

HENRY JAMES
AND
IMPRESSIONISM

by

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Striving to overstep their boundaries, arts assimilate themselves to each other. Inborrowing the devices of each other, they not only stimulate more interpretive capacities in the perceiver/reader, but they surprise him with peculiar techniques and new forms. They, in Maurice Chernowitz's words, "have mutually served and inspired each other's substance, themes, ideology, view of nature, and even form of expression" (1944:3).

However, the analogy between one art and another is more persistent when they belong to a certain stage of time. About all the works of art in a given epoch there is, in Mario Praz's view, an "air de famille"¹ (1954:217). Aestheticians, like Lessing and Croce, have been concerned with the analogy between visual arts and literature which not only defines the aesthetic value peculiar to each medium, but helps to "discover a beauty that transcends both" (Hagstrum:1958:xiii).

Though different in medium, they help one another, reveal one another, and their main objective remains the same---"to generate understanding" (Gilman: 1978:4).

Poetry, more than any other literary genre, is thought to be closely related to painting. Bernard Fehr equates Pope's couplets to the rectilinearity of the classical plastic form, and David Mallet's blank verse to the linear convolutions of the baroque (Fehr:1936:193-7). Marco Mincoff sees great similarity between the lyrical refrains in Renaissance and the repetitions in a Renaissance facade (1946-47:27). Wylie Sypher takes Hamlet for a 'mannerist' play, and Othello for a 'baroque' (1955:25,45).

The association between literature and painting, even goes back to the great critics of antiquity. Plato notices that "the poet is like a painter"; Aristotle often turns to the sister art with some expression as "it is the same in painting"; Horace is the author of the statements" ut pictura poesis

("as a painting, so a poem") and "let a poem be like a painting"(Hagstrum:4,6,9).

The relation between the visual arts and the novel, however, has proved to be closer and deeper. Although in 'looking' and in 'reading' people use different skills, both aim at achieving approximately the same end--"an interpretation or comprehension of the object being examined"(Kolers: 1977:155). Both processes rely on eye fixation: in the first, the eye is fixed on a number of varying points; in the second, on varying patterns. In borrowing the representational characteristics of painting, the novel acquires new dimensions of richness and complexity. Evocative comparisons with works of art, in Jeffrey Meyers' view, transcend the limitations of fiction, and "transform successive moments into immediate images"(1975:1).

Subscribing to the 19th century aesthetics, Henry James believes in the fundamental unity of arts. In his 'Notes of a Son and Brother', he reveals his early discovery that "the arts were after all essentially one" (Autobiography:1956:13).

The analogy between the art of the painter and the art of the novelist, in James's view, is complete. Both learn from each other and may "explain and sustain each other" (Partial Portraits:1888:378). Both the painter and the novelist share the same goal of rendering the look of things---"the look that conveys their meaning to catch the colour, the relief, the expression, the surface, the substance of the human spectacle" (Partial Portraits: 390). The novel, to James, must be a picture to which action is subsidiary.

In describing Balzac's style, James notices "it is the art of the brush..as opposed to the art of the slate-pencil, but to the art of the brush the novel must return"(The House of Fiction: Essays on the Novel:1957:82). He looked upon his own finished works not as narratives, but as static compositions such as" architectural constructions, mosaics, portraits, and pictures"(Ward: 1967:31). The novelist, like the painter, has the right to treat the subject he pleases since the search

for form, James came to discover, is as "legitimate in writing as it is in painting" (Partial Portraits: 384-5).

However, analogies can never be identities. Neither of the two arts can be reduced to the other's terms. It is in vain that we say what we see. What we say, in Foucault's words, "never resides in what we say" (1970:9,10). In an essay on Joseph Conrad, Edward Said observes that writing cannot represent the visible, but it can "desire and ...move towards the visible without actually achieving the unambiguous directness of an object seen before one's eyes" (1983:101). The fact remains that the one art never replicates the other. The analogy demands a double vision of the visual model as well as the verbal text.

As the present study endeavors to explore the similarity of both the intent and the emotional impact between Henry James and Impressionism, it will, in part I, extend to the reader the major features of Impressionism. Part II investigates

James's involvement with visual arts in general, and Impressionism in particular. In part III, the study will be focusing on the influence that different literary Impressionists practised on James's mind and art. Parts IV and V are devoted to analysing A Portrait of a Lady and The Ambassadors which both reveal James's remarkable capacity of making a colourful picture of an impressionistic, incomprehensible world.

1. Impressionism

Impressionism in Painting:

Impressionism is the most important aesthetic change that has happened in European art since the Renaissance. Most of the subsequent movements in painting and sculpture have stemmed from the new tendencies it has cultivated during the second half of the 19th century. The art of modern painting has been prepared for by "the Fauves, Cezanne, and by the Impressionists" (Freedman:1961:12). It substituted, for the first time in the history of art, a perceptual approach based on actual visual experience for a perceptual approach based on

traditional ideas about the nature of what we see. In other words, for a supposedly stable reality, it "substituted a transient one"(Denvir:1978:3).

Impressionism is basically founded on the physical principles of effects of light against the pure colours of the spectrum. It gives primary importance to the subjective attitude of the artist-- an attitude depending on a spontaneous, immediate vision and reaction. To realize a more emotional contact with the subject seen, the impressionist painters abandoned walled studios and laid great emphasis on painting in the open air. They, like poets, were trying to lift from the most unlikely subjects the veil of materialism to show, in John Mills' words, "a beauty others had not found" (1959:156).

The impressionists aimed at reproducing "the shifting visual nuances of the natural world" (Grana:1964:37)-- the world of waters, leaves, branches, and fields. For them, no essential and unchanging forms in nature existed. There were only passing impressions of form, subject to

continual modification by "changing atmospheric and light conditions" (Murphy:1972:58). They moved their easels outside to record nature's moods and capture the subtle play of colour and light. "One does not paint a landscape, a seascape, a figure", Manet assures, "one paints an impression of an hour of the day" (Murphy:58). That demanded the elimination of the black shadows and outlines which do not exist in nature. Instead, shadows were painted in colours complementary to that of the subject concerned. That justifies their remarkable use of blurred outlines and broken colours. Instead of receiving distinguishable outlines, the eye, in the impressionistic pictures, is presented with patterns of colours. The object is suggested rather than observed. Colours are placed together to give each "the maximum effect in tonality or..orchestrisation"(Mills:156).

Absorbed in the dappled effects of sunlight shining through foliage onto tablecloth, summer dresses, rocks, grass, human faces, the impressionist painters introduced new subject matters:

boating parties, picnics, dances, the world of theatre and the world of sport, and bathers.

The impressionists also had special interest in painting city life. The city was, for them, a new spiritual environment emerging after "the destruction of primitive and traditional associations and sentiments"(Grana:37). They felt excited in the rapid crowding of changing images as well as in "the sharp discontinuity in the grasp of a single glance, and the unexpectedness of nourishing impressions"(Wolff: 1950: 410). Most of them were born in Paris, or lived and developed their art there. It was the Paris of the late years of the 19th century with its hostelries, restaurants, cafes, dance halls, gardens, railway stations, art academies-- Paris "the center of art, learning, business and high fashion and, like all great cities, of poverty and crime as well"(Grana:39). It was the Paris of Picasso and Joyce; the Paris that sheltered the Lost Generation and the great Bohemians; the Paris of Balzac and Zola.

Since the impressionists were confronting the

realities of their time and trying to capture the sensations received from nature, they had to fight desperately against the strict formulas imposed by the Academy. The academic art of the 19th century was celebrating the 'noble' and the 'ideal' in classical style. Roses, pets, elegant ladies, story pictures, historical and mythological figures and incidents-- were all favourable subjects of academic art. It was not surprising, then, that the impressionists should be attacked and rejected by the Academy. Napoleon III, however, intervened and suggested that the public should be given a chance to decide for itself. The rejected artists were at last allowed to exhibit at a separate show: the Salon des Refuses. People came to that Salon predisposed to laugh as they have been prepared by the Press to see a laughable show (Harris:1979: 16). That resulted positively in the combination of those who were acting against the academic rules. They have become aware of one another. Thus, in April 1874, Manet, Pissarro, Sisely, Renoir, Degas, Guillaumin, and Morisot banded together in

a group that called itself the Societe Cooperative des Artistes, Peinters, Sculpteurs, Graveurs, etc.

The impressionists art was, at the beginning, described with all denigratory adjectives possible moral as well as political. Their style was seen as a "threat not only to society, but to the inner certainties of the ego"(Denvir:5). Albert Wolff, another critic, expressed his opinion in Figaro:

"...it is startling to see how far astray human vanity can go, even to the point of total madness. Try to explain to M.Pissarro that branches are not violet, that the sky is not the colour of fresh butter, that in no country on earth can one see those objects he paints, and that no intelligent human being can take such deviations seriously..." (Keller: 1980:35).

Though the exhibition was a failure, the impressionists gained confidence and momentum that helped them to achieve popularity and success.

Other factors, however, provided the impressionists with significant services: the emergence of the art dealer-who liberated them from their dependence on the annual official Salon; the emergence of the art historian and the critic

as figures of special importance; the improvement of education; the application of the steam engine to the printing press; the invention of lithography; the production of cheap chromolithographic prints; the advances in the techniques of producing line blocks-- all these resulted in" a growth of visual sophistication and of knowledge not only about the art of the past, but about that of the present" (Denvir:8). Much more articles were written about art than ever before; and so the impressionistic exhibitions received suitable coverage.

impressionism owed much of its success to the significant alliance of scientists and artists, as both were moving in the same direction towards a realization that colours were not, as Leonardo and Alberti had believed, " immutable realities but depended on individual perception"(Denvir:10). Due to the colour theories of the polymath Chemist Eugene Chevreul and the discoveries of Helmholtz and Rood, that colours came to be known as part of the universe of light as well as one of the elementary dimensions of nature. The new breed of

scientists and artists no longer believed in the existence of a permanent, independent, unchangeable reality that could be controlled by perspective or Newtonian physics (Denvir:10). The advent of the machine, with its temporal rhythms, also has affected the nature of impressionism. Such rhythms fostered an obsessive concern with time. After 1840, clocks appeared in squares and public places. It is important here to remember how Monet endeavored to relate light, time, and place in " a sequence of serialized images of cathedrals and lily ponds" (Denvir:10).

