

THE SUBJECT OF THE GOLDEN BOWL

CRITICISM AND THE "MAJOR PHASE" :

THE SUBJECT OF HENRY JAMES'S

THE GOLDEN BOWL

By

REX BISHOP, B.A.

A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies

in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of Arts

McMaster University

(November) 1971

MASTER OF ARTS (1971)
(English)

McMASTER UNIVERSITY
Hamilton, Ontario.

TITLE: Criticism and the "major phase" : the subject of
Henry James's The Golden Bowl.

AUTHOR: Rex Bishop, B.A. (University of Warwick, England)

SUPERVISOR: Dr. M. Aziz.

NUMBER OF PAGES: VI, 97.

This thesis is directed towards arriving at a greater understanding of the 'subject' of The Golden Bowl, in the light of a representative selection of criticism on the novel. As will be shown in Chapter II, much of this criticism has failed to recognise the supreme fusion between form and content in this novel, as is witnessed by the multitudinous analyses which examine either form or content whilst ignoring this complete fusion. The result of this 'error' has been talk of saints and witches. By analysing this discrepancy, a valid framework will be provided that will give a greater scope to an understanding of this fusion than would otherwise be possible. From such a starting-point, the thesis will argue that this last novel of the so-called 'trilogy' is James's supreme achievement, his most perfect production in the particular medium with which he was so familiar and so capable.

Textual Note:

References made to the novels of Henry James are taken from the Scribner's "New York" edition, 1907-1909. The Golden Bowl is contained in volumes XXIII and XXIV of that edition. Other references to the works of James are as follows: The Prefaces as collected in The Art of the Novel, edited by R.P. Blackmur (New York : Scribner's Sons, 1934); James's essays as found in The Future of the Novel, edited by Leon Edel (New York : Vintage Books, 1956). As a result, footnotes referring to these works will appear in a shortened form, for example : The Art of the Novel.

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

<u>CHAPTER I</u>	:	<u>Introduction</u> - The form-content argument and its relationship to <u>The Golden Bowl</u> .
<u>CHAPTER II</u>	:	<u>The Golden Bowl I.</u>
<u>CHAPTER III</u>	:	<u>The Golden Bowl II.</u>
<u>CHAPTER IV</u>	:	<u>Epilogue</u> - freedom and the organic form.

I should like to thank Dr. M. Aziz for his kind assistance during the preparation of this thesis.

I

INTRODUCTION

Modern criticism has shown us that to speak of content as such is not to speak of art at all, but of experience; and that it is only when we speak of the achieved content, the form, the work of art, that we speak as critics. The difference between content, or experience, and achieved content, or art, is technique.¹

The most noticeable failure in the mass of criticism written on The Golden Bowl, in particular - and, in general, those novels known under the title of the "major phase" : The Wings of the Dove, 1902; The Ambassadors, 1903; The Golden Bowl, 1904; - has been an unfortunate dichotomy between those two seemingly eternal irreconcilables, form and content. In this connection, Mark Schorer's comments on the genre, of which The Golden Bowl is a part (despite intricate attempts to "make it a 'fable' or an 'allegory'") have direct relevance:

The novel is still read as though its content has some value in itself, as though the subject-matter of fiction has greater or lesser value in itself, and as though technique were not a primary but supplementary element, capable perhaps of not unattractive embellishments upon the surface of the subject, but hardly of its essence.²

Such attractive protuberances as the bowl itself or the Pagoda image at the beginning of Volume II have been praised for their ornate

1. Mark Schorer, "Technique as Discovery", Hudson Review, I (1948), 67-87.

2. Ibid.

presence. Point of view, structure, technique, have all been referred to but in a separate category, distinct from the subject-matter of the novel.

As will be shown, any appreciation of the 'subject' of The Golden Bowl should include a consideration of form and content. To ignore one, at the expense of the other, is to become embroiled in a situation where, left with content alone, the critic has no choice but to treat the novel as a moral tract. The result has been successive conflicts between what the critic considers to be James's Weltanschauung and what the critic considers to be his own. One or the other must crack under the strain. Consequently, as the novel is a relatively passive article in comparison with the active pen of the critic, this situation has led to a multitude of morally orientated judgements of the novel. Perhaps a 'moralist' would reply that, as far as The Golden Bowl is concerned, morality is precisely what we are arguing about in this work. A rejoinder to this must take the form that, first, the critic has not paid enough attention to technique and, second, a situation arising where Maggie Verver has been judged both a saint and a witch³ is hardly a strong recommendation for "the common pursuit of true judgement".⁴ This still may not be a sufficient reply for the moralist. Thus, the first section of this thesis will be an examination of some of the major approaches to the novel in an attempt to outline some of the errors of what has been a strong moralistic bias towards the novel.

3. Walter Wright, "Maggie Verver : Neither Saint Nor Witch", Nineteenth-Century Fiction, XII (1957) 59-71.

4. F.R. Leavis, The Common Pursuit (London, 1952), p.v.

Such an approach to James, as will be taken in this thesis, does not make any grand claims to 'revolutionizing' Jacobite criticism of the 'master'. James's own critical theory, as outlined in his Prefaces and Essays, draws heavily upon the realization of the fusion between form and content. For James, the novel is a picture, an architectural monument raised up around some central "germ" caught from life. It is "in its broadest definition a personal, a direct impression of life" ⁵ :

Life being all inclusion and confusion, and art being all discrimination and selection, the latter, in search of the hard latent value with which alone it is concerned, sniffs round the mass as instinctively and unerringly as a dog suspicious of some buried bone.⁶

The novelist (or painter), through the "sublime economy of art", orders and patterns the 'raw stuff' of life into a novel whose ultimate realization is to be : "... [not appear] a living thing, all one and continuous like any other organism".⁷ Thus, for James, art is a process, a far cry from "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" which many critics, tuned to the Romantic 'sensibility' have taken it to be:

Art deals with what we see, it must first contribute full-handed that ingredient; it plucks its material, otherwise expressed, in the garden of life - which material elsewhere grown is stale and uneatable. But it has no sooner done this than it has to take account of a process - from which only when it's the basest of the servants of man... pusillanimously edge away. The process, that of the expression, the literal squeezing-out of value is another affair - with which the happy luck of mere

5. "The Art of Fiction", The Future of the Novel, p.9.

