Serialisation, Settings, Characters:

a comparative case study of gender roles in society, as addressed in selected novels by Thomas Hardy, Henry James, and Edith Wharton

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Abstract:

The principal concern of this thesis is the extent to which male and female characters in Thomas Hardy's *The Return of the* Native (1878), Henry James's *The Europeans* (1878) and Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* (1920) succeed in contributing to, or halting, the processes of change in their respective societies of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In combination, these three novels provide a particularly apt opportunity to look at issues of gender and social change at specific points in time, and within a transatlantic context, through the representation of attitudes and actions by individuals within the narratives.

The study is divided into three chapters, an introduction, and a conclusion. Each chapter addresses one novel through three main areas of enquiry that aim to build a detailed understanding of the role of gender in the relevant social settings. The first area of study concerns the serialisation of the novels, with attention to the visual imagery that accompanied the texts in the case of Hardy and Wharton. The illustrations which accompanied the first, serialised versions of *The Return of the Native* and *The Age of Innocence* disclose concealed themes. They also provide added insight into the expectations of the period. The second area of enquiry explores the setting of each novel: Egdon Heath in Hardy's English west-country Wessex, Boston for James and New York in the case of Wharton. Those settings are discussed in relation to historical indicators within the works, including public gathering places which are portrayed as points of social pressure. A study of characterisation in the novels concludes each of the three chapters. The focus is on individuals, representing certain social categories, that are either struggling to attain a degree of autonomy over their lives or trying to maintain a status quo that would enable them to

keep their social position. The conclusion brings into the thesis a conversation about technical devices and further contextual considerations that the three authors deployed in order effectively to portray how men and women of their respective societies reacted to changes at different levels of their everyday lives.

A main contribution to knowledge in this study lies in the examination of serialisation and the use of illustrations in light of the role of gender in social change.

Despite cultural differences between the American and the British societies portrayed, Hardy, James and Wharton as major authors of their time share a number of concerns about male and female interactions within vastly changing societies. Furthermore, this investigation aims to establish an example that might prompt future comparisons of more global writers from different periods and parts of the world; in particular, asking how they differently reflect change in diverse social contexts.

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Contents:

Introduction

> "The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there."[1]

To examine and understand the details of cultural and social aspects of lives of the inhabitants of certain places at certain times involves venturing into an unknown zone. The past might have different codes of language, conduct, and forms of communication, yet if we have a glimpse into the interior cultural and social lives of those before us, we can perhaps understand how aspects of what has gone before continue to affect us in our own era. As Edward Said in *Culture and Imperialism* tells us: "Appeals to the past are among the commonest of strategies in interpretation of the present. What animates such appeals …. [is] uncertainty about whether the past is really past, over and concluded, or whether it continues"[2]

Said argues for the continuity of the past within the present. The past does indeed extend into the present - and even gives us signposts to the future; therefore, this study and other similar ones seek to enhance the idea that the past plays a crucial role in defining the present. Past events can be seen as relevant in our own times, and even help us divine aspects of the future. My aim in this study is to show how that past – as depicted in the studied novels, complete with their historical and social perspectives - is characteristic of periods of upheaval and restlessness, and carries within it symptoms of dissatisfaction, exhibited through the characters portrayed.

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[1] L.P. Hartley, *The Go-Between* (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1953), p. 5.
[2] Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*. (Copy 1993), p. 1.

Experiencing the past at first hand is beyond our ability. Yet, one of the ways in which we might attempt to access this aspect of the past is through works of fiction. In the present thesis I will undertake a comparative case study of three novels, published between the late nineteenth century and the opening decades of the twentieth century: one of them is located in Britain, the other two in North America. This will give us the opportunity to compare these two distinct cultural sets, while at the same time studying the different experiences of men and women, through the characters created – both in North America and Great Britain. Doing so will allow us to analyse a period of profound and intricate change through the fictional worlds created by three different authors.

This period of study has been chosen because it offers the chance to investigate a turbulent time when fundamental changes in society, industry, and the wider economy, saw established patterns of social behavior under extreme pressure. Looking back, we see a situation in which social elites in both Great Britain and America sought to control the masses (both men and women), forcing them to follow laws and codes of behaviour that restricted their ability to express themselves artistically, socially and politically. Similar periods of subtle social and economic repression within a democratic framework have reoccurred in the decades since the turn of the nineteenth century. Understanding the forces at work, and the intimate interior lives of those involved, is a valuable asset in understanding our own world. Literary novels offer us a direct route into the minds of those characters who – although fictional – are created in the intense pressure of such periods of change, and give us, at the very least, the authors' insight into the society of the day.

At the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries a seachange occurred within America and Great Britain, a shift from a stable consensus to a state of uncertainty, disaffection, and internal tensions. This dramatic period of internal social

conflict provided writers with the opportunity to chronicle profoundly turbulent times. The stories they told are full of the personal lives of people caught up in the great events of these decades. Their novels bring to light the blighted lives of human beings who have seen their dreams frustrated and unfulfilled by the restrictions of their societies; barriers – often unspecified and shifting - set down by the elite classes. These characters often long to break free of their chains and seek a better life, both for themselves, and for future generations. At the same level, these novels record the changes that were taking place in people's lives socially, intellectually, politically – at home, at work, at play. Nevertheless, this study will trace how the authors through their narratives portray the characters' strivings to accomplish change and improve their lives. The novel is the most convenient form to examine in regard to themes of gender and social change, in many ways, as it allows the writer to use details and characters to chart subtle changes that were taking place on a small scale, but held the seeds of greater change in the future.

"Social Change" as a term used in this thesis indicates all kinds of upheaval: social as well as cultural, economic and even environmental. In terms of scholarship, my focus is on the social and cultural more than the economic and environmental sides. I will be exploring the ways in which the selected novels by authors from both sides of the Atlantic responded to, and contributed to, new ways of thinking about gender. In particular, the thesis is concerned with the roles of men and women in their societies. Any kind of change that takes place in society will affect its inhabitants from both genders. "Did all the characters presented in these works contribute to the stream of change– or confront it? And to which extent?" is the main question that will be addressed in the thesis.

This thesis is focused on a transatlantic comparative case study of three novels set from the 1840s to the 1870s– Thomas Hardy's *The Return of the Native*, Henry James's

The Europeans and Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence*. The aim of this study is to seek an insight into the role of gender in social change as perceived by the writers in these particular works, at a specific time. All three works are set during the same broad period – stretching from the end of the nineteenth century to the opening decades of the twentieth. As such they offer a view of the changing roles of men and women during a time of upheaval and rapid development in society, industry, and commerce. In addition, the novels were all serialised in popular magazines of the time, often with accompanying illustrations. This process, which brings to the texts additional contemporary editorial judgements, reveals further interpretations of attitudes to gender at a time of rapid commercial development – a period of growth, which embraced the written word.

The three studied novels were illustrated in fashion, literary and women periodicals, the very fact of the different interests of the press of the time mirrors to an extent the changing roles of men and women. In addition, the presence of illustration alongside the serialised work, as it is the case in Hardy's *The Return of the Native* and Wharton's *The Age of Innocence,* presents another level of interpretation for the scrutinised themes being hermeneutically embedded in the pictures. Therefore, it is important to hold in respect the value of the magazines and their editorial lines that exert an immense impact on the reception of the serialised novels.

The invisible societal boundaries imposed on the people of the period pushed them to the utmost level to change their existing conditions, especially when these conditions contradicted their personal goals. Invisible boundaries is the area that I am particularly interested in in this study and mainly the arbitrariness of the boundaries which are subjected to the designs of the individuals. The policies might be set in most of the cases by corrupt people and to favour their own personal interests. Here the authors chosen for study have different ways of addressing the hypocrisy in a society that

purports to be very moral, employing corrupt individuals working under the cover of respectability to formulate the social codes. At the other end of the story, key male and female characters of the novels show a great deal of motivation in the sense that they plant the first seeds of upheaval in their social circles, and they are thereby able to react to the long established rules of their societies. What precise facets of personality enabled these fictional characters to express their unhappiness with their societies? It is certainly because they possess distinct characteristics that are different from those of other people at the time. I will particularly look at the concepts of the New Man and the New Woman and the extent to which they succeed in introducing "challenging" ideals to their communities as portrayed in the studied novels. And I shall be asking whether, as proposed in the novels, one of the main portrayed reasons for their ability to adapt new ways of life can be attributed to contact with the ethics of other cultures by means of travel.

The presentation of the dynamics of social change in the novels is significant, in the sense that the authors focus on the human dimensions of this period in their respective societies. Creating these societies as microcosms within their works, they allow their experience of the time to play an insider's view in their narrations. This perspective gives us an intimate picture of life, very different from traditional histories that rely on statistics and generalisations. The writers depict their heroes and heroines at a time when they are seeking to change the old values and conventions that once shaped their lives, and indeed the lives of their ancestors. The three principal novels within this study present characters who wish to embrace change, and others who stand in the way of change. The authors also draw characters who struggle to find their own identity between those two positions, of either honouring what they value about the past, or following the new teachings and therefore endangering established rank within society. Most of the characters seen to

embrace change are presented as young men and women from different social sets. However, those standing in their way tend to be older members of the upper elite, because they fear that any kind of adjustment might change the prosperity and social standing they are enjoying.

A close textual analysis of these three novels will provide certain aspects of interest between the three studied novels to scholars wishing to study the issue of gender and social change during this crucial period. Despite profound social differences between America and Great Britain, the principal characters of the novels live under similar social, sexual and intellectual restrictions. Furthermore, the authors incorporate a transatlantic theme, or a broader international perspective, into their works, comparing characters from different societies, and the degree to which they are struggling with different perspectives relating to gender and change. This transatlantic theme is a key component of all the novels chosen. Such a perspective allows the authors to reveal, to some extent, a tendency to compare what is happening in their own "created" societies with what is taking place in other parts of the world, or to link, through the narrative, episodes from different cultures overseas.

For example, in Henry James' study of Nathaniel Hawthorne's fiction, James points him out as the "American genius" who broods on the national consciousness of being an American. Hawthorne's fiction is marked with a pre-civil-war spirit that prioritises the morality of the national individual over the society as a compound. It is clear that the most important missing aspect in Hawthorne's American fiction is tackling international and transatlantic aspects of American life, matters that are certainly present in James's fiction.

The three novels in this study, viewed with respect to their titles, offer us narratives that promise to explore ideas of society, change and gender. *The Return of the*

Native suggests a clash between cultures as the native, who has travelled in the wider world, comes back to the land of his birth. Clym Yeobright returns to Egdon Heath having presumably acquired the habits of another culture, and this essential contrast fuels the narrative of the novel. Upon Clym's return from Paris, Eustacia Vye marries him thinking that he will save her from the captivity of life at Egdon Heath and take her to her "promised land", Paris. *The Europeans* also promises us a clash of cultures, this time on a continental scale. The scene is set for a narrative that follows the arrival of two Europeans in Boston, the American Puritan city. How will this native society react to such a visit? To what extent will the arrival of modern European manners overthrow the established ways of an entrenched elite?

The Age of Innocence with its inherent ironic warning, proposes to chronicle the story of a society where there is a clash between the guardians of old habits and the rebellious young. The title advises, in contrast to the other two novels, a clash of ideas within the limits of one society; an inner conflict in one community. Wharton seeks to examine a conflict of different eras – overlapping perhaps, but with distinct mores and manners. Wharton's choice of title is believed to be derived from a "fancy picture" – a type of eighteenth century painting that depicts scenes of everyday life - by Sir Joshua Reynolds. Entitled itself "The Age of Innocence" (see Appendix B) Reynolds' painting portrays an unidentified girl in her early childhood sitting barefoot under a tree in a forest with a simple dress with no ornaments or accessories. The meditative setting of the girl lets us wonder what she will become in womanhood. The painting features the girl holding her hands together, presenting the innocence of this young female who will grow up to be a woman. Her very hand-folded pose suggests that she is incapable of acting in a

wild "forest-like" surrounding.[3] In a similar technique or way as that deployed in the painting of the innocent girl, Wharton is trying to portray in her novel the time when she was a girl and how she sees that period as an "innocent" time. Ironically, Wharton might be referring to the innocence of her childhood and not to the time that she used to live in. Moreover, it can be argued that the novel serves as a "character study" of Wharton's New York.

My methodology in this study is a close textual analysis of three chosen novels, adding in necessary supporting comparisons with other works by the same authors. Because an author's work, particularly in the case of Henry James, changes over the course of his writing career. Looking for example at the early and late Jamesian fiction, it is clear that his way of dealing with realism changes dramatically. He concentrates on the relationship between the human being and society in general in his first phase of moral realism. In his middle phase he deals with conflicts within a specific social or political class. Towards his final phase he concentrates on the psychological aspect of relationship between humans' outward actions and their inner selves. Furthermore, in other cases, I will employ comparisons of other works by the same authors; some longer or shorter works of fiction such as Edith Wharton's short stories and in particular the collection of "Old New York stories". Their relevance to the discussed themes consists in their representation of various aspects of New York society. The stories cover the period going back to the middle of the nineteenth century and extending to when Wharton was writing and publishing. My examination is not clouded by any particular theory. The structure of the thesis is accordingly quite straightforward. Apart from the introduction and

[3] After its presentation to the National Gallery in 1847, Reynolds's painting has been frequently copied. No less than 323 versions were made between 1856 and 1893.

conclusion, the body consists of three chapters: the first discusses *The Return of The Native*, the second addresses *The Europeans* and the third is concerned with *The Age of Innocence*. In order to investigate the role of gender in social change I will focus on three themes when examining the chosen works; the first appearance of the novel in its serialised form, the locale or the social setting of the narration, and the characterisation. I shall try to offer explanatory readings of the visualised forms that accompanied the serialised parts of the novels from a selective perspective that gives more attention to the ideas of gender and social change as they are the main two points under scrutiny in this study. This method aims at proposing a new understanding of the written word when accompanied by a visual dimension inserted into the material at the time of its publication.

Under the first appearance of the novel I will tackle the editorial policy and control over the serialised novels, and the illustrative works that appeared alongside the works. Study of the illustrations and the conditions under which they were presented to the public is essential to my research. The plates introduce an innovative way of understanding the social subtleties of the stories and how such a representation affected the first reception of the novels by the reading public. The plates not only represent an example of the scene mentioned in the words under each of the pictures, they also enhance the different features of the male and female characters in their social settings thus giving a visual dimension to the thesis' main enquiry of gender's role in social change. In some respects, the illustrations might be seen solely as taking the words of the novel a step further and visually representing them, simply serving to elucidate and illuminate – as the word illustration suggests - the written word of the text. Yet one cannot disregard the fact that this visualisation of the characters and scenes of the story does reflect the embedded themes of gender difference and changing aspects of the

characters' social setting. Visual imagery also influences the ways in which readers respond to the characters and story, so exerts an affective agency that is partly its own and partly the contribution of the illustrator and editor. In a number of cases, furthermore, the authors were complicit in the production of these images – working with the artists, or at least exercising a degree of control over the way their characters are presented to the public. Thomas Hardy's correspondence with the illustrator of *The Return of the Native*, Arthur Hopkins, is one such example. Hardy - unhappy about the first portrayal of his heroine Eustacia Vye - asks Hopkins to draw a more feminine, youthful picture of her. However, Henry James followed a different path and preferred his works to stand alone as he believed that illustrations would belittle the value of the written word.

Therefore, the illustrators play a key role as both 'first reader' of the manuscript – or in some cases a summary of the work written by the author with his instructions, backed up by correspondence – and also as interpreters of the work in a visual form. The tablets contain the illustrators' interpretation of not only the words printed alongside, but also the entire social setting of the novel. The illustrators not only rely on the text but also draw on their own imaginations and experience in order to create a picture – embracing the novel's range of characters, society, community and period. I will also address a number of ways in which the illustrators' techniques evolved over time, incorporating subtler details and symbols in order to portray the text in terms of certain aspects of body language chosen to stress features of the portrayed male and female characters. In these ways the illustrations give us an insight into the themes of gender and social change embedded in the works. Indeed, the power of this approach – illustrating the serialised works – is in itself demonstrated by Henry James' own decision to let his narratives stand-alone without illustrations.

Each of the studied novels starts with a presentation of its setting and seems to hold the characters back for a later stage of the narration. In *The Return of the Native*, it is not until the second chapter that Hardy mentions human existence in the novel. And it took James 108 words before he starts describing his heroine of *The Europeans*, Eugenia Munster. *In The Age of Innocence*, if we consider the prima donna, Christine Nilsson, as an essential component of the opera house; Newland Archer, Wharton's hero, is presented to the scene after 289 words.

This magnitude endowed to the place renders the novels' settings as the next point to address in each of the chapters– both in an immediate domestic sense, and the surrounding 'wild' - and how the background in general affects the characters' lives. The wider historical background will not be addressed except where the authors have specifically referred to events, thus allowing the thesis to investigate the role of gender and social change at the personal level of the characters portrayed by the writers. As this study is concerned with social change, studying the setting in which the characters are placed is crucial for a number of reasons. The material surroundings of houses, streets, and public places such as the opera house, the graveyard, or the local inn help the reader to chart the extent of change happening in a society. The principal characters are placed within these settings, and created in a position to respond differently to the forces of change within their geographical and social limitations.

A brief plot outline of the three novels reveals that public places dominate the narratives, so we can expect to observe characters as they deal with the conventions and structures of their society within the confines of the specifity of these places. Crucially, we can chart the inner thoughts of the characters as they navigate social interactions in public arenas. In the lines of their narratives, the authors concentrate on the characters' private state of mind; stressing, at the same level, the characters' actions, interactions and

dialogues with other individuals in public places. These interactions pave the way for variable forms of discussion. Main among which are the political, social and intellectual dialogues that increasingly began to be reflected in the growing institution of the press in the late nineteenth century. A century earlier this trend has been described by the German theorist Jürgen Habermas. In his book *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Habermas presents the story of the emergence of a new kind of society in public places, using existing institutions like the French salons, and the British coffee houses. Whereas these places were frequented by the elite, Habermas showed how they also became popular with a new, educated middling class. Most importantly, in his introduction "Preliminary Demarcation of a Type of Bourgeois Public Sphere," he addresses how transformations in existing places were reflected in the press. Intellectual debates and ideas born in the salons or the coffee houses found their way into the press of the time, which began to function as a public arena for the discussion and debates of the Bourgeoisie:

> As early as in the last third of the seventeenth century journals were complemented by periodicals containing not primarily information but pedagogical instructions and even criticism and reviews. At first there were scholarly periodicals speaking to the circle of educated laymen …. In the course of the first half of the eighteenth century, in the guise of the so-called learned article, critical reasoning made its way into the daily press.[4]

Hardy, James and Wharton as studied here wrote more than a century after the initial period that Habermas is discussing. By this point the relationship between public places and the press was part of the structure of society. All three authors chose to publish their works in a serialised form in periodicals, a format that allowed readers to debate the narratives in between issues. Furthermore, two of the authors, Hardy and Wharton,

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[4] Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge: MIT, 1989), pp. 24, 25.

sanctioned the use of illustrations for their work – a popular medium of the time. A study of these illustrations should offer an insight into the world of the novel. The readers' experience was expanded, and arguably further enriched, by the placing of tablets and advertisements alongside the text. The details of the tablets focus on issues of manners and interaction between the sexes. A study of these may reveal a further insight into the aspirations and hopes of the readership. Such a survey of illustrations has yet to be undertaken in detail with respect to these authors.

Thomas Hardy chose to create a fictional rural landscape of Egdon Heath as the setting for *The Return of the Native*. However, it is set at more or less the same time as James' and Wharton's works – the middle of the nineteenth century - and explores the same issues of gender transgression within a society resisting change. The role of the public place is given to the local inn, where only men are allowed, and to Egdon Heath itself – used by the community for public events. The Heath cherishes the same class divisions and distinctions as the city does, but on a smaller scale.

In sharp contrast, the wider setting for the novels of both James and Wharton is the American city. Urban centers like Boston and New York acted as crucibles of change during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In his Introduction to *The City in the American Novel, 1789-1900*, George Dunlap makes it clear from the onset of his book that New York and Boston are in the forefront of a new American culture:

> From the earliest days of our nation's history until the opening of the present century, these three cities—New York, Philadelphia and Boston—have reflected faithfully the changing conditions of American life as found in the populous centres. … They may be

> taken, collectively, to represent a homogeneous whole, the American city.[5]

Choosing such dynamic city settings allows both authors to create characters with the potential to alter their lives.

The historical dimension is an important factor in the narration of the novels. As early as the opening lines of each of the novels, the authors start to specify the time and place upon which the incidents come about. The three chosen novels are set in the turbulent decades on either side of the four-year American Civil War (1861-1865). The post-war decades, in particular, marked the start of the Gilded Age in the United States, an era of remarkable developments in all fields of economy, science, politics and so on. At the same time, the American nation during the Reconstruction period has not only to deal with the cultural and physical destruction in the aftermath of the Civil War but also to cope with the collapse of the slave economy in the South and its replacement with something viable. The North, as a part of the American nation, although victorious in terms of its values, was not exempt from stresses of its own. By contrast, Britain in the second half of the nineteenth century was a nation very anxious about the sustainability of the empire that was the engine of its economy. Overall the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries constitute an era usually regarded as intricately complex carrying as it did a number of challenging aspects to human life.

In spite of the fact that Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* was published in 1920, the author is presenting a retrospective account of the early eighteen-seventies. Born in New York City in 1862, Wharton in *The Age of Innocence* is looking back to the

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[5] George Arthur Dunlap, *The City in the American Novel, 1789-1900; A Study of American Novels Portraying Contemporary Conditions in New York, Phioladelphia, and Boston* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1965), p. 7.

time of her childhood and adolescence. She is remembering what she has gone through with the experienced hindsight of an intellectual woman of the early twentieth century. In spite of her retrospective account, Wharton demonstrates a full control over her narration of events, in the sense that she does not let her knowledge of coming incidents dominate her story. In other words, she does not let the 1920s she is living in cast the slightest shadow over the 1870s of her narration. *The Age of Innocence* gave Wharton the opportunity to be the first woman to win the Pulitzer Prize.

A close textual analysis of the works will reveal the extent to which the setting can act as a hindrance to the characters' ability to fulfill their aspirations, or as a platform inspiring challenge and rebellion. In particular we will examine public places, where we would expect the rules and manners of society to apply pressure on the characters to conform, and where those characters' determination on change would be most constrained. Jim Miller states in *Geography and Literature: A Meeting of the Disciplines*, "Surely in the past regions and traditional cultures associated with regions have often been correctly seen as obstacles to desirable changes, as impediments to progress; and regional identities have been correctly seen as limited and limiting."[6] By this token certain places, like Egdon Heath in Thomas Hardy's works, are presented as the main obstacles to any process of change, employing certain people from the Heath to advocate and guard its ideologies and conventions.

For the third and final part of each of the chapters, I will concentrate on the main characters of the respective novels. These principal players, created by the authors, are the fictional means by which they are able to explore the complex themes and ideas

[6] William E. Malory and Paul Simpson-Housley (eds.), *Geography and Literature: A Meeting of the Disciplines* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1987), p. 10.

related to social change and gender within American and British societies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. To what extent do the young male and female characters challenge the old established rules of their societies and how do they start to demand alternative values and forms of conduct that promise them more freedom? These characters test the limits of change and also the strength of "reactionary forces" standing in the way of reform. The second set of characters represents conservative forces, who may even seek a return to the "natural order" of the past. They are often disguised, entrenched within institutions, and seeking to preserve their positions within the elite. While in some cases the forces of reaction are presented collectively, in others they are literally personified by characters who stand in the way of any disobedience or challenge to the established structure of their societies. For example, both Henry James and Edith Wharton create such characters – hidebound Mr. Wentworth in *The Europeans*, and the matriarchal Mrs. Mingott in *The Age of Innocence*. On another note here, critics have long identified Thomas Hardy's Egdon Heath as a character in its own right within the narrative structure of *The Return of the Native*. I will therefore examine this landscape in terms of its role as a reactionary or challenging character, in line with those created by James and Wharton.

In examining novels by these three writers, it is essential to take into account the extent to which their works reflect their gender. Is it perhaps true that Wharton's female characters are drawn on a more sophisticated level? Do the two male writers give us a more simplistic understanding of the female point of view? Furthermore, do Hardy and James portray their own gender with more sensitivity than Wharton? Or, is it possible that Wharton's insight into character is simply more extensive than her male counterparts? For all three writers we could proceed to ask to what extent their empathy extends to an

understanding of the way in which gender operated as a crucial factor in the direction and speed of social change.

All three books chosen in this study offer – at least at first sight – or 'prima facie' – the chance that we might uncover within the texts insights into the subtle responses of individuals – both men and women – to the great historical forces at work within their very different societies. And what makes them an interesting case of comparison is that all of the studied narratives revolve around social confrontations, and the extent to which women and men face entrapments of differing kinds. A number of factors are at work in these clashes. One of the main factors can be seen to be gender priorities and interests that are mainly imposed on characters, whether male or female, by their social group.

Chapter I:

Thomas Hardy's *The Return of the Native* (1878)

This chapter will discuss Thomas Hardy's sixth novel *The Return of the Native*, which began to be published in January 1878 in twelve monthly serial parts. Hardy faced difficulties publishing the novel, because it tackled controversial themes unacceptable to the dominant moral ideologies of Victorian Britain. Particularly subversive was its representation of the triangle of relationships between the main characters: Eustacia Vye, Thomasin Yeobright, and Damon Wildeve. This led the *Cornhill* editor, Leslie Stephen, to decline publishing the serialised novel, as he feared that the portrayal of the love-triangle, and its reception among his readers, might prove potentially "dangerous for a family magazine."[7]

However, Hardy did succeed in publishing the novel in *Belgravia the Magazine of Fashion and Amusement*, a magazine recognized for its publication of sensational fiction - a newly emerging genre in Great Britain between the 1860s and 1870s - and dedicated to attracting lower-middle-class readers. Sammantha Graves in *Reading Sensation Critically: Mary Elizabeth Braddon's Belgravia Fiction* (2007) argues that "polite" Victorian society disapproved of this new genre and regarded it as a "low form"[8] of literature, because of the way women were represented. Women in sensational novels were depicted as independent

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[7] Pamela Dalziel, "Anxieties of Representation: The Serial Illustrations to Hardy's *The Return of the Native*," *Nineteenth-Century Literature* v. 51, no.1 (1996): 85.

[8] Sammantha Graves, *Reading Sensation Critically: Mary Elizabeth Braddon's Belgravia Fiction* (United States: ProQuest, 2007), p. 9.

and powerful women, which was "as much of a threat to the Victorian society as unchastity."[9]

The first part in the serialisation of *The Return of the Native* appeared in January 1878 accompanied by illustration plates by Arthur Hopkins.

This chapter addresses three main areas that interact with one another: the illustrations, the setting, and the characterisation of the main figures in the novel. Through focusing on these three areas I aim at illustrating key aspects of the role of gender in altering society in *The Return of the Native*. It is necessary to understand the illustrations in order to gain a sense of the novel's first reception among Victorian readers. Within periodicals, visual imagery was important and illustrators were mentioned in magazines at least as prominently as the author. The matter of the illustrations of *The Return of the Native* was not addressed in any depth by Hardy's critics until recently. Only Arlene Jackson in *Illustration and the Novels of Thomas Hardy* (1981) gives a detailed account of Hopkins' plates, and more recently, Pamela Dalziel's essay "Anxieties of Representation: The Serial Illustrations to Hardy's *The Return of the Native*" (1996) presents an informative critique of the novel's medium of publication.

Eustacia Vye and Clym Yeobright appear in five plates of Hopkins' illustrations, stressing their importance as principal characters in the narration. Hardy did not approve of the way Eustacia was portrayed in the first illustration of her, because it did not portray her as he imagined. Arlene Jackson states in *Illustration and the Novels of Thomas Hardy* (1981) that Eustacia, in Hardy's text, was of "a dumpy appearance, unromantic and

[9] Ibid.

unsophisticated."[10] Eustacia was depicted, in the illustration, in manly terms with a telescope in her hand and horses behind her.[11] In his letter to Arthur Hopkins, Hardy criticises this illustration as follows: "I think Eustacia should have been represented as more youthful in face, supple in figure, &, in general, with a little more roundness & softness than have been given her."[12] Horses in the scene can be seen as signifying male sexual passion, and in this case they would appear to represent Eustacia's sensual entrapment between two men, Damon Wildeve and Clym Yeobright. Jackson argues that "Since there are two ponies, the scene suggests Eustacia's relationship with Clym, as well as with Wildeve."[13] Moreover, through the narrative line of the story, Eustacia seeks to obtain help from those two men to flee from the Heath. Hardy was happier with the second plate, which shows Eustacia holding an open parasol in her hand and renders her as a woman of fashion. In the midst of the Heath's wilderness, Eustacia's stylish appearance might be seen as a symptom of her belonging to a different place than this rural land. Furthermore, none of the other women of the Heath is portrayed in the illustrations with a parasol or appears in a stylish manner. In a letter to Hopkins, Hardy states: "I think Eustacia is charming – she is certainly just what I imagined her to be, & the rebelliousness of her nature is precisely caught in your drawing. The grouping of the three figures also is excellent."[14] The revolutionary aspect of Eustacia's character, as shown in this drawing, might be interpreted in her challenging attitude of

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[10] Arlene Jackson, *Illustration and the Novels of Thomas Hardy* (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1981), p. 89.

[11] Plate number (2) in Appendix "A".

[12] Richard Little Purdy and Michael Millgate (eds.), *The Collected Letters of Thomas Hardy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), p. 52.

[13] Jackson, p. 89.

[14] Purdy, p. 59.

interference in a men's workplace. The parasol in the heroine's hand, according to Freud, can be seen as a symbol of male sexuality. In this plate Eustacia is depicted on a higher ground level, while Clym cutting the furze is in the lower part of the scene. This emphasises the complexity of Eustacia's situation of entrapment in Egdon Heath with a husband below her status.

The October illustration depicts Eustacia leaning back against a sofa. As Jackson points out, it "establishes the depth of her ennui and depression."[15] In terms of Eustacia's facial details in this latter plate, Jackson notes that "Hopkins emphasizes her moodiness and the sort of distraction one might expect from a character who is contemplating suicide."[16] However, I might suggest here that Eustacia's contemplation is not of a suicidal nature. Charley's presence in the plate suggests that Eustacia is considering something that might help her escape from the Heath, as Charley has helped her in the first place to meet Clym by taking his role in the mumming play. Therefore, his accompanying Eustacia in this plate suggests that there is another possibility for her to run away from her entrapment on the Heath.

The final plate illustrating Eustacia's death scene is very indicative in terms of what it demonstrates about her personal attributes. Likewise, plate nine that portrays Mrs. Yeobright's death scene pinpoints important qualities of Mrs. Yeobright. Jackson argues; "Each death posture, in fact, becomes an emblem of the personalities, even life styles, of these so very different women."[17] Jackson in her readings of the illustrations establishes a

[15] Ibid., p. 90.

[16] Ibid., p. 90.

[17] Ibid., p. 91.

point of departure for further enquiry. Even if they both die within the boundaries of the Heath, the two deaths are poles apart. The reasons behind their deaths, their personalities and the kinds of life they lived play an important role in the portrayal of their death positions. I argue that Eustacia's defensive death posture, in which she turns her back to the men in the plate, asserts her struggle to attain her goals in a male dominant world. In contrast, Mrs. Yeobright's body shape accords with her conformity to societal orders. Both illustrations depict the people of Egdon Heath around the bodies of the dead women, which can be interpreted as the Heath being the main reason behind both deaths.

Thomasin appears in only two plates of Hopkins' illustrations, yet this appearance is indicative in terms of what it shows of her characteristics. The plate of Thomasin in the apple loft carries clear indications of her as the model Victorian woman whose main responsibility is caring for the household. If we compare this plate with that of Eustacia leaning on the sofa wearing a stylish dress and being served a drink by Charley (plate ten), it is clear that Eustacia's interests are completely different from those of Thomasin. While Thomasin is busy with her work around the house, Eustacia is engaged in a deep thoughtful mood. In the illustration of Eustacia, the Heath is present in the background through the window behind her; Eustacia's unconscious hatred for this landscape can be interpreted as the main reason limiting her aspirations. Plate eleven that shows Thomasin and Venn on the night of Eustacia's death demonstrates another important quality of Thomasin's character. Her act of following Venn pinpoints the state of women on the Heath who obey male commands.

The sixth illustration portrays Eustacia leaning across the window; half of her body is out the window with the men and the other half is within the domestic sphere of her home. Her partial interference in male matters lays the grounds for her as a rebellious woman on the

Heath. The significance of depicting any defiant woman in "manly" terms is also stressed by Margaret Fuller, the American transcendentalist, journalist, and women's rights advocate. In her essay "The Great Lawsuit" (1843), she argues, "It is well known that of every strong woman they say she has a masculine mind."[18] Thus, the heroine's strong will to attain her goals is presented in the "male-like" depictions of her in Hopkins' plates.

Alfred Pearse's poster, "The Modern Inquisition,"[19] which was published by The Women's Social and Political Union during the General Election of 1910 illustrates a defiant suffrage woman being force fed. To compare this illustration with the plate of Eustacia's death (plate twelve), it is clear that both women share the same defiant posture. The shape of the hand and the head thrown back in both illustrations is identical. The shape of the hand, which is like a claw, asserts the tense struggle both women are going through to attain their rights in a society of male patriarchy. In this sense, it might be argued that Hopkins' illustration of Eustacia anticipates the forthcoming mass movements in favour of women's rights. Furthermore, concluding the illustrations with a plate demonstrating death (plate twelve) asserts the tragic sense of the novel.

The illustrations have been chosen and portrayed in accordance with the general taste of the readers of the time. For example, the instances of female defiance are not celebrated; on the contrary, desperate scenes of Eustacia for example prevail in all of the illustrations, which arrive at their zenith in the final tablet of her death. One of the defiant situations of Eustacia that I would personally be particular about seeing illustrated is the scene of her dressed as a Turkish Knight in the mumming play. The heroine took Charley's role in the

[18] Margaret Fuller, "The Great Lawsuit: Man vs. Men, Woman vs. Women" *The Dial* IV (1843): 9.
[19] Appendix "B"

play in order to be able to meet Clym. In this scene Eustacia is not only defying the norms of the Heath by advancing to meet the man she believes will save her, she is also daring to break a greater rule by cross-gender dressing within the confines of Egdon Heath.

Interestingly, all of Hopkins' plates are published having the same dimensions; four inches by six, which suggests the importance of the portrayed dramatic moments. In spite of the "poor technical quality"[20] of the illustrations, they had an impact on the reception of the novel. Jackson argues, "[T]he illustrations are not so easy to dismiss. The strengths they possess make them puzzling to anyone who attempts to evaluate their contribution to the text."[21] A month between the publication of each episode allowed the readers time to anticipate the incidents of the novel and, more importantly, to contemplate the reasons behind the tragic incidents happening to the main characters (which the reader will eventually discover are mainly because of social injustice).

The illustrations can be read as Hopkins' commentary on the novel. Moreover, they have their own impact on the reception of the novel's episodes at the time of their publication. The plates create a visual understanding that interprets the most important themes in the work. One of the palpable themes which can be tracked in the plates is the value and importance of human relationships. This idea is stressed since the central focus of all illustrations is the human characters of the novel. The presence of the people of the Heath is a constant feature of most of the plates.

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[20] Jackson, p. 88.

[21] Ibid.

Also, the natural environment of the Heath dominates most of Hopkins's illustrations. Most of the portrayed incidents happen in the wilderness of the Heath. Even in the illustration of Eustacia leaning on the sofa the Heath features in the window behind her. It is only in the two plates of Thomasin in the apple loft and Diggory Venn in his cart that domesticity and secrecy prevail. Therefore, the plates give another dimension to the understanding of the narration and they have an impact on the readers of the work in its original magazine format. The illustrative works of *The Return of the Native* depict remarkable moments as the quotations placed under them suggest (except "The reddleman re-reads an old love letter" plate). They were also published usually as frontispieces or to face the pages to which they refer. Arthur Hopkins was a significant illustrator and his works demand study. He illustrated two works other than *The Return of the Native*, which are the illustrations for the monthly serialisations of *The Atonement of Leam Dundas* (1876) which appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine* and *Kit — A Memory* (1882) which was published in *The Graphic*.

Looking at Arthur Hopkins' three serialised works, it is noticeable that he follows the same techniques and styles of drawing in his illustrations of *The Atonement of Leam Dundas* (1876) and *Kit — A Memory* (1882). His portrayals of the countryside dominate the larger part of his works. The principal characters in his works are often enclosed and equally overwhelmed by the greatness of their surroundings; they are usually portrayed between the trees, bushes and elements of the wilderness and vastness of the countryside. In spite of the fact that Hopkins had drawn plates of the same style in *The Cornhill Magazine* two years before he illustrated *The Return of the Native*, his experience with Hardy definitely enriched his career. In particular, his correspondence with Hardy and the latter's guidance and notes

enhanced Hopkins' understanding of how the author preferred his work to be presented to his readers.

The main tragedy embedded in the narrative of *The Return of the Native* is the death of the main characters: Eustacia and Wildeve drown in the river. Hardy does not mention the name of the river - it is referred to only as "the river."[22] The use of the definite article "the" without a name suggests an archetypal quality to this natural feature. Unlike the Heath, it changes because of the very fluidity of its substance; "The sea changed, the fields changed, the rivers, ..., yet Egdon remained."[23] Thus, the river which is in constant changing process can be seen as an embodiment of change surrounding Egdon Heath.

The river marks a threshold between the power of the Heath and the power of change outside the Heath's borders. It can be argued that it is bringing change to the Heath gradually because of the nature of its flow. The water is symbolic of life flowing through the village. In terms of Victorian realism, it provides the means of grinding corn and providing flour for bread. Those qualities emphasise its life-giving quality, but also suggest a symbolic religious underpinning because bread is part of the process of redemption from sin through Holy Communion in the Christian Church. The Anglican Church, (and the non-conformist chapels by the middle of the nineteenth century) was the moral compass of village life in late Victorian Britain, as it had been for centuries. Leonore Davidoff & Catherine Hall in *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780-1850* assert this aspect of the

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[22] An image of the river in the *Anniversary Edition of the Wessex Novels* is in "Appendix B". It illustrates how the river surrounds Egdon Heath.

[23] Thomas Hardy, *The Return of the Native* (London: Penguin, 1999), p. 12. All quotations from the novel are from this edition and appear in the text between brackets. It will be abbreviated as *R N*, in the subsequent referencing.

Victorian life; "Attendance at church or chapel was a social necessity."[24] The river therefore embodies life, tradition, and a moral judgement that goes beyond human justice. In Chapter VI, Book five, Thomasin is afraid of the power of the river, "When, a little later, Wildeve returned from his walk to Mistover, Thomasin said, 'Damon, where have you been? I was getting quite frightened, and thought you had fallen into the river.'" (*R N*, p. 339) Since Thomasin knows of her husband's previous relation with Eustacia, she suggests the possibility of Wildeve's being drowned in the river. This suggestion affirms the view of the river as a power that destroys anyone who strays from societal conventions. Likewise, Eustacia the very determined New Woman is annihilated at the edge of the Heath by the power of the river. In this respect, she is the wrong kind of woman for rural, English society and for Victorian middle-class Britain more generally.

Hardy added the sixth book to his novel - containing the marriage of Thomasin Yeobright and Diggory Venn - to suit the tastes and popular demands of the Victorian readers and to emphasise the final happiness of characters who conform to social expectation. On the other hand, this book can be seen as Hardy's challenge to the common and conventional rules regarding the expected formal nature of tragic narrative of his time. Just as the novel's subversive heroine disdains the rules of her society, so, the very narrative form of the text itself defies the expected aesthetic 'laws' of tragic literary genre and adds a sixth book to stress the old formal and implicitly ideological convictions placed on the ways human beings used to live.

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[24] Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780-1850* (London: Hutchinson Education, 1987), p. 76.

The illustrations elucidate certain traits of the male and female characters of *The Return of the Native*. A set of two types of women can be clearly observed: Thomasin - the ideal woman - who is portrayed in two scenes of obedience; and Eustacia -the defiant woman - who appears in five plates. The first four plates depicting Eustacia portray her in male-like, rebelling poses, while the final one depicts her death. Concluding the illustrations with the scene of Eustacia's tragic death asserts her failure to confront the power of the Heath. More or less, the illustrations as visual representations of *The Return of the Native* stress the role of the male and female characters in affecting and contributing to a new set of societal values in a period marked by rapid alteration.

Egdon Heath:

The setting for this tragedy is Egdon Heath: a symbol of permanence and the geological sublime in a countryside undergoing processes of change. Wessex is a recurrent location in much of Hardy's fiction. Egdon Heath features in *The Return of the Native*, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, and the short story "The Withered Arm". Wessex[25]is the south and southwest part of England in Hardy's works. The opening chapter gives vivid geographical descriptions of Egdon Heath, and it is not until the second chapter that Hardy starts identifying his human characters. It has become a critical commonplace that the Heath constitutes the most important element or "character" in *The Return of the Native*. Hardy's introduction of the setting before he mentions any characters is the point of departure for such readings.

[25] Maps of Wessex and a real map of the areas in Hardy's fiction are included in "Appendix B."

Even the title of the first chapter includes a personification that suggests a place that is ancient and resistant to mutability, "A Face on which Time makes but Little Impression." Hardy contrasts Egdon with other natural and human features of the place; "Those surfaces were neither so steep as to be destructible by weather, nor so flat as to be the victims of floods and deposits." (*R N*, p. 12) The lack of extreme height or flatness is significant, for the monumental nature and moderate features of Egdon Heath are what has protected it from various forms of cataclysmic change over the longer term of history. Topographically and symbolically, its size and equanimity resist the effects of rapid and extreme alteration. Yet Hardy bounds its permanence with manifestations of change: the shifting features of the tidal river on one of its sides, and the natural sublime of the sea and the weather on others. Those nonhuman presences prefigure a catastrophe. Moreover, Hardy writes that everything surrounding Egdon changed, "yet Egdon remained," (*R N*, p. 12) drawing attention to its status as a remnant in the process of being left behind.

That stature and ancient presence alludes to the Titans of Greek mythology - giants overthrown by a new order. The Titans were overthrown, according to Hesiod's *Theogony*, after the goddesses slept with mortal men, "But now, O sweet-spoken Muses of Olympos, daughters of Zeus of the aegis, sing out the generation of women."[26] Hardy invokes the Titans when he says of the Heath: "Every night its Titanic form seemed to await something; but it had waited thus, unmoved, during so many centuries, through the crises of so many things, that it could only be imagined to await one last crisis -- the final overthrow." (*R N*, p. 10) The superstitions and witchcraft associated with Egdon throughout the novel similarly

[26] Hesiod, *Hesiod: The Works and Days: Theogony and The Shield of Herakles* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1959), p. 186.

identify a long history of strangeness, with the local populations resisting anything that threatens familiar codes of conduct. The residual belief that there are witches on the Heath emphasises the human cruelty that accompanies fear of difference.[27] Yet Hardy does not deny the heath's potential for change: the "little impression" made by time on its face admits some potential for adaptation.

In most of his imagery, Hardy gives the Heath anatomy, posture and human characteristics: "The face of the heath by its mere complexion added half-an-hour to eve" (*R N*, p. 9) suggests a surface that reflects light whilst prolonging time. An austere standard is established against which the skin tone of the human characters can be compared (the red colour in Venn's skin which "grow'd into" it and "won't wash out" (*R N*, p.77). Hardy also describes the place having feelings and emotions. This involves John Ruskin's concept of the "Pathetic Fallacy,"[28] as described in *Modern Painters* (1856). Ruskin illustrates that the goal of the Pathetic Fallacy is to "signify any description of inanimate natural objects that ascribes to them human capabilities, sensations, and emotions (*Modern Painters* Vol. 3, chapter 12)."[29] It is noteworthy here to consider Hardy's Egdon Heath as having neither male nor female characteristics; its primitiveness renders Egdon as a place beyond the scope of gender.

In chapter eight - Book five - entitled "Rain, Darkness, and anxious Wanderers," the weather on the Heath is in sympathy with the anxiety of the main characters. Clym is impatiently waiting for an answer from his wife after sending Fairway as a messenger to

[27] Discussion with Doctor Susan Oliver draws on environmental theory.
[28] John Ruskin regards Pathetic fallacy as an artistic mistake.

[29] Meyer Howard Abrams and Geoffrey Galt Harpham, *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (Boston: Wadsworth, 2012), p. 269.

rescue their marriage. Thomasin is worried that her husband is about to elope with Eustacia. Eustacia is anxious because she does not have the money to escape from the Heath. Besides, Wildeve is not sure of Eustacia's decision of running away or not. This unease of the Heath dwellers is reflected in the weather:

> To Clym's regret it began to rain and blow hard as the evening advanced. The wind rasped and scraped at the corners of the house, and filliped the eaves-droppings like peas against the panes. .. It was one of those nights when cracks in the walls of old churches widen, when ancient stains on the ceilings of decayed manor-houses are renewed and enlarged from the size of a man's hand to an area of many feet. (*R N*, p. 349)

In Book One, chapter three, "The Custom of the Country", the narrator identifies the Heath as a "country" as early as the title, and then moves into illustrating how its people work and think: "Every individual was so involved in furze by his method of carrying the faggots that he appeared like a bush on legs till he had thrown them down." (*R N*, p. 19) It is interesting in this respect to compare Hardy's description of the Heath as a place where "Civilisation was its enemy" (*R N*, p. 12) with Raymond Williams' account of rural underdevelopment accompanied with notions of the country in English literature from the sixteenth century; "the country … [is] a place of backwardness, ignorance, limitation."[30] The Heath is the main obstacle in the way of Eustacia's aspirations, and it is significantly marked by its people's superstitious beliefs.

[30] Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 1.

Quiet Woman Inn:

Not only the Heath, but every part of the place is significant in *The Return of the Native*. The Quiet Woman Inn, run by Wildeve, is symbolically important in terms of its location (which involves a turn in the road), its place as an institution at the center of the community, and the visual imagery on its sign: "they turned towards the inn, known in the neighbourhood as the Quiet Woman, the sign of which represented the figure of a matron carrying her head under her arm." (*R N*, p. 44) The Inn can be read as a symbol of tradition on the Heath, as it is the place where a mainly male community socialises. Having a headless woman as its sign, the Inn carries sinister implications asserting the expected silence of women at the heart of the Heath. Indeed, the figure works as an illustration within the text and asserts Hardy's consideration of the power of visual imagination. Moreover, the sign symbolises the situation of Victorian women in general and particularly the women of Egdon Heath. The mind, the heart and the breast of the figure are on the same level. Women's femininity, symbolised by the breast, and their affectionate motherly love, marked by the heart are under male patriarchal control, similar to the head which is the centre of reasoning and decision making. Thus, an important characteristic of the Victorian woman is her complete obedience and not only her being a constant mother and wife.

Since the relationship and connection between an environment and its inhabitants are inescapable, the people of the Heath take on the characteristics already attributed to the land where they live and work. They refuse to accept any alterations in the ways they are accustomed to living. Hardy addresses the fear of discord through two types of female characters representing two main, topical trends; the defiant and sexualised figure that would later emerge as the New Woman – a figure that did not appear until many years after *The*

Return of the Native throughout the 1880s and early 1890s - in contrast to the self-sublimating Angel in the House.

The term "Angel in the House," which was commonly used to describe the ideal example of the Victorian woman, originates from Coventry Patmore's poem "The Angel in the House" (1854, revised through 1862). Patmore wrote the poem as a continuation of courtship after marriage to his wife, Emily, whom he considered to be the perfect woman. The term was used to indicate women who embodied the Victorian respectable middle-class ideal of wives as the spiritual and moral guardians of the home. As Joseph Black points out in *The Broadview Anthology of British Literature,* the ideal Victorian woman was expected to embody "Quiet beauty, purity, devotion and selflessness."[31] In this sense, the Angel in the House is personified in the character of Thomasin Yeobright, who is a wife and mother selflessly devoted to her children and submissive to her husband.