Time and light, combined, resulted in the appearance of 'speed' as another preoccupation that had an intense impact on impressionism. Before the 1830's and 1840's, nobody had experienced traveling at more than about fifteen miles an hour. Objects and landscapes started to be seen from trains at fifty or sixty miles an hour. That emphasized the subjective nature of visual experience"underlying the transitory, blurring the precise outlines...and unfolding a larger, less confined

view of landscape"(Denvir: 11). The development of transport also made it easier for the impressionist painters to move more extensively and discover other inspiring regions.

As photography, after a long battle, was declared to be a legal art form, the impressionists believed that painting was going to achieve self-sufficiency. Painters were no more in need to be documenters. They were at last emancipated from the necessity of referring to a concept of external reality as an inescapable criterion. Photography enabled painters to get steadier and more continuous looks at appearances; " it permitted analyses of the nature of structure, and of movement"(Denvir: 12). Photography and impressionism became natural allies. It is no wonder that the first impressionist exhibition was held in the premises of the photographer Felix Tournachon, and that Degas himself was an ardent photographer (Scharf: 1962:186-95). Both impressionism and photography gave special consideration to the immediate and the spontaneous.

Literary Impressionism :

The attempts toward a definition of literary impressionism have always been difficult as it was never, in Gibbs's words, "really a movement, and no writer ever proclaimed with any sustained force that he was an impressionist" (1952:175-83). Instead, it is seen as a phenomenon of a set of heard assumptions, philosophic agreements, and common reactions to a changeable, incomprehensible universe.

Unlike the painting impressionists, literary impressionists did not form a unified group. Each of them was groping for a more credible vision of a world unstable and complex. Literary impressionism, however, was an honest attempt to catch and reproduce the shifting impressions by which the modern world impinges on our senses. It was not simply a stylistic phenomenon trying to capture what is blurred and transitional in impressionist painting, nor was it an attempt to communicate moments of literary pictorialism.

To break down the distinction between the subject and object, the literary impressionists abandon formal logic or desire to fit his impressions into predetermined forms. It is no wonder, then, that we look at literary impressionism as the real beginning of literary modernism (Muller: 1938: 355). As if anticipating the features of modernism, Stowell describes literary impressionism as.

the primacy of phenomenological perception, the atomization of a subjectively perceived reality, the acceptance of chance in a world so complex and unknowable as to render causality impotent, the necessity to come to terms with reality through the process of induction; and the realization that Henri Bergson's individualized flow of duration must merge with the quanta-like moments of phenomenological time. (1980: 14-15).

Literary impressionism, therefore, returns us to the purity of objects seen by means of an aesthetic act that is characterized, in Rowe's words, by its "spontaneity, freshness, and immediacy" (Rowe: 1982: 234).

The 'impression' is an act of physical violence

'pressing into or upon' that marks a seizure or enslavement. In order to impress, or to press in, as in the making of a mark; something must be repressed, pressed back. All the different connotations of the word-- the imprint of teeth and surrounding tissues in wax and plaster for the dentist, the printer's pressing of type onto paper, the mark left by fingers on flesh-- all have been subordinated in aesthetic terms to the presentation of the sensible data to our mental faculties (Rowe: 234-5). This determines the position of the eye/1 as the threshold between body and soul, the point of entrance into an invisible realm inaccessible to ordinary instruments. The fact that this homophony eye/1 demands an alphabetic script marks "the passage of the impression from its physical 'origins' to its spiritual, mental, or affective telos "(Rowe: 235).

Literary impressionism is recorded to be a reaction to the shifting intellectual and social circumstances of the age. It is different from Realism since it offered a more fluid and less

didactic reality. It sprang from, in Stowell's view, "neither theoretical constructs nor rigid ideology" (Stowell: 15). In general, most of the literary impressionists fought to rid themselves of their narrow realistic conventions. Unlike realism, literary impressionism is primarily concerned with the visual, the picturesque, or the scenic. It carries with it "suggestions of visual and plastic representations that rely on the illusion of a subject" (Rowe: 234). The great contribution of literary impressionists to modernism is their response to the furiously changing world and their attempts to recreate that world of individualized sensory perception, relativism, fragmentation, and surfaces. In a world that suffers from disintegration of faith into the confusion of chance and the chaos of unknowability, they wrote with hopes of "expanding powers of inductive perception to navigate the shoals of the unseen and unknowable" (Stowell: 16).

Literary impressionism precariously perched for the flight of modernism into the twentieth

century. As it anticipated the major scientific, philosophical and cultural changes of the coming generations, it reflected the running theories of their age: Bergson's *duree* and Husserl's phenomenological time, William James's empiricism and epistemological indeterminacy, Einstein's relativity of space and time, the phenomenologists' recognition of a reciprocal perceptual reality between subject and object, and the Gestalt psychologists' synthesis based upon dynamic patterns of perceived fragments (Stowell: 16-17). Within this framework, the aesthetic goal of the literary impressionists was the fusion of form and meaning through the portrayal of human consciousness compressed into a fluid network of brilliantly concentrated sensory impressions.

However, the achievements of the literary impressionists in fiction have been remarkable and numerous. First, they have substituted the creation of atmospheric effects and subtle evocation for static analysis and comment. In other words, they increased their reliance on "metaphor and metonymy

in the presentation of events and existents"
(Ferguson: 1982: 14).

Second, the literary impressionists deleted or transformed several elements of the traditional plots . They discredited the formal chronological narratives with a beginning , a middle, and an end, in favour of retrospective, discontinuous, or unfinished actions, stream of associations canalized by emotion and the logic of the unconscious. This resulted in the dissolution of plot and the broken cycle of casuality found in the traditional novels (Ferguson: 16-17).

Third, they avoided the relatively simple patterns of characterization. Since their main emphasis was laid on the presentation of sensation and inner experience, their characters had no distinguishing shapes and seemed to defy simple categories. They destroyed the solidity and rigidity of life, and, like impressionists painters, blurred the contours, sacrificed symmetry and preferred intensity and expressiveness.

Fourth, they succeeded in discovering other possibilities of narrative techniques. They realized that they could not force their own beliefs into their works through mouthpieces. They refused speaking didactically through characters who were left to "see the world for themselves" (Stowell:21). Most of their novels were written through third person central consciousness, or sometimes through multiple reflectors. That provided greater freedom for the central consciousness to "glide through and fill in the void between outer world and inner ego" (Stowell: 22). Impressionists authors concealed themselves and presented the entire narrative from the characters' point of view-- a technique by which one moment of reality is comprehended after the sensation has been "modulated by consciousness and arrested by time" (Illie: No.17: 77). Consequently, instead of passively receiving comments and views, the reader/viewer becomes, in Lubbock's words, "co-author" (1921: 18). In his Preface to the The American, James warned against the dangers of first person narration, and justified the central

consciousness technique as serving" the dual impressionistic function of economy" (The Art of the Novel: Critical Prefaces: 1934: 37-38 .

Fifth, the shift from the description of concrete reality to a rendering of apperception necessitated a new language. The impressionists have remarkably created new linguistic and rhetorical effects that enabled them to render sensory impressions on eyes, ears and consciousness. Their prose is generally figured for "an abundance of verbs of perception and a suppression of verbs of action" (Stowell: 27). It is also dominated by adjectives so as to attract attention toward the sensory qualities of objects. James has employed in his novels "prolix and syntactical arrangements to capture in language the direct perceptual contours of consciousness" (Stowell 27). Associated with language is the impressionistic use of 'tone'. In a world so vague and complex, the impressionist fiction has become tonal poetry in which the use of interior monologue dramatizes the disparity of tonal language. For this reason, James

sees the principal merit of his Tragic Muse to be "the consistent, the sustained, preserved tone" (The Art of Fiction: 1949: 81).

Sixth, Baudelaire's belief that a good portrait is like "a dramatized biography, or rather, like the natural drama inherent in every man" (1956:274). seems to be the keynote to understanding the conception of characterization or portraiture adopted by the literary impressionists. In their fiction, characters at the beginning of the novel are different from them at the end. They undergo a great deal of change in emotional as well as mental terms. This justifies the reversals of position and attitude in James's The American, The portrait of a Lady, and The Ambassadors. Characters in impressionists novels find themselves in the flux of changing relations. To reshape their own identities, they have to redefine their relationship with the surrounding situations. They often seek relations, patterns, and meanings to solidify their communication with the outside world. Most of them, in Stowell's words, "have active, restless

consciousness" (Stowell: 44).

Alongside character portraiture, literary impressionist has special tenderness toward portraiture of setting. James is unrivaled in his awareness of the visual capabilities places can offer. In The Portrait, for instance, his portrait of Venice resembles his portrait of Isabel. He personifies the Italian town as a woman and ascribes his enchantment with the city to its "contradictoriness, its unpredictability, and its deep humanity" (Ward: 10). Since impressionism is an extension of Realism in its sensational, experiential aspect, setting is often established to give verisimilitude. Details are usually selected carefully to reflect the mood of characters and, sometimes, to mark their social standing. Setting is after all used metaphorically to substitute for representation or analysis.

In the light of the foregoing panoramic survey of impressionists background and features, James's mind and art will be brought into focus in the following parts.

II. James and Visual Arts

James's involvement with visual arts began as early as a small boy in New York. The view through the window from their Fourteenth Street house impressed him and marked the first visual interaction with the outside world. It was an "inkling of a mode of perception that became habitual and of his relation to life as a mature artist (Winner: 1970: 1). The great square with its 'splendid perspective' was to settle in his memory as a living picture.

