative role, the impressions being little more than pictorial illuminations, with little left to the reader's imagination.

Closely allied to the pattern of natural images, is that dealing with water, flowing mediums, and the sea. In this series of images, there is a general equation between society and a large mass of water, an equation which lends an element of fluidity and freedom to the world in which the characters move. Having set out Gloriani's career, and

showed its practicality, James comments that around the Italian 'there were so many of the aesthetic fraternity who were floundering in unknown seas, without a notion of which way their noses were turned ...' (I,80). Even within the individual, certain streams take an independent course. Roderick realises this when he says to Rowland, "'there are all kinds of indefinable currents moving to and fro between one's will and one's inclinations"'(I,106). As can be seen from these two examples, the most salient point about this image-cluster is that it emphasises an aspect of a world over which the characters, in spite of their aspirations, can have little control.

Thus Roderick, faced with Christina'a attractiveness, is uneasy about her:

> The impression remained that she was unsafe; that she was a complex, wilful, passionate creature, who might easily engulf a too confiding spirit in the eddies of her capricious temper. And yet he strongly felt her charm; the eddies had a strange fascination!(I,140).

And the terrified Mrs. Hudson, although having got over her initial fright on arriving in Rome, 'was still catching her breath a little, like a person dragged ashore out of waters uncomfortably deep' (II,38). Even the placid and controlled Mary Garland images herself as caught up in the swirling waters of Europe. She says to Rowland of Europe:

> "I was all ready: I only wanted a little push; you gave me a great one; here I am up to my neck! And now, instead of helping me to swim, you stand on the shore - the shore of superior information - and fling pebbles at me!"(II,57).

Roderick himself is shown to have little say in the growth of his creative faculty; by the end of the story he feels it to be somewhat extrinsic and divorced from his life. 'He felt conscious of a sudden collapse in his moral energy; a current that had been flowing for two years with liquid strength seemed at last to pause and stagnate' (II,170). It is only when the last spark of life has been washed from Roderick that the water imagery, in the form of cleansing rain, relents of its inexorable power and, rather melodramatically and over symbolically, washes away the blood from Roderick's broken body (II,191).[12]

Matching the prevalent water imagery in Roderick Hudson, is the series of images referring to boats and ships, a pattern which is woven

prominently into the text of the work.[13] From the very beginning, Rowland wishes to 'put in (an) oar' (I,2) for Cecilia's 'boat' by helping her financially. To Roderick, having offered him a trip to Rome, he says,'"I have launched you, as I may say,... and I feel as if I ought to see you into port. I am older than you and know the world better, and it seems well that we should voyage a while together"' (I,33). As this last image particularly implies, the characters are setting out on a journey not only to the Old World, but also towards a deeper knowledge of life's shaping forces.

It is on the boat going to Europe that Rowland learns of Roderick's engagement, and the ship of his equanimity gives a 'great dizzying lurch' (I,62). This is but the first of many blows Roderick will deal to his faith in the sculptor's character. Sadly, although he learns that life is cruel and capricious, Rowland really gains little insight into human nature.[14]

Roderick's journey through life is measured by the imagery in a more detailed fashion. Having seen him set out, at first he seems to be 'floating on the tide of his deep self-confidence' (I, 93-94), but within weeks the Muse leaves him, and he says dispiritedly to Roderick,'"I have struck a shallow! I have been sailing bravely, but for the last day or two my keel has been grinding the bottom"'(I,95).[15] As he becomes more and more dispirited, so the images become more static and less concrete than before; bitterly he complains to Rowland,'"My mind is like a dead calm in the tropics, and my imagination as motionless as the phantom ship in the "Ancient Mariner"!"'(I,173). But in spite of his malaise, Roderick is too stubborn to help himself; as Rowland writes to Mary Garland, 'he's too confoundedly all of one piece; he won't throw overboard a grain of the cargo to save the rest'(II,17).[16] As he goes on his way, Roderick realises the hurt and disappointment he is causing to others, but is powerless, because of his egotism, to stop rocking the boat which contains them all (II,114). Finally, he is wrecked on the rocks of the Swiss Alps, fracturing at the same time the lives of all connected with him.

The boat imagery, then, shows a distinct journey motif, most clearly with regard to Roderick. Unfortunately, there is a dichotomy between the journey depicted in the imagery, and the amount of self-knowledge which Roderick gains. At the end, he knows as little about himself as he did at the beginning. He has learnt nothing on his journey, and the resultant feeling for the reader is one of melodramatic anti-climax,

the high drama of the journey's end not being consonant with Roderick's course through the novel.

Carefully woven into the fabric of the novel is a small but important set of images referring to the march of time, and to clocks and watches.[17] As the author says, '"we must live as our pulses are timed, and Roderick's struck the hour very often"'(I,68). Rowland, having heard from Mary Garland and Mrs. Hudson, thinks that 'the monotonous days of the two women seemed to ... follow each other like the tick-tick of a great timepiece' (I,101). In a highly self-revelatory speech, Roderick asks of his genius :

> "What if the watch should run down ... and you should lose the key? What if you should wake up some morning and find it stopped - inexorably, appallingly stopped?"(I,172)

That Roderick should conceive of his genius, a highly intangible, spiritual concept, in such concrete, mechanical terms, shows his real lack of knowledge as to how his creative spark functions.[18] This lack of understanding inevitably leads to a misuse of his genius, and from that comes his downfall. Roderick's confused state of mind in this respect is finally emphasised when he says disparagingly, (near the story's end) to the industrious Singleton:"You remind me of a watch that never runs down. If one listens hard one hears you always - tic-tic, tic-tic"'(II,160).[19] Forgetting his earlier image of genius, Roderick is here actually paying Singleton a singular compliment, and not disparaging him, as he thinks. Plainly, the water-colourist can never have Roderick's inspirational genius, but his unflagging industry is rewarded by a steady creative output, in itself more than Roderick ever achieves.

Although by this stage in his career James had not yet evolved his famous 'scenic' method of composition, learned from his abortive sally into the theatre, he is nevertheless meticulous in providing a careful background, through very concrete images, for each section of the novel's action.

For example, as Rowland walks home after inviting Roderick to Rome, James sketches the scene with quiet beauty:

> The great Northhampton elms inter-s ched far above in the darkness, but the moon had risen a J through scattered apertures was hanging the dusky vault with silver lamps (I,51).

The composed serenity of the scene prompts Rowland to reflect that America has beauty enough for an artist, and at that moment Roderick, in high spirits, appears, striding and singing down the street. The symbolism is clear: why must Roderick go to Europe and be subject to beauty and corruption, when he has beauty, albeit heavily influenced by New England Puritanism, right in his own birthplace? This is the question to which the scene points. At the end of the story, the reader is still left asking the question: why? In this instance therefore, the setting is thematically important.

Elsewhere in Roderick Hudson, however, the settings are not always so tightly constructed or so carefully controlled. When Rowland wanders up into the convent at Fiesole, where he says he is tempted by the devil (II,32), James's descriptive powers spill over into a welter of detail not all of which is strictly relevant. To be sure, the religious aspect, the fact that it is a garden, and that it is set high above the city, are important. But the long, sensuous description of the scenery and the summer weather is largely superfluous to the action in hand. In itself, such description is not offensive, and yet, when compared to the Lambinet scene in The Ambassadors, where every detail is a relevant part of the composition, it is possible to see how much refinement James's art had still to undergo in stepping off from Roderick Hudson.[20] Further, this scene, so symbolically evolved, has little of the force of that in The Wings of the Dove when Milly Theale fa- s the abyss in Switzerland (XVII,118). That setting is so placed used that it becomes a prefigurement of Milly's later more serious situation at the Palazzo Leporelli. This scene in Roderick Hudson, since Rowland sleeps throughout, and therefore nothing can be known of his temptation, becomes, as a result, merely another incident in Rowland's ordeal.[21]

As far as the arrangement of his characters in a particular setting is concerned, James displays much of his later artistry. The image of the three artists examining Roderick's statue of Eve is an instance of this (I,93). Lighted by the lamp, as an image alone, they display, importantly, three different artistic points of view. Unfortunately, James does not allow them to stand by themselves. Uncertain of his power of pure evocation, he finds it necessary to describe what each of them represents. The technique is very different at Chad's entrance to Strether's life at the drama in Paris, where the characters are again symbolically situated and grouped. There, no explanation is necessary:

the image is immediate enough in itself, all the more so for the effort which must be made by the reader in grasping its significance (XXI,136).

The three artists examining Roderick's statue of Eve point towards one of the most important concerns of Roderick Hudson, namely the theme dealing with art and the artist. The novel is, after all, about the rise and fall of the gifted sculptor Roderick Hudson, and this theme must therefore be seen as central. A vital aspect of the art theme is the question of the extent to which Roderick's decline may be attributed to the influence of Europe: in other words, the 'international theme',[22] in relation to the artist.

