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A Study of the "International Situation" and Its Critical Function in the Work of Henry James, with Particular Attention to Its Use and Culmination in the Ambassadors

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A STUDY OF THE "INTERNATIONAL SITUATION" AND ITS CRITICAL FUNCTION IN THE WORK OF HENRY JAMES, WITH PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO ITS USE AND CULMINATION IN THE AMBASSADORS

A Dissertation
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of English

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Eva May Baskoff
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VITA

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Henry James (1843-1916) is a key figure in our literature. He built up an art which anticipated most of the literary problems of the Twentieth Century. Ever since about 1880 great interest has centered in James and his works. A revival of interest in him has again sprung up during the last fifteen years and especially during the last three or four.

In James's lifetime Emerson, Thoreau, and Whitman were the writers of American manifestos, programs of thought and action. Some of the writers who took over the problems left by these men were Henry James, William Dean Howells and Stephen Crane. New schools of fiction arose in the later Nineteenth Century -- local color, realistic, short stories, literature of the provincial areas of the United States. Among these writers were Bret Harte, George Washington Cable, Sarah Orne Jewett, Hamlin Garland, Mark Twain and Mary Wilkins Freeman.

It was an age in which the whole historic development and opportunity of America was demanding criticism and analysis by writers and among these writers, one of the men especially equipped in his knowledge of American traditions and allegiances
was Henry James.

Henry James, Sr., the father of the novelist, was one of the sons of William James, founder of the family fortunes. William had come to America in the late eighteenth century and set himself up as a merchant for a while in New York City and then moved to Albany establishing a mercantile business there. These cities were ports of entry to the then Western frontier. William left a fortune of between three and four million dollars to be divided among his children to enable them to do what they wanted to do provided they spent a certain amount of time in business. They all did so with the exception of Henry James, Sr., who was independent, religious and a metaphysical speculator. He rebelled against the condition stipulated and was finally allowed part of his money without having to serve in business.

Henry James, Sr., married a Scots-Irish woman whose station in life was similar to his own. They settled in New York City and built a family home near Washington Square. They had five children: William, Henry, Robertson, Wilkinson and Alice. Robertson and Wilkinson showed no talent for following in the father's ways and interests, but the other three showed themselves as artistic and speculative.

Henry James, Sr., was a student, writer, thinker, and religious-minded man, always exploring mystical and metaphysical traditions in thought including the idealistic schools of
Shaftesbury and Berkeley. He finally rested under the wings of Swedenborg, a believer in the sanctity of personal life and freedom of the individual soul through some kind of contact with the Divine. He wrote on all aspects of personal and mystical religion, suffered "vastations" or devastating crises of mind and spirit, but emerged from them by seeing that it was the duty of man's personal salvation to become that of all society, that religion should be social. He made it the subject of his last book, Society, the Redeemed Form of Man.

The senior James was also a man of great charm. He was kind to his family and had a great adaptability for friends. Preachers, ministers, writers, journalists were frequent visitors to the Jameses' home. Books, decorations and reports were brought from Europe. All of this helped to make the children internationally-minded from the beginning. The home radiated an atmosphere of enthusiasm and alertness for the things going on in the world.

The elder James, believing the family should travel, saved enough money so that each of his children could live comfortably without having to make money-earning a profession. He was always going to Europe and attending lectures. When he was ten years of age, Henry James, Jr., was taken with his brothers and sister to schools in France, Switzerland and Germany. This was the beginning of Henry's exploration of
European backgrounds. After three years in Europe the Jameses came back to America. They spent summers at Newport where Henry James, Jr., met famous people such as Julia Ward Howe, Samuel Howe, painters John LaFarge and William Morris Hunt. The family moved to Boston and Cambridge.

William James, having ambitions as a painter, gave up the idea when he saw he lacked sufficient talent and decided to become a student of medicine. He obtained his M.D. at Harvard but never practiced. Instead he developed into a world-famous psychologist and philosopher, founding the school of pragmatism.

Henry Jr., in 1860, at the age of seventeen, entered the Harvard Law School where he stayed only about a year and a half. He had no inclination for the law, was restless to become a writer and so began. First he wrote criticisms and reviews for the established journals and newspapers in New York and Boston including the North American Review, The Atlantic Monthly, and The Galaxy. He also contributed articles and reviews to The Nation, the newest thing in American journalism in that period.

At the time of the Civil War in 1861 the Jameses were living in Cambridge, the center of the intense northern or abolitionist movement, surrounded by agitators, journalists and pamphleteers. Robertson and Wilkinson fought in the war, one of them becoming badly injured. William was exempted and so was Henry because of an accidental injury. Evidently this fact
troubled Henry because when he was seventy years of age he wrote two stories which hauntingly pictured the Civil War: A Small Boy and Others and Notes of a Son and Brother.

After the war had ended in 1865 American thought and literature were confronted by the reality of the new age. Emerson and Whitman survived to witness in their old age the struggle of the country emerging from one era into another. Thoreau and Hawthorne had died. Melville had abandoned literature after fifteen years of composition to take a routine job in the New York Customs House and so sunk into complete obscurity. Inspiration now leaned toward the nationalistic and imperialistic. It was the age of railroad building, government land grants, mine claims, lake and river traffic, etc. Cooper's hero of the frontier, Leatherstocking, now became more lusty and arrogant, adventurer, exploiter of mines and rivers, the baron of big business, the symbol of new life of adventure and recklessness that found its literary voice in Mark Twain, Bret Harte, John Muir, Ambrose Bierce, Joaquin Miller and Jack London.

There was another problem which weighed on those who looked backward toward the East, Europe and the historic past out of which American civilization had been born. From 1607 till after the Revolution, the bonds of blood and faith that tied the New World to the Old had been strong. Not even the Revolution of 1776 had broken them, especially as indicated in the works of
Irving, Poe, Longfellow and Hawthorne. Apparently they had felt that these links were too strong to be cut. Cooper in his later social and political novels had tried to test the strength of these values as they related to American and European life. Painters like Whistler and Sargent, romantic novelists like F. Marion Crawford, a whole generation of expatriates as travelers and tourists, the wealthy, went to Europe to write and paint. It was the age of American travel.

Other men of a more complex intelligence, men who inherited the deepest strains of American character and loyalty, saw that now in the hour of a revived and victorious nation, America was faced by problems and debt as a child of European civilization. Poe, Hawthorne and Melville reminded people that this duty existed.

Below are a number of questions which were pondered by men of the nineteenth century:

Is it wise, possible, for any nation to reject examples of the past?

Can new and independent cultures exist?

What is the nature of the debt America owes Europe?

Does Europe in turn owe a debt or an example to America?

Is culture, history, civilization a unity, a continuity, or is it a series of disconnected episodes?
Henry Adams in *Mont Saint Michel and Chartres* and his *Autobiography* discussed the question of the historical intelligence. Charles Eliot Norton, art professor and aesthete of Harvard University, filled the same role in America that Ruskin had filled in England. George Santayana's life was divided between America and Europe. T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound later became exiles from America in order to become exponents of art of international scope.

It was Henry James, Jr., however, who was especially destined to act as a mediator and to express the conflict of civilizations in its fullest terms. He was equipped by parentage, good fortune and temperament to fill this role. He was a cosmopolite from infancy because his influences were international, transatlantic. His *Passionate Pilgrim* gives us the key to his whole career. He returned to the culture of the old world — London, Paris, Florence, Venice, Rome. These were the places where James found material for his stories on art and beauty. He was the one person who was very keenly sensitive to this western world. Cooper, Irving, Franklin, and Hawthorne had all travelled to Europe as representatives of American state or society. Some went as philosophical searchers like Emerson, or moral critics of the old way of life like Cooper, but James went back to Europe like a grateful child.

Italy was for him the shrine of his highest devotion,
land of beauty and promise for his people. England was the home of his deepest sympathies and loyalties, so much so that in 1876 he made it his permanent home. He was attracted to Paris where the arts were most at home, exciting movements going forward in literature, where all the cultural crossroads of Europe converged. By 1870, James had discovered his gift for criticism and imaginative discourse and Paris was the magnet which drew every novelist. It was the time of Parnassianism and symbolism in poetry, impressionism in painting, aestheticism in criticism, experiments in the form and content of fiction, time of Flaubert, brothers de Goncourt, Daudet, Zola, Maupassant. Behind these contemporaries lay the examples of Balzac, Stendhal and George Sand.

James believed that the art of fiction in America had run to sentimentality, formal feebleness and conventionality, lacked substance and richness of style, discipline, order and shapelessness. For fifteen years he had been observing as a critic of this condition of the novel. His earliest artistic belief was that the quality of a work of art will always depend on the quality of the mind of its producer and therefore should live up to the art, mind, spirit and intelligence of the person producing the art. James's aims were to serve:

1. not only as a critic, mediator, between civilizations of America and Europe, but also
2. as an ambassador of the new aesthetic principles in Paris.

This brings us to the main topic of discussion in this paper, the full treatment of James's first subject, the international situation. It will be the purpose of this thesis to show that this theme was used by Henry James throughout his novels, short stories and essays, that it reached its fullest and final critical treatment in his novel *The Ambassadors* in 1903. He portrayed Americans as innocent in the favorable as well as the unfavorable sense; allowed Europeans the advantages of cultural seniority and civilized intelligence, but denied them a higher kind of conscience. In his novels the innocent people, who are usually Americans, are confronted with the possibilities for good or evil in a life of superior cultivation and enjoyment, while the worldly people, who are usually Europeans or Europeanized Americans, are acted upon, changed sometimes even destroyed by the singular power of conscience. This motif will be traced in each of James's works which relates to this topic; the manner in which James adds to this idea in his later stories, the way in which characters and settings are changed but the essential problem still remains the same. All of this will be analyzed in detail, up to the culminating presentation in *The Ambassadors*. It will also be shown that because of his education, training and background, James was fitted
to cover this theme, and to become its classic interpreter in the literature of his period.
CHAPTER II

THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

From the very first James laid hold of the idea which soon came to be the principal theme of his writings, namely the essential conflict between the sophisticated and decadent characters who represent the ancient culture of Europe and the strong but naive characters who come from America. It was the rediscovery of Europe by Americans in which he was interested. James used the international cultures both as a social and historical background against which his characters were set and with which they struggled. In his early works it was stated and experimented with; tried for vitality and breadth; tested for its sincerity and validity. In his more mature works it was developed with all the color and detail for which James was famous and in his later works, particularly *The Ambassadors*, it was given its final and fullest development.

James's influences were international and transatlantic because he spent his time in studies and travels abroad as well as in America. His cultural and artistic background revealed to him the contrasts between the American and European atmosphere, between the civilization of the New World and the Old. He became interested in the American mind as working upon and worked
upon by the European, whether English, French or Italian. He transplanted Americans to Europe and Europeans to America. He had discovered and developed a new genre in American fiction, namely the study of the reaction of Americans fresh from the comparative crudity of the New World to the maturer social forms, decadent ideas and artistic riches of the Old World. In this type he was supreme.

Some of James's Americans go to Europe as persons who discover the charms of art and civilization and become enriched by them as in The Passionate Pilgrim. Other Americans who go to Europe are unprepared for the subtle workings of ancient wisdom on their souls; they go out of vanity and arrogance, seeking nothing but pleasure and escape from the rough justice of American work. Such people tend to meet defeat as in Roderick Hudson, Daisy Miller and The American. These Americans depict a candid courage in spite of the fact that Europe has defeated or repudiated them. James's two worlds act in counterplay and criticism. He used his materials and characters to stage a drama of forces, a conflict of energies, that gradually became a record of two civilizations acting in mutual attraction and resistance to one another. Some Americans go to Europe armed with honesty and decency exemplifying the raw young sincerity of their native country which no sophistication can discourage, e.g. Daisy Miller and Christopher Newman.
Behind the international theme James was going into secret psychology and the moral tendencies of human character. The problem of the age was the conflict between desire and destiny, between appearance and reality, between good and evil as they are conditioned and subtilized by the antagonisms of modern society.

Yvor Winters says the motivating ideas of James's novels were:

that there is a moral sense, a sense of decency, inherent in the human character at its best; that this sense of decency, being only a sense, exists precariously, and may become confused and even hysterical in a crisis; that it may be enriched and cultivated through association with certain environments; that such association may, also, be carried so far as to extinguish the moral sense...that the moral sense as James conceives it is essentially American or at least appears to James most clearly in American character; that it can be cultivated by association with European civilization and manners; that it may be weakened or in some other manner betrayed by an excess of such association.¹

For example, James's Americans come from a semi-barbarous country to seek Europe's culture. What they find depends on themselves. They may find it evil depending on their vanity, greed, unscrupulousness, pride, arrogance of power. If Europe has great treasures, so too does America have its gift of youth, sincerity, honest energies, innocence and generous instincts. The two worlds cannot be divorced from each other. They are a

part of a single whole, need each other, and their destinies are interdependent. Americans who are strong like Daisy Miller, Isabel Archer and Christopher Newman will meet the test. So emerges the inner theme, that of the "world's betrayal of innocence." Instincts of honor, good faith go out into the forest of human lust, jealousy, greed for power, hunger for wealth, predatory passion. That world kills its antagonists. In the man or woman of pure spirit, the world recognizes and fears such a person. The real spiritual victories are possible only to the "children of light," to those who refuse to be corrupted even if they are defeated.

