

نشریه دانشکده ادبیات و علوم انسانی

دانشگاه شهید باهنر کرمان

دوره جدید، شماره ۱۴ (پیاپی ۱۱) زمستان ۸۲

کاسه طلایی: نه توی صورت (ادبی) بعنوان پادزهر هنری جیمز
برای سطحی نگری* (علمی - پژوهشی)

دکتر بهزاد قادری
دانشگاه شهید باهنر کرمان

۱- چکیده

این گفتار، جستجویی است در باره صورت ادبی والا در آثار هنری جیمز و کاربرد آن برای رویارویی با تنگ نظریهای آمریکاییان نیوانگلندی، خیل آدمیان سطحی نگری که جیمز، صورت ادبی والا را برای آنان چون پادزهر می دانست. در این مقاله، فرایند آفرینش هنری این نویسنده از دو سو بررسی شده است: الف- جیمز بعنوان هنرمندی صورت-آگاه، که این ویژگی را نیروی نجات دهنده من هنرمند از آشفتگیهای برخاسته از گرایشهای فرصت طلبانه فرهنگ پیرامونش می داند.

ب- هنر چون ابزاری برای در هم شکستن مرزهای منتهیهای اسیر سطحی نگری، مرزهایی که به نظر او، به آدمی اجازه نمی دهند گامی به سوی وادی گسترده آگاهیهای نوین بردارد.

در ادامه این گفتار و برای روشن شدن این نکات، آخرین رمان جیمز، -کاسه طلایی(۱۹۰۴)- بررسی می شود و به پاره ای از شگرد های هنری وی، از جمله

تاریخ پذیرش نهایی مقاله: ۸۲/۱۲/۳

* تاریخ دریافت مقاله: ۸۲/۷/۸

/ کاسه 4 طلایی : نه توی صورت (ادبی) بعنوان پادزهر هنری جیمز برای....

استفاده از شیوه های روایت تئاتری، نقاشی و تابلو سازی با انسان و فضا های پیرامونش و تأثیر این ترفند ها بر ذهن خواننده، اشاره شده است.

واژگان کلیدی: هنری جیمز - کاسه طلایی - روش تئاتری در روایت - نقاشی و روایت - پادزهر سطحی نگری

Journal of the Faculty of Letters and Humanities,
Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman
New Series, No. 14 (ser. 11)
Winter, 2004

**The Labyrinth of Form as James' Antidote to American
Provincialism**

by

Behzad Ghaderi

Associate Professor, Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman

Abstract:

Henry James (1843–1916) regards 'form' as a stratagem for counterbalancing the reader's naiveté, that is, a mode of artless simplicity which prevailed in his culture at the time. This article discusses James' artistic career as an endeavor to show form consciousness both as a power which redeems the artist him-/herself from the chaos of routine life and as an instrument to break the boundaries of a provincial self-sufficiency.

To see how James fulfills these tasks, this article examines *The Golden Bowl*(1904), a novel from his later phase in which he denounced his earlier manner of storytelling and opted for what he called "scenic method," that is, a narrative style dependent on painting scenes, a strategy which James considered his final salvation and the only means

Comment [ص ۱]:

کاسه طلائی: نه توی صورت (ادبی) بعنوان پادزهر هنری جیمز برای... /

with which an artist may be able to vault the mind of the reader from single-mindedness to multi-dimensionality.

Keywords: Henry James *The Golden Bowl* Scenic Method
Painting Antidotes to Provincialism

Date received: 30/09/03 Date approved: 22/02/04

The Golden Bowl:

The Labyrinth of Form As James' Antidote to American Provincialism

Behzad Ghaderi

Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman

I realize -- none to soon -- that the scenic method is my only salvation. (James; in: Mathiessen, 1947: 263)

... because it is through art that men journey to freedom
(Schiller; in: Heiseler, 1959: 147)

What is important for men is to have the use of several systems of meaning and natural

language helps in the elaboration of artificial languages (Barthes, 1977: 84).

1. Introduction

1.1- Preliminary Argument

As the epigrams suggest, an artist's prime concern when dealing with language is to break the prison house of 'normal' language with a paralogical narrative which aims at postponing rather than delivering meaning. It is this desire for 'otherness' which Schiller calls humankind's "journey to freedom". Henry James (1843-1916) who emerged from the American Civil War(1861-65), made an agonized effort in his life time to live by his art, to achieve an artistic form with language, and to present his art form in such a manner to help the reader establish a dialogue not with an authoritarian writer but with the artistic form which calls for the reader's active participation. This aesthetic experience, James hoped, would enhance the American reader's sense of life and give him/her a morally and culturally refined perspective.

