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at the Turn of the XIX and XX Centuries
H. James, J. Conrad, D. H. Lawrence

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INTRODUCTION

The discussion of the sub-genre novella involves a whole tangle of theories, approaches, and frequent confusions as to the texts which deserve this name. It was only recently, with the works of Mary Doyle Springer and Judith Leibowitz that the Italian term *novella* has been introduced into English critical vocabulary.

In order to relate the actual state of the novella theory and criticism, it is indispensable to discuss the various tracks it follows.

The simplest and the most straightforward is the discussion of the Renaissance novella of Italy, France, Spain and England. Confusion arises, however, when the historical development of the form is described — the original form evolved gradually into the *romance, novel*; shrank again into the *short story* and the *short novel* — the latter frequently termed the *novella*. In this case, apart from the anatomy of the Boccaccian *novella*, it is necessary to give a very factual account of the whole evolution and to point out certain generic similarities — if possible — at the various stages of the transformation. Genre theory is not easy, and critics who choose this approach have to face twofold difficulties — extensive chronology and multinational literatures. Furthermore, findings along these lines of research do not always sound convincing. It starts where it should — at the point where the *novella* originated, but unless a good theory (Formalism for example) of the generic evolution is offered, it will never explain the affinity between the Boccaccian story and the *modern novella* (if there really exists one).

Returning to the evolution, we come to another trend in the theory — the outraging battle over terminology always hoped to be solved for good. This refers particularly to English which is the handicapped language where the distinction between the novel and its shorter counterpart was lost at some stage. When criticism required greater precision, the gap was filled with the outlandish *novella, Novelle, nouvelle*, or the clumsy but native *short novel, long short story* and even the somewhat flippant *novelette*. This is not, however, a mere battle of words, as it requires a solid knowledge of all the related genres before any of them is dismissed or chosen.

A chapter of their own make the German Novellentheorien. They are based almost exclusively on German literary criticism and practice, both in this case quite inseparable since *Novellen* were written to illustrate the theory, and the theory changed whenever nonconforming *Novellen* were written.

The German theory is traditionally said to have begun with Goethe's words: "... was ist eine Novelle anders als eine sich ereignete unerhörte Begebenheit" (what is a Novelle but an unprecedented happening that has actually occurred) spoken at the beginning of the 19th century. The vogue continued all throughout the century and remarkable *Novellen* are still being written, though they have gone a long way from the stories included in the *Unterhaltungen deutscher Ausgewanderten*. The German *Novelle* is an ethnic variety, but the theories were so strongly voiced and the *Novellen* so popular that they managed to cause enough havoc all over Europe.

Finally, there is this type of criticism that deals with the multifarious texts which are now anthologized as the *modern novellas* or *short novels*. What should be understood as "modern" in this context are the works written after the rise of the conscious short story theory, well after the novel had been established. It is a surprisingly neglected area in criticism. Of course, there does exist a stock repertoir of titles acknowledged by the general consent of the critics (and more often than not by that of the editors and publishers) to be *novellas*, but now and again a difference of opinions arises. Critics who choose to study the novella have a great freedom of approach. There are certain attempts at classification of the novellas based on the technique, structure and theme. The texts of the novellas are used in analyses that illustrate some more general methodologies. Novella-length works are becoming more and more popular with the writers and the publishers. Judging by the Victorian three-volume standards, most of the modern novels would appear very short indeed. Very little has in fact been written about this sub-genre which quite justifiably is gaining more and more autonomy. One is perhaps to conclude that whatever is being written today about the modern novel applies also to the *novella*.

The intermediate position of the novella (between the *novel* and the *short story*) provokes more and more frequently nowadays various genre considerations, the relations between the various prose narratives: **romance — novella — novel — short story**, as well as the lyrical and dramatic qualities of the long tales.

Research on the *novella* can lead the critic very easily astray, and it is most helpful to decide at the beginning at which end one should start — tracing the whole history or taking the modern texts. Insufficient knowledge may cause hasty conclusions — either an automatic comparison of the modern novella with obsolete forms or treating it as a mere expansion of the short story or a condensed version of the full-length novel.

In order to avoid at least some of the traps and mistakes, and to make clear the principles of the further analysis of individual texts, it is most useful to discuss all those points in a greater detail because all of them contribute, to a greater or lesser degree, to the total notion of the *novella* as we think of it

today. Since the analytical part of the work will deal exclusively with the English texts, written by a very restricted group of authors, within a very limited span of time, this theoretical introduction will also concentrate on the history of short fiction in England, hopefully explaining how the *novella* came into being in that country.

I. A BRIEF OUTLINE OF LITERARY HISTORY OF THE *NOVELLA* IN ENGLAND AND THE ACCOMPANYING TERMINOLOGY

1353, the date related to Boccaccio's *Decameron*, marks a crucial point in the development of short fiction. The Boccaccian *novella* exceeded in its popularity and influence all expectations. Critics may disagree on various points, but, Steinhauer suggests, the only exception is their fixation for Boccaccio who "has had the same crippling effect on the novella as Homer had on the epic and Aristotle on drama" (1970:158). The Renaissance *novella* deserves a separate treatment for it marks a point of divergence from the earlier medieval short narratives and gives rise to new forms which were to follow.

The terms *novella* and *novellino* had been used even before 1353. The oldest of preserved collections of brief narratives entitled *Novellino* dates back to the 13th century (Canby 1909:104), and *novella*, never a precise term in English, was used by the Italians and the Germans to denote short, undidactic narratives popular in the Middle Ages. In England, this particular "novella" type stories in prose appear in *Gesta Romanorum* (Canby 1913:4). Among the undidactic medieval narratives were *contes devots* — devotional and pious; the realistic *fabliau* and the *beast fabliau* — both humorous and serving satire much as the *conte devot* served devotion; *lai* of a fairy-tale nature. *Apologue* and *fable*, on the other hand, were laid with didacticism. Stories invented for the purpose of preaching were *exempla*. Canby makes the reservation about the *exemplum*, which, according to him, should be treated rather as a mode and not a variety of its own, since any type of the medieval "short story" could be ultimately used as an *exemplum* (Canby 1913:4–10). He sees in all those forms the very "training school" for the effective short story. To remind, modern short story frequently bears this exemplary character.

Boccaccian stories justify the assumption that this is where the European *novella* began. In its subject it was much broader than the *fabliau* — it treated of life in all its aspects — humorous, sordid or tragic. The *novella* did not avoid commenting on human nature, but at the same time it remained free from much analysis. In its form it favoured the impression of actual experience. Simple, harmoniously developed, it brought out all the good points of the plot (Canby 1909:105). Thinking in contemporary terms, the *novella* was realistic in the sense we think today of the novel, as opposed to the tale of chivalry of romance. *Novella* dealt with the "novel" and "newsworthy" (hence its very

name), in contrast to the earlier edifying themes of high literature (myth, legend, saga) (Steinhauer 1970:159). As to its length, the Boccaccian *novella* is shorter than the fabliau or the romance. In its structure and the general idea of conviviality *Decameron* is reminiscent of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Cervantes's *Novelas Ejemplares* are longer, more elaborate and digressive than the stories in the *Decameron*.

A short account of the current terminology would be most helpful here. The Italians had their *novella*, the Spanish *novela* (the shorter Cervantesque stories), the French — *nouvelle*. It is very interesting to see where the term *novel* came from in England and how it could carry the newer generic concept. An account is given by Gerald Gillespie in an article "Novella, Nouvelle, Novelle, Short Novel? — A Review of Terms" (*Neophilologus*, vol. 51, 1967:117–127, 225–230). There did exist the term *romance* covering the "voluminous narrations about the trails and travails of aristocratic personages, about noble ventures, about courtly civilization, whether idealized, dressed in fictive robes, or set in past history, legend or exotic, remote lands" (1967:17). "Novel" (stressed novèl), up to the sixteenth century, meant in English, parallel to Italian and French, either something-new (a noun), or a piece of news (in singular), or news or tidings (in plural). When the need arose, again by analogy to other languages, the third application emerged, between the 16th and the 18th century — literary, used chiefly in plural, for tales or short stories contained in such works as *Decameron* or *Heptameron*. Gillespie thus describes the new literary concept of the *novel*:

> It designated stories of various length ranging from anecdotes to tales; and thus it conveyed, especially in the singular, the related sense of a fictitious prose narrative or tale of good length with characters and actions representative of the real life of past or present times. (1967:18)

The contrast between the *romance* and the *novel* for the English speaking was obvious both in form and content. The term *romance* in English remained where it originally had belonged to.

The first successful imitations of *Decameron* outside Italy were written in France — *Les Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles* or the *Heptameron* of Marguerite of Valois. It is most instructive and vital for any genre considerations to trace the fate of the Italian *novella* on the English ground during the Renaissance and the Elizabethan Era. Numerous direct translations or imitations were soon produced, but the English were not satisfied with the restrictions set to the Italian originals. In England, as Canby points out (*The Short Story in English*, 1909), the *novella* had to bear the whole burden of the Renaissance erudition, preaching, rhetoric, classical references (1909:107). The model of rhetoric and oratory was Castiglione's *The Courtier* and the *novellas* were written alike. Painter's *The Palace of Pleasure* written in 1566 is an outstanding assortment of foreign stories translated into readable English. Since it was still before the term *novel* acquired its common usage, Painter referred to the stories as *newes* or *nouvelles* (Canby 1909:120). Any student of the Elizabethan drama realizes that due to their dramatic value and remarkable plotting the stories were soon to be used by the dramatists. Canby compares the new type of the story to a sponge: "the sponge itself was the Italian novella. The fluids that it soaked in and swelled with are the mingled currents of the revival of learning, the remodelling of manners and the redignifying of language" (1909:115), plus certain streams of native English habits. The almost abnormal expansion of the *novella* is ascribed to the Euphuists — Lyly and Pettie in particular. John Lyly's *Euphues. The Anatomy of Wit.* (1578/79) — at its core nothing but a story of the Italian *novella* type — was overadorned with discourse and oration. Canby says that at this junction the following alternative became possible — to persist in what Lyly had begun, to kill the plot in favour of the argument ending up with the *essay*; or allowing for a more extensive plot which could absorb all the peripheral rhetoric and discourse returning to the *romance*. Canby calls it a *new romance* — in prose, preserving the heroic medieval qualities but improved by the Renaissance tradition (1909:139). The standards for the *new romantico-rhetorical romance* of the 17th century polite fiction were set by Greene (*Alcida, Menaphon, Philomela*). The departure from the Italian *novella* is obvious — the setting of the faraway regions, rhetorical debate.

Paradoxically enough, 1620 is the year when *Decameron* was for the first time translated entire into English, the period when the expansive popularity of the novella-scope narratives was already at its close. It was not until the 18th and the 19th century that literature was to be dominated by the *novel* as we understand it today, which, apparently, in English appropriated its name from the shorter form. In fact the domesticated *novel*, of a greater naturalness than the productions of the Euphuistic episode, comes much closer, at least in this respect, to the original Italian novella.

The transitional periods are always awkward to tackle. Such is the case of the 17th century characterized by an immense popularity of novels of the *Oroonoko* type. The stories of about a hundred pages link the Italian *novella* and the genuine *novel* which was to appear some time later and perhaps for the first time there emerged a story in scope at least compatible with what we call the *modern novella*. In *A Study of the Short Story* (1913) Canby describes it as follows:

> They preserve its (the *novella's*) unified plot — sometimes specific plots; its use of historic background; and its assertation of reality. They are more elaborate in incident; indeed they are no more short stories in any strict interpretation of the term. *Oroonoko*, for example, is neither a novel in its scope, nor a short story in its subject. It is such a tale as Bandello or Boccaccio would have told with the brevity and compression of the short story, such a tale as the French, perhaps, would call a nouvelle. (1913:22)

It would be very convenient to recognize this historical form as the "17th century novel" and not to confuse it with the "true" novel of Richardson and Fielding. This "brief novel" tradition continued well into the mid-18th century when it was gradually superseded by the "long novel" and the "short story" which evolved mainly from the periodical essay. From the 18th century onwards, it seems to be clear what the terms *romance, novel* and *story* denote in English. Fielding, writing *Joseph Andrews*, was conscious of the difference between his work and the romance, the latter in English (not necessarily in other languages) remained with the older type of content.

The "brief novel", as mentioned earlier, was written in the 18th century by women novelists. The tradition feebly survived in the Gothic novels of the Romantics, it is echoed in the Victorian tales of Dickens, Mrs Gaskell, George Eliot, Meredith, Thackeray or Hardy. They all appeared brief in comparison with the three-volume requirements of the time (Harris, "English Short Fiction in the Nineteenth Century". *SSF*. 6. 1-93). Canby's closing comment on this particular subject is very significant:

> These narratives are on the borderline. They are not often short stories, although they have that unity of action which, so far in fiction, only the short narratives had attained. They are never novels in our sense of the word. Novelette better fits them. But it is clear, whether one considers the unified intrigue plot, the basis of history or pseudohistory, or the attempted truth to the contemporary life, that they stem directly from the English "history", or French "histoire", of the previous age, which once had been the quasi-historical Italian novella. They represent this novella as it had been continued, and altered, in France and in Spain, the years of Euphuism and romance in England. ... Thus we are justified in passing into the borderland of our subject, the field of the long-short and the short-long story, to discuss this narrative, not as a predecessor of the novel, but rather as a development of the short story of renaissance. (1909:162)

Closing this part of the survey, a final glimpse at the available terminology should conclude the presentation. Most confusion arises from the mobility of the terms *romance* and *novel* in various languages. *Romance*, in French, Italian and German always denoted the relatively longer narrative forms consistently surviving the transition from chivalric to modern. In Spain and England, the shift of the subject-matter of romance-length narratives caused its change of name into *novel* — the long narrative appropriated the name of the narrative of intermediate length leaving it either without an adequate label or causing awkward repetition. This is the terminology available to the Romantics at the beginning of the 19th century (Gillespie 1967:122):

ENGLISH	(hi)story	tale	—	novel
SPANISH	historia	cuento	novela (archaic)	novela
ITALIAN	storia	racconto	novella	romanzo
FRENCH	histoire	conte	nouvelle	roman
GERMAN	Geschichte	Erzählung	Novelle	Roman

Such a situation justifies the numerous preferences of the modern critics. Theoreticians of the Italian and German historical varieties use the original

labels the *novella* and *Novelle* respectively. The argument begins when the more recent works of intermediate length are being considered. Clements and Gibaldi, the authors of the book *Anatomy of the Novella* devoted to the study of the Renaissance story suggest according to their own interest:

> A possible way out of the critical dilemma — and one that combines the historical with the normative approach — is to adopt (at least in criticism in English) the following set of terms: "novela" for the Renaissance form; "Novelle" for the Romantic and post-Romantic tradition of German short fiction, and "novelette" or "short novel" for modern works of intermediate length (retaining "novel", of course, for the full-length work of fiction). Such a scheme seems both conceptually and etymologically satisfying, for it implies a certain kinship yet retains the basic literary distinctions that exist between these related yet diverse forms of fiction. (1977:27)

Bayard Quincey Morgan also uses the term "novelette" referring to prose narratives intermediate in their length between the *shortstory* (his spelling) and the *novel*, but his use covers also the German *Novelle*, since length is the main distinctive feature (1946:34-39).

Harry Steinhauer in an article "Towards a Definition of the Novella" (1970:154-174) uses the "short novel" interchangeably with the "novella" and he makes no relevant distinctions between the two. He remarks an interesting tendency in the German literary criticism — a new term "Kurzroman" has been recently coined to distinguish between their own *Novellen* and the long tales written today (1970:169). Howard Nemerov analyses "Composition and Fate in the Short Novel" (1963:375-391).

However, there is a markedly growing popularity of the currently used Italian *novella*. No clear justification of the choice is given and it is assumed to be a matter of convention — as long as one states what is being meant in each particular case by the *novella* there should be no confusion. *Novella* is finally selected by Gerald Gillespie, by Marvin Felheim who discusses the "Recent Anthologies of the Novella" (1969:21-27). Mary Doyle Springer classifies the forms of the *novella* in the book *Forms of the Modern Novella*. Judith Leibowitz, in the book *Narrative Purpose in the Novella* concentrates on its (*novella's*) effect and techniques, showing at the same time an open dislike for the term "short novel" which is "an unfortunate confusion because the short novel is the short version of the novel genre of fiction, whereas the novella is a different literary form, coinciding occasionally only in length with the short novel" (1974:9). In a collection of critical essays on the long fiction Charles E. May writes about the *novella* (1983:3213-3339), and finally Robert Scholes devotes chapter III in *Elements of Fiction. An Anthology* to "The Modern Novella" where he writes:

> The novella is a difficult literary form. Unlike the short story, it is not limited by concentration on a crucial moment in people's lives or the achievement of a single effect. It attempts, in fact, to do what the full scale novel does, to give us the pattern and movement of

a whole life — but without using the scope of the full scale novel to document and illustrate that life. To be rich and full and satisfying as a novel, but as tightly constructed and efficient as a short story — that is the novella's goal. (1981:791)

II. THE RENAISSANCE *NOVELLA* AND THE GERMAN NOVELLENTHEORIEN

To recapitulate, the *novella* currently, but not too precisely, designates three separate and distinct types of fiction:

1. The Renaissance tales.

2. *Novella* used as a synonym for the German *Novelle* of the late 18th and 19th centuries which was theorized about and written by such writers as Goethe, E.T.A. Hoffman, Storm, Keller.

3. To designate modern works of fiction of intermediate length.

The discussion of the Renaissance novella concentrates on the works of the critics Clements and Gibaldi. Their book *The Anatomy of the Novella* was preceded by a short article by Clements in 1972, under the same title, which in a very concise way announced the topics that were developed later in 1977. The four structural elements of the Renaissance *novella* (texts analysed are the European tale collections from Boccaccio, Chaucer to Cervantes) are:

1) a cornice or framework, often containing a narrative itself,

2) an overall unity prescribed by a predictable or a set number of days or nights of narration,

3) limited word-length, excluding such later characteristics of the short story as psychological development or lengthy descriptions — concentrating on plot and situation,

4) separable thematic components, often announced by one of the story-tellers in advance (Clements 1972:3).

The frame, or the cornice of the collection emphasized the oral tradition of the stories, produced a kind of distance and detachment between the story-teller and the narrative itself and, very important at the times, it took off of the author any blame for any indecencies or licentiousness within the tales. The situation of a plague, pilgrimage etc. favouring story-telling as a way of instruction or time killing provided a kind of a "higher" justification for concocting tales. Most of those qualities we shall see revived in the German *Novelle*. Orality and brevity were gradually lost: "as one moves geographically and chronologically from Italy from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, one notes the steady gravitation of the novella, as it gradually lost its connection with the oral tradition, toward the expansion of the form" (Clements, Gibaldi 1977:25).

The unity of time within the collection was dictated by the number of days spent on story-telling. The period was frequently very rationally limited, for example the time span of a pilgrimage, or quarantine, or subsistance of a flood.

The stories were also divided according to the theme. Boccaccio devoted each day to a single topic chosen by the queen or king of the day.