The imagery of boats and ships, suggesting strongly the journey motif, continually brings to the reader's notice the idea that the physical journey from America to Europe has involved Roderick in a personal journey bringing about a crisis in his creative ability.[23] The problems presented in this concern, as well as James's attitude, are summed up by J. Hynes in his article, 'The Transparent Shroud: Henry James and William Story'. He writes:

> The example of Story and his fellows had enabled James to see the dangers of mere escape from the deadeningly bourgeois. Rowland Mallet foreshadows the fate of Roderick, and Story, when he says that to give in to the charm of Italy is to indulge in "a sort of glorified loafing: passive life there, thanks to the number and quality of one's impressions, takes on a respectable likeness to an active pursuit". Because neither Roderick nor Story knew what lay ahead - the famous "complex fate" of the expatriate American artist[24] - and because each was struck down uncomprehending, James feels for them both.[25]

In the novel, Roderick indulges in this 'glorified loafing' and the spring of genius in him gradually runs dry. His slow decline is, however, very carefully signposted by James through each of the sculptor's statues. His first work, the Water-drinker (I,21), images Roderick's state at the time. The statue is 'youth ... innocence ... health ... strength ... curiosity', and the cup is 'knowledge, pleasure, experience'; these latter are precisely the elements which Roderick will taste in Europe. The next work brought to the reader's notice is Roderick's model, singularly beautiful, for his brother's sepulchre, of a young soldier 'sleeping eternally with his hand on his sword - like an old crusader in a Gothic cathedral'(I,29). By this image, Roderick is at once connected with the theme of death, the model pointing towards the sculptor's death shaped in large measure by his own actions.

His Adam (I,78), executed soon after he arrives in Europe, is the pinnacle of his achievements. It stands for man (and Roderick by implication) at the zenith of his uncorrupted power and beauty. A wonderful Eve, but the necessary partner for the sin of eating the fruit of the tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, is soon completed. After his dissipated interlude at Baden-Baden, he models a statue with none of the high symbolism or idealism of his previous great creations. It represents,

> a woman leaning lazily back in her chair, with her head drooping as if she were listening, a vague smile on her lips, and a pair of remarkably beautiful arms folded in her lap (I,107).

The passivity of this piece starts the process which marks the decline of Roderick's powers.

His statues of the lazzarone in the sun (II,19), his mother's (II,67), and Christina's busts (I,133), while very beautiful, have neither life nor an infusion of his 'sacred fire'. His final inability to produce anything marks the end of Roderick's creative life, and must therefore precede his death, since he is essentially a living embodiment of the spirit of artistic genius. An image sequence such as this, in which James the artist depicts Roderick the sculptor imaging his own decline, looks forward, for example, to the subtlety of Strether's attempt in The Ambassadors to shape a coherent picture of exactly what Europe means, a process involving the gradual accretion of impressions.[26]

The high seriousness of Roderick's role as an artist is emphasised by the many religious allusions and references. As mentioned, the motif of the forbidden fruit is suggested by the natural imagery. Religious imagery in general, whilst recurring frequently, does not follow any specific pattern; its most noteworthy characteristic is the rather obvious nature of many of its occurrences. As an example of this, the scene may be cited where Roderick smashes Mr. Striker's bust and then cries out,'"I have driven the money-changers out of the temple!"' (I,30). At the time Mary Garland 'seemed not to understand the young man's allegory', but quickly the reason for Roderick's outburst in this form becomes apparent; being cast in religious terms, it is needed to start the allegoric tale of Roderick's fall from the grace of artistic creativity to the hell of ennui. The statues of Adam and Eve, the figure of Christina Light as an 'angel' (I,123) or

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an 'immaculate saint of legend being led to martyrdom'(I,133-4), or a mortal in 'the blooming body of a goddess'(I,148) or Roderick's talk of 'miracles' in his life (II,3), are all threads in this pattern.

That James saw elements of this image-pattern as too obvious, is borne out by his changing Roderick's expostulation on Mary and his mother from'"they mean no more to me than a Bible text means to an atheist"'(II,63), to'"They mean no more to me than a piano means to a pig"!'[27]

As his powers weaken, Roderick feels himself to have been betrayed (II,118) and says (II,123),'"If I had not come to Rome I shouldn't have risen, and if I had not risen I shouldn't have fallen"! He goes about clad in white, the sacrificial colour(II,137), and when he complains of being 'buried alive', Rowland answers sententiously, and pointedly, '"Death of that sort is very near to resurrection"'(II,145). Finally, of course, Roderick falls to his death at Engelthal, the valley of angels, and finds a serenity in death which escaped him in life.

Contrasted with the quiet religious tone of The Wings of the Dove which, because of its technique and sure choice of imagery never needs such overt reverences as occur in Roderick Hudson, the religious allegory of the latter strikes a slightly jarring note. By choice of subject and careful manipulation of his chief symbol, the dove, in The Wings of the Dove, James infuses the mortal with the immortal theme in a far more subtle manner.[28]

Since Roderick Hudson is a book about the fate of a sculptor, there is, fittingly, recurrent emphasis on the image of the eye, the organ with which a work of art can, in the very first instance, be appreciated. The image of the eye is also used in a broader framework of meaning than this: in Roderick Hudson the personages are not only characterised by what their eyes look like, but also display many emotions by the manner in which their eyes react in certain situations. For example, Jonas Mallet, Rowland's father, the icy Puritan, had a 'frigid gray eye' (I,9), while his son, susceptible to impressions,emerges from childhood a 'round-eyed lad' (I,11), gradually acquiring, in his inactive middle years, a 'quiet gray eye'(I,13). On seeing Roderick for the first time, Rowland exclaims to himself'"... certainly there was life enough in his eye to furnish an immortality!"(I,18). Ironically, Roderick's 'generous dark gray eye' (I,18) is the first in the book to be closed in death. Mary Garland's 'gray eye was clear but not brilliant' (I,41) and she is continually resting her 'serious eyes' upon some

object, of which she disapproves (I,42). Miss Striker has the 'pale blue eye' of her father (I,55), while the once great but now fallen Cavaliere had 'a little black eye which glittered like a diamond, and rolled about like a ball of quicksilver ...'(I,71).

When set in motion, these characters communicate very much with their eyes. Cecilia looks at Rowland with 'the spark of irritation' (I,36) in her eye, while Miss Carland bestows on him 'a short cold glance' (I,43). Christina used the beauty of her eyes to good effect, letting them play freely on those around her (II, 7-8,166). The anxious Mrs. Hudson follows her son with 'intensely earnest eyes'(II,42) and Gloriani causes Roderick's eyes to fill with 'glittering angry tears' (II,68) through his criticisms. Mrs. Light, faced with betrayal by her daughter, pleads with Rowland with eyes 'quite dry and ... fixed in stony hardness on the floor'(II,97).[29]

As can be seen, the list of eye references in characterisation and action is very long. Although each image serves to characterise and dramatise to a certain extent, the repetitive use of eye allusions, (all the sympathetic characters have grey eyes) tends to leave a feeling of the shallowness of James's ability to use significant detail to distinguish persons and situations. In the late novels, eye imagery is still prevalent, but there it is a very small part of characterisation, and is connected in a more profound way with the themes of perception and of appearance versus reality.

In Roderick Hudson, the theme of appearance and reality, although clearly important, is very rarely referred to, either through imagery or comment. The issue involved is that Roderick must learn, in Italy, to see beyond the surfaces of things, not only to the deeper inner beauty of so much of that country, but also to the dirt and corruption, which are as much a part of life as the beauty. Christina's care of her appearance and love for beautiful clothes show her concern for surfaces, and it is Roderick's downfall that he never sees past them to her small, selfish egotism. In fact, Roderick, like Rowland, never gains any real insight into his own character. For, the more Rowland tries to help Roderick, the more the latter enmeshes himself in Europe; as a result the friendship gradually disintegrates. Finally, because of the mutual lack of insight, Roderick dies and Rowland is left to a life of bitter disappointment.

This concern with appearance and reality is peculiarly suited to illustration by imagery, as The Golden Bowl amply demonstrates.[30] In

that work there are numerous image-references delineating the theme, whereas in Roderick Hudson, apart from a few references to masks (I,11) (II,59,167), to clothes, and to perception (II,181), there is little imagery employed. The importance and immediacy of the theme suffer as a result.

Imagery and scenes concerned with drama, do, in a small way, have a bearing on appearance and reality in that a play is merely a sustained illusion of life. Unfortunately, these types of references in Roderick Hudson are so scattered as to add little colouring to the theme. Christina is the character most often associated with drama imagery since she concerns herself with surfaces and with playing a part in order to fulfil her mother's wishes. As Rowland says of her, '"she is an actress, she couldn't forego doing the thing dramatically, and it was the dramatic touch that made it fatal"'(II,18). And after Mrs. Light's party, when she has rejected Prince Casamassima, Rowland looks at her and realises that 'she had played her great scene, she had made her point, and now she had her eye at the hole in the curtain and she was watching the house!'(II,103). Finally, in her role as actress, she gets her just desserts and is forced into marriage with the Prince. Rowland hears of the marriage: 'For some moments this seemed to him really terrible; the dark little drama of which he had caught a glimpse had played itself out' (II,109).[31] This small sequence shows a development, or at least a series of steps in Christina's life, and as such it foreshadows the great dramatic strands of imagery used so emphatically in The Ambassadors and The Golden Bowl,[32] strands which add immensely to the focus and interest in those works.

In Roderick Hudson there are three further patterns of imagery worthy of mention: that dealing with doors, keys and locks; that concerned with eating and drinking, and those images referring to commerce, gold and money.[33] None of these patterns is sufficiently widespread so as to make a significant impact by force of repetition. Neither does any one of them have one particular image which is noteworthy for its special applicability or depth of meaning.

A facet of the imagery in Roderick Hudson which deserves special mention is the use of conventional and unevocative figures.[34] Rowland says to Roderick that his mother loves him too well, and continues, '"I will lay you a wager that this is where the shoe pinches"' (I,31); Roderick asserts, '"I grasped the bull by the horns"' (I,34) when he rejects Mr. Striker's job; Mrs. Hudson speaks of the '"goose or the hen, who hatched a swan's egg"' (I,50); Mrs. Light says her daughter is '"a thorn

in the flesh"'(I,134); Roderick on the subject of industry in art, says that"'the proof of the pudding was in the eating"'(I,174), and that his work has"'gone to the dogs"'(II,117). Imagery such as this is so hackneyed that it fulfils no purpose whatsoever, apart from pointing to lapses in James's train of original thought. In the late three novels, such figures have disappeared.