The small boy recorded his early attention to Gaverni's etchings, the set of illustrated Beranger, and "the tall entrancing folios of Nash's lithographed Mansions of England in the olden Times" (Autobiography: 13). His view of London, again, was formed under the influence of Cruikshank's illustrations of Dickens's novels. Phiz's and Cruikshank's illustrations seemed to impress him even more than the texts they were illustrating. To him, Oliver Twist was more Cruikshank's than Dickens's (Autobiography: 69). John Leech's

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illustrations of Young Troublesome or Master Jacky's Holiday, and Richard Doyle's drawings for The Adventures of Brown, Jones, and Richardson had an undeniable influence in forming the aesthetic skills of the young James (Partial Portraits: 331-3). Les francais peints par eux-memes, with its eight volumes of literary and graphic sketches introduced the receptive child to a visually wide world as well as to the complexities of another social order.

Moreover, the illustrations of Johannot, Daubigny, Pauquet and others were all a unique variety of "the picturesque and grotesque, the humorous and fantastic, the pathetic and heroic" (Winner: 4). Such illustrations provided the young James with a pictorial image of Europe: kings, smugglers, allegorical figures of peace and war, gypsies, beggars, peasants, violin players, devils, and peddlers-- all appeared in different backgrounds of castles, cottages, battlefields, vineyards, inns and parlors.

Museums and art exhibitions also had played a great role in the formation of James's early taste.

Between 1851 and 1855, he had seen a great number of contemporary German, French, and American canvases in the New York Gallery of Fine Arts, in the American Art Union, in the National Academy of Design, in Goupil's, and in the Dusseldorf Galleries. He also paid frequent visits to the exhibitions at the Crystal Palace and J. Bryan's Gallery of Christian Art. He must have accompanied his father on visits to the studios and homes of Thomas Hicks, Felix Darley, Christopher Cranch, and Paul Duggan-- contemporary illustrators and painters who were friends of the elder James (Winner: 5). James's notice of Hick's portrait of his wife with "the light of the window playing over the figure" (Winner: 37,8) revealed an early sensitivity to the reflection of colour and light that predicted his later interest in impressionism.

When the James's family was in London in 1856, Ruben and Titian failed to arouse much enthusiasm in Henry. He, instead, found in the mamouth works of Haydon a "remarkable interest and beauty" (Autobiography: 177). At the age of thirteen, he

was captivated by the Robert Vernon collection of 157 paintings that included Turner, Bonington, Reynolds, and Constable;

In Paris in 1855, James had the first glimpse of the pre-Raphaelite art which meant for him "intensity of meaning, not less than of mystery, that thrills us in its perfection" (Autobiography: 178). He was also attracted to Holman Hunt, especially his memorable Scapegoat which was "so charged with the awful that I was glad I saw it in company" (Autobiography: 178).² James was also attracted to Delaroche and Delacroix.

James's taste, however, underwent a substantial change as the process of 'seeing' was to be associated with another process of 'thinking'. What pushed him forward to a higher point of aesthetic development was his visits to the Louver and the Luxembourg where he became aware of the personal vision of the painter which "finds expression through the language of his medium and which penetrates his representation of objects" (Winner: 10,11). Delacroix and Decamps educated his eyes and created in him

a new awareness of 'style'. In Paris, he was also attracted to the Barbizon landscapists: Troyon, Rousseau, Daubigny, and Lambinet. He considered them, for a long time, the masters of modern painting. Anyway, it was the Louvre that formed a bridge between Self and others. His inner and outer worlds were successfully reconciled. It was, in James's words, "a place of art" as well as a "house of life" (Autobiography: 195). He has gone far in appreciating the subtler art of Veronese, Leonardo, and Murillo.

In New York, later, Henry was an informal pupil of William Morris Hunt, in whose studio he felt himself "at the threshold of a world" (Autobiography: 285). Among others there: his brother William, John La Farge, and Theodora Sedgwick, he indulged himself in copying pictures and listening to Hunt's art views. A great deal of his technical terminology was referred to Hunt who taught him, for instance, that art is found inside the artist himself rather than outside him, and that the artist should have the power to

penetrate through surfaces to the hidden reality of things(Winner: 14). La Farge, who stood out for the Young James as " an embodiment of the gospel of esthetics" (Autobiography: 289-90), introduced him to Balzac and helped him to grasp that literature was no less art than painting-- a not entirely common view at that time. He also must have encouraged him that his aesthetic impulses would find successful issue in writing fiction (Winner: 51).

The third quarter of the 19th century witnessed transitions in attitudes towards art. A great deal of controversy was taking place in cultural and artistic circles. Delacroix's romanticism was challenged by Ingres' treatment of sentimental allegorical subjects. The exponents of the New Realism clashed with the defenders of Idealism. A third attitude conceived the painter as a disinterested spectator who "should paint what he sees, namely the variations of light received by the eye" (Winner: 17). That was impressionism. The impressionists insisted on preventing the

painter from making any effort to interpret Man or Nature either in intellectual or in spiritual terms. Accordingly, the artist paints not the object itself but his own way of seeing that object.

By 1868, the year James wrote his first art review Ruskin, Palgrave, Pugin and popularizers such as Anna B. Jameson had awakened enthusiasm in England and America for the long-neglected masters- Fra Angelico, Giotto, Ghiberti, Masaccio, Ghirlandajo (Winner: 18).

James was exposed to such a complex world of ideas and movements as well as to the art criticism of the mid-century in France and England. He was familiar, as recorded in his art reviews, with Stendhal, Planche, Vitet, Taine, Fromentin, Sainte-Beuve, Gautier, Ruskin and many others.³

Analyzing the gallery of the H.M.S. Calcutta by his contemporary Tissot, James found it realistic but "the sentiment...sterile and disagreeable," while Watts had what Tissot lacked--"the art of combining the imagination and ideal element in portraiture with an extreme solidity"

(The Painter's Eye: 140-3). James wrote also sympathetically about the Dutch painters: Ruisdaels, Teniers, and Brueghels- who give a sense of rest that results when "aim(to copy nature) and end (picture) coincide " (The Painter's Eye: 92). To him, the finest works of art were those with intellectual charm, allusiveness, style,tone, invention, sentimental redundancy, reflection, emotional byplay, and imagination.

Following the aesthetics of the first half of the 19th century in America, James as well as Allston, Hawthorne and Cole sought spiritual truth as the primary value in pictorial representation. The real greatness of art lay in its power to evoke a sense of human relationships, especially of the past to the present. In other words, he intended to humanize the past to see beauty in a natural scene(Winner: 25). Return to the past was not for imitating or idealizing the old Masters, but it was the magic of the past that caught him-- the past as a living force. He has gone to prefer "the ruined...to the reconstructed,however splendid"

(James: A Little Tour in France: 1885: 196). His belief in the dynamic relation of the past to the present justifies his passion for old Italy.

It was natural, then, for James who was so intellectually alive to experience a change in aesthetic values. By the 1870's the world taste was revolutionized by impressionism. It is interesting to note that James looked, at the beginning, at those radical painters as "partisans of unadorned reality and absolute foes to arrangement, embellishment, selection" (The Painter's Eye: 114). For him, it was a phenomenon that might be harbouring great dangers-- the most obvious of which was 'shallowness'. James warned that the artist must "take time to see deeply into his subject" (The Painter's Eye: 117-8). Unaware that his own artistic sensibilities were much closer to the impressionists, he wrote scornfully that they showed no signs of possessing first rate talent, and that the 'impressionist' "doctrines strike me as incompatible" (Rewald: 1961:371-2).

A few year later, when the impressionist has won public recognition after a ferocious battle against the dominating taste, James's attitude changed. He, then, wrote about Sargent's El Jaleo as a singular painting with "the stamp of an extraordinary energy and facility" (The Painter's Eye: 221). In his Little tour in France, sketchable impressionistic scenes are scattered: the crooked streets, ruined fortresses, and old peasant women. In The Reverberator, casual allusions were made to impressionism --Gaston Probert defended certain of Waterlow's (a fictional american-impressionists painter) purples and greens "as he would have defended his own honour" (1888: 40). Moreover, in an essay entitled "New England: An Autumn Impression" in 1905, he singled out each of the impressionists painters for special mention:

...an array of modern "impressionistic" pictures, mainly French, wondrous examples of Manet, of Degas, of Claude Monet, of Whistler, of other rare recent hands, treated us to the momentary effect of a large slippery sweet inserted, without a warning, between the compressed lips of half-conscious inanition. (The Notebooks of Henry James: 1905: 287).

James's growing interest in impressionism was accompanied by a process of reevaluation of his old ideas. His favourable painters were, in a sense, victimized; they no more fulfilled the aesthetic requirements of the new age. Hunt, he came to see, was a victim of the "merciless manner in which a living and hurrying public educates itself" (Autobiography: 287). La Farge could not "surpass two or three of early illustrations of Browning's Men and Women" (Autobiography: 291-2). It was clear by then that impressionism had got hold of him and that the radical change had been transmitted to him.

III. Influences on James's Impressionism

Parallel to the influence of the impressionists painters was the inspiration of the French literary impressionists whose impact is strongly felt in the compositional mode and descriptive style of James's last novels.⁴ One of these who made extended use of impressionists techniques in his fiction was Gustave Flaubert. At Flaubert's apartment, James

met Zola, Daudet, Edmond de Goncourt, Maupassant, Loti and others. He wrote particularly about his great host on five different occasions. What struck James most about Flaubert was his "restless passion for form" (The House of Fiction: 210)⁵-- a passion that he himself was to suffer from later. Flaubert, however, has always been referred to as one of the pioneer users of the impressionists stylistic methods. In his narrative descriptions, a unique blurring effect is produced through his use of "the imperfect verb".⁶ In Madame Bovary, landscape descriptions are always subordinated "to the character who is viewing them" (Bart: 1956:V).