This is apparent in the character Christopher Newman as the plain, average self-made man and in the character of Isabel Archer as the devoted, but deluded idealist; likewise the character of Daisy Miller as the spirited person and Millie Theale as the pathetic character. These spiritual victories are also possible to James's kind of a saint, the particular kind of dedicated character like the artist devoting himself to truth and who more than any other is likely to be feared or repudiated by the world.

Constance Rourke in The American tells us that Henry James had been pictured as a "troubled evasionist without a country; and the charge has been turned to a militant charge
against American civilization." She puts forth the theory that this statement doesn't explain the fact that James spent such a great amount of time for his use of the international situation in his writings; that the choice of a subject will be instinctive resting upon many elements of heritage and personal experience; that the consciousness of the European relationship was binding in America and that given favorable observation someone was bound to use this theme.

According to Miss Bourke:

James was bent upon a purpose that had absorbed many fabulists, that of drawing the large, the generic American character. Deliberately, it seems he abandoned the portrayal of local figures, though for this he had a singular genius; in regions familiar to him he caught the local speech, the manner, the inevitable effect of background. Barring the characters in The Europeans and The Bostonians and a scattering few elsewhere, his Americans are nomadic and rootless; even when they are seen on American soil they belong to no special locality; they are the composite type; the broad lineaments are unmistakable. He wrote of an American 'confidence that broke down...a freedom that pulled up nowhere...an idyllic ease that was somehow too ordered for a primitive social consciousness and too innocent for a developed.'...James was candid as the early fabulists had been candid. He wrote of Americans who treated Europe 'collectively, as a vast painted and gilded holiday toy, serving its purpose on the spot, but to be relinquished, sacrificed, broken and cast away, at the dawn of any other convenience.'

3Ibid., pp. 140-141.
James shows some of these questing Americans as full of an eager pathos, others as indifferent and lost, moving about the world for lack of another occupation. More Americans were included by Henry James than any other writer before his time with the exception of Hawthorne in *The Scarlet Letter*. James pictured American women at full length. Except for Christopher Newman and Roderick Hudson, most of James's significant characters are women: it is they who meet disastrous happenings abroad, they who embody diverse and contradictory American elements. He presents Isabel Archer, Millie Theale, Mary Garland, Daisy Miller and Euphemia de Mauves. Some of his lesser feminine figures reveal hardy American habits, e.g. Henrietta Stackpole and Mrs. Westgate; it is they who most often indulge in the monologue:

Mrs. Westgate: 'I don't apologize, Lord Lambert; some Americans are always apologizing; you must have noticed that. We've the reputation of always boasting and "blowing" and waving the American flag; but I must say that what strikes me is that we're perpetually making excuses and trying to smooth things over. The American flag has quite gone out of fashion; it's very carefully folded up, like a table-cloth the worse for wear. Why should we apologize? The English never apologize--do they? No, I must say I never apologize. You must take us as we come--with all our imperfections on our heads. Of course we haven't your country life and your old ruins and your great estates and your leisure--class and all that.'...Mrs. Westgate's discourse was delivered with a cold merciless monotony, a paucity of intonation, an impartial flatness that suggested a flowery mead scrupulously "done over" by a steam roller that had reduced its texture to that of a drawing-room
carpet.  

Italy was the country which fed James's imagination in the early years for to him it was a land of architecture, of art galleries, a treasury filled with achievements of the past and with a people whose ragged clothes were transmuted into costumes by the manners and attitudes of their wearers. He was not interested in the Italian as a person for he closed his eyes to the many evidences of economic distress in the country. Italy brings to mind the following works of James: "The Last of the Valerii," "The Madonna of the Future," many of the chapters in Transatlantic Sketches, Roderick Hudson, Daisy Miller, The Portrait of a Lady, and The Aspern Papers. These selections lead us to think that James was an American author in Italy, more in love with Italy than with Italians. In the depiction of Italian characters, Francis Marion Crawford was superior to James. Rather, James was interested in Americans residing in Italy becoming some part of his intellectual and emotional background.

James's association in his youth with the Théâtre Français, the Louvre and especially the many practicing novelists

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in Paris--Balzac, Turgenieff, Zola--led him from Italy to France. From this life came his essay on French authors and some of the portraits of Places, as well as "Madame de Mauves," The American, "The Reverberator," The Tragic Muse and The Ambassadors. Again James was the American, extolling solid American values as in "Madame de Mauves" and The American or, from a background of life in England as well as in America, he was interested in recounting the influence of Parisian life on English characters in The Tragic Muse and on American characters in The Ambassadors. But there is a striking difference between James's estimation of French and of Italian values. He seemed willing that Italy should not modify the nature of his English and American characters.

James loved England so much that it became a second home to him. He lived there for many years acquiring a flat in London and later living in Sussex and toward the end of his life becoming a British citizen.

James served not only as a critic, but also as a mediator between the civilizations of America and Europe. From his own life and travels, he dealt with the contrast between Europe and America, "the international situation" as he called it. He wrote of Americans in Europe, of English in England and America and on the Continent, of Continental characters on the Continent and in England and America--i.e. the difference of viewpoint,
the difference in social organization, the difference in culture, complicated European life as compared with the far simpler status of America. This he could very well accomplish because he moved among the leisure class of Europe. In this way he could bring the best of Europe into contact with the best of America, for he deals only with the wealthy when he deals with the American in these international novels. James was in love with the accumulated arts and conventions of the Old World. Although he turned from the more direct, rough individualistic American manners, he was not blind to the basic strength of American life.

Lyon Richardson states in *Henry James*.

The similarities between the minds of James Fenimore Cooper and James are striking when one compares certain works of James's with Cooper's *Homeward Bound* and *Homeward As Found*. Of the two, Cooper was much more intensely American, but both yearned for an American life sublimated by the virtues and strained of the vices of the Old World. James, as one of the international novelists, contrasted uniquely national qualities; but he employed the contrasts fundamentally in order to portray the diverse human elements in mankind. He was critical of American manners and customs, but he was no less critical of European traits and traditions. In the latter part of his life, when visits to the United States emphasized his mind the greatness and the variety of America and its developing culture, he sometimes

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wished that he had grown up with the country. He took delight in thoughts of an English-American world, though not politically united; and he was distressed at the evidences of the increasing migration to the United States of peoples who could not speak English.

James has given us portrait after portrait in his novels and short stories, creating an entire gallery of characters to which Americans may turn for knowledge, social experience and enlargement. Through the growth of Mr. James's works can be seen the change in level from the wilderness and the farm to that of people of leisure, urbanites. He was grounded in the Yankee fable and he was very sensitive to foreign criticism. He wrote of Lady Barbarina "It was not in the least of American barbarism that she was afraid; her dread was all of American civilization." In "Pandora," the German envoy was on his way "to explore a society abounding in comic aspects"--an American society comic to the European.

Again and again James contrasted the world by Europeans against the innocent Americans as illustrated in "Four Meetings", "An International Episode," Daisy Miller, etc. Through all these influences James's concept of the American as a fresh and invigorating force, essentially a good force contrasted with European decadence and evil grew in strength and became for him

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7Henry James, Daisy Miller, Pandora, The Patagonia and Other Tales (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909) p. 98
a preoccupying subject. In developing this theme he drew from his knowledge of both Europe and America and from his associations on both continents a rich fund of material to create a real and living background. The full development of this theme of conflict took many years and many writings. James used it in numerous short stories and character sketches, but it is in the long series of novels covering almost half a century that he presents the problem in the delicate shades and colors, with the intimate light and diversity and richness of development that was to be expected from his extraordinary qualifications.
CHAPTER III

APPLICATION OF THEME IN WORKS

PRECEDING THE AMBASSADORS

James played upon the international theme in many pieces and with great variation. His characters, though limited by the theme, follow no set mold and his plots show a fertile imagination, yet his treatment of the central theme remains consistent. James's writings containing this theme will be listed in chronological order as given in LeRoy Phillips's A Bibliography of the Writings of Henry James.

The Passionate Pilgrim (1871) is the first of James writings which presents the international motif. Clement Searle goes from America to England to reclaim an estate and fortune only to find himself helpless against the staid solidity of the present owner. He falls in love with the usurper's sister, but is driven from the door and dies just after the usurper's death has delivered the estate to him.

The story is told by a friend of Searle's, an observer, on his first visit to England, interested in recognizing it from the novels he has read, meeting Searle, listening good-naturedly to his ravings about the family estate, humoring him to the extent of going down with him to look it over, comforting him as he
becomes ill from disappointment and dies, and through it all pitying him.

The narrator may well be James himself; he is young; he is alert to impressions; he is genially interested in a situation such as the plight of Searle brings up; he is James wondering what might happen in such a contingency. Searle is a case for a psychologist. He is much older; he is confirmed in his idea that he has been defrauded of his birthright, sick over it almost to madness, cranky, querulous, not enjoying England because he can think only of what he has missed.

The story is more of a travelogue than a narrative. James literally revelled in his stay in England, e.g.:

The latent preparedness of the American mind even for the most delectable features of English life is a fact which I never fairly probed to its depths. The roots of it are so deeply buried in the virgin soil of our primary culture, that, without some great upheaval of experience, it would be hard to say exactly when and where and how it begins. It makes an American's enjoyment of England an emotion more fatal and sacred than his enjoyment, say, of Italy or Spain. I had seen the coffee-room of the Red-Lion years ago, at home,—at Saragossa, Illinois,—in books, in visions, in dreams, in Dickens, in Smollett, and Boswell...But crowded seasons had passed away from the Red-Lion forever. It was crowded only with memories and ghosts and atmosphere.8

The comments of the narrator, although full of enthusiasm for England as a country, are an adverse criticism of English

life, of Richard Searle unfeeling until his birthright is threatened, then desperate and deceitful; of his sister, "fenced and protected by convention and precedent and usage; so passive and mild and docile."

The basic elements of the international situation are presented for the first time: the American, steeped in Continental history and lore, versus the more sophisticated and deceitful European.

In "The Last of the Valerii" (1874) the young wife Martha and the narrator happen to be Americans, but the interest wholly centers in the development of the latent pagan strain in the Count Valerio. He falls in love with a disinterred Juno from whom his wife does not succeed in regaining his affection until the goddess is again returned to the earth.

James made the wife an American girl thrilled to be marrying into an ancient Italian family, but sincere, genuinely in love with the Count, though she is determined, too, to dig up the old statues which rumor has it are buried under the soil of the ancestral domain. Aided by her godfather who tells the story, James made of Martha a most attractive and true portrait. The Count, last of his line, he carefully sketched also in an endeavor to explain the survival of pagan instincts in him.

At first the Count opposes the whim of his wife to excavate for hidden treasures.
'Let them lie, the poor disinherited gods, the Minerva, the Apollo, the Ceres, you are so sure of finding...and don't break their rest. What do you want of them? We can't worship them. Would you put them on pedestals to stare and mock at them? If you can't believe in them, don't disturb them. Peace be with them!...Yes, by Bacchus, I am superstitious!...Too much so perhaps! But I'm an old Italian, and you must take me as you find me. There have been things seen and done here which leave strange influences behind!...Don't dig up any more, or I won't answer for my wits!'

But the girl, true to American girls, has her way, and a marble Juno is discovered. Immediately the Count becomes excited, pours out a libation, secretly carries away the hand which has been broken from the statue, changes his former devoted attitude toward his wife to one of inattention, almost of indifference, becomes sombre, and thoughtful but confesses he is "prodigiously happy," and reverting to the past, becomes a pagan in every sense of the word. The wife at first is dazed and then realizes gradually that the Count's love for her has been transferred to the goddess. She endures passively until she finds a roughly extemporized altar before the statue and the evidence of a sacrifice. Then her grief turns to active indignation, and she orders the statue buried again. Its baleful spell is broken, and the Count, relieved, returns to his wife--yet the hand of the Juno he keeps in a cabinet of curios.

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9Henry James, A Passionate Pilgrim and Other Tales (Boston: James R. Osgood & Co., 1875), pp. 141, 142.
Miss Kelly states that James had read Mérimée's *La Vénus d'Ille*, and had translated it. Mérimée's story seemed even more real, more possible in Italy, than it had when James first read it. One felt the pagan past there, almost an active influence. Every bronze, every marble statue of antiquity, seemed almost alive to James, seemed a person from the past who disturbed in its sleep underneath the earth of centuries might, now that it had been disinterred, exert some baleful influence upon persons of today. Italian art, so lovely, so beautiful threatened to disturb James's own peace of mind. What effect might it not have upon a man who was not a rational American, but a "sturdy young Latin," a superstitious pagan rather than a good Catholic, a man born in Italy with the blood of pagan centuries in his veins? The germ took root and developed. How could it fail to do this with the atmosphere of Italy fostering it? In James's Count, we can see the influence of Hawthorne's Donatello.

James's story has a germ of truth and warning in it. Like "The Madonna of the Future" it is an allegory, more true than untrue. He sketched his characters carefully. The young girl is realistic, first in her enthusiasms, then in her qualms and fears, while the Count himself is not wholly improbable.

Here again we have the background of Europe, Italy with
her art treasures and pre-Christian aura. There is a battle of wills between Martha who is a New World figure and the Count who represented generations of luxurious living, his mind and imagination clinging to past glories and unrealities. American reality is the victor in this tale.

When in the summer of 1873, James settled in Hamburg temporarily quite away from the spell of Italy and of art, he fell under the spell of the people. It was here that he wrote "Madame de Mauves" in 1874. Hamburg to James was interesting, endurable because of the "comings and goings of a multifarious European crowd" allowing James to compare the "national idiosyncracies" of Germans, French, English, and Americans, and to philosophize about them.