Looking at the imagery as a whole, then,it is characterised by very simple tropes which even, at times, lapse into monotonous repetition or even dull conventionality. When held against the rich image-patterns of the late novels, these features are particularly noticeable; within the context of Roderick Hudson, as a first novel, they tend to merge more nearly into the lowered tone and relatively straightforward thematic content of the work. The total impression of the novel, and particularly that of the imagery, is best summed up by an anonymous reviewer of 1876, who wrote:

> Looking at the book as a whole, it is like a marvellous mosaic, whose countless minute pieces are fitted with so much skill and ingenuity that a real picture is presented, but with an absence of richness and relief, of all that is vivid and salient; there is a pervading lowness of tone and flatness of tint.[35]

A year after its first publication, Roderick Hudson was followed by The American, in 1876, in serialised form. The novel opens with a carefully drawn scene in which the American businessman, Christopher Newman, is depicted sitting in the Louvre in Paris with 'an aesthetic headache' (A,651)[36] from overexposure to European art. Through the presentation of this setting the reader is at once introduced to the theme and image of the American confronted with the cultural wealth of European art. This opening scene is important, firstly because it is evidence of James's early development of the scenic and dramatic form of narration, a form which reached its most refined state in the final three novels.[37] Secondly, it is significant because it demonstrates characters strongly influenced by their environment and setting, a recurrent facet of the novel's structure, and one which shows James concentrating more closely than he did in Roderick Hudson on evolving relevant settings, in images, for his significant scenes. Settings, it should be noted, which are closely connected with the action in hand, and not artificially constructed scenes used for an obvious purpose.

The initial scene of The American is equally important for its emphasis on the theme of art and for its introduction of the important thread of art imagery which runs through the novel. Newman, at the very outset, is seen as unable to react sympathetically to the art of Europe, and, when he buys Noemie Nioche's copy, to be unable to differentiate between good and obviously inferior creative work. At this stage in the story, his sensibilities have not been developed to the extent where he can discriminate between good and bad, not only in art, but amongst the characters with whom he comes into contact.

This inability of Newman to perceive the profound way in which art is interfused with life, and how much art it takes to live a life which is deeply satisfying, is exemplified by an image he used when discussing with Mrs. Tristram his search for a wife. Expounding on how his 'success' can be fulfilled he says:'"To make it perfect, as I see it, there must be a beautiful woman perched on the pile, like a statue on a monument"'(A,668). Such a picture at once shows Newman's undeveloped understanding of the relationship between art and life, since clearly the woman he describes as the ideal partner is anything but a cold and immobile statue. The image also hints at the reason for Newman's later disappointment with Mme. de Cintré. As in this figure, so in real life, Newman courts Mme. de Cintré without sufficiently taking into account her French noble background; he places her on a rather elevated pedestal and out of context with the de Bellegarde pride which has such a powerful influence upon her.[38] And at the end of the story the reader's mind at once refers back to this image, for then all Newman has is the memory of Clair de Cintré as a Carmelite nun, divested of all worldly vitality, to place upon the pile of ruined ideals and hopes entertained when he first arrived in Europe.

The important juxtaposition of character and art observed in the first scene, is given added emphasis by the image of a statue in the de Bellegarde mansion which appears twice in the space of a few pages. The first occurrence is detailed when Mrs. Bread takes it upon herself to conduct the American into the living quarters at the Rue de L'Université. She leads Newman upstairs:

> At half its ascent the staircase gave a bend, forming a little platform. In the angle of the wall stood an old indifferent statue of an eighteenth-century nymph, simpering, sallow, and cracked. Here Mrs. Bread stopped ... (B,545).

At this point she expresses the hope that he will marry Mme. de Cintré as soon as possible and warns him of the fear the de Bellegardes are capable of inspiring.

The statue next appears when Newman is greeted by the de Bellegardes on the same platform, just before the ball :

> The marquise and her two daughters were at the top of the staircase, where the sallow old nymph in the angle peeped out from a bower of plants. Madame de Bellegarde, in purple and fine laces, looked like an old lady painted by Vandyke; Madame de Cintré was dressed in white (B,650).

The equation of the marquise, and indeed the whole de Bellegarde clan with the sallow nymph, is here emphasised. For one, they are both imaged as works of art. Dressed in all her finery, which covers her true character, Mme. de Bellegarde seems like a beautiful Vandyke. In reality, as the story shows, she and her family are as indifferent to standards of honour as the statue is indifferent as a work of art. They lived walled in from the realities of life and have an outlook and pride as incomplete and cracked as the statue's form. Fittingly, Mme. de Cintré is dressed in white, the colour of sacrifice, for it is from the time of this ball that her own and Newman's feelings begin to be sacrificed to the de Bellegarde pride. Her proximity with the family to the cracked nymph at this point suggests the incomplete system of honour which will shatter her dreams of freedom and happiness.

These three uses of art imagery discussed above, display James's growing awareness of how the fact that he was employing an art form to display certain truths, could be used in his settings; through art imagery he is able to point specific important symbolic correspondences, thus enriching the tone and scope of significant scenes.

This technique is brought to superb fruition in The Golden Bowl where the bowl, itself a work of art, is associated with each of the characters in turn, its symbolism having so many facets and layers that it is applicable to each. Coupled with Mr. Verver's art collector's zeal, and the finely tuned 'artistic' sensibilities of the characters, art in that novel forms a major part of its meaning.[39] In The American, although these art references are reinforced by further allusions,[40] they do not begin to approach the complexity or subtlety of the art imagery in James's final completed novels.

Newman's inability to relate meaningfully to the art of Europe is occasioned largely by his overriding American sense of the pervasive

power of money. When Newman is first introduced, the reader is told that

> Christopher Newman's sole aim in life had been to make money; what he had been placed in the world for was, to his own perception, simply to wrest a fortune, the bigger the better, from defiant opportunity. The idea completely filled his horizon and satisfied his imagination (A,660).

In short, the idea of money so closes off the American's vision that he cannot see how the lure of his fortune could possibly be insufficient for the de Bellegardes. As the humorously shallow Tristam remarks to Newman, '"You have what must be the most agreeable thing in the world, the consciousness of having bought your pleasure beforehand and paid for it"'(A,666). The irony of this remark is that Newman does not get any pleasure in the story, and he pays dearly for what he doesn't get, in terms of pain and suffering. The mistake he makes is to think that the ancient de Bellegarde pride can be bought with new American money.

Speaking of getting a wife at the beginning of the story, he says, '"I want to possess, in a word, the best article in the market"'(A,668), and his whole attitude is summed up when James writes:

> The world to his sense was a great bazaar, where one might stroll about and purchase handsome things, but he was no more conscious, individually, of social pressure than he admitted the existence of such a thing as an obligatory purchase (B,24).

The complacency conveyed by this image is precisely that which smooths over any finer intuitions he might have had about the real feelings of the de Bellegardes. In his commercial-mindedness he little realises that while social pressure can have little effect on him as an individual, that felt by others might well squeeze him, should he attempt to associate himself with their way of life.

While forming the engagement he talks in terms of a 'contract' (B,473), and at the dying Valentin's bedside he can still expostulate: '"it's about the meanest winding-up of a man's affairs that I can imagine!"' (C,166). As a result, because he is so orientated towards the commercial ethic, he can only think in terms of business images and cannot understand why he is finally rejected by the de Bellegardes. Only after his pain has settled, can he reflect that 'a man might be too commercial'(C,539).

He never, however, can admit that he might have been at fault in this regard, for, 'if he had been too commercial, he was ready to forget it' (C,539).

The references to commerce and money in The American, then, form a clearly defined cohesive element. This pattern does, however, have certain limitations. Confined as the allusions mainly are to Newman, they lack the coruscating surfaces which this type of imagery has, for example, in The Wings of the Dove.[41] In that novel each character has a different attitude to money.

In The American, for the first time in the novels, water imagery appears often enough to be taken note of as denoting the quality of society and the relationship between characters. The initial image is both graphic and active, its immediacy springing to the reader's notice. It occurs when Newman walks into the presence of the de Bellegardes on his first visit: 'For a moment he felt as if he had plunged into some medium as deep as the ocean, and as if he must exert himself to keep from sinking' (B,158). Once Newman takes the plunge into European society, immediately he realises that he is connected, in the icy fluidity of that society, in relationships which vest him and others with rights and duties to those around them. His sense of wrong stems from a feeling that the de Bellegardes have acted in defiance of their social duty towards him.

As Valentin recommends, Newman at first allows himself to 'float with the current' (B,310), having been 'launched' (B,321) by Mrs. Tristram. Despite the fact that Newman feels himself to be in the same medium as Mme. de Cintré, Mrs. Tristram tells him, and there is great truth in her words, that he '"will never begin to know through what a strange sea of feeling she passed before she accepted him"'(B,322). The implication in Mrs. Tristram's words is that Newman is making the mistake of thinking that through mere presence the nature of the de Bellegarde pride will become clear to him and that he will never be able to understand the motivations of European nobility. The American is deceived into believing that Mme. de Cintre's openness is a quality which sets her apart from the rest of her family. But he forgets, unfortunately, that her being 'as frank as flowing water' (B,169) means, to continue the metaphor, that she can be easily restricted by the icy hardness of her relations. He only realises the extent of their influence over her when she recalls his first impression of their society by saying to him, having announced her decision to become a nun, that she is '"as cold as that

flowing river"' (C,173). In fact, the ice over the surface of the de Bellegarde circle, which has frozen Newman out, is so thick that even with all the weight of the dead Marquis's note behind him, he cannot crack it. He threatens Urbaine de Bellegarde with its disclosure: 'The marquis almost succeeded in looking untroubled; the breaking up of the ice in his handsome countenance could not come to pass in a moment'. (C,300). Even Mrs. Bread is affected by the motion of the noble family's society; she has lived so long on the periphery of the medium which contains them that 'her face ... looked as hopelessly blank as the tide-smoothed sea-sand ... '(C,297).