6. The Art of the Novel, p.120.

7. "The Art of Fiction", The Future of the Novel, p.15.

finding has nothing to do.... The subject is found, and if the problem is then transferred to the ground of what to do with it the field opens out for any amount of doing.⁸

As a result of this process, the novelist constructs his edifice, completes his picture, a "habited, featured, coloured form of life".⁹

"The novelist can only fall back on that - on his recognition that man's constant demand for what he has to offer is simply man's appetite for a picture".¹⁰

The so-called 'Jamesian' aesthetic has been fully discussed elsewhere, primarily in Joseph Warren Beach's The Method of Henry James, which still stands as the major 'textbook' for the student of James's novels and stories. Nevertheless, as far as The Golden Bowl is concerned, such an aesthetic has been largely ignored. In place of seeing and understanding a presented consciousness (two concepts at the heart of James's aesthetic, as expressed in "The Lesson of Balzac", an essay written in close proximity to the date of the composition of The Golden Bowl), criticism has generally engaged in attempting clearcut moral judgement. This thesis represents an attempt to go against this grain.

However, to over-emphasise form at the expense of subject-matter - of the experience presented to us by which our vision of the external world is nourished, enriched and, occasionally, drastically changed - would also appear to be a pit into which the critic is likely to fall. At times, Beach is himself 'guilty' of propogating this view. Thus, in his Introduction to the 1954 edition of his book, he admits:

8. The Art of the Novel, p.312.

9. "The Lesson of Balzac", The Future of the Novel, p.116.

10. "... a primary need of the mind". "The Future of the Novel" Ibid, p.33.

It should be noted that The Method of Henry James is rather strictly limited to the subject of James's story-telling techniques, and that mainly in his longer narratives. There was no attempt to present the man Henry James, to place him in his background of family, habitat and period. And as for the other major topics of interest - his subject-matter, his philosophy of life, even his style - these are all vigorously subordinated to the one subject, his methods as a novelist.¹¹

His primary concern with the mechanics of technique might have suggested, in the mind of a lesser critic than Beach, something of "the machine age" (to use his own phrase).¹² Nevertheless, whilst making the major contribution to the ever-expanding archives of the Jacobite 'school', for a critic to pursue his explication of James's theory, in an examination of The Golden Bowl, might lead to a position where the analysis that resulted would merely add weight to those criticisms of the novel that have charged it with being arid, decadent, too evocative of James's fanaticism with the 'embellishments' of point of view and so forth. Further, and this would appear to be more directly damaging, such an approach might run the risk of missing the essential 'life' the book possesses. As James declares, it is in the artist's power:

...to guess the unseen from the seen, to trace the implication of things, to judge the whole piece by the pattern, the condition of feeling life in general so completely that you are well on your way to knowing any particular corner of it - this cluster of gifts may also be said to constitute experience, and they occur in country and in town,

11. J.W. Beach, The Method of Henry James (Enlarged edition; Yale University Press, 1954), p.VIII.

12. Ibid., p. XIV.

and in the most differing stages of education. If experience consists of impressions, it may be said that impressions are experience, just as... they are the very air we breathe.¹³

Thus, delighting in "deep-breathing economy and an organic form",¹⁴ James, especially in The Golden Bowl, asserts far more sympathetically, articulately and effectively the often quoted maxim of Lawrence's craft (far more, that is, than Lawrence himself):

The novel is the one bright book of life. Books are not life. They are only tremulations on the ether. But the novel as a tremulation can make the whole man alive tremble. Which is more than poetry, philosophy, science, or any other book-tremulation can do.¹⁵

However, abstract theorizing has generally led to a position whereby the critic, having isolated his ideal theory, finds that it will not hold good in the arena of concrete critical debate.¹⁶ Thus, it is hoped, that by avoiding this pitfall (meeting the criticism on its own ground in an analysis of the novel itself), the main contention of this thesis will be illustrated: namely, that in The Golden Bowl, James has achieved a remarkable perfection in the genre, a complete fusion of form and content. One is reluctant to apply evaluative 'judgements' at such an early stage in the argument. However, it is also a contention of this paper that this novel marks the consummation of his career as a novelist, standing as a pinnacle from which many of the so-called classics of both

13. "The Art of Fiction", The Future of the Novel, p.13.

14. The Art of the Novel, p.84.

15. "Why the Novel Matters", D.H. Lawrence - A Selection, ed. R.H. Poole and P.F. Shepherd, (London, 1970), p.124.

16. See, for example, D. Lodge, The Language of Fiction (London, 1966) pp. 189-213.

nineteenth and twentieth-century fiction appear in a dim shadow. As the finest of his productions, it is also noticeable that what emerges is an 'affirmation' - an assertion and realization of all the artistic beliefs evident in his previous novels - unparalleled in the "major phase" and perhaps in the rest of the Jacobite canon. That this 'affirmation' is independent of morality (in the sense in which morality is conventionally understood), whilst necessitating a thorough knowledge of it, is the result of both the novelist's and the character's understanding of the questions that surround 'forms', 'conventions', 'techniques' and their relationship to morality (a relationship presented in Maggie's notion of the "equilibrium"). Such an understanding precludes the excesses of judgement which a great many critics have found a necessary response to such a complex work.¹⁷ In its evocation of the precarious balance contained in any relationship between the confusion and chaos of life and attempts made to order that 'stuff' into a fully meaningful pattern of operation and action, The Golden Bowl stands as the fullest realization of James's artistic creed and the ultimate validity of his own world view. Because the novel is so much concerned with the relationship between 'matter' and form, it thus appears to dictate 'its own terms' through which a reader may articulate his or her response.

