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Diplomová práce

Conflicts of Romance in Three Early Novels by Henry James

Milostné střety ve třech raných románech
Henryho Jamese

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Abstract

The thesis explores a theme common to three early novels by Henry James: the pursuit of romantic relationship and conflict involving romance. The theses analyses these three novels: *The American*, *The Europeans* and *Washington Square*. Except for *Washington Square*, the protagonists are American, and there is no happy ending in romance. There are another common themes are wealth, the climbing up in society, manners, and religion and psychological motive, which play a major role in addition to love. The thesis show both positive and negative aspects of an individual ability to pursue a romantic relationship with various obstacles that create a new life for him or her. Henry James's life is considered as a possible inspiration for having written the three novels.

Anotace

Diplomová práce se zabývá společným tématem třech raných románů Henryho Jamese: snaha navázat romantický vztah a milostné střety. Práce analyzuje tyto tři romány: *Američan*, *Evropané* a *Washingtonovo náměstí*. Mimo *Washingtonova náměstí* jsou hlavní hrdinové Američané a láska nekončí šťastně. V knize nalezneme další společná témata jako bohatství, snaha dostat se do vyšší společnosti, mravy, víra a psychologický motiv, které hrají hlavní roli v lásce. Práce znázorňuje jak pozitivní, tak negativní aspekty jedincovy schopnosti usilovat o romantický vztah s různými překážkami, které přináší jedinci nový život. Dále práce pojednává o životě Henryho Jamese jako jeho možnou inspiraci k sepsání románů.

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1 Introduction

This diploma thesis focuses on the literary work of Henry James, the writer and critic of the nineteenth century psychological literary realism. The thesis deals with his three early novels, *The Americans* (1877), *The Europeans* (1880) and *Washington Square* (1888). The theses focuses on the aspects linked with the theme of romance and conflicts of the main protagonists in the novel. It also compares the three above-mentioned novels on their common themes such as wealth, manners, religion, social class differences and no happy ending in any of the three novels, which play an important role in pursuing a romantic relationship.

Henry James was born in 1843 in Washington Square in New York City to a wealthy family. "His grandfather, an Irish immigrant, was one of the wealthiest men in America" (Powers 1970: 9) when his grandfather died his son and James's father, also named Henry, inherited a great fortune. This well-educated man dedicated his life to educating and improving his sons in advanced studies in England, Switzerland and France. He and his brother William were educated in many American and also European schools. Henry was mainly influenced by his private tutors who helped him to study in the greatest European galleries. Since he was a child Henry was interested in the careful observation of social life. He was reading English and French novels by the well-known authors such as Honoré de Balzac, Samuel Richardson, Charles Dickens, William Makepeace and Thackeray. For a short time he studied law at Harvard University, but soon he continued with his literary work. In 1869 he moved to London and in 1875 he left to Paris where he was introduced to the French society by Ivan Sergeevich Turgenev. However, in a year he left back to London where he stayed until his death, accepting British nationality as a protest against the American weak and passive reaction to World War I. He was highly supported by the writer and critic William Dean Howells.

In his work, he mainly focuses on the psychological study of the people from different social classes, which allows him to explore the self consciousness

and perception. His work is often compared to the impressionist painting for capturing the atmosphere of the unrepeatable moment of the soul. He is well-known for showing Americans encountering the world of Europe and describing the clash between these two different mentalities. During his journey in France and Italy he was observing Americans living in their houses. Europe, in his point of view, is a tough world corrupted by aristocracy and the old traditions.

His career can be divided into three main phases' periods. The first phase is dated between 1864 and 1881, the second since 1881 to 1902 and his third phase between 1902 and 1911. In his early first phase, which is dated between the years of 1864 and 1874, the author is studying how to write and focuses on the critical essays and novels. His first novel is *A Tragedy of Error*, which was published in 1864, was printed in *The Continental Monthly* and since 1865 he publishes in the magazine called *The Atlantic Monthly*. The author considers *Watch and Ward* as his first novel; however, it was published in the Atlantic serially. In 1875 the author introduces his first "international" novel, called *Roderick Hudson*, which is published in 1875 and became a turning point in his career, "despite its obvious flaws, it represents a remarkable five year's advance over *Watch and Ward*" (Mull 1973: 30) He also publishes *A Passionate Pilgrim and Other Tales*, which "turns on the question of ancestral property" (Mull 1973: 15) *Transatlantic Sketches* and a long essay on Balzac.

The characters in this phase are usually innocent, very intelligent and also naïve. They are coming to Europe to fulfil themselves and to experience the old world, society, life and traditions and while travelling around Europe where they find the significant differences in behavior and manners. There is a clash of different society of New World of America and Old World of Europe, when the "bad" American behavior causes the embarrassment of the "good American" in the old conservative and aristocratic world of Europe. His well-known novels from this period are: his second "international" novel *The American* (1877) and a novella *The Europeans* (1878), a revision of the early novel *Watch and Ward*. Then James wrote his "first collection of critical essays *French Poets and*

Novelists (1878); his first and only critical biography, *Hawthorne* (1879); and his first bestseller, *Daisy Miller* (1879)” (Powders 1970: 15)

Daisy Miller, his first bestseller, is a psychological plotting of a lady with traditional point of views of Italian society. This comedy of manners describes a young free soul coming to Europe and shocking local society with her easy-going American mind. This pretty heroine dies of malaria. This novel brings “a much harsher and almost unfavourable light on the general American scene” (Powders 1970: 15) Italy is a place where people fulfil themselves intellectually. However, at the end they do not gain what they really had expected. In contrast with other authors writing about Italy, James does not criticize the country as much.

In 1881 he wrote *Washington Square* and his major novel *The Portrait of a Lady*. While writing *The Portrait of a Lady* Henry James was inspired by George Eliott’s *Daniel Deronda* as well as the prose of Turgenev. The novel *The Portrait of a Lady* is a study of Isabel Archer who travels to Europe and becomes a victim of her own provincialism. She brings her free spirit to Victorian world and she is then manipulated by Europeans from higher social class to marry an American widower who lives in Italy because she had inherited a large amount of money. One novelist-scholar, E.M. Forster in his essay *The Ambassadors*, describes that the main protagonist, Isabel “is a second rate, deficient in sensitiveness, abounding in the wrong sort of worldliness; [...] her absurdity is delightful” (Edel 1963: 75) This novel describes the author’s interest in contributing the differences between America and Europe. What made this novel so popular are the timeless themes of freedom, betrayal and money.

His middle phase the author in his later novels describes the social reformers and philanthropists and anarchists. In 1886 he publishes another two novels *The Bostonians* and *The Princess Casamassima*: “The former, his only major novel that is purely American, is a humorous satire of certain aspects of American life” (Powders 1970: 19). These novels are followed by *The Tragic Muse* (1890), in which James describes the study of art dilemma (the conflict between art and the world).

Moreover, the author between the years 1890 and 1895 dramatized *The American* in 1891 and wrote his best play *Guy Domville* in 1895, which was nevertheless not successful. As the plays were not a big success, to put it mildly, James wanted to put the experience of drama into his novels. Henry James includes his essays on the purpose of art into his novel *The Real Thing* (1892). He wrote *The Turn of the Screw* (1898), where the author is inspired by the children's world and studies the innocence and *In the Cage* (1898). The divorce novella *What Maisie Knew* was published in 1897 and it is actually the first novella which must have dictated because of the author's sickness. Since 1899 all his novels were dictated to his secretary who wrote the words down, which altered his style. *The Awkward Age* was published in 1899. These two novels "represent important extended experiments in narrative technique – particularly in narrative focus" (Powders 1970: 32)

Henry James was able to write three masterpiece novels at the beginning of the new century in just a few years, which became his bestsellers. His last period is therefore highlighted as major phase. First of all, in 1902 he publishes the second bestseller, *The Wings of the Dove*, which "recounts the bitter-sweet story of Milly Theale, the wealthy American girl, whose very name recalls the long dead Minny Temple. James's one true love and her brief but finally fruitful life in Europe and especially in Italy" (Powders 1970 32-33). The story describes a pretty young heroine suffering from a serious disease and how she influences people around her. The dove, which appears in the title, symbolises Minny's purity, beauty and peace. In the book there is the association between death and love. The main theme of the book is again a clash between naïve Americans and highly sophisticated Europeans.

Secondly, in 1903 he wrote *The Ambassadors*, the comedy of manners and "a table of Americans in Paris and hence in some sense a sequel to the earlier *The American*; James would always consider this his best work" (Powders 1970: 33) The story is about a middle-aged American, Lambert Strether, who goes to Paris to help a young man, Chad Newsome, to bring him back to the family business in Boston. However, discovering that Chad is living in Europe for such a long time

and being amazed at Parisian life, Lambert finally stops Chad from going back to America. The book became so popular because of its beauty. “The Ambassadors is the reward due to a fine artist for hard work. James knew exactly what he wanted, he pursued the narrow path of aesthetic duty, and success to the full extent of his possibilities has crowded him.” (Edel 1963: 76)

Finally, in 1904 he wrote *The Golden Bowl*, which is a study of adultery with four major protagonists. It describes the interrelationships between father and daughter and their spouses. Powders points out:

the last of three, again raises the question of the possibility of successful marriage between the fresh, new American girl and the European aristocrat of long tradition and ancestry. This would be his last major novel, and is supremely appropriate that in it in James managed to effect the successful compromise toward which all his international fiction had from the first been yearning: the antinomies are reconciled and the American fruitfully weds her European. (Powders 1970: 30)

In James’s declining years, the author was not able to write and final three novels *The Outcry* (1911), *The Ivory Tower* and *The Sense of the Past* (1917). After his death his critical essays are printed in 1934 *The Art of the Novel*.

Henry James influenced the American world of fiction mainly because of his stylistic effort which had made the psychological melodrama common among the American society in the nineteenth century. The psychological novel was, however, introduced by Richardson but Henry James improved its stylistic attitude.

For my thesis I choose to deal with James’s three early novels mostly set in the United States: First of all, I choose the novel *The American*, which is his earliest great novel presenting the moral and social class clash between Americans and Europeans. The second work I deal with is *The Europeans*, the shorter novella set near Boston based on two siblings’ journey to escape from the European

decadence to America to visit their blood relatives to find happiness. Finally *Washington Square*, the psychological melodrama describes the ruin of a prominent family because of the stubbornness of a father as well as of the only surviving child born to a successful but widowed father who runs his medical practice in New York City.

2 The American

The American was originally published as a series in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1876-77, then published as a book by Henry James in 1877. According to the scholar Beach the novel “is a fine example of his earlier period. It was his third novel and it was the second of those chosen by him for inclusion in his collective edition (1907-1909).” (Beach1949: x)

2.1 Introduction

There is an important influence by Henry James on the contemporary American novel. As J.W. Beach wrote, “Henry James may well be called, at the present moment, the novelist’s novelist.” (Beach 1949: v) Many scholars have noted the influence of James on such novelists as Virginia Woolf, William Faulkner, Joyce, Conrad and Dostojevsky and even the African American novelist James Galdwin admitted his debt to Henry James. In James’s novels,

the tendency of „subjectivism”, the limitation of the point of view, and the „dramatic“ handling of the story have been dominant features of serious fiction since James, and while many novelists have contributed to the development of these techniques, he may be given the greatest credit for bringing them so widely into vogue. (Beach 1949: ix)

Bernard Malamud even allows *The American* to play centre stage in the early part of one of his own novels. In his 1961 novel *A New Life*, Malamud’s hero’s first evidence of intellectual interest finds expression in Henry James’s novel *The American*. Like Seymour Levin of the 1950s, Christopher Newman of 1868 leaves his home to change his life. Newman moves from the idyllic, unspoiled California to the old world of France while the Malamud hero departs from the Europeanized old world of New York culture to find meaning in his life

in the untamed and also unspoiled West. Both of them are looking for love and self-fulfillment among unfamiliar strangers. Both escape a stressful past and both find their new surroundings completely amazing at first. However, later they acknowledge that the place is destroyed by admittedly different forms of the old aristocracy. *The American* become really popular, nearly a best-seller and has influenced many contemporary writers.

The most recognizable motif of the novel is the international theme where the two different worlds are combined. It describes a story of an American, Christopher Newman, who is a rich businessman travelling to Europe to enjoy the beauty of the old culture. Moreover, he comes to Europe to marry a girl; however, as he has the money, she must be the best woman. The trip can be understood as fulfilling the American dream which never becomes true. The exposition of two different worlds and morality of Americans and Europeans is well described by Lyall H. Powers:

the typical international theme receives a balanced and clear-cut exposition: the good and the bad of both the American and the European are distinctly and carefully set forth. Christopher is basically good-hearted and well intentioned, yet his woeful naïveté is so extreme as actually to constitute a serious fault-especially when seen against background of European cultured civilization. Newman is the great Western barbarian, the hick, a boor and a bear: he is unfinished man. The European Bellegardes are awfully (in the most literal sense well mannered, are of course as much at ease in society's drawing room as Newman is awkward. (Powers 1970: 46)

Another theme of the novel is love and personal happiness of aristocrats against family duty. In the nineteenth century the duty of an arranged marriage to secure the family wealth was very common. The young ladies had to marry a man of the same "blood" so that their aristocracy was preserved. Love had no impact on the decision of the father, who was actually the only one capable of choosing an appropriate husband. In the novel

Christopher Newman is not accepted to be a husband for a woman of aristocratic blood. There is an unspoken love between them. However, the woman named Claire de Cintré at the end decides not to disobey and marry him because of her duty and goes instead into a nunnery.

A significant part of the criticism against *The American* is James's apparently unrealistic portrayal of Newman's Americanness or Westernness. He neither speaks with a dialect nor manifests any aspects of Western U.S. culture or humour. Newman only rarely appears to be ill-mannered to the French aristocracy. As McElderry notes, Christopher Newman only occasionally "is capable of gaucheries," (McElderry 1965: 46) when he telegraphs friends in America of his engagement before the family has a chance to make a formal announcement; he proposes to give a ball, not realizing that Claire's family should do so first.

In fact, Newman is a character type James never really knew personally. Rourke believes James's portrait of Newman originates from James's memories of popular plays in New York City when he was a boy. He saw plays at Barnum's:

where the Yankee farces were often performed, where the whole Americans legend was racyly sketched, with the backwoodsman and the minstrel as occasional figures...During James's boyhood the streets of New York were alive with the color of the California adventure"(Rourke 1973: 33)

James's youth and his perceptions of both the European aristocracy in decline and this Californian legend of the self-made man, influenced James to create the plot of *The American*, but the plot's origin and its execution was grounded in romanticism rather than realism.

Another point of criticism is the fact that the comedy of manners turns into an almost gothic horror. Yet there is much foreshadowing early on in the plot of

this gothic aspect which took so many readers by surprise. Constantly, Newman is warned by Mme. de Cintré and others that the family is ‘strange.’ The resolution Claire makes to take refuge in a convent, “one of the most hackneyed plot devices in nineteenth-century fictional romance,” (McElderry 1965: 46) as McElderry points out. The novel is melodramatic, out of character of the picture James offered up to that point of Claire de Cintré, and wholly unconvincing. Christopher Newman is largely unaware of the social traditions and conventions of the older civilization and is largely realistic.

2.2 *The Dilemma of Arts*

As L. H. Powers identified, Henry James, in his stories of writers and artists, concentrates on the theme which James calls “the dilemma of the artist”. James works with this theme during his career in the theatre, which was a period of his own personal crisis. However, it should not be understood as autobiographical, because if the author used his own dilemmas, he would express this treatment in a concrete form. Henry James connects the international theme with his art. What these two themes have in common is the relation between the opposition of the world and art and the society of two different worlds of the United States and Europe, which are too far from each other because of different history and tradition. American society could hardly understand the European, also because of different manners and behavior. The art of the old European world with aristocratic manners really influences the civilized naïve American, who sees the aristocratic behavior as hypocritical, unscrupulous and undemocratic because European aristocrats perceive Americans as uneducated foolish people, they would never accept this stupid Americanism into their society:

The Jamesian opposition between art and the world tends to emphasize the spiritual quality of art and the crass materialism of the world; that is the centre of theme of the dilemma of the artist. There is, furthermore, a close association between that theme and [...] the international theme. Without unfair representation and

undue strain we may say that as the structural tension in the artist stories results from the general opposition of art and the world, so in the international stories the structural tension results from the opposition of America and Europe. The first dilemma of the innocent American derives from his confrontation, in Europe, with a world that takes its stand and bases its judgements on what shows-correct manners, conventional behavior. The particular evil of that stand is that it permits the grossest hypocrisy to flourish: what one smoothly does is not necessarily a reflection of what one truly is. The trouble with the naïve American is that he has no art or artifice to express faithfully to civilized European society what he really is. (Powers 1970: 114)

2.3 The Quest

The American is an unusual novel. In the beginning of the novel it appears to be a comedy: an American is a complete novice to fine art. Ironically, when he arrives to Europe, he visits the Louvre in Paris. He is not able to classify what is the masterpiece and what a university student might have created:

He had looked, moreover, not only at all the pictures, but at all the copies that were going forward around them, in the hands of those innumerable young women in irreproachable toilets who devote themselves, in France, the propagation of masterpieces, and if the truth must be told, he had often admired the copy much more than the original. (James 1958: 1)

He does not know anything about technique or the quality of the painting. He is seen to go into the greatest art museum in the world in Paris, the centre of art. In the Salon Carré he notices a beautiful painting; Moon-borne Madonna painted by one of the most prestigious baroque painter, Murillo. Christopher Newman sees this magnificent masterpiece for the first time. This portrait of Christian femininity is timeless and captures the real purity of the newborn life and belief. Henry James chose this painting because it symbolizes the new life and Christopher Newman came to Europe to live a totally different relaxing new life.

