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***Transcultural Encounter and Identity in Henry James's Novel The Portrait of a Lady 1881 and Jane Campion's Movie The Portrait of a Lady 1996.***

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**To my family**

**To all my friends and relatives**

**To all the teachers of the department of  
English**

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## Abstract

*This modest research paper deals with cultural differences and immigrant encounter as it is propounded in Henry James's novel The Portrait of a Lady (1881) and within Jane Campion's movie The Portrait of a Lady 1996. As a theoretical framework, it relies on Homi Bhabha postmodern theory as it is developed in The Location of Culture (2004). Cultural difference is the first theoretical concept which is deployed in order to demonstrate the cultural obstacles James's American characters encounter in the European context. The foreignness of the languages is the second concept used in order to explain how the foreign language elicits the immigrants (James's characters) racist fantasies. Benedict Anderson's theory Imagined Communities (1991) is also referred to since it represents an authentic theoretical background that clarifies my perspective. His concept which is named cultural roots is reliable to explain how James's American characters meet the so called classical European languages. This dissertation also exposes Campion's attitudes through her adaptation of The Portrait of a Lady 1996. The latter deals with the revelation of past worlds atrocities via the female character. It also consists of a psychoanalytic examination of the behaviors of the characters as it is interpreted by Freud and as it is reconsidered by Feminists attitudes. The two perspectives are approached under the umbrella of the theoretical framework of Josephine Donovan The Feminist Theory (1992). Leaning on Cultural Feminism and Freudianism, those sections have revealed the traditional conservative kinship system that has kept women under subjugation. It is also a starting point for interpreting and exposing Campion's Reflective Nostalgia. Relying on Donovan's The New Feminist Moral Vision, this work has critically exposed her moral visions that tend to elicit the elite as well as the ordinary spectator's mind to sympathize with past worlds in order to construct a harmonious modern world.*

## Introduction

Transcultural Aesthetic, Identity and travel represent passionate issues for both modern and post modern studies. They have occupied a considerable status within the realm of several critical disciplines which have taken unique stands in the way they mirror the complexity of such transit themes. Philosophy (Kant, 1989), psychoanalysis (Freud, 1920), literary criticism (Anderson, 1991) and anthropology (Leavis, 1993) are authentic essays that have marked the twentieth century critical discourses.

Literature with its various genres has shed a special light on such existential themes. As a result, a particular literary genre under the name of “The American Realism and Naturalism” has emerged and concerned itself with the exploration of the twin themes of travel and identity. Many remarkable writers have tackled ingeniously such international themes. Mark Twain *Innocents Abroad* (1869), Herman Melville’s *Benito Cereno* (1856) and Jane Austin’s *Pride and Prejudice* (1884) are really considerable literary works which are very consistent in this context. Yet, this present paper will be more concerned with Henry James fictional work which represents a great deal concerning the twin themes of Identity and Travel. Actually, one may be excited by the way James has explored the clash between the two cultures; the American and the European especially in his eminent novel *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881)

*The Portrait of a lady* (1881) by Henry James has been not only a subject of scholars’ criticism but a fertile source of many film adaptations among whom, Jane Campion’s adaptation that has granted James fiction to enter the British filmic heritage. In fact, she has asserted in her official cite that the motives of her adaptation along with the work of the

scenarist Laura Jones are simply related to certain nostalgia. The first time I have heard this word, I conceived it as being a simple concept which may draw the audience to an amusing film that takes place in the Victorian era. That was only my first impression as a spectator of Jane Campion's *The Portrait of a Lady*. However, the impression is getting reversed and more profound after had been visualizing the film by a suspecting analytic eye and after consulting many documents that are related to media studies. Thus, this pleasant concept has become the key concept of my thematic analysis that I will expose in the second section of this dissertation.

Before beginning any clarification of this concept, I would point out that *The Portrait of a Lady* 1996 by Jane Campion has to be classified within the category of the heritage films since a part of it is filmed in Great Britain, and it inspires its cultural components from a literary source rather than from any approach to aesthetic or cinematic innovativeness. In fact, it is an adaptation of Henry James' novel *The Portrait of a lady* 1881. Besides, it is clear for the audience once watching the movie that it is a representation of a heritage European and specifically British culture. The latter has been defined in the Oxford dictionary of film studies as a conservative attempt for a stable past which might or might not have even existed. (Westwell, 2012: 147)

In addition, the heritage culture that is manifested in every aspect of the film is associated with the aspect of globalization and post modern conditions since it tackles international and transitional themes just like cultural differences, gender and sexuality.

It is obvious that Campion's adaptation of *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881) along with the films adaptations of classical fiction represents a reaction against contemporary filmmaking trends that undermine complex and consistent characters, rigid plot lines, and causal logics. Timothy Corrigan, in her book that is entitled *Film and Literature*

(1999), asserts that Contemporary Media grows faster and more disorienting by its inundating passive images (Corrigan, 1999: 73). That is to say that the audience mainly the young generation is entertained by more superficial images which lack coherent and determined actions and perspectives. In this respect, Corrigan makes reference to Jim Jarmusch's *Mystery Train* (1989) and Oliver Stone's *Natural Born Killers* (1994) as two movies through which the characters are constructed more and more unmotivated to give superficial images that represent international fragmented stories.

In her part, Campion asserts in one of her interviews that she has chosen to adapt *The Portrait of a Lady* in order to get the audience attention from those annoying contemporary films. (Wexman, 1999: 35) Indeed, once analyzing the movie and going through its filmic techniques as well as the messages they deliver, the watcher deduces that Campion gives profound images through which she aims to incite the audience mainly the young generation to sympathize with past worlds of coherency and adventure in order to discover, understand and construct the future.

My investigation, therefore, will be constructed upon Campion's revelations of past worlds atrocities on the one hand. On the other hand, I will shed a special light on the alternatives she gives and by which she aims to help the audience mainly the young generation to realize self understanding and that of the world. Before doing so, it is worth reviewing the previous critics that the movie has received.



### **The Review of the literature:**

Fallen from critical favor, Henry James' fictional work *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881) has represented a source of inspiration for a wide range of literary criticism. Accordingly, both the structure and the content of James' *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881) have mutually received the attention of significant critics among whom I may cite respectively David W. Smith. In his book entitled *The Language of a Master: Theories of Style and the Late Writing of Henry James*, he has referred to critics that have taken into consideration both the structure and the content that characterize James' prose. As a good instance, he has mentioned Joseph Warren Beach, an eminent critic of James, who does not describe the features of James' style at all; yet he characterizes the style this way:

**[James] is never sarcastic, never lachrymose, never moralistic. There is never any suffusion of his work with a cosmic poesy such as distinguishes the work of Hardy. It is always unmistakably the tone of prose in which he speaks. He has but a mild tincture of that gusto -- that blend of irony and boyish high spirits -- that makes the family likeness of male English novelists from Fielding to Scott to Dickens and Meredith. The tone of James is the tone of indoors and the tea-table. There is about him no smell of peat or sagebrush. You cannot imagine him peddling Bibles in Spain or 'squatting' in California among the rattlesnakes. You cannot imagine him taking an interest in the soul of a planter up some river in Borneo. His words are never scattered and disarranged by any breath of the boisterous Atlantic.**

**(David, 1988: 8)**

Morris Dickstein (2005) in her book "A Mirror in the Roadway; Literature and the Real World, argues that the work of Henry James is organized by a narrative logic that no longer seemed to be convincing, but that he has occupied a place within a generation which resisted the documentary impulse, the abundance of Journalistic details that was critical for the first modern writers, who had emerged in the 1890's

under the tutelage of Howells and the influence of Zola. In addition, she explores the relation of James' literature to what is called "The Real World". In fact, she asserts that James argues with Nietzsche that at least in the sphere of understanding, there is no objective reality (Dickstein, 2005: 24)

It is obvious that James's novel *The Portrait of a Lady* 1881 has been an area of interest for many literary scholars. Actually, all the critical works mentioned above have to be taken into account. However, James fictional work can be analyzed under different perspectives which are not much stressed in those works. As a matter of fact, this modest study will shed a special light on the theme of cultural differences and its impact on identity within James novel *The Portrait of a Lady* 1881.

### **The movie reviews**

Many film reviews have taken into analysis Campion's movie *The Portrait of lady* 1996. Alan Williams considers that Campion has deployed exotic scenes that correspond more to the incorporation of fantasy scenes rather than to geographic referents or emblematic purposes that would utter its involvement within local and international hybridity. He explains that this adjustment at the level of generic functioning has made the work to no longer belong to the convention of the genre. (Quoted in Bessière, 2009: 201)

In her book, *Jane Campion Interviews* (1999), Virginia Wright Wexman explains how *The Portrait of a Lady* (1996) has been considered as an autobiographical realization of Campion own experiences. She has mentioned that Campion, just like Isabel Archer, has come to Europe as a young woman where she has experienced the best and the darkest moments at once. In fact, she lived for a while in England and

studied art in Italy. Campion has asserted that her time in Italy helped her to understand Europe “Winter Spirit” along with its darkness. (Wexman, 1999: 206)

Howard Feinstien considers that all that Isabel Archer has experienced Jane too has experienced it during certain periods of her life. He supports that like Isabel, Jane lost her baby Jasper who died just after Campion’s winning of the top prize at Cannes. This analogy, according to Feinstien justifies that *The Portrait of a Lady* is dedicated to Jasper. In fact, Campion says: “The tow experiences have taught me a lesson, made me reassess my life”. (Ibid: 207) Feinstien supports that the irony of Jasper fading just after winning The Palme d’or for the realization of her famous movie *The Piano* has taught Jane to reconsider that we do not have always all that we want under our control.

Andrew Higson, in his book *The Heritage Film and British Cinema* (1996) judges the movie as being a middle-class quality product comparing it to E M. Forster’s and Jane Austin’s fiction in the 1980’s and early 1990’s. (Higson, 1996: 36) Indeed, he considers that the movie cannot fit with the notion of English heritage which he argues are central to the audience appeal of British costume dramas.

As noted by Hilary Radner, Alistair Fox and Irène Bessière (2009), many critics, mainly French ones have commented on *The Portrait of a Lady*’s cinematic “lack” a “lack” of what the French call a veritable culture. They consider that its text does suit neither the form nor the content of world film history. They explain that it is not a canonical version that would serve the French educational system. In fact, they assert:

**“a lack of the cinematic version of conspicuous high cultural consumption; a practice that continues to play a central role in contemporary French society in the maintenance of social class distinctions, the recruitment of political elites, and success in the educational system.”**

(Bessière, 2009: 219)

That is to say that French critics consider that *The Portrait of Lady* (1996) does not teach history. In addition, they exclude it from canonical film texts. The journalist Globe Hebdo interprets this lack as being the result of Campion's naïve cinematographic art to approach the French culture. In fact, he says: "Jane Campion, so a little film-buff, admits to never having seen either *Atalante* (1934) or *The Night of the Hunter* (1955), in which women are inversed in water." (Ibid: 220) Noting that the reviewer does not mention the directors' names. By asserting so, he stresses to what extent the canonical culture of the tow movies address and has been very familiar to the educated French reader.