James's admiration for the cosmopolitan Ivan Turgenev was great. The subordination of the plot to the development of character and manners is one of the impressionists elements in Turgenev's literature that appealed to the young James. He praised Turgenev's On the Eve in which the story is "all in the portrait of the heroine" (French Poets and Novelists: 224-5)--so much like The Portrait of a Lady. Turgenev's landscape

descriptions are often compared to those of Corot-- one of the forerunners of impressionism.⁷

Edmond and Jules de Goncourt have also exerted a considerable influence upon the artists and writers of that time. They introduced Japanese art and culture to France--the matter that was significantly important to impressionism. James was attracted to their Parisianness. He wrote that their "space comes to stop at the limits of Paris" (Literary Reviews and Essays: 1975: 158). In their Manette Salomon- a hymn to beauty and the fleeting moment as practiced by the impressionists painters- the students of Langibaut's atelier sketch their models in the open air.

The reader of James's last novels can easily feel the influence of Alphonse Daudet whose novels, Brunetiere notices, "if they are not well written, they are magnificently painted" (Kirschke: 1981:61). Daudet's impressionistic mode, in James's view, is due to having all "the newly developed, the newly invented perception" (Partial Portraits: 207). No

one had such an eye for a subject or such a perception of 'bits' as Daudet did . His Le Nebab and Les Rois en Exil, one of the verbal pictures of Paris is impressionistically painted- as James observes:

The light, the sky, the feeling of the air, the odours of the streets, the look of certain vistas, the silvery, muddy seince, the cool, grey tone of color... remind you again and again that if he paints with a pen he writes with a brush. (Partial Portraits: 213-14).

To read one of Daudet's books, James went on to think, was to see a little gilded gallery with small modern masterpieces. His style "is impressionism carried to the last point" (Literature: 1897: 306-7).

Another artist in the Flaubert circle was Emile Zola who not only supported the impressionists but translated them into literature "by the touches, notes, coloration, by the palette of many of my descriptions" (Hartz: 1897: 306-7). His popularity with the impressionists was further attested early in 1870 when Bazille did a painting of Zola chatting with Renoir. Although he is always

classified as a Naturalist, his works are loaded with impressionists features. Apart from the Parisian life he portrayed, Zola was interested in out-of-door scenes. In his The Masterpiece, Lantier, the novel's painter, paints a picture similar to Manet's Dejeuner sur l'herbe (1950: 35). Zola's novel was so popular during that time, and James most probably read it.

James recorded his indebtedness to Guy de Maupassant. Maupassant, in his analysis of human behaviour, relied on visible terms. He avoided telling his stories in the analytic conventional way : but he aimed at, in James's words, "making persons and events pass before our eyes" (Partial Portraits: 256). Maupassant accompanied Monet in the mid-1880's on his trip to Etretat to paint the same subject at different times of the day. He had an opportunity to observe the impressionists painter's struggles to capture the light effects. James also admired Maupassant's talent for developing the insignificant events of everyday life-- "events whose subsequent meanings

often become of the utmost importance to us-- in life, as in art"(Kirschke: 72). That is one of the impressionists practices.

Of the other influential French figures who exercised their impact on James's impressionism, were Pierre Loti, whose cathedrals were similar to Monet's paintings of Rouen Cathedral and whose works suggested for James "how long and how far impressionism will yet go" (Fortnightly Review: 1888:648). and Charles Baudelaire who placed much emphasis on the importance of the fleeting moment and who interpreted modernity, in impressionistic terms, as "the transitory, the fleeting, the incidental" (Leymarie: 1959:66). James's French experience, however, has resulted in his later experiments with the central consciousness as a narrator to serve his impressionistic goals.

James was equally familiar with English art and artists during his time. Ruskin's visual appeal attracted him. His Modern Painters, The Seven Lamps of Architecture, and The Stones of Venice were observed to have enhanced " the prestige of the

visual arts in England" (Kirschke: 95). The British writer's theories seemed to have shaped a great deal of James's preferences and views . He introduced him to the early Florentine painters and taught him to question the taste of the preceding generation. Like Ruskin, James applied in his art criticism a theory of representation that evolved his attempt to "justify beauty , reconcile art and morality, truth and imagination" (Winner:21). Ruskin's pronouncements regarding the use of colour in painting were revolutionary at that time; "the purest and most thoughtful minds are those which love colour the most", and "no amount of expression or invention can redeem an illcoloured picture" (The Stones of Venice: Vol.II, Chap. 5, Para. 30). Formulating in words the technique of juxtaposition, which the impressionists used later, Ruskin believed that light was neither to be considered as "neutral and white, bringing out local colours with fidelity: or coloured, and consequently modifying these local tints with its own" (Kirschke: 96-97). Like the impressionists

painters, he thought of objects as continually transformed by their surroundings, and insisted that the artist could render nature more precisely than the camera and that the artist should use his imagination in order to capture the accurate 'impression' that the camera could not realize (The Stones of Venice: Vol. 1, Pt.II,Chap.1,Para.14).

Ruskin, furthermore, believed that the artist should not merely record the facts of appearance, but he should give "the impression it made on his mind" (Landow: 1971: 63). Such were the affinities between the British artist and impressionism. James admired him and absorbed his views and attitudes.

Walter Pater, the art critic, was always the champion of the relative spirit. Like Ruskin, he believed that there are no degrees of truth, only degrees of approaches to it. In his preface to The Renaissance, he implied that subjective impressions of beauty are the only knowable reality . For him, as well as for the impressionists painters, what is real in life is that "single sharp impression, with a sense in it, a relic more or less fleeting,

of such moments gone by" (1956: 109). The relation, however, between James and Pater, has proved to be based on mutual admiration and influence.

George Moore, himself a painter during his early career, spent his early twenties in Paris and was in association with Manet, Monet, Renoir, and Degas. His Confessions of a Young Man is a record of the Parisian life during the time of impressionism. In his Modern Painting, Hail and Farewell, and Modern Painters, he practised a considerable influence in spreading knowledge about the impressionists painters and their work. Moore admitted that Turgenev and Corot, two precursors of impressionism, remained the major influences in his life: "They have been and still are the holy places where I rested and rest" (Phelps: 1956: 109). Moore's A Mummer's Wife was widely received as his foremost impressionists novel. Moore sent a copy of this novel to James to support it for him with the Mudie's circulating library (Moore: 174-5).

George Du Maurier also has exercised his influence upon James's impressionism. Although his Trilby was not a good impressionists novel, it nevertheless contained detailed descriptions of Bohemian life and art rendered in an atmosphere that seemed, in Jackson's words, "very like the one in which the impressionists school of painters originated and thrived" (1966:39). In his Preface to Daisy Miller, James admitted that Du Maurier has suggested to him the idea of his impressionists story "The Real Thing". James seems to have read Trilby with much care and referred to it on four different occasions.

The influence the American artists practised upon Henry James, however, can not be ignored. The admiration between James and William Dean Howells was mutual. They both used impressionists techniques some of which, as Kirschke notices, "they may have learned from each other" (117). Through James, Howells grew to know Morris Hunt, John La Farge, George Fuller and many others of the early impressionists group(Carter: 1966: 13). Anyway,

they both have influenced each other's literary impressionism.

Between James and his brother William there was a great deal of rivalry as well as professional respect (Hocks: 1974: 87). Both were great readers of French literature and both were drawn to visual arts. William's concept of perception that while part of what we perceive comes through our senses from the object before us, "another part always comes...out of our own head" (William James: 1890: 103). --is so similar to that of the impressionists painters. Both the two brothers, moreover, believed in the importance of the viewer/reader of art-- an importance emphasized by the impressionists. William's view that "neither the whole of truth nor the whole of good is revealed to any single observer although each gains a partial superiority of insight from the peculiar position in which he stands" (William James: 1968: 645) suggests a great deal of impressionism .

Other minor artists have also exerted their

impact upon James's literary impressionism . These were: Jules Laforgue who observed that "in the flashes of identity between subject and object lies the nature of genius" (Laforgue: 1956: 44). Edgar Saltus and Stuart Merrill who are referred to as Cosmopolitan impressionists; Hamlin Garland who used the impressionists style with a high degree of consistency (Stronks: 1964: 38-52), and Stephen Crane whose narration implies a dramatic literature that renders direct sensory experience "without expository intrusion, without authorial addition or correction" (Bloom: 1987: 81).

IV. The Portrait of a Lady

The shift from 'describing' to 'showing' is more strongly felt in The Portrait of a Lady than in any of James's early works. James holds, in the most impressionistic terms, a unique view of the idea of change-- "change in status or emotional or mental condition of a character brought about by a set of experiences"(Ward: 34). Isabel's future, present and past are implicitly fused so that the

story is often regarded as a portrait rather than a chronicle.

As early as the novels start, the opening lines reveal a kind of pictorialism most critics refer to when they describe literary impressionism. In Gardencourt, the historical English house, the young American heroine was unexpectedly exposed to the charming weight of the past. It was one of the ceremonies of a splendid afternoon tea. Part of the afternoon had waned and the flood of

summer light had begun to ebb, the air had grown mellow, the shadows were long upon the smooth, dense turf. They lengthened slowly, however, and the scene expressed that sense of leisure still to come;... but on such an occasion as this the interval could be only an eternity of pleasure;..The shadows on the perfect lawn were straight and angular.⁸(p.5).

The scene is very similar to Monet's Women in the Garden and Argenteuil, Late Afternoon.

Plunged into the heart of a sophisticated European society, Isabel Archer confronted an entirely new set of arrangements different from those in Albany in New England where the "condemned

door" of the family house was "secured by bolts" (p. 25). Ironically, James pretends that she was looking at everything "with an eye that denoted clear perception" (p. 17). She had not that 'clear perception'. Her problem is a problem of vision-- of how to see, of how to face the changeability and incomprehensibility of the world around her without prior beliefs.