Ironically, it gives Christopher an “aesthetic headache” (James 1958: 1), an ironic symbol of Newman’s ignorance of art.

Christopher Newman is an exceptional American: he is an orphan, who rose up on his own. While he is extremely clever, he is not formally educated. He does not speak necessarily with the best grammar. Nevertheless, he is a multimillionaire. Christopher Newman represents a Jamesian example of businessman “almost painfully wanting in the refinements of Old World culture.” (Beach, p. vii) However, for the French aristocracy the way he makes money is not really elegant. When Madame de Bellegarde asks him where his money comes from, he simply replies: “I was in business. I have been in business since I was fifteen years old.” (James 1958: 85) Madame de Bellegarde then asks Newman:

And what was your business?” asked Madame de Bellegarde, who was decidedly not so pretty as Madame de Cintré. “I have been in everything,” said Newman. “At one time I sold leather; at one time I manufactured wash-tubs.” Madame de Bellegarde made a little grimace. “Leather? I don’t like that. Wash-tubs are better. I prefer the smell of soap. I hope at least they made your fortune.” She rattled this off with the air of a woman who had the reputation of saying everything that came into her head, and with a strong French accent. Newman had spoken with cheerful seriousness, but Madame de Bellegarde’s tone made him go on, after a meditative pause, with a certain light grimness of jocularly. “No, I lost money on wash-tubs, but I came out pretty square on leather.” (James 1958: 85)

In an American sense making money in this way is acceptable, because Newman comes from a lower class orphanage and became a millionaire. Most wealthy people from Europe and even from the more European East Coast of the United States, (while Christopher is from California in the West), have wealth because they inherited it. People like Henry James, who are born into wealth, did not have to get the money by engaging in business, they inherited it from their fathers or even grandfathers. Henry James’s grandfather was extremely successful in business, and it was him that Henry James inherited his money. Christopher Newman is therefore the opposite type of American from Henry James

background or social class. While Henry James attended excellent schools including Harvard University, Christopher Newman never went to a university or a proper school. He does not speak elegant English. Moreover, since he was a small child he has had to take care of himself by earning money.

According to Rourke, Newman's quest is highly influenced by the Civil War. Newman served with the Union (Northern) forces with distinction. Americans, Rourke writes, needed to establish something after the chaos of the war experience: "Fumbling and fantastic, the restless habit seemed an effort to find an established tradition, with solidity, assurance, and justification which traditions may bring". (Rourke 1973: 32) However, Newman may instead be merely following a tradition of long standing among the wealthy New Englanders who sought the best in education and culture in Europe and particularly in France. Newman wants to join this exclusive class, unaware that money alone will not open the doors. Even before the American Revolution, although the most famous Americans abroad were diplomats, it was science, philosophy, literature and culture that occupied the majority of their time. Benjamin Franklin attended the opera, observed churches such as the Church of the Madeleine being built, met with scholars and writers such as D'Alembert, Condorcet, Morellet, Madame de Staël, and most famously with Voltaire (Ross 1970: 10-15). Franklin is emphasized here because his name is mentioned in James's novel by a French woman to Newman as the great example of the American self-made man of business and culture, and it is certainly him that Newman sought to emulate in this quest.

2.4 Newman's Inability to Cope with French Society

Christopher Newman comes to the Louvre with a very poor knowledge of French vocabulary. The single word, "Combien" (James 1958: 4), which Christopher Newman knows, reveals "limited capacity for dealing with a non-American world and foreshadows his later inability to function within French society" (Tellote 1979: 30). Ironically, Christopher Newman misunderstands what

is for sale. By using his money to access what has been inaccessible for a busy Californian, he remains ignorant to the cultural sensitivities of the French aristocracy; he merely feels that he own education is both worthwhile and possible at this location.

Newman appears utterly uneducated in the non-business aspects of life. When Newman confronts works of art, he confuses even the deprived and poor Mlle. Noémie Nioche: “I don’t understand how a man can be so ignorant.” (James 1958: 56)

Mlle. Noémie Nioche comes from a lower middle class, far from the aristocratic background. Her father is a failed businessman; she is now the one trying to earn money for the family. Having some elegance in her looks, but not in her clothing, Mlle. Nioche has noticed the new man, the American. Americans at that time were known to have lots of money, because of the American industrial expansion after the Civil War was highly successful. The American growth of the economy after the Civil War ended in 1865 was enormously strong whereas Europe was not doing nearly as well with the expansion, money, industry and economy. Particularly France in a whole nineteenth century never economically recovered from the loss of Napoleonic wars in 1815. Other European countries besides France had not expanded much either. Germany was even a little bit behind England which of course was developed primarily through its massive empire. Therefore everything in France to Henry James and Americans such as Christopher Newman was really inexpensive while a lot of French people lived in poverty. That is why Christopher Newman could buy anything for a low price. However, he did not know the French prices of things so Mlle. Nioche charges very high prices for terrible looking paintings that Newman will pay money for, which is still not a bad price in the United States. Yet in France he is paying much more than what any French man would pay for this girl’s abysmal paintings.

That is why he purchases poorly copied works of masterpieces exhibited in the Louvre, unaware of the worthlessness of the duplicates he pays large sums for. The copyist, after learning that Christopher Newman was named after Christopher

Columbus, Newman's "patron-saint, in the calendar" (James 1958: 6) James by his parents, uncompromisingly reveals his aim to purchase many of the supreme expressions of European culture to bring back to America.

2.5 Newman's Insight into the Parisian Language and Life

Of course, Newman cannot speak French, which makes him feel frustrated. As Tellote illustrated "similarly, language as a form of perspective causes its own frustrations, since words seldom convey precisely the same meanings to all people" (Tellote 1979: 29)

On the other hand, meeting Mlle. Nioche gives Christopher first chance to meet with the Parisian language, because Monsieur Nioche offers him lessons of French in his rusty English. Noémie introduces her father to Christopher Newman. Monsieur Nioche is blinded by both the sum of 2,000 francs for his daughter's painting and her daughter's intrigues of demanding so much. However, he is an old merchant and he sees Christopher as an easy opportunity to earn money. As Christopher knows he needs French to be able to understand French people, and also he wants to meet with French society, they arrange French lessons:

"Would it please you to receive instruction in our beautiful language?" he inquired, with an appealing quaver.

"To study French?" asked Newman, staring.

M. Nioche pressed his finger-tips together and slowly raised his shoulders. "A little conversation!"

"Conversation—that's it!" murmured Mademoiselle Noémie, who had caught the word. "The conversation of the best society."

"Our French conversation is famous, you know," M. Nioche ventured to continue. "It's a great talent."

"But isn't it awfully difficult?" asked Newman, very simply.

“Not to a man of *esprit*, like monsieur, an admirer of beauty in every form!” and M. Nioche cast a significant glance at his daughter’s Madonna.

“I can’t fancy myself chattering French!” said Newman with a laugh. “And yet, I suppose that the more a man knows the better.”

“Monsieur expresses that very happily. *Hélas, oui!*”

“I suppose it would help me a great deal, knocking about Paris, to know the language.” (James 1958: 9)

Not only Noemie’s father provides Newman an insight into the Parisian language. When he meets the American family, the Tristrams, who have been living in France for six years, they provide Christopher with lots of advice and teach him useful French informal language:

“*C’est le bel âge*, as they say here.”

“What does that mean?”

“It means that a man shouldn’t send away his plate till he has eaten his fill.” (James 1958: 15)

Tom Tristram is Christopher’s old friend, whom Christopher met in America. Tom comments on the French lessons, which Newman had arranged with M. Nioche:

“[...] I have just made arrangements to take French lessons.”

“Oh, you don’t want any lessons. You’ll pick it up. I never took any.”

“I suppose you speak French as well as English?”

“Better!” said Mr. Tristram, roundly. “It’s a splendid language. You can say all sorts of bright things in it.”

“But I suppose,” said Christopher Newman, with an earnest desire for information, “that you must be bright to begin with.”

“Not a bit; that’s just the beauty of it.” (James 1958: 15)

2.6 Newman’s Reasons for Coming to Europe: matrimony

In *The American*, we can see the main character, Christopher Newman as “mediating factor between his world and the reader’s” (Tellote 1979: 28). Henry

James portrayed this man as a modern American businessman who takes us to the old world of Europe. The name Newman actually means a newcomer to a place. Christopher Newman is assumed as a connection between the old world of Europe, to which Newman has never been before and the modern world of the western part of Europe:

Newman becomes something of Columbus in reverse, taking us on a voyage of discovery to the Old World. What we mainly discover, though is just how inscrutable the world-new or old-really is and how important perspective is for constructing a habitable world. (Tellote 1979: 28)

Christopher Newman is travelling to a place where he had never been before. Moreover, he perceives himself as a new person from inside. Coming to a new place brings him a possibility to change himself and forget about his difficult past:

I had money enough, or if I hadn't I ought to have. I seemed to feel a new man inside my old skin, and I longed for a new world. [...] I gave the old horse the bridle and let him find his way. (James 1958: 23)

By chance at the Louvre, Christopher Newman encounters his old companion, Tom Tristram. Christopher Newman served in the Northern Army during the Civil War. He was a bit of a Civil War hero as a soldier and this is the place where he met Tristram. Christopher tells him that the poverty forced him to take care of himself since he was fifteen years, however, he was involved in various fields of business, except from the time he spent serving in the Civil War. He became quite successful and earned a great fortune of money. Tristram then asks him: "come to Paris to spend it, eh?" (James 1958: 13) Christopher explains that he got tired of the entire business machination, when one businessman has to

be very competitive, cold-blooded, insidious, sharp, and careless to others, sometimes causing one's total ruin. Once he fast asleep in the cab, he awoke in Manhattan and changed his mind, he started to be disgusted by the whole business. Christopher knows that it is Europe where he wishes to go to when he escapes Wall Street:

“I have come to see Europe, to get the best out of it I can. I want to see all the great things, and do what the clever people do.” (James 1958: 21)

I want the biggest kind of entertainment a man can get. People, places, art, nature, everything! I want to see the tallest mountains, and the bluest lakes, and the finest pictures, and the handsomest churches, and the most celebrated men, and the most beautiful women. (James 1958: 23)

Tom Tristram introduces Christopher to his wife, Mrs. Tristram, who has many good ideas for Christopher. She talks to him, giving him much advice and once in the evening on the balcony Christopher Newman confides to Mrs. Tristram that he is in Europe also to marry. He takes marrying a woman as a deal: he has lots of money and thinks he should marry well, since he is sure he can fulfil every wish his wife may have. He wants to gain a kind of prestige through his wife, who must be pretty, good in manners and even in person:

I want a great woman. I stick to that. That's one thing I can treat myself to, and if it is to be had I mean to have it. What else have I toiled and struggled for, all these years? I have succeeded, and now what am I to do with my success? To make it perfect, as I see it, there must be a beautiful woman perched on the pile, like a statue on the monument. She must be as good as she is beautiful, and as clever as she is good. I can give my wife a good deal, so I am not afraid to ask a good deal myself. She shall have everything a woman can desire, I shall not even object to her being too good for me; she may be cleverer and wiser than I can understand, and I shall only be the better pleased. I want to possess, in a word, the best article in the market. (James 1958: 34)

In Christopher Newman's point of view, he sees his possible wife as a "property" (Tellote 1979: 32). This kind of opinion was very typical for men among the nineteenth century. The men were those, who courts the women and as Christopher Newman knows he possess a great fortune of wealth, he thinks that his wife should help him get himself up in the society. He wants to be perceived by high social class and thinks that money can help him. However, eventually he realizes that money is not the most important aspect of life for French people.

2.7 *Comedy of Manners*

The first half of the novel may be classified as a comedy of manners: people of different social classes meet each other, might be attracted to one another but they have different class habits, means of speaking, dressing, eating, manners of conducting conversation, etc. Among the American literature it is somewhat unusual to write a comedy of manners since most Americans understand each other as democratically originating from the same social class. However, Henry James in his life went to Europe where the situation regarding social differences was totally different. French people are generally Roman Catholics; the Bellegardes in particular go back to before the reformation as aristocratic people of significance. They were the Templars, the leaders engaged in the Crusades which the Pope one thousand years ago ordered Europeans to fight in. The ancestors of Bellegardes family, the real nobles of the French aristocracy, were heroes during the Crusades; they were generals in the fight to liberate Jerusalem from the Muslims. As the results of their heroic fighting, they were knighted and given aristocratic titles as well as land and castles. These people, the Bellegardes, hundred years after the crusades are still living in those castles. The name "Bellegardes" means "beautiful" or "good" guards. They continue with their ancient tradition, which is extremely important for them. The tradition includes belief in God, belief in nobility, manners and maintaining family blood. Any boy or girl born into the family must marry only someone who

also belongs to the same social class (the higher level of aristocracy). Love does not play a role in what happens in choosing spouses or in their marriage, but rather the duty to tradition is essential.

Mrs Tristram helps Christopher Newman to find an appropriate wife. When she comes to understand what are Christopher's wishes and ideal visions of a possible wife, she is confused: "We know a good many pretty girls, thank Heaven, but magnificent women are not so common" (James 1958: 35) Later on, however, she mentions Claire de Cintré, the loveliest, beautiful and proud girl of an aristocratic background. She is the daughter of Madame de Bellegarde, and that is the first time when Christopher Newman meets with a real blue blood. Bellegardes could be taken as snobs, and Christopher Newman would be taken as an ordinary person. However, in the nineteenth century people reading this novel would see Christopher Newman as a comparatively primitive man and Madame de Bellegardes and her family are not only snobs, but out of Newman's league.

Claire de Cintré, her daughter is an unusual woman and while her social status is very high, she is a kind of romantic person. Once in the afternoon, Newman stops by the Tristram residence and finds there a guest, Claire de Cintré, who has come to politely decline Mrs Tristram's offer to dine together, because her family was leaving for the country trip the next week. Christopher Newman makes "an instinctive movement to gather his wits together. Through the slight preoccupation that it produced he had a sense of a long, fair face and two eyes that were both brilliant and mild." (James 1958: 39-40) Newman's eyes meet with Claire's eyes and he is very pleased when Claire announces she would be delighted to meet with him at her home. The day before Claire's departure, Christopher decides to visit her at home; however, he is rejected by her older brother Urbain de Bellegarde.

Later on, the interactions between Christopher Newman and Claire de Cintré are romantic so there is a chemical reaction of interest. Christopher Newman believes he can marry her. Claire de Cintré believes it would probably take a miracle for her to be able to marry him. An American of any background is

practically unacceptable. In America there is democracy while aristocracy is not accepted. There is no inherited power position in American government. In much of Europe at that time there were still people of noble blood holding the position of power in the government including in France. Aristocratic people were important. There was a reaction against Napoleon after the French Revolution back to aristocracy. In fact, one of the Napoleon's children was crowned. However, France was still poor and the people could not get back the great wealth. At this time the aristocracy ruled and the rule of aristocracy only collapsed in most of Europe in World War One. At this point when this novel takes place, French aristocracy is very important, though the aristocracy is corrupted and decadent.