This story presents us again with the case of an American girl married, though this time less congenially, to a foreigner. Euphemia Cleve, as a young girl, had the same romantic respect for tradition that we discover in a later heroine, Maggie Verver. Like Maggie, Euphemia dreamed of marrying a man of hierarchical "rank"—not for the pleasure of hearing herself called Madame la Vicomtesse, for which it seemed to her she should never greatly care, but because she had a romantic belief that the enjoyment of inherited and transmitted consideration, consideration attached to the fact of birth, would be the direct guarantee of an ideal delicacy of feeling.10

Her disillusionment is severe. Richard de Mauves, the brother of a friend of her French convent girlhood, debt-ridden but titled, marries her. At the time the story opens, perhaps a half a dozen years later, becoming disillusioned, Euphemia trying to resign herself to her lot attempts simply to live with her sorrow.

The narrator, a young American named Longmore, sees her, pities her. The profligate French husband, annoyed at the stiffness of his wife, her evident scorn of immoral life, hopes that she will become involved with Longmore to the end that her own actions will justify his. But Monsieur de Mauves fails to take into account the fact that Euphemia and Longmore are Americans, in whom conscience and reason and dignity are stronger than passion. In despair, her husband blows out his brains because he has become hopelessly, helplessly romantically in love with his cold wife who is so unreasonable about trifles.

Longmore hears of this but "he has become conscious of a singular feeling, for which awe would be hardly too strong a name."

The contrast between the two civilizations is well brought out in this nouvelle. Euphemia had been too sheltered, living mostly in a dream world, so that she became an easy victim of de Mauve's selfish scheming. She faced her reality with a stern New England conscience, really with an austerity
that was frightening. It is a question whether the American came off the victor in this story, for Euphemia would never again be the same.

Eugene Pickering (1874) was an American boy who had been unusually carefully brought up, unusually protected. In Paris this naive young man became involved with a Madame Blumenthal whose antecedents were as dubious as Eugene's were certain. She amused herself for a time with him and then dropped him for two reasons: one, his innocent sincerity began to pall upon her and secondly, she had renewed earlier ties with an older more experienced man. Eugene, however, was grateful for the interlude: "It's worth it almost...to have been wound up for an hour to that celestial pitch."

James must have seen many young men like Eugene who had come to Europe--awkward, nervous, having their first glimpse of life and not wholly understanding the wondrous things they saw. These innocents were easy prey for the experienced and sophisticated European women.

"The Madonna of the Future" (1873) is one of James's most beautiful shorter stories. It is the tale of an American painter who dreams of a perfect model for twenty years while he and she grow old, and leaves at his death nothing more to show for his years than a cracked blank canvas; and the Florentine background is worked on diligently and affectionately.
James uses the complicated device of a narrator in the retelling of a story he has heard from someone else. The narrator was James himself, the James of the travel reports and art noes. He began: "It relates to my youth and to Italy: two fine things!" As soon as he had arrived in Florence, even though it was late at night he had set out for a stroll around the city. As he gazed at Michael Angelo's David and Cellini's Perseus, he had been joined by Theobald, a figure invented not simply to work out the plot, but to express one side of a question which the art of Italy and the culture of the continent brought up in the mind of a young American traveller. Theobald, like the narrator, like James, had to confess to an American origin. Theobald lamented it, expressing the difficulties which beset an American who wished to succeed:

'We're the disinherited of art! We're condemned to be superficial! We're excluded from the magic circle! The soil of American perception is a poor little barren artificial deposit! Yes, we're wedded to imperfection. An American, to excel, has just ten times as much to learn as a European! We lack the deeper sense! We have neithertaste nor tact nor force!'

This was, indeed, one side of the situation, but there was another side. James gave it in the answer which his narrator had ready for the querulous artist.

\[\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 442\]
'But do you know my own thought? Nothing is so idle as to talk about our want of a nursing air, of a kindly soil, of opportunity, of inspiration, of the things that help. The only thing that helps is to do something fine. There's no law in our glorious Constitution against that. Invent, create, achieve. No matter if you've to study fifty times as much as one of these. What else are you an artist for? Be you our Moses... and lead us out of the house of bondage!'

That was the other side. The two characters represent the two sides which James felt in himself, and the story is devoted to showing the futility of Theobold's side which talked and lamented but did not act. "The Madonna of the Future" reminds us of The Passionate Pilgrim in giving thus the reactions of Americans to an older civilization.

"The Madonna of the Future" was now James's answer to himself. What though an American had ten times or fifty times as much to learn, need that deter him if he had the will? No! And it was James's will, his determination to succeed, which made this story the best thing he had yet done. The story has form; it is an allegory of life.

Miss Kelly states that this tale of James was influenced by Balzac's Le Chef d'Oeuvre Inconnu and also Musset's Lorenzaccio. Balzac's story was laid in Paris and is the story of the artist who believed he knew the secret of how to paint living and breathing people but was disillusioned after ten years of work on his masterpiece by the careless remark of a young man that there was

[12]Ibid., 442.
"rien sur sa toile." This was reversed by James.

James's story was laid in Florence. Musset's Lorenzaccio was translated by James in his youth and may have suggested Florence as a setting. At least one minor person and one brief scene in it suggested the name of the artist Theobald, and was responsible in two short speeches for the character which the artist in James's story was to have.

Tebaldeo speaks: "Mes ouvrages ont peu de mérite; je sais mieux aimer les arts que je ne sais les exercer. Ma jeunesse tout entière s'est passée dans les églises. Il me semble que je ne puis admirer ailleurs Raphael et notre divin Buonaretti. Je demeure alors durant des journées devant leurs ouvrages, dans un extase sans égale.'13

And again:

'Je passe les journées à l'atelier. Le dimanche je vais à l'Annonciade ou à Sainte-Marie; les moines trouvent que j'ai de la voix, ils me mettent une robe blanche et une calotte rouge, et je fais ma partie dans les choeurs, quelquefois un petit solo; ce sont les seules occasions où je vais en public. Le soir, je vais chez ma maîtresse, et quand la nuit est belle, je la passe sur son balcon. Personne ne me connaît, et je ne connais personne.'14

The entire life of James's Theobald is spent in much the same manner, his time divided among the churches, the studio, and the home of his mistress.

This story surpasses both the tale of the painter which is hinted at in Musset's drama, and Balzac's story which it closely parallels in some parts of its plot development. It

14Ibid., p. 150
emerged from James's hands a masterpiece on its own account. He threw himself into the writing of it, put his own ideas and feelings about art and Italy and an American in Italy into it, and gave it a fire and passion which is not in Balzac's well developed little story. James's story is passionately felt.

Theobald, like Roderick Hudson, does not have the stamina to resist the charm of Italy. Theobald lives in the past and in his fancy. He fails to meet the test and hence dies ignominiously.

Transatlantic Sketches (1875) contain delightful descriptive passes of the Continent. The very first chapter gives us a description of Chester, England, which is the same town that opens up The Ambassadors.

It is full of that delightful element of the crooked, the accidental, the unforseen, which, to American eyes, accustomed to our eternal straight lines and right angles, is the striking feature of European street scenery. An American strolling in the Chester streets finds a perfect feast of crookedness,—of those random corners, projections, and recesses, odd domestic interspaces charmingly saved or lost, those innumerable architectural surprises and caprices and fantasies which offer such a delicious holiday to a vision nourished upon brown-stone fronts.15

Cathedrals, country-sides, multi-colored church windows, rural picturesque Devonshire, cottages, Exeter, cliffs, sea, moated castles, ruins of Abbey of Glastonbury—all of these are

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covered on his trip to England.

Switzerland does not appeal very much to James because he is not the adventurous hardy soul who likes mountain climbing and skiing although he does concede the beauty of the lakes and mountains. But, as he says, who can stand to look at them for more than a short period.

Turin, Brescia, Verona, Mantua, Padua and Venice appeal to James.

Meeting on the Piazza, on the evening of my arrival, a young American painter, who told me that he had been spending the summer at Venice, I could have assailed him for very envy. He was painting, forsooth, the interior of St. Marks! To be a young American painter, unperplexed by the mocking elusive soul of things, and satisfied with their wholesome, light-bathed surface and shape; keen of eye; fond of color; of sea and sky, and anything that may chance between them; of old lace, and old brocade, and old furniture (even when made to order); of time-mellowed harmonies on nameless canvases, and happy contours in cheap old engravings; to spend one's mornings in still, productive analysis of the clustered shadows of the Basilica, one's afternoons anywhere, in church or camp, on canal or lagoon, and one's evenings in starlight gossip at Florian's, feeling the sea-breeze throb languidly between the two great pillars of the piazzetta and over the low, black domes of the church,—this, I consider, is to be happy as one may safely be.\(^\text{16}\)

He visited Paris and Germany. James's travels taught him to look at life more directly, to use his eyes and to draw his own conclusions.

\(^\text{16}\text{Ibid.}, \text{pp. 86-87.}\)
I should be very sorry to underestimate the entertainment to be found in observing the comings and goings of a multifarious European crowd, or the number of suggestions and conclusions which, with a desultory logic of its own, the process contributes to one's philosophy of life... The observations of the 'cultured American' bear chiefly, I think, upon the great topic of national idiosyncrasies. He is apt to have a keener sense of them than Europeans; it matters more to his imagination that his neighbor is English, French, or German. He often seems to me to be a creature wandering aloof, but half naturalized himself. His neighbors are outlined, defined, imprisoned, if you will, by their respective national moulds, pleasing or otherwise; but his own type has not hardened yet into the old-world bronze. Superficially, no people carry more signs and tokens of what they are than Americans. I recognize them, as they advance, by the whole length of the promenade.17

Many of the ideas for James's novels and short stories were directly due to what he saw in his travels. James published several other collections of travel essays, all of which blended into the European-American controversy: Portraits of Places (1883), A Little Tour of France (1885), English Hours, (1905), Italian Hours (1909), The American Scene (1909).

The first full length novel which Henry James wrote presenting the international theme in its fullest details is Roderick Hudson (1876). A well-to-do American takes Roderick who has shown talent as a sculptor, from his stool in a lawyer's office in Northhampton, Massachusetts, and sets him up in a studio in Rome.

17 Ibid., p. 359.
His mother and fiancee, Mary, fear that European life will be too soft for him. However, the very opposite occurs. It is he who is whipped by Europe. The business of art means not only lounging under the pines of the Villa Ludovisi and chiselling Carrara marble; it means also the painful toil of creation which demands from the artist a steady purpose, an austerer renunciation of every grossness than was expected of any law-abiding citizen of Northampton. In other words, if a man is strong, he can hurdle the weak moments. If he isn't, he will succumb to them. To further Roderick's downfall, Christina Light puts in an appearance. She is being hawked over the Continent by her mother and a rich Cavaliere, who is really her father, in search of a husband. This ugly girlhood has so corrupted Christina, that she alternately scorns and favors Roderick. After the collapse of his art and his love for Christina, Roderick falls over a precipice in Switzerland. He is one of the Americans who has been beaten by the Europeans. The clash between the American concepts and European influence is presented clearly.

Roderick is introduced to Europe by Rowland Mallet in much the same way James had visited it—England, Paris, Milan, Venice and Rome. The whole story breathes the magic air of Rome, which to American travelers of that era was the essence of culture. Its wonderful air of achievement seemed to mock the struggles of the artists of the present even while it nursed
them. However, the charm of Rome proved fatal for Roderick who started out to become a success.

James was influenced by several writers in his presentation—Turgenieff, Balzac, George Sand and George Eliot, as well as his own travel experiences.

The conception of Europe as a complex organism which would have no use, or only a cruel use, for those bred by the simple organism of America, animates "Four Meetings" (1877).

It is the tale of a little schoolmistress who, having long nourished a passion for Europe upon such slender intimations as photographs of the Castle of Chillon, at last collects a sum for the trip. She is met a Havre by a cousin, one of those Americans on whom Continental life has acted as a solvent of all decent moral tissues, and is tricked out of her money by his story of a runaway marriage with a Countess. The schoolteacher returns to New England hoping to "see something of this dear old Europe yet," and has that hope ironically fulfilled by the descent upon her for life of the said Countess. This Countess is so distinctly "something of this dear old Europe" that the very sight of her, transports the travelled recounter of the story to "some dusky landing before a shabby Parisian quatrieme—to an open door revealing a greasy ante-chamber and to Madame, leaning over the banisters while she holds a faded dressing-gown together and bawls down to the portress to bring up her coffee."
It is one of the saddest stories in the world and one of the cleverest. The heroine is Miss Caroline Spencer, a spinster school teacher of thirty, who has been saving her dollars for years to get to Europe. She is relieved of these savings by an importunate cousin and returns after precisely thirteen hours spent on the dull margin of her paradise.

The American written by Henry James in 1877 is the first large treatment of the international situation with its contrast of the American and European cultures. Roderick Hudson was also the story of an artist, in addition to the presentation of the international theme.

Christopher Newman, the American, after making a fortune, came to France to enjoy it. He met Tristram, a former acquaintance now living in Paris. In talking to Mrs. Tristram, Christopher tells her he wants to see something of the world and possibly to find a wife. She has him meet Claire de Cintré, a member of the French nobility and a widow. He finds her charming and wishes to marry her. He meets her younger brother Valentin de Bellegarde and gets on splendidly with him. Newman approaches Claire's mother, the Marquise de Bellegarde and her elder brother, Urbain, the Marquis. Although they disapprove of Newman, they promise to let him try to win Claire if he can because of Newman's wealth. Christopher sends the good news to his friends in America and tells the Bellegardes of the congratulations which
come in return, and goes on to say he would like to give a celebration for them and his Paris friends. The Marquise is horrified and explains that she will give the party introducing him to her friends. It is this affair which proves Newman's undoing. During the ball he roams through the rooms of the old house in the Rue de l'Université where all the old families are assembled and noisily accepts his good fortune. In the meantime a distant cousin of the Bellegardes, Lord Deepmere from England appears at the ball. He is both wealthy and titled and the Marquise then fastens her mind on the suitability of Lord Deepmere as a husband for her daughter.