Women in Victorian Britain were expected to be chaste prior to marriage and faithful afterwards, although the reality was different from the ideal. In Hardy's novels, marital questions confront a number of different anxieties. Money and class considerations were socially important, but they are not the only things that Hardy questions. Mutual understanding and love appears to be of more significance and value in his works. Published seventeen years after *The Return of the Native*, *Jude the Obscure* (1895) clearly deals with anxieties of the New Woman that began to be noticeable in the fin-de-siècle. In *Jude the Obscure*, Hardy represented marriage and female sexuality in such ideologically liberal ways

[31] Joseph Black etal. (ed.), *The Broadview Anthology of British Literature: The Victorian Era* (Toronto: Broadview Press, 2006), p. LIX.

that its publication led to a "moral outcry."[32] Sue Bridehead and Arabella Donn are two different types of women in Jude's life: they also represent two contrasting aspects of New Womanhood. Sue is free-spirited while Arabella is sensual and utilitarian. Sue confronts tradition and Victorian morality through principled resistance, whereas Arabella adapts to changing circumstances by using her sexuality for selfish ends; Arabella leaves Jude Fawley on his death bed to get another man: "'I should not mind having a spin there with a fellow's arm round my waist,' she said to one of the men."[33]

The male counterpart to the domestic Angel in the House in that period was the Victorian gentleman. The gentleman according to John Henry Newman in *The Idea of a University* (1852) should be "tender towards the bashful, gentle towards the distant, and merciful towards the absurd; he can recollect to whom he is speaking; he guards against unseasonable allusions, or topics which may irritate; he is seldom prominent in conversation, and never wearisome."[34] Clym in *The Return of the Native* can be seen as the ideal of a gentleman. He is very sensitive and keeps blaming himself for being the cause of the death of two women, his mother and wife. Clym after the death of Eustacia says, "She is the second woman I have killed this year. I was a great cause of my mother's death, and I am the chief cause of hers." (*R N,* p. 368) There is no doubt that Hardy's portrayal of the problems faced by his male and female characters is very much based on the sexual stereotypes that were prevalent in his culture.

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[32] Ledger and Roger Luckhurst (eds.), p. 98.
[33] Thomas Hardy, *Jude the Obscure* (London: Penguin Books, 1998), p. 404.
[34] John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University: Defined and Illustrated* edited with intro and notes by I. T. Ker, (London: Clarendon Press, 1976), p. 179.

Eustacia Vye: Queen of Night:

Eustacia Vye is an exceptional woman; she is different from the submissive woman championed in the dominant patriarchal value-systems of the Victorian period. She is representative of the "New Woman" populating emergent discourses of the *fin de siècle.* She challenges dominant gender norms of masculine strength and feminine passivity by striving to prove her autonomous social identity in an androcentric social order. Eustacia is the "bad" girl in the eyes of Heath dwellers and according to Victorian principles. Her "nonconformity" to the traditions and rules of her society is demonstrated in her answer to Diggory Venn's attempt to persuade her to give up her love for Wildeve, "Am I not to show favour to any person I may choose without asking permission of a parcel of cottagers?" (*R N,* p. 93)

The paragraph opening the "Queen of Night" chapter is dedicated to Eustacia's virtues as a model goddess but not as a model woman:

> Eustacia Vye was the raw material of a divinity. On Olympus she would have done well with a little preparation. She had the passions and instincts which make a model goddess, that is, those which make not quite a model woman. Had it been possible for the earth and mankind to be entirely in her grasp for a while, had she handled the distaff, the spindle, and the shears at her own free will, few in the world would have noticed the change of government. (*R N,* p. 58)

Eustacia has a free will, passions and instincts that are very similar to that of gods. This mythical representation of her is regarded as an "Ovidian irony" according to David Eggenschwiler in his essay "Eustacia Vye, Queen of Night and Courtly Pretender":

> I am puzzled that so many commentators have used this "Queen of Night" chapter—and in particular this quoted passage—to point out that Hardy romantically defies Eustacia and yet have not noticed how ironic he sometimes is toward this apotheosis.[35]

By giving Eustacia the name "The Queen of the Night", Hardy alludes to one of the main characters in Mozart's opera *The Magic Flute*. In Mozart's opera, The Queen of the Night is a powerful figure who attempts to control those around her, male and female. In the end, she loses to Sarastro (representing the male patriarch)[36]. Similarly, Eustacia loses her life at the end of the novel in confrontation with the dominant patriarchy of the Heath.

The conflicting attitudes of the other characters in the novel towards Eustacia assert the complexity of her representation. Her soubriquet "the Queen of the Night" lays the grounds for two possible interpretations in regard to her personality. Darkness can indicate either her evil nature, or the mysterious unknown aspects of the heroine. Hardy allows the reader an interpretative space in which to view the heroine either as an evil or wronged character. Is she really a witch as most of the Heath's dwellers believe, or is she misunderstood by her society? It is palpable that the uniqueness of Eustacia's personality renders her an outcast in the eyes of the members of her community. Therefore, it can be argued that she is believed to possess magical influences, because she is different from the rest of women on the Heath and in the Victorian period in general. The mythical aspects accompanied with the representation of Eustacia's character assert the fearful element of the New Woman in rural communities.

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[35] David Eggenschwiler, "Eustacia Vye, Queen of Night and Courtly Pretender," *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* v. 25, no. 4 (1971): 43.

[36] Burton D. Fisher, *Mozart's The Magic Flute* (US: Opera Journeys Publishing, 2005).

Eustacia abhors her life on the Heath and aims to leave it for a freer place: "Egdon was her Hades[37]." (*R N,* p. 69) Hardy portrays her as a beautiful but strange-natured woman who defies the rules of her rural society. She ends her relationship with Wildeve to follow another love: one that may liberate her from Egdon. Clym Yeobright, who has been working in Paris before moving to live on the Heath, is seen by Eustacia as a potential saviour who will romantically rescue her from her misery. She has great expectations of the man whom she will one day marry; however, when she marries Clym, she is devastated by what she perceives as his lack of desire:

> To be loved to madness – such was her great desire. Love was to her the one cordial which could drive away the eating loneliness of her days. And she seemed to long for the abstraction called passionate love more than for any particular lover. (*R N*, p. 71)

Eustacia is in love with the notion of love more than with Clym's personality.

In order to see Clym, Eustacia dresses up as a Turkish Knight in the mumming play that will take place in Clym's house. She not only crosses the gender barrier set by her biological being as a woman, she is also following her sensual desires. Her disguise as a 'Turkish Knight' suggests that she possesses some of the characteristics of this reincarnation which is mainly characterised by its sexual, barbarian instincts within an orientalist paradigm.

Even after achieving her goal of marrying Clym, Eustacia is not satisfied because marriage does not meet her expectations. This dissatisfaction can be seen as one of the important aspects of the New Woman's characterisation: even when she accomplishes her aims within the parameters of patriarchal social norms, she is unfulfilled. Hardy seems to

[37] Hardy is referring here to classical Greek mythology - Persephone, stuck in Hades with a God she does not love. Meanwhile, her mother Demeter refuses to allow spring to appear until she has been reunited with her daughter Persephone.

argue that just as the Victorian ideal of the ideal woman in the home was unrealistic, so was the ideal of liberated feminism pursued by New Womanhood.

In terms of clearly identifying the used terms in this thesis, it is necessary to draw on the term "The New Woman". The New Woman is a social and literary phenomenon rooted in the British and American culture from the 1890s through the 1910s. The terminology; however, did not come into existence until 1894 when initially used by British writer Sarah Grand in her essay "The New Aspects of the Woman Question".

Seeking to define the term of the New Woman, it is essential to point out Sally Ledger's view of this term. Ledger writes:

> The New Woman as a category was by no means stable. Whilst medico-scientific discourse, for example, focused on reproductive issues, emphasising the New Woman's supposed refusal of maternity, antipathetic fictional discourses on the New Woman concentrated instead on her reputed sexual license. The New Woman writers themselves did not always agree on who or what the New Woman was…. The elusive quality of the New Woman of the *fin de siècle* clearly marks her as a problem, as a challenge to the apparently homogeneous culture of Victorianism which could not find a consistent language by which she could be categorised and dealt with. All that was certain was that she was dangerous, a threat to the *status quo.*[38]

Therefore, the most important point to consider while using this term is the instability of its representation. Henceforward, I will explore the different conceptions of the New Woman and offer a definition of this term as used in this study.

As a literary figure, the New Woman reflects a number of cultural, social, intellectual and sexual anxieties of the late nineteenth century, and the extent to which female characters

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[38] Sally Ledger, *The New Woman: Fiction and Feminism at the Fin de Siècle* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), p. 10-11.

conquer these anxieties and their problematic consequences. The complexity of this term lies in the various conceptions that this literary persona evokes.

The leading female characters representing the New Woman figure in the studied novels cannot be regarded as sufficient examples for the purpose of defining and pinpointing the different aspects attributed to the New Woman during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In works of fiction and nonfiction of the turn of the century, the New Woman did not have a definite role or depiction. It had a rather "creative" and "diverse" nature in her pursuits to attain her final goal.

In the studied novels from both British and American landscapes, the degree of independence exerted by the female protagonists varies and escalates with the social restrictions imposed on them. Also, their final tragic resolutions are often seen as retribution from their society and epitomised by their suicidal death, social elimination or death of children. A moving example in this case is the death of Sue and Jude's children in Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* and the eventual return of Sue to her previous husband which can be seen as another form of "self-punishment to her poor self."[39]

The New Woman has committed herself to various kinds of independence in the fields of education, politics, work, and married life. In the married life, for example, she is usually wary of the equal and shared respect between the man and woman. Also, this literary figure is associated with the sexual freedom of women, especially those female characters who are discontented with the patriarchal marriages and are seeking relationships outside the

[39] Hardy, *Jude the Obscure*, p. 481.

married lock. These sexual rights for women embody the controversial values and ideals that the New Woman embodies.

Alongside the literary atmosphere that has initiated and reflected the emergence of the New Woman, the historical and social incidents, on both sides of the Atlantic, have an immense influence on the prosperity of this kind of women in late nineteenth century British and American landscape; "The social conditions presaging the New Woman's inception were the industrialization, urbanization, and massive growth of the middle class in nineteenth-century Britain and the United Sates."[40] The wider engagement of women in public roles, education and work place besides the wider interest in issues outside their domestic arena have helped the New Women from different cultural and social backgrounds to bloom and gain their independence.

Indeed, the New Woman can be seen as "a crucial modern social development"[41] in the studied works, from both the British and American backgrounds. In the specified novels, we are introduced to new prospects of this evolving icon. Nonetheless, the complexity of her representation did not distract this figure from her main goal, which is, in most of the portrayals, involve an inner struggle with herself at first hand and with others around her secondly. Thus, the New Woman as a term used in this thesis includes a collection of different female attempts to attain a sort of autonomy over their lives. This figure is not only an emblem of women's strife in relation to suffrage and politics, but she also cares about

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[40] Charlotte J. Rich. *Transcending the New Woman: Multiethnic Narratives in the Progressive Era* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2009), p. 7, 8.
[41] Martha H. Patterson. *The American New Woman Revisited: A Reader 1894-1930* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2008), p. 2.

other important issues that affect women's daily lives such as marriage, self-identification, female attire, sexual freedom and motherhood.

Eustacia faces double disappointment in her life. Firstly, she is frustrated by the Heath folk who regard her as an outsider and consider her beauty and social aspirations to be sources of fear and concern. Secondly, she is discouraged by the man whom she chooses to be her husband. She initially believed Clym to be emotionally passionate, educated and aspiring like herself. But he proves to be impervious to her needs. The illustration in *Belgravia* portraying her holding her parasol, standing in a part of land above Clym, affirms her station as a lady of fashion who is put in an inapt place for her due to her husband's indifference; Clym carries on singing without paying attention to her approach. Hardy states: "Unconscious of her presence, he still went on singing:— *'Le point du jour…..*" (*R N,* p. 248) From another perspective, this incident stresses the perilous consequences of the remoteness in the relationship between husband and wife.

Eustacia is treated badly and looked on as an "inferior" in her society. She is a witch[42] in the eyes of the Heath's folk. She is the "other" or the neglected member of the Heath. In her essay "The Quiet Women of Egdon Heath", Jennifer Gribble asserts: "Eustacia affirms her role as 'other', as exotic, as scapegoat, but even as she does so, she takes further her challenge to masculine strongholds. Her gender-crossing not only affronts her grandfather's sense of decorum, but also, it now more blatantly seizes the sexual initiative

[42] Eustacia embodies something old as well as something new, with witch-like traits adding to the progressive behaviour that troubles the villagers.

conventionally assigned to the male."[43] Eustacia did not allow her social shunning to prevent her from attainting her ultimate goals. As already mentioned, in order to see Clym she dresses up as a Turkish Knight.

Throughout the novel, Eustacia is accused of two offences which she has not committed. One is grounded in superstition and folklore, and the other in codes of etiquette. Firstly, Susan Nunsuch believes that Eustacia is the one responsible for the illness of her son. Secondly, Clym believes that Eustacia deliberately did not open the door for his mother: the incident precipitating his mother's demise. Annie Ramel argues that Eustacia is the victim of male mistreatment in the novel: "Hardy insists on his 'women criminals' being innocent and pure, the victims of male exploitation or misunderstanding."[44] However, Eustacia does not only suffer from male but also from female misunderstanding in her society. Both Mrs. Yeobright and Susan Nunsuch think of her as a bad woman and witch. While Susan pricks her in the arm with a long stocking-needle in the church, Mrs. Yeobright asserts to Sam and Clym in a conversation about Eustacia's beauty, "Good girls don't get treated as witches even on Egdon.'" (*R N*, p. 178)

Reading, education, and the mention of the books in the novel can be seen as clear indications of the permitted educational level of the females toward the turn of the century, and of how limitations were imposed on women in terms of their education. The very act of reading for women involved that female readers preserve their traditional roles. Through

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[43] Jennifer Gribble, "The Quiet Women of Egdon Heath," *Essays in Criticism: A Quarterly Journal of Literary Criticism* v. 46, no. 3 (1996): 249.

[44] Annie Ramel, "Tess the Murderess, Eustacia the Adder: Two Women 'Criminals' in Hardy's Fiction," in *Fiction, Crime, and the Feminine*, eds. Redouane Abouddahab and Josiane Paccaud-Huguet (Newcastle upon Tyne, England: Cambridge Scholars, 2011), p. 65.

reading, women were supposed to obtain instruction in being more obedient and acquire knowledge of new strategies for pleasing the men in their duty circle.

Therefore, as portrayed in the novel, being an educated female character, connected with education and books, could inflict destructive consequences on the woman and even on the men around her. Wherever the heroine is linked with reading, she is doing something extraordinary and at the same time not quite acceptable in her social surrounding. In the same context that education is harmful for girls, Eustacia's grandfather states that it is better for her if she has read less romantic stories, stressing again the overall belief that the danger of such readings lies in the frail nature of the minds and hearts of women and children, leading them to the inability to distinguish between life and fiction. Eustacia is not like the other women on the Heath, because she prioritises the duty towards herself over the sacred duty towards the men in her life. Hardy proposes this lingering belief in his novel as follows:

> "Ah, there's too much of that sending to school in these days! It only does harm. Every gatepost and barn's door you come to is sure to have some bad word or other chalked upon it by the young rascals—a woman can hardly pass for shame sometimes. If they'd never been taught how to write they wouldn't have been able to scribble such villainy. Their fathers couldn't do it, and the country was all the better for it."
>
> "Now, I should think, Cap'n, that Miss Eustacia had about as much in her head that comes from books as anybody about here?"
>
> "Perhaps if Miss Eustacia, too, had less romantic nonsense in her head it would be better for her," said the captain shortly; after which he walked away. (*R N,* p. 109)

The power of Eustacia evaporates in front of that of the Heath and its society. She is eliminated from the Heath by the collective communal force. The Heath can be regarded as an unchanging natural force that not only reflects culture but also shapes it by its sublime and unchanging presence. Eustacia's exclusion and neglect from the members of her society can

be interpreted in the light of Friedrich Nietzsche's concept of "will to power" which "can manifest itself only against resistances; therefore it seeks that which resists it."[45] Eustacia defies the authority of her society; therefore, the Heath eliminates her as the other or the inferior part in the community. Eustacia is not only challenging the long-established orders of her society, she is also challenging male dominance. Her demise can be seen as being in favour of the men in the novel: it helps the male figures to stay in power.

In the narration of *The Return of the Native* there is a halo of uncertainty surrounding the nature of Eustacia's death. It is unknown if she has committed a suicide or has fallen in the water by accident. Whether Eustacia's death is a matter of fate or suicide, it is essential to consider the influences of her character from the writer's point of view on one hand and the fictional community in which she lives on the other.

Eustacia's fate symbolises that of the defiant woman in Victorian society. Furthermore, her death, after the act of Susan's melting an effigy resembling the person of Eustacia in the seventh chapter of book five, "The Night of the Sixth of November", discloses the lingering belief in black magic on the part of rural British nineteenth-century society. We might ask whether Hardy believed in black magic and witchcraft (as do most of the Heath's folk) since he lived in the same environment, or whether he treats it symbolically, as the remnant of an anachronistic attachment to outmoded values? I propose that Hardy utilises superstition as more than a mere belief in witchcraft within *The Return of the Native,* as he was interested in its sociological effects in rural societies.

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[45] Lawrence J. Hatab, *Nietzsche's On the Genealogy of Morality: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 12.

Before her demise, Eustacia is always linked with black magic and witchcraft; however, after her death she is an exceptional spectacle for the entire people of Egdon. She is associated with light even on her deathbed: "They stood silently looking upon Eustacia, who, as she lay there still in death, eclipsed all her living phases. Pallor did not include all the quality of her complexion, which seemed more than whiteness; it was almost light." (*R N*, p. 367) The correlation of Eustacia's death with light prevails to the extent that it illumines Hardy's own stance towards such aspiring and challenging female characters. Their exceptional qualities and attributes, which are regarded as magical, supernatural, and unsuitable for adaption in their communities, do considerably bring enlightenment about the new values and ideals they call for. Moreover, Eustacia's death can be read as the tragedy of the women in a society that considers them as inferior creatures: sexually, intellectually, socially and economically. Eustacia's rebellious and "flame-like" soul stands for the first flame for women's movements of change in Victorian England. Eustacia's death symbolises the final, irrevocable transformation of her into the ideal compliant woman. She is silenced and made incapable of action. Her death represents the ultimate sublimation of self-interest and sexual desire, and her rebelliousness is finally curtailed.

Nicola Lacey traces the fundamental changes in ideas of selfhood, gender and social order through different representations of women characters in eighteenth and nineteenth century novels. In her book, *Women, Crime, and Character: From Moll Flanders to Tess of the D'Ubervilles*, Lacey argues that female criminality and hazardousness were ideas attached to women in the late Victorian period:

> [L]ow levels of recorded female crime [by the end of the 19th Century] were juxtaposed with significant late Victorian fears of female criminality, and by a profusion of theories of female

> dangerousness, often portrayed onto images of sexually motivated or emotionally rooted crime.[46]

In light of this comment, Susan's fear of Eustacia is mainly because she has a great influence on her son; this influence that Susan does not want to acknowledge emanates from Eustacia's sexual beauty. The charm-like effect of that sexual allure makes the Heath's dwellers fear Eustacia and regard her as a "criminal" and "dangerous" woman. Sam, being one of the Heath's dwellers, acknowledges Eustacia's uniqueness. In a conversation with Clym about Eustacia's beauty he says: '"Yes, tolerably well-favoured,' Sam replied. 'Lord! all the country owns that 'tis one of the strangest things in the world that such a woman should have come to live up there.' " (*R N*, p. 177) So, Eustacia's sexual attractiveness is one of the main reasons behind her tragedy, because she becomes perceived by the people of the Heath as possessing magic powers over men.

Thomasin Yeobright: The Angel in the House and Model Heroine:

Thomasin Yeobright, Clym's cousin, is the model woman in *The Return of the Native* according to middle-class standards in Victorian Britain. Richard Beckman describes Thomasin thus: "the type which would like to be happy passively, without changing things."[47] Thomasin never wants to alter anything in her life; she is happy when Wildeve marries her, and happy again at the end of the novel, when she marries Diggory Venn. Thomasin is rewarded at the end of the novel by having her child, which is an indication of futurity.

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[46]Nicola Lacey, *Women, Crime, and Character: From Moll Flanders to Tess of the D'Ubervilles* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 113.

[47] Richard Beckman, "A Character Typology for Hardy's Novels," *ELH* v. 30, no. 1 (1963): 77.

Thomasin is an epitome of Victorian womanhood, yet she has transgressed one of the most important rituals of the Victorian society by courting Wildeve and asking him for marriage: “Here am I, asking you to marry me; when by rights you ought to be on your knees imploring me.” (p. 47) Concurrently, she has done this out the fear of being socially shamed by the alternative - a broken engagement. So, she has broken one of the laws of societal decorum to avoid a greater social shame that she would incur if she broke her engagement with Wildeve.

The statue in front of the Quiet Woman Inn represents to a great extent the predicament of Thomasin. In order for the woman to live in a polite Victorian community, she should cease any type of independent thinking or reasoning in order to cope with the demands of the men around her (her husband, father, sons and brothers). The Woman should figuratively cut off her “head,” to privilege her heart in symbolic parallel with the figure in front of the Inn. On the sign, the head, heart and breast are next to one another rather than being separated by a distance. All the attributes of polite femininity are aligned. Eustacia dies because of her social discontentedness, but Thomasin succeeds in keeping silent and doing whatever the patriarchal society demands, and eventually she is rewarded by having a daughter and a new husband even after Wildeve passes away. Yet she has no will of her own.

Mrs. Yeobright:

Mrs. Yeobright is an embodiment of the principles of the first wave of feminism because of her care for the financial independence of women.[48] Lee Holcombe argues that under the common law of nineteenth-century England "married women were little better than their husbands' slaves."[49] However, the Married Women's Property Acts of 1870 and 1882 - which are the main achievements of first wave feminism - gave married women the right to own and control their money and property separately from the husbands. Indeed, Mrs. Yeobright's act of sending money to Thomasin and not to Wildeve implies her violation of the social rules which state that women and everything they possess belong to their husbands. Moreover, Hardy suggests this act as an implication of the later success of women in obtaining autonomy over their possessions, including any inherited money.

Mrs. Yeobright's attitude towards the characters of the novel varies. She is gentle and compassionate with her son Clym, with Thomasin, Wildeve and even with Diggory Venn; yet she is aggressive and resentful towards Eustacia. She thinks of Eustacia as a witch and dangerous for her son, in accordance with the overall idea of the people of the Heath;

> Observing that Clym appeared singularly interested Mrs. Yeobright said rather uneasily to Sam, "You see more in her than most of us do. Miss Vye is to my mind too idle to be charming. I have never heard that she is of any use to herself or to other people. (*R N*, p. 178)

Robert C. Schweik asserts that Mrs. Yeobright does hate the conventionality of life on the Heath, but still she does not transgress boundaries by defying society as Eustacia does. She

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[48] First wave feminism was mainly concerned with women's rights (property rights, custody of children, mental health rights, capacity to give evidence in court, and education). One of the first feminist treatises was Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792).

[49] Lee Holcombe, *Wives and Property: Reform of the Married Women's Property Law in Nineteenth-Century England* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983), p. 37.

has moderate views: "Mrs. Yeobright has crossed the threshold of conventionality, but unlike Clym, she has not gone beyond it. She shares in some ways the attitudes of both Clym and Eustacia"[50] Yet it can be argued that the submissive obedience of the model Victorian women is one of the reasons behind the tragedies happening to the new type of defiant woman.

Susan Nunsuch:

Susan Nunsuch's role in the novel seems secondary; however, her actions have a remarkable effect on the development of the narrative and on the theme of social change. At the beginning of the narration she commits a cruel act, piercing her hat-pin into Eustacia's arm in church. Towards the end of the novel, she melts the wax effigy that she has made of Eustacia on the same night of the latter's death. Susan believes that Eustacia has charmed her son, Charley, and caused his illness. Gribble argues, "Susan perceives Eustacia's sexual power as a threat to the sons of Egdon."[51] Eustacia's beauty gives her a power over the men of Egdon: Susan likens it to the power of black magic. In this regard, it can be argued that Eustacia is a "scapegoat and ritual victim"[52] of the old dominant beliefs of the people of the Heath about the danger of female sexual attractiveness.

In the final chapter of the fifth book, "Rain, Darkness, and anxious Wanderers", which reports the death of Eustacia and Wildeve, Susan's act of superstition urges the

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[50] Robert C. Schweik, "Theme, Character, and Perspective in Hardy's The Return of the *Native*," *PQ*, v. 41 (1962): 762.

[51] Gribble, p. 252.

[52] Ibid.

readers to question the beliefs of the Heath's folk on the one hand and Hardy's own beliefs on the other:

> [T]he boy's mother busied herself with a ghastly invention of superstition, calculated to bring powerlessness, atrophy, and annihilation on any human being against whom it was directed. It was a practice well known on Egdon at that date, and one that is not quite extinct at the present day. (*R N*, p. 347)

The importance of this act of black magic lies in the fact that Eustacia's death immediately follows this superstitious ritual. Susan's actions and believes represents those of the Heath's community, because Hardy suggests that this act was and still "not quite extinct". Superstition is present in most of Hardy's works. In "The Withered Arm" which shares the same setting with *The Return of the Native* (Egdon Heath), witchcraft constitutes an important part of the narration of the short story. Rhoda Brook "overlooks" and "bewitches" the young wife of Mr. Lodge, Gertrude. This causes Gertrude's fragile arm to wither; "Mrs. Lodge's gradual loss of the use of her left arm was owing to her being 'overlooked' by Rhoda Brook."[53]

It is remarkable that in Hardy's works the people who believe and engage in superstitious acts are farmers or general people of the rural Heath; Herbert Borthwick Grimsditch argues that "It has already been remarked that Hardy represents the peasants as pagans at heart…. Their superstitions, however, are many and varied, and are very seriously believed by all."[54] It is the general folk of Egdon who cling to the old values and believes,

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[53] Thomas Hardy, *The Withered Arm and Other Stories* (London: Penguin Books, 1999), p. 344.

[54] Herbert Borthwick Grimsditch, *Character and Environment in the Novels of Thomas Hardy* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1962), p. 90.

while the heroes and heroines who have new ways of thinking abhor these acts and work towards altering and challenging them.

Clym Yeobright:

Clement Yeobright or Clym is the representative of the "New Man" in *The Return of the Native*. He is the "native" son of Egdon who returns from Paris to his home with principles that he wants to apply to help the people of the Heath. He is a hero and reformer in the sense that the novel is named after him. Clym's main aim is to educate and enlighten the people of the Heath. In his essay "*The Return of the Native* as a Tragedy in Six Books", Richard Benvenuto stresses Clym's nobility: "His actions had been those of a man too good for his world."[55] Clym abandons his work with diamonds in Paris and turns to educate his people, because he has found that human respect – not money - is the supreme power that can contribute to change in society. Clym leaves his work with diamonds and return to Egdon to work with something just as precious, namely educating the new generation of Egdon.

Because of his caring nature, Clym believes himself responsible for the death of the two women whom he loves: his mother and wife. He refuses to listen to their advice to return to Paris, and instead works on starting as a school teacher in Egdon. However, he becomes a preacher after the death of his mother and Eustacia. In the final chapter in the novel, "Cheerfulness again asserts itself at Blooms-End, and Clym finds his Vocation." Hardy clarifies that Clym's preaching does not seem to find interest among the people of the Heath:

[55] Richard Benvenuto, "*The Return of the Native* as a Tragedy in Six Books," *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* v. 26, no. 1 (1971): 91, 92.

"They listened to the words of the man in their midst, who was preaching, while they abstractedly pulled heather, stripped ferns, or tossed pebbles down the slope." (p. 395) His determination lowered him from a position as a jewel trader in Paris to that of a simple preacher in a small village. Gribble argues that [Clym] "is finally made impotent by the drama which he has been so deeply implicated."[56] Clym has done what he likes and thinks to be right, which assures his happiness with himself and his achievements, even though he did not go for a "better class" of wife or job.

The tragedy in the novel is stressed by the hero's loneliness. Clym returns to change the old habits of the Heath's dwellers; however, they are unaware of his presence. In the final chapter of the novel, Charley looks for Clym through the glass of the window – because of Clym's partial blindness - to tell him about what is going on in the house where the people of the Heath are gathered for celebrating Venn and Thomasin's marriage. Clym enquires of Charley:

> Do any of them seem to care about my not being there?' Clym asked. 'No, not a bit in the world. Now they are all holding up their glasses and drinking somebody's health.' … 'Well, they haven't concerned themselves about me, and it is quite right they should not. It is all as it should be, and Thomasin at least is happy. (*R N*, p. 392)

Benvenuto (1971) argues that *The Return of the Native* is still a tragic novel, despite the happy ending for Thomasin and Venn the reddleman. "But if we keep our attention on Clym", Benvenuto proposes, "we learn that Hardy retained his original conception while appearing to conform to the demands of serial publication; and that he used the transplanted ending to add to the portrait of his original hero a tragic edge and power it would not otherwise have had. The point of the novel is not simply the native's return, but his

[56] Gribble, p. 255.

destruction."[57] Indeed, Clym's loss of his mother and wife displays him as the tragic figure of the novel, and the fact that he is not even missed from the Heath's dwellers renders him as a stranger in spite of his attempts to guide and instruct them.

Damon Wildeve:

Damon Wildeve is the owner of the Quiet Woman Inn of the Heath. At the beginning of the narration, he is wavering between marrying Thomasin and keeping Eustacia's love. However, he marries Thomasin after Eustacia's decision to forsake him and marry Clym (who may take her to Paris). His name "Wildeve" consists of two words "wild" and "eve" asserting his love to a wild-natured woman and indicating that any possible tragic "wild" end for him may be caused by a woman's love. Wildeve is an "ex-engineer", but he leaves his profession to run an inn in Egdon. The people of the Heath do not approve that change, because it is considered a move down the social ladder: "He was brought up to better things than keeping the Quiet Woman. An engineer - that's what the man was, as we know; but he threw away his chance, and so 'a took a public-house to live. His learning was no use to him at all." (*R N*, p. 26) It can be argued here that the Heath limits the potentials of its dwellers and keeps them under control, especially those who would be tempted to break its rules like Wildeve.

Before his death Wildeve has a daughter with Thomasin, "little Eustacia"; however, Hardy never depicts him in an affectionate fatherly scene with his daughter. Little Eustacia is always mentioned in connection with her mother, which confirms the conventions of

[57] Benvenuto, p. 91.

Victorian father-son and mother-daughter relations. Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall stress this situation as follows: "Mothers were to be relied upon for personal care and emotional rather than economic support. While for fathers involvement with their children's lives was a matter of choice."[58]

The Reddleman: Diggory Venn:

Diggory Venn is a travelling reddleman in *The Return of the Native*. He supplies the farmers with redding for their sheep. The red dye has stained his skin, and gives him the appearance of a devilish person. Hardy writes in chapter three that he is "red from top to toe." (*R N*, p. 35) His first appearance in the novel is in his act of helping Thomasin after she comes back heart-broken without being married to Wildeve. The complexity of Venn's character is embodied in the duality of the people's reception of him. At the beginning of the novel, he is portrayed as a person who spreads fear in children's hearts. If any mother wants to frighten her child in Egdon, she will say that the reddleman is coming. Later on, when Venn abandons his job as a reddleman and works in a farm the whole of Egdon Heath's people celebrate his marriage to Thomasin.

This duality in Hardy's representation of Venn and the Heath folks dealing with him is a depiction of the disorder in Venn's milieu; "we can account for these instabilities in terms of the instability of their encompassing milieu."[59] Looking at the change of the people of the Heath's attitude towards Venn from another perspective, it can be argued that the

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[58] Davidoff & Catherine Hall, p. 335.

[59] David Musselwhite, *Social Transformation in Hardy's Tragic Novels: Megamachines and Phantasms* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 38.

inhabitants of the Heath judge each other on the basis of their class and jobs. Therefore, after Venn leaves his profession in redding, he transforms into an eligible lover for Thomasin. The illustration portraying Venn in the darkness of his cart reading a love letter shows another angle of this demon character. It indicates his secret love of Thomasin Yeobright.

Venn is a symbolic figure of tradition. He is a figure who holds the community together. He travels between the Heath and other areas around it. His main goal is to make a connection between the degenerates and tradition in the novel. Venn is a development of Wordsworth's figure of the peddler in the sense that both of them wander in the solitude of fields as they move from one community to another in the course of their work. On a broad scale, it can be argued that the reddleman is doing the same thing in his travels as the Wordsworthian observer; he is watching what is happening on the outskirts of Egdon Heath, but returns to it to assert that nothing will change on the Heath. Moreover, Venn is always following Eustacia to assure himself that nothing will affect the happiness of Thomasin; he is the Victorian detractor.

The major characters, especially male characters, in the novel suffer from unstable class positions accompanied with frustration on their part after moving from a higher profession to a lower one. Clym abandons his work as a jeweler to be a furze cutter; Wildeve leaves engineering for inn keeping; and the reddleman turns from his work in redding to be a dairyman. It is evident that the three men go through a class change. But, the reddleman's class mobility is accepted by his surrounding society, whereas the other two's changes in occupations are looked upon as unacceptable.

Both the men and women of Egdon do have a common problem that they suffer from, which is depression and isolation. Hardy states in his description of Clym:

> As for his look, it was a natural cheerfulness striving against depression from without, and not quite succeeding. The look suggested isolation, but it revealed something more. As is usual with bright natures, the deity that lies ignominiously chained within an ephemeral human carcase shone out of him like a ray. (*R N*, p. 138)

Moreover, when Clym asks Eustacia the reason behind her disguise as a mummer she responds, '"To get excitement and shake off depression.'" (*R N*, p. 144) This state of melancholy can be ascribed to the stream of "ennui" or the intellectual boredom that spread in the nineteenth century as a way through which the educated elite confirmed its intellectuality. In the introduction to *Essays on Boredom and Modernity*, Barbara Dalle Pezze and Carlo Salzani assert that ennui was known as "la maladie du siècle" and "In boredom the modern subject confronts the impossibility of realising the striving of the imagination, so that boredom as interpretation of human experience came to dominate psychological, sociological and metaphysical representations of the nineteenth century."[60] By representing Eustacia and Clym in a state of boredom and inability to accomplish their aspirations, Hardy shows them as the intellectual members of the Heath living in moments of crisis and ideological change.

The reason behind the isolation and depression of the main characters in the novel cannot only be attributed to the common stream of ennui; there is a further perspective in this regard. Talking about London, Angelique Richardson in *Love and Eugenics in the Late Nineteenth Century: Rational Reproduction and the New Woman* points out, "a self-consciously modern, and superbly class-conscious sense of separation and isolation was emerging. ... Each individual is conscious of himself, but nobody conscious of themselves

[60] Barbara Dalle Pezze and Carlo Salzani eds., *Essays on Boredom and Modernity* (New York: Editions Rodopi, 2009), p. 14.

collectively.'"[61] The isolation in question is a result of certain society's decision to detach some of its members, as in the case of Eustacia who is neglected by the people of the Heath and treated as a "witch".

By naming Thomasin's daughter Eustacia, Hardy stresses that even if the heroine as an embodiment of the New Woman faces a tragic death, another passionate, defiant woman like her will emerge. In *The New Woman: Fiction and Feminism at the Fin de Siècle* (1997), Sally Ledger suggests that later discussions about the New Woman have "reversed" in the sense that "the New Woman had sought not to undermine the institution of marriage but rather to reform it."[62] So, as women's freedom gradually ceased to be regarded as a threat to the sanctioned roles of the society; the New Woman started to be seen as a factor of improvement. Indeed, Hardy's *The Return of the Native* can be regarded as a manifestation of the stage when the New Woman and Suffragette movements in Britain started to appear.

The choice of the name 'Eustacia', Thomasin and Wildeve's daughter, is significant, because it does give the readers a clear indication of the discourse of social Darwinism and the belief of a mutation in human society, demonstrating the strong's prevalence over the weak. The life of the people on the Heath confirms this Darwinian assumption that can be recognised through Hardy's description of the way the folk walk after the end of their daily work; "The party had marched in trail, like a travelling flock of sheep; that is to say, the strongest first, the weak and young behind." (*R N*, p. 19) The meaning of the name "Eustacia" can be read as a feminized version of Saint Eustace, a Roman general in the

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[61] Angelique Richardson, *Love and Eugenics in the Late Nineteenth Century: Rational Reproduction and the New Woman* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 133.

[62] Ledger, *The New Woman: Fiction and Feminism at the Fin de siècle*, p. 11.

second century. Saint Eustace became known as a patron saint of anyone facing adversity; it can be argued that the heroine, Eustacia, is facing the hardship of being considered an outsider in her society. According to the Darwinian theory of evolution, a genetic change should occur in any social or ideological movement. The principle of natural selection introduced by Charles Darwin in his book *On The Origin of Species* (1859) argues that forms of life are in a constant struggle for existence, which is achieved by the fittest and best adapted to changing conditions. Due to the social translation of natural selection, when the unconventional heroine is terminated another line of similar women must continue her cause in order for it to succeed. That is what Hardy aims for by the naming of a middle-class girl, Thomasin and Wildeve's daughter, as a would-be new woman: "Eustacia".

The deaths of Eustacia Vye and Wildeve prove the defeat of emergent ideologies by the Egdon community, which is, in social Darwinian terms, a stronger but older social group eliminating a weaker, newer force. So, Eustacia and Wildeve's love is not fit to exist on the Heath and both of them die. It is noteworthy here that Eustacia's supposed degeneracy is not due to a natural degeneracy in her character, but it is forced upon her socially as a way leading to eliminate her as socially inferior.

In most of his fiction, such as *Far From the Madding Crowd* (1874), *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), and *Jude the Obscure* (1895), Hardy portrays two types of stereotypical women characters: the fallen (outsider) and the good (Victorian model) woman. These two types of women are represented in different ways in Hardy's narratives. The differentiation can be attributed to the transition in Hardy's social recognition between 1880s to the 1890s. Or to put it differently, this change in the stereotypical female characters can be ascribed to the change in the social view of women issues and the ways they are dealt with.

Typical of Hardy's fictional characters, Eustacia is the defiant female. Tess d'Urberville and Bathsheba Everdene are two other rebellious females. The injustice toward women is very much forced upon them by their circumstances and not because of a fault in their characters. Tess and Bathsheba are two examples of loving and caring women. Both of them are independent in the sense that both of them challenge the established values and manage their own business.

In *Tess of the d' Urbervilles: A Pure Woman Faithfully Presented* (1891), Tess has been punished by her society and by Angel Clare for a crime she did not commit; because she has lost her virginity following her rape by Alec d'Urberville. Tess's dilemma is beyond her control. Angel Clare, who loves and marries her years after her rape, does not approve what he sees as Tess's questionable social and moral standing as a woman in patriarchal society, due to the biological fact that she has lost her virginity. He disregards the matter of whether Tess's loss of virginity was by her will or not, and he abandons her. Angel goes back to her love but too late, because Alec has convinced her to be his mistress after a financial problem she has passed. Tess returns and tells Angel that she cannot bear him thinking badly of her:

> 'And -- and,' she said, pressing her cheek against his; 'I fear that what you think of me now may not last. I do not wish to outlive your present feeling for me. I would rather not. I would rather be dead and buried when the time comes for you to despise me, so that it may never be known to me that you despised me.'[63]

Tess is finally executed after murdering her ravisher, Alec.

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[63] Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the D' Urbervilles: A Pure Woman Faithfully Presented* (New York: Harper& Brothers Publishers, 1891), p. 498.

In *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874), Bathsheba Everdene is another female example of the prejudice that women suffer from in their communities. After Bathsheba discovers the relationship of her husband Sergeant Francis Troy with Fanny Robin, Troy leaves Bathsheba. Meanwhile Bathsheba consents to marry William Boldwood. At the reappearance of Troy, Boldwood kills him. The real tragedy in *Far From the Madding Crowd* lies in the death of Fanny Robin, Troy's former lover while giving birth to their child. Troy and Bathsheba encounter Fanny making her way painfully toward Casterbridge. However, Troy only gives her all the money in his pocket, telling her he will give her more in a few days but without really helping her in any more notable way. A few hours later, she dies giving birth to her baby. Whilst death in childbirth was a common cause of mortality in the Victorian period, Hardy adds a moral dimension to Fanny's death by representing Troy's negligence[64] when Fanny is in need for his help. So, Troy's contribution to the circumstances makes death almost inevitable for Fanny. By representing the demise of Fanny, Hardy is not only stressing the moral failure of one man to stand by the side of a woman he has wronged, but is also confirming the inadequacy of a whole community that does not provide ample forms of communal social care. Fanny's society does not provide a shelter for her in time of distress and leaves her to face her death with a child who knows nothing about the regularities of this society. This failure on the part of men and society is an implication of a system that should change which, in turn, addresses the question of change that I have raised in this thesis. Fanny Robin is an ideal submissive woman and in her yielding to male commands she is very similar to Thomasin Yeobright; however, she cannot be a symbol of

[64] Sergeant Troy represents a common type of soldiers who abandon women and leave them heartbroken. Esther in Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton* (1848) is an example of a woman who is abandoned by a soldier.

the Victorian chaste woman because of her relationship as a mistress and not a wife with Troy.

Unsuccessful marriages and their consequences on both the male and female parties form one of the leading themes tackled by Thomas Hardy in J*ude the Obscure* (1895). The principal characters: Jude Fawley and Sue Bridehead, find themselves in conflict with long-established Victorian traditions of religion, love and marriage. They must also confront their own views and standpoints of these issues. In this novel, Hardy brings to the surface issues often seen as unacceptable in the context of Victorian Britain, and furthermore deal with them in a candid manner.

One of Hardy's primary concerns in this novel is the degree of autonomy married people had over important decisions in their lives. If it is the case that they decide to separate and break free from the bond of marriage, how their conventional surrounding would react to their resolution? The idea that women should enjoy autonomy over their lives is a pre-requisite for the heroine; Sue, even before she enters the married life. Primarily, Sue calls for women's right in having a relationship without all the responsibilities that a married life would normally be seen to incur. She abhors any foundation that would undermine a woman's potentials. In *Jude The Obscure,* Hardy calls for women's rights before, during and after marriage. He sets out the argument that they should have the freedom to take full responsibility for themselves at any stage of their lives.

At the heart of Hardy's story is an examination of the extent to which Victorian women are allowed to be free within wedlock. A coherent explanation of the absurdity of the state of women in the traditional marriage is articulated by Hardy through the character of Sue. The heroine is distressed about the fact that women are not in full legal and physical

possession of themselves; that a male relative, during the marriage ceremony, is given the role of literally leading her to the groom – 'delivering her to her new master', in a similar way that any item would be handed over to a new keeper. Asking Jude, her only male relative, to give her away to Mr. Phillotson in the Church, Sue writes in the letter for her cousin:

> Jude, will you give me away? … I have been looking at the marriage service in the Prayer-book, and it seems to me very humiliating that a giver-away should be required at all. According to the ceremony as there printed, my bridegroom chooses me of his own will and pleasure; but I don't choose him. Somebody gives me to him, like a she-ass or she-goat, or any other domestic animal. Bless your exalted views of woman, O Churchman![65]

In this very text, Hardy provides an insight into the overwhelming situation of women in Victorian married life. Married couples enter into a life-long contract committed to each other, yet under the terms of this agreement, the woman is degraded to the extent that she is considered to be equivalent to a commodity, passed form her family into the possession of the husband.

Under these circumstances, Sue regards the institution of marriage as a snare that she longs to free herself from. After her marriage to Mr. Phillotson, the school teacher, the heroine abandons her loveless marriage, leaving her husband to live with her cousin Jude as comrades in a sexless relationship. Sue's decision stems from her belief that she has the right to lead a liberal life without the restrictions that married life imposes on her body and mind. In her choice to live with Jude even after she is married in the Church to Mr. Phillotson, she

[65] Thomas Hardy, *Jude the Obscure*, p. 226.

is expressing a sense of female individuality at variance with the suppression experienced by so many Victorian women trapped in loveless marriages.

It can be argued that Sue's interest in the relationship she enters with Jude reflects Hardy's own enthusiasm for "Free Union" and "Free Love" as a substitute -or at least as an option- for the strictly conventional Victorian marriage. Leaving her husband to live with Jude, who is already married, is an act that is not only criticised within her own narrow society, but also condemned on a wider scale. In his essay "The Ideological Questions of Marriage in Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*", Saleh Abbasi states that Jude and Sue's "conservative society not only does not confirm their free union but also utterly abhors their illegitimate relationship."[66] This degree of social unacceptability endangers Jude and Sue's union, as they are not able to find a place in which to live or work to earn their living.

Adding another level of complication to Sue's character, the 'comrade-like' relationship with her cousin Jude did not keep its nature for a long period. As soon as Sue knows of the arrival of Arabella Donn, Jude's previous wife, Sue offers to change the nature of their relationship and have sex with Jude. Her decision is seen by many critics as selfish, because her only aim was to keep Jude for herself and prevent him from going back to Arabella. Elizabeth L. Knauer in her essay "Unconscious Sue? Selfishness and Manipulation in *Jude the Obscure*" states:

> Sue Bridehead had little in common with the New Woman… Her various opinions concerning marriage, employment, and education issues tied closely to the New Woman movement, are never set forth to establish equality for

[66] Saleh Abbasi, "The Ideological Questions of Marriage in Thomas Hardy's Jude the Obscure," *K@ta,* v. 17, no. 2 (2015): 53.

> females… [She] presents the age-old story of human selfishness, only she pursues it to an extreme degree.[67]

The "extreme degree" to which Sue calls and defends her ideals is therefore regarded by Knauer as a way of pursuing her own selfish ends. However, I do not totally agree with Knauer's analysis of Sue as a selfish character. A close reading of the text reveals that Sue's decision is not principally the result of jealousy, or a selfish drive to possess Jude and have the "upper hand"[68] in their relationship, as Knauer suggests. Despite the fact that by adapting the ideals she calls for she can be seen as a representative of the New Womanhood, I would also suggest that Sue relied on Jude as a relative, friend, and lover who understands and respects her views and needs. In the course of their relationship, Sue and Jude have two children, and Sue becomes pregnant with a third child. Hardy bestows Jude and Sue's relationship with children to suggest, perhaps, that their ideals will live on to affect society in the future.

In addition, their situation worsens dramatically once they have to deal with the children which are the result of their ever close union – which moved on to a sexual nature. Upon their return to Christminster with their children, they were not able to get a place to stay in. In one of their attempts to get a place to stay with their children, the author writes:

> The householder scrutinized Sue's figure a moment. 'We haven't any to let,' said she, shutting the door. Jude looked discomfited, and the boy distressed. 'Now, Jude,' said Sue, 'let me try. You don't know the way.' They found a second place hard by; but here the occupier, observing not only Sue, but the boy and small children, said civilly, 'I am sorry to say we don't let where there are children;' and also closed the

[67] Elizabeth L Knauer, "Unconscious Sue? Selfishness and Manipulation in *Jude the Obscure*," *The Hardy Review*, v. XI, no. 1 (2009): 42, 43.
[68] Phillip Mallet, *Thomas Hardy: Texts and Contexts* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan Ltd, 2002), p. 122.