Thus, by examining the novel in this manner, it may be possible to articulate (to catch a glimpse of) a response that John Bayley hints at, but hardly develops due to the immense scope of his book The Characters

17. On the whole question of judgement in a moral sense, see William Righter, The Logic of Criticism (London, 1963), pp. 50-62. (This section contains a good discussion on the position held by F.R. Leavis).

of Love. Whilst writing about "Love and Knowledge" he declares:

The "golden mist" which James several times invokes as an image for the opacities and translucencies of human society, fades out - like the evening haze of London itself - the innumerable arcades of query and possibility, while leaving the reader with the spacious impression that they are still there, still leading away into the haze of human complication, still open and explorable. The subject of The Golden Bowl cannot be clearly stated, and the problems which it raises are of the sort which can be solved after a fashion but which can never be computed; before they can be classified they have multiplied and mutated themselves endlessly, like some elemental form of life.¹⁸

As Bayley goes on to point out: "This is of course a property of almost all real problems involving human relations, and according to one's mood it can be either stimulating or discouraging..."¹⁹

It is the writer's task to shed some light upon not only the subject but also the stimulation that resulted as a response to that subject (which only became a little clearer as a result of that stimulation). In this respect, the response gained from successive readings of the novel is akin to that, luckily for him, is frequently realized by David Lodge.²⁰ The perception that "sends a shock like an electric charge", the intuitive response, which resulted from reading this novel is also closely connected with Bayley's notion of the 'subject' of The Golden Bowl.

18. J. Bayley, The Characters of Love (New York, 1963), p.179.

19. Ibid., p.179.

20. D. Lodge, The Language of Fiction, pp.78-82.

That this 'subject' and the response are closely connected with the fullest realization of the 'Jamesian' vision remains a basic axiom of this thesis, an axiom that can only be supported by the ensuing examination. One can rarely articulate a purely subjective insight. But, taking comfort in James's maxim that "criticism is the only gate of appreciation", it is hoped to illuminate the 'subject' of The Golden Bowl, so closely bound up with the novel's insight into form and 'matter', the very relationship of things.

II

"What sort of world is being portrayed and how are we to judge it?"¹

As Oscar Cargill has observed: "working through the very great mass of commentary on James's fiction, I have been struck by a curious deficiency - nobody apparently reads anybody else - there is no accumulated wisdom, no 'body' of appreciation".² Indeed, this is particularly true of the novels and short stories of James's late period. The "major phase" has been subjected to the full venom of critical activity, the diversity of opinion reflecting more of the idiosyncracies of individual critics than any concerted effort, such as a "common pursuit", to arrive at some agreed understanding, some shared perception of the success and value of these works. James himself pointed to a 'function' of criticism which the Jacobite clan has largely ignored:

To criticise is to appreciate, to appropriate, to take intellectual possession, to establish in fine a relation with the criticised thing and make it one's own. The large intellectual appetite projects itself thus on many things, while the small - nor better advised, but unconscious of need for advice - projects itself on few.³

-
1. F.O. Matthiessen, Henry James : The Major Phase (Oxford U.P., 1944) p.87.
 2. O. Cargill, The Novels of Henry James (New York, 1961), p.XII.
 3. The Art of the Novel, p.155.

The failure of criticism to establish a relation - few critics appear to, have taken more than a superficial possession of these works - is reflected in the anarchic Stock Market where James's value, at the hands of succeeding generations of 'Marxists', 'psychologists', 'moralists' and 'mythologists' (to name but a few), is either inflated or deflated by the dictates of a 'new' theory. Some of this discourse undoubtedly has had value in extending our appreciation of a particular novel. However, most has achieved very little - especially with regard to The Golden Bowl - the result being a rather grotesque Tower of Babel.

Indeed, a brief listing of some of these judgements serves as an introduction to the problem of achieving a worthwhile view of any or all of these novels. Nowhere can so much energy have been spent than in the myriad attempts to enthrone or dethrone the 'master'. We are told that he is a nineteenth-century author⁴....No! a twentieth-century author.⁵ His work is a "criticism of life" and a "radical criticism of society at the turn of the last century" (especially the late novels)⁶.... No! these novels are magnificent pretensions ... the fruits of an irresponsible imagination, of a deranged set of values, of a mind working in the void, uncorrected by any clear consciousness of human cause and effect...⁷

4. D. Lodge, The Language of Fiction, p.190.

5. C. Fadiman, Appreciations (London, 1962), p.84.

6. D. Krook, The Ordeal of Consciousness in Henry James (Cambridge U.P., 1962), p.10.

7. Van Wyck Brooks, The Pilgrimage of Henry James (New York, 1925), p.134.

He sacrificed life in the interests of aesthetic form.⁸ But "the extremes to which he pushed the limits of his created individual consciousness, so much less varied than those of Gide, Proust, Mann, Kafka, and Joyce, but no less intense, no less desperately grasping after life, and the form of life, for, and in the name of the individual"⁹... this is what we should look for in the 'major phase'. No! these novels are "formidable projections of a geometrical intellect"... "the confused reveries of an invalid child".¹⁰

Yet "the psychological atmosphere" of the late novels is praised¹¹ ...but, "even in his subtle psychological inquiries he remained shut up within his own skull pan".¹² No!...James was no psychologist (Geismar). However, "he is a philosophical novelist".¹³ Thus the tower grows, the bewildered reader perhaps being forced to agree with Maxwell Geismar: "The wonder of it is that this Jacobite cult could have gone so far on so little : piling flattery upon praise, rationalization upon rationalization -- even falsehood upon falsehood."¹⁴ "Yes", the reader acknowledges: "I know there is no 'real' Henry James. Every notable artist is subject to diverse interpretations; the more the better. Each age has its own view of every artist".¹⁵ But the contorted imbroglio that is a part of the

8. E.M. Forster, Aspects of the Novel. (London, 1927), pp.140-150.

9. R.P. Blackmur, The Lion and the Honeycomb (New York, 1955), pp.268-88.

10. Van Wyck Brooks, The Pilgrimage of Henry James, p.131.

11. E. Wilson, "The Ambiguity of Henry James", Hound and Horn (April-June, 1934) p.385-406.

12. V.L. Parrington "Henry James and the Nostalgia of Culture" The Question of Henry James, ed. F.W. Dupee (New York, 1945), pp.128-130.