What this water imagery stresses, therefore, is that each person in society is involved in a series of relationships with the people around him:: in other words that society is compounded of a series of inter-dependencies which, for the smooth flow of that group, must consist in an easy give-and-take. The rigidity of the de Bellegardes prevents this, causing Newman's hurt and rejection. This pattern of imagery, then, goes a long way towards explaining not only how, but also why Newman is finally unsuccessful in becoming a part of European noble society. As such, it fulfils a useful function. It does not, however, have anything like the complexity of its counterpart in, for example, The Golden Bowl.[42] In that novel, this type of imagery not only provides a picture of society, but also marks and serves as a comment upon the actions of characters at certain stages within the novel's progress.[43]

While one quality of the world of The American is conveyed by water imagery, another facet is illustrated by the cluster of images centering around nature. Throughout the work, this image-pattern serves as one end of a scale on which to measure how far a character or situation has departed, through social pressure, from the state naturally expected of it. Hence, Valentin, the most vital and human of the de Bellegardes, is 'the flower of an ancient stem' (B,165), whereas in Mme. de Cintré, Newman wonders where 'in so exquisite a compound, nature and art showed their dividing line' (B,317). As the novel demonstrates, the line is thin and sometimes crookedly drawn in Mme. de Cintré: her natural character is frank and open, but, coerced by her family, she is turned into a filtered, consciously structured person, representing, in many ways, the formality of a work of art.

The conflict between Mme. de Cintré's natural character and the strictures she is forced to endure are suggested in the scene where

Newman first proposes. He has offered himself and his fortune:

> Madame de Cintré walked some distance away and paused before a great plant, an azalea, which was flourishing in a porcelain tub before her window. She plucked off one of the flowers, and twisting it in her fingers, retraced her steps (B,320).

Madame de Cintré's action here points towards not only the turbulent emotions of the moment, but also looks forward to the point at which her natural character will be plucked and twisted into the form desired by her family.

Newman, on the other hand, blind to the all-encompassing influence which the de Bellegardes wield over the woman he desires to marry, sees her in terms of the most romantic and expansive natural images imaginable. These images show his complete oblivion of her smallness in relation to the might of the pride and tradition in her background. Her face has for him 'a range of expression as delightfully vast as the wind-streaked, cloud-flecked distance on a Western prairie' (B,323), and he has as little wish to hurry her 'than he would have had to hurry a golden sunrise' (B,545). The realisation of how wrong he has been, consequently comes as a very great shock to Newman. In fact, the blighting influence which her relations have on one of such 'superb white flowers' (C,296), is but a repetition of how the old Marquis was killed. Mrs. Bread says Madame de Bellegarde killed him with a look which '"was like a frost on flowers"'(C,310), thereby picking up, incidentally, the element of coldness present in the water images.

Here then, in the allusions to the natural world, is a pattern of images carefully and consistently used both for the purposes of characterisation and for development of theme. Notably, however, they lack the complexity of the later images of this type. Significantly, James has not yet developed the technique of using an actual natural setting, for example the garden,[44] so as to emphasise repeatedly certain factors in specific scenes within the same novel; The Portrait of a Lady and The Ambassadors exhibit this technique in its most refined form.[45]

The strand of natural imagery is broadened by figures referring to animals, a pattern which illuminates the very instinctive desires to acquire and protect which are at large in the work, in spite of the rigorously maintained form and surface of polite manners. For example, explaining to Newman about his quarrel with Stanislaus in front of Noemie Nioche, Valentin says he couldn't back down because she was watch-

ing, to which the American replies, '"A cat may look at a king ... she's a polecat!"'(C,9). Of Mr. Nioche, Newman says he is '"as poor as a rat..."' (B,465). These two exclamations, apart from accurately summing up M. Nioche and his daughter, both, through their use of highly conventional images, do nothing for the characterisation, apart from suggesting an element of flatness. Since Newman is the central figure in the novel, such flatness does nothing to stimulate added interest in his fate, and must be seen as a flaw in his characterisation. Mrs. Bread too, never the roundest of characters, speaks of herself as being '"still as a mouse"' (C,309), thereby flattening herself even further. James's ability to avoid such conventional usages in the later novels, at once removes a limiting factor in the vitality of his characters.

As in Roderick Hudson, one of the most important themes in The American is that of vision or perception. That the characters should perceive fully the various elements of their world, and how they relate to other people, is central to the latter novel. The story is set in Paris because that city, as Valentin says, '"quickens one's wits, and it ends by teaching one a refinement of observation"'(B,170). It is this 'refinement of observation' which Newman must learn: he must learn to see that not everything can be bought, that some sections of society are impenetrable, that openness and amiability do not necessarily guarantee happiness in personal relations, and that certain social codes of behaviour can cause, through their rigour, unhappiness, withdrawal, and even death. Most importantly, Newman must perceive that not all the people with whom he comes into contact are as open or as candid as himself and Valentin de Bellegarde.

At first, as he looks around Paris, Newman feels that 'this seeing of the world was very pleasant, and he would willingly do a little more of it'(B,29).[46] With his eye 'in which innocence and experience were singularly blended' (A,652), he initially has

> no perception of difficulties ... The complex Parisian world about him seemed a very simple affair, it was an immense, amazing spectacle, but it neither inflamed his imagination nor irritated his curiosity'(A,665).

By the end of the story he is baffled by the many different faces of noble Parisian life, has encountered insuperable difficulties, and has been saddened and angered by the capricious betrayal he has suffered at the hands of the de Bellegardes. The experiences Newman is forced to undergo

make him see more and more the complexity of the European world, and the impersonality of many of its institutions. But the farthest advance in his perception comes when he sees that revenge would be futile and demeaning to himself.. Osborn Andreas explains this development in Newman by writing :

> Revenge forsworn appears in James's fiction as a phenomenon of enlightenment, forbearance unexpectedly presenting itself to the vengeance seeker as more desirable than the sight of the opponent's humiliation.[47]

Significantly, the final action Newman is seen to perform, is one of vision. In Mrs. Tristram's parlour, having cast the old Marquis's death-letter into the fire, 'Newman instinctively turned to see if the little paper was in fact consumed; but there was nothing left of it' (C,544). Right to the end, then, Newman's visual and perceptive faculties are stressed.[48]

A factor which sets The American apart from Roderick Hudson as far as perception is concerned, is that, in contrast with the earlier work, there is irony attached to the theme in The American. Ultimately, it is seen, no matter how much insight Newman might have gained, the actions of the de Bellegardes are so irrational and hidden by the forces of pride and background as to preclude a clear understanding, through perception, of their elements. This illustration of the truth that some human deeds are inexplicable even to the most clear-sighted people, a sophistication of the theme in Roderick Hudson, is accompanied by a comparable advance in the use of eye images, this being the pattern employed to suggest a concern with perception.

In The American, many of the references to eyes are qualified by similes or metaphors which strengthen the dramatic and immediate effect of the image. M. Nioche, complaining to Newman of his daughter's vagaries, shows his 'little white eyes' which 'expanded and glittered for a moment like those of a cat in the dark'(B,645). And when Newman sees Mme. de Cintré for the last time, 'she let her eyes rest on his own, and she let him take her hand; but her eyes looked like two rainy autumn moons ...(C,171). This last image has not only a visual correspondence in shape between the moon and the eyes, but also, for the observer, an intense feeling of cold and distance. Further present is the analogy between rain and tears, while 'autumn' suggests the waning vitality in their relationship. But above all, the image has a

strong synaesthetic quality, combining tactile, visual and emotional impressions, all of which are highly effective in their harmonious grouping. Conveyed in elements which are both particularly applicable, and yet so broad in scope, such a picture shows James beginning to develop the type of mastery over the specific image which is a feature of the final works.[49]

Apart from the more carefully thought out images, The American still contains many of the more limited type which are found in Roderick Hudson.[50] In common with all James's heroines, Mme. de Cintré has 'clear gray eyes ... both gentle and intelligent'(B,160), while Valentin has 'a clear, bright eye' (B,163). Madame de Bellegarde's eyes are 'cold' and 'blue' (B,323), her son Urbain's are 'opaque' (B,325), and Mrs. Bread's eyes are 'soft' and 'lifeless' (B,540). Such images, and there are more,[51] while important in an initial character-sketch, have little dramatic value, being too simply descriptive in conception.

There is a further set of images connected with the theme of vision and perception. Images illustrating the concern with appearance and reality lay stress upon the ability to 'see' clearly. These images centre upon references to masks, clothes and surfaces. But in spite of the importance of these themes, the images in The American do not form a tightly cohesive pattern. They are, for example, noticeably scattered in appearance, although interesting as individual figures. For example, when the full extent of the de Bellegarde's treachery becomes apparent to him, Newman thinks to himself: 'They're a bad lot; they have pulled off the mask'(C,298). This mask is the apparent willingness of the de Bellegardes to please and accept Newman for his money. Consequently, M. de Bellegarde's mask is seen to discolour when Newman reveals his possession of the note (C,424), and Mme. de Cintré's face, when she asserts her intention to enter a convent, is 'as solemn as a tragic mask'(B,318). It is these masks which have deceived Newman from the start, their existence making him realise that a person's face can hide, as well as reveal, their personality. With the de Bellegardes, frighteningly, it seems as if their faces have actually become the masks.