> door. The small child squared its mouth and cried silently, with an instinct that trouble loomed.[69]

The social outcasting does not only affect Jude and Sue; however, their social exile has distressed Little Father Time; the little bizarre thinker of the story. Believing that as children, they are the cause of Sue and Jude's misery, Little Father Time ends the life of his half-siblings and himself leaving a note, "Done because we are too menny."[70]

In spite of Sue's progressive approach to New Womanhood and the free values she believes in, the tragic loss of her children, and the abortion of her other child, represents a problematic portrayal on the part of the novelist. Sue fails as a mother to secure the life of her children. A legitimate question might be raised here, if this is the kind of free relationship that Hardy praises in the novel, why is this relationship not granted success and permanence? It can be argued that Hardy is making the point that this kind of relationship can only be successful if its essential tents are embraced and accepted by society. The children's homicide scene forms a turning point for the events of *Jude the Obscure*. After the disturbing death of her children, Sue takes full responsibility for Little Father Time's act and decides to return to her loveless marriage in an attempt to lift the curse that has ended the life of her children. Her return can be regarded as a self-inflicted figurative, even punitive death in which she abandons her anti-marriage ideals and surrenders to Victorian mores.

Sue, as a passionate and thoughtful example of New Womanhood, is able to an extent to face the various social, familial, and economic obstacles she is doomed to encounter due to her adaption of a new way of life. She takes on a revolutionary voice and calls for a total

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[69] Hardy, *Jude the Obscure*, p. 402.
[70] Ibid, p. 410.

reconstruction of the relationships between men and women inside the bond of marriage. Rosemarie Morgan in *Women and Sexuality in the Novels of Thomas Hardy* writes, "in so far as she [Sue] is sexually repressed, psychologically conditioned a 'loser', a 'casualty' of her class and background, she is representative of her suffragist peers who, in the public sphere at least, accommodated similar frustrations and defeats and encountered comparable destructive attitudes."[71] Therefore, the final defeat of Sue as portrayed by Hardy can be seen as another affirmation of her being a representative figure of the New Womanhood.

Following a similar scheme of calling to a wider freedom for women's decisions and thoughts despite their being married, Hardy's Eustacia Vye the Queen of the Night from *The Return of the Native*, fights her whole community to achieve her goal to leave the Heath. Unlike Sue, Eustacia dies fighting for her choice, and she is granted a measure of immortality by Hardy when he introduces another baby girl in the novel with the same name. However, Sue surrenders to the expectations of her community, leaving Jude who has supported her cause initially to face his own death alone.

In *Jude the Obscure*; however, Arabella Donn is the predatory New Woman who uses her sexuality as a means for social and financial advancement. She can be seen as an example of the New Woman calling for sexual freedom, yet she lacks the required moral principles and conventionality. With the disturbing description of her at her very first meeting with Jude, throwing him with what Hardy refers to as "the characteristic part of a barrow-pig"[72], Hardy pinpoints the violence she is capable of inflicting on others in order to

[71] Rosemarie Morgan, *Women and Sexuality in the Novels of Thomas Hardy* (London: Routledge, 1988), p. 114.
[72] Hardy, *Jude the Obscure*, p. 80.

fulfil her own goal. This incident also indicates the sexual-drive that would characterise the nature of her relationship with Jude.

Arabella's character, additionally, embodies an early example of working women. She is initially introduced by Hardy as labouring on her father's farm, cleaning the slaughtered pigs. Soon after her marriage to Jude, she informs him that she worked as a barmaid at Aldbrickham for three months, where she has learnt how men like to see women. Jude does not discover these fake aspects of Arabella's personality until the first day of their marriage:

> A little chill overspread him at her first unrobing. A long tail of hair, which Arabella wore twisted up in an enormous knob at the back of her head, was deliberately unfastened, stroked out, and hung upon the looking-glass which he had bought her. 'What – it wasn't your own?' he said, with a sudden distaste for her. 'O no – it never is nowadays with the better class.' 'Nonsense! Perhaps not in towns. But in the country it is supposed to be different. Besides, you've enough of your own, surely?' 'Yes, enough as country notions go. But in towns the men expect more, and when I was barmaid at Aldbrickham-' 'Barmaid at Aldbrickham?'[73]

An exploration of Arabella's character shows her to be deceptive as well as a woman trying to pursue her financial security at any cost. Yet, her working to gain financial independence at the start of her life, establishes her determination to achieve female independence even by following false means. This justifies the belonging of her character to the New Womanhood movement; however, she does not spare any opportunity to hunt a good gain.

[73] Ibid., p. 103.

On one hand, the characters of Sue and Arabella represent two extremes of the New Womanhood at the turn of the century. On the other hand, we cannot ignore the fact that these two women are of different natures, and by representing them Hardy is therefore, to some extent, characterising the uniqueness of the human being. Whatever the stereotypes that they might represent, Sue and Arabella identify two distinct and completely different identities that cannot be duplicated. The fiery sexual Arabella and the sophisticated Sue are two unique characters of Hardy's creation. Nonetheless, Sue and Arabella can be seen as a dramatisation for Jude's own inner conflict within himself. They personalise the conflict between Jude's inner sexual and intellectual desires, embracing both parts of his personality and the desires he is eager to realise in his life and career.

The form of speech that Jude switches to when talking to either Sue or Arabella is suggestive in this respect, and in itself mirrors the unconscious inner struggle that Jude endures. Most of his conversations with Sue are intellectually based; they depend on convincing each other with their particular points of argument and attaching relevant explanations. Jude and Sue normally lead sophisticated dialogues identified by its elaborative scholarly formula. When Jude asks her to marry him as they are both equally free from their previous marriages, Sue responds:

> 'Well,' she sighed, 'you've owned that it would probably end in misery for us. And I am not so exceptional a woman as you think. Fewer women like marriage than you suppose, only they enter into it for the dignity it is assumed to confer, and the social advantages it gains them- a dignity and an advantage that I am quite willing to do without.'[74]

[74] Ibid., p. 324.

On the other hand, Jude's conversations with Arabella are often short inquisitive sentences or phrases that would help them arrive rapidly at a point of view. From their dialogues, it is noticeable that Arabella's relationship with Jude is temperamental, short-termed one and based on erotic and material interests. In his dialogue with Arabella after his return from meeting Sue, a journey in the rain that has led to his death, he starts talking about phantoms:

> 'Fancy! The Poet of Liberty used to walk here, and the great Dissector of Melancholy there!' 'I don't want to hear about 'em! They bore me. … 'I don't want to know their names, I tell you! What do I care about folk dead and gone? Upon my soul you are more sober when you've been drinking than when you have not!'[75]

At this instance, Arabella tries to terminate Jude's intellectual thinking and lead him to her sexual side by reminding him with himself while drinking.

It can be argued that Hardy does not only disclose the spirit of the period in these dialogues between his main characters, he also unveils a number of characteristics of the nature of the characters and their relationships. Raymond Chapman states:

> [T]hrough the words of his characters, Hardy reveals a great deal about the period, both in the rural community and in London… Dialect is used to show the position of speakers in the rural hierarchy; this is an area in which Hardy excels. In addition to dialect features, or in speech without them, he conveys a fine sense of the regular social situation and of changing relationships within it.[76]

Jude's way of speech with Arabella and Sue reflects the different kinds of real-life social relationships taking place between people based on the grounds of their social positions and aspirations. Examining the previous two dialogues, it is clear that Sue's speech with Jude is a

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[75] Ibid., p. 473.
[76] Raymond Chapman, *The Language of Thomas Hardy* (London: Macmillan, 1990), p. 136.

polite and sophisticated one, while Arabella depends on interrupting Jude, diverting his attention and leading him to her.

Indeed, in this novel Hardy is putting forward an argument for the emergence of a new type of empowered and independent woman who does not only initiate a change in their social spectrum, but who also continues the fight for her autonomy, even managing to encourage men to respect and follow her ideals. Therefore, *Jude the Obscure* does not only show the changing status of women and their different needs and views at the turn of the century, it also suggests how masculinity is undermined by the rise of the New Woman and the consequent adaptation of men. Jude Fawley, the eponymous hero of the novel, has high scholarly ambitions, yet his goals are hindered twice by women who interrupt his career. The first obstacle to his academic goals occurs when Arabella deceives him by pretending that she was pregnant to force him into marrying her, so he sells his books to buy pans for the house. The second interruption happens when the hero burns his books intentionally abandoning his dream in order to keep Sue's love and stay with her. Therefore, Jude abandons and undervalues his dreams twice to accomplish the needs of two women in his life.

In spite of the sacrifices that Jude does for Sue and Arabella and the failure of his intellectual dreams, he blames himself and feels that he is the reason for all what has happened to his beloved Sue. On his deathbed, he remembers Sue and says, "Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child

conceived."[77] Indeed, Hardy portrays that the main problem for his hero is his entrapment in Wessex. Similarly, Clym Yeobright from *The Return of the Native* is another man from Wessex who is trapped in an existential predicament. Both Jude and Clym's existence renders the inevitable failure to their intellectual quests. They also share the same dread of being the reason for the misfortunes of women in their lives.

It is clear that the grouping of Hardy's characters is similar in most of his works. In Hardy's works, there are four main characters, two men and two women who are the center of the narration. In "A Character Typology for Hardy's Novels", Richard Beckman asserts that the repetitive narrational pattern that predominates in *Far from the Madding Crowd*, *The Return of the Native* and *The Woodlanders* does not belittle the importance of the individual characters: on the contrary, "each character, then, is significant in relation to other characters who complement his peculiar essence. Each is a phase in a four-part cycle. The four phases complete the cycle; and the cycle, given the world of each novel, is exhaustive, admitting of no further essences."[78]

Sexuality was regarded as taboo in polite, middle-class Victorian society; but as always, the forbidden represents what is desired. There was a suppressed fascination concerning sexual matters, which revealed itself in a number of instances in Victorian life. Dresses that show the shape of women bodies were one of the most important instances of this attraction to body and sensuality. Books on women's conduct addressed this fashion, in an attempt to contain its sensuality. In *Advice to Young Ladies on the Improvement of the*

[77] Hardy, *Jude the Obscure*, p. 485.
[78] Beckman, p. 74.

Mind and the Conduct of Life (1808) Thomas Broadhurst advises women to be cautious about their dress and appearance both in private and public. He stresses that women should care for the modesty and simplicity in their dress and not for the fashion of the day because it could be immodest:

> [B]e extremely cautious as to your dress and appearance, both in private and in public.—Constantly study, in this respect, a modest neatness and dignified simplicity; and accommodate yourselves to the reigning fashion of the day no farther than is perfectly consistent with these rules… for both you and I have witnessed some of your sex dressed in such a manner as to put every friend to decorum and modesty to the blush.[79]

Not only the way the women dressed, but also the manner in which they were expected to organise their hair shows the extent to which appearance mirrored codes of social conduct. The depiction of Eustacia's hair in the final scene of her as a dead corpse confirms Hardy's representation of her as a social outcast and rebel; "Her black hair was looser now than either of them had ever seen it before, and surrounded her brow like a forest." (*R N*, p. 367) Definitely, Eustacia attains her total freedom from societal conventions by her death, which is affirmed by the greater looseness of her hair. In contrast, Thomasin's hair is always organized and braided, "The sun, where it could catch it, made a mirror of Thomasin's hair, which she always wore braided. It was braided according to a calendar system -- the more important the day the more numerous the strands in the braid." (*R N*, pp. 157, 158) Thus, Thomasin's organised hairstyle designates her conformity to the rules of her society.

The established patterns of dress and fashion of the time can be considered as clear indicators of the status of men and women at the turn of the nineteenth century. Different

[79] Thomas Broadhurst, *Advice to Young Ladies on the Improvement of the Mind and the Conduct of Life* [1808] (London: Longman & Co., 1810), p. 104.

dress codes are presented and stressed throughout the narratives signifying the different attitudes of the wearers towards laws and conducts in their societies. Furthermore, clothing is used effectively in the illustrations to signpost the portrayed characters' social position, class and profession. The engagement of fine details and the fashionable objects used at the time are portrayed with care and attention by the illustrators. The male and female characters are drawn holding significant items in the designated scenes stressing their obedience to the laws of dress, even in carrying small items like parasols, sticks, fans and hats. Thus, clothing discloses particular facts in regard to the roles of men and women, as well as any alterations happening to these roles in society.

Clothing not only projects the personality of the wearer and shapes the way people see that person. It also has the effect of shaping the actual body of the wearer. In regard to women's clothes, for example, the style of clothes worn in the early nineteenth century would physically alter the shape of their bodies. Corsets and crinolines can be seen as the most essential examples of restrictive pieces of clothing. They were used to stress and showcase the femininity of women at the time. These items of clothing would restrict women's freedom in the sense that wearing corsets led them to have a number of health problems like breathlessness, which was attributed in some cases to their sensitive female nature. Hence, corsets not only had the effect of shaping the female body, their restrictive styles also changed the physical attributes of female bodies and at the same time affected the way women reacted to incidents in their life.

Early corsets were made from different materials like cane, whalebone and steel to assure that the shape of the female body would change into the desirable feminine form in the eyes of men around her. Furthermore, wearing crinolines put women in a variety of

pitfalls and awkward positions, such that in some cases they would fall or catch their crinolines in omnibuses and expose themselves to irony. Crinolines' fashion has changed in regard to the width and the shape of the skirt. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the diameter was reduced to give more freedom for women in smaller spaces. Only towards the 1870s did the style change from a dome, to a form in which hoops were drawn up at the back. This style of crinoline employed in women's dresses can be seen in the illustrations studied in the previous chapters. Also, this style of the 1870s can be noticed in the fashion plates of the time presented in *Impressionism, Fashion & Modernity*.[80]

In regard to men's clothing and fashion, it did have the purpose of indicating the profession of the male wearer. It was not as dedicated to show the beauty of the man as it was for women. Otherwise, if a man cared about "highly elaborate sartorial expressions"[81], he would be regarded as a dandy, unable to cope with work and its pressures. Male clothing is highlighted in the narratives of the studied novels, especially what men used to wear in public. An ideal appearance in public served to indicate the wearer's class and position in society. Examining men's clothing in the illustrations gives another dimension to the understanding of the changing roles of men in the late nineteenth century. In the illustrations of Hardy's *The Return of the Native*, for example, the men on the Heath are portrayed wearing the same style of hats in their working environment. Even Clym, in the illustration in which he is cutting the furze, is portrayed wearing the same style of hat as the other man beside him. This stresses that Clym's Parisian experience did not change the fact that he should accord with what the people on the Heath were wearing.

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[80] Gloria Groom, ed., *Impressionism, Fashion & Modernity* (Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago, 2012), p. 93.
[81] Ruth P Rubinstein, *Dress Codes: Meanings and Messages in American Culture* (Oxford: Westview Press, 1995), p. 39.

As was the tradition, the only acceptable style for men in public is the one most suitable to their jobs, as men's work enhanced their positions over other men in their circle. This is stated in Ruth P. Rubinstein's book as follows: "It is decreed in the French fashion that the only attire appropriate for men were the military uniform, the riding habit, and the English gentleman's business suit."[82]

However, matters changed towards the end of the nineteenth century; there was a general trend of including male fashion in the periodical press, to initiate the perspective that for a man to care for his dress was not considered to undermine his manliness or mark him as a dandy. Fashion magazines started to support this urge, arguing the worthiness of male fashion. This has been addressed in Brent Shannon's book, *The Cut of His Coat: Men, Dress, and consumer Culture in Britain 1860-1914* (2006), as follows: "To look well is part of the debt one owes to Society, since the seemliness of any assembly is the sum of the efforts of its units. Men as well as women owe something to Society." [83] Not only women wore corsets. Men started to wear male corsets or "broad-boned belts", which were advertised in the fashion magazines during the early twentieth century and suggested to be used by sporty men, army officers or even for health uses. Men used corsets to obtain the desirable looks of a healthy and fit man.

Marriage as a convention was predicated on a number of ideological and social regularities at the turn of the century. For example, a woman was expected to be from the same socio-economic class as her husband. In much fiction of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, marriages are depicted as unhappy when the woman marries a man of

[82] Ibid.
[83] Brent Shannon, *The Cut of His Coat: Men, Dress, and consumer Culture in Britain 1860-1914* (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2006), p. 97.

unequal social status. A pre-eminent example can be found in Mrs. Yeobright's unequal marriage to Clym's father and the way she treats the other members of the Heath as socially inferior:

> The air with which she looked at heathmen betokened a certain unconcern at their presence, or at what might be their opinions of her for walking in that lonely spot at such an hour, thus indirectly implying that in some respect or other they were not up to her level. The explanation lay in the fact that though her husband had been a small farmer she herself was a curate's daughter, who had once dreamt of doing better things. (*R N*, p. 36)

On a related note here, in Clym and Eustacia's marriage there is a major difference between their natures, which fictionalises the general, prevailing strangeness and unpredictability of the relationships between men and women in that era. In addition, in spite of the disparity between the two, there is something pre-linguistic, unknown and primordial that connects them. Mark Asquith (2003)[84] states that love is not an easy thing but it is very hard and may lead to the destruction of one of the lovers. He attributes the reason beyond the harsh force of love portrayed in Hardy's works to a "Darwinian impulse" over and above their control that draws the characters together. However, both Eustacia and Clym suffer from the same problem which is boredom.

To look at Eustacia's abhorrence of her status from a critical angle, her hatred for the Heath and the old values of her community can be attributed to the concept of Ressentiment which was first tackled by Friedrich Nietzsche in his first essay "'Good and Evil', 'Good and Bad'" in *On The Genealogy of Morality: A Polemic*. Nietzsche attributes the birth of Christianity and slaves' revolt as well to the spirit of Ressentiment:

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[84] Mark Asquith, "A Drama of Grandeur and Unity: Egdon Heath in *The Return of the Native*," *The English Review* v. 14, no. 1 (September 2003): 23.

> The beginning of the slaves' revolt in morality occurs when ***ressentiment*** itself turns creative and gives birth to values ... this *inevitable* orientation to the outside instead of back onto itself – is a feature of *ressentiment*: in order to come about, slave morality first has to have an opposing, external world, it needs, physiologically speaking, external stimuli in order to act at all,[85]

Eustacia senses that the cause of all of her unhappiness is the Heath, and if she could leave she would be happy. This realisation makes her direct her hostility towards the Heath. Yet Eustacia's challenge can be read positively as the beginning of a new trend in thought that may lead humanity into a better future.

Moreover, Nietzsche discloses the reason behind this pessimism, which lies in the future progressions that humans are expected to develop:

> Today we see nothing that wants to expand, we suspect that things will just continue to decline, … no doubt about it, man is getting 'better' all the time … Right here is where the destiny of Europe lies – in losing our fear of man we have also lost our love for him, our respect for him, our hope in him and even our will to be man. The sight of man now makes us tired – what is nihilism today if it is not *that?* ... We are tired of *man* …[86]

The rapid and constant advancement in all fields of life starts to be annoying for nihilist thinking. Therefore, change accompanied by rapid advancement is the main cause of feelings of hatred towards humanity. Change and nihilism occur simultaneously within a stage that humanity is obliged to experience. In his introduction to Nietzsche's text and in discussion of the idea of the "overcoming" of morality, Keith Ansell-Pearson argues; "Nihilism is the state reached when the highest values of humanity devalue themselves. He [Nietzsche] construes the reign of nihilism as a pathological transitional stage which Occidental humanity must

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[85] Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 21.

[86] Ibid., p. 27.

pass through while old values are being transvalued and new ones being created."[87] In conformity with some of Nietzsche's perceptions, Hardy's nihilism and disdain for humanity's progress can be spotted in several instances of his work.

Hardy's misanthropy concerning the condition of Late-Victorian society manifests itself in his distaste for the unjust rules governing its daily life; mainly those concerning the prevalence of the power of instinct. Desire and instinct are the main drives in most of the communities portrayed by Hardy. The desire to control everyone's life either bodily or intellectually is very present in all of Hardy's male characters, who want to regulate the life of the females in their social circle. In *The Return of the Native*, Clym expresses his despair, claiming that his actions have been the cause for the death of his two beloved women, "I was a great cause of my mother's death; and I am the chief cause of hers [Eustacia's].'… If it had pleased God to put an end to me it would have been a good thing for all. But I am getting used to the horror of my existence." (p. 368) Hardy's hero, therefore, proposes this nihilist idea believing that his human existence has been the reason behind the tragedies of others around him. However, Clym's nihilist thoughts does not dominant Hardy's narration. Rebellion against such socially limiting rules and conditions are manifested in the defiant acts of Wildeve and Eustacia, which will build hope that unfair social determinations are tested on a regular basis and will eventually be broken and altered.

[87] Ibid., p. xi.

Chapter II:

Henry James' *The Europeans: A Sketch* (1878)

Henry James' *The Europeans: A Sketch* appeared serially in *The Atlantic Monthly: A Magazine of Literature, Science, Art and Politics* in four monthly instalments from July to October 1878. In the form of a short comic novel, James lays out a comparison between two groups of people: the Europeans and the Americans. The story revolves around two siblings, Eugenia Munster and Felix Young, whose parents were born in the United States, but who were themselves brought up in Europe. They are visiting their cousins, the Wentworths, in Boston, Massachusetts. The visitors' European views of life influence their cousins and threaten the stability of the Wentworth household, and the wider society in which they live. The Wentworths (Mr. Wentworth, Clifford, Charlotte, and Gertrude) are of Puritan descent, following the ethics of the early English colonizers of New England. They regard life as a strict discipline; however, Felix is portrayed as "Bohemian," of free-and-easy habits, regarding every day of life as an opportunity that should be fully enjoyed. James' choice of title - *The Europeans* – immediately sets the tone of the narrative, establishing the theme: the cultural and psychological difference between American and European morals and lifestyles. Jonathan Freedman in *The Cambridge Companion to Henry James* defines this "International Theme" as running through most of James' works. Freedman described James' books as frequently offering narratives in which "naive Americans encounter a Europe that seemed

both endowed with cultural wonders and suffused with a sinister, often sexual, knowledge of the world."[88]

James's evaluation of American and European values and conduct can be seen as a transatlantic cultural comparison. In some ways this can be seen as a comparison between ages – between ancient Europe and more recently created United States. This contrast was at the forefront of nineteenth century ideas. In *The Spirit of the Age* (1831), John Stuart Mill argued; "The idea of comparing one's own age with former ages, or with our notion of those which are yet to come, had occurred to philosophers; but it never before was itself the dominant idea of any age."[89] The present chapter will examine the importance of the international encounter that is the main subject matter in James's *The Europeans.* The bringing together of different cultures can be seen as among the factors that contributed to societal change in nineteenth century America. A supernatural motif is another important device used by James to indicate social and economic change and it will be addressed in this chapter as well. In addition, I will interpret the principal characters in the novel to show how they contribute to social change or, alternatively, help to bolster existing social behaviour. I shall conclude the chapter by critiquing a repertoire of themes related to the different roles of men and women in a constant changing society.

Unlike Thomas Hardy's *The Return of the Native*, the four serialised parts of *The Europeans* appeared in the *Atlantic* without illustrative work. *The Atlantic Monthly: A Magazine of Literature, Science, Art and Politics* (founded in 1857) was published in Boston.

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[88] Jonathan Freedman, *The Cambridge Companion to Henry James* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 7.
[89] John Stuart Mill, *Mill: Texts, Commentaries*, ed. Alan Ryan (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.1997), p. 3.

I propose that the lack of illustrations in this serialisation was due to editorial policy on the part of the magazine.[90] The publishers promised the readership that the magazine would seek to advance the "American Ideal", and "the nation's greater good."[91] The editors accepted a wide range of texts from many authors but insisted that the works should promote the principles for which the magazine stood. The readers therefore expected works of intellectual quality that reflected a middle class American mindset. In *Republic of Words* (2011), Susan Goodman presents the history of the *Atlantic* through examining the history of its editors, and the writers who wrote for it. In her chapter about Henry James and the *Atlantic* entitled "Straddling the Atlantic," she asserts, "He [James] had a large appeal for *Atlantic* editors and readers, who saw his straddling of the Atlantic as a strength because it fostered comparisons between Europe and the United States."[92] Being himself an American expatriate (who became a British citizen in 1915), Henry James's works proved to be of a great interest to the editors and readers of the *Atlantic*. Additionally, James and the *Atlantic* contributors aimed at defining the characteristics of the real American identity: "Like James, *Atlantic* contributors repeatedly returned to the question posed by the title of an unsigned May 1875 article, 'What Is an American?' "[93]

Boston as a centre for the magazine's publication shaped the editorial policy and the type of work that might be published in the *Atlantic*. Referring to the beginnings of the magazine, Goodman explains how readers of the *Atlantic* expected a literature of a high

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[90] On another note here, another reason for the lack of illustrations in the serialisation of The Europeans can be attributed to James's own preference. This point that will be addressed in further detail later in this chapter, pages 105-106.
[91] Susan Goodman, *Republic of Words: The Atlantic Monthly and its Writers, 1857-1925*(Lebanon: University Press of New England, 2011), p. ix.
[92] Ibid., p. 120.
[93] Ibid., p. 123.

quality because of the literary characteristics associated with the city: "Readers associated the new magazine with the attributes of its mother city, the imaginative centre of the nation's literary life. Home to beans, bluestockings, and Harvard University in nearby Cambridge, the city had the reputation of a latter-day Athens."[94]

In his book *The Atlantic Monthly*, Ellery Sedgwick likens the *Atlantic*'s editors to politicians, stating that they "are supposed to be simultaneously leaders and surrogates for their public's values."[95] William Dean Howells who was the editor of *The Atlantic* from 1871 until 1881 shared the attitudes of the previous editors and magazine's contributors. The social and economic problems that faced the American nation were his main concern, and consequently these issues dominated the content of the magazine at the period of his editorship. Howells's editorial decisions can be clearly noticed in the number of socio-economic based works that appeared in the magazine in one year of his editorship; "Howells's *Atlantic* reflected his growing concern with social inequities. In 1878, the magazine published Arthur G. Sedgwick's essay 'Primitive Communism' (September), followed by Erastus B. Bigelow's 'The Relations of Labor and Capital' (October), Brooks Adams's 'Oppressive Taxation of the Poor' (November), and '[I]ts remedy' (Adams, December)."[96]

During Howells's editorship of the *Atlantic*, many of James' well-known novels were published, including *Roderick Hudson* (1875), *The American* (1876-1877), *The Europeans* (1878) and *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881). Ultimately, James's friendship with Howells,

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[94] Ibid., p. 4.
[95] Ellery Sedgwick, *The Atlantic Monthly 1857-1909: Yankee Humanism at High Tide and Ebb* (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 1994), p. 1.
[96] Goodman, p. 98.

which we can see developing in their correspondence, helped the novelist to understand the desires of the magazine's editors and publishers, and to write in accord with the taste of its readership. For example, before James started writing *The Europeans*, he received a letter from Howells asking him to make the novel more humorous in its tone, and to steer away from a tragic denouement. James replied to Howells as follows:

> I suspect it is the tragedies in life that arrest my attention more than the other things & say more to my imagination; but, on the other hand, if I fix my eyes on a sun-spot I think I am able to see the prismatic colors in it. You shall have the brightest possible sun-spot for the 4-number tale of 1878.[97]

In his letter James makes it clear that he is prepared to give this new work, *The Europeans*, a more cheerful aspect upon the request of Howells as an editor.

Looking closely at *The Europeans*, the virtues of being American are apparent. Principally, they are seen as free and honest in comparison with their European counterparts, who are burdened with the past, superstitions and old-fashioned attitudes. James stresses this by representing the preconceived notions of his male and female characters in *The Europeans* as either innocent and dutiful, and therefore American, or materialistic and deceitful, and therefore European. For James this contrast is not strictly about the accident of birth. He treats characters from Europe, originally Americans, as if they were Europeans.

It is clear that James draws from the disparity between the Americans and the Europeans not just a difference in way of life, but also in the ways in which they think. James illustrates this particular contrast most graphically when he describes the encounter between the two groups in the novel: the Wentworths and the siblings Felix and Eugenia. James stresses the contradictory views of the two groups, both in terms of the view they have of

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[97] Philip Horne, *Henry James: A Life in Letters* (London: Allen Lane, 1999), p. 83.

themselves, and of each other. After his return from visiting the Wentworths, Felix gives Eugenia a full picture of their relatives. He describes their life style by the following words: "It's primitive; it's patriarchal; it's the *ton* of the golden age,'"[98] and he goes on describing them as '"sober; they are even severe. They are of a pensive cast; they take things hard… They have some melancholy memory or some depressing expectation." (*T E*, p. 61) Thus, Eugenia and Felix, representing the Europeans in the novel, regard their American relatives as strict and gloomy.

In some ways James is illustrating the overall atmosphere of how American and British writers felt very differently about the traditions in which they were working. In *Atlantic Double-Cross*, Robert Weisbuch explains two different senses of cultural time, "British lateness and American earliness." He argues that British nineteenth century writers imagine themselves to be the descendants of a great culture before them, while the American writers visualise a long future in front of them. On the other hand, while the British authors are haunted by their inability to produce a literature of a quality similar to that of the great literature of the past, the American writers find themselves without a historic tradition to follow. Weisbuch states, "Clearly, cultural earliness allowed Americans to capitalize upon the bareness of their present scene by considering this bareness a clearing of the ground for an unprecedented development. Nonetheless, cultural earliness just as easily might mean cultural emptiness."[99] An application of these thoughts can be traced in James's own description of the feelings and attitudes of the two main groups in *The Europeans*. Indeed,

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[98] Henry James, *The Europeans*: *A Sketch* (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1878), p. 60. All subsequent referencing is from this edition and will appear in the text between brackets. It will be abbreviated as (*T E)*.
[99] Robert Weisbuch, *Atlantic Double-Cross: American Literature and British Influence in the Age of Emerson* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), p. 126.

the depiction of men and women in the contrasting groups in the novel is dominated by their preconceived conceptions about each other.

Towards the turn of the century, encounters such as the one James describes in his novel became commonplace due to the immense increase in foreign travel among the educated and upper classes of both America and Europe. James himself left America in 1874, crossing the Atlantic in a number of visits to Italy, France and other European countries. He eventually settled in London in 1876, but he kept American themes at the heart of most of his writings. Part of his fascination with American identity is derived from his travel in Europe, since the feeling of one's national identity becomes stronger at the moment of leaving one's homeland, and in experiencing new lifestyles. James' own experience in Europe as an American is reflected in the plots of most of his novels. Freedman points out:

> James depicts a world where national and cultural identity exists (as does identity generated in the context of the family) as something to be made, not something given, in a world where new possibilities of identity formation are being conjured forth by an internationalizing economy organized by leisure, travel, and mass culture.[100]

It can be argued that the fate of Eugenia and Felix represents James' own: in spite of their American origin, they are unable to settle in America because of their acquired European habits.

There are also international aspects to James' treatment of the supernatural. He explores that theme through the characters of Eugenia and Felix, the two European visitors. James uses several techniques to bring the supernatural, and its influence on his characters, into sharp focus in the novel. At the start of his narrative he describes Eugenia and Felix's

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[100] Freedman, p. 11.

arrival at their hotel which overlooks a cemetery, conjuring up for the reader Gothic images of ghosts and spirits. James draws a parallel between these apparitions in the churchyard and the strange and unsettling ideas and values the two Europeans bring to Boston – a city renowned for its conservative, puritan and conventional society. Just as the graveyard is haunted by presumably American ghosts, Eugenia and Felix are cultural spirits from another world – that of nineteenth century, Gothic Europe.

James opens the novel by juxtaposing three images: he describes Eugenia and Felix in their hotel room that looks at the cemetery, and Eugenia's seeing an omnibus approaching crowded with women. The omnibus is presented by James as a symbol of advancement. That is made very clear by his describing the women using it as "liberal" in the opening scene:

> When it [the omnibus] reached a certain point the people in front of the grave-yard, of whom much the greater number were women, carrying satchels and parcels, projected themselves upon it in a compact body-a movement suggesting the scramble for places in a life-boat at sea- and were engulfed in its large interior. … This phenomenon was repeated every three minutes, and the supply of eagerly-moving women in cloaks, bearing reticules and bundles, renewed itself in the most liberal manner. (*T E,* p. 34)

The mentioning of the cemetery at the beginning of the novel, alongside the European visitors and the Boston omnibus, encourages the reader to consider the relationship between these three elements. The omnibus and the European visitors both represent the economic and social advancement that is changing the face of the city of Boston. But why is the cemetery placed in the same scene? Is the cemetery, with its elaborate tombs, statues, and pleasant pathways, a sign of advancement and change as well?

Americans began to change their cemeteries as cities grew. Citizens became wary of burying the dead in the centre of towns due to European superstitions, which began arriving

in the United States at the beginning of the nineteenth century. While they embellished existing graveyards with sculpture and memorials, and encouraged people to walk through them and enjoy the peaceful environment, they began burying the dead in new cemeteries on the outskirts of the city. This fact about American cemeteries in the nineteenth century is explored by David Charles Sloane in *The Last Great Necessity* (1991). Sloane points out that "Although the cemetery was an urban institution, its design embodied rural values that Americans were worried about losing. Influenced by new European events and ideas, Americans situated rural cemeteries outside cities on large tracts of farmland and developed them into gardens of graves."[101] Cemeteries in the United States represented facets of rapid economic and social change in the early nineteenth century. Accordingly, cemeteries are not only places of remembrance, but they reflect the values of Americans, and the way they want to represent the early years of the nation's history.

Americans also felt the need to remind themselves of the values and achievements of their ancestors who had founded the new nation. They wished to immortalise every incident of the history of the early settlers and the foundation of the United States, a brief period of a few centuries, which they saw in contrast to the millennia of European culture. So, they started to build cemeteries with classical architecture, statues and mausoleums, to commemorate those who had taken part in what they saw as a seminal period in the history of America. Therefore, the cemetery, the omnibus and the European visitors are all signs of the swift economic and social change that is taking place in Boston of the nineteenth century.

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[101] David Charles Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), p. 12.

James also utilises the characters of Gertrude and Felix to explore deeply the theme of the supernatural in *The Europeans*. There is a moment in the second chapter of the novel when Gertrude, one of the Wentworths, is alone, reading the *Arabian Nights*.[102] James describes her looking up from the text and seeing Felix standing in front of her as if he had been conjured up out of the air, like a prince in the book: "At last, looking up, she beheld, as it seemed to her, the Prince Camaralzaman standing before her. A beautiful young man was making her a very low bow - a magnificent bow, such as she had never seen before. He appeared to have dropped from the clouds." (*T E*, p. 52) This passage shows how Felix is seen as a semi-supernatural figure, not just a European, but a symbol of the ideas of the East – of the Orient, and of exotic ideas and influences.

The *Arabian Nights* itself has long been considered a Gothic and supernatural work, as well as an emblem of Orientalism in the West. The book presented new visions of Asiatic culture, of sensuality, indulgence, and supernaturalism. In their introduction to *The Arabian Nights in Historical Context: Between East and West* (2008), Saree Makdisi and Felicity Nussbaum argue for the importance of the *Nights*' spectrality as follows: "The *Nights* also added a supernatural dimension to the Enlightenment; the tales offered an avenue into modernity through its magical opposite, an alternative to European identity, and an antidote to neoclassicism."[103] The book carries the main elements of difference between the cultures of the East and the West, implicitly indicating discourses of Orientalism in the novel. By linking Felix, who came from Europe, and Gertrude, who is an American, to the *Arabian*

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[102] *The Arabian Nights* was increasingly popular throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth century, introduced by the French translation of Antoine Galland's *Mille et Une Nuits: Contes Arabes* that set in motion the European eighteenth-century obsession with the Orient.

[103] Saree Makdisi and Felicity Nussbaum (eds), *The Arabian Nights in Historical Context: Between East and West* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 4.

Nights, James makes the two characters represent a new vibrant generation, which is changing the world by an almost miraculous process, introducing newer and freer ways of possible cultural dialogues.

James links the characters of Felix and Gertrude to the story of Prince Camar al-Zaman and Princess Badoura in particular, who are two youths of extreme beauty. In this tale Prince Camar al-Zaman and Princess Badoura refused the idea of marriage and as a consequence were imprisoned by their fathers. Their story is very suggestive in terms of how they met. The two jinns, Maimuna and Dahnash, who were quarrelling about the superiority of Camar's and Badoura's beauty, decide to bring them side by side to be compared. So, Dahnash flies with Badoura while she is asleep and brings her to Camar al-Zaman's tower. While the jinni's flying helped the lovers in the *Arabian Nights* to unite, the flight of Gertrude in her thoughts to forbidden places, by her act of reading, facilitates her meeting with Felix.

Marina Warner argues for the importance of flying in the stories of the *Arabian Nights* and what the notion of flying implied in literary works of eighteenth century Europe. Warner states:

> Oriental fairytale becomes a preferred genre to communicate newfangledness; it often takes the place of the treatises and essays in which such speculation had more often been couched. ... When the spate of improvisations on the *Nights* began to pour from the presses of eighteenth-century Europe, they gave impetus to the imagining of flight before flight.[104]

[104] Marina Warner, *Stranger Magic: Charmed States & the Arabian Nights* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2011), p. 335.

It can be argued that James is using the story of the two lovers Camar al-Zaman and Badoura to suggest the uniqueness and novelty that those two lovers are going to actualise, in spite of their different social backgrounds.

The concept of flight can be taken on another level if we consider William Veeder's argument that in James's later fiction, the author endows his heroines with "flight," a method that enables his female characters to challenge and terminate, to an extent, the limitations imposed on their lives. Veeder proposes that flight of the female protagonists has "a fantasy function" for Henry James: "What makes these protagonists' narratives therapeutic for their author is precisely their engagement with the horrors that prompt flight. James explores bravely both what threatens us in domestic life and why we opt to flee rather than to engage and work through the threats."[105] One question that we might raise here is why the female characters are bestowed with this ability and not the male? It is possibly because the constraints imposed on women of the time are recognized by James as more than can be tolerated or easily altered; and that consequently, these limitations need to be changed in a more magical way.

The supernatural aspect of the main characters in *The Europeans* is also accompanied by a material, financial side. Felix is introduced by James as a fairy-tale prince, due to the nature of his arrival and meeting with Gertrude, while she was reading the *Arabian Nights*. In addition, his obsession with money is clear from the beginning of the novel, because he states that the main aim of his visit to New England is to be paid for sketches he plans to draw of his relatives: "I have an engagement to make fifty sketches, and I mean to paint the

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[105] William Veeder, "James and the Limitations of Self-Therapy," in *Henry James: The Shorter Fiction: Reassessment*, ed. Neil Reeve (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1997), p. 173.

portraits of all our cousins, and of all *their* cousins, at a hundred dollars a head.'" (p. 39) Felix is presented as a spectre, and a lover of money. James portrays him as the New Man of his times; an age marked by rapid economic and social change, which is challenging the old order of values. James is representing Felix as the hero who is capable of bringing change into American society. In the same respect, Andrew Smith, suggests a link in nineteenth century novels between the supernatural and money.[106] Smith points out that stories of ghosts are mainly connected with money. He argues that ghost stories reflect the economic anxieties of the century. He presents some insightful readings of the haunted houses in Henry James's works and how they can be seen as a metaphor for social and economic instability in the nineteenth century. I would argue that economic change and instability at this time was on a super-natural scale and threatened society in the same way as ghosts threaten those who live in haunted houses.

Additionally, a link can be drawn between the supernatural, in terms of ghosts and spectres, and the turbulent state of the national identity of the new transatlantic generation. Felix embodies the uncertainty of the new generation, because he was born in America but brought up in Europe. The new generation, of which he is a member, is struggling to formulate its identity. In the same way ghosts are ephemeral; lack of identity represents the abstract, the unreal, and a fissure between the living and the dead. Felix himself is not sure of the type of identity he carries: "'And you are Sicilian,' said Gertrude. 'Sicilian, no! Let's see. I was born at a little place – a dear little place – in France. My sister was born at Vienna.' 'So you are French,' said Gertrude. 'Heaven forbid!' cried the young man.'" (*T E,* p. 53) He

[106] In Smith's book *The Ghost Story, 1840-1920: A Cultural History* (2010).

concludes his conversation about his identity by telling Gertrude that he is a "foreigner of some sort." (*T E,* p. 54) Images of spectrality not only reflect the economic crisis of the time, they also bring to the fore the concept of national identity in James' works, and in a deeper sense the reality of this identity. Smith stresses that the portrayal of the supernatural in the works of Henry James "helps to elaborate a notion of national identity in which the ghost functions as the intermediary between British and American cultures."[107] The ghost exists in between the opposite worlds of the living and the dead, in a similar way to those with "undefined" identities who live on both sides. In light of Smith's definition of the role of the ghost, Felix can be seen as a personification of a ghost with this national transitional identity.

Another proof of the extent to which Felix's character is unreal, or spectral, can be seen in his conversation with Gertrude upon their second meeting:

> 'I didn't think we should ever see you again.'
> 'And pray, what did you think would become of me?'
> 'I don't know. I thought you would melt away.'
> 'That's a compliment to my solidity! I melt very often,' said Felix, 'but there is always something left of me.' (*T E,* p. 67)

Gertrude's anticipation that Felix may disappear is another evidence of him being like a genie from the *Arabian Nights*. Indeed, the supernatural element present in the story of *The Europeans* is one of James' strategies to explore the social and economic changes in the nineteenth century. These alterations were seen as supernatural, Oriental and unreal incidents disturbing the old social conventions.

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[107] Andrew Smith, *The Ghost Story, 1840-1920: A Cultural History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press. 2010), p. 7.

The setting: Boston:

> A NARROW grave-yard in the heart of a bustling, indifferent city, seen from the windows of a gloomy-looking inn, is at no time an object of enlivening suggestion; and the spectacle is not at its best when the mouldy tombstones and funeral umbrage have received the ineffectual refreshment of a dull, moist snow-fall. (*T E*, p. 33)

With these lines describing the view from the window of a Bostonian hotel James opens *The Europeans*. Later on, in the second chapter, the setting moves to the countryside near Boston where the Wentworths live. In choosing Boston, James sets his novel at the heart of the economic and social change of the nineteenth century. Crucially, Boston is the place where the *Atlantic Monthly* was published. Readers would be familiar with the setting of the novel, and its context. Boston also played a key role in the struggle for freedom from British colonial powers, and was one of the cradles of the American Revolution. In terms of its location, Boston is on the coast of the Atlantic Ocean, and is one of the places where newcomers from Europe would arrive. Once ashore these newcomers influenced society with their different ideas.

One of the key historical events that happened in Boston is the Boston Massacre, on the fifth of March 1770. British soldiers arrived in Boston in 1768 to help customs inspectors enforce the law. Their arrival in the city made the situation tenser between Americans and the British colonizers. Bostonians resisted the interference of the British soldiers, because they believed themselves to be "religious and orderly people who did not need troops to enforce the law."[108] This massacre helped make the American Revolution inevitable. It

[108] Robert J Allison, *The Boston Massacre (*Beverly, Massachusetts: Commonwealth Editions, 2006), p. 2.

assisted the Americans to understand better their situation and it was seen as a starting point for the struggle for freedom and independence.

From a social angle, Bostonians led a respectable, almost austere existence, which did not accord with Henry James' aspirations to live an aesthetic life, full of art and literature, as he had in Paris. In his short story "A Bundle of Letters" (1878) his main character, Louis Leverett, writes to Harvard Tremont in Boston, explaining what it is like to live in the city:

> I don't think that in Boston there is any real sympathy with the artistic temperament; we tend to make everything a matter of right and wrong. And in Boston one can't *live—on ne peut pas vivre*, as they say here. I don't mean one can't reside—for a great many people manage that; but one can't live aesthetically—I may almost venture to say, sensuously.[109]

The same sentiment is articulated by the heroine of *The Europeans*, Eugenia. She sees Boston as a practical place where feelings or artistic attitudes are not celebrated as in her Europe. Felix - the fortune hunter who came to America to get money through selling his sketches - obtains his fortune by marrying his cousin Gertrude Wentworth, while Eugenia who complains about Boston as a dreadful place, goes back to Europe without the rich American husband she had intended to acquire. After exploring the history of the *Atlantic Monthly* and Boston as the setting of the novel, the succeeding part of this chapter will study the characterisation of *The Europeans.*

Men and women in the nineteenth century were facing immense challenges. Change was threatening the old-established values of their societies. They were obliged to take a position with respect to such change; either to keep their constancy to the old order, or embrace new reforms that promised more personal and social freedom. Through the male

[109] Henry James, *Confidence* (London: Macmillan and co., 1883), p.62-63.

and female characters of his novel Henry James depicts this period of instability, and shows how certain groups of men and women were able to affect the current of change, either advancing its pace, or holding it back.

There is a clear stereotypicality that marks the representation of the male and female characters in *The Europeans*. These types illustrate preconceived notions about strangers and outcasts in society. Neglected people are regarded through a lens that distorts their actual life styles and "foreign" conducts related to their places of living. The "other" in James' novel is Eugenia Munster, the heroine. She comes from Europe holding different views and habits from those of American women. James portrays her as the foil to the American girls, Gertrude and Lizzie. She also turns out to be the only tragic figure in the novel, which ends with a number of marriages but not Eugenia's own.

Eugenia Baroness Munster:

Integration in a constantly changing society was one of the main problems that faced nineteenth century women. They encountered a choice of either remaining faithful to the established values and living in the old world, or of adapting to new values which challenged the old rules. If they chose tradition, they would risk losing their identities in a society dominated by men. If they chose the second, they would inevitably face the opposition of a patriarchal society. This problem is clearly addressed in the storyline of James' novel and in his representation of the dilemma of his heroine, Eugenia. She is an emblem of fading European values in the United States. Her excessive care for her appearance and her lifestyle is set in direct contrast to the simplicity of American life. She is the European "ambassador" who comes to the unromantic Boston to "seek her fortune" (*T E*, p. 43) by marrying a

wealthy American husband. She is connected through a morganatic marriage[110] to a "German prince" – a liaison she has undertaken in order to impress her social circle. However, the prince's family has not approved of Eugenia; therefore, she is trying to find a husband in Boston and then break off the prior morganatic marriage.

I would argue that Eugenia's visit to America, a country known for its hatred of constraints, is a clear attempt on her side to escape, to some extent, the control of the old social rules on her life in Europe. Certainly, Eugenia is a victim of the rules and values of European society, instilled during her upbringing.

One aspect of her inability to leave behind the values of her own society is her attitude to her appearance. Eugenia does not have exceptional beauty, as James asserts in his opening description of her; "Her forehead was very low – it was her only handsome feature;" (*T E,* p. 35) In another instance, when Eugenia meets her uncle Mr. Wentworth for the first time, she is described as having an "ugly face and ... beautiful smile." (*T E,* p. 63) Eugenia's looks – which James describes as "exotic" - might be one of the reasons for her excessive care for appearances, which is stressed in her concern for the outward details of her surroundings. It could be that she sees herself as plain, and seeks to divert attention to the beautiful things with which she surrounds herself.

Upon her moving to stay in the little detached house of the Wentworths, she starts to make herself "comfortable" by decorating the house with her own little things like "wax candles, draperies over the arms of sofas and the backs of chairs and India shawls suspended, curtain wise, in the parlour door, and curious fabrics." (*T E,* p. 79) She conceals the reality of

[110] The morganatic marriage is a marriage within the European royalty and it was most popular in the German-speaking parts of Europe. It happens between people of different social rank, and it will prevent the passage of the husband's title and privileges to the wife and any children born of the marriage.

the objects in her surroundings by hiding them behind glamorous things. It can be argued that Eugenia's fondness for covering up everything in this way reveals a facet of her true character; that is, her attempts to hide the truth about her past, especially her morganatic marriage.