In the "preface" to *The Golden Bowl*(1904) he suggests two distinct objectives for the writer of fiction. Firstly, he

contends that the artist is primarily preoccupied with refining his own taste: the "'taste' of the poet is ... his active sense of life...to hold the silver clue to the whole labyrinth of his consciousness"(*The Golden Bowl*: 18). Secondly, he propounds that such a mind will never be satisfied with irresponsible prose: "anything that relieves responsible prose of the duty of being...good enough, interesting enough and...pictorial enough...does it the worst of services..."(Ibid.). The function of such a prose, James contends in his essay entitled "Emerson", is to revitalize the sense of life in an American audience whose taste gave "the impression of a conscience gasping in the void, panting for sensations, with something of the movement of a landed fish"(Edel, 1956: 62). For Henry James such a prose was eventually materialized by a narrative strategy he called "scenic method." This article sets out to explore the cultural and moral implications of such a method James opted for.

To do so, we will first try to explore socio-cultural issues which James was determined to address, challenge and, if possible, amend through his art. This will then be related to James' attitude towards manipulation and/or dramatization of language for the promotion of "scenic method", a formal or

structural gesture which James considered instrumental in refining man's social and moral behavior. This will be expounded, as far as the scope of this article permits, with reference to *The Golden Bowl*, a work from James' 'major' or 'modern phase', that is, when his writing had absorbed all the qualities which promoted a vibrating language "good enough, interesting enough and...pictorial enough" to challenge what he termed (American) provincialism.

1.2- Foundations for Such a an Argument

To begin with, a glance at the implicit dialogue between James and Ibsen is worthwhile mainly because there are some moral and cultural affinities between these two writers which are instrumental in the discussion in hand. It is true that James almost always had ambivalent feelings towards "the northern Henry"(cited in Meyer, 1971: 693), his half ironic name for Henrik Ibsen; yet he fervently traced the late 'master builder's' manner of presentation. Thus, one is tempted to read James' allusion to Ibsen as the 'northern Henry' a gesture of 'brotherhood' in art as well as social issues between the two of them. Fed up with the American perplexed and naïve view of life and determined to break new grounds in national identity,

James, like Ibsen, went into self-exile. And, like Ibsen who targeted the grim moral and political atmosphere of Norway, James meant to challenge the New England provincialism. After Hawthorne who plunged into the depths of moral corruption in New England to bring about revelations, James targeted the opportunist tendencies of his tribe and set out to amend them through his art by helping them go through the labyrinth of form.

James' response to *John Gabriel Borkman* in 1897 -- seven years before the publication of *The Golden Bowl* -- is convincing enough to show that James' ambivalent feelings towards Ibsen's art finally gave way to a more congenial critical sense. Here, James praises both the play and the art of the Norwegian dramatist, in that

[the] author...arrives at the dramatist's great goal -- he arrives for all his meagreness[sic.] at intensity. The meagreness which is after all but an unconscious, admirable economy, never interferes with that; it plays straight into the hands of *his rare mastery of form*. The contrast between this form -- so difficult to have reached, so civilized, so 'evolved' -- and *the bareness and bleakness of his little northern democracy* is the source of half the hard frugal charm that he puts forth (Ibid.; emphases added).

There are in James' observation two hints that are pivotal in our present discussion: "rare mastery of form" and "the bareness and bleakness of [Ibsen's] little northern democracy". In *John Gabriel Borkman* James sees both the artist and the character, John Gabriel Borkman, at odds with a society that has failed to recognize the significance of change. By praising this play, James identifies himself with Borkman's irreconcilable attitude towards an uncomprehending society.ⁱ James' affinity with Ibsen becomes more evident when one hears an echo of Ibsen's anger with the Norwegian way of life in James' observations about America. To him, "modern emerging America ...[is] at once increasingly crowded and radically empty" and this emptiness, he goes on to say, is "a thing that makes us endlessly wonder"(Tanner, 1971: 416). The consequence of this American 'void', James contends, is "the so called abolition of *forms*"(Ibid., 417) which itself gives rise to ugliness. James was determined to help this "new emerging America" vault over its naivete through a vital, splendid form, one that is "so difficult to have reached, so civilized, so 'evolved'" to gnaw a wider consciousness through assertive modes of existence to which Americans were prone.

James held that "art...*makes* life, makes interest, makes importance"(Wagenknecht, 1952: 151); thus he was bent on challenging the opportunist tendencies which narrowed down the Americans' moral and intellectual interests.

James' messianic role of the artist is evident in the title he chooses for his novel, *The Golden Bowl*. In the Old Testament, Ecclesiastes, there is a Preacher who reproaches his people for having eyes that do not 'see'; for having "no remembrance of former *things*; neither...*any* remembrance of *things* that are to come with *those* that shall come after"(1: 11). The preacher advises his people paralyzed with vanities and amnesia, to have a fresh sense of life "Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or *the golden bowl* be broken..."(Ecclesiastes,12:6; emphasis added). James identifies himself with the Preacher and addresses the problems of the American naivete the corollaries of which are formlessness and absence of memory or consciousness, things which James believed could be amended by encouraging them to 'see'.