When she saw Lord Warburton, she shouted with fascination, "Oh, I hoped there would be a lord, it's just like a novel" (p.17). The contrast is so sharp between what she saw and what she believed she should see. In Albany, behind bolted doors, it never occurred to her that vulgar streets lay beyond and a whole life was going on. The outside was "a region of delight or of terror" (p. 25). But in England, impressions attacked her from all sides.

Isabel Archer carried within her a great fund of life. Her deepest enjoyment was to feel the "continuity between the movements of her soul and the agitation of the world" (p. 35). Although she

had a great desire for knowledge and change, her view of change was based on romantic theories springing from the books she read in Albany. For her, the world was a place of "brightness, of free expansion, of irresistible action" (p. 51). Her dream was to see her life in harmony with "the most pleasing impression she should produce" (p. 51).

With such unknowability and innocence, Isabel was thrown into a complex European society of knowability and evil. She did not possess the perceptual powers necessary to understand the empirical reality, or read the subtle signs of the English teatime in Gardencourt. The old house was imaged to symbolize not only English history but the tradition of the whole of Europe as well as the accumulated weight of the past. With an impressionist brush, James describes the large, low rooms with brown ceilings and dusky corners as well as.

the quiet light on dark, polished panels, the deep greenness outside, that seemed always peeping in, the sense of well ordered privacy in the center of a 'property'-- a place where sounds were

felicitously accidental, where the tread was muffled by the earth itself (p. 54).

The English house, however, did not reveal much of its secrets to the inexperienced eyes of the American lady. Ralph- the novel's philosopher⁹- warned her that it could never be seen by a "young happy, innocent person like you" (p. 48). But she was not yet aware of the impressionistic, complex world around her. Her rejection of Ralph's observation marks a series of her misconceptions as she continued to misread intentions, actions, and deeper surfaces.

Lockleigh, Warburton's house, indicated for her a noble way of life. It affected the young visitor as

a castle in a legend...the watery sunshine rested on the walls inblurred and desultory gleams, washing them, as it were, in places tenderly chosen, where the ache of antiquity was keenest (p. 78).

The impressionists painters had a great tendency towards buildings. The sunshine reflected on the walls here reminds us of Monet's The Ducal Palace

at Venice;

Isabel rejected Warburton's proposal. A man with great responsibilities, great opportunities, great wealth would be a real threat to her aspirations. She felt frightened of being drawn into "a system in which he rather individually lived and moved" (p. 102).

In response to something she did not know, she , again, rejected Caspar Goodwood who came to London after her to renew his fidelity. He never corresponded to her idea of a delightful person. Such rejections exposed her to criticism. For O'Neil, it is a rejection of America itself. Ironically, he expects that such splendid refusals "must issue in a concrete choice of great value" (1973: 34). Sicker sees that she was forming her opinions of others "superficially and conceiving of individuals as types" (1980: 56).

The idea that things reveal a great deal of the "self" is the central issue in the Mme. Merle-Isabel meeting. In a philosophic tone, Merle

recited the sermons of her worldly experience. She had been a dweller in many lands, and had social ties in different countries. For Isabel, she seemed to have known "absolutely everything on earth there is to know" (p. 194). Converting Ruskin's observations, 'tell me what you like and I'll tell you what you are', Merle believed that "one's self and one's house, one's clothes, the book one reads, the company one keeps--these things are all expressive" (p. 201). She existed only as an expression of her accumulated talents and possessions. Her identity, Sicker notes, is self-created, defined completely and irrevocably by the figure she cuts in the external world" (Sicker: 54).

Mme. Merle, a part of the impressionistic world, stood behind the young lady's capabilities to understand. Isabel misread her and saw in her a set of pre-selected details. She could not realize that Merle's talents have not been so much cultivated for themselves as for her prestige and social recognition. Isabel's fascination is an evidence of her surrender to the world of superficial

impressions. She not only accepted first impressions as a message of truth, but she allowed, in Stowell's words, "too many of those attitudes shaped in Albany to influence her impressions" (Stowell: 181). She forced each impression into a previously-arranged mold. She did not 'paint' her pictures in plain air as impressionists painters do. This lack of perceptual impressionism pushed her into a tunnel of misconceptions and mistakes.

At the Mediterranean coast, Isabel felt to be at the threshold of Italy- the gate of wonders and admirations. Italy stretched before her as a "Land of promise, a land in which a love of the beautiful might be comforted by endless knowledge" (p. 223). Wandering with Ralph through the narrow, somber streets of Florence, she felt drowned in a strange universe of beauty and glamour. She felt her heart in the presence of "immortal genius and knew the sweetness of rising tears in eyes to which faded frescos and darkened marble grew dim" (p. 246). James's city scenes bring to memory pictures like

Monet's The Hotel--Noires at Trouville, and Pissaro's Le Boulevard Montmartre.

In such an impressionistic scene, the significant entrance of Gilbert Osmond was announced to start the real drama of the story. Osmond's villa is also presented through visual impressions so as to reveal the character of its owner. The antique, solid, weather-worn front had "a somewhat incommunicative character. It was the mask, not the face of a house" (p. 226). The windows, in their noble proportions, seemed to defy the world; their function "seemed less to offer communication with the world" (p. 226). Isabel could not read the impressions the house conveyed. Instead, she was lost in the intoxicating atmosphere of a museum-like house rich with arts, pictures and collections. She took it for an honest reflection of its owner— a man devoted to high connoisseurship. The place, the occasion, the combination of people— all signified more than what lay on the surface, but she had not had enough perceptual powers to see through that incomprehensible, complex world.

Osmond, in turns, practised the utmost degree of impressionism upon her. He pushed her to see him as "no one she had ever seen" (p. 261). His refined sensibility made him, she thought, "impatient of vulgar troubles", and had led him to live by himself " thinking about art and beauty and history" (p. 262) . She went on further to mix up his treasures with his features. Both seemed inseparable for her. She painted a portrait for him:

He had a fine, narrow, extremely modeled and composed face...This beard, cut in the manner of the portraits of the sixteenth century and surmounted by a fair mustache...His conscious, curious eyes, howeve, eyes at once vague and penetrating, intelligent and hard, expressive of the observer as well as of the dreamer (p. 228).

Such a remarkable use of visual terms, packed to achieve a subtle fusion of thought, feelings and facial features, drove Marianna to think that by Osmond's entrance into the action, the use of the visual arts assumed greater and more ideological dimensions, and the novel began "its movement up the continuum of uses of the visual

arts and pictorialism" (Marianna: 158). It seems that Isabel vibrated more to the arts clustered around his figure than to the character itself. She thought of him as fine as "one of the drawings in the long gallery above the bridge of the Uffizi" (p. 247).

Manet's Le Jardin a Giverny and The Artist's Garden at Giverny; and Sisley's The Road, View of the Serves Road are brought to memory when Isabel walked into the terrace of Osmond's villa. She was clothed with beauty as the sun got low and the golden light took a deeper tone. The masses of purple shadow glowed on the mountains. The air was "almost solemnly still, and the large expanse of the landscape...lay there in splendid harmony and classic grace" (p. 277).

Isabel's choice of Osmond was the result of idealizing too much and perceiving too little. It was, in Tanner's view, a result of "a radical failure of vision" (1968: 209). In marrying him she came to think, she was marrying all the achievements of the old great masters. Her

seduction by Osmond was in fact a " seduction by arts" (Marianna: 162).

In Rome, a whole world of impressions and beauty, of knowledge and art was revealed to her. She has always been fond of history; and in Saint Peter's was "history in the stones of the terrible human past was so heavy to her. It was a complex universe that defied interpretation and rejected over-simplification. Her consciousness, she felt, was "mixed that she scarcely knew where the different parts of it would lead her" (p. 287). Things not only changed their places, but lost their shapes and outlines. The sky was "a blaze of blue, and the splash of the fountains in their mossy niches had lost its chill and doubled its music" (p. 287).

As she went about in a repressed ecstasy of contemplation, she saw in things more than was really there. When the sun began to sink, the air was "a golden haze, and the long shadows or broken column and vague pedestals leaned across the field

of ruin" (p.288). In a highly impressionistic scene, time and space were fused. From the roman past to Isabel's future was " a long stride, but her imagination had taken it in a single flight" (p. 288). Both Rome and Osmond have become one thing ; the acceptance of Rome meant the acceptance of Osmond. Her dilemma has often been justified in terms of Osmond's villainousness, whereas the real flaw lay in her character. She could not realize that there was something in the air that signified more than appeared on the surface. That made her reject the impression that Osmond's villa was like a labyrinth, once you were in, "you would need an act of energy to get out" (p.253).

After marriage, a tremendously different portrait was painted for Isabel Archer, or, in other words, other dim colours were added to the old features. The free, cheerful girl has become quite another person. There was nothing, she discovered, " worth people's either differeing about or agreeing upon" (p.244). The man she took for a demoralized prince in exile was sinking in

the depths of calculation and constricting appropriation. He pretended to be the master of the world, and in reality he was "its very humble servant, and the degree of its attention was his only measure of success" (p. 394). His tastes, his studies, his accomplishments were all not to please the world, but to please himself by "exciting the world's curiosity and then declining to satisfy it" (p. 394). Instead of climbing the heights of meditation and art, she was, in Tanner's words, "plunging down into the world of means" (Tanner: 217).

The scene in which Isabel saw casually Mme. Merle and Osmond not only reveals a high degree of pictorialism, but also promises a rare moment of impressionistic synthesis. Mme. Merle was in her bonnet.

standing on the rug a little way from the fire; Osmond was in a deep chair, leaning back and looking at her. Her head was erect, as usual, but her eyes were bent on his...Then she perceived that they had arrived at a desultory pause in their exchange of ideas and were musing, face to face...Their relative positions, their absorbed mutual gaze, struck her as something detected (pp. 407-408).

According to impressionism, it is one of the privileged moments that is both accidental and sudden. Isabel seemed to have captured "a separate fragment of reality not determined by any other experience" (Stowell: 183). The immediacy of perception allowed for no reliance on preconceptions. 'Seeing' for the first time was fused with 'knowing'. Such a moment of perception and consciousness is, in Stowell's view, crucial to "Isabel's growth as it is to James's impressionism" (Stowell: 183).