A subplot which has been appearing through the story now becomes enmeshed with the main plot. Newman has been ordering pictures from Mlle. Nioche, a copyist in the Louvre, and taking French lessons from her father. Newman introduces Valentin to Mlle. Noémie Nioche who soon becomes involved in a quarrel with another man over Noémie. Valentin goes to Switzerland to fight the duel. Newman calls on Claire and finds her about to run away. She tells him she cannot marry him and refers him to her mother and Urbain who sit near by. They tell him the marriage is improper and impossible. Newman charges them with treachery but they deny it. Newman is called to Valentin's deathbed and finds him dying from a wound received in the duel. Valentin hears of the treachery of his family and apologizes for it. Before he
dies, he tells Newman to ask Mrs. Bread, a servant, for the family secret with which he can force the Marquise to give in.

After Valentin's funeral, Newman calls on Claire who persists in her refusal and who states that she has to obey her mother. Claire tells him she is going to enter a Carmelite Convent and there is nothing he can do to dissuade her from her purpose.

Newman learns from Mrs. Bread that the Marquise hastened the death of her husband to force Claire to marry the Comte de Cintre. Newman confronts the de Bellegardes with the information and although they are agitated and terrified they inform him they would far rather Claire become a nun than to marry him. The de Bellegardes' hatred for Newman, a raw and semi-barbarous creature, was so much that they were not broken by Newman's knowledge of their dark secret. Since there is nothing more for Christopher to do, Claire has already entered the convent, he feels he would be just as base and low as the de Bellegardes in revealing their crime; he returns to America.

In the preface to the definitive edition Mr. James states that the theme is "the situation in another country and an aristocratic society of some robust but insidiously beguiled and betrayed, some cruelly wronged compatriot; the point being in especial that he should suffer at the hands of persons pretending to represent the highest possible civilization and to be of an
order far superior to his own."18

The self-made American without antecedents or traditions is brought into juxtaposition with a group of persons for whom these are almost the whole of life. The innocent, honorable, self-made American is presented in his dealings with the formal, sophisticated extremely polite and treacherous Europeans. The social contrast comes out more clearly in a series of scenes leading up to the occasion when the elder de Bellegardes accept Norman as a suitor for the hand of the daughter, Claire. They try to make him understand their enormous condescension in permitting Claire to marry him. But this attitude on their part does not penetrate Newman's mind. He was unaware of the pitfalls which were before him. He did feel obscurely however the quality of culture displayed in the manners of his French friends, especially in Claire.

She gave him, the charming woman, the sense of an elaborate education, of her having passed through mysterious ceremonies and processes of culture, of her having been fashioned and made flexible to certain deep social needs. All this... made her seem rare and precious—a very expensive article.19

Newman is presented to us as an individual as well as a type. He is dominated by his Americanism, is pictured more broadly and fuller than Roderick Hudson or Rowland Mallet. Claire is described many times as a "consummate woman, nobly planned."

19Ibid., p. 165.
Miss Rourke states that the title of this novel was a fulfillment that "whoever heard of a significant English novel called The Englishman or an excellent French novel called Le Francais? The simple and aggressive stress belonged to an imagination perennially engaged by the problem of the national type. The name Newman had significance, faintly partaking of that comic symbolism by which a hero in one of the Yankee fables was called Jedediah Homebred."20

The Europeans (1878) brings two sophisticated Europeans (brother and sister—Felix Young, a Bohemian painter and Eugenia, the Baroness de Munster) to America to reclaim their American family connections, and is a companion piece to The Americans. It appears natural to these young people that their private life should be spent largely in wondering how the last public appearance went off and planning effects for the next, a point of view which arouses the worst suspicions of their cousins who are accustomed to live as if the sky were indeed a broad open eye. So Felix has the greatest difficulty in persuading his uncle, who takes thirty-two bites to a moral decision, that he is a suitable husband for his cousin Gertrude; and poor Eugenia fails altogether in an environment where a lie from her lips is not treated as un petit péché d'une petite femme, but simply remains a lie. Felix gains his prize, but the Baroness doesn't and

20Dupee, F. W., op. cit., p. 145.
leaves forever a country whose low standard of civilization and narrow standard of morality she alike despises.

The aspect of New England life that James emphasizes here is its joylessness, as later in The Ambassadors he was to emphasize the joylessness of Woollett, Massachusetts. The Wentworths, like the Newsomes and the Pococks, are a sad family, and like them they possess at least one member who yearns for emancipation. Chad and his cousin Mamie find it at its source in Paris. To Gertrude Wentworth it is communicated by the infectious gaiety of her cousin Felix.

James took a class of people who were immured in the free and easy mode of living on the continent and confronted the Puritans with them. Felix and his sister were of American ancestry and cousins of the New England family but both were born abroad, bred in the European tradition and the sister had come by her title by virtue of her morganatic marriage with a prince who now wished to have the bond dissolved.

The book is really an exposition of the view that Europe has of New England and New England of Europe.

Felix gives us Europe's view of Americans when he says to Eugenia:

'No they are not gay...They are sober; they are even severe. They are of a pensive cast; they take things hard. I think there
is something the matter with them; they have some melancholy memory or some depressing expectation. It's not the epicurean temperament. My uncle, Mr. Wentworth, is a tremendously high-toned old fellow; he looks as if he were undergoing martyrdom, not by fire, but by freezing. But we shall cheer them up; we shall do them good. They will take a good deal of stirring up; but they are wonderfully kind and gentle. 21

Mr. Wentworth represents a type which has disappeared from America—the cultured, refined New England gentleman of moderate wealth and Puritanical views who welcomed his foreign relatives as an extension of duty.

James presented the Boston attitude to foreigners.

Daisy Miller (1878) is James's classic tale. She is a simple, unspoiled, unsophisticated pretty girl from Schenectady, New York, representing a typical middle class American girl touring Switzerland with her mother and extremely national young brother. Winterbourne, an American trained in the codes, manners, cabals and caste consciousness of Europe, arrives in Geneva on a brief visit to his aunt, Mrs. Costello. He encounters Daisy in the garden one morning and finds to his surprise, delight and amusement that all barriers between them are very quickly broken down. It is quickly arranged that he shall conduct her personally to the Castle of Chillon, a proposal which gratifies her mother, but shocks the handsome courier

Eugenie. His aunt is stiffly displeased with the whole proceed­nings, and refuses to meet such vulgar people.

Winterbourne meets the Miller family again in Rome during the winter season. Daisy, unaware that her simplicity of be­havior is in conflict with the codified social world and there­fore improper, soon comes to be suspected of being improper. She has succeeded in getting herself much talked about by reason of her easy promiscuity, and more especially for her indiscreet appearance with a handsome third-rate Italian, Signor Giovanelli. Winterbourne maintains his interest in the girl, an interest that is clearly shading to love, but the respectable American colony gives her the cold shoulder. Her final indiscretion is a visit by moonlight to the Colisseum under the escort of Signor Giovanelli. The woman who does a thing for the sake of the thing in itself is always suspected by society, and the American colony, which professed the mellow conventions of Europe with all its own national crudity, accuses her of vulgarity and even lightness. They talk so bitterly that when Winterbourne finds her viewing the Colisseum with Giovanelli, he leaps to the conclusion that she is a disreputable woman. Daisy is seized with malarial fever and dies.

The theme is that of the American girl on European soil and her intermingling with the society of an older civilization. Daisy is the heroine and James at the same time wished to
emphasize in her the intriguing combination of charm and innocence with the most flaunting vulgarity and the most compromising frankness. The same situation occurred in The American. In that story the American is defeated, whereas the self-made, independent girl or man is treated satirically in "A Bundle of Letters." In "Pandora" the American triumphs over the European.

James won his first great public notice with this tale. It gave him one hour of wide notoriety and publicity at a moment when the American girl was on the way to independence. The question was debated as to whether it was a slander on the American girl or whether it was a just picture. Today, we would state that it was no slander, that the heroine testified to James's American allegiance.

The story is written with a limpid, rhythmical quality of style. The same is true of The Portrait of a Lady. This theme stayed with James throughout his life. He came back to it ultimately in the last three great novels, but in a more complex manner.

James gives us the New York background in "An International Episode" (1879). It concerns the impressions produced on two young Englishmen, who in 1874, visit New York and Newport, and with the experiences and impressions a year later of a young woman from Boston who sees England for the first time.
The Englishmen are Percy Beaumont and his cousin, Lord Lambeth, heir of the Duke of Bayswater. Mr. Westgate, an office-haunting New Yorker, hands them over to his wife in Newport, where Lambeth becomes interested in Miss Alden of Boston, a sister of his hostess. Beaumont contrives to get Lambeth summoned home and the risk is for the time averted. The scene is then transferred to England by the arrival there of Bessie and her sister. Bessie realizes in England the existing conditions and feels the coldness of the English toward Americans. She comes to the conclusion that she wants something more out of life than a dull, prosaic, cautious Englishman.

This is a revision of the situation in _The American_. Here, too, the contrast of civilizations plays a part; the interest of the woman, the more intellectual personality, in the heir of a name celebrated throughout centuries is rather curiosity as regards the historical glory of the family and the family possessions—a sensation which America does not offer. Bessie is unable to become enthusiastic over the otherwise agreeable man himself, from whom she is separated, moreover, by his hostile, extremely proud mother and by her own American self-consciousness. James touches on something else the European has rather little knowledge of; the most refined form of "spread-eaglism," where it constitutes a pride in the American democracy equivalent to the European pride in noble birth. The Americans
have the upper hand in this story.

A boarding house serves as a setting for "A Bundle of Letters" (1880). James uses all six characters as narrators: Miss Miranda Hope from Bangor, Maine, Miss Violet Ray from New York City, Miss Evelyn Vane from England, Lewis Leverett from Boston, Dr. Staub from Germany, and Mr. Verdier, a native of Paris. James intercepted their mail as it left the house and published it, thus revealing the characters of these six correspondents. The attention is centered upon the two American girls - the English girl used only for contrast.

In Miranda Hope, James presents the American girl who first went to Europe alone and unchaperoned, the pioneer seeking to know "life" and to obtain "culture," but thoroughly loyal to her ancestry. She is slightly silly in her letters about the nice young man back home but perfectly capable of taking care of herself even though she goes to museums for rendezvous and takes French lessons from a Frenchman who might presume too much were it not that her very openness quite takes away his desire.

The story in The Pension Beaurepas (1881) is presented through a young novelist who stated he was inclined toward a literary career and had come to the pension to study human nature à la Balzac and Stendhal. It seems that the narrator might have been James himself. The narrator observes and talks with two American girls who are also at the boarding house and
discusses them at length with Madame Beaurepas, who from her vantage point, has studied human nature for forty years, with Mr. Pigeonneau, whose heart flutters at the rustle of petticoats; with cautious, cultured Mrs. Church, the mother of Aurora; and the financially embarrassed Mr. Ruck, father of Sophie.

Aurora, an American-born girl, brought up as a jeune fille envies Sophie, who may wander when and where she will, and tries without avail to get out of her mother's control. Mrs. Church, a widow, who had much "culture" but little money has spent her life running from one cheap pension to another, trying to keep her daughter unspotted and innocent in the hope of marrying her some day to a wealthy man. Poor Aurora, victim of her mother, knows too well what an anomaly she is:

'I've to pretend to be a jeune fille. I'm not a jeune fille; no American girl's a jeune fille; an American girl's an intelligent responsible creature. I've to pretend to be idiotically innocent, but I'm not in the least innocent... To do very simply things not at all simple—that's the American girl!'22

Mrs. Church suggests to the narrator that she would welcome her deliverer but he ignores the hint and Aurora is dragged to another pension.

"The Siege of London" (1883) has for its heroine, Mrs. Headway, aged thirty-seven but still devastatingly pretty. She is a new type, a much divorced Westerner who has recently been left a legitimate widow with ample means. For this we have her unsupported statement to Littlemore, a chance friend of early San Pablo days, who one evening, accompanied by his friend, Rupert Waterville, of the American embassy of London, encounters her in the Théâtre Français. Her protector of the evening is a fatuous young English baronet, Sr. Arthur Demesne, who had fallen in love with her recently in Homburg, and whose fascination by her charms is rendered more intense from the puzzled bewilderment in which he stands with reference to her past.

Mrs. Headway, after her notorious Western career, had sought to establish herself respectably in New York but had there been ignominiously snubbed for her pains. It is her ambition of course to snub New York in turn, and to this end she cultivates the innocuous Sir Arthur, to whose mother she hopes to present, Littlemore aiding, a certificate of marriage. However, the new Lady Demesne has still to achieve the conquest of her dowager mother-in-law, of the American embassy, and of Littlemore's careful sister, Mrs. Dolphin. Her satisfaction is that New York people were beginning to inquire "who in the world Lady Demesne had been."
Next to *The Ambassadors*, *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881) was Henry James's favorite.