No wonder, then, that his novels are teemed with characters who try to 'see' their way out of the maze of formlessness by commencing quests which end up in changed perceptions. This is one of the reasons why he portrays

characters that are surrounded by artifacts including poems, paintings, carpets, statues, and ancient architectural monuments, objects which enhance their, as well as the reader's, sensory appreciation of the world.

Yet all this is not enough for James; there are also characters that are art/structure-oriented. James almost always has at least one character whose major preoccupation is art in general or painting in particular: Neomie in *The American*(1877), Felix Young in *The Europeans*(1878), Osmond in *The Portrait of A Lady*(1881), Verena Tarrant in *The Bostonians*(1886), Maisie in *What Maisie Knew*(1897), and Adam Verver in *The Golden Bowl*(1904) are but examples of such art-conscious characters.

James usually portrays his characters in the process of individuation. To enhance this search, he ushers them, especially those of the international novels, into extremely testing circumstances provoked by cultural dilemmas of their time. But he is keen to concretize these characters' search for new identity only when they are prepared to gradually move towards a more developed consciousness about structure or form, be it their own mental frame of mind or their awareness about external structures, that is, when they have structured

and internalized their experiences or when they learn to relate themselves to the objects that surround them.

Therefore, James does not only tell stories; he makes his characters negotiate with him as well as with the reader the possibilities of form. We know that early in his career, James, like Neomie and Osmond, felt the threat that he had to sell, a tendency which forces an artist to conform to mimetic tenets. Consequently, one may argue that figures like Neomie and Osmond are James' alter egos for a fallen artist. Neomie has a superficial talent for copying from original paintings; Osmond has a taste for imitation or "copying from [a page] the drawing of an antique coin"(James, 1883, 58-59). Such characters represent the provincial spirit of art dominant at the time.

However, as James established himself as a famous artist, he withdrew from mimetic principles to develop a more diegetic narrative form. Thus, if the first group stands for the opportunist tendencies of 'marketable' art or artist, the second group, that is, Maisie, Felix, and Isabel Archer, stands closer to James' idealistic notion of art. Felix craves for painting the different shades of the setting sun; Isable has an urge that personal and private matters should not tempt an artist -- which reminds one of aesthetic distance regarding form; and,

finally, Maisie betrays an immense taste for seeing colours, images, objects and has keen ears for hearing sounds, all of which are elements that enhance one's aesthetic awareness when confronting an achieved structure. Therefore, when later in his career he declares his "scenic method" as his "only salvation", it indicates that he had resolved to employ a certain kind of language to serve his ideal of "great form", a form that is achieved only when the artist learns "to see the actual or the imaginative, which is just as visible, to paint it"(Edel, 1963: 46).

This method is an intricate process. Just as the reader of James' novels gains insight into the alchemy of human nature by peering into the abyss of the characters' reflections, James forces him/her to see the artist himself there busy with his alembics in the firelights of his workshop in search of the elixir to create out of the copper-chaos of narrative, plot, character and language the desired gold -- but not the cracked golden-bowl! -- of his art: an art which eventually crystallizes extrinsic shapes into organic, intrinsic forms.

2. James' Aesthetic Experiments with Language

2.1 *The Golden Bowl*: the Last Phase of Innocence Abroad

The Golden Bowl has a striking similarity with *The American*. In the latter, Christopher Newman, a self-made but naïve and forthright American who has fulfilled the myth of success is "conscious of the germ of the mania of the 'collector'" (James, 1963: 14-15). He travels to Paris in search of "high culture" to go with his wealth. To bring his life to perfection, Newman thinks "there must be a lovely woman perched on the pile, like a statue on a monument" (Ibid., 35). Likewise, in *The Golden Bowl* a middle-aged American millionaire, Adam Verver, together with his daughter, Maggie, is on his tour in Europe for collecting artifacts to erect in his American city "a place of art..., a receptacle of treasures sifted to positive sanctity..." (James, 1972: 125). Newman and Adam Verver finally realize that they have to shed behind their naïve sense of life with a changed perception which counterbalances their 'western' mode of business-busyness: Newman fails to 'purchase' the ideal woman to add to his collection and Adam Verver only manages to return home with Charlotte, the only 'artifact' he is able to import to New England, a second hand 'golden bowl' with an invisible crack.

James usually impresses one as if he were repeating the same experience. Richards(1959: 213) sees it

a serious charge against much of Henry James,... that when the reader has once successfully read it there is nothing further which he can do. He can only repeat his reading. There is often a point at which the parts of experience click together, the required attitude is achieved, and no further development is possible.

One may argue that as far as the dialectic between the reader and the subject matter is concerned, Richards' observation sounds fair and relevant, but it does not hold when we consider the game or dialogue between the reader and the artist's text. One of the original meanings of "art" is having a "cunning" skill, the magical power to disguise and to conceal, and this is a charming aspect that seduces the reader to unravel what the tactful artisan has concealed or transformed. It is true. *The Golden Bowl* is a variation on the same theme, that is, innocence abroad, which James had started with *The American*. Yet what persuades the reader to consider *The Golden Bowl* a completely new experience is the 'howness' rather than the 'whatness' of James' identical experience: in

The American art copies life; in The Golden Bowl art makes life.