Eugenia's aversion to Boston upon her arrival, described in the opening scene, can be interpreted as an omen of the failure she will face in finding a new husband in America. Laurel Bollinger in her essay considers this aspect: "Eugenia's antipathy toward the church-spires also anticipates the failure of her flirtation with Robert Acton,"[111] Additionally, in the first chapter and in the description of Eugenia, James foreshadows his heroine's abandonment at the end of the novel, especially because she looks like an outsider:

> But these eyes were charming: grey in colour, brilliant, quickly glancing, gently resting, full of intelligence. Her forehead was very low – it was her only handsome feature; and she had a great abundance of crisp dark hair, finely frizzled, which was always braided in a manner that suggested some Southern or Eastern, some remotely foreign, woman. She had a large collection of earrings, and wore them in alteration; and they seemed to give a point to her Oriental or exotic aspect. (*T E*, p. 35)

Eugenia fascinates Robert Acton – the man of the world - and Clifford Wentworth, her cousin, by her beauty of manners. However, her "Eastern", "foreign", "Oriental" and "exotic" looks render her an intruder, not acceptable in America. Her "intelligence", which can be seen in her clever plans to seduce Acton, is another reason behind her abandonment. Contradicting the norms of the nineteenth century virtuous woman, Eugenia uses her intellect to ensnare a husband in America while she is supposed to use her beauty as the principal

[111] Laurel Bollinger, "Poor Isabel, who had never been able to understand Unitarianism!": Denominational Identity and Moral Character in Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady*," *Henry James Review* v. 32, no. 2 (July 2011): 166.

means. Maurizio Ascari in his essay "Prince Camaralzaman and Princess Badoura Come to Tea: Cosmopolitanism and the European Identity in *The Europeans*" argues that "the expert and subtle worldliness of the woman [Eugenia], her ability to lie should social decorum or personal interest require it, disquiet Acton, who refrains from definitely proposing to her."[112]

America is not the right place for Eugenia because her European life style conflicts, in some ways, with an American preference for simplicity. This is illustrated when Mr. Wentworth asks Felix if he aims to stay in America. Felix's answer reveals the extent to which his sister, Eugenia, feels like a stranger in America. Felix responds to his relative's question, "I cannot say I intend. But it's very likely I shall go back to Europe. After all, I am a European. I feel that, you know. It will depend a good deal upon my sister. She's even more of a European than I; here, you know, she's a picture out of her setting." (*T E*, p. 112) In addition, Eugenia's European habits and manners do not generate any appreciation in Boston. This is possibly one of the reasons why Eugenia goes back to Europe, where she will be a centre of admiration.

Gertrude Wentworth:

While the first chapter of the novel is dedicated to introduce Eugenia's character - who represents the type of women who obey their social rules - Gertrude, the defiant and strong-minded daughter of the Wentworth family, is given a complete physical description at the beginning of the second chapter:

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[112] Maurizio Ascari, "Prince Camaralzaman and Princess Badoura Come to Tea: Cosmopolitanism and the European Identity in *The Europeans*," in *Across the Atlantic: Cultural exchanges between Europe and the United States*, ed. Luisa Passerini (Brussels: P. I. E.-Peter Lang, 2000), p. 59.

> She [Gertrude] was tall and pale, thin and a little awkward; her hair was fair and perfectly straight; her eyes were dark, and they had the singularity of seeming at once dull and restless - differing herein, as you see, fatally from the ideal 'fine eyes', which we always imagine to be both brilliant and tranquil. (*T E,* p. 46)

Here James establishes a strong visual image of a second type of women; Gertrude as the representative of New Womanhood, a female who challenges the society in which she lives.

Gertrude does not go to church, preferring to stay at home, in contrast to the other family members. James associates her religious dissent with her physical appearance; he describes her as the "innocent Sabbath-breaker" who is "especially pretty." (*T E,* p. 46) In spite of the fact that she is a "breaker" of the rules of her social circle, James elevates her choice when he links it with her beauty. It can be argued that James's attitude towards Gertrude elucidates his personal views of women offenders violating old-established societal rules. Gertrude breaks the rules by not going to Church, but she has a free will to do what she prefers, as James illustrates by describing her as "innocent" – in this case, using the word to suggest a freedom from social mores; a freedom which is denied to most women in Puritan Boston. In her defiance of long established social conventions (Church attendance), she symbolises the defiance of the New Woman, as portrayed in the novel. She not only refuses to conform to the traditional values of her community, but goes further by defying tradition, when she refuses the marriage that her father planned for her, to Mr. Brand. Eventually, she is married to Felix instead. James' celebration of these aspects of Gertrude's character implies his admiration for her challenging the social order around her. Yet "restlessness" is a shared characteristic of both of Gertrude and Eugenia, who both carry the seeds of a change in their looks and eyes.

Felix's arrival in Gertrude's life brings gaiety into the Wentworth's household. She refuses to contemplate the marriage arranged for her by her father. To his relatives, Felix represents the concept of enjoying life, art and pleasure. His ideals triumph over those of the austere, church-going Mr. Brand. Gertrude chooses to marry her "fairy-tale prince", not the pious seeker of "moral pleasure". This decision mirrors the radical change in women's views of marriage which was taking place in the nineteenth century in the United States. By refusing to marry Mr. Brand, Gertrude also defies the orders of her father, who represents the dominant patriarch in the small familial circle. On a larger scale, her disobedience is a violation of the whole system of patriarchy, and the social rules imposed on women in the nineteenth century.

Gertrude is represented as an intellectual and imaginative reader in *The Europeans*. She does not go with her family to church, because she wants to cherish an atmosphere of isolation: "This agreeable sense of solitude, of having the house to herself ... always excited Gertrude's imagination... It always seemed to her that she must do something particular – that she must honour the occasion." (*T E,* p. 51) In this instance of complete loneliness, she picks up her volume of the *Arabian Nights* and goes to the portico to read it. At this point, Prince Camaralzaman - in the person of her cousin Felix - appears in front of her as if "dropped from the clouds." (*T E,* p. 52) I suggest here that this encounter highlights Gertrude's personal attributes, and asserts the power of imaginative reading. Her choice of this piece of literature affirms her open-mindedness in terms of her acceptance to other cultures. She not only accepts other cultures, but is also willing to use her imagination in the process. In her essay "Who Cares about Charlotte Wentworth?: Fancy-work in Henry James", Victoria Coulson observes Gertrude's imaginative ability as follows:

> Gertrude is an exemplary reader for James because of her paradoxically strong-minded capacity to entertain emptiness: by refusing to allow her morning to be filled up with church and her future to be occupied by Mr. Brand, she opens up a creative space inside herself that allows her, in turn, to enter, and be entered by, the creative space of the book.[113]

Since Felix appears while Gertrude is alone with her copy of the *Arabian Nights*, James is making it clear that the nature of any future relationship between Felix and Gertrude is going to be an intimate one, like that clandestine bond between Gertrude and reading. I want to support my point here by concurring with Victoria Coulson's view of imaginative reading; "Reading is thus an activity of the interior, just as the intimate relationships of love or friendship are mutually transformative exploration of internal worlds."[114]

It is very important in regard to Gertrude's character to consider James's authorial stance towards her. In a letter to one of his friends, Elizabeth Boott, James agrees with his correspondent's criticism saying: "You are quite right to hate Gertrude, whom I also personally dislike!"[115] This "dislike" for Gertrude's character accords with the views of many of his nineteenth century readers, who would have felt threatened by her defiance, and the way in which she appeared to challenge patriarchal society. This unease towards her actions renders Gertrude a symbol of the New Woman. Gertrude's love for Felix is the most important aspect of her character. This love gives Gertrude the power to challenge her father's plan that she is to marry Mr. Brand. Instead she is able to decide upon her future life with Felix. This rebellious act can be seen as the seed of a wider rebellion by the younger generation against the old rules that were controlling their lives in the late nineteenth century.

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[113] Victoria Coulson, "Who Cares about Charlotte Wentworth? Fancy-Work in Henry James," *Henry James Review* v.31, no.1 (2010): 21.
[114] Coulson, p. 22.
[115] Horne, p. 97.

Adeline Tintner in her essay "Henry James, Orientalist" suggests that the story of Camar al-Zaman and Princess Badoura in *The Arabian Nights* – a story of the transformative power of love - is linked with the characters of Felix and Gertrude in *The Europeans.* Tintner states, "The story from the *Arabian Nights* begins to be symbolic in Gertrude's mind of her own life."[116] Gertrude's love to Felix serves as a symbol for her awakening into life through love.

Gertrude, and her sister Charlotte, have completely different natures. While Gertrude is rebellious, Charlotte is a conformist. Charlotte cares deeply about her social position and standing in the sense that she is very cautious about how she looks before heading to Church, "Charlotte turned away; but she stood there a moment. Presently she looked down at the front of her dress. 'Doesn't it seem to you, somehow, as if my scarf were too long?'" (*T E*, p. 48) Gertrude, on the other hand, sees these efforts as "not of much use"; this in spite of the fact that they were brought up in the same strict Puritan environment. Gertrude and Charlotte have different reactions to the male patriarchal system of their society. The different aspirations of these two sisters mirror the different stances of women towards social freedom in the late nineteenth century.

Miss Lizzie Acton:

Lizzie is Robert Acton's young sister, and presented by James as the beautiful American girl. Eugenia is irritated by the nature of Lizzie's character, seeing her as rude and shallow, like other American girls. Upon their first meeting, Lizzie does not utter a word of

[116] Adeline R. Tintner, "Henry James, Orientalist," *Modern Language Studies* v. 13, no. 4 (1983): 126.

welcome to the Baroness; a silence which suggests to Eugenia that "American girls had no manners." (*T E,* p. 108) At any rate, Eugenia is shocked by Lizzie's willingness to combine a knowledge of housework with an eye for style:

> Lizzie struck her as positive and explicit almost to pertness; and the idea of her combining the apparent incongruities of a taste for housework and the wearing of fresh Parsian-looking dresses suggested the possession of a dangerous energy. It was a source of irritation to the Baroness that in this country it should seem to matter whether a little girl were a trifle less or a trifle more of a nonentity. (*T E,* p. 108)

Eugenia's disdain for Lizzie stems from seeing her as an inferior type of woman compared to the European woman, like the Baroness herself.

Lizzie is an "American Girl", a vision that had appeared a decade earlier in Louisa May Alcott's celebrated novel *Little Women* (1868). In her novel, Alcott narrates the story of four girls growing up in Concord, Massachusetts, and the problems they face when their father leaves to fight in the Civil War. She sets the ground for an American tradition, in which girls are both home-loving and practical, while continuing to care about their appearance and fashion. James therefore presents Lizzie as the American girl who is both beautiful and stylish, while also caring for her household.

Felix Young:

Felix is the European artist who sees America as a land of comic opportunity: "American civilisation expressed itself to his sense in a tissue of capital jokes." (*T E,* p. 41) He is very happy to be in New England and regards everything as a kind of entertainment. His name "Felix" means happy and successful, and thus carries clear suggestions of his personality. The fact that Felix can build a career as an artist demonstrates an increasing

interest in painting in the nineteenth century Europe. It became a part of the fashion for the Grand Tour to spend huge sums of money on portraits painted en route – in France, Italy, Switzerland and Britain. This tradition and its consequences on New York's elite class is the main theme addressed in Edith Wharton's short story "False Dawn", which will be discussed in the next chapter page 169. Furthermore, Mr. Wentworth's uneasiness at the prospect of sitting for a portrait painted by Felix illustrates the awkwardness of Americans in accepting such a widespread European phenomenon.

As we have seen James drew on the influence of artists to describe changes affecting society. In many of his novels James locates his heroes, mostly artists and their communities, in cities. (Felix Young the painter of *The Europeans* in the city of Boston, Christopher Newman the art admirer of *The American* in Paris, and the eponymous Roderick Hudson, a talented sculptor, in Northampton Massachusetts). "The artist figure" is an important character in James's works. Even if the visual artist is of a secondary or minor importance in a novel by James, the figure carries a crucial representative importance in the sense that he is "standing for the possibilities of corruption or fulfilment in a way of life more hedonistic than the other characters have known or approve of."[117] Similar to James who uses his novels as an outlet to escape from the difficulties of life and its corruption, the painter figure in his fiction is applying the same technique in his life. The painter understands that the relationship between art and life lies in his deepest belief of "art as redemption from the waste and chaos of life."[118] James invited his friend, the artist John Singer Sargent, to the city

[117] Viola Hopkins Winner, *Henry James and the Visual Arts* (Charlottesville, Virginia: University Press of Virginia, 1970), p.94.
[118] Ibid., p. 126.

in order for Sargent to come to a full admiration of city life and to put his artistic abilities under test. Adrian Poole articulates the meaning of the city for James as follows: "It is the challenge of the city for the artist: to produce the highest and finest resolution of multitudinousness and unity, or as James would often simply put it, of 'life' and 'art'."[119]

It was the habit among eighteenth century American painters to travel to Europe to get the required "European models and European training."[120] Because of the great tradition of European art, they went there to enhance their profession as painters. However, American painters like Benjamin West and John Singleton Copley started to be examples for European artists to "emulate."[121] Sargent also is an expatriate American painter and a friend of Henry James whom James praises as a "great painter. He wd. be greater still if he had one or two little things he hasn't – but he will do."[122]

James himself tried his hand at painting in his early adult life with his brother William during the migration of James's family to Newport. Believing in writing and painting as partner arts, he did not continue with painting but painted his works in words. However, in spite of James's obsession and great interest in painting and his earlier artistic experience, he prefers to have fewer illustrations in his novels. The novel studied in this chapter is an example of James's non illustrative works which have been delivered to the public in a magazine format. In one of his letters, James discloses his aversion for the illustrations and pictures that accompany works of literature in magazines: "I have always hated the magazine form, magazine conditions & manners, & much of the magazine

[119] Adrian Poole, *Henry James* (Hertfordshire: Harvester New Readings, 1991), p. 7.
[120] Matthew Baigell, *A History of American Painting* (Thames and Hudson, 1971), p. 63.
[121] Ibid., p. 64.
[122] Horne, p. 201.

company. I hate the horrid little subordinate part that one plays in the catchpenny picture book - & the negation of all literature that the insolence of the picture book imposes."[123] James's main concern about the illustrative pictures is the extent to which they degrade the quality of literature and detract from the power of words. We find most of James's novels appearing in magazines which are well known for dealing with works of literature, so that the readers would expect to read literary works in these magazines.

In order to familiarise himself with the commercial requirements of the press of the time, James allowed some of his serialised works to be illustrated. At the same time, he was fully aware of the threats that these visual aids represented in terms of the essence of his literary work. He was skeptical if the accompanying pictures would provide a positive addition to the written text, or whether they might detract from the narrative in terms of the reader's experience. In some of the illustrations to his serialised works, James kept close contact with the illustrator. It is noticeable that he preferred that the pictures enjoy full independence from the written text. Therefore, the illustrative works to his texts features as an indicative rather than informative medium. They gave hints of what might take place in the story rather than illustrating specific detailed incidents from the story. By following this method, James's aim was to give each of the two works of art involved in the serialisation its own value and importance, as none would interfere in the scope of the other. James's preference of the use of illustrations alongside his texts is tackled in Ralph F. Bogardus's essay "Henry James and the Art of Illustration". Bogardus writes, "His [James's] viewpoint was consistent throughout his artistic maturity and was the product of a clearcut and

[123] Ibid., p. 278.

sophisticated understanding of the differences between the written and visual language, and it enabled James to decide when and how pictures ought to be used with *his* text"[124]

The first illustrations to accompany James' serialised work were drawn by his friend and illustrator, George DuMaurier, who illustrated *Washington Square* (1881) for the *Cornhill Magazine*. DuMaurier's illustrations proved to be of a poor quality lacking the details that James liked the illustrations to convey with the potential to enrich his work, but without interfering in the written word.

An example of how the illustrations that accompanied James's written work were suggestive rather than informative of the plot can be clearly noted in the headpiece for *The Other House* (1896) illustrated by Walter Paget in the *Illustrated London* News. This headpiece shows a woman holding a cup with the apparition of the Devil himself behind her. This exact illustration is described by Amy Tucker in her book, *The Illustration of the Master: Henry James and the Magazine Revolution* as "misleading", because the illustration does not portray the actual incident that takes place at the end of the novel. The picture instead suggests an eventual death caused by poisoning – referring to an earlier version of the story submitted by James. However, the murderer in the story drowns rather than poisons her four-year-old victim. Indeed, this misrepresentation stresses the impact of the publication conditions on James's works of art. Tucker states, "For this reason I have used Paget's singularly inappropriate headpiece for *The Other House* as the coda to this introduction,

[124] Ralph F. Bogardus, "Henry James and The Art of Illustration" *The Centennial Review*, v. 22, no. 1 (1978): 78.

signifying the usefulness even of misconceived images to our understanding of the influence of publishing conditions on James's work."[125]

Nonetheless, it is essential to keep in mind the importance of the suggestive power of this media, and the contemplation of the illustrator -as he can be considered as one of the first readers of the text- on how the events of the story might develop. Also, it certainly brings to the fore James's belief in the power of this visual medium on his readers; the reason why he preferred to keep the two methods apart.

In spite of his aversion that the art of illustrations to accompany his works of art, James wrote several essays on illustrations which were collected in his edition *Picture and Text* (1893). In this collection of essays, he expresses his admiration for the works of famous illustrators of his time including his friends, John Singer Sargent and George DuMaurier. James also launches a pictorial analysis of the works of certain illustrators, identifying their imbedded cultural interpretations. James was keen to express his dislike for the art of illustration through the negative comments he passes disguised in an ironic taste. In his essay "Black and White", he writes:

> In *Harper* they have again and again, as it were, illustrated the illustration, and they constitute for the artist a series of invitations, provocations and opportunities. They may be referred to without arrogance in support of the contention that limits of this large movement, with all its new and rare refinement, are not yet in sight.[126]

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[125] Amy Tucker, *The Illustration of the Master: Henry James and the Magazine Revolution* (California: Stanford University Press, 2010), p. 22.
[126] Henry James, "Black and White" in *Picture and Text* by Henry James (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1893), pp.1-2.

A number of James's serialised works were also illustrated such as, "Greville Fane" (1892) which have been illustrated by A Forestier in the *Illustrated London News*. In the same magazine in 1896, *The Other House* appeared illustrated by Walter Paget. *Julia Pride* (1908), in which James tries to reproduce to his readership Daisy Miller the innocent American girl, was illustrated by W. T. Smedley.

When Felix Young, the hero in *The Europeans* beholds the women in the streets of Boston scrambling into the omnibus he states; "The women are very pretty, ... the whole affair is very amusing. I must make a sketch of it."[127] The way Felix reacts to this street scene can be compared to James's depiction of the wider American scene, and particularly Boston, in words rather than in painting. According to James, the difference between the attitudes and interests of Americans and of Europeans is a matter for humour, which is indicated by his choice of the words "A Sketch" in the title of the novel. The word "sketch" in the title of the novel, a metaphor taken from the visual arts, suggests that James is only drawing upon some of the essential features of the life of his characters in a rather descriptive manner, leaving any comments for the imagination of the readers. He presents the dilemma of his characters as a demonstration of a whole group or class of people.

When Eugenia describes Felix as "a penniless correspondent of an illustrated paper,"[128] his reply illustrates that he has meticulously planned his visit to America. "I have an engagement to make fifty sketches … at a hundred dollars a head."[129] This calculated care over money is an important part of his character. He aims to return to Europe after building a

[127] Ibid., p. 37.
[128] Ibid., p. 39.
[129] Ibid.

fortune. Felix's story can be seen as a representation of James's own life. Moreover, it can be argued that Felix with his business ambitions embodies the "American Dream" in his pursuit of financial expansion.

Felix is a representative of the new generation in both America and Europe. His views about life and how it should be lived are very different from those held in America – his native country. When Gertrude asks him about his identity and homeland, he tells her that he is a wanderer – he feels that all of Europe is his home:

> 'You are a foreigner of some sort,' said Gertrude. 'Of some sort – yes; I suppose so. But who can say of what sort? I don't think we have ever had occasion to settle the question. You know there are people like that. About their country, their religion, their profession, they can't tell.'... 'Where do you live?' she asked. 'They can't tell that either!' said Felix. 'I am afraid you will think we are little better than vagabonds. (*T E*, p.p. 54, 55)

Felix's uncertainty about the important qualities that constitute an identity is what marks his Europeanised way of life. He is not sure of anything that makes him belong to a place, to a group of people, or to an idea. He prefers to have an identity that has no restrictions; an identity that allows him to be free from all types of constraints.

Felix, with his European habits, is represented in direct contrast to the other male American characters in the novel. Jerrold Seigel in the introduction to the first chapter of *Across the Atlantic: Cultural Exchanges between Europe and the United States* entitled "Cultural Identities" asserts: "To be European was to be "dark", "oriental", mysterious, perhaps untrustworthy and even cruel, but these traits were tied to a high degree of self-consciousness, and an appreciation for forms of artifice that contrasted with a certain kind of

gruff American honesty."[130] It can be argued that one of the important traits of Felix that has fascinated Gertrude is his appreciation for all forms of art, which clearly contrasts with Mr. Brand's austere views of life.

James' own inclinations and interests are certainly embodied in the character of his young hero Felix. After leaving America, James spent his life as an expatriate moving from one place to another. Both Felix and James aim at finding happiness and consolation in their art and creativity: Felix in his sketches and James in his writing.

Mr. Wentworth:

Mr. Wentworth is the head of the Wentworth family. From the beginning of the novel he expresses his anxiety regarding the visit of his relatives, Eugenia and Felix. When Gertrude gaily asks her father to let the newcomers reside in their small house, he stresses that the family should be aware that the visitors may exert an influence on their lives: '"You must keep watch. Indeed, we must all be careful. This is a great change; we are to be exposed to peculiar influences." (*T E,* p. 75) The cause of Mr. Wentworth's worry can be interpreted from two angles. On the one hand, his unquestioned dominance over the house and its inhabitants might be disturbed. On the other hand, he is worried about the rebellious and challenging ideas they may bring into his home. Philip Yanella in *American Literature in Context from 1865 to 1929* asserts that such anxieties in James' characters are mainly "motivated by the need to preserve family status and purity from interlopers."[131] Mr.

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[130] Jerrod Seigel, "Introduction" in *Across the Atlantic: Cultural exchanges between Europe and the United States*, ed. Luisa Passerini (Brussels: P. I. E.-Peter Lang, 2000), p. 21.
[131] Philip Yannella, *American Literature in Context from 1865 to 1929* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), p. 79.

Wentworth's worries foreshadow Gertrude's rebellion when she goes against his authority and refuses to marry Mr. Brand.

As the head of the American Puritan family, Mr. Wentworth's only concern is to make sure that the old-established rules of his society, and particularly his family, are obeyed. In a sense he is the custodian of the inherited family's rules including manners, aspirations, attitudes and he is dedicated to ensuring that the young generation under his control conforms to these rules.

Mr. Wentworth is left at the end of the novel with no option but to accept the decisions of the younger generation. In the final Chapter, Felix and Gertrude confront him and try to convince him that they should be allowed to marry. Mr. Brand, Gertrude's former fiancé, appears suddenly on the scene and urges Mr. Wentworth to agree to the couple's desires. As soon as Mr. Wentworth gives his permission he is left lonely and bewildered: "Gertrude went to her sister and led her away, and Felix having passed his arm into Mr. Brand's and stepped out of the long window with him, the old man was left sitting there in unillumined perplexity." (*T E* pp. 187-8)

This scene graphically illustrates the inability of the father – at least from his point of view - to stand in the way of the course of the next generation's lives, emphasising his helplessness in the face of their decisions. However, from the perspective of the younger generation, it is nevertheless clear that the consent of powerful patriarch was necessary to confirm their ability to overcome the reactionary forces of heredity and replication.

I propose that in his characterisation of Mr. Wentworth, James is critically examining the rules of the smallest unit in society; the family. He proposes that if the habits of this unit change, then the whole set of rules governing society will follow. James suggests that a

Gertrude in every house would challenge the patriarchal dominance over the female voice, which was common at the time in nineteenth century America. The extended family suggests transatlantic relations between society in the United States and Europe.

Mr. Robert Acton:

Robert Acton is the man of the world whom Eugenia aims at seducing, in order to make him her future husband. He is a young man who has increased his fortune through trade in China. Mr. Acton eventually prefers to give up his love for Eugenia, because he regards it as too dangerous a gamble. In other words, he judges his personal relationship by the standard of a business venture. In spite of his love for Eugenia, Acton abandons her and decides to marry a younger American girl. This very act of Acton symbolises, to some extent, lack of commitment on the part of American men in their love towards women, especially because of their suspicious attitude towards dominating women. Acton realises that if he marries Eugenia, his patriarchal power will be endangered. His decision results from a fear of Eugenia's intellectuality and her ability to manipulate those around her. Mr. Acton is not sure that Eugenia has terminated her morganatic marriage and therefore he is not sure about her feelings and attitudes. James states, "Unfortunately, he was unable to say it finally, definitively; and now that he was near her it seemed to matter wonderfully little. 'She is a woman who will lie,' he had said to himself. Now, as he went along, he reminded himself of this observation; but it failed to frighten him as it had done before." (*T E*, p. 171) In spite of the fact that Mr. Acton is sure that Eugenia would lie to him, she still has a form of power over him. She fascinates him and lets him know more about the world.

From another perspective, it can be argued that Mr. Acton renounces his plans to marry Eugenia because of her excessive care for outward appearances – he fears that she might sully the simplicity and innocence of American life. Her acts and beliefs threaten the old-established rules of life of American men and women. However, I argue that Acton's decision stems from his wariness that Eugenia will not bring him any financial gain and therefore he will lose if he enters this marriage contract. His loss lies in the fact that Eugenia the intellectual European woman will not let him dominate her and her thoughts.

James uses a similar representation of European women as worldly creatures and American ones as chaste and pure in his later novel *The Wings of the Dove* (1902). Kate Croy accepts that her betrothed lover Merton Densher should marry an American heiress, Milly Theale, who will soon die and leave a fortune for them to enjoy. Kate accepts the deception of a fellow woman for financial gain. Knowing about the terminal illness of Milly, Kate exploits her tragic circumstances through showing friendship and concern, helping Merton to get close to Milly. Again, love and personal relationships are reduced to business transactions.

Daisy Miller was published during June and July 1878 in the *Cornhill Magazine*. Unlike *The Europeans*, in this novella James represents a new type of American women: the outcast American girl. As an expatriate, Daisy Miller is set in a critical social situation. She is obliged to either obey the values and the customs of the place she is visiting, or to keep her own American habits – characterised by freedom of ideas and actions. What is stimulating in Daisy's presentation is the positioning of the influence of her character in the places she visits. She is rendered as an influencer of people she is visiting in spite of social and cultural differences. Indeed, James again uses the narrative technique of international comparisons

between Americans and their European counterparts. As in *The Europeans*, he examines the stigmatisation of young American women by their social circles exploring how they are classified under certain labels and categories.

Daisy Miller, or Annie P. Miller, is ostracised by the small circle of Americans she meets while travelling in Switzerland and Italy. They describe her as "a reckless flirt" who does not care about her reputation or behaviour especially during her walks and outings with her gentlemen friends in public - a habit that contradicts "the custom of the place[s]"[132] she visits. In her travels around Europe, Daisy is accompanied by her rather liberal mother, Mrs. Miller, her brother Randolph C. Miller who is nine years old, and their courier, Eugenio.

The novella opens describing the hotel at the little town of Vevey in Switzerland where Daisy meets the American expatriate, Mr. Frederick Winterbourne. At the very start, Mr. Winterbourne expresses his interest in meeting a new type of American girl. He is charmed by Daisy's talk and manners. Through Winterbourne's eyes we see Daisy as follows:

> Poor Winterbourne was amused, perplexed, and decidedly charmed. He had never yet heard a young girl express herself in just this fashion … Winterbourne had lost his instinct in this matter, and his reason could not help him. Miss Daisy Miller looked extremely innocent ... She was very unsophisticated; she was only a pretty American flirt. Winterbourne was almost grateful for having found the formula that applied to Miss Daisy Miller.[133]

In other instances, and in his talks about Daisy, Mr. Winterbourne endows the heroine with a number of other attributes like "unsophisticated", "uncultivated, "wild", and "very common"

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[132] Henry James, *Daisy Miller* (London: Penguin Classics, 1878), p. 69.
[133] Ibid., p. 20.

girl. He is represented by James as the intellectual observer who arrives at conclusions after close examination and contemplation. Winterbourne in one way or another is the means by which the readers are introduced to Daisy. He arrives at his assumptions about her from what he sees to be her character and from the accounts he hears from other Americans in their social circle. In her book, *Meaning in Henry James*, Millicent Bell indicates the injustice brought upon Daisy's character; as readers we are never given access to the heroine's own stream of thoughts or justifications of her social-defiant acts: "[Daisy] can only be seen from the outside through the lens of Winterbourne's special viewpoint. We are never allowed to know her unspoken thoughts but only the reflections about her uttered to him by others."[134] It is clear that James is characterising Daisy from a single person's point of view. Any understanding of her character is relatively coloured by what Mr. Winterbourne believes or hears about her. It can be argued that his observations of Daisy are those of American men in general toward this new type of American girls.

From his first meeting with Daisy, Mr. Winterbourne strives to place her in a "ready-made" category employing his own observations of her personality. He appears unaware that this categorisation limits any understanding of the true capacity of this girl, and others who are in similar conditions, and that this limited viewpoint may affect these girls deeply. At the very start of the novel, Mr. Winterbourne is excited about his outing with Daisy in a tour to the castle on their own in Vevey. However, later in Rome, he does not approve of her constant companionship with Mr. Giovanelli, Daisy's handsome Italian gentleman friend.

[134] Millicent Bell, *Meaning in Henry James* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), p. 54.

This change of attitude towards Daisy can be seen as a result of the condemnation Mr. Winterbourne hears of Daisy's carelessness in observing social protocols.

It is clear that there are two matriarchal figures: Mrs. Costello, Mr. Winterbourne's aunt, and Mrs. Walker, Daisy and Mr. Winterbourne's friend. Both women express their unhappiness about Daisy's behaviour, especially their sense of outrage that she has "gone wild" ignoring the etiquette of their small American circle in Europe by accompanying men for walks in the streets publically and at night. Trying to make sure that Daisy does not transgress the customs of the place, Mrs. Walker follows her after she leaves her house with Mr. Winterbourne and Mr. Giovanelli for a walk. Mrs. Walker tries to convince Daisy to accompany her and take her carriage instead of walking out with men and being "talked about": '"You are old enough to be reasonable. You are old enough, dear Miss Miller, to be talked about.'"[135] In this novel, James tells the story of an American girl that might extend to include the state of many American girls striving to attain some sort of autonomy over their lives. He also delineates the various kinds of social disdain they face on a regular basis.

It can be argued that in *Daisy Miller*, Hardy bestows some unique attributes on his American heroine; Daisy is different from Gertrude, another American girl in *The Europeans*. In spite of the fact that both of them disobey the conventionality of their social circles, Daisy represents a quite different model. Gertrude Wentworth tries to adapt a new challenging prospect within her own circle in America, while Daisy Miller is the expatriate American girl who introduces a new way of living to a larger section of people outside her original social surrounding. She is not only keen to change the standpoints of the small

[135] James, *Daisy Miller*, p. 60.

American circle to which she belongs, but she is determined to bring the change to every place she visits in Europe. Annette Kar explains the heroine's dilemma as follows; "Daisy is surrounded by organised society on all sides at both Vevay and Rome. She has the option of submitting to its demands, and losing her identity, in return for the prospect of eventual social acceptance, or of rebelling against its conventions, and defying its time-honored codes of behaviour."[136] It can be argued that standing in the face of the long-established rules of the places she visits allows her to make acquaintance of the hero from the first meeting. However, the name given to the hero of the novel, Winterbourne, might emphasis the coldness with which he will face Daisy's friendliness.

Even after the incident when Mrs. Walker follows Daisy to offer her a ride in her carriage instead of walking with two men in the streets at night, Daisy does not change her conduct. Part of the independence and liberty that Daisy calls for is the freedom to enjoy her stay at Vevay and Rome. However, by walking alone with men on the streets, she risks being classified along with "street walkers" and prostitutes. James here examines both Daisy's behaviour and the social response that it produces through the medium of polite, middle-class fiction. The novelist uses a story telling mode to confront the lack of tolerance in that society. Not only Mrs. Walker is keen for Daisy to change her conduct to accord with the general behaviour of their social circle, Mr. Winterbourne who was attracted by the uniqueness of Daisy's personality upon their first meeting changes his views later to agree with Mrs. Walker's.

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[136] Anenette Kar, "Archetypes of American Innocence: Lydia Blood and Daisy Miller," *American Quarterly*, v. 5, no. 1(1953): 35.

The decisive incident that may have led to Daisy's death is the encounter with Mr. Winterbourne at the Colosseum while she is in the company of Mr. Giovanelli late at night. For Daisy to visit the Colosseum at Rome, this massive ruin from the old Roman times, she can be portrayed as 'a gladiator' who is facing the long-established values of the place. Directly after this incident, Daisy becomes seriously ill and dies. In this incident, Daisy is struck by the indifference of Mr. Winterbourne. Daisy initiates the conversation with Mr. Winterbourne as follows: "'Did you believe I was engaged the other day?' she asked. 'It doesn't matter what I believed the other day,' said Winterbourne, still laughing. 'Well, what do you believe now?' 'I believe that it makes very little difference whether you are engaged or not!'"[137]

The novella concludes with a troubling conversation between Mr. Winterbourne and his aunt Mrs. Costello. In this final confession, Mr. Winterbourne acknowledges the unfairness with which he has treated the innocent Daisy as the catalyst that might have led to her death. This final scene portrays a disturbing aspect of Mr. Winterbourne's personality. A year after Daisy's death, and reflecting on the message that she left him, Mr. Winterbourne comes to the conclusion that he was unjust. Talking to his aunt, he expresses his regret, "'She sent me a message before her death which I didn't understand at the time. But I have understood it since. She would have appreciated one's esteem.'"[138] The final scene in *Daisy Miller* suggests a number of points. Firstly, it asserts that Mr. Winterbourne's hesitation can be regarded as one of the main reasons behind Daisy's death. Secondly, it also indicates Mr.

[137] James, *Daisy Miller*, p. 84.
[138] Ibid., p. 88.

Winterbourne's inability as a representative of the American male figure in the novella to stand by the American girl and help her when she is in need of the affectionate support.

The desire for male support can be seen as a wider problem in James's *Daisy Miller*. Within the circle of her family, Daisy was not in a position to receive the support or guidance of her father, who was too busy in his "mysterious land of dollars."[139] Her father Ezra B. Miller is a rich American with a big business in Schenectady. He chooses his business over minding his daughter's needs. This leaves Daisy, more or less, to rely on the kindness she receives from other men who are not considered suitable companions because of her high social position. Mr. Giovanelli, for instance, tells Mr. Winterbourne at Daisy's grave, '"She was the most beautiful young lady I ever saw … And the most innocent!'"[140]But, he was unable to be with her because he is not socially equivalent for her.

Daisy is a victim of her society's unquestioned concern about obedience to etiquette. Her visits to different parts of Europe and her encounters with new cultures give her an insight into the importance of her own values, which privilege freedom of expression and behaviour. This is evident in the compromise she makes. In an exchange with Mr. Winterbourne, Daisy says: "I, thank goodness, am not a young lady of this country. The young ladies of this country have a dreadfully poky time of it, so far as I can learn; I don't see why I should change my habits for *them*."[141] Indeed, the heroine in James's novella prefers to exercise her own individual freedom over the traditions and customs of the places she visits. The wider popularity and interest in her character can be seen in the later use of

[139] Ibid., p. 74.
[140] Ibid., p. 87.
[141] Ibid., p. 68.

her name, “Daisy Miller,” as a euphemistic term to describe a particular type of women who behaved in a certain way outside their original environment. As Bell says, “The naive rebel, Daisy, an embodiment of willful freedom from conventional definition, might seem more eccentric than real. Yet such a figure might represent a significant resistant impulse at work in American life.”[142]

In *The American* (1877), however, James redeploys this international theme of comparison between European and American cultures. James wrote the manuscript for this novel while on a visit to Paris. The central character of the novel, Christopher Newman, is making a tour of Europe. Newman is an innocent American who has come to Paris to experience its culture and to find "a pure pearl" wife, preferably from the higher levels of old society. Why did James choose to call his principal character Christopher Newman? Other than the wordplay on the “new man,” it may be that James is alluding to Christopher Columbus, in the sense that both Columbus and Newman made a revolutionary step in exploring new ways of life and moving from one part of the world to the other. While Columbus “brought civilisation” to Virgin lands of America, Newman is returning to the origins of civilisation to get whatever suits him (as an adventurous American) and to neglect what does not. Being away from his original social circle gives him the capacity to choose without the social pressure that he might suffer from in American society.

It is clear from his novels that while James values the historical richness of the European tradition over the New World, he nevertheless prefers American identity – one that

[142] Bell, *Meaning in Henry James*, p. 49.

is open to cultures and influences from outside: and furthermore, an identity that is also able to bring these different motivations and influences, weave them together, and form a new and exciting character. As an enthusiastic expatriate James travelled, collecting influences and ideas – while rejecting others - and felt bold as an American to make some of them his own. It is clear that he saw America as a new country, without cultural or historical achievements, but which had ironically produced the American character – outward looking, and eclectic. James believes that any American can deal freely, "pick and choose and assimilate" aspects of any civilisation he likes, wherever he finds it. While James presents the contradiction between the American and the European cultures in his longer works, he does not demand that the reader discard one or the other; on the contrary, he illustrates that both rely on each other, and are inter-reliant, and even "derives from their need of each other."[143]

It is impossible to avoid the impact of the big city, in its various forms, as a setting for the narratives of James' novels. Such locations play an important role, almost as important as do the characters in themselves. Each city – from Boston or London to New York - brings its own set of particular characteristics, which impact on plot and development. James was always fascinated by living in big metropolitan areas and this fascination is reflected intensively in his novels. It is worth noting in this context that James shows a preference for setting his stories in "old" cities – which had played a part in the great historical moments of his young nation. And so they had preserved the honour of the past, its great memories, and traditions. Adrian Poole considers the meaning of the city in James's fiction as follows: "'The city' is for James, as for other nineteenth-century writers, a scene

[143] Poole, p. 22.

for consciousness. It concentrates history, power, politics, sexuality, art and most important of all, it concentrates language."[144] Locating his stories in the city, James tested his literary abilities to effectively choose the social predicaments that he had noted and believed of the importance of their alteration.

Even in his novella *In The Cage*, James manages to include this tradition of the city by using London as his backdrop. In his letters he stresses that the British capital is the place where "there is most in the world to observe."[145] (L2: 135) In addition, he perpetuates the strangeness that one can feel in living in those big old cities. He writes of enjoying the life of the flaneur – the wandering writer, who is able to observe, while under no obligation to take part in the lives of the inhabitants of the city.

The outcome of living in big, commercial cities or industrial communities can be seen as an important motive discussed in James's novels. Talking about London, Angelique Richardson in *Love and Eugenics in the Late Nineteenth Century: Rational Reproduction and the New Woman* points out that:

> A self-consciously modern, and superbly class-conscious sense of separation and isolation was emerging. ... Each individual is conscious of himself, but nobody conscious of themselves collectively. This tendency towards individualism and, by extension, towards solitary pleasure brought with it a new perspective, the perspective of the detached observer, the *flaneur* ... which constituted an affront to eugenic ideas of civic responsibility and social obligation.[146]

It can be argued that crowded and big industrial cities offered a kind of self- understanding for societal individuals because of the freedom they can feel at living at ease without

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[144] Ibid., p. 7.
[145] Ibid.
[146] Angelique Richardson, *Love and Eugenics in the Late Nineteenth Century: Rational Reproduction and the New Woman* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 133.

pressure from society. Yet it certainly resulted in increasing isolation for the young members of the society. Those New Men, modern flaneurs, who survive because they detach themselves from the problems of their social surroundings, becoming observers who work upon satisfying their own social curiosity and comfort. The *flaneur* as a term and a phenomenon had been current in Paris and London (as the best examples of big metropolitan cities) since the middle of the nineteenth century. Indeed, Balzac was already using the term in the 1830s and 1840s. I suggest that Christopher Newman the hero of James's *The American* certainly represents the New Man, the detached observer in the great city of Paris.

James uses Newman's character to explore further the role of travel in stimulating social change. In some ways Newman can be seen as mirroring James' own desire to change the corrupt and materialistic society of America by adapting aspects of other cultures he encounters on his travels. Newman meets an old friend now living in Paris – Tom Tristram - in the Museum of the Louvre, and explains that, after making a fortune in America, he has decided to visit Paris and find himself an appropriate wife. "You're the great Western Barbarian," says Tristram: "stepping forth in his innocence and might, gazing a while at this poor corrupt old world and then swooping down on it."[147]

James is here demonstrating a clear insight into the deep, historical, background of both European and American cultures. Adrian Poole tackles this issue in his preface to his readings of Henry James' fiction. In his book Poole states that in James's addressing of both the comforts and discomforts of American and European cultures, he is illustrating the restlessness of these cultures. What makes James' representation more influential

[147] Henry James, *The American,* edited with an Introduction and Notes by Adrian Poole (Oxford: Oxford U. P., 1999), p. 45.

comparable with many other authors is the "historical force"[148] that accompanies his work – the idea that he speaks from a position of both personal experience – being an expatriate in London – and from his wide understanding of cultural history.

Through his ability to present a vision of people of diverse cultures in their own social settings, James is trying to dig deep into the concerns and anxieties of his own age; such as the pain, violence and darkness that lie behind rapid changes in society, in areas such as technology, art, and manners. James examines the world of his characters within a wide cultural framework, focusing on the contradictions between America and Europe; for example, his American female characters are more concerned with family life at home, than with the European ideal of an outward-looking social role.

It can be argued that Felix and Eugenia in *The Europeans* are two "displaced" Americans; their parents are from America, but their culture and thinking is different from fellow young Americans because they were brought up in Europe. They came back to America, their homeland, to re-establish themselves and leave behind the fear of being strangers in Europe. Edward Said in his essay "Reflections on Exile" argues that "Exiles feel an urgent need to reconstitute their broken lives, usually by choosing to see themselves as part of a triumphant ideology or a restored people."[149] This is evident in Eugenia and Felix's attempts to join their relatives in America, and to find partners in Boston so that they can establish their own families.

James focuses on human relationships in his novel and pays particular attention to the familial relationships. This interest is clearly seen in his clear description of the Wentworth

[148] Poole, p, xi.
[149]Edward Said, "Reflections on Exile", in *Transatlantic Literary Studies: A Reader* (eds.) Susan Manning and Andrew Taylor (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), p. 286.

family and its members in *The Europeans*. It is noticeable, therefore, that the key mother figure is absent, and indeed is not mentioned in any of the other characters' speeches. This can be read in terms of an emotional homicide; the mother has been totally removed from the minds of the family, reflecting, perhaps, the role of the mother in nineteenth century American society. In addition, the absence of the mother means she is unable to provide any moral guidance for her children. The mother figure is not only absent in *The Europeans*, but also in a number of Henry James' other novels and short stories. The absence of this important pillar of family life from James's American based novels raises a number of questions in the readers' minds about the reasons behind this nonappearance. This omission can be seen from two different angles. Firstly, one can argue that James aims at stressing the state of his society at the period. The moral guidance that the mother provides for her children is similar, to some extent, to the guidance provided by the country through a set of inherited cultural values and regulations for its people. In some ways this absence of the mother in the family suggests to the readers of James' works that it is inappropriate for America, without the moral guidance of its mothers, to guide its own people. On the other hand, this absence of the role of mothers also shifts the emphasis in James's works onto the defiance of the young heroes and heroines and their struggle to obtain a degree of freedom from the dominating patriarchy, embodied by the father figure in *The Europeans*.

In her book *Novel Relations: The Transformation of Kinship in English Literature and Culture, 1748-1818*, and in the chapter on "the importance of aunts", Ruth Perry examines the absence of mothers in a late eighteenth-century literary tradition, and how

mothers were represented "as a memory rather than as an active present reality."[150] Additionally, Perry pinpoints a number of explanations for the nonexistence of the mother figure in the eighteenth century literary tradition. She regards the trauma of mother-daughter separation as the hidden reason behind this tradition of absence. She also argues that this absence mirrors the state of powerlessness of women, and in particular mothers. Finally, she demonstrates that motherlessness encourages the heroine to avenge the social injustices in her mother's life - being herself a potential mother. Colm Toibin in his essay "The Importance of Aunts (in the 19th-century novel)" takes the argument of the absence of the mother figure a step further. Toibin states:

> Mothers get in the way in fiction: they take up space that is better occupied by indecision, by hope, by the slow growth of a personality, and – as the novel itself develops – by the idea of solitude. It becomes important to the novel that its key scenes should occur when the heroine is alone, with no one to protect her, no one to confide in, no possibility of advice. Her thoughts move inward, offering a drama not between generations, or between opinions, but within a wounded, deceived or conflicted self.[151]

He argues that this absence is essential for the formulation of the heroine's personality. With the absence of the guidance and supervision of the mother in the life of the female central character, she is left to initiate her own decision in the way that will suit her forthcoming social life.

Absent mothering is a Gothic commonplace. The mother is not only absent, her role in the family is reduced to the extent that she becomes invisible. It can be argued that James proposes this absence in his fiction as a way of implicitly arguing that mothers need to be

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[150] Ruth Perry, *Novel Relations: The Transformation of Kinship in English Literature and Culture, 1748-1818* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 336.
[151] Colm Toibin, "The Importance of Aunts (in the 19th-century novel)" *London Review of Books* v. 33, no. 6 (2011): 13.

present in American family life as individuals in their own right; otherwise, the mother's role will stay invisible in her family. American mothering should be given more importance and mothers should be in charge of their homes and families in a way such that they are not abstracted to absence.

James examines the conflict within the family, showing that even inside the two family groups that are represented in *The Europeans* there is a clear conflict in terms of viewpoints, ideas, and inclinations. The difference is clear between the sisters and brothers within each group. Eugenia and Felix are of different temperaments and standpoints. While Eugenia sees Bostonian women as "very pretty", nonetheless according to her "they are mere little girls. Where are the women – the women of thirty?" (*T E,* p. 43) Felix regards them as pretty and full of life. He understands that his sister wants Bostonian women to be of the same age as her; Felix was going to ask her: "Of thirty-three, do you mean?" (*T E*, p. 43) On the other hand, the Wentworth sisters – Gertrude and Charlotte- contrast with one another. Each has different interests and an independent understanding of life and how it should be lived.

The international theme in *The Europeans* offers a space for comparing different women models. Female characters enjoy free will and independence, and they have a "character- effect" (*T E,* p. 355) over the people around them. This effect is clear in the case of Eugenia's influence over her family and the way they are all amazed by her. Eugenia and Gertrude are set to represent a direct contrast between European artifice and the more natural New England.

Marriage plays a pivotal role in the narrative of *The Europeans*. The novel ends with four successful marriages. This stress on the part of James suggests that he viewed personal

relationships as the most important aspect of life. It makes readers wonder about the conditions surrounding these marriages and their possible consequences. Eustacia's morganatic marriage that took place in Europe is based on interest and appearance; ultimately, she is distressed and tries to find an alternative matrimony. By contrast the marriages that take place in America (Felix Young to Gertrude, Mr. Brand to Charlotte, Clifford Wentworth to Lizzie Acton and Robert Acton to a young American girl) are based on love and mutual understanding. In his book *The American Family: From Obligation to Freedom*, David Peterson del Mar asserts the growing of the phenomenon of courtship and love that would lead to marriage in middle class life: "Marriage became more compassionate and complementary, and love played a larger role in both courtship and marriage for the growing middle class. This emphasis on romance owed something to the changing functions of the family, as emotional components replaced economic ones."[152] In terms of Del Mar's reckoning here, love started to constitute an important part of the foundational structure of marriages and family lives in general, affecting society as a whole.

James adapts a neutral voice in *The Europeans*; he neither criticises nor approves the problems inherent in his society. Rather, he represents his characters' social struggles without attempting to find a solution for them. Alwyn Berland states:

> James [did not find] a clear or final answer to the question of how deep or essential were the corruptions of European civilisation.... But he attacked it when it was seen through the eyes of a character who aspired to the ideal, whether this person was American, like Isabel Archer, or European, like Fleda Vetch.[153]

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[152] David Peterson del Mar, *The American Family: From Obligation to Freedom* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 51.
[153] Alwyn Berland, *Culture and Conduct in the Novels of Henry James* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 14.