The many careful references to clothes, most of them connected with the de Bellegardes and Europeans, are an extension of the theme which stressed the distance between appearance and reality. The young Marquise de Bellegarde, the most flighty and superficial of that

family, is constantly concerned about her clothes, and at the ball which seals Newman's fate, the clothes of each of the family are described in detail (B,650) so as to emphasise their concern with outer appearances which lulls Newman into a false sense of security. This concern with appearances measures the distance of the de Bellegarde's treachery from their pretence at living as normal members of society. Mrs. Bread, the most quietly natural character in the book, shows the importance of clothing imagery when, at the end, having left her life-long masters the de Bellegardes, Newman offers her a better set of garments than those she has. '"Oh, sir, I am fond of my own clothes"', she replies, (C,413). In other words, she neither wants nor needs any appearances which she feels might hide the honesty of her true self. Although 'flat', she is the one character in the novel who 'most nearly "resembles" herself'(B,541).

Another side to this pattern, which manifests itself in two references, shows the difference between European and American attitudes to surfaces. When Newman is looking for rooms in Paris, the reader is told that 'he had no taste for upholstery ...'(B,155). In short, the American cannot be bothered with an elegant outer appearance, merely for the sake of such an appearance. On the other hand, in Valentin's rooms, he sees that 'here and there was one of those uncomfortable tributes to elegance in which the upholsterer's art, in France, is so prolific' (B,168). Although Valentin is himself a candid person, he is still very much a product of France, and consequently the surfaces of his furniture display his concern with appearances. The other de Bellegardes, to be sure, have so covered their real characters that their surface is impenetrable in its bland smoothness. This imagery of upholstery occurs again in The Portrait of a Lady in relation to Osmond, and will be discussed in the following section of this chapter.

In the canon of James's novels, The American is amongst the most dramatic in the sense that the plot takes a number of unexpected turns. This dramatic nature is given added depth by the images which refer to the drama of Newman's experience. Further, since a play is but the illusion of life, this set of images is related to the theme of appearance and reality; the de Bellegardes do, after all, merely act out the part of accepting Newman as a suitor for Mme. de Cintré.

From the very start, Newman steps back out of business in America, letting his opponent snatch away sixty thousand dollars. As he says,

'"all this took place quite independently of my will, and I sat watching it as if it were a play at the theatre"'(A,662). In fact, throughout the novel, to a large extent, Newman can only watch while his fate is sealed by the actions of the de Bellegardes. But he only realises his involvement in the drama when he is finally destroyed. As James says in the Preface, '... it was important for the effect of my friend's discomfiture that it should take place on a high and lighted stage'.[52] For this reason, most of the dramatic images refer to Newman.

Hearing first of the de Bellegardes's desire to force Mme. de Cintré into another marriage, Newman is amazed :'"it is like something in a play"'(B,157) he says to Mrs. Tristram. And as he becomes more and more fond of Mme. de Cintré, he thinks that 'she was part of the play that he was seeing acted, quite as much as her companions; but how she filled the stage and how much better she did it!'(B,169). Even Noemie Nioche's machinations have dramatic interest, Valentin patronisingly remarking:'"to see this little woman's little drama play itself out, now, is, for me, an intellectual pleasure"'(B,170). Initially, the world of Europe is for Newman a spectacle to sit back and watch and enjoy. With calm objectivity, he listens to the duchess's 'legend', which has for him 'the air of being a bit of amusing dialogue in a play, delivered by a veteran comic actress' (B,653).

Right up to the time when his friend Valentin is killed in the duel, and immediately before his rejection by Mme. de Cintré, Newman imagines he is watching a play, the detached observer. On the former occasion, he says to Valentin on the eve of the match: '"Your duel itself is a scene ... that's all it is! It's a wretched theatrical affair. Why don't you take a band of music with you outright?"'(C,11). This image shows particularly Newman's perception that the kind of honour involved in Valentin's duel is empty, the mere form of an out-dated custom. It is only when he finds himself irretrievably enmeshed in the affairs of Europe, and realising that he has in reality been part of a dramatic action drawing inexorably to its conclusion, that, gazing at the dying Valentin, Newman feels he is 'playing a part, mechanically, in a lugubrious comedy'(C,167). Seeing that he is now part of the drama, adds immensely to Newman's growth in perception. Sadly, having perceived this, it is too late for such perception to be of any use. Earlier in the story he might well have been able to take action aimed at avoiding some of the hurt he suffers.

These images of the drama Newman encounters in Europe, add significantly to the themes of vision and perception, and of appearance and reality. The pattern they form is a significant advance in their use as against that in Roderick Hudson.[53] They are, in fact, the first noteworthy set of drama and theatre images in the novels, and as such they look forward to the technically accomplished and developmental use to which they are put in The Golden Bowl.[54]

One particular image in The American deserves mention because of its reappearance in The Portrait of a Lady and again in The Golden Bowl. The young Madame de Bellegarde reminds Newman of'a painted perfume bottle with a crack in it' (B,648). The image conveys the lady's incompleteness under a pretty surface, as well as her inadequacy in fulfilling the role even of a 'sweet' person. This is the only image of its kind in The American, and it is but loosely related to the theme of appearance and reality. In The Portrait of a Lady, Mme. Merle's cracked cup presents an image of a similar nature, but is more carefully integrated into the presentation of her character and the themes which surround her. In The Golden Bowl, the image becomes a symbol in the cracked, gilt-crystal bowl, and has an all pervasive frame of reference in that work.[55]

The American is threaded through with a number of other image patterns. These include architectural, musical, literary, religious and military images.[56] In each of these patterns, the references are either so disparate, or so stereotyped and repetitive, as to make detailed discussion unnecessary.

Taken together, then, the images in The American show a defter touch than in Roderick Hudson, although there is still a noticeable dearth of the many-faceted image-patterns of the late works, as well as an inability to use imagery in a significant manner to show development. James himself best sums up the quality of imagery in The American when he writes of

> the season of images so free and confident and ready that they brush questions aside and disport themselves, like the artless schoolboys of Gray's beautiful Ode, in all the ecstasy of the ignorance attending them.[57]

CHAPTER TWO

PART TWO

Generally regarded as the most important work of James's middle phase, The Portrait of a Lady was published in 1880. It marks the height in his career as a novelist up to this point, and looks forward in many of its themes, to the final three completed works which signal the end of his novel writing. James, in this book, for the first time achieves a close correspondence between life and his art. Gone are the rather forced passages on life and art of Roderick Hudson, and the melodramatic romanticism of The American. The refinement which James's sensibility has undergone since the writing of the latter, produces a wealth of closely interwoven detail from which emerges an intense impression of life. James seems to feel this when he writes in his Preface for the New York Edition:

> Recognising so promptly the one measure of the worth of a given subject, the question about it that, rightly answered, disposes of all others - is it valid, in a word, is it genuine, is it sincere, the result of some direct impression or perception of life?[58]

The answer for The Portrait is a very definite affirmative. How tightly the 'balloon of experience'[59] is tied to the earth in this novel, may be seen from the fact that while the ethical conduct of the characters is questionable, and is meant to be, the morality of the work as a representation of life is indisputable. Rarely does the reader feel that a character is acting inconsistently, or that a scene is contrived. As such, the work bears examination under one of James's most carefully formulated criteria for the quality of a work of art. He writes :

> There is, I think, no more nutritive or suggestive truth in this connection, than that of the perfect dependence of the 'moral' sense of a work of art on the amount of felt life concerned in producing it. The question comes back thus, obviously, to the kind and the degree of the artist's prime sensibility, which is the soil out of which his subject springs. The quality and capacity of that soil, its ability to 'grow' with due freshness and straightness any vision of life, represents, strongly or weakly, the projected morality.[60]

And since it is the images which convey the 'vision of life', The Portrait's image-patterns assume a position of great importance in this study.

In The Portrait of a Lady, Isabel's life is the centre of focus

and her progress in the novel provides the interest. At the outset, her conception of life is untainted by mixture with the real world's harshness. Up to the opening of the story, Isabel has simply chosen not to recognise the outer world. Her aunt, Mrs. Touchett, finds her secluded in an Albany study :

> she (Isabel) had no wish to look out, for this would have interfered with her theory that there was a strange, unseen place on the other side,- a place which became, to the child's imagination, according to its different moods, a region of delight or of terror (X,597).[61]

From this point, prompted by her aunt, Isabel chooses to see life for herself. Curiously, she loves the house in which she has been secluded for she says '"A great many people have died here; the place has been full of life"'. Her aunt then asks, '"Is that what you call being full of life"', and she replies, '"I mean full of experience - of people's feelings and sorrows"' (X,599). It is curious she should like the house for such a reason, because from this stage forward she conceives of life in a much more romantic and unreal manner. Only at the very end does she return to this formulation realising that the experience of her life has been full of 'feelings and sorrows'.

With her 'immense curiosity about life' as well as her own 'great fund of life' (X,603), she has at first an expansive and romantic outlook embracing 'great crowds and large stretches of country, ... revolutions and wars' (X,603). Lacking the particularity of deep personal experience, she thinks she should begin 'by getting a general impression of life' (X,743). Isabel, at this moment in her career, wishes to stand back and view life objectively; participation is odious to her. Ralph Touchett says to her :

> "You want to see life, as the young men say"
> "I don't think I want to see it as the young men want to see it, but I do want to look about me".
> "You want to drain the cup of experience".
> "No, I don't wish to touch the cup of experience. It's a poisoned drink! I only want to see for myself".
> "You want to see but not to feel".
> "I don't think that if one is a sentient being one can make the distinction" (Y,184).

