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A comparative study on the "American innocence" issue: Henry James's *The American* and *Daisy Miller: A Study*

PORTO ALEGRE
2006

UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DO RIO GRANDE DO SUL
INSTITUTO DE LETRAS
PROGRAMA DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM LETRAS
LITERATURAS DE LÍNGUA INGLESA

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Dissertação submetida à Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul
para obtenção do grau de Mestre em Letras
na ênfase Literaturas de Língua Inglesa

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Porto Alegre
2006

Agradecimentos

Profa. Dra. Patrícia Lessa Flores da Cunha, pela dedicação e apoio na orientação desta dissertação.

Aos professores e colegas que, de forma direta ou indireta, contribuíram para a realização desta pesquisa.

RESUMO

Esta dissertação aborda a questão da “inocência americana” em duas obras do escritor norte-americano Henry James, empregando conceitos da Literatura Comparada como base para a análise dos textos escolhidos: *The American* e *Daisy Miller: A Study*. Portanto, os conceitos de intertextualidade, influência e alteridade são fundamentais para o estabelecimento das confluências e divergências entre as duas obras. Este trabalho também apresenta uma análise, com base na teoria comparatista da interdisciplinaridade, entre a obra literária *Daisy Miller: A Study* e o filme *Daisy Miller*, dirigido por Peter Bogdanovich. O tema recorrente nas obras analisadas, o da “inocência americana”, foi abordado por Henry James em grande parte de sua produção literária, sendo um reflexo de sua própria experiência como o “outro”, bem como de suas observações sobre seus compatriotas, quando confrontados com os valores e tradições vigentes na Europa, no século XIX. James alcançou seu merecido lugar no cânone literário ocidental, graças ao seu estilo incomparável, o qual foi aperfeiçoando durante toda sua carreira e até hoje é parâmetro para escritores contemporâneos.

Palavras-chave: Henry James, Peter Bogdanovich, *The American*, *Daisy Miller,* inocência americana, intertextualidade, interdisciplinaridade.

ABSTRACT

This thesis approaches the "American innocence" issue in two works of the North-American writer Henry James by using some concepts of Comparative Literature as base to the analysis of the chosen texts: *The American* and *Daisy Miller: A Study*. Therefore, the concepts of intertextuality, influence and alterity are vital to establish the confluences and divergences between the analyzed works. This work also presents an analysis, based on the interdisciplinary theory, between the literary work *Daisy Miller: A Study* and the film directed by Peter Bogdanovich, *Daisy* Miller. The recurrent theme in the analyzed works, the American innocence, was approached by Henry James in most part of his literary production, being a reflex of his own experience as the "other", and his observations on his countrymen, when confronted with the values and traditions in vigor in the nineteenth-century Europe. Henry James has achieved his place on the Western literary canon, due to his incomparable writing style, which he had improved through his career and still today is a reference to contemporary writers.

Key words: Henry James, Peter Bogdanovich, *The American, Daisy Miller*, American innocence, intertextuality, interdisciplinarity.

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INTRODUCTION

Try to be one of the people on whom nothing is lost!

Henry James
The Portrait of a Lady

The first contact I had with Henry James's fiction was the reading of his novel *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881). His narrative called my attention because of the main character Isabel Archer, the young American girl who advances towards experiencing of life in Europe. At that time, I was not aware of the recurrence of James's "international theme" in his novels and short stories, and also of the fact he was considered, by many critics, the master in portraying American women through the issue of American naïveté against European tradition. Another detail that called my attention was his amazing prose style and the way he portrayed the true substance of human relationships.

I started looking for other works by James, and the more I read the more I understood the relevance of his legacy. As I have always appreciated the late nineteenth and the early twentieth-century literature, especially the gloomy novels written by James's contemporaries, such as Thomas Hardy, Gustave Flaubert, Emile Zola and others, my contact with James's work was rewarding.

It is a common sense among critics that Henry James is one of the most important writers in both American and English literature. Many consider James to be the master of the psychological novel, and his influence on the twentieth-century literature is undisputed. An expatriate in London from 1876 to his death (he became a British citizen in 1915), James wrote about European-American and male-female relationships, creating some of the most sophisticated, complex prose in his work.

Major writers, such as Virginia Woolf, Joseph Conrad, T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound and Graham Greene, agreed that he was one of the greatest writers of his time. Graham Greene is, in my opinion, the one who best summarizes the importance of Henry James to the English novel, in his unequivocal tribute: "He is as solitary in the history of the novel as Shakespeare in the history of poetry".[1]

James's career as a writer is usually divided in three stages: early, middle and mature. The works of his early period deal with his thoughts and feelings as an American living in Europe. James's middle to late prose style is frequently marked by long, digressive sentences and highly descriptive passages that defer the verb for a longer space than it is usual. His prose style is the strongest characteristic in his work. It became, through his career, increasingly complex, marked in its late stages by long sentences with elaborate syntax.

According to Daniel Mark Fogel[2], despite the many distinct phases through which James developed as an artist, some elements in his work remain constant, foremost among them the thematic keynote sounded so clearly in *Daisy Miller*, as Ezra Pound put it, "... of the major James, of the hater of tyranny, the champion of human liberty, personal liberty, the

[1] GREENE , Graham. *Henry James: The Private* Universe. In: AUCHARD, John. *The Portable Henry James*. New York: Penguin, 2004, p. 605.
[2] FOGEL, Daniel Mark. *Daisy Miller: A Dark Comedy of Manners.* Massachusetts: Twayne, 1990, p. 6.

rights of the individual against all sorts of intangible bondage! There was passion in James's love of personal liberty, …".[3]

By 1875, American writers were moving toward realism in literature. The most prominent names were William Dean Howells, Mark Twain, Rebecca Hardy Davis and Henry James. Howells created the first theory for American realism. He had important followers and was also a friend and a supporter of Mark Twain and Henry James. Under his ideas, realism became the mainstream of American literature. He felt that romantic literary works created false views about life. Unlike some realists that became naturalists in the 1890s, James was not interested in business, politics or the conditions of society. His realism was a special kind of psychological one. The novels and tales written during his early period belong to his realistic phase.

In 1877, James published *The American*, his second novel in book form. The novel received favorable criticism, but did not achieve remarkable success at that time. In 1878, *Daisy Miller: A Study* was published in *Cornhill Magazine*[4]. Pirated editions published in America became best-sellers. The tale established James's fame in the United States and England and made him a celebrity. John Auchard affirms that: "Some of the works James wrote before *Daisy Miller* have by now been long established as classics of American literature (notably *The American*), but none of them had had – or have had since – such astonishing success with the public".[5]

These two novels have in common one of the most recurrent themes in James's works, his so-called "international theme". Most of his novels and tales involve their protagonists in

[3] POUND apud FOGEL, op. cit., p. 6.
[4] The *Cornhill Magazine* was founded by George Smith in 1860. The first editor was William Makepeace Thackeray and the journal specialized in the serialization of novels. This included the work of Anthony Trollope, Elizabeth Gaskell, George Elliot, Henry James and Thomas Hardy. The journal ceased publication in 1975.
[5] AUCHARD, John (ed). *The Portable Henry James*. New York: Penguin Books, 2004, p.2.

new situations and unprecedented dilemmas, created by American heroes' and heroines' immersion in European manners, culture and civilization, which led them to new perceptions so profound that their selves are transformed. James did not invent the international novel, but he made it recognizably his own turf. "From *Daisy Miller* on, American, English and European readers looked on Henry James as the master of the novel of international contrasts".[6]

The American and *Daisy Miller* have in common James's approach on the American innocence, that is, the confrontation between American modernity and European tradition. The issue of "innocence" in James's works, refers to a state of unknowing, where one's experience is less than that of one's peers, in either a relative view to social peers, or by an absolute comparison to a more common normative scale.The main characters in the analyzed works, Christopher Newman and Daisy Miller, are victims of a system of conventions that they neither appreciate nor understand, caused by their lack of experience.

The approach to the American innocence issue is not the same in the analyzed works. In *The American*, Christopher Newman embodies the innocent American, deceived and betrayed by a traditional French family. Daisy Miller is the embodiment of the free spirit unable to understand and to deal with the European entrapping world. Unlike Newman, Daisy is not deceived and betrayed by Europeans; her own decision in behaving the way she believes one has the right to do leads her towards an unhappy ending.

In some cases, the term "innocence" connotes a pejorative meaning, where an assumed level of experience dictates common discourse, or baseline qualifications for entry into another, different, social experience. Since experience is the prime factor in a point of

[6] Ibid., p. 3.

view, innocence is often also used to connote an state of ignorance, or lack of personal experience. By considering the main characters' trajectory, and their reactions to the conservative European society, one of the aims of this dissertation is to determine whether the term "innocence", in the analyzed works, connotes a state of ignorance or a pejorative meaning.

As both works deal with the same subject, but with different approaches, a literary study is very appropriate, considering that there is an intertextual relation between the texts. The study will be made based on some concepts of Comparative Literature, taking into account that the fields of English Language Literatures and Comparative Literature are extremely related, for, sooner or later, every scholar of culture, language or foreign literature, will develop a comparatist approach in his work. Therefore, the use of some comparative concepts is indispensable to the development of my investigations.

One of these indispensable concepts is the notion of intertextuality. The semiotic notion of intertextuality was introduced by Julia Kristeva in 1969, and it is associated primarily with poststructuralist theorists, such as Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault. Kristeva declared that "every text is from the outset under the jurisdiction of other discourses which impose a universe on it".[7] She argued that, rather than confining our attention to the structure of a text, we should study its "structuration" (how the structure came into being).

In this respect, Michel Foucault, when discussing the unities of discourse, explains that

> *The frontiers of a book are never clear-cut: beyond the title, the first lines, and the last full stop, beyond its internal configuration and its autonomous form, it*

[7] Cited in CULLER, Jonathan. *The Pursuit of Signs: Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981, p. 105.

> *is caught up in a system of references to other books, other texts, other sentences: it is a node within a network. […] The book is not simply the object that one holds in one's hands; and it cannot remain within the little parallelepiped that contains it: its unity is variable and relative.*[8]

Comparative Literature has grown a relevant status in the field of literary studies, and, for that, it has been reevaluated and discussed. Tania Franco Carvalhal, in her *Literatura Comparada* (2004), reconstructs the Comparative Literature path by contrasting the classical and the new theory. For it is vital to choose the correct comparative approach to analyze the texts, Tania Franco Carvalhal's study will enlighten this work.

As important as Tania Franco Carvalhal's work in the Comparative Literature scenery, Sandra Nitrini has also stated relevant opinions in this area. In her *Literatura Comparada: História, Teoria e Crítica* (1997), she discusses the methods and objects of Comparative Literature under the light of the major theories that have been contributing to the evolution of the comparative studies. Sandra discusses the origin of the concept of intertextuality and its reflex in the comparative field. Her fundamental analysis will give both theoretical and critic support to the development of this thesis.

The aim of this work is to undertake a comparative study between two works from the same author - a novel and a tale –, from the same period, with the same subject, but with different approaches, considering the American innocence issue as the main topic.

While developing my studies, I was moved to discuss a new approach, that of film studies, carrying out an interdisciplinary analysis between Henry James's *Daisy Miller* and Peter Bogdanovich's *Daisy Miller*, the latter a film released in 1974. Such an adaptation

[8] FOUCAULT, Michel. *The Archeology of Knowledge*. London: Tavistok, 1974, p. 23.

received great attention from the critics in general, and still today it has been an object of studies and articles, a "cult" film, as it is often said.

As I will be dealing with two different areas of knowledge, I have to consider the studies that have been carried out in this interdisciplinary area. Interdisciplinary studies arise from a shared conviction that, sometimes, the traditional disciplines are unable or unwilling to address an important problem. Very often, different disciplines, or rather, different languages such as literature and films, have been working together in pursuit of common goals.

A comparison between *Daisy Miller*, the film, and *Daisy Miller*, the tale, will be made by looking for the confluences and divergences in the respective author's approach on the American innocence issue.

Another fundamental concept to the development of this study is the notion of alterity. During great part of his life, James was an outsider, both in America and in Europe. The characters Christopher Newman and Daisy Miller were outsiders in Europe as James was; James also became an outsider, or the "other", in America later, for he lived a long time abroad. The concept of the "other" has its origins in the early nineteenth-century, with the German philosopher Hegel, who stated that: "Each consciousness pursues the death of the other"[9], meaning that in seeing separateness between the self and the other, a feeling of alienation is created. Nowadays, alterity, has been the term coined to embrace all the studies concerning the "other". Important philosophers and scholars, such as Tzvetan Todorov, Emanuel Levinas and Octavio Paz, have been working in this area, analyzing the processes by which societies and cultures exclude particular people on account of their "otherness".

[9] BEISER, Frederick C. *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

In the first part of this thesis, I will be dealing with the American innocence issue, the base for this comparative study. Therefore, in Chapter 1, I will discuss the relevance of the "international theme" on James's life and works, by pointing out in what manner his own experience led him to work with this subject almost throughout his entire career. For that, it is vital to study and to discuss the historical contextualization of American and European scenery from the late nineteenth and the early twentieth-century, considering that the Civil War and the Second Industrial Revolution have changed the United States politically, economically and socially, while Europe has remained attached to the old social values, which resulted in a cultural shock between Americans and Europeans.

The changes that had taken place in the United States brought a new reality; many writers' growth of sociological interests and aversion to "melodrama", moved them towards realism in literature. In this respect, I will discuss some aspects of realism, considering that James's early works were influenced by this special kind of psychological realism.

Relevant theoretical concepts, such as intertextuality, interdisciplinarity, alterity and influence, which prove extremely useful for the analysis of the chosen texts, under a comparative light, will be discussed in Chapter 2.

In Chapter 3 and 4, I will analyze, respectively, James's *The American* and *Daisy Miller: A Study*; their relevance in James's career and his approach on the American innocence issue in these works. To reveal the way James managed to portray the American innocence issue in the characters Christopher Newman and Daisy Miller, I will analyze their trajectory and the reflex of their "innocence" in their lives.

After analyzing Henry James's literary works and Peter Bogdanovich's film, that are the base for this literary study, I will present, in Chapter 5, the result of my comparative analysis, which is the purpose of this thesis.

To enter Henry James's fictional world is not only to read and analyze his works, but to be enlightened on the complexity of two different worlds – America and Europe. The American innocence issue, portrayed by James in *The American* and *Daisy Miller*, may seem as a reflex of his own experiences as the "other", in his own country and the country he chose to live in.

1 THE INTERNATIONAL THEME

1.1 The relevance of the “international theme”

In his early novels and tales, James’s most recurrent theme is his so-called “international theme”, referring to the impact of European culture on Americans living or traveling abroad. John Auchard reminds us that, in his works, James takes what is best in the American characters – and his Americans can have remarkable vigor and freshness – and he attempts to merge it with the great European achievements. It is with such an ambition that James sweeps his generally appealing Americans over the sea, and then makes them – amiable people who love their liberty – squint hard into the complicating mists of history. For much of his life, Henry James himself was an expatriate, an outsider living in Europe. This feeling of being an American in Europe may have determined this recurring issue in his books, which contrasted American innocence (or a certain lack of sophistication) with European sophistication (or sense of decadence).

Richard A. Hocks points out the importance of James’s international fiction. He defines “the international novel” as the subject that deals with the conflict of confrontation of

American characters with the labyrinth of European culture. According to him,

> *James's international fiction can be thought of as the "second frontier" in our literary history: at the time it sensed the completion of the westward settlement, the American psychic instinctively began to gravitate back toward its European "memory". The international theme – or, more accurately in James, the international subject – is prominent in his early period, tends to disappear in the middle period, and reappears with great complexity in his late period or major phase. […] In general, however, I believe James's international subject transposes imaginatively into the deep and archetypal paradigms of innocence and experience, nature and art, the ethical and aesthetic consciousness, freedom and determinism. James's international fiction, in short, often recapitulates the deep structure of universal polar or dialectical themes.*[10]

Van Wyck Brooks and Otto L. Bettmann explain the reasons that led several nineteenth-century writers to move to Europe, and report their experiences as Americans living abroad. They point out that the atmosphere of the new generation, the rush for money and the corruption that were taking place in America, repelled the imaginative mind. The old culture had broken down, the old causes were dead and forgotten, and no new ideal had arisen to rally the minds of the younger men; and while many turned westward, almost as many turned towards Europe, in despair of the kind of civilization they saw before them. "Of these, the younger Henry James was the great exemplar in years to come; but there were numbers of others, from New England and elsewhere, who also sought for haunts of ancient peace".[11]

> *For most writers, the question of facing the new America, with its worship of "bigness" and numbers, seemed overwhelming. Incapable of creating new aesthetic patterns out of this native chaos, many American writers closed their minds to America and its patterns. […] They agreed with Matthew Arnold that for the artist there was no room in a country where 'the sky was of brass and iron'. Henry James' yearning for Europe had the same motive; to forget America, - as for many other sentient artists and writers, the drama of Europe in American breasts remained a central problem.*[12]

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[10] HOCKS, Richard A. *Henry James: A Study of the Short Fiction*. Boston: Twayne: 1990, p. 5.
[11] BROOKS, Van Wyck; BETTMANN, Otto L. *Our Literary Heritage: a Pictorial History of the Writer in America*. New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, 1956, p. 164.
[12] Ibid., p. 164.

There were many artists and writers who were repelled by the tumultuous air of the New America. They hankered for the repose of an imaginary England. Nonetheless, many Americans, once they had arrived there, felt their heart tremble over the question of what the English thought of them, and whether they would be accepted as social equals. As a result, many of the young writers returned from Europe after a stay of a few months or years, prompted by their essential Americanism, with all that this implied in regard of the old world. William Dean Howells and Mark Twain, the Western writers, were among those who took the feeling that America, at its lowest reach, was better than Europe; but even Henry James confusedly shared it.

James sustained his position as an expatriate in his subtle study *Hawthorne* (1879), which contained a vivid account of the defects of American culture. In doing so, he wrote his famous accusation of provincialism against the entire American nation: "Certain national types are essentially and intrinsically provincial"[13], he answered to Howells's comment that it is no more provincial for an American to be very American than for an Englishman to be very English. If James, during these acclimatizing years, reflected almost constantly upon the "international situation" it was because he stood in that situation himself.

The "international theme" issue worried James all his life, as his writings, both fictional and non-fictional, have demonstrated. In his *Notebooks*, he recorded:

> *No European writer is called upon to assume that terrible burden, and it seems hard that I should be. The burden is necessarily greater for an American – for he must deal, more or less, even if only by implication, with Europe; whereas no European is obliged to deal in the least with America.*[14]

[13] VAN DOREN, Carl. *The American Novel*. New York: Macmillan, 1921, p. 5.
[14] MATHIESSEN, F.O. and MURDOCK, K.B., (eds.).*The Notebooks of Henry James*. Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1981, p. 24.

To summarize James's feelings in relation to his situation as an expatriate is very proper to cite Robert M. Crunden's comment when analyzing *The Portrait of a Lady*:

> *Em meados da década de 1880, James tinha, claramente, chegado a conclusões quanto ao seu nascimento como americano e quanto ao seu ambiente europeu. E achou ambos deficientes. Os americanos eram inocentes e pensavam que eram livres. Os europeus estavam aprisionados na sua cultura e não mais eram capazes de exercer a livre vontade ou de criar uma nova arte.*[15]

1.2 Historical Contextualization

According to Warner Berthoff[16]**,** the Civil War radically changed the pace of economic and social changes in the United States, but minds changed slowly. Over the years between the Civil War and the First World War, a sense of small-town security and of an idyllic past coexisted with booming industrialization, the triumph of commercialized farming at the expense of the yeoman-farmer ideal, vast migrations from Europe and from the country to the city, the emergence of new fortunes and new slums, on a scale never dreamed before. But rampant industrialization and urbanization, which benefited a few capitalists and entrepreneurs, also resulted in harsh living conditions for many, especially farmers who were pushed off their lands by the workings of monopolistic economic practices, whereby a few businessmen, who controlled profitable industries, were able to become "captains of

[15] CRUNDEN, Robert M. *Uma breve História da Cultura Americana*. Trad. de Álvaro de Sá. Rio de Janeiro: Nórdica, 1990, p. 195.
Translation: "In the mid 1880's, James had clearly got to conclusions about his birth and about his European environment. And he felt both deficient. Americans were innocent and thought they were free. Europeans were imprisoned in their culture and no longer were capable of exercising the free will of creating a new art". (Translation mine)

[16] BERTHOFF, Warner. *The Ferment of Realism: American literature 1884-1919*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

industry." Writers such as Upton Sinclair were critical about urban life, comparing cities to jungles where only the strong and lucky would survive.

As we can apprehend from the article "Reconstruction"[17], from 1865 to about 1900, the U.S. became the world's leading industrial nation, witnessing meteoric expansion in the pace and scale of production. The availability of land; the diversity of climate and the corollary economic diversity; the ample presence of navigable canals, rivers and coastal waterways that filled the transportation needs of the emerging industrial economy; and the abundance of natural resources fostered the cheap extraction of energy, fast transport, and the availability of capital that powered this Second Industrial Revolution.

As a result of this industrial revolution, big fortunes were being made by self-made men, who arose from the low class or did not come from the once traditional families. On the other hand, the life of a nineteenth-century U.S. industrial worker was far from easy. Even in good times, wages were low, hours long and working conditions hazardous. Little of the wealth generated went to the proletariat. The situation was worse for women and children, who made up a high percentage of the work force in some industries, and often received but a fraction of the wages a man could earn. Periodic economic crises swept the nation, further eroding industrial wages and producing high levels of unemployment. At the same time, the technological improvements, which added so much of the nation's productivity, continually reduced the demand for skilled labor. Yet the unskilled labor pool was constantly growing, as unprecedent number of immigrants – 18 million between 1880 and 1910 – entered the country, eager for work.