James delineates the struggles that his characters face on a daily basis, and therefore his realistic representation gives more liberation in dealing with the dilemmas of women in his portrayed social circle. These unbiased views render the unfairness of the situation that women were living in. The more revolutionary female characters are examples to be emulated in order that women might finally obtain a greater autonomy over their lives.

Even inside the groupings of Americans and Europeans, there is a big difference between the beliefs and commitments of the young members. On the one hand, Eugenia and Charlotte believe in the power of the old values of their own societies, and pursue the generalised views of acting as chaste women. Felix and Gertrude, on the other hand, believe in the power of individual freedom, and follow new ways of life. However, I argue that James wrote the happy ending for Felix and Gertrude (who represent the new type of men and women of both societies) to assert that the old preconceived views of gender relations are losing their importance by the passing of time. Moreover, Eugenia's failure to get married to an American husband during her visit to Boston illustrates the fact that there are always some unavoidable tragedies or a termination for certain types of characters in order for other characters carrying more suitable social ideals to prevail. The clash between the different personalities and cultures in the novel creates a space of interdisciplinary themes and views. One cannot disregard the fact that the Americans and the Europeans in James' novel have different views of each other; however, upon their meeting and mingling the standpoints of both are at stake. The male and the female characters serve as examples for the strife of nineteenth century men and women to get their freedom and independence.

Chapter III

Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* (1920)

Edith Wharton's novel *The Age of Innocence* was published in four instalments from August to November 1920 in the *Pictorial Review* magazine, one of the most popular "women's magazines" in early-twentieth-century North America. Later in the same year, the story was published in its entirety, and won a Pulitzer Prize in 1921[154]. In *The Age of Innocence* Wharton narrates the arrival of Ellen Olenska in New York society and addresses how she is seen as an outsider, because she is to be divorced from her husband Count Olenski. The novel is set in the 1870s, so concerns a period when the North American women's rights movement was already underway. Through her story, Wharton portrays the mobility of New York social classes, and the way in which society was developing – especially how some women were striving to win a measure of control over their lives whilst maintaining their socio-economic standing. This move towards change in the autonomy of their lives was helped by some courageous acts of defiance by New York women – and by some men.

One of the earliest women magazines that advocated a reform in women's rights and published in New York is *The Lily* (1849-1853) edited by Amelia Bloomer. The magazine and its editor advocated a change not only in women's rights, but also women's dress. The Bloomerite movement - that included wearing bloomers - gave women more freedom both in public lives as well as domestic duties. It also contributed to the early women's suffrage

[154] As earlier mentioned in the Introduction to this thesis, Edith Wharton was the first woman writer to be awarded a Pulitzer Prize.

movement in North America. *The Lily*, under Amelia Bloomer, provided a stark contrast to the propriety and conventional codes of dress and behavior promoted by the leading women's magazine of the time, *Godey's Lady's Book*, which was published in Philadelphia.[155]

This chapter demonstrates the use of three literary devices: the illustrations that accompanied the text of the serial publication, the settings employed for the story, and the characterisation that Wharton used to explore how male and female characters contributed to the complicated and multi-layered process of social and economic change in nineteenth-century North America. Addressing the illustrations is an important factor in understanding the direct reception and interpretation of the novel's themes. The novel's setting in New York appears as an emblem of change. The role of the opera house which is the first social place mentioned in the novel is a key point that I will focus on in the second part of this chapter. Finally, I will analyse the main social acts of the characters and how they see their place in society, as well as the extent to which they are content or disturbed by social rules.

Before starting to examine the original illustrations, it is necessary to understand the nature of the *Pictorial Review* as a women's magazine. What does it mean for a magazine to be a women's magazine and what kind of material is supposed to be published in that type of magazine? Women's magazines first appeared in the late seventeenth century. As women started to be the main consumers for commodities and entered different fields of work during the nineteenth and twentieth century, the production of magazines addressed to women

[155] I am grateful to Dr. Susan Oliver, my supervisor, for sharing her research on this topic. Dr. Oliver will be publishing her material in a forthcoming monograph, *Arbiters of Opinion: Transatlantic Periodical Culture 1790-1860.*

became "a considerable industry."[156] The editors of women's magazines initially addressed the interests and inclinations that white, middle-class society expected of the "fair sex". Different magazines specialised in different topics, such as music, religion, literature, and the home. Women's magazines aimed at presenting all that interested women included the "latest coiffures, newest lace making patterns, tightest wasp-waists, and most elevating fiction."[157]

The *Pictorial Review* was originally designed to showcase dress patterns; however, its interests changed under the editorship of Arthur T. Vance. In 1907, Vance, a former editor at the *Companion* magazine, took the editorship of the *Pictorial*. Vance originated a major change in the editorial policy of the magazine. His alterations helped in changing the *Pictorial Review* from a small monthly magazine concerned with dressmakers and home fashion to a remarkable magazine with a circulation of 2.5 million by 1923. He dedicated a great part of the magazine to advertisements for furniture, household and food products, giving a secondary importance to advertisements of clothing. Along with the new line of advertisements, Vance focused on the quality of the fiction presented in the magazine. He believed in the importance of fiction for the overall presentation, and hired some of the best short story writers to write for the magazine. Kathleen L. Endres and Therese L. Lueck discuss how the *Pictorial*, under the editorship of Vance, was able to help women cope with the consequences of World War I, because of the type of works of fiction presented: "The magazine was filled with any number of articles designed to help women adjust to the

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[156] Ros Ballaster [et al.], *Women's Worlds: Ideology, Femininity, and the Woman's Magazine* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991), p. 109.
[157] Lee Jolliffe, "Women's Magazines in the 19th Century," *Journal of Popular Culture* v. 27, no. 4 (1994): 126.

demands of wartime: from how-to stories to inspirational features about women at the front written by the *Pictorial Review's* reporter, Mabel Potter Daggett."[158] The magazine was subsequently able to adapt to the prosperity of post war America and dealt with contentious topics and concerns. This success during and after World War I is credited to Vance's approach that "blended the best in fiction with practical household and child care advice and a strong reform sense."[159] Vance adopted an editorial line backing women's rights and the suffragette movement. In explaining the direction of the magazine, he appealed for women to "act and to think as well as to be entertained"[160]. This was clear in the stories presented in the magazine. In the same year of the serialisations of *The Age of Innocence*, the *Pictorial Review* published stories "about birth control in 1920 and new attitudes toward marriage and editorially supported a national divorce law."[161]

The Age of Innocence was published within the context of a national debate about divorce. An advert for the novel – placed by the publishers D Appleton and Co – highlights the question: "Was she Justified In Seeking a Divorce?"[162] As we have seen, the *Pictorial* was an advocate of a new national divorce law. Wharton presents a case study for women who seek their rights in divorcing from "brutal" husbands. I argue here that the nature of the magazine in which *The Age of Innocence* was serialised and the context in which the novel was promoted were fundamental in influencing later interpretations of the novel and its role in the women's movement.

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[158] Kathleen L. Endres and Therese L. Lueck, *Women's Periodicals in the United States: Consumer* Magazines (Westport, Conn: Greenwood, 1995), p. 277.
[159] Ibid., p. 275.
[160] Ibid.
[161] Ibid., p. 277.
[162] Hermione Lee, *Edith Wharton* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2007), p. 588.

On the surface, Wharton criticises a society that prohibits women from choosing whom to marry, or even if they should marry, as well as denying them the right to seek a divorce. However, she is also portraying this crucial decade at a time in which social notions and ideals are under change. Men and women, for similar reasons, are shown in *The Age of Innocence* to suffer from the old social values that control many aspects of their lives. To the new generation, such as Newland Archer's son, Dallas Archer, the old New York conventions are becoming less important. Dallas is engaged to a social outcast, Fanny Beaufort – the daughter of a bankrupt - who is, nevertheless, warmly accepted into New York society. Wharton contrasts the arrival of Fanny into this society with that of Ellen's entrance three decades earlier:

> Fanny Beaufort, who had appeared in New York at eighteen, after the death of her parents, had won its heart much as Madame Olenska had won it thirty years earlier; only instead of being distrustful and afraid of her, society took her joyfully for granted.[163]

It is clear that the engagement of Dallas and Fanny is the product of these changes in society's values. The new generation did not continue to follow and agree with the old values of New York represented by certain individuals who were considered to be "authorities"; "old Mr. Jackson was as great an authority on 'family' as Lawrence Lefferts was on 'form'" (*A I*, p. 7).

The serialisation of *The Age of Innocence* did not attract as much interest amongst readers and critics as the later prize-winning publication of the novel. In its serialised form the work was accompanied by two types of visual imagery. The first kind is related to the

[163] Edith Wharton, *The Age of Innocence* (New York: Penguin, 1996), p. 355. All quotations from the novel are from this edition and appear in the text between brackets. It will be abbreviated as (*A I*) in the subsequent referencing.

text and may affect its reading and understanding. While the second comprises advertisement which is of a different format and style, its presence certainly interacts with the novel's themes of perpetuating female beauty. The material placed within the text falls under four categories: W. B. King's illustrations, the poems with their drawings, small design elements introducing the text, and editorial statements. My main focus here will be on studying King's illustrations, and the societal implications that underpin the relationships between the characters portrayed within the context of New York's changing society. I will show how the illustrations provide a new dimension to our understanding of the novel's embedded social, cultural, and economic themes.

King provided a total of fourteen illustrations, each depicting social situations described by Wharton in her novel. The first illustration to appear occupies the first half of page five of the August edition of *Pictorial Review* and depicts Ellen Olenska in the opera house talking to Newland Archer in the presence of May Welland, Mrs. Mingott and Mrs. Lovell Mingott. This illustration portrays a critical moment at which Ellen tells Archer that he once stole a kiss from her behind a door when they were children: '"You were a horrid boy, and kissed me once behind a door." (*A I*, p. 15) Wharton describes Ellen as the center of attention in the opera house, and consequently King places her in the middle of the illustration. The shape of her body and the style of her dress are unclear, covered by the fan she is holding. In spite of her nonconformity to social taste, which has resulted from "the eccentric bringing-up" (*A I*, p. 37) that her aunt, Medora Manson, gave her, Ellen is carrying a fan in this illustration following the fashion of the 1870s. It can be argued that King is using this fashionable accessory as a means to hide the outrageousness of the dress Ellen is wearing in the opera. In contrast to this portrayal of Ellen, Mary Cassatt's 1879 painting

details a woman in the Parisian opera, "Woman with a Pearl Necklace in a Loge." The woman in Cassatt's painting is wearing a showy dress and holding a closed fan, yet she is not scandalous which suggests the difference between fashions and their acceptance in Paris and New York. This interpretation of the fan as a means to conceal and hide the reality of what lies behind is clearly addressed in Susan Hiner's *Accessories to Modernity* as follows: "The fan thus became 'an ornament, a bibelot, a kind of fetish object' … that stands in for something that is absent or must remain hidden from view."[164] Compared with May Welland's conventional femininity, Ellen looks almost masculine. This has the effect of "desexualising" Ellen as shown in figure 1. Likewise, May Welland is portrayed as an elegant woman holding a bouquet of lilies-of-the-valley[165], yet she is given a secondary importance in the illustration, on the right side of the scene. Considering the meaning of the lilies-of-the-valley in literary contexts, E. W. Wirt in *Flora's Dictionary* suggests that the white colour of lilies usually alludes to the "Delicacy"[166] of their possessor. It is clear that King is emphasising the "unconventionality" of Ellen, and her courage in confronting society's demands. It may be that King's portrayal of Ellen was designed to coincide with the magazine's editorial position – which sought to glorify the less-sophisticated model of the New Woman. In addition, the innocent portrayal of May accords with the essence of Wharton's novel, which is to adore the simplicity of the past era and the righteousness of its women.

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[164] Susan Hiner, *Accessories to Modernity: Fashion and the Feminine in Nineteenth-Century France* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), p. 149.

[165] Lilies-of-the-valley are considered to be special for bridal use and believed to bring happiness. Also, in the Christian legend, the lilies of the valley are believed to be sprang from Virgin Mary's tears when she was weeping over the crucifixion of her son. Therefore, it can be said that Wharton is using it here mainly as a symbol of female purity.

[166] Elizabeth Washington Wirt, *Flora's Dictionary* (Baltimore: Fielding Lucas Jr., 1837), p. 76.

In the second illustration, May Welland and Newland Archer are at the Beauforts' ballroom preparing to announce their engagement in front of the members of New York's elite class. At this point, both May and Newland are wary of making this public announcement, because they fear that it will destroy the privacy of their relationship. Yet they are willing to do it, because they think that it is the "right" way to seek the approval of their social circle and follow the dictations of the older generation. In the illustration, May is holding the same bouquet of lilies-of-the-valley. Wharton's text also stresses this fact as follows: "Miss Welland, evidently about to join the dancers, hung on the threshold, her lilies-of-the-valley in her hand (she carried no other bouquet)" (*A I*, p. 20). The illustrations can be seen as faithful extensions of Wharton's text in the sense that the information mentioned between two brackets is displayed in the middle of the illustration. Again this illustration brings to the surface the innocence of May and her conformity to social rules, by giving extra attention to her carrying the lilies-of-the-valley. The illustration reflects the minute observations of the author in the text and renders them in their social frame. Also, Newland's conformity to the mores of his society is shown in this tablet. He is taking the customary step to satisfy his social circle even though he is not convinced that this public declaration is of any real value to their future relationship together.

The positioning of the illustrations also suggests an editorial strategy that used the power of pictures to inform readers' interpretations of Wharton's story. The first and second illustrations were set within the magazine alongside the matching passage of text. The third illustration, however, portrays an incident that is mentioned on the previous page. It is seen after the reader has read the relevant passage, so acts as a prompt to reflection. The setting here is Mrs. Mingott's house, and it shows the arrival of Countess Ellen Olenska with Mr.

Beaufort after their meeting in Madison Square. In this illustration King displays the inner structure of New York's elite class. The illustration presents the women of the Mingott's house with Newland, who is a member of their social class, sitting together. However, Mr. Beaufort, who is an outsider, is shown peeking from behind the curtain; his body is firmly separated from their social sphere. By portraying Mr. Beaufort in such a position, King stresses the fact that newcomers, increasingly mingling with the elite class of the city - not only during the historic, 1870s setting of Wharton's novel but also during the early decades of the nineteenth century - are not at liberty to enter completely into the most private of circles. The same concern about unwelcomed arrivistes trying to climb the social ladder of New York, armed with new – and often foreign - fortunes, is addressed by Wharton at the very beginning of her text. She writes of "the 'new people' whom New York was beginning to dread and yet be drawn to." (*A I*, p. 1)

Julius Beaufort and Ellen are shown walking down Fifth Avenue in the fourth illustration. This tablet depicts another key moment of Ellen's social life in New York. Ellen is a married woman who is trying to obtain a divorce. To be seen in the most fashionable street in New York walking with Mr. Beaufort puts her in a critical social situation. Being in such a vulnerable position, her actions would be the subject of gossip in New York. Mr. Beaufort, on the other hand, is an outsider and is less concerned about the rules of elite society. This tablet illustrates the occasion that Mr. Jackson is condemning Ellen for, when he is at the Archers' house. His criticism elucidates how all of New York society does not accept such "foreign" conducts and styles of dress. The man and the woman behind Ellen and Beaufort are standing close to each other, directing their gazes towards them, perhaps already discussing the behaviour of Ellen in walking out with a stranger on Fifth Avenue.

The head of Mr. Beaufort is inclined towards Ellen as if he is listening to her conversation. Ellen, on the other hand, is looking in the other direction. In contrast to other illustrations of male characters, Mr. Beaufort listens to the women around him. We could interpret Beaufort's willingness to treat women on an equal basis, as depicted here, as a symbol of a more modern man, ready to listen to women's views, in contrast to the more self-centred attitude of traditional men who see women as restricted to certain duties – such as running a house.

It is clear that, generally, King was focusing on the characters and their social reactions more than the precise setting of the action. In this particular illustration, Fifth Avenue is reduced to a shadow of a lamp post drawn in between the heads of Ellen and Mr. Beaufort. The small fashionable objects of the time shown in the illustrations also tell us much about the social interactions between the characters. Here, Ellen is carrying a parasol, while Beaufort is holding his walking stick under his arm. These objects that the characters carry in the illustrations are clear affirmations of their class and gender. The walking stick in Mr. Beaufort's hand, clearly a fashion item rather than to help him stand, indicates that he is not obliged to work, and is rather a member of the New York's moneyed classes. It signifies that he has the finances and the social standing – being married to a woman from the elite class of the city - to cope with the demands of his newfound social circle. The parasol Ellen is carrying, by contrast, indicates that she requires its protection and security. It is an emblem of female fragility. But like Beaufort's stick the parasol is a display of the owner's wish to obey the etiquette of New York's Fifth Avenue – the gallery for the city's fashionable elite. Other elements of the accepted fashions of the time are clearly displayed throughout the other illustrations as hallmarks of the conformity of New York's upper class.

The second serialisation of September opens with a small illustration of Ellen Olenska at the top of the left side of the page, which is taken from the larger illustration of the opera scene. Again this small illustration on page twenty portrays Ellen holding her fan. Her hairband, a contemporary fashion, suggests that although she lives in the 1870s Ellen anticipates the "bright young things" of the period in which *The Age of Innocence* was written. In other words, she participates in a continuum of feminine change that moves towards the independence and assertive androgyny of the 1920s. This illustration, which is placed at the beginning of the episode, indicates that Ellen will stay the center of attention, with the plot of the story revolving around her. King's presentation of Ellen only in this small illustration can be seen as a signal to the reader that this is a story of a woman who represents a forceful element of change in the elite circle of New York. Ellen introduced new and challenging situations to test the endurance of the long-established social boundaries.

May Welland and Newland Archer appear in King's fifth tablet together in St Augustine's garden. At this point, May asks Newland if he is in love with another woman, and he responds:

> "Some one else—between you and me?" He echoed her words slowly, as though they were only half-intelligible and he wanted time to repeat the question to himself. She seemed to catch the uncertainty of his voice, for she went on in a deepening tone: "Let us talk frankly, Newland. Sometimes I've felt a difference in you; especially since our engagement has been announced." "Dear—what madness!" he recovered himself to exclaim. (*A I*, p. 147)

In the illustration, Newland's denial can be seen in the shape of his body and one of his hands, while he carries his hat in the other. The architectural form of St Augustine's garden is indicative in the sense that it is "prison-like" – the pillars behind them appearing like bars on a cell. Through one of the gaps we can see the roof of the church. The cross on the top of

the roof appears as a reminder of the power of the Church. In this illustration the cross appears in a powerful spot imprisoning Newland and May and supervising them. Thus, it represents the social expectations which cast a shadow over the couple's future. May and Newland are publicly tied together by their engagement, and society anticipates that they will marry, be in love, be happy, and have children, while in reality they are entangled in a loveless relationship. May who is described by Wharton as "looking her loveliest under a wide-brimmed hat that cast a shadow of mystery over her too-clear eyes" (*A I*, p. 145), is sitting calm and still, her hands clasped together, and a parasol on her lap. The parasol in May's hands, while generally a symbol of female weakness, here suggests the controlling power she now has over Newland. Men in New York's elite society symbolically share the traditional role of the parasol: they provide money and security for their wives, protecting them from financial hardship. So, the parasol indeed personifies patriarchal power, but in this situation May is in power as she has by this time become engaged to Newland. May looks away from him, and appears in complete control of the situation. King has again attempted to sum up a complex social situation in his drawing. King's illustration suggests May's confidence that because of her formal engagement to Newland, he will have little freedom to pursue another woman without endangering his own social position.

The intimate environment of Ellen's house is portrayed in the sixth illustration. Visually, King foregrounds Wharton's exploration of the private activities of a more progressive side of New York upper-class culture. The plate prepares the reader for the episode that follows, hinting at a glimpse of a more clandestine society. Ellen hosts a salon of some painters and writers and her aunt, the Marchioness Medora Manson, is also there. Newland Archer is an outsider in this gathering, and is only present because he came round

to try and persuade Ellen not to go on a visit to Mrs. Struthers's house. Generally, people with artistic interests, including poets and painters, often met in the houses of those characters who do not care about the rules of society. This negligence of social decorum is clarified in Wharton's statement that the two men in the illustration were "both in morning clothes that they had evidently not taken off since morning." (*A I*, p. 156) Moreover, this Bohemian set is described in the text as follows, "Beyond the small and slippery pyramid which composed Mrs. Archer's world lay the almost unmapped quarter inhabited by artists, musicians, and 'people who wrote.' These scattered fragments of humanity had never shown any desire to be amalgamated with the social structure" (*A I*, pp. 99, 100). It is clear that the nature of this salon is different from the other gatherings portrayed in King's illustrations. It is the circle of those who are not accepted by elite New York society, because they are regarded as inferiors. The face of Aunt Medora is different from the other women in the rest of the illustrations as the hallmarks of matriarchy are clear on her face with its stern expression. Marchioness Manson is referring her hand towards Newland in an attempt to introduce Dr. Carver, "founder of the Valley of Love Community". The lines of the text that King depicts in this illustration are deferred until after the seventh illustration. Therefore, this illustration appears in the wrong order of events for the story. However, it does have the statement under the illustration and one can see that it is supposed to illustrate this exact situation mentioned under the tablet.

Newland Archer alone with Ellen Olenska in her house is the scene for King's seventh illustration. After Mr. Beaufort's departure, Newland notices from the window the arrival of the carriage that will carry Ellen to Mrs. Struthers's house. Here, Newland initiates an intimate conversation with Ellen in an attempt from him to prevent her from going to her

destination. Newland starts by telling Ellen that May is suspecting him of being in love with another woman. In May's presence, Newland denies this accusation, while here he is telling Ellen that May is right and that Ellen is the woman whom he loves, "'May guessed the truth,' he said. 'There is another woman--but not the one she thinks.'" (*A I,* p. 169) Newland makes this confession holding Ellen's hand. In King's illustration, the body language is very suggestive. While one of Ellen's hands is in Newland's, the other one is placed on her heart indicating the extent of her surprise at Newland's words. Newland feels humiliated when Ellen asks him to stop making love to her, because he is in love with her. Wharton states, "Archer, changing colour, stood up also: it was the bitterest rebuke she could have given him. 'I have never made love to you,' he said, 'and I never shall. But you are the woman I would have married if it had been possible for either of us.'" (*A I,* p. 169) His serious face and his hand stretched to explain his real love for Ellen are indications of his honesty. The location in this scene is Ellen's house, which has clearly a different style from the rest of the places portrayed in the illustrations. Ellen's house is more simple and "rustic" if we compare it with the sophisticated houses of New Yorker's elite class. The illustration precedes the text it portrays by a number of pages, so the tablet prepares the readers for this dramatic incident in which Newland articulates the exactions of his love, and encourages them to follow the plot of the story.

The October installment starts with an illustration of Miss Blenker sitting on the bench of her garden talking to Newland Archer. Newland stands assertively looking downward at Miss Blenker, who sits meekly on a garden seat under a bower. The choice of the garden scene in this illustration hints at the Biblical Garden of Eden in which the first human sin has occurred. Following the tradition that God's demands should be obeyed in the

Garden of Eden, a garden usually would have certain rules which should comply with its social sphere. The garden therefore can be seen as an intermediary place between the conformity of New York and the liberation and wildness of the countryside. It is indeed a cultivated version of the freedom that one may experience in the countryside, yet rules of New York's elite class should be followed in it. In this illustration, Newland's questioning about Ellen is unacceptable, because he is a married man and this act will certainly disturb his position within his social circle. Newland is asking about Ellen: "Archer found the strength to break in: 'But Madame Olenska—has she gone to Newport too?'" (*A I,* p. 227). Starring at him, Miss Blenker tells Newland that Ellen received an important telegram and went immediately to Boston. The illustrated incident is narrated four pages later, which might suggest that Newland's main concern through these pages is to find Ellen.

In the tablet, Newland is holding a parasol that belongs to Miss Blenker. The parasol is mentioned in the text as being left by Miss Blenker's sister in the garden; "my best parasol! I lent it to that goose of a Katie, because it matched her ribbons, and the careless thing must have dropped it here." (*A I,* p. 227) Newland appears to be nervous, fiddling with the parasol between his hands to relieve and calm his stress. If we return to consider the parasol as an emblem of patriarchy, this illustration shows that Newland has regained his power over women of his circle, particularly his wife, as he is looking for his beloved Ellen. To look at the parasol in Newland's hands from a different perspective, one can argue that King is trying to showcase the menace that Wharton has between the lines of her text towards Newland. No matter how powerful Newland is as a man, still he holds this female fashionable accessory, which can be interpreted as the female love and support. Also, this illustration indicates male self-importance that is a common feature of the men of the time, in

the sense that Newland projects a degree of male dominance and superiority over Miss Blenker by the way he is looking at her. In addition, on this occasion Newland is subservient to Miss Blenker in a way that he is in need for her answer otherwise he will not know Ellen's location. But Newland discovers that Ellen has already left, leaving him powerless

The archery contest at the Beauforts' garden party provides the setting for the ninth illustration. The event takes place after Newland and May's marriage. The choice of the scene is ironic in the sense that the use of the bow reminds readers of Cupid, the god of love, whereas Newland and May's marriage is based on social tendencies and expectations. May is holding her bow perfectly, suggesting that she has acquired a combination of self-awareness, composure and autonomy. She "wins" the contest; however, Beaufort comments that the straw target is "the only kind of target that she will ever hit," referring to her socially arranged marriage to Newland Archer. Newland is troubled by Beaufort's remark for a number of reasons. Beaufort indicates May's "niceness" as sign of submissive femininity, yet Newland interprets his words as a hint of her lack of attractiveness. May is occupying the center of attention in her social circle and thus King portrays her in the middle of the illustration. The women in the archery party are wearing their best dresses: as Wharton states in the text, "All were young and pretty, and bathed in Summer bloom." (*A I,* p. 212) It is in such parties that women of the elite class showcase their best dresses to impress the men in attendance and emphasise their eligibility to belong to this class.

Moreover, archery has been regarded as one of the competitive sports that women of the elite circle living in the city are supposed to practice in order to help them get into the desirable female body shape. In *Godey's Lady's' Book* a short article on the benefits of practicing archery for women is in the "Editor's Table" features for July 1849:

> Archery. -- The spirited illustration of this graceful accomplishment for ladies must win admiration. We have called this practice of archery a graceful accomplishment - a healthy exercise would be the more appropriate term. Ladies brought up in cities have too few opportunities to use their arms, and the back and chest cannot gain the requisite strength and roundness unless the muscles of the arms are developed by active exertion. Every young lady educated in the city, would gain health and beauty by the practice of archery.[167] (p. 78).

Women pursued this sport to benefit by becoming shapely and healthier. More importantly, by taking part in archery competitions elite women would confirm their belonging to the upper-class gentility.

The tenth illustration of two men and a woman at the wiring office is very suggestive in spite of the little that it might show at first glance: Newland Archer and Lawrence Lefferets talking at the Western Union Office. It does capsulate two important themes of the novel; change and gender discrimination at the same time. Change in the sense that the telegram was a newly introduced communicational technology to New York's society through the offices of the telegraph company, Western Union, in 1861. Yet this has altered the life style of New Yorkers as they were able to communicate easily with relatives throughout the country and "instant long-distance communication became a practical reality."[168] The fact that one of the illustrations takes place in the telegram office asserts that this new place has begun to be one of the public spaces used by members of the elite class. Furthermore, this illustration displays gender bias in the sense that Newland is the one who is using the invention to wire the letter to Ellen and not his wife who has written it. The third person who appears in this tablet is the office worker. The lady is portrayed behind the bars

[167] *Godey's Lady's Book*, July (1849), p. 78.
[168] Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 1.

waiting dutifully to help the two gentlemen. On the other hand, the two gentlemen are at liberty to talk and behave freely. This portrayal of the woman at her work and her two male customers is a symbol of the wider society in which they live. It illustrates the predicament of working, middle-class women who by taking up employment, rather than following the example of New York's traditional ladies, rule themselves out of marriage within elite society. In the eyes of men like Newland and Lefferts such a woman would appear as "unmarriageable" because she has violated the conduct of her sphere of "private, female world, centred on domesticity and effective family ties."[169] The same social exclusion exerted on female workers, in particular women workers at the telegraph office, is tackled also in Henry James's *In The Cage.*

While Newland is shown at the Western Union office sending the telegram, he meets Lawrence Lefferts who asks if Newland is wiring Ellen. Mr. Lefferts assumes that Ellen is the receiver as she is a member of the Mingott's family. The body language of the two pictured men gives us an insight into the interaction between them as members of the elite class. The direction of Mr. Leffert's and Mr. Archer's looks is indicative. Lefferts is trying to tease Newland by asking him about Ellen; therefore, he inclines his body towards Newland, avoiding direct eye contact but allowing himself to speak discretely; "Archer's lips stiffened; he felt a savage impulse to dash his fist into the long vain handsome face at his side …Lefferts … raised his eye-brows with an ironic grimace that warned the other of the watching damsel behind the lattice." (*A I,* p.p. 279-280) Newland's look at Mr. Lefferts

[169] Laura F. Edwards, "Gender and the Changing Roles of Women," in *A Companion to 19th- Century America*, ed. William L. Barney (Malden: Blackwell, 2001), p. 223.

appears reproachful, perhaps because he feels it is unacceptable to talk about women in public places, especially a woman from within the family circle.

Ellen and Newland in one of Boston's inns are represented in the eleventh illustration. Newland is in Boston for work, and has taken the opportunity to see Ellen and discuss their relationship. Ellen here expresses her love for Newland, but at the same time she refuses his offer to stay with him as a mistress. She tells him how she knew the real meaning of life through an understanding of his views of life. Ellen states, "You gave me my first glimpse of a real life, and at the same moment you asked me to go on with a sham one" (*A I,* p. 244). The window in the scene can be interpreted in terms of representing a featureless, bleak future. It can be regarded as a symbol of what would lie ahead if Ellen were to accept Newland's advances and become his mistress. If she accepts Newland's offer, Ellen will have invisible future, with no exact position or identity in New York elite society. In the illustration, Ellen turns her back on this version of the future, symbolised by the window, branding it a "sham one". Ellen's hands are folded as if she has been held by the power of her love to Newland. In this confrontation, both Ellen and Newland are avoiding each other's eyes with their hands inactive and folded, as if in recognition of the difficult situation they are facing. The rules of elite society make it impossible for them to be together as they wish.

November's concluding instalment opens with an illustration taking the upper half of the page. In this twelfth illustration, King attempts to introduce New York's elite class in another important social assembly in which etiquettes and manners should be obeyed. It is the first big party that May is holding in her social circle as a married woman, and it is supposed to give an impression of her compliance with social rules. King's portrayal of the

scene in which the characters are gathered around the table is in harmony with Wharton's description of this gathering as a "conspiracy". He portrays Newland and Ellen at the middle of the illustration trying to talk to each other, while they are scrutinised by May's guests. Newland here recognises that he and Ellen are separated by the power of May's "whole tribe," because May already knows about the love between him and Ellen. By giving this party, May is celebrating the leaving of Ellen who can be considered as a threat to the stability of her marriage: "the occasion of the entertainment was simply May Archer's natural desire to take an affectionate leave of her friend and cousin" (*A I,* p.338). The table in front of the guests is shadowy and barely seen. There are only empty glasses and plates of no importance in comparison to the prominence of the characters around the table and their interactions, which are clearly presented through their body language. Newland initiates the talk with Ellen: "'Did you find the journey tiring?' he asked in a voice that surprised him by its naturalness; and she answered that, on the contrary, she had seldom travelled with fewer discomforts." (*A I,* p. 339) It is clear that Ellen is not interested in the conversation with Newland in this instance; she has both of her hands under the table. While Newland is asking her if she is tired from her journey, Ellen is looking in a different direction. The couple on the left of the scene are busy talking to each other, while the old woman on the right side is watching Ellen and Newland. This woman by her old age represents old New York's values and her watching of Ellen and Newland in the party suggests the close surveillance of society over its members on social occasions.

The next illustration portrays May sitting comfortably on an armchair while Newland is trying to hide his anxiety, after she has told him of Ellen's return to Europe. The incident illustrated appears in the wrong order of the story's events, as May tells Newland of Ellen's

decision before she gives the party in Ellen's honour. It takes place in Newland and May's house. May is trying to spot the anxiety on Newland's face, and he is trying to hide any reaction that May might notice by turning his face away from her. Wharton states, "He understood that his own eyes must be unbearable, and turning away, rested his elbows on the mantle-shelf and covered his face." (*A I*, p. 328) However, the reflection on the mirror behind him would have revealed his confusion to May. By placing the mirror on the mantelpiece near Newland, King suggests that May already knows about Newland's love to Ellen because of the way she structured her house. The layout of May's house, which ostensibly accords with the codes of the elite class, readily shows any case of disloyalty from Newland's side. May is self-controlled in this portrayal, as well as in the other illustrations, which indicates that she already knows the news of Ellen's return to Europe through her familial connections. Yet May is not concerned because social expectations have full control over her life with Newland as a married couple.

The last illustration portrays Newland Archer and his son Dallas Archer in front of Ellen's house in Paris. This illustration portrays another instance in which Newland should choose either his love for Ellen, or his conformity to old New York social values. At this point, May is dead and Newland can join his beloved, Ellen. But he refuses to enter Ellen's house with his son. It is clear that Newland still fears the ostracism in his social circle if he is to be linked with a social outcast, Ellen. Dallas asks his father before he leaves him outside what excuse he should use with Ellen: "'Very well. I shall say you're old-fashioned, and prefer walking up the five flights because you don't like lifts.' His father smiled again. 'Say I'm old-fashioned: that's enough.'" (*A I*, p. 364) The father and the son in this illustration are looking in opposite directions. The direction of their looks is symbolic in the sense that

Newland is looking downwards, avoiding to gaze towards Ellen's house. On the other hand, Dallas is looking up towards Ellen's house. These looks convey clear indications of the father's and of the son's traits. While Newland avoids thinking of going to Ellen and defies her society by looking in a different direction, Dallas is optimistic, holding his head up and looking forward to meet Ellen who can be seen as an epitome for him and his fiancé.

A total of six editorial statements appear within the lines of the serialisation of *The Age of Innocence*. These panels convey messages from the editors directed to the magazine's readers set between the lines of the serialised novel, yet their focus varies throughout the serialisation from attracting, indulging or leading the readers out from the novel they are reading. The elaborate design of the boxes in which these statements are represented emphasises the superiority of the themes mentioned inside them. They may also refer to the interest in outward detail, manners and class which characterise the everyday life of the elite class in New York.

The first editorial statement takes place at the second page of Wharton's serialised text. Entitled "Pictorial Review Serials", it lists the names of the authors whose works will be serialised alongside Wharton's novel. This statement helps readers to build an overall picture of the kind of fictional works they are expected to encounter in the process of reading the magazine. Also, it gives a sense of the quality of these works by the final added declarative question, "Sounds like a string of prize-winners, doesn't it?" Therefore, trying to guide the readers to read more of the magazine's serialised works. "A Great Novel About Real People" is the heading for the second editorial caption which also appears in the first serialised instalment of the novel. In this captioned box, the editor is identifying the type of the characters represented in Wharton's story and urging the readers to anticipate a solution for

the complex situation the characters are entrapped in. Questioning the readers' ability to anticipate the consequence of this complex relationship helps the readers to reflect on the conditions that have led to this complexity and the possibility of a way out.

The third editorial insertion under the editorship of Vance is entitled "The Story of the Story". It starts by a general query about a man expectation in his wife, "What is it a man expects in a wife?", providing information of how Newland is attracted to Ellen in spite of his engagement to May Welland. This statement suggests Newland's attraction to Ellen's "allure and European experience", however, it concludes to raise another point for readers' speculation questioning the outcome of Newland's unsettled emotions towards those two women. The fourth editorial statement takes the same title "The Story of the Story" and appears in the second page of the third instalment. In this observation the editor details Ellen and Newland's predicament. Ellen is placed in an awkward social position due to her asking for divorce because she is not happy in her marriage. The insertion starts by the question, "Was Ellen Olenska justified in seeking a divorce?" To start the editorial statement by a question helps the readers to indulge and think of the reasons behind the events of the story.

The fifth editorial box is entitled "Kathleen Norris's New Serial Next Month". It appears in the third instalments of *The Age of Innocence* and informs the readers that the final part of Wharton's novel will appear in the next instalment of the magazine. Also, it serves to prepare the readers for Norris's "The Beloved Woman" which will appear in the next number. The editor here asserts that Norris will strike a "new note" in this novel; therefore, attracting the readers to follow up reading Norris's novel. The final editorial statement, "We Begin a New Novel by Kathleen Norris", focusses on "The Beloved Woman" and gives a general hint of what the readers will encounter in the process of reading

the story. The final two editorial statements; therefore, aim at encouraging the readers to read the story of another female protagonist following Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* in the *Pictorial Review*.

Five short poems are also inserted within the serialised work. Most of their themes accord with the general atmosphere of the incidents narrated within the same lines. The middle of page eight of the first installment in the *Pictorial Review* is occupied by a short poem by Mary Carmack McDougal. The poem is entitled "My Plum-tree". It narrates the wish of a woman to have a child and the joyful things that she will do with him. Around the poem there is a drawing by Katherine S. Dodge. The drawing is of a woman and her child under a tree raising their hands to catch a plum that has the poem written inside. The poem is set near the text that narrates the first days of May's and Newland's engagement. Consequently, it indicates May's ultimate wish to have children, which is in turn the woman's sacred duty in New York's patriarchal society.

The second poem, "The Strong House" by Sara Teasdale, is presented with drawings by Kerr Ely in the second instalment. It indicates the state of women in New York society in general. For the woman, love means working for the comfort of the house and the husband. The third poem, "Hands of the Moon", is also presented in the second instalment and is written by a woman, Mary Carolyn Davies. On the same page, Newland is talking with Ellen about her divorce papers. Ellen is deceived by Newland who is apparently helping her, but at the same time he is asking her to return to her husband. The same context is brought up in the poem which talks about the illusions of the moonlight. The next poem appears in the third serialisation on page 27 and is entitled "Autumn Rovers". The poet, Clinton Scollard, talks about the roaming of two lovers in spite of the difficulties they face. The poem is inserted on

the same page narrating Newland's attempts to find Ellen in the Blenker's house. The final poem "Shadow Music" by Arthur Guiterman appears in the last instalment. It definitely indicates the nature of Newland's ultimate choice, which is to live in the shadow of his old society.

The last visual aspect that is presented along the lines of the serialised work is the small plates on the top of the final sections of the story. The style of the drawings is similar to the style of the fashionable women in King's illustrations; nonetheless, they are drawn by different illustrators. On some of the small plates the initials HB or HLB are clear, while some of the others do not have any noticeable initials. Most of the small plates portray women of fashion in their domestic places: beautifying themselves, attending a gallery of hats and pictures, or taking care of their small gardens. These actions constitute the fashionable side of the life of any woman in New York. These small plates take the top of last pages in the instalments where no illustrations are provided. Thus, they help to keep the general atmosphere of fashionable New York life dominating the rest of the serialised work.

The second type of visual imagery that appears alongside the serialisation of *The Age of Innocence* is the advertisements. As I have mentioned earlier, the advertisements have stylish photos of different style to the women portrayed in King's illustrations. An example of the dissimilarity is seen clearly in page 103 of September's serialisation, where the style of dress for the sporty women in the advertisements differs from that of the domestic woman portrayed at the top of the page, indicating the start of the next part of the novel. (See Appendix A, page 262) This gives the impression that the novel belongs to an era preceding the time of its publication. The advertisements vary from vacuum cleaners, gas ovens, and ready-made soups, to soaps and cleaning products. All of the commercials try to convince

female readers of the effectiveness of the advertised products, and how using these merchandises will provide them with more external beauty and personal freedom at different levels of their lives.

Editorial decisions certainly affect the presentation of the tablets in the magazine. In the case of *The Age of Innocence*'s illustrations, the first and second installments present their tablets in accordance with the events of the story. Yet the illustrations in the third and fourth editions are of a mixed order. The tablets (8,9), (10,11), and (12,13) are switched in pairs, in the sense that according to the sequence of the story's events plate number nine should be placed before eight and so on. It can be argued that editorial plans prioritise the general appearance of the magazine over the sequence of events.

By having another close examination of King's illustrations, one can notice that the direction of the characters' gazes gives clear indications of their attributes and how they act in different social situations. It is interesting to notice how women are portrayed in the illustrations, turning their heads to listen to the men around them. This portrayal demonstrates the overall condition of women in New York's elite class; women are mainly passive listeners following the orders of the male members of their society.

For almost a century critics ignored the importance of the illustrations that accompanied the serialisation of *The Age of Innocence*. Edith Thornton's "Innocence Consumed", published in 2005, is the first article that deals with a number of the original illustrations. Thornton argues that the story was "visually sold as nostalgia for a simpler

time"[170] portraying the innocence of the early nineteenth century to the magazine's readers. The theatrical poses and gestures of the characters dominate the tablets from beginning to end, all of which are typical indications of the manners of New York's elite class in the nineteenth century. Thornton argues that desexualising Ellen in these illustrations - by presenting her revealing dress covered by the fan she is holding - can be seen as King's own interpretation of Wharton's longing for simpler times, and hence as a move away from the visual preoccupations with sexuality that prevailed at the time of the publication of *The Age of Innocence*. Thornton states, "By desexualising Ellen throughout, by emphasising stillness, tableaux, and highly theatrical gestures to display emotions, the illustrations point away from the 1920s preoccupations with sexuality, youth, and currency toward a simpler time when female sexuality was not yet the visual commodity it would become in the post-First-World-War era."[171]

Having compared the illustrations with Wharton's text, I incline to agree with Thornton's view of desexualising Ellen in the illustrations. Ellen, in Wharton's text, is described as wearing a revealing dress; so revealing that it caused a minor scandal in society. In the illustrations Ellen is portrayed differently, with a modest dress in almost all illustrations and with a fan covering the style of her dress in the illustration for the same incident that she is criticised for by her social circle. Yet, I would add another important factor suggesting, again, that these contradictions between the portrayals of Ellen in the text

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[170] Edith Thornton, "Innocence Consumed: Packaging Edith Wharton with Kathleen Norris in *Pictorial Review* Magazine, 1920-21." *European Journal of American Culture* v. 24, no. 1 (2005): 30.

[171] Ibid., p. 39.

and the illustrations come about because of the editorial policy of the *Pictorial Review*, which actively backed women's rights. I suggest here that the illustrations were part of a commercial plan to present the story to accord with the magazine's procedures. On the other hand, May is shown in the illustrations and the original text as an emblem of the women who conform to their societal orders. She is "The Angel in the House" and thus a symbol of purity. This attribute of her is clearly displayed in illustration by portraying her carrying the posy of lilies-of-the-valley.

Thornton argues that the theatrical poses in the illustrations indicate a longing for past simplicity. Looking at them from a different angle, the stiff poses and features can be seen as a way of displaying the classiness of the pictured characters. In Ariel Beaujot's article "The Beauty of her Hands: The Glove and the Making of the Middle-Class Body," Beaujot asserts that these mid-motion gestures were presented in most of the fashion plates and even professional photographs of middle-class men and women; therefore, they became popular as the best way to suggest belonging to a high social class. Such gestures were supposed to portray the best body shape to be imitated by middle-class women. Beaujot states:

> Though the dress and female silhouette of fashion plates were ever-changing, the hand gestures and arm movements of the women in these images remained remarkably constant. The hands in fashion plates had a set amount of gestures, all of which were inactive. Arms and hands were arrested in mid motion: gently reaching for objects, calmly gesturing towards items of interest, and holding accessories insecurely within their gloved hands.[172]

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[172] Ariel Beaujot, "The Beauty of her Hands: The Glove and the Making of the Middle-Class Body," in *Material Women, 1750-1950: Consuming Desires and Collecting Practices*, ed. Maureen Daly Goggin and Beth Fowkes Tobin (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), p. 173.

In addition to the shape of the body, hand movements play an important role in portraying the intentions of the characters. Generally, they are portrayed in the middle of an important social action. The hands of the portrayed men and women in the illustrations are rarely empty. The characters are always occupied holding something with their hands. In public places, women are carrying parasols, fans or roses. Men also are holding their hats or sticks. The accessories they hold show their conformity to social etiquettes. Indeed, the illustrations focus, as the story does, on the lifestyle of the elite class of New York.

One of the main concerns during the nineteenth century was food and its preparation, presentation and consumption. Cooking and the consumption of food were essential procedures of the everyday life to the extent that Judith A Barter, in *Art and Appetite: American Paintings, Culture, and Cuisine*, says that the task of eating has been transformed into "a performance of cultured living."[173] However, at the turn of the twentieth century, food consumption and rendering food in paintings started to be seen as signs of "nineteenth century extravagance." That revision in attitude came about because of changes that happened to the social structure of America, and not least because of the rampant materialism of what became known as "the Gilded Age."[174] American painters of food during the *fin de siècle* tended to focus on portraying the aftermath of the meal, out of fear of being criticised for endorsing extravagance. This tendency in painting is seen in one of John Singer Sargent's paintings, *My Dining Room* (1883), in which the artist sketches what is believed by

[173] Judith A Barter, *Art and Appetite: American Paintings, Culture, and Cuisine* (Chicago: Yale University Press, 2013), p. 82.

[174] Ibid., p. 159. (The Gilded Age in the American history starts at the 1870s and coincides with the same time period as the three studied novels. It also extends to the 1900s and marks an era of social corruption underneath a gold layer of social etiquettes.)

critics to be the artist's Paris dining room after the consumption of a meal.[175] Even the remnants of the food are not recognizable, to enhance the informality of the scene. In a rather similar stylistic technique, in the illustrations to Wharton's *The Age of Innocence*, there is barely any food portrayed on the tables. Yet the table can be seen as a means to represent the center of actual consumption in the house, and it can be extended further to represent American culture as a culture of consumption. Also, rendering the tables and the gatherings that were taking place specifically in dining rooms can be attributed to the rising interest in such locations as the central foci of show on the part of the gentility, and the hosts' concern about their social set and its requirements.

> By midcentury, the rituals of etiquette were on full display in the dining room, the home's central space of food consumption. At a dinner party in particular, the hosts and their guests navigated a profusion of protocols concerning sociable eating. From invitations, proper dress, greetings, and the duties of the host to the order of procession to the table, managing one's utensils throughout the meal, sipping soup quietly, and chewing thoroughly, dining with gentility required rehearsal and precision.[176]

So, gatherings and special arrangements around the table can be interpreted as mere display of social distinctions and class divisions. This importance is easily seen in the narrative lines of the studied novels, and is acknowledged in the magazine illustrations as samples from the period in question.

Overall, King's illustrations succeed in giving the reader an insight into the characters and their social reactions in the particular incidents portrayed. It is clear that every tablet has either Ellen or Newland or both, and therefore presents them as the main agents of change in

[175] Barter, p. 159.
[176] Barter, p. 82.

the story. The illustrations also present intricate moments of scandal and social mischief which constitute the main social practices that Wharton intends to show at the verges of change in her society. Moreover, the stress on the style of the dresses and the care for fashion prevails throughout the illustrations, which can be attributed to the nature of a magazine that focused on showcasing dress patterns. All the details in the tablets, from parasols to walking sticks, from theatrical poses to hand gestures, build up to illustrate styles of fashion, manners, gender roles and a number of other social, cultural and economic aspects of the life of New York's men and women in the immediate post-bellum period of the nineteenth century.

The Setting, New York:

We can now turn to an analysis of the setting of Wharton's novel. As a locale for most of her well-known novels, New York in Wharton's works is a city of the elite upper class, dominated by men. She is indeed portraying the society in which she was raised. Edith Newbold Jones was born to a prestigious family in New York City in 1862. At 23 years old she married Edward (Teddy) Robbins Wharton from an established Philadelphia family. She lived all of her life within the bounds of this class even after her divorce from her husband in 1913. In *The Age of Innocence*, Wharton specifies the time frame and the setting as early as the first line of the novel: "On a January evening of the early seventies, Christine Nilsson was singing in Faust at the Academy of Music New York" (*A I*, p. 1). The choice of opera – Charles-François Gounod's *Faust* - in the context of the story is highly significant as I will discuss later. At that time New York was experiencing a high tide of turbulent change.