Consider the following passage in which Newman explains why he left America. Here he gives an account of how on a trip to beat a rival in business, he falls asleep and 'wakes' into a sudden disgust with his own New England money-mindedness:

I had been traveling all night, and though I was excited with my errand, I felt the want of sleep. At all events I woke up suddenly, from a sleep or from a kind of a reverie, with the most extraordinary feeling in the world--a mortal disgust for the thing I was going to do. It came upon me like *that!*" and he snapped his fingers--"as abruptly as an old wound that begins to ache. I couldn't tell the meaning of it; I only felt that I loathed the whole business and wanted to wash my hands of it. The idea of losing that sixty thousand dollars, of letting it utterly slide and scuttle and never hearing of it again, seemed the sweetest thing in the world. And all this took place quite independently of my will, and I sat watching it as if it were a play at the theatre(23-24).

Having his characters 'wake up' with the 'ache' of an old 'wound,' enabling them to transcend the boundaries of a materially motivated life in order to see their immigration into a *multiverse* for themselves are what James meant to target

throughout his career. In this selection James does not go beyond an admixture of melodramatic form mainly because Newman *talks* about his experience; he deprives himself as well as the reader of 'seeing' his experience. Here James is mainly concerned to give Newman's immediate view of life; he does not 'paint' the character's experience.

However, seven years after the publication of *The American*, James wrote "The Art of Fiction"(1884) where he argues that when a novel ceases to compete with life as the canvas of the painter does, "it will have arrived at a very strange pass"(Baym, et.al.; 1989: 457). This is a new development in his career and, to see James' evolved manner of execution in his last phase of writing, note his dexterity in 'painting' Adam Verver -- also as a naïve American millionaire -- in the act of withdrawing to a billiard-room with his newspapers and letters:

When he took a rare moment "off" he did so with the touching, confessing eyes of a man of forty-seven caught in the act of handling a relic of infancy -- sticking on the head of a broken soldier or trying the lock of a wooden gun. ... The greatest of wonders moreover was exactly in this, that so interrupted a man should ever have got, as the phrase was, should above all have got so early, to where he was. It

argued a special genius; he was clearly a case of that. The spark of fire, the point of light, sat somewhere in his inward vagueness as a lamp before a shrine twinkles in the dark perspective of a church; and while youth and early middle-age, while the stiff American breeze of example and opportunity were blowing upon it hard, had made of the chamber of his brain a strange workshop of fortune(112).

Further on in this passage, the reader is given enough clues to see Adam Verver emerge as an American Frankenstein, a mechanical, childish being who has been stifled by an opportunist culture. This portrayal is done in such an intricate way to leave enough space for the horizon of the reader to complete Verver's picture out of bits and pieces of the surrounding objects which are but projections of his character.

Why does James choose such a new manner? One cannot take his taste for painting as the only reason. James' more developed definition of experience, put forward in "The Art of Fiction," may give more insight into his new position:

Experience is never limited and it is never complete; it is an immense sensibility, a kind of huge spider-web, of the finest silken threads, suspended in the chamber of consciousness and catching every air-borne particle in its tissue(Baym, et.al., 461).

In his later phase, James avoids the tenets of mimesis and its corollary, the authoritarian narrator, mainly because his notion of 'experience' necessitates multiple presences. In *The Golden Bowl*, we recognize that James has distanced himself from the 'impure' style of his early phase in which the narrator pops up in the midst of the story informing the reader as if he were afraid of letting the reader alone. The narrator in his 'impure' style directly addresses the reader by such cliches as "The gentleman in whom we are interested understood no French, but I have said he was intelligent, and here is a good chance to prove" (*The American*, p. 8); or "It should be added, without delay, to anticipate misconception, that [Mrs. Tristram's] little scheme of independence did not definitely involve the assistance of another person..." (Ibid., p.36). As pointed out earlier, in *The Golden Bowl* the narrator takes the role of a witness who records the impressions the characters reveal.

In the "Preface" to *The Golden Bowl*, James informs us about his splendid, advanced approach of understanding characters:

It is the Prince who opens the door to half our light upon Maggie, just as it is she who opens it to half our light upon himself; the rest of our impression, in either case, coming straight from the very motion

with which that act is performed. We see Charlotte also at first, and we see Adam Verver, let alone our seeing Mrs. Assingham, and every one and every thing else, but as they are visible in the Prince's interest, so to speak--by which I mean of course in the interest of his being himself handed over to us. With a like consistency we see the same persons and things again but as Maggie's interest, *her* exhibitional charm, determines the view(9-10).