In this exchange, despite Isabel's last sentence, what emerges is her desire for vicarious uninvolvement, an objectivity which she naïvely

equates with real experiential contact. Ironically, at the end of the novel, she realises that true insight stems from a deep involvement with all life's forces; in short, that vision is life. That realisation is very different from the easy assumptions made in her talk with Ralph Touchett. As her existence becomes more complicated, more detailed and more personal, her 'quickened consciousness of the pleasantness of life' (X,750), by impinging on the lives of others, is modified, so that very immediate pain is included in the range of her experience.

She is bowled over by Osmond, for whom life is ambition (Y,456), and is taken in by Madame Merle who lives by appearances. These two, but particularly Osmond, realise that Isabel's nature seeks the beautiful untouched by the disfiguring hand of life. Madame Merle presents such an appearance, and Osmond, totally withdrawn from life, while courting, uses intentionally picturesque images which he knows will please Isabel.

Speaking of their prospects together,he says,

> "My dear girl, I can't tell you how life seems to stretch there before us, - what a long summer afternoon awaits us. It's the latter half of an Italian day, with a golden haze, and the shadows just lengthening, and that divine delicacy in the light, the air, the landscape, which I have loved all my life, and which you love to-day' (Y,823).

Osmond's taking advantage of Isabel's weakness here is patently unscrupulous. As Naomi Lebowitz comments, 'in James, the immortality of the picturesque vision matches the immorality of the romantic vision when it is isolated from the real'.[62] The empty romanticism of Osmond's image clearly isolates it from the real; the rest of Isabel's life demonstrates the truth of this statement.

Having trapped her with images such as these, the hurt he deals Isabel through his selfish dilettantism once they are married, is all the more painful. Knowing his and Madame Merle's treachery, Isabel feels suddenly that life is very much part of her, and no longer something to be gazed at from a distance. As she arrives in England to see the dying Ralph, she realises that, 'deep in her soul - deeper than any appetite for renunciation - was the sense that life would be her business for a long time to come' (Z,752). And it is the half-dead Ralph who provides the final image of just how close Isabel is

to the vicissitudes of experience. Her feelings are involved at close hand, and not her vision at a distance. He says:

> "You wanted to look at life for yourself, but you were not allowed; you were punished for your wish. You were ground in the very mill of the conventional!" (Z,761).

Isabel has indeed, at this juncture, come a long way from her first romantic ideas of life.

Isabel's changing attitude to life is very important in terms of James's attitude to art. His central figure is that of a young girl trying to shape her destiny into a form which pleases her. As such, she is very much an artist figure. Through her, the reader sees that a meaningful life, and therefore a significant work of art, can only be shaped if rooted firmly in the soil of human experience, both bad and good, sad and happy. The novel's progress therefore affirms the 'morality' James speaks of in his Preface, while the imagery anchors it to the stuff of life.

A large part of The Portrait's imagery is concerned with the world of nature. Such images used in connection with people either suggest their naturalness, or measure their distance from it; the implication of growth, or its absence, is often present.[63] For example, Isabel's fresh, stimulating qualities are vividly conveyed when Mrs. Touchett says early in the work that Isabel is '"as good as a summer rain, any day"' (X,607). But after she has been married some time to Osmond, James writes that 'the years had touched her only to enrich her; the flower of her youth had not faded; it only hung more quietly on its stem' (Z,65). Pansy, it seems certain, with her name, will always remain a sweet 'convent-flower' (Y,467). In reality, however, she is a dispensable product of Osmond's nurture. This is suggested when Ned Rosier expresses his liking for her for the first time : 'If he had not spoken she would have waited forever; but when the word came she dropped like the peach from the shaken tree' (Z,68).

The pattern is continued when Ralph images Miss Stackpole's relationship with Goodwood as that of a thorn with a rose (Y,19), while Mrs. Touchett's dry acerbity affords no ground for anything fruitful to grow: 'Nothing tender, nothing sympathetic, had ever had a chance to fasten upon it, - no wind-sown blossom, no familiar moss' (Y,356). And Madame Merle, the character whose natural personality has been most carefully covered, Isabel perceives to be a 'tolerably

artificial bloom' (Y,807). In a woman whose social, outer shell is her all, natural imagery, measuring her falsity, is highly effective in the particular context.

Madame Merle, discussing bitterly with Osmond their former relationship, exclaims, 'with a sudden outbreak of passion, a burst of summer thunder in a clear sky, "the matter is that I would give my right hand to be able to weep, and that I can't!"' (Z,497).[64] Sudden anger in a temperament usually so inscrutable that, like a clear sky, nothing is discernable, and the association of tears with the hint of rain, all go to make up an image peculiarly suited to the exact context. The surprise conveyed by the image, together with its sound quality, adds immensely to its richness. Noticeably too, it has a spontaneity which is wholly lacking in the natural imagery of Roderick Hudson or The American. In relation to this, their brand of natural imagery is perceptibly flat. In general, the type of originality in this image of Madame Merle is characteristic of the pattern in The Portrait, and shows a marked advance in technique over the two earlier works discussed.

One of the most important facets of natural imagery in The Portrait of a Lady is the use made of the garden image and setting. Isabel's story begins and ends in the park at Gardencourt, Mr. Touchett's English country home, the name of which is highly expressive, suggesting that 'this is the locale in the book which most exudes a mood of mellow reciprocity between the civilised and the natural'.[65] In the opening scene, with Isabel's innocence, the setting is Edenic, its tranquillity and quiet natural charm giving an atmosphere of peace and simplicity from which the young girl moves forward into the complications of her later entanglements.

The easy calm of this setting mirrors Isabel's feelings about her own nature which she images as having a romantic, picturesque quality. But in spite of being reminded

> that there were other gardens in the world than those of her virginal soul, and that there were moreover a great many places that were not gardens at all, only dusky, pestiferous tracts, planted with ugliness and misery (X,742).

in her naïvete she imagines herself to be inviolable. She little realises that something as unprotected as a garden-like 'virginal soul' is extremely vulnerable to hurt and corruption. For, as Miss Lebowitz remarks, 'though gardens in James hold the promise of Edens

revisited, they hold the serpent of romantic temptation as well'.[66]

It is in the park at Gardencourt that Isabel hears Lord Warburton's vain proposal (Y,6), and it is in the garden at Osmond's villa that she really falls in love with his beautiful surroundings (Y,472). When Ralph warns her of the mistake she is making in marrying Osmond, he does so in a garden (Y,820). In all these scenes, the open, natural, uncomplicated setting emphasises that they are moments of great importance in Isabel's life where certain issues, unemcumbered by complicated backgrounds, are being laid bare; further, that their resolution requires clear, simple thinking, and the type of decision, which, naturally and candidly taken, will lead to the correct choice.

It is only in the great chapter where Isabel contemplates through the night her life with Osmond, (Ch. XLI, Z,225) that she realises how small the expansive 'garden of her soul' has become, and sees just how completely Osmond has appropriated her spirit. She faces the fact, with horror, that

> her mind was to be his, - attached to his own like a small garden plot to a deer-park. He would rake the soil gently, and water the flowers; he would weed the beds and gather an occasional nosegay. It would be a pretty piece of property for a proprietor already far-reaching (Z,231).

The complacency and easy assumption of ownership which Isabel here images, suggest strikingly how Osmond is to put her to use for his own gratification.

The final scene with Isabel is set once again in the garden at Mr. Touchett's house (Z,766). There, Caspar Goodwood tempts her to leave Osmond and go with him. He kisses her and she flees away from him to the house, and ultimately back to her husband. By this stage the garden has become a place where she goes to disburden herself of sorrows and contemplate her unhappy future. Innocence and simplicity have gone from her life, yet she does not succumb to the final temptation. Renouncing both the garden and the lure, she affirms her realisation of her earlier empty romanticism, so closely associated with the garden, demonstrates her new ability to decide correctly, and thereby shows the real wisdom she has gained through suffering.

This careful reiteration of the garden image serves not only as a useful frame for the work, but also as a unifying factor thoughout. With an obvious analogue in the Eden story, the work's scope both in

time and theme, and Isabel's quest for 'freedom', with its resultant disappointment take on something of an archetypal character. Neither Roderick Hudson nor The American contain such a dramatically and symbolically effective usage of imagery.

As in these previous two novels, nature imagery receives an extension through the pattern dealing with animals. In The Portrait, the references to animals are rather scattered, but, being carefully considered, are effective in each case. They certainly escape the conventionality attaching to them in the previous two works discussed. The Countess Gemini is especially well characterised through the recurrent image of a tropical bird[67](Y,466). Not only her flightiness, but also her rich clothing and animal vulgarity are all conveyed in the image. Her stupidity and inconsequentiality are established immediately the image appears. The impact is great:

> She was thin and dark, and not at all pretty, having features that suggested some tropical bird, - a long, beak-like nose, a small, quickly-moving eye, and a mouth and chin that receded extremely ... The soft brilliancy of her toilet had the look of shimmering plumage, and her attitudes were light and sudden, like those of a creature that perched upon twigs (Y,466).

Although the Countess remains essentially flat, the charm and humour of this image help to maintain interest in a character who has little to do with the plot, apart from revealing to Isabel the extent of Madame Merle's machinations. As such, she stands alone as a fine example of James's maturing ability, up to this point, to use animal imagery in order to suggest a person's character. She has only to be compared to Mrs. Bread in The American, who fulfils much the same function, for it to be seen how James has learnt to animate even his flat characters.