2.8 Newman's Immorality

The name Christopher Newman indicates that he is a new man to Europeans and he is a great man because of his money. His brilliance of knowing how to make money and fight in the American Civil War and he is a good man, and not a rude person is of less importance: He is very kind to women, he does not have bad behaviour traits but he has bad table manners, bad grammar, he does not know how to sit in the chair in an elegant way: "he possessed a talent for stretching his legs which quite dispensed with adventitious facilities" (James 1958: 74) Precious little about his behavior is, however, appropriate to French aristocratic blue blood. In the novel, every European would recognize him as a person of different nationality:

An observer with anything of an eye for national types would have no difficulty in determining the local origin of this undeveloped connoisseur, an indeed such an observer might have felt a certain humorous relish of the almost ideal completeness with which he filled out the national mould." James (1958: 2)

Mrs. Tristram describes him as a “Western Barbarian, stepping forth in his innocence and might, gazing a while at this poor effete Old World” (James 1958: 31) Newman’s posture is American, his legs are outstretched in an American relaxing way. At that time no European man, even a lower class French man would ever stretch his legs in such way. However, Christopher Newman remains unaware of the fact that his behavior is bad. He is a kind of person who thinks that he is equal to anybody because he is smart. This opinion is a kind of prototype opinion of the American, who feels equal to anyone even if he is coming from the average lower-class origin in the nineteenth century.

Henry James, therefore, has two character types in this novel: the low-born, clever American who thinks he is good and the aristocratic French who thinks that they are good. The Bellegardes believe that the good means high-quality people, so the aristocracy and bad people are the lower class working people. The Bellegardes are good because they helped defend civilisation and that is all kept in their family blood. They basically hold entirely different views of morality. On the other side, as Tellote describes Americans: “their wit stems from their American idiom, a different way of seeing and thus describing the situation; that wit is totally lost on the Bellegardes who have a quite different perspective on the proposed union” (Tellote 1979: 33)

Claire de Cintré has two brothers, Urbain de Bellegarde who is married and has children and obeys as an older brother her mother, Madame de Bellegarde. Valentin de Bellegarde, the younger brother, soon recognizes the truth of his family manipulation. Valentin is a rebel. He shows no respect for the position he holds within the hierarchy of the aristocracy. In front of his arrogant older brother Urbain, he declares to Newman:

Madame de Bellegarde said that if she had not been told who you were, she would have taken you for a duke – an American duke, the Duke of California. I said that I could warrant you grateful for the smallest favours-modest, humble, unassuming. I was sure that you would know your place always, and never give us occasion to remind you of certain differences. After all; you couldn’t help it if

you were not a duke. There were none in your country. (James 1958:151)

This explanation ironically summarizes the French attitude toward both the European aristocrat and the American gentleman who wishes to regard himself as an aristocrat or at least equal to Claire de Cintré. Valentin de Bellegarde may become a Roman-Catholic priest, he can join the military, or he can have an arranged marriage with a woman of extreme wealth to raise the wealth of the Bellegardes family. Yet what if the Bellegardes family cannot find a proper woman for Valentin who would raise the family wealth? Valentine de Bellegarde is a romantic kind of person. He sees beautiful women and he falls in love with them; any of whom however, he is forbidden to marry because any ordinary woman is unacceptable to the Bellegarde family. Valentin's wife has to have blue blood. That constitutes Valentin's tragedy.

2.9 Wealth – Businessman Theme

Newman is a man of business out of necessity; Newman was required to begin work when he was fifteen and leave school at the age of ten. As a result he has not read too many books, and knows almost nothing about history or culture. "Manufactures are what I care most about," (James 1958: 132) Newman replies to Marquis Urbain de Bellegarde's question of what interests him.

After Newman first announces his wish to marry Mme. de Cintré to her mother, Madame de Bellegarde is clearly annoyed, and quickly indicates her dissent. Newman continues,

'Will you suffer it then? Will you let it pass?'

'You don't know what you ask. I am a very proud and meddling old woman.'

‘Well, I am very rich,’ said Newman.

Madame de Bellegarde fixed her eyes on the floor and Newman thought it probable she was weighing the reasons in favour of resenting the brutality of this remark. But at last looking up, she said simply, ‘How rich?’

Newman expressed his income in a round number which had the magnificent sound that large aggregations of dollars put on when they are translated into francs. He added a few remarks of a financial character, which completed a sufficiently striking presentment of his resources.

Madame de Bellegarde listened in silence. ‘You are very frank,’ she said finally. ‘I will be the same. I would rather favour you, on the whole, than suffer you. It will be easier.’ (James 1958: 136-137)

This passage combines the misunderstanding of the two cultures, in which money is not discussed as openly with Europeans as Americans might do, and the European approach of openly expressing contempt to disagreeable people. Yet it seems that Newman did not even understand Madame de Bellegarde’s expression of concept at all. The behavior of Madame de Bellegarde looking at the floor when money is mentioned (Europeans consider talk of money a major indiscretion) changes quickly in the context of winning a hand in marriage, and Madame de Bellegarde demands information which she knew would be difficult to acquire.

Henry James offers another unrealistic aspect of the millionaire Newman: Newman is an open man with no bad secrets of his own to hide: “[...] he was an antidote to oppressive secrets; what he offered her (Mme. de Cintré) was, in fact, above all things a vast, sunny immunity from the need of having any.” (James 1958: 165) Yet in the world of business with which James was so unfamiliar, all clever business people hold secrets and these people would never tell others how much money they possess. The reader of the twenty-first century may see this behavior as unrealistic as well because business men are very careful about what they share with others. This idea was also indicated by the scholar named Hoffmann in *An International Episode*:

Like Christopher Newman in *The American*, Mr. Westgate made his money in the railroads, but there is no suggestion of the economic barbarism on which the railroad fortunes were built. There is no suggestion that the way in which James' businessman made his money in any way formulated or influenced his moral or social sense. And yet the very naivety of the portrait – had James followed the implication through – has in it the seed of a fundamental truth about nineteenth century business “ethics”: the discrepancy between middle class morality and business practices which divorce business morality from private morality (Hoffman 1957: 18)

2.10 The Announced Marriage

Newman learns that Claire had been forced to marry against her wishes to help secure the family fortunes. She was essentially sold to keep the family finances going, in spite her father's objections. Claire is a widow, born Claire de Bellegarde, when she was a teenager she had to marry a much older man through an arranged marriage. De Cintré had the same high aristocratic blood as she and he lived in securing the aristocratic bloodline.

When Christopher Newman whispers into Madame de Bellegarde's ear, this great dominating matriarch, how much money he is worth, he can solve the financial problems if she allows him to marry Claire de Cintré. For a while she opens the door of a possible marriage. However, she later rejects him because of his bad manners. Newman is invited to Madame de Bellegarde's party and he embarrasses the party before aristocratic people who are coming to the party by not knowing how to dance and wearing inappropriate clothes: “If I were looking at you through a telescope. It is very strange” (James 1958: 208) and not behaving according to such a formal occasion “you look like all happy men, very ridiculous” (James 1958: 214)

Madame de Bellegarde finally announces the rejection basically at the Paris Opera, where Christopher Newman sees the Mozart's *Don Giovanni* for his first time. Saying “It's improper” (James 1958: 242) Madame de Bellegarde

announces to Christopher Newman that he is not going to marry Claire, that she is going to take Claire out to the country and that he is not going to see her again.

Instead of Newman, Madame de Bellegarde finds another man more appropriate for her daughter. It is Lord Deepmere, who is a distant relative from England. Actually, Claire de Cintré is bilingual and half English and half French. Lord Deepmere is rather disgusting older man. Nevertheless, because he is coming from an aristocratic background and seems to be interested in Claire, Claire is told she should marry this man she is not in love. While Madame de Bellegarde is forcing Claire to marry Lord Deepmere, nevertheless Claire de Cintré desires to find freedom in making a free decision about her husband. She is, however, aware of possibly ruining the family prestige by marrying a totally inappropriate man of American background, Christopher Newman, so she makes an unexpected decision. As Claire is no longer able to obey her mother and go through with another arranged marriage, she decides to become a nun, which is an acceptably religious kind of rebellion against her mother's wishes. However, it gives her a kind of freedom. She cannot imagine living with a person she is not in love with.

Henry James presents a romantic heroine, who wants nothing but to find love. However, what may be regarded as typical for Henry James's novels is an unexpectedly sad ending and ruining of the youth. Although Claire is in love with Christopher Newman, so she decides to go into the church to become a nun, which naturally forbids the future marriage and happiness between the two young people.

Ironically, Noémie Nioche at the end gets married to Lord Deepmere, who Claire de Cinté was supposed to marry, an older ugly man of a good blood. As Noemie Nioché has a man, Valentin de Bellegarde, who died for her in a duel of honour, her reputation went up, and so this primitive lower working class girl marries the man who was supposed to marry the most aristocratic perfect blue blood girl, Claire de Cintré, thereby showing the hypocrisy of the urgency of marrying couples of the proper lineage.

2.11 *Duel of Honour and Allusions to Art, Music and Literature*

The first half of the novel, the comedy of manners section, ends when the main characters see Mozart's Opera in the French Opera Theatre. The opera is called *Don Giovanni*. *Don Giovanni* had actually been composed by Mozart over eighty years earlier and this opera was then performed in Paris. Of course, the French audience knew everything about Mozart; however, Christopher Newman watched this opera for the very first time in his life even though Mozart's operas were performed in the United States, in New York, Boston and other cities in the United States. This Western person had never heard Mozart; however, he quickly watches what is going on. *Don Giovanni* is about an Italian man, a Don Juan seducing every girl, regardless if they are married or not and having affairs. At this point, structurally in the middle of the novel, the opera is the setting of this novel's climax.

Christopher Newman had introduced the young painter named Noémie Nioche to Valentin de Bellegarde. Noémie Nioche had bought many of her art copies to Christopher Newman before and in the novel she is the first French woman Christopher Newman meets in the Louvre. Valentin de Bellegarde wants to find his freedom and wants to marry a girl with whom he is in love. He is another romantic character and similar to his sister, Claire de Cintré, he wishes to marry for love. Both siblings rebel against their mother in choosing their husband or wife. Valentin is amazed by the young painter, Noémie Nioche, a pretty and with an outgoing personality, but she does not have nice clothes, she is certainly not rich and she is not from an aristocratic background. Noémie wants to marry up. However, she will have no dowry from her father. In the nineteenth century it was the custom that the possible groom goes to the father of the bride to arrange a dowry, which the groom would get from the bride's father. Since Noémie Nioche and her father have no money, she has to do whatever she can to marry upward so that she does not have to live her life in poverty. Noémie Nioche captivates and probably seduces Valentin de Bellegarde, who meets with her through Christopher Newman.

At the Opera *Don Giovanni*, the tenor *Don Giovanni* has wickedly seduced pretty women and ruined them. Valentin de Bellegarde knows he cannot marry Noémie Nioche that he is in love with. Valentin de Bellegarde leaves her alone for a moment in the box and when he comes back he realises there is another man sitting at his place in the opera, who shows interest in Noémie:

The box is not his; Noémie came in alone and installed herself. I went and spoke to her, and in a few moments she asked me to go and get her fan from the pocket of her cloack, which the *ouvreuse* had carried off. In my absence this gentleman came in and took the chair beside Noémie in which I had been sitting. My reappearance disgusted him, and he had the grossness to show it. He came within an ace of being impertinent. I don't know who he is; he is some vulgar wretch. I can't think where she picks up such acquaintances. He has been drinking, too, but he knows what he is about. Just now, in the second act, he was unmannerly again. I shall put in another appearance for ten minutes – time enough to give him an opportunity to commit himself, if he feels inclined. I really can't let the brute suppose that he is keeping me out of the box" (James 1958: 231-232)

This man is wealthy; he comes from Switzerland and speaks French with a heavy German accent. He is not a handsome or good-looking person. However, he is dressed elegantly enough. Valentin de Belledarde decides to stop this man going after Noémie Nioche because he in fact is infatuated with in this lovely girl. He insults this Swiss man, called Stanislas Kapp. Stanislas Kapp does not allow himself to be insulted and challenges Valentin to duel of honour right at the Opera setting. Valentine de Bellegarde accepts the challenge.

The duel of honour is a turning point because the novel is no longer a comedy of manners but becomes suddenly modified into a kind of gothic novel. Valentin is a man who in everyone's mind is essentially committing suicide because he cannot otherwise escape his tragic fate honourably as an aristocrat.

Christopher Newman tries to consult before this situation of duel of honour started. He offers him to come to the United States with him. Valentin de

Bellegarde imagines immigration to America a good idea, an idea which may give him the freedom missing in his life. Here James shows the European man in grave, who doubts about the European tradition. He sees something America offers which Europe can never give him; he admires Christopher for his self-consciousness. Valentin de Bellegarde is, however, decided to disobey, like Claire. Newman offers Valentin that he could find him a job in a bank: "There are several places, but I suppose you would consider the bank the most aristocratic." (James 1958: 225)

Valentin de Bellegarde rejects this idea and shows Newman that he has no idea what an aristocrat in Europe really is: "My dear fellow, at night all cats are grey! When one derogates there are no degrees" (James 1958: 225) He explains that there is no job which could be appropriate for a European man of blue blood. Of course, Christopher Newman cannot understand this mentality.

The fatal conflict which ends in a duel in Switzerland originates in the Paris Opera House performance of W. A. Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. In the opening scene of Mozart's opera, a duel is fought over a woman resulting in death of the 'better' man, in the case of the opera, the father who was protecting his daughter. This duel to the death, besides inspiring and sealing Valentin de Bellegarde's death, foreshadows the murder of Claire's father, revealed later in the novel, who attempted to protect Claire from an unhappy marital union. The conflicts of both the opera and this sub-plot of the novel are caused by beguiling behavior. In the case of *The American*, Mlle. Noémie Nioche intends to boost her reputation by being the basis for a duel of honour, resulting in Valentin de Bellegarde's death. For the French society she becomes more worthy, she gains moral prestige, because another man died in the duel of honour. She is a notable character in this novel because she thoroughly captures the quixotic attention of Valentin de Bellegarde, in spite of her father's failure in commercial ventures, and thus Noémie Nioche's consequential poverty.

At first, only the fighting and duel for the protection of honour seems a basis for the reference to this opera in his novel. (James rarely alludes to operas

in his other novels.) Yet James arranges his characters to comment on their own fate, Madame de Bellegarde says to Newman, “I suppose Zerlina reminds you of me,” (James 1958: 226) for Zerlina is the woman most often discredited with Don Giovanni in the opera. Urbain de Bellegarde’s remark is an ironic one as well, he murmured afterward: “I will go to the foyer for a few moments and give you a chance to say that the Commander – the man of stone – resembles me’...and then murmured, ‘Not a man of stone, a man of wood.’” (James 1958: 226) Again through Mozart, James presents commentary by his novel’s characters some foreshadowing of Urbain de Bellegarde’s secrets. Both the Commander and Zerlina are the antagonists in the opera, as the mother and marquis will turn out to be for Christopher Newman. Urbain de Bellegarde, a man of stone, insinuates that Christopher Newman is in his point of view Don Giovanni and that he is chasing a girl whom he is not allowed to chase, because it is forbidden.

As to Claire de Cintré, Newman himself characterizes her without irony as reflected best in “*Don Giovanni*” through the forsaken woman, Donna Elvira, who tragically is left alone after the death of Don Giovanni at the end of the opera. Newman says of her, “Donna Elvira reminds me of Madame de Cintré; I don’t mean in her circumstances, but in the music she sings.” (James 1958: 226) Sure enough, Claire is left at the end of *The American* as the single most tragic figure, more tragic than even the badly wounded Christopher Newman. Both of them are left alone and their lives and youth is destroyed by unfulfilled love between them.

A moral feature distinguishing the opera from this novel is that with Mozart, justice in the main does prevail, when Don Giovanni, who has wounded so many girls by seducing them and also murdered a man, meets his divinely-inspired, uncanny death. Like novel *The American*, *Don Giovanni* is both comic and tragic, with almost Wagnerian divine retribution striking down the evil-lover, the tragedy coming at the end. Valentin, the good man dies and this foreshadows the nature of the defeat of the innocent hero, Christopher Newman.

There was a telltale sign earlier in the novel just as first Newman succeeds in winning both the family and Claire de Cintré to consent to the marriage. At that point he declares to Claire, “With me you will be as safe – as safe – as in your father’s arms.” (James 1958: 180) This causes Claire to cry (James 1958: 180).

2.12 Claire Gets Herself to a Nunnery

Claire de Cintré has been ordered by her mother to marry the ugly mad Lord Deepmere, another older blue blood aristocrat, whom Claire has absolutely no interest in marrying. Madame de Bellegarde has ordered him to marry Lord Deepmere after Mozart’s opera where she finally rejects of Christopher Newman as Claire’s suiter. Christopher Newman and Claire obviously have fallen in love with each other and both reject Madame de Bellegarde’s arrangement for Claire’s marriage. While Newman creates a strategy through Mrs. Bread and her possession of the final letter of Claire’s father before he was murdered by her mother, Claire, on the other hand, understands that she must follow the aristocratic tradition. Claire knows she cannot disobey her mother and marry Christopher Newman by eloping, but she can disobey her mother by joining a Catholic order to become a nun, which is an acceptable religious form of disobedience in her aristocratic tradition.