New York in the early nineteenth century was well known for the diversity of its business community. Due to the growth of economic wealth in the hands of newly wealthy

people, they were able to mingle with the elite class and change some of their lifestyles. As this entrepreneurial class was constantly changing, and growing thanks to trans-Atlantic immigration, its members adopted new views about where to live, and in what kind of houses. These new communities did not have much interest in governing New York; their main aim was to establish themselves, and their businesses, by building family connections with the established elite.

Through her narrative Wharton charts the physical growth of New York. She addresses the fact that the core location for elite houses moved from lower Fifth Avenue steadily northwards on Manhattan Island. Yet, she does not mention poor migrants living in tenements. After "the stir and bustle of trade, together with the tremendous immigration that followed upon the war of 1812,"[177] tenement-houses were built to accommodate the new class of industrial poor migrants who worked for small earnings. The house owners and agents divided the big rooms in the tenement-houses into smaller rooms to get more money from renting to the poor. They did not care for the comfort and safety of the tenants. They provided them with very tiny rooms without light or ventilation. It can be argued that Wharton's upbringing as a member of the elite did not give her the opportunity to inspect how the poor of New York society lived. In her writing she gives minute societal details of the atmosphere that she had lived in. She does not describe the poor of New York because she had not been in that position herself.

However, in most of her works, Wharton did include representatives of the new moneyed class of migrants who constitute the exotic element within the growth of New

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[177] Jacob A. Riis, *How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York* (New York: New York Hill and Wang, 1962), p. 5.

York. In *The Age of Innocence*, for example, Mr. Beaufort, the newly-arrived banker, succeeds in marrying the penniless daughter of a New York elite family, and entertaining his new circle with parties and balls. However, when he becomes bankrupt, his new friends encourage his wife to desert him, because he was originally an outsider. The same plot of the banker who marries the poor girl from the New York elite is seen in another of Edith Wharton's novels, *The House of Mirth*. In this story Simon Rosedale is the migrant Jewish banker, who is seen throughout the novel trying to secure a position in elite New York society through marrying the unfortunate and poor heroine Lily Bart.

Outside the context of her novels, Edith Wharton wrote an essay entitled "A Little Girl's New York". It was published posthumously in 1938 in *Harper*'s *Magazine*. In this essay she portrays the dullness and complexity of the New York society of her childhood. She recollects the social habits of old New Yorkers, and tells how they were guarded from novelties that might endanger the old social structure. It is essential to consult this essay in any study of the New York of Edith Wharton, for it would appear to explain the social background for a number of her New York-based novels, in her own words.

Talking about New York, Wharton states in her essay:

> But this is not to say that the average well-to-do New Yorker of my childhood was not starved for a sight of the high gods. Beauty, passion, and danger were automatically excluded from his life (for the men were almost as starved as the women); and the average human being deprived of air from the heights is likely to produce other lives equally starved—which was what happened in old New York, where the tepid sameness of the moral atmosphere resulted in a prolonged immaturity of mind....[178]

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[178] Frederick Wegener (ed.), *The Uncollected Critical Writings: Edith Wharton* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999), p. 276.

Wharton clarifies how the inhabitants of New York, men as well as women, were repressed and deprived from any contact with beauty or love that might lead to transgressing their social limits. This deprivation created a dull generation unable, out of fear, to try anything new or challenging. What she calls "a prolonged immaturity of mind" describes the exact situation of her hero Newland Archer in *The Age of Innocence*. In spite of his intellectuality, the habit of conforming to social demands and orders renders him motionless, unable to unite with the woman he has always loved – Ellen Olenska - at the end of the novel, out of social fear.

As we have seen in the previous quotation, Wharton puts an emphasis on the fact that men face the same societal problems as women do in New York. May Welland and Ellen Olenska are both socially restricted, and Newland is certainly in the same position. However, Ellen does not obey what is imposed on her by New York society; she challenges it, and decides to follow her happiness and personal freedom. She leaves New York for Paris, where she can live away from old conventions. Paris was a modern metropolis that has witnessed revolutionary wars; the French Revolution of 1789. Walter Benjamin in his essay "Paris – Capital of the Nineteenth Century" presents Paris as an example of the city where new architectural forms, technologies and artistic interests intermingle[179] to compose what he calls the "capital of the nineteenth-century". All of these new elements fascinated people from different parts of the world to dwell in Paris. In this city, Wharton longed to live because it was the home of the fine arts and hence also the ultimate place that she chose for Ellen to live.

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[179] Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999).

Wharton also describes the architecture of New York, and uses it to illustrate aspects of her society. For example, she describes not only the sameness and dullness of the habits of New Yorkers, but also the uniformity of the houses and the extent to which they are often identical. Keeping the brownstone-front style for the houses was a tradition among the house owners of the elite class. Wharton stresses the old monotonous aspect of New York's architecture in her essay, "A Little Girl's New York"; stating, "The façades varied in width from twenty to thirty feet, and here and there, but rarely, the line was broken by a brick house with brownstone trimmings; but otherwise they were all so much alike that one could understand how easy it would be for a dinner guest to go to the wrong house--"[180] Ironically, she mentions how it is easy for a guest to arrive at the wrong house because of the identical outer structure of all the houses of New York's elite class. It is only the houses of the socially defiant characters, like Ellen Olenska, that are situated in different areas from the rest of the elite. Even the interior and the contents of Ellen's house do not comply with the general social taste and break social rules.[181] This difference in the structure of the houses of New York society is also stressed in King's illustrations (see the different portrayals of Ellen and May's houses earlier in this chapter).

A totally different picture of New York is drawn in *Delirious New York* by Rem Koolhaas, a late twentieth century Dutch architect. Koolhaas argues that New York became the laboratory for the 'Machine Age' - between 1890 and 1940 - and describes the rapid

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[180] Ibid.

[181] In "Mausoleum or house of life?" Cathy Taylor presents a discussion of how the houses in *The Age of Innocence* were of two kinds. Extravagant houses which work as mausoleums with their vast collection of furniture, paintings and sculptures and those simple and plain ones which are normally occupied by the members of the elite class who do not care about the rules of society. In both cases the houses portray the personality of their inhabitants.

growth of parts of Manhattan. While Wharton stresses the sameness that prevails over the architectural style of New York, this tradition changed upon the arrival of the new millionaires, who courageously introduced new styles and decorations for the houses. Regarding this fifty years of time, Koolhaas shows how the metropolis grew in a chaotic way, creating a fantasy for humans to live in. The inconsistent building styles gathered one layer on another, creating a cultural and historical vision of New York of the new century:

> Manhattan is the 20th century Rosetta Stone[182]. Not only are large parts of its surface occupied by architecture mutations (Central Park, the Skyscraper), utopian fragments (Rockefeller Center, the UN Building) and irrational phenomena (Radio City Music Hall), but in addition each block is covered with several layers of phantom architecture in the form of past occupancies, aborted projects and popular fantasies that provide alternative images to the New York that exists.[183]

While Koolhaas's description of New York is concerned with the rise of the culture of skyscrapers in the twentieth century, the New York that is described in most of Wharton's fiction is of the closing decades of the nineteenth century and very beginning of the twentieth. In *The Age of Innocence*, public places, streets and avenues, combined together, represent a whole image of New York. As the nature of the elite class was not stable, the people of this class continued to move their residences northwards throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century, creating a changing urban geography of Manhattan. Wharton writes about New York in the process of change, in terms of the geographical placement of different classes, especially the old wealthy classes.

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[182] An essential clue to a new field of knowledge.

[183] Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan* (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 1994), p. 9.

Wharton stresses the class distinction and prejudice between two groups of people: a group which claims that it is from New York, and another that includes the wealthy newcomers. Wharton shows us that most of the people who consider themselves to be original members of the city's elite class were not New Yorkers by origin. Newland's mother says; "New York has always been a commercial community, and there are not more than three families in it who can claim an aristocratic origin in the real sense of the word" (p. 47). At the beginning of the novel, readers are introduced to the elite New Yorkers in the Academy of Music who want to build a new opera house specifically for the newcomers, so that they themselves may go on attending the old one "uncontaminated". Wharton states, "Conservatives cherished it [the old opera house] for being small and inconvenient, and thus keeping out the 'new people' whom New York was beginning to dread and yet be drawn to" (*A I*, p. 1). The building of a new opera house – the Metropolitan – is designed to divert the new people from attending the old one. Wharton pinpoints that even if New Yorkers try to avoid mingling with the newcomers, they are still attracted to the new wealth, ideas, and commercial projects brought by the strangers.

Money is an important factor in old New York; Manhattan society deals with its people on the basis of whether they have money or not. This is clear in the case of Regina Beaufort and Ellen Olenska, two women from New York. Both are married to men from outside their social circle; outsiders. Regina's husband is a rich banker, while Ellen's husband is a wealthy Count. When Regina's husband, Julius Beaufort, had money the whole of New York society came to their parties. However, when he became bankrupt, the same social circle encouraged his wife to desert him and their close friends decided that "society must manage to get on without the Beauforts" (*A I,* p. 281). In contrast, when Ellen left her

husband, all her relatives were against her decision because of her husband's high social status and wealth, as a Count. Wharton presents these two examples to illustrate that the chief concern for New York society is money. The strength of the marital relationships depends greatly on the financial status of the husband, as he is the only provider for the family. The financial factor plays a pivotal role in social decisions, even if it is not clearly mentioned.

The change in Wharton's New York was radical and swift and reflects changes in the social behavior at the turn of the century. This is shown by the extent to which Newland Archer regards the aspects of change in the city like the wonders of the *Arabian Nights*:

> [T]here were people who thought there would one day be a tunnel under the Hudson through which the trains of the Pennsylvania railway would run straight into New York. They were of the brotherhood of visionaries who likewise predicted the building of ships that would cross the Atlantic in five days, the invention of a flying machine, lighting by electricity, telephonic communication without wires, and other Arabian Nights marvels. "I don't care which of their visions comes true," Archer mused, "as long as the tunnel isn't built yet" (*A I,* p. 287).

Newland prefers to live in visions of the past even if they are not anymore real. It is interesting in this respect to think of the reason behind Wharton's connecting the new "magical" inventions with *The Arabian Nights*. Those magical and supernatural elements started to appear with the arrival of the newcomers to New York. The halo of magic that surrounds the new inventions is similar to the one narrated in the storylines of *The Arabian Nights*. Wharton highlights that the social and economic change in New York is unpredictable to the extent that it is seen as unreal and supernatural in the eyes of its inhabitants. Similarly, Felix Young, the hero of Henry James's *The Europeans*, is described as Prince Camaralzaman – a hero from the *Arabian Nights* – in the eyes of Gertrude Wentworth. This description can be read in terms of the new challenging ideals that the

character adopts. The new and challenging inventions in Wharton's novel and the novelty of Felix's ideas in James' work are both likened to the magical world of *The Arabian Nights*. Both novelists in this respect show resistance from members of their societies to accept new developments and ideas, which they regard as resembling the supernatural elements in *The Arabian Nights*.

New York also features as the main setting for Wharton's collection of short stories "Old New York." The collection traces the changing phases of the life of New York's elite class over four decades. It presents a historical lineage of New York society in the sense that each of the short stories talks about New York during the course of a single decade. The first short story starts with "The Forties" and the last one finishes with "The Seventies". It is also important to note that *The Age of Innocence* starts with a time reference to the "early seventies" (*A I,* p. 1). It can be argued that the collection of the stories of "Old New York" paves the way and presents a historical context for *The Age of Innocence* by focusing on a certain aspect of New York's society in each of the short stories separately.

In "False Dawn (The 'Forties)", Wharton addresses the blind conformity of old New Yorkers to the general taste of their society. This story narrates how Lewis Raycie is sent by his father, Halston Raycie, on the "Grand Tour" to Europe to fetch paintings by some famous artists. This story shows how the possession of certain kinds of painting was considered to be a privilege in New York elite society. "The Spark (The 'Sixties)" coincides with the American Civil War or War Between the States (1861-1865). In this short story, Wharton presents Hayley Delane, another example of a morbid New Yorker. Delane refuses to move in time and prefers to continue living in his vision of an older world. He is like other people of his time who "stopped living at one time or another, however many years longer they

continued to be alive; and I suspected that Delane had stopped at about nineteen. That date would roughly coincide with the end of the Civil War."[184] By coincidence Delane knows that Walt Whitman, a friend he met in Washington during the war years, is writing "new-verse forms". The story's last lines sum up all aspects of Delane's character. Delane prefers that he did not know about Whitman and his challenge to the conventional rules of poetry. He wants to keep having the same picture of his old friend, "'I'll never forget him. –I rather wish, though,' he added, in his mildest tone of reproach, "you hadn't told me that he wrote all that rubbish.' "[185] It can be argued that through the act of Delane's dismissal of Whitman's new type of poetry, Wharton indicates the amount of reaction that faced people of new and challenging ideals even from close friends in New York society.

In the short story "The Old Maid (The 'Fifties)," Charlotte Lovell the heroine works in an orphanage, and helps in charitable work visiting the poor. Her caring for deprived poor children outside her social circle and her ignoring of any domestic duties render her unmarriageable and an "old maid" in her social circle. That is why Joe Ralston, who proposes to her, insists that she gives up her work in the orphanage. Ironically, society does not realise that one of the reasons for her determination to keep going to the orphanage is that she has a daughter in the institution. The only person who knows her secret is her married cousin, Delia Ralston, who in turn takes advantage of her and starts to impose her views. Delia convinces Charlotte that the best way to protect Tina from turning into an old maid is to keep her ignorant about the identity of her real mother. Delia is not happy in her marriage; on one occasion when Charlotte starts talking about Joe and the "Ralston ideas," Delia says,

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[184] Edith Wharton, *Old New York* (New York: Virago Press Limited, 1924), p. 199, 200.
[185] Ibid., p. 226.

"The Ralston's ideas? … so unbearably unpleasant to live with." [186] In spite of the fact that both women have been victimised by their society, Delia uses the same social power to show her control over her cousin.

In "New Year's Day (The 'Seventies)", Wharton presents an example of a woman who has been excluded from her society and socially "cut". This is Mrs. Lizzie Hazeldean. At the beginning of the novel, we get the impression of her being a fallen woman, because she is seen leaving an hotel on Fifth Avenue with Henry Prest. After this incident, her social circle excludes her, because they think she has deceived her sick husband. Later, her act appears justified, as her aim was to get money from Prest to give her beloved and terminally ill husband some happy final years. Her husband saved her from poverty by marrying her, and she wants to return this favour before his death. As the story comes to a close, the plot reveals the extent of Lizzie's love for her late husband, as she keeps her husband's precious books near her on her own deathbed.

Lizzie's action is certainly a defiance of social norms, yet it can be seen as an assertion from Wharton to regard acts on the basis of their acceptability by the human conscience, irrespective of whether they follow society's rules. She proposes that social rules should be created to help its members and not to restrict their lives. Leo Schneiderman comments on Lizzie's action and argues for her going into a process of "conscience-formation":

> Wharton's heroine is aware, of course, that universal moral standards can be invoked and that they derive their legitimacy from sources outside one's own group. High society, as portrayed by Wharton, is governed by narrow conventions designed to avoid shame in the eyes of others, rather than

[186] Ibid., p. 89.

> guilt in the sense of violation of conscience. The heroine of "New Year's Day" is able to endure ostracism, i.e., shaming, ostensibly because she is convinced that adultery-for-one's-husband's-sake is morally right.[187]

In the light of Leo's interpretation of Lizzie's character, I might add here that Wharton aims at enlisting empathy for Lizzie's situation. Lizzie has done what she thinks appropriate according to her conscience and out of deep love for her husband. She also did not aim at harming anybody with the decision she has made. Wharton creates empathy for the situation of daring women who cross the borders of social conformity.

It is essential to consider in this respect the reason behind Lizzie's ostracism. Lizzie is socially shunned because she challenges the rules of her society and cares about providing money for her sick husband; normally a man's responsibility in patriarchal societies. Writing a number of years earlier than Wharton, Henrik Ibsen addresses the same problem in a Norwegian household. Nora, the self-liberated heroine in Ibsen's play *A Doll's House* (1879), also makes her financial decision and challenges the codes of conduct of her society. Without the knowledge or the consent of her husband, Torvald Helmer, Nora borrows money to offer him a trip to Italy when he is terribly ill. Then she works hard to save and repay the money and return the IOU paper. Their dilemma starts when Nils Krogstad, an employee at Torvald's bank, threatens to expose the IOU paper that includes a forged signature of Nora's dead father if Torvald discharges him from his job. However, when her husband knows that Krogstad will inform the public, he asks her to stay in the house but without having any contact with him or the children.

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[187] Leo Schneiderman, "Edith Wharton: Peer Groups and Peerless Women," *Imagination, Cognition and Personality*, vol. 21, no. 3 (2001-2002): 239.

As the story comes to a close, Krogstad sends Torvald a letter telling him that he will stop using the debt paper publically against him. Here, Torvald forgives Nora, showing his sense of male superiority over her by saying, "There is something indescribably wonderful and satisfying for a husband in knowing that he has forgiven his wife …. It means that she has become his property in a double sense."[188] Nora cannot tolerate her husband for being troubled about what society would think of him, rather than admiring her because of the difficulties she has gone through to give him the trip. At the end, she makes her own decision to leave her husband and children for a more sacred duty towards herself. She is convinced that what is sacred is to be loyal and honest with oneself and do what one feels to be good and not what society imposes on one by its rules. Her final scene, as the Norwegian housewife who shuts the door and leaves her husband and children behind, was not acceptable in parts of Northern Europe. The first German production of the play even had an altered ending with Nora being forced by Helmer to enter the children nursery.[189]

The Opera House:

The Academy of Music is the first social public space mentioned in *The Age of Innocence*. In the opera house, New York society gathered, and made sure that their codes of conduct were being obeyed. Wharton also specifies the name of a real-life Prima Donna[190] - Christine Nilsson - singing Faust, to give the impression that the story is an authentically

[188] Henrik Ibsen, *A Doll's House*/ tr. by Michael Meyer (London: R. Hart-Davis, 1965), p. 96.
[189] The alternative ending of *A Doll's House* http://ibsen.nb.no/id/11111794.0
[190] Prima Donna is an Italian term that refers to the leading female singer in the opera, while the leading male singer is referred to as Primo Uomo.

real. Nilsson was a Swedish soprano who appeared in the opening performance of Faust for the Metropolitan Opera on 22 of October 1883. Faust is an opera in five acts by Charles Gounod, first performed in Paris in 1859. Faust commits adultery with his beloved Marguerite, which leads to her being socially ostracized and, later, condemned to death. However, what is essential in Marguerite's story is that she does not seek help from the devil, as Faust does. On the contrary, she asks help from God and his angels. Looking at the opera's plot, the readers face a big question here: why did the elite women of New York come to watch such operas, featuring heroines who became social outcasts because of following their lovers? The opera is the place where real-life social rules are observed; it shows the ruin of women who violate the rules of their societies.

In this context opera was a means of reinforcing expected, polite behaviour**.** Wharton emphasises in the novel that, as a rule, operatic performance would be in a different language from that of the audience and, sometimes, of the Prima Donna; therefore, it cannot be understood by the English-speaking audience. It was an unalterable and unquestioned law of the musical world that the German text of French operas (Faust) sung by Swedish artists (Christine Nilsson) should be translated into Italian. "She sang, of course, *'M'ama!*'and not 'he loves me,'" (*A I*, p. 2) says Wharton. However, when the people come to watch an opera about Faust they would have expectations of seeing a man who gives his soul to the devil in return of the love of his woman and earthly gains. In the literary arena, the legend of Faust has a number of accounts (Christopher Marlowe's play *Doctor Faustus*, first published 1604, is one of the versions of the Faust legend). Still the opera plot is not really important for most of the audience. Catherine Clement in her book *Opera or the Undoing of Women* points out that women's transgression of social mores in opera represented "no risk":

> No risk: the words in opera are seldom understood, either they are in another language, or they are made inaudible by the singing technique. No risk: one makes a pretense of being interested in the plot, which is completely unimportant. So one is moved for no apparent reason, what bliss! This gift is attributed to grace, to the prima donna, to leisure, to the miracle of opera.[191]

Men at the late nineteenth century had better access, and more time, to explore literature and therefore understood the plots of such works as Faust better than women, who were supposed to prioritise home, husband and children more than intellectual matters. Newland Archer, the hero of the novel and an educated member of New York society, aims at enlightening and romancing his beloved, May Welland. At the beginning of the novel he says:

> "We'll read Faust together ... by the Italian lakes..." he thought, somewhat hazily confusing the scene of his projected honey-moon with the masterpieces of literature which it would be his manly privilege to reveal to his bride ... He did not in the least wish the future Mrs. Newland Archer to be a simpleton (*A I*, p. 5).

During their engagement Archer reads poetry to May; however, after their marriage he stops the practice and changes to reading history books, because he is disturbed by May's comments on what he used to read: "she [May] had begun to hazard her own [opinions], with results destructive to his enjoyment of the works commented on" (*A I*, p. 297). As a result, he attempts to stop her from thinking in her own way and expressing her opinions. He prefers that she does not challenge his patriarchal views, which accord with the old-established rules of New York.

There are two instances of women as social outcasts in Wharton's description of the opera scene. The first involves the Prima Donna on the stage. The second is the appearance

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[191] Catherine Clément, *Opera or the Undoing of Women* (London: Tauris, 1997), p. 9.

of Madam Ellen Olenska in the Mingott's opera box. While the male members of New York society are examining the women in their boxes through their opera glasses, Ellen Olenska appears sitting beside Mrs. Mingott. May Welland is also present in the same box. Opera glasses were intended for watching what is happening on the stage. However, in the novel, Wharton suggests the use of them to watch women in their boxes. In this scene, the men in the so-called "club box" condemn the Mingotts for allowing Ellen to appear in their box on such an important social occasion for the elite class of New York. Mr. Sillerton Jackson who is a great authority on "family" articulates his comment as follows: '"I didn't think the Mingotts would have tried it on"' (*A I,* p. 8). Men in the club box represent male patriarchy, and the extent to which women are under their supervision. Since Ellen is not socially accepted, the men in the club box attack her presence at a place where only social conformists should show themselves.

At the opera, New York male socialites show their wealth by displaying the way their women are dressed. Indeed, social status is measured by how expensive and elegant the women's dresses are. In her essay, "Looking Through the Opera Glasses: Performance and Artifice in *The Age of Innocence*", Carmen Trammell Skaggs asserts, "The spectacle of the women's opera boxes provided an opportunity to demonstrate the wealth and leisure of New York's upper class. Displayed in their evening dresses and jewels, the women embodied the wealth, refinery, and gentility of their stock."[192] We also see Archer worried about the possible influence of Ellen on May, because of Ellen's transgression of New York's rules of taste:

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[192] Carmen Trammell Skaggs, "Looking through the Opera Glasses: Performance and Artifice in *The Age of Innocence*," *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature* v. 37, no. 1 (2004): 2.

> Madam Olenska's pale and serious face appealed to his fancy as suited to the occasion and to her unhappy situation; but the way her dress (which had no tucker) sloped away from her thin shoulders shocked and troubled him. He hated to think of May Welland being exposed to the influence of a young woman so careless of the dictates of Taste. (*A I*, p. 12)

The Academy of Music had only thirty boxes; therefore, it was a social privilege for New York elite families to possess their own boxes in this opera house; a private place amid the rest of the elite. By going to the opera, New Yorkers show their wealth and social status more than any artistic enjoyment that might result from watching a high form of art. With the passing of time attending opera became a ritual of class and decorum.

While at the opera house, Newland looks at May and imagines what books he will be reading for her during their honeymoon. It is the place that inspires Newland to think of his future life with May, thus indicating the opera as a venue where men get attracted to some beautiful girls from the upper classes. Maureen Montgomery notes that the opera house participates in the rituals of the marriage market, with its own protocols and performative social spaces[193]. After the opera, Newland waits eagerly to go to the ballroom to announce his engagement to May. I argue here that even the sacred steps of marriage in New York high society should take place under the supervision and critical eye of members of that society. This emphasises the value of gaining consent and social approval within a restricted circle.

In "New Year's Day" the heroine Lizzie is a social outcast. However, she continues to attend the opera house and receives people at her home in order to entertain them. In doing so, she performs the expected duties of a woman of her class. She is certainly the product of

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[193] Maureen E. Montgomery, *Displaying Women: Spectacles of Leisure in Edith Wharton's New York* (New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 13.

upper-class society; therefore, she cannot live outside it. She sits alone in her opera box, snubbed by former friends, because of her previous relationship with Henry Prest. None of New York's women wants to endanger her own reputation by being seen in public with her, at a place such as the opera, yet some are happy to take advantage of her entertaining at home: "No ladies showed themselves at the opera with Mrs. Hazledean; but one or two dropped in to the jolly supper."[194] At the opera house the members of New York's high class come to watch and be watched. It is the place where decorum is most cared about: decent ladies are not prepared to show themselves in the same box with a woman who has a tarnished reputation. Indeed, it is the place where artificiality and performance take precedence.

The opera is the location where the prejudices of New York high society are most clearly displayed. Wharton describes the men and women of her novel sitting separated in different boxes. The men wield power over the female subjects by passing judgment on them. Skaggs argues, "This theatrical venue provided the stage not only for the musical and dramatic performance by the opera stars but also as the platform for a complex performance of class and gender relations."[195] The opera box can be seen as a mark of wealth and high class, as only wealthy people are capable of reserving their own boxes amid the high demand of the regularly expanding elite class. It also stresses gender differences and underpins male superiority, due to the different groupings of men and women in opera boxes of late-nineteenth-century North America.

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[194] Wharton, *Old New York*, p. 295.

[195] Skaggs, "Looking through the Opera Glasses: Performance and Artifice in *The Age of Innocence*," p. 2.

Gender difference and male superiority are not only noted in the opera boxes; they are present in the opera performance itself. It is the female singer, the Prima Donna, who most often is at the center of tragedies and normally the opera ends with her death. Catherine Clément unfolds a theory about the true meaning of what is seen in opera, and the reality concealed behind its charming music. She argues that the beauty of operatic music hides a cruelty embedded in its plots toward women. Virtually all operas of the nineteenth century involve a Prima Donna and most have a tragic end. Moreover, the female singer enacts her death, day after day, for the sake of art and for the pleasure of an audience that comes to enjoy a spectacle built upon the suffering of such women. It is significant that these cruelties were rendered acceptable through the mask of High Art. Clément sees opera as the place where women articulate their "undoing" in front of men who enjoy their pain; she states in the Prelude to her book:

> No prima donna, no opera. But the role of jewel, a decorative object, is not the deciding role; and on the opera stage women perpetually sing their eternal undoing. The emotion is never more poignant than at the moment when the voice is lifted to die. Look at these heroines. With their voices they flap their wings, their arms writhe, and then there they are, dead, on the ground.[196]

These tragedies in one way or another can be likened to the miseries happening to women in late-nineteenth-century North America. The soprano is the one who bears the punishment at the end of the operatic performance. However, a close examination of the plot of the opera reveals that the actual psychological punishment is more often for the hero. The tenor usually loses his beloved who dies leaving him alone.

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[196] Clément, p. 5.

At the onset of the novel Wharton foreshadows the tragic end of her hero, when he enters the opera house while the Prima Donna is singing "M'ama … non m'ama …", "he loves me loves me not". Later, he is placed in a state in which he must make his decision to either remain with the woman he loves - the by then socially outcast Ellen - or to keep his social standing by marrying his betrothed, May. The only choice that Newland Archer has if he does not want to lose his social standing is to have Ellen as his mistress; an option that has been rejected by Ellen.

When Archer is alone with Ellen in the carriage he tells her that the only reality for him is that she is sitting beside him. That statement is a departure from operatic tradition, in which artifice displaces reality. While Archer is indulged in imagining a vision of his love for Ellen, she prefers to look at the reality of their situation. She asks him: "Is it your idea, then, that I should live with you as your mistress—since I can't be your wife?" (*A I,* p. 292). Ellen assures Archer that he cannot live as a social outcast because, unlike her, he cannot imagine life outside his familiar social group: "'You've never been beyond. And *I* have,' she said in a strange voice, 'and I know what it looks like there'" (*A I,* p. 294). Newland's ultimate decision about his relationship with Ellen is set at the end of the novel, in the form of another "operatic" scene in which he refuses to enter Ellen's house and therefore prefers to hold on to his old social values. Ellen takes on the role of the Prima Donna here, yet she sings of her triumph over old societal values that she demonstrates to be morally redundant. Newland's son becomes an emblem of futurity and continuity when he enters Ellen's house, leaving his father outside alone. In spite of Newland's ability to unite with Ellen after his wife's death and the change of social views that is carried by the new generation, he remains unable to embrace changes to the old social constraints with which he was raised.

Among the social rules of New York was that women must not drive their carriages in the streets. In *The Age of Innocence*, Wharton gives an example of a violation of this rule and of how the instance of disobedience was treated in New York society. She describes how women driving their carriages on Fifth Avenue were seen as outrageous: "Such 'women' (as they were called) were few in New York, those driving their own carriages still fewer, and the appearance of Miss Fanny Ring in Fifth Avenue at the fashionable hour had profoundly agitated society" (*A I*, p. 83). Putting the phrase "as they were called" between brackets suggests that these daring women were regarded as strangers and unacceptable in their social circle. The word "such" suggests their exclusion from society. While the New Woman challenged the old orders of her society, the conformist woman used her social rank to control other men and fellow women in her social circle. In the novel this ruthlessness is embodied in the character of Mrs. Mingott who controls the life of all members of her family and uses her power to drive Ellen to return to her husband. In *The House of Mirth*, Wharton presents Mrs. Bertha Dorset as an example of such ruthless women. She is the reason behind the ruin of the heroine Lily Bart, and she has the means to ruin her husband likewise.

Madam Ellen Olenska:

Ellen belongs to the Mingott family, and is married to Count Olenski. However, when she decides to divorce her husband, and return from Europe to New York she is ostracised. To be a divorced young woman within the elite class was not acceptable, especially if the husband was still seen as wealthy, and therefore able to provide financial security. Ellen's decision to leave her husband is the first social transgression that she commits. In a number of other instances that follow, she shows her carelessness of social etiquette. In the opera

house she wears a revealing dress, and at the Beauforts' ball she advances to talk to Newland in the ballroom, in spite of the social rule that women should wait for men to initiate the conversation in public places.

M. Riviere, who is an old friend of Count Olenski, talks about Ellen to Newland, assuring him that she has changed since she was in Europe. M. Riviere is in New York on a special task to convince Ellen to go back to her husband. However, he decides to discharge himself from the mission because he sees that Ellen has changed for the better. Instead, he talks to Newland, urging him to use his influence with the family to help Ellen stay in New York. When Riviere tells Newland that Ellen has changed he responds:

> '*Tenez*—the discovery, I suppose, of what I'd never thought of before: that she's an American. And that if you're an American of *her* kind—of your kind—things that are accepted in certain other societies, or at least put up with as part of a general convenient give-and-take—become unthinkable, simply unthinkable (*A I,* p. 256).

Ellen has managed to escape from an unhappy arranged marriage, and this has allowed her character to develop and become more independent, and despite New York's social conventions she is able to be free. This prompts the question: why is she able to be free now, but not able earlier to refuse to marry Count Olenski? After she has returned to New York, Ellen is not under the control of her husband on the one hand. Also, she is not controlled by her society either, because she has been ostracised from the time of her arrival back to get divorced. So, she does not care about what will happen to her in a society that has turned its back on her. Furthermore, it can be argued that she attained power to challenge society through her love for Newland.

Ellen has challenged the social rules not only by her acts, but also by her way of dressing. The ways women dress and behave at social occasions were dominated by

patriarchal social rules. In the first appearance of Ellen in Mrs. Mingott's opera box, the narrator describes her appearance as follows:

> A slim young woman, a little less tall than May Welland, with brown hair growing in close curls about her temples and held in place by a narrow band of diamonds. The suggestion of this headdress, which gave her what was then called a "Josephine look," was carried out in the cut of the dark blue velvet gown rather theatrically caught up under her bosom by a girdle with a large old-fashioned clasp. The wearer of this unusual dress, who seemed quite unconscious of the attention it was attracting, stood a moment in the centre of the box (*A I*, p. 7).

Here Wharton describes the reaction of the audience to Ellen's dress, which is seen as controversial, "unusual", and not what most women would have worn at the opera. Dress can be seen as another way of showing if a woman conformed to, or transgressed, social rules.

To look at another angle of Ellen's character, she provides help for Fanny, the orphaned-daughter of Mr. Beaufort, when the latter comes to Paris sent over by her father. Ellen supports Fanny, because she is herself an orphan, and has passed through the same situation, when all refused to help her, including the man she loved, Newland. Ellen can be seen as an early advocate of excluded women who are victimised by their society: such women are capable of helping their fellow women when they are faced with the evils of society. Gertrude Farish, the New Woman in *The House of Mirth*, helps Lily Bart by sheltering her in her flat after Gus Trenor's attempt to rape her. She also helps by her charitable work other girls at her club, by showing them ways to attain financial and personal independence. Ellen is another such woman, capable of giving help when fellow women are in need.

Other than Ellen's talk about Newland's kissing her when they were children, nothing is mentioned in the novel about any meetings or connection between Newland and Ellen until

her return from Europe. To look at the story of Ellen in parallel with Wharton's own life incidents, it is clear that the similarity between the heroine and the novelist's life lies in the fact that both of them found their real love after their estrangement from their husbands. Wharton stresses the importance of this period and starts her narration from the point of Ellen and Newland's meeting. Wharton herself met her beloved friend, Walter Berry, after her estrangement from her husband.

Newland Archer:

Newland Archer represents the cultivated man in the novel: "In matters intellectual and artistic Newland Archer felt himself distinctly the superior of these chosen specimens of old New York gentility" (*A I,* p. 6). He cherishes new ideals about educating his betrothed May Welland. He wants her to be experienced and wise, as he does not like the playful ways of young women who seek to attract men in New York society. He wishes that "his wife should be a worldly-wise and as eager to please as the married lady whose charms had held his fancy" (*A I,* p. 5). On the other hand, Newland also represents fidelity to conventional social rules. In spite of the fact of his knowledge that the rules of his society are unfair to women, he is unable to transgress such values and support the women. He loves Ellen, but he follows the Mingotts' wish and tries to convince her to return to her husband in Europe.

As a lawyer, Newland is in a position to help Ellen with her divorce from her cruel European husband. His profession places him in a high social position in New York society. But if he helps Ellen (a social outcast) he will endanger his reputation. Moreover, he is engaged to May who belongs to the Mingott family, which means that he should follow Mrs. Mingott's demands to push Ellen into returning to her husband. Indeed, Wharton places

Newland in an intricate situation from the beginning of the novel; he has to choose between either conforming to his conscience and therefore helping Ellen attain her rights, or keeping his social rank in New York. Because he is on the top of the New York social hierarchy as a lawyer, he cannot endanger his status. Therefore, in Newland's case, it is his well-established social state and conventionality that prevent him from supporting an ostracised and wronged female member of his society - Ellen.

This inaction is a shared characteristic of most of Wharton's male characters. For example, in *The House of Mirth*, Lawrence Selden is another timid lawyer. If he follows his occupation's teachings, he should defend the oppressed female members of his society. But, like Newland Archer, Selden does not support Lily Bart in her social distress out of fear that he might be attached to a social outcast and consequently loses his social standing. In spite of the fact that Selden realises the importance of Lily in his life and comes to confess his love to her at the end of the novel, he arrives too late, as Lily is dead by that point. Holbrook stresses this as follows: "often the growth of a love is frustrated by the failing of the man to commit himself or to develop."[197] In Wharton's novels, the accomplishment of love is usually hindered by the inappropriate, mostly timorous acts of the male characters towards their beloveds.

Because Newland's engagement happens with the public approval of society he cannot go back and have a relationship with Ellen. Therefore, he goes on with this social pledge and marries May, leaving Ellen without help. On one hand, he wants Ellen to stay with him; yet he does not want to endanger his social position. During his early married

[197] David Holbrook, *Edith Wharton and the Unsatisfactory Man* (London: Vision Press, 1991), p. 13.

years, he maintains a monotonous life with his wife. Archer feels himself stifled in the same room with May, especially when he sees her "ripening into a copy of her mother" (*A I*, p. 298). On one occasion when both of them are in the same room, May asks him: "'Newland! Do shut the window. You'll catch your death.' He pulled the sash down and turned back. 'Catch my death!' he echoed; and he felt like adding: 'But I've caught it already. I *am* dead—I've been dead for months and months'" (*A I*, p. 298). Newland does not find happiness in his marriage to May. It is social obligations and manners that keep them together. Yet Newland is happy to stay in the same monotony and refuses to meet Ellen, even after May's eventual death. It can be argued that Newland is afraid that his world, based on the perfection of the old social rules, will be cracked and destroyed if he meets Ellen. Newland prefers to preserve this illusion of his perfect social past: "'It's more real to me here than if I went up,' he suddenly heard himself say; and the fear lest that last shadow of reality should lose its edge kept him rooted to his seat as the minutes succeeded each other" (*A I*, p.p. 364-65). Newland consoles himself with the idea that he is still honouring the social values he lived to obey. He wants to carry on living in their shadow.

May Welland:

May Welland is the symbol of the "innocent" and pure woman. She is certainly the "Angel in the House" whose main concerns are her husband, house and children. She is the granddaughter of the matriarchal and independent Mrs. Mingott. May is the typical woman who personifies traditional values for New York society. Therefore, we do not see a resistant part of her character; we always see her as the obedient and beautiful May. She knows that Newland loves Ellen but hides the emotional wounds caused by his betrayal. When Newland,

by then already married to May, goes to pick Ellen up from the station and take her to Mrs. Mingott's house, he forgets that he has previously agreed to meet his wife at her grandmother's house. Newland returns home angry from Ellen's refusal to stay in New York for his sake, and become his mistress. In contrast when May returns she does not mention her own anger at Newland's forgetfulness:

> Archer was struck by something languid and inelastic in her attitude, and wondered if the deadly monotony of their lives had laid its weight on her also. Then he remembered … he was smitten with compunction, yet irritated that so trifling an omission should be stored up against him after nearly two years of marriage. He was weary of living in a perpetual honeymoon, without the temperature of passion yet with all its exactions (*A I*, p. 296).

As a member of New York's elite class, May has been trained to conceal her feelings and please her husband. On this same occasion, Wharton contemplates May's situation as follows: "If May had spoken out her grievances (he suspected her of many) he might have laughed them away; but she was trained to conceal imaginary wounds under a Spartan smile" (*A I*, p. 296).

At the end of the novel, after May's death, Dallas informs his father that his mother always knew about his love for Ellen. Dallas also informs him that his mother knew that his father gave up his love for Ellen when May said she was pregnant, to keep the family together. Dallas tells his father, "She [May] said she knew we were safe with you, and always would be, because once, when she asked you to, you'd given up the thing you most wanted" (*A I*, p. 359). But now he urges his father to go to Ellen because he knows about his father's love for her. Dallas sympathises with Newland because there is a parallel between Ellen and Fanny. Both of them defeat their social rules and are "different" from other women

of their time. It is exactly what Dallas feels about Fanny, and that is why he tells Newland that Ellen was once his equivalent to Fanny.

Dallas, Newland Archer's son:

Dallas Archer is Newland and May's son. His parents are conformists and keepers of old social values in the novel, yet he is a foil for both of them, Dallas "belonged body and soul to the new generation" (*A I,* p. 359). In his conversation with his father, he indirectly criticises the older generation of his parents. He feels that they cared about their spouses without having any communication with each other. Also, their familial orientations made them put their feelings aside and sacrifice their happiness for the family's service: "Well, I back your generation for knowing more about each other's private thoughts than we ever have time to find out about our own" (*A I,* pp. 359-60). This ironic comment sums up Dallas's attitude towards the values of New York's older generation and his refusal to follow the same orders in his own life.

Dallas chooses to start his life by marrying a social outcast, Fanny Beaufort, the very thing that his father refused to do in his youth. Dallas is prepared to do this because of the degree to which society has changed since his father's time; three decades earlier. Also, he is a more daring character than his father. At the close of the narrative, Dallas enters Ellen Olenska's house, while his father refuses, and stays out in the street. This act seems to sum up all that Wharton wants to show us about changes in society: Dallas, an emblem of the new generation, is leaving the old values of his father's age behind; as well as physically leaving the old man outside. Meanwhile, he is mingling with socially ostracized people, without any fear of being seen, or even linked, with them. He does not share his father's deep prejudices

against women who challenge social instruction and decorum. Consequently, he is giving the woman her right to be treated as an independent individual, free to choose whatever suits her.

Summary Analysis:

It is clear that Wharton superficially groups her characters under different stereotypes: The Angel of the House, the New Woman and the New Man. Wharton does not value these stereotypes highly; on the contrary, I argue here that she undermines the importance of those known categories by creating different characters under each broad stereotype. This leads the reader to question how far these stereotypes are valid. Although members of the older society tend to criticise and isolate characters who disobey their conventions, this labeling fails to restrict the new generation from choosing to follow their freer choices. Moreover, Wharton suggests here that even if the New Woman is ostracised and condemned by her society that does not prevent her from helping other women who face the same social dilemmas. Ellen's help for Fanny is very suggestive in this regard. In addition to the different stereotypes portrayed in the narratives, Wharton also creates some tense social situations between the different characters who work as agents of social change.

Wharton illustrates these tensions by offering us two groups of characters. The first includes those who are traditionalists and resistant to social mobility and change in codes of conduct. The second group is usually personified by one or two young characters, who act in favour of changing the dominant views of gendered behavior in their societies. The narratives ultimately reveal the success of the new generation in gaining autonomy and control over their lives. In such a way the narrator or the fictional persona encourages readers to rethink the importance of this clash between the ideals of an older and a younger group,

and the need to create a fresh and better status quo. Indeed, the narrator is a projection of Wharton's own interests. Like Wharton, the narrator works as an advocate for a certain kind of limited but important group of New York polite well-to-do society at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries.

Because Wharton knows this society and has lived in it, she is able to portray its tensions closely and in minute detail. It is clear that the narrative voice in the novel is critical of the traditionalist characters, who are often portrayed as hypocritical and self-interested. Similarly, a century earlier than Wharton, Jane Austen from the minor gentry wrote about and criticised the same class she lived her entire life in. Austen also carries social observations of her society throughout her works and addresses the problems of her own limited circle and the importance of marrying the right man within the well-off class.

In the title of *The Age of Innocence*, the word "innocence" is widely seen as referring to the period in which Wharton lived and is writing about in her fiction. "Innocence" as an attribute can be spotted in some of the novel's characters. To be an innocent woman within the framework of nineteenth century social codes implies that a woman should mind her duties in her house, husband and children. An innocent woman should obey the male in the house, and achieve the expectations set by her society. The innocent woman does not have the right to behave in a way that might endanger the established social values. On the other hand, to be an innocent man infers adopting the values that allow him to earn more money from business, so that he can provide his female dependents with security and position. One of the ways in which such a man can show his financial status is to dress his wife in fine clothes and expensive jewelry to show her off on social occasions. In contrast such characters are not innocent in the sense that they are not free of responsibility for their social

expectations. For example, in Wharton's short story "New Year's Day" Lizzie has a lover without the knowledge of her ill husband. Newland Archer, the hero of *The Age of Innocence*, would have become an unfaithful man if he had kept Ellen as a secret lover while already married to May.

In a recollection of her childhood memories, Wharton is portraying New York at an intricate point when it is on the verge of intricate social and economic change. She even wrote *The Age of Innocence* in a more dreadful time: in the aftermath of World War I. In *A Backward Glance*, Wharton declares that she wrote the story as a retrospective of a vanished age and as an escape from the impact of the long years of War that she had spent in Paris:

> Meanwhile I found a momentary escape in going back to my childish memories of a long-vanished America, and wrote "The Age of Innocence". I showed it chapter by chapter to Walter Berry; and when he had finished reading it he said: "Yes; it's good. But of course you and I are the only people who will ever read it. We are the last people left who can remember New York and Newport as they were then, and nobody else will be interested."[198]

Wharton divides her narration in this novel into two separate books. Throughout them, she tracks the changes in the social treatment of women, especially socially marginalised women, and how such women were gradually accepted after a long period of exclusion from their communities. She gives the examples of Ellen who is abandoned by her society and Fanny who is warmly accepted and embraced by the same society of elite New York and by her lover Dallas. She also traces how a new type of man emerges, Dallas Archer, representing the new generation after a long period of male submission to social rules. Men's compliance is generally attributed to the patriarchal social rules that accord with

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[198] Edith Wharton, *A Backward Glance* (New York: Scribner, 1964), p. 369.

their benefit. At any rate, the second book in the novel marks a new phase of the hero's life. It starts with the rituals of Newland's marriage to May, and from this point onwards Archer is under a greater social pressure. He loses all his chances of being able to marry Ellen. Newland is a married man now and if he ceases his marriage, he will definitely break the rules of his society. Wharton suggests here that the institution of marriage, which is supposed to be private, is greatly dominated and affected by New York societal procedures.

Wharton specifies the time in three instances throughout her story, at the beginning, middle and end of her narration. And at these exact times she presents important twists of the narration. At the onset of the novel, at the opera house, the time is the "early seventies". In the second book and at Newland's marriage scene the time is stressed by mentioning the date on the ring "(engraved inside: Newland to May, April ---, 187--)" (*A I*, p. 180). At the end of the novel time is also stressed as following:

> It was the room in which most of the real things of his life had happened. There his wife, nearly twenty-six years ago, had broken to him, with a blushing circumlocution that would have caused the young women of the new generation to smile, the news that she was to have a child (*A I*, p. 347).

This stress on time is a clear indication from Wharton that this story is one of real people. She gives a range of different and longer time spans for her actions to develop and for her narration to arrive at the ultimate goal she intends to portray in her fiction.

Through her narration, Wharton presents two different social eras. The first is that of old New York society, that in which courageous, social-defiant women like Ellen Olenska were ostracised. The second era is when New York's new generation starts to gain a measure of control over their lives. The new generation is personified in the characters of Dallas Archer and Fanny Beaufort, who decide upon their own future and are able to announce their

engagement in spite of the fact that Fanny is a social outcast. The process of the narration portrays the extent to which the male and female characters succeed in their struggles; in particular the gender struggle to overcome the old traditional rules that lead them to have miserable lives.

In her childhood, and even after her marriage, Wharton lived a fortunate and high life style among members of the elite class of New York. Nonetheless, she presented in most of her narrations examples of unfortunate young women of New York who belong to the elite well-to-do class and are penniless. This ill-fated situation of young elite women can be clearly noted in a number of works by a feminist author writing a century earlier than Wharton and in another country, namely Mary Wollstonecraft. In her first published work, *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters* (1787), and in the chapter, "Unfortunate Situations of females, fashionably educated, and left without a fortune," Wollstonecraft presents some of the humiliating situations that elite women face when they are placed in financial distress. Unlike Wharton, Wollstonecraft had lived that situation herself. She portrayed it in her fiction with feeling.[199] To be one day penniless is a situation that has always been feared by women of an elite social class; its consequences are to live in a bad financial situation and be obliged to get their own living. Lily Bart, the heroine of *The House of Mirth*, is forced to work to get some financial independence.

To look at Wharton's stories from another perspective, it is clear that her own style of life is depicted in most of her works. The only sphere she presents in her narrations is that of the elite class of New York. This is definitely because the class of well-to-do New Yorkers is

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[199] Caroline Franklin, *Mary Wollstonecraft: A Literary Life* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 10.

the class she knew in its various aspects. Wharton herself led an independent life, without the need to depend on men in her life for finance or security.