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[17] BLAINE, James. "Reconstruction" (This article incorporates public domain text from *Twenty Years of Congress: From Lincoln to Garfield. With a review of the events which led to the political revolution of 1860*, by James Blaine. Available at <http://www.reference.com/browse/wiki/History_of_the_United_States_(1865-1918)>. Accessed on Sept. 05, 2005.

At the end of the Civil War, a few writers started to be concerned with the literary representation of such a reality. Consequently, realism began as a reaction to romanticism, in which subjects were treated idealistically. Indeed, realists tended to discard theatrical drama and classical forms of art to depict commonplace or realistic themes.

> *Before the Civil War and industrialization, workers, the poor, vagrants, and unheroic soldiers were rarely the subjects of fiction. But changes in the marketplace, most notably in the publishing industry, altered this scenery. Newspapers became important spaces to disseminate political, social, and cultural ideas. Many writers, including Ambrose Bierce, Stephen Crane, Frank Norris, Mark Twain, Theodore Dreiser, and William Dean Howells began their careers as journalists. […] As American writers began to fight with the particularities of their nation, from the 1830s to the end of the century, realism became an important issue on the American literary aesthetics. Many writers fought with the "crisis of representation" – the notion that a gap exists between the literary representation and that which is being represented. Edith Wharton, for example, combined particularities with satire, reflecting more on human consciousness than on the settings or furnishings. On the other hand, Henry James and Mark Twain understood language as an interpretation of the real, rather than the real thing itself.*[18]

George Parsons Lathrop, in his article "Novel and its Future" observes that

> *Realism sets itself at work to consider characters and events, which are apparently the most ordinary and uninteresting, in order to extract from these their full value and true meaning. It would apprehend, in all particulars, the connection between the familiar and the extraordinary, and the seen and unseen of human nature. Beneath the deceptive cloak of outwardly uneventful days, it detects and endeavors to trace the outlines of the spirits that are hidden there; to measure the changes in their growth, to watch the symptoms of moral decay or regeneration, to fathom their histories of passionate or intellectual problems. In short, realism reveals. Where we thought nothing was worth of notice, it shows everything to be full of significance.*[19]

The most prominent name on the rising of realism was William Dean Howells, considered a great observer of America. As editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*[20] and of *Harper'*

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[18] BAYM, Nina. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*. Available at http://www.wwnorton.com/naal/Vol_C/welcome.htm. Accessed on Sept. 05, 2005.

[19] LATHROP, George Parsons. 'The Novel and its Future," *Atlantic Monthly* 34 (September 1874):313 24. Available at <http://www.wsu.edu/~campbelld/amlit/realism.htm>. Accessed on Sept. 5, 2005.

[20] The *Atlantic Monthly* (also known as *The Atlantic*) is an American literary/cultural magazine founded in Boston in 1857 by a group of writers that included Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr., and James Russell Lowell (who would become its first editor). Originally a

New Monthly Magazine[21], Howells promoted writers of realism as well as those writing local color fiction. He defined realism as nothing more and nothing less than the truthful treatment of material. Everett Carter observes that

> *The basic axiom of the realistic view of morality was that there could be no moralizing in the novel [. . .]. The morality of the realists, then, was built upon what appears a paradox--morality with an abhorrence of moralizing. Their ethical beliefs called, first of all, for a rejection of scheme of moral behavior imposed, from without, upon the characters of fiction and their actions. Yet Howells always claimed for his works a deep moral purpose. What was it? It was based upon three propositions: that life, social life as lived in the world Howells knew, was valuable, and was permeated with morality; that its continued health depended upon the use of human reason to overcome the anarchic selfishness of human passions; that an objective portrayal of human life, by art, will illustrate the superior value of social, civilized man, of human reason over animal passion and primitive ignorance.*[22]

The enduring friendship between James and Howells, his first editor, began in 1866 and was nurtured by many interests beyond that of the novel; Howells also had a passion for travel, and especially for France. An exchange of letters with Ivan Turgenev, himself an expatriate in Paris, gained James an introduction to Flaubert's circle of writers – Zola, Daudet, Goncourt, Maupassant, Turgenev and others. James started writing *The American* in 1875, at the time he was in Paris, delighting in the art and companionship of Turgenev, but yet feeling somewhat excluded from French society. As he explained to Howells in 1876, "My subject was: an American letting the insolent foreigner goes, out of his good nature, after the insolent foreigner had wronged him".[23]

As Donald Pizer notes in his introduction to *The Cambridge Companion to American Realism and Naturalism: Howells to London*[24], the term realism is difficult to define, in part because it is used differently in European contexts than in American literature. Pizer suggests

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monthly publication, the magazine subscribed to by 425.000 readers, now publishes ten times a year and features articles in the field of political science and foreign affairs, as well as book reviews.

[21] *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* is an American journal of literature, politics and arts published continuously from 1850.

[22] CARTER, Everet. *Howells and the Age of Realism*. Philadelphia: Lippincot, 1954, p. 157.

[23] *American Literature*, vol. 64, n. 3, September 1992.

[24] PIZER, Donald. *The Cambridge Companion to American Realism and Naturalism: Howells to London*. New York: Cambridge U.P., 1995.

that whatever was being produced in fiction during the 1870s and 1880s that was new, interesting, and roughly similar in a number of ways can be designated as realism, and that an equally new, interesting, and roughly similar body of writing produced at the turn of the century can be designated as naturalism. In American literature, the term realism encompasses the period of time from the Civil War to the turn of the century during which several major writers produced fiction devoted to accurate representation and an exploration of American lives in various contexts.

At the same time, the Second Industrial Revolution was taking place in the United States, and new fortunes were being made by former low class workers; social and political situation was also changing in Europe. After the defeat of the revolutionary France, the other great European powers tried to restore the situation which existed before 1789. However, their efforts were unable to stop the spread of the insurgent movements; the middle classes had been deeply influenced by the ideals of democracy of the French revolution. The Industrial Revolution brought important economical and social changes; the lower class started to be influenced by Socialist, Communist and Anarchist ideas (especially those summarized by Karl Marx in the Manifesto of the Comunist Party). The nineteenth-century also saw the British Empire emerge as the world's first global power due, in a large part, to the Industrial Revolution and the victory in the Napoleonic Wars.

As a consequence of the Industrial Revolution, many noble families lost their economical power and were struggling to keep their properties and to go on living in the same pompous way of life. As a matter of fact, they despised the American *noveau riches* and the way they behaved when traveling in Europe.

1.3 The American Myth

The myth of the "American innocence" is closely related to the need Americans felt to be free of European ascendancy. Americans wanted to achieve their own identity through the emergence of their peculiar and distinctive dialogue.

R. W. B. Lewis explains that, during the second quarter of the nineteenth-century, the chief intellectual spokesmen in America – novelists and poets, as well as essayists, critics, historians and preachers – appear to have entered into just such a lively and creative dialogue. Whatever they may have been talking about, all interested people seem invariably to have been talking about the same subject. "Among the terms and ideas that turned up most frequently in the debate were: innocence, novelty, experience, sin, time, evil, hope, the present, memory, the past, tradition".[25] The dialogue that emerged among American writers and speakers, from 1820 onward, was one effort to define the American character and the life worth living.

America was a new country, without cultural roots and intellectual experience. Because of narrative deals with experiences, the newborn American man was considered "innocent"; a new man without inherited inttelectual content, free to find his path in history. If on the one hand, this new man was free, on the other hand, he lacked experience and did not know how to deal with the descendants of his ancestors in the other side of the Atlantic.

Lewis traces, in his book, the emergence of the American myth and the dialogue in which it was formed by analysing the works of major writers and thinkers from Emerson to Saul Bellow. He explains that the American myth was not fashioned ultimately by a single

[25] LEWIS, R. W. B. *The American Adam: Innocence, Tragedy and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1955, p. 2.

man of genius. “It was and it has remained a collective affair; it must be pieced together out of an assortment of essays, orations, poems, stories, histories and sermons”.[26] The American myth saw life and history as just beginning. “It described the world as starting up again under fresh initiative, in a divinely granted second chance for the human race, after the first chance had been so disastrously fumbled in the darkening Old World”.[27]

When explaining the American hero of the new adventure, Lewis states that he should be

> *... an individual emancipated fron history, happily bereft of ancestry, untouched and undefiled by the usual inheritances of family and race; an individual standing alone, self-reliant and self-propelling, ready to confront whatever awaited him with the aid of his own unique and inherent resources. It was not surprising, in a Bible-reading generation, that the new hero (in praise or disapproval) was most easily identified with Adam before the Fall. Adam was the first, the archetypal man. His moral position was prior to experience, and in his very newness he was fundamentally innocent.*[28]

These were the first impulses that begot the myth. The ideal of the newborn innocence was both rejoiced and deplored. Henry James Senior wanted to enrich the discussion on the Adamic condition by educating his listeners to the value of tragedy, for, as he said: “Life flowers and fructifies out of the profoundest tragic depths”.[29] It was the tragedy inherent in the new American hero’s innocence and newness that established the pattern for American fiction.

As America had no past, but only a present and a future, the national and hence the individual conscience was clear. This feeling is strongly present in the works of Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman and their followers and imitators. The key term in their vocabulary was

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[26] Ibid., p. 4.
[27] Ibid., p. 5.
[28] Ibid., p. 5.
[29] Ibid., p. 6.

"innocence". Some thinkers, such as the elder Henry James, were characterized by a tragic optimism.

The discussion on the American innocence, or lack of experience, has only recently tended to die away, for now there has been experience in America. "The dismissal of the past has been only too efective: America, since the age of Emerson, has been persistently a one-generation culture".[30] The vision of innocence and the claim of newness were almost perilously misleading. The illusion of the freedom from the past led to a more real relation to the continuing tradition. The vision of innocence stimulated a positive and original sense of tragedy. Without the illusion, we are conscious no longer of tradition, but merely with a sterile awareness of evil uninvigorated by a sense of loss.

The illusion of the freedom and the vision of innocence are both present in the works of Henry James. Daisy Miller's illusion of freedom from the values of the Old World caused her only tragedy, which makes us reflect upon the difficulties in breaking-up with the burden of tradition. Christopher Newman's innocent lack of cultural vision caused him a great loss.

Another vision on the American innocence issue is given by Susan Sontag, when explaining the roots of the conflicts between America and Europe:

> *There has always been a latent antagonism between Europe and America, one at least as complex and ambivalent as that between parent and child. America is a neo-European country and, until the last few decades, was largely populated by European peoples. And yet it is always the differences between Europe and America that have struck the most perceptive European observers: Alexis de Tocqueville, who visited the young nation in 1831 and returned to France to write Democracy in America, still, some hundred and seventy years later, the best book about my country, and D.H. Lawrence, who, eighty years ago, published the most interesting book ever written about American culture, his influential, exasperating Studies in Classic American Literature, both understood that America, the child of Europe, was becoming, or had become, the antithesis of Europe. Rome and Athens. Mars and Venus. The authors of recent popular tracts promoting the idea of an inevitable clash of interests and values between Europe and America did not invent*

[30] Ibid., p. 9.

> *these antitheses. Foreigners brooded over them --- and they provide the palette, the recurrent melody, in much of American literature throughout the 19th century, from James Fenimore Cooper and Ralph Waldo Emerson to Walt Whitman, Henry James, William Dean Howells, and Mark Twain. American innocence and European sophistication; American pragmatism and European intellectualizing; American energy and European world-weariness; American naïveté and European cynicism; American good-heartedness and European malice; American moralism and the European arts of compromise --- you know the tunes.*[31]

America based its freedom from European influence on undermining the Old Continent values. "You can never have a new thing without breaking an old", Lawrence wrote. "Europe happened to be the old thing. America should be the new thing. The new thing is the death of the old".[32] The past was Europe, and America was founded on the idea of breaking with the past. American democracy implies repudiating Europe, for the latter has always been a menace to the "American way of life". If on the one hand, Europeans have always admired Americans for their energy, on the other hand, they have always despised them for being "barbarians". In the nineteenth-century, their "barbarism" lay in their manners; nowadays it lies in its mercantilist biases of culture.

Americans have been crossing the Atlantic, in the last two centuries, to keep in touch and to admire the wonders of the Old Continent, but the citizens of the richest and most powerful nation in history are still regarded, by many Europeans, as crude, boorish and uncultivated. For minorities of the privileged, Europe has been the great escape for generations of Americans seeking culture. America, in its turn, has been the great escape for Europeans looking for the liberating ambiance of a colony where one can throw off the restrictions and high-culture burdens of "back home". Susan Sontag recalls being told by a

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[31] SONTAG, Susan. *Literature is Freedom*. (The Friedenspreis des Deutschen Buchhandels acceptance speech to the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade). 16 November, 2003. Available at <http://www.digitalsouls.com/articles/print.php/14>. Accessed on September 24, 2005.
[32] Ibid.

German film-maker, living at the time in San Francisco, that he loved being in the States "because you don't have any culture here".[33]

America returns, decade after decade, with the same pain and amazement to the same conflicts and discoveries. "The temper which despised memory not unnaturally fostered a habit of forgetfulness, and writers who even forgot that there was anything to remember have found themselves remote alike from their predecessors and their contemporaries".[34] In losing the childlike cheerfulness of writers such as Emerson and Whitman, we also lose the profound tragic understanding of Hawthorne, Melville or James.

The issue of American innocence was brought up again in 2001, after the terrorist attack of which the United States was victim. Many people agree that, from September 11 on, Americans have lost their "innocence" (or the slight portion they still had), for they were attacked in their own territory. The feeling of being a safe and intangible country collapsed with the two towers. Americans' innocence was attached to the feeling of freedom - the freedom they tried to carry with them in their incursions into the European territory in the nineteenth-century – for they were free to go and to do everything they wanted to. When Americans realized they were not free anymore, that they were imprisoned to their arrogance and imposition, to the rest of the world, of their "way of life", their innocence fell apart.

Susan Ballee, in her article *The American innocent*[35], points out that, due to the changes occurred after September 11, she is not the same reader she used to be. She has changed the witty Southern American books for serious European novels.[36] "I suddenly find

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[33] Ibid.
[34] LEWIS, op. cit., p. 9.
[35] BALLEE, Susan. "The American innocent". In: *The Hudson Review*, Summer, 2002. Available at < http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa4021/is_200207/ai_n9129047>. Accessed on Jan. 13, 2006.
36In this article, Susan Ballee analyses the work of the Dutch writer Cees Noteboom, *All Souls Day* (2001) and the work of the Czech writer Ivan Klima, *No Saints or Angels* (2001).

myself in tune with Europe's long history of grief, oppression, and terrorism. For once, I am weary of America's innocence, of our ahistorical approach to life, our all-consuming egoism, and our cultural adolescence".[37] Nowadays, novels that do not deal with "serious matters" seem frivolous. "Who has time, anymore, to play with puzzles? Real life poses enough of a conundrum".[38]

1.4 The American innocence issue in James's Works

The American and *Daisy Miller* were written in 1877-78, respectively, and in both James deals with the "international theme", most specifically, the issue of American innocence. The main characters, Christopher Newman and Daisy Miller, are exposed to the values of the Old World and they do not know how to deal with them appropriately.

Eloína Prati dos Santos discusses the American innocence concept by pointing out that the first Europeans who arrived in North America found a vast expanse of exuberant nature with no traces of ancient cultures to elucidate its past. The first Americans born rapidly assimilated their novel culture and tried to "educate" their immigrant parents in the concepts of freedom and democracy. Eloína observes that "the examination of American relations to Europe at first consisted of merely contrasting the New World innocence against the Old World corruption. Important American figures such as Thomas Jefferson never ceased to be shocked by Europeans manners and morals".[39] For many generations, it was believed that

37Ibid.
38Ibid.
[39] SANTOS, Eloína Prati dos. "The Limits of Freedom and Convention in Henry James'. In: *Cadernos do IL*. n. 5, March, 1991, p.48-58.

American youths, sent to Europe for an education, learned only dissipation and were introduced to all kind of vices.

We should remember that, despite his long life abroad, James was able to keep in touch with moral values which were the essential product of a New World. His preference to live in Europe; his fun poking at Americans in Europe and at home; the punishment of his American heroines; all came to pass for a dislike of the United States. In reality, there was more a desire to correct the absurdities and encourage the fineness he ultimately perceived. He was constantly traveling to Europe with his family, and this knowledge of society, on both sides of Atlantic, gave him the ability to analyze them well.

James's interest in the American innocence issue can be traced in his own life and experience. Henry James Jr. was born in 1843, into a rather uncommon family, on Washington Place, in New York City. His father, Henry James Sr., a philosopher who had been a friend of Emerson and Carlyle, kept his five children constantly on the move, so that their minds would never fix on any "inhumanity of method". They moved from one town, from one country, from one continent and from one language to another. The James children had got a deep experience of European organicism and European repose – but they got it odd, bit by bit, and always on the road. William James - James's brother who would become one of the most influential philosophers and psychologists of his time - may have known best when he said his brother was "a native of the James family, and has no other country".[40]

According to Lyall H. Powers, the first major influence on James was his father, who certainly had unusual ideas. A non-church-going Christian of harmless but vigorously

[40] AUCHARD, op. cit., xxxiii.

promulgated views; he enjoyed something of a reputation as a Swedenborgian[41] religious philosopher. Among the elder Henry James' friends and close acquaintances were many of the leading figures of the day, both American and European – Emerson, Carlyle, Hawthorne, Thackeray, Thoreau, Bronson Alcott and many others. "The children, especially Henry and his elder brother, William, were encouraged to join in the discussions, to sharpen their young wits and discover their own nascent ideas. And always, of course, there was the gently dominant influence of their father".[42]

Van Wyck Brooks and Otto L. Bettmann observe that William and Henry were "hotel children", floating vaguely about the world. They knew nothing of politics or business, the primary occupation of their sex. The historical instinct of the country was scarcely in them, though the elder James became interested in the American issues with the events that led the Nation to the Civil War. In later years, William adjusted himself to this condition; he over-adjusted, in fact, a little. He might have been described as more American than the Americans, as Henry was less, or rather different, - he became more English than the English. Meanwhile, Henry was "at sea" with his "native land" and all it represented for a story-teller.

> *When he arrived in Cambridge, therefore, the younger Henry James' mind was torn already by a problem that he really never solved. He was bent on becoming a novelist, but novelists always had "native lands". Yet he looked at this "huge queer country" he felt he could scarcely endure an American existence. He had been struck too deeply by the "outland dart", he had absorbed the "European virus". The English writers had filled his mind, and he knew the names of the London streets and he knew the names of the streets of New York. America, for him, afforded no objects of interest to compare with this European "fantastication". The*

[41] **Swedenborgianism** is the ecclesiastical organization of beliefs developed from the writings of the Swedish scientist Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772), and as such, considered a religious movement by many. Many aspects are closely related to Christianity, and the movement is founded on the belief that Swedenborg witnessed the Last Judgment and second advent of the Lord, along with the inauguration of the *New Church* and an explanation of the spiritual meaning of the literal sense of the Scriptures. Some Swedenborgian organizations teach that the writings of Swedenborg (often called *The Writings*) are a third part of the Bible and have the same authority as the Old and New Testaments. "Swedenborgianism". Available at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swedenborgianism>. Accessed on Jan. 10, 2006).

[42] POWERS, Lyall H. *Henry James: An Introduction and Interpretation*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1970, p. 10.

> *problem remained on James' hands unsolved during all the years that he was to spend in Cambridge. […] For, as to his being a novelist, this question was settled, whatever the conditions might be. No one had ever possessed a clearer vocation, and his mind was an inexhaustible well of stories. To test his feeling Henry James had crossed and recrossed the Atlantic trying to solve his great dilemma, whether to live in at home or to live in Europe.*[43]

In the summer of 1861, before going to Harvard, Henry was at his family's house in Newport. He had the summer free to

> *… read whatever he liked without the foreboding that his father would at any moment and without warning appear at his bedroom door and tell him that there was a war on, his country needed him […]. In the days after his father agreed he could go to law school, Henry discovered Hawthorne.*[44]

Due to his cousin's Sargy Perry insistence, James started reading *The Scarlet Letter* (1850). The novel had the same impact on him as the novels by Balzac, who he admired, and was one of his favorite writers. As a consequence of the impact of Hawthorne's novels, James's early works were highly influenced by him. *Roderick Hudson* (1876), James's first international novel, has the same setting and similar characters as Hawthorne's last novel, *Marble Faun* (1860). Both novels deal with American artists in Europe, most specifically in Rome.

As his own experiences had a huge impact in his works, when one studies Henry James's career, his unusual childhood and youth are always mentioned. In *The Art of Fiction*[45], James stands against Walter Besant's pronouncement that one should not attempt to write on any experience that is remote from one's own social experience. "The only reason

[43] BROOKS and BETTMANN, op. cit. p. 166-167.
[44] TÓIBÍN, Colm. *The Master*. New York: Scribner, 2004, p. 161.
[45] Published in *Longman's Magazine* in September 1884. This piece was written in response to Walter Besant's overly prescriptive 1884 essay, "Fiction as one of the Arts". Among other pronouncements, Besant insists that one should not attempt to write on any "experience" that is remote from one's own social experience. Here James redefines as a process of analysis in "the chamber of consciousness" and considerably complicates any definition of fictive realism.

for the existence of a novel is that it does attempt to represent life".[46] James himself was aware of the impact of his own experiences in his works. When discussing the differences between good and bad novels he states: "It must be admitted that good novels are much compromised by bad ones".[47] He continues, giving his definition of how a good novel must be: "A novel is in its broadest definition a personal, a direct impression of life: that to begin with, constitutes its value, which is greater or less according to the intensity of the impression".[48]

In this essay, James defends his position that one must write from experience, but one has to pay attention to what kind of experience is intended and where it begins and ends. In James's definition "experience is never limited, and is never complete; it is an immense sensibility, a kind of huge spider-web of the finest silken threads suspended in the chamber of consciousness, and catching every air-borne particle in its tissue".[49] He argues that if experience consists of impressions, it may be said that impressions are experience. Therefore, if James should certainly say to a novice, "Write from experience and experience only", he should immediately add, "Try to be the one of the people on whom nothing is lost".[50] This remark has become one of his most quoted. He describes, deeply and poetically, one's experience "As if a magnifying glass out of a detective story, something negligible yet powerful has been detected, and although the 'thing' is over by the time it is seen, the perception is prodigious".[51] Isabel Archer, in *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881), is a character who sees this flash of life, which lasts only a moment, and her adventure has become one of perception. She has become someone on whom nothing is lost.