*Isabel Archer* is brought to England by her aunt, Mrs. Touchett, who knowing of her poverty and approving of her independent bearing, proposed to show her the world. Isabel had a great desire for knowledge and an immense curiosity about life. In the offer of her aunt she saw a chance to live, a chance to escape from mere existence which, it seemed, would be her lot if she remained in America and accepted the suit of Caspar Goodwood.

Although she is brought to Gardencourt, an old English country-house, at a time when Mr. Touchett is failing rapidly, she finds that even in this quiet place, life is far more exciting than in America. She meets her cousin Ralph, more or less inactive physically, but interested and amused by her and curious about her. She meets Lord Warburton who presently proposes, but Isabel who craves romance refuses him gently and kindly, telling him that she does not wish to marry and saying "I can't escape my fate...I can't escape unhappiness...In marrying you I shall be trying to" explaining that to marry him would be to separate herself from life, from the inevitable chances and dangers, from what most people come to know and suffer.

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Caspar follows her to Europe, but Isabel commands him to leave her alone for two years. Ralph is amazed by Isabel's refusal of Lord Warburton. He sees that the world interests her and that she wants to throw herself into it, but that she may find her hands tied by poverty. Ralph prevails upon his father, at the point of death, to remake his will, leaving the greater part of his own share to Isabel.

Madame Serena Merle arrives on the scene while Mr. Touchett is ill and she and Isabel are thrown together. She exudes cosmopolitanism and experience and Isabel feels in some way that Madame Merle is to affect her life. Ralph reveals his dislike and mistrust of her but Isabel doesn't listen. Serena Merle is interested in Isabel and listens to her high hopes about life and Europe, but urges her to return to America and drops a warning that there are many unattached Americans who are idly crawling over Europe and in particular a friend of hers, Gilbert Osmond.

Mr. Touchett dies and Isabel becomes suddenly rich. At first she is sobered by the responsibility but presently sets forth with Mrs. Touchett to see Europe. When they reach Florence, Madame Merle turns up, congratulates Isabel on her good fortune and takes her to call on Osmond. It appears that Madame Merle has suggested marriage to Osmond, the cynical Italianate American and dilettante, mentioning Isabel's wealth
and intelligence. He bestirs himself to play his part well, enlisting Isabel's admiration, sympathy and stimulating her curiosity. His daughter, Pansy, trained in the convents, perfect in manners and obedience, also interests Isabel. Osmond makes a declaration of love, and although Isabel is deeply affected, she puts him off until she has seen more of the world. Meanwhile Ralph has been watching, much amused but quite sure that Osmond will be put in his place. Madame Merle, as well as Mrs. Touchett, accompanies Isabel on her travels so that Isabel does not forget Osmond. As a result she accepts him on her return to Florence.

Isabel in the meantime explains her action to Goodwood. Ralph feels shocked at Isabel's acceptance and at length tells her that Osmond is too "small" a man for her and betrays his own interest when he says "I had a vision for your future...I amused myself with planning a kind of destiny for you. There was to be nothing of this sort in it. You were not to come down so easily, so soon." Isabel is hurt and resentful and vows she will never again tell him what she is thinking. Osmond proves a charming person and Isabel feels satisfied.

After a break in the story for three years we learn indirectly how things have gone with Isabel. Ned Rosier, a poor young man with a taste for bibelots and a love for Pansy, asks Madame Merle how he can win the favor of Osmond. She is discouraging and then he suggests approaching Isabel whom he had
long known.

'I think Mrs. Osmond would favor me.'
'Very likely—if her husband doesn't!'
'Does she take the opposite line from him?'
'In everything. They think very differently.'

Osmond has high hopes for Pansy and hence Isabel can give no encouragement to Rosier although she knows Pansy cares for him.

Ralph and Lord Warburton arrive in Rome. Isabel refuses to betray herself or Osmond. Osmond objects to Ralph's presence in Rome but when he finds Lord Warburton apparently interested in Pansy, Osmond is elated because that is the kind of match which he desires for his daughter. Madame Merle also approves and Isabel finds her suspicion slightly stirred by this and by something else she sees one day in her drawing room—her husband and Madame Merle standing in intimate silence. She stifles her suspicion in a great effort to please her husband and determines to forward the match if she can. However, when Osmond bluntly tells her that he depends upon her to do this very thing, a certain repugnance sets in and she sits long and late one night viewing the situation and her life during the three years of her marriage. She sees sadly what a failure it has been, how mistrust has become its keynote. She feels Osmond's hatred, born when he discovered that she had ideas of her own which he could not change. Lord Warburton calls to say that he is about to return to England. When he leaves, Osmond cruelly blames Isabel

Ibid., p. 315.
for preventing Pansy's marriage and for thwarting him, revealing to her all the meanness of his nature. Madame Merle returns from out of town and when she hears of Lord Warburton's departure, she loses her discretion and self-control and blames Isabel. At this point Isabel sees that Madame Merle arranged her marriage. Osmond sends Pansy back to the convent to think things over so that she will be ready for the next nobleman who appears.

A wire reaches Isabel stating that Ralph is dying and that he wishes to see her. Osmond declares to Isabel that it is her duty to stay with him, that if she goes all will be at an end between them. Isabel finds herself suddenly afraid. Marriage, conventional to Osmond, is a sacred thing to her. Osmond's sister, the Countess Gemini, reveals to Isabel that she has no "duty" to Osmond, that Madam Merle is the mother of Pansy. Isabel goes to the convent to say goodbye to Pansy whom she pities and longs to help. There she finds Madam Merle who starts to explain her presence. Madam Merle, realizing that Isabel will never accuse her, tells Isabel that the person who is most to blame for her unhappiness is Ralph because he was responsible for her bequest of money. Isabel then feels that Ralph must have suffered too and reaches Gardencourt before he dies. They both know that though one must die and the other live, for a long, long time, the survivor will be helped by the consciousness of the love of the other and that life may have something of happi-
ness in it. She returns to Rome, duty and Gilbert Osmond.

Isabel's difficulty lies in the relation of her ideals to those of her husband. She is clever and intelligent but surrounded by wicked and clever people and hence suffers defeat at their hands. Nevertheless, defeated though she is externally, Isabel achieves a moral victory for herself. Thus, she is like Newman in *The American*. It is not the bare facts of Gilbert Osmond's relation to Madame Merle and Pansy that are of importance to Isabel. It is the values of life as conceived by Gilbert and Madame Merle as contrasted with Isabel's ideals upon which these facts throw their final interpretative light.

With the entry of Madame Merle toward the end of the first volume, the painter attacks the real background of his picture. A few chapters later his task begins in earnest with the appearance of the Florentine gentleman who is to become the most prominent feature in the heroine's experience. From this point on, the work is a masterpiece of revelation; and if the details brought out are chiefly details of "background" having to do with the characters of Osmond and Madame Merle—that is essentially the case in the later books. The background circumstances are revealed through the consciousness of the heroine who is the foreground figure; and they tend to bring out in brighter relief the beauty of this figure. Every trait of vanity and selfishness in Osmond gives play to the corresponding traits of generous large-
mindedness in Isabel, as well as giving her occasion for the dis-
play of resourcefulness in difficult social relations. The
coldness of his nature serves as foil to the flame-like warmth
of hers. And the large ground of taste and sensibility which
they have in common.

This novel marks the close of James's early period. It
was his first masterpiece but he was still far from his techni-
cal goal. In mechanical ways the work is still very different
from The Golden Bowl to which it bears a considerable likeness
in theme. The Portrait is a novel, like other novels, taking
us through successive stages in the history of its characters.

The appeal of James is not the appeal of diversity. It
is by fineness of texture, closeness of and subtility of weave,
fastidiousness of workmanship--rich and exquisite surface. At
the time of James's writing of The Portrait, however, he had not
yet achieved the brief and incisive style which came to mark his
later work. Nearly the whole first volume, for example, is taken
up with material which would have been excluded from the more
distinctive work of the later years. The episode of Lord
Warburton and his proposal, the death of Mr. Touchett and his
bequest to Isabel are two major blocks of material which would
have been treated briefly and referentially as a part of the
antecedent facts of the story. Not merely does James give a
whole volume to Isabel's earlier history as a grown woman. When
he has once got her launched in this earlier career, he stops for the length of more than two chapters to bring up to date her history as a girl and that of her cousin Ralph. And this is not done, as it would have been done after 1896, by reminiscence and dialogue as an integral part of the narrative of present experience, but is treated separately.

James showed admirable restraint in terminating his story. Having taken great pains to build his characters so true that they could be expected to react to a given set of circumstances in one way only, he is content to create the circumstances and trust his characters to act their parts. At the end of the story he leaves Isabel turning back to Rome to a scene which will be more unpleasant than any in the book. Though it is stopped short by the author, Isabel's story is by no means finished; she must continue to live and suffer for many years, but there is no need for her story to be completely finished. The reader knows how Isabel will now act and feel, with her eyes opened and Ralph's love sustaining her and making life more endurable.

James wrote another series of travel sketches on Europe, Portraits of Places (1883) covering Venice, Paris, Rouen, London, Saratoga, Quebec and Niagara. These sketches are more mature than his earlier one and more individual. Their tone is more even. The early essays on England showed James's interest primarily in cathedrals. Now he turned to manor houses, castles,
rectories, places that had been lived in and had social connections.

A story built on lines similar to those of *The American* is "Lady Barbarina" (1884). Jackson Lemon is of somewhat harder clay, but like Newman he wishes to marry the woman just on account of her being a mature creation of the centuries. In this case, however, the marriage comes off, not without some grating of the kind experienced by Newman between American and European outlook and the problem then becomes one of the possibility of transplanting a scion of old English aristocracy to American soil. The experiment turns out abortive.

James breaks new ground. He tries to represent the difficult acclimatization of an English girl of good birth in even the most civilized American milieu, New York. Jackson Lemon, a young American doctor of great inherited wealth, came into contact with the daughter of the impoverished but splendid Marquis of Canterville. Wooing her he finds a somewhat complicated matter, as this has to be performed under the sanction of authority, and the preliminary and advanced stages alike are beset with difficulties. Indeed it looks as if this affair would never ripen to a conclusion, for Lemon does not prove an accommodating person, and balks at the idea of marriage settlements. He might have continued in this independent spirit had he not been piqued by the freely uttered doubts—the prognostication of dis-
aster even—concerning the marriage expressed by his old American friends, the Dexter Freers. He waives his point, and having subscribed to all forms and formalities he takes his bride and her sister, Lady Agatha, to New York. This latter young lady fully acclimatizes herself and yields with alarming facility to the fascination exercised by the cheerful vulgarity of a California adventurer, Herman Longstraw. But Lady Barbarina Lemon is stubbornly incapable of adaptation, and makes no faintest disguise of her contempt, expressed though it is by mere lassitude, for the social usages of New York. Her sister's runaway match with Longstraw affords the pretext for a return to England, and the story indefinitely leaves the ill-assorted pair.

Milly Theale, a wealthy New York orphan, in The Wings of the Dove (1902), through sheer will power fights against a disease which will end in death. With Susan Stringham as a companion, Milly goes to Europe. They arrive in London where they meet Kate Croy and her aunt, Mrs. Lowder. Kate and Merton Densher are in love but cannot marry because of lack of money. Milly falls in love with Densher. Kate knows of this and also knows that Milly is very ill. So Kate proposes to fool Milly, making Densher follow her lead. Milly dies and leaves her money to Densher but the taste of victory is bitter to Densher and the scene ends with Densher telling Kate that they cannot marry on Milly's money.
The theme is that of the innocent American coming into the European atmosphere of deceit as in The American and The Portrait of a Lady.

James wanted to raise his international theme to its ultimate potentiality. He was no longer satisfied to endow an Isabel Archer with a legacy sufficient to allow her to confront Europe independently. He was bent on extending the source of his splendor to the farthest conceivable degree. Milly was to be a fabulous millionairess. James posited for Milly the same 'excess of joy' in living, and gave to her 'crowded consciousness' the sense that it was her doom 'to live fast.' It was essential to his theme that his anxious fighter of the battle of life should be arrayed against insuperable odds, that her high-strung American nerves should feel Europe too 'tough' for her. But if James has shown again that the chords he could strike were minor, were those of renunciation, of resignation, of inner triumph in the face of outer defeat, he was not out of keeping with the spiritual history of his American epoch.

In the first chapter of William Wetmore Story (1903), "The Precursors," James tells us that Europe, for Americans, has been made easy, that "the old relation, social, personal, aesthetic, of the American world to the European...is as charming a subject as the student of manners, morals, personal adventures, the history of taste, the development of a society, need wish to
It is the tale of an American sculptor who went to Italy for inspiration. It is true he turned out a few statues, but did not create anything outstanding. In other words, "Judge Story, who never left his native soil, was both New Englander and man of the world; while his son, disdaining his New England heritage and living a lifetime in Europe, remained a provincial always."26

It is the same theme as used in Roderick Hudson but instead of ending in death it ends on the note of mediocrity.

James did not forget America's gift in The Golden Bowl (1904) in which he gives us a drama of the pathos and tragedy of enormous wealth in the age of millionaires.

In the Americans of later novels, all that was magnanimous and human, along with all that was frustrated, sterile, excessively refined, it is the Americans who have it better from the moral point of view. Beauty and power show in the goodness of these naive people. They still bring to Europe the American sincerity, but they have become wan, at the mercy of the schemers of Europe.