Hence James' preoccupation with a language verging on painting. Philipson(1985: 125), commenting on the impact of painting on language, refers us to Derrida's discussion of Artaud's confession when he says, "I write for illiterates". Derrida's conclusion is that Artaud substituted painting for writing and, thus, the "values of literacy and the literal" are either displaced or "through its relativising of the literal" the audience tends to hesitate to take it for granted. Literal language has no pact with phonic and picturable modes of expression; it is not rooted in "non-linear writing" and will eventually lead the reader to "a reduction of history"(Derrida, 1974: 85).

On the other hand, a picturable language -- an instance of which is James' account of Adam Verver quoted above -- which emphasizes on pictorial, phonic, and convoluted expressions diminishes our rigid sensual certitude of the

objective world and gives our imagination a chance to escape the gravitational force of a three-dimensional space; it is, therefore, closer to the notion of history as a sublime entity, that is, an epic state of mind which throws us in the middle of an uncertain consciousness or what the Greeks called 'chaos'.

James' new definition for experience and his interest in painting coincided with his interest in the theatre in the 1880's. He could not succeed in the theatre; however, what he learned there, namely, the 'scenic method', he transferred to the realm of the novel. It is a method of narrating which expresses the most intense emotions in a detailed but elliptical manner. Thus, James initiates the reader into a phenomenological world, what Wolfgang Iser(1976: 126-27) calls "an arena in which reader and author participate in a game of the imagination" to help the reader "shade in the many outlines suggested by the given situations, so that these take on a reality of their own."

James establishes this "game" in *The Golden Bowl* by entangling the consciousness of his characters with that of his reader in a web of perspectives. This, on its normal plane, may be considered a deficiency because novels develop through action. Yet James, shedding behind the technique of

omniscient narrator, creates a new version of dramatic action, one which emerges from his keen observation of reflecting consciousnesses.

In creating a drama out of conflicting thoughts *The Golden Bowl* is exemplar. Fanny Assingham, a middle aged woman, whose preoccupation is "practically simplifying"(p. 60) has an 'uncanny' presence. She is always busy judging the four major characters but, accustomed to seeing actions in one long piece, she gets puzzled when she has to put together bits and pieces of external clues. Fanny(funny!) Assing/ham(overacting) is the caricature of a logocentrist full "of discriminations against the obvious"(p. 50) and her searches to get to the end of the thread only entangle her in an endless comedy of errors. She looks like the reader-critic habitually looking for the old methods of consuming the story. She is ignorant of the fact that in seeing and judging others, she is seen and judged.

James, one may speculate, portrays this character in this way to warn those readers who may tend to approach his "scenic method" by using the old conventional logic of reading stories. He leaves very little room for 'logocentrism' in *The*

Golden Bowl; we are allowed to hover over suspended consciousnesses.

2-2. "Air and Form" in *The Golden Bowl*

In his preface to *The Golden Bowl* James calls the first version of *The American* a "sorry business" (p. 22) and by revising it he says he wanted to gild it over "at least for reader, however few, at all *curious* of questions of *air and form*" (P. 22; emphasis added). To see what he means by "air and form," one may consider the treatment of plot in *The Golden Bowl*.

This novel is based on the conventional comedy of love and intrigue. Maggie Verver, an American girl, marries an Italian prince living in London. Her widowed father marries her friend Charlotte Stant. As the story unfolds, we understand that there had been between Charlotte and the Prince before their marriages a secret liaison which afterwards is resumed. When the truth is unraveled, the story ends, with Verver and his wife heading for America.

A romance-like linear narrative assures the reader that if s/he proceeds up to the end of the narrative, s/he will be rewarded with meaning. Perhaps this is why James later calls

The American a "sorry business". Whereas Barthes contends that "meaning is not at the end of the narrative, it runs across it ... meaning eludes all unilateral investigation" (p. 87). It is through using a cryptic language and giving fragmentary knowledge that James manages to elevate this novel and give it what *The American* lacked, that is, "air and form".

A melodramatic romance of love and intrigue, in the absence of devices mentioned above, would have easily collapsed into a romance catering for the expectations of a common reader: envy, eavesdropping and watching, disclosure of the secret, and taking revenge. But James frustrates all such expectations because he subordinates these things by diverting the attention of the reader to the process through which characters gradually move from suspicions to convictions and learn that discovering also means to be discovered.

2-3. Devices for Deviating from Mimesis

For art to be a mere imitation of nature is to be damned. For rejecting verisimilitude, one has to have a reservoir of syntactic and rhetorical devices. Yet these alone are not enough. An artist who does not know the significance of

'seeing' proves to be in the early stages of writing mainly because s/he advocates one of the major tenets of mimesis, that is, 'doing'. But when s/he learns to tip the balance in favour of 'seeing', that is, when one adds intellect to an object, a new sense of life based on dehabitualization and deautomatization, to borrow from Shklovsky, gains strength.