Another shared aspect between Wharton and her characters is the interest in all forms of fine arts: opera, music, painting and literature from different parts of the world. The presence of any form of art is accompanied with the presence of a cultivated member of the elite New York society. Newland Archer in *The Age of Innocence* is an example of an educated member of New York society who knows a number literary works from around the world:

> Newland Archer prided himself on his knowledge of Italian art. His boyhood had been saturated with Ruskin, and he had read all the latest books: John Addington Symonds, Vernon Lee's "Euphorion," the essays of P. G. Hamerton, and a wonderful new volume called "The Renaissance" by Walter Pater. He talked easily of Botticelli, and spoke of Fra Angelico with faint condescension (*A I*, p. 68).

It is clear that Newland and other elite characters are interested in the fine arts because art is an important constituent part of cultured societies. Here Wharton is criticising a society that cares about the outward symptoms of culture and forgets the pillars in such a society, namely free men and women who are able to initiate their own decisions.

Moreover, the traditionalists in New York used different forms of art as signs of wealth and of showing off their belonging among other members of the elite. The sheer number of works a person knows is a clear indication of sophistication and of the variety of places visited from different parts of the world. In *Overtones of Opera in American Literature from Whitman to Wharton,* Carmen Skaggs stresses how art for social conformists is a means of displaying wealth. She states: "[A]rt for the elite merely performs a dutiful function: it demonstrates wealth. Because Beaufort doesn't own any paintings by New York

artists, he can't even imagine that they exist. For Beaufort, and even for Newland, the arts serve primarily as commodities to be consumed and displayed for their own pleasure."[200]

Wharton's life style has always been surrounded by minute detail. A very clear example of her caring about small details in her life is the inner decorations of her house "The Mount". Wharton designed her house with great care for minute detail and privacy. Hermione Lee talks about her style as follows:

> Wharton's design of her own house, at The Mount, as an exclusive and private domain, is anticipated. 'Whatever the uses of a room, they are seriously interfered with if it be not preserved as a small world by itself.' Bedrooms should be designed as suites, 'preceded by an antechamber separating the suite from the main corridor of the house', and preferably with a separate door into the bathroom for the servants to use without disturbing the inhabitants of the bedroom, 'for greater privacy'.[201]

Wharton's care about privacy and symmetry, clearly seen in the structure of her house, is also portrayed in her narrative structure. Her style of living has definitely affected her writing technique, which is mostly known as "ornamental". Dorri Beam addresses the issue of Wharton's style and argues for the importance of this highly wrought style in expressing the literary and social environments that the author seeks to present in her fiction. Beam states:

> Highly wrought language is not language seeking to break its relations, but language seeking to claim its relations to literary and social environments and, finally, to make a claim on its readers. … Our encounter with amazing prose, the turn into poetic language that transports us, our forced march into the detail of the mise en scene … This prose "moves" us: it dislocates our textual pleasures and interposes other ones.[202]

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[200] Carmen Trammell Skaggs, *Overtones of Opera in American Literature from Whitman to Wharton* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 2010), p. 123.
[201] Hermione Lee, p. 133.
[202] Dorri Beam, *Style, Gender, and Fantasy in Nineteenth-Century American Women's Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 194.

Indeed, it is the exact details of Wharton's texts that "transport" and "dislocate" us as readers in a miniature of the world in which she has lived. By focusing on minute detail, Wharton also criticises a society that allows such minor specifications to affect the life of its socialites. These social particularities become the reason behind the ostracism of certain characters if they dare to transgress these regulations.

I have tried to show in this chapter how the study of the illustrations, the settings and the characters in *The Age of Innocence*, engaged together, draw a picture of the contribution of each gender in changing the rules of New York elite society as presented in the story – either in a negative sense, in that they hinder progress, or positively, in that they embrace new ideals and manners. The illustrations are significant in that they show the male and female characters in intricate social situations, depicting subtle details not in the text, giving us a new dimension, and helping us understand better the politics of gender at that time. The main setting of the novel, New York, and other specific settings like the Opera House and Fifth Avenue help Wharton to explain the limitations that social place imposes on her characters. Finally, studying the principal characters reveals how Wharton used specific stereotypes, placed in exact social situations, to show the reader the reactions of her characters. Each character can be shown to contribute to the current of social change depicted in the narrative. These three elements – illustrations, settings and characters - are closely connected, and a study of one of them will lead ineluctably to a study of the others. Indeed, these three elements work together to reveal Wharton's intention, which is to illustrate the forces of social change in New York in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and the different initiatives and responses of men and women of the time in that process.

Conclusion:

The research conducted in this thesis provides a close textual study of selected fictional works by Thomas Hardy, Henry James and Edith Wharton. In these novels, the authors describe a world struggling to accommodate the forces of change that altered society in both Britain and North America in the decades leading up to the turn of the nineteenth century. I have looked in detail in the previous chapters at Hardy's *The Return of the Native*, James's *The Europeans*, and Wharton's *The Age of Innocence*, and how these novels chronicle changes in society, in particular how attitudes toward gender and associated codes of conduct are essential factors. All three authors provide us with insights into the intimate thoughts and motives of their characters, giving us, in turn, a unique perspective on the reality of life in these historic decades. By creating a fictional world that so closely resembles the historical reality, they allow us to enter into the minds of their characters, who have to struggle with forces which the authors themselves encountered in their real lives. As such, the three selected novels under scrutiny amount to a unique source, outside the historical canon, giving us, as readers, the ability to penetrate beyond mere facts and statistics such that we may participate in the everyday challenges of men and women at this crucial time. The fictional characters give us the opportunity to empathise – by proxy – with the competing ideas and principles of the age, within the context of the manners and mores of society. Most of all these narratives show us what happens when individuals clash, throwing a light on the ideas and principles which they hold. These encounters, in which the characters personify a whole set or class, allow the authors to reveal the underlying collision of manners, ideas, and wider philosophies of the period.

It has become apparent during my examination of the texts that Hardy, James and Wharton considered that men and women have different and substantial roles to play in the processes of change within their societies. Social pressures affect the portrayed characters to a great extent, impacting on their everyday lives by changing most of the habits they are used to. While each narrative ends with an ostensibly happy marriage – a symbol of stability - each underlines a tragic ending for defiant or socially neglected characters. For example, Eustacia's death in Hardy's *The Return of the Native,* Eugenia's inability to find an American husband in James's *The Europeans*, and Ellen and Newland's failure to marry in Wharton's *The Age of Innocence*. These tragedies, while standing in contrast to the upbeat narrative climaxes of each of the novels, seek to illustrate a profound truth, that the characters' sufferings and dissatisfaction stem from their conflict with society, which as a result casts them as outsiders.

Furthermore, these tragedies come about because of the "passive resistance" to change exhibited by conservative characters, who seek to defend their positions. Resistance to change within society is personified by those characters who refuse to embrace aspects of change which would affect their personal lives. Mr. Wentworth, the patriarchal figure in Henry James's *The Europeans*, tries his best to keep the changes away from his house by fighting the norms brought by his relative Felix Young. Throughout the novels the majority of the characters endeavour to retain the well-established positions either through an innate reactionary position, or a specific fear that they will lose aspects of power and influence. Levels of resistance to change range from the passively mute, as in the trope of silent women in Hardy's *The Return of the Native,* to those patriarchal and matriarchal characters who strive to keep proposed changes to a minimum, when they would affect their power and

control over others. Such figures use economic as well as social pressure to give a voice for their resistance: in other words, their money and influence "speak."

Rebellion in the exposed social settings comes in various forms. Some female characters mark the full extent of resistance, setting an almost revolutionary example of what we might characterise as "change machines" by challenging the conventions of their societies, aiming for greater autonomy from the constraints imposed by codes of expected conduct. During this period – from the 1840s to the 1920s – women took up radical positions to win their fair rights in both America and Britain, and fought for various freedoms such as the right to vote or to own and inherit property. British women eventually attained their rights in owning properties by the Married Women's Property Act of 1882. In America women had begun to have the right to own property from 1839.

These decades, preceding the eventual emancipation of women, were ones in which they struggled to win the right to express their opinions and take action on their own behalf. At the same time men continued to enjoy the privileges of power, especially over women in their own social circles. Yet some exceptional men embraced the spirit of change engendered by women, and supported their efforts to gain equal rights in societies dominated by patriarchy. Others took a passive position, neither reacting against the forces of change nor taking a leading role in defending the status quo. However, even these men could on occasion abandon their passive positions in order to lend support to "change machines". Therefore, conventional conceptions that passive men played a limited role in the processes of change are misleading, as the novels illustrate, when they tell how such men dramatically stepped forward to help women seeking revolutionary change. Close textual examination shows us these forces in action, at a level of human detail.

Hardy's *The Return of the Native*, James's *The Europeans*, and Wharton's *The Age of Innocence*, are a rich source for studies in gender and social change. All three novels were initially published in a magazine format. This gives us an insight into one aspect of social change at the time. Magazines' availability changed the reading habits of men and women – but particularly offered women the chance to read widely, and in a way that fitted into their everyday working life. In addition, serialisation provided a framework within which readers could access such novels alongside editorial commentaries, accompanying advertisements, and directions to other similar literary serials. Serialisation forms part of a wider "culture of reading" in the Late-Victorian period, in which magazines proliferated, and sought out precise markets in terms of gender interests, employment and class.

In the case of Hardy and Wharton there is a further layer of interest. Their novels were not only serialised but illustrated by a series of placed black and white plates. These tablets convey interpretation of certain incidents from the novels through an assembly of symbols, messages and body language which are given to us in addition to the text, to help us contemplate the implications of the text behind the rich and fine details deployed in the drawings of the later nineteenth century, through into the fin de siècle. These images accompanied the serialised works, and were created at the time by artists often working closely with the authors. As such, they provide us with a particular advantage in our search for the role of gender in social change. By focusing on apparently superficial elements – such as fashion, manners, and body language – the images provide a unique insight into the subtle details that underpin the nature of the interactions of men and women in society. We can examine how the illustrators used various tools and techniques to communicate with the magazine's readers. The illustrations give us a rare secondary, but contemporary

interpretation of the novels. By their very limitations – in that they are merely visual interpretations – they offer us unique insight into the role of men and women in the social development of their communities.

Close analysis of the illustrations in previous chapters reveals that these visual aids can disclose more to the reader in several subtle ways, embellishing issues of manners, fashion (including dress and food), attitude and human interaction. The tablets make a substantial contribution to helping our general understanding of the period, through showing us intimate details of the personal lives of the portrayed characters. In effect these pictorial enhancements function as the tool, bringing into sharp focus our core issues of gender and social change in a vivid way.

Close reading of the selected texts has shown that all three authors employ certain techniques and narrative tools in order to focus on the issues of change and gender in their respective societies. Each chooses to place their characters in a time of change, in places at the centre of change, uniting them also in actions driven by change – although qualified by gender. Taking each of these issues below we will examine how effectively they enabled the authors accurately to portray the forces at work beneath the surface of everyday life.

The broad time span is an important shared aspect of the three studied novels. Hardy and James's novels were published in 1878 and written to appear contemporaneous. Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* was published in 1920, although it narrates events dating back to the same time period of the early eighteen seventies. This interval between the publication of the two contemporaneous novels and Wharton's gives us two distinct perspectives in the same time period. Hardy and James are writing about the moment they are living in seen through fiction set in a relatively recent past, whereas Wharton uses

hindsight, and the experience of several intervening decades (half a century that includes a World War), to colour her view. So, these three books give us an insight into the unsettled period of the aftermath of the American Civil War (1861-1865), and the First Anglo-Boer War (1880) and this same decade viewed from just after the First World War (1914-1918).

The three narratives chart the experience of women and men exposed to intense social pressure. These tensions surface in the everyday lives depicted by the authors, as their characters test and challenge appropriate forms of behaviour and conduct. Antebellum Boston and Reconstruction period New York delineate symptoms of ailment, and tensions within the body politic. Also, these unsettled periods in the aftermath of war provide rich material for James and Wharton. Their characters struggle to find a place in the new social order. However, Hardy, James and Wharton all show us that real social change is slow, even in such times. Despite the efforts of some the principal characters to find a niche in the new order the incremental pace of social reform often leaves them to face disappointment and failure within the context of their echelon of society. On the other side of the spectrum, reactionary forces work to frustrate those characters who operate as "change machines."

The period between the middle of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is marked by a series of social upheavals that resulted in radical change in the role of women, and consequently the position of men in their respective societies. The span of time covered in the novels coincides with the emergence of the Women's Suffrage Movement that began in Britain in 1872, and with the development of the Reconstruction period in American (1865-1877) in the wake of the Civil War. In both societies women were required to take up the jobs of men, who left for the wars, to either defend their homes and families in the turmoil of the American Civil War, or seek glory overseas expanding the empire as in the

Boer Wars. In both cases, women, either as widows or spinsters, found themselves with no option but to work because of financial necessity. Women worked in a variety of domains to get a sufficient income; however, they were paid less than men undertaking the same labour. Nonetheless, women's work constituted an important component of the national work force at the time, both in Britain and North America. Established lower pay rates for women was one of the tactics used by employers to boost profits in factories, mines and shops.

Examples of such women appear in the studied works of Hardy, James and Wharton. The telegraph operator in Henry James' *In The Cage* illustrates the humiliation of working women, widely considered as inferiors within the workforce and treated – in James' description – as "beasts". Wharton introduces another aspect of these working women in her presentation of the character of Gertrude Farish in *The House of Mirth* (1905). Gertrude works to support herself by getting an independent income through her charitable work. Furthermore, she seeks to support and encourage other women around her, of lower income, to enter the labour market and gain a degree of financial stability independent of men.

Women in periods of reconstruction after war not only occupied men's jobs while men were fighting: they also helped in the frontlines taking up a number of duties, such as nursing the soldiers, cooking for troops, organising humanitarian aid, and even operating as journalists from magazines and newspapers. In writing *The Age of Innocence* (1920), Edith Wharton was able to look back from the perspective of a woman who had herself witnessed the First World War, visiting the trenches while based in Paris, and helping to care for refugees fleeing the frontline in Belgium. Wharton sought to help refugees whose homes had become ruins in the theatre of war in parts of Belgium devastated by the fighting.

From being what was popularly known as the “Angel in the House” with her cares focussed solely on the home, husband, and children, (the origins of the term has been addressed in chapter one, page 33), to being involved in war, even on the frontline itself, the role of the working woman was witnessing a remarkable transformation. These upheavals in society also had an impact on men, who found their privileged positions at work, and at home, under threat. Even in the upper reaches of society women began to find that they were in a position to challenge men on an intellectual basis – in the professions, the arts, and wider civil society.

The narratives of the studied novels are underpinned by the authors’ descriptions of the intricate and subtle changes in everyday life that were in themselves signals of more fundamental tensions within society. These details, observable in the manners and dialogues of members of society, pointed the way towards the remarkable events of later periods, such as the winning of female suffrage in the 1920s, which would remake the order of society, both in Britain and North America. While these historical events are adequately covered in the traditional historical record, the early indications of such tensions within society are more difficult to trace. These shifting early pressures, forerunners of wider change, which often pass without any formal note or acknowledgement, would be lost to us if they had not been documented by novelists and writers of the day – or those looking back with first-hand memories of the period. The studied authors created characters that in themselves represented classes, gender, and different beliefs and principals, and showed how their interactions came under stress, and evolved as society changed around them, over the period covered in the three texts under study.

The "Woman Question" – a term that became widely used in the late nineteenth century to indicate general agitation over the position of woman in society - is one of the main themes in all three books, in spite of the fact that the writers tend to discuss and deal with these issues in an indirect way. The question underlies most of the crucial incidents in their narratives, and the motivation behind many of the principal characters. All three authors covered in this study highlight, through their characters and plots, the argument that women should enjoy greater autonomy and equal rights, and the freedom to develop their own personal identities. Even if their approach in dealing with these fundamental issues is not straightforward, the two male and one female author involved in this examination, through their writing encourage the readers to empathise with characters struggling against social exclusion and the established patriarchy.

For example, in Henry James's *The Europeans*, Gertrude Wentworth challenges her father's determination that she should marry Mr. Brand, by instead courting Felix. Her triumph over the patriarchal choice of her father in eventually marrying Felix illustrates the possibility that women should enjoy the right to decide their futures, in this case by choosing their future husbands. Another instance of the issue of women's rights can be seen in *The Return of the Native*. Here Hardy tackles the extent to which women have rights over their property and wealth. The normally conformist Mrs. Yeobright strikes an independent note in deciding to send money directly to her niece, Thomasin, ignoring the established rules of the time, which would have dictated that the money should be sent first to her husband, Damon Wildeve, as he is the one with overall responsibility for Thomasin's financial estate. (This decision is discussed in further detail in the first chapter, page 48).

Wharton as the only female author in this study seems to reflect in her writing more empathy for the state of women in society. It can be argued that this is due to her ability as a woman to sense and inhabit the interior world of her female characters. Furthermore, she may also be portraying characters drawn in part from her memories of the life she led as a member of the New York elite in the late nineteenth century. Also, she is able to look back half a century, and focus on those key elements of society that, in retrospect, were to prove crucial in the coming transformation of the lives of women. It is clear that Wharton wrote the novel – which was to be serialised in the *Pictorial Review* magazine - with an eye to the needs and interests of a growing female readership. The point is literally illustrated by the fact that the story, when serialised, was accompanied by a number of fashion plates and advertisements of interest to women.

The three studied novels celebrate, to an extent, the Victorian notion of the importance of marriage. This notion is articulated in the opening lines of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, published earlier in the same century (1813), as follows: "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife."[203] Unity in marriage is seen as providing a woman with financial security while at the same time enhancing a man's possessions, providing a wife who will fulfil his sexual desires, care for his house and prolong his family name, by providing him with children, for whom she will care. Under the rules of this institution, men enjoy the ultimate power of decision in all matters that might affect the futurity of the family.

[203] Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (New York: Charles Scribner's sons, 1918), p. 1.

Marriage is seen throughout the novels as a key financial transaction. To marry the right partner can secure social position and financial stability, two objectives portrayed as goals of most of the principal characters in the studied novels. All of the three narratives end on a seemingly happy note with marriage, and yet several characters are denied this social privilege, having been branded as "unmarriageable" by their social peers. The final happy marriages portrayed in the novels are restricted to certain conformist characters, while they are denied for those seen as rebels. Successful marriages are defined as those which provide a husband who can bestow on the wife a higher social status and provide her with financial stability – or those which provide a husband with a socially acceptable wife.

Relationships that are seen to fail entail an unsuccessful choice of a husband or a wife, who fails to prioritise social status and financial security over concepts of love and close emotional family ties. This is seen in the case of the unfortunate marriage of Clym to Eustacia in *The Return of the Native*. His decision to stay in the rural backwater of the Heath condemns her to live as the wife of an ordinary furze cutter, rather than the high social position she expected in the town. In *The Europeans*, Eugenia did not succeed in marrying the American husband that she planned to find in Boston, largely because she did not manage to adapt to the values of Puritan society in America. A case of the unfulfilled romance is that of the divorced Ellen and the already married Newland in *The Age of Innocence*. Here marriage is denied for them even after the death of Newland's wife, May. Unhappy relationships like this are generally depicted as involving characters dissatisfied with the status quo, and striving to challenge social rules.

The marriages represented in the novels cover a wide range of relationships embracing those of different social classes and groups. However, successful marriages are

portrayed as those that thrive within the boundaries of society, founded on considerations of social status and money, which are perceived as the pillars of both marriage itself, and wider established society. These marriages are shown to be "Marriages of Convenience", which do not value the emotions or affections of the men or women involved, but rather depend on the expectations of society.

Throughout this thesis, one of the issues that I have been trying to highlight is the nature of the male contribution to processes of social change. To what extent do those male characters who struggle against the establishment succeed in bringing about long-term change? Such challenging men are present in each of the three main studied novels. In *The Return of the Native*, Damon Wildeve endangers his social position by helping Eustacia Vye to flee the Heath. He challenges the rules of his society by eloping with a married woman, while he is himself married. He is ready to stand up against the accepted values of his social circle for the sake of the woman he loves. At the end, Wildeve drowns in the river because he tries to cross the boundaries of the Heath (literally and philosophically); yet the essential point is that he had the moral and physical courage to defy those borders. Felix Young in *The Europeans* proposes a number of bohemian changes to the strict puritan lifestyle of his American cousins. The success of his proposals is epitomised in his eventual marriage to Gertrude, an archetypal all-American girl. Dallas Archer, the son of Wharton's hero, in *The Age of Innocence* disobeys the values of Old New York by getting engaged to a bankrupt girl, in sharp contrast to his father, who was unable to break the conventions of his time in marrying the once-divorced Ellen.

The male-female interactions in the studied novels provide also an important area of study, because they illustrate the way wider interactions between men and women of the time

were unfolding. Problems the characters are facing are indications of a widespread state of instability in their societies. The nature and result of these male-female interactions within the limitations of their depicted social spheres are stressed by the works of the three authors. Equally, both the portrayed male and female characters are exposed to the tyranny of their own social conventions. And in the stories those characters are trying to change the world around them, which can be seen also as early symptoms of an interior change in the formation of the identities of social members of North American and British societies.

Moreover, the three novels address the changes that affect the middle classes and the common appeal towards this social set as the most suitable class for the portrayed characters. They deal with the anxieties of class division that shape the style of life for the men and women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Like Mary Wollstonecraft in 1790s England, Wharton a century later believed that the best prospect for increasing women's social mobility, opportunities, and autonomy over their lives lay with the middle classes. That was because of their literacy, the time available to them, and the fact that they were not as compromised by having to conform in terms of behaviour to what would have been required to ensure a life of privilege at the highest class level of the upper classes. In Wharton's *The House of Mirth*, Gertrude Farish, a middle class female worker, supports her fellow women to gain their personal and financial independence. Due to the fact that Gertrude is able to help Lily, the heroine who has been neglected by the upper class to which she originally belonged, Wharton symbolises in her the future of womanhood in America and renders her as the best example to emulate.

Focusing on interpersonal relationships and interactions between male and female characters, and the changes which underpin these relations, are functional ways by which

novels can trace underlying tensions within society. As a consequence, characters and social settings are two necessary factors in any study of social change. They are, concurrently, the main points of focus in the novels under examination. The settings of the chosen novels are the same places of their writers' childhood locales. The authors know all specific details of the places they are portraying, because in parallel to their real lives, they create a fictional world with definite properties, providing their readers with a close and realistic view of their own communities.

It is clear that by examining each of these globally read novelists separately, one can notice that there is a kind of indirect connection between the themes presented in their novels. Thomas Hardy, Henry James and Edith Wharton share the same concerns as their characters and call for the necessity of changing the inappropriateness of old conventions and bringing instead a new lifestyle that suits the aspirations of their characters and consequently their own ambitions as creators. For instance, Wharton and James share the theme of criticising American social practices within the elite classes in the middle of and later nineteenth century, dealing in similar analyses of a society that prioritises communal interest over the personal one.

One of the principal concerns for the authors in the three studied novels is that the characters who bring change to their societies from both genders are seen as strangers, outsiders, and interlopers, and concomitantly as a source of danger to the community. Classically they are seen as an example of the 'Other'. Edward Said defines how such characters are often "transformed from a very far distant and often threatening Otherness."[204]

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[204] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1995), p. 21.

As such they are often linked with superstition, folklore, magic, witchcraft and spectrality. All such manifestations are shunned and eventually destroyed by the communal power of their societies, as those societies attempt to reinforce and defend older values and traditions. Superstitions, such as the embedding of pins in an effigy in *The Return of the Native* in order to cause pain, become self-fulfilling, not because Hardy, James or Wharton suggest they are credible, but because the superstitious act is accompanied by real-life human action that satisfies the desire for inflicting malicious pain. The representation of this aspect of the rebellious characters is deliberate on the part of the novelists. Firstly, they represent them as characters wronged by their communities. Secondly, the authors aim to stress the fact that even a failed rebellion sows the seeds of future upheaval, in that the courage of the first attempt will inspire those in the future. For example, in *The Return of the Native*, the choice of the name Eustacia for Thomasin's daughter, echoing the rebellious nature of the original Eustacia, indicates that in the future other attempts will be made to break that patriarchal authority which extends over Egdon Heath. In *The Europeans*, the marriage of Gertrude to Felix, who is a Bohemian, offers the promise that a new open-minded generation will one day accept challenging views and beliefs which may be unacceptable to the wider American society. Also, in *The Age of Innocence*, Newland Archer's son marries a social outcaste and pays a visit to Ellen, while the patriarchal power is displaced and left behind, characterised by the figure of his father who stays outside Ellen's flat.

Where the names of the heroines in the studied novels are concerned, it is notable that their given names start with the letter "E," and all descend from Greek origins. I argue that the letter itself gives indications of the characters' own longings and fears, for the following reasons. To interpret their initial in terms of the characters' fears; the letter may indicate the

word “evil” or “escape”, in the sense that all of the heroines are trying to flee what has been adjudged to be an “evil” part of their life by their respective communities. Also, the meaning of the names gives a further layer in understanding the novels. “Eustacia” means “fruitful”, and therefore embeds the productivity of the actions of this character. “Eugenia” from *The Europeans* means “well-born”, emphasising the Baroness’s origins and her fastidiousness about etiquette that elite women were expected to care for. The meaning of “Ellen” indicates “light”; therefore suggests enlightenment and hope in two senses. For Countess Ellen Olenska brings optimism and happiness into an increasingly staid, gloomy and old-fashioned New York; as Mrs. Mingott points out, “Ah—I hope the house will be gayer now that Ellen’s here!” Also, it can be argued that Ellen brings lightness in terms of the new and free ideals she proposes in her society.

Indeed, the narratives portray particular details from the life of North American and British men and women at the late nineteenth century. Every aspect of life that is depicted in the novels carries a sense of positive or negative reaction towards a more exciting and new lifestyle that challenges the order of tradition. It is my intention that comparing these three writers has opened the way for more discussion of Hardy, James and Wharton in terms of how they dealt with issues of social change in their novels’ by employing their own original birth places.

What is strikingly similar between the three studied novels is that the causes of social change can be traced in the strains and stresses under the surface of interactions between men and women. The extent of the experienced progress differs in the works according to the change of setting. For example, if the setting is rural and concerned with a community of relatively few families and individuals, traditions are more difficult to challenge and change

takes longer than where the story occurs mainly in an urban or metropolitan community, where life and change happen at a faster pace. For example, the range of social changes happening on Egdon Heath, as a setting, is very different from the alterations portrayed in the cities of Boston and New York by James and Wharton.

It is clear that this study involves two different milieus; the rural setting of Egdon Heath as a locale for the narrative of *The Return of The Native* and on the other hand the cultivated American cities of Boston and New York in *The Europeans* and *The Age of Innocence*. The rural country landscape in Hardy's work restricts its inhabitants for reasons that I have shown in chapter one, applying concentrated pressure on those who challenge the perspectives of its men and women. Life on the Heath was a burden for Eustacia Vye, who married Clym Yeobright in the hope of getting away from the Heath, then sought the help of Damon Wildeve to flee the constraints of that community to a city near the seashore in which the French influence promised a freer life style and more scope for self-expression. City life in Boston and New York, on the other hand, exercises different kinds of restriction on its inhabitants. Both Boston and New York are considered to be key financial centers for the United States in the nineteenth century. In the narrative lines of James and Wharton one can clearly see the elite class of Boston and New York seeking more autonomous lives. Their efforts, paradoxically, involve attempts to relocate to the countryside, suggesting an escape from the social claustrophobia of their existing condition to a perceived simplicity of country life.

Fleeing from the country to the city, or the other way around, has in real life often marked a desire for greater freedom. That gesture is not necessarily a revolt against the state

of order in general, but it does signify a refusal simply to obey the old-fashioned codes of conduct that are perceived as not prioritising people and their feelings.

The Heath, Boston and New York are very suggestive settings in regard to the nature of their reaction to the changes they are exposed to. The Heath by its grandeur holds to its values and refuses to undertake any kind of change brought onto its land. In order to keep the changes to a minimum, the Heath's various locations employ a number of other factors to keep its control over its inhabitants for a longer period. Symbolically, the Quiet Woman Inn as a social gathering place for the men of the Heath keeps the Heath's women under control. The river also, marking the borders of the Heath, works as an agent preventing any kind of interference in the orders of society. Hardy in *The Return of the Native* addresses a rural England of the middle of the nineteenth century, yet he introduces a similar understanding of the concept of innocence to that of Wharton. Innocence cherished in Hardy's fiction is linked with the characters' lack of knowledge and their immature ways of dealing with their social surrounding. It also implies a sense of lack of communication with the outer world; that is, beyond the boundaries of Egdon Heath.

New York features as the wider setting of Wharton's narrative, and the Opera House is portrayed as the social gathering place for New York's elite class. The presentation of the opera as a place for assemblies and for hinting at changes that are going to happen – for example the opening of a new opera house in New York for new comers - serves to chronicle the restructurings that had undergone the social and intellectual life systems of New Yorkers. It might be argued to an extent that New York's Opera House, as portrayed by Wharton, carries some similarities to the Quiet Woman Inn in *The Return of the Native*, in the sense that to enter it women are supposed to conform to certain etiquettes and rules. Women are

not allowed to enter that social sphere if they do not conform to its rules, as in the case of Ellen Olenska, who is condemned for attending the opera with the "wrong" style of dress; her action causes a semi scandal in New York society.

The general settings of the novels alongside the smaller specific places promoted in the narrations classify and identify the nature and extent of the social changes delineated in the authors' narratives. Dealing with Egdon Heath, Boston, or New York, the authors propose main social differences in living either in the country or the city. Also, the three authors discuss the significance of specific social gathering places within their settings, as a way of charting change at specific points of social pressure. In these specific places, or "pressure points", prejudice towards certain classes or gender is greatly displayed and, in turn, scrutinized by the authors. Such settings are seen as restricted and restricting places for those living under their rules. Specific places like the Quiet Woman Inn, the graveyard, the Opera House, or the garden in the city illuminate the slow pace of change and the stages that architectural, intellectual and social transformations had to pass through.

In spite of their being American expatriates, James and Wharton wrote about the American social landscape as one of the main settings in their fictional works. They imagined and wrote about the life of their American characters, while at the same time they had a view from outside because they lived in other countries. In their expatriation, Paris was one of the places in which both James and Wharton preferred to live, because of the elevated life style that most of the authors and people of letters enjoyed in that capital. However, Hardy's expatriation lies in the fact of his belonging to a different and lower social group. In *The Return of the Native* he creates an imaginary place that is full of all forms of exclusion and ostracism he suffered from. The three authors under examination express their disdain

about their social orders by stepping away and alienating themselves. In Paris, the capital of the American expatriates, the characters are introduced to new styles of life which make them see things from a different perspective. Living in Paris enlarges their understanding of a new place and new relationships; "Not only their experience but also their consciousness is enriched by their contact with the capital."[205] Paris has been seen in the eyes of the American expatriates as an imaginary and mysterious city, adding to the Bohemian prospect of its artistic life. It is for these merits that Newman in James's *The American* seeks to marry a woman from Paris and calls its inhabitants as "best people"[206] and "the crowned heads."[207] Indeed, all of these elements combined together render Paris the best place for American expatriates, "fulfilling their roles as tourists and pilgrims."[208] Alongside the fictional aspects that characterised the Parisian life, the capital promised young Americans a great level of insight into new styles and techniques of knowledge and learning. Thus, the authors' expatriation helped them understand the corrupted social orders that should be transformed in order for their societies to experience forms of freedom other nations' men and women were enjoying.

The rise of various forms of technological advancements in the late nineteenth century has been portrayed as one of the symptoms of radical change happening at all levels of the lives of the portrayed characters in the studied novels. The extent of acceptance of and adaptation to these new technologies differs from the country to the city. It has also affected

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[205] Jean Meral, *Paris in American Literature* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1989), p. 76.

[206] James, *The American*, p. 35.
[207] Ibid., p. 38.
[208] Meral, p. 4.

the style of life in both the American city and British rural landscape – the Heath in Hardy's work - and Boston and New York in James and Wharton. Technology also affects to a large extent the way in which men and women interact with each other in their social setting. The new forms of technology promised an easier life for them, yet changing the way they used to live.

One of the main technological advancements changing the lifestyle of the people in the late nineteenth century was the introduction of trains, omnibuses and public transport. Though the introduction of means of travel and their impact are not addressed directly in Hardy's *The Return of the Native*, the concept of moving from one place to another and the feeling of displacement is still one of the main addressed themes. The introduction of omnibuses in Boston is portrayed as the main spectacle at the opening of James's novel, *The Europeans*. The use of these technologies was subject to certain protocols of gender and class groups. Moreover, this is represented in a way that stresses how people from different genders, classes, and groups are eligible to use such technologies.[209]

The train is the social space that represents the urban environment in motion. It moves city dwellers to the countryside, but this quick placement does not portray them as part of the rural community. Trains allow people from an urban, metropolitan environment to travel and interact in the countryside. Yet, they carry their social prejudices with them. In trains, people were exposed to different codes of conduct as those from different classes came together. The train becomes a symbol of the fast-moving pace of life and the changes

[209] Additionally, these newly introduced forms of transport and technologies helped during the intricate historical points of time in the American civilisation, such as the use of the trains and telegrams during the American Civil War.

taking place in social strata. In such social spaces, traditional codes of conduct are at stake, because one encounters people with new and different viewpoints.

Through their narratives, the authors' main concern seems to be that the lives of their characters are not controlled by these innovations. A main question is whether characters still have control over their lives. The authors stress the importance of a lifestyle that highlights human relationships. A most significant instance can be seen in Henry James's *In The Cage*. In this narration, James presents the dilemma of the telegraph girl who could not manage to keep "the distance" required by her mechanical and lifeless job, when she helped one of her customers by stopping a message from going to the wrong person and thereby creating a big scandal. James's heroine could not remain as just a part of the machine she is working on. The example brings to the fore the importance of human relationships.

Indeed, Hardy, James, and Wharton stress that whatever the level of technology and its importance in the social life of human beings, newly introduced technologies should not govern the life of their characters. The humanitarian side of relationships should always prevail and remain the chief priority. The same position is expressed in the argument of Raymond Williams's *Television: Technology and Cultural Form*. In his book, adopting the television as his example, Williams argues that even if the information available on various forms of media has the effect of moduling the social group it is aimed for, such information will never rule and hold dominant power over its subjects. He states, "On the contrary, the reality of determination is the setting of limits and exertion of pressures, within which variable social practices are profoundly affected but never necessarily controlled."[210]

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[210] Raymond Williams, *Television: Technology and Cultural Form* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 133.

Under the limitations of their settings, male and female characters in the studied novels have different opportunities in relation to their education. City life helps the characters to pursue education and therefore they are able to advance in their intellectuality. Also, being able to communicate with and accept other forms of cultural intellectuality raises the intellectual spectrum of the characters more generally. Most of the principal characters in the three main novels acquired their education through expatriation outside their original social milieus.

While men's education means that they will obtain a higher rank in their society or even a respectable profession, women's education was regarded as a dangerous act on the part of women, even if they happened to live in an intellectual environment. The dominating patriarchal system encouraged fears that education would distract women from their familial duties and eventually emancipate them, leading them to change the balance of their submissiveness in the social status quo.

The character of Gertrude Wentworth in James's *The Europeans* adds another layer to the perspective of the danger of women's reading habits. Gertrude's reading of the *Arabian Nights* opens her eyes to another culture and fantasies, in the sense that her reading helped her to understand Felix's views of life. Most important of all, it assisted her in making her decision to be with her hero and emancipate herself from the patriarchal controlling power of her father.

The decision to examine the serialisation of *The Return of the Native*, *The Europeans* and *The Age of Innocence* – and particularly their illustration – has produced a valuable insight into the role of the male and female characters in the processes of change within their respective societies. By definition the artists are restricted to depicting the manners of the

societies described in the novels. The illustrations give us a fresh, contemporary view of issues such as fashion, food, décor, manners, and social interactions in both public and private places. Therefore the plates, working as a visual filter, allow us to see clearly the importance of apparently superficial issues such as style, social standing, and conversation, by probing inside the details of societies undergoing pressures of reform.

The artists are limited to portraying only certain aspects of the narratives – leaving aside dialogue, plot, and ideas –focusing entirely on the outward appearances of the characters, and how they interact when they meet. Therefore, the plates act as a window into a period when tensions beneath the surface of society were beginning to express themselves in small details of behaviour. Indeed, the illustrations refine the narrative down to a series of tableaux, which show us the extent to which the manners of the time were acted out. The finely portrayed objects alongside pieces of furniture and landscapes are used to symbolise and refer to larger social themes and ideas that would reflect on the understanding of the narratives.

In contrast to the other two novels under scrutiny, James's *The Europeans* appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly: A Magazine of Literature, Science, Art and Politics* without any visual enhancements. This might be attributed to a number of reasons, main among which could be the style of the *Atlantic* as a literary magazine, and also James's own preference to have his serialised work untainted by any other form of art. He believed in the importance of drawing as a form of art and therefore the insertion of illustrations would definitely affect the literary value of his works.

A main contribution in this study was to give explanatory readings of the visualised forms that accompanied the novels from a new perspective, giving more attention to the

implications of gender and social change in the examined illustrations. The importance of the illustrations lies in the fact that these drawings are the visual production of a collaboration between three authorities: the author of the text, the editor (in relation to the decisions made in the placement of advertisements and illustrations around the text and even interfering in the course of events of the novel in some cases) and finally the illustrator. It is essential to draw attention to the importance of studies which concentrate on the first publications of novels in terms of their relation with gender and change in the relative societies.

A study of the magazines reveals their effectiveness as an affordable and accessible form of educating the public. Also, they have been employed by the editors to comply with the line of the magazine and with the greater benefit of their societies. Family magazines, women and children magazines, literary magazines, fashion magazines, scientific magazines, religious magazines and so forth, all of these kinds of magazines required different criteria for literary works to be published under their title. Different magazines addressed certain classes or groups of people by their contents and therefore aimed at presenting what is suitable and interesting for that group.

The different types of periodical magazine made available in both America and Britain changed the way that readers receive and interact with a work of fiction. Literary works were either modified to suit the magazine's needs or initially written to suit its publication line. The editorial regulations of the magazines can be seen as another essential factor in demonstrating the final shape of a work of fiction. Also, it can be argued that the magazine format is another way of adhering to the social order by obeying the general taste that was prevalent during the late nineteenth century in both North America and Britain's periodical press. An example of this can be seen in Hardy's inability to publish *The Return of*

the Native initially in the *Cornhill* magazine, because the story was not suitable for a family magazine.

Certain magazines were designed for women and children readers and supposed to address their needs. These magazines were formulated to educate women in the right path to be ideal wives; otherwise, the reading of them becomes dangerous. Material printed in these magazines encouraged women to take care of their duties and give them the requisite knowledge to support a traditional role of the "woman". In the chapter concerned with women and children in *National Identity in Great Britain and British North America, 1815-1851: The Role of Nineteenth-Century Periodicals*, Linda E. Connors and Mary Lu Macdonald delineate how "British educational material… was often directed to the moral improvement."[211] Furthermore, those magazines aimed to educate women by providing them with instruction "sugarcoated by a story" in order to set an image of the ideal woman as the moral emblem for her fellow women and the main moral instructor for children.

On another level of the spectrum, women's magazines helped in setting some early examples that initiated and supported women's rights in New York and New England more generally. As mentioned earlier in the third chapter, *The Lily*, one of the leading women's magazines in the nineteenth century advocated for women rights and in particular women's freedom in dressing in a style that would not restrict their social and physical potentials. The editor of the magazine and one of the advocates for more freedom in women's clothes, Amelia Bloomer, wore herself the style of dress named after her that became known as bloomers. *Lady's Godey's Book*, published in Philadelphia is another women's magazine,

[211] Linda E. Connors and Mary Lu Macdonald, *National Identity in Great Britain and British North America, 1815-1851: The Role of Nineteenth-Century Periodicals* (Farnham, Surrey, GBR: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2011), p. 98.

edited by Sarah Hale who was a working woman with a respectable job. *The Lady*, published in London, is also one such women's magazine continuously running from 1885, which played an important role in the British press. It also advocated for women's rights and included articles that are of interest to women. Therefore, the material addressed in the serialised works that appeared in the magazines helped in the recognition of female rights in women's magazines in both America and Britain. Such magazines included demands of earlier advocates for women rights and managed to instruct readers towards acknowledging women's rights and working towards obtaining them.

In Hardy's *The Return of the Native*, food is the main focus in three of the serial plates. In each plate a serious incident is taking place, indicating the centrality of food to the life of the characters. For example, it is so serious a matter to get water that a number of men gather around the well of Eustacia's house to help haul out the bucket. In another incident, Charley offers Eustacia a cup of tea while she was sitting on the sofa to assure her that he will help her. And Thomasin's plate in the apple loft portrays the ultimate role and responsibility of women as the responsible agents for preparing and storing the food for the family.

The habit of gathering around the table for consuming food in *The Age of Innocence* offers a new prospect in ways of understanding dietary consumption and its significance, in the sense that these gatherings possessed their own rituals and etiquettes in elite society. It is an important occasion for May to showcase her precision and care for the social protocols of dining parties, in particular because this is the first meal she gives as a married woman in New York society. This will certainly validate her social position and skills as the wife of a lawyer in her community. In the tablets about food, there are only empty plates on the tables;

it is the gathering around the table that stresses the value of domesticity, and the affectionate side of such moments as portrayed in the illustrations. In the tablet of Newland Archer and Eugenia Munster alone in her house, there are plates drawn behind them; it can be argued that the plates are displayed as a decoration symbolising domestic harmony behind them. In the plate showing Newland and Ellen again alone in one of the inns of Boston, the tea served on the table may suggest the nature of Newland's offer to Ellen to be his mistress, which might be seen as a normal offer that can be discussed while having tea. Yet Ellen's response is clear from her facial and body gestures.

In total, men and women in the nineteenth century aimed to perform their "ideal appearance" in public, yet women were the carriers of the main task in presenting the fashion of the period through obeying codes of dress and fashion in their social circle. Clothing, therefore, not only functioned as the objects covering our bodies and protecting them from the outside world: clothes also by their style and material give clear indication of a person's belonging to a certain social group or class. Clothing indeed still exerts (to an extent) most of these functions. All of the roles of clothing are addressed and stressed in the statement that Rubinstein makes in her book. Rubinstein says, "Exercising authority, wielding power, differentiating the sexes, and arousing sexual interest are all facilitated by the employment of categories of clothing signs."[212] However, the most important and evident task of clothing, and which is mostly evident in the studied illustrations, is that different items are worn in public to convey certain messages about who has the social power over other members of society.

[212] Rubinstein, p. 8.

Having a closer look at clothing and its different implications, one can note that items like walking sticks, parasols, and even hats convey messages of how women are independent on men and indicate the relationship between the sexes: "Clothing signs make visible the structure and organisation of interactions within a specific social context."[213] For instance, Ellen, the heroine of Wharton's *The Age of Innocence*, is welcomed in New York society because of her belonging to the Mingott family, yet the style of her dress which is different from the style of dress for other women in the opera invites men to look at and condemn her, even her family, because it has allowed her to show herself in the opera house in this dress that does not comply with the codes of dress in New York.

The illustrations reflect to an extent the attitude of the characters towards each other and how they interact when they come together. It is noticeable through the illustrations that there is not any physical contact especially between men and women. It is considered to be one of the unacceptable acts that a woman would allow a man to hold her hand. In *The Return of the Native,* Charley helps Eustacia to get into her grandfather's house and offers her tea. He justifies his kindness as a consequence of her having been kind to him in allowing him to touch her hand when she was asking to play instead of him in the mumming play. '"You let me hold your hand when you were a maiden at home.'" (*R N,* p. 327)

In *The Age of Innocence,* during the intimate instance when Newland is confessing his love for Ellen, Ellen is wearing her gloves while preparing to go out. When he holds her hand he does so when she has a glove on it. He therefore does not have direct contact with the uncovered skin of her hand. Gloves constitute an important part of the dress of every

[213] Ibid.

woman during the late nineteenth century, as they are "the only item of clothing that could be removed with propriety in public to reveal the wearer's naked skin."[214]

Caring about her virtue and reputation, a woman should wear her gloves outside. In another instance Aunt Medora Manson pokes Newland with her fan rather than using her hand to attract his attention, while introducing her friend Dr. Carver to him. The fact that she pokes Newland rather than touching him can be seen as an instance of the same prohibition, namely that women were not supposed to touch men, as this might expose their reputation and virtue for criticism. Therefore body language, touch, eye contact and attitude of the portrayed characters all serve as markers of greater social and economic themes drawn within the illustrations and definitely can be noticed and scrutinised by means of a close analysis of the illustrations.

Further investigations of the questions of gender and social change would extend to include a number of other novels by the same selected authors, and even to take in more writers of the period. D. H. Lawrence is a case in point. In particular, his novels *Sons and Lovers* and *Women in Love* explore issues similar to those investigated in this thesis. Lawrence's interest in Hardy's fiction can be seen in "Study of Thomas Hardy," which Lawrence initially wrote to criticise Hardy's characters, but in which he later included his philosophies of life and some of his fanciful moralising about Women's Suffrage, the War, the Laws and the Poor[215]. This study as a primary source helps extend an understanding of Hardy's characters from another author's point of view, and at the same time enriches our

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[214] Simon Gatrell, *Writing and Culture in the Long Nineteenth Century, Volume 1: Thomas Hardy Writing Dress* (Oxford: Peter Lang AG, 2011), p. 87.
[215] D. H. Lawrence, *Study of Thomas Hardy and Other Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 14.

understanding of the conditions under which Lawrence created his own characters in relation to his observations on the characters of his "spiritual father"[216]. Wharton and James, as American expatriates and friends, exchanged a prolific number of personal letters and views of each other's works. In a letter to Wharton dated 1905, James expresses his admiration for Wharton's *The House of Mirth* as follows: "I very much admire that fiction, & especially the last three numbers of it; finding it carried off with a high, strong hand & an admirable touch, finding it altogether a superior thing."[217] Such correspondence shows the private and professional interaction between these two American expatriate writers. While Hardy's characters live under socially constrained conditions, they struggle to come into being and to formulate their own identities. Their struggle is mainly attributed to love between the portrayed characters, as they strive through their interaction to achieve this perfect accomplishment. In his philosophical moralisations, Lawrence relates these struggles and their consequent tragedies to the nature of human being as such, which he describes in his own words as similar to the "hide-bound cabbage going rotten at the heart." Lawrence states, "It lies in the heart of man, and not in the conditions … we hang back, we dare not even peep forth, but, safely shut up in bud, safely and darkly and snugly enclosed, like the regulation cabbage, we remain secure till our hearts go rotten, saying all the while how safe we are."[218] Also, Lawrence creates his characters trapped in tradition and its constraining effects, but he concentrates on the fact that their tragedies stem, in most cases, from a fault in the essence of the human being. However, both Hardy and Lawrence – as British authors - share concerns of their birth place and how it limits the potential of their characters. Egdon Heath, Hardy's

[216] Andrzej Diniejko Thomas Hardy and D. H. Lawrence: A Literary Kinship Victorian Web.
[217] Horne, p. 418.
[218] Lawrence, *Study of Thomas Hardy and Other Essays*, p. 15.

imaginary setting, and the British midlands towns of coal mining, as Beldover in *Women in Love* and the little mining towns of the Nottinghamshire in *Sons and Lovers*, are the main settings of those two writers. Hardy, James and Wharton focus on one setting and the limitations that the characters experience because of living in such a place. The portrayed characters in the studied novels aspire to break these limitations and enjoy with their fellow men and women a new societal order that breaks out of the austerity of their present conventions. In James's and Wharton's novels the settings extend to include comparisons of a transatlantic nature and a criticism of it.