13. C. Fadiman, Appreciations, p.84.

14. M. Geismar, Henry James and His Cult (London, 1964), p.10. First printed in the U.S.A. as Henry James and the Jacobites (Boston, 1963).

cult, whilst threatening to bury the works under the deluge of critical exegesis, has also carried on its main battle at a great distance from the novels it has been allegedly discussing. The situation found with regard to The Golden Bowl now begins to resemble that surrounding perhaps the greatest 'problem' of all, namely, Shakespeare's Hamlet. Hamlet was (and perhaps still is) a problem precisely because the critic could not explain it or fit the work into a carefully structured pigeon-hole. The volumes of criticism on that play stand, not as an adequate testimony to the beneficial effects provided by the critical discipline, but a tribute to what has been largely ignored by the multitudinous debates : the mystery evoked by the work of art and the ultimate mystery of the creative process itself.

This situation, especially relevant to The Golden Bowl, does not deny the validity of the critical act. In this connection, one remembers James's own maxim : "that criticism is the only gate of appreciation, just as appreciation is, in regard to a work of art, the only gate of enjoyment".¹⁶ Like Hamlet, we are told, The Golden Bowl "is the large problem child among James's writings as The Turn of the Screw is the small one".¹⁷ Part of this 'problem' has been that criticism has attempted to explain rather than appreciate or enjoy. As such, the explication that has occurred has tended to revolve around the problem of finding a 'key' to

15. Ibid, p.3.

16. "The Lesson of Balzac", The Future of the Novel, p.97.

17. F.W. Dupee, Henry James (A.M.L.S., 1951), p.225.

the mystery that would explain all. Generally speaking, whilst omitting the rare attempts to approach the novel from the point of view of technique, the failure to find a 'key' may be said to be closely entwined with several central issues that must affect the way the critic is going to approach the novel.

The first two issues will be dealt with at length in the subsequent appreciation of The Golden Bowl and, therefore, need only be briefly mentioned at this stage. First, perhaps an all too obvious point, The Golden Bowl might resist our attempts to explain it precisely because it reflects a problem and is a problem because it reflects one. In this sense, the novel is like those 'works of art', such as Hamlet, which exist and continue to enthrall critics and readers alike because they reflect, what is termed, the central mystery of experience. In this connection, these works defy our conventional means of handling experience, of judging, knowing, perceiving (and, indeed, explaining). Thus, it is significant that Dupee compares The Golden Bowl as a problem, with The Turn of the Screw. The latter, judged by some a 'pot boiler', is: "a piece of ingenuity pure and simple, of cold artistic calculation, an amusette to catch those not easily caught... the jaded, the disillusioned, the fastidious".¹⁸ The nouvelle defies clear-cut analytic terms as it is the creation of : " a conceived 'tone', the tone of suspected and felt trouble, of an inordinate and incalculable sort - the tone of a tragic, yet exquisite, mystification".¹⁹ Those most eagerly drawn

18. Art of the Novel, p.172.

19. Ibid, pp.172-3.

to rationalize their reactions to the tale are the 'explicators' who insist that mystery can, indeed must, be explained. This search for the ultimate 'key' presupposes that there must be such a thing. Forgetting that the story is a ghost story, these critics (such as Wilson) embark upon a search that is analagous in its obsession to that found in the narrators of The Aspern Papers or The Figure in The Carpet. Like the governess, critics have tended to remain explicators. Yet eventually the governess moves from being such an explicator to being a record of felt experience. She is forced to surrender her previous concepts of evaluation and judgement (of "sane inference"), and, in her own way, acknowledge the infinite possibility of experience. To explain (to attempt to explain) is to ignore the very traps and snares James lays for the unsuspecting reader-critic. We are left with an acknowledgement of the limitations of handling experience.

A similar, though essentially different, situation exists in The Golden Bowl. It possesses a mystery of its own which refuses to be explained in a conventional manner, because it is a mystery involving characters and readers alike in gauging relations, feelings and communications (between each other) upon a level that almost belittles explanation. (See, for example, the 'mystic lake' passage between Fanny and Bob Assingham, (Vol. XXIII, 376-379), a passage to be discussed at a later stage in this thesis). Thus, we are perhaps reminded of the thoughts of Lambert Strether:

... his heart always sank when the clouds of explanation gathered. His highest ingenuity was in keeping the sky of life clear of them. Whether or no he had a grand idea of the lucid, he held that nothing ever was in fact - for anyone else - explained. One went through the

vain motions, but it was mostly a waste of life. A personal relation was a relation only so long as people understood, or, better still, didn't care if they didn't.²⁰

Explanations and, as will be shown, morally-orientated judgements seem a long way from that experience.

Secondly, yet closely connected with the first point (and, again, to be discussed more fully during the ensuing examination of The Golden Bowl), criticism of the novel has tended to emphasise James's role as "a novelist of Ideas", when praising him, or alternatively, criticizing him for his total lack of Ideas (the "criticism of life" stand adopted by Leavis and Krook is relevant here). In this respect, it is well worth acknowledging the unfortunately brief, yet illuminating, statements made by an artist whose critical prowess perhaps matches that found in James's Prefaces and Essays for its rarity. T.S. Eliot wrote of James (in 1918):

James's critical genius comes out most tellingly in his mastery over, his baffling escape from Ideas; a mastery and an escape which are perhaps the last test of a superior intelligence. He had a mind so fine that no idea could violate it.²¹

By "Ideas" Eliot perhaps means the end result of excessive 'explanation' and judgement, the Idea that can explain everything (such as a theory or moralistic Ideology). In his "curious search" for "spiritual life", James set an example: "of an integrity so great, a vision so exacting, that it was forced to the extreme of care and punctiliousness for exact expression". Perhaps Eliot comes closest to rejecting the thirst for