The chief interest in the *novellas* was in the narrative sequence, the story line or plot. "Few of these stories, if any, were intended to create a mood, and a very few of them go beyond the most elementary sort of characterization" (1977:62). The brevity of the *novella* demanded "flat" and "static" characters. The common practice was to tell about the characters first, i.e. inform the audience or the reader about the personage's character in the prologue and then to exemplify that personality in action (a common practice in Chaucer). There is not so much showing the character in development as illustrating its sudden change eg. conversion to Christianity as a frequent metamorphosis in *Gesta Romanorum*.

Most of *The Anatomy of the Novella* is devoted to a detailed analysis of themes in the Renaissance tales. One of the theme divisions may be based on the mimetic mode of characters — tragic, comic, ironic (the latter mainly when the characters were women). Another list might enumerate concrete subjects:

— events in the lives of personages from modern and contemporary history,

— images of society — social classes, nations, races, wars, monarchy, court life, class structure, feudalism, church, trades, professions, women, marriage etc.

Diversified as Clements and Gibaldi's treatment of subject-matter might be, it always comes to the same single point of social criticism. The *novella* became a genre typical of the middle class, it reached a very wide reading public and it was a very persuasive tool for the forthcoming wave of Reform. The brevity of the form excluded the presentation and discussion of profound and philosophical ideas. Instead, "its economy of form rendered the genre perfectly suited for brief glimpse of and a pungent comments on contemporary social matters" (1977:92). Naturally, the *novella* was a very powerful vehicle for satire and this feature will remain present until today.

In a work "The Real and the Ideal in the Novella of Italy, France and England. Four Centuries of Change in the Boccaccian Tale" (*University of North Carolina Studies in Comparative Literature*. 44, 1968) by Yvonne Rodax the narratives are analysed from a different angle. Rodax formulates certain statements which are most true of the tradition as it continued also after the seventeenth century:

> All of the world's tales convey to the reader a vivid sense of reality, but the sources of this vigour range between the two extremes. The realist who sees the world as a physical entity lying outside of himself, experienced by the senses and mapped by the intellect, recreates it in words as exactly as he can. The idealist looking within, mirrors the truth which he discovers within the brightly colored realm of his own psyche. The unification of these disparate views constitutes the task of the writer and the challenge of human existence. (1968:1)

Fiction favours realism; poetry — the ideal; and it seems, argues Rodax that to restore the quality of wholeness in the *novella*, the two should be fused together. According to Rodax the four centuries of the Renaissance *novella* have prepared the ground to reunite those dual aspects (1968:131). But this will already be a new genre coming closer to what we think of today as the *novella* and the *short story* both exploring the natural world only to reveal "the sinister jungles and abysses corresponding to depths in human psyche" (1968:132).

The German *Novelle* had its hayday in the 19th century, at the time when in America and England the theory of the short story was already developing. It was only at the end of the century that the Germans started to consider the shorter form seriously, and in the 20th century the German *Novelle* declined to yield the field to the increasingly popular short story. As Klaus Doderer said: "The short story had its chance in the 20th century just as the Novelle had in the 19th" (Bennett, Waidson 1965:246). This explains, partly at least, why the *Novelle* theory never had the chance to develop fully in England and the visible German impact in English criticism.

It would be a gross oversimplification to state that some absolute definition of the German variety is possible. The *Novellen* do not form any homogeneous material and they vary in form and treatment of content according to more general fashions, current philosophical attitudes.

1794 is a significant landmark — Goethe wrote the *Unterhaltungen deutscher Ausgewanderten*, a framework series of six stories modelled on Boccaccio and Cervantes, which Goethe called "moralische Erzählung" or simply "Geschichte". Not all of the stories met the requirements which Goethe set later for the *Novelle* as a genre (LoCicero 1970:31). The traditional definition of the *Novelle* as an unprecedented happening that has actually occurred comes from 1827 when Goethe had completed a story later entitled "Novelle". Bennett (1965) calls Goethe's stories "classical" — closest to Boccaccio and yet directed to the further development of the genre. In the "Novelle" the centre of interest has been shifted from the external events to the internal significance of those events starting the irreversible process of *Verinnerlichung*.

Kleist's metaphysical *Novellen* (1810) present the transition between the classical and the romantic. The Romantic Novellendichtung was developed by Ludwig Tieck to whom the famous Wendepunkt theory is ascribed, though as early as 1801–1804 Schlegel admitted the existence of turning points (plural) in the *Novellen*. There is a much greater play of imagination, the narrated events are deeply significant, they focus on man's relation to the inexplicable forces of nature. There is a stronger emphasis on description, and as with many genres in Romanticism, the form becomes less definite. Poetic qualities are visible in the increased evocation of lyrical mood or Stimmung (Bennett, Waidson 1965:50–52). All those transformations heigh-

tened the subjective character of the *Novelle*. Greater freedom of form blurred the distinctions between the genres (hence the frequent fairy-tale character of the romantic Novellen).

The latter half of the 19th century in German literature is dominated by the *Novelle* with no competition from drama or poetry. It is the time of Poetischer Realismus, in the 1880's superseded by Naturalism. The romantic extravaganza is abandoned but the evocation of Stimmung and the working of imagination are retained. Gottfried Keller is the main representative of the *Novelle* of the period.

In 1871 Paul Heyse revived the *Novelle* theory adding his own contribution of the Falkentheorie. His theory owes its name to the 9th story of the 5th day in *Decameron*, where as the short summary states:

Federigo degli Alberighi loves and is not loved in return: he wastes his substance by lavishness until nought is left but a single falcon, his lady (Monna Giovanna) being come to see him at his house, he gives her to eat: she knowing his case, changes her mind, takes him to husband and makes him rich. (Boccaccio, nd.; 55)

Heyse uses the falcon, central in this story, to illustrate the call for simplicity and individuality in the *Novelle*. The bird, through its death, brings happiness to Federigo and Giovanna. "It is the distinguishing feature of an otherwise not very original or interesting story, the fate of the hapless bird being the unique twist, "das Spezifische" (LoCicero 1970:78).

Theodor Storm claimed the affinity between the *Novelle* and drama, i.e. the tendency of substituting the *Novelle* for tragedy (the tragic situation arising from the force of circumstances).

The tragic *Novellen* prepared the ground for the psychological *Novelle* at the end of the century in which the conflict is further internalized and the outlines of the form even more strained.

Is there a tentative definition of the German *Novelle* possible? There are two critical approaches possible:

1) **historical** (Martin Swales, *The German Novelle*, 1977), or **real** (Hartwig R. Eckert "Towards a Definition of the Novelle" *New German Studies*. 1. 1973:163–172) definition,

2) the **nominal** approach.

In fact, the two are interdependent, in isolation they display certain shortcomings. The **norm**, the **ideal** type, might easily become "too value laden" as Swales expresses it, though obviously it solves the terminological problem. In the **historical** or **real** definition, where a group of heterogeneous works, varying from one historical context to another, is analysed, the definition of the *novella* as such might be altogether impossible. And yet, critics following the latter path do refer to some traditional concept of the *novella* (*Novelle*), just as the writers themselves did. Swales combines the two, stating that there should be no harm done if there existed some genre concept meeting certain artistic expectations, but it "has validity insofar as it is allowed to function as

a reservoir of potentiality, as a structuring principle that generates specific phenomena and that by that act of generation the genre concept is then modified for its subsequent practitioners" (1977:15). In this light it is perhaps worthwhile to summarize certain features of the German *Novelle* which reappear more consistently than the others:

1) It is an epic, in prose.

2) The *Novelle* deals with a single event or conflict which is either internal or external. This event might become subservient to an idea that it is supposed to illustrate. The treatment of the conflict in the narrative brings it close to drama.

3) The presentation of happenings "as if" they were in keeping with reality — it is up to the author what he believes to be real.

4) Observance of form — brevity leading to concentration and a very intensive treatment of subject resulting in the poetic or lyrical quality.

5) Gradually increasing subjectivity of the tales (Verinnerlichung).

6) Points 4 and 5 contribute to the symbolic readings of the *Novellen*.

7) Frequent, but not altogether indispensable, framework structure, turning-point, central "falcon" motif.

8) Incorporation of other genres (fairy-tale, ghost story, etc.) resulting in the numerous varieties of the *Novelle*.

III. SOME MODERN APPROACHES TO THE THEORY OF THE *NOVELLA*

1. DEFINING THE LENGTH OF THE *NOVELLA*

Critics involved in the study of the *modern novella* inevitably plunge into the area between the *short story* and the *novel*. As it is, the most obvious criterion for differentiating between the various forms of prose fiction is their **length. Length** on its own, however, determines very little, but it conditions two very important aspects of the genre:

1) The technique, the treatment of material which depends on the space that the author commands — the longer novels can do in a greater detail what the shorter forms must do through abstraction or suggestion or fragmentarily. In more words more can be said.

2) The formal purpose of the work (whether it is to be a satire, an apologue, an action etc.) — different formal functions are best achieved at certain lengths — "the author restrained by some length will tend to restrict himself to certain kinds of formal purposes which can be most effectively realized by that length" (Springer 1975:10).

Length and the organization of the text result in what is called the "aesthetic size" and the idea is extended over all works of art (Jessup, 1951:31–38). The notion combines the correlation between the literal size of the work of art ("long" novel, "short" story) and its comparative worth (which is the critic's very task to evaluate). In other words, "aesthetic size" means

the connection between the quantitative and qualitative degree in the work of art (1951:31). A further distinction is between the two modes of "aesthetic size" — "extensive aesthetic size" and "intensive aesthetic size". The quality of the work of art can roughly be understood as the structural development and exploitation of the material which are commensurate with its size: "It is possible to do more with narrative art in a novel than in a short story; it is possible to elaborate a theme in a symphony in a detail which cannot be done in a sonatina. In general, increased opportunities for development of structure is an objective consequence of size" (Jessup 1951:33). The "disadvantage" of size is overcome by greater internal development in the intensive aesthetic mode. Referring all those ideas to the *novella* it might be said that by the **intensive treatment of the narrative art** (hence all the technical considerations) the reader's aesthetic experience of the text needn't be any poorer than when reading a novel.

2. ACHIEVING THE AESTHETIC EFFECT THROUGH TECHNIQUE

There are no techniques exclusive of particular genres, the same techniques are used by the novelists, the authors of short stories or the novella writers. Instead, Robert Scholes argues in the article "Towards a Poetics of Fiction. An Approach Through Genre" (1969:101–111) that the difference lies in the purpose for which certain techniques have been used. In other words, there do exist certain techniques which statistically occur more frequently in the *novellas* than elsewhere (hence they are repeated in all the normative definitions) but this is not an imposition on the author. Their recurrence is conditioned by the **novellas' common aesthetic goal**, or **narrative purpose** that is best achieved through those very techniques.

Technical considerations are the primary subject of Judith Leibowitz's book *Narrative Purpose in the Novella* (1974). She analyses the **novella's narrative purpose** and then the techniques which serve it best are isolated. The **aesthetic goal** is defined as "the double effect of intensity and expansion" (1974:16) which, translated into simple idiom, means expansive and broad significance of the text achieved through a very intensive treatment of the subject. How does one achieve though broad implications of a circumscribed narrative? Two major techniques, apart from minor devices such as manipulation with chronology etc., are isolated — the **theme-complex** and the **repetitive structure** — both operating to compress the material while at the same time expand its implications.

Theme-complex means the concentration on a closely associated cluster of themes, on the same material. All the motifs refer ultimately to the same subject but since the implications of each motif are suggested only and not explicitly developed, the scope of the narrative expands. "This outward expansion from a limited focus is the effect of a typical plot construction of the novella" (1974:16).

Repetitive structure enables the author to rework or redevelop themes and situations he has already developed. Repetition occurs in multiple narrative levels, in recurrent images and symbols, in parallel moral attitudes (1974:39). The function of repetition is intensification and not progression. Contrariwise, the chief narrative purpose of the novel would be the progress of action — the motifs are organized in a continuous plot. In the short story a specific point is made without expanding its implications. This is a matter of debate, however, as Arlen J. Hansen remarks: "These techniques and this end may belong to the novella, but surely not exclusively. One can find the same qualities and effect in almost in any artistic short story or, for that matter, in a highly focused novel like *Mrs Dalloway*" (1976:95).

3. AN ATTEMPT AT CLASSIFICATION OF THE FORMS OF THE MODERN *NOVELLA*

The formal functions which the novella-length narratives can serve best, their classification and technical description are analysed in Mary Doyle Springer's book *Forms of the Modern Novella* (1975). Springer refers to Sheldon Sack's theory of the basic informing principles of narrative: *apologue, action* and *satire*. The distinction of formal functions or of general principles common to the unique literary creations, argues Sacks in "Golden Birds and Dying Generations" (1969:274-291) provides a "frame of reference", hypothetical concepts which can be employed in comparative investigation. As an *apologue* he describes the narrative where:

… characters are represented in complex relationships in a narrative manner and choice of style designed to alter our attitudes toward or opinions of the world we live in. The attitudes themselves are formulable critically as statements about the external world, though the aesthetic response required fully to appreciate the apologue need not go beyond an altered "feeling" — a sentiment — about the external world. To put it less accurately but far more simply: in an apologue all elements of the work are synthesized as a fictional example that causes us to feel, to experience as true, some formulable statement or statements about the universe. (1969:276–277)

Springer distinguishes two forms of the *novella* based on the apologue principle — the *apologue* and the *example apologue* and provides a compendium of technical devices which are used to shape the narrative in those cases.

The *apologue* contains a certain message which is concealed behind the characters and the plot, sparing the reader any outward preaching, though the authorial commentary is more likely to be heard here than in the other forms. Characteristic of the apologue is the maintenance of a certain distance from the character by not naming him or by using some generic epithet (e.g. "our islander" in D.H. Lawrence's *The Man Who Loved Islands*), by making him less human or even animal-like (Jill, Henry in Lawrence's *The Fox*); reducing the characters to one or two dimensions — "species characters". The *apologue's* universality is achieved through a very special treatment of time — the general statement is in fact timeless, or better, "time-free". The form asserts its

universality is achieved through a very special treatment of time — the general statement is in fact timeless, or better, "time-free". The form asserts its universality also by exploiting myth and ritual (Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*). There is a relative plotlessness — the plot being substituted by a chronological sequence of events. Repetition of words and images additionally emphasizes the message (Springer 1975:39–51).

The *example apologue* reflects the tendency towards increased realism in literature, but its purpose is the same as previous — to express a general statement by depicting realistically a selected example. Many of the technical devices of the "pure" apologue will occur here as well. An example telling a unique story should be understood: "This is always like this …" and an example of how exactly it always is follows (1975:55–56) as in Stephen Crane's *Maggie, a Girl of the Streets*.

Actions — the next general informing principle — concentrate on the relations between the characters that are tightly plotted in order to be resolved into either a tragic, serious or comic effect. The difference between the *apologue* and *action* is that the implicit or formulated message of the former refers to the world external to the literary creation while *actions* are:

… works whose shared informing principle was the internal "power", whose shared artistic end was the creation of the unique experience for the sake of the psychological effects implicit in the created literary object …. In the represented action, the most intellectual belief, the most extended social criticism, the most penetrating ethical comment, become integral parts of a whole work only as they move us to the appropriate response to the created characters which finally, makes possible the appropriate experience. (Sacks 1969:277)

Actions resolved tragically are distinguished as the *degenerative tragedy form of the novella* since the tragic effect in the *novella* is more likely to be pathetic, similar to that produced by the "degeneration plot" (Norman Friedman). In the degenerative action "the protagonist encounters a change, sometimes drastic, sometimes not — it could be a new situation, a loss, a temptation or test of his own strength of character — and succumbs unhappily to some kind of an unhappy ending" (Springer 1975:102). Henry James's famous *Daisy Miller* is an example.

In the tragic actions the character dominates over the plot. A greater balance is kept between the two in *serious actions*. In the case of the *novella* those actions centre on a single character and they are the most typical novella form. Within the whole scope of fiction three types of serious plots are available:

1) Gradual revelation to the reader, by means of the represented events, of the protagonist's character. (This type of plot, Springer claims to have invented herself.)

2) Plot of learning — gradual change towards increased knowledge for the character himself.

3) The improvement plot — the change in the character's knowledge is predictive of improvement in his future behaviour (1975:129-132).

Novella length allows best for the serious plots of character revelation and the serious plots of learning (e.g. Lawrence's *The Virgin and the Gipsy*). The improvement plot is preferable for the novel since in the *novella*, maturity and improvement are not conclusively demonstrated but merely suggested as in Conrad's *The Secret Sharer*.

Satire appears in its usual meaning whereby all parts of the fiction cohere in the purpose of ridiculing objects and phenomena in the world outside the story. Though not limited to any genre or length it has some formal features which are particularly appreciated in the *novella* — the loose, episodic plot held together by a single character e.g. the *satiric novellas* of Kurt Vonnegut: *Slaughterhouse Five*, *Cat's Cradle*; and a tighter plot, much closer to that of the *actions*, as in Henry James's *The Death of the Lion*.

4. THE *NOVELLA* AS METAPHOR AND METAFICTION — EVOLUTION, COMPOSITION, GENERIC CONVENTIONS

There is a short article by Howard Nemerov "Composition and fate in the Short Novel" (1963:375-391) which anticipates some of the recent approaches to the *novella*. Nemerov's observations are repeated to some extent by Springer in reference to the *apologue* form and Leibowitz when she describes the "effect of expansion through intensity".

> The most striking element shared by almost all the great pieces in this genre is their outright concentration upon traditional problems of philosophy, the boldness of their venture into generality, the evidence they give of direct and moral concern. (Nemerov 1963:381)

This feature of the *novella* (*short novel*) results in the composition of the works where there is the combination of action and the awareness that the *novella* is a parable. The problem becomes central in the composition which is dramatized as the conflicts of appearance and reality, freedom and necessity, madness and sanity — broadly speaking the problem of identity (1963:382). Examples of such conflicts are to be found in *The Secret Sharer*, *Heart of Darkness*, *Death in Venice*. Two very important features of the genre follow from it:

1) The author's greater involvement in what he is doing, in his own art and the act of creation itself becomes the theme. So to speak, the artist, in the *novella*, is more susceptible to lay bare the story's own fictionality (1963:385).

2) The balance between the external and the internal relevance of the story. External relevance means the temporal succession of events, while the internal relevance is expressed through association, metaphor, symbol, and always comes from the central conception (1963:388).

Point 1 refers to the metafictional qualities of the *novella*, and point 2 to its metaphoric and symbolic character. The external-internal balance necessitates a very cautious treatment of detail in the *short novel*. Details have a twofold function in this genre — they should be selected by probable observation (related to the events), and be relevant for the inner problem which the story illustrates. The choice of detail (probably it can be extended into the selection of narrative material) is very fateful and multiply-determined. This inner determination produces in the *short novels* "not single details only but chains and clusters of iterative imagery also, such as we usually identify with the poetry of Shakespeare; and sometimes, as in *Un Coeur Simple*, it is the elegant patterning and constatation of such groups of images which alone, implicitly, supply the meaning or meanings..." (1963:390).

The *novella's* metafictionality and metaphoric style are picked up by Charles E. May in his essay "The Novella" (1983:3213-3339) which seems to be a very cumulative discussion of the genre. May manages to demonstrate the continuity of the *novella* tradition from the Boccaccian tales up to the present times, largely on the basis of the Russian Formalism theory. He discusses generic conventions within the genre, and finally, he offers some of the most intricate analyses of the texts.