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26Hound and Horn, April-June 1934 "Henry James in the World" by Edna Kenton, p. 511.
Adam Verver, wealthy, with his daughter Maggie goes to live in England for a while where he can build up a collection of art which will become his hobby to give as a gift to his home city in the United States. They are alone, alone with each other and need more to satisfy them. Maggie marries a young Italian nobleman, Prince Amerigo and gives him a dowry. Feeling her father will be lonely, Maggie looks about and decided Charlotte Stant will be a good wife for him. Charlotte marries Maggie's father. At one time Charlotte and the Prince have been lovers and now renew their affair. Maggie discovers the evil, and thwarts them. The novel turns and becomes Maggie's drama because through her misplaced confidence and gullibility, it becomes her problem to save the situation. It is immensely complicated. She works through the struggles and devices without ever bringing them into the open. Maggie handles the situation with a decency that awakens the admiration of her husband. She triumphs over them all.

Some of the consequences of the industrial revolution are oddly refracted in The Golden Bowl. The Ververs's wealth is of the new kind. To be sure, the product of Woollett, which Strether fastidiously refused to specify for Maria, was turned out by a New England factory that was on its way to establishing a monopoly. But the Newsome's family fortune was only a background for James's main theme. And when money became the great
tempter for Kate Croy the source of Milly's fabulous inheritance was left entirely shrouded. Adam Verver's fortune, on the other hand, has been made entirely by himself in the post-Civil War west. His again unspecified financial dealings have been as rapid as they have been vast, since he is only forty-seven, with retirement several years behind him. But he has brought his acquisitive sense into his leisure like so many other robber barons, he has set his heart on becoming a great collector, and gold and jewel images color, in consequence, every relationship in the novel.

The character most comparable to Adam Verver in James's earlier work is Christopher Newman in *The American*. The first names of both men call attention to the quality that James was most concerned to endow them with: both are discoverers of new worlds, just as, in turn, Prince Amerigo's name symbolizes how he must be a re-discoverer of America or Americans. What Newman and Mr. Verver also have in common is their newness; it would hardly seem accidental that both syllables of the latter's surname suggest spring. Both too have had their moments of vision in which the mere amassing of money came to seem futile. Whereas Newman came to Europe with a quiet eagerness for wider experience, Mr. Verver brought along his far vaster fortune and a scheme. His "business of the future was to rifle the Golden Isles." Mr. Verver's vision, his 'peak in Darien,' as James
calls it, has stretched out before him the gleaming possibility of giving to his home town, American City, situated somewhat dimly beyond the mississippi a whole museum complete with contents.

James through Maggie, as through Milly, wanted to give his last quintessential expression to a quality which had long haunted him, not the intense yearning for life, but another phase of the American character as he had known it, its baffled and baffling innocence in contrast with the experience of Europeans. That again is a minor-keyed and feminine quality, more convincing in a daughter than in a father. But when Mrs. Assingham goes to the length of saying that Maggie 'wasn't born to know evil, she must never know,' we are back in the world of Hawthorne, of Hilda and her loves in The Marble Faun. James believed in the moral fineness and sweetness of the old-time simpler America, and believed too that even if Mr. Verver was a billionaire, he could still be colored by those qualities.

In contrast with Strether and Milly, and indeed, with Newman, with Daisy Miller, with Isabel Archer, and with most of James other Americans in Europe, the Ververs are not faced with defeat or renunciation, but with the consequences of complete triumph. The drama is grandiose; the spirit coming to life through realizing the possibilities Europe reveals; seeking its nourishment and deciding to take the responsibility for getting
it; acknowledging evil and trying to deal with it; coming down to earth from the distractions and abstractions of money; and for once the American is triumphant over the European.

American cities are discussed by James in The American Scene (1906). He writes essays on Boston, Philadelphia, New Jersey, New York and parts of Florida—all of which he visited on a later trip to America.

James also wrote a series of personal memoirs:

* A Small Boy and Others (1913) — reminiscences of his and his brothers’ boyhood.
* Notes of a Son and Brother (1914) — carried the above further.
* The Middle Years (1917) — began the third installment of the series but he did not finish it.
* The Sense of the Past (1917) is an unfinished novel and deals in a complex, tenuous way with an American going back to the Europe of now as contrasted with the Europe of the past. The young American goes to Europe to claim an inheritance in London. He is so absorbed by his love for the traditions of the past that he loses his modern identity.

* The Ivory Tower (1917), also an unfinished novel has a less generally poetic, less rarefied, but more vital theme than The Sense of the Past.

James was fascinated by what he saw in America, its enormous development, its wealth. Hence he had a basis for his
story about vast American fortunes, what went into them, their aftermath.

The scene is Newport, the millionaire's residence of the 1900's. Two families are involved--the Bettermans and the Gaws. A young American who has been brought up in England has inherited one of these fortunes and has been called to claim it. Among the things he inherits is a Chinese carved ivory tower. He is told by his wealthy father's business partner that this tower contains a letter which will explain how the vast fortunes were made.

The comments in all these various writings bear out the premise of the chapter that James does maintain his central theme although he does not follow a set mold in his plots.
CHAPTER IV

THE AMBASSADORS: A CRITICAL AND ANALYTICAL STUDY
OF THE NOVEL AND OF JAMES'S PRESENTATION OF
INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT AND RELATIONS IN IT

The Ambassadors first appeared in the North American Re
view in 1903 and was published in book form in the same year.

In this novel Henry James returned to a subject which he
had started earlier and represents the peak in his treatment of
the international theme. He told again of the "passionate pil­
grim" to Europe, the greatest tribute to European civilization.
Roderick Hudson's thirst for experience had been so violent that
it had hurtled him to destruction; but for Christopher Newman,
who had retired from business in early life, and for Isabel
Archer, just on the threshold of her twenties, there had
seemed every possibility for the abundance Strether had missed.
In Lambert Strether and Chad Newsome, James has two important
Americans; the former being of the frankly native variety,
directly descended from Christopher Newman, the latter the Euro­
peanized product of a year-long intimacy with the art-world of
Paris.

Briefly, the story tells of Chadwick Newsome, of a
wealthy manufacturing family from Woollett, Massachusetts. He
went to Paris and didn't want to come back. His widowed mother
wanted him to come back to the family business in Woollett. His family becoming desperate, dispatched an elderly friend, Lambert Strether, to Paris to bring Chad home.

Years before Strether had enjoyed the opportunity both of Boston and Europe, returning to America "with lemon-coloured volumes on the brain, as well as with a dozen trunks." But the middle part of his life, after the death of his wife and son, has been barred; he has soaked up the provincialism of "Woollett," seeming of all localities in James's novels to be the essence of provincialism, and he has become a "belated man of the world--belated because he had endeavored so long to escape being one." With a "Woollett" attitude toward Paris, he lands in Europe.

James had made Strether as provincial in point of view as possible and yet he has also made him admirable in his reactions to the new environment. Strether appreciates at once what Paris has done for Chad in teaching him how to do such things as enter an opera box; what it has further done for him, and for most people who have come in contact with it, in enriching their lives. His consciousness and frank admission of his own failure to live, his stress upon living is admirable as instanced in the outburst in Bilham in Gloriant's garden--"Live all you can. Live, live!" Knowing how to live was the great lesson Chad had learned and Strether regrets his own failure. Although he had not learned to live, he made friends from the
first with his open, genuine spontaneity. He could be on terms of intimacy with so varied a group as Maria Gostrey, Bilham, Gloriani, "in relation to whom he had the consciousness of opening...for the happy instant all the windows of his mind, of letting this rather grey interior drink in for once the sun of a clime not marked in his old geography" and Madame de Vionnet. He does not swing back to the "Woollett point of view" when he discovers the real relations between Chad and Madame de Vionnet. He always shows the national characteristics of the James's American--frankness, spontaneity, chivalry, and a general beautiful genuineness.

Structurally the novel is divided into twelve books. This division fitted in with the serialization of the story, each book bringing out Strether's gradual blooming in Europe and a series of smaller climaxes.

In the first book Strether arrives in Chester, England, from Liverpool to meet his friend Waymarsh and it is then that Maris Gostrey approaches him. Strether is described fully as:

the lean, the slightly loose figure of a man of middle height and something more perhaps than the middle age--a man of five-and-fifty, whose most immediate signs were a marked bloodless brownness of face, a thick dark moustache, of characteristically American cut, growing strong and falling low, a head of hair still abundant but irregularly streaked with grey, and a nose of bold free prominence, the even line, the high finish, as it might have been called, of which, had a certain effect of mitigation. A perpetual pair of glasses astride of this fine ridge,
and a line, unusually deep and drawn, the pro-
longed pen-stroke of time, accompanying the curve
of the moustache from nostril to chin. 27

Strether's initiation into things European really begins
in the second book when he has dinner with Maria Gostrey over a
small table on which the lighted candles had rose-colored shades.
She wore a low-cut gown and smelled of a soft fragrance.
Strether mentally contrasts this person and surroundings with
those of Mrs. Newsome and Woollett. Maria senses the reason for
Strether's being in Europe:

'I seem with this freedom, you see, to have
guessed Mr. Chad. He's a young man on whose head
high hopes are placed at Woollett; a young man a
wicked woman has got hold of and whom his family
over there have sent you out to rescue. You've
accepted the mission of separating him from the
wicked woman. Are you quite sure she's very bad
for him?' 28

Strether is still the New Englander when he says: "Of
course we are. Wouldn't you be?"

It is further revealed that Strether is the editor of a
magazine called Review which has a green cover, and which maga-
zine is subsidized by Mrs. Newsome.

Strether and Waymarsh leave London for Paris. There
they attend the theatre. Strether does some sightseeing--the
Rue de la Paix, the Tuileries, Rue de Seine, Luxembourg Gardens,

27Henry James, The Ambassadors (London: Macmillan and
Boulevard Malesherbes. As he stands on the Boulevard Malesherbes looking up at the balcony of Chad's apartment, Strether feels at once that the life which goes on in such balanced and measured surroundings cannot possibly be the crude dissipation that Woollett believes.

On going up to Chad's apartment, Strether meets Little John Bilham who is living in Chad's apartment during his absence. Bilham invites him to déjeuner the next day. Strether takes Waymarsh with him and as they walk toward their meeting place, Strether feels wonderful:

They walked, wandered, wondered and, a little, lost themselves; Strether hadn't had for years so rich a consciousness of time—a bag of gold into which he constantly dipped for a handful.29

In Book IV Strether sees Chad and renews his friendship with him. It is understood by both Chad and Strether that should Strether succeed in bringing Chad back home, he will marry Mrs. Newsome.

Madame de Vionnet is introduced to Strether in the fifth book and it is in this part that Lambert Strether makes his impassioned plea for living:

'All the same don't forget that you're young—blessedly young; be glad of it on the contrary and live up to it. Live all you can; it's a mistake not to. It doesn't so much matter what you do in particular, so long as you have your life. If you haven't had that what have you had? This place and these impressions—mild as you may find them to wind

29Ibid., p. 77.
a man up so; all my impressions of Chad and of people I've seen at his place—well, have had their abundant message for me, have just dropped that into my mind. I see it now. I haven't done so enough before—and now I'm old; too old at any rate for what I see. Oh I do see, at least; and more than you'd believe or I can express. It's too late. And it's as if the train had fairly waited at the station for me without my having had the gumption to know it was there. Now I hear its receding whistle miles and miles down the line. What one loses one loses; make no mistake about that. The affair—I mean the affair of life—couldn't, no doubt, have been different for me; for it's at the best a tin mould, either fluted and embossed, with ornamental ex­crescences, or else smooth and dreadfully plain, into which, a helpless jelly, one's consciousness is poured—so that one 'takes' the form, as the great cook says, and is more or less compactly held by it: one lives in fine as one can. Still, one has the illusion of freedom; therefore don't be, like me, without the memory of that illusion. I was either, at the right time, too stupid or too intelligent to have it; I don't quite know which. Of course at present I'm a case of reaction against the mistake; and the voice of reaction should, no doubt, always be taken with an allowance. But that doesn't affect the point that the right time is now yours. The right time is any time that one is still so lucky as to have. You're, as I say, damn you, so happily and hatefully you. Don't at any rate miss things out of stupidity. Of course I don't take you for a fool, or I shouldn't be addressing you thus awfully. Do what you like so long as you don't make my mistake. For it was a mistake. Live! '30

In Book VI Strether visits Madame de Vionnet at her home and at a few other places. She makes a great impression upon him.

Ibid., pp. 190-191.
Before the end of Book VII Chad wants to go home but Strether prevails upon him to remain. The original situation is reversed.

Chad... 'You don't want to get back to Mother?'
'Not just yet. I'm not ready.'
'You feel,' Chad asked in a tone of his own, 'the charm of life over here?'
'Immensely.' Strether faced it. 'You've helped me so to feel it that that surely needn't surprised you.'

Maria Gostrey no longer needs to assist Strether for he can now toddle alone. She tells him that "the wonderful special thing about you is that you are, at this time of day, youth." He makes a long reply:

'Of course I'm youth--youth for the trip to Europe. I began to be young, or at least to get the benefit of it, the moment I met you at Chester, and that's what has been taking place ever since. I never had the benefit of the proper time--which comes to saying that I never had the thing itself. I'm having the benefit of this moment; I had it the other day when I said to Chad "Wait"; I shall have it still again when Sarah Pocock arrives. It's a benefit that would make a poor show for many people; and I don't know who else but you and I, frankly, could begin to see in it what I feel. I don't get drunk; I don't pursue the ladies; I don't spend money; I don't even write sonnets. But nevertheless I'm making up late for what I didn't have early. I cultivate my little benefit in my own little way. It amuses me more than anything that has happened to me all my life. They may say what they like--it's my surrender, it's my tribute, to youth. One puts that in where one can--it has to come in somewhere, if only out of the lives, the conditions, the feelings of

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other persons. Chad gives me the sense of it, for all his grey hairs, which merely make it solid in him and safe and serene; and she does the same, for all her being older than he, for all her marriageable daughter, her separated husband, her agitated history. Though they're young enough, my pair, I don't say they're, in the freshest way, their own absolutely prime adolescence; for that has nothing to do with it. The point is that they're mine. Yes, they're my youth; since somehow at the right time nothing else ever was. What I meant just now therefore is that it would all go--go before doing its work--if they were to fail me.'32

In Book VIII the Pococks (Sarah, Mrs. Newsome's daughter; Jim, Sarah's husband; and Mamie, Jim's sister) arrive to take the situation in hand. Mrs. Newsome's appearance is felt like "some particularly large iceberg in a cool blue northern sea." Mrs. Newsome never actually appears in the novel, but her presence is felt throughout the book.