20. The Ambassadors, Volume XXI, 141.

21. See The Question of Henry James, ed. F.W. Dupee (New York, 1945), p.110.

explanation, which so many critics find difficult to quench, in the following statement:

The focus... [in a James story]... is a situation, a relation, an atmosphere, to which the characters pay tribute, but being allowed to give only what the writer wants. The real hero, in any of James's stories, is a social entity of which men and women are constituents.²²

The "atmosphere" is all important, as is its relation to the "social entity" of which Eliot speaks. One is reminded of James's own declarations in his Preface to The Princess Casamassima. The novelist, he declares, is faced with "analyses of ambiguities" where: "Experience, as I see it, is our apprehension and our measure of what happens to us as social creatures - any intelligent report of which has to be based on that apprehension".²³ The "penetrating imagination"²⁴ thinks and feels, recording the myriad forms of reality that occur in the chamber of consciousness.²⁵ This is the "very atmosphere of the mind" which turns "the very pulses of the air into revelations."²⁶ Such an imagination, capable of penetrating surface appearances, belongs to Magie Verver, Amerigo and even Fanny Assingham. Certainly, this imagination belongs to James. Again, it is one of his recording consciousnesses that throws

22. Ibid, p.110.

23. The Art of the Novel, pp.64-65.

24. Ibid, p.78.

25. "The Art of Fiction", The Future of the Novel, p.12.

26. Ibid, p.12.

light upon the relevance of Ideas in James's imaginative vision. As Lamber Strether declares: " 'That is I have no ideas. I'm afraid of them. I've done with them.' " ²⁷

But this would not appear to be the case if one were solely to rely on the critical fracas surrounding The Golden Bowl (and the other late novels). "The most intelligent man of his generation" (Eliot) has become the 'victim' of an error in criticism which is closely linked with the two points so far discussed. By primarily focusing on the subject-matter of The Golden Bowl (and not, to use Schorer's term, the "achieved content"), critics have tended to deal with the novel as a work of Ideas, as solely a "criticism of life" (in the Arnoldian vein), a moral tract that can be conveniently explained in conventional clear-cut terms. To put the problem in a different fashion: by not paying enough attention to the fusion between form and content in the novel, critics have tended to exercise too quick a judgement on, what would appear to them to be, the moral value of such a work. This would seem to ignore part of the total experience of the novel (its 'subject'), as it ignores the very way in which the material is presented to us. Ultimately, the Leavisite approach is reductive, whereas the experience of the novel would appear to be the exact opposite. As John Bayley has pointed out, the novel is full of resonance where James is : "aiming for something like the self-sufficiency of the poetic drama, its inclusiveness, and above all its effect of incalculability within the fixed limits of a formal situation." ²⁸ The

27. The Ambassadors, Volume XXII, 325.

28. John Bayley, The Characters of Love, p.181.

resonance produced, the Protean quality Bayley notices, the sense of expansion do not "strike us as a striven for effect but rather as the inevitable over-plus of a great and wholly rounded work of art."²⁹ The problem for the critic is to convey these impressions, not in reductive moral terms, but in terms that will record and communicate the resonance to the reader whose insight he hopes to enlarge. Attention paid to "achieved content" might have avoided the pitfall of reductive analysis.

Thus, even with his refreshing scepticism, Maxwell Geismar is eager to reduce the novel to these forms of explanation:

Overcome by the fairy-tale magic of the American Financier-collector in The Golden Bowl, and, by the making of a true American princess, the artist has become indifferent to, even unaware of, the human cost which this triumph of moral virtue is exacting upon the victims of its process, or upon the victors.³⁰

"Moral virtue", seeing the novel in terms of "victims" and "victors", these are the things Geismar leaves unexplained, and yet expects the reader to understand what such judgements mean in terms of the novel, judgements that, in his case, are meant to serve as explanations. Indeed, if one looks further into the form of Geismar's argument, such judgements have been arrived at on the basis of ~~fail~~ evidence and, in one case, blatant misreading of the novel. Thus, we are told: "Meanwhile there is the scene where Charlotte buys the flawed bowl (symbol) as a wedding present for Maggie and the Prince".³¹ As Charlotte is a: "scheming, devouring

29. Ibid., p.181.

30. M. Geismar, Henry James And His Cult, p.329.

31. Ibid., p.307.

woman" it is hardly surprising that she : "buys the glittering bowl for fifteen pounds and tells the Prince she has paid but five. The Prince leaves the little antiquarian shop during the actual purchase".³² Strangely enough, it is Maggie who buys the bowl (See Volume XXIV, 195-198.) and pays the high price for the knowledge it has to give her.

Errors of this sort are not common in the criticism of The Golden Bowl, but reflect the evident tendency to rush to wild judgements based upon superficial readings of the novel. However, this situation is understandable. The novel demands an attention and engagement perhaps unparalleled in the fields of English or American Fiction (with the possible exceptions of works such as Finnegan's Wake or Absalom, Absalom!) The "hypertrophy of technique", as Leavis has called it, still demands justification in terms of the fictional experience itself. Lodge's point that modern criticism has fully exonerated James's late manner from charges of 'perversity' is untrue.³³ One still hears the opinion expressed (though rarely published) that reading The Golden Bowl is an exercise in literary masochism. Most critics, believing that if they ignore this difficulty it will go away, have failed to meet this problem. Again, this is the result of a schism between form and content.