When Christopher Newman realizes that Claire is going to become a nun, he is shocked: “You are going to be a nun,” he went on, “in a cell—for life—with a gown and white veil?” (James 1958: 278) when Claire de Cintré announces: “I am going into a convent.” (James 1958: 278) She is then describing she is going to become a Carmelite nun.

The Carmelites is the Order of the Brothers of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel. The origin of this order may extend to the twelfth century and has a long tradition in Europe. They started to live a community life and dedicated themselves into service of God. The Carmelites fulfil the oath of silence. They are

not allowed to speak at all and Claire specifically chose this order because of this oath. Their active life is basically dependent on the prayers and they cannot live the everyday life as ordinary people do. According to Zimmerman:

The life of a Carmelite is somewhat different according to the branch of the order to which he belongs, and the house in which he lives. The life in a novitiate, for instance, is different even for those who have taken their vows, from that in a college, or in a convent intended for the care of souls. It is also stricter among the Discalced Carmelites, who keep perpetual abstinence (except in the case of weakness or illness) and who rise in the night for the recitation of the Divine Office, than among the Calced Carmelites, who have adapted their rule to the needs of the times. [...] The Calced Carmelites still adhere to the liturgy of the church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, a Gallo-Roman Rite, practically identical with that of Paris in the middle of the twelfth century. It underwent certain changes during the Middle Ages and was completely and satisfactorily revised in 1584. [...] In all convents a certain time is given to mental prayer, both in the morning and the afternoon. [...] The rule of fasting, somewhat less severe among the Calced Carmelites, is preserved everywhere, although the church has in many respects mitigated her legislation in this matter. (Zimmerman 1908)

Christopher Newman knows that Claire disobeyed her mother. Nevertheless, he still thinks he can force Madame de Bellegarde to allow them to get married through the death letter, the details of which will be described later.

Claire de Cintre and Valentin de Bellegarde have both figuratively committed suicides specifically with honor. Valentin de Bellegarde did so through a duel of honor, and therefore, he died an honorable death. Claire de Cintre did not want to marry Lord Deepmere. She wished to marry Christopher Newman, but following the tradition of her family she would not disobey an arranged marriage by marrying someone else, even someone she loved. Rather than obey her mother and live a married life of misery with Lord Deepmere, she commits an acceptable honorable form of rebellion, (a kind of metaphorical suicide), by becoming a Carmelite nun. In this order nuns take an oath of silence. They must never speak except when singing or praying to God. It is a form a suicide from real life. Henry

James chose the Carmelite Order, which requires nuns to live a silent life for a reason. It is the ultimate protest against Madame de Bellegarde's arranged marriage and her entire manipulation of her life. She will not speak about it, and thereby make a proper protest.

2.13 *The American as Gothic Novel*

The Mozart Opera is the climatic scene when there is the change in the nature of the novel from a comedy of manners to a Gothic novel of deceit, greed and murder. Claire's ailing father had been subsequently killed when Madame de Bellegarde withheld medicine from him because he refused his consent for Claire to marry de Cintré. The old man Claire married died shortly into their marriage, without leaving much of the fortune Madame de Bellegarde had anticipated. Newman then feels that his best intention could be to help Claire escape from that treacherous family. He develops a new role for himself, a change from a quest for education to an American hero-gentleman who rescues a defenceless beautiful young woman.

In addition to this sinister murder by a wife, the Bellegardes experience another death in the family. Valentin is dying in the duel of honour, in which the plot is uttered modified. Christopher Newman visits the dying Valentin, who is informing him that his mother forbids Claire to marry Christopher Newman: "There is trouble about your marriage. They have stopped it." (James 1958: 264) Valentin also informs Christopher that Mrs. Bread, the family governess and servant, has information about the secret scandal of the family: "I can tell you something – a great secret – an immense secret. You can use it against them – frighten them, force them." (James 1958: 267) At this point, Valentin de Bellegarde goes against his family tradition, he knows something about the murder, but he does not know all the details, but he is aware that Mrs Bread knows all the details about that. The reason why he wants to "ruin" the family is

that he wants to save his sister from the Bellegardes. He really detests the aristocratic rules of arranged marriage. Additionally, he became a close friend to Christopher; he both trusts and envies him the freedom to make his own decisions and he admires his kind-heartedness. He knows that Christopher Newman is the only one who can “save” his sister. Valentin de Bellegarde sends Christopher to find Mrs. Bread who knows the secret:

“You can find out. Mrs Bread knows. Tell her I begged you to ask her. Then tell them that, and see. It may help you. If not, tell everyone. It will – it will” – here Valentin’s voice sank to the feeblest murmur – “it will avenge you!” (James 1958: 268)

Mrs. Bread is an English servant of the Bellegardes family and has worked for them for decades. Christopher arranges a meeting with Mrs. Bread and he tells her that Valentin on his deathbed had sent him to find her and that she should reveal him the secret of the family: “Tell me as it suits you, and when it suits you. Only remember that it was Mr. Valentin’s last wish that you should” (James 1958: 294) and that he would use the information to shame the family, that he wants the revenge:

I am very angry, I am very sore, and I am very bitter, but I don’t know that I am wicked. I have been cruelly injured. They have hurt me, and I want to hurt them. I don’t deny that; on contrary, I tell you plainly that that is the use I want to make of your (Mrs Bread’s) secret. (James 1958: 295)

As well as this, he offers Mrs. Bread a pension for her life, so that she does not have to worry about the consequences of revealing the truth. Mrs. Bread decides then to leave her service to the Bellegardes and becomes Christopher’s housekeeper at the end of the book.

Mrs. Bread says to him that she possesses the death letter of the Marquis Henri – Urbain de Bellegarde, Claire’s father. This letter had not actually been read yet, because the letter is written in French and Mrs Bread does not speak French. She gives the letter to Christopher, who is actually the first person reading the letter, Christopher promises Mrs Bread to translate it: “I will translate poor M. de Bellegarde’s French to you.” (James 1958: 309) For Christopher it is difficult to translate it, however, Mrs Bread does not know a word in French: “But Newman’s fierce curiosity forced a meaning from the tremulous signs.” (James 1958: 310)

In this letter, he is explaining he had been denied the medicine by his wife because he would not give his fatherly consent to Claire’s marriage to a much older man. The father has the only power in making decisions regarding the marriage of his daughter Claire, who was seventeen, to marry by arrangement a man, who was fifty-five in order to secure the blood and aristocratic tradition. He denied the right of this horrible man to marry Claire but the mother wanted it. Therefore, she basically stopped giving him his medicine:

My wife has tried to kill me, and she has done it; I am dying, dying horribly. It is to marry my dear daughter to M. de Cintré. With all my soul I protest – I forbid it. I am not insane, - ask the doctors, ask Mrs. B---. It was alone with me here, to-night; she attacked me and put me to death. It is murder, if murder ever was. Ask the doctors. “Henri – Urbain de Bellegarde” (James 1958: 310)

When Christopher Newman informs the Bellegardes family that he can reveal the truth of their secret to force them to allow him to marry Claire, actually they are not as frightened of Newman as he had supposed they would: “I don’t frighten you?” demanded Newman. “That’s for you to judge.” (James 1958: 290)

Christopher Newman is a kind person, so he does not like to make conflicts. He is considering whether to publish the letter or not. In point of fact, Madame de

Bellegarde had disobeyed her husband, which was breaking from the aristocratic tradition. She demanded that her children follow traditions which she herself had disobeyed. It was a scandal. Newman wants Claire, who obeys and become a Carmelites nun. The very last sentence of the novel, when Christopher Newman is holding the death letter, he decided not to publish it, since he knows he cannot get Claire anyway; she is already in the Cathedral and has taken her oath of silence, and is at a point of no return as a nun. He could publish it and legally they may not be put into the jail but in society they would no longer be acceptable people to come out in society as aristocrats. Their reputation would have been ruined. He decides not to because he himself would not gain anything from it particularly, he would not get Claire back. Mrs Tristram tells him that the Bellegardes family knew he would not publish it because Christopher is a friendly person. At that moment he wanted to take the letter back out of the fire to prove that he is not such a good person. However, the letter was already burnt: “Newman instinctively turned to see if the little paper was in fact consumed; but there was nothing left of it.” (James 1958: 360)

2.14 Christopher's Revenge

According to Keyishian, the reason why people take the revenge is because they are hurt and they want to compensate the pain with revenge: “Because people want to see injuries punished, and feel threatened when they are not, stories of wrong and revenge stir us deeply.” (Keyishian 1987: 3)

Christopher Newman want to revenge because he is hurt by the Bellegarde family in two different ways:

Christopher Newman is wronged by the Bellegarde family in two ways. They make a fool of him when they permit him to be introduced as the future husband of Claire and then withdraw their permission for the marriage; and they ruin the life of the woman he

loves when they force Claire to leave society and enter a cloister as a Carmelite nun, a fate Newman characterizes as "too dark and horrible for belief," which "made him feel as he would have done if she had told him she was going to mutilate her beautiful face, or drink some potion that would make her mad" (pp. 243-44). Newman has motive enough for revenge both for the damage done to himself and to Claire de Cintre (Keyishian 1987: 7)

The very last sentence of the whole novel shows the gothic character of revenge. Christopher Newman wanted revenge but he knew he would still not get to marry Claire de Cintré. In the novel, the revenge is the central concern of the author. The author, however, shows the main hero, who at last does not take the revenge and decides to stay in the dark because he finds the revenge worthless. He knows that the revenge would not "cure his wound" because the revenge would not bring his lover back to him as the girl is already away.

Keyishian characterizes Christopher as being "too sensible to forgive" (Keyishian 1987: 5). Yet Christopher Newman does not understand why he should harm other people when he is harmed as revenge is essential un-Christian approach to fellow human beings. It is the portrait of a real hero, humanity and "moral triumph". The author still remains Christopher's good sense of being good-hearted.

2.15 Keats's poem "La Belle Dame sans Merci"

I doubt whether Newman, who saw no harm in Tristram's conversing with an ingenious mechanic, would have complied with this request; but at this moment Valentin de Bellegarde drew near. Newman, some weeks previously, had presented Madame de Cintré's youngest brother to Mrs. Tristram, for whose merits Valentin professed a discriminating relish and to whom he had paid several visits.

"Did you ever read Keats's Belle Dame sans Merci?" asked Mrs. Tristram. "You remind me of the hero of the ballad:—

*'Oh, what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering?'*

“If I am alone, it is because I have been deprived of your society,” said Valentin. “Besides it is good manners for no man except Newman to look happy. This is all to his address. It is not for you and me to go before the curtain.” (James 1958: 216 – 217)

Mrs. Tristram discusses the sad countenance of Valentin de Bellegarde, Valentin is perhaps foreshadowing the conducting fate of Christopher Newman in Valentin’s impossibility of being able to marry the woman he might yet fall in love with, as any marriage would have to meet standards of his mother, and Valentin doubts highly that his romantic standards of a loving partner would hold up to her standards of proper breeding and family.

Christopher Newman also becomes the knight-at-arms: Claire de Cintré simply disappears into a convent, permanently irretrievable. Newman is likewise “woe-begone” full of “anguish,” once his once promised wife has held him “in thrall” through her love for him and his for her.

Of course, the Keats poem includes the question-answer scenario which is replicated by Mrs. Tristram as she directs the question to Valentin, and it is quite a direct personal question that French people would ordinarily avoid asking “Why are you so sad? Is it because of a woman?” By asking the question through the use of the classic ballad poem by Keats, Mrs. Tristram overcomes the taboo of asking an all-too-personal question to an aristocrat. It is also to be noted that were the poem addressed to Christopher Newman, other “pale kings and princes too” as well as “starved lips” are to be noted in the surroundings of Newman’s Paris: Claire’s father and brother have died, and “starved lips” may refer not only to the lack of kisses delivered for loved ones, but of the medicine denies Henri de Bellegarde by his wife, another woman “sans merci”.

This poem along with Mozart’s opera *Don Giovanni* are clearly used by Henry James to illuminate the passions and conflict of his first great novel.

La Belle Dame sans Merci

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge has withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow,
With anguish moist and fever-dew,
And on thy cheeks a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful, a fairy's child;
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She looked at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan

I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she bend, and sing
A faery's song.

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna-dew,
And sure in language strange she said—
'I love thee true'.

She took me to her Elfin grot,
And there she wept and sighed full sore,
And there I shut her wild, wild eyes
With kisses four.

And there she lullèd me asleep,
And there I dreamed—Ah! woe betide!—
The latest dream I ever dreamt
On the cold hill side.

I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
They cried—'La Belle Dame sans Merci
Hath thee in thrall!'

I saw their starved lips in the gloam,
With horrid warning gapèd wide,
And I awoke and found me here,
On the cold hill's side.

And this is why I sojourn here,
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing. (Keats 1966)

3 The Europeans

The Europeans is a novella written by Henry James, first published as a serial in *The Atlantic Monthly* for July – October in 1878. Essentially, it is a comedy contrasting the behavior and attitude to life of two different worlds of America and Europe.

3.1 Introduction

Donald L. Mull calls this novel as a “satyr play” and contrasts the novel with *The American*, written a year before: “a light and ironic pedant to more substantial and serious *The American*.” (Mull 1973: 44)

In the center of James’s interest is the international theme. He describes the clash between the Old World of Europe and the New World of North America, more specifically, in Europe the aristocratic tradition and the American version of strict Puritanism, aristocracy is of course denied by citizens of New England and republic, democratic America. *The Europeans* describes the tensions and misunderstandings between these two countries. As Mull mentions:

The familiar international situation is stood on its head, with Europe (or rather, as the case so often is in James, Europeanized America) descending on America to gather the spoils thereof. American innocence is virtually reduced to benevolent simple-mindedness and European experience to casual hedonism and genial rapacity. (Mull 1973: 45)

Tony Tanner has identified, that before the book was published, Henry James sent a letter to William Dean Howells, in which he describes he is planning to write a novella about two worlds of Europe and America. Howells then, in October 1878 publishes this letter in the *Atlantic*:

I shall probably develop an idea that I have, about a genial, charming youth of a Bohemian pattern, who comes back from foreign parts into the midst of mouldering and ascetic old Puritan family of kindred (some imaginary locality in New England 1830) and by his gayety and sweet audacity smooths out their rugosities, heals their dyspepsia and dissipates their troubles. All women fall in love with him (and he with them – his amatory powers are boundless;) but even for a happy ending he can't marry them all. But he marries the prettiest, and from a romantic quality of Christian charity, produces a picturesque imbroglio (for the sake of picturesque I shall play havoc with the New England background of 1830:) under cover of which the other maidens pair off with the swains who have hitherto been starved out: after which the beneficent cousin departs for Bohemia (*with his bride, oh yes!*) in a vaporous rosy cloud, to scatter new benefactions over man – and especially, womankind! - (Pray don't mention this stuff to anyone. It would be meant, roughly speaking, as the picture of the conversation of a dusky, dreary domestic circle to epicureanism. But I may be able to make nothing of it. The merit would be the amount of color I should be able to infuse into it.) (Tanner 1984: 7)

Ward has classified the novella as a comic novel. He mentions the influence of French playwrights and also writers of narrative romances. Moreover, he comments on the construction of the novella, which he sees as well-balanced with the characters and events. The conclusion, according to him, is inevitable. The comic patterns he finds in the conversations about the traditional society between the main protagonists of the novel, who fall in love:

the structure of *The Europeans* should begin with the observation that it is essentially a comic novel. For one thing, it owes much to the well-made dramatic comedies of such nineteenth-century playwrights as Dumas *filis*, Augier, and Sardou, and also to the narrative romances of Feuillet and Cherbuliez. Not only do the wit, the grace, and the situation of *The Europeans* suggest such works, but also the rigid construction, the careful balancing and juxtaposition of character types, and the rigorously logical progression of events (rendered scenically) to an inevitable conclusion. Also James draws freely upon much older comic patterns, such as the conversation of the traditional society by a group of young intruders to a fresher view of life and triumph of

the young lovers over objections of their obtuse and narrow-minded elders. (Ward 1964: 1)

This novel is often contrasted with James's earlier novel *The American* and not only because of the international theme. In both novels, the main protagonists, Christopher Newman in *The American* and Eugenia and Felix in *The Europeans*, they all go abroad with the intent to marry and to self-fulfill themselves. However, they are rather inexperienced about the other worlds:

In the world of *The Europeans* the potentialities of human experience have been drastically limited, and it is nearly impossible to take anyone very seriously. Consequently, the point of view with which the reader inevitably sympathizes is the one which does not take people or things very seriously, that of Eugenia and Felix as focus and framework, *The Europeans* is the only one of James's novels to accept at the outset as one of its working premises a curtailed sense of human possibility, and as such it may be called his only truly comic novel. (Mull 1973: 45)

Tanner also introduces some critics in his introduction to *The Europeans*. First of all, Henry James was criticized for his radical anachronistic, as Thomas Wentworth Higginson points out in *Literary World* in 1879:

the family portrayed to be 'the best society in Boston', however, the daughter, twenty-three years old, (Gertrude) has "never seen an artist before". [...] The household is perfectly amazed and overwhelmed by the sight of two foreigners, although there were more cultivated Europeans in Boston thirty years ago. (Tanner 1984: 8)

The novella is divided into twelve chapters. The first half of the novella describes Eugenia's and Felix's confrontation with the orthodoxy of strict Puritanism, where James criticizes the Puritan's extreme piety and also the

inability of the family members to enjoy their lives because of feeling guilty for their pleasure. This situation is contrasted with Eugenia, who suggests to their cousin about the Christian comfort. She also visits the family to seek for a fortune. Her husband wants to divorce her and she is aware of her possible starving of money. However, in the second part of the novella, the narrator is not trustworthy by William Wentworth. Mr. Wentworth even denies to be painted by Felix. However, soon the narrator changes his mind and reveals the fact that Clifford, his son, was thrown out of Harvard University because of drinking. (This aspect may be seen as impossible in a real life today but in the nineteenth century the code of conduct at universities, especially the Puritan Harvard University, was extremely strict.) In such a matter, this ascetic man would hardly change his mind and if so he would probably never reveal the truth about his son. Mr. Wentworth then accepts the suggestion of Felix of a possibility that Eugenia, the married wife, could marry Clifford after signing the divorce papers. However, no New England patriarch would normally condone this behavior. Young Clifford does fall under the spell of the older Eugenia. However, later he survives and marries Lizzie Acton, who is a Bostonian.