As the shock of discovery stimulated her past failures, her sense of time was momentarily lost. That fragment of time was both isolated and immobilized. Time was spread across this epiphany 'frozen' scene in the same way brush strokes and flickers of light are scattered on an impressionistic canvas: Isabel 'stopped short', 'gave her time', 'for a minute', 'for a moment', 'instantly', 'lasting only a moment'...etc. Time was spatialized in the heroine's mind.

Further to this, verbs of perception are abundantly used throughout the scene: 'She had

received an impression', 'had often seen', 'noticed', 'perceived',...etc. This not only emphasizes the pictorial quality of the scene, but also marks Isabel's growing control of perception.

A high degree of impressionism is also achieved because of the shift of the angle of vision from the description of the narrative action to, in Stowell's words, "the effect rendered by this scene on Isabel's sensibilities" (Stowell: 184). Such fragments are filtered through the emotional and sensory transitions of her consciousness. She no longer selected what she saw.

The fact that the moment ended before "she had fairly seen it" (p. 168) added to the obscurity of the scene. The incompleteness of the 'picture' as well as the frustration of the perceptual process also reflected Isabel's confusion. She would need the contemplation of what she saw. She just endeavored to arrest the fleeting impressions coming to her as scattered spasms of light that would need to be rearranged and reconstructed later.

In one of the most memorable scenes in the novel, James internalized the narrative in Isabel's consciousness to show how far she has come to terms with her fate. In the vigil scene, she was brought closer to self-realization. She has come into position to fix herself in relation to the world around her. The fragments of that complex, vague reality were collected, rearranged, and cohered.

The verbs of visual perception, again, permeated the scene: 'she saw the answer', 'she had read some of the signs', 'strange impression she had received', 'the world would seem', 'she could still see', 'scanning the future with dry, fixed eyes', 'opened her eyes so wide', 'properly impressed', ...etc. This again emphasizes her newly developed perceptual capabilities.

The gulf had widened terribly between Isabel and her husband. She had suddenly found "the infinite vista of a multiplied life to be a dark, narrow alley with a dead wall at the end" (p. 424). She did not take her suffering for a stupor or a

depression. It was "a passion of thought, of speculation, of response to every pressure" (p.425). that saves the scene from being a fit of melodramatic rage into being a real attempt at understanding the world around her. In a moment of blurred outlines and ambiguous hints, "the shadows had begun to gather" (p. 425). She accused him of nothing. He was neither cruel nor violent; It was her mistake of perception. She had seen only half his nature as one saw "the disk of the moon when it was partly masked by the shadow of the earth" (p. 426). She had mistaken the part for the whole. She had been immensely under his charm. She had imagined a world of things that had no substance. Her vision of him, she came to realize , was "fed through charmed senses" (p. 426). There was an indefinable beauty about him towards which she felt powerless.

Now the fragmented impressions gathered and Isabel was pushed into new realms of knowability. She realized that she "had not read him right"

(p. 426). She realized, too, that he was belonging to a sophisticated society that lived "with an immense esteem for tradition" (p.431). When the rigid system of his society closed about her, a sense of "darkness and suffocation...took possession of her" (p. 431). She was a failure to herself as well as to Osmond. He, too, had expected her to "feel with him and for him, to enter into his opinions, his ambitions, his preferences" (p.432).

The fusion of sight and insight, of subject and object was complete when Isabel, like any impressionists, went far away under the sky. To the ruins of Old Rome, she delivered the secrets of her agony. She rested her "weariness upon things that had crumbled for centuries and yet still were upright" (pp. 517-18). Her sufferings looked so small in the large Roman record. She has been elevated above individual experience as she was haunted by a sense of the "continuity of the human lot" (p. 518). No more she thought of Rome as a factory of arts and a school of beauty. No more it merely evoked simple esthetic pleasures. Now,

Rome appeared to her as "the place where people had suffered" (p. 518). Such impressions filled her up with strength and resistance. Failures did not destroy her. She has got the message of Rome. She did not collapse to know that Mme. Merle was Osmord's mistress who had conceived her marriage for financial reasons. She was now in full control of herself. She was at last, in a position to see, to see, to know, and to face an impressionable, complex universe.

V. The Ambassadors

With its pictorially scenic structure, The Ambassadors is a remarkable "progression toward impressionistic nuances of multiplicity and change" (Stowell: 208). As the whole story is filtered through the consciousness of Lambert Strether, a peculiar world of 'pictres' composes and decomposes before his eyes. An incredibly sophisticated life of Parisian society is explored with a detective's passions. The "chaotic stream of real-life experience" (Anderson: 1977: 221) is brought into focus. James succeeded also to develop a fusion of

impressionistic portraits and fragmented perceptual relativism.

Strether, an American of fifty-five, was endowed with imagination and intelligence. Yet, he was confused by what he saw as well as what he failed to see. His plunge into Europe was a consciousness of personal freedom and "a deep taste of change" (p. 5) he had not known for years. His quest of knowledge and perception drove him not only to change his view of the surrounding world, but to revolutionize the whole of his life. That quest concealed the torture of the double consciousness, as the prejudices of Woollett, Massachusetts, were still pressing inside him. He found himself caught in the middle of shifting perspectives.

The reader's visual awareness is immediately heightened when James draws an impressionistic portrait for his protagonist whose immediate signs were a marked.

bloodless brownness of face, a thick dark mustache...growing strong and falling low a head of hair still abundant but irregularly streaked with grey, and a nose of bold free prominence...A perpetual pair of glasses astride of this fine ridge,

and a line, unusually deep and drawn, the prolonged pen-stroke of time, accompanying the curve of the mustache from nostrils to chin, did something to complete the facial furniture that an attentive observer would have seen catalogued, on the spot..(p. 8).

Apart from the painting terminology: signs, brownness, dark, grey, pen-stroke, curve, on the spot, James's skill lies in the way sight and insight are fused. The portrait communicates a great deal of Strether's emotions.

At Chester, Strether practised his visual talent in reading facial expressions and postures in the same manner a painting is read. Introduced to the amiable Maria Gastrey, he was confused by something in her face--"something more, that is, than its apparently usual restless light seemed to notify him" (p.7). He exerted some effort to rearrange the impressions that crowded into his mind.

Strether was charmed by the homely streets "under the brows of gables, views of cathedral tower and waterside fields" (p. 13). The medieval walled town not only introduced him to "the general

concept of Europe" (Bowden: 1956: 98), but suggested the complexity and deviousness of old Europe. Subject and object were fused as his growing sense of delight was mixed with " certain images of his inward picture" (p. 13). The scene reveals the protagonist's gradual initiation into an impressive world-- a world of new values, in Mattiessen's words, " and a series of small climaxes" (Mattiessen: 1944: 44). The beauty of the city led him to think about his own life. It was a failure, he realized, not to enjoy. It was his failure as well as the " failure of Woollett" (p. 14).

Waymarch was there to remind Strether of his old self, of the Puritanical world he has left behind. To Waymarch, change was to be feared and hated. He was to remind Strether of his ambassadorial mission. He should not forget that he has come abroad for the wealthy widow, Mrs. Newsome, to bring back her son Chad who was living in Paris and refusing to come home and take his proper position in the family business. He was thought to be in the clutches of some 'bad woman'.

In one of a series of tete-a-tete scenes, favoured by impressionists painters, James draws a fine picture of Strether and Gostrey before going to theatre...

Face to face over a small table on which the lighted candles had rose-coloured shades; and the rose-coloured shades and the small table and the soft fragrance of the lady...were so many touches in he scarce knew what positive high picture (p. 33).

Added to the effect of light and shades, was his companion whose dress was cut down to shoulder and bosom, and who "wore round her throat a broad red velvet band with an antique jewel" (p. 34). Strether was charmingly given to "uncontrolled perceptions" (p. 34).

Unnumbered impressions crowded into the protagonist's mind so that he felt that the play itself "penetrated him with the naked elbow of his neighbour" (p. 35). It was a peculiar time-- "it was a world of types" (p. 35). It was a rare impressionistic moment in which nothing had a definite outline: all the figures and faces in the stall were "interchangeable with those on the stage" (p. 35). Contours

were blurred and nobody was easily distinguished. Strether "could not have said if it were actors or auditors who were most true" (p. 36). In a world so changeable and dynamic, preconceptions were out of place ; and "one can only judge by the facts" (p. 37). He decided, immediately, to reject the foolish Woollett idea that Chad was got hold of by a wicked woman.

Strether's first walks in Paris marked his entrance into a magic city of art and beauty. The Parisian morning struck its cheerful notes "in a soft breeze and sprinkled smell, in the light flit, over the garden-floor" (p. 53). The air had a taste "as of something mixed with art" (p. 53).

In the Luxembourg gardens, the cup of Strether's impressions seemed to overflow . On a penny chair, he embraced a strange world of "terraces, alley, vistas, little women in white caps, and shrill little girls at play" (p. 53). This is like the impressionists pictures of the French city especially those of Pissarro with their whirling brushstrokes and broken colours.

The Parisian gardens, however, were appropriate for the protagonist's meditations. He remembered his Woollett life where he was "buried for long years in dark corners" (p. 57). He felt sorry for "an opportunity lost" (p. 57). Woollett, he felt, was a society dominated by the clock. It calculated people's profits, limited their relations, and imprisoned their passions. Paris symbolized everything that Woollett lacked. It reminded him of his homelessness. It transformed him and helped him to discover the real meaning of life. Life, he realized, was not a set of static rules and regulations; it was dynamic and changeable. He should take things "as they came" (p. 55). Paris appeared to his eyes as

some huge iridescent object, a jewel brilliant and hard, in which parts were not to be discriminated nor differences comfortably marked. It twinkled and trembled and melted together, and what seemed all surface one moment seemed all depth the next (p. 59).