The distinction between the long and short narratives should be based not on the physical size but on the two fundamentally different narrative styles:

1) the metonymic (Jakobson, Lodge) or "Homeric" (Auerbach) style characteristic today of the long narratives,

2) the metaphoric (Jakobson, Lodge) or "Hebraic" (Auerbach) style typical of short narratives.

The "profane" metonymic style in which reality is defined in terms of what is contextually foregrounded and externalized, based on the assumption that reality is that which is external, is typical of Realism. The metaphoric "sacred" style based on the principle of substitution or similarity, assuming that true reality is accessible only indirectly, underlies Romanticism and symbolism.

To this stylistic distinction May applies B.M. Ejxenbaum's theory that the stages in the evolution of a genre can be observed when a once serious or "high" genre undergoes "degeneration", resulting in a parodic or comic form.

> In such a model the two basic forms of fiction (short symbolic and long realistic) depend on whether the metaphoric or the metonymic devices are dominant. The shift of the dominant metaphoric pole to the background while the metonymic is foregrounded would account for a shift in generic narrative types. Basically, the process of narrative is either one of secularizing of the spiritual or the spiritualizing of the profane. (May 1983:3331)

The novelty and the popularity of the Boccaccian tales was due to the realistic, "profane" style as a reaction against the "sacred" old forms of *romance* and *allegory*. A further displacement towards the profane and realistic takes place in the works of Cervantes. In fact Cervantes played with both: the old *romance* and the new *novella* forms in *Don Quixote*, conscious of the process of

secularization of the *romance*. Cervantes's contribution, to posterity and to the new direction of the novella, was his discovery that the character's thought can be as interesting as the plot itself.

The history from Cervantes to Goethe is primarily (but not exclusively) the realistic metonymic form which gradually expands into the novel. Romanticism reverts again towards the romance, the sacred and the metaphoric, combining it with the "realistic" mode. Within these two poles the three basic forms of narrative become established — the *novel*, the *novella*, the *short story*. It was not a mistake when May spoke of the two basic forms at the beginning, since he describes the *novella* as a mixed genre, leaning today more towards the metaphoric, the romance and the short story than to the novel, although it shares the elements of the novel's metonymic method (May 1983:3335).

The existing mass of the *novellas* is a material evidence of the process of evolution, at the same time the very process is recorded in the *novellas*. Cervantes has already been mentioned. May puts it very strongly:

> The novella is often an aesthetic tour de force, that is a work in which the forming conventions are as important as, if not more important than, the content of the work itself. (1983:3234)

Goethe's "Novelle" is taken as a landmark — from that moment on the *novella* is more symbolic, its primary concern is the duality of "reality" and "artifice", as a consequence of which it concentrates on its own narrative structure, becoming the most selfconscious of all the genres.

Metaphor and the narrative art are the key concepts in May's classification of the generic conventions in the *novella* which derive from various preexisting types. The **Gothic** and **parable** conventions come from the old romance and parable forms. The **narrative voice** convention, where the point of view and the narrative voice have a particular importance, derives perhaps from the old framework structure and the existence of the story-teller. The stories of the **Doppelgänger** (the "double") are essentially parabolic. The **anatomy** convention can be traced back to the contes philosophiques of the 18th century. Conventions of **tragedy** are owed to classical drama. **Fairy-tale** and **dream** come from the 19th century Märchen. Their counterpart is the **negative adventure** convention which can be best described as the extraordinary presentation of the ordinary and common (e.g. Henry James's *The Beast in the Jungle*). A class of their own constitute the contemporary *novellas* absorbed essentially with their own fictionality (May 1983:3255 3256).

An overview of titles and textual analyses leads to the conclusion that the conventions are consciously used as a subject in themselves. The use of the convention helps to combine the two opposing tendencies — the realistic and the metaphoric. The romance trappings of *The Castle of Otranto* or *The Turn of the Screw* substitute the "as if" genuine external world, becoming the story's own reality. The happenings at Bly belong to the world of romance in which the governess's imagination persists and for her this is the no less true world.

In the **narrative voice** convention, so crucial for James and Conrad, the background persona of the narrator, the story of the story-telling itself, come forward. Marlow's report on Kurz in *Heart of Darkness* becomes the tale about the difficulty of telling a tale.

"The double" convention, so frequent in the *novella*, exemplifies best the reconciliation of the metaphoric and the realistic. This is what Nemerov called the "issue of identity", perceiving one's double is an internal problem of an individual, the knowledge of one's self is only in the mind. But it can be presented realistically by providing for the protagonist his physical counterpart (*Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, The Secret Sharer*).

Conventions are not exclusive — a single novella may embody several of them. D.H. Lawrence's *The Fox*, for example, May analyses as a dream, but obviously the March-Banford team, in the light of his own theory, fit the convention of "the double" as well.

IV. CONCLUSION

A whole range of current theories has been presented, giving, hopefully, a cross-section of modern *novella* criticism. The aim was to show how this type of narrative is at least talked about today, and what requirements it is frequently expected to meet. Obviously the word *novella* has entered the critical idiom for good.

All the theories have their individual merits which might prove most helpful in textual analysis. However, the superficially varied statements can, in many cases, be conveniently generalized. To avoid concluding the conclusions of the previous section, it should be mentioned that the modern theory repeats a number of critical statements formulated in the historical approach to the Renaissance *novella* and the German *Novelle*.

1. All critics distinguish the *novella* as a separate genre between the *novel*, and the *short story*. Its theme, style and structure are to a great degree determined by the length.

2. The **"double effect of intensity and expansion"**, Springer's **apologues**, Nemerov's **parables**, May's **parable** and **anatomy** conventions, all refer a particular preference for general themes with broad implications.

3. The central **"theme of identity"**, as distinguished by Nemerov, coincides with Springer's **plots of learning** and May's **"the double"** convention. These are, of course, the specific ways of conveying the *novella's* parabolic nature.

4. The theme and the condensation of the *novella* result in a specific discourse drawing heavily on the **metaphor** and **symbol**, hence relationship with poetry.

5. Both technique and structure of the work contribute to its overall meaning (repetitive structure, patterns of imagery, selection of details, metafictional elements etc.).

6. Related to point 5 but particularly emphasized by all, is the effective treatment of the **point of view**. It sums up what Leibowitz defines as parallel narrative levels, Springer as the plot of revelation of the protagonist's character to the reader, and May as the narrative voice.

7. Without exception (though perhaps not all that explicitly), everyone, at some stage or other, observes the *novella's* either structural or thematic similarity to drama (tragedy in particular). In Leibowitz's analysis it would be the very intensive treatment of a limited subject (characteristic of drama where the situation is explored, so to speak, in its depth) and the very structure. In Springer's classification a place of their own have the tragic actions and the tragic convention of May's is supposed to be based on classical drama. Nemerov who writes about the very composition and fate in the short novel, concludes: "I have tried to describe the short novel ... not as a compromise between the novel and the short story, but as something like the ideal and primary form, suggestively allied in simplicity and even in length with the tragedies of the antiquity" (1963:391).

CHAPTER I

HENRY JAMES'S NOVELLAS

INTRODUCTION

Henry James's particular preference for "the blest nouvelle", his extraordinary form-consciousness and outspokenness on the technical intricacies of his own writing make him a somewhat patronizing figure within the group of the three authors whose works are scrutinized within the present analysis. His famous remarks on the nouvelle (he consistently used the French word) had become the solid stock of the critical trade. Richard P. Blackmur in the Introduction to James's *The Art of the Novel* writes of the nouvelle as a form:

> The nouvelle — the long short story or the short novel — was perhaps James's favourite form, and the form least likely of appreciation in the Anglo-Saxon reading world, to which it seemed neither one thing nor the other. To James it was a small reflector capable of illuminating or mirroring a great deal of material. To the artist who practiced in it the difficulties of its own economy were a constant seduction and an exalted delight.
> (XXVI–XXVII)

There seem to be very little critically unexplored ground left in the work of Henry James. His shorter pieces (the short stories as well as anything relatively shorter than his major novels) have already received their due attention and yet they are reverted to over and over again. The first reaction of anyone wishing to study a very prolific writer is that of "pick and choose". On second thought this profusion might become awkward and it must be kept in mind that the selection should remain appropriate to the overall objective of the particular study.

If the term *nouvelle* is to be used strictly on the basis of the word counts, then the combined total, according to Vaid's list, of James's shorter works comes to 56. For the purpose of this study, however, only certain works are under review, and these are selected on the basis of internal structure which is a better criterion for defining the *nouvelle* qua genre than mere length.

The last decade of the 19th century is of a special relevance. Walter Isle in his book devoted to the novels written by James between 1896 and 1901 (*Experiments in Form. Henry James's Novels 1896–1901.* 1968) describes it as James's period of experimentation (1968:2) marking the writer's breaking up

with the expansive Victorian novel (*The Tragic Muse*), as the term is popularly used, and his professed preference for drama and "short things". Having totally failed as a playwright (*Guy Domville* 1895), James continued to write relatively short novels (shorter than his "long" novels of the eighties or those that followed in his "major phase" after 1900) producing *The Other House* (1896), *The Spoils of Poynton* (1897), *What Maisie Knew* (1897), *The Awkward Age* (1899), *The Sacred Fount* (1901) and a good number of short stories and nouvelles. Two main tendencies are visible — a relative brevity, which accounts for the fact that numerous critics treat those novels as nouvelles, and the dominating dramatic technique of presentation.

For the reasons given the 1890's seem a good time limit for the selection of the texts. The shorter novels written at the time could be compared in their scope with the earlier short novels like *Watch and Ward*, *Confidence*, *Washington Square* etc. but apart from their comparable brevity, they are more compact and restricted, there is a marked change and development of technique which makes them come closer to the extended nouvelles than to novels that had just happened to be short. Isle describes them as follows:

> There has been a drastic concentration in character, action and scene, more concentrated even than in some of the earlier works. Usually only a handful of characters are involved or even mentioned; the action is limited in duration…. The action and the situation are limited to apparently small crises in the personal relationships of a small group of people (a feature more common in a play than in the novel). All of this tends to make the novel static. Quite often James's intention throughout these novels is to explore or simply reveal a situation or a state of mind, rather than a sequence of events, an action …. James draws fairly narrow limits around the subjects of these novels, but within these limits, his technique produces a kind of structural complexity and virtuosity which is very different from and in some ways more challenging from anything he had done before. (1968:8)

In the following analysis any ordering or grouping of the texts must be treated at this stage only as very provisional. The arrangement is based on the classification of Mary Doyle Springer (cf. p. 19–20).

The selection of the texts is also limited to those which, according to my view, represent best the versatility of James's capacities as a nouvelle writer and thus could be treated as representative. It must be also specified at the very outset that if one assumes that James had been writing any *apologues* they are specifically Jamesian — the parabolic themes for him, a writer by profession, are those of reality and appearance, the way both appear to the perceptive mind, the process of learning and discovering of one's own self. The final arrangement is as follows:

I. *The Turn of the Screw* — an apologue about reality and its appearance to the creative mind — the story in making.

II. *The Altar of the Dead* — identity and self-knowledge theme apologue.

III. *What Maisie Knew* — an action with a serious plot of learning.

IV. *The Spoils of Poynton* — a tragedy.

V. *The Birthplace* — a satire.

I. *THE TURN OF THE SCREW* — AN APOLOGUE ABOUT REALITY AND ITS APPEARANCE TO THE CREATIVE MIND — THE STORY IN MAKING

No other single work of James has elicited such an extensive body of criticism as *The Turn of the Screw*. Shoshana Felman attributes it to the story's exceptional "reading effect" and comments that "if the strength of literature could be defined by the intensity of its impact on the reader, by the vital energy and the power of its effect, *The Turn of the Screw* would doubtless qualify as one of the strongest — i.e. most effective — texts of all time, judging by the quantity and intensity of the echoes it has produced, of the critical literature to which it has given rise" (1982:98). The critical debate over the novella follows two basic views: "psychoanalytical" and "metaphysical" (Felman's distinction) The "psychoanalytical" analysis concentrates on the governess seen as "a clinical neurotic deceived by her own fantasies and destructive to her charges (Miles and Flora)". The "metaphysical" camp sees the governess as "a sane, noble saviour engaged in a heroic moral struggle for the salvation of the world threatened by supernatural Evil" (Felman 1982:98).

The two different critical trends are by no means contradictory (irrespectively of the turns the actual debate did take), they reflect the double nature of the story itself which allows for those two different interpretations — psychoanalytical favouring fact but in the analysis concentrating on the fancies of the governess, and metaphysical (moral) taking her fancies to be a fact. The present analysis will not take sides since from the beginning the standpoint is that multiplicity of interpretation is the inherent feature of a good novella. In Felman's terms — the story's worth is measured by its effectiveness. It will concentrate on the formal aspects which make it the more effective.

Before the analysis proper, a point should be made about the chronology. *The Turn of the Screw* has a very important place in any comparisons between James, Conrad and Lawrence. Its first publication (October 1898) antedates by a mere four months the serial publication of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (February 1899), and in 1900 Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* appeared. There exists a formal and thematic similarity between the two novellas, the latter is defined by Hanna Wirth-Nesher as an aspect of "modernism" which consists in experiencing by the reader along with the central characters "an inability to identify with certainty the presence of evil which pervades these worlds" (1979:317). The effect is achieved through the use of similar techniques in both stories (the narrative voice, the Gothic, romance, dream and fairy-tale and finally the "double" conventions). Freud's work supplied a solid theory and method of analysis of *The Turn of the Screw* but obviously there must have existed at the time a more general interest in the matters Freud investigated, and the selfsame interest continues later in the works of D.H. Lawrence.

The most obvious structural similarity between James and Conrad is that of the frames used in both stories. The primary function in both remains identical — to establish the point of view (or points of view). The most striking difference is that *Heart of Darkness* is enclosed in a frame of an oral narrative; *The Turn of the Screw* has an incomplete frame of oral story-telling and of a written and then re-edited report. There exists a certain likeness between the narrators and the companies listening to the narratives. The company in *The Turn of the Screw* is somewhat flippant and literal (Douglas warns against "literality" at the very beginning). Douglas who will eventually produce the manuscript left in his trust some twenty to forty years ago by his sister's governess, recognizes that the narrator of the whole situation on the particular Christmas Eve is the most sympathetic and discreet of his listeners (similar to Marlow and the first narrator in *Heart of Darkness*). At his death bed Douglas will eventually commit the whole manuscript to this narrator who will prepare the final version of the story for the reader. While the other listeners "resented postponement" in revealing the mysterious story, the "I" narrator is "charmed" by Douglas's scruples. Relatively early in the frame the first narrator as good as states that the overall narrative is about story-telling. Christmastide is an occasion for social gathering and amusement. The company's mood is that of the "uncanny" (as the story told earlier has ended in that manner) and tellers are taking their turns in the specific topic. It is almost Boccaccio coming to life when the "I" narrator says about Christmas Eve: "The last story, however incomplete and like the mere opening of a serial, had been told; we handshook and "candlestruck", as somebody said, and went to bed" (1966:352). The story proper, the one reconstructed from the manuscript with the exclusive first-person narration of the governess is preceded by a short prologue by Douglas — an introduction to his relationship with the lady in question and the circumstances of her employment at Bly as the sole and exclusive supervisor of Flora and Miles. The frame ends definitely once the report of the governess begins.

What is the function of the frame in relation to the story proper? The story proper is told by the governess, or at least it is assumed that it is. Anthony J. Mazzella, for example, contradicts it, arguing in his article "An Answer to the Mystery of *The Turn of the Screw*" (1980:327–333) that the first narrator who admits that the narrative is "from an exact transcript of my own made much later" (1966:352), has an equal share in making the story up: "James's obvious intention is for us to arrive at the governess's story in a very particular way: through the editing of a manuscript — a most unusual one, for its ink is faded" (1980:331). This is, however, an approach going outside the story. The reader is limited throughout to the vision of the governess and, as Edward Wagenknecht says, he is compelled "to think her thoughts after her and share her reactions as they develop in response to the changing situation" (1984:110). In the prologue all the events are thrust into the past achieving a time distance to the story proper, but the principal function of the opening sections is "to furnish the governess with a "character reference" and guide the reader's judgment of her" (Wagenknecht 1984:110). The reader learns thus that she was "young, nervous, untried" undertaking "serious duties and little company, of really great loneliness"(1966:354). On the other hand we know that despite the events that she had described (before we actually do read about them) she had remained a competent governess. As David Cook and Timothy Corrigan say: "the governess must be granted authority and credibility" (1980:57) which she is granted already in the prologue. And yet this credibility has to be undermined if the story is to remain of the type of the "fantastic". Analysing the novella's narrative structure, Cook and Corrigan establish a pattern of the reader's sympathies for the governess swinging back and forth all the time. This pattern begins already in the frame. The reader's faith in the governess rises only to fall in the very next sentence.

William R. Goetz considers the frame not so much as "an informative background to the principal narrative but as an exemplary scene by means of which James tells us how to read his tale" (1981:71). Goetz sees the tale's resistance to any unanimous interpretation not only in any vague "richness" of content but in its hermeneutic structure which is revealed in the frame. The evident feature of the frame is that it consists of an oral story-telling scene which introduces a written report. Those two different narrative types entail different kinds of meaning and authority. As long as there is the oral narration the listeners might inquire, ask questions. Once the story becomes written there is no easy recourse to the author, just as the governess herself is not allowed to turn to the Master for help. The reader then has only the text that he can judge and always to revert to to see how inadequate his judgment is.

The story proper is written in the Gothic convention. It is a story of ghosts (just as the later story of *The Sacred Fount* is about vampires) because it appears to the governess-narrator as a ghost story, and since she relates the story further, the reader is presented the reality the way she sees it. The meaning of the story then is the function of the tale's narrative structure. Cook and Corrigan describe the narrative structure as the laws that govern the story (*histoire*) and the language in which it is told (*discours*). The analysis of the *histoire* and *discours* shows how two meanings are possible in a tale simultaneously at the same time. Further, there exists a tension between the two meanings, as a narrative strategy, which generates the total meaning of the story (1980:56). In other words there is a difference between the story told (*histoire*) and the very manner of its telling (*discours*). The tension between the two is responsible for the final effect that the governess all along creates what she sees, that she "has predisposed herself, in short, to see things in a certain way". It is only by discovering her particular disposition that one understands that she has been consciously creating a narrative. Her disposition was to see reality in terms of the romance and the fairy-tale, to interpret the incidents

in terms of the parabolic struggle between Good and Evil, giving at once evidence how fantastic literature is produced.

According to Tzvetan Todorov "the fantastic is that hesitation experienced by a person who knows only the laws of nature, confronting an apparently supernatural event" (*The Fantastic*, 1975:25). The most effective technique for the fantastic literature is the manipulation with the point of view. This is precisely what happens in *The Turn of the Screw*. The reader accepts the events as "fantastic" because they appear so to the governess. Since she is the sole reporter, she gives her tale all the necessary reliability. However, if one only looks closer, one sees that her visions are very subjective, not corroborated by any other objectively existing personages. There is information drawn from Mrs Grose or Miles but often the governess herself puts words in their mouths or believes to have them really heard say things she actually wants to hear. Very early in her report the woman admits that she is very easily "carried away" and this is what she has come to Bly for (James, 1966:357). Guided by Flora on her first tour around the "big, ugly, antique but convenient house" — the qualities of the place that she is perfectly aware of — she had the view "of a castle of romance inhabited by a rosy sprite, such a place as would somehow, for diversion of the young idea, take all colour out of story-books and fairy-tales. Wasn't it just a storybook over which I had fallen a-doze and a-dream?" (1966:358). The governess is perfectly conscious of her metaphors, and the tale seems to be an illustration to the metaphor conceived at such an early stage.