3.2 Money

Money plays an important role in this novel. Baroness Eugenia and her brother Felix Young travel from Europe to America with almost no money: “You have no sense of property” (James 1985: 36). In the opening scene of the novel, there is a conversation between Eugenia and her brother Felix about the wealthy relatives the Wentworths:

“Are you very sure they are rich?” asked Felix, lightly.

His sister slowly turned in her place, looking at him. “Heavenly powers!” she murmured. “You have a way of bringing out things!”

“It will certainly be much pleasanter if they are rich,” Felix declared.

“Do you suppose if I had not known they were rich I would ever have come?”

The young man met his sister’s somewhat peremptory eye with his bright, contented glance. “Yes, it certainly will be pleasanter,” he repeated.

“That is all I expect of them,” said the Baroness. “I don’t count upon their being clever or friendly—at first—or elegant or interesting. But I assure you I insist upon their being rich.” (James 1985: 40)

The reason why Eugenia goes to America is to seek for fortune because she knew it would not be very difficult to make a fortune in a world that seems stranger to her: “If she had come to seek her fortune, it seemed to her that her fortune would be easy to find.” (James 1964: 43) Actually, this phrase appears in the book repeatedly, also in chapter VIII. Mull identifies that “it takes the position of moral stigma out of it. Eugenia is so consciously on the make that her end is less money itself than the role of seeking it, one of the many roles which she plays.” (Mull 1973: 46) For Eugenia and Felix, it is their strong intention to meet the wealthy relatives in the New World.

William Wentworth is a rich Puritan Bostonian, a Puritan parson who is extremely conservative. His half sister is the mother of Eugenia and Felix, who converted to Catholicism to be married. They are a social climbing type of people, they move from place to place. They are not just English and they are not particularly French. Felix was born in Paris, Eugenia was born in Vienna, and however, the bottom line is that they are consummately Europeans and less English because they have remained strong to Roman-Catholicism. However, Henry James has not mentioned where the fortune of William Wentworth comes from. He is the owner of a big house outside of Boston where he and his family live and also a small house on the estate. He is the officer where three times a week he makes some money, however that cannot be the reason of such enormous wealth. The same situation appears in the novel with Robert Acton, who is also very rich, the reader is only informed that he has tripled an original sum of his

wealth. The scholar Donald L. Mull also comments on the theme of money: “The theme of money becomes in *The Europeans* a device of parody, all the values usually associated with it in James are inverted. Eugenia is so utterly and consciously acquisitive that acquisitiveness becomes almost a virtue.” (Mull 1973: 45)

Eugenia actually anticipates the amount of money that the Wentworths possess; however, she is clever enough to understand that they do not know what to do with all the wealth as explained in the conversation by her brother Felix:

“My dear sister,” said Felix, “the inhabitants are charming.”

“In what style?”

“In a style of their own. How shall I describe it? It’s primitive; it’s patriarchal; it’s the *ton* of the golden age.”

“And have they nothing golden but their *ton*? Are there no symptoms of wealth?”

“I should say there was wealth without symptoms. A plain, homely way of life: nothing for show, and very little for—what shall I call it?—for the senses; but a great *aisance*, and a lot of money, out of sight, that comes forward very quietly for subscriptions to institutions, for repairing tenements, for paying doctor’s bills; perhaps even for portioning daughters.” (James 1985: 60)

The design of the home is reflecting the Puritan philosophy of simplicity. Mull points out “the tone of the Europeanized brother and sister is so infectious that one cannot help feeling what the Wentworths do with their money to be, at least pretty tame.” (Mull 1973: 47) In his point of view, it is Eugenia, who is rather abundant because she is clever and she knows what can help the family, how to treat the money properly. Eugenia cannot help see the Wentworths as kind of simple-minded and primitive (as above mentioned in the quote by James 1985: 60) when she sees how their household is run:

The Wentworth household seemed to her very perfect in its kind – wonderfully peaceful and unspotted; pervaded by a sort of dove-colored freshness that had all the quietude and benevolence of what she deemed to be Quakerism, and yet seemed to be founded upon a degree of material abundance for which, in certain matters of

detail, one might have looked in vain at the frugal little court of Silberstadt-Schreckenstein. She perceived immediately that her American relatives thought and talked very little about money; and this of itself made an impression upon Eugenia's imagination. She perceived at the same time that if Charlotte or Gertrude should ask their father for a very considerable sum he would at once place it in their hands; and this made a still greater impression. The greatest impression of all, perhaps, was made by another rapid induction. (James 1985:77-78)

3.3 *Morganatic Marriage*

In the opening pages of the novella, there is a description of the morganatic marriage: "That's what they call a marriage, you know, contracted between a scion of a ruling house and – and a common mortal. They made Eugenia a Baroness, poor woman; but that was all they could do." (James 1985: 56 – 57) As a marriage where a wealthy man marries a woman from a lower or middle social class, this situation was unusual because traditionally, the main purpose of these old aristocrats was to keep the family wealth and prestige going by marrying a woman of the same background. A morganatic union prevented the lower-class wife and even their children from inheriting the property, privileges and the title of their father.

Baroness Eugenia, the main protagonist of the novella, is married to the Prince Adolf of Silberstadt-Schreckenstein, a made-up name of a German aristocracy. His family would like him to marry another wife coming from their higher background; they were obviously disappointed with Eugenia, from a lower-class background. Eugenia is under treat of her husband and his family, so if she divorces him she will inherit no money. Eugenia is in her thirties, not very pretty and she has no children. After some years of the marriage she and her husband realize that they do not love each other, that the love between them is dead. That is why they want to divorce and Eugenia and her brother depart in a trip to America.

3.4 Housing Supply by the Family of Wentworths

In the next pages, there is a discussion between Mr. Wentworth and his family concerns the potential dangers of being influenced by the European influences. In the conversation, Mr. Wentworth warns his family:

You must keep watch. Indeed, we must all be careful. This is a great change; we are to be exposed to peculiar influences. I don't say they are bad; I don't judge them in advance. But they may perhaps make it necessary that we should exercise a great deal of wisdom and self-control. It will be a different tone. (James 1985: 75)

Mr. Wentworth is highly aware of them as Catholics who are not so strict as Puritans are, and he is patient. His romantic daughter wants him to put them up in the separate house on his estate and she explains the reason saying "it will be like going into Europe." (James 1985: 75) Her wish is to encounter the European customs and traditions. She wants to understand the different behavior of their relatives. Mr. Wentworth then invites Eugenia and Felix to live in the separate house. To Charlotte's confusion, Eugenia adds some decorations, such as "silk blinds in the windows" and along chimneypiece she put "a band of velvet" saying "I have been making myself a little comfortable" (James 1985: 79), expressing European regimentation which is interpreted as Catholic by the Puritan Wentworths.

Felix, on the other hand, "was not a young man who troubled himself greatly about anything – least of all about the conditions of enjoyment" (James 1985: 79) and he "extracted entertainment from all things" (James 1985: 80) and he enjoys the freedom of socialising with young unmarried women. Eugenia feels standoffish but she pretends to be neglected: "You see Mr. Acton has had to take pity upon me" (James 1985: 83)

3.5 Courtship

In this novella, people fall in love because of the personality and same attitudes towards life, not because of beauty. It is an interesting aspect because normally people fall in love because they find the other person appealing at first, however, in this novella the situation is totally different. Ward has described the first meeting between Gertrude with Felix:

When Gertrude first sees Felix, she glances upward from a volume of *The Arabian Nights*, and the vision she beholds is as miraculous as the story she has been reading. Gertrude is naive, but the Europeans consistently behave in a manner in keeping with her fantasies. Also, the Europeans are purged of ancestral evil. The connivances of Eugenia's remote brother-in-law are clearly not to be lingered upon; this is but acquaintances as extravagant and as charming as the childlike view of the Old World that fascinates Gertrude. (Ward 1964: 5)

Felix Young is amazed by Gertrude, by her romantic, non-Puritan spirit. Finally, the brother of Eugenia marries Gertrude. They marry because Felix is an artist and they become close to each other when Felix creates a portrait of her instead of a portrait of Mr. Wentworth. He describes himself as a kind of Bohemian type of nature: "I am a species of Bohemian and adventurer" (James 1985: 93), who loves poetry and art and nature and that is exactly Gertrude's way as well: "Gertrude lived in a fantastic world; she seemed to herself to be reading a romance that came out in a daily numbers" (James 1985: 94). Gertrude is described as a not particularly pretty woman, and even Felix did not like her at first, but there is a change in his eyes: "I did not think you were beautiful at first. But you have to come to seem so little by little." (James 1985: 90) Gertrude becomes much more beautiful in the eyes of this young painter as he sees her personality, which she thoroughly enjoys and feels a confirmation about rebelling from the Puritan restrictions.

They both like the same poetry, they both have the same attitude towards life, they both believe in having fun and pleasure in life: “I care for pleasure – for amusement.”(James 1985: 128) and not always feeling so guilty and sinful “to take life – not painfully, must one do something wrong?” (James 1985: 92) in the conversation with Gertrude Felix refuses the attitude towards pleasure, he sees Gertrude be urged to behave in the same way as her family and he thinks that Gertrude does not like to be urged: “You don’t seem to me to get all the pleasure out of life that you might” (James 1985: 92) Gertrude agrees with him, she also refuses to go to church “because the sky is so blue” (James 1985: 50). She refuses to go to the church because of waste of her time. She does not understand why she should spend time in the church listening to prays and vows: “I have taken no vow, no pledge” (James 1985: 91) instead of walking outside and enjoying nature. Felix has probably never been to church telling Mr. Wentworth: “at the bottom I am a terrible Philistine. [...] I mean, as one may say, a plain, Good-fearing man” (James 1985: 113). However, he was of the Catholic background but they have no problem in getting married.

Felix asks Gertrude’s father if he could marry her. Felix knows he is not the man who they might look for, with no fortune and no position, but he condones himself and promising to give Gertrude what she really needs: “I can give Gertrude no place in the world. A place in the world – that’s what she ought to have; that would bring her out.” (James 1985: 182) Gertrude then reproaches her family for not letting her be natural: “You wouldn’t let me be natural. I don’t know what you wanted to make of me.” (James 1985: 184) Mr. Wentworth knew that the temperament of her daughter was always different and he thinks that “Gertrude’s character required a special line of development” (James 1985: 187). However, as he sees her daughter to be really happy with Felix, he decides to let her marry Felix instead of the Puritan minister Mr. Brand. The pair gets happily married: “Gertrude left her father’s house with Felix Young, they were imperturbably happy, and they went far away.” (James 1985: 194) Actually, Felix saved Gertrude from being religious and an unhappy woman.

3.6 Religion

In *The Europeans*, religion as a motif is extremely important. Gertrude is reading romantic poetry and the rest of them read that if a person decides to talk about earthly things, they are disconnected with the Bible. To the Puritans too many people are too much thinking about pleasure. The father lectures his family because of the drinking, dancing and having too much pleasure. Among the ultra-conservative Puritan Parsons, Mr. Wentworth is liberal: “he knew he was liberal. It gave him pleasure to know it, to feel it, to see it recorded; and this pleasure is the only palpable form of self-indulgence with which the narrator of these incidents will be able to charge him.” (James 1985: 77). He has a quite a few children who are ready to get married. They are bothering him by having too much pleasure. As a Puritan he does not like them having too much pleasure. In the conversation with Felix revealing the truth about Clifford, who had been thrown out of Harvard University because of drinking, he criticizes his son: “He was too fond of something of which he should not have been fond. I suppose it is considered a pleasure.” (James 1985: 115) Pleasure is actually against the Puritan faith. People must be constantly reminded that Jesus suffered and died on the cross for their sin in Puritan religion. If a person has pleasure, he or she is forgetting that and Mr. Wentworth wants to remind them all the time. So dancing, something of the ritual when a man with a woman holding each other close to music and someone replicates the occasional moments with the rhythm of Johan Strauss from Catholic Austria and the wilder music does that. It was a new music in the nineteenth century and he was much fond of the protestant religion. Mr. Wentworth informs his children what the Bible says and they are demonstrated they are not behaving properly. In the conversation, he warns his daughter “not to get excited, not to allow these – these occurrences to be an occasion for excitement” (James 1985: 76)

They do not believe that Catholics are proper Christians. It is suggested that Clifford could get married. Mr. Wentworth cannot accept him as a possible husband of Eugenia because she is already married and Catholics are not allowed

to get divorced. Another comment has been made about Eugenia about being available to another man. For Protestants, it is totally unacceptable.

Everyone in the novel is quite religious. Mr. Wentworth is a Parson in the Puritanical religion. Most of the people in Boston would want Gertrude to properly follow the Puritan Church principles to marry Mrs. Brand. Also, Mr. Brand, a Unitarian minister, who expresses his love for Gertrude but in the end he marries her more beautiful sister Charlotte. He is extremely religious and more conservative than her father. He is trying to convert Gertrude, a free spirit who is not interested in being converted. Life is not a pleasure; all pleasure is a sin for these Puritan people. Gertrude disagrees with this notion and she reads the poetry of the romantics. She believes in love, in feelings and some of these feelings go totally against the Bible and the church, so she rejects the church and she wants to behave naturally.

3.7 “Happy Ending” in a Henry James Novella

Henry James presents the decadence and the evil of aristocracy. He sharply criticizes the aristocracy through the husband of Eugenia who is a decadent man, while she is not decadent. Eugenia was born in Vienna, but the mother was from England and cousins are Americans and she appears as a nice lady. She has some aristocratic title; however, it is through marriage. Robert Acton is a different kind of an American person, for he had been to China and therefore is a worldly man. He is not puritanical in religion nor is he narrow-minded. Lizzie Acton, however, his sister, is very narrow-minded. She thinks that Eugenia is a real snob and she cannot get used to her as a possible wife of her brother, Robert Acton. Lizzie shares her opinion of Eugenia when Eugenia comes to visit Robert Acton at home. Lizzie shows that she is a kind of person that should not be accepted to European family: “American girls had no manners and she was quite prepared to learn that she had failed to commend herself to Miss

Acton.” (James 1985: 108), however, Robert Acton is in love with Eugenia saying to her: “I love you very much; I love you more than ever.” (James 1985: 96) and he actually does not care about his sister’s opinion.