Nevertheless Campion's *The Portrait of a Lady* (1996) is thus frequently recognized as being a work of which the aesthetics are constructed upon a large and profound knowledge of film traditions. Though, it is worth mentioned that her work is considered to have a naïve access to the French high culture, she has been granted the status of a cultural bricoleuse for her eminent capacity to deploy preexisting film forms and narrative. Under the chapter "Plus "barbare" qu'esthète", One of the critics notes:

**"Jane Campion reconciles opposites: the baroque and modernity, violence and tenderness, gloom and optimism".  
(Jane Campion reconciles les contraires: le baroque et la modernité, la violence et la tendresse, la noirceur et l'optimisme)**

(Bessière, 2009: 219-220)

Thus, a new genre has emerged out of the coupling of high and low, distant and familiar under the name of "The Cinema lesson from a noncinephile: le retour d'un authentique Surrealisme". (Bessière, 2009: 219-220)

As shown in our movie review, Campion's cinematographic art in general as well as her *Portrait of a Lady* (1996) in particular have been the subject of many

scholars' criticism. It is worth mentioned how the French critics have approached the work from canonical perspectives. However, the main task of this dissertation is to reveal the impact of those canonical values on sub classes' lives and destinies mainly that of the female character. In addition, it will feed the reader by some alternatives as they are articulated within *The Portrait of a Lady's* discourses.

## Issue and Working Hypothesis

My analysis will be centralized on the themes of cultural differences and identity within James' fictional novel *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881). As a matter of fact, I will reveal about the problems that James's characters may encounter in their so journeys to the European countries mainly England, Italy and France. Those obstacles are due to the abrasive clash between the cultures of these countries (the European) in the one hand and the American culture on the other hand.

In the analysis of the theme of cultural differences and James's characters' identity, I make use of the post modern theories. In fact, I rely on Homi Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* (2004) as a framework theory. I shall also make reference to Benedict Anderson *Imagined Communities* (1991).

My approach is also concerned with the revelation of the past canonical values' atrocities as they are articulated in Campion's *The Portrait of a Lady* (1996) and as they are illustrated under the feminist theoretical framework of Josephine Donovan. My aim therefore, is to reconsider those artificial canonical codes to get into their significant consequences upon the female character. In addition, the dimension of this present paper is to stress Campion's incitement to sympathize with past worlds of coherency and adventure in order to understand and construct the future.

Indeed, this sympathy for which Campion is calling takes part within the key concept that I have already mentioned above and which is Nostalgia. Before clarifying Campion's nostalgia and its ideology, I will first of all shed a special light on this term and its implications within heritage films. Thus, I will refer to John Hill's distinction of two types of Nostalgia. In fact, in his book entitled *British Cinema in the 1980's issues and themes* (1999), Hill introduces the first type that is Simple nostalgia which involves

a straight for-ward belief in the superiority of the past over the present. Hence, he adds that it would be firm to advocate that this is noticeably the case in the heritage film. (Hill, 1999: 84). Consequently, he introduces the second type of nostalgia that he names Reflective Nostalgia which is concerned with the revelation of a past world that is not comprehensive, perfect and accurate (Ibid: 84). Hill affirms that Heritage films are more concerned with Reflective Nostalgia rather than simple nostalgia.

Obviously, Campion's screen play *The Portrait of a Lady* (1996) adheres a Reflective Nostalgia since it covers images of other times and places, mainly images and cultural codes of the Victorian era. Actually, Campion's aim in her adaptation of *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881) is to inform the new generation about the cruelties of the past world in order to show that life in the eighties and nineties was not less complex and violent than contemporary life. In addition to this, her adaptation is covered under literary images that act as a comprehensible alternative to the audience mainly the female character.

## Method and material

In this section, as I have already mentioned, I will shed light on my needed theories by giving some outlines and backgrounds. Indeed, I will make reference to postmodern theories as they are developed in Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* (2004) and in Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1991). *The Location of Culture* is a highly influential book in post modern studies which concern itself with the problems that an immigrant can encounter once being abroad; in foreign countries. In this context, Homi Bhabha introduces his chapter that is called *BORDER LIVES: THE ART OF THE PRESENT TIME* in which he describes:

**“it is the trope of our times to locate the question of culture in the realm of the beyond [...] The ‘beyond’ is neither a new horizon, nor a leaving behind of the past...Beginnings and endings may be the sustaining myths of the middle years; but in the ‘fin de siècle, we find ourselves in the moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion. For there is a sense of disorientation, a disturbance of direction, in the ‘beyond’: an exploratory, restless movement caught so well in the French rendition of the words au-delà – here and there, on all sides, fort/ da, hither and thither, back and forth”**

**(Bhaba, 2004: 1-2)**

According to him, this expresses the moral dilemma of the dwellers which is due to crossing the borders. In this work, Homi Bhabha elaborates on the distinction that exists between the immigrant and the host culture. As a matter of fact, it can be understood as a discourse informed by notions in which the host culture is strong and imposes some conditions for the immigrant in order to enter its social space.

In his work *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha observes that there are a set of critical categories through which the cultural difference can be approached. Among others, *DissemiNation: Time, narrative and the margins of the modern nation*



concern the cultural condition that the host culture imposes on the immigrants. It consists of the host way of clothing and behaving as being eminent elements in the construction of the immigrant identity.

The second critical category concerns the foreignness of the languages as it is articulated by Homi Bhabha in his chapter which is named *cultural difference*. It concerns the exotic aspect of the foreign language that the immigrants try to tame and imitate in order to guarantee his membership within the social space of the host culture.

Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1991) is another reliable theory which is concerned with the clarification of the distinction between the immigrant and the host culture at the level of the language especially in his chapter that is entitled *cultural roots*.

My primary source is Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881). In fact, James said: : “ (...) Presently he became aware of a good deal of a movement about him, and when he looked up saw Pansy making a curtsy-it was still her little curtsy of the convent –to the English lord whom Mrs. Osmond had presented.” (James, 1881: 358). This is an instance of acquiring an English manner by Pansy as an American young girl who is grown and educated within an Italian context and culture. The whole novel deals with many instances that reveals the problems James' characters encounter as American immigrant that face the English, French and Italian cultures.

### **Methods and Materials on which the movie will be based on**

In this section, I shall clarify some basic theoretical elements upon which my study will be based on. Indeed, I will make use of Josephine Donovan's *Feminist Theory* of which the sub title is *The Intellectual Traditions of American Feminism* (1992). Thus, my sections

will be approached under the sub critical categories as they are developed by Josephine Donovan.

The first critical category will be devoted to reveal past worlds' atrocities via the female character. Thus, I will deploy the three theoretical concepts as they are highlighted by Josephine Donovan and which are respectively: Christian Doctrines, Social Darwinism, as well as The Institution of Marriage. As far as Christian Doctrine is concerned, Donovan makes reference to Stanton's conclusions that condemn the bible to be the reason of women's suffering and subjugation. In fact, she (Stanton) says:

**“the Bible [is] used to hold [woman] in the divinely ordained sphere, prescribed in the Old and New Testaments”(1: 7) “Creeds, codes, Scriptures and statutes, are all based on the patriarchal idea” that woman was made after man, an inferior being, subject to man”(1: 7)**

**(Quoted in Donovan, 1992: 37)**

As for social Darwinism, Donovan means to introduce the feminine economic dependency upon the world of the male. She adheres that the female character is excluded from the public sphere and thus her only chance to economic profit is get only through sex-attraction. (Ibid: 44-45).

Under the conception of the institution of marriage, Woodhull explains how women are enslaved and kept as men' prisoners. (Quoted in Donovan, 1992: 50)

The second critical category will clarify my work in terms of males and females psychosexual development and its implications on the female character. It will also give a detailed analysis of feminine narcissist attitudes as they are represented by Freud and how they are reconsidered by feminist approaches. Thus, I will make use of Freudian concepts as they are referred to within Donovan's section *Feminism and Freudianism*

and which are respectively: The Age of Puberty, Sadism, Masochism as well as Narcissism.

To express feminine reactions via Freudian notions, I will refer to Simon De Beauvoir and Betty Friedan's revision of the real causes that lead women to fall into Narcissist attitudes.

As for the third critical category, it will be deployed to stress ideas that are borrowed from *The New Feminist Moral Vision* so as to transmit Campion's suggested alternatives. The latter will be approached under Feminist attitudes that are concerned by overcoming all unreal loyalties. (Quoted in Donovan, 1992: 185) In addition, this category will help us to interpret Campion's suggestions of new pure worlds where mutual respect and complete harmony would reign beneath.

## **Materials**

My basic source to develop my investigation is *The Portrait of a Lady* (1996) directed by Jane Campion and narrated by Lora Jones. It is a cinematic realization that is the outcome of an original adaptation of Henry James' novel *The Portrait of Lady* (1881). The scenes have been filmed in three places that are England, Florence (France) and Italy. Campion has relied on Wojciech Kilar and Franz Schubert to play the film's melodies. Janet Patterson assumed the task of costume designer and Veronika Janet the one of the Film Editor. The film has been nominated for an Academic Award by Los Angeles Film Critics Association, 1997: Best Production Design, Best supporting Actress (Barbara Hershey) and best supporting Actor (Martin Donovan).

### **As for the cast, Campion has worked with those actors and actresses:**

Nicole Kidman for the role of Isabel Archer, John Malkovich as being Isabel's husband for the role of (Gilbert Osmond), Barbara Hershey (Madame Merle), Mary-Luise Parker (Henrietta Stackpole), Marten Donovan (Ralph Touchet), Shelly Winters (Mrs. Touchett), Richard E. Grant (Lord Warburton), Shelly Dival (countess Gemini), Christian Bale (Edward Rosier), Viggo Mortensen (Caspar Good Wood), Valentina Cervi (Pansy Osmond), Johon Gielgnd (Mr. Touchett), Roger Ashton-Griffiths (Bob Bantling), Catherine Zago (Mother superior).

### **The film's synopsis:**

As I have already mentioned in the previous sections that the movie has been faithful in terms of plot and characterization. However, Campion has chosen to open the movie with a modern scene that represents a group of young women wearing soft white sheaths and making contemporary movements. They are filmed under Black and white

lightening. A technique she has used to jump after few minutes into a Victorian world of aesthetics and colors. Within such a world, she gives us her principal actress Nicole Kidman for the role of Isabel Archer, a young American enlightened woman who travels to a European Victorian world. First off all, the young lady would settle at Garden court (England) with her aunt's (Mrs. Touchett) family. During this period, she would refuse a very important marriage proposal that is the one of Lord Warburton.