The question is: how can one shift from 'doing' to 'seeing' without distorting the dramatic effect of the work? Jose Ortega y Gasset proposes some techniques for evoking such a seeing mode. He contends that out of the three kingdoms -- the mineral, vegetable, and animal -- that which usually predominates in our consciousness is the animal kingdom, that is, even when we use metaphors, we tend to approach and perceive things anthropomorphically. But, Gasset argues, if the artist wants to give priority to 'seeing' s/he must subdue the prominence of human beings so that the reader can establish a better relationship latent among “the high algebra of metaphors”(1986: 40). This is probably because when we look at a scene which foregrounds human beings, we tend to neglect the objects and other animate beings and, by so doing, we verify the work because it reflects a “familiar” universe.

To illustrate what Gasset calls "installment of dehumanization" in art, compare, for instance, the titles of James' early novels with those of his later phase. Naming is just one of the techniques which may help the artist shape "air and form". The early James names his novels *The American*, *The Europeans*, *The Bostonians*. The mature James, however, prefers such names as *The Sacred Fount*, *The Wings of the Dove*, *The Golden Bowl*, and *The Ivory Tower*. In the former group the mind of the artist does not go beyond the plane mirror; in the second, the artist is preoccupied with a polysemous universe created by concave or convex mirrors.

In James' early phase characters have an assertive sense of being; there is not enough room in their mind to register impressions and get illuminations from their surroundings. But the later James proves to be seriously involved with creating intense form. *The Golden Bowl* proves that with his "advanced algebra of metaphors," to borrow from Gasset, James intends to give us an *impression* of the immediate reality, a tendency which, in Shklovsky's view, is indispensable in art:

art exists that one may recover the sensation of life; it exists to make one feel things, to make the stone *stony*. The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived

and not as they are known. The technique of art is to make objects “unfamiliar”, to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged (Leman and Marion, 1965: 12).

The Golden Bowl focuses more on intensified and complicated modes of perceptions and impressions. There are many perception-enhancing devices such as “foregrounding”, “word-image repetition” and “syntactic complications” in this novel.

One can realize that here “illusion” is intensified not because the writer uses a great number of symbols, but because he establishes a tight relationship between a character and the scenes, images, and symbols that surround him/her. In *The Golden Bowl* James has the characters interpret others in terms of, or with reference to, (art) objects. For instance, as he introduces the golden bowl, he repeatedly intensifies the atmosphere by, directly or indirectly, pointing to objects which eventually preview the golden bowl. When the Prince first comes across Charlotte, his perception of her is related to us in terms of the art of sculpture:

He saw the sleeves of her jacket drawn to her wrists, but he again made out the free arms within them to be completely rounded, the polished slimness that Florentine sculptors, in the great time, had loved, and of which the apparent firmness is expressed in their old silver and old bronze (p.59).

Or again, in an ironic confrontation with Adam Verver, the Prince touches on the notion of the golden bowl by saying “Oh, if I’m a crystal I’m delighted that I’m a perfect one, for I believe that they sometimes have cracks and flaws - in which case they’re to be had very cheap!”(p.12). Even as Mrs. Assingham is listening to the Princess’ remarks about Charlotte, James transforms her attentiveness into a metaphor closely related to the golden bowl: “The *crystal flask* of her innermost attention really received it on the spot “ (p. 209; emphasis added), thus repeating the fragility of the glass which points not only to a possible flaw in the Prince's personality but also suggests a flaw in Mrs. Assingham’s analytical or logical approach towards the truth.

James achieves unity in *The Golden Bowl* by creating repetition through variation. In other words, he gives us so many relevant words or images that should finally contribute

to the image of the golden bowl, an artistic device for prolonging our perception. In the scene in Macham, “morning” to Charlotte and the Prince is “golden” and then the Prince says, “I feel the day like a great gold cup that we must somehow drain together” (p.269).

It is not just the image of “bowl” or “flask”, or “cup” that intensifies the "high algebra of metaphors", James also has a reservoir of words denoting “surfaces” or “appearances”. Right in the beginning of Book Two, Maggie, at the threshold of her dramatic action of breaking through the surfaces, sees her new situation as a pagoda, “a structure *Plated* with hard, bright porcelain... .” (p.301) and also “the great *decorated surface* had remained consistently impenetrable and inscrutable” (p.301, emphases added).

2-4. Shift in Narrative Methods to Achieve Intense Language

Unlike the 'impure' style which makes us acutely conscious of time and place, James' later phase blurs our sharp sense of time and place. *The Golden Bowl* begins with the Prince roaming in the streets of London, but the *trope* subdues

our acute sense of time and place by suspending us between two worlds, that is between London-Rome, the Thames-Tiber:

The Prince had always liked his London, when it had come to him; he was one of the modern Romans who find by the *Thames* a more convincing image of the truth of the ancient state than any they have left by the *Tiber* (P.29, emphases added).