Strether finally realizes in Book IX that Chad is bound to Madame de Vionnet. She tells Strether that her daughter is to be married to a young Frenchman, that the marriage has been arranged for in the European manner.

The last three books cover the after climax. Sarah changes Strether with being in the enemy's camp, that he has betrayed her mother. The Pococks leave Paris. Strether sees Chad and Madame de Vionnet together on the river and the true relationship is brought home to him visibly. Strether has a final interview with both and tells Maria the whole story and what the whole

---32 Ibid., pp. 43-44.
experience has come to mean to him.

The subject matter proper of *The Ambassadors* is somewhat abstract—the matter of free intellectual exploration in general, of the open mind in contrast to the mind closed and swaddled in prejudice and narrow views. Under another aspect it is resolved again into the inveterate contrast between the cosmopolitan and the provincial, between the European and the American outlook.

Strether's discovery of the open mind is his discovery of Europe. It is Europe that teaches him how to live. We see in this novel the entire process of the acclimatization of Lambert Strether. The physical atmosphere of Paris is immense. The spiritual atmosphere is one of intelligence tempered with imagination. When Strether looks back wistfully on his earlier visit to Paris, when he regards subsequent employments which have cheated him of "life," it is the life of the intellectual that he has in mind. He thinks of all the movements he has missed through his absence from Paris, the capital of the world, he thinks of all the talk—talk freely and genially without vulgar hindrances over the fields of life and art which in such a view are not to be divorced. He had done the best he could for himself in Woollett. He has attached himself to the woman of the highest intellect and most imposing character in the place. He has published a magazine with a green cover. But he has not enjoyed there, the intellectual amenities for which he has himself
such an unusual aptitude.

He has never found intelligence tempered with imagination, intelligence made sociable. The errand which takes him abroad proves to be his great occasion for making up arrears. The fortunate encounter with Maria Gostrey opens his eyes to the possibilities of discriminating thought on many subjects. Europe appears to be an institution offering special facilities for play of mind and imagination.

Strether's fineness is superior to that of the Europeanized Chad for when he has learned just how much Chad owes to Madame de Vionnet, Strether urges him as his duty not to think of returning to Woollett.

Strether belongs in the same category with Christopher Newman and Milly Theale clearly indicating that the James's American cuts no inferior figure in Europe, but rather stands out from most of those about him by the strength and honesty of his character. He is a good example of what the author means when he stresses "the state of innocence of my country folk...irresistibly destitute of those elements of preparedness that my pages show even the most limited European adventurer to call into play," but "the grace of youth and freshness aiding, their negatives were converted and became in certain relations lively values and positives." The whole novel is portrayed to us through Strether—what he sees—his consciousness.
This is the "tribute" novel to the European side of James's allegiances--pays homage to Europe and all it has given in spiritual richness to the world.
CHAPTER V

THE CRITICAL FUNCTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL
THEME IN JAMES'S WORKS AND ESPECIALLY
IN THE AMBASSADORS

The James's theme appears to achieve its most critical
development in The Ambassadors. The author expresses his ideas
of the American and European character in terms of social milieu,
isolating in each qualities which he liked or disliked. In such
a book as The American, the old world civilization has a partly
villainous role while the crude but honest American possesses
the virtues of unspoiled nature, of material achievement. Newman
is like a Galahad whose blameless lady is enmeshed in the toils
of a socially snobbish mother. These types occur again and again
with the addition of an amiable and highly conscious observer
who is Ralph Touchett in The Portrait of A Lady, the narrator in
The Sacred Fount, Strether in The Ambassadors and is essentially
James himself.

Even if we leave out of consideration that James's birth
and mode of life predestined him to a vivid interest in an under-
standing and realization of the difference between Europe and
America, whether this difference was brought out the more sharply
by direct confrontation and interplay or not, these are other
reasons why the present problems should recur so often and play
so prominent a part in the works of James.

It should be remembered that Taine, Balzac, Zola and their followers had a profound influence on James's outlook on life, at least on some of the essential aspects as revealed in his writings. The doctrine of the milieu, of the formative power of different parts of society, descent of determinism, of intermixture and inheritability of temperament, was an extraordinarily powerful factor in the making of his work. The effect in a special case of this position of his may aptly be observed in James's conception of Emerson as it is worked out in Partial Portraits. James, in a manner, puts together Emerson's soul out of the elements furnished by the visible external constituents of his life. There is Concord, the quiet, undisturbed out-of-the-way place, with something of the permanent, sunny, motionless Sunday, the Sunday of the good and pious thoughts, of the inconceivableness of human badness and of life's violence and difficult tasks; there is Transcendentalism, the peculiar outburst of Romanticism on American soil with Alcott, Thoreau and Hawthorne for significant adherents; there is some—hardly influential—knowledge of the civilization of the Old World acquired on several, not too long, journeys to Europe; there is last but not least the position as the spiritual leader of a congregation whose needs in the long run turn out to be rather simple and artless.
James's recurrence to the contrasts of Europe and America in his literary achievement is due not only to the fact that his life so intimately partook of both worlds. It also becomes evident that the external powers formative of the mind are often accepted by James as an expedient facilitating the putting of, the investigation into, and the solving of, his psychological issue. For example when explaining why he has conceived Milly Theale just as she is James says: "I had from far back mentally projected a certain sort of young American as more the heir of all the ages than any other person whatever."

It seems evident that here James puts stress upon those advanced aspects of his native country, which make America to him--though devoid of a continuous, conscious tradition--the heiress of all ages, and that accordingly, the plot of the novel such as it was conceived asked for an American and no other. Only as conditioned by the New World was the development of the mind of Milly Theale, as required by James, probable to him and capable of being made probable to others.

An even more satisfactory illustration can be found in the preface to The Ambassadors. When accounting for the "peculiar tone" of Strether James says: "Possessed of our friend's nationality, to start with, there was general probability in his narrower localism...He would have issued, our rueful worthy, from the very heart of New England--at the heels of which matter
of course a perfect train of secrets tumbled for me into light." James fixes his regard on certain spiritual aspects of the older civilization as presented by Paris and then brings under their influence an individual who is unmistakably stamped by the New England outlook on life. It is James's thorough knowledge of this outlook which then enables him to follow the reactions, the play of features and of mind, which become visible in Strether at the contact with the other world.

The introspective bent of James's mind limits the field from the beginning. He has himself told how his home from the tenderest years of his childhood threw him on the "inward life," made him begin with that, which together with a certain healthy simplicity and naturalness of his early surroundings later on enabled him to take in the deeper sense of things in a more intense manner than is usual with members of a more complicated form of society when gradually the host of impressions of more varied, differentiated and checkered horizons.

How came it then that for the most part so simple we yet weren't more inane? This was doubtless by reason of the quantity of our inward life--ours of our father's house in especial I mean--which made an excellent, in some cases almost an incomparable fond for a thicker civility to mix with when growing experience should begin to take that in...There must have been vast numbers of people about us for whom under the usages, the assault on the imagination from without was much stronger and the filling-in of the general picture much richer. It was exactly by the lack of that we--we more especially
who lived at near view of my father's admirable example--have been thrown so upon the inward life.33

James's words about his childhood as just quoted make us suspect that the first great and serious congenial problem presenting itself to his young mind--impressionable, delicately discriminating, quivering with eagerness for food but by its healthy constitution capable of digesting that food--that this problem might be more or less for life. And we are able to make out from his autobiographical remarks that such was the case and that this first conquering problem was the present one.

It was to be expected that the extraordinary vividness with which the problem presented itself to James, the haunting process of confronting in his mind, first American and European and then American and different national aspects of Europe must bring a reaction, sooner or later. His letters testify to the fact that such a point was reached by him about the time which is the limit between the earlier and the later James, the years that produced The Tragic Muse. But it was only for a short time. William Wetmore Story, The Wings of the Dove, The Ambassadors, The Golden Bowl, The Sense of the Past and The Ivory Tower show that his first serious problem was his last. And their method shows that this problem was artistically the most impor-

tant one of his life. Without that splitting up of his consciousness effected by the contrast of American and European, the successful entering into the individual point of view of his creations, that power of so to speak acquiring the consciousness of another being, or person, to the elimination of his own--James's highest artistic achievement and his immense advance upon every other artist of his time, without that splitting up, it is difficult to imagine that the actual artist Henry James would have come into being. The perfect accordance of his work with his theory of the "point of view" is most easily understood in the light of his "double consciousness."

In The Ambassadors we have the same contrast between the cosmopolitan and the provincial, between the European and the American outlook, as we have had in the other works of Henry James mentioned in this paper. Strether's discovery of the open mind is his discovery of Europe. It is Europe that teaches him how many and how delicate considerations are involved in the solution of his problem--how much depends on facts and "values" not to be lightly determined in advance. And if it is Europe that stands here for the open mind, this Europe is more specifically embodied in the most cosmopolitan of cities.

It is one result of the method of James that his people seen to belong to their setting. It has had time to grow up about them; they have had time to take on the coloration of
their environment. Chad and Maria Gostrey and Little Bilham, as well as Gloriani and Madame de Vionnet, have quite the air of natives; and we are invited to behold the entire process of acclimatization of Lambert Strether.

During the ten years following his trip to Europe in 1872, James spent part of his time on one side of the water and part on the other, and the people in his stories followed in his footsteps. It was the period chiefly of his studies in comparative national psychology and manners. He not only shifted extremely American Americans, such as Christopher Newman, to Europe, so as to see how they might look and behave in Paris; but he also tested the behavior of some Europeanized Americans, when returned to the self-conscious simplicities of native American society. While most of his stories were concerned with these international comparisons, he did attempt some elaborate searching of undiluted American life; but such books as Washington Square and The Bostonians do not rank among his successes.

Mr. James, during these years, was convincing himself by conscientious experimentation that his point of view demanded European surroundings and chiefly a European material. At any rate, he finally took up his permanent residence abroad, and for twenty-two years he had not returned to his native country.

The fact must be constantly kept in mind that it was in London James took up his residence. His earlier stories were as
much, if not more, concerned with France and Italy as with England. Christopher Newman, like all good Americans in the seventies, went to Paris to live. Roderick Hudson, at the bidding of the prevalent preference for inspiration to technique, followed one of the roads that led to Rome. Daisy Miller had the Forum and St. Peter’s as the scenery for her colloquial exploits. In the beginning, Mr. James himself seems to have passed as much time on the continent as in England. Finally, however, the neighborhood of London became definitely his home; and the study of relief or contrast, more persistently his task. Even when the scene shifts to the continent, as it frequently does, English people, however, modified by the scenery, remain his subject matter; and though in *The Ambassadors*, he returns to his earlier study of the effect which Paris and a Parisian woman may have upon susceptible Americans, the liveliness of the effect is partly due to its novelty.

The expatriated American of the present day, even when he lives on the continent, takes on English characteristics; and the fact that Mr. James lived in England and wrote chiefly about its inhabitants, helped both to qualify and define his expatriation. He is, after all, not more than half divided from his native country. He is writing of a people whose language we use in our own way, whose literary traditions we have in some measure inherited, and of whom he may write and we may read with-
out any violent intellectual transposition. Of course, these very facts have in some cases only helped to Anglicize an American resident of London much more thoroughly than he could possibly have been Italianized in Rome; but no such disaster, at least so far as his work is concerned, has befallen Mr. James. He has taken what England had to give him. He has found the maturity of English life, its treasures of fully formed types, of fixed traditions and of domestic scenery, the incomparable social spectacle that it offers—he has found this all very much to his purpose. Yet this purpose is as alien to English as it is to American literature. It is nothing but his own purpose, his own conception; and Mr. James, in writing of Story, classes London with Boston or New York as a city in which an artist must "live with his conception." So, while it cannot be said that he has remained much of an American in London, at least he has not become, artistically speaking, much of an Englishman, and we may at least surmise that he has been more of an American in London than he would have been in New York.

The great fact about Mr. James is that wherever he lives, he is, above all, deliberately and decisively the individual artist. In England the American literary artist was allowed free personal expression, whereas in this country he was not. English life he could approach more sympathetically from his point of view, and he could handle it more saliently with his equipment.
and methods. The artist, as Mr. James sees him, is the man who seeks fullness of insight and perfection of form at any cost. Art is second only to religion in the sacrifices which it demands from its followers. What all artists need and what American artists can obtain only by some violence of behavior, is moral and mental detachment—the freedom from practical obligations which will compromise his work, the freedom from intellectual and social ties which will obscure his vision.