Other particles of this image-cluster concerning animals also have a suggestive power absent from their earlier counterparts in James's initial two novels. Henrietta provides one such image when she says to Isabel, who is sending everybody away with Ralph, that she (Isabel) is like '"the stricken deer, seeking the innermost shade"(Z,485).

The figure conveys a fine sense of Isabel's pain, terror and helplessness, together with the darkening prospect which looms before her. No longer is Isabel the confident young girl choosing her destiny;

now she is the instinctive animal withdrawing in fear. The image is caught up again when Goodwood presses his final proposal at the very end, and Isabel moans 'like a creature in pain'(Z,769).

The force of Osmond's characterisation as 'dangerous as a poisoned rat' (Z,758), is accurate and direct, and with 'his egotism ... hidden, like a serpent in a bank of flowers'(Z,230), he becomes a very threatening animal indeed. The temptation motif, seen in the garden imagery, is here recalled in the serpent reference, giving an indication of how James is beginning to knit his image patterns together. His ability to do this reaches its zenith in The Ambassadors where, in the Lambinet episode, he achieves a total synthesis of imagery in the climactic scene of the work.[68]

One of Isabel's most important characteristics is her capacity for development, and much of the story's interest lies in the way she is shaped by experience. In this respect she stands apart from all the other characters, except perhaps Henrietta, none of whom is seen to change. The impression of her ductility and ability to develop is conveyed by her association with water imagery. At the very start, having just arrived in England, she feels the need sometimes to check herself ' in the current of that easy eagerness on which she had lately been floating '(X,742) while for Mr. Touchett the newly arrived cousin is 'as agreeable to his sense as the sound of flowing water' (X,744). In these two images, Isabel's candid naturalness, together with her rather transparent and complacent acceptance of the direction in which she is travelling, are suggested. The combination of these qualities causes her great misery later in the novel.

Isabel's easy, liquid personality is placed in sharp contrast with Mrs. Touchett's 'dryness' that sets the former's 'moral fountains flowing'. The extent to which Mrs. Touchett has dried out her own character, is emphasised when she is unable to cry at the death either of her husband or son. Even Mme. Merle can no longer cry, Osmond having long since diverted the stream of life in her. Bitterly she says to him '"You have not only dried up my tears; you have dried up my soul"' (Z,498).

Osmond has the same effect on Isabel; she knows that marriage to him has stifled her emotions :

> she made no secret of the fact that the fountain of sentiment, thanks to having been rather violently tapped at one period, did not flow quite so freely as of yore(Y,336).

Isabel is continually imaged as afloat in a swifty-flowing current, and Henrietta Stackpole, noticing the alteration England has wrought in her friend, worriedly tells Ralph that his cousin is '"changing every day; she is drifting away, - right out to sea"'(Y,17). Here the reporter shows her clear understanding of how Isabel's sheltered, directed existence will soon spill out into the turbulent, complex sea of life. Isabel's unawareness of the direction of her drift is one of the reasons for her later foundering in the sea of life. When Miss Stackpole asks her if she knows where she is drifting, she complacently replies,'"No, I haven't the least idea, and I find it very pleasant not to know"'(Y,193). Having made her mistake and been channelled into a stagnant relationship with Osmond, she looks enviously at Warburton, and men in general, 'who are always free to plunge into the healing waters of action' (Z,76). The dull calmness of life with Osmond is broken by the 'high-surging wave' (Z,495) of realisation that Mme. Merle arranged her marriage. Releasing herself further by resolving to go to the dying Ralph in spite of Osmond's prohibition, she becomes aware of herself as, 'far afloat on a sea of wonder and pain' (Z,634). And when she has seen Ralph to his grave, suddenly she wishes that her restless motion in the rough waters of life would end too. 'To cease utterly, to give it all up, and not know anything more, -this idea was as sweet as the vision of a cool bath, in a marble tank, in a darkened chamber, in a hot land'(Z,752). In this image Isabel shows a deeply felt need for isolation, protection, comfort and ease. Noticeably though, she expresses no desire to be free from the element of her choice. By this stage she already feels she must face the consequences of her actions. This aspect of the simile looks forward to her return to Osmond at the end of the novel. The acute feeling conveyed by the image stems from its strong appeal to the senses, the reader feeling the image as deeply as Isabel feels the emotion. This figure of the bath, fine as it is here, reaches it apotheosis when the Prince in The Golden Bowl images himself as in a scented bath (XXIII,11). Nevertheless, the relative complexity of the image in The Portrait of a Lady is a distinct advance on any metaphoric picture of the earlier two works discussed, and looks forward, as mentioned, to The Golden Bowl.[69]

At the very end of The Portrait of a Lady, Isabel finally realises that she has been spewed out into the ocean of life. The world seems 'to take the form of a mighty sea, where she floated in fathomless

waters', while Caspar Goodwood's assistance comes 'in a rushing torrent'. But in the very act of sinking under the burden of her lot in life, she shows something of her earlier endearing spirit: 'she seemed to beat with her feet, in order to catch herself, to feel something to rest on' (Z,769). The purchase she gains is a realisation that return to Osmond is the only course which will give her inner stability and self-respect. She has no hesitation, now, in taking such a course.

This set of water images, then, is very carefully arranged to coincide with certain stages of Isabel's progress. The pictures mirror at places, not only her speed of progression, but even convey a sense of her moods, ranging from frustration to temper. They therefore form a springboard for James's use of them in The Ambassadors and The Golden Bowl, where their function, although more complex, is seen to be a direct outgrowth of their appearance in The Portrait.

The complement to water imagery in The Portrait of a Lady is that concerned with ships and boats, a series of references which emphasises the journey motif, most important in relation to Isabel. While, however, in The Ambassadors, Strether's journey of consciousness is carefully detailed at each of its stages both by water and by boat imagery,[70] in The Portrait of a Lady, Isabel's progress lacks the illumination of this second strand. To be sure, she is seen to sail, but the imagery carries neither a strongly emphasised theme of development, nor of progress in a specific direction.

Ralph Touchett initiates the pattern when he says he would 'like to put a little wind' (Y,203)in Isabel's sails by giving her money, and continues it when he assures his mother that Gilbert Osmond will not slow down his cousin's progress. As he says, '"she may have slackened speed for an hour, but before we know it she will be steaming away again"' (Y,624). This last image suggests Ralph's understanding of Isabel's basic motivation. In the first image he talks of sails, and in the second of steam power, the point being that Isabel is now free to move around at will 'under her own steam', as it were.

Isabel herself sees that Goodwood's proposal of marriage might one day be congenial to her as a refuge on her restless voyage - 'a clear and quiet harbour, inclosed by a fine granite breakwater'(Y,358). And Ralph, with nowhere to go in life, and no real vital force to sustain him, drifts about, 'like a rudderless vessel in a rocky stream ...'(Y,816). Even Isabel's final meeting with Caspar Goodwood before her marriage is like 'a collision between vessels in broad daylight. There had

been no mist, no hidden current, to excuse it, and she herself had only wished to steer skilfully! (Z,361).

In the final scene at Gardencourt, Isabel, desiring only peace, quiet and tranquillity, sees to her dismay that Goodwood, instead of curbing his advance 'had only let out sail' in his quest for her hand (Z,767).[71]

It emerges therefore, as mentioned, that a pattern of images which could, and profitably does in the later novels, carry the themes of progress and development, in this instance is merely interestingly illustrative: James's technique in this respect still requires some time to mature.

Although this particular set of images does not emphasise the journey motif, it should be noted that the many journeys actually made by the characters embracing America, England and Europe, do hold before the reader's attention the notion that a journey in life is at the centre of the novel.

And one of the most important points about Isabel's journey is that it is involved with a growth in her perceptive faculty. Whereas at the start she is happily blind to the nature of life, at the end her misery is balanced by a clear perception of what position she occupies, where her duties lie, and exactly who she is. This deepening of Isabel's vision is framed by two references to the ghost at Gardencourt. When she first arrives, Ralph tells her about it, and she asks to be shown where it haunts. Ralph replies:

> "I might show it to you, but you would never see it. The privilege isn't given to everyone; it's not enviable. It has never been seen by a young, happy, innocent person like you. You must have suffered first, have suffered greatly, have gained some miserable knowledge. In that way your eyes are opened to it"(X,611).

The awful knowledge which Isabel gains is that she cannot shape her own destiny, and that she is fated to live miserably with the man of her choice. Finally, at the moment of Ralph's death, she sees his ghost in the dark at her bedside (Z,762). That her perception has deepened, is emphasised by the fact that she can now see, in the absence of light,and even with her eyes closed. Vision has become for her a far deeper and more incisive instrument than her original easy glances at the world had denoted. (Strether's looking at Chad's balcony at the beginning and end of The Ambassadors, is the counterpart of this

image-set in the late novels).[72]

Every one of the characters is concerned with sight and insight, a fact stressed by the inclusion of an eye description in each person's initial portrait.[73] Old Mr. Touchett's eye, mellowed by age and experience, is 'humorous' (X,586); Caspar Goodwood's vigour is conveyed by 'a blue eye of remarkable fixedness' (X,604); the quiet, harmless Misses Molyneux have, to Isabel's mind, 'the kindest eyes in the world' (X,756); Ralph Touchett looks at Henrietta Stackpole's eyes and thinks that 'there was something in their character that reminded him of large, polished buttons; he seemed to see the reflection of surrounding objects upon the pupil' (X,761). That nothing of real importance penetrates Henrietta's eyes as this image suggests, is true initially, but later in the story she does return to look at her Correggio, showing that she has developed some sort of artistic appreciation, itself an indication of a deepening perception.