Barthes speaks of the language of literature as an “artificial” one, a language that beyond its ordinary use, connotes a meaning that is not stated (p. 84). Take, for instance, the opening scenes of *The American* and *The Golden Bowl* in which James describes Newman and the Prince, respectively. We know that the co-ordinator ‘and’ gives us a feeling of addition in space (N+N), repetition in concept (Adj + Adj), and continuity in time (V+V). Compared to his early phase, James uses ‘and’ less often in his later phase.ⁱⁱ

Minute as such a change may sound, it is an outstanding development in James’ approach toward language as “device”. In *The Golden Bowl* language has changed into a mute globe that contains its meta-lingual dimension. James also moves from definite to more indefinite spheres of meaning. His shift

from continuous linear action or thought to some retrospective, convoluted states of mind is evident when we consider how anxious he is in his revisions.

Michael Toolan(1990) distinguishes between “progressive” and “simple past” tense in that the progressive

usually indicates that the action or event described is perceived by the speaker as occurring not as unified and clearly bounded particle, but as a multi-phase wave of activity without sharply defined points of origin and termination... considered in relation to context, it becomes apparent that progressive verbal forms imply disruption of the conventional linear succession of events -- of the kind that a sequence of clauses reporting actions in simple past tense would suggest(p. 103).

The following selection is a juncture of Maggie’s thought which appears in convoluted sentences in *The Golden Bowl*. One can see that as the Prince propels out into the periphery of Maggie’s consciousness and as Charlotte probes into the centre of her consciousness, James switches to the ‘-ing’ form:

It was as if he were singing of himself, *sotto voce*, as he went -- and it was also, on occasion, quite ineffably, as if Charlotte, *hovering, watching, listening*, on her side too, kept sufficiently within earshot to make it out as song, and yet, for some reason connected

with the very manner of it, stood off and didn't dare (p.492).

In *The Golden Bowl* language, instead of being a means for describing a character's situation, is a medium for exploring the character's motives for, or the dynamics of, an action. Thus, in *The Golden Bowl* language's function is to move us from strangeness to strangeness. This "dry-hardness" of language, a concept later established by T. E. Hulme to challenge sentimental handling of subject-matter(1949: 9), gives James' last novel a unique austerity, itself is a gesture towards characters' mental or moral obliquity.

Clara F. McIntyre(1912) criticizes James' later prose for its ambiguity because "when two forms of expression are possible he deliberately chooses the less natural and the more awkward"(p. 369). However, more recent critics have taken this as a democratic gesture on the part of James because he breaks with the old convention of "omniscient point of view," thus letting his characters see for themselves. Related to this sense of democratization achieved by art is Iser's observation that a hard language is one of the pre-requisites of substantial works of art mainly because it is through creating some

“blockages” in language that the text retains, or rather aims at, its “dynamism”: an energy which enables the reader “to bring into play [their] own faculty for establishing connections...” (p. 131). Indeed, what James does can be called a registering of the momentum of consciousnesses both of characters and of the reader, an effort which is energetic, pulsic, retrospective and withdrawn.ⁱⁱⁱ

2-5. Phonocentric Language as *the* Prerequisite for Fathomless Mental States

From the above argument it is evident that the more James dealt with the fluctuating states of mind of his characters, the more he realized that the unconscious resides in a condensed, complicated, and infinite realm. For James, according to Donadio

the essential character of humanity ... is not a given but something that remains to be realized: it is a condition of supreme awareness ..., an absolute condition which exists beyond the bounds of actual human possibility but which reveals itself in some degree to every human being (1978: 114-15)

Thus James' psychological concerns affected his style in two ways: first, in his later phase, he tried to break every single atom of his characters' thoughts, creating a burst of energy which manifests itself in complicated sentences; second, he moved farther from concrete dialogues toward more introspective monologues, a technique evolved to its peak by Joyce and Faulkner.

Alternating between pictures and scenes, choosing multiple angles of vision, introducing heightened imagery and shifting from logocentric to phonocentric language were among some of the devices he employed to portray man's dramatic moral consciousness. According to Madan Sarup, a language centred round "phonocentrism" appears in monologues and soliloquies and is closer to the individual's consciousness "because it is closer to the possibility of presence. ... In speech meaning is apparently immanent, above all when, using the *inner voice of consciousness*, we speak to ourselves"(1993: 36; emphasis added).

The Golden Bowl abounds with soliloquies because James now sees his characters not as individuals who are acted upon but as beings who 'see' and their seeing is a new kind of action. Therefore, their mind should show an immediate

alertness to their surroundings, an alertness which may redeem them from their provinciality.

3. Conclusion

In this paper we tried to explore Henry James' mastery of new narrative strategies which he required to materialize his ideal form, that is, "scenic method". The fact that the novels of his later phase have at most three or four characters indicates that he meant to render the novel into a stage for dramatizing the impressions his characters leave or provoke.