Secondly, she would establish a very good friendly relations ship with her cousin Ralph Touchett. The latter has adored her enlightened way of conceiving things. Thus, he would persuade his father (Mr. Touchett) to let her fortune after his death. Actually, he wanted to make her rich in order to fulfill all sort of adventures she wanted in life. However, this fortune would latter on attract the greediness of Madame Merle who is a good friend of Isabel's aunt (Mrs. Touchett). Isabel had met her for the first time at Garden Court and had become so fascinated by her European Aesthetics manners. In fact, she has been so delighted by her way of playing the piano.

Unfortunately, Isabel would be a victim of Merle's plain. In fact, she would marry Gilbert Osmond. She met him for the first time in Florence; a meeting that had been cleverly arranged by Madame Merle (Osmond's mistress and Pansy's mother). Osmond had accomplished the plain by convincing her to pay him a visit in Rome. During this visit Osmond played the role of a modest enlightened gentle man. In fact, he showed Isabel as if he was tolerating her liberates ideas and he had told her that he was in love with her. Thus, he incited her to think over the matter.

After three years, Isabel had been accomplished her travels and had decided to marry Gilbert Osmond. Gradually and unconsciously, she became swallowed by the Italian values. Thus, she became very cold via her relatives and she found herself

involved within her husband's plan that consists of marrying Pansy (her step daughter) to Lord Warburton. However, Osmond's and Merle's plans will be revealed by Countess Gemini (Osmond's sister). As a matter of fact, Isabel had reacted bravely and had traveled to England in order to be side in side with her dying cousin Ralph Touchett. During those short moments, Isabel had realized great things among which her love for Ralph Touchett.

Just after Ralph's fading, Isabel found herself anew followed by her American admirer (Caspar Good Wood). The latter kissed her and incited her with an insisting manner to get rid of her husband and to get married to him. Under those circumstances, Campion gives us Isabel fleeing again his proposal. She is running toward Ralph's door house without entering but just keeping her hand on its knob and looking forward. With such a scene, Campion ends her movie with another opening that incites the spectator to a wide range of interpretations.

## Results

Following the ideas of Homi Bhabha, my study of Henry James's novel *The Portrait of a lady* (1881) has reached the results that he conforms to the issues of cultural differences once crossing cultural borders. This is developed through two main points: *DissemiNation: Time, narrative and the margins of the modern nation and cultural difference* and *the foreignness of the languages*. *DissemiNation: Time, narrative and the margins of the modern nation* deals with the exposition of the cultural obstacles that James's characters, as being Americans, encounter in the European context. Within this section, I have analyzed the clash between the enlightened American and the aristocratic European. The Europeans are generally considering themselves as "original" whereas the Americans are considered by the Europeans as "modern and strange". Indeed, I have introduced the primacy and centrality of the former over the latter. Furthermore, my attention goes to another point which is presenting the delicate situation that James's characters face and which consists mainly of taming the European culture.

Leaning on Josephine Donovan theoretical frameworks, my dissertation on Campion's movie *The Portrait of a Lady* (1996) has reached the results that reveal past worlds atrocities in order to form modern coherent generations. This is developed through three main points: *Cultural Feminism* that consists of the revelation of past worlds' atrocities relying on three theoretical key concepts that are: *Christian Doctrine*, *Social Darwinism*, and *The Institution of Marriage*. The second point consists of approaching Campion's actors from a Freudian psychoanalytic point of view as it is asserted by Donovan's section *Freudianism and Feminism* and as it is reconsidered by contemporary Feminists analysis. The third point is *The New Feminist Moral Vision* that is devoted to interpret Campion's suggested alternatives via the young generation.

Throughout deploying those theoretical concepts that are respectively: Christian Doctrine, Social Darwinism as well as The Institution of Marriage I have come to the result of interpreting Campion's attitude which consists of visualizing canonical codes and social orders in order to reveal their implication on the female character.

In terms of approaching Campion's actors from a Freudian psychoanalytic point of view, I have relied on *Feminism and Freudianism* as it is asserted by Josephine Donovan in *The Feminist Theory* (1992). The aim is to explain males and females psychosexual development and its impact on their behaviors and identity as well as on the division of social roles. In fact, I have given a detailed psychoanalytic study of Campion's characters through using Freudian concepts which are respectively: The Age of Puberty, Sadism and Masochism, Narcissism. Throughout those concepts, I have clarified Freud's attitude which considers female's subordination as being biologically determined. This section has also relied as I have already mentioned above on Contemporary feminists revisions of Freudian analysis and that assert that Female subordination has been culturally determined rather than biologically.

In the last section of this paper, I have made reference to Donovan's theoretical basis which consists of *The New Feminist Moral Vision*. By doing so, I have demonstrated Campion's suggested alternatives for contemporary generations mainly for the female character. Indeed, this section has revealed Campion's educating messages which emphasize mutual and pure love, the significance of going beyond sexual freedom to reach intellectual and spiritual freedom. It also stresses the importance of visualizing and analyzing matters rather than manners.



## Discussion

### Cultural Differences and its Impact on Henry James's Characters within his Novel the *Portrait of a Lady* 1881

Cultural differences represent the outcome of crossing cultural borders. Once abroad, either in the Eastern or the Western world, in the modern or the 'archaic' one, the traveler is to face a new culture to which he or she has to be integrated. Trusting the course of history, the Atlantic was and is to be the bridge between the European and the American continents between which cultural and historical ties are at once similar and distant.

According to historical records, the 19<sup>th</sup> century marks the era of prominent cultural differences between America and Europe. Actually, while the American is exposed totally to enlightenment ideas and perspectives, the European is still sticking to their already shaped modals of morality, aesthetics and social order. Consequently, an American presence within a European context causes a tension under which the American traveler finds himself or herself consciously or unconsciously conforming to and performing certain moral and aesthetic values which shape the social system of the European continent. In her book entitled *Migrancy, Culture and Identity* (1994), Lain Chamber describes the immigrant's dilemma by saying:

**"[...] to come from elsewhere, from 'there' and not 'here', and hence to be simultaneously inside and outside the situation at hand, is to live at the intersections of histories and memories, experiencing both their preliminary dispersal and their subsequent translation into new, more extensive, arrangement among emerging routes"**

**(Chamber, 1994: 15)**

Henry James novel *The Portrait of a Lady* 1881 demonstrates overtly the European cultural obstacles that his characters encounter. Indeed, the English, French

and the Italian aesthetic values and behaviors make it impossible for the American adventurer or immigrant to behave in harmony to his individual style of shaping his values, behaviors, attitudes and identity. Thus, James's characters are obliged not only to understand artificially and superficially the signifier of the English, French, and the Italian values but they have to perform the signified which bears their traditional Victorian, aristocratic and snobbish manners and norms. As Homi K Bhabha has articulated in his section *cultural difference* which is included in his book entitled *The Location of Culture*:

**“[...] designations of cultural difference interpellate forms of identity which, because of their continual implications in other symbolic systems are always ‘incomplete’ or open to cultural translation. The uncanny structure of cultural difference is close to Lévi-Strauss’s understanding of the unconscious as providing the common and specific character of social facts... not because it harbours our most secret selves but because ... it enables us to coincide with forms of activity which are both at once ours and other’ (my emphasis)<sup>55</sup>.**

**(Bhabha, 2004: 233)**

That is to say that an immigrant character is fully assimilated within the European one. Truly, this conclusion is demonstrated throughout Henry James' characters in his novel entitled *The Portrait of a Lady* 1884.

### **DissemiNation: Time, narrative and the margins of the modern nation:**

Trusting the story of human experience as an immigrant, Henry James' assimilated characters portray the delicate situations to which an immigrant is exposed to. Indeed, their need to tame the English, French and the Italian cultures pushes them to submit absolutely to the conventional order and to put aside their appropriate rational norms. Gradually and unconsciously, even his most enlightened characters such as his protagonist Isabel Archer and her friend Miss Stackpole have acknowledged to a high extent the traditional way of living and behaving in order to

fetch out their place. As Bhabha has explained in his essay *"The Time of The Nation"*, people in other times, within the edge of foreign nations are facing the gatherings of every aspect of the encountered cultures (Ibid: 199). That is the case of Isabel Archer, as being James's protagonist, who has been engaged with every aspect of the European aristocratic and aesthetic values starting from changing her physical appearance penetrating to reach even her way of thinking and behaving.

### **Physical appearance:**

Isabel Archer, as being James' principal character adopts fully the European snobbish way of dressing especially when she has got married with Gilbert Osmond, an extreme worshiper of the aesthetic manners and behaviors. In fact, she dresses herself with the Roman robe which is made of a corset and velvet. Indeed, once arrived to Garden court in England, Isabel is told by her Aunt Miss Touchett and her husband that she has to look as an aristocratic lady by wearing gloves (James, 1881: 61). Another prominent example, Isabel puts a veil on her face when she has lost her child. The latter is an aesthetic value which symbolizes sorrow in the Italian context. In fact, James describes:

**"[...] But now she neither taunted him with his fallacies nor pretended that her own confidence was justified; if she wore a mask, it completely covered her face. There was something fixed and mechanical in the serenity painted upon it; this was not an expression, Ralph said, it was a representation. She had lost her child; that was a sorrow, but it was a sorrow she scarcely spoke of; there was more to say about it than she could say to Ralph. It belonged to the past, moreover, it had occurred six months before, and she had already laid aside the tokens of mourning. She seemed to be leading a life of the world; Ralph heard her spoken of as having a "charming position"."**

**(Ibid: 362)**

The latter can be considered as what Hommi Bhabha describes as adopting and being aware of the semiotic systems that produce the signs of culture and their

dissemination. In fact, he has said: “Much more significantly, we are faced with the challenge of reading, into the present of a specific cultural performance [...] (Bhabha, 2004: 233). Indeed, Isabel Archer represents fully both the signifier and the signified of both Victorian and Italian aesthetic values.

Thus, Bhabha’s concept of cultural performance leads us to explore the second part of the sign which covers James’s characters. Actually, his heroine Isabel finds herself unconsciously performing the role of a traditional submissive woman in plotting and managing her personal relations and her family affairs in accordance to social aesthetic values and customs. In fact, she has found herself involved in her husband’s plot which consists of marrying her stepdaughter Pansy with Lord Warburton though she is principally against. Accordingly, she has tried perseveringly to convince her to forget about her lover Mr. Rosier whose fortune according to Isabel is not a very large one. Besides, she urges her to acknowledge her father’s efforts which consist of introducing her to the fortune of the English gentleman who is Lord Warburton (James, 1884: 432-433). Actually, such a plot goes hand in hand with the Italian middle class plots which consist in their tradition of marrying their daughters with aristocratic and rich families to keep their virtues and richness immortal.