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[46] JAMES, Henry. *The Art of Fiction*. In: AUCHARD, op. cit., p. 428.
[47] Ibid., p. 431
[48] Ibid., p. 432
[49] Ibid., p. 434.
[50] Ibid., p. 435.
[51] AUCHARD, op. cit., xxiv.

It is easy to understand the reason why James considered the reflex of the author's experience so important in a literary work. His father was a prominent theologian and philosopher who wanted that his children became "citizens of the world". As a child, he witnessed familiarity and acquaintance with Emerson, Horace Greeley, Carlyle and other notables; he attended schools in New York, London, Paris and Geneva, entering the law school at Harvard in 1862. He lived in Paris where he met Flaubert, Turgenev and other literary figures. We can find the reflex of his own experiences through his career. The places he lived, the people he met, the things he heard, they are all there, in his fine and complex prose.

Important writers, such as Virginia Woolf and Andre Maurois, wrote about James's work and life, mentioning the contrasts between Europe and America, which are the most recurrent theme in James's novels and short stories. Auchard, in his introduction, calls attention to the polemical criticism James received from his peers:

> *Nor could Virginia Woolf tolerate complaints about a Byzantine syntax or an obsession with the niceties of upholstery: 'For to be as subtle as Henry James one must also be as robust; to enjoy his power of exquisite selection one must have 'lived and cursed and floundered and enjoyed and suffered', and, with the appetite of a giant, have swallowed the whole.' […] For example, André Maurois was mostly wrong when he called James 'a great writer who spent his whole life wandering in a literary limbo between the paradise of European culture and the hell that was the Golden Age of America.' The fact is that, even in the earliest tales, signs of stagnation trouble that European seduction.*[52]

We can assume, from the excerpts above that many critics recognize the reflex of James's own experiences as an American in Europe, mainly at the beginning of his career that may led him to choose "the international theme" as one of the most important aspects in his works. Therefore, analyzing and studying Henry James's biography has become relevant and

[52] Ibid., xii-xiii.

opportune during the research I have done, in order to enlighten some aspects of his fictional production. Life and work clear each other up.

One of the strongest characteristics in James's American characters is their will to choose and refusal to fit in the European social code of manners, that is, of doing everything in a certain way, for they have a good way of doing almost everything. "If you agree to conform, European life can be good, for that life will be more artful, polished, layered, subtle, […] and sometimes intelligent. But Europe makes powerful demands, and it takes things away […] and it can make you stand oddly still".[53]

The word "choice" has become a tremendous American word, and it still has power to make the world tremble. Auchard gives an example of the importance of the word "choice" and all that it represents to American values, quoting a passage of *The Portrait of a Lady*. Isabel Archer is in England, at her aunt's house. In Mrs. Touchett opinion (Isabel's Europeanized aunt), Isabel has been behaving in a reproachable way. "Isabel asks to be told about all the things one should not do. 'So as to do them?' asks her aunt. 'So as to choose', says Isabel".[54]

James always regarded *Roderick Hudson* (1876) as his first novel. In 1871, he published *Watch and Ward* serially in the *Atlantic Monthly*, but it was not published in book form until 1878. *Roderick Hudson* combines two of his major themes – the "international theme" and that of "the dilemma of the artist". This novel has significance beyond the terms of its story; its surface is faithfully realistic, based on James's firsthand experience. In 1871, James developed the "international theme" in one of his first short stories, *The Passionate*

[53] AUCHARD, op. cit., xv.
[54] Ibid., xiii.

Pilgrim, in which he was fortunate to use the raw material he had, and the possibilities he saw in it, that is, his own experience.

James's characters and themes were very much of the moment when he wrote *The American* and *Daisy Miller*, a fact that might explain the success of both works, specially the second one. In the 1870s, Post-Civil War America was in the middle of an industrial boom which bestowed sudden wealth on many previously ordinary families. This allowed them to travel abroad for the first time, in order to learn about the culture and history of Europe. But American manners were very different from European manners, and the "uneducated" Americans – from a country where there had never been any aristocracy based on heredity or nobility – did not know the social codes with which European "high society" conducted itself.

The American, published in 1877, and *Daisy Miller*, published in 1878, have in common the theme of cultural juxtaposition, exploring the American innocence in the main characters. Christopher Newman is the innocent American doomed in Europe. His high hopes, and then his defeat, illustrate the limits of excessive optimism of an innocent American face to face with more complex European social and moral forces. In this respect, Eloína Prati dos Santos reminds us that there is a notable evolution from the rigor of this cultural contrast in Daisy who is a victim of Roman fever – a clear symbol of European hostility – yet, she is not afflicted with European villains. The forces against her are those of Winterbourne's insensibility and the snobbishness of the American colony in Rome.

Both, *The American* and *Daisy Miller*, are international novels in which an outsider is brought face to face with his or her inability to enter the world they have proposed to conquer, due to his or her failure to speak the local language or perform adequately without breaking local rules.

Between the publication of *The American* and James's first masterpiece, *The Portrait of a Lady*, he published a number of short pieces of fiction in which he developed the "international theme" in interesting ways – refining his conceptions and sharpening the focus of his ideas. According to Lyall H. Powers, James's problem was to clarify the terms of the polarity he had set up – Europe vis-à-vis America – by sorting out for examination the characteristics of the two poles, between which the tension of his fictional dramas is suspended, to clarify and particularly to evaluate them.

He considered and reconsidered the comparative innocence of his American hero or heroine – a state created by the youth of the country, and by its lack of traditions and of a richly cultural civilization, a state perpetuated and complicated by America's religious or at least its moral tone. He questioned acutely the sufficiency for effective civilized life of the good-hearted but ingenuous and naïve American. At the same time he weighed the merits and weaknesses of representatives of that traditional, conventional and strictly mannered society into the midst of which the inexperienced hero is set to perform and against which his peculiar American qualities are tested.

Powers points out that, in 1878, James published an unsigned article in *The Nation*, "Americans Abroad", in which he addressed specifically the very matter he was dealing with in his international fiction: "the question of Americans appearing to 'advantage' or otherwise in Europe"[55]. The article is an attempt at a balanced treatment of the question; it explains why Europeans have difficulty understanding the American abroad and appreciating the merits of the democratic country he has left, sometimes only to visit but increasingly to settle for an extended period in Europe:

[55] POWERS, op. cit., p. 50.

> *... it is not surprising that [the Europeans] should be found doubting whether the country the American has left is as agreeable, as comfortable as civilized, as desirable a one as [their] own […] the fact remains that in pursuit of some agreement or other he has forsaken his native land…*[56]

It also explains why, on the other hand, the American fails to make himself and his country understood by Europeans. In spite of the attempt, however, it is easy to see where James's sympathies lie: he cannot help but regret that his compatriots do not make a better showing abroad. He calls attention to the two last sentences from the excerpt below, for "The essence of those last two sentences is, in one way or another, at the heart of all of James's stories on the international theme".[57]

> *The great innocence of the usual American tourist is perhaps his most general quality. He takes all sorts of forms, some of them agreeable and some the reverse, and it is probably not unfair to say that by sophisticated Europeans it is harshly interpreted. . . . they set it down once for all as vulgar. . . . Their merits, whatever they are, are not of a sort that strike the eye-still less the ear. They are ill-made, ill-mannered, ill-dressed.*[58]

In 1877, James published *Four Meetings*, in which he again deals with the "international theme". Caroline Spencer is a pathetic little schoolmistress who is cheated in Europe by the trickery of her Europeanized American nasty art-student cousin. It is important to notice that James has shifted the role of villain from a European (as it was in *The American*) to an American character.

After having published *Daisy Miller* in 1878, James published *The Europeans*, in which he examined the question of what manners are for. The international situation is somewhat reversed in this story, for here the Europeans visit America. Another balanced

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[56]JAMES, Henry, op. cit. In: *The Nation*. XXVII, October, 1878, p. 208-209.
[57] POWERS, op. cit., p. 50.
[58] Ibid., p. 50.

treatment of the “international theme” is *An International Episode* (1878-1879). It offers a direct, bipartisan confrontation of Americans and Europeans, both in America and in Europe. It has all the appearance of a comedy of manners: its dramatic ado derives from the clash of European manners and conventions with American behavior.

In 1880, James published *The Portrait of a Lady*, considered by many his best novel. Isabel Archer has become the embodiment of the American innocent girl introduced to the long traditions and established conventions of the Old World. As well as Daisy Miller, she believes she is independent and earnestly wishes to remain so – to be free to see life. On the other hand, Isabel Archer is aware of her own inexperience and ignorance and wishes to repair that flaw in her life that would leave her an incomplete woman.

During the two next decades the “international theme” is absent from James’s major fiction, but it does appear in several short stories of that period, such as *The Pupil* (1891) and *Europe* (1899).

In the opening years of the twentieth-century, James published, in regular annual succession, three substantial and important novels on the “international theme”: *The Wings of the Dove* (1902), *The Ambassadors* (1903), and *The Golden Bowl* (1904). These are the tree great novels of what has come to be called his major phase; they resume the theme that had been absent from his novels for over twenty years, and, in doing so, demonstrate a considerable technical advance and a notable maturing of attitude.

As mentioned before, James’s stories, devoted to the “international theme”, are a constant in his career. The metaphoric depth of these stories tells us the truth about life as it

has always been and must be – the truth as James perceived it. The surface lets us know certain facts of life as it was in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century. His innocent American characters, such as Christopher Newman and Daisy Miller, with their interesting realistic surfaces, are ultimately metaphoric personifications in which James uses the characterization of both American and European people.

2 SOME THEORETICAL ISSUES

2.1 Intertextuality

Roland Barthes in *S/Z*[59] (1971) refers to an essential notion to literary comparatism and to the theoretical consideration on literature: the idea of textual community. Tania Franco Carvalhal[60] clarifies Barthes' comments by explaining that in literary texts there are common elements that identify their nature, without unifying them. It is the support not only to the literary theory but also to the comparative literature, when both seek the abstraction of concepts based on the textual analysis, directed to supra-individual aspects of the works. They assume, as the main goal, the global literature approach which has to deal with the complexity of interliterary relations and the way, by theses processes, the tradition is established.

Tania Franco Carvalhal also traces the migration of the concept of intertextuality, by rescuing the notion of *Weltliteratur*[61], not considering the cosmopolitan vision of the early

[59] BARTHES, Roland. *S/Z*. Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 1992.
[60] CARVALHAL, Tania. *O próprio e o alheio: Ensaios de literatura comparada*. São Leopoldo: UNISINOS, 2003.
[61] **Weltliteratur**: German word meaning world literature**,** was long defined in the United States as an established canon of European masterpieces, but an emerging global perspective has challenged both this European focus

nineteenth-century, or Goethe's[62] utopian vision, when he diffused this term in 1927. The conception of literature as a dynamic interactive wholeness grazes the work of many modern writers, such as Jorge Luís Borges. In his work, the idea of "world literature" takes the shape of an "endless library" that, when covered by an eternal traveler in any direction, will prove, at the end of time, that the same volumes will repeat in equal disorder.

Intertextuality has been a much used term since its first introduction by Julia Kristeva in her works of the late 1960s, notable her essay of 1969, "Word, Dialogue and Novel"[63], on Bakhtin's *Rabelais and his World* (1984), his theory of carnival and other aspects of his dialogue account of literature and language.

The fundamental concept of intertextuality is that no text, much as it like to appear so, is original and unique-in-itself; rather, it is a tissue of inevitable, and to an extent of unwitting references to and quotations from other texts. Kristeva referred to texts in terms of two axes: a *horizontal axis* connecting the author and reader of a text, and a *vertical axis*, which connects the text to another text. Uniting these two axes are shared codes: every text and every reading depends on prior codes. She declared that "every text is from the outset under the jurisdiction of other discourses which impose a universe on it".[64]

Tania Franco Carvalhal, when discussing intertextuality, explains that the writing process is also seen as a result of the reading process of one previous literary *corpus*. The text

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and the very category of "the masterpiece", though today the term world literature is still used to denote the supposedly very best in literature, the so-called Western canon.

[62] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe introduced the concept of Weltliteratur, in 1827, to describe the growing availability of texts from other nations. It pressuposed the existence of nations with their own identity and with comunication in the literary level.

[63] Kristeva, Julia. "Word, Dialogue and Novel". In: MOI, Toril (ed.). *The Kristeva Reader*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984.

[64] KRISTEVA apud CULLER, Jonathan. *Saussure*. London: Fontana, 1985, p. 105.

leads to the analysis of the procedures that characterizes the analogies between them. The comparatist absorbs this textual critic, moving from the bare identification of the relation between the texts, to a profound analysis of the reasons that generate this relation. The text is: "o diálogo de várias escrituras, e o que era antes entendido numa relação individual (intersubjetiva) passa a ser coletivizado, ou seja, as relações são estabelecidas no conjunto dos textos".[65] Intertextuality has become an essential procedure to the investigation of the bonds between different texts. It has also guided the interpretation of the interdependence that one text keeps with a pre-existent textual *corpus*. As a result, we have the concept of "intertext", that is, the interlace of significations.

Nowadays, the notion of intertextuality is one of the pillars of the textual theory and it is essential in comparative studies. "Tomada num sentido largo, a intertextualidade nos permite entender que ler um texto é lançá-lo num espaço interdiscursivo e na relação de vários códigos, que são constituídos pelo diálogo entre textos e leitura".[66]

In doing a comparative study under the light of intertextuality, the comparatist should not look for which part of the prior text the author appropriates, but should examine in which way the author does it, characterizing the done procedures. The comparatist should go further and ask the reason why one text (or several) are "rescued", in a determined moment, for another work. Tania Carvalhal puts a question: "Quais as razões que levaram o autor do texto

[65] CARVALHAL, op. cit., 2003, p. 73.
Translation: "The dialogue of several writings, and what was understood before in an individual relation (intersubjective) starts becoming socialized, that is, the relations are established on the set of texts." (Translation mine)

[66] Ibid.
Translation: "Taken in a large sense, intertextuality allows us to understand that reading a text is to cast it in an interdiscoursive space and in the several codes relation, that are constituted by the dialogue between texts and reading." (Translation mine)

mais recente a reler textos anteriores? Se o autor decidiu reescrevê-los, copiá-los, enfim, relançá-los no seu tempo, que novo sentido lhes atribui com este deslocamento?".[67]

Laurent Jenny[68] observed that intertextuality denotes not only a confused and mysterious amount of influences, but also the result of the transformation and assimilation of several other texts, produced by a central text which detains the command of the sense. The previously notion that intertextuality is a relation of dependence, the debt that one text acquired with its antecessor, becomes to be understood as a natural and constant procedure of rewriting texts. This perspective leads to the analysis of the procedures that characterize the relation between texts.

Three essential matters are pointed by Sandra Nitrini, referring to Laurent Jenny's concept of intertextuality:

> ● *O reconhecimento da presença de outros textos em toda e qualquer obra literária.*
> ● *O trabalho de modificação que os textos estranhos sofrem ao serem assimilados.*
> ● *O sentido unificador que deve ter o intertexto, entendido como "texto absorvendo uma multiplicidade de textos, mas ficando unificado por um sentido".*[69]

In the texts analyzed in this thesis, the unifying sense in the intertext is the issue of American innocence, which links both works and is the base to this study.

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[67] Idem, op. cit., 2004, p. 52.
Translation: "What are the reasons that have lead the most recent text writer rereading the prior texts? If the author has decided to rewrite them, copy them, that is, relaunch them, what new sense has assigned them with this dislocation?". (Translation mine)
[68] Idem. "A Estratégia da Forma". In: *Intertextualidades*. Coimbra: Almedina, 1979.
[69] NITRINI, Sandra. *Literatura Comparada: história teoria e crítica*. São Paulo: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo, 1997, p. 163-164.
Translation:-The recognition of the presence of other texts in each and every literary work.
-The alteration work the different texts suffer when assimilated.
- The unifying sense the intertext must have, understood as 'text absorbing a multiplicity of texts, but remaining unified by a sense'. (Translation mine)

In 1968, Roland Barthes announced "the death of the author" and "the birth of the reader", declaring that "a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination".[70] By giving the reader a greater role in the creation of meaning, Barthes saw works of literature as analogous as works of music - structures to be created and played as they were interpreted. In his essay "From Work to Text"[71], Barthes takes this idea further, arguing that while a work (such as a book or a film) contains meanings that are unproblematically traceable back to the author (and therefore closed), a text (the same book or film) is actually something that remains open. The resulting concept of intertextuality implies that meaning is brought to a cultural object by its audience and does not intrinsically reside in the object.

Intertextuality is, in a sense, at this stage of history, impossibly freighted with meanings and uses; the intertextual networks and chains of significance set going by the concept of intertextuality are now almost impossible to contain, cover and summarize. Leon Roudiez commented, in 1984, the range of the term intertextuality:

> *… the concept [...] has been generally misunderstood. It has nothing to do with matters of influence by one writer upon another, or with the sources of a literary work ... It is defined in Kristeva's La Révolution du langage poétique (1974), as the transposition of one or more systems of signs into another ... 'Any signifying practice is a field (in the sense of space traversed by lines of force) in which various signifying systems undergo such a transposition'.* [72]

Fredric Jameson[73] also discusses intertextuality, arguing that we apprehend the texts through the sedimented reading habits and categories developed by those inherited interpretive traditions. Considering that each reader rewrites the text with his particular

[70] BARTHES, Roland. *Image-Music-Text*. London: Fontana, 1977.
[71] Ibid., p. 155.
[72] ROUDIEZ, Léon S., "Introduction". In: KRISTEVA, Julia. *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984, p. 15.
[73] JAMESON, Fredric. *The Prison-House of Language*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 1975.

interpretation, the possible intertexts will be defined by the reader's interpretation. Texts are framed by other texts in several ways. The American innocence issue frame was chosen by me as a result of the reading I have proposed of on *The American* and *Daisy Miller*, using, unconsciously or not, the background I have been acquiring during my literary studies.

In this thesis, I am dealing with two texts by the same author. My aim is not to do a comparative study searching for their intertextual relation with other texts, but to search for the thematic relation between them, and the way the author develops the theme of American innocence.

It is relevant to discuss what makes a comparison possible. If the concept of intertextuality leads us to the conclusion that one text is the absorption or replica to other texts, is it possible to compare two texts based on one specifical topic? Jonathan Culler states that

> *If we are reflecting theoretically on the nature of comparative literature, then we need to attempt to work out the basis of comparison in literary studies, the nature of comparability itself. Although the question is not often explicitly debated, it underlies important shifts in the discipline. Everyone interested in the field is likely to know one story of comparative literature: once upon a time, comparative literature focused on sources and influence, bringing together works where there seemed a direct link of transmission which subtended and served to justify comparison. But then comparative literature liberated itself from the study of sources and influence and acceded to a broader regime of intertextual studies--broader but less well defined--where in principle anything could be compared with anything else. At this point we began to hear talk of a "crisis of comparative literature," no doubt because of the difficulty of explaining the nature of the new comparability that served to structure and, in principle, to justify comparative literature as a discipline.*[74]

[74] CULLER, Jonathan. "Comparability". In: *World Literature Today*, v. 69, 1995.

Tania Franco Carvalhal[75] calls attention to the fact that, if the notion of intertextuality has brought revitalization to the field of Comparative Literature, at the same time, it has provoked a great challenge: its redefinition as the reading exercise that refers to other texts, previous or simultaneous, that appears in the one we have under our eyes.

2.2 Interdisciplinarity

According to Henry H.H. Remak[76], we can define Comparative Literature as the study of literature that goes beyond the borders of an individual country and the study of relationships between literature and other areas of knowledge and consciousness, such as art (e.g. painting, sculpture, architecture, music), philosophy, history and social sciences (e.g. political science, economy, sociology), science, or religion. In short, it is the comparison between one literature with other or others, and the literature comparison with other spheres of human expression. Tania Franco Carvalhal[77] explains that, if we consider Comparative Literature under the light of Remak's definition, it is a specific way of questioning literary texts in its interaction with other texts, literary or not, and other ways of cultural and artistic expression. The tendency of trespassing frontiers and to explore the relationships between literature with other forms of artistic or intellectual expression and other areas of knowledge, have created the interdisciplinary field.

[75] CARVALHAL, op. cit., 2003, p. 87.
[76] REMAK, Henry H. H."Comparative Literature – Its definition and function". In: STALLKNECHT, N.P.; FRENZ, H. *Comparative literature: Method and Perspective*. Revised edition. Illinois University Press, 1971.
[77] CARVALHAL, op. cit. 2004, p. 74

The frontier trespassed in this dissertation is between the field of literature and films. As interdisciplinary studies allow us to compare these two different forms of art, I will also be dealing with an interdisciplinary study between Daisy *Miller*, the tale and *Daisy Miller*, the movie.

Nowadays, comparative studies are not restricted to the literary field. The possibility of moving through different areas has allowed the comparatist to appropriate of several methods, demanded by the analyzed object. Due to these facts, the main characteristic of interdisciplinary studies has become its mediator nature, situated in-between two or more elements, exploring their relations and accentuating its interdisciplinary character.