Following W. Shakespeare in his understanding what comedy should be, this novella ends in everyone getting married except Eugenia. There are two reasons why Eugenia does not get married. First of all, she is “used goods” as a woman who has already been married. She has been married since she was a late teenage girl, and she is now in her thirties and it does not seem she has any children, but she has been married and she is a Catholic. In the time of Henry James, a divorced woman almost had no chance to get married again. A widowed woman had a chance to get married if she was still young and beautiful; however, this is not the case with Eugenia. Secondly, Eugenia is a kind of particular. She has done a couple of naughty things. There is one son of Mr. Wentworth, Clifford Wentworth, who studied the Harvard from where he was expelled because of drinking. Eugenia invites Clifford, in his early twenties, to her house alone and there is a hint of this older woman possibly seducing this young man because she has not enjoyed intercourse for such a long time. Robert Acton comes into her house and at first Clifford is hiding, however, and then he reveals himself. In other words, in Puritanical society, Eugenia has done something that does not look so great either. Nevertheless, Robert Acton still wants this woman, he knows that the only thing she has to do is to sign “a little document in her writing desk and send it back to the Prince” (James 1985: 105). However, Eugenia refuses, she goes back to Europe. She gets divorced and she never gets married again. She is the only unhappy character at the end of the novella.

The rest of the characters are all Protestants and Mr. Brand happily marries the beautiful sister of Clifford, Charlotte while Clifford marries Lizzie Acton at the end of the novel. “Robert Acton, after his mother’s death, married a particularly nice young girl” (James 1985: 194) as well. This is basically a classic happy ending to all characters except Eugenia, who is stubborn, regarded as being “used goods” and found upon both Robert Acton and mother, Robert Acton’s sister and few other people including old Wentworth. Eugenia is no longer a snob

but in her thirties she is still attractive, she is educated, she can play the piano and sing, and she is not a bad woman in a sense of beauty and culture. However, in a sense of religion and may be puritanical understanding of morality, she is less than ideal.

Ward also points out that the comedy ends happily, however, he identifies Eugenia to be the only unhappy person at the end, which seems to him to be a failure:

But it must be said that there is very little of pain in the novel. Thus the Americans are exposed as quixotic in their fear of a nonexistent evil. Finally what oppress them is a fear of the unconventional and a fear of pleasure. As representatives of these qualities, the Europeans are harmless. Their suggested faults, their plotting for self-gain, Felix's inability to acknowledge pain, the Baroness's inability to face raw experience-are in no way inimical to the Americans. The Europeans offer only the possibility of happiness to the entire group. If anyone suffers, it is the Baroness, though she is no less admirable than Felix. The reason is simply that Felix's bonhomie proves less difficult for the New World to endure than the Baroness's courtliness. But Eugenia's failure is not the only unpleasantness in the book. Through symbolism James suggests grave realities underlying the experience of the novel, though the suggestion is too mild to distort the genial tone. Mainly the setting, the dialogue, and the witty narrative voice blend; the discordant notes remain beneath the surface, to be perceived, but not to offset the comic mood. (Ward 1964:11)

4 Washington Square

Washington Square was written by Henry James in 1880 and was published in *Cornhill Magazine* and *Harper's Magazine* as a serial. In 1881 it was published as a novel. "One could scarcely call *Washington Square* a youthful work or a beginning." (Martory 1997: 23) According to one James scholar, "*Washington Square* is taken to represent the final essay of James's apprenticeship, the last sketch, as it were, in preparation for his full-scale masterpiece, *The Portrait of a Lady*" (Lee 1984: 7)

4.1 Introduction

Scholars have divided the periods which James wrote in and the demarcation of his first and second periods is *Washington Square*:

The Portrait of a Lady initiates what has been called James's second period, *Washington Square* closes the first. There is no gap between the two. There are no abrupt fractures in James's career. If later on, he himself judged *Washington Square* rather harshly, it's doubtless because he felt he had transcended whatever that traditional conception of the novel had been able to provide with him. But the work marks a stage, with its references to two currents of literary fiction and the clear trace it bears of the writer's personality. (Martory 1997: 24)

The number of writers Henry James read and closely studied was enormous, and scholars have traced in numerous instances influences on his fiction:

Washington Square [...] is constructed along the traditional lines of the French and English novel of the mid-nineteen century; it tells a familiar tale of literary fiction: the opposition between a lovesick daughter and the father who disapproves of the suitor, both for its dramatic situation and the manner in which the subject is conceived. (Martory 1997: 23)

For instance, Henry James was influenced by Henri Balzac. *Washington Square* is often compared his novel *Eugénie Grandet*.

The primary subject of the author's work is his inner state of feeling. Henry James had no doubt Balzac was the supreme master, and his tribute is finally paid with characteristic generosity and a less characteristic awe. When we compare the wealth of detail, physical and social, in *Eugénie Grandet* with that in *Washington Square*, and when we recall that the two men were of similar age when they wrote their novels, it is easy to appreciate James's amazement. (Lee 1984: 10)

Both novels concern young women whose naive love is thwarted by their fathers. Both girls are not beautiful but are kindly and of course have wealth, which is obviously attractive to men of lesser means. James of course knew of cases like these two novels personally, as he himself came from a family of wealth.

James may or may not have consciously borrowed his theme from *Eugénie Grandet*, but that is hardly significant. Both novels revolve around naive young girls who fall in love with more sophisticated suitors. In each case these prove to be shallow opportunists whose schemes are thwarted by the greater cunning of the girls' fathers. In both novels the heroines are depicted as being incapable of relinquishing their deep emotional attachments to their superficial lovers, and their lives are effectively ruined. (Lee 1984: 10)

According to Martory, there are similarities and differences in the two novels which come to serve James's purpose. Naturally, the changed setting from France to New York City is not accidental, and in fact the particular setting in Washington Square happens to be exactly where Henry James himself was born.

The setting and the secondary characters lack, in *Washington Square*, that importance of Balzac accords them. While, in order to appreciate the respective relations of *Eugénie Grandet* and her father, we have to wade through a veritable monograph on the small city Saumur, James barely suggests what the fact of residing in 1850 in one of New York's most opulent neighbourhoods might mean for Catherine Sloper or the doctor. Whereas old Grandet grabs all attention and assumes the position of principal character, Dr. Sloper makes an appearance only insofar as he plays a role in

the marriage plans of his daughter; beyond that, we know almost nothing about him. (Martory 1997: 23)

Washington Square may also be compared with Hawthorne's "Rappaccini's Daughter." In "The Hawthorne Relation," which is an essay published by *The New England Quarterly*, the father-daughter conflicts are somewhat similar and since Henry James had published his own study of Hawthorne in his twenties, it is obvious that he was familiar with all of Hawthorne's works of fiction. According to Long,

In "Rappaccini's Daughter" and *Washington Square*, the relationship of a daughter and her treacherous father is central, and despite great differences and more than casual similarity may be observed between Rappaccini and Sloper. Both are thwarted that egotism and pride of mind have replaced their capacity for love, which exists for them merely as the occasion of an experiment. Doctor Sloper has no more regard for the sanctity of his daughter's being than Rappaccini, and he too uses his daughter for an experiment to gratify his own egotism. But the relationship presented in Rappaccini's Daughter and *Washington Square*, where the father's obsession with mind causes him to sacrifice his daughter's soul, as it were for the sake of an intellectual exercise, is so special and distinctive as to place these two works together. (Long 1973: 585)

4.2 An American Family Discord

Washington Square is an American novel, i.e., the characters are all Americans so is the setting. It appeals on the reader in many ways. It is characterised as a psychological realism as well as melodrama. It describes customs of the wealthier society living in New York in the 1850s:

giving himself thirty-year of perspective on the events. The distance obtained in this way allowed him to manipulate the angle of his narrative vision and give an added dimension to his picture of American society poised on the brink of a major upheaval, enjoying the last years of its pre-war provincial immigration, industrialization, finance capitalism and all the developments that

the older James came to abhor. The entire novel is pervaded by the sense of an irrecoverable past, an impending future and the human and social implications of imminent change.” (Lee 1984: 16)

Henry James actually does not describe a city fulfilled by many people. He describes a town which is not actually very crowded. As Lee points out:

However, James sense of compactness of New York society was not just the product of an infant perspective. It was a small town still, with a population of two hundred thousand, though even at this stage the pattern of social history was being laid, enabling him later to make nice discriminations with almost archaeological exactness. (Lee 1984: 17)

In the novel, the characters have to struggle with hate, evil, generosity and stinginess. One of the themes recognizable in the novel is family betrayal. The relationships are quite tricky as the main protagonist, Catherine Sloper, is influenced by her father. He disinherits her and he does not give her any freedom. However, she in turn betrays his father by not obeying him, never confessing that her father was right in his opinion about Morris, her lover; although she knows she will never marry him. At the end of the novel she is vengeful toward Morris because Morris had broken her heart and he hurt her much. Actually, Doctor Sloper feels untenably betrayed when his son and wife died. He accuses Catherine of being the reason for his wife’s death. Moreover, he detests her for not inheriting any beauty from her mother, and she is not clever as well. In addition, he cannot believe his sister Aunt Penniman who is of a romantic nature helping the young pair to get married. However, the most dramatic betrayal by Morris comes on the scene, when Catherine comes to finally understand that Morris wants to marry her only because of her fortune and feels heartbroken. She explains to Morris at the end that there is no love between them anymore because he had hurt her so much. Moreover, Catherine is also betrayed by her aunt, Mrs. Penniman who intrigues against her by meeting with Morris secretly. Lavinia is amazed at him and she surely supports his intention of marrying Catherine.

Other themes of the novel include majority, family duty, romance and marriage, truth, deception and imagination. Sassoubre identifies relationships as another theme of the novel:

The core themes of the novel (whether abstraction reveals or perverts truth; whether personal relationships can be insulated from social change; how to set standards by which conduct should be judged in new social contexts) are conceived by each of James's characters in terms of "rights," "duties," and "liberty." (Sassoubre 2007: 1034)

Irony plays an important role in the novel *Washington Square* as well. The scholar Sassoubre mentions that the sense of irony is recognizable even in the characters' behavior:

This slippage often manifests as irony- a disconnect between what is said and what is meant. Sometimes the irony is intended by the characters, who deploy it as a kind of shield as they navigate the unstable terrain of competing cultural values and assumptions.”(Sassoubre 2007: 1035)

The novel may certainly be understood as a portrait of a girl's soul and her journey to find balance in life and personal integrity.

Set in New York City, where Dr. Sloper runs his medical practice very successfully and honestly, many clients are provided with professional cure of high quality. In this field he was so well-known and proclaimed that he chose for a marriage a lovely girl, Miss Catherine Harrington. Miss Catherine was very pretty, educated and also very rich, richer than Sloper in fact. Doctor Sloper married this lady when he was 27 and this marriage brought to their relationship charm, dedication and a small fortune. The wealth had no effect on the loving husband and he continued to work very hard.

They were happy until the author of the novel brings the first but not the last dramatic turn of the events. When the first son was born, the doctor thought he would be his follower into the medical profession. He was deeply hurt when his eld son died when he was three years old. After two years their second child

was born. The daughter's birth, however, did not help Doctor Sloper to deal with the death of his first born son. What makes the situation even more serious, fourteen days after the birth of baby Catherine, his beloved wife dies.

4.3 Raising a Daughter Alone

Doctor Sloper is left alone with his daughter Catherine. He is still a successful doctor running his medical practice and he is also looking after his daughter. "Doctor never called her anything but Catherine." (James 1984: 30) He is self confident never thinking about losing her: "such as she was, he at least has no fear of losing her." (James 1984: 30) However, he cannot help and put the blame of his wife on poor Catherine.

Henry James hated doctors; his favorite niece called Minnie Temple was, in his opinion, killed by a doctor when she was twenty four. The author was twenty six and this sad event inspired the author much. In none of his novels we can find a nice doctor who represents the good. In *Washington Square*, the main character, Doctor Sloper, is a kind of nasty to his daughter. "He cruelly destroys the soul of his daughter." (Long 1973:581)

He never supports her and may see her as a reason of his wife's death and underestimates her:

Catherine was decidedly not clever; she was not quick with her book, nor, indeed, with anything else. She was not abnormally deficient, and she mustered learning enough to acquit herself respectably in conversation with her contemporaries." (James 1984: 34)

Over time, the relationship between the father and Catherine develops and it is one in which the personal strength of the daughter grows:

Catherine is not the cipher he takes her to be, and he comes in time to find that he has lost her love, together with his ability to dominate her. He continues to mock her, but his mockery is hollow and insecure, since he is no longer sure that he knows or understands her. (Long 1973: 587).

The character development is one-sided in the novel. Dr. Sloper really never changes from beginning to end. However, over the course of time, Doctor Sloper sees Catherine as

a healthy, well-grown child, without a trace of her mother's beauty. She wasn't ugly; she had simply a plain, dull, gentle countenance. Her father's opinion of her moral purity was abundantly justified; she was excellently imperturbably good; affectionate, docile, obedient, and much addicted to speaking truth. (James 1984: 34)

In the novel, Dr. Sloper gets some intelligent challenge to his own notions, not from his own daughter, but from his sister during a visit. His sister asks him which is better, beauty or brains, in a woman. His answer, obviously underlining his daughter's deficiency, is: "You are good for nothing unless you are clever." (James 1984: 33) This view he maintains consistently throughout the novel. As is well known, James is a psychological realist; the scholar Long points out that "Their relationship shows a psychological sophistication" (Long 1973: 578)

Catherine respects his father; she even admires him for his cleverness and medical skills. However, she is also afraid of him: "The poor girl found her account so completely in the exercise of her affections that the little tremor of fear that mixed itself with her filial passion." (James 1984: 34)

Her desire is to please her father, in particular his ambitions for her, however, he never recognizes her autonomy, and he feels superior to her with regard to knowing how her life should be led. Nevertheless, doctor is always kind to her; he rarely shows his disappointment with her. Doctor Sloper wanted to be

proud of his daughter, but unfortunately there was nothing to be proud of in poor Catherine. Moreover, she certainly had none of her mother's beauty.

Catherine is not an extrovert and she has no desire to shine, on most social occasions she hides in the dark. Her sense of fashion as well as manners is also bad. At twenty-one, she enjoys choosing fashionable clothing that is too old for her and makes her look over-dressed. She chooses this clothing to wear to an engagement party of one of her cousins, a daughter of Aunt Almond. Doctor Sloper ironically speaks to his daughter of her backwardness: "His intellectual nature manifests itself frequently in his habit of irony at the very beginning when Catherine appears in which are rather ill-chosen." (Long 1973: 585).

4.4 *Awkward Courtship*

At the setting she is introduced to Morris Townsend, a charming man and perhaps one of the most handsome men at the New York party. However, he is unemployed and taking care of children of his widowed sister Mrs Montgomery. He has been away travelling around the world for several years and that is why he is very cultured and sociable.

At the party Morris and Catherine dance and then converse with each other. That was her first time when a man has asked her to dance. She felt confused, but very happy and she could not believe that such a handsome man chose her – a not very pretty and a clumsy girl.

In the evening, Morris converses with her Aunt Penniman who obviously approves of Morris. On the way home in the carriage, her father questions Mrs. Penniman about her conversation with Morris at the party: "He is in love with this regal creature, then?" (James 1984: 47) Doctor Sloper speaks about Morris in a sarcastic way: "You see, he thinks you have eighty thousand a year" (James 1984: 47), the doctor does not approve of Morris. Doctor Sloper only thinks that he is with his daughter because of money. The aunt does not agree with the father so

the doctor notes in a humorous ironic way: “he must be tremendously refined not to think that” (James 1984: 47)

Doctor also asks Catherine: “Catherine, dear, what was the gentleman’s name?” (James 1984: 48) Catherine has always been absolutely honest, however this time she simply replies “I don’t know” (James 1984: 48) in a soft way. Doctor never shares his real opinion with the daughter in a clear way and his dull daughter probably does not understand his irony.

Although the doctor was in fact right about this man, this boy romances her with every possible skill he has. In fact, the reason why Morris Townsend does so is the fact that Catherine Sloper is the heiress of a great amount of money. Moreover, she will be the owner of a magnificent villa on Washington Square in New York City, which is one of the nicest houses of the most popular and richest city in the world.

In the mean time, Doctor Sloper calls Morris Townsend to dine with him and his family in order to make an opinion of him for himself. He discovers his ability; however, he does not like him much for not having any profession and for his very forward and pro-active manners in his pursuit of Catherine. Morris actually visits Catherine behind Sloper’s back. Nevertheless, Doctor Sloper starts to dissemble so that Ms Penniman and Catherine were both pleased.