Pansy as being Henry James’s heroine’s step daughter represents a character that is completely swallowed within the European culture. Though she belongs to a family whose national origin is America, she has been exposed to church Education under French and Italian values. As far as church education is concerned, the American child within an Italian context is to be educated under the particularities of the church orders. As Benedict Anderson has demonstrated in her book entitled *Imagined Communities* how immigrants get exposed to a trans-European Latin Christendom that would articulate and structure one’s look and behavior. Moreover,

it would prepare him or her for the world (Anderson, 1991: 23). Actually, this is the case of Pansy who has told Isabel that she has received her education in the convent under the hands of the sister Catherine. Besides, James portrays her as being very obedient to the sisters' instructions. In fact, she has told Isabel that she has been taught in the convent to not ask questions about the age in order to be properly educated (James, 1884: 23).

As for French and Italian aesthetic values, James portrays Pansy as being prettily directed and fashioned. In fact, James says: Presently he became aware of a good deal of a movement about him, and when he looked up saw Pansy making a curtsy-it was still her little curtsy of the convent –to the English lord whom Mrs. Osmond had presented". (Ibid: 358). In addition, Pansy's attention is completely occupied by her occupation of making tea in the party while her lover is looking at her (Ibid: 258-351). Really, she is innocent and behaves in the way traditional Italian women behave in parties.

## **Immigrant Reactions under the Influence of The Foreignness of The Languages Within Henry James's Novel *The Portrait of a Lady* 1881**

Another exotic aspect to which the American immigrants are exposed to in the European context during the 19th century is language. Actually, Henry James's characters find themselves wandering about the originality of the French and Italian languages as it is claimed by its aristocratic nations. Benedict Anderson, enlightening more this representation, has asserted:

**[...] Yet such classical communities linked by sacred languages had a character distinct from the imagined communities of modern nations. One crucial difference was the older communities' confidence in the unique sacredness of their languages, and their ideas about admission to membership.**

**(Anderson, 1991: 13)**

Accordingly, James's characters stumble on an embracing situation in which they risk to crawl on the surface if they do not master these conventional languages. Thus, they are gathering on them in order to guarantee their membership and avoid alienation. Indeed, they articulate them consciously and unconsciously in order to reach the status of cultivated and original characters. The latter has been described by Homi Bhabha in his chapter *The Foreignness of Languages* as the immigrants' desire to imitate the host languages in order to enter the social space. **(Bhabha, 2004: 238)**

Madame Merle, as being the protagonist's friend represents the subject as well as the object of the ethnography act (I have to explain this) as it is named by Lévis – Strauss who has explained how the character has to divide himself or herself into object and subject in the process of identifying his or her field of knowledge mainly language in this context. (Ibid: 215) As far as the subject is concerned, she (Madame Merle) speaks fluently the French and the Italian languages. Thus, she is considered

by her surrounding in general and her friend Isabel in particular as a person who is not superficial but deep and so original since she articulates a conventional language and expresses herself by original signs (James, 1884: 178). Hence, Merle's mastery of the host languages has placed Isabel as an alien and foreign. As Bhabha has said: "[...] Content becomes the alienating mise-en-scène that reveals the signifying structure of linguistic difference". (Bhabha, 2004: 235)

Actually, Merle spontaneous way of articulating the French language has astonished Isabel who has thought of her as a French woman when Merle has described her playing on the piano by saying: "just du dou des doigts" (sic) (James, 1884: 160). Indeed, Isabel has found herself in an atmosphere which bears an air of distinction between her and Madame Merle. This air of distinction that is possessed eminently by Madame Merle as it is asserted by the author. Indeed, Merle is intimidating unconsciously our heroine who is really placed in a discomfiting and delicate situation. In fact, Isabel speculates and wanders silently about Merle's identity and originality without being able to ask her overtly. Indeed, she has just been forming hypothesis by claiming that Merle may be French, German or an Italian woman. (Ibid: 163). This silence and those hypotheses prove that she (Isabel) is in a very confused state of mind and that she feels ashamed of interrogating her friend's identity. In this context, Homi Bhabha has said: "[...] The migrant silence elicits those racist fantasies of purity and persecution that must always return from the outside" (Bhabha, 2004: 238).

As for the object, James demonstrates that Madame Merle has just submitted to the acquirement of the host languages in order to avoid alienation. In fact, she (Merle) has told Isabel that she knows her Europe throughout her dwelling in its different lands (James, 1882: 180). That is to say that she knows its languages as

well. Besides, she explains to Isabel that her knowledge of the European languages has been done in order to challenge the European discriminating eye and to not to crawl like a parasite on the surface. Homi Bhabha claims:

**[...] The transposition of this process into the language of the outsider's grasp – this entry into the area of the symbolic of representation/ signification – than make the social fact. [...]The ethnographic object is constituted 'by dint of the subject's capacity for indefinite self –objectification (without ever quite abolishing itself as subject) for projecting outside itself ever-diminishing fragments of itself'"**

**(Bhabha, 2004: 215)**

That is to say that she has just been object to the foreignness of the European languages in hope of entering their social space and to guarantee her membership among them. Indeed, she has trusted the European equation which states that a person who speaks the original language is an original one.



## **Cultural Feminism and The revelation of Past Worlds Atrocities under the Effect of Light and Color in Jane Campion's Movie *The Portrait of a Lady* 1996**

To clarify more Campion revelations of the past cruelties via the female character, I will rely, as I have already mentioned above, on the concepts that are highlighted in the *Feminist Theory of Josephine Donovan (cultural feminism) (1992)*. Those concepts are mainly and respectively; Christian doctrine, social Darwinism as well as the institution of marriage.

As for Christian Doctrine, Campion has chosen brilliant solid colors for the lightening of her shots in order to articulate Christian atrocities via the female character.



Indeed, in this medium shot or mid shot (From the waist level to the top of the head), the watcher would remark the dark yellow color that is known also as the olive brown color on the faces of the two nuns which is deployed to show a high point of saturation, as it is asserted by Angela Dalle in her book *Color, The Film Reader (2007)*. This color aims to indicate the extreme disenchantment the two nuns are suffering because Osmond insists on the fact of keeping his daughter in the convent under the system of the church. In fact, he has answered the two sisters when they are telling him

that his daughter is perfect but that she is made for the world by saying that the matter is not settled yet. (Jones, 1996: 36) He adds that he has faith. Actually, Osmond's faith relies on the Christian church that grants him the right to forbid his daughter of enjoying minimal common rights of humanity.

This oppression is really very well illustrated within Donavon's metaphoric concept that covers the cage theory as it is introduced in her chapter named *Cultural feminism*. In this section, Donavan refers to Grimké and Stanton who state:

**“During the Christian ages, the church has not alone shown cruelty and contempt for women, but has exhibited an impious and insolent disregard of her most common rights of humanity. It has robbed her of her responsibility, putting man in place of God. [...] it has denied her independent thought, declaring her a secondary creation of man's use... It has anathematized her sex, teaching her to feel shame for the very fact of her being”**

**(Donavon, 1992: 41)**

That is to say that the Christian faith has granted the male character an absolute power just like the one of the God in order to rule over the subordinate female character.

To convey more explicitly the notion of the cage, Campion has chosen very significant scenes among which we can make reference to this to this grabbed medium shot along with the convent background.



Really, this scene gives a frame that makes the spectator think of a prison not a convent. In fact, it exposes young girls wearing a chosen clothing uniform just like prisoners. Besides, it seems that they are descending in a hurry having their pale faces fixed to the earth. Furthermore, none of them have opened her eyes. This gesture demonstrates the extreme extent of shame they do feel because they have preached to behave in this way. Indeed, the full action makes the image grabbed and uneven in order to transmit to the watcher that the girls are not at ease under the strict discipline of the church.

### **Social Darwinism:**

As for demonstrating Social Darwinism implications on the female character, Donavan has referred to Gilman's major work that is entitled *Women and Economics* (1898). In this essay, Gilman has explained how the female character is exploited and enslaved under an economic dependence on the male.

Before applying Gilman's ideas on Jane Campion adaptation *The Portrait of a Lady* (1996), I will shed a special light on the theme of Gender and Aesthetics as it is articulated in the Victorian era. In her book entitled *Gender and Aesthetics*, Carolyn

Korsmeyer said: “The world of male values is abstract and associated with the mind”. “That of the female concrete and associated with the “body” (Carolyn, 2004: 13). Indeed, reason is traditionally nominated the faculty of mind that distinguishes human from nonhuman activities. Besides, it permits them to escape the laws of nature and to build up cultures and civilizations. Yet different degrees of reason provoke a social difference which is considered in certain periods of history as being a “natural” superiority of some people over others. Actually, the latter has been the case of the Victorian era during which reason and superiority are restricted to the males over the females character. That is to say that the dual role of reason is not only to shape a difference between human and non human but also to draw a great gap between masculinity and femininity, rationality and non rationality.

Henry James’s novel as well as Campion’s adaptation of *The Portrait of a Lady* exposes the discrimination which is set up between males and females in terms of reason, fame and aesthetic values; beauty and sublimity during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Actually, males are considered reasonable and genius that is why they have access to the economic and political spheres. Besides, they have the right to exercise power through their artistic talents in order to reach fame and a highly social status. By the contrary, woman are considered irrational, weak and intuitive that is why they can only exercise their artistic and intellectual talents in a very limited scope which consists of satisfying the social order and conventions.

Actually, this exclusion of the female character from economic and political spheres has created this economic reliance on the male character. As a matter of fact, all her energy is devoted to attract the man since it is the only source of her survival. Gilman says: “As a parasite, the human female has learned how to attract and keep

host". (Quoted in Donovan, 1992: 45) That's why, according to her, all women are diminished to prostitutes in order to survive.

Those following shots are some frames that represent to the spectator how the Victorian women are dressing and exposing themselves like dolls in some parties in order to attract men.



This medium long shot or what we call also the American shot (the subject from above the knees to above the head, but still as a part of the setting) exposes young ladies wearing laces. The latter is a sort of very delicate decorated robes with an open-work design mainly at the level of the breasts. Besides, they wear gloves.

Here is an example of a very open lace.



In this extreme tight close up shot, Campion exposes to the watcher a portion of the pale face of a young lady along with her mother displeased face who is trying to feed her by air with her fan. The position of her head along with her closed eyes shows clearly that she is breathing heavily because she wears a corset which is hold by a tight lacing as any Victorian lady. In her book entitled *Victorian Literature and the Anorexic Body* (2002), Anna Krugovoy Silver asserts:

**“[...] The writer, who equates tight lacing with self-immolation and pagan sacrificial rites, implies that the practice of tight lacing is not only dangerous but immoral, perhaps because tight lacing drew attention to a woman's erotic beauty. From being merely “mischievous,” tight lacing had become portrayed as downright evil, vilified with such vocabulary as “destruction,” “pinioned,” “tortured,” and “wicked.”**

**(Krugovoy, 2002: 37)**

In other words, Krugovoy wants to say that this culture which consists of conforming women to such sort of confining (clothing) is really very punishing and very dangerous via the ladies' health and the proof is very well illustrated in this shot since it exposes to which extreme the lady could not breath. Moreover, she could not leave because her mother insists on keeping her there in hope of purchasing a husband.

To illustrate more visibly those brutal images of the Victoria era, Campion has feed the spectator by striking some scenes of the movie by grabbed frames.



The aim of deploying those sudden inconsistent frames is to highlight to the spectator the extremity of discomfort the Victorian ladies are suffering from. Indeed, this sudden image portrays an incontinent woman who is transported by three men. This female character could not support the harshness of the fasting that is imposed on her in order to keep slenderness which is a highly value within the standard of Victorian beauty myth. Actually, this image reflects Gilman's assertions about women starvation and limitations via a natural development of their bodies. (Donovan, 1992: 45)

In this respect, Krugovoy Silver introduces the concept of the Victorian Anorexic body. In fact, she has explained how the Victorian ladies have to look fragile within their clothing that accentuates small waists, leaning shoulders, and a softly round silhouette (Krugovoy Silver, 2002: 28). Just like Archer in this following image.





This portrait represents Isabel's anorexic body that reflects all the requirements that are imposed on a Victorian woman in order to give her the image of an affluent lady occupying a highly social stand. Hence, those abused cultural requirements have been the cause of the anorexia nervosa disease as it is stated by Krugovoy Silver through referring to Gull's and Lasègue's clinical work on anorexia nervosa (Ibid: 26). Actually, all the shots that I have exposed above show women's unhealthy bodies that is the result of a torturing fasting system.

### **The Institution of Marriage:**

Assuming the Victorian mentality, the torture that is mentioned above via the female character has to be accomplished under the institution of marriage that is described by Goldman as a limitation of individual freedom. (Quoted in Donavon, 1992: 51). Indeed, Campion has provided the spectator with vivid images that portray how the female character's position is diminished to the one of the slave.

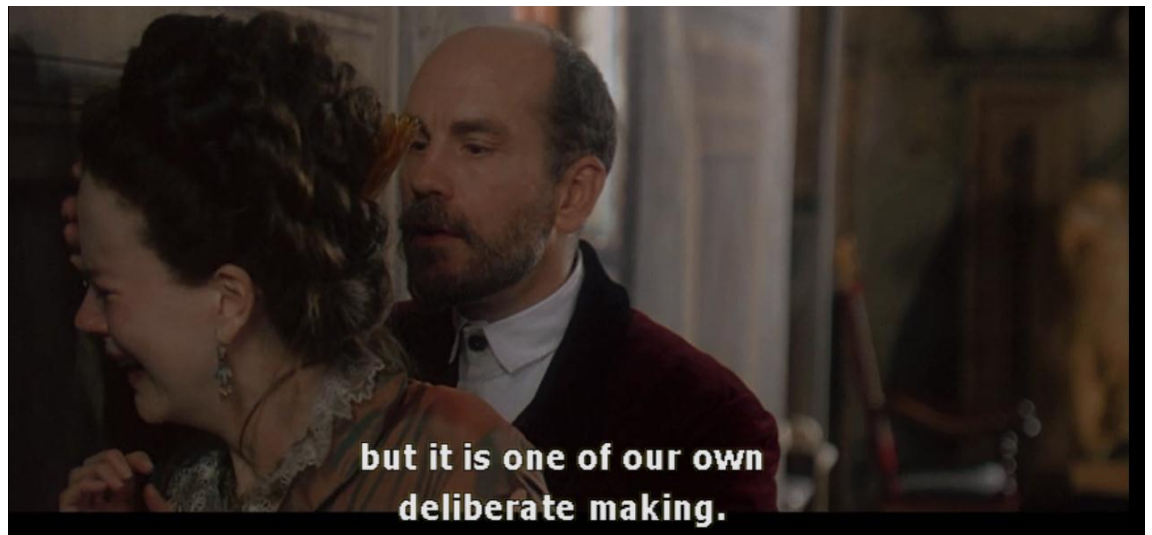




In this medium long shot, the camera portrays Isabel in a position that is equal to the one of the slave. In fact, Osmond has granted himself the right to beat her down because, according to him, she has not been obedient to his instructions that consist of middling between his daughter Pansy and Lord Warburton.

In addition, he opposes her idea which consists of traveling to England in order to see her dying cousin Ralph Thatcher. In fact, he reminds her that they are engaged to each other and then they have to assume the consequences. That is to say that, as being Miss Osmond and no more Miss Archer, she cannot leave Rome and his house. In fact, Osmond says: "I have an ideal of what my wife should do or should not do, she should not travel across Europe to sit at the beside of other men" he adds: "your cousin is nothing to you. He is nothing to us". (Jones, 1996: 111) Indeed, he behaves with her by using the most violent and ridiculous ways of expressing his opinions.

To express Osmond's coldness and non human character, Campion feeds the spectator with this extreme tight close up shot.



In this shot, Campion lightens Isabel face with a slight yellow color. A technique that she deploys in order to portray a pale face with the features that indicates Isabel's crying and sufferings. Whereas, Osmond face appears cold without any pitiful feature. In this scene, he considers Isabel as a little daughter that ought to be taught what is right to do or not to do. In fact, he considers Ralph fading as a ridiculous matter whereas he does not cease of prizing the honor of their marriage that is part of a highly institutional and social system. In fact, he says: "[...] I think that we should accept the consequences of our actions and what I value most in life is the honor of a thing" (Jones, 1996: 112)

Actually those treatments are the results of the Roman law that is known as *Loco Filiae*. This latter has placed the married woman in the position of a daughter between the husband's hands as it is revealed by Simon De Beauvoir in her Book *The Second Sex* (1953), mainly in the chapter that is entitled *The Married Woman*. De Beauvoir adds that in marrying, a woman gains a certain legal protection via man's capricious actions; but she becomes his vassal. He is the head of every decision and she has just to belong to his universe. He is the one who would decide about their residence and she has to break out with her past and relatives. She takes his name, religion, costumes and

traditions since it is he (the husband) that represents his family place within the one of the society. (De Beauvoir, 1953: 418- 419)

That is to say that regardless of the wife psychological conditions, the husband's only interest is his stand within his society. That is why any deliberate position of breaking all the assignments mentioned above would be just a humiliating act via the family's honor.

Actually, Jane Campion has illustrated throughout those filmic techniques how the Victorian era has taken those principals in order to educate the youth. In fact, they have taught their daughters the importance of being portraitures and mere sexual objects in order to fetch out their social status. Hence, Campion has also her own ways and interests in educating the contemporary generation.

Throughout her adaptation, one would assume that she has been faithful to the linearity of James' *The portrait of a Lady's* plot. However, her ideology is quite different in the sense that her work is covered under a reflexive nostalgia as I have already mentioned before. Indeed, her aim is that she wants to bring the elite mind to think about the matter rather than the snobbery of the manner as it is maintained during the Victorian era. That is why she has opened the movie with a scene that is radically different from the initially image that is deployed by Henry James. In fact, the latter has initiated his novel by prizing the tea moment during the evening. In fact, James says: "Under certain circumstances there are few hours in life more agreeable than the hour dedicated to the ceremony known as afternoon tea. There are circumstances in which, whether you partake of the tea or not- some people of course never do- the situation is in itself delightful. (James, 1881: 1) Throughout these passages, James prizes the English habits that are maintained in its castles, along with its glorious history that has

constructed the canonical world of such a period and which stills works as contemporary museums.

Campion's opening scene by the contrary has nothing to do with this canonical culture. But rather, she stresses the contemporary popular culture. In fact, she has given us an image of many young women who are juggling, moving and mainly looking with a suspecting eye just like this following shot.



This close up shot or close shot in which the head takes up more than the half of the frame portrays a women's looking that is very symbolic at the level of visualization. Indeed, the message in this shot is to get the spectator's attention to the importance of looking profoundly beyond the surface and the manner in order to pick out the reality behind. This message goes hand in hand with the ideology of Heritage films as it is asserted by Timothy Corrigan in her book entitled *Film and Literature* (1999). The latter has described it as a reflection of contemporary film audiences and their increasing concern with manner over matter. (Corrigan, 1999: 73) They are looking at the camera and around them with a suspecting eye. In fact, Campion has said in one of her interviews that they are intellectual women who are aware of the environment around them.

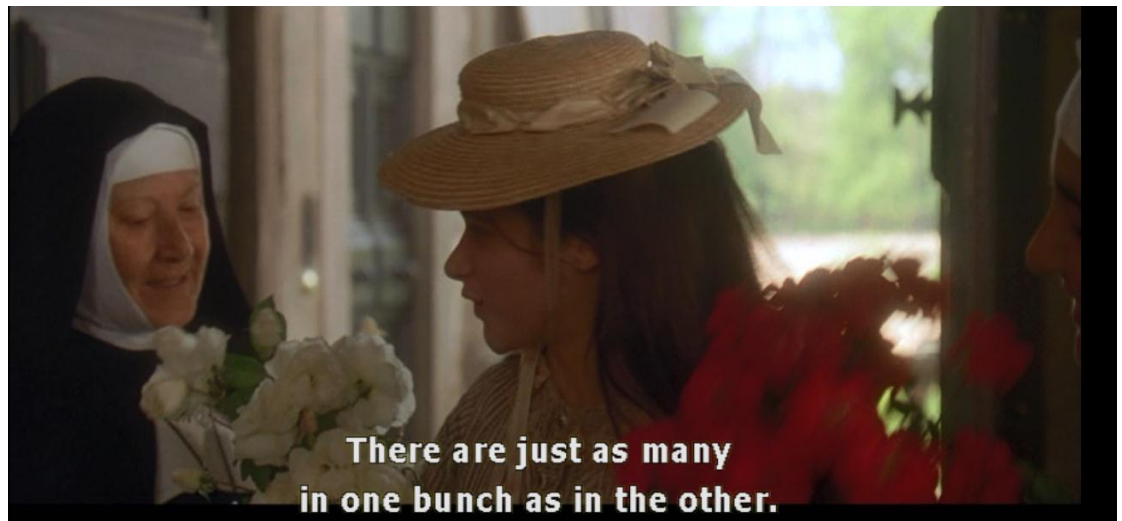
Actually, it is the very term awareness that Campion is concerned with. She wants to give comprehensible alternatives to the young generation mainly the female character. Her aim is to teach the modern generation how to manage their life, motives and relationship. In fact, on the one hand, she has deployed a powerful representation of female desires and sexuality along with male's fantasies. On the other, she strikes the movie with very significant dialogues that goes beyond sexual freedom and which stresses intellectual works. Moreover, it aims at orienting the young generation toward a harmonious life.