Madame Merle has 'a small gray eye, with a great deal of light in it, - an eye incapable of dullness, and, according to some people, incapable of tears ...'(Y,199). The description of Osmond's eyes is very revealing as far as his character is concerned. They are 'luminous' and 'intelligent', with 'the nature of the observer as well as the dreamer': they show that Osmond studies effect, but 'only within well-chosen limits, and that in so far as he sought it he found it'(Y,450). Like the rest of his attributes, Osmond's vision is only used for his self-gratification.

When compared with the flat descriptiveness of the eye images in Roderick Hudson, it is possible to see how James has used this device to broaden the reader's grasp of his characters by a sensitively directed focus upon the ability to see. Their importance, in James's scale of characters who perceive clearly, is also carefully established.

In spite of the stress laid upon the eyes of all the characters, Isabel's vision remains the central concern. At Gardencourt, she looks at everything 'with an eye that denoted quick perception' (X,592), and even at the beginning of her career in the novel, she pays 'the penalty of having given undue encouragement to the faculty of seeing without judging' (X,601). It is this last failing for which Isabel, at the very end of the work, must take responsibility. And it is because she is mature enough to accept the moral responsibility of her choice, that she returns to Osmond. With her 'larger perception of surrounding facts' and a 'finer mind than most of the persons among whom her lot was cast' (X,740), the tragedy of Isabel's fate is deepened. But despite the

error of judgement she makes, thinking about her marriage, she is able to accept the responsibility: 'It was impossible to pretend that she had not acted with her eyes open; if ever a girl was a free agent, she had been' (Z,215). The irony of the perception theme in relation to Isabel is that she sees only pleasant things at the beginning of the work with her innocent view, and when her eyes have been really opened, then she sees only a world full of bitterness and pain stretching into the future.

Closely allied to the theme of perception, and a natural extension of it, is that of appearance and reality. It is Isabel's lot in the novel to suffer the experience which will allow her to pierce through the illusions she believe in and see the reality of people and situations. Her early naïvete is largely accountable for her later failure of happiness. Her talk with Madame Merle about a person's 'things', provides the central image here.[74] Isabel says she cares nothing for Goodwood's house, to which Madame Merle replies:

> "That is very crude of you. When you have lived as long as I, you will see that every human being has his shell,[75] and that you must take the shell into account. By the shell I mean the whole envelope of circumstances ... I have a great respect for things. One's self- for other people - is one's expression of one's self; and one's house, one's clothes, the books one reads the company one keeps, - these things are all expressive"(Y,344).

Isabel, on the other hand, asserts that she cares nothing for outer appearances.

It is because Isabel disregards the 'envelope of circumstances' around Osmond that she makes the mistake of marrying him. She takes no account of his house, his eyes, his daughter or his works of art, all of which are highly indicative of his true character. Isabel also badly misjudges what Madame Merle's smooth surface denotes. She realises the older woman is 'deep'(Y,338), and even after Madame Merle tells her that she has been 'chipped and cracked' (Y,339), Isabel only sees the abysses in Osmond's former mistress after a great deal of suffering.

Seated at tea with Osmond for the first time, she realises that 'the place, the occasion, the combination of people, signified more than lay on the surface', but in spite of this realisation, she makes no effort to pierce the surface - 'she would not try to understand' (Y,467).

But as her marriage begins to fail, Isabel not only plumbs the depths of Osmond's character, but also begins to realise the importance

of erecting screens and putting forth appearances in order to hide certain facts. For Ralph she 'would always wear a mask' (Z,80), and from Madame Merle she learns the advantage of 'having made one's self a firm surface, a sort of corselet of silver ...'(Z,213). Now she sees 'the whole man', whereas before she had'mistaken a part for the whole' (Z,228) and as a result, 'in their talk she was perpetually hanging out curtains and arranging screens' (Z,233). Isabel defends herself against Osmond's 'seeming' with appearances of her own, the result being that real contact between the two is impossible. This is objectively symbolised by Isabel's journey to England and flight from Osmond. But her ultimate advance in perception comes when she sees that fending off Osmond by appearances of her own and thus keeping her distance from him, is a denial of her responsibility. Her only course is therefore to return, and this she does.

In The Portrait of a Lady the theme of appearance and reality is highly complex, appearance not merely being decried and reality sought, as they were, for example in Roderick Hudson. Here, both are seen to have their good and evil aspect; such ambiguity, appearing thinly at this point, is strongly characteristic of his final three works.[76]

The freedom which Isabel loses through her marriage to Osmond, is the thing she values most when she arrives in Europe. In common with all James's heroines, she sets great store by her independence, saying quite plainly to Ralph, 'I am very fond of my liberty' (X,594). Freedom is, indeed, an important theme in The Portrait of a Lady. The question posed is : how free is Isabel to choose her own path in life? The images of keys, locks, bolts, cages, tunnels and restriction would tend to suggest that although she has the illusion of choice, Isabel is in fact so hemmed in that she is forced to follow a predestined path.

When first found by Mrs. Touchett, Isabel is seen, at Albany, in a house having a 'tunnel' used by the sisters, which,though 'well lighted', seemed to Isabel 'to be strange and lonely, especially on winter afternoons' (X,596). Isabel's fear of restriction, and yet acquaintance with it, is thus early established. Specifically, she is imaged as sitting in an office which had opened to the street, but whose door is now shut and locked. It is a door 'fastened by bolts which a particularly slender little girl found it impossible to slide'(X,597). It is Mrs. Touchett's visit which fires an imagination not accustomed to being kept behind bolts (X,601). By her aunt, Isabel

is freed from her American background and set down in England to 'affront her destiny'.

This pattern of imagery becomes noticeably sexual when Ralph surveys the edifice of his newly-arrived cousin, imaging her as a house, conscious that he has some answers to her personality, but convinced that none of them are adequate: 'the door was fastened, and though he had keys in his pocket, he had a conviction that none of them would fit' (X,748). By this image it is suggested that Ralph, because of his illness, frailty and cousinship, can never presume to love Isabel, and indeed that he does not expect to.[77] His important role as manipulator and spectator are thus early suggested in the novel's action.

And Isabel's rather indiscriminate candour is perfectly imaged when, in opening herself to Madame Merle, and hence preparing for her later betrayal, she feels, 'as if she had given to a comparative stranger the key to her cabinet of jewels' (Y,335). The sense of something very precious - Isabel's spirit, and later her money - as well as Mme. Merle's free access to use them, which she makes use of, is here suggested.

The use Mme. Merle makes of Isabel is to manipulate her into a marriage with Osmond, her former lover and the father of her daughter. It is through her fortune, which Ralph had imagined would set her free, that she is placed in bondage (Z,215). To her horror she discovers the 'infinite vista of a multiplied life' to be 'a dark, narrow alley with a dead wall at the end' (Z,227).

It is only after intense suffering that Isabel gains the freedom she had so ardently sought at the outset. Immediately after Caspar Goodwood's cataclysmic kiss, 'she was free'. She is free here, not only from his embrace, but also from her earlier romantic dreams, dreams which had obscured and warped her judgement. That her mind has now finally achieved free play, is demonstrated by her taking the only really viable course open. To have chosen differently would have indicated indirect and illusory judgement; because of her suffering, Isabel now has no illusions, and is consequently free to choose. It is part of The Portrait's pathos, and reality, that she must choose to return to a situation filled with unhappiness.[78]

Isabel's miserable choice of marriage partner, and consequent unhappy marriage, illustrate an inability to shape her own destiny, itself a manifestation of her failure as an artist. This failure

results from an inadequate perception of the stuff of life, caused by romantic myopia. Isabel must fail, since she tries to shape her artistic ideas from something not directly drawn from life. Closely concerned as it is with Isabel, the theme of art and the artist is very strong in The Portrait of a Lady.

Mme. Merle is an artist too, for she has shaped her life into a perfect smoothness where each accomplishment complements the other, and none of the cracks of her past life show through. Isabel first sees her playing the piano, and thinks that 'her touch was that of an artist' (Y,197). Mme. Merle extends her role as artist when she fashions the marriage of Isabel and Osmond. But her efforts, like Isabel's, are also doomed to failure, although for a different reason. Far too concerned with appearances, she merely places the two together for her own gratification, the inconsistencies in her artistic make-up setting a damning seal on her efforts from the start. As James, intervening later on remarks,

> There were people who had the match-making passion, like the votaries of art for art; but Madame Merle, great artist as she was, was scarcely one of these. She thought too ill of marriage, too ill even of life (Z,496).

Gilbert Osmond is another character cast as an artist. When first introduced he is seen painting a watercolour (Y,450), and in his final appearance before Isabel's departure, he can hardly spare her the time from copying a reproduction of an antique coin (Z,625). In these terms his life is framed. Both images show Osmond merely dabbling at creativity. Ralph comes closest to an accurate characterisation when he calls him a 'sterile dilettante'(Y,820). The owner of the Palazzo Roccanera is essentially an aesthete; he cares nothing for life or doing anything in life, and self-gratification is his one aim. As Ralph says, '"everything is relative; one ought to feel one's relations. I don't think Mr. Osmond does that "' (Y,819).[79] Osmond's special failing is that he cannot get round his own egotism. Having 'a great respect for himself' (Y,819), he cares little for anyone else. It is his egotism which causes him to re-shape Pansy into a compliant little convent-flower who will never irk him by acting against his will. The flat, sweet sterility of her character illustrates clearly the product of such selfish creation at the expense of others.

The image, mentioned above, of Osmond copying 'the drawing of a

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