D. H. Lawrence is one of the authors that would provide a stance of comparison with the other three authors conducted in this study. Parenthetically, *Women in Love* (1920) is the novel that I would have chosen if the limits of the study permitted. In this specific novel, Lawrence proposes the grounds for vital change taking place across the Industrial Midlands of England prior to World War One. It clearly charts the changing role of men and women in a rapidly changing community. Lawrence's portrayal of the social change in his novels is courageous, while Hardy represents the themes of social and cultural change in his works in an indirect way as in the example of *The Return of the Native*. However, as Tim Parks stresses "Hardy negotiates with censorship and trembles at criticism; Lawrence flouts the censors and thrives on upsetting the critics."[219] Hardy's concern about Victorian conventions makes him criticise the status quo in an indirect way. Undoubtedly, the tragedy of Eustacia's death prompts readers to question the society in which they themselves live.

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[219] Tim Parks, "Fear and Courage versus Good and Evil: Warring Polarities in the Writings of Thomas Hardy and D H Lawrence," *The Thomas Hardy Journal* v. 26 (Autumn 2010): 167.

By contrast with Hardy, both James and Wharton portray Europe in their works as an emblem of civilisation and sophistication, and consequently their European characters appear to be more complex and manipulative. The "innocence" celebrated in the novels is often attributed to the American characters who have limited social skills due to their lack of experience and knowledge of the world. For example, Mr. Robert Acton in *The Europeans* ultimately changes his plans of marrying Eugenia, because he fears that she is a woman capable of lying and decides instead to marry an American girl. However, both European and the American characters are victimised by their societies as their stories unfold. It cannot be denied that historiographical studies of the conditions of men and women in the late nineteenth century are indispensable for the analysis of the characterisation in the novels.

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to answer all the questions of similarity and difference between the works of Hardy, James, and Wharton. They have a number of shared points regarding their lifestyles and literary connections; one thinks of the friendship between James and Wharton on the one hand, and the fact that James read and reviewed a number of Hardy's works. James's bitter criticism of Hardy can be seen in *The Critical Muse: Selected Literary Criticism* when he criticises Hardy as follows: "The pretence of 'sexuality' is only equalled by the absence of it, and the abomination of the language by the author's reputation for style. There are indeed some pretty smells and sights and sounds. But you have better ones in Polynesia . . ."[220] More areas of study could be relevant to include, in this comparison between the literary works of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, under the limitations of this investigation and most relevant to the issue of gender and social

[220] Henry James, *The Critical Muse: Selected Literary Criticism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1987), p. 305.

change, I have addressed issues related to illustrations, settings, and characters in the selected novels. More studies might extend to include further ways in which sexuality is dealt with, as well as changes in the nature and extent of boundaries imposed on characters by society.

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http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/reynolds-the-age-of-innocence-n00307/text-summary

The Mount: Estate and Gardens Designed by Edith Wharton http://www.edithwharton.org/

The alternative ending of *A Doll's House* http://ibsen.nb.no/id/11111794.0

Godey's Lady's Book, July (1849): 78. From the American Periodical Series.

Appendix A:

Arthur Hopkins' Illustrations of *The Return of the Native:*

Belgravia, A Magazine of Fashion and Amusement

Image scan, caption, and commentary by Philip V. Allingham, Victorian Web.

Plate 1:

"Didst ever know a man that no woman would marry?"

(January 1878): Vol. 34, to face page 274. 4.3125 x 6.375 inches.

Plate 2:

"She lifted her hand"

(February 1878) Vol. 34, to face page 493. 6.375 inches wide by 4.3125 inches high.

Plate 3:

"The reddleman re-reads an old love letter"

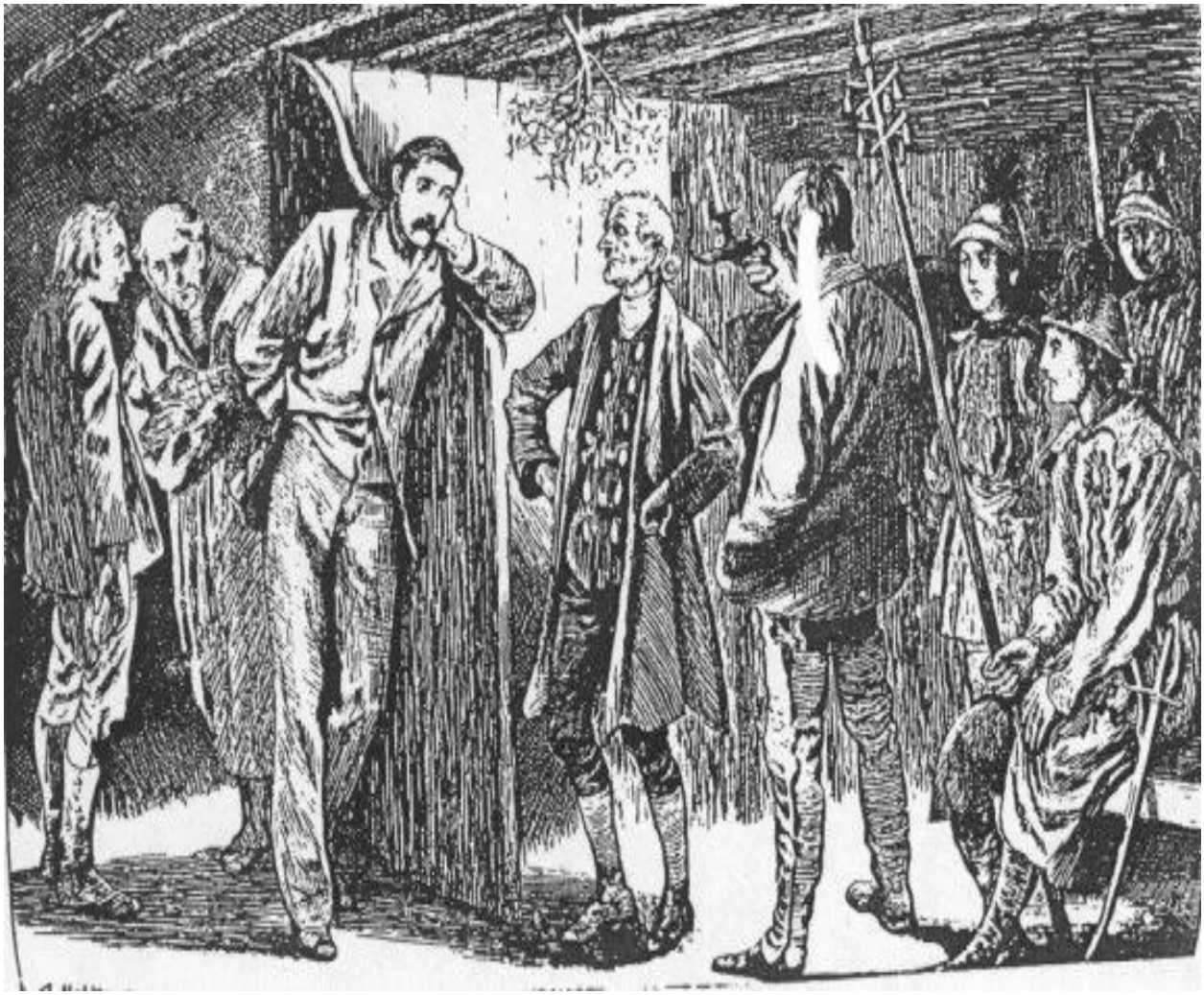
(March 1878) Vol. 35. Frontispiece 6.375 by 4.3125 inches.

Plate 4:

"I wish all good women were as good as I!"

(April 1878): Vol. 35. 6.4 by 4.3 inches. 235

Plate 5:



` "If there is any difference, Grandfer is younger"

(May 1878): Vol. 35, to face page 260. 6.375 inches wide by 4.3125 inches high.

Plate 6:

" Tie a rope round him; it is dangerous!"

(June 1878): Vol 35. 6.375 by 4.3125 inches. 492.

Plate 7:

"The stakes were won by Wildeve"

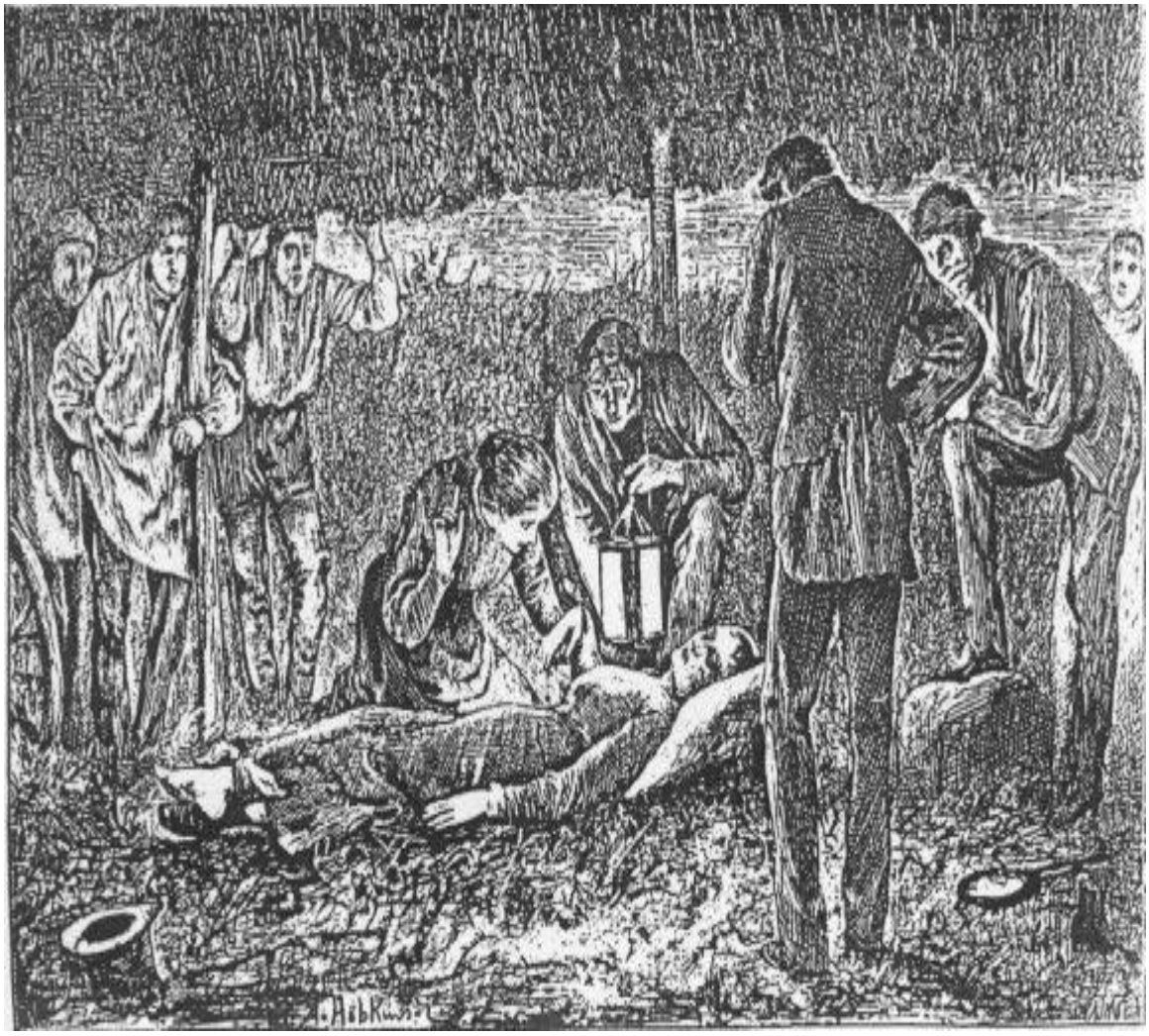
(July 1878) Vol. 34, Frontispiece, to face page 493 6.375 inches wide by 4.3125 inches high.

Plate 8:

"Unconscious of her presence, he still went on singing"

(March 1878), Vol 36. 6.375 by 4.3125 inches, facing 238.

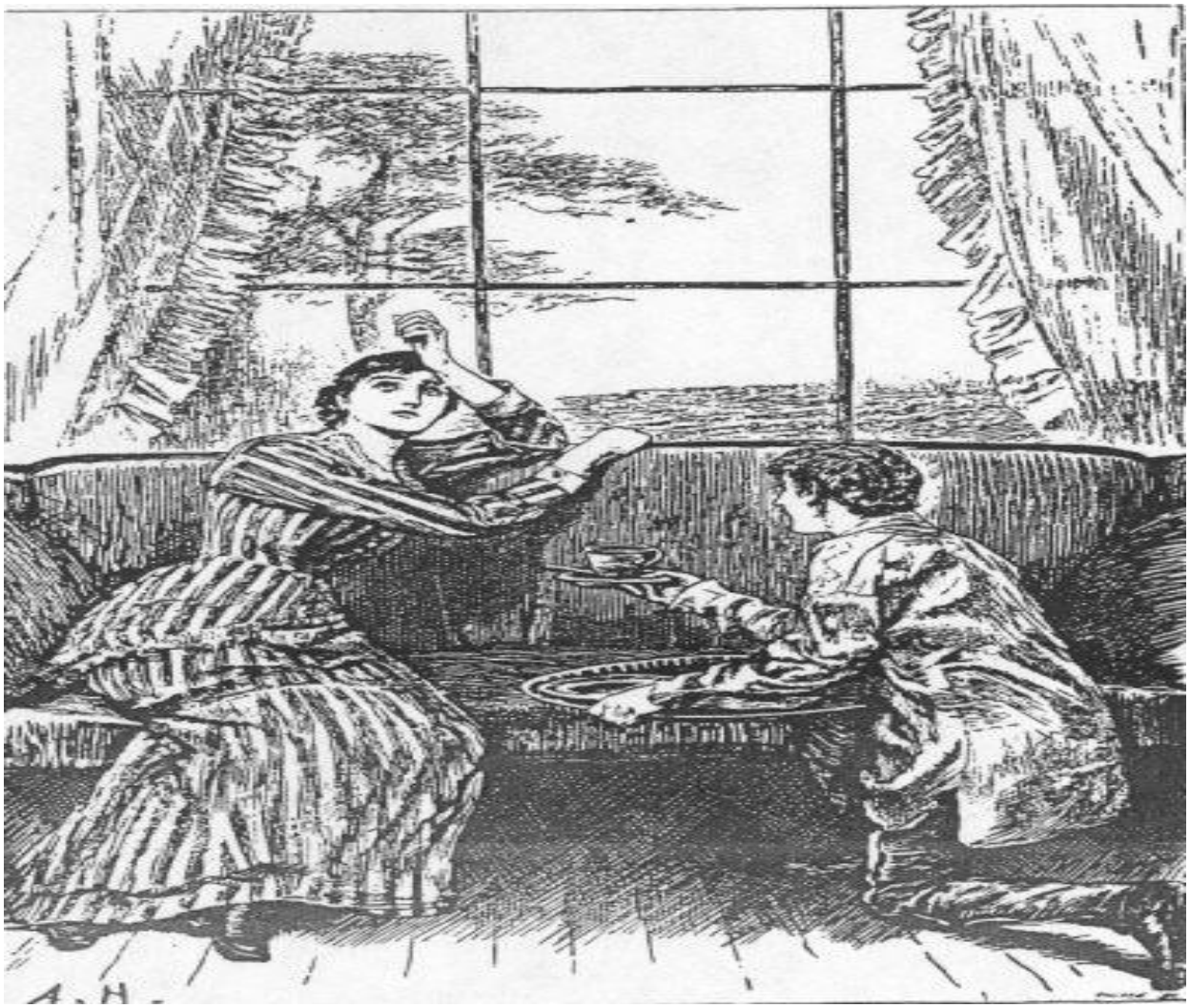
Plate 9:



"Something was wrong with her foot"

(September 1878): 9. Vol. 36, to face page 273; 6.375 inches wide by 4.3125 inches high.

Plate 10:



"He brought the tray to the front of the couch"

(October 1878), Vol. 36. 6.375 by 4.3125 inches. facing 506.

Plate 11:

"Tis not from the window. That's a gig-lamp, to the best of my belief"

(November 1878): Vol. 37, Frontispiece; horizontally mounted; vertically mounted; 6.375" x 4.3125."

Plate 12:

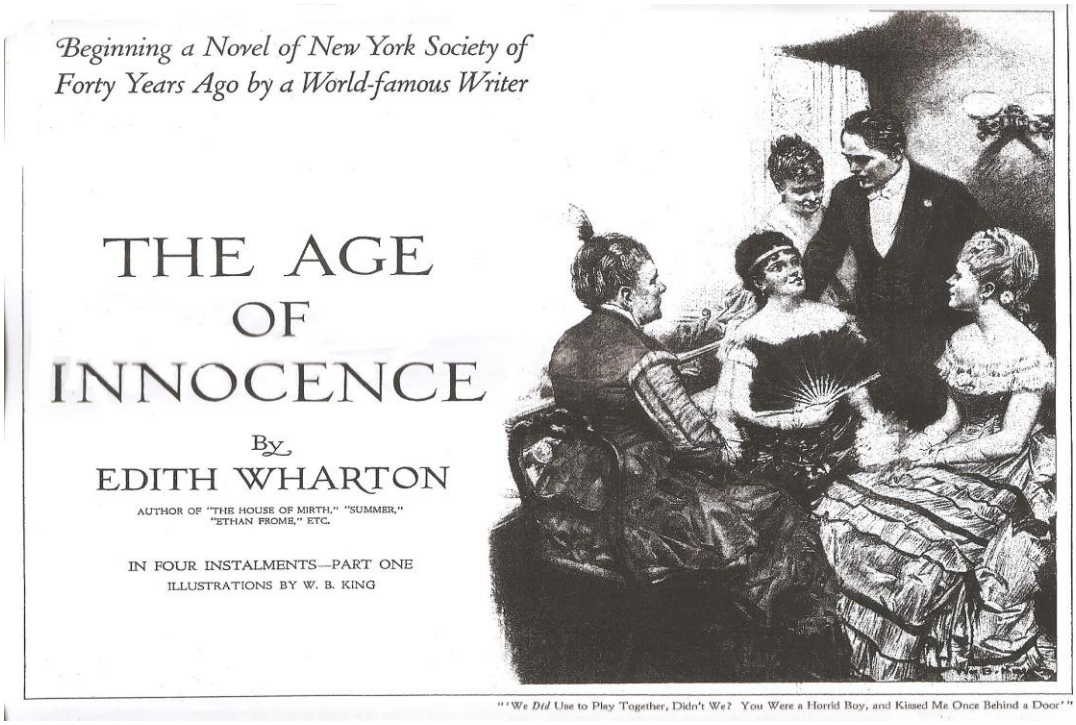
"All that remained of the desperate and unfortunate Eustacia."

(December 1878): to face page 229. 6.375" x 4.3125.

***The Age of Innocence*'s** **W. B. King's illustrations**

Figure 1:

The first instalment: A frontispiece by W. B. King (August): page 5 of the *Pictorial Review*.



"We did use to play together, didn't we? You were a horrid boy, and kissed me once behind a door.'"

The first instalment the *Pictorial Review* (August): Page 6

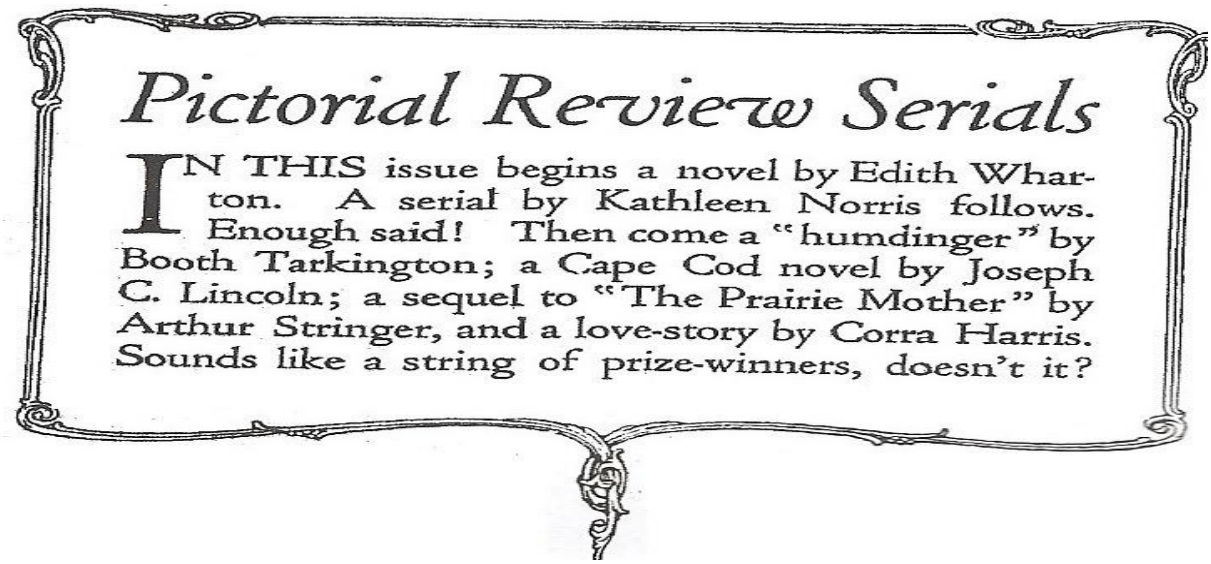
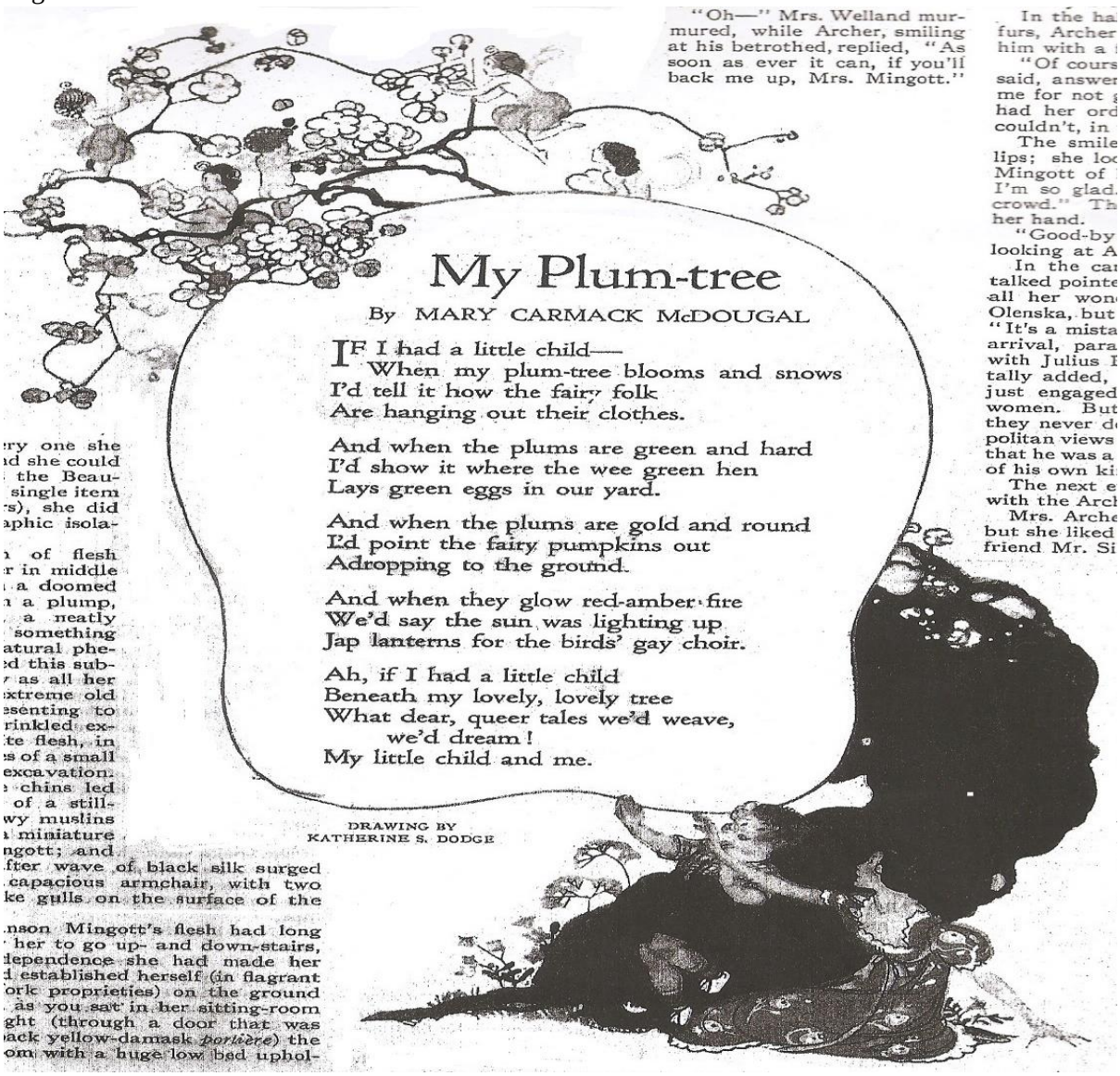


Figure 2: May Welland and Newland Archer at the Beaufort's ball preparing to announce their engagement.

Page 7 of the first instalment:

"Her Eyes Fled to His Beseechingly, and Their Look Said, 'Remember, We're Doing This Because It's Right'"

Page 8:



My Plum-tree

By MARY CARMACK McDOUGAL

IF I had a little child—
When my plum-tree blooms and snows
I'd tell it how the fairy folk
Are hanging out their clothes.

And when the plums are green and hard
I'd show it where the wee green hen
Lays green eggs in our yard.

And when the plums are gold and round
I'd point the fairy pumpkins out
Adropping to the ground.

And when they glow red-amber fire
We'd say the sun was lighting up
Jap lanterns for the birds' gay choir.

Ah, if I had a little child
Beneath my lovely, lovely tree
What dear, queer tales we'd weave,
we'd dream!
My little child and me.

DRAWING BY
KATHERINE S. DODGE

"Oh—" Mrs. Welland murmured, while Archer, smiling at his betrothed, replied, "As soon as ever it can, if you'll back me up, Mrs. Mingott."

In the ha
furs, Archer
him with a
"Of cours
said, answer
me for not
had her ord
couldn't, in
The smile
lips; she loo
Mingott of
I'm so glad
crowd." Th
her hand.
"Good-by
looking at A
In the ca
talked pointe
all her won
Olenska, but
"It's a mista
arrival, para
with Julius
tally added,
just engaged
women. But
they never d
politan views
that he was a
of his own ki
The next e
with the Arch
Mrs. Arche
but she liked
friend Mr. Si

ry one she
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the Beau-
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te flesh, in
s of a small
excavation.
chins led
of a still-
wy muslins
miniature
ngott; and
fter wave of black silk surged
capacious armchair, with two
ke gulls on the surface of the

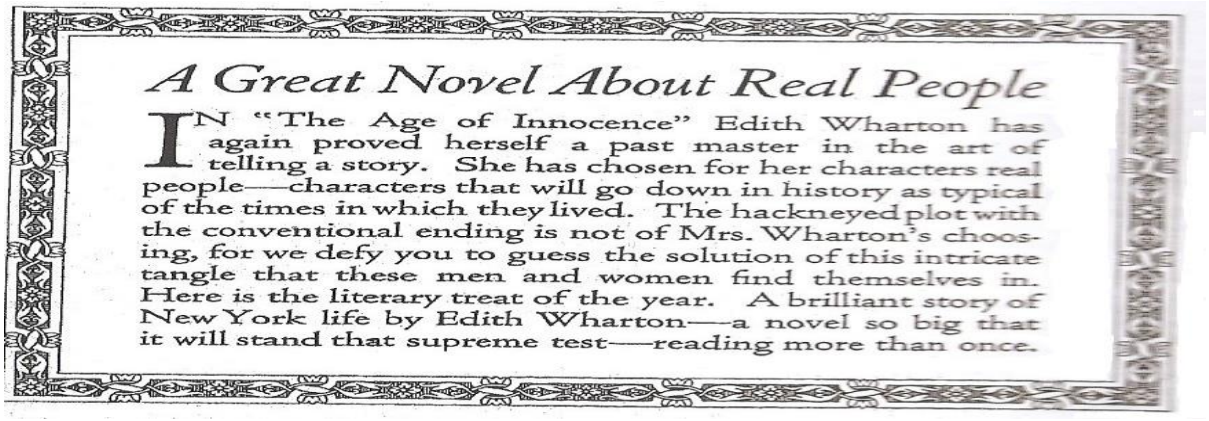
nson Mingott's flesh had long
her to go up- and down-stairs,
dependence she had made her
established herself (in flagrant
ork proprieties) on the ground
as you sat in her sitting-room
ght (through a door that was
ack yellow-damask *portière*) the
om with a huge low bed uphol-

Figure 3:

Page 9: Ellen enters into her grandmother's house accompanied by Mr. Beaufort.

"'Ah—I Hope the House Will Be Gayer Now that Ellen's Here!' Cried Mrs. Mingott"

Page 10: A Great Novel About Real People:



A Great Novel About Real People

IN "The Age of Innocence" Edith Wharton has again proved herself a past master in the art of telling a story. She has chosen for her characters real people—characters that will go down in history as typical of the times in which they lived. The hackneyed plot with the conventional ending is not of Mrs. Wharton's choosing, for we defy you to guess the solution of this intricate tangle that these men and women find themselves in. Here is the literary treat of the year. A brilliant story of New York life by Edith Wharton—a novel so big that it will stand that supreme test—reading more than once.

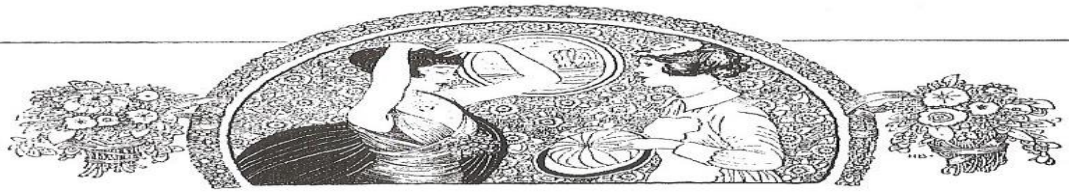
Figure 4:

Page11: Beaufort and Ellen Walking Up Fifth Avenue

"'Beaufort Certainly Knows Her, for She Was Seen Walking Up Fifth Avenue This Afternoon with Him by the Whole of New York'"

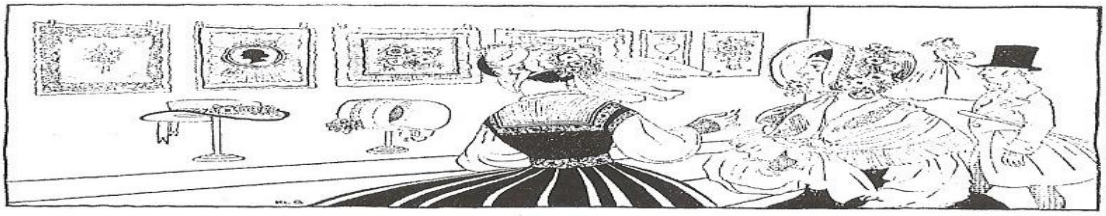
The Age of Innocence

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11



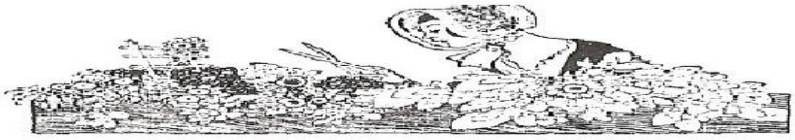
The Age of Innocence

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 68



The Age of Innocence

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 70



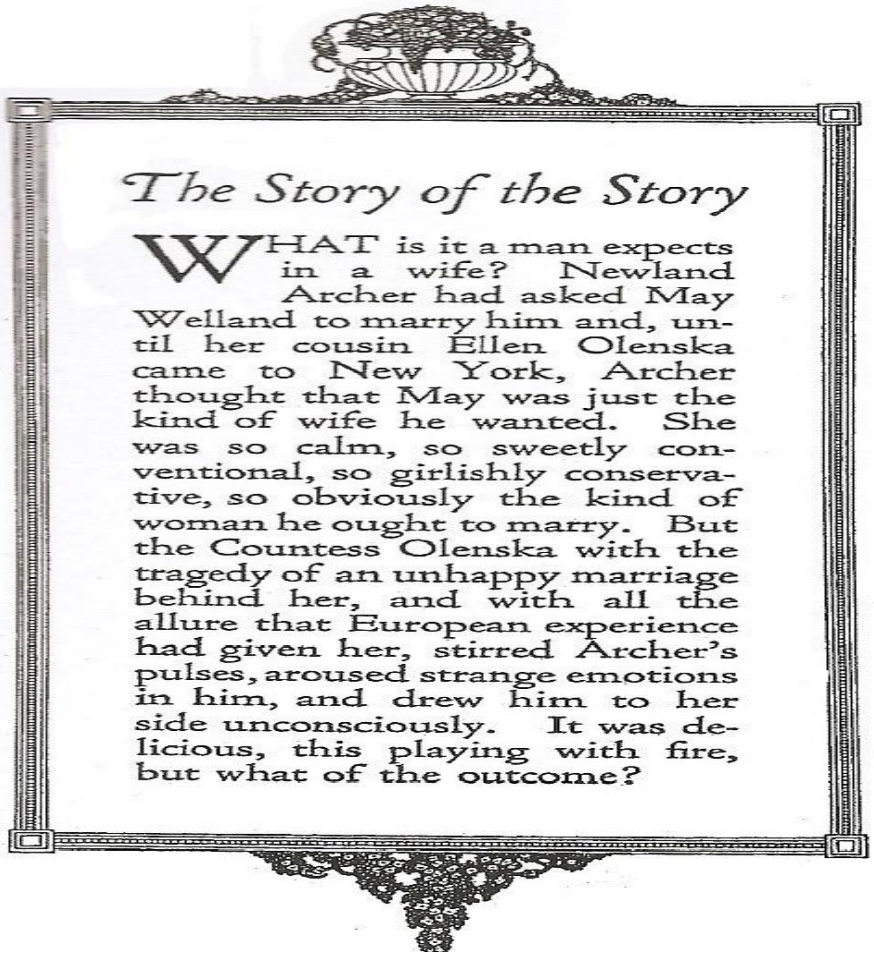
The Age of Innocence

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 74

The second instalment September:

Page 20: the small illustration at the top of the page of Ellen

Page 20: Editorial Statement: The story of the story



The Story of the Story

WHAT is it a man expects in a wife? Newland Archer had asked May Welland to marry him and, until her cousin Ellen Olenska came to New York, Archer thought that May was just the kind of wife he wanted. She was so calm, so sweetly conventional, so girlishly conservative, so obviously the kind of woman he ought to marry. But the Countess Olenska with the tragedy of an unhappy marriage behind her, and with all the allure that European experience had given her, stirred Archer's pulses, aroused strange emotions in him, and drew him to her side unconsciously. It was delicious, this playing with fire, but what of the outcome?

Figure 5:

Page 21: May and Newland the illustration in the middle of the page 7.50 – 5.50 inches

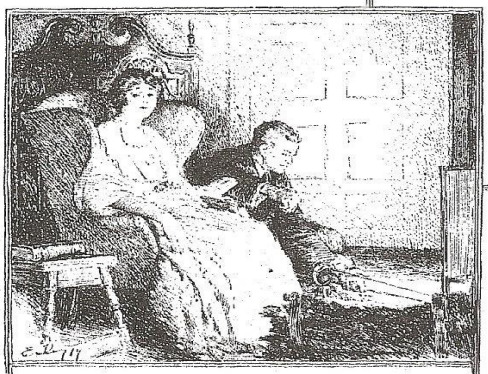
"'Some One Else—Between You and Me?' He Echoed Her Words Confusedly as tho They Were Only Half Intelligible, and He Wanted Time to Repeat the Question to Himself"

Page 22:

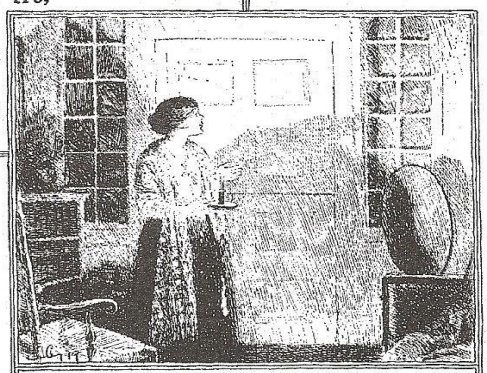
THE STRONG HOUSE

By SARA TEASDALE

OUR love is like a
strong house
Well roofed against the
wind and rain—
Who passes darkly in the sun
Again and again?



THE doors are fast, the
lamps are lit,
We sit together
talking low—
Who is it in the
ghostly dusk
Goes to and fro?



SURELY ours is a strong house,
I will not trouble any more—
Who is it stealing at midnight
To try the locked door?

Drawings by Kerr Ely

Figure 6: Page 23: Dr. Carver, Aunt Medora Manson, Mr. Winsett and Newland

"'I Was Called Away by Our Dear Great Friend Here, Dr. Carver. You Don't Know Dr. Agathon Carver, Founder of the Valley of Love Community?'"

Page 24: Poem: Hands of the Moon

Hands of the Moon

By MARY CAROLYN DAVIES

TO BREAK our lives asunder
With all the wonder
Of moonlight on the world, is more
Than I can bear. I felt before
That I would give all, all, to be
Now, as before I knew you, free!

But when I watch the white
Hands of the calm moonlight
At their old task of weaving new illusions
To cover life's confusions
And restlessnesses, I am drawn again
Into the house of pain
The moonlight tells us is no house of pain,
But one of joy. And we believe again!

The old lie draws us near whom truth would part.
Come, lean your tired head upon my heart.

Figure 7:

Page 25: Newland and Ellen are in Ellen's house. Trying to delay her outgoing to Mrs. Struthers, Newland tells Ellen about his love to her

"'I Have Never Made Love to You,' He Said, 'and I Never Shall. But You Are the Woman I Would Have Married if It Had Been Possible for Either of Us'"

The third instalment: October

Figure 8: Page 23: Newland with Miss Blenker asking her for Ellen

"Miss Blenker Stared at Him. 'Madame Olenska—Didn't You Know She'd Been Called Away?'"

Page 24:

THE STORY OF THE STORY

WAS Ellen Olenska justified in seeking a divorce? Was she justified in offending society and causing a scandal simply because she was unhappy? Newland Archer loved her, and yet when it was breathed about that she wanted her freedom, he advised her against it. There came a time when Archer's engagement to May Welland was forgotten, when he told Ellen Olenska that he loved her. But it was too late then, for Ellen was resolved not to make a scandal. On the day of his marriage, he cared no more for his wife than he did for his own sister. Every drop of blood in him cried out for another woman!

Figure 9: Page 25, May at the archery contest in Mr. Beaufort's garden party.

Figure 10: Page 26: Mr. Lefferetts with Newland at the Western union office


"'Wiring to the Family, I Suppose? I Gather It *Is* Bad, if You're Including the Countess Olenska'"

Page 27: at the bottom of the page

AUTUMN ROVERS: By CLINTON SCOLLARD

ROAMING, roaming, my love aroaming
Under the Autumn skies of blue!
In the dawning and in the gloaming
Fain am I ever to fare with you!

Oh, it's hand in hand, with the world before us,
All the past but an outworn tale;
Marvel about us and wonder o'er us
Down the dip of the gipsy trail!

Naught to hinder and naught to harry,
Just the journeying wind and sun
Leading us into the Land of Faery
When the round of the day is done!

Come, love, off with each bond and tether,
Bidding the high adventure hail,
Roaming, roaming, roaming together
Down the dip of the gipsy trail!

Drawing by John Wolcott Adams

Page 28:

Figure 11:

Page 29: Newland and May in the inn in Boston

"'What's the Use? You Gave Me My First Glimpse of a Real Life, and at the Same Moment You Asked Me to Go On with a Sham One'"

The Fourth and Concluding instalment November 1920:

Figure 12: May's feast in honour of Ellen who will leave to Europe.

Page 24: taking the upper part of the page

Figure 13:

Page 25: Newland and May, Newland is trying to hide his face from May when she tells him about Ellen's decision of returning to Europe

Figure 14:

Page 27: Newland Archer and his son Dallas Archer in front of Ellen's flat in Paris.

"'Why—Aren't You Well?' His Son Exclaimed. 'Oh, Perfectly. But I Should Like You, Please, to Go Up Without Me'"

Page 28:

We Begin a New Novel by Kathleen Norris

SHE calls it "The Beloved Woman," and once you have read the first few opening lines you will never rest until you have found out who Norma, the lovely heroine, really is. One day a clerk in a book-store, the next day the adopted daughter of one of the richest and most exclusive families in New York. One day helping get the dinner, in simple workaday surroundings, and the next day waited on by servants in livery and seated at a table laden with silver and choice foods.

It is a love-story, of course, but above all it is a mystery-story with the solution so buried that you never dig it up until the very end, tho you think you know just exactly who Norma is in each instalment. "The Beloved Woman" is built on an absolutely new theme for Mrs. Norris, but so successfully has she handled this complicated mystery-plot that it only goes to prove what a past master she is in the telling of a story.

"The Beloved Woman" begins in November; ends in the issue on sale January 15. If you don't like to read a novel in instalments, save your copies and read it all at once.

Page 29:

Drawings by
John Wolcott Adams

SHADOW MUSIC

By ARTHUR GUITERMAN

THE gabled roof hath taken the lichen of decay;
The storming years have shaken the house across the way.

The walls are worn that know not free mirth nor festal din;
The staring windows show not if any dwell therein.

Behind an ivied grating the battered spinet stands,
Through all the day awaiting the touch of wakening hands;

No melody rejoices the chords with echoing thrill,
And, hushed their chiming voices, the varied keys are still.

But when the twilight lingers on crests of swaying trees,
A troop of fairy fingers beguiles the rippling keys,

Tho some austere magician in clouds of curtaining lace
Enfolds the fair musician and hides her form and face;

And all the spinet's laughter, so mellow, rich, and clear,
The jealous wall and rafter forbid the world to hear.

Then eye, assume the duty that should to ear belong,
Light movement's rhythmic beauty interpreting in song:

For sure, that gentle motion bespoke a lullaby;
There swelled the roar of ocean, there breathed a lover's sigh.

The dying twilight lingers above the swaying trees
And still the pallid fingers caress the yielding keys,

Like elfin dancers thronging a yielding ivory floor.
Why throb the chords of longing for one who plays no mor

No more? Then whose the playing? What tender
presence stirs
That curtain, whitely swaying? May not that form be hers

Whose very life and being was music soft and pure?
Oh, eyes too dim for seeing! Shall death, alone, endure?

For need those hands be mortal that wake the strain I miss?
Can love unbar the portal that shuts her world from this?

Oh, thrill the dark uncertain with tones divinely low!
Now rend the cloudy curtain, my love of long ago,

And come! Celestial Player, to one who lives to pray!
His head and heart are grayer than ere you went away.

Example page of the advertisement appeared with the serialisation of *The Age of Innocence*:

DeMiracle

Every Woman's Depilatory

Removes Hair

Immediately—safely

ONLY a chemist should mix a depilatory, then it is sure to be safe. Unlike pastes and powders which must be mixed by the user, DeMiracle is a liquid just the right strength for instant use. It never deteriorates. DeMiracle is more economical because there is no waste. It is the quickest, most cleanly and simple to apply.

To devitalize hair you must use DeMiracle. Being a liquid it permits absorption. Therefore it is totally different. It attacks hair under the skin as well as on the skin which is the only common-sense way to remove it from face, neck, arms, underarms or limbs.

Only the original sanitary liquid DeMiracle has a money-back guarantee in each package.

Three sizes: 60c, $1.00, $2.00

At all toilet counters, or direct from us, in plain wrapper, on receipt of 65c, $1.04 or $2.08, which includes war tax.

DeMiracle

Dept. R-22 Park Ave. and 129th St. New York City

The Age of Innocence

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 102

with you. What sort of a life could we build on such foundations?"

Her face had taken on a look of such tragic courage that he felt like bowing himself down at her feet. "I've wanted to say this for a long time," she went on. "I've wanted to tell you that when two people really love each other, I understand that there may be situations which make it right that they should—should go against public opinion. And if you feel yourself in any way pledged—pledged to the person we've spoken of—and if there is any way—any way in which you can fulfil your pledge—even by her divorcing—oh, Newland, don't try to escape from it because of me."

His surprize at discovering that her fears had fastened upon an episode so remote and so completely of the past as his love affair with Mrs. Thorley Rushworth gave way to wonder at the generosity of her view. There was something superhuman in an attitude so recklessly unorthodox, and if other problems had not pressed on him he would have been lost in wonder at the prodigy of the Wellands' daughter urging him to marry his former mistress. But he was still dizzy with the glimpse of the precipice they had skirted and full of a new awe at the mystery of young girlhood.

For a moment he could not speak; then he said, "There is no pledge—no obligation whatever—of the kind you think. Such cases don't always—present themselves quite as simply as—But that's no matter—I love your generosity, because I feel as you do about those things—I feel that each case must be judged individually, on its own merits—irrespective of stupid conventionalities—I mean, each woman's right to her liberty—." He pulled himself up, startled by the turn his thoughts had taken, and went on, looking at her with a smile, "Since you understand so many things, dearest, can't you go a little farther, and understand the uselessness of our submitting to another form of the same foolish conventionalities? If there's no one and nothing between us isn't that an argument for marrying quickly rather than for more delay?"

She flushed with joy and lifted her face to his; as he bent to it he saw that her eyes were full of happy tears. But in another moment she seemed to have descended from her womanly eminence to helpless and timorous girlhood; and he understood that

Slim, Youthful Lines

FLATTERINGLY plain and plainly flattering are these man-like, man-tailored Sport Suits of *Kenweave* and *Kencheviot*. Youth and grace are

Appendix B:

The Age of Innocence by Sir Joshua Reynolds

"The Modern Inquisition," a poster by Alfred Pearse produced by The Women's Social and Political Union during the 1910 General Election.


The WESSEX
of Thomas Hardy's
Novels & Poems
Scale of Miles
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
LOWER WESSEX
OUTER WESSEX
MID WESSEX
UPPER WESSEX
N. WESSEX
S. WESSEX
BRISTOL
BATH
SOUTHAMPTON
Plymouth
ISLE of SLINGERS


Thomas Hardy's WESSEX
Fictitious names as Exonbury
Real names as Portsmouth
Cliff without name
Targan Bay
Dundagel
Pentargan Bay
Vallency Vale
St. Launce's
OFF WESSEX
Plymouth
Trufal
Penzephyr
Lands End
Miles
Bristol Channel
Stancey Castle
Bristol
Bath
Mendip Hills
Exon Moor
Dunkery Beacon
Quantock Hills
Downstaple
OUTER WESSEX
Tountall
Glaston
Sedgemoor
Toneborough
LOWER WESSEX
Tintworthy
Exonbury
Idmouth
Tor-upon-Sea
Christminster
Lumsdon
NORTH WESSEX
Alfredstone
Marygreen
MID WESSEX
Marlbury Downs
Castle Royal
Aldbrickham
Kennetbridge
Botton Castle
Inkpen Beacon
Stoke Barehills
Quartershot
Weydon Priors
Icenway House
The Great Plain
Stonehenge
Stour Head
Melchester
UPPER WESSEX
Wintoncester
Deansleigh
Shaston
Wingreen
The Chase
Sherton Abbas
Stourcastle
Chaseborough
Well
Vale of Blackmore
Shottsford Forum
The Great Forest
Southampton
Kings Hintock
High Stoy
Bulbarrow
Emminster
Flintcomb Ash
Warborne
Pilsdon
Chalk Newton
SOUTH WESSEX
River Axe
Casterbridge
Egdon Heath
Havenpool
Port Bredy
Blackon
Overcombe
Sandbourne
Solentsea
Portsmouth
The Island
Deadmans Bay
Budmouth
Knollsea
Isle of Slingers
Lightship
The Beal
The Race
The Channel
Miles

The Return of the Native in the Anniversary Edition of the Wessex Novels, (1920)

Frontispiece.