The dazzling image of the 'jewel' brings James's response to reality close to that of the impressionists painters. Consciousness is not fixed

and stable. The brilliance of the jewel is the product of both surfaces and depths. Reality and appearance are too fused to distinguish. In a relativistic world nothing alone stands for the final truth.

A few days later, in the box party at the Comedie Francais, new complications multiplied for Strether's vision. While he and Miss Gostrey were sitting in complete silence, the door opened and a stranger came in with a quick step. The couple found themselves suddenly in the presence of Chad himself. Another fusion of reality and appearance, of subject and object. Strether was struck partly because he had never seen a young man "come into a box at ten o'clock at night" (p. 91), and partly because he found himself face to face with a real "case of transformation" (p. 90). Chad's image did not correspond to the conception adopted in Woollett.

The atmosphere of James's theatre recalls Degas' pastels La Loge and The Dance Foyer at the Opera as well as Cassatt's The Loge which render the illusion of the world of the theatre.

Strether realized that Paris has retouched Chad's features: it had "cleared his eyes and settled his eyes and settled his colour" (p. 98). It had given the young man "a form and a surface, almost a design" (p. 98). In such visual terms, Strether defined Chad's relation with Paris.

The outdoor party in the gardens of the great sculptor Gloriani is one of the finest scenes that reflects James's impressionistic mood. The place itself was "a great impression" (p. 125). It gave Strether a sense of a great convent of missions as well as of a nursery of young priests, "of scattered shade of straight alleys and chapel-bells" (p. 126). He had the sense of names in the air, of "ghosts at the windows, of signs and tokens" (p. 126). The scene verbalizes the impressionists' passion for landscapes and plain air scenes. Manet's La Musique aux Tuileries, Monet's Femmes au Jardin, and Renoir's Le Moulin de la Galette are good examples.

The fact that Strether was less a participant than a spectator communicates a relative view of reality implicit in the emphasis on the dynamic

relationship of the perceiving subject and the perceived object (Marianna: 179). In a world of illusions, Strether was groping for some sense of reality . In the light of Paris, one is allowed only to see "what things resemble" (p. 133). James's canvas is so similar to the impressionist cityscapes: the crowding life; the patches of colour and light; the vague but suggestive details. With the minimum of conversation—Strether, James's camera eye, was moving from one object to another.

When Mme. de Vionnet and her daughter Jeanne, Chad's particular friends, arrived an impressionistic picture was drawn of them. The charming mother was dressed in light and transparent black. Her face "had a roundness"; her eyes "far apart and a little strange"; her smile "natural and im"; her hat "not extravagant" (p. 135). Jeanne, on the other side, was another impression. She was a young girl "in a white dress and a softly plumed white hat" (p. 141). As reality and illusion exchanged their places in a world so complex and incomprehensible, Strether assumed Jeanne, not her mother, to be the object

of Chad's interest. There was nothing final. One thing he was sure of: that there were some things that had to come in time if they were to come at all. If they did not come in time, "they were lost forever" (p. 139). He delivered his most memorable advice to Belham-Chad's friend- "Live all you can it's a mistake not to" (p.140). The advice shows his own need to realize the fleeting quality of time as well as " a plea for immunity from its forward movement" (Stowell: 211). He was exerting his efforts to suspend time and to sort out the fragmented pieces of his life and rearrange them. He was trying to arrest each present moment as he felt lost between a disappointed past and an unknowable future.

Strether's confusion multiplied during the visit Chad urged him to pay to Mme.de Vionnet. The journey was, in fact and in Priscilla's view, a perspective into the past, into the history of Paris (1954: 1075-84). His house was designed in the "high homely style of an elder day, and the ancient Paris he was looking for" (p.155). It was crowded

with medallions, moldings and mirrors, little old miniatures, pictures and books. It was a whole life in which the present and the past were harmoniously combined. Each time he strove for truth, more ambiguities appeared for him.

The lady, whom Woollett took for a wicked type; sat close to him in a tete-a-tete position with her hands clasped in her lap and "the fine prompt play of her deep young face" (p.157). A symbol of the complex modern world, she-as James wrote in his Notebooks- "gratifies some more distinctively disinterested aesthetic, intellectual, social, ... historic sense in him" (Notebooks: 392). He felt he had never met a woman like her in Woollett. She was the embodiment of everything he was in need of; the embodiment of civilization at its most refined form. When the distracted protagonist discussed the problem he came to Paris for, she added more ambiguities by saying: "simply tell her (Mrs. Newsome) the truth...any truth- about us all" (pp.161-62). His naive question whether Chad was going to marry her daughter was answered vaguely: "No-not that..."

He likes her too much" (p. 162). Before leaving, he found himself saying: "I'll save you if I can" (p. 163). The promise not only marks a detour in his mission, but also a changed response to the new life he found in Paris.¹³

In Paris, Strether felt himself moving in "a maze of mystic closed allusions" (p. 179). Nothing could fit into the Woollett categories. Mme. de Vionnet appeared to him as part of a world beyond simple comprehension. She seemed to him as various: "she's fifty women" (p. 157). In a final portrait, she has been painted in highly impressionistic terms:

Her bare shoulders and arms were white and beautiful; the material of her dress, a mixture, as he supposed of silk and crape, were of silvery grey so artfully composed as to give an impression of warm splendour; and round her neck she wore a collar of large emeralds, the green note of which was more dimly repeated, in satin, in substances, and textures vaguely rich...He could have compared her to a goddess still partly engaged in a morning could, or to a sea-nymph waist-high in the summer surge (p. 173).

With such a remarkable concern for costume details, colours, and texture, James brings to mind the

portraits of elegant ladies by impressionist painters such as Manet's Gare Saint-Lazare and Ropose; Renoir's La Loge, Portrait of Jeanne Samary and Girl with a Fan; Dega's Portrait of a Young Woman and many others. Moreover, James's description of Vionnet as a sea-nymph refers to a long series of nude pictures. Renoir's Nude on a Sofa, Bather and Seated Bather; Degas' The Mornign Bath; and Nude before a Looking-glass by Lautrec.

In an accidental meeting at the cathedral of Notre Dame, Strether invited Mme. de Vionnet to lunch with him. They were seated on either side of a small table "at a window adjusted to the busy quay and the shining barge-burdened Seine" (p.192). The sunshine on the river was filtering through the window and lighting up the objects on the table. The scene added romantic dimensions to human relations and revealed a great deal of emotions and passions. It also verbalized the impressionists' dedication to contemporary life and their interest in joyous occasions such as picnics and luncheons in the open air. Manet's Chez le Pere, Renoir's

Dejeuner des Canotiers and After Luncheon; and Degas' Absinthe are good examples.

After the luncheon, Strether was definitely sure that Chad-Vionnet relation was not as had been guessed in Woollett, but it was beautiful and "that's what makes them strong. They're straight, they feel and they keep each other up"(p. 182). Instead of urging Chad to go back to his family, he wanted him to stay in Paris. The case, he realized, was "more complex than it looks from Woollett" (p.238). Strether came to enjoy his defiance of Mrs. Newsome.

After the departure of the Pococks, who were sent as new ambassadors to check upon and even to replace Strether, the protagonist caught a train that took him "almost at random"(p. 341). out to a day-long excursion into the countryside. He looked at the French ruralism, with its cool special green, through "the little oblong window of the picture frame" (p. 341). The train deposited him at a landscape that reminded him of "a certain small Lambinet that had charmed him, long years before"¹⁴ (p. 341). Like impressionists painters,

he was bathed in " weather, air ,light, colour and his mood all flavouring" (p. 342). He found himself at "the right spot" (p. 342) where one of the most privileged moments was waiting for him-- a moment that fused his past, present and future. He walked and walked as the oblong gilt frame disposed its enclosing lines, "the poplars and willows, the reeds and river...fell into a composition, full of felicity" (p.342). The sky was 'silver and turquoise and varnish'; the village on the left was 'white' and the church on the right was 'grey'. He was "freely walking about in it" (p. 342). The scene was no longer a Lambinet's as it was Strether's own impressionists painting "reflecting his immediate state of mind" (Stowell: 209).

In such a rare impressionistic moment, Strether was desperately trying to suspend time so as to be able to evaluate his life and rearrange its fragmented pieces. His past was transformed into presentness. No more he was a passive spectator, but he became essentially part of that relative

supersensual multiverse. He was absorbing, "not escaping from the relativism of sensory relations" (Stowell: 213).

The impressionistic rendering of the scene reflected his new sense of harmony. Time and place were fused as the sky, the village, the church, Termont Street where he saw Lambinet long years ago- were all combined. He was unified with himself as well as with his surroundings.

Then , the setting shifted to an inn gargon in a village with "river flowing behind or before it" (p. 346)-- a preferable place where boating parties and crowds were the impressionists' favorite subjects. Monet's Bethers at la Grenouillere and A Boat on the Epte; Renoir's Luncheon of the Boating Party are examples. Strether, then, saw a boat advancing with a young man "in shirt sleeves", and a lady with "a pink parasol" (p. 348). This marks a shift from Lambinet whose figures were mainly simple peasants dressed in rough working clothes, to Renoir or

Monet who painted city-dwellers and ladies in fashionable dresses. In the first Lambinet-part, colours are presented through adjectives and light is presented in the sky not diffused throughout: the sunny silvery sky, the shady woody horizon; the sky was silver and turquoise and varnish...etc. That suggests Strether's traditional aerial perspective in which objects appeared blurred at a distance. Later, the primary emphasis in description is not on the object modified by adjectives, but adjectives are converted into substantives.¹⁵ The grammatical shift places the emphasis mainly on the sensory quality of the visual experience rather than on the object itself. The village affected Strether as a "thing of whiteness, blueness, and crookedness set in coppery green" (p. 346). This movement from Lambinet towards impressionism suggests not only a movement from past to present, but also reveals his growing response to the impressionistic world around him.