Avoiding this difficulty, among others, Dorothea Krook, steeped in the Arnoldian vein of Literary Criticism, insists upon seeing the whole Jacobite canon in terms of the "international theme" which serves a

32. Ibid, p.308.

33. D. Lodge, The Language of Fiction, p.190.

double-edged function:

... that of a radical criticism of society at the turn of the last century, on the one hand, and, on the other, of a 'criticism of life' in Matthew Arnold's sense - a radical exposure, sometimes in its tragic aspect, of some of the fundamental and permanent predicaments of human life.³⁴

It is not this particular approach that creates problems for Miss Krook, as far as The Golden Bowl is concerned. Despite the warnings regarding the "international fallacy"³⁵ given by James himself, such an approach can give a valid insight into the novel (if rather too dependent upon James's vague reference to "some eventual sublime consensus of the educated" - see the Preface to Lady Barbarina).³⁶ Nevertheless, in this connection, it is worthwhile pointing out James's own attitude towards the "international fallacy", as expressed in the same Preface. On the "opposition of aspects from country to country", he declares:

... there are cases in which, however obvious and however contributive, its office for the particular demonstration, has been quite secondary, and in which the work is by no means merely addressed to the illustration of it...the subject of The Wings of the Dove or that of The Golden Bowl has not been the exhibited behaviour of certain Americans as Americans, of certain English persons as English, or certain Romans as Romans...We shall see nevertheless at the same time that the subject could in each case have been perfectly expressed had all the persons concerned been only American or only English or only Roman or whatever.³⁷

34. D. Krook, The Ordeal of Consciousness, p.10.

35. The Art of the Novel, p.132.

36. The Art of the Novel, p.203.

37. Ibid, pp.198-9.

This is a point both Wegelin and Krook tend to overlook where, for example, Wegelin emphasises the "achieved social fusion" as a result of seeing the 'major types' of James's international terminology. Clearly they are present, but are of secondary importance.

But, Miss Krook, develops her preoccupation with the framework provided by Matthew Arnold. Reaching for the excessive moralistic tone and phraseology of this dogma, she is eager to make the novel fit a pre-conceived moral scheme of "redemption" and "restoration" (unaware, it seems, that the novel might create 'its own terms' with which to deal with such a movement). Her basic axiom, in chapters eight and nine of The Ordeal of Consciousness is that : "The Golden Bowl resembles the classical Greek drama".³⁸ As a result : "The Golden Bowl may stand as James's most ambitiously and most brilliantly executed long poem".³⁹ The implications of her approach may be seen in the following quotation : "What emerges from it is a great fable - one of the greatest in modern European Literature - of the redemption of man by the transforming power of love".⁴⁰ This redemption is primarily a result of : "a restoration of the universal

38. Krook, The Ordeal of Consciousness, p.232.

39. Ibid, p.233.

40. Ibid, p.240. It is characteristic of criticism of The Golden Bowl to make the novel into "a work of art in a genre for which no precise name exists". (C.B. Cox, The Free Spirit (Toronto, 1963) p.73). Thus it becomes a 'fable', an 'allegory' or a 'poem' which is generally emblematic of something else. (See C.Wegelin, The Image of Europe in Henry James (Dallas, 1958)). This again marks a failure of criticism to meet the work in its own form, principally as a novel. This failure will become clearer in an examination of Quentin Anderson's argument.

moral order which has been disordered by the immorality of an ugly betrayal".⁴¹ The main contention of Dorothea Krook's argument is closely connected with what she considers to be an easily discernible classical movement and moral framework to the novel. Thus an analogy with a Shakespearean tragedy would amplify Miss Krook's point. Generally speaking, the universal moral order is clearly visible in a Shakespearean play (as it is, say, in the Oedipus trilogy). This moral order is threatened, - indeed, in the case of Hamlet, severely shaken - but never seriously challenged (unless one takes into account the ambiguities of Troilus and Cressida). Challenged in Act one, the rest of the play shows a tendency to move towards a restoration of that universally applicable moral order. However precarious it may seem, as in Macbeth, it is nevertheless there. In this respect, the movement may be said to be circular. But whether this is true of The Golden Bowl is another matter. One may question Miss Krook's implication that there was a universally applicable moral order to begin with at the outset of the novel. Certainly, what order there is at the beginning (to utilize Miss Krook's moral framework) contrasts sharply with what exists at the end. Thus, the movement is more linear than Dorothea Krook would have us believe. For example, as Fanny Assingham points out in connection with Maggie's "progress" during the novel:

"It isn't a question of recovery. It won't be a question of any vulgar struggle. To 'get him back' she must have lost him, and to have lost him she must have had him". With which Fanny shook her

41. Ibid, p.241.

head. "What I take her to be waking up to is the truth that all the while she really hasn't had him. Never." ⁴²

In this sense, the drama Miss Krook notices is one of construction rather than restoration or recovery. In her reading of the novel, she declares: "it is the lust figured in the adultery of the Prince and Charlotte that has to be exorcised in order that the moral order may be restored and reaffirmed."⁴³ It would appear that Miss Krook allows her moralistic orientation to overwhelm her understanding of the dramatic elements in the novel. Thus, in contrast to Fanny Assingham's rather astute perception, she declares:

The point is that Maggie Verver has won back her husband and restored the right relations of their moral universe which had been disordered by his act of betrayal by bringing him to see the insufficiency of the touchstone of taste for the conduct of life - and thus effecting in him the final supersession of that aesthetic by the moral.⁴⁴

By showing us Maggie through the consciousness of Amerigo, the reader is shown that Maggie and her husband were not in a 'right' relation. Amerigo sees that Maggie has not even begun to fully appreciate him. Besides his "historical" self (found in libraries) : " 'there's another part, very much smaller, doubtless, which, such as it is, represents my single self, the unknown, unimportant - unimportant save to you - personal quantity. About this you've found out nothing' ".⁴⁵

⁴² Volume XXIII, 384.

⁴³ The Ordeal of Consciousness, p.254.

⁴⁴ The Ordeal of Consciousness, p.273.

⁴⁵ Volume XXIII, 9.