The very first apparition of Peter Quint is literally invited. During her evening walks the governess actually thought that "it would be as charming as a charming story suddenly to meet someone". When she does see the spectral figure she thinks of *Udolpho* and *Jane Eyre* (1966:367).

The first apparition of Miss Jessel (the governess's own "evil" double?) appears during a make-believe game with Flora and she sees Miss Jessel without even looking at her, not to mention that the proof that Flora had seen her previous guardian as well was that the child actually pretended not to see anything.

The third encounter with Quint occurs after she had been reading *Amelia* by Fielding.

The other occasions when the ghosts occur are not confirmed by any other witnesses (she herself does not see Quint when she believes Miles to observe him on the tower). The governess does speak of the deepening sensibility and asks: "How can I retrace today the strange steps of my obsession?" (1966:405).

The story is very limited in its space of action and the number of characters (six — the ghosts included). The only quarter where the woman might expect confirmation of her visions from, is the somewhat inarticulate Mrs Grose. The reader has to be well on his guard if he does not want his perception to become one with the governess's. It is her command of language,

her powers of expression that make the presentation of the supernatural possible. The inevitable result is the "tension between the governess's narrative voice and the facts of the world outside. That voice, a tension between a marvelous world of ghosts and the uncanny world of neurotic governess" (Cook, Corrigan 1980;64). All along the reader is challenged to accept the governess's fiction as fact. The ultimate impact of the narrative is its self-reflection — it is a parable about Good and Evil and at the same time an apologue of the creative imagination: "By constantly undermining and restoring the narrator's credibility, James transforms a narrative which is potentially either a ghost story or a mystery tale about a demented governess into a very subtle fiction about the process of fiction itself" (Cook, Corrigan 1980:65).

II. *THE ALTAR OF THE DEAD* — IDENTITY AND SELF-KNOWLEDGE THEME APOLOGUE

Krishna Baldev Vaid writes of the Jamesian Triptych (*The Altar of the Dead, The Beast in the Jungle, The Jolly Corner*): "one of James's characteristic devices in his late period was to choose either fantastic subjects involving either a complete departure from literal possibility or a bold distortion or simplification" and comments that in order to achieve this effect James in his numerous late tales, either completely internalizes the adventure of his heroes and heroines or else the happenings in the tales took place "in the rarer regions of fantastic allegory" (1964:214).

In the Preface to the volume containing *The Altar of the Dead* and *The Beast in the Jungle*, James referred to *The Altar of the Dead* first as a conceit and later as a fable. Lightly as it sounds, the terms should be understood as synonymous with parable and apologue. To James the subject of his story was "the exhibition of a case" (*The Art of the Novel*, 242). But it differed from the other conceits that may come and go, since it represents "an accepted and cultivated habit (the cultivation is really the point) of regularly taking thought for them (the dead)". The story illustrates a "practiced communion" which is "the foredoomed consequence of life".

The third-person narrative is about "poor Stransom" (whom the reader quickly enough finds to be the story's centre of consciousness) whose life was stilled, ruled by "a pale ghost" (1982:85) of his would-be bride who had died before their wedding. Unforgetting as Stransom is of the beloved dead, he soon appears equally unforgiving towards his deceased friend Acton Hague who had happened to have wronged Stransom and thus their friendship had terminated. The cultivation of the memory of the dead (others beside Mary Amtrim and except Acton) finally is embodied in the magnificent altar in a suburban London church in which each of the blessed souls familiar to Stransom had its candle lit, the only one never to be kindled was the one in Acton's memory. As

it appears there is another worshipper of the dead — an unnamed little lady who uses Stransom's altar for her own prayers. As he learns months later she remembers but one person. Stransom and the lady share their spiritual communion at the church but their relationship outside the temple remains very loose. It is only on his first visit to the lady that he finds out, to his great horror, that she had been encouraged to pray at his very own altar for no one else but Acton. The story ends with a discussion of an equally parabolic theme of Christian forgiveness and sympathy whose absence undermines sincerity of Stransom's altar altogether.

Narration dominates in the nouvelle and the only developed scene is that of revelation after which the re-examination and correction of Stransom's intentions necessarily take place. His obsessive charity and stubbornness are confronted with the woman's attitude, and, interestingly enough, there are hints that she had also been the intended bride badly wronged by Acton and yet capable of idolizing him equally to Stransom's attachment for Mary. The story's clear tripartite division emphasizes this repetition. All nine sections are equally divided — Part I Vaid defines as the raising of the altar at first spiritually and then in the church; Part II depicts Stransom and the unnamed lady sharing piety and devotion for their deceased; and Part III beginning with the revelation in the middle of section VI and with the dramatic section VII is followed by the closing narrative where Stransom has to make revisions. The revelation changes the quality of the relationship between the two characters, Vaid expresses it as "their impersonal friendship leading now to a personal complication".

Deadly as the summary sounds, the actual story takes its vividness from irony and grotesque. Up to the moment of bitter revelation, the allegory of the altar is gradually built up. On the one hand Stransom is aware that whoever should feel the need of an altar, even the poorest "could build such temples of the spirit — could make them burn with candles and smoke with incense, make them flush with pictures and flowers. The cost in the common phrase of keeping them up fell entirely to the liberal heart". What is needed are "the ample sources of the soul" (1982:77). This is exactly what Stransom does — he erects in his mind "the unapproachable shrine" that everyone can have and to prevent it from growing dim "he asked himself if he shouldn't find his real comfort in some material act, some outward worship" (84). The internalized becomes from that moment on the outward manifestation — he establishes a public rite and as his real altar grows more and more ablaze he feels like a "shepherd of a huddled flock". Along with Stransom's apostolic vocation supported by the imagery and metaphors there develops a counter-theme of his egoism which possesses obvious ironic and grotesque overtones. The nouvelle might be a universal, spiritual allegory at moments when time is forgotten but it becomes very much Stransom's own story when he finds in his altar "the years of his life there, and the ties and the affections, the struggles and the

submissions, the conquests if there had been such, a record of that adventurous journey in which the beginnings and the endings of human relations are the lettered milestones" (1982:86-87). As it is said at the beginning — his memories "whatever it was it was an escape from the actual" (76). The absolute grotesque effect of his escapism is achieved when he actually catches himself wishing for certain of his friends to die so that once their candles are lit at his shrine he "might establish with them in this manner a connection more charming than, as it happened, it was possible to enjoy with them in life" (87).

A metaphorical objectification to his secret musings is the meeting with his friend Creston freshly married after his wife's death. The two men are symbolically contrasted — Stransom never forgetting the dead and openly manifesting it, and Creston — to Stransom's view — never remembering them. Stransom's mind begins to work again — the new Mrs Creston appears a monstrous character of gross immodesty and Creston himself nothing but a conscious ass. Moreover, Stransom believes that they also feel what he feels.

After the revelation the elaborate structure erected earlier has to crumble down since the ritual cultivated for so long had not been complemented by the spiritual. The altar, the candles become mere emblems "material signs" which are meaningless if his forgiveness was a "motive with a broken spring" (107). If there is no belief behind, the candles burn only mechanically. At the end the story reverts again to the allegorical, to the altar that even the poorest can have, the only one worth cultivating without jealousy and making exceptions. Stransom's had ceased to exist, all the dead had to die once more. "Then he understood that it was essentially in his own soul the revival had taken place, and that in the air of this soul they were now unable to breathe" (112). The woman wins because she forgives Stransom.

III. *WHAT MAISIE KNEW* — AN ACTION WITH A SERIOUS PLOT OF LEARNING

What Maisie Knew is an instance of one of those extended tales which James described in the Preface as "another instance of the growth of "the great oak" from the little acorn" (1954:5). The story germinated from an accidental mention of a child of a divorced couple whose life was spent on rotating from one parent to another, further complicated by the re-marriage of the ex-spouses. James elaborated the principal situation endowing it with a greater symmetry, deeper moral implications, but he never departed from the core of the original case — the child being "the little feathered shuttlecock they [the parents] could fiercely keep flying between them" (1954:27). The whole progress of action are the altering terms spent either with mamma or papa. The next major concern was that of the child protagonist Maisie endowed with sufficient intelligence and quickness of mind on the one hand, and adolescent innocence on the other, to become an interesting reflector of the whole experience.

Maisie Farange — the daughter of Ida and Beale — is the bone of contention in her parent's dispute over the child's maintenance, or rather the father's inability to provide the mother (Ida), the child's legal guardian, with the necessary means. As a solution the child was "divided in two portions tossed impartially to the disputants" (18). The subsequent episodes of tossing the child from one household to another follow. Eager as the disputants seemed to have their hostage during the legal arrangements, they gradually lose all interest in their charge being involved in their own affairs of a rather intimate nature. Eventually the child is abandoned to her own fate and the supervision of the hired governesses — Miss Overmore and Mrs Wix — at her father's and mother's, respectively.

A very intricate and symmetrical pattern of personal relationships is gradually worked out, in most cases the child brings together and unites people. Mr Farange marries Miss Overmore; Ida marries Sir Claude several years her junior. Sir Claude, claiming his step-daughter from the Faranges falls in for Miss Overmore (now Beale's wife) and an affair between them develops. In all those complications Maisie's welfare and prospects would have been forgotten had it not been for the somewhat inarticulate Mrs Wix and those of the few positive intentions of Sir Claude.

Slight as this summary might seem for an altogether copious nouvelle, one has to trust the Jamesian economy and craftsmanship. The theme of guardianship is not an altogether new one to him to remember his very early short novel *Watch and Ward* (1870) about Roger Lawrence's adoption of the orphaned Nora Lambert. The difference between Nora and Maisie is that the former protegée receives assistance and guidance from her protector. The story spins from her childhood up to her marriage with Roger. Maisie has to make her own way. She begins as a child and ends up as a wiser child, but still only a child.

Two tendencies operate in the story — concentration on the central situation of the girl and the ever expanding implications of her circumstances. Two important techniques are responsible for it — the very economical presentation excluding any peripheral materials not related directly to Maisie's condition which automatically implies a very purposeful selection of details; and an ingenious manipulation with the point of view with Maisie's status being an integral part of it.

What Maisie Knew is a realistic tale solidly set in the fashionable London society which is eventually satirized (the notorious promiscuity of its members, hypocrisy). None the less, the reader is never allowed a "panoramic" vision of it. James restricts himself to the very essential paraphernalia. Thomas L. Jeffers in "Maisie's Moral Sense: Finding Out for Herself" (1979:154–172) discusses at one point the physical setting of the story perceiving a symbolic meaning in the alternating surroundings — the stuffy "entombed" school-rooms, lecture halls, coaches, the recurrent garden scenes; and finally the open perspective of the

French landscape. The overall impression though is that of something very histrionic and stage-property-like and changeless. There is never anything superfluous in the story that would overshadow the moral implications of the tale, which are reverted to over and over again, the grown-ups taking Maisie's knowledge of it for granted, and moreover, they assume that her perception of the situation is equal to their own when it suits them, and only a child's when they want to keep her in ignorance.

In the preface to the tale James calls Maisie "the extraordinary "ironic centre" ... shedding a light far beyond the reach of her comprehension" (1954:11–12). Jeffers calls this method "the prebuscent point of view" asking what it actually achieves in the story. Maisie is not a unique type in James's stories, especially if one remembers his American "innocents" in *Daisy Miller* (1878) or Laura Wing from *A London Life* (1888) or the English Nanda Brookenham from *The Awkward Age*. However, Maisie is endowed with a double function in her story — that of facilitating the reader's interpretation on the one hand, and complicating the positions of the other fictitious characters who act at her side because there exists the mentioned discrepancy of perception.

Maisie is a child and she understands the situation and the behaviour of her elders as a child would naturally understand it. There is no mystification of this fact and it becomes the main source of irony and any comic sparks in the narrative as on the occasion as she suggests to Miss Overmore's face that Sir Claude should become her tutor once that she goes back to her mother's so that his position acquires all the demanded propriety that Miss Overmore's already possesses. The child then pieces together her own jig-saw puzzle along with the reader who constantly guesses what precisely is going on in reality because he knows of Maisie's limitations. In his introductory essay to *The Sacred Fount* Leon Edel sees in it the continuation of the "appearance and reality" theme originating with *What Maisie Knew*, continued in *The Turn of the Screw*, *In the Cage* and *The Sacred Fount* (*The Sacred Fount*. 1979: XXII–XXIII). The interesting case of Maisie is that what appears to her is probably more **real** than in the other stories. She sees reality the only way a child can see it and the reader is not misled about it as it might appear in the other stories with the more "mature" protagonists and the more reliable centres of consciousness. In the latter cases the reader may fall into the trap of taking their reliability and authority for granted. Maisie's perception is the one congenial to her age and experience and the girl must be kept in mind when the other tales are read and the difference between what is registered and what objectively exists is much more blurred or overseen.

The reader makes all the corrections whenever he perceives that Maisie blunders but he has no power of affecting her. In the narrative Maisie affects Sir Claude, her edification is delegated to the simple-minded Mrs Wix. An additional area of dynamic interaction is established. At the final scenes in

France when Sir Claude proposes that Maisie should stay with him and Mrs Beale, the child renounces them both "knowing better" than they might suspect what reality their "triangle" will stand for. Maisie learns from her experience, from the succession of "repetitive" situations. In each, her small person is used to keep up the appearances of "decency" of her elders. Accepting the final proposition would have meant coming the whole circle back to the beginning when she lived with her father and Miss Overmore the governess. Maisie's renunciation of Sir Claude means her choice of freedom and "moral" knowledge which she has found out for herself.

Already the protagonist's adolescent point of view provides a story rich in implications and the reader's guesses. Even more is done for its overall expansion. First of all, apart from Maisie there exists the omniscient third-person narrator of whom Jeffers writes:

> ... it is astonishing how little overt aid we get from the Jamesian narrator. Only rarely does he step in to label a character, as when out of the desire to reassure us he says at the start that Maisie's soul is and will be "unspotted"... The aid that he gives us is covert — the imagery which, in our first reading, works on our preconscious, disposing us to feel as Maisie does about her elders, and as he does about them and about her. (1979:159)

The narrator's "covert" aid does not only consist of the suggestive imagery but also of the very style of his narration. He speaks very much in the same manner as the adult characters speak to Maisie which the reader quickly perceives to be based on the principle of the understatement. *What Maisie Knew* marks the departure from the reliable narrator as the one in *Washington Square* for example, the narrator of "elegant prose and confident wisdom" as Kenny Marotta says in "*What Maisie Knew*: The Question of Our Speech" (1979:506). In this nouvelle and in the stories that followed, James assumed a kind of a participant reader that *What Maisie Knew* demands. The "language" these novels show, is in some ways a lie and a "screen" (1979:506).

The position of *What Maisie Knew* is that of a prologue to James's manner of writing fully developed in his major phase. He applied it first in works of nouvelle-length (*The Spoils of Poynton* immediately preceded *What Maisie Knew*) which length seemed so congenial to the treatment of "the intricate problem of consciousness" (Matthiesen 1963:16). In the "dramatic" nouvelles the protagonists are also the narrators and the reader has to be even more active. None the less, a great deal is achieved in the nouvelle *What Maisie Knew*. It is about the novella's fundamental topic — one's identity. James concentrates on a single little girl who is allowed to do very little but whose situation tells a great deal, the progress of a relatively static action becomes a dynamic progress of learning (despite of the absence of her "institutional" education) and at the same time her full natural capacities are revealed to the reader.

IV. *THE SPOILS OF POYNTON* — A TRAGEDY

R.P. Blackmur had written in the Introduction to *The Spoils of Poynton*: "The thing reads like a well made novel trying to be a well-made play about trifles, about the manners of men and women left out; but with the distinction that rather a cynical fable is about to be unfolded in an atmosphere of sheer brutal brilliance, moral humiliation without moral compassion" (1966:12–13). The "well-made play" qualities of the novel have justified its selection for the present analysis. As with most of James's nouvelles or the shorter novels the intended length needn't have approached the natural brevity. Long as *The Spoils* had finally appeared to be, James still had thought of it as "the poor little "long" thing" (*The Art of the Novel*, nd. 125). Charles G. Hoffman admires James for having extracted "from a framework of a given situation the fullest measure of dramatic and analytic power" (1957:55). The very dramatic and analytic powers that Hoffman refers to make *The Spoils of Poynton* a perfect example of the technical strategies and the variety of reading characteristic of the shorter form of fiction — the novella.

The dramatic conflict is ignited by the difference of opinion and taste between Mrs Gereth and her prospective daughter-in-law — Mona Brigstock. Mrs Gereth finds her ally in Fleda Vetch — a young lady of limited means but extensive sensibility; Owen Gereth, on the other hand, shares the attitude of Mona whom he declares at an early stage in the story to have proposed to. The fate of Poynton — the beautiful Gereth family home — is at stake. Law requires of Mrs Gereth to move over to the dower-cottage and leave the principal estate to Owen and Mona who are bound, in Mrs Gereth's opinion, to mismanage it. Mrs Gereth eventually moves over to the cottage carrying along the most beautiful and valuable objects from Poynton which become the bone of contention basically between her and Mona. Fleda undertakes the negotiations between the mother and son only to find out, much to Mrs Gereth's delight, that she herself loves him. By that time Owen is also infatuated with Fleda and altogether glad that his marriage with Mona might still come to nothing. However, Fleda's condition is to have a point blank break of Owen's prior engagement declared by Mona herself. Ironically, Mrs Gereth, assuming things to have been settled between her son and her favourite girl, sends all the valuables back to Poynton. Owen, returning to Waterbath to Mona, is only too welcome under the new circumstances. The young are married and Owen pleads Fleda to select her favourite object from Poynton. She never does this since the place is burned down while the new owners are abroad, Mrs Gereth's fears coming out only too true.

Speaking in terms of dramatic structure, the opening chapters of the nouvelle function as a prologue. It is written in the third-person narration but the reader is soon informed that Fleda is: "that member of the party in whose intenser consciousness we shall most profitably seek a reflection of the little

drama with which we are concerned..." (1966:132). Chapters up to eight reflect Owen's and Mona's (interestingly the girl makes her last appearance in person in chapter three, the first of the proper conflict) engagement. It ends with Owen's appeal to Fleda for help. From that moment on the progression of action will take on the form of quick dramatic scenes between Owen and Fleda with the intrusion of Mrs Brigstock who unwittingly brings the two people closer together (the same irony as when Mrs Gereth later is responsible for their separation) and it culminates with Owen's confession of his affection for Fleda and renunciation of Mona. This is the moment when the somewhat melodramatic well-made play is over. Whatever the resulting events are, they are the consequence of Fleda's own choice and making. Her moral principles that she wants to remain true to do not allow her to accept Owen. In fact, both Fleda and Owen are victims of the struggle that runs parallel to the haggle over Poynton things except that Owen is the more compromising of the two. The story does not end tragically in the conventional sense. It depends on what one prizes more — ethics or possessions — and then either almost everything is saved or almost everything is lost. None the less it would be classified as a tragedy novella because of Fleda whose failure has been characterized by Alan R. Roper as resulting "from her being forced into a situation where she has to sacrifice someone other than herself, and her inability to resolve the problem results in her last flight from Owen ..." (1961:196).