American life was in the making. Its social forms were confused and indefinite; its social types either local, or evasive, or impermanent. Its ideal of a democratic society in a democratic state was constantly present as an ideal, but mostly absent as a reality, offering a problem to be worked out rather than an achievement to be generalized and portrayed. Its intellectual interests are for the present subordinated to its moral, practical, and business interests. The atmosphere of its life is charged with activity and endeavor rather than with observation and reflection. The novelist who attempts to represent this life finds himself in a difficult situation. It is hard to reach or to maintain any sufficient intellectual concentration or detachment. He is himself generally caught up and whirled along by these powerful illusions, which strenuous Americans are trying to convert into realities. He becomes either a patriotic orator, masked as a novelist, or he confines
himself to the description of the social eddies which the flood of American life occasionally casts off to one side. In such a society the permanent aspects which a novelist may fix, tend to be, as the work of Mr. Howells shows, somewhat unimportant; and if the better American novelists are particularly deficient in the power of coherent, salient, and edifying thought, if they seem unable to compose large, powerful and vivid social pictures, the difficulty lies both with the material itself, and with the effect of their surroundings in diluting the blood of their intellectual purpose.

In abandoning his own country, Mr. James seems to have been driven by the logic of his choice to fasten his attention more exclusively than ever upon those social traits in which his countrymen, when at home, are most completely lacking. He instinctively, he consciously, referred the study of definite and mature social types. Although coming from the country of little leisure, Mr. James almost always portrays leisured people, or people in their leisured moments--men and women who have for one cause or another abandoned the day's work. They may not be rich; but if so they have either consented to their poverty, or are seeking wealth, as did Kate Croy, by devious and daring social diplomacy. They are not interested in trade, in politics, nor as a rule in ideas; but they are "wonderfully" interested in each other; and the only active working people who are admitted
to this set of economic parasites are the artists-- the people whose active work illuminates the play of social contrast, diplomacy, and adventure. Mr. James likes to arrange people of this kind in effective and significant background. It is a subtle, exciting, and finished social situation, which he isolates, analyzes, interprets, and composes, with his eyes fastened exclusively upon the psychological aesthetics of the people and the social aesthetics of their attitudes toward one another.

London is obviously much more in the shadow of this kind of social foliage than is New York or Boston. It contains a very large number of people, in good "society" and out, who would rather pursue interesting inquiries in human nature, or assume and watch interesting social attitudes than play the strenuous part. That there should be so many of these people in good "society," is in itself perhaps a sign of deterioration. This society has abandoned the solid distinction of aspect and behavior which it possessed in 1850, and Mr. James regretfully notes and even chronicles its loss of form; but the very contrast between its high memories and survivals and its present pursuit of the socially curious and remunerative person provides him with many an amusing situation. From this point of view, also, the value of these situations is enormously enhanced by the background of domestic scenery, partly historic and partly personal, which he can arrange around them. No writer of
historical or romantic stories has been more careful to give his fables an appropriate historical or emotional setting than has Henry James, to place his characters in houses and rooms which illuminate and intensify their personalities. He has given, indeed, a new value in the art of novel writing to domestic properties and scenery--to such an extent that a woman like Madame de Vionnet is as absolutely identified with her house and is as inconceivably apart from it as Meg Merrilies would be apart from Scottish moorland. Undoubtedly one of James's strongest reasons for preferring England to his own country is that, abroad, these finer proprieties of domestic life have had time to become authentic and definite. They are the creation of social position of personal leisure, of historic accumulation, and in our own country the historic accumulation is meager, social position vague and doubtful, and personal leisure almost a minus quality.

As a novelist, James had to deal with the vision and values of life as they appeared to him; and according to his moral outlook European life was life itself to the zenith, because more richly charged, more significantly composed, and more completely informed. He could not renounce this vision without intellectual degradation; yet he could not give it free rein in his native country.

Even in the early "international" novels we witness the transformation of Puritan morality, of which the sanction was
religious, into a kind of chivalry, of which the sanctions are individual taste and class loyalty. Madame de Mauves, the lovely American married to a philandering French husband in that charming little masterpiece which bears her name, is not exhibited as preserving her "virtue" when she rejects her lover; she is exhibited as preserving her fineness. Her American lover acquiesces in his dismissal not from any sudden pang of conscience, but from a sudden recognition that if she persists in his suit he will be doing precisely what the vulgar French world, and one vulgar spectator in particular, expect him to do. In the earlier novels such as "Madame de Mauves," Daisy Miller and The American, the straightness, the innocence, the firmness of the American conscience are played up as beauties against the European background. As early as 1876 James had begun his criticism of the intellectual dullness and emotional poverty of the New England sense of "righteousness"--a criticism wonderfully culminating in The Ambassadors (1903), in which the highly perceptive Strether, sent to France to reclaim an erring son of New England, is himself converted to the European point of view.

In William Wetmore Story and His Friends (1903), he analyzed the case of an American artist who, missing everything in America's ambient air, both what it contained and what it didn't, and turning therefore in aesthetic disgust a permanent back on his country, lacked enough sap drawn from his native
soil to survive transplantation. In the autobiographies and prefaces (and in the Letters) James gave us the case of an artist American enough, as Story was not, to take a natively developed vigor with him to Europe; and artist enough, as Hawthorne was not, to feel need of free range through other cultures and manners. Story, rooted neither in Salem nor Boston, in Italy branched and leaved in a dozen different directions but never flowered in one. The victim of mere beguilement, hag-ridden by a superstitious valuation of Europe, his career was "a sort of beautiful sacrifice to a noble mistake," the mistake being, all simply, "the frank consent to be beguiled." James, too much the artist not to miss what America didn't contain, but also too much the artist to miss anything and everything it did hold, turned only his literal back on his literal country. There are pages in plenty, in Notes of a Son and Brother, where the process of his realization both of his Americanism and of its high value to be is intimately disclosed. We can stand by, can watch it unfold. America minus Europe was Hawthorne's simple problem; as Europe minus America was Story's more complicated one.

In 1888 in a letter to William, Henry set down his conclusions on the relations between the two great English-speaking countries: they were more like than unlike, were but different chapters of the same general subject with which fiction could
magnificently deal under one great condition.

'I have not,' he wrote, 'the least hesi-
tation in saying that I aspire to write in such
a way that it would be impossible to an outsider
to say whether I am at a given moment an American
writing about England or an Englishman writing
about America (dealing as I do with both countries,)
and far from being ashamed of such an ambiguity I
should be exceedingly proud of it, for it would be
highly civilized.'

James has presented portrait after portrait in his
novels and short stories. The characters are more than types.
They are a whole society of typical individuals: they appear
with narrow aggressions and an insular nobility, a careless
honesty, a large and delicate purpose. This society of wander-
ing Americans was a provincial one, transcending provincialism
only by fine character. They offer a good indication of the
American character. In later years many other American writers
have followed James in the use of the international scene.

In James's later novels, the pattern of his earlier
novels are repeated. The pattern is the typical conflict be-
tween glamorous people who were also worldly and likely to be
wicked, and people of superior scruples who were likely to be
more or less homely. The former usually represent Europe and
the latter the United States. In these novels, it was sometimes
the Americans—as in The Portrait of a Lady—who were left with

——F. W. Dupee, op. cit., p. 136——
the moral advantage; sometimes—as in *The Europeans*—The Europeans. However, in the late novels it is usually the Americans who have the better of it from the moral point of view.

Henry James's visit to America in 1904 culminated in his *The American Scene*. He returned to this theme in his unfinished novel, *The Ivory Tower*. In *The Sense of the Past* he makes a young contemporary American go back into Eighteenth-century England. The question posed for us is: Is it the English of the past who are the ghosts or is it the American himself who is a dream? Which is real—America or Europe?

In the Americans of Henry James's later novels—the Milly Theales, the Lambert Strethers, the Maggie Ververs—he shows us all that was great, reviving, and human in the Americans at the beginning of the new century along with all that was frustrated, sterile, excessively refined and depressing.

Edmund Wilson in "The Ambiguity of Henry James" states that something tragic has happened to the Americans in James's later novels:

What has become of Christopher Newman? He is Lambert Strether now: he has been worn down by the factories of Woollett. And these Americans of the later novels—who still bring Europe the American sincerity—what has happened to them to make them so wan? Well, for one thing they have become very rich, and being rich is a terrible burden: in the process of getting rich, they have starved themselves spiritually at home; and now they are trying to get something for their money, they find that they have put themselves at
the mercy of all the schemers and adventurers of Europe.34

Perhaps from the critical viewpoint of the international theme James has indeed achieved the "ambiguity" of authorship he deliberately sought. So far as the characters and plot are concerned in The Ambassadors and the works mentioned, the author himself could be judged either as an American or European. As an artist he pictures the scene as it would appear without regard to the author's nationality. They are acceptable as authentic in probability or reality whether the reader sits in New York or London. His mastery of this kind of portrayal is the essence of his art. All is for the perfection of the picture—a perfection that leaves no question as to the author's intimate understanding of the exactness of the design.

34 F. W. Dupee, op. cit., p. 186.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

James's American characters come from a young and half-barbarous country seeking Europe's culture. What they find depends on themselves. If Europe has great treasures, so too America has its gift for the older world in its youth, sincerity, honest energies, generous instincts and innocence. The two worlds can never be divorced from one another. They are a part of a single whole and need each other. Their destinies are interdependent.

James was so preoccupied with this "international theme" that he used it throughout his lifetime of writing. This motif can be seen in his early, middle and later works illustrated in The Passionate Pilgrim, Daisy Miller, "Madame de Mauves, The Portrait of a Lady, Roderick Hudson, The Europeans, The Wings of the Dove, The Ambassadors, The Golden Bowl, The Ivory Tower and The Sense of the Past, other short stories and travel essays. His works demonstrate a growth in intensity of the theme with the maturing of the writer. This growth reached a climax in The Ambassadors by which time James's theme became more detailed, polished and subtle.

Historical events since his death have demonstrated the continuing significance of the theme even in the face of new
conflicts. We are still in conflict with the Old, but now face a new conflict in the ideology of Russia which historically both precedes and follows our own. The elements brought out by James relating to the international situation in the nineteenth century may well be applied to today's situation.

Henry James started abroad when he was very young and like others of his literary countrymen succumbed to the fascination of Europe. This spell reformed his whole intellectual and spiritual outlook. It demanded for its satisfaction the utmost refinement and completeness of form. That instinct was starved in America. Europe aroused it into happy and vigorous activity, the sense of which overflowed immediately in his work. He began to write about passionate pilgrims. His earlier works are peopled with young Americans who are famished by the artistic and intellectual dearth and disorder of their native land, and who do not reach their full growth until they have fed upon the ripe fruit of European art and history. All this was, of course, the reflex of his own experience, the benefit of which he did not and could not forego. It determined the form, the purpose, and the circumstances of his subsequent life and work.

Other Americans returned home after their European sojourn and took up their pre-established tasks. Europe became to them a sentimental association, a pensive memory, the subject for essays and histories, and even, as in the case of Cooper,
the standard whereby they in some measure estimated and criti-
cized American society. A robust and austere mind like that of
Emerson was strengthened by the experience, without being per-
turbed by the contrast; James Russell Lowell had a way that was
all his own of keeping his feet planted on both sides of the
water. It was the strength and the weakness of Henry James, how-
ever, that in his case both the experience and the dilemma which
issued from it were more critical. He could not be content with
writing about his pilgrimages merely as travelers' gossip, or of
translating it into art criticism or history; neither could he
unconcernedly resume his profession as novelist in this country,
with his subject matter and standards partly derived from Europe.
As a novelist, he must deal with the vision and values of life
as they appeared to him; and according to his moral outlook Euro-
life was life itself raised to a higher power, because more rich-
ly charged, more significantly composed, and more completely in-
formed. He could not renounce this vision without intellectual
mutilation; yet he could not give it free and sufficient ex-
pression in his native country.

Henry James's father and his early boyhood conditioned
him to become the portrayer of the international theme. The
activity constantly going on in the James's household--lectures;
conversations with ministers, poets, novelists, essayists; trips
to Boston, Newport, Europe--gave him an intellectual background.
Because James had been born in New York, and New York being the port to America where new ideas were first disseminated, he always had his eyes on Europe just across the waters. Naturally, he was not brought into close contact with America's expanding frontier, for he had been brought up as a gentleman and a scholar without having to work for money. He had no longing to find out what lay behind the frontier. His longing was for the "sense of the past." He was an omnivorous reader and when he first went to Europe he was delighted to discover that he could relate what he saw to what he had read. He liked to walk, as it were, in the footsteps of Italian artists, French and English authors.

In Europe he steeped himself in the Italian art museums, churches, the cities of Venice, Milan, Rome, Florence; the Louvre in France, the theater and artistic movements in writing; the countryside, cathedrals and cities of England.

How could one expect Henry James to present to the public ideas and stories of, say, the type written by Emerson, Bret Harte, Whitman or Howells? It just was not in his nature to do so. Even had he remained in America, he would not have been able to do justice to the American scene because his roots were cosmopolitan. And it is not true that he turned his back on America. In the novels and short stories dealing with the International theme, it is the Americans who triumph over Europe
and its heritage.

It would be interesting to conjecture what Henry James would have done in our time, especially if he went to Europe and took up the threads of his characters and followed them out—what would he have felt at the catastrophe which occurred during and after World War II?

There is a movement afoot in the East to modify the teaching of English literature in our schools in order to emphasize American literature instead. If that is to continue, it might be well for our high schools and colleges to use the work of Henry James as a focal point of study and interpretation.
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The thesis submitted by Eva May Baskoff has been read and approved by three members of the Department of English.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

Date ___________________________ Signature of Adviser ___________________________