This discovery will be "the promised occupation" of Maggie's future. Amerigo himself exists, to his own mind, in a similar situation:

He remembered to have read as a boy a wonderful tale by Alan Poe, his prospective wife's countryman - which was a thing to show, by the way, what imagination Americans could have : the story of the shipwrecked Gordon Pym, who drifting in a small boat further towards the North Pole - or was it the South? - than anyone had ever done, found at a given moment before him a thickness of white air that was like a dazzling curtain of light, concealing as darkness conceals, yet of the colour of milk or of snow. There were moments when he felt his own boat move upon some such mystery. The state of mind of his new friends, including Mrs. Assingham herself, had resemblances to a great white curtain. He had never known curtains but as purple even to blackness - but as producing where they hung a darkness intended and ominous. When they were so disposed as to shelter surprises the surprises were apt to be shocks.⁴⁶

For Amerigo, there is also a mystery to be investigated and appreciated and, through his consciousness, we see an awakening of such an awareness of the mystery of Maggie's being.

Thus, as Fanny Assingham points out, this is no "vulgar struggle". It would seem that, largely the result of a moralistic, reductive analysis, this is precisely what Miss Krook's study has made the novel out to be. The approach designed to reduce characters into conveniently placed pigeon-holes would perform an injustice upon the complexity and ultimate incalculability of such consciousnesses. The result, like Blackmur's Introduction,⁴⁷ is to over-emphasize minor details that, though of secondary importance (such as the "international fallacy"), conveniently label those

46. Vol. XXIII, 22-23.

47. Introduction to the Laurel Edition of The Golden Bowl.

pigeon-holes the critic has constructed. Thus, the emphasis upon the "wealth of Christian overtones" illustrates this tendency towards categorization:

"... part of the moral world in which Charlotte Stant is most prominent remains...outside the dominion of love; that she accordingly comes under the dominion of justice; that Adam Verver is the executor of the justice, being, so to speak, a figure of the Just God of Judaism and Christianity as Maggie is a figure of the Loving God; and that Charlotte's fate at the end of the story, along with the other 'unpleasant' elements we have noted, are to be explained as a function of the quasi-divine justice executed by Adam Verver by the exercise of his power.⁴⁸

In this connection, one is forced to agree with S. Gorley Putt that:

I confess that I find Dr. Krook's reading of The Golden Bowl far too much preoccupied with the penalties and rewards of emancipated human behaviour, much as if one had discovered in the study of a sophisticated humanist the old embroidered framed text on the wall : 'Then God seest me'.⁴⁹

This is not to completely negate Krook's criticism. Her comments on the ambiguity of the novel are worthwhile, if a little weighted towards the moral dimension. But her book does illustrate the ease with which critics have used the restrictive yardstick of moral judgement to replace the far more open and involved response the novel seems to demand (where we are asked to see and understand the situation, rather than judge one particular viewpoint of that event).

48. The Ordeal of Consciousness, p.286.

49. S. Gorley Putt, The Fiction of Henry James (London, 1966), pp337-8. It is noticeable that Miss Krook relegates any discussion of James's 'Method' to an Appendix.

Perhaps the critic who has done most damage to any possible development of the terms which the novel appears to ask the reader to use, by way of response, is none other than F.R. Leavis.⁵⁰ Bearing in mind Leavis's rampant charge through Literature, in the cause of "challenging discriminations" and the needed "ethical sensibility" (whatever that might possess), it is no wonder that we find him at odds with the late James. It is useful to compare the following statement, aimed at James's criticism, with the moral directness of Leavis's own pronouncements:

This inveterate indirectness of the later James, this aim of presenting, of leaving presented the essential thing by working round and behind so that it shapes itself in the space left amidst a context of hints and apprehensions, is undoubtedly a vice in the Prefaces; it accounts for their unsatisfactoriness. It appears there, in criticism, as an inability to state - an inability to tackle his theme, or to get anything out clearly and finally.⁵¹

Again, here is the critic demanding from the novelist simple, reductive statements of moral intention, clearcut axioms concerning the "ethical sensibility". This "inability to state" is carried over into the "hypertrophy of technique" Leavis finds in The Golden Bowl. Rarely does he stop to consider the proposition that such a novel is written the way it is, precisely because there was no other way for the novelist to 'do' the subject (without betraying his artistic purpose). Yet Leavis does acknowledge this point, at one stage, but fails to follow it through:

50. "Henry James and the Function of Criticism", The Common Pursuit (London, 1953), pp.223-232.

The Great Tradition (London, 1948), pp.174-178

51. The Great Tradition, pp.175-6.

James's technical preoccupations, the development of his style and method, are obviously bound up in this essential genius; they are expressions of his magnificent intelligence, of his intense and delicate interest in human nature. No direct and peremptory grasp could handle the facts, the data, the material that concerned him most; and the moral situations that seemed to him most worth exploring were not such as invited blunt and confident judgements of simple 'good' and 'bad'.⁵²

Exactly, here Leavis has provided a sound defence for the late manner.

But this is not to be the case, as he derides these novels for possessing: "a loss of sureness in ... moral touch" that leads us to question James's "implicit valuations".⁵³

As far as The Golden Bowl is concerned, the crux of the issue is the wide gulf between the openness of response the novel would seem to demand, and Leavis's own direct and constructive attitude towards the possibility of experiencing such a response. A suspension of simple 'good' and 'bad' would appear to be necessary for an understanding of the genius at work in the novels of the early and middle period: "the vital poise between ... diverse tendencies and impulses" which gives an "inclusive harmony".⁵⁴ But why this should be suspended by critics, when faced with The Golden Bowl, would seem to be the point at issue:

There [in The Golden Bowl] James clearly counts on our taking towards his main persons attitudes that we cannot take without forgetting our finer moral sense - our finer discriminative feeling for life and personality.⁵⁵

52. Ibid., p.176.

53. Ibid., pp.176-7.

54. The Great Tradition, p.163.

55. Ibid., p.177.

Once "discrimination" (whether of a finer or an inferior sort) has been exercised, the novel all but disintegrates. Thus, the resulting judgment:

Actually, if our sympathies are anywhere they are with Charlotte and (a Little) the Prince, who represent what, against the general moral background of the book; can only strike us as decent passion; in a stale, sickly and oppressive atmosphere they represent life.⁵⁶

Leavis appears to overlook the complexities of point of view in the novel. We see from several vantage points and are not asked to 'take sides' (which is what must be understood by Leavis's 'sympathies'). The failure to arrive at some understanding of 'life' in terms of the novel itself, but by a grand appeal to some external principle of what is and is not 'life' which, curiously enough when one considers Leavis's criticisms of James's Prefaces, is never stated but, we must somehow presume, tacitly acknowledged. This seemingly indiscriminate sense of "discrimination" emerges in its full glory in the following statement:

What we are not reconciled to by any awareness of intentions is the outraging of our moral sense by the handling of the adultery theme - the triangle, or rather quadrilateral of personal relations. We remain convinced that when an author, whatever symbolism he intends, presents a drama of men and women, he is committed to dealing in terms of men and women, and mustn't ask us to acquiesce in valuations that contradict our profoundest ethical sensibility. If, of course, he can work a revolutionary change in that sensibility, well and good, but who will contend that James's art in those late novels has that power? In The Golden Bowl we continue to find our moral sense outraged. ⁵⁷

56. Ibid., p.178.

57. The Common Pursuit, p.228.

This statement borders on the incoherent. As this criticism illustrates, the argument eventually reaches outside the work of art under discussion. It becomes no longer a literary debate (about the success of a particular novel) but an ethical confrontation. The results have little relevance to The Golden Bowl.⁵⁸ All the reader of Leavis's criticism can wonder at is that he did not allow the novel to extend rather than affront his "sensibility".

But, in terms of a comparison with earlier James' novels, it is noticeable that The Golden Bowl has created immense difficulty for critics who have tried to handle and place it (despite protestations that conventional criticism has performed this task effectively)⁵⁹ forcing them to adopt a position, and a critical approach, they have had no need to utilize in other situations. No less a critic than F.O. Matthiessen has found himself in such a position. It is the "positive values" of the novel he finds so perturbing:

In contrast with Strether and Milly, and indeed with Newman, with Daisy Miller, with Isabel Archer, and with most of James' other Americans in Europe, the Ververs are not faced with defeat or renunciation, but with the consequences of complete triumph.⁶⁰

The result of this strange piece of behaviour, on the Ververs part, is that : "we can hardly escape feeling that Maggie ... both has her cake and eats it too. She seems to get an unnatural knowledge of evil since she

58. For further discussion of the "ethical sensibility", see W. Righter and D. Lodge.

59. W. Righter, The Logic of Criticism, p.54.

60. F.O. Matthiessen, Henry James : The Major Phase, p.99.

keeps her innocence intact".⁶¹ Matthiessen reacts to, what he terms, the novel's "positivism" in a manner that is antithetical to the stance adopted by Dorothea Krook. His scepticism and disbelief replaces her admiration for the "redemption", "restoration" and "salvation" in the novel. Interestingly enough, in the two other novels of the "major phase", "we are moved most deeply by loss and suffering".⁶² But, faced with "triumph" (to use Matthiessen's term), James : "was unable to conceive it (success) in any heroic form ... James was trying to invest his triumphant Americans with qualities they could hardly possess".⁶³ Or in an attempt to translate his criticism into technical terms, James "did not find the 'objective correlative' for his theme". But the apparent artistic failure is perhaps attributable to the conflict between Matthiessen's own concept of existence and that he sees as being presented in the novel. Thus: "Love is not enough to redeem a world like Maggie Verver's, as we can tell by a single glance ahead at the inevitably futile existence that any such Prince and Princess must continue to lead".⁶⁴ Matthiessen's disenchantment with the end of the novel is closely linked with, what he terms, "the contrast between victory and defeat". Unlike The Ambassadors and The Wings of the Dove, where Matthiessen is most moved by loss and suffering, the victory, triumph, success (call it what you will) is unacceptable; unacceptable, it would seem, not only because:

61. Ibid, p.101.

62. Ibid, p.101.

63. Henry James : The Major Phase, p.101-102.

64. Ibid, p.102.

"James was trying to invest his triumphant Americans with qualities they could hardly possess",⁶⁵ but due to the fact that the novel presents success. "Triumph" leads to a lack of verisimilitude, and, consequently, The Golden Bowl "is almost as hollow of real life as the chateaux that had risen along Fifth Avenue".⁶⁶

Again, as with Leavis, the argument becomes a clash of outlook, Matthiessen's 'tragic' outlook finding "triumph" a misrepresentation of the external world. Yet it is the charge of hollowness one finds most disturbing. Contrasted with The Wings of the Dove (a book Matthiessen considers to be of a far superior quality), the centre of The Golden Bowl appears exceedingly solid. There, unlike The Ambassadors, the centre of the novel collapses as our range of vision disintegrates with the decline and eventual death of Milly Theale (The Dove). The "deliberately indirect presentation"⁶⁷ of the heroine presents a passive, almost vapid centre that dulls us with its hollowness. Densher and Kate cannot carry the book alone, at the end, as the central figure disappears. Largely a technical problem (how to present a dying consciousness) which James failed fully to solve, The Wings of the Dove nevertheless appeals to Matthiessen ["His masterpiece was also an elegy"⁶⁸] because of its 'tragic' outlook. This situation hardly does credit to either The Golden Bowl or The Ambassadors, both very different novels in tone and 'outlook'.

65. Ibid., p.102.

66. Ibid., p.104.

67. The Major Phase, p.55.

68. Ibid., p.80.

But it is not the presentation of "positive values" that Matthiassen seems to reject, rather the values themselves. This does not mean that he cannot appreciate the "symmetrical structure" James achieved in the novel.⁶⁹ His objection to the novel remains one of disagreement with the social fabric that is given to us, the absence of "the larger society of which his characters were part" :

The inadequacy of The Golden Bowl in this respect makes it finally a decadent book, in the strict sense in which decadence was defined by Orage as 'the substitution of the part for the whole'.⁷⁰

This view is finally akin to that propogated by F.R. Leavis in The Great Tradition, the tendency towards "overtreatment". In this connection, it is worