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Nature Imagery as A Pattern in Henry James' the *AMBASSADORS*

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ABSTRACT

This research paper entitled "Nature Imagery as a Pattern in Henry James *The Ambassadors*" is to examine James' employment of nature images in his work *The Ambassadors*. This novel is taken for the analysis to explore the recurring images in *The Ambassadors*. The images are water imagery, money and time imagery, rose imagery, moon imagery, food imagery, and nest imagery.

Key words: Domestic Imagery, Art imagery, Figuration imagery, Biblical Imagery, character Imagery, Narrative technique, Narrative lucidity.

Introduction

Imagery is the central core of language. In it the sensuous, the emotional, and the intellectual merge, and the vision of life is whole. It seems reasonable to suppose that, a writer's genius will appear most clearly in the figurative images that he creates to convey his meaning. A study of a writer's imagery will reveal his basic intuitions concerning reality.

Imagery used as a Pattern

In the novel *The Ambassador*, imagery is as surely the reader's "friend" as the ficelle, a stylistic device which, James employs for the express purpose of enlightening the reader without departing from a single point of view. Serves to expand the narrative, like the ficelle. Imagery is an "enrolled, a direct aid to lucidity". However, as the "means by which experience in all its richness and emotional complexity is communicated. James' carefully selected imagery surpasses the ficelle in providing explanation, interpretation, and intensification of theme, character, and story. James' employment of image appeals both to the senses and the conscious intelligence. Imagery is the logical and artistic means successful communication with the whole man.

In *the Ambassador* imagery has a variety of uses. It defines, underscores, and functions contrapuntally with the theme. It creates atmosphere and tone: it dramatizes and illumines dialogue: It reflects character by revealing psychological nuances of personality and degree of relationship. Its major function is to extend and intensify the narrative development. The "story" itself is the demonstration of Lambert Strether's evolving consciousness, his "process of vision about the meaning of life. Strether goes to Paris as an ambassador of morality, Americanism, and filial affection to save the only son, Chadwick Newsome, from a life. That is assumed to be both immoral and unremunerative. On his presenting the claims of the practical with firmness and

serenity, Strether is naively confident that.

Chad will immediately see the speciousness of the attractions of an alien civilization and long for the earnest enterprises of a few England manufacturing town. It is not a reprobate Chad whom Strether encounters in Paris, however, but an admirably poised young man, seemingly "already in possession of more values than Woollett at Its best could ever give him. James successfully uses imagery to link reader, fictional character, theme, and "story." In *The Ambassadors*, imagery is so organically related to both structure and theme. It becomes their "mode of apprehension". Through imagery, James not only releases himself from the necessity of burdening his "story" with realms of narrative details in order to establish what Strether "sees" but also provides the reader with a means of identifying and evaluating his own perceptions of meaning.

James expected, his reader, to be vigilant and attentive and to rely on his own imagination as the organizer and intensifier of action. James uses art imagery as a part of his highly specialized technique. That fact does not indicate necessarily that James himself was an artist or even a connoisseur of art. Rather, its significance lies in its function, which is to frame for the reader certain highly concentrated and important details of Strether's "vision thereby enables him to "see" exactly what Strether sees, and to interpret Strether's conscious reactions and subconscious intuitions in order to attain insights into motivation. Through carefully selected and focused "pictures" figuratively hung in the gallery of Strether's mind, James suggests reasons for relationships, establishes psychological motivation, illustrates character, reveals cultural differences between Woollett and Paris. which act as polar influences on Strether, explores Strether's past and reveals what is significant in his present, and creates an expressive means of uniting structure and "story," technique and narrative. As a highly civilized man, urbane, witty, cultured, sophisticated and cosmopolitan as well as an artist, James uses domestic imagery to reflect personality and degree of civilization to probe the moral values and traditions of society and to reveal Strether's changing views of what is important in civilization.

James uses food imagery to reflect Strether's shift from New England moral absolutism to European pragmatism, by dramatizing how "tasting" becomes the empirical test of the good life of Paris. Through domestic imagery, James also illustrates Strether's deepening belief that the contemplative life is equally as valuable to society as the active. True maturity innocence must not avoid a confrontation with reality.

Water imagery constitutes up another pattern, which James uses to illustrate one of the important facets of Strether's developing consciousness. His relationships are more important than systematic and static ethical standards. Mrs. Newsome and her daughter Sarah, Strether gradually "sees," are icebergs and glittering icicles images which reveal their chilly natures, as well as their static and inflexible viewpoints. It an ideal relationship, on the other hand, is a warm, pleasant, free-flowing stream, which floats congenial friends to their destinations and never willfully obstructs progress. Chad's charm is a mysterious, uncharted sea complex relationships are floods and whirlpools new ideas are wells and fountains pouring from pure but

unexplainable sources. surrendering quickly to the beauty of Paris is to be "washed up on a pent." Miss Gostrey's orderly home is a "nest" It reflects her character and suggesting her intentions toward Strether. Mrs. Newsome and Sarah are caged animals who are "quietest at feeding time". Gloriani is the "glossy male tiger" who is to the accompaniment of "little cries and protests," stalks through his jungle-garden the beautifully-plumed creatures who are his prey. Though the narrative development stays firmly on the level of intellectual and moral analysis. Imagery suggests certain subconscious personality traits. which intensify the reader's perceptions. Adding a subterranean level of drama, this imagery becomes in itself a story. The images Boats and ships represent temporary safety from transportation over and management of fast-flowing and constantly changing life.