4.5 Greed, Not Love

Catherine Sloper falls in a romantic love and does not recognize Morris Townsend as anything but a man in love with her. She does not understand why he is in love with her as she knows she is not beautiful or very intelligent. She comes to the conclusion that love is something what cannot be understood always rationally and that a handsome man can fall in love with not so pretty woman because chemistry in romance is not understandable. As Labrie mentions in his

study: "Although Townsend's strategy is to woo control of Catherine's money is quite transparent to Doctor Sloper and to the reader, the girl does not catch on." (Labrie 1971: 410)

Morris is aware of the father; he knows that he will never be accepted by him. However, Catherine's perception is exclusively influenced by romance. Love makes her blind:

Morris rejoined; 'you especially, because for you it must come hardest. Do you know the first thing your father will say to you?'

'No Morris, tell me.'

'He will tell I am mercenary.'

'Mercenary!'

'It's a big word, but it means a low thing. It means that I am after your money.'" (James 1984: 80).

As Long shows in his longer study, it is only money that ends up becoming the true center of the three-way conflict in this novel:

Doctor Sloper and Morris Townsend are both more intelligent than Mrs. Penniman, but they both deny Catherine any inner being and self. Doctor Sloper sees Catherine first in terms of the credit she would be to him if, like her mother, she were beautiful and clever. Since she is neither, and does not rebound to his credit, he treats her with his fine, ironic contempt. Despite their differences, the doctor and Townsend are in many ways alike. When he is invited to dinner the Slopers, Townsend samples their claret with approval. The doctor and Townsend are figures almost interchangeable. Sloper had himself made an advantageous (though honourable) marriage, and he understands the way Townsend thinks because he, too, knows the value of property. He estimates Catherine's "worth" in money terms-in the amount she will inherit. There is no other reason a young man would be interested in her, and this estimation of his child even gives him a peculiar satisfaction; he is pleased to deny that she has any "worth" he cannot know and judge. (Long 1973: 583-584)

Catherine is deeply in love, she secretly becomes engaged with Morris and is about to marry him. Mrs. Penniman supports her. Catherine is aware of her father's opinion and is quiet about her feelings in front of her father. One evening she decides to tell her father about marriage: "I am engaged to be married" (James 1984: 83) Doctor Sloper does not approve as he knows Morris Townsend is only after money. He argues: "But you have known him very short time, my dear." (James 1984: 84)

Later on, Doctor Sloper asks Morris about the plans for marriage to Catherine. Doctor Sloper changes his objection in his discussion with Morris, he cannot approve of the marriage, because Morris has no profession, insinuating that Morris would simply marry Catherine in order to live luxuriously on her money. Morris opposes that Catherine may not give him up because she is in deep love with him.

At home the father is a bit disappointed that Catherine does not share her real feelings. She is trying to be obedient and hopes that her behaviour may influence her father to change his mind about Morris. The romantic Mrs. Penniman believes Catherine should somehow betray her father. She meets with Morris secretly to suggest eloping. When Catherine comes to know about this secret meeting, she becomes angry and pleases her not to meet him again. Catherine is a little confused, so she goes to her father to announce that she wants to meet with Morris again to tell him that they should be patient and wait with the decision of permission for their possible marriage. Her father replies: "Have you no faith in my wisdom, in my tenderness, in my solicitude for your future?" (James 1984: 123)

The conflict becomes so serious that father declares that if Catherine marries Morris without his consent, he will disinherit her. Catherine hopes that her father will change his mind. However, she is unsure of how the things will turn out. As Sassoubre points out:

Doctor Sloper had his theory, and he rarely altered his theories. The marriage would have been an abominable one, and the girl had

had a blessed escape. She was not to be pitied for that, and to pretend to condole her would have been to make concessions to the idea that she had ever had a right to think of Morris. (Sassoubre 2007: 1046)

4.6 *Test of Time and Distance*

Morris asks Catherine: “Will you marry me to-morrow?”(James 1984: 132) He knows that Catherine cannot satisfy both her father and him; however, Catherine fears she will be disinherited. In order to compel Catherine to forget about Morris, Doctor Sloper decides to take Catherine to Europe. On the other hand, one scholar points to the edifying potential of Europe: “Doctor Sloper concedes that he is doing the young man a favour by providing Catherine with the improving advantages of a European trip.” (Long 1973:582)

Miss Penniman, of course, does not agree with Doctor Sloper. She meets several times with Morris secretly to advise him eloping. Morris is disappointed and replies that he does not want Catherine to lose the will of her father by disinheriting. As a result, she advises him to be cautious and to wait patiently.

Catherine knows she has to leave her father’s house, since she has rebelled and has not obeyed him. Doctor Sloper is then informed that she had finally decided to marry Morris. Her father asks Catherine if she could possibly wait with the marriage for six months and travel to Europe.

Mrs. Penniman explains that the only reason why Dr. Sloper wants Catherine to go to Europe is his hope that she will give Morris up. Catherine is confused and asks Morris to help her to decide to go or not, hoping Morris will please her not to go. She feels she would betray her father on the trip, knowing that she will never change her mind. Morris finally suggests obeying her father explaining that it may change her father’s opinion. However, his main intention is not to risk Catherine’s disinheritance.

Instead of six months Catherine and Doctor Sloper spend in Europe twelve months. Meanwhile, at Washington Square, Mrs. Penniman let Morris enjoy the doctor's wine and cigars:

At such moments the doctor and Townsend are figures almost interchangeable. Sloper had himself made an advantageous (through honorable) marriage, and he understands the way Townsend thinks because he, too, knows the value of property. (Long 1973: 584)

Doctor Sloper "treats the first love affair of his daughter, Catherine, opportunity to test his judgments of her (he has until this point disappointing) and of her beautiful young suitor Morris, a stranger. " (Sassoubre 2007: 1038) For the six months in Europe Dr. Sloper does not speak with Catherine about Morris. He supposes that Catherine is writing to him, feeling awful since nothing has changed on her opinion. There is the struggle between Catherine and her father. As Martory points out:

Children always have two opinions of their parents, one biased, stemming from the restrictions which parental authority has placed on the demands of their youth and character, less often acknowledged by them, more detached from immediate contingencies, which will be the stronger one if they manage to arrive at a degree of independence in their judgement. Catherine Sloper isn't immune to this rule. One phase of her drama consists precisely in her awareness of the rightness of her father's reasoning, in remorse for the harm she has caused him. Doctor Sloper, on the other hand, if he exerts a rigorous tyranny over his daughter that stifles the most natural parental feelings, to the point where we see him as 'the perfect incarnation of old New York respectability', strikes us as less rigid and more explicable. (Martory 1997: 24)

One evening at the end of the summer, they walk around the footpath in the Alps and Dr. Sloper leaves his daughter in order to make her feel afraid of

possible being lost high up in the Alps. Finally he appears close to the end of the cliff asking his daughter: “Have you given him up?” (James 1984: 154) When she answers no, he becomes furious and frightens her: “Should you like to left in such a place as this, to starve? That will be your fate – that’s how he will leave you.” (James 1984: 155) Clearly, he warns her that Morris is not a good man for her and that she should believe his wisdom. However, she argues: “you ought not to say it. It is not right, and it isn’t true.” (James 1984: 155) Sloper then does not mention Morris until they leave. The night before they leave he informs her that it would please him if she could notify him at least three days before the day of their marriage.

4.7 Disobedience and the Great Lie

When Catherine comes back home, she finds out that her aunt has been enjoying her time with Morris in their house. She also realises that Morris has now risen in a small way: he has a position, a business partnership. However, Catherine knows this will still not change her father’s mind since she has dealt with the fact that her father will never approve Morris as Catherine’s husband.

At this certain point of a novel, Catherine’s change of personality is noticeable: when until now she was totally obedient; as she is a romantic woman she finds a certain independence from her father:

By the time of the return from Europe, he has begun to establish her independence, and she preserves the sincerity of her emotions in the face of a world that is cynical and compromised. She may be slow and unimposing, but she is not superficial; yet it is on the level of surfaces that she is judged by the others. (Long 1973: 583)

Catherine finally decides to elope without letting her father know about their marriage. She suggests this when she comes from the trip from Europe and

she finally acknowledges that her father really despises her because she is not like her mother. She would automatically inherit the money from her mother even if the doctor disinherits her if she marries a “wrong” man. As she is in love, she wanted to marry her lover without the inheritance from the doctor because she knows they could live comfortably without it.

However, money now exposes Morris’s true ambition and motivation:

the role that Morris plays is much more like of an investor. Having won Catherine's heart but not Sloper's approval, must choose between settling for Catherine and her \$10,000 a year with slight hope of seeing the doctor's money, or abandoning Catherine to income more commensurate with his self-estimated value. (Sassoubre 2007: 1058)

Having considered all advantages and disadvantages he knows he has to be very cautious. However, as an investor

Morris must not only take risks, but also risks and rewards with imperfect information. Indeed, Morris conceives situation as essentially a mathematical problem in which Doctor opposition was the unknown quantity . . . he had to work out (Sassoubre 2007: 1058)

Morris comes to understand that Catherine’s income in contrast with the inheritance from his father can never be an advantage for an investor, so he does not agree to elope and want to be recognized as a correct husband by his father in order to get the larger inheritance money from him. Morris argues that he does not want Catherine to lose her inheritance or to suffer defeat “I have staked my pride on proving to your father that he is wrong, and now that I am at the head of a flourishing business, I can deal with him as an equal.”(James 1984: 165-166)

Catherine does not want Morris even to try to convince her father, since she feels totally independent on her father’s affection.

Dr. Sloper informs Aunt Penniman that neither he nor Catherine has changed their minds. Penniman also confesses that while he was away in Europe she spent time with Morris. He warns her that Morris may seek revenge. Sloper speaks to his other sister about Catherine's stubbornness. He is no longer interested if Catherine breaks off relations with him.

At that point Morris disappears as he decides to give Catherine up because he knows that he will never be accepted by Catherine's father: "Morris promptly decides to give her up, first trying to convince the girl's aunt to break the news and eventually calling off the engagement by letter." (Sassoubre 2007: 1039)

He visits Catherine at home to tell her he cannot visit her due to the foreign business partnership which would be valuable to her father. She does not understand why he leaves her. Catherine wonders why he has changed his mind. However, Morris refuses explanation, promising he will describe his intention in a letter.

Catherine feels totally abandoned. At this point Catherine finally realises who Morris really is and this breaks her heart deeply. She finally starts to think rationally and is able to accept the truth about herself. She waits with hope that Morris will come back but at the end of the day she gives him up. However, she does not want her father to recognize her change of mind. She does not even want to speak to Mrs Penniman and she stays alone. When Morris does not appear, it makes Catherine feel more determined not to share the truth with her father. Dr. Sloper then thinks that Morris has changed his plans by not marrying his daughter.

When no letter comes to her she looks for Morris only to find out that he has left the city. She interrogates Mrs. Penniman about his whereabouts. However, when the aunt starts to describe the need of separation she feels furious.

Even when Catherine receives a confirmation letter she continues hiding the truth because she cannot confess that her father was right about Morris. Although Dr. Sloper may feel in the air there is a chance, he is pretending to

expect Catherine marriage and demands to be informed about the exact date of the marriage, which is the cruellest moment of the father's irony:

Catherine is seen standing in the window of the house on Washington Square after having been jilted by Townsend, and her father, entering below, tips his hat to her. He cannot know that Townsend has just abandoned her, but he must know that she is suffering, and his courtly addresses can be nothing other than mockery of her maiden's heart. (Long 1973: 585)

In a major change in her behavior with her father, for the first time Catherine is explicitly dishonest: "What happens next surprises the doctor. Catherine reports that it is she who has ended the engagement and goes on about her life in her father's house" (Sassoubre 2007: 1039)

4.8 Breaking Up Both Engagement and Family Love

At this point the novel turns into a semi-gothic novel because there is a deep-seated hate relationship between the father and the daughter. Nevertheless, they lived together in a same house. They do not feel any love for each other, they cannot stand each other but they do remain polite to each other. She hates her father but does her duty as a daughter to a man, whose wife has died. She helps with the household:

Catherine and her father spend the rest of his life (more than twenty years) together quietly in his house on Washington Square with no sign of Morris, but the doctor's unexpressed surprise evolves into an erroneous suspicion that Catherine plans to marry Morris after he is dead. (Sassoubre 1973: 1039)

When he is close to death, Doctor Sloper asks his daughter to promise him she will not marry Morris Townsend. She replies she cannot promise anything. The question is why Catherine did not promise her father not to marry Morris Townsend. The reason is that she wanted to hurt her father. She stubbornly wanted her father to not have any control of her. She wanted to remain independent of her hateful father. She wanted to prove to her father that he is not able to pull the strings even after he dies so still she refuses to obey his father. Although, she knew she would not marry Morris Townsend as he really lied about being in love with her, she did not marry him for her own reasons. Dr Sloper did not want her to marry him and take his money. She did not want him to think that she would still obey:

‘If I live with you, I ought to obey you.’

‘If that’s your theory, it’s certainly mine,’ said the Doctor, with a dry laugh.

‘But if I don’t obey you, I ought not to live with you – to enjoy your kindness and protection.’ (p. 146)

She wanted to exert as a little girl, who is not very clever, still having independence and power to do what she wants to do. She disobeyed her father and lost a large amount of money for that decision but she got the independence which was much more important for her. “So if we can believe up to a point that his daughter is his victim, the end of the book amply demonstrates how Catherine, after her father’s death, behaves exactly as he would have wished her to.” (Martory1997: 24) Then Doctor Sloper dies.

4.9 *Revenge from the Grave*

When Doctor Sloper’s will is opened after his funeral with family and scores of professionals and friends in attendance, the testament is divided into two distinct portions:

The first of these dated from ten years back, and consisted of a series of dispositions by which he left the great mass of his property to his daughter, with becoming legacies to his two sisters. The second was a codicil, of recent origin, maintaining the annuities to Mrs Penniman and Mrs Almond, but reducing Catherine's share to a fifth of what he had first bequeathed her. 'She is amply provided for from her mother's side,' the document ran, 'never having spent more than a fraction of her income from this source; so that her fortune is already more than sufficient to attract those unscrupulous adventures whom she has given me reason to believe that he persists in regarding as an interesting class.' The large remainder of his property, therefore, Doctor Sloper had divided into seven unequal parts, which he left, as endowments, to as many different hospitals and schools of medicine in various cities of the Union. (James 1984: 207-208)

Catherine's accepts this in a calm way: "I like it very much. Only I wish it had been expressed a little differently." (James 1984: 208) A few years later when Morris Townsend comes back, he wants to marry Catherine even for the small money she had inherited. However, she refuses him saying he treated her badly and her feelings are dead and buried. Morris Townsend then disappears and never returns again. "Catherine, meanwhile, in the parlor, picking up her morsel of fancy-work, had seated herself with it again - for life, as it were." (James 1984: 220)

5 Conclusion

The diploma thesis focused on further analysis of the three early novels written by the American writer Henry James. Generally, the thesis was concerned with his early prose fiction *The American* (1877), *Washington Square* (1888) and *The Europeans* (1878). I analyzed the varied aspects linked with the themes of romance and class conflicts of the main protagonists of these three novels, two which included international romances. The chapters were divided according the publication year of these three novels.

In the novels there are various sources for the conflicts. In *The American* and *The Europeans* social class plays an important role. In *Washington Square* although social class is generally not openly discussed because Americans do not tend to talk about class distinctions. It is in fact a situation that Dr. Sloper does not like Morris Townsend primary because he comes from the poor branch of the family that his sister's daughter has married into. Morris Townsend comes from the poor branch of the Townsend family that have many other very rich people. He has some education, he has excellent manners, and he is really very handsome; he can play the piano and can sing in foreign languages. He has travelled the world and can keep up with conversation among the wealthy elite in society. However, he does not have any money, he has lived for pleasure as many people with wealth do, but he does not have any trade of profession. This is why Dr. Sloper does not like him. In Europe it would be understood that Dr. Sloper does not like Morris Townsend because of his low social class. However, in America people are not allowed to talk about the social class. Therefore, what does Dr. Sloper openly criticizes him about is the fact that he has no skill and no profession, in contrast Dr. Sloper has a successful medical practice in New York City. Morris Townsend helps his widowed sister to run her household and helps her with her taking care of her children. In the nineteenth century it would be generally unacceptable if Catherine, such a wealthy person, married the unemployed Morris Townsend, their wealth and education background must be reasonably close to get married.

Social class is the main theme discussed in *The American*. The blue blood aristocrats meet an American who is much wealthier than they are; however, they see him as a low class, vulgar and primitive businessman. Money, that he possesses, cannot make up for his vulgarity. Christopher Newman is handsome, but without table manners: he is not well-dressed, he does not know how to eat and sit in the chair and finally he does not know how to dance and behave correctly in front of these aristocrats. Also his lack of education is evident: he has no idea who Mozart is, what makes a painting a masterpiece – in short he does not know anything about the world of art. Christopher Newman is a low class man who is unacceptable. At the end he does not win out because of his money, but loses because of his low social class.

In *The Europeans*, social class is a false mark of criticism. Americans do not identify strongly with social classes. Americans actually believe that regardless people of being lower or middle or higher levels of wealth, they may marry whoever they wish. There is no social class; they marry for love, not for the demand of matching a family tradition of aristocracy. One exception to the United States might be the religion at that time. People should marry a person of the same religion. A Catholic marrying a Protestant was not possible, though it is completely divorced from one's social class.

The reason why the sister (Eugenia) and brother (Felix) have gone to America is the same as the reason Christopher Newman went to France. In a sense, Christopher Newman went to find a wife, while Eugenia and her brother, Felix Young, who is an artist, went to America because of a combination of two things. Eugenia was basically embarrassed and humiliated by her aristocratic German husband, who stole her best years of life in an unhappy marriage and now he wants to divorce her. They come to America even to find a new husband for Eugenia.

In *The American*, Claire de Cintré has blue blood, but Eugenia Munster in *The Europeans*, who is married to the Prince Adolf in a Principality in Germany, does not have blue blood. As a very young woman Eugenia was married to this

man for her beauty. While she was not poor (she was coming from upper social class), her origins were however, not from an aristocratic social class. Once she is in her thirties, there are younger aristocratic women for this playboy, who also gambles and is a high flying man enjoying life to an extreme. She married him because she was in love, but that love has now gone. There is a morganatic marriage between them: Eugenia got the title Baroness, however, if they get divorced, she will not inherit any money, property or privilege that her husband owns. They both are ready to divorce and Eugenia has left for America.

Since Henry James is an American, his American characters believe in democracy deeply in an American way. However, James lived in Europe and he observed the European ways of aristocracy. In *The American*, where Christopher Newman has the American manners, James is criticizing the Bellegarde family, their tradition and the decadence of aristocracy. In *The Europeans*, these Europeans are escaping that decadent European aristocracy as well, even though they themselves are Europeans. Eugenia and Felix come from the same family as the Wentworths of Boston, they are cousins. Eugenia and Felix are social climbing type of people; however they do not come from the high social class.

There is another source of the conflicts of romance and that is the act of rebellion against the parents, which is recognizable in *Washington Square* and *The American* (and to some extent with Gertrude in *Europeans*). In *Washington Square* Catherine Sloper disobeys her father and she never confesses that he had been right about Morris and his greed. Even on Doctor Sloper's death bed when he begs her to promise that she will never marry Morris Townsend, she answers that she cannot promise anything although Catherine knows she will never marry him because Morris had hurt her deeply. The family conflict is so serious that the father disinherits her. However, Catherine is not interested in his money so much. The reason why she disobeys is psychological that she wants to be a free person. This stubborn separation causes the loss of her father's money and actually causes the family ruin because the family wealth becomes in "vain" as Doctor Sloper gives his entire wealth of money to various hospitals and schools of medicine. Catherine Sloper wins her freedom and independence, she can still live in the

house and moreover, she can marry whoever she wishes. Every single decision is her own and not her tyrannical father's.

In *The American* Claire de Cintré as a mere teenager obeyed her mother and married much older wealthy aristocratic man to keep family tradition. Claire understands very well that aristocracy has its own rules and at any case she does not wish to harm in any way the reputation of her family name. Claire de Cintré must obey and obeying means marrying Lord Deepmere. She is, however, allowed (in the sense of aristocracy) to rebel in the way that, nearing the conclusion of the novel the widowed Claire joins a convent. Henry James, a protestant, knew about the extreme form of Catholicism, an order where nuns live under the oath of silence. Like Catherine Sloper, Claire decides to disobey, which means a metaphorical suicide from a real life for her, as it may be understood in *Washington Square* as well because Catherine actually never gets married again nor does she live free in any real sense of the world. However, Claire de Cintré does not destroy the reputation of the Bellegardes among those families who still perceive the prestige of the aristocracy. Valentin de Bellegarde indicated to Newman that becoming an officer in the French Army or becoming a monk was acceptable for him, but it was Claire who became a nun, so it does not cause the ruin of the family as it happens in *Washington Square* when the testament of Doctor Sloper becomes public.

Another source of the conflicts is religion. In *The Europeans*, most of the Wentworths are quite religious and the religion is extremely important. Everyone in the novel is quite religious except Gertrude and Felix. Mr. Wentworth is a Parson in the Puritanical religion. Most of the people in Boston would want Gertrude to adhere to Puritanism to marry. Mr. Brand, a Unitarian minister, who is interested in Gertrude, but in the end he marries her more beautiful sister Charlotte. He is extremely religious. He is trying to convert Gertrude, who is a free spirit, who is not interested in being converted to the austere notions of Puritanism. Life is not a pleasure; all pleasure is a sin for Puritans. Gertrude disagrees with this philosophy of life and instead she reads the poetry of the romantics and believes in love, in feelings and some of these ideas which go

totally against the Bible and Puritan doctrine, Gertrude rejects the church and she wants to be natural, that is why she marries Felix Young, who thinks about these things in the same way. He is a painter and a free spirit, he does not go to church and he likes enjoying his life, dancing, going to the theatre and so on. For him the pleasure is an opportunity and Gertrude is amazed by him and she thinks that Felix is the appropriate man. However, Mr. Wentworth has to overcome a lot to let his daughter marry Felix, as he is a Catholic, a free spirit and Mr. Wentworth is quite a conservative Puritan. Only Felix marries a woman with different religious origins in her family - everybody in the novel marries within the same religion.

In *Washington Square*, the religion is not a factor. The religion of Catherine Sloper and Morris Townsend is not mentioned. Almost all Americans at that time were Protestants, and not many of the people were Catholics. However, at that time in Europe 70% of the people were Catholics. When the Americans and the Europeans meet in the plots of Henry James's novels it could be an affect.

In *The American* Christopher did not care that the Bellegardes family was Catholic. These people are very Catholic, ready to go to church, such as Claire at conclusion became a Carmelite nun. The details of religion are not addressed in *The American*. Christopher Newman does not like the fact that Claire cannot get married and that they cannot be together because of her becoming a nun and considers the situation absurd.

Finally, all three novels end to varying degrees tragically. It is clearly a tragic ending in *The American*, also *Washington Square* could be classified as a kind of sad and tragic but faithful ending only in so far that Catherine remained true to herself. *The Europeans* has the tragic ending only for Eugenia, the only one not getting married. The most tragic and almost Greek type of novel, however, is *Washington Square*, because the father disinherited Catherine because she was of a stubborn nature, she refused to allow him to die with following his demands and to be right, denying her to marry whom she was in love with. Nevertheless, she did not want to marry Morris as he had hurt her much. She did not want to marry anyone. Yet she wanted to be the one who decided, not her

father. In her stubbornness she did not want her father who told her something that was right. In the end, she is disinherited, he is bitter and angry, and obviously Dr. Sloper was disappointed much earlier because he married a beautiful woman who died giving the birth to a girl who did not inherit any of her wife's beauty. Catherine is clumsy and not very clever. Secondly he is bitter because she does not obey. Finally, it remains very sad because when Morris Townsend earns a small sum of money he comes back to Catherine to ask her if she could marry him and she refuses him because he had hurt her, she loved him at one time, but she is not in love with him anymore. She wanted to marry for love. The people's personalities are ending really tragic and causing harm to others as well, all people were unhappy in the end in this classic work of psychological realism.

The American has a tragic ending as well; at first the comedy of manners changes midway into the plot into a gothic novel with the head of the Bellegarde family to have been murdered and people committing suicide through various forms such as Valentin de Bellegarde in the duel of honour and Claire de Cintré becoming a nun metaphorically committing suicide by eliminating herself from real life. She cannot talk to people, she cannot see her family, and she will never speak except to God in prayer. Of course, Christopher Newman is devastated too. Ironically, the Bellegardes kind of won a victory. They may be not classified as happy, when both children are fundamentally killed from living a real life, but the Bellegarde family name remains honorable.

In *The Europeans* there is a mixed conclusion since Eugenia is a major character. It is her arrival to America because of disaster in European aristocracy in her marriage and that remains a tragedy for her, that remains unresolved. However, her appearance with her brother and interactions between Europeans and Americans are exciting and interesting to these rather austere, conservative Protestants. Mr. Wentworth thinks they should not allow the Catholic Europeans to influence them and that they should not allow their new ideas to infect Americans with bad notions of pleasure. Because of the influence of pleasure he regularly tells his children to behave themselves and get married properly. Gertrude was already interested in pleasure, romance and nature rather than

church while not feeling guilty as Puritans are instructed to feel. Eugenia in fact has not changed anyone else. Mr Brand could not get Gertrude although he might have tried to change her but Felix saved Gertrude from being a religious and unhappy woman. The rest of the characters get happily married. Clifford Wentworth marries Lizzie Acton, Mr. Brand marries Charlotte Wentworth and Robert Acton marries an unnamed pretty woman (instead of Eugenia). Eugenia is actually the only unhappy person in the novel. Eugenia did not get married because she was already married in her thirties, soon to be divorced, regarded by society as “used goods” and she found out that America can be as devastated as Europe.

It is likely that the isolation is characteristic concluding in all three novels. Christopher Newman stays alone, Eugenia is isolated from the marriage and so is Catherine Sloper. At the end of the novels, James does not show a kind of the marriage in which the people merge with the family they are marrying into. Felix Young in *The Europeans* was not accepted so nicely into the family by Mr. Wentworth and the engagement can be presumed as the survival from the reins of Europeans. They can realize themselves; however, they isolate themselves from the rest of the family when they move far away, through Gertrude herself is certainly less isolated in her marriage than she was as a member at her Puritan family.

In conclusion, the two novels *The American* and *The Europeans* can be defined as the clash between two different worlds of Europe and America, when people do not allow themselves to be so easily influenced by other foreign influences. Nevertheless, their lives are then so influenced that they can no longer live their calm and quiet life as they expected. *Washington Square* may be defined as the demonstration of the line of one end of the line of one family because of the stubbornness of an independent woman facing paternalistic domination and overcoming it

6 Czech summary

Tato práce se zaměřila na podrobnější analýzu děl *Washington Square*, *The American* a *The Europeans*, které napsal americký spisovatel Henry James. V práci byly analyzovány různé důvody manželských i nemanželských střetů dvou generací.

Nejdříve se práce zaměřuje na stručnou charakteristiku nejznámějších děl autora Henry Jamese jakožto jednoho z nevlivnějších průkopníků amerického modernismu. Úvod práce nastiňuje autorovu zkušenost se dvěma naprosto odlišnými národnostmi, s Amerikou a Evropou. Autor totiž sám v obou zemích žil. Ovšem v jeho dílech je bezpochybně znát, že se považuje za amerického autora a své americké ideály jsou patrné ve všech jeho dílech. Ve svých dílech se nejvíce zaměřuje na psychologickou studii jednotlivých postav z různých společenských vrstev a různých světadílů. Henry James strávil většinu života v Evropě, kde měl tu možnost nahlédnout do mentality tamějšího lidu. Své dojmy autor shrnul ve svém díle *Malá cesta po Francii* (1884), a svou vášeň pro italský lid barvitě popsal ve svém světoznámém románu *Daisy Millerová* (1878) a v nejznámějším díle *Portrét dámy* (1881). Nejvěrněji však tuto zemi, se svými tradicemi, kulturou, pohledem na svět, autor popsal v díle *Italské hodiny* (1903). Jamesovy povídky a romány zpravidla líčí nemilosrdnou srážku naivního a dobrosrdečného, hrdého a upřímného Američana s velmi konzervativním, lhostejným a vypočítavým Evropanem. Některé z jeho děl byly i sfilmovány. Českého překladu se však dočkala jen polovina děl, jako například *Listiny Aspernovy* (1958), *Co všechno věděla Maisie* (1971), *Washingtonovo náměstí* (1987) a *Utažení šroubu* (1994).

Kapitola věnována *The Americans* se nejdříve zabývá stručným představením knihy a tématem mezinárodnosti. Stručně vymezuje rozdíly v kultuře, tradicích a zájmech Američanů a Evropanů. Část práce je věnována kritice tohoto románu. V kapitole jsou vymezeny jak střety mezi dvěma národnostmi, ale i střety milostné, popsány jsou hlavní důvody těchto střetů. Mezi tyto důvody bezpochyby patří peníze, ale hlavně společenské postavení. První

polovina knihy je chápána jako komedie mravů, kde společenská etiketa hraje nesmírně důležitou roli. Hlavní hrdina, Christopher Newman má velice nevybíravé a netaktní způsoby, a tak dochází ke společenskému střetu s velmi konzervativní rodinou Bellegardes. V druhé polovině díla děj ostře přechází v gotický román, kde se řeší problematika vraždy otce Claire de Cintré, smrt Valentina de Bellegarde v souboji o čest a případný sňatek mezi Claire de Cintré, dcerou Madame de Bellegarde, a Christophem Newmanem. Christopher Newman postupně odhalí tajemství rodiny za pomoci služebné Mrs. Bread, která mu předá dopis na rozloučenou otce Claire. Z něj se Christopher dozvídá o strašlivé vraždě a přeje si pomstít se rodině Bellegardes. Pomsta v tomto románu hraje velmi důležitou roli. Autor se inspiroval středověkou i pozdější literaturou. Pomsta Christopa Newmana by v podobě odhalení oné pravdy o vraždě způsobila zkázu rodiny Bellegardes. V tomto románu se tato pomsta nakonec neuskuteční, jelikož autor pozdvihuje svůj americký národ dobrosrdečnosti, přátelskosti a upřímnosti. Hlavní hrdina nakonec spálí důkaz. Jedna z kapitol je také věnována problematice Karmelitánského řádu. Claire de Cintré nakonec dobrovolně vstupuje do toho řádu, kde není povoleno mluvit nebo se stýkat s ostatními lidmi. Tímto aktem spáchá jakousi sebevraždu, jelikož je naprosto vyvržena z klasického života.

Další kapitola analyzuje kratší novelu *The Europeans*. Tato kapitola charakterizuje dílo, děj a hlavní motivy a témata. V této knize je zdrojem střetů mezi dvěma odlišnými národnostmi především víra, kdy dochází ke sňatkům mezi katolíky a protestanty. Na rozdíl od předešlé kapitoly, Evropané cestují do Ameriky. V této zemi nalézají své příbuzné, kteří jsou velmi konzervativní a nechtějí připustit, že by je svět Evropy měl něčím pohltnout či ovlivnit. Peníze opět hrají svou roli, jelikož rodina v Americe je poměrně bohatá, zatímco sourozenci Eugenia a Felix na tom finančně nejsou nejlépe. Stejně jako Christopher Newman v předešlé kapitole odjíždí do ciziny, aby našel lepší svět, případně manžela pro Eugeniu, která byla nešťastně provdána a chce se nyní rozvést. Ke střetu dochází ve chvíli, kdy Felix, jakožto člověk svobodného ducha, chce požádat Gertrudu o ruku. Ta odmítá navštěvovat kostel a víra pro ni není důležitá jako pro zbytek rodiny. Pan Wentworth zpočátku nesouhlasí s tím, aby si Felix mladičkou

Gertrudu vzal za ženu, ale nakonec dojde ke svatbě a pár odjíždí daleko od rodiny. K dalšímu konfliktu dochází mezi Eugenií a Robertem Actonem, který si chce Eugenie vzít za ženu. Ta nakonec nesouhlasí a jako jediná nešťastná postava se vrací zpět do Evropy.

V kapitole zvané *Washington Square* je opět analyzován tento román, hlavní motivy, témata a děj. Tento román se odehrává v Americe a všechny postavy jsou Američané, proto v této knize chybí téma mezinárodnosti. Zdrojem krutých rodinných střetů je tvrdohlavost mladé Catherine Sloper, která za žádnou cenu nechce poslechnout svého otce. Je vášnivě zamilovaná do Morrise Townsenda, který nemá žádné zaměstnání ani peníze. Proto je otcem, doktorem Sloperem nenáviděn. Otec prokoukne Morrise, že jediným důvodem tohoto podivného sňatku je cesta k penězům, jelikož Catherine má sdědit velké věno po jeho smrti. Catherine ani na smrtelné posteli otci neslíbí, že si nikdy nevezme Morrise a je vyděděna. V případě tohoto románu jde ovšem o naprostou zkázu rodiny, jejíž jmění naprosto zaniká, když otec Sloper věnuje své peníze nemocnicím a školám pro mediky.

V závěru práce jsou výše zmíněné romány porovnány z hlediska společenských rozdílů jednotlivých kultur, rozdílné víry, vzpoury vůči rodičům a také tragické konce těchto děl.

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