He felt at peace there as a great sense of confidence was deepened with "the lap of the water, the ripple of the surface, the rustle of the reeds on the opposite bank" (p. 348). The valley on the farther side was "all copper-green level and glazed pearly sky" (p. 348). The copper-green is often used by impressionist painters to catch the effect of light and atmosphere as they think that the green of nature is not green at all but "a combination of colors" (Anderson: 270). The river-view, again, suggests Manet's En Bateau Monet's La Grenouillere, and Renoir's Canotiers a Chatou.

In this 'right spot', Strether was fully prepared for the 'full impression'. His perceptions have been sharpened and modified to absorb the "right thing" (p. 348). He saw something that "gave him a sharper arrest" (p. 348). A boat was floating down near him. Time has suspended. His ability to read impressionistically a purely impressionistic scene was put to test. The moment was rendered in a highly impressionistic language:

"the air quite thickened"; "with further intimations"; "vaguely felt"; "the very moment of impressing"; "their boat seemed"; "this little effect was sudden and rapid"; "for an instant"; "within a minute"--- such phrases force the transience of the scene and reveal a moment of "recognition that seems frozen and etched in his consciousness" (Stowell: 219). Even in the ill-defined slight movement of the lady 'wavering' in the boat there was a great deal of impressionism. At Strether's discovery that the lady and the young man were Mme. de Vionnet and Chad, subject was fused with object. Knowing was now connected with seeing. Chad, Strether realized now, was involved in a mature and passionate love affair with the mother, not her daughter.

It was afterwards that Strether was able to understand the whole situation and fit things together. In a vigil scene, "the impression took fuller form..to complete itself" (p.352). He seemed to be moving those days as if in a gallery

"from clever canvas to clever canvas" (p. 360).
He has at last received the vague voice of
Pairs" (p.360). Nothing was simply good or
simply evil. He had been tried and tested. He
had become "himself, with his perceptions, and
his mistakes, his concessions and his reserves"
(p. 363).

CONCLUSION

This study was, in broad terms, an attempt to further the concept of the fundamental relationship between the visual arts and the verbal arts. It exemplified how far arts can transcend one another, help one another, and reveal one another by assimilating themselves to each other. Although this area has been under critical investigation, there is still, I think, a need for further exploration.

The reader of Henry James's novels usually emerges from the experience with a feeling that he has been visiting a museum of modern art, and has been concentrating on viewing a variety of impressionists paintings. This study tried to emphasize how James has set out to achieve in words what Monet, Manet, Renoir and Degas have done in oils. He wanted, it seems, to write as they painted. His style reveals a desperate effort to make a picture of a supersensual multiverse. His genuine interest in visual arts

drove him to be one of the most memorable innovators and breakers of conventional patterns of narration. His novels, like impressionist paintings, evoke feelings and communicate impressions. His themes are rendered visually rather than rationally.

This study falls into five parts. Part I was devoted to a definition of impressionism in both painting and Literature. During the second half of the 19th century, impressionism in painting cultivated new revolutionary tendencies that led to most of the subsequent modern movements in painting and sculpture. It substituted a perceptual approach based on actual visual experience for the old approach that was based on traditional ideas about the nature of what we see. It paid special attention to the effects of light against the pure colours of the spectrum; it gave primary importance to the subjective attitude of the artist. It aimed at reproducing the shifting visual nuances of the natural world. The impressionists were trying to

capture the sensations received from nature. This study also shed light on the different elements of impressionism, the challenges it faced, and the social-technological factors that helped its development.

Then, a discussion of literary impressionism followed. Unlike impressionism in painting, literary impressionism was not a school, but a phenomenon of a set of shared assumptions and common reactions to a changeable complex universe. Literary impressionists were groping for a more credible vision of the unstable, incomprehensible world. They were trying to catch and reproduce the shifting impressions by which the modern world impinges on our senses. It returns us to the purity of objects seen by means of an aesthetic act characterized by its spontaneity and immediacy.

Part II traced James's involvement with visual arts which began when he was a small boy in New York. His attention to the etchings and illustrations of Cruikshank, Phiz, Leech, Doyle,

Johannot, Daubigny, Panquet and other artists impressed him and introduced him to a wide visual world. His frequent visits to museums and art exhibitions also played an essential role in forming the receptive child's taste. His travels to Europe pushed him to a higher point of aesthetic development.

Since he was the child of his time, James absorbed the ideas and attitudes in art and literature of his age as his critical writing show. He was perfectly attuned to his age and fully aware of what other artists and writers were trying to do. He wrote various articles about Ruskin, Palgrave, Pugin, Fra Angelico, Giotto, Stendhal, Planche, Vitet, Gautier and many others. He also analyzed the pictures of Tissot, Watts, Ruisdaels, Teniers and others.

James's attitude toward impressionism- a radical movement during that time- was investigated. It's interesting to know that in the beginning, he looked at impressionism as a phenomenon that might be harboring great dangers. He

went on to accuse the impressionists painters of shallowness; but, later, he discovered how his own sensibilities were close to theirs. He, afterward, singled them out for special consideration.

Part III explored the influence of the French literary impressionists on Henry James. Flaubert, Zola, Dudet, Edmond de Goncourt, Maupassant, Loti, and the cosmopolitan Ivan Turgenev exercised their impact on James's impressionism. He was also influenced by English artists such as Ruskin, Pater, George Moore, and George Du Maurier. Other American artists also had an influence on him such as Howells and his brother William.

Part IV is an analysis of The Portrait of a Lady which marks James's first serious shift from the technique of 'describing' to the technique of 'showing'. It also conveys a unique view of change. Plunged into the heart of Europe, the American young lady, Isabel Archer, confronted a complex world of traditions and arrangements. Her tragedy emerged from her failure to see

things and persons without priori beliefs. She saw what she believed she should see. She not only accepted first impressions as a message of final truth, but forced each fresh impression into a previously-arranged picture. In other words, she did not 'paint' her pictures in open air. She had mistaken the part for the whole, and imagined a world of things that had no substance. That pushed her into a series of mistakes and misconceptions.

After sufferings and pains, she succeeded to arrest the fleeting impressions coming to her as scattered spassms of light. She gathered and reconstructed such fragmentary impressions and came into position to fix herself in relation with the world around her. Failures did not destroy her; and when the novel ended, she was seen in full control of herself.

Part V was a further attempt to catch the impressionistic qualities in James's The Ambassadors which is a remarkable progression toward his

mastery of the impressionists technique. The whole story is filtered through the consciousness of Lambert Strether- a fifty-five year-old American with special perceptual talents. His initiation into the impressionable world of Europe gave him a sense of personal freedom and a deep taste for change unprecedented in his past life in New England. His quest of perception and knowledge led him to change his views of the world. In Paris, he felt himself caught in the middle of shifting ambiguous perspectives. Paris urged him to think about his own life; reminded him of his homelessness; and transformed him. The study traced his growing response to the supersensual multiverse of Paris. Nothing, he came to realize, was simply good or simply evil.

This study included analyses of different scenes in The Portrait and The Ambassadors that are similar to pictures painted by the different impressionists painters. The two novels are crowded with scenes of public gardens, seascapes, landscapes, cityscapes, theatres and historical,

places. Attention was also paid to James's talent for portraiture rendered in a highly impressionistic language.

NOTES

1. However, in his "The Parallelism between Literature and the Arts, "English Institute Annual 1941, 1942, pp. 29-63, Rene Wellek Warns against the parallels that are based on sociological-cultural grounds.
2. This picture might have provided James with the main theme of The Golden Bowl in which the heroine sees herself as the scapegoat carrying the burden of strained family relationships.
3. See also James's Portraits of Places, Boston: James R. Osgood and Co., 1884. p.19.
4. On the French aspects of James's character and literature, see Philip Groves, Henry James and the French Imagination, Barnes and Noble, 197, pp. 189- 207; and Edmund Gosse, Aspects and impressionism, London: Cassell, 1972, p.41.
5. See also James's French Poets and Novelists, New York & London: Macmillan, 1878, p. 199.
6. Flaubert's stylistic methods as connected with impressionism is further investigated in Maria E. Kronegger, Literary impressionism, College & Univ. Press, 1973, pp. 135-136; and Stephen Ullman, Style in the French Novel; Oxford: Blackwell, 1964, pp.94-110.

7. Turgenev's prose was also under analysis in E.J. Simmons's Introduction to Fathers and Children, New York: Rinehart, 1955, XV .
8. All subsequent references to James's The Portrait of a Lady are quoted from the Penguin ed., 1978.
9. For further analysis of the character of Ralph Touchett, see Ora Segal, The Lucid Reflector: The Observer in Henry James's Fiction, New Haven & London: Yale Univ. Press, 1969, and Oscar Cargill, The Novels of Henry James, London: Macmillan, 1961.
10. Isabel's choice of Osmond is further discussed in Juliet McMaster, "The Portrait of Isabel Archer, " American Literature, XIV, 1973-74, pp.50-66; and H.G. Flinn & Howard C.Key, "Henry James and Gestation," College English, XXI, 1959-60, pp. 173-75.
11. All subsequent references to James's The Ambassadors are quoted from the Penguin ed., 1980 .
12. The importance of the Parisian beauty is also discussed in J.W. Beach, The Methods of Henry James, New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1918, p.4 .
13. Strether's change of attitude is discussed in Robert E.Garis, "The Two Lambert Strethers: A New Reading of The Ambassadors, " Modern

Fiction Studies, VII, 1961-62, pp.305-6 .

14. Lambinet, Rousseau, Daubigny, Corot and Millet belonged to the Barbizon School of Painting. They were mainly interested in the quiet moods of nature: slow-moving rivers, light filtering through trees...etc. Lambinet's Fishing on the Banks of the Seine might have been in James's mind when he wrote this scene. For further reading, see Winner, pp. 76-77.
15. There is an illuminating linguistic analysis of this scene in Winner, p. 77-78.

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