Strether's "applying the torch" to the "ships" is of his New England background, leaves him stranded with no way to return home, Sarah offers him conditional help surrender instantly to her protection and direction. Sarah, really has no "boat" by showing its effect" on a character. Sarah has been robbed of her individually by her mother. She has no direction and purpose of her own. She does not even have a personal source for her "well." According to Strether, she opens straight down, as it were, into her mother," suggesting that even her ideas and motivations, her dreams and ideals flow from her mother. Such imagery illustrates beautifully Maurice Charney's idea, that "an image has only one legitimate purpose, which is to say a thing more directly and simply and beautifully than, it could be said in words."

James uses flower imagery to describe characters, focusing in particular on the two young women representative of their differing cultures, Jeanne de Vionnet and Mamie Pocock. In addition, flowers symbolize Barrace and Sarah Pocock. Strether, the rose expresses role-reversals Strether and Chad, like sand in an hourglass, change places in their perceptions of value in life. It points out the problem of appearance versus reality Strether comes to Paris expecting to find Chad "patched"" but recognizable. He mistakes reconstruction for regeneration, and at the end of his experience he learns to his dismay that Chad is indeed only "patched."The rose reveals, through its intrinsic attributes, the beauty but brevity of life and the need, therefore, to make the most of it at every opportunity. Besides interpreting character with flower imagery, James also treats it as technique. In the introduction to the novel *The Turn of the Screw*, James advises young writers. "Make the reader think the evil. Make him think it for himself." This releases the writer from the obligation of providing the "weak specifications" of a shady relationship. He says, and offers the reader an opportunity to imagine any horrible detail he desires. Madame de Vionnet deliberately fails to introduce Strether to a predatory Duchess, Strether feels she has somehow committed a breach of etiquette. The character of the Duchess, as well as Madame de Vionnet's reason for not introducing her is subtly revealed through flower imagery. Her morals like her style of life are bright and gay but "loose." Through imagery of money and religion, James examines "the inadequacy of' the famous New England conscience," using it as another figurative facet of the "story" of Strether's growth from innocence to maturity.

Money imagery, illustrates Strether's changing value system, while adding overtones of Woollett, where Time is Money and even personal allegiances are commodities. William M. Gibson, in *Metaphor in the Plot of The Ambassadors* comes closest to a demonstration of how imagery unites structure and story when he shows how James employs "metaphorical devices" to two major ends, both of them connected with plot. "To dramatize and make vivid key Stages in the developing action and to make increasingly explicit the moral significance of Strether's experience to himself. Gibson never suggests that imagery is the reader's guide to a full, understanding of the experience itself, he does attempt to show how images fall naturally into categories, which relate structurally and thematically to the novel as a whole. In fact, some critics point out that, clusters of images do exist.

James's employment of clusters of images give dramatic intensity, reinforce central themes, unite form and narrative and thus create a contrapuntal melody. It also foreshadowing illustrating, and providing psychological reasons for events, serve as the story of the "story." In comparison with his predecessors the imagery in James's works strikes us at once as being something quite different from decoration. His novels and stories would lose their deeper meaning, their life would vanish. The images in his work indeed form such an organic part that the whole would be destroyed. It attempts to tear them from it. "To paint," said the post-Impressionist artist Cezanne, whose method of painting James greatly admired, "is not merely to copy the object. it is to seize a harmony between numerous relationships," In *The Ambassadors James* clearly follows Cezanne's counsel, for the novel is essentially the story of relationships, of attitudes and analyses, of perceptions and assessments, painted subtly through imagery to enable the reader to "seize the harmony." James' goal is portraiture rather than narration. His special method to form characterization is to define relationships. he uses images of water, birds, animals, and flowers to reveal the essence of the interpersonal relationships and to provide the reader with a means of participating in the narrative by -using his own preferences and opinions to fashion interpretation.

Barrace is suggested by flowers, as Miss Barrace, who has been trying unsuccessfully to Interest Waymarsh in Parisian culture reveals to Strether. She and Waymarsh now have a "new" relationship. Suddenly they are such good "friends" that he wishes to send her expensive presents. "I save him hundreds and hundreds. I only take flowers." "Flowers.?" Strether echoed again with a rueful reflexion. "Innocent flowers," she pursued, "as much as he likes. He sends me splendours he is wonderful."(5). This conversation arouses the suspicion that stodgy old Way marsh may not be as dull and disapproving as he appears. Since, separated from his wife ten years earlier, he always appeared to live an exemplary moral life.

Flower imagery gives the reader a reason to wonder. Besides characterizing Strether, defining his changing value system, and illustrating how in New England worship of the "great black ebony god of business" has stunted psychic, moral, and spiritual growth, monetary imagery is the reader's clue to Strether's triumph over New England's matriarchal and materialistic society.

Strether learns the importance of relationship: he grows morally by choosing compassion and honesty over sound business judgment. Revealing the "inadequacies" of intolerance and materialism, imagery of money and religion is the reader's guide to James' criticism of his native region and the figurative "story" of Strether's transcendence of the Calvinistic and commercial values, which have been such a definite part of his background.

Conclusion

This research paper concludes that, the novel "*The Ambassadors*" has get a lot images. In this study, domestic imagery, art imagery, figuration imagery, Biblical Imagery, and character Imagery are examined. This paper illustrates James' stylistic device called "*Ficelle*". In this research James' employment of narrative technique and its narrative lucidity are shown as a Pattern used in this novel.

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