Reading James's works in the order they appeared sounds like looking at a series of pictures that gradually change from iconic life-size shapes to some arabesque geometric forms, a journey from the finite speculations to an infinite openness of consciousness, an artist's pilgrimage towards freedom through language. In this journey, the artist compels us to submit to the turbulence, or share the delight, of the writer's mind trying to shape itself in visible verbal performance. To the extent that the reader 'sees' his/her

theatrics, the artist may be sure that s/he has transported the reader to high culture and moral betterment.

¹ A closer glance at *John Gabriel Borkman* may suggest why James admired it. In this play Ibsen is successful in creating different angles of visions: John Gabriel imprisons himself on the second floor of his house; his wife lives in the first floor. These two characters are not ready to meet each other but are informed about each other through others' reports and/or reflections about them. By so doing, Ibsen achieves a form which gives prominence to character and perspective and makes the play an ensemble of tableaux. In dividing *The Golden Bowl* into two parts -- The Prince and The Princess -- one may speculate, James might have had a side glance at Ibsen's new dramatic form.

² It is noteworthy to see, for instance, that 'and' occurs seventeen times in the opening paragraph of *The American* which also describes Newman; it occurs only eight times in *The Golden Bowl*. In the first paragraph of *The American* 'and' occurs 8 times combining sentences or verb phrases, a phenomenon which gives more force to action whereas in *The Golden Bowl* it occurs three times in such structures but even then, James prefers the nominative case.

³ A study of James' lexical maneuverings in his later phase may be revealing. Take, for instance, words like 'linger', 'hover' or 'haunt'. Their frequency in *The Golden Bowl* is 25, 25, and 12, respectively; while in *The American* their frequency is 5, 4, and 1. Such words and their derivatives depict a wavering, unpredictable and uncertain state of mind. James' inclination towards such words in his later phase suggests his acute alertness to mood and attitude.

Bibliography

- Barthes, Roland. (1977). *Image-Music-Text*. Trans. Stephen Heath. England: Fontana
Paperback.
- Baym, Nina, et.al. (1989). *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*. New York:
W. W. Norton & Co.
- Derrida, J. (1974). *Of Grammatology*. Trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. London:
The Johns Hopkins Press Ltd.

- Donadio, Stephen. (1978). *Nietzsche, Henry James, and The Artistic Will*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Dryden, John. (1903). *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, Ed. Thomas Amold. 3rd. edn. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Edel, Leon, ed. (1956). *The American Essays of Henry James*. New York: Vintage Books
- , ed. (1963). *Henry James: A Collection of Critical Essays* New York: Prentice- Hall.
- Heiseler, Bernt Von. (1959) *Schiller* . Trans. J. Bednall. London: Eyre and Spottiswoode.
- Hulme, T. E. (1949). "Romanticism and Classicism." In *Critiques and Essays in Criticism* . Ed. Robert Wooster Stallman. New York: The Ronald Press Co. 3-16.
- Iser, Wolfgang. (1947). *The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach*" *New Directions in Literary History* Ed. R. Cohen. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 125-47
- James, H. (1883). *The American*. London: Macmillan and co. .
- . (1970). *The American* . New York : Augustus Kelley.
- . (1972). *The Golden Bowl* . England : Penguin Books.
- . (1883). *The Portrait of Lady*. London : Macmillan and co..
- Matthiessen, F. O., et al. (1947). *The Notebooks of Henry James*. New York: Galaxy Books.

- McIntyre, Clara. F.(1912). “*The Later Manner of Mr. Henry James*,” In PMLA, 27 (1912). 354-371.
- Meyer, Michael. (1971). *Ibsen*. London: Penguin.
- Moore, G. Ed. (1977). *The Penguin Book of American Verse*. England: Penguin Books.
- Ortega Y Gasset, Jose. (1986). “First Installment on the Dehumanization of Art”, In:
Contemporary Literary Criticism. Ed. R.C. Davis. London: Longman Inc. 38-52
- Poe, E. A.(1967). *The Fall of the House of Usher and Other Writings*. Ed. David Galloway. London: Penguin Books.
- Philipson, Michael. (1985). *Painting, Language and Modernity*. London: Routledge.
- Richards, I. A. (1956). *Principles of Literary Criticism*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd..
- Sarup, Madan. (1993). *An Introduction to Post-Structuralism and Post-Modernism*. 2nd. ed. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Shklovsky, V. (1965). “Art as Technique,” In *Russian Formalist Criticism*. Trans. Lee T. Lemon, et al. Ed. P.A. Olson. USA: University of Nebraska Press. 3-25.
- Tanner, Tony. (1971). *City of Words: American Fiction 1950-70*. London: Jonathan Cape.
- Toolan, Michael. (1990). *The Stylistics of Fiction : A Literary Linguistic Approach*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

- Wagenknecht, Edward. (1952). *Cavalcade of the American Novel*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Wellek, R. (1958). "Henry James's Literary Theory and Criticism", In: *American Literature*. 30 (1958) 293-321.
-