A great deal of the story's interest depends on irony. If Fleda's failure is in a way conscious, then in the case of Mrs Gereth it is ironical that she is also responsible for the destruction of Poynton. The very burning down of the place has been judged as a very pessimistic resolution — everybody's efforts ending in total futility — Fleda's pointless renunciation of Owen, Owen's hopeless marriage to Mona etc. Symbolically it might be interpreted that neither of the parties had been right. The "spoils of Poynton" and the place itself are the governing metaphors of the whole story. Alan Roper discusses the patterns of recurrent images of battles, plundering, flights and storms and comments that it is "in the patterns formed by these three recurrent images that we must seek an accurate foundation for an interpretation of the novel's ethical import" (1961:184). The persistent patterns of the underlying imagery is the traditionally discussed feature of the genre of the novella. If one were to see the "spoils" as an element of the story's self-reflection then once the story is over there is no use of it any longer. The belligerent track of images runs parallel to the images of piety and worship — the spoils are sacred and thus defended. Apart from the constant emphasis on the primary theme, imagery has also strong heroic implications (reminiscent of the burlesque in *The Birthplace*). Stein sees exaggeration as James's method of foreshortening:

> This deliberate transposition of the natural expression into an incongruous key marks the first step in James's scheme to imbue his narrative with dramatic power without depending wholly upon conventional dramatic procedures. As he actualizes the practice of condensed statement, the situations of crisis are reduced to the melodrama of passionate verbalism. So he foreshortens the moral, emotional and esthetic sentiments inherent in the conflict of attitudes towards the spoils of Poynton. In effect, he assigns linguistic revelation a function equal to the importance of the machinery of incident. (1968:189)

Language itself is the drama here, much as it is the supernatural in *The Turn of the Screw*.

The Spoils of Poynton fuses the dramatic and the epic. Fleda is responsible for the dramatic situation — her standards are reminiscent of those of *Madame deMauves*, *Washington Square*, but hers is also the central consciousness. On her first visit to the restored Ricks cottage before Fleda herself is called into the action she can look from a distance so that the parlour-maid became on the instance an actress in a drama, and Fleda, "assuming pusillanimously that she herself was only a spectator, looked across the footlights at the exponent of the principal part (Mrs Gereth)" (184). The girl does not depart far from the other sensitive protagonists (the governess, the telegraphist in *In the Cage*, the narrator of *The Sacred Fount*), in her function of the central intelligence she is similarly convention biased. As early as on the occasion of Owen's announcement of his engagement, Fleda is day-dreaming:

> She dodged and dreamed and romanced away the time; instead of inventing a remedy or a compromise, instead of preparing a plan by which a scandal might be averted, she gave herself, in her sentient solitude, up to a mere fairy-tale, up to the very taste of the beautiful peace with which she would have filled the air if only something might have been that could never have been. (1966:157)

The difference between Fleda and the telegraphist and the governess is that she *knows* the limits of her imagination, she clearly opposes fiction (romance, dream and fairy-tale) and drama (true life and action). The action of *The Spoils of Poynton* actually does develop as in a romance and a fairy-tale Fleda thought of at the beginning. That which "could never have been" almost happens, but this is when Fleda interrupts the romance and when drama begins. Owen "wouldn't be there with a cigarette in his teeth, very handsome and insolently quiet: that was only the way he would be in a novel, across whose interesting page some such figure, as she herself closed her eyes, seemed to her walk" (165). Fleda uses the literary comparisons most consciously and sees the difference between surrendering to them in mind and in true life:

> She had read in novels about gentlemen who on the eve of marriage, winding up the past, had surrendered themselves on the occasion to the influence of a former tie; and there was something in Owen's behaviour now, something in his very face, that suggested a resemblance to one of those gentlemen. But whom and what, in that case would Fleda herself resemble? (1966:172)

In fact Fleda oscillates in a vicious circle — she tries to escape the romantic illusions judging them inadequate to life, only to fall into the illusory ambitious goals of her own making — the process described by William Stein

as the protagonist's making "experience conform to the preconceptions of experience" (1968:191). Fleda theoretically knows the faults of the romance and yet she cannot help being romantic.

V. THE BIRTHPLACE – A SATIRE

The Birthplace is unanimously recognized by the critics as a satire exposing various aspects of the protagonist's position. Peter Messent sees it ultimately as a tale "of the compromises the man of sensitivity and intelligence has to make in an undiscriminating world in pursuit of economic survival" (1982:XII). The very theme of the birthplace of a literary celebrity allows the story to be read as "critical" or "literary" fable revealing the development and growth of an artist in the warden himself. On the other side there is an apparent exposure of those who believe in Morris's tales and take them on their face value. Ross (1966:321–328) describes this duality in the following:

> Thus in "The Birthplace" James turns the narrative screw not once but twice: once when the reader receives the mild shock of Gedge's transformation from an honest man into a self-confessed hypocrite; and once again when the same reader is flattered to discover that such hypocrisy goes undiscovered by the credulous public. The result of this narrative tension in "The Birthplace" is a double-edged commentary on both the mechanics and the morality of literary idolatry.

Neither literary heritage (e.g. *The Aspern Papers*) nor the romance convention used in *The Birthplace* are new in the Jamesian satires. It is worthwhile to analyze this particular use of the convention since it appears to function in a reversed order in comparison with the other stories. The Gedges are actually invited to make the romance and fairy-tale their daily bread-and-butter and it is Morris's honesty that makes him see the facts and reality. It does not mean that he has no imagination — he has plenty in order to create a parody of a biographical romance which in its excellence is so absurd that it almost stands for truth itself. Accusing Morris of final hypocrisy does not seem to do him justice. There is a difference between believing in a false story; between knowing it be a lie and yet appearing to take it for granted (Miss Pitchin perhaps); and finally producing a conscious parody whose form always exposes the content — asking nothing of the listeners but to take it or leave it.

The story is simple. The Gadges, backed by Grant-Jackson, are appointed to become the custodians of the celebrated birthplace. Briefly instructed by their predecessor — Miss Pitchin — they take over their duties. Isabel adapts herself quickly to the atmosphere of the literary shrine, the object of pilgrimages. Morris — contrariwise — is exasperated by the absurdity of their position, of the show, squads of tourists, and above all he sees the common "faults" about the writer himself. He asks Isabel, whose "conception of her office was to cherish and enrich the legend" (1982:310), about the morality of

their duties. He finally speaks of his doubts in front of the sympathetic American couple — the only visitors whose opinion about HIM — the poet and the legend concocted about his life is similar to Morris's. Encouraged by this brief encounter, Morris begins to voice his personal opinions in front of the other "pilgrims". A visit from Grant-Jackson eventually takes place — the member of the "Body" (the Board in charge of the birthplace) reprimands the warden. Morris understands that conformity is the only solution. After a span of time (about eighteen months) the selfsame American couple arrives again. "For what had brought them back was not, indubitably, the sentiment of the shrine itself — since he [Gedge] knew their sentiment; but their intelligent interest in the queer case of the priest" (1982:333). Morris treats them to a supreme parody of a lecture about HIM (the Poet). It is a clear sign of his genius but the danger again is that of overdoing the romance so much that the mockery is visible. At the very moment when they are discussing this danger, Grant-Jackson arrives again. This time he comes with congratulations expressing the "Body's" satisfaction with Morris's services.

The nouvelle's symmetry is straightforward — after the introduction about the Gedges getting the appointment — its structure is based on the two contrasting scenes with the Americans always followed by a reported meeting with Grant-Jackson. What Morris and the Hayeses take for honest truth is reprimanded; what they know to be downright mockery is praised.

The actual parallelism of the two subsequent scenes with the Hayeses is matched by a thematic repetition — Miss Pitchin/the Gedges. According to Morris, the Pitchins' simplicity of mind made them adequate for the "show": "They were kept straight by the quality of their ignorance — which was denser even than mine. It was a mistake in us, from the first, to have attempted to correct or to disguise ours" (303). The very question is whether the Pitchins were really all that ignorant? Did not Morris meet Miss Pitchin at exactly the point that he himself ends the story at? If one assumes that James is ironic then Miss Pitchin rightly predicts what is going to happen:

> What do they [the tourists] know, after all, when for us it's our life? I've never moved an inch, because, you see, I shouldn't have been here if I didn't know where I was. No more will you be a year hence — you know what I mean, putting it impossibly — if you don't I expect you do, in spite of your fancies. (298–299)

"Our life" is meant here literally as the bread giving occupation, and if one cannot afford to lose it then one cannot give way to one's fancies. Her words coming true makes the story even more bitter in spite of its comic character.

Another use of the verbal irony is visible in the constant religiously idolizing imagery used in reference to the Birthplace — it first appears as a church with the warden's house like a vicarage attached to it. Later it is referred to as a place of worship — the custodians being the priests. The tourists are the pilgrims etc. Morris's notions of them as squads and hordes, the whole exhibition as a "show" sound absolutely blasphemous.

Eventually, the story's ending is an ironic reversal of the beginning. Whatever the Gedges want to escape from at Blackport — the squeamish intellectual atmosphere, the library, the cheap novels — finally become the things they cultivate at the Birthplace (literally and metaphorically).

The story is essentially about Morris's ideals and the necessity to conform which the hard facts of life impose on him. It results, as with many Jamesian characters, in the typical split between their perception and reality. Usually it is their own choice to see the reality in a certain manner differently from the "objective" facts — Morris does it against his will:

> The point was that he was on his way to become two quite different persons, the public and the private, and yet that it would somehow have to be managed that these persons should live together. (308)

Morris and his "professional" and imposed double become reconciled in the final travesty of the Birthplace routine, which as Ross says, makes the story a "sharply-honed-double-edged comment on the morality of such celebrations" (1966:321).

CHAPTER II

JOSEPH CONRAD'S NOVELLAS

INTRODUCTION

The "substantial" short story has a very special place in the whole of Conrad's work. In comparison with the other two authors, the proportionate relevance of the novellas in Conrad's literary reputation is much greater than in the case of Lawrence or even James. Conrad would not have been the same Conrad had he not written *The Nigger of the "Narcissus"* or *Heart of Darkness*. He did not express his preference for the form as emphatically as James did, but his whole creative process seems to testify that this medium-length narratives were the most congenial with his temperament. Writing the full-length novels (though their expansion was often beyond the author's control) had always been a harrowing experience. The short stories, on the other hand, often appear somewhat "slight" in comparison with his longer pieces.

The classification of texts selected for the formal analysis is based, as previously, on Mary Doyle Springer's distinctions (limited here to an apologue and actions including a tragedy). The observed order is as follows:

I. *Heart of Darkness* — an apologue.

II. *The Secret Sharer* — an action with a serious plot of learning.

III. *The Planter of Malata* — a tragedy.

Classification is particularly difficult in the case of the stories sharing certain thematic similarities as it is with the apologue here and the action with a serious plot of learning. The division into those two classes is complicated by the similarity (in Conrad's case) of the subjects in the two classes: his apologues are essentially about the self-knowledge themes and actions provide realistic stories about the incidents in which the protagonists learned to know themselves better. The confusion arises from the fact that Conrad's apologues concentrate on the process of learning and experience, the inherent feature of any action. On the other hand, no critic is ignorant of the parabolic nature of all of the novellas (actions included) which is evoked by the basic metaphors of the sea, sea life, isolation and distance; by the conventions of the narrative voice and romance. The stories tell a good deal about Conrad's

experiments with the degree of reliability and identification of his narrators. The telling voice and the romance, dream, and fairy-tale are of a particular relevance reverting simultaneously to the roots of the genre and becoming the modern mode of presentation. The Doppelgänger appears in various guises as a means of presentation of the identity and learning themes reconciling the novella's metaphoric and realistic aspects.

I. *HEART OF DARKNESS* — AN APOLOGUE

This analysis will not deal deliberately with the story's interpretation (though it cannot be easily avoided), but with arranging the story's features along the main lines of the current novella theory.

Thematically, structurally and technically, *Heart of Darkness* is reminiscent of Conrad's earlier novellas, namely *The Nigger of the "Narcissus"* and *Youth* visible in Marlow's attempts in explaining the significance of events he had witnessed earlier in his life. He repeats: "I did not see the significance of that wreck at once. I fancy I see it now, but I am not sure — not at all" (1985:72). The story he tells on this occasion is much more ambiguous but the time distance is a clear overtone of *Youth*. The story is at its core essentially about Marlow himself though at the beginning he tries to contradict it by telling his audience that he does not want to bother much with what had happened to him personally.

A most Boccaccian situation is described in the frame. The same company as in *Youth* is having a session of storytelling aboard *Nellie*, a cruising yawl which cannot proceed because of the low tide. Marlow's narrative is meant originally to kill the time. The frame is dominated by the unnamed narrator, the story proper — by Marlow. The function of the frame-story is much more complex than in the case of *Youth* and a great deal of critical discussion has been devoted to it. It is not a mere external "wrapping" to the Congo story, it is closely interrelated with it.

The primary function of the frame is visible already in the first reading. The formidable company of *Nellie* is "fated" to hear about Marlow's "inconclusive experience" whose effect towards the end is that of a parable. In his article, Peter Lindenbaum (1984:703-710) points to the marked contrast of technique between the frame and Marlow's yarn — the former much more geographically detailed and the latter much more vague in this respect. George Walton Williams in *The Turn of the Tide in "Heart of Darkness"* (1963:171-173) had in fact examined the symbolic implications of the very details, seeing, paradoxically, the universal and parabolic meaning in the return to the particular situation of *Nellie* whose position towards the end of the tale, facing the open sea, implies the tale's general nature. Lindenbaum concentrates on the Marlow story's effect on the immediate listeners, the selfsame particulars that Williams examines, for Lindenbaum speak for the audience's persistence in

their own attitudes and judgments (excluding the first narrator). However, the two prominent points remain: (1) different techniques of the frame and the yarn and (2) the impact of Marlow's story on the surrounding company.

Different technique, apart from its inherent symbolism, emphasizes the difference between the two narrators. The first frame narrator is much more matter-of-fact and he qualifies Marlow as "a story-teller" creating an additional perspective. His is the famous sentence that for Marlow "the meaning of an episode was not inside like a kernel but outside" (1985:48) — the sentence which is everso often repeated in reference to Conrad himself.

Seymour L. Gross describes point (2) as "the reflective function of the frame" which "not only serves to reinforce the thematic implications of the story ... but adds a new aspect to the work as well. That the narrator is able to arrive at his moral insight through "literature", as Marlow had arrived at his through experience, demonstrates Conrad's faith in the moral efficacy of experience through literature" (1957:170). To explain: Gross sees in the frame the reflection of themes from Marlow's yarn, which Lindenbaum elaborates writing of the story's impact on the listeners supporting it with the discussed symbolism. In any case both write of the total effect of the repetition of themes on each narrative level resulting ultimately in the novella's expansion of implications. Gross compares the indifference of the Lawyer, the Accountant and the Director to that of the pilgrims, company officials and the fantastic Russian; Marlow becomes for the narrator what Kurtz had originally been for Marlow (a voice merely); the narrator also stands to Marlow in the same relationship as Marlow stood to Kurtz in the original experience (1957:168–169). Lindenbaum elaborates the last two points extending them over the story's total structure describing Marlow's experience as a rite of passage (supported by all the ritualistic elements) reflected in the comparable experience of his listeners who become in turn *initiands* guided by Marlow's tale. Symbolism is strengthened by their general names, unawareness of time (Lindenbaum, 1984:706–707). All those features bring us back to the novella's parabolic qualities.

Conrad consistently relies on repetition elsewhere as well. Marlow deliberately begins his tale speaking of the Romans who first came to England — a disconnected remark which acquires its significance later on. The fate of Marlow's immediate predecessor Freslaven is a bleak introduction to Kurtz himself.

Marlow is the more prominent of the novella's two narrators. In principle his position is similar to that in *Youth*. Telling a story from a distance of time he passes a double judgment — that of Kurtz and himself and he is not sure of either. The story is qualified by Charles May as being written in the narrative voice convention and the metanarrative element is very persistent. Marlow is aware that it is a difficult story even for himself to come to terms with, and that his listeners are not inclined to understand it either. The metafictional level is

closely related to the dream-like quality of the tale. Whatever difficulties Marlow has with the articulation spring from the nightmarish nature of the experience. He begins with the tint of the romance similarly as it was done in *Youth* — his fascination with the map in the shop-window a reminiscence of his childhood passions. Once the whole enterprise is put to motion the adventure grows more and more sinister ending up with the *dance macabre* pattern. The unconsciously registered foreboding images at the beginning (the doctor measuring his scull, the Fates-like women knitting black scarfs and the black cat) will be brought back later. Soon enough Marlow recognizes the whole affair as "a sordid farce" in places "with farcical names where the merry dance of death and trade goes on in a still and earthy atmosphere as of an overheated catacomb". Here, since at the beginning Marlow may still speak with irony, the natives are wearing "grotesque masks" (1985:61-62) but the further he progresses, the greater problems he has to face. Not once he asks: "Do you see him? Do you see the story? Do you see anything? It seems to me I am trying to tell you a dream — making a vain attempt, because no relation of a dream can convey the relation of a dream-sensation..." (1985:82).

Interestingly enough, Marlow's struggle for expression is magnified by the frame narrator and thus he emphasizes that it is a part of the overall story:

> The others might have been asleep, but I was awake. I listened, I listened on the watch for the sentence, for the word that would give me the clue to the faint uneasiness inspired by this narrative that seemed to shape itself without human lips in the heavy night-air of the river. (1985:83)

An excellent examination of the dream qualities of *Heart of Darkness* appeared in Frederick R. Karl's article "Introduction to the *Danse Macabre*: Conrad's 'Heart of Darkness'" (1968:143-156). He begins with the Freudian and psychological perspective and finishes with the general implications of the novella. When Conrad set down to writing his story he had "definite images" in mind and the analysis of the pattern of the intrareferential images is most valuable for the discussion of the novella form. Karl notices that: "every facet of Marlow's experience in the Congo, including the preliminary interview at the Brussels office contains elements of the absurd — that is elements that become a wedge between a man's seeming rationality and the world suddenly irrational and suddenly out of focus" (148). Whatever there is of the absurd, grotesque distortion and even black macabre humour — all those elements are artistically controlled and calculated. It is by no means a disconnected sequence — it is Marlow's substitute for reality.

Marlow's perception of the grotesque and absurd has a special personal aspect — apart from its aspect of accounting for the altogether unaccountable experience. It serves him as a safety valve from sharing the fate of Fresleven or Kurtz. It is also responsible for the comic fragments in the story which Conrad did describe himself as tragi-comedy. Kenneth R. Lincoln writes of the comic distance in the novella (1972:173-182) emphasizing that "Marlow entertains

a comic sense of his own nightmare" (184). This sense of the comic is particularly relevant for the novella's "tail" — technically the most dramatic of the story's scenes — Marlow's interview with the Intended. Obviously the troublesome purport of the final irony has to be projected against the whole of the narrative. Though it seems to be the theoretical "turning point" it is but the natural outcome of the whole adventure.

The story reflects evidently the Doppelgänger convention but Conrad manages to elaborate it considerably due to the tale's structure and technique. Jerome Meckier (1982:373-379) discusses a whole chain of Doppelgängers: Marlow — Kurtz — the anonymous Swedish captain — Fresleven — and finally the opening speaker as Marlow's final double. Their existence can in fact be inferred from the already discussed repetitions and the frame's reflective function. Most critical discussions wind up with the moral and ethical implications of Marlow's recognition of Kurtz's similarity to himself. It would be worthwhile to concentrate on the less exploited excellent technical solutions of this theme uniting it with the "narrative voice" character of the story.

Marlow is compared to Kurtz even before he does it himself. The comparison is prompted by the objectively existing facts. The brick-maker of the central station tells Marlow right into his face: "You are of the new gang — the gang of virtue. The same people who sent him specially also recommended you" (1985:79). The kinship to Kurtz due to their common "special recommendations" will turn up again during their first meeting — Kurtz already knows of Marlow from letters. This misconstrued image of Marlow in the eyes of other pilgrims and the company officials will in fact cause the misinterpretation of his speech. It will blind them to the irony of Marlow's words clearly implying **their**, and not **his**, similarity to Kurtz. A supreme passage in this respect is Marlow's conversation with the manager who explains Kurtz's "vigorous action" as an "unsound method" since time had not been ripe for it yet. As it is, the trade will suffer since the district will remain closed for a time, the remarkable quantity of ivory will have to wait. The manager interprets Marlow's answer literally: "'Do you', said I looking at the shore, "call it 'unsound method'?" "Without doubt" he exclaimed, hotly. "Don't you?"..." (1985:137). It is Marlow who sees the Manager-Kurtz partnership, the former is by no means the more benevolent of the two but he equates Marlow with Kurtz because he is blind to his position. The circle closes on the level of the metanarrative — Marlow's immediate listeners are the "literal" men of the Manager class.

In the conclusion it is worth stressing that in *Heart of Darkness* Conrad experiments with the narrative voice so that it can effectively tell an apologue (without reverting to its reservoir of traditional devices) expressed in the recognizable conventions of the romance, dream and "the double" which become the archetypal manners of perception of experience, this perception is in turn expressed in literature which again becomes experience itself (the

experience of reading). Andrzej Zgorzelski elaborates this question of perception further. The distances existing between the narrator and the story related (temporal, intellectual and emotional) are responsible for the greater degree of narrative impressionism, the represented world is highly determined by the point of view which perceives the surrounding world as absurd, nonsensical and grotesque. The text ceases to be merely informative ("pseudo-objective" as in the earlier Victorian literature) about the story proper — it reflects the creative process itself. The reader — on his behalf — has to participate in the process of literary creation (1984:94).

II. *THE SECRET SHARER* — AN ACTION WITH A SERIOUS PLOT OF LEARNING

A considerable amount of critical deliberation has been devoted to one of the shortest of Conrad's novellas *The Secret Sharer*. It is one of those stories where the convention, structure and technique are absolutely subordinate to the ethico-moral implications.

The captain of the unnamed ship who narrates his experience of holding for the first time "a position of the fullest responsibility" being at the same time the youngest man of the crew (1983:89) begins in the perceptible mood of parable and sea romance, feeling enamoured with his vessel, the voyage being "the appointed task of both our existences to be carried out, far from all human eyes, with only sky and sea for spectators and judges" (1983:88). This is the assertion of the only possible reality in a work of literature — its own fictionality which is always an extended metaphor of the external world.

The captain's peace of mind is soon enough disturbed by the presence of an unexpected intruder — Leggatt — whom the captain himself pulls out of the water. Leggatt beseeches to be hidden aboard of the ship since he has escaped from the *Sephora* where he had killed an insubordinate sailor. The captain, feeling a certain identity with the culprit, agrees to help. Part two of the novella is the presentation of the hide-and-seek game interrupted by the *Sephora's* captain's visit in search of his runaway convict. Tension arises from the captain's apprehension of being exposed to his crew. Both, the captain and Leggatt, plan the latter's escape. He has to swim to Koh-ring, but for his safety, and at the risk of running the ship into jeopardy he has to be brought near enough to the shore in the dark. Finally, Leggatt leaves the ship close enough to the land and the captain makes a narrow escape from damaging the ship having been ominously shown the way by his own hat worn by Leggatt and left floating on the water. None the less, the chances appear to have been well calculated.

The relatively short narrative allows various critical approaches. Conrad's biographers, supported with facts from his life, like to look for the autobiographical clues and implications of his own moral attitude. Other

studies concentrate on the re-working of the raw material of the well known *Cutty Sark* affair (Curley 1962:179–194).

The intrinsic analyses inevitably begin with the story's structure and its interpretation is automatically assumed. *The Secret Sharer* is the exemplary novella written in the Doppelgänger convention and is classified as such by Charles E. May (1983:3296). From the very beginning the captain feels a certain kinship with Leggatt, in fact it induces him to become his accomplice. There are no more doubts about Leggatt's role when the reader learns from the captain that "he followed me like my double on the poop" (1983:94). The impression is strengthened by the recurring mirror-images excellently analysed by Cedric Watts (1977:25–37); by a certain kinship of experience, by assuming the same role when they are both planning the further escape. Moreover, a very emphatic element in this identity theme is the captain's defence of Leggatt which is, at the same time, an accusation of his former master Archbold. Leggatt is the "objectified" and "realistic" self-reflection of the captain who is perfectly conscious of it and applies "the double" convention himself.

Charles E. May who is somewhat "hooked" on metafiction elaborates the problem of self-reflection on the tale and the process of writing. He argues that since the figure of "realistic" Leggatt functions also as the projection of the captain's mind there arises a complicated duality which makes the author even more aware of the artistic process. It really supports what had been said earlier. Within the story the narrator is aware of that process and he is the "internal" organizer of the narrative. May, however, recalls such additional evidence as the symbolic moments of Leggatt's emerging and returning to the sea; the captain's statement that they are not living a boy's adventure tale, but, above all, May clings to the fragment at the beginning when the chief mate finds the scorpion:

> The why and the wherefore of that scorpion — how it got on board and came to select his room rather than the pantry (which was a dark place and more what a scorpion would be partial to) and how on earth it managed to drown itself in the inkwell of his writing-desk — had exercised him infinitely. (Conrad, 1983:89)

Obviously, the passage is not a mere loose-end. It metaphorically restates the whole of Leggatt's affair even before it had begun. May insists on the inkwell/sea parallelism (Leggatt's coming from and returning to it), the former an indispensable implement of any writer. The empirical sea life reality becomes the story's fictionality. He also perceives in the passage the convention similar to animation in films (May, 1983:3296). It all appears a strategy conscious enough to be metafiction.

From structure and technique there is but a step to interpretation. The captain's attitude is ambiguous. There arises the question whether he was to judge the motives of the actions? Many interpretations end outside the novella altogether. Daniel Curley absorbs himself with such "common sense" interpretation. He definitely argues that Leggatt represents the captain's

higher, ideal nature and that his final resolution complies with the good in him (1962:179). Naturally, it can be anticipated that he condemns Archbold (irony in the name?) "in refusing his mate to escape, he has yielded to public pressure and has refused his role as a morally responsible individual" (1962:184).

In such a situation it is safest to assume that the adventure's greatest merit was to teach the captain that there are controversial accidents when none the less decisions have to be made and carried out eventually. There is no one to rely on but one's second self. Krajka and Zgorzelski state that "in the overall organization of meanings of the story, the plot is only an exemplification of the universal laws which are being discovered. Moreover, with the use of the first-person narration these general laws appear on three different levels: 1) man and his environment, 2) man with another man, 3) the attitude towards one's own inner life" (1984:148). The conventions of a symbolic-psychological novel (the Doppelgänger) and that of a mere tale of adventure and crime are organized dynamically allowing for the fusion of the seemingly contradictory elements. Concluding that "the imaginative variety of critical speculation seems to result in large part from the tendency to seek a symmetrical resolution as suitable to the sort of reliable tale that *The Secret Sharer* is assumed to represent, an expectation that aids the reader in passing over inadequately explained elements" (1984:38). This statement refers not only to Conrad but James as well in whose novellas information is derived not merely from the bare tale but also from the technique and the treatment of the tale — the manipulation of the point of view. Troy ought to be quoted at length here:

> The general question of narrative perspective is of course greatly significant for James, Conrad and other early modernists, and in "The Secret Sharer" point of view is maintained with the same unwavering consistency we find with — in the enclosed narrative of another story of similar concerns, James's "The Turn of the Screw" which has ... also elicited interpretive responses moving beyond or tangentially to the information provided in the text. ... with this compact masterpiece Conrad takes to a definite point the shared modernist concern with point of view as expressive of the relationship of the individual to other individuals and to nature of reality itself. (Troy 1984:38)

III. *THE PLANTER OF MALATA* — A TRAGEDY

The Planter of Malata displays on a lesser scale the triangle from *Under the Western Eyes* which here exists between: Renouard — H. Walter (Arthur) — Felicia Moorsom. "In each case the hero is held responsible for the death of a former associate, and his death in each case, particularly upsets the heroine in her relations with the hero" (Land, 1984:208). Of course, in the novella, Renouard did not precipitate his casually picked up assistant's death, he had only concealed it for reasons which could not have sounded convincing to Felicia — the assistant's former fiancée. Roza Jablkowska labels the story as one combining the elements of an uncanny grotesque and an intellectual jest (1961:342).

The story is simple after this introduction. Felicia, her philosopher father and aunt set out on a round the world tour in search of the missing Arthur. For some kind of a financial fraud that the man had been involved in, their engagement was broken and he went to the colonies to start a new life. Eventually he had degraded to the position of an assistant at a silk plantation. He dies there unrecognized even to be a gentleman. In the meantime he is cleared of all the accusations, and Felicia's search is meant as a reparation for all the former wronging. The irony is that Renouard, Arthur's former employer, remains genuinely unaware of the whole situation and falls in love with Felicia. The moment of revelation of Arthur's (alias H. Walter's) identity comes as a surprise to everybody (except the father perhaps). It is too awkward to Renouard to admit Arthur's death and so he invites the searching party to his plantation where he confesses both about Arthur and his own great passion for Felicia. The girl is indignant and covers her embarassment by making up a sentimental ending to the affair; the father is glad she had been taught a lesson; and Renouard, the strong and unbending man, commits suicide having his heart broken.

The story is written in the third-person narration and it is infested with Arthur's ghost. The Editor of the local paper ominously inquires about Renouard's assistant several times and the answers are very reticent. This ambiguous aspect of the story is later explained in favour of Renouard who simply did not want to be pressed to adopt another drop-out. The moment of revelation is the story's structural and Renouard's emotional turning-point. It sheds a new light on the story's opening passages and marks the beginning of the re-examination of the problem. The novella will in fact become a real ghost story once the action shifts to the plantation. At one moment it is even a satiric parody of the spiritualism fashionable in the high society.

Of course, it was probable, but highly unlikely, that Felicia and Renouard had come together and that the planter preferred not to speak about the death of one of his insignificant employees. This is the "unerhörte Begebenheit", fatality and "the maddening thunderbolt of the gods" (Conrad, 1984:58).

Conrad skillfully fuses the story's structure, romance and dream conventions related to two consciences within the story proper, and the ethical dilemma that Renouard has to face. Renouard is affected by Felicia from the very first moment. For him their meetings have a dream- and hallucination-like quality from the beginning. He loses his power of sane judgment. He literally dreams of Felicia where she appears as an ominously crumbling marble monument and he persists in his visions of real life: "Henceforth, without ever trying to resist, he went every afternoon to the house where she lived. He went there as passively as if in a dream" (1984:39). His perception of reality changes as well — Willie is a figure out of a nightmare — "a gigantic, repulsive, and sentimental bat" (1984:39), the aunt is a wax flower.

Felicia also persists in a romance of her own making which is a shallow ideology imposed on the current convention of the high-society she lives in: "This, Mr Renouard, is a work of reparation. I stand for truth here. I can't think of myself" (1984:51). She strongly believes in her own fantasy, approaching Malata she felt the sentiment of romance of the situation. Her moment of revelation is yet to come, but even then she does not profit from it. The invented ending was that the fashionable beauty of Miss Moorsom did find her betrothed only to see him die in her arms. Her persistence in the sentimental story is similar to that of Yvette's in the novella by D.H. Lawrence *The Virgin and the Gipsy* and ultimately serves the same purpose in both narratives — social criticism and the parody of sentimentalism.

The only balanced attitude is that of Professor Moorsom who seems to be perfectly satisfied with the good riddance of Arthur — "the complicated simpleton" as he describes the might-have-been son-in-law. For him the whole search is a "sentimental pilgrimage" in whose genuineness he doubts. Arthur's story is a mere "idealization of a sad reality", Arthur had not been smart enough even to be dishonest. Felicia's romance, through Moorsom's declaration, becomes a means of satire, an attack on the hypocrisy and inefficiency of the young of the fashionable world.

At the point of the conversation with the professor, Renouard is too infatuated to face the truth, but truth it is and he will recognize it when it is expressed unaware by the Editor at the scene of revelation:

> "Fancy living with a gentleman and never guessing. A man, I am certain, accomplished, remarkable, out of the common, since he had been distinguished ... by Miss Moorsom, whom we all admire." (1984:54)

Renouard sees the meaning of Felicia's confabulation and when they approach Malata he feels the spell of the already dead romance.

Felicia's moment of revelation is when Renouard announces Arthur's death. The man appeared nothing but "a sick crow" to him, unimpressive and pitiful, drugging himself (1984:72). Whatever illusions the reader might still have possessed are certainly re-valued now, but Felicia persists in her romantic deception and Renouard realizes that "stuff of dreams, illusions" are not to be conquered. In a way the two protagonists are similar — both are the victims of unalterable dreams — his being the love for the woman.

CHAPTER III

D.H. LAWRENCE'S NOVELLAS

INTRODUCTION

The longer tales written by Lawrence customarily edited and analysed as novellas form two chronological groups: *The Captain's Doll*, *The Fox*, and *The Ladybird* written in 1921, all strongly echoing the World War I experience. *The Princess*, *St. Mawr*, *The Woman Who Rode Away*, *The Escaped Cock* conceived between 1924 and 1927 reflect Lawrence's journeys to America. Technically, the natural consequence of them is *The Man Who Loved Islands*, though no place of action is specified. *The Virgin and the Gipsy* is the only English-set story written at that time. Four of the novellas have, incidentally, their short story counterparts: *St. Mawr* had been written in two versions — the short and the long; *The Princess* had been initially meant to be a novel.

In the analysis of the selected texts, it is worthwhile to combine two aspects simultaneously: chronology and the general classification accepted in the two previous chapters devoted to James and Conrad (based on Springer). Lawrentian novellas form two groups — the earlier ones set in England; and the late narratives which could be labelled as "American". The chronological arrangement of texts allows to demonstrate certain general lines of development — the gradual movement from realism towards symbolism and the immediate effect of it on the novella. One can observe the gradual generalization and abstraction of actions resulting in the apologue qualities of the "American" stories. Lawrence obstinately reverts to the same themes in his stories but the gradual change of technique allows for them to be differently told.

Most of the "English" novellas happen to be successful serious actions with plots of learning written in the realistic, "domestic" mode of presentation. Perhaps only *The Ladybird* is an early attempt at telling an apologue.

In two of the "American" novellas — *St. Mawr* and *The Princess* — the theme of learning and self-discovery is continued but the technique, however, is conspicuously characteristic of the apologues. To reconcile those two aspects,

the two novellas can be conveniently labelled as "action-apologues" and Springer's class of the example apologues seemed to be the best critical label offered so far. The final three stories could be with little hesitation referred to as apologues. The selection of texts is as follows:

I. *The Fox* — an action with a plot of learning.

II. *St. Mawr* — the "Sleeping Beauty" example apologue.

III. *The Man Who Died* — an apologue.

I. THE FOX — AN ACTION WITH A PLOT OF LEARNING

The Fox has a special place of its own in Lawrence's work since the full understanding of it will never be achieved in isolation from his *Psychoanalysis of the Unconscious* and *Fantasia of the Unconscious* published in 1921 an 1922, respectively.

The novella fared extremely with the critics since it is capable of satisfying diverse interests. It illustrates well the psychoanalytical approach — in its extreme concentrating on the "spicy" relationship between the two women protagonists. Charles May includes it in the discussion of the fairy-tale and dream conventions. Other critics interpret its symbolism and the recurrent visual images. The very structure of the novella deserves a separate treatment — it is well proportioned with a turning-point and a "longer tail" at the end which provide interesting final readings of the story. Mary Doyle Springer classifies *The Fox* (along with *The Virgin and the Gipsy*) as an action with a serious plot of learning (or perhaps "failed learning").

The Fox was first written in 1918 and put into final form in Sicily in 1921, immediately after Lawrence had written the foreword to *Fantasia of the Unconscious*. The story was finally given a "longer tail" as Lawrence himself called it (Moore 1982:436). As with many of his stories *The Fox* is based on some kind of authentic experience. In 1918 Lawrence and Frieda lived in Berkshire — the region described also in *Aaron's Rod* and *Kangaroo*. The very setting and authentic figures of the two girls from Grimsbury Farms where Lawrence stayed for a while, were transported into the story. Comically enough, Harry T. Moore says in his biography of Lawrence *The Priest of Love*, in real life the part of the young soldier Henry belonged to the foxlike Lawrence himself (1982:368).

Bearing in mind that the novella developed out of an original in size about one third of the final version, the story should not surprise by its brevity and simplicity. Two girls, "usually known by their surnames, Banford and March" as the opening sentence goes, try running together a farm, making their living by poultry. The enterprise turns out a crushing failure. The women cannot cope with the livestock and the situation is worsened by the war conditions, but "one evil there was greater than any other" — that pest of a fox which continually carried away their chickens. Exasperated by the fox, and the

successive mishaps, the women grow irritable and tired of each other. Months passed and things did not improve. March's futile attempt to kill the fox ended up only with her growing sense of a spell that the animal had over her.

Things change one dull November evening when a young soldier arrives at their doorstep believing that the farm still belongs to his grandfather, the previous owner of the place. The youth, at least a ten years the women's junior, stays at the farm. Henry does not interfere with the farmyard activities but the atmosphere changes considerably. He is the one who finally shoots the fox. The young man conceives gradually of marrying March and a fierce competition between him and Banford develops. March eventually agrees to marry and Henry leaves the Bailey Farm for his military camp arranging to marry March and carry her off to Canada. In his absence, March changes her mind and sends a letter cancelling all the prior arrangements. Henry's reaction is immediate — he takes a leave of absence and goes to March and Banford only to meet the two women busy felling a dry Scotch-fir-tree. Giving them a helping hand he warns Banford that the tree might hit the fence where she is standing. Banford understands those words as Henry's "being falsely solicitous" and does not move an inch. The outcome is just as Henry had predicted — the tree falls right down on the woman. Henry's and March's marriage ends the story.

Structurally the story is neat, well-balanced and self-contained. It can be read as a realistic story enclosed within the span of a couple of months; from the "heavy, dark November" evening to the "damp December afternoon" when the accident took place, up to Christmas when March and Henry were married and went to Cornwall. The routine of the farm life is described in the introductory section mainly in the third person omniscient narration, highlighted only by the scene of March's first encounter with the fox. The two closing paragraphs of the exposition begin twice with the same phrase: "the months passed" referring once to the girls daily routine and then to March's state of mind where the presence of the fox, just as their daily routine, "had become a settled effect in their spirit, a state permanently established, not continuous but always recurring" (1982:141). It is a most clever way of introducing simultaneously two levels of narration which from that moment on will exist concurrently up to Banford's death where the "realistic" objective conflict will be eliminated.

From the moment of Henry's intrusion into the women's household the story proper begins. Speaking in realistic terms, it is most natural that hostility is bred between Banford and Henry, both being jealous of March. An exaggeration of the very theme leads to the numerous psychopathological interpretations of the text.

Simultaneously, since the fox obsession of March is as permanent a state as her relationship with Banford, the psychological theme is carried on, strengthened by Henry's physical similarity to the animal.

There is a considerable shift in technique. From now on up to the climactic accident the scene prevails, resulting in a more dramatic presentation — though not entirely free of the narrative commentary. As it is always with drama, the reading requires more effort, the two levels of narration become closely interwoven. Automatically a double perspective is produced — that of the realistic story as enacted by the main characters, limited in their individual visions and guided by their unique desires; and the reader's own perspective and understanding of what is going on, based on his more extensive view of the whole narrative and the common sense. Invariably, the effect of the dramatic irony is heightened, especially that the reader is not entirely deprived of the access to the characters minds. Absolute mastery in this respect is achieved in the crucial scene of Banford's death where the scene and the commentary intermingle in a manner that makes the reader literally spell-bound:

> And as he (Henry) looked into the sky, like a huntsman who is watching a flying bird, he thought to himself: "If the tree falls in just such a way, and spins just so much as it falls, then the branch there will strike her (Banford) exactly as she stands on top of that bank".
>
> He looked at her again. She was wiping the hair from her brow again, with that perpetual gesture. In his heart he had decided her death. A terrible still force seemed in him, and a power that was just his. If he turned even a hair's breath in the wrong direction, he would lose the power. "Mind yourself, Miss Banford", he said. And his heart held perfectly still, in the terrible pure will that she should not move.
>
> "Who, me, mind myself?" she cried ... "Why, do you think you might hit me with an axe?" "No, it's just possible the tree might, though", he answered soberly. But the tone of his voice seemed to her to imply that he was only being falsely solicitous and trying to make her move because it was his will to move her. (1982:198-199)

The reader realizes three things in an instance: Henry's true intention, Banford's fatal obstinacy and his own (the reader's) horror.

Leibowitz insists on the repetitive structure and the obvious repetition is the double narrative level. However, Lawrence cunningly avoids re-telling the story again or re-fighting the battle between March and Banford after Henry's return to the camp, by inserting March's letter, the prominence of which is quite obvious. What Henry and the reader should infer from it is that the matter must have been discussed and revised over at the Bailey Farm. The letter stands out in the text and further complicates the action. It seems the most economical device (though a conventional one) that Lawrence could have thought out for his novella.

The concluding part, March's musings in Cornwall, returns again to the straightforward third-person narration reflecting her inner consciousness.

Most critics, as it could be expected, concentrate on the symbolic meaning of the novella. Leo Gurko remarks in "D.H. Lawrence's Greatest Collection of Stories — What Holds It Together" (1972:173–182) that the first encountered element is the title which is a symbol of a figure within. The fox of the title is the emblem for Henry. Initially, it is the animal fox that March gets obsessed

with — "it always recurred at unexpected moments, just as she was going to sleep at night, or just as she was pouring water into the tea-pot, to make tea — it was the fox, it came over her like a spell" (1982:141). This is precisely the way the fox will appear in the story, its presence marking the high points of action. A pattern of intricately associated images gradually develops. At the first meeting with Henry, March "already under the influence of his strange, soft, modulated voice, stared at him spell-bound. He had a ruddy, roundish face, with fairish hair, rather long, flattened to his forehead with sweat. His eyes were blue and very bright and sharp. On his cheeks, on the fresh ruddy skin were fine hair, like a down, but sharper" (1982:143). Henry is obviously the human fox. A more detailed study of Henry's foxlike physiognomy, associated symbolism and reference to the *Fantasia of the Unconscious* can be found in Lawrence Jones's article "Physiognomy and the Sensual Will in *The Ladybird and The Fox*" (1980:1–29).

Henry's task in the story is to destroy his two major opponents: the symbolic fox which is associated with March's deeper, unfulfilled desires, and Banford who is the "objective" obstacle on their way to marry. Henry overcomes both, by killing the two successively. Comparison can be sought with *The Captain's Doll*. In *The Fox* the order of the structural and symbolic turning-points is reversed: first the animal is shot, March makes up her mind to marry, changes emotionally (though her emotional change is a question up to the very end), now the death of Banford is absolutely inevitable. At moments there is a supreme convergence of the two themes as for example in March's dream of Banford's death which she had immediately after the shooting of the fox. In the dream she cries her heart out after her friend's death and lines her coffin with the fox-skin (1982:171–172).

A system of interesting cross-relationships is formed — Henry is the physical embodiment of March's hidden desires connected with the animal fox; Banford is the realistic counterpart of that part of March that hesitates and doubts, and Banford takes advantage of it. The shooting of the fox and the death of the woman are necessary to liberate March and enable her to love Henry. Leo Gurko analyses this motif as the "Sleeping Beauty" motif of folklore. The young soldier frees March from the evil spell. "Her heterosexual nature slumbering beneath the lesbian surface, is released from its entombment by the insistent force of his desire for her" (Gurko 1972:174). This dreaming-waking theme can be analysed in Freudian terms as in the article by Louis K. Grieff "Bittersweet Dreaming in Lawrence's *The Fox*" (1983:7–16). Henry and March are seen here in a visionary dream-like chase throughout the best part of the story — the dream ending once they are married and have to come to terms with their future. The fairy-tale and dream conventions are applied to it by Charles May, both devices used here to create grotesque, caricatured and ironic version of the fairy-tale story (May, 1983:3309).

It must be remembered though that the story is also about March's identity and integrity, it tells of the split within her, of the opposition between the irrational and the rational, embodied on the realistic level in the fox and in her friend Banford, respectively. And this is perhaps the ultimate resonance of the story.

Following the theory of the novella's multiple narrative levels, interesting questions arise in connection with Banford's death and the aftermath. As Charles May says — in realistic terms Banford's death is a sheer murder. Symbolically, of course it means March's integrity and liberation. What follows is a new kind of love, a new quality of life symbolized by the couple's intention to move to Canada.

F.R. Leavis commended the story's economy and precision combined with a great complexity of thought. He wrote of the fox-motif: "in all its development it is remarkable for its inevitability of truth and the economy and precision of art", and that the drama of resolution on Henry's side and irresolution on March's has the dignity given to it by March's loyalty to Banford (1981:312, 318). A continuous process of the "heightening" and intensification of internal symbolism will be observed in the successive novellas — developing from the unique, domestic, contextual symbol, up to the most primeval and independent, derived from myth and ritual. It is worth remembering that *The Fox* (along with *The Captain's Doll*) was one of the first of the works in the Lawrentian novella sequence.

Finally, some remarks about the style. Monroe Engel writing on the continuity of Lawrence's short novels (1958:201–209) describes it as "a markedly objective style verging on irony or a kind of satire with only the purest comedy. The elastic fluency of the style also allows direct seriousness, even earnestness" (201). It is most true, the greatest merit of it being that though in summary the story approaches allegory, it in fact resists any kind of abstraction, to repeat after Ian Gregor (1959:10–21).

Up to the point coinciding more or less with the end of the exposition, the situation is subtly comic, the humour rising from the ironic incongruity — two females in the roles of men, the farm life turned upside down. "The two women are performing a travesty of farming, just as in their personal lives they are performing a travesty of marriage" (Julian Moynahan. *The Deed of Life.* 1963:197), and the style reflects this disorder, this death-in-life metaphor inherent in the description.

The tone changes with the appearance of Henry. The characters will speak from now on more for themselves and their speech will reflect their social status — lower middle-class. Though far from "high brow" literariness they will convincingly carry out their roles. More than in the other stories the contrast between the narrator's and the characters' speech is felt so that there is still room for Lawrence and the full resonance of his lyrical prose.

II. ST. MAWR — THE "SLEEPING BEAUTY" EXAMPLE APOLOGUE

St. Mawr is Lawrence's longest novella of over 150 pages in the standard Penguin edition. The story should be of particular interest to any of Lawrence's biographers since the germ of that novella is to be found in that episode of Lawrence's and Frieda's lives when they were closely associated with the slightly ménage dérangé of Mrs. Luhan in Taos. The two principal characters (Lou Carrington and Mrs. Witt) Lawrence resuscitated from his past — Elizabeth Humes and her mother (Moore 1982:496). The two were American (southern) women whom Lawrence had met in Capri, and later, having seen the Americans "in their own setting, Lawrence could now project these women against both European and American backgrounds". This is, to draw parallels, a most Jamesian situation characteristic of his "international theme" stories.

The story begins in England. Lou, a lively American girl of twenty-five, is married to Henry Carrington (Rico), the son of an Australian baronet. Rico — elegant and handsome — is a fashionable portrait painter making his name in London. However, the marriage is a failure, or it became "more like a friendship, Platonic", without sex (279). The couple is being watched by Mrs. Witt — Rico's belle-mère — the symbol of the American woman — democratic and independent. The title comes from the name of the horse St. Mawr that Lou buys for Rico. The horse is a splendid animal that fascinates Lou but scares the breath out of Rico. Whenever Rico is to ride him the animal is most insubordinate. The final accident occurs in the country when the horse limps Rico and smashes the face of another beau. Rico, hurt and vindictive, decides to sell the horse to Flora Manby who is very fond of Rico, and who decides to geld the stallion. In order to save the animal Lou and Mrs. Witt leave Rico and England and go to the States, towing along St. Mawr and two servants — the Indian Phoenix and the Welsh groom Lewis. The closing part of the narrative takes place in the States (Texas) where St. Mawr is "seduced" by a long-legged Texan mare; and later at a ranch in the South-West near Santa Fe.

Geographically and structurally, the novella is divided into two parts — the English and the American. The story's length is a very sensitive problem — the long American "tail" is detrimental to the overall dramatic effect of the English part with the disastrous accident at its climax. On the other hand, the "tail" modifies the implications of the story. Had *St. Mawr* ended with the Witts's escape to America, it would have meant triumph for the two women, as it is, the story might well begin over again.

A number of themes in *St. Mawr* — both realistic and symbolic — has been already used in the "domestic" novellas. But this time for all the similarities, Lawrence avoids the schematic pattern of its predecessors as it will be demonstrated. The sexless marriage of Lou and Rico is reminiscent of another story *The Ladybird* or the relationship of the two women in *The Fox*.

The handsome blue eyed men (Rico, Frederick Edwards) are like Basil of the former story mentioned. Louise — whose life is not really what she expects it to be — is something of Daphne (*The Ladybird*) or Yvette (*The Virgin and the Gipsy*). The Indian Phoenix and the aboriginal little Welshman Lewis are the Henry (*The Fox*), Count Dionys (*The Ladybird*) or the gipsy types. Symbolically, the Great God Pan, spoken of at the dinner table the day before the excursion, and later in the evening discussed between the mother and the daughter, is parallel to the Dionysus Zegreus analogy in *The Ladybird*.

Mrs Witt at moments becomes Lady Beveridge, at others she is that toad of the Granny from *The Virgin and the Gipsy* — the object of satire and ridicule. At the same time, by her wit, irony and caustic sarcasm of the intensity of "prussic acid", she exposes the folly of others. If she is the "belle-mère" (with Rico's characteristically English pronunciation), her son-in-law, in his peachy silk shirts, is nothing but an "apricot" to her.

Finally, there is the central symbol of the powerful animal — St. Mawr. It is neither the wild fox nor the ladybird, it is not the dead doll. The horse has always been a potent symbol for Lawrence — he wrote about it in the *Apocalypse*; the horse dealer's sons all come from the same stable in *The Horse Dealer's Daughter*. St. Mawr's function in that novella is that of a catalyst for all the surrounding characters. It is most interesting to trace the gradual accumulation of the symbolic implications connected with the animal. The story begins with an equine allusion — Rico is "just like a horse that is edging away from its master: to know how completely he was mastered" (1982:276). Contrasted with St. Mawr, of whom Rico is afraid from the very beginning, Lou grows aware of her husband's deficiency, and the animal's independence has a particular appeal to her:

> What was it? Almost like a god looking at her terribly out of the everlasting dark, she had felt the eyes of that horse; great, glowing, fearsome eyes, arched with a question, and containing a white blade of light like a threat. What was this nonhuman question; and his uncanny threat? She didn't know. He was some splendid demon, and she must worship him. (287)

This is only the beginning. Somewhere half-way through, the evening before the excursion, Lou admits that if she is to see the Great God Pan in anything, then it is in St. Mawr.

The most apocalyptic vision that the animal inspires is the one Lou sees immediately after the crucial accident. The accident makes her realize the existence of the omnipresent evil and the horse had given an outlet to it. The circumstances of the fall are significant. Did St. Mawr jerk because he was afraid of the dead adder? Did the fashionable tune, whistled by Rico, so incongruent with the horse's primeval nature, annoy the animal? Or was it a sheer vengeance of a slave? Whatever it was, it made Lou aware of the existence of evil:

> She became aware of evil, evil, evil, rolling in great waves over the earth. Always she had thought there was no such thing — only a mere negation of good. Now, like an ocean to whose surface she has risen, she saw the dark-grey waves of evil rearing in a great tide.

> And it had swept mankind away without mankind's knowing. It had caught up the nations as the rising ocean might lift the fishes, and was sweeping them on in a great tide of evil ... (340)

Also that bell marc (belle-mère) of Mrs Witt is only too clever not to see what the horse stands for. The little Welsh groom Lewis — the closest human being to St. Mawr, who knows of the horse's "raw spot" and that one has to meet him "half-way" — is not by accident Mrs Witt's object of affection.

The Indian Phoenix, who also belongs to the Witt party, is the least sincere of them all. There is something of Yvette in him — the desire to follow the call of blood but not on his own, only with the Witt women who represent for him the "establishment".

Speaking in terms of structure, the first part, up to the women's departure to the States, is dramatic with very strong comic fragments exposing the triviality and the superficiality of the young generation and the parochialism of provincial England. The irony is that Rico, one of the young, is an artist expected to possess a certain sensitivity, an observer of life, and yet St. Mawr is nothing for him but a figure in his dead compositions.

The accident is a very strong structural point — in its consequences it is not tragic and the wounds hurt less but mean more (e.g. the disfigured handsome face of the young Edwards). The fall releases all the associated visions and, on the realistic plane, it marks the division into the two opposing camps. The division had been simmering up from the very start. Through the description of the states of mind and the use of dramatic irony, Lawrence achieved from the beginning the effect of perfect communication between the allied individuals, and excluded the opponents from the full understanding. The culmination of this method, of course, is the Dean's tea at Mrs Witt's after the accident. From that scene onwards, it is an open battle between those that want to castrate St. Mawr (a very symbolic operation in itself) and those who want to protect the animal.

Lou and Rachel Witt's departure for America closes this self-contained part of the story in a manner similar to Henry and March's wedding in *The Fox*. In both cases the longer "tails" follow. In *The Fox* the lyrical narrative is more of an afterthought to the story. In *St. Mawr* the heroines and the readers have to revise their opinions. Coming from England to Texas is like jumping from the pan into the fire — from the unreal "poisonous" England into the world of the "noble cowboy of the films" and the "film psychology" (1982:400). St. Mawr is tamed by the Texan mare, and there is a striking incongruity seeing Phoenix "ready to trade his sex, which, in his opinion, every white woman was secretly pining for, for the white woman's money and social privileges" (1982:405). Compared with other novellas, it is a very inconclusive ending. Whatever has been so meticulously worked out in the first part is here one by one destroyed.

Another very interesting reading of the novella accounting also for the questionable ending is the attempt of Anne Darling Barker "The Fairy Tale and St. Mawr" (1984:76 83). The author sees St. Mawr as an inversion of the Sleeping Beauty motif (as opposed to the awakening of the Sleeping Beauty in *The Fox*), "an inversion of the tale of the enchanted princess who awakens only with the kiss of the prince" (76). Lou of St. Mawr does the opposite — she gradually withdraws from her social and personal involvements and finally goes to sleep. The story begins happily as most fairy-tales end, and it rejects the "happily ever after" at its close.

The problem of the ending is raised again. For the fairy-tale it is a most unsatisfactory one. The expected balance is here disturbed. There is however this alternative in the interpretation, which Baker overlooks, that the inadequacy of the fairy-tale convention is being here **consciously** demonstrated by Lawrence to increase the reader's awareness of "the complexities facing his generation", of the world of the distorted fairy-tale and reversed and ironic romance.

III. THE MAN WHO DIED — AN APOLOGUE

When the first part of *The Escaped Cock* (later cautiously retitled into *The Man Who Died*) appeared in the American magazine *Forum* it raised very unfriendly feelings between the baffled reading public and Lawrence whose reaction was: "not fit to read; my lovely story! Oh, their dirty, mean, poky little minds!" (Moore 1982:560).

Lawrence must have considered such reactions setting down to write of the theme of Christ's resurrection after which Christ realizes his own great mistake and gives up his vocation as a prophet. On his journey he meets the priestess of the temple of the Searching Isis who takes Jesus for the missing Osiris and finally is with Christ's child. Obviously this process of anthropomorphization of the already manlike Jesus must have sounded like a downright blasphemy to the more conservative readers. Parallel to the story is the theme of the cock tied to the tree by a string so that he does not escape into the outer world from the little yard.

In its theme it is a much more "biblical" story than another of Lawrence's novellas *The Man Who Loved Islands* whose protagonist escapes from the world at large and creates a realm of his own where, in total isolation from the outer world and its commitments, he can make a Godlike figure of himself; in technique — it is much more dramatic and "secular". There does exist a certain parallelism between Jesus and Cathcart who loved islands — this is the reversed process becoming God and resigning to be one, followed, in both cases, by the gradual reduction of the self. In Cathcart's case it ends with the total disintegration of the self along with the paradoxically increasing

self-love; Christ learns to perceive the egoism of his virginal love and becomes the self. In both cases this is the fundamental theme of identity. Christ says to Madeleine:

> But my mission is over, and my teaching is finished and death has saved me from my own salvation. Oh, Madeleine I want to make my single way in life, which is my portion. My public life is over, the life of my selfimportance. Now I can wait on life, and say nothing, and have no one betray me. I wanted to be greater than the limits of my hands and feet, so I brought betrayal on myself. And I know I wronged Judas, my poor Judas. For I have died and now I know my limits. Now I can live without striving to sway others any more. For my reach ends in my fingertips, and my stride is no longer than the ends of my toes. Yet I would embrace multitudes, I who have never truly embraced even one. (565)

Cathcart, the limited human, has nowhere to **escape** from but the phenomenal world and thus ends up in nothingness. For Christ, the phenomenal world is the **refuge**.

The inclusion of the hapless bird in the story is Lawrence's return to the old method of constructing the story around a central symbol. It is worth mentioning on the occasion that Part One of the story where the cock is so conspicuous had been written first and only a year later Lawrence added Part Two. The two sections seem as separate stories altogether. The myth of the second part (of Lawrence's own making) exists independently of Part One. Thus the symbol was much more effective when the symbol functioned as a challenge to the world of reality. In *The Man Who Died* such challenge does not exist, the themes run parallel to the critical moment (there is also a conceptual similarity between Christ's condition and that of the bird) and then the symbol disappears. Christ and the bird, "for he too was adventuring for the first time into the wider phenomenal world" start on their venture together. Christ realizes on his way that "life bubbles variously" and says: "Why should I have ever wanted it to bubble all alike? What a pity I preached to them! ... But I must toss this bird into the seethe of phenomena, for he must ride his wave. How hot he is with life!" (1982:572). Inevitably, the cock is freed.

Cathcart **escapes** from the phenomenal world; Christ **descends** to it only to be entangled in the pagan myth of Isis-Osiris. The biblical **Ascension** theme is literally turned upside down. Christ, the prophet and the healer of the souls decides to be a physician — the healer of the flesh.

Robert MacDonald juxtaposes the symbolic worlds of *The Princess* and *The Man Who Died* as the illustrations to Lawrence's later cosmological and psychological theory, his personal mythology where there are the two kinds of union — the negative union of the opposites (*The Princess*) and the positive union of the man who died and the priestess of Isis, "the soft, delicate union of pure creation" (1979:289).

Earlier, MacDonald wrote of "The Union of Fire and Water: An Examination of the Imagery of *The Man Who Died*" (1977:34–51), and saw the merit of the story in the integration of the myth and the symbolism — "myth may give structure to the story but the symbolism must penetrate to the core".

As myth he classifies the archetypal substrata of the story — the theme of resurrection is planted "in nature, in the rebirth of the sun, the land, the crops, in the force of the sea, in the sexuality of the living things" (1977:36). Beneath this archetype Lawrence builds up his own, personal symbolism, he charges the old myths with his own mythology (see *Etruscan Places*) of "dark sun" and "new man" (the myth underlying also *The Ladybird* but the whole is additionally governed by the mimesis of the social convention).

The Man Who Died, the last novella analyzed here, is the last major work of Lawrence. According to Larry LeDoux this novella is the ultimate realization of Lawrence's chief concerns in all of his fiction ("a celebration of the physical, non-rational passionate life of the body, phallic consciousness, the communion of the blood between man and woman"). Aesthetically, he sees it as "the climactic triumph of an artistic and mythopoeic imagination in a work of art which is simultaneously the recreation of an old myth and the creation of a new one" (1972:132).

CONCLUSIONS

The time span of the publication of the selected novellas embraces about forty years — roughly from 1890 to 1930. Here is the place to synthesize the analyses of the necessarily very narrow selection of the works of the three masters of the form in English literature — Henry James, Joseph Conrad and David Herbert Lawrence. The novella had a different significance for each writer — James found its length most congenial for his artistic and editorial purposes; Conrad wrote his greatest masterpieces at the novella-length continuing the process started by James of forming the principles of the modern novel which had been becoming increasingly shorter; and D.H. Lawrence often re-worked his earlier short stories endowing them with the qualities of full-length novels. The synthesis will concentrate on the novellas hitherto discussed, assuming that they all represent an identifiable literary genre.

I. REALITY — PERCEPTION — CONVENTION

The common feature of all the texts is their realism. For the very superficial reader there is always a story to read about, action set in the realistic environment of the Jamesian country houses, the trying events and hardships of the sea life in Conrad's tales, the lives of the English farms in D.H. Lawrence to name but a few possibilities. The technique of each of the writers is responsible for the transformation of that reality, for deepening the significance of this outward realism. The term used by Charles May had been that of the "metaphorical objectification" of reality in the novella and it seems to be very true of all the three writers. The stories are all about reality and its appearance, or better, reality as it appears to the narrator or the protagonist, the centre of consciousness, or finally to the reader, is always an extensive metaphor and to understand the novella is to see it as a metaphor of reality. This confirms some of the modern approaches to the novella but here it is possible to show more specifically how exactly the novella functions as a metaphor.

The two extremes in this selection would be James and Lawrence — Conrad remaining the middle figure who seems to profit from both strategies. James manipulates with the point of view, with the narrative technique;

Lawrence constructs an overtly symbolic plane above the mimetic presentation while remaining conservative technically. If one were to write of the continuity and change in this respect then there would be more in common between James and Conrad, and Conrad and Lawrence. Conrad manipulates with the point of view much as James does and his stories share certain archetypal features with Lawrence's.

James and Conrad pick up an incident and let it be represented, re-told or re-written by a definite consciousness. A good deal of critical attention has been devoted to two of their novellas: *The Turn of the Screw* (1897) and *Heart of Darkness* (1899) both published after the first meeting of the two writers in 1897. The whole relationship of the two authors, the similarities and differences between their works are described by Elsa Nettels in the book *James and Conrad* where one chapter is devoted to "The Drama of Perception" (1977: 44–79). Their novellas become the representations of their characters' perceptions of reality. In Conrad the perception is more actively confirmed by the action the character takes, in James it is characteristically limited to the mind only.

Apart from the "objective" situation, the novellas represent the "subjective" experience of the selfsame action and as Nettels puts it: "their (James's and Conrad's) preoccupation with the way their characters see the world and feel their respective situations led both novelists to create characters who serve as centres of consciousness and whose point of view provides a unifying frame for the work" (1977:45). The narrative becomes even more complicated when the novella is enclosed in the conventional Boccaccian frame which provides an additional perspective and multiplies the intermediaries between the story proper and the report edited for the reader's benefit. Of James's novellas discussed here only *The Turn of the Screw* is an instance of the "framed in" story, among Conrad's works, the supreme example in this respect is *Heart of Darkness*. Roger Ramsay says that in the respective stories "Conrad was finding his genius, James was playing with his" (1971:141). The point is not of that who emulated whom but the fact that the exploitation of the point of view had been recognized by both as the very method of making the most of their relatively brief works.

Perception of reality and the articulation of that perception which eventually becomes the literary text, the novella itself, is inseparable from any consideration of the literary convention and the self-reflective nature of the novella. Charles May speaks of the narrative voice convention as equal to that of the romance, tragedy, dream, "double" etc. The contention here would be that in all of the novellas here discussed whenever there exists a perceptible narrative voice it governs other conventions. The narrative voice is selfreflective in the sense that the novellas are perceptibly narrated and it is the narrator's susceptibility to perceive reality in a certain convention. In other words, *The Spoils of Poynton* reminds of a stagey drama because the narrator

wants reality to be stage-like and he reminds the reader of his intention quite openly. *Heart of Darkness* is initially conceived as a romance because Marlow remembers it as such. The supreme principle though is that the represented reality is an artistic creation, the result of a creative process. Taking Marlow one might illustrate what James had been doing with his less intrusive centres of consciousness: "With Marlow, in fact, James's registering consciousness is wholly dramatized as regards both the tale and its telling; it is also internalized in the sense that it is fully adapted to the direct relation of the individual's inner thoughts and feelings as to the description of the external world" (Ian Watt, 1978:164).

II. THEMES AND CLASSIFICATION

The characteristics and the attitudes of the informing narrative voice are closely connected with the themes of the novellas. The Jamesian narrator speaks from the position of an aesthete whose tales originate from certain ideas which obsessively occupy him even before the tale is well under way. Those preoccupations with ideas are confirmed by the novella's progression. The stories illustrate the development of certain metaphors initially conceived. The final proof for the metaphor's validity is frequently the confrontation with empirical reality represented in the text in the form of drama. If necessary, the initial position of the narrator or the centre of consciousness, his belief and illusions have to be checked (e.g. *The Altar of the Dead*). This aspect of Jamesian themes automatically implies repetition that Leibowitz so much insists upon. In this light all Jamesian novellas possess plots of learning both in respect to the fictitious characters and the reader who should profit from the new knowledge even if the characters are reluctant to do so. To classify Jamesian novellas one would have to look at the significance of his topics for James himself, James hardly ever touches upon the archetypal themes in the sense Conrad and Lawrence do. His novellas remain very intimate for the registering consciousness. Apart from *Benvolio* (a very early story of James) one does not find the typical apologue detachment, distance, the immediate mood of the parable. His parables are about the process of creation of parables. As opposed to Conrad and Lawrence, Jamesian protagonists have to come to terms with internalized conflicts, conflicts of ideas. The potential change of attitude would require a reassessment of their attitudes once they confront reality, society. The social background brings together James and Lawrence in respect to the satirical qualities of their works which appear irrespectively of any qualification.

Conrad's novellas deal with the vital moments in the protagonists' lives. The conflicts are those that every human being has to face at some moment in his life. There is no return for the protagonist to the stage before the climactic event, the consequences are irreversible. The process of learning has been very vital for all of his apologues and actions of learning.

The dramatic situations in the novellas by Lawrence had been perhaps more diversified but his novellas also deal with the turning points in the characters' lives often marked by the beginning of a new life, departure to a new place, possible because they are that much wiser.

In the light of these analyses the strict division into apologues and actions with serious plots of learning becomes very problematic. The plots of the actions might be generalized to the degree of the apologues, and apologues deal essentially with specific actions. It does not undermine the distinction in general, but in reference to the novella there exists a contradiction between Leibowitz's expansion of themes through the very intensive treatment of them and Springer's split into the two categories of apologues and actions (especially the example apologues). For Springer expansion is reserved for the overt allegories and intensity for actions, while the tendency of the modern novella is towards the allegory and the parable.

In the analytical sections a provisional ordering of the novellas along Springer's classification had been maintained but, generalizing, it can be said that the prevailing tendency is towards the presentation of reality as experienced by the narrator, the central consciousness or the protagonist. Their perceptions are expressed in marked literary conventions, through the parody of these conventions or through grotesque vision (according both to the inclinations of the fictitious characters and the writer himself). The awareness of the convention expressed in the metafictional commentary and the awareness that it is only the appearance of the world at large both imply consequent knowledge of that world and that of one's identity in that world — the supreme parabolic theme.

III. IMAGERY AND SYMBOLISM

Terms like metaphor have already been used. The use of images and symbols will be understood here as part of the narrative technique contributing to the novella's brevity and yet retaining its overall complexity. Henry James always limits the milieu of his action to the absolute essentials but he attempts to put to multiple use the details that are eventually left. In each of his novellas persistent patterns of recurrent imagery are conspicuous (often announced already in the title) e.g. the battle imagery in *The Spoils of Poynton*. Of the method Elsa Nettels wrote that "images once introduced may develop into a chain of metaphors marking the stages in the development of action" (1977:67). In fact they not only mark the stages in the progression of action, they substitute it. James's great art of foreshortening very much depends on the substitution of drama by powerfully suggestive imagery. A similar process is visible in Conrad, the difference, however, is that James works from an idea to the image while Conrad begins with the images from the physical world which become ideas as the story goes along as in the case of *Heart of Darkness* where

"the unexplored wilderness at the centre of Africa" gradually expands "into the metaphor of the heart of darkness, thus moving from the tangible to the abstract" (Nettels 1977:71). The prominence of certain images in Lawrence's works is often announced already in the titles (*The Fox, St. Mawr*). Occurring in the tangible world of realities they systematically remind of the hidden desires of the characters.

David Lodge classifies James as the precursor of modernism. The archetypal qualities of Conrad's and Lawrence's novellas bring forward the chief concern of the epoch for the mythical, the escape into the prehistorical and the primitive. Far as this might seem to be departing from James, it is the continuation of the process started by his metaphorization of the texts. The aim of the mythopoeic method is to find the identity of the 20th century European. K.K. Ruthven analyzes the Frazerian-anthropological elements in the *Heart of Darkness* and compares them with Lawrence's *Women in Love* and *The Rainbow* (1968:39–54) but what he says of the shared interests of the two writers is also true of Lawrence's novellas: "Lawrence shares with Conrad the fascination for what civilization excludes, and also the conviction that the act of exclusion has severed us from sources of great vitality" (50). Apart from the escape into other cultural areas, Conrad and Lawrence similarly perceive the ritualistic elements.

IV. STRUCTURE

It would be a gross oversimplification to bring all of the discussed novellas to a single structural pattern. However, two points from the theories of Leibowitz and May should require a certain systematization — repetitive structure and the negative adventure convention which bring us back to the metaphorical nature of the novella. Repetition is frequently the result of the use of the negative adventure. The prominent governing metaphor is frequently stated in the earlier stages of the stories, not necessarily in the expository paragraphs (though it frequently happens so) but also in the initial progression of the action. This is the part of the narrative where the specific perception of reality is verbalized. Persisting in his convictions and beliefs the character is brought to a climax after which verification follows. In other words, what Leibowitz understands as the repetition of the same theme from a different angle of vision (referred to also as the theme-complex) — narrative vs dramatic for example — is a consequence of what May labels as the negative adventure. The problem is that the negative adventure implies an overt contradiction to the denouement to the exposition while it should be mitigated and understood as the verification of the initial beliefs which, the character in question needn't necessarily accept.

The final resolution of the novellas is frequently announced in a "tail" or a twist ending which are typically troublesome for the overall interpretation

turning all the prior expectations upside-down. The attempt in the analyses was to show that the endings were an integral part of the final artistic effect, of a cycle opening the possibilities of starting the narrative all over again since the process of learning, discovery and finding out one's own self is never completed.

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NOWELA W ANGLII NA PRZEŁOMIE XIX I XX WIEKU
H. JAMES, J. CONRAD, D.H. LAWRENCE

Streszczenie

Praca składa się z rozdziału wstępnego, trzech rozdziałów poświęconych kolejno utworom nowelistycznym Henry Jamesa, Josepha Conrada i Davida Herberta Lawrence'a; rozdział ostatni zawiera wnioski końcowe.

We wstępie poruszane są zagadnienia teoretyczne dotyczące omawianego gatunku literackiego. Zawarty jest w nim krótki rys historyczny rozwoju noweli w Anglii. Termin „nowela" (*novella*) funkcjonuje w pracy w odniesieniu do utworów objętościowo obszerniejszych niż nowelka czy opowiadanie. Przy omawianiu procesu rozwoju krótszych form narracyjnych w Anglii, omówiona jest także terminologia, którą stosowano w tym języku — „story", „tale" i „novel". Założeniem tej części pracy jest wykazanie niezależności tego gatunku, który analizowany w kontekście współczesnym jest często uznawany jako powstały w efekcie wydłużenia krótkich nowelek lub skrócenia długich powieści. Celem uniknięcia pewnych niejasności omówiona jest nowela renesansowa, jako że w opinii pewnych krytyków termin ten ma zastosowanie tylko w tak zawężonym kontekście, oraz niemieckie teorie noweli.

Przegląd teorii współczesnych powraca raz jeszcze do zagadnienia rozmiarów noweli, które trudno stanowczo ograniczyć, ale należy pamiętać, że „programowa" zwięzłość noweli determinuje wybór techniki pisarskiej, dzięki której maksymalnie wykorzystane są środki wypowiedzi literackiej. Efekt estetyczny noweli, osiągnięty dzięki zastosowaniu odpowiedniej techniki narracyjnej, omawiany jest na podstawie teorii Judith Leibowitz, która określa ów efekt jako równoczesne osiągnięcie intensywnej i rozległej interpretacji. Wspomniana wcześniej formalna funkcja utworu jest podstawą klasyfikacji proponowanej przez Mary Doyle Springer. Wyróżnia ona zasadniczą klasę „apologue" o najbardziej uniwersalnej, parabolicznej interpretacji oraz klasę „akcji" (actions), w których interpretacja nie wychodzi poza utwór, uwaga skupia się na wydarzeniach i doświadczeniach bohaterów, które są o wiele bardziej unikalne niż w parabolach. Klasa satyr występuje w znaczeniu tradycyjnym — celem ich jest krytyka i ośmieszanie pewnych zjawisk.

W analizie tekstów podkreśla się ciekawe podejście do zagadnień noweli reprezentowane przez Charlesa Maya. Jego zdaniem, rzeczywistość w utworze literackim to ta, w którą wierzy narrator czy też postaci literackie, to obraz fizycznego, empirycznego świata jak oni go postrzegają, a jako postaci literackie, postrzegają świat przez pryzmat konwencji literackiej.

W rozdziale poświęconym Jamesowi analizowane jest 5 utworów. W *The Turn of the Screw* przedstawiona jest rzeczywistość i pozory rzeczywistości, odbicie rzeczywistości w świadomości twórczej, które to zagadnienia można by sprowadzić do kwestii powstawania utworu literackiego. *The Altar of the Dead* to parabola o poznaniu samego siebie; *What Maisie Knew* to akcja przedstawiająca proces uczenia się; *The Spoils of Poynton* to akcja tragiczna, a *The Birthplace* to satyryczne przedstawienie samej literatury i procesu jej powstawania.

Nowela Conrada sklasyfikowana jako „apologue" to *Heart of Darkness*. Utwór dotyczy ogólnoludzkich problemów moralnych i etycznych. Czas i miejsce akcji nabierają rozmiarów mitycznych, czynności ludzi stają się rytuałem. Dzieje się tak za sprawą narratora, który wyraźniej niż u Jamesa występuje jako bohater, a potem jako narrator wydarzeń. *The Secret Sharer* to znowu utwór o poznaniu samego siebie oraz opowiadanie „o opowiadaniu opowiadania"; *The Planter of Malata* to nowela tragiczna.

Pisarzem najbardziej tradycyjnym pod względem techniki narracyjnej jest D.H. Lawrence. Sukces jego noweli (podobnie jak u Conrada) polega na bogatej symbolice realistycznych na pozór opowiadań. Nowela *The Man Who Died* zakwalifikowana została jako „apologue"; *St. Mawr* — jako „apologue" oparta na konkretnym przykładzie, zbliżona przez to do klasy akcji; akcja o procesie poznania to *The Fox*.

Uogólniając wnioski z analiz poszczególnych utworów, nasuwają się spostrzeżenia dotyczące noweli w Anglii na przestrzeni lat 1890–1930:

1. Są to utwory pozornie realistyczne. U wszystkich trzech autorów rzeczywistość należy rozumieć „metaforycznie", polega to na zrozumieniu, iż rzeczywistość jest przedstawiona tak, jak ją odbiera centralna postać, narrator, często za pomocą konwencji literackiej, której wyboru dokonuje głos narratora.

2. Charakterystyczną tematyką nowel przełomu wieków jest proces zdobywania wiedzy o samym sobie i o otaczającym bohatera świecie. Ostateczną parabolą nowel jest jednak ich „autotematyzm", podkreślający świadomość, że świat utworu to tylko pozór fizycznej rzeczywistości.

3. Obrazowanie i symbolika w nowelach, ściśle związane z problemem metafory, mogą być potraktowane jako zabiegi techniczne wzbogacające znaczenie i interpretację utworów, nie powodując przy tym ich wydłużenia.

4. Przy omawianiu struktury noweli należy podkreślić, iż wstępna, obsesyjna metafora musi być zwerbalizowana, a następnie zweryfikowana, czyli sytuacja musi być pokazana z innego punktu widzenia. Koniec utworu jest więc zweryfikowanym początkiem, którego to rozwiązania bohater wcale nie musi zaakceptować.

M. Trebisz, The Novella in England...

ERRATA

The first two lines from the top of page 19 should be deleted.
on page 37, 16th line from the bottom, instead of "end" should be "and"