In 1931, Paul Van Tieghem[78] drew the future of the comparative studies by stating that literary studies can deal with different subjects. Every literary study has the purpose of describing a passage, the fact that something literary cross over a linguistic frontier. The linguistic diversity is no longer the only basis to comparative studies, but the diversity of languages. According to Etienne Souriau[79], despite the similarities we can find in distinct languages, we must remember that the work of a musician or a painter is done with specific experience in a specific field (e.g., music, painting). Therefore, we have to consider its particularities when doing an interdisciplinary study.

Despite of all the changes in the field of comparative studies, there is one basic premise that has not changed: one of the artistic expressions must be a literary work; but, little by little, this is giving away the predominance over the other forms of artistic expression and establishing a balance.

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[78] TIEGHEM, Paul. Van. *La Littérature Comparée*. 4 ed. Paris: A. Colin, 1951.
[79] SOURIAU, Etienne. *A correspondência das artes: elementos de estética comparada*. São Paulo: Cultrix, 1983.

Tania Franco Carvalhal observes that "essa ampliação de campos no domínio da investigação comparatista pressupõe igualmente uma duplicação de competências".[80] The comparatist needs to move, with the same efficacy, from one area to another. "Nesse sentido, a literatura comparada torna-se duplamente comparativa, atuando simultaneamente em mais de uma área".[81] The interdisciplinary field seems to indicate in which way comparative literature may characterize itself as a generalized reflection on the literary phenomena.

2.3 Alterity

The attempt to understand alterity or the relation with "others" is a topic of great urgency on the contemporary international scene. This attempt started with the failure to recognize "others" as full human beings with the same rights as we have. The boundaries between "we" and the "others" are framed by different aspects. On the contemporary scene, the most discussed aspects are racism, ethnic wars, segregation and discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, age and social class.

In the nineteenth-century, the concern with the boundaries between the "self" and the "other" was restricted to the gap between social classes. Alterity has acquired ontological relevance in modern philosophy and especially in the modern post-structuralism. Before all these, the concept of the "other" was used by the German philosopher Hegel who said: "Each

[80] CARVALHAL, op. cit., 2003, p. 46.
Translation: "this amplification of fields in the dominium of comparatist investigation presupposes equally a duplication of competences". (Translation mine)
[81] Ibid., p. 74.
Translation: "In this sense, comparative literature becomes doubly comparative, acting simultaneously in more than one area". (Translation mine).

consciousness pursues the death of the other"[82], meaning that in seeing separateness between you and another, a feeling of alienation is created, which you try to resolve by synthesis.[83]

The Bulgarian writer and critic Tzevan Todorov, in his *The Conquest of America: The Discovery of the Other* (1984), tries to answer the question: "how to behave in relation to the other?" As he explains, the only way he found was by telling the history of the discovery and conquest of America. To deal with such a relevant issue is a hard task, if we consider the hindrance in human condition with dealing with otherness.

Todorov starts his discussion by arguing that:

> *My subject – the discovery the self makes of the other – is so enormous that any general formulation soon ramifies into countless categories and directions. We can discover the other in ourselves, realize we are not a homogenous substance, radically alien to whatever is not us, as Rimbaud said: Je est un autre. But others are also "I"s: subjects just as I am, whom only my point of view – according to which only all of them are out there and I alone am in here – separates and distinguishes from myself. I can conceive of these others as an abstraction, as an instance of any individual's psychic configuration as the Other – other in relation to myself, to me; or as a specific social group to which we do not belong. This group in turn can be interior to society […]; or it can be exterior to society. i.e. another society which will be near or far away, depending on the case […].*[84]

When defining the typology of the relationship with the "other", Todorov explains that this relationship happens in more than one dimension. To understand the differences that exist in the real dimension is necessary to distinguish between three axes, in which the alterity problematic can be situated. The first one is a value judgment (axiological plan): the other is bad or good; I like or I do not like him or he is inferior to me (because, evidently, most of the time I am good and I have self-esteem). There is, in second place, the action of getting closer

[82] *Other*. Available at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Other>. Accessed on February 20, 2006.
[83] In philosophy, **Synthesis** is commonly understood to be an integration of two or more pre-existing elements which results in a new creation. (AUDI, op. cit.)
[84] TODOROV, Tzvetan. *The Discovery of America: The Conquest of the Other*. New York: Harper & Row, 1984, p. 3.

or being far away from the other (the praxiological plan): I embrace the other's values; I identify myself with him or I assimilate the other by imposing him my own image. In the third place, I know or I ignore the other's identity (epistemological plan). There are, of course, relations and affinities among these three plans, but no inflexible implication; we cannot reduce one to another or predict one from the other.

According to *The Routledge Critical Dictionary of Postmodern Thought*, alterity is the philosophical term used for "other". "The "other" in the work of Michel Foucault, for instance, consists of those who are excluded from positions of power, and are often victimized within a predominantly liberal humanist view of the subject".[85]

Whereas the debate on alterity is a recent one, the sociological concept of identity has its origins in the American Pragmatism[86] of the eighteen-nineties. It was in the nineteen-fifties that it enjoyed its first efflorescence. In posing questions about the survival of the individual in mass society, which bulked large on the agenda of intellectuals at that time, the quest for identity became popular. Since the nineteen-sixties, identity has become practically relevant in those social groups that have sought recourse to traditional identity-securing concepts, such as those of race and ethnicity, gender or even nationality. And it is exactly at this point, in the realm of theory, that the concept of the "other" or alterity has its point of application.

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[85] SIM, Stuart (ed.). *The Routledge Critical Dictionary of Postmodern Thought*. New York: Routledge, 2001, p. 181.

[86] **Pragmatism** is a philosophical movement, developed in the United States, which holds that both the meaning and the truth of any idea is a function of its practical outcome. Fundamental to pragmatism is a strong anti-absolutism: the conviction that all principles are to be regarded as working hypotheses rather than as metaphysically binding axioms. A modern expression of empiricism, pragmatism was highly influential in America in the first quarter of the 20th century. Pragmatism has tended to criticize traditional philosophical outlooks in the light of scientific and social developments. William James gave a further direction to pragmatism, developing it as a theory of truth. True ideas, according to James, are useful "leadings"; they lead through experience in ways that provide consistency, orderliness, and predictability. (AUDI, Robert. *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 772.)

The “other” is a key concept in psychology and philosophy where it is often considered to be what defines or even constitutes the self and other phenomena and cultural units:

> *What appear to be cultural units – human beings, words, meanings, ideas, philosophical systems, social organizations – are maintained in their apparent unity only through an active process of exclusion, opposition, and hierarchization. Other phenomena or units must be represented as foreign or 'other' through representing a hierarchical dualism in which the unit is 'privileged' or favored, and the other is devalued in some way.*[87]

2.4 Influence

According to Lyall H. Powers, *The American* gives strong evidence of the influence of Hawthornesque romance. In 1879, the same year *Daisy Miller* was published in book form, James published his first critical biography, *Hawthorne*. The volume permitted James "to examine the problem posed for the American artist by the cultural poverty of the American scene and to suggest expatriation to Europe as a perfectly viable solution".[88]

Besides Hawthorne, another writers’ influence can be traced in James’s work. Most critics agree that Ivan Turgenev and George Eliot had a considerable impact on James’s novels and tales. In his article *Influência* (1992), Arthur Nestrovski analyses George Eliot’s influence on James's works. He quotes James’s comment on his friend Edith Wharton’s literary production:

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[87] CAHOONE, Lawrence. *From Modernism to Post-modernism: An Anthology*. Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1996.
[88] POWERS, Lyall H. *Henry James: An Introduction and Interpretation*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970, p. 16.

> *Antigamente, percebia-se em você, aqui e ali, algumas nuances que eram como refinadas e benevolentes marcas da boa George Eliot - ecos de suas leituras extensas daquela excelente senhora... Mas agora é você que é como um "mestre do passado" (de preferência grego), um mestre que ela parece ter lido e de quem só se observa, nas texturas dela, uma reflexão enfraquecida.*[89]

According to Nestrovski, James's comment is ambivalent and ironic and might refer to himself better than to his friend Wharton. James can be traced in every Wharton's work (including *The Reef*) and "serve para alterar obliquamente os raios mais diretos da influência de Eliot, que recaem sobre James".[90]

Lyall H. Powers observes that Hawthorne's influence is immediately replaced after the publication of the biography, but it will never entirely disappear. From that year on, 1879, James would be more influenced by George Eliot and Ivan Turgenev.

In fact, the concept of influence would become one of the central themes in literary criticism and theory in contemporary times, mainly in works of poets and critics such as T.S. Eliot, Jorge Luís Borges and, more recently, Harold Bloom.

It is a common sense that every writer is influenced by others, mainly the ones he appreciates the most or the ones he admires; in the same way us, readers, are influenced by our favorite writer's ideas and concepts.

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[89] NESTROVSKI, Arthur. Influência. In: JOBIM, José Luis. *Palavras da Crítica: tendências e conceitos no mundo da literatura*.. Rio de Janeiro, 1992, p. 213.
Translation: "In former days, we could sense in you, here and there, some nuances that were like the good George Eliot's refined and benevolent marks – echoes of your extensive readings of that excellent lady … But now you are like 'a master of the past' (preferably Greek), a master she seems to have read and of whom we only observe, in her textures, a feeble reflection". (Translation mine)

[90] Ibid., p. 213.
Translation: "helps to obliquely alter the most direct rays of Eliot's influence that shine over James". (Translation mine).

The American critic Harold Bloom wrote one of the most instigating contemporary works dealing with the influence issue, *The Anxiety of Influence* (1973). He states that every text is a reading of another text, as Bahktin and Kristeva had stated before, but this reading is always defensive, because it occurs in the interpoetical dominium; the reading, when it happens, is always against the influence.

The main idea in *The Anxiety of Influence*[91] is that literature is influence, therefore, it is intertextual, and every intertextual relationship must lead us to a moment of interpretation. This moment is the reading itself, or the so-called “misreading”, term chosen by Bloom to explain the act of interpreting a literary work. He suggests misreading categories, which can exist not only among authors, but also among one author’s works or inside a text, its chapters, its paragraphs, etc. Bloom attempted to trace the psychological process by which a poet broke free from his precursors to achieve his own poetic vision. He drew a sharp distinction between "strong poets" who perform "strong misreadings" of their precursors, and "weak poets" who simply repeat the ideas of their precursors as though they were a kind of doctrine. He described this process in terms of a sequence of "revisionary ratios", through which each strong poet passes in the course of his career. Henry James is, in my opinion, one of the “strong poets” who were able to break free from his precursors and achieved his own poetic vision.

[91] BLOOM, Harold. *The Anxiety of Influence*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1970.

3. THE AMERICAN

3.1 The relevance of *The American* in Henry James's career

The American, one of James's earliest important works, first appeared as a serial novel in the *Atlantic Monthly*, running in twelve installments from June 1876 to May 1877. It was James's third serialized novel, following *Watch and Ward* (1870) and *Roderick Hudson* (1875), and his second novel in book form. Thus, *The American* is a curious mixture of early and late James which, if not as consistently fine as his later works, clearly reflects his rare mastery of grace, gesture and form.

James started writing *The American* in the winter of 1875-76, when he was living in Paris. In 1875 he settled in Paris, partly because it was the best of meeting-places in which to view his countrymen abroad. For a year, James lived in Paris, in constant association with the novelists he had studied with rapture at home. Art, lives on discussion, the interchange of views, the comparison of standpoints; and Flaubert, Turgenev and Zola, among others, gave him a place in their circle.

Leon Edel[92] explained the relevance of the novel to the European and to the American. To the early, it suggested a distant, unknown man from the New World, a “natural” man who was fighting the Indians and conquering wild frontier-land. To the latter, it spoke for his own identity, of which he did not have a clear image in a period of flux expansion. Christopher Newman was a man from a land where everything was being made over and made new. Old standards had been cast aside and the ingrained wrongs of centuries were being set to right. To the European, an American was, in a sense, a mythical figure, a traveler from an unknown land, as in the books of imaginary voyages. Edel states that the suggestive title had particular meaning for the late-nineteenth-century readers, because, for instance, there never had been a novel called “The Englishman” or “The Frenchman” before.

James's writing in general, and *The American* in particular, is notable for its high and eloquent style, gorgeous prose, carefully crafted narrative, and substantial attention to detail. Though written serially, *The American* is nonetheless full of the parallelism, prophesy, foreshadowing and structural symmetry one might expect from a traditionally written novel. Then, as now, the book's great triumph remains in its sympathetic and intricate character study against the clear backdrop of tragedy. The novel gives voice not only to James's analysis of his characters, but to their feelings, praise, encouragement and condemnation of one another. Ultimately, having fostered dependence, the novel considers its characters in their fellows' absence. Broad themes of cross-cultural encounter, of love and marriage, of betrayal and friendship are negotiated on the difficult and particular level of individual characters. The characters at once transcend stereotype, embody it, and give it life. The novel, like the Louvre in its opening scene, is not to be hurried through for fear of an aesthetic headache, as we can learn from the excerpt bellow:

[92] EDEL, Leon (ed.).*The Complete Plays of Henry James*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990. Available at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/americancollection/american/ei_novel.html>. Accessed on Jan. 23, 2006.

> *On a brilliant day in May, in the year 1868, a gentleman was reclining at his ease on the great circular divan which at that period occupied the centre of the Salon Carré, in the Museum of the Louvre. This commodious ottoman has since been removed, to the extreme regret of all weakened lovers of the fine arts; but the gentleman in question had taken serene possession of its softest spot, and, with his head thrown back and his legs outstretched, was staring at Murillo's beautiful moon-borne.*[93]

Much of its rarity and beauty are hidden in turns of phrase and subtle wit, in characters' dreams against evidence of desolation, in the odd unconscious smile and the lingering glance.

Lyall H. Powers observes that James drew upon his familiarity with romance literature to add emphasis and gave shape to *The American*. In his opinion, it is obvious that this novel derives from "Hawthornesque" romance[94] and, beyond that, from European (especially English) romance fiction – including the Gothic. The clock-and-dagger atmosphere, thickened by the dark family secret and its awful revelation by the old family retainer, Mrs. Bread, puts this early novel of James directly in the novel tradition.

Leon Edel calls attention to the fact that if Henry James was unaware that he was writing romance under the guise of "realism", his readers did not make this mistake. They

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[93] JAMES, Henry. *The American*. London: Penguin, 1995, p. 5.

[94] Some readers that are not familiar with literary terms, may confuse the terms "novel" and "romance", particularly Brazilian readers, due to the connotation of the word "romance" in Portuguese. "The term novel is now applied to a great variety of writings that have in common only the attribute of being extended works of *fiction* written in prose. As an extended narrative, the novel is distinguished from the *short story* and from the work of middle length called the *novelette*; […]. The term for the novel in most European languages is **roman**, which is derived from the medieval term, the *romance*. The English name for the form, on the other hand, is derived from the Italian novella (literally, 'a little new thing'), which was a short tale in prose. […] Novel may have any kind of plot form – traigc, comic, satiric, or romantic. A common distinction – which was employed by Hawthorne, in his Preface to *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851) and elsewhere, and has been adopted and expanded by a number of recent critics – is that between two basic types of prose fiction: the realistic novel (which is the novel proper) and 'romance'. […] Examples of romance novels are Walter Scott's *Rob Roy* (1871), Alexandre Duma's *The Three Musketeers* (1844-45), Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), and an important mode of American fiction which extends from Edgar Allan Poe, James Fenimore Cooper, Nathaniel Hawthorne …". (ABRAMS, M.H. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. 6. ed. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers, 1985, p. 130-132.)

knew they were reading an old-fashioned love story; I had this same feeling by the time I read *The American*. James gives great pleasure to its readers, who expect a happy ending, and then sharply veered the novel into pathos and disaster. “No marriage, no happy ending – the romance turns to dust and ashes”.[95] “They would have been an impossible couple”[96], James wrote to Howells, explaining his decision of not giving a happy ending to the novel.

The American was and remains a favorite with its readers, for its myths are true, and the storytelling is fresh and has great charm. “Had James willing to give the novel the happy ending he finally gave to the play version, he would have achieved a commercial ‘best-seller’”.[97] Unlike his late novels, such as *The Ambassadors* (1903) and *The Golden Bowl* (1904), in which he uses long sentences and nothing seems to be happening besides the character’s thoughts, *The American* is full of energy and the plot develops quickly, which catches the reader’s attention.

In 1891, disappointed with fiction sales, James turns attention to dramatic production and rewrites *The American* as a play with a happy ending. *The American: A Comedy in Four Acts* opens to critical and popular success in the English provinces, Scotland and Ireland. In London, however, the play did not assure success. The critics were not favorably impressed with James’s first dramatic offering.

William T. Stafford, editor of the three volume edition of *Henry James: Novels 1871-1880*, *Henry James: Novels 1880-1886*, and *Henry James: Novels 1886-1890*[98], observes, in

[95] EDEL, op. cit., 1990.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid.
[98] STAFFORD, William T (ed.). *Henry James: Novels 1871-1880*. Available at <http://www.loa.org/volume.jsp?RequestID=56&section=notes> Accessed o n Jan. 26, 2006.
[98] Ibid.

the first volume, that *The American* was completely revised for the New York Edition, published by Scribner's & Sons in 1907. Henry James did not read proofs for the serial version since there was not enough time to send them back and forth across the ocean. In December 1876, in a letter to his mother, James wrote: "The story, as it stands, is full of things I should have altered; but I think none of them are so inalterable but that I shall be easily able in preparing the volume, to remove effectually, by a few verbal corrections, that Newmanesque taint on which William dwells".[99]

It is impossible to know what alterations were made in the serial version of the novel, since no manuscript or printer's copy exists, but a collation of the serial version with the first book edition reveals that James was able to make revisions in the text published by Osgood. Hundreds of verbal changes occur throughout the text; some of them perhaps influenced by his brother William's objection. When the American and English editions are compared, however, the case is very different. Few verbal changes occur, and the differences in punctuation seem to be more a matter of house-styling than authorial revision. In fact, except for the few changes mentioned above, James does not seem to have done much to the English edition. Therefore, I decided to work with the 1877 American first book edition because it seems most clearly representative of Henry James at the time of its composition.

[99] Ibid.

3.2 The American Innocence Issue in *The American*

While in Paris, James observed the wanderings of the Americans in Europe. Most of them were product of the post-war years, who had made fortunes, but having no leisure in their world, they were drawn to Europe, where leisure was an art. Christopher Newman is a specimen of this new social class with a lot of money and a lack of culture.

The migrant American in James's novels drifted about in isolated groups, satisfied merely to bask in the sunlight of Europe. They floated on the edges and surfaces of things. They were charmed and then they were beguiled, for they were usually innocent, virginal, upright, and open-hearted creatures, and in almost every case they came to grief. Christopher Newman was beguiled; Daisy Miller was misprized and died – for innocence wronged was the theme of James's work. And this innocence was the young American innocence at the mercy of the dark Old World that so charmed it, deceived it, destroyed it, and, finally, cast it away.

Lyall H. Powers points out that *The American* is a popular novel, probably because, in a manner, it solves its problem and clearly enough points it's moral. "It is, nevertheless, an instructive novel for the student of James. The way in which he has developed the international material and apportioned his value system here sets up a pattern to which his subsequent fiction remains strikingly constant".[100]

[100] POWERS, op. cit., p. 47.

According to Powers, in *Roderick Hudson* (1876), published a year before *The American*, at the outset of the story, the narrator makes an observation that lends brilliant illumination not only to this short story but to all of James's international fiction:

> *The latent preparedness of the American mind for even 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.*[101]

The "fact" which this fictional narrator refers to is one that James observed in his own life in both sides of the Atlantic. It appears again in *The American*, a story of the triumph of American good-heartedness over European corruption; yet before Christopher Newman has been allowed his moral triumph, he has been exposed to a great deal of sharply satirical treatment.

Christopher Newman is a self-made American millionaire in his first trip to Europe. According to Eloína Prati dos Santos, Christopher Newman emerges as the archetypal American; he is named after Christopher Columbus, the discoverer; he is a new breed of man who comes to rediscover Europe in an ironic reversal of history.

When analyzing Christopher Newman, Carl Van Doren quotes James's comments on the character, and affirms that Newman is not excessively convincing: "Before the American business-man, as I have been prompt to declare, I was absolutely and irredeemably helpless, with no fiber of my intelligence responding to his mystery".[102] In Van Doren's opinion, these imperfect elements are tangled in a fine net of charm. Though the style is sparer, sharper than

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[101] EDEL, Leon (ed.). *The Complete Tales of Henry James*. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1962, v. II, p. 227.
[102] VAN DOREN, op. cit., p. 5.

James's style was to become; its texture is here firm with adroit allusions and observant wit, while the background of Paris abundantly though unobtrusively fills the picture. *The American* does not have the meticulous style that would make James worldwide known later. In the excerpts that follow, we can notice not only James's informal style in *The American*, but also learn that Newman was not inclined to improve his mind intellectually: "… it was his prime conviction that a man's life should be easy […]. The world, to his sense, was a great bazaar where one might stroll about and purchase handsome things;…"[103]

> *At the outset, on his leaving Paris, his curiosity had not been intense; passive entertainment, in the Champs Élysées and at the theatres, seemed about as much as he need expect of himself, and although, as he had said to Tristam, he wanted to see the mysterious, satisfying best, he had not the Grand Tour in the least on his conscience, and was not given to cross-questioning the amusement of the hour. He believed that Europe was made for him, and not he for Europe.*[104]

The story begins at the Louvre; Newman goes there for he wants to learn art and to buy a few paintings. In the museum, he makes acquaintance with Mlle. Noémie Nioche, a mediocre copyist of paintings, who belongs to the low class and lives with her impoverished father, M. Nioche. The Nioche family will take advantage of Newman's naïveté and willingness to fit in the Parisian society.