## **Feminism and Freudianism as they are mirrored within Campion's visible Spectrums in her movie *The Portrait of a Lady* 1996**

As far as the powerful representation of female desires and sexuality are concerned, Campion has exposed to the spectator some erotic images but that are not vulgar as she has asserted in one of her interviews. That is why her actors have to be analyzed under the psychoanalytic approach as it is asserted in Donovan's section that is entitled *Feminism and Freudianism*. To develop this part of my work, I will rely on three main Freudian concepts that are respectively; The Age of Puberty, Sadism and Masochism, Narcissism as well as their implications on the female character.

### **The Age of Puberty**

Actually those concepts are highly reflected through Campion's scenes just like this following shot.



Shot: 39:32

This medium close up shot (shows the character from chest level to the top of the head) portrays Pansy as a very genteel adolescent who is offering bunches of

flowers to the nuns. The red makeup that is applied on her cheeks demonstrates that she is shy. This act is explained by Freud as being the result of the latency period as it is witnessed by Pansy. It is the initiating step for the age of puberty that marks female psychosexual development. He adds that biological transformations will be occurred and act as inhibitions on the sexual life, and restrict its manifestation. By the contrary, it provokes shame and aesthetic values. In fact, he defines it as a process of repression and sublimation (kindness) (Donovan, 1992: 93).

As for the age of puberty, Freud defines it as: “transference of the erogenous excitability from the clitoris to the vagina” (Quoted in Donavan, 1992: 94). This phase of transference is described by Freud as a second step of suppression. He adds that it is a very sensitive and difficult progression since it takes time and during which the young wife risks to remain sedative if the clitoris zone refuses to give up its excitability (Ibid: 94). That is to say that she would become without any sexual desires just like the nuns in the scene above. Indeed, Campion’s placement of Pansy between the two nuns has not been done haphazardly but it is very symbolic in the sense that she anticipates Pansy’s faith if his father maintains her oppression under the church system.

Campion wants to draw the parents’ attention to not make a pressure upon their daughters during this age. In fact, she stresses the important role of communication as it is performed by Madame Merle (Pansy’s real mother) in this following shot.



In this shot reverse shot, Campion strikes Pansy's face with a lightening white color while she is looking at her mother. This strategy of lightening proves that there is no atmosphere of saturation but rather it reflects the hue's variation of purity. (Vacche, 2006: 171) Indeed, this lightening has shown Pansy's face with features of delight since the dialogue with Madame Merle makes her to feel at ease. The aim of Campion is that she wants to make the parents aware that during this age, the young girl searches to be aesthetically attractive. The latter would help her to accomplish this process of transference. In fact, she has given us Pansy as a girl who is, unconsciously, seeking to look very beautiful. The symptom is that she has asked Madame Merle whether the gloves she would offer her would be very pretty. (Jones, 1996: 38)

Indeed, any pressure that would be exercised on the girl at this age especially via the aesthetic side would push her to deny her femininity. If the latter occurs, Simon De Beauvoir asserts in her chapter untitled The Psychoanalytic Point of View that she would become anesthetic or more than this. She can turn to homosexuality. (De Beauvoir, 1953: 67) That is why both Freud and Simon De Beauvoir are inciting women to think about their sexuality as being prior to other responsibilities just like mother roles or satisfying male's needs.



## Sadism and Masochism

Another point that is tackled by Donovan within her section *Feminism and Freudianism* is that she has highlighted Freudian concepts that are respectively sadism and masochism along with their implications on the female character. In fact, Freud has explained that there is a “bisexual disposition” in all people. (Donovan, 1992: 92) That is to say that each individual disposes of sexual desires via the opposite sex. In other words, both the female and the male character possess sexual desires via each other. However, the intercourse of this sexual relationship, according to Freud, has been constructed through sadistic and masochist behaviors (Ibid: 92)

As for sadism, Freud defines it as an active, aggressive masculine behavior (Ibid: 92). Actually, this aggressiveness has been very well mirrored through this following shot.



This reversed shot portrays Merle's face in uneasy position as it is aggressed by Osmond's fingers. He maintains this gesture and pushes her down in order to subdue her to his sexual desires. This is because Merle does not want to make love with him. Freud has defined this as the male's will of beating down the confrontation of the sexual

object. (Donovan, 1992: 92) He adds that it is a biological necessity for the male character that has its root within the Oedipus complex. During this phase, the boy wants to kill his father in order to make love to his mother. Hence, the rules of the society banish this sort of acts. Freud introduces them as the control of the super ego. Because the male character cannot overcome those taboos during this phase, he maintains unconsciously this violence during adulthood. That is to say that this aggression is a kind of compensation.

Freud adds: “The claim of the public world, or “civilization,” requires the man to make “an expedient distribution of his libido”. (Ibid: 97). That is to say that he justifies males’ unfair sexual intercourse. Just like Osmond who has made of Madame Merle his mistress. In fact, the countess Gimini has told Isabel: “At least you understand! Had it never occurred to you that Serena Merle was for six or seven years his lover?” (Jones, 1996: 115) Throughout these words, the Countess has revealed to Isabel that her husband (Osmond) was and stills in an unfair sexual relation with Madame Merle.

As far as Masochism is concerned, Freud has associated it with the passivity of the feminine behavior. He asserts that it constitutes all feminine submissive attitudes via the opposite sex along with the hurting and pain at the hands of the sexual object.(Ibid: 92)

Campion has given the audience many shots that reflect this passivity among which I may refer to this shot.



Actually this reversed shot demonstrates Isabel's passivity to Osmond violence. In fact, the spectator can remark the difference at the level of lightening within this spectrum. Indeed, Campion sheds on Isabel's face a very slight yellow color that clears up some weaken features just like her closed eyes while Osmond is seducing her to a kiss by his beating actions. She wants immensely to kiss him though he is stupefying and beating her in this scene. In fact, he has told her with an aggressive tone: "Are you satisfied? Am I sufficiently disappointed?" (Jones, 1996: 97) Freud has explained this unconscious reaction under his notion of the penis envy, as being the result of conceiving the clitoris as a wanting organ. That is why she acts submissively and inferiorly. Moreover, she admits her so called castration as an established fact. He adds that she has developed this idea so earlier to the Oedipus complex. According to him, she abandons easily the idea of bearing a child from her father as being so jealous of her mother. In fact, he explains that the girl has no penis. That is why she is already castrated and then she has nothing to worry about via the superego (Donovan, 1992: 95-96).

As far as women attitudes via the superego is concerned, Freud asserts:

**"I cannot escape the notion ... that for women the level of what is ethically normal is different from what it is in men. Their superego is never so inexorable, so impersonal, so**

**independent of its emotional origins as we require it to be in men ... [women show less sense of justice than men, that they are less ready to submit to the great necessities of life, that they are more often influenced in their judgments by feelings of affection and hostility.]”**

**(Ibid: 96)**

That is to say that a woman usually acts according to her willing not according to reason and what it should be. That is why she negates the environment around her along with its provisions. Actually, this attitude via the female character has been very well expressed through Osmond’s words. In fact, he has told her: “I think you are trying to humiliate me. As a man who tried to marry his daughter to a lord but grotesquely failed.” (Jones, 1996: 97). That is to say that he considers that she has been unreasonable and ignorant of the disgusting situation he would face within the class to which he belongs.

Isabel in her part has explained to him that Pansy is not in love with Lord Warburton but rather with Mr. Rosier (Ibid: 97). That is why she sympathizes with Pansy and she has revealed to Lord Warburton that Pansy is in love with Mr. Rosier. That is to say that she has acted according to her affections. Osmond, on the other hand has answered: “Your affection has immense limitations, however, that perhaps, is natural [...] it is not that, it is proved that Pansy can aim high” (Ibid: p). Actually, this utterance is very significant in the sense that he considers that Isabel’s feelings cause a great weakness. He adds that this weakness has its root within the nature; means the biological nature of her as being a female. Hence, its consequences are that Pansy cannot advance in the right sense as it is assigned by the society means the civilization. Thus, the equation is that Isabel’s reasoning and actions are destructive for both Pansy and the civilization she belongs to. That is why Osmond excludes her from taking decisions. Indeed, this exclusion symbolizes Freud’s anticipating exclusion of the

female character from the construction of civilization. In fact, he describes those emotions as a destructive attitude toward civilization. (Donovan, 1992: 97)

### **Narcissism**

Narcissist attitudes are another point that has been greatly manifested throughout Campion's spectrums and dialogues.



This medium shot represents Isabel at the left hand-side of the visible spectrum. She is wearing a very open aquamarine lace along with a necklace of the same color. Hitchcock's defines this color as cool one of which the connotation is to demonstrate not only a "masculine" affecting indifference or coldness, but rather an attitude of an attractive yet provocative sexuality that is reflected on the cool exterior ( Quoted in Angela, 2007: 136). Indeed, Osmond looks very indifferent via Isabel's beauty. The features of his forehead demonstrate that he is extremely upset about his greedy matters. In fact, he accuses her of managing a very deep game in order to prevent his daughter's marriage to lord Warburton. (Jones, 1996: 96) That is why he takes her cruelly from her arm and he shows none a sense of sensibility toward Isabel's charms and affections.

Freud considers women who care extravagantly of their beauty as being narcissistic, selfish ones as it is the case of Isabel in this shot. According to Freud analysis, one can admit that Isabel is frustrated and got her sexual desires unsatisfied that is why she returns to herself and devotes all her energy to her beauty. In this respect, Freud explains:

**[...] an intensification of the original narcissism, and this is unfavorable to the development of a true object-love with its accompanying sexual over-estimation; there arises in the woman a certain self-sufficiency (especially where there is a ripening into beauty) which compensates her for the social restrictions upon her object-choice [...]**

**(Quoted in Donovan, 1992: 94)**

In this passage, Freud asserts that a girl develops a true object-love. In other word, he means to say having oneself as the object-love. He has already explained in his essay “On Narcissism” (1914) that both the male and the female character have primarily developed an anaclitic love object which consists of loving the mother or whoever has taken care of them during their childhood. Hence, he adds that while the male character keeps having the mother as the love object, the girl manifests other narcissistic attitudes at the age of puberty that would cause the transference from an anaclitic love object to a narcissist one. In fact, he has already explained through his notion “The Oedipus Complex” that the girl at the age of puberty becomes so jealous of her mother and develops a love for her father. As I have already mentioned before, the girl sooner abandons the idea of bearing a child from her father and being denied from her mother, she searches to replace her mother’s love and then she turns to cultivate her beauty in order to take compensation in it. That is why she unconsciously develops mere self-love and becomes selfish via man’s love and friendship.

Actually this selfishness has been widely mirrored through Campion’s scenes.



Shot: 1:44:22

In this medium shot, Campion portrays Isabel wearing a uniform of which the lime green color is very attractive and associated with the brown color. Hitchcock explains that the wearing of such colors by a western woman symbolizes that she wants to look as a goddess of the spring or an eve in the Garden of Eden (Quoted in Vacche, 2006: 135). That is to say that Isabel has metamorphosed radically her way of clothing in order to be the center of beauty. Hence, she is so indifferent to the love of her surroundings. In fact, she is looking back to her ancient friend and suitor Caspar Goodwood and she has told him that she is very happy because he is going to leave. (Jones: 1996, 100) In this respect, Freud asserts: “[...] Strictly speaking, such women love only themselves with an intensity comparable to that of the man’s love for them. Nor does their need lie in the direction of loving but of being loved [...]”. (Quoted in Donovan, 1992: 94).

Really, this is not the only scene in which Isabel has been portrayed as being very cold and insensitive via her friends and relatives.



Shot: 01:17

In fact, in this medium shot the camera shots Ralph' face reflecting a grayish (pale) color along with features that denote that he is very ill. This technique of lightening is described by Godard as being very effective to create depth (means the power of the illness). (Quoted in Vacche, 2006: 172). Actually, this is the case of Isabel's cousin in this scene. In fact, he has told her that he is very ill and that he cannot face another journey. Besides, he adds that he neither cares for the gravity of his illness, nor for the doctor's instructions but all that he wants is to be near to her as being his cousin. In fact, he has told Lord Warburton that he does not want to move to Cecily since he has no cousin there (Jones: 1996, 76). That is to say that he is just searching Isabel's tenderness in the last moments of his life. Hence, Isabel has reacted so harshly and the extremity of her coldness and selfishness has been revealed when Ralph has asked her: "If I die here, you will bury me" and then she has answered indifferently: "No, you shan't die here". (Ibid: 77)

All in all, one can conclude that Freud has set up two worlds. On the one hand, a Male world that is more concerned with the superego, and then with the construction of civilization. In fact, the male is biologically and culturally aggressive, competitive and



the most reasonable to act via the necessities of life. In fact, he says: “[...] the work of civilization has become increasingly the business of men” (40), in somewhat circular logic. Because civilization confronts [men] with ever more difficult tasks [it] it compels them to carry out instinctual sublimation of which women are little capable” (40) (Donovan, 1992: 97). On the other hand, a Female world that is, by nature, more concerned with masochist reactions as well as narcissist attitudes, then with aesthetic values. That is why Freud limits women’ role to family and sexual duties (Ibid: 97). Actually, his assumptions come to the point of legitimizing male’s dominating mentality to which many feminists’ attitudes have responded.

### **Implicit Feminists Reactions and Attitudes within Jane Campion's movie *The Portrait of a Lady* 1996**

Actually, many feminists' works have been established as a reaction to Freudian ideology that aims to keep women under male's ascendancy. Indeed, Simone De Beauvoir, Betty Friedan along with other feminists' criticisms stresses the importance of stopping the legitimization of the rapist mentality that is covered under biological determinism. In fact, Freud asserts: "Anatomy is destiny" (Ibid: 101). That is to say that male and female roles and behaviors are biologically determined. The latter has attracted many feminists to consider that these roles are rather culturally determined. Under the section of Feminism and Freudianism, Donovan has made reference to Lévi-Strauss analysis of the Kingship system. The latter consists of the patriarchal law that keeps women as sexual objects of exchange in order to suit parental economic interests. (Donovan, 1996: 108)

Firestone as well as Simone De Beauvoir considers that Freudian notion of the Oedipus complex is just a representation of the Victorian patriarchal system. (Ibid: 103). Indeed, the latter has kept them as subordinate sexual objects. In fact, Simone De Beauvoir stresses that those narcissist attitudes that are considered by Freud as a sort of selfishness towards the male character are rather a result of men 'selfishness. In her book entitled "The Second Sex", mainly within the chapter that is named The Narcissist, De Beauvoir has explained that a woman falls into narcissism because she has been sexually frustrated. This frustration is due to male's ignorance of her sexual desires (De Beauvoir, 1953: 597). That is why she devotes her time to make herself attractive to the male's gaze. She wants her beauty to be reflected within male's eyes rather than in mirrors.

Actually, this helpless attempt to satisfy her sexual desires has pushed her to fall into ambivalent narcissist attitudes as it is very well illustrated within Campion's scenes just like the following one.



In this extreme close up shot, Campion portrays a portion of Isabel's face along with a ruby ear-ring and necklace. It seems that she wears a red robe. Hitchcock defines this way of clothing with the female's attempt to stop man's unjust consideration on the one hand, and with the desire of reciprocating his affection on the other hand. (Vachee, 2006: 140). Indeed, Campion has demonstrated throughout the dialogues she deploys how Osmond's sarcasm and coldness have pushed Isabel to reach the pitch of narcissist ambivalence. Thus, on the one hand, she looks confident and rebellious. Actually, she has responded Osmond anxiously when he is mocking the way she defines Lord Warburton. In fact, he has told her: "it seems to me he is very attentive" "isn't that what you call it?"

Isabel has broken one of the cups and answered with a high nervous tone: "I don't call it anything. I've waited for you to give it a name." (Jones, 1996: 79). That is to say that

she is firmly against the cynical way with which he is addressing her. Moreover, she has continued systematically to deny his accusation of adultery with Lord Warburton. In fact, she says: "English men are shy" Osmond answers: "This one is not, not when he makes love to you" and then Isabel has responded fiercely with a tag question: "I beg your pardon? He was extremely so" (Ibid: 81). De Beauvoir has described this reaction under the chapter of "The Married woman" as a women's sudden awareness of the necessity to stop those unpleasant and unfair considerations. (De Beauvoir, 1953: 451)

However, De Beauvoir mentions that the female sooner submits through poor narcissist judgments of herself. She does think that the male would conceive her attitudes as she presents them. (Ibid: 605) That is why Isabel has been portrayed to be ridiculous and weak on the other hand. In fact, she has responded Osmond when he has asked her if she is trying to oppose him with so a ridiculous manner by saying: "No I...I had determined this time to try and act as you would like" (Jones, 1996: 79). Therefore, she becomes unconsciously very cold via her friends and relatives and wants them all to leave Rome though their presence suggests only their love for her. Henrietta says with a pity: "she wants us all to leave Rome" (Ibid: 99). Indeed, Isabel has thought that by doing so she would incite Osmond's tenderness because she knows very well that he wants all her relatives to be out of Rome. Actually, she reaches the extreme point of frustration in this situation. In fact, at the end of this shot, she has been portrayed by Campion as being very sad when she has been seduced by Osmond and then left without even a kiss. De Beauvoir describes that it is a pity that the husband remains insensitive to the freshness and the charming of his wife's body. (De Beauvoir, 1953: 598)

Another reason that leads women to fall into narcissist attitudes is that they are excluded from the public sphere. De Beauvoir has noted that the man is identified

through his architectural and medical achievements, but the woman is ceased from realizing her projects and objectives. That is why she is turned to identify herself within the immensity of her person. (De Beauvoir, 1953: 597). Actually, this is the kind of Madame Merle.



Shot: 33: 00

In this medium shot Campion has portrayed Madame Merle directly reflected in a mirror. A technique she has used in order to highlight her ambitious narcissist attitudes. The spectator would remark that she wears a robe of which the color ranges from green to grayish one. The latter evokes, according to Hitchcock's interpretations, a female disconnection of male's world. (Quoted in Vachee, 2006: 135) Actually, Merle is represented throughout the dialogues as someone who does want any relation neither with Ralph nor with Osmond. This is because she finds the male's world as one that is unjust via female's emotions. In fact, she has told Osmond that she would like if he is not so heartless (Jones, 1996: 41).

This detachment that is caused by men' selfishness takes substitution in art. Hence, Madame Merle could not cough easily when she is to talk to Isabel about her artistic

ambitions. In fact, Isabel has asked her in this scene: “what should you like to do that you have not done?” “I am very ambitious”. (Ibid: 31). Actually, she does not find the words to express her attitudes. In her book entitled *The Feminine Mystique* (1977), Betty Friedan introduces this inability to express oneself ambitions as the problem that has no name. (Freidan, 1977: 15) This problem is that of a career. Indeed, Madame Merle has articulated it implicitly within one of her dialogues with Isabel. In fact, she has explained to her that a woman unlike the man always crawls on the surface because she has not allowed any fortune or career that would grant her a position. (Jones, 1996: 28-29)

Then she adds: “My dreams were so ... great”. It is clear that her dreams hold on an eager career that she could not realize. , “I should make myself ridiculous by talking of them”. (Ibid: 31) That is to say that she is very ashamed and embarrassed to talk about her ambitions. De Beauvoir explains under the chapter “The Narcissist” that women fall into such a delicate situation because they have not granted the opportunity to express themselves in everyday actions and life. (De Beauvoir, 1953: 603)

De Beauvoir explains that this lack of action pushes women to fetch substitutions for her narcissist goals either in art or by identifying herself with readymade ambitions as they are realized by the male character. Actually, this is the case of Madame Merle.



Shot: 24: 37

In this medium shot (shows the character from the waist level to the top of the head), Campion has portrayed Madame Merle in her highest narcissist attitudes. In fact, she looks beautifully wearing highly decorated brown velvet. This brown warm color suggests according to Hitchcock the desire of the western woman to prize her femininity. (Quoted in Vacche, 2006: 135). Indeed, she looks fully occupied with the playing of the piano to the extent that she does not remark Isabel's presence within the room. In fact, Jones introduces her as: "A strange woman, her back to Isabel, plays the piano with great skill and feeling" (Jones, 1996: 22).

As for taking substitutions in art, De Beauvoir explains this artistic profession as it is practiced by the narcissist woman as an activity with which she wants to enter the gallantry. Furthermore, it brings her glory and it permits her to accentuate her own importance. (De Beauvoir, 1953: 603) Actually, this is the aim of Madame Merle. In fact, she has told Isabel: "I am afraid there are moments in life when even Schubert has nothing to say to us" (Jones, 1996: 23). This utterance suggests to which extent she identifies herself with art and artists. Really, she prizes art and she is anxious not to be genius in her artistic activities. Thus, she mentions the famous German compositor

Franz Schubert. In addition, she has succeeded to make her surroundings approve her immensity. In fact, Ralph has told Isabel that his mother Mrs. Touchett is very fond of her (Madame Merle) to the extent that she wishes to be her place. (Ibid: 27) Isabel says then: “Well, she’s very charming, and she plays beautifully”. Ralph has responded: “She does everything beautifully. She is complete” (Ibid: 27)

As far as identifying female’s narcissist ambitions with readymade artistic works as they are realized by man, De Beauvoir mentions that such an act is a result of the female superiority complex to the extent that she can’t manifest her ambitions to the world. (De Beauvoir, 1953: 603) That is to say that she tries to realize her artistic projects by attaching them to a man who has talent and influence that she amazes by her virtues. Actually, this is what Madame Merle has planned. In fact, Osmond has said: “I’m not so heartless as you think. Every now and then something touches me, as for instance your ambitions for me. You are, after all, the most remarkable of women [...]” (Jones, 1996: 41) That is to say that he is very fond of her and that he is sensitive via her ambitions for him.

As a matter of fact, Merle takes advantage and she has told him that she wants him to do more than he has done in drawings. In fact, she says: “[...] I should have liked you to do so many other things. Those were my ambitions” (Ibid: 41)



**Campion's Educating Messages as they are clarified under Donovan's  
Theoretical Section *The New Feminist Moral Vision*.**

As I have already, Campion's *The Portrait of a Lady* (1996) deliver messages that serve as good alternatives to the young generation in general and to the female character in particular. Her aim of using the same linear plot as Henry James is to incite the spectator to think about constructing a coherent and a harmonious social order. Thus, she has given us Ralph Touchett as an attentive and comprehensive character.



Shot: 14:00 minutes

In this reversed shot, Campion sheds a white light on Ralph's face. This strategy of lightening proves that there is no atmosphere of saturation but rather it reflects the hue's variation of purity. (Vacche, 2006: 171). Indeed, this is one of the rare scenes within which an air of tranquility and patience reign over. Throughout the movie's dialogues, Lora Jones has given us Ralph Touchett as one who supports Isabel's free spirit rather than as one who makes her pressure to marry him though he is in love with her. In fact, he has said in this shot: "You've told me the great thing: that the world interests you and that you want to throw yourself into it." (Jones, 1996:

15) That is to say that he is not selfish but rather comprehensive to Isabel's charming visions.

In addition, he asked her father to leave her (Isabel) a fortune in order to realize her dreams. In fact, he has told his father that he wants to make her rich in order to make her able to realize all what she likes. He adds: "I call people rich when they are able to meet the requirements of their imagination" .His father Mr. Touchett answered: "I've thought of that, too, I've left her a legacy, five thousand pounds". Ralph has thanked him but he explains that he wants to do more since she wants to visit the world. His father answers: "To do what she likes with?" Ralph: "Absolutely what she likes" (Ibid: 26)

Actually, Ralph's attentions go hand in hand with what Murdoch has described as:

**"The direction of attention ... [must be] away from self which reduces all to a false unity, toward the great surprising variety of the world, and the ability to so direct attention is love.**

**The more the separateness and differences of other people is realized, and the fact seen that another ... has needs and wishes as demanding as one's own, the harder it becomes to treat a person as a thing"**

**(Quoted in Donovan, 1992: 182)**

This direction marks the shift from the love of the self (I) towards the other in order to establish a balanced social relations. It implicates the acceptance of women's visions and to treat them as persons not as objects. Actually, this is the way with which Ralph has treated Isabel's new dimensions. In fact, though he is in love with her, he makes prior the realization of her dreams that are beyond his proper desires and domination.

Another point to which Campion wants to bring the female's attention is the public sphere. She wants her to get what Virginia Woolf calls positions of power. (Quoted in Donovan, 1992: 185). Indeed, she wants her to cultivate her brain and to enter the intellectual field. Thus, she has given us the example of Miss Henrietta Stackpole.



In this long shot (the bodies are shown nearly entirely along with the background) Miss Stackpole looks as a soldier armed by her notebook and pen, along with the other means she uses for reporting. Her portraiture is not exposed to men's gazes just like the one of the Victorian ladies that I have exposed in the previous sections. Actually, Campion has given us Stackpole as someone who is determined and self confirming. In fact, Isabel has answered Ralph (her cousin) when he has asked her whether he should like or hate her reporter friend (Henrietta) by saying: "Whichever you do will matter very little to Henrietta. She doesn't care a straw what men think of her" (Jones, 1996: 9-10)

It is noticeable that Campion has given place to female sexual fantasies and supports sexual freedom. However, she has given us Henrietta as an example to the modern woman who would fight against every degrading cliché that would deny her body and mind. Dana Densmore as a contributor of the radical feminist theory named "Independence from the

Sexual Revolution” (1971) considers that women have not to conceive sexual freedom as she says: “the be-all and end-all of liberation. “Spiritual freedom, intellectual freedom, freedom from invasions of privacy and the insults of degrading stereotypes” (Quoted in Donovan, 1992: 142-143)

In other words, Dana Dansmore urges women to construct their proper respected identity. Thus to make limitations to pornographic images that are maintained over the years from literature to the last modern means of communication just like their naked representation within journals ; Tabloids: The Sun for example.

Campion’s suggestion of Miss Stackpole analytic visions is to bring up the female’s attention to analyze the matter of things and events and to suspect about the real attentions of her surroundings. Actually, Henrietta Stackpole has been represented within Jones’ dialogues as a person who has been always careful in her decisions. In fact, she explains to Isabel that she does not come haphazardly to the point of marrying Mr. Bantling. Thus, she describes her decision as:

**“I’ve come to it little by little. I’ve studied him for many years and now I see right through him. He’s not intellectual, but he appreciates intellect. On the other hand, he doesn’t exaggerate its claims. I sometimes think we do in the United States”**

**(Jones, 1996: 121)**

That is to say that unlike Isabel Archer, she does not fall as a victim of an artificial romantic love. The latter, Firestone asserts that it keeps women believe in what she calls as “beauty ideal” through which they unconsciously contribute to their identification as sex objects tying their happiness to romance and sex. (Quoted in Donovan, 1992: 149) Actually, Isabel Archer has been mistaken by Osmond’s taste and sublimation. In fact, she has been fascinated by Osmond’s Museum and does not take into consideration Countess Gemini’s ironic revelation of Osmond’s old and confining believes as well as his devil intentions. Thus,

she advised Isabel: “[...] But don’t sit there, that chair’s not what it looks. There are some very good seats here, but there are also some horrors”. (Jones, 1996: 45). Unfortunately, Isabel has analyzed just superficially and answers: “I don’t see any horrors anywhere. Everything seems to me beautiful and precious”. The Countess Gemini adds: “Poor Osmond, with his old curtains and crucifixes!” (Ibid, 45). Hence, Isabel maintains her sensitiveness and she does recognize very late that she has got married to a fortune-hunting dilettante. In fact, she has told Ralph during his dying moments that Osmond has married her for her money. (Ibid: 126)

Really, Campion and Jones’s deliberate aim is to address the female conscious mind to go beyond the artificial in order to reach the real because what it seems to be in things and matters is very distant from what it is in them. Thus, Henrietta Stackpole’s words reflect what Firestone calls as: “an “anticulture revolution” in a “matter-antimatter explosion” has occurred” (Quoted in Donovan, 1992: 149). Indeed, Stackpole has acted out of any artificial value and has known how to analyze profoundly Bantling personality and to integrate her principals to it.

Indeed, Henrietta does not find the appropriate words with which she would explain to Isabel the process she has made to reach the decision of marrying Mr. Bantling. Actually, she is ashamed because she is always against the act of marrying a European. In fact, she says: “Well, yes, I suppose it does. I think I know what I’m doing, but I don’t know that I can explain” then Isabel has answered her by saying: “One can’t explain one’s marriage”. (Jones, 1996: 121). That is to say that Isabel has understood that marriage is such a probable existential matter that Henrietta cannot prevent with the Englander Mr. Bantling. Actually, this comprehensive attitude goes hand in hand with what David Kolb describes in his book named *The Critic of Pure Modernity* (1986) as: “[...] Indeed, in modernity, self-consciousness comes into its own: it becomes possible to continually engage in reflection on

available social roles and possibilities and gains a distance from the tradition” (Kolb, 1986: 47). In other word, the spectator is to deduce that one can choose and make and then remake one’s identity as one’s life circumstances and possibilities change and expand or contract.

## Conclusion

This modest paper has studied the theme of cultural differences and the problems the immigrants encounter within Henry James's novel *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881). It is based on Homi Bhabha's postmodern theory which is entitled *The Location of Culture* (2004) and Benedict Anderson's theory of *Imagined Communities* (1991). In the light of this study, it is concluded that Henry James portrays and depicts clearly the delicate situation to which his American characters are exposed to within a European context. Indeed, he has demonstrated how they are gathering on every cultural aspect in order to enter the social space. In fact, they are gathering on the languages as well as the ways of behaving and thinking. Actually, his illustrations are fascinating and universal ounces since such obstacles are faced in a way or another by all the immigrants in all over the world.

This framework d

eals also with Campion's adaptation of Henry James *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881). It gives a detailed analysis of Campion's Reflexive Nostalgia that is concerned with the revelation of past worlds atrocities via the female character. It interprets also Campion's educating messages and suggested alternatives for the young audience in general and the female character in particular. As a theoretical framework, it relies on Josephine Donovan's *The Feminist Theory* (1992) as well as Simon De Beauvoir feminists attitudes as they are articulated in her book *The Second Sex* (1953).

In the prologue of her theory, Donovan has stressed the importance of teaching and transmitting one's history as well the significance of self understanding. Thus, she has made reference to George Santayana's aphorism who states that those who are ignorant of their history are condemned to repeat it. Nikki Giovanni also asserts that freedom is maintained by critical knowledge of one's self, one's community, and the world. Thus, the principal aim of this research paper is to approach Campion's attitudes in terms of those exposed principals

Leaning on *Cultural Feminism*, I have come to interpret Campion's revelation of the implications of Christian Doctrines, Social Darwinism as well as the Institution of Marriage on the female character. Indeed, this section has demonstrated very well the hidden pains that are exercised on the female character within highly aesthetic canonical codes that have shaped the Victorian social order. Thus to expose Campion's incitement of the young generation in general and the elite mind in



particular to deduce that females' conditions in the past was not so easy and perfect as it is covered by fashionable modes of life.

Focusing on Freudian psychoanalytic approach as it is articulated within the section of *Freudianism and Feminism*, this investigation has explained the males and females' psychosexual development and its impact on their behaviors as well as on the division of social roles and orders. It also elicits feminists' reactions to Freudian notions that are: Sadism, Masochism as well as Narcissism.

It has been the major aim of this dissertation to interpret Campion's suggested alternatives to the young generation. Her adaptation as I have already mentioned follows James's coherent plot and characterization. Thus, I have demonstrated how *The Portrait of a Lady* (1996) has emerged as a film heritage product that transmit educating messages that stress pure love and mutual respect as well as other suggested alternatives to reintegrate one's principals in order to manage a harmonious life and to get self understanding as well.

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