Newman wants to see the best of what the world has to offer. For the moment, at least, he has had enough of making money, and would now like to see what his money can buy. He wants to hear the best music; taste the best wine; see the best art and, most ambitiously, find the best woman to be his wife. He wants to marry as well as he can. The "acquisition" of the perfect wife would be the crowning of his financial success.

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[103] JAMES, op. cit., 1995, p. 58.
[104] Ibid. p. 58, italics mine.

Shortly after his encounter with Mlle. Nioche at the Louvre, Newman recognizes Tom Tristram, an old friend from the Civil War, wandering at the gallery. Newman explains him he has made quite a fortune and now, having realized the inanity of seeking competitive revenge on his fellow businessmen, has decided to move to Europe to enjoy his wealth. Over dinner, Newman admits to the Tristams he has come to Europe to find a wife to complete his fortune.

Unlike other Americans, who were bored and went to Europe only to meet their countrymen and move from one country to another, Newman had a goal to achieve. In a conversation around the Tristam's dinner table, Newman explicitly defines one of the motivating forces of the story:

> *Well, I want a great woman. I stick to that. That's one thing I can treat myself to, and if it's to be had I mean to have it. What else have I toiled and struggled for all these years? I've succeeded, and now what am I to do with my success? To make it perfect, as I see it, there must be a lovely being perched on the pile like some shining statue crowning some high monument. She must be as good as she is beautiful, and as clever as she is good. I can give my wife a good deal, so I am not afraid to ask a good deal myself. She shall have everything a woman can desire; I shall not even object to her being too good for me; she may be cleverer and wiser than I can understand, and I shall only be better pleased. I want to posses, in a word, the best article in the market.*[105]

We can assume, from the excerpt above, that Newman's ambitions were not modest. He was aware that such a wife would be "too good for him" but, at the same time, he believed that his fortune would be reason enough to make this "ideal woman" consider marrying him.

The Tristams have been living in Paris the last six years. Despite their long stay, they are too innocent of European sophistication, as well. Richard A. Hocks notices that James's

[105] JAMES, op. cit., 1995, p. 35.

Europeanized character is a characteristic element in his international theme. He affirms that in *Four Meetings* (1885) James gives us an early taste of the innocence-to-experience theme in the person of Caroline Spencer.

> *The morally flawed Europeanized American persists in James's international theme, and can be seem in such figures as Winterbourne in Daisy Miller. […] In The American the ambivalent Mrs. Tristam is the principal Europeanized American character; had she been more representative of Christopher Newman's moral hazards than the Bellegardes, the late James would likely have thought his early novel more realistic and less flawed by romance.* [106]

Eloína Prati dos Santos compares the characters of Mrs. Tristam and Winterboune characters affirming that: "This lady has the practical function of bringing together the opposites, but she also represents the hybrid outlook of the Europeanized American similar to that of Winterbourne in Daisy Miller".[107]

Newman confides to Mrs. Tristam he wants to marry a French woman, preferably beautiful, well educated and belonging to a traditional family. She tells Newman about this beautiful widow, from a traditional French family: Claire de Cintré. She also warns him of the extreme pride and aloofness of Claire's family, the Bellegardes. In his naïveté, Newman assumes that his wealth and dynamism will prove more powerful than European class conventions. "In considering his marriage into the French aristocracy feasible, Newman reveals an uninstructed American optimism and his ignorance of the social complexity of Europe".[108]

Mrs. Tristam will promote Newman's acquaintance with the Bellegardes, a traditional Parisian family, to whom the most important aspect of life is to keep the old values and the

[106] HOCKS, op. cit., p. 21.
[107] SANTOS, op. cit., p. 52.
[108] Ibid. p. 52.

straights with the small group of families that compound the Parisian society. Love and happiness are not important for the Bellegardes; marriages are arranged by interests not for mutual affection and personal choices.

When describing her friend Claire to Newman, Mrs. Tristam, at the same time, puts Claire's qualities in relief and tries to bring together two opposite worlds, America and Europe: "I happen to number among my friends the loveliest woman in the world. Neither more nor less. I don't say a very charming person or a very estimable woman or a very great beauty; I say simply the loveliest woman in the world".[109] Mrs. Tristam goes on, explaining the Bellergardes' place in French aristocracy*:*

> *She belongs to the very top of the basket, as they say here. Her family, on each side, is of fabulous antiquity; her mother is the daughter of an English Catholic earl. […] I was not of her monde; I am not now, either, but we sometimes meet. They are terrible people – her monde; all mounted upon stilts a mile high, and with pedigrees long in proportion. It is the skim of the milk of the old noblesse. Do you know what a Legitimist is, or an Ultramontane? Go into Madame de Cintre's drawing-room some afternoon, at five o'clock, and you will see the best preserved specimens. I say go, but no one is admitted who can't show his fifty quarterings.*[110]

A few days later, Newman stops by the Tristram house only to find the visiting Claire, who politely invites him to call on her. Newman promptly accepts the invitation. The day he stops by the Bellegardes, a pleasant young man promises to go get Claire, but is checked by an imposing older figure who claims she is not at home (in this episode, Newman confuses the Marquis Urbain de Bellegarde with a butler, showing his lack of experience in dealing with traditional families).

[109] JAMES, op. cit., 1995, p. 36.
[110] Ibid., p. 37.

Mrs. Tristram encourages Newman to spend the summer traveling, promising that Claire will wait for his return. Newman spends a wonderful summer exploring ruins, monuments, cathedrals and the countryside with his usual enthusiasm. On his return to Paris, in the fall, Newman calls on Claire and finds her at home with her brother Valentin, the pleasant young man he had met on the first visit. Newman is deeply drawn to Claire's presence, her peace and her intense yet mild eyes.

As Newman gets to know Claire, he becomes more and more interested in her. He is impressed by her look and her personality. “In her whole person there was something both youthful and subdued, slender and yet ample, tranquil yet shy; a mixture of immaturity and repose, of innocence and dignity. […] She was a beautiful woman, and it was very easy to get on with her”.[111] If at the beginning of his courtship, we may see Newman’s attraction to Claire as a desire for the superlative and unavailable, rather than for Claire's inimitable essence, as their acquaintances become frequent, it is evident that Newman's delight in his prize fiancée increases each time they meet.

The object of Newman’s interest, Claire de Bellegarde, also the Comtesse de Cintré, is described as an exquisite and perfect woman: cultured, aristocratic, beautiful, and kind. At twenty-five, she is a widow; her mother having married her off at eighteen to the rich but unsavory Comte de Cintré, primarily out of an eagerness to refill the dwindling family coffers. Though Claire is strong and willing to stand against her family on moral principles, she cannot ultimately fight for her own happiness. Newman's courtship gives her a brief glimpse of the joy others experience. If at the beginning of the novel, she was determined never to marry again, as soon as she realizes Newman is a decent man, who would do

[111] Ibid., p. 35.

everything to make her happy, she changes her mind. After all, Claire had strong reasons to not consider being engaged again. Newman had learnt Claire's bad experiences from Mrs. Tristam: "… she has had one husband, and he gave her a low opinion of the species. […]. She was married at eighteen, by her parents, in the French fashion, to a disagreeable old man".[112] The marriage with Newman would be her way to escape the Bellegardes' tyrannical dominium over her.

Ravished with the possibility of marrying Claire, Newman tells Valentin that he is deeply interested in her and he would like to talk with the rest of the family about the possible marriage. Valentin then arranges an audience with the heads of the family – the forbidding Marquise and Urbain – later that week. On the appointed evening, after some painful small talk, Newman horrifies the assembled company with a long and candid speech about his poor adolescence and the makings of his fortune. When the others have left for a ball, Newman bluntly tells the Marquise he would like to marry her daughter. After inquiring with equal frankness about his wealth, the Marquise grudgingly agrees to consider his proposal. Several days later, Newman receives an invitation to dinner at the Bellegardes' house. After dinner, Urbain confirms the family has decided to accept Newman as a candidate for Claire's hand.

When Newman had started frequenting the Bellegardes' house, he frankly spoke with Claire about his love, his intention in marrying her and his assets. Fascinated, but still under the shadow of her first unhappy marriage, Claire asked him not to mention the issue for the next six months; if he agreed to do so, she would continue to see him. After the expiration of the six months period of silence about marriage, Newman proposes again and Claire accepts.

[112] Ibid., p. 37.

Newman and Mrs. Tristam come from a culture where no gap separates appearance from reality, and they are also totally inefficient at the reading of symbolic language. They are unable to see beyond the Bellegardes' manners and gestures and to understand the complexity of the French aristocracy. When Newman had started frequenting the Bellegardes, two sets of historical, political, cultural and religious values clashed sonorously. No other description of the scenery could be more accurately: two different worlds clashing! The strongest episode that portrays the juxtaposition of American and French morals and manners is the ball organized by the Bellegardes to introduce Newman to the Parisian society and to celebrate his engagement to Claire. The untitled Newman is presented to "three dukes, three counts and a baron". When Newman, in his inability to read the symbolic signs, parades his prospective mother-in-law in his arms, he has no clue that this kind of intimacy is not allowed in the French society. He is ecstatic for being accepted by Claire's family and behaves in the manners he considers are the most appropriate for the occasion. He does not realize that M. Bellegarde takes the gesture as a great offense in this shown of American vulgarity.

> *Newman is about to realize that he is thought bizarre by the people he sees as strange. He also suspects he is being shown as an 'exhibition' and asks himself: "Am I behaving like a damned fool? Am I stepping around like a terrier on his hind legs?" […] Newman is rendered incapable of analyzing the scene critically and goes home feeling confident and exhilarated.*[113]

The Bellegardes do not bother in hiding from Newman their opinions about him. After telling Claire he intended to marry her, Newman was invited to have dinner at the Bellegardes' house. As soon as the meal finishes, Claire's older brother, Marquis Urbain de Bellegarde proposes Newman they should go into the smoking-room. After announcing Newman he would recommend his sister to accept him, he makes his point clear: "I must do myself the justice, to say that our decision was not easy. Such an arrangement was not what

[113]SANTOS, op. cit. p. 53.

we had expected. The idea that my sister should marry a gentleman – ah – in business was something of a novelty".[114] Despite of the Bellergardes' efforts to give Newman the impression the family was trying to make some concession to the novelty, the reality was that they were feeling humiliated for accepting such a marriage for financial reasons.

After speaking with Urbain, Newman is requested to have a few words with Madame de Bellegarde, who would give the last word on the marriage issue. She tells Newman they should not interfere, and she completes by saying: "I wish to add a word that my son probably did not feel at liberty to say, […] I must say it for my own peace of mind. We are stretching a point; we are doing you a favor"[115]. They were clear as water about the way they felt in relation to Newman and about the fact that, even being wealthy, he was and he would never be good enough for them. "I may be wrong but I am too old to change. […] I shall not enjoy having my daughter marry you, and I shall not pretend to enjoy it. If you don't mind that, so much the better"[116], says Madame de Bellegarde to Newman, trying to make him understand that they would never change their proud way of being and that he should never expect to be considered as an equal.

Despite of the situation, Newman was feeling happy and thrilled waiting the marriage to come. He did not care about the Bellegardes and the cold distant way they treated him. He trusted in their given word and he was not waiting for a change of plans. But, one morning, as he had been doing for months, he went to the Bellegardes to visit Claire. As soon as he had arrived, he was surprised by the news: Claire was living Paris and the engagement was cancelled. Claire lets the amazed and bewildered Newman know she gave him up because her mother had told her to do so. He was informed, by Madame de Bellegarde, that the marriage

[114] JAMES, op. cit., 1995, p. 140.
[115] Ibid., p. 146, italics mine.
[116] Ibid., p. 146.

was improper and she and her eldest son, Marquis Urbain de Bellegarde, had used their authority and had commanded that Claire did not marry him. The Bellegardes decided to change their decision, even though they had agreed and had given their word before. They took their decision despite of Claire's feelings; they did not care if their decision would make her unhappy.

Newman could not believe the Bellegardes had decided not to allow the marriage. They snubbed him; they snatched Claire from him; and their best explanation was that "it was improper".[117] "Have I done anything wrong?' he demanded. 'Have I given you reason to change your opinion? Have you found out anything against me?'"[118] asked Newman, trying to find a reasonable reason for being deceived and betrayed. Madame de Bellegarde explained to Newman they had no ill-will towards him. "It is not your disposition that we object to, it is your antecedents. We really cannot reconcile ourselves to a commercial person. We fancied in an evil hour that we could; it was a great misfortune".[119] Newman was not good enough for the ancient French house of the Bellegarde. The repression of the Old World and the old values prevailed.

The American innocence issue in *The American* can be summed up in one word: misperception. It is implicit in Newman's ambitions, his misperception that Europe could be understood simply as an older, richer, and more sophisticated version of America. Newman, and others like him, imagined Europe as the sort of place that America would be in perhaps a hundred years, if it put its mind to painting, sculpture and music with the same industry it had thus far demonstrated in its commerce and industry. This good-natured conception – essentially, that the difference between America and Europe cannot run too deep – is a

[117] Ibid. p. 146.
[118] Ibid., p. 224.
[119] Ibid., p. 224.

symptom of the stereotypically American ignorance of history, and, thus, of all the cultural, social, and political differences that accrue in history's wake. In short, Americans are frequently seen as failing to distinguish an abstract admiration for European culture and artifacts from a selfish wish to possess them. The imagined similarities between Europe and America allow American buyers, tourists, and fiancés to acquire their European objects of desire on American terms. But the consequences of such culturally ignorant acquisitions were often, as James's novel attests, tragic.

Much of the difficulty the elder Bellegardes had with Newman, and that he had with them, resulted from the expected difference in values, beliefs, habits, occupations and desires. Newman's misperception of the importance of the unit of the French society, here represented by the Bellegardes, who might be cynically called producers of culture. Juxtaposed to the European traditional bonded family, Newman is the American individual prototype, who is free to act and make decisions according to his own beliefs.

Newman, in his difficulty to understand a world completely different from the one he was used to, was also unable to understand Claire's motifs in accepting her family's decision to interfere in the marriage. Their major difference revolved around the relative weight of personal freedom – happiness, autonomy, interest and so forth – on the one hand, and, on the other hand, duty to family, tradition and history. Newman believed strongly in the individual's right to act fairly and rationally and make his own personal choices. After had been told by the Bellegardes that Claire would no longer marry him, Newman was stunned and wounded. He could understand the Bellegardes' treachery, but the treachery of Madame de Cintré amazed and confounded him. Only three days had elapsed since she had told him she was happy in the prospect of their marriage. He had a terrible apprehension that she had

really changed and he could not understand the reasons that had caused this twist in their lives. He did not rail at Claire as false; for he was sure she was unhappy. "It means that I have given you up"[120], explains Claire to Newman, justifying her departure to Fleurières. "Her face was too charged with tragic expression not fully to confirm her words".[121]

At this point of the narrative, we have the climax, that is, Claire's renunciation of her engagement with Newman, pressed by her mother and her brother. Even though she had had a glimpse of happiness, she was not strong enough to fight against her family and the pressure of the old and traditional values. Her sense of duty to family was stronger than her own happiness. "My mother commanded"[122], says Claire, explaining to Newman the way her family had used their authority over her. "Commanded you to give me up – I see. And you obey – I see. But why do you obey? asked Newman. […]. I am afraid of my mother, she said".[123]

Needing to pour out his ire, Newman goes to Mrs. Tristam, and tells her the "news". To his surprise, Mrs. Tristam tells him she felt something the other night in the air (at the Bellegardes' house): they wanted Claire to marry Lord Deepmere, her English rich cousin. But that is not the only thing, adds Mrs. Tristam; the strongest reason the Bellegardes backed out was that

> *They really couldn't endure you any longer. They had overrated their courage. I must say, to give the devil his due, that there is something rather fine in that. It was your commercial quality in the abstract they couldn't swallow. That is really aristocratic. They wanted your money, but they have given you up for an idea.*[124]

[120] JAMES, op. cit., 1995, p. 220.
[121] Ibid., p. 220.
[122] Ibid., p. 221.
[123] Ibid., p. 221.
[124] Ibid., p. 228.

With these words Mrs. Tristam summarizes the importance of keeping up appearances to The Bellegardes and the extent to which they were attached to old traditional values. They could not bear the simple thought of being bonded with a commercial person. In Mrs. Tristam's opinion, Claire must have a very fixed idea in her head to resist to Newman. Knowing that Newman had the intention of going after Claire, she declared: "… go to Madame de Cintré at any rate, and tell her that she is a puzzle even to me. I am very curious to see how far family discipline will go".[125] Even though living in Paris for years, Mrs. Tristam still could not understand the way aristocratic families worked.

There are two main points in Newman's innocence, portrayed in the novel. The first one, I have been discussing during the development of this sub-chapter: Newman's attempts to marry Claire and, consequently, the Bellegardes' betrayal. The second important point is Newman's opportunity to have his revenge against the Bellegardes. In choosing whether taking this option or not, Newman becomes James's innocent American abroad, and the Bellegardes represent the corruption and repression of the Old World and old values.

To summarize the events, after Claire takes her leave to Fleurières, Mrs. Bread, the Bellegardes' old English maid, tells Newman that there is a secret involving Urbain and the Marquise. Valentin, Claire's younger brother, in his death-bed, formally apologizes for his family and tells Newman about a skeleton in the Bellegardes family closet, which Newman can use to get his revenge. After a few events, Mrs. Bread finally tells Newman that Urbain and the Marquise killed the Marquis, at the family's country house, because he opposed to Claire's first marriage to the Comte de Cintrè; to prove her information, she gives Newman a letter written by the Marquis, just before he died. Newman threatens the Bellegardes, by

[125] Ibid., p. 228.

telling them he will tell all their friends about the murder if they do not allow the marriage, but they refuse to give Claire. The Bellegardes do not back away and Newman gives up his revenge, destroying the incriminatory letter at Mrs. Tristam's fireplace.

In choosing to not have his revenge, Newman shows his good-heartedness, a very strong characteristic of the innocent Americans.

> *Yet at the last moment he decides that it would be a dastardly trick to use the weapon, would lower him to their level by involving him in their foul game. He destroys the information and returns to America a somewhat sadder but a wiser and noble man than he left it. […] Here the typical international theme receives a balanced and clear-cut exposition: the good and the bad of both the American and the European are distinctly and carefully set forth. Christopher is basically good-hearted and well intentioned, yet his woeful naïveté is so extreme as actually to constitute a serious fault – especially when seen against the background of European cultured civilization. Newman is the Western great barbarian, the hick, a boor and a bear: he is unfinished man.*[126]

During the whole novel, Newman's misperception, caused by his lack of experience and culture, is very clear. One can learn this from the episode in which he burns the incriminatory letter at Mrs. Tristam's fireplace. Newman does not show her the paper, still he tells her that it was something which would damn the Bellegardes, if it were known. Then he explains the reason he has given his revenge up: he has frightened them. He knew they were afraid, and that was enough for him. "'But they were frightened', Newman added, 'and I have had all the vengeance I want'".[127] Mrs. Tristam then asks Newman if the letter was already burnt and he answers that there was nothing left.

> *'Well then', she said, 'I suppose there is no harm in saying that you probably did not make them so very uncomfortable. My impression would be that since, as you say, they defied you, it was because they believed that, after all, you would never really come to the point. Their confidence, after counsel taken of each other, was not in their innocence, nor in their talent for bluffing things off; it was in your*

[126] POWERS, op. cit., p. 46, italics mine.
[127] JAMES, op. cit., 1995, p. 324.

> *remarkable good nature! You see, they were right. 'Newman instinctively turned to see if the little paper was in fact consumed; but there was nothing left of it.*[128]

Newman then realizes he has misunderstood the whole situation. He has thought he was taking a noble attitude by not lowering at the Bellegardes' level, but, in fact, they have deceived him one more time. They knew that, at the end, his good nature would prevail. In order to keep old traditions and conventions, Urbain and the Marquise shut up Claire in a Carmelite convent, taking advantage of Newman's good-heartedness and lack of malice, returning to their life of appearances.

Claire's destiny makes us think about the power of the word "choice", which was mentioned in Chapter 1. Had Newman never become interested in Claire, or had she did not allowed his courtship, she would be less unhappy and would be living outside the Carmelite convent walls. A lot has been said and written about Newman been a victim, for he is James's stereotype of the innocent American; but, if we consider the result of the events in Claire's life, she was "the" victim. Newman had come into her life and, even though his intentions were the best possible, he brought her only disgrace. After having tasted the best the world can offer: **freedom**, Claire's life would never be the same again. She became a prisoner of something stronger than walls; she became a prisoner of the awareness that she was incapable of breaking the bonds with her tyrannical family and taking control of her own destiny.

[128] Ibid., p. 324-325.

4. *DAISY MILLER: A STUDY*

4.1 The relevance of *Daisy Miller* in James's career

Henry James was thirty-five years old in 1878, when the runaway success of *Daisy Miller: A Study* made him a celebrity in both England and America. He would never again write anything that would have such a startling success. Rejected by the *American Lippincott Magazine*[129] because of a perceived "outrage on American girlhood", as James notes in his New York Edition Preface[130], *Daisy Miller* was published in England in Leslie Stephen's magazine.[131] Despite of the great success, James was deprived of almost all revenue from the tale because of his failure to secure an American copyright; editions pirated in New York and Boston sold at breakneck pace. The Harper's Half-Hour Series' edition sold twenty thousand copies in a few weeks.

[129] *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine* is a 19th century magazine, published form 1886 to 1915, in Philadelphia. It published literary criticism, original work, general articles and advertisements.
[130] Preface to *Daisy Miller, Pandora, The Patagonia and Other Tales*, v. 18, *The New York Edition of The Novels and Tales of Henry James*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909.
[131] James's friend Leslie Stephen (1832-1904, father of Virginia Woolf) issued the story in two parts in *The Cornhill Magazine*, number 37, June, 1878, and number 38, July 1878.

According to Daniel Mark Fogel, James's experimentation with narrative and point of view[132] in his work foreshadowed the concerns of such writers as Proust and Joyce. He also undermined the prototype of the American male writer uniquely inept at portraying women; he established a new stereotype, one that became an enduring and cherished American myth – the free, spontaneous American girl of independent and generous spirit. The novel is, at the same time, one of the finest examples of the manipulation of point of view and a carefully constructed comedy of manners.

Daisy Miller marked a watershed in Henry James's artistic development. It was followed in rapid succession by two short novels that are now considered minor masterpieces, *The Europeans* (1878) and *Washington Square* (1880), and it was clearly preparatory to James's first incontestably great novel, *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881).

> *In vesting innocence and a sense of freedom in an attractive, unmarried American girl in Daisy Miller, and then in showing how Daisy comes to grief in conflict with European conventions, James was rehearsing the theme of the much greater novel he would soon write: […] The Portrait of a Lady.* [133]

The publication of *Daisy Miller* was a pivotal moment in James's career. From that moment on, American and European readers looked at Henry James as the master of the novel of international contrasts. From *Daisy Miller* forward, from all the white male authors who have dominated the canon of American literature, James's fiction is distinguished by his remarkable empathy with the minds and hearts of his female characters.

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[132] Henry James refined "the limited point of view", that is, the narrative in which the narrator tells the story in the third person, but stays inside the confines of what is experienced, thought, and felt by a single character (or at most by very few characters) within the story. James described such a selected character as his "focus" or "mirror", or "center of consciousness"; for example: Strether in *The Ambassadors* (1903) and Maisie in *What Maisie Knew* (1897). Later writers developed this technique into *stream-of-consciousness* narration, in which we are presented with outer observations only as they impinge on the continuous current of thought, memory, feelings and associations which constitute an observer's total awareness.

[133] FOGEL, op. cit, p. 3.

When discussing the importance of *Daisy Miller*, Fogel points out that, late in life, Henry James expressed irritation over the disproportionate attention the public lavished on *Daisy Miller* compared to the rest of his work. It overall sales and number of readers, making it what James called "the ultimately most prosperous child of my invention".[134] Why, in short, does *Daisy Miller* matter? There are many possible answers. Fogel suggests that the major keys lie on the still vital and engaging issues that James developed in the tale about the role of conventions and stereotyping in the human community, about our vulnerability to self-deception, and about the proper relations between men and women and between parents and children. William Dean Howells emphasized the relevance of *Daisy Miller* remarking that, in this tale James "was the inventor, beyond question, of the international American girl".[135] Having seen James's portrayals of Daisy, real American girls would never again behave innocently and unconsciously as she had done. Howells also suggested that the tale occasioned intense debate and some outrage in the polite American society. He remarked that "American society almost divided itself into Daisy Millerites and anti-Daisy Millerites".[136]

As mentioned before, for four years, between 1905 and 1909, Henry James worked on the twenty-four-volume selection of his works, known as the New York Edition. *Daisy Miller* appeared with several other tales, in volume 18.

It is relevant to make a few comments on the revised edition, for James made several changes, starting by the title, which can confuse the readers that are not familiar with this detail. For the purpose of this thesis, I have chosen to work with the original edition, considering that the analyzed works were written in the same period of his career (1878-

[134] JAMES, op. cit., 1909.
[135] *New York Times* Editorial, June 4, 1879, p. 4.
[136] Ibid., p. 4.

1879), at the time James started dealing with the "international theme" and the "American innocence" issue.

What had thus far been called *Daisy Miller: A Study* became simply *Daisy Miller*. In the New York Edition Preface, James said he could not recall the reasons for the original subtitle, "unless they may have taken account of a certain flatness in my poor little heroine's literal denomination"[137]. In Fogel's opinion, James's observation in the preface to the new edition that Daisy "was of course pure poetry, and had never been anything else"[138] would seem to disavow the apparently realistic intention of the tale. The new, late title seems to imply that the revision at least will not have the analytic bite of a study; instead it will be rich with the symbolism of a poetic tribute to Daisy. "In keeping with his new conception of Daisy as 'pure poetry' James transformed his earlier concrete descriptions of her to more abstract, vague, nebulous ones, consonant with her new status as an idealized figure".[139] Winterbourne's observation that Daisy "had the *tournure* of a princess"[140], becomes his thought of "her natural elegance"[141], which plays into the myth of Daisy as a "child of nature" without any concrete physical reference. James adds the word "charming" at least half a dozen times in the revised text, conveying the idea that Daisy casts a scarcely explicable spell over Winterbourne. Not only James poeticizes Daisy but makes the condemnation of her by others harsher and therefore less excusable, more culpable.

If in the original edition Daisy's innocence is questionable until the end of the tale, in the revised edition James sets up more signs that point to her innocence, which leads the reader to the sense of the depth of the error that takes her as anything but innocent. She is

[137] Preface to *Daisy Miller*, NYE, vi.
[138] Ibid., viii.
[139] FOGEL, op. cit., 1990, p. 91.
[140] JAMES, Henry. *Daisy Miller: A Study*. In: *The Portable Henry James*. New York: Penguin, 2004, p. 15.
[141] JAMES, op. cit., 1909, p. 21.

also presented less ambiguously, for instance, Winterbourne no longer rebukes Giovanelli at the graveside for taking Daisy to the Colosseum just because she wanted to go – "That was no reason!"[142] he exclaims in the original – but instead repeats Giovanelli's words, "She did what she liked"[143], in implicit tribute to the independent streak in Daisy for which they both have admired her.

Many readers seem to prefer the earlier version simply because James's late grammar style is more complicated. They object to the verbal texture of a prose that leans toward such formulations as "his little friend the child of nature of the Swiss lakeside"[144] for a simply "Daisy Miller".[145] In the revised edition the late style becomes the means of depriving the text of 1878-1879 of its full range of ironic qualifications and complexities.

As pointed out in the introduction, I refer to the tale, in this dissertation, as *Daisy Miller*, even though working with the 1878 edition, considering that the majority of critics and scholars refer to the tale by the short and most known title, instead of *Daisy Miller: A Study*.

4.2 The American Innocence Issue in *Daisy Miller*

My first impression, by the time I read *Daisy Miller*, is the same that seems to bother the character Winterbourne and, probably, most of the readers that are faced with Daisy's incongruence: "Is she really an 'innocent' girl?". It is hard to believe that someone would be

[142] JAMES, op. cit., 2004a, p. 60.
[143] Ibid., p. 92.
[144] Ibid., p. 46.
[145] JAMES, op. cit., 1909, p. 28.

so unaware of the established social rules and act just in the opposite way. Even though not being in agreement of these rules, Daisy could had been flexible and tried to enjoy her new experience in Europe, without breaking all the established patterns and, consequently, damage herself. But, all these impressions and feelings come from an experienced woman who lives in a completely different world, more than a century from the time the tale takes place.

For the reasons mentioned above, analyzing the social-historical context of the American and European societies is crucial for the study of *The American* and *Daisy Miller*, which was made at the beginning of this dissertation, in Chapter 1. Some aspects of the American social-historical context worth being analyzed in order to understand the actual setting – Europe in the late 1860s or early 1870s – and the "unseen" setting, the home of its characters, America Post Civil War.

The United States was, in that era, a nation that was rapidly becoming industrialized and rich. The new industries and the wealth worked many changes in American life. Some families found themselves suddenly catapulted into the upper class to form a new American aristocracy. That was not an aristocracy based on inherited nobility, as it did in Europe, but one based strictly on money. James created a fine fictional example of such a family with the Millers of Schenectady, NY. Though their wealth allowed them to socialize in the most fashionable circles, these *nouveau riches* lacked education as well as the refined behavior expected in such circles. In the United States, this deficiency did not cause many problems, for numerous families were in the same position. The country was still young, without the centuries of tradition and refinement that weighed on Europe.

The wealth that pushed families, such as the Millers, into the American upper class, also enabled them to travel abroad for the first time. What would happen when they arrived in

Europe, where manners and social classes were far more rigid, where aristocracy had been in place for centuries, and where a long-established group of Americans sought to fit in by behaving with the same strictness the Europeans exhibited? These questions lie at the heart of *Daisy Miller*.

Daisy is a strikingly beautiful American girl, probably in her late teens. Her father runs a profitable business and she enjoys a whirlwind social life. Her mother and her nine-year-old brother, Randolph, accompany her on her travels through Europe.

While in Europe, Daisy behaves just as she did in America, talking openly with any man she finds attractive or interesting. What she does not realize is that, in Europe, nice girls most definitely are not flirts. In her spontaneity and naturalness, her ignorance and her disregard for decorum, Daisy is among the first of the characters whom James used to represent the new world of America in contrast to the older, more cultured world of Europe.

Daisy Miller was based on true events which James learned in the autumn of 1877, as he explained at the beginning of the New York Edition Preface. According to James, a friend told him about this simple and uninformed American lady, who was accompanied by her young daughter, “a child of nature and freedom”, who had “picked-up” by the wayside, a good-looking Roman, of vague identity, who was exhibited and introduced by the girl “all innocently, all serenely”. This last until some small social check, some interrupting incident, of no great gravity or dignity had happened – which James did not remember – as well he had not known who they were. What matters is that James immediate felt like dramatizing the story as he emphasized in the preface: “Dramatize, dramatize!”. The result of “my

recognizing a few months later the sense of my pencil-mark was the short chronicle of *Daisy Miller* […]".[146]

Alan W. Bellringer affirms that Daisy does not act out of caprice or the desire to shock. She simple wishes to exercise her right to choose what male companion she pleases, without prejudice or suspicion. "She does not want to know what people may be saying about her, as she would not like what they meant".[147] But, even though Daisy seems to not care about anyone's opinion, she is only defending herself from a situation she does not know how to deal with. Her mother, Mrs. Miller, who should be the person to guide the innocent young girl, is a model of America's loosely controlling mother figure. She is a listless, frail, and vacant character, unable to control her daughter or her son. As ignorant as Daisy of European standards, she is far less sensitive to the undercurrent of disapproval her ignorance provokes.

The drama of *Daisy Miller* is, in large part, the same drama of the character Frederick Winterbourne, in his confusion about Daisy, his continuing, baffled attempts to understand and to type her. The narrator's perspective on Winterbourne entails a very complex blend of sympathy and criticism, empathy and analysis, closeness and distance. He is the narrator's point of view; consequently, his confusion leads the reader to the same path of confusion and mistakes about Daisy's true character.

When discussing the relationship between Daisy Miller and Winterbourne, Bellringer affirms that "the reader is left in the dark about Winterbourne on vital matters just as Daisy is, and so indirectly identifies with her, in spite of everything that tells against her".[148] He has been away from America too long to know "where he is" with Daisy Miller's good nature.

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[146] JAMES, op. cit., 1909.
[147] BELLRINGER, Alan K. *Modern Novelists: Henry James*. London: Macmillan, 1988, p. 47.
[148] Ibid., p. 47.

One of the greatest impacts Henry James had on modern literature was through his experiments in the point of view of the narrative. Up until his writing, fiction was frequently written from the point of view of an omniscient third-person narrator who was separate from the action of the story but who could describe or comment on any part of the story at any time. What James did was to create a character who became involved in the action of the story, then use that character to tell the story, not necessarily by writing in the first person. *Daisy Miller* is a third-person narrative, but nevertheless by filtering the events of the story through that character's thoughts and feelings. Winterbourne does not narrate the book, but the reader sees everything from his point of view. There is no scene in which he is not present; and having him serve as the point of view character, gives *Daisy Miller* a slant it might not otherwise had.

The first contact between Frederick Winterbourne and Daisy Miller happens in a comfortable hotel at the little town of Vevey, in Switzerland. This acquaintance will give the tone to the development of the plot. Since the very first moment

> *The poor Winterbourne was amused, perplexed, and decidedly charmed. He had never yet heard a young girl express herself in just this fashion; […] He felt that he had lived at Geneva so long that he had lost a good deal; he had become dishabituated to the American tone.*[149]

By condemning the American girls' behavior, Winterbourne lets the reader know that he is a Europeanized American and, in his opinion, Miss Daisy Miller was a flirt. "Certainly she was very charming; but how deucedly society!".[150] In Europe, a young man was not at liberty to speak to a young unmarried lady except under certain rarely-occurring conditions. Considering these social conventions, even the most open-minded man would be astonished if

[149] JAMES, op. cit., 2004a, p. 12.
[150] Ibid., p. 12.

a pretty American girl came and stood in front of him in a hotel garden, starting a conversation. The poor Winterbourne was wondering whether he had gone too far until the moment he realized that she was not in the least embarrassed herself; she was evidently neither offended nor fluttered. This was simply her habit, her manner.

Winterbourne spends the whole narrative trying to find a "formula" that could be applied to Miss Daisy Miller. "… she was only a pretty American flirt. Winterbourne was almost grateful for having found the formula that applied to Miss Daisy Miller. […] It presently became apparent that he was on the way to learn".[151] Thus, during the narrative, this "formula" will change accordingly to Winterboune and Daisy meetings are occurring and the events to come. The point of view character will lead the reader to the same wrong conclusions he reaches.

Still at Vevey, Daisy tells Winterbourne that she would like to visit an Old Castle near the hotel. Winterbourne offers to accompany her in the excursion to the *Château de Chillon*, afraid of being bold or disrespectful with his offer, and believing that Mrs. Miller would accompany them. For his surprise, Daisy accepts the offer and says she would go alone with him because her mother don't[152] like to ride round in the afternoon. Such behavior was completely improper in Europe those days. No respectful young woman would go in an excursion with a man, without the company of relatives or other people related to her family. It is very easy to the reader to understand and to share Winterbourne's doubts about Daisy's personality, because it is very clear that, even the most innocent and unsophisticated young woman would know that this would be an inappropriate behavior.

[151] Ibid., p. 12-13.
[152] In the original.

Winterbourne is also influenced by his aunt's prejudices against Daisy. Mrs. Costello refuses to be introduced to Miss Daisy Miller. After learning from Winterbourne that he has acquainted Miss Miller, Mrs. Costello declares: "They are very common. They are the sort of Americans that one does one's duty by not – not accepting".[153] She also deplores Daisy's mother attitudes in relation to their courier, Eugenio, who is treated like a familiar friend – like a gentleman. "Winterbourne listened with interest to these disclosures; they helped him to make up his mind about Miss Daisy. Evidently she was rather wild".[154]

Hocks observes that Daisy's beauty, enthusiasm and spontaneity do not change the fact that, like her mother and her absent father, she inhabits an intellectual vacuum; Daisy believes Europe is nothing but hotels. Even infatuated with her, Winterbourne eventually recognizes she is "nothing every way if not light" – "a lightweight in Jamesian lexicon usually meaning someone without sufficient consciousness".[155]

Several weeks later, Winterbourne goes to Rome, at the end of January, to stay with his aunt and also hoping to see "Miss Miller". On arriving there, Mrs. Costello informs him that Daisy's attitudes are more vulgar than in Vevey. "The girl goes about alone with her foreigners. […]. She has picked up half-a-dozen of the regular Roman fortune-hunters and she takes them about to people's houses".[156] Winterbourne tries to defend her affirming that Daisy and her mother were very ignorant – very innocent only. He was annoyed at hearing of a state of affairs so little in harmony with an image that had lately flitted in and out of his own meditations: Daisy looking out in an old window asking herself urgently when Mr. Winterbourne would arrive.

[153] JAMES, op. cit., 2004a., p. 16.
[154] Ibid., p. 17.
[155] HOCKS, op. cit, p. 33.
[156] Ibid., p. 31.

At this point of the narrative, it is not clear whether Winterbourne is infatuated with Daisy or not. There are a few hints, such as the episode at Mrs. Walker's house, when they first met in Rome: "Winterbourne, rather annoyed at Miss Miller's want of appreciation of the zeal of an admirer who on his way down to Rome had stopped neither at Bologna nor at Florence, simply because of a certain sentimental impatience".[157]

At this same party, Daisy amazes Winterbourne again, by asking the host to bring an Italian friend, Mr. Giovanelli, next time she would come to a party. "He's the handsomest man in the world – except Mr. Winterbourne!"[158], says Daisy, preparing to leave for a walk in the evening, accompanied by Mr. Giovanelli, an inappropriate behavior in Mrs. Walker and Winterbourne's opinion. From this moment on, Daisy starts to ruin her image through the eyes of the Roman society and becomes more and more wild and reckless, doing what she pleases, probably defending herself in her own innocent way.

After this episode, Winterbourne lets the reader know his true feelings for Daisy. Mrs. Walker tells him she wishes he would cease his relations with Miss Miller; to her surprise, he answers: "I'm afraid I can't do that", I like her extremely".[159]

On the evening of the third day before the events mentioned above, another party took place at Mrs. Walker's house. Winterbourne attended the party. When he arrived he found only Mrs. Walker among the American ladies. Daisy came after eleven o'clock, rustling forward in radiant loveliness, carrying a bouquet and attended by Mr. Giovanelli. "Every one stopped talking, and turned and looked at her".[160] When Winterbourne finally has a chance to

[157] JAMES, op. cit., 2004a, p. 34.
[158] Ibid., p. 35.
[159] Ibid., p. 43.
[160] Ibid., p. 46.

talk with Daisy, she claims she did not see why she should change her habits for them (the European society). “I’m afraid your habits are those of a flirt”[161], said Winterbourne, in a reproachful speech, advising her that those people did not understand that sort of things there, that is, to be seeing alone in public with Mr. Giovanelli. As it happened every time they met, Winterbourne was bewildered and perplexed by Daisy’s behavior that made nothing clear, though, for him, “… it seemed to prove that she had a sweetness and softness that reverted instinctively to the pardon of offences”.[162] Winterbourne wondered all the time whether Daisy was an innocent American girl, who believed that she was acting in the right way, or she was only a dangerous, terrible girl, trying to shock people; someone who knew exactly what was doing.

At the same evening, Daisy would show her weakness. At the moment of her departure from Mrs. Walker’s house, the hostess turned her back straight upon her. “Daisy turned away, looking with a pale, grave face at the circle near the door; Winterbourne saw that, for the first moment, she was too much shocked and puzzled even for indignation. He on his side was greatly touched”.[163]

In his analysis of the Chapter 4, Fogel affirms that although Winterbourne continues to defend Daisy and to call on her frequently – even though she is never at home – the episodes that leads up to the climax in the Colosseum show him increasingly inclined to regard her in a harsh, negative light.

Winterbourne cannot tell if Daisy is too provincial ‘even to have perceived’ her ostracism or if she was ‘a defiant passionate, perfectly observant consciousness

[161] Ibid., p. 47.
[162] Ibid., p. 48.
[163] Ibid., p. 49.

> *of the impression she produced', and he is still hung up on the old questions of whether she is innocent or 'a young person of the reckless class'.*[164]

In the climax scene, Winterbourne finds Daisy seated at the base of the cross in the center of the Colosseum, close to midnight, with Giovanelli's attendance. According to Fogel's analysis, in this moment, with a sort of horror or relief Winterbourne feels the answer to the puzzle, as if a sudden illumination had been flashed upon Daisy's ambiguity and the riddle had become to read. "She was a young lady whom a gentleman need no longer be at pains to respect".[165] Despite of being angry for have been spending so much time bothering about the right way of regarding Daisy, Winterbourne is taken by a sense of the danger and he "begun to think simply of the craziness, from a sanitary point of view, of a delicate young girl lounging away the evening in this nest of malaria".[166] Winterbourne drives Daisy home as fast as he can. She dies a few days later of Roman fever.

During the episode at the Colosseum, when Winterbourne was driving Daisy home, she suddenly asks: "Did you believe I was engaged the other day?' she asked. 'It doesn't matter what I believed the other day' said Winterbourne, […] 'I believe that it makes very little difference whether you are engaged or not!'".[167] After Daisy's death, Mrs. Miller tells Winterbourne she had left him a message. "She told me to tell you that she never was engaged to that handsome Italian".[168] Winterbourne did not understand the message at the time, but after speaking with Giovanelli at Daisy's funeral, he finally realized he had done her injustice; after all, she was just an innocent girl.

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[164] FOGEL, Op. cit., 1990, p. 82.
[165] JAMES, op. cit., 2004a, p. 57.
[166] Ibid., p. 57.
[167] Ibid., p. 58.
[168] Ibid., p. 60.

It is relevant to mention the events that happened during Daisy's funeral, for they finally clear up the issue of her being an innocent American girl or not. Near to Winterbourne, Giovanelli says: "'She was the most beautiful young lady I ever saw, and the most amiable'. And then he added in a moment, 'And she was the most innocent'".[169] Sore and angry, Winterbourne asks him: "Why the devil did you take her to that fatal place?[170]". Imperturbable, Giovanelli answers: "For myself, I had no fear; and she wanted to go".[171] She did what she wanted and her will drove her to death.

The next summer Winterbourne met Mrs. Costello again at Rome. One day he spoke of Daisy to his aunt – he said it was on his conscience that he had done her injustice, and then he explained: "She sent me a message before her death which I did not understand at the time. But I have understood it since. She would have appreciated one's esteem".[172]

At the end of the narrative, the reader finds the answer to the question that remains through the whole tale: "Is Daisy Miller an innocent American girl or just an inconsequent flirt?" As Winterbourne finally decodes Daisy's true character, the reader becomes aware of her innocence.

Lyall H. Powers points out that many readers fail to see Daisy's culpability and then put full blame for her catastrophe on Winterbourne's shoulders. If it seems to us that he is another of those Europeanized Americans who are typically responsible for the evil that strikes the innocent American hero or heroine, we have failed to take into account his scruples and his quite unselfish interest in Daisy's welfare, and we have forgotten that he is the last

[169] Ibid., p. 60.
[170] Ibid., p. 60.
[171] Ibid., p. 60.
[172] Ibid., p. 61.

and the most reluctant to give up on her. “The point of the story is surely that Winterbourne cannot, with the best intentions and the greatest goodwill possible, be sure that he is not being taken in by the little flirt: he wants to think well of her, but her actions and the opinion of all the others in his circle prevent his doing so”.[173]

Daisy’s inability to deal with a “new world” and her mother’s weakness in controlling her own daughter, leads Daisy to a rebel path and she is not able to know when is the right moment to take a step back and return to a safe one. Daisy does not have the benefit of mature guidance, as her wretched mother is a distinct liability, allowing Daisy to do what she pleases with her parental indulgence. As ignorant as Daisy of European standards, Mrs. Miller is far less sensitive to the undercurrent of disapproval of her ignorance provokes. If we see her through Winterbourne’s eyes, she is a listless, frail and vacant character, unable to control her daughter or her son. As Daisy does not have someone close to guide her, and she does not listen to Winterbourne and Mrs. Walker’s advices, she misunderstands the attention given to her by Giovanelli, the opportunistic Italian, provoking the American community that starts ignoring and despising her.

Brooks reminds us that at the late period of his career, James developed the method which remained as a model for the writers to come. “Wonderful metaphors blossomed in his pages like airplants from the tropics”.[174] In the same way Henry James is considered a master in using metaphors in novels and short stories, his compatriot Robert Frost is considered a master in using metaphors in poetry. His most known poem, one of my favorites, *The Road Not Taken* (1920), deals with the huge importance of making choices in life. Daisy had to choose which path to take and she chose the less traveled one; it made all the difference in her

[173] POWERS, op. cit., p. 53.
[174] BROOKS, op. cit., p. 170.

life, but, unlike the poem, in a negative way. Sometimes people assume risks in life that they should not have done. Daisy tried to break strongly established rules, which made her a victim of her own choices. As the American community refuses to have anything to do with her, it drives Daisy more deliberately than ever on her downward path. “She will not learn, will not be told, will not see; and she plunges pigheadedly on to her doom, poor little fool!”.[175]

[175] POWERS, op. cit., p. 53.

5 INTERTEXTUAL AND INTERDISCIPLINARY READING

5.1 Confluences and divergences in *The American* and *Daisy Miller: A Study*

In order to do the comparative study between *The American* and *Daisy Miller*, it is vital to determine the confluences and divergences among the texts.

Christopher Newman and Daisy Miller are both rich Americans traveling in Europe. They are part of a new American aristocracy, suddenly catapulted from the upper class as a result of well succeed business after the Civil War. This is their first experience in the Old Continent, thus they are not familiar with European tradition and values.

Daisy is traveling with her mother and her younger brother. They only objective is to spend a few months in Europe, know new places and make acquaintances. Unlike Daisy, Newman has an objective: he wants to learn art, listen good music, that is, gets the best money can buy. To crown his financial success he also wants to marry a refined European lady; he believes his wealth will open the aristocratic families' doors.

Both characters are stereotypes used by James in his own mythology to represent the dichotomies of Good and Evil, Innocence and Experience, America and Europe. Daisy is the stereotype of the spirited, independent American woman, a mix of innocence and rudeness; the representation of America as the country of futility and superficiality. Newman is the stereotype of the self-made American man, a new breed of wealthy Americans with a lack of good-manners. In their innocence, they do not realize that they are not accepted as equals, even to the Europeanized Americans who have been living in Europe for a long time.

In the preface to the New York Edition, James explained his intention when he wrote *The American*. In writing this novel, he wanted to create the theme of a story in which

> *… the situation in another country and an aristocratic society, of some robust but insidiously beguiled and betrayed, some cruelly wrong compatriot: the point that he should suffer at the hands of persons pretending to represent the highest possible civilization and to be of an order in every way superior to his own. What would he 'do' in that predicament, how would he right himself, or how, failing a remedy, would he conduct himself under his wrong? […] He would behave in the most interesting manner – it would all depend on that: stricken, smarting, sore, he would arrive at his just vindication and then would fail of all triumphantly and all vulgarly enjoying it. He would hold his revenge and cherish it and feel its sweetness, and then in the very act of forcing it home would sacrifice it in disgust.*[176]

James explained that he had the idea some years before he started writing the tale. He recalled he was seated in an American "horse-car" when he had found himself considering the idea of a character which, the essence of the matter would be, at the right moment, to find his enemies in his power and at the supreme moment, he would run away; the bitterness of his personal loss yielding to the very force of his aversion. "All he would have at the end would

[176] JAMES, Henry. *Daisy Miller* (Preface). New York: Harper and Brothers, vol. XVIII, 1909. Available at <http://www2.newpaltz.edu/~hathawar/daisynye.htm>. Accessed on Jan. 23, 2006.

be therefore just the moral convenience, indeed the moral necessity, of his practical, but quite unappreciated, magnanimity […]".[177]

By using this criterion, James created Christopher Newman, a character who is a kind of ideal American, a type recognizable at home but an object of curiosity abroad, as Leon Edel points out. He is a high-spirited and energetic American who discovers, at the end, that his riches cannot buy him everything. To discover this, he is wronged by willful aristocrats no less obstinate than himself.

In his revision to the New York Edition, James also wrote a preface to *Daisy Miller*, providing the motifs for the significant changes he had done. Unlike the preface to *The American*, in this one, James is not incisive about his intentions when he created the main character, Daisy Miller. Only at the end of the preface he asserts:

> *My answer to all which bristled of course with more professions that I can or need report here; the chief of them inevitably to the effect that my supposedly typical little figure was of course pure poetry, and had never been anything else; since this is what helpful imagination, in however slight a dose, ever directly makes for.*[178]

As the objective of this comparative study is to determine the similarities and differences between the analyzed works by using the issue of American innocence as the base to the study, it is vital to determine James's approach on the novel and on the tale.

In *The American*, Christopher Newman portrays the new discoverer, doing the reversal path now. At the first sight, he looks only a very nice American; however, if one looks him more closely, he can be discovered as an ambiguous figure and a complex being. He is

[177] BLACKMUR, Richard. "Introduction". In: JAMES, Henry. *The American*. New York: Dell, 1960.
[178] JAMES, op. cit., 1909.

innocent, but he is also experienced; he has made a fortune within three years of the end of the Civil War, as we can apprehend from the novel. James managed to create a paradox character that can be generous, open-hearted but also demanding and inflexible. He has to learn the lessons of civilization, for he is the "other" in the French Second Empire, where the democratic ideals of the Revolution had been sharply curtailed. In this sense, Leon Edel observes that the vision offered to the reader is that of an essentially aristocratic France opposed to a democratic America. Newman never experienced before the social contact with aristocracy. "When the Marquise de Bellegarde tells him she is a proud and meddlesome old woman, Newman feels his most effective answer to be 'Well, I am very rich'".[179]

Following the same trail in *Daisy Miller*, James also created an ambiguous character, which was not able to deal with European social manners. Daisy is not as ambiguous as Christopher, for her ambiguity relies only in her innocence. It is too easy to the reader to misread Daisy, for she is shown through Winterbourne point of view. As the "other" in a society she does not know the rules, she is excluded for she follows the rules she was used to in her country.

Newman is accepted, at the beginning, only because of his wealth. The Marquise de Bellegarde's main interest is quite as mercenary: she wants to know how much Newman is worth. Daisy, in her turn, is accepted for the American Europeanized society, but, as soon as she starts behaving against all the social established rules, she is ignored. They give her "their cold shoulder".

[179] EDEL, op. cit., 1990.

Daniel Mark Fogel points out that *Daisy Miller* can be considered a dark comedy, not only because of its sad ending or not only because of the pathos (as in *The American*), but also because of the cultural determinism it presupposes. Not one of the characters, not even Winterbourne, can overcome the environmental determinism that finally makes impossible for them to meet each other halfway. Also speaking of determinism, James, in the New York Edition Preface to *The American*, states that

> *The art of the romancer is, "for the fun of it", insidiously to cut the cable (the cable of the balloon of experience which ties us to the earth), to cut it without our detecting it. What I have recognized then in The American, much to my surprise and after long rears, is that the experience here represented is the disconnected and uncontrolled experience – uncontrolled by our general sense of "the way things happen" – which romance alone more or less successfully palms off on us.*[180]

In this specific part of the preface, James, in my point of view, is justifying the sad ending of the novel, by letting the events "flow with the river". He states that there is our general sense of the way things happen, and there is a particular way they do not happen, meaning that the readers would like a happy ending, but, in the case things do not happen, it may be artfully made to pass for the way things do.

James was a literate man who loved arts and all expressions of beauty related to it. In *The American*, he could have placed Christopher Newman anywhere in Paris, at the beginning of the story; nevertheless, he chose the Salon Carré of the Louvre, one of the temples of art for literate people. As he explains: "It was important for the effect of my friend's discomfiture that it should take place on a high and lighted stage, and that his ambition, the project exposing him, should have sprung from beautiful and noble suggestions […]".[181] Christopher Newman goes to the Louvre because every tourist "must" go there. He knew anything about

[180] JAMES, op. cit., 1909.
[181] Ibid.

arts and he did not seem to be really interested in learning about the works of art and about their creators. He was interested in buying pictures, whether they were original or not. Consequently, he gets involved with the opportunistic Nioches, without questioning their desire to "use" him. Newman was not really interested in art itself; as a matter of fact, he did not love paintings. He was interested in buying paintings for he had money to spend on it, and this was a common sense among the Americans *nouveau riches*: lets buy everything the once wealthy Europeans could afford and now they cannot anymore.

If there is no particular reference to works of art in *The American*, on the other hand, in *Daisy Miller* James portrays her ignorance and lack of culture by posing her beneath Velázquez's famous portrait of Pope Innocent X, in the Castle of Chillon. In this same episode, still at Chillon, Winterbourne tells Daisy the history of the unhappy Bonivard[182], romanticized in Lord Byron's poem "Prisoner of Chillon". Meanwhile, she was only interested in asking questions about Winterbourne and his family. "But he saw that she cared very little for feudal antiquities, and that the dusky traditions of Chillon made but a slight impression on her. […] The history of Bonivard had evidently, as they say, gone into one ear and out of the other".[183]

Daisy's flatness due to a lack of inner culture and a disposition to blunder about matters of information is more evident in Peter Bogdanovich's film. The episode mentioned above is a good example of it. While Winterbourne discourses about the historical importance

[182] FRANÇOIS DE BONIVARD, 1493-1570, Swiss patriot and historian. The prior of St. Victor, near Geneva, he supported the revolt of Geneva against Charles III of Savoy, who imprisoned him from 1519 to 1521. He was again imprisoned from 1530 to 1536 in the castle of Chillon, romanticized in Lord Byron's poem "Prisoner of Chillon." Released by the Bernese, he later became a Protestant. Geneva honored him with a pension. His chronicle of Geneva was first published in 1831. (*The Columbia ElectronicEncyclopedia Copyright 2000.* Licensed from Columbia University Press. Available at <http://www.thehistorychannel.co.uk/site/search/search.php?word=BONNIVARD%2C%20FRAN%26Ccedil%3BOIS%20DE&enc=6374>. Accessed on Feb. 10, 2006.

[183] JAMES, op. cit., 2004a, p. 28.

of Chillon, tells the history of Bonivard and recites Byron, Daisy chit-chats and flows around him, giving no attention to his words.

Newman and Daisy were victims of their own obstinacy, for they were inflexible in their decisions. Newman was warned by his friend, Mrs. Tristam, when speaking of the Bellegardes and discussing the difficulties in marrying Claire:

> *They are terrible people – her monde; all mounted upon stilts a mile high, and with pedigrees long in proportion. It is the skim of the milk and the old noblesse. Do you know what a Legitimist is, or an Ultramonte? Go to Madame de Cintré's drawing-room some afternoon, at five o'clock, and you will see the best-preserved specimens. I say go, but no one is admitted who can't show his fifty quarterings.'And this is the lady you propose to me to marry?' Asked Newman. 'A lady I can't even approach?'' But you said just know you recognized no obstacles'.*[184]

He knew he was taking a great risk, even though he assumed that his money would solve all the problems to come; "in reality, such a family would have 'jumped' at a rich American, he came to believe".[185] Newman would learn that survival is never secure, that great care must always be taken, that one can never be sure of a lover, or in fact, sure of anything; the experiences that James's Europeans have learned over time.

Daisy, in her turn, took her obstinacy too far. She was innocent; she had a lack of culture; she was a free-spirited woman, nevertheless, she should have known she had already gone too far and should have started listening to wiser people's advices. John Auchard[186] points out that James's incurable young and frequently rich Americans make big mistakes and often fare badly – even when Europeans have nothing to do with it. "After ignoring their

[184] JAMES, op. cit., 1995, p. 37.
[185] BELLRINGER, op. cit., p. 34.
[186] AUCHARD, "Introduction", op. cit, xvi.

counsel, Daisy Miller walks into the miasmal Colosseum at midnight and then takes ill and dies".[187]

In respect of whether the term innocence, in the analyzed books, connotes a state of unknowing or a pejorative meaning, I agree with John Auchard when he states that some Europeans might insist that American innocence in Henry James is less ignorance of evil than an inability to comprehend how insecure and dangerous life can be, and so, his characters, are annihilated (Daisy Miller), deceived (Christopher Newman), and lose their innocence in the most difficult way of learning.

After having analyzed all the collected data, my understanding, concerning to the connotation of the term "innocence", in the studied works, is that it is more a pejorative meaning than a state of unknowing. Newman and Daisy were innocent, as a consequence of their lack of understanding of the European cultural and social values. This condition, in my point of view, is portrayed by James in a pejorative way. Their lack of culture and their inability to comprehend values different from the ones they were used to, placed them in a lower social level. Ultimately, Christopher Newman and Daisy Miller did not "have knowledge of the unpleasant and evil things in life" (one of the definitions of the word innocence in the *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary*[188]). In fact, they were innocent due to their social circle in America. Anyone, especially their relatives, had cultivated in them the appropriately social manners and values that would prepare them for confrontations with such people as the ones they unluckily faced in Europe.

[187] Ibid.
[188] GILLARD, Patrick. *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary.* Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 647.

5.2 Confluences and divergences in Henry James's *Daisy Miller: A Study* and Peter Bogdanovich's *Daisy Miller*

The first deliberate attempts to make films of well-known literary works, can be traced to 1907, the year that the Kalem Company in America produced *Ben-Hur*. Gerald Mast explains that, since then, speculative comparisons have been made; the history of these comparisons has been full of splitters and lumpers of those who argue for distinctness of the two media. "Theoretical comparisons of films and literature have frequently been colored by issues of value, assumptions about artistic superiority and 'legitimacy' […]".[189]

Filming is a new art, observes Mast, the only new art to be invented in thousand of years of Western civilization (with the exception of photography). Inevitably, the new art must be compared to and judged by the standards of the existing arts.

In respect for the integrity of the original literary text, a film adaptation of an important literary work has an obligation to be faithful to the spirit of the original text, and, at the same time, to be a cogent and unified work in its own terms. We also have to consider the modernist assumption that a work must be a unique, indeed radical, creation in both form and content; some sort of value and innovation in films is expected, when a comparison of literature and film is made.

Despite of all the difficulties implied in filming a literary work, the American director Peter Bogdanovich turned to the literary costume drama, in 1974, with an adaptation of Henry

[189] MAST, Gerald. "Literature and Film". In: BARRICELLI, Jean Pierre and GIBALDI, Joseph (eds.). *Interrelations of Literature*. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1982, p. 278.

James's *Daisy Miller*. With a screenplay by Frederic Raphael and location shooting in Rome and Switzerland, Bogdanovich carefully recreated the rich surroundings and stultifying social strictures of James's story. In spite of this well-executed atmosphere, *Daisy Miller* suffered critically, as Bogdanovich was especially taken to task for casting the amateurish top-model Cybill Shepherd in the complex and pivotal role of Daisy.

Since its release in June 1974, the film has attracted considerable critical interest. Opinions on its first release varied from qualified enthusiasm, such as the critic Jonathan Baumbach ("With middling expectations […] I stayed to like Daisy Miller"[190]), to intense dislike as the critic Jan Dawson ("it's a historical film bereft of any feeling for history, and a literary adaptation that reveals a fine contempt for literary subtlety"[191]). The film's reputation has improved somewhat over the last quarter of a century; by 1996, critics such as Brian MacFarlane argued that it should be treated on its own merits as a "drama of restricted consciousness"[192] filtered through Winterbourne's point of view, and not simply as an "inferior" adaptation of James's nouvelle.

According to the critic Nora Sayre, in her film review for *The New York Times*[193], translating Henry James's *Daisy Miller* for the screen seemed like an absolutely hopeless project, but Peter Bogdanovich made a movie that works amazingly well. She observes that James's tale of a naïve, headlong young American tourist, who scandalizes her snobbish compatriots, was directed with freshness and intelligence. The world of lost Americans abroad – some weakened by too much alien culture, others penalized for their ignorance – is

[190] BAUMBACH, Jonathan. "Europe in America". In: *Partisan Review*, 1974, 41/3: 450-1.
[191] DAWSON, Jan. "Daisy Miller". In: *Monthly Film Bulletin*, 1974, 41/489, October: 222.
[192] MACFARLANE, Brian. "Bogdanovich's Daisy Miller and the Limits of Fidelity". In: *Literature/Film Quarterly*, 1991, 9/1: 15-21.
[193] SAYRE, Nora. "Daisy Miller: James's Novella adapted well by Bogdanovich". In: *The New York Times*. May 23, 1974. Available at:< www.movies2.nytimes.com> Accessed on Dec. 20, 2005.

skillfully re-created, which makes *Daisy Miller* relevant to the latest debates about growing up in America.

Bogdanovich was crucified, by the critics, due to his choice in casting Cybill Shepherd, whom with he had a relationship at that time. In Nora Sayre's opinion, at moments, Cybill Shepherd overdoes the breathless chatter and the parasol-twirling. But much of the time, she catches the gaiety and the directness of Daisy, the spontaneity of a spoiled but very likable person. She also manages to be thoughtless without playing dumb or dizzy, and to convey that mixture of recklessness and innocence that bewildered the other Jamesian characters – those who discovered that "the unexpected in her behavior was the only thing to expect."

Bogdanovich's translation of James's *Daisy Miller* is lovely, imaginative and literal to its original. Unlike many adaptations of literary works into movies, Bogdanovich sticks to the same characters' construction James did. The audience sees through Winterbourne's eyes and has become as stiff towards Daisy as he had.

To the critic Nora Sayre, however, there are a couple of literary problems. The tale was told from Winterbourne's point of view. In the movie, close-ups of his gaze resting wistfully on Daisy yield a rather clumsy substitute for James's narration, and there are too many reaction shots. James's own *Daisy* is a one-dimensional work – it hasn't the emotional depth of his best inventions, and the film mirrors the flaws of the charming but fairly bloodless original. In this respect, I deeply disagree. The adjective "bloodless" is inappropriate to describe James's *Daisy Miller*. If the literary work has any flaws, certainly one of them is not the lack of emotional depth.

Cybill Shepherd may have been an inexperienced actress when Bogdanovich cast her to Daisy's role, but still she is very convincing in portraying the innocent American girl who did what she liked. She pictures the image of girlish charm, a bit flirtatious, but innocent, incredibly blonde and pretty, but not sensual. As the critic J.J. Liggera defines: "she shines".[194]

J. J. Liggera's film review is very favorable to Bogdanovich. According to him, Bogdanovich's *Daisy Miller* "is among the most artistic and successful ventures of literature into film".[195] The success of the movie relies on Bogdanovich's sense that *Daisy Miller* was left unfinished by James. "Thus like one of those novelists James describes in *The Art of Fiction*, Bogdanovich used his artistic imagination to portray what was 'unseen' but guessed from James's 'seen'".[196] In his 1909 Preface, coming thirty-one years after the initial writing, James seems to have suspected the unfinished quality of his work. He says that the book is a "study" for a reason that he cannot recall, "unless they may have taken account of a certain flatness in my poor little heroine's literal denomination".[197]

In *O Contar e o Narrar na Construção dos Universos Fílmico e Verbal* (2004), Bella Jozef argues that

> *O cineasta ao adaptar um romance, dada a inevitável mutação, não o converte: apenas manipula uma espécie de paráfrase – o romance como matéria prima. O cineasta não se torna um tradutor de determinado autor – ele próprio é um novo criador de outra forma artística.*[198]

[194] LIGGERA, J.J. "She Would Have Appreciated One's Esteem: Peter Bogdanovich's Daisy Miller". In: HOCKS, Richard. A. *Henry James: A Study of the Short Fiction*. Boston: Twayne Publishers: 1990.
[195] Ibid., p. 142.
[196] Ibid., p. 142.
[197] Preface to *Daisy Miller*. NYE
[198] BELLA Jozef, "O Contar e o Narrar na Construção dos Universos Fílmico e Verbal". In: SEDLMAYER, Sabrina; MACIEL, Maria Esther (org.). *Textos à Flor da Pele: Relações entre literatura e cinema*. Belo Horizonte: Faculdade de Letras da UFMG, 2004, p. 137.
Translation: "The film maker, when adapting a novel, due to the inevitable mutation, does not convert it: only manipulates a sort of paraphrase – the novel as subject-matter. The film maker does not become the translator of a determinate author – he himself is a new creator of another artistic form." (Translation mine)

Bogdanovich, when adapting James's novel, tried to complete the literary text by adding the cinematographic resources and by creating his own method. Liggera observes that Bogdanovich's method was to take a hint from Orson Welles and starts his film with the boy, Randolph, a device he extended through the film to its dramatic conclusion in which Randolph silently glares at Winterbourne. Orson Wells once said to Bogdanovich: "If I were doing that picture, I'd begin with the boy".[199] The vocabulary recalls much from Welles: rapid-fire dialogue to indicate Daisy's innocent but seemingly boorish self-assertion.

Winterbourne is established by the director as the film's "central consciousness", in the same way James did in the tale. If in the tale the reader becomes aware of Daisy's character through Winterbourne's thoughts and comments with the other characters, in the film the audience also has the image extra resources. Bogdanovich masterly portrayed Winterbourne's reactions, only by catching him looks at Daisy and reacts to her attitudes. Sometimes he is bewildered; others, he is taken by her freshness and innocence, and he smiles, as if, for seconds, he realized the truth about her.

In addition, Bogdanovich created a scene which is not in the tale. Winterbourne and Daisy are in the Pincio (a square in Rome); they stop to view a Punch and Judy show. This is one of those moments in which Winterbourne's stiffness melts a bit. He catches sign of a woman in a white dress much like Daisy's. She is more mature and seems to be an experienced woman. She gives him a lustful glance; when Winterbourne looks to Daisy she also gives him a glance, but it is a flirtatious one. The camera records Winterbourne's looks but he can respond to neither. "He is too caught between cultures to advance toward either European decadence or American innocence".[200] Liggera explains that the viewer remains

[199] Liggera, op. cit., p. 147.
[200] Liggera. op. cit. p. 146.

dependent upon Winterbourne's view of things to the end, failing to withdraw from him until too late.

> *The secret of James's novel is brought home: the reader – or viewer – doesn't really care about the frivolous Daisy until he himself learns, also too late, what a suspicious prig he has been and how he has betrayed his best instincts for love, as well as his culture, for acquired standards, acquired from the rather cowardly Winterbourne.*[201]

From the quotation above, we can learn James's way of inducing the reader to judge Daisy according to Winterbourne's standards. The reader – or viewer – is induced to never believe in Daisy's innocence, and, at the same time, he is not aware that he is seeing Daisy through Winterbourne's eyes. Until the end of the narrative or the movie, there is no definite clue indicating that "the truth" is, in fact, Winterbourne's truth, based on his standards. By developing short fiction techniques, such as displaying attention to details in language and structure, as well as the multilayered meanings, James is considered one of the world's greatest short fiction writers.

In my opinion, Bogdanovich produced a movie in which the best characteristics of the literary work were kept. The psychological realism and the challenge of delineating, in fictive prose, the depths of individual character are both present in the film. Like James, Bogdanovich himself is quite polemical. His sensibility is more European than American, for his painterly style comes largely from his father's love of the French Impressionists. Liggera calls the attention that Bogdanovich's background creates a dualism in him that somehow confuses critics: "I was brought up in a household that was completely European rather than American […]. I do have an artistic background that is totally European – my father is a

[201] Ibid. p. 146-147.

Servian painter and my mother a Viennese".[202] It is this background that allows him to see Daisy's problem as an outsider and a foreigner, and also to supply images to represent it. His own personal experiences resulted in a great movie as well as James's own experiences resulted in great pieces of literary work.

Daisy Miller is the first movie Bogdanovich has made, in which the time period of the story exists prior to the invention of movies.[203] He decided to stick to the basic line because, in his opinion, it was a fragile tale, and "if I was going to change it in any way, it had to be done in terms of interpretation rather than in the actual sequence of events".[204] He had to create circumstances from nearly a hundred years gone, and he did so using talents, old and new, to create an era in which the real thing was never quite done or said, but hinted.

The actress Cloris Leachman, who plays Mrs. Miller, is one of the "old" talents used by Bogdanovich. She is just perfect as the flustered, dumb mother, who has no idea of the European system of chaperonage, allowing her daughter to do whatever she wants and go out alone with male companions. She cannot control both Daisy and Randolph, who tyrannizes her all the time. Mrs. Miller is portrayed as a weak woman, extremely dull, whose only conversation is her illness, dyspepsia, and Dr. Davis, her doctor in Schenectady.

To illustrate such points, there is a scene in which Bogdanovich masterly explores Mrs. Miller dullness. During a ball at Mrs. Walker's house, Mrs. Miller arrives at the party earlier than Daisy. She explains to the hostess and to Winterbourne she does not know what to do because she has never been to a party by herself before. She seems so pathetic and so unfit

[202] BOGDANOVICH apud LIGGERA, op. cit., p. 144.
[203] The Lumiére Brothers invented the cinematographer, which they patented in 1985. The first footage ever to be shot on the device was shot on 19 March 1895; the film was *La sortie des usines Lumière* (literally, *The Exit From the Lumière Factories*, or, under its more common English title, *Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory*).
[204] Liggera. op. cit., p. 10.

in that place, that the viewer cannot help feeling sorry for her and, at the same time, despising her. Later, at the same party, she is sitting by the side of an old man who sleeps while she chatters about her irreplaceable doctor. She is the picture of an unimportant and trifling woman, who anyone thinks worthy of attention.

Randolph, Daisy's brother, has a more relevant role in the film than in the tale. Following Welles suggestion, Bogdanovich starts the film with the boy, in the same way James does in the tale, but, unlike it, the boy also appears in the last scene. Randolph gives Winterbourne a significant long glare, as if blaming him for Daisy's tragic death. This scene takes place at Daisy's funeral, just after Winterbourne has learnt from Giovanelli he has always considered Daisy the most innocent creature he has ever known. He tells Winterbourne he was aware of the fact that Daisy would never marry him, and also that she had always considered him just a good friend. In this very moment, Winterbourne realizes he has been misjudging Daisy based on wrong standards; it is through Randolph's accusatory glare that the viewer realizes the extension of Winterbourne's unfairness and his own unfairness to Daisy.

In the film, Randolph's bad manners are also explored by Bogdanovich to portray Mrs. Miller's weakness as a mother. The boy does what he wants to do. Mother and daughter cannot make him act properly. He is always running at the corridors and gardens of Vevey Hotel, bothering the guests. There is an episode, at the hotel garden, in which Daisy and Mrs. Miller tell Winterbourne that Randolph does not like going early to bed, providing examples of him spending whole night awake, an unacceptable attitude for a boy his age. Daisy and her mother behave as if the boy's recklessness is not as significant, but, for the viewer, more than to the reader, the boy attitudes are unbearable and unpleasant.

Gerald Mast calls attention to the importance of films as a modern "language" which is a complex communicative system for making and conveying meaning. Of all the alternative modern "languages" semioticians have investigated, filming is the only system that can rival verbal language ability to construct lengthy and complex messages. When comparing films to literary works, sometimes we get to the conclusion that the impact of the image is much stronger than the impact of the words. We have a good example of this in one of the first scenes in the film, in the episode Winterbourne and Randolph make acquaintance at the hotel, in Vevey. After start talking to Winterbourne, the boy eats lots of sugar cubes that are on Winterbourne's tea table, and tells him he had almost lost all his teeth because he used to eat lots of candies. He insists on complaining that he does not like to be in Europe for there are no American candies. To assure Winterbourne he is telling the truth, he takes a bunch of teeth from his pocket and shows them to the astonished gentleman, who does not know what to say. It is a disgusting scene reinforced by the impact of image.

The antagonisms between Daisy and Winterbourne are stronger in the film, as a result of the impact of the image and Bogdanovich's clever usages of camera resources. Lawrence Raw[205] calls attention to the scene in which Daisy asks Winterbourne his full name. He replies "Frederick Forsyth Winterbourne", which prompts Daisy to run out of the right side of the frame, exclaiming "I can't say all that"". By refusing to stay within the frame, and participate in small talk, Daisy quite literally breaks with tradition; she resists to any attempt either on Winterbourne's or the cinematographer's part to constrain her.

Henry James left no doubt in the preface to the New York Edition that his intention, when he created Daisy's character, was to portray a woman who was not conformed to pre-

[205] RAW, Lawrence. "Observing Femininity: Peter Bogdanovich's *Daisy Miller*. In: *The Henry James E-Journal*, n. 4, June 19, 2001.Available at <http://www2.newpaltz.edu/~hathawar/ejourn4.htm> Accessed on Dec. 23, 2005.

determined rules and desired to have more opportunities for self-expression than those allowed in her social circle. Lawrence Raw, in his analysis, observes that Winterbourne may envisage her as a romantic heroine, but he believes that cinema-going audiences are encouraged to respond to her very differently.

CLOSING REMARKS

One of the aims of this work was to analyze Henry James's *The American* and *Daisy Miller*: *A Study*, with a comparative approach, based on the intertextual reading, looking for the congruences and divergences in James's considerations on the American innocence issue. I also committed myself to do an interdisciplinary study between Henry James's *Daisy Miller: A Study* and Peter Bogdanovich's *Daisy Miller*, a film released in 1974.

Working with a complex author as James is a hard task to deal with, due to his elaborated narrative and the duality of his novels and tales. In 1924, T.S. Eliot predicted, for the next generations, the relevance Henry James's literary production would achieve, and the difficulties in handling the complexity of his work:

> *Henry James is an author who is difficult for English readers, because he is American; and who is difficult for Americans, because he is European; and I do not know whether is possible to other readers at all. On the other hand, the exceptionally sensitive reader, who is neither English nor American, may have a position of detachment which is an advantage. One thing is certain, that the books of Henry James form a complete whole. One must read all of them, for one must grasp, if anything, both the unity and the progression. The gradual development, and the fundamental identity of spirit, are both important, and their lesson is one lesson.*[206]

[206] ELIOT, T. S. "A Prediction", 1924. In: EDEL, Leon (ed.).*Henry James: A Collection of Critical Essays.* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1963.

In order to trace out the reasons that lead James to write about the social contrasts between Americans and Europeans, I looked for hints in his own life. The Jameses were not a usual family. Henry James Senior wanted his children to not be attached to established values; for this reason, they kept moving from one town, from one country, from one continent to another. James schooled in several countries in Europe, being a citizen of the world since his childhood. Bronson Alcott, Horace Greeley and Ralph Waldo Emerson – a good friend of Henry James Senior – were frequent visitors by the time the James family lived in New York (1845-1957).

In 1875, James returned to Europe, where, except for brief visits to the United States, he would reside for the rest of his life. While living in Paris, and feeling somehow an outsider, James observed the Americans wonderers, who drifted everywhere. By this time, he started writing tales and novels dealing with the so-called “international theme”, in which he would describe the difficulties Americans had to understand and to fit in European society. The American innocence issue would appear in his work as a result of his view of his countrymen making mistakes, due to their ignorance, lack of culture, or for being deceived by some corrupted Europeans.

The American and *Daisy Miller: A Study* have in common the American innocence issue, approached by James in different ways. Both works are relevant in his career, for the former was, and still is, one of his most popular novels among the public, and the latter was a watershed in his career. *Daisy Miller* made him a celebrity in both American and England.

I have exhaustively studied and analyzed the content, the characters, and, most of all, the approach James used on both works when dealing with the American innocence issue. I also came to see the relevance of *The American and Daisy Miller* in James's career.

In *The American*, James used the stereotype of the self-made American man who goes to Europe looking for leisure and expecting to learn arts, to portray the "innocent American". The result of James's peculiar literary creation is the character Christopher Newman, who, in all his innocence, mistakes an aristocratic family's ruthlessness for merely stubborn manners. His ultimate aim in Europe is to find a wife, which would crown his success. In his ignorance, lack of manners and culture, he thinks his wealth will definitely open the French aristocracy doors and that he will be accepted just as an equal. Consequently, he is beguiled and deceived by a traditional French family, the Bellegardes, and, even though he apparently has the chance to get his revenge, he gives it up, because, after all, he was a good-hearted man.

In *Daisy Miller*, Henry James goes further on the American innocence issue, by creating a character that has become very polemical, especially by the time the novel was first published. In this tale, James created the stereotype of the free-spirited young American woman, who unconscious of the established social rules in Europe, scandalizes the Europeanized American society and thus is despised by them. James approached not only the issue of American innocence, but also the issue of sexual politics and social classes. The chaperonage system still running in Europe was not followed in America; young unmarried women were treated differently in both sides of the Atlantic, for the manners followed by Europeans were outmoded. The gap between social classes was bigger in Europe than in the United States. In the former, old and traditional families despised the *nouveau riches* and easily would not accept having them in their social circle.

Another relevant issue, when one analyzes *Daisy Miller*, is James's use of the narrator's point of view. The reader is conducted and, sometimes, deceived by Winterbourne's opinions, for James portrays Daisy through his impressions. For Winterbourne is not always fair in relation to Daisy, the reader is lead to misjudge her, in the same way Winterbourne does. At the end of the tale, Winterbourne realizes that "I was booked to make a mistake. I have lived too long in foreign parts".[207] In this very moment, the reader also realizes that he too was booked to make a mistake, for he was not seeing Daisy through impartial eyes, but through someone full of prejudices and guided by outmoded established social rules.

I also have analyzed the criticism the New York Edition received. For four years, between 1905 and 1909, Henry James worked on the twenty-four-volume selection of his works, known as the New York Edition. *The Novels and Tales of Henry James* excluded a number of James's novels, but *The American* and *Daisy Miller* were among those he revised and published. Daniel Mark Fogel observes that "no extended study of Daisy Miller can be complete without some attention to the New York Edition text".[208] The first change James made was in the title, changing it to simply Daisy Miller. Questioned later about the reasons that had led him to change the title, he answered that he could not recall the reasons for the original subtitle. The other significant change was in Daisy's speech, which became much more vernacular and less grammatical in the revision, "as if to counterbalance the more poetic, vaguer turn of the narrator's descriptions of her".[209] Many readers seems to prefer the earlier version simply because James's late style is more complicated grammatically and tend to elegant elaboration, that is, the style that would have been known later as "the-stream-of-consciousness".

[207] JAMES, 2004a, p. 61.
[208] FOGEL, op. cit., p. 87.
[209] Ibid., p. 93.

Concerning to *The American*, in the New York Edition, James seems to have created a new work; in this instance, one that most readers feel is inferior to the original. James did few verbal changes, eliminated unnecessary words and changed some to new elaborate ones. The 1877 Edition remains the favorite among his readers, because it seems most clearly the representative James at the time of its composition.

After having analyzed the chosen works, and having collected relevant critical material to do the comparative study, I selected some concepts to support the intertextual and the interdisciplinary reading.

The semiotic notion of intertextuality, introduced by Julia Kristeva in 1969, was vital to the development of this comparative work. Kristeva referred to texts in terms of two axes: a *horizontal axis* connecting the author and reader of a text, and a *vertical axis*, which connects the text to other texts. Uniting these axes are shared codes: every text and every reading depends on prior codes. Every reading is always a rewriting. In this sense, I have done my study based on my reading of the chosen texts, looking for the confluences and divergences among them.

In the respect of this comparative study, the aim was not to analyze to which other texts *The American* and *Daisy Miller* are connected with, or to which other texts they owe, but to analyze their intertextuality, using the American innocence issue as a parameter. For the interdisciplinary reading, the pattern was the same. I was concerned with the connections between two different art languages, focusing on the approach used by a writer (James) and a film director (Bogdanovich). Relevant interdisciplinary works were also studied, to give support to this thesis.

Another relevant concept I worked with is the one of alterity. The relation between the "self" and the "other" has been fairly discussed in the last decades. This attempt started with the failure to recognize others as full human beings with the same rights as we have. The boundaries between "we" and the "others" are framed by different aspects. The main characters Christopher Newman and Daisy Miller were victims of social exclusion because they did not fit in the new social environment. In the same way, James had become the "other" in both sides of the Atlantic, Newman and Daisy crossed the Atlantic to become the "other" in Europe. As they ignored the social rules and were not able to realize they were not accepted as equals, it resulted in their social exclusion, which caused all the pathos in their lives. Their lack of understanding of the social mores of the society they wish to enter ultimately leads to tragedy.

The intertextual reading resulted in the conclusion that the network that unifies both works lies in Christopher Newman and Daisy Miller's lack of culture, good-heartedness and, most of all, misunderstanding. Newman was deceived by the Bellegardes for he misunderstood how attached they were to European old conventions; they would sacrifice everything to keep up appearances. Daisy, in her turn, misunderstood the relevance of social manners in Europe, assuming that she could behave, in the Old Continent, in the same way she was used to in her homeland.

The most relevant aspect of James's approach in the American innocence issue, in *The American,* appears since the beginning of the narrative. It is very clear, in my understanding, that Newman is an innocent man who would be beguiled and deceived by corrupted Europeans. It is very clear that he is a victim of his lack of culture and good-heartedness. Unlike *The American,* in *Daisy Miller* the narrative is conducted based on the uncertainty whether Daisy is an innocent American girl or just an American flirt. The answer will be

known at the very end of the tale, at the same time the point of view character, Winterbourne, realizes the whole truth about her.

Both characters are stereotypes used by James in his own mythology to represent the dichotomies of Good and Evil, Innocence and Experience, America and Europe. James uses both stories to discuss what he thinks about the way Americans and Europeans may believe about each other.

Before starting the interdisciplinary study, I have rescued some theoretical notions. Interdisciplinary studies allow us to goes beyond the frontiers of literary studies and compare different forms of "language", such as literature and films. Henry Remak[210] stated that the tendency of trespass frontiers and to explore the relationships between literature with other forms of artistic or intellectual expression and other areas of knowledge have created the interdisciplinary field.

In this respect, despite of all difficulties in filming a literary work, Peter Bogdanovich's *Daisy Miller* is lovely and imaginative. Bogdanovich sticks to the same character's construction James did, being faithful to the original, which, in this case, is a quality. By the time of the film release (1974), the critic of *The New York Times*, Nora Sayre, praised it, observing that the world of Americans abroad was skillfully recreated, which makes *Daisy Miller* relevant to the latest debates about growing up in America.

Bogdanovich created some scenes that are not in the tale, which reinforces the antagonisms between Daisy and Winterbourne, two young Americans with astonishingly different cultural background and social training, and their difficulty to understand each

[210] REMAK, op. cit.

other's world. The requirements for a film based on an important literary work be considered a success, were fulfilled in Bogdanovich's adaptation of James's tale. The film is much more than a director's faithful vision of a tale; it is a cogent and unified work in its own terms. Winterbourne's drama is more evident in the movie; his confusion to understand and to "type" Daisy is masterly portrayed by the director using all the camera resources to reinforce the impact of the image.

In *The Art of Fiction*, one of his best critical works, James redefines experience and defines the role of a novel in "real life", and all the requirements it must have to be considered a good novel. James states that the only reason for the existence of a novel is that it does attempt to represent life, and he insists on the fact that as the picture is reality, so the novel is history. He goes on, affirming that literature should be both instructive and amusing. Concerning to good novels, James points out that it must be admitted that good novels are much compromised by bad ones, and that the field at large suffers discredit from overcrowding. Comparing good and bad novels, we learn that there is as much difference as there ever was between a good novel and a bad one: "the bad is swept with all the daubed canvases and spoiled marble into some unvisited limbo, or infinite rubbish-yard beneath the back-windows of the world, and the good subsists and emits its light and stimulates our desire for perfection".[211]

If we analyze *The American* and *Daisy Miller: A Study* under the light of the concepts mentioned above, we will find out that both works have all the characteristics James stated a good literary work should posses. Both works are not only a picture of reality, they are also

[211] JAMES, 2004b, p. 430.

history, for they portray the reality of life in the nineteenth-century. These literary works are instructive and amusing; they are direct impressions of life.

> *A novel is in its broadest definition a personal, a direct impression of life: that, to begin with, constitutes its value, which is greater or less according to the intensity of the impression. But there will be no intensity at all, and therefore any value, unless there is freedom to feel and say.*[212]

James was an apostle of freedom, yet his fiction encourages recognition of the responsibility that real freedom demands and the necessity of accepting commitment to life. The will of freedom is one of the pillars of the newborn American hero, the innocent man masterly portrayed by James in his novels and tales. Christopher Newman, Daisy Miller and many others nineteenth-century Adamic heroes, belong to a breed of characters who will, with marvelously inadequate equipment, take on as much of the world is available to offer them, without ever fully submitting to any of the world's determining categories. "Each of them struggles tirelessly, sometimes unwittingly and often absurdly, to realize the full potentialities of the classic figure each represents: the Emersonian figure, 'the simple genuine self against the whole world'".[213]

The issue of American innocence was brought up again in 2001. Many people state that, after the terrorist attack in the United States, Americans had lost their innocence and their most praised own: freedom.

In the same way the American innocence issue was somehow been brought up in this decade, Henry James's *oeuvre* was rescued again. James's legacy has always been present in literary studies and his works have been acclaimed by critics and students that have been

[212] Ibid., p. 432.
[213] LEWIS, op. cit., p. 198.

experiencing the pleasure of reading his works. Because James is part of the Western literary canon, he has always been present when the matter is literature; however, meaningfully in this decade, the interest in his life and work seems to have been increased. In 2004, two novels, based on James's life and career, were published. The Irish writer, Colm Tóibín, painted a graceful, terribly sad portrait of James's life in *The Master* (2004). The novel was named one of the best books of the year by *The New York Times Book Review* and other major newspapers. Trailing the same path, David Lodge's *Author, Author* (2004) is also based on James's life, focusing on his attempts to achieve fame and fortune as a playwright with *Guy Domville* (1895).

Henry James's writing style has been influencing many writers. Those who have achieved the same level as the "Master's" style, have been praised by critics as great writers, such as Alan Hollinghurst; his *The Line of Beauty* (2004), has been considered by many critics the work of a great English stylist in full maturity; a masterpiece. "The book is Jamesian in the best sense; indeed, in some ways, Hollinghurst surpasses his master".[214]

Henry James's relevance for both American and English literature is so significant that, not only his works, but also his life, have called the attention of great writers of our time. The writer that had not achieved popular success in his lifetime became a character of novels with all the requirements Henry James himself considered essential for a great achievement. Since then, one may say he has not only been influencing many writers, he has been inspiring them as well.

[214] NESS, Patrick. "The Line of Beauty by Alan Hollinghurst". In: *Sunday Telegraph*. April, 17, 2005. Available at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/arts/main.jhtml?xml=/arts/2005/04/10/bopb.xml> Accessed on March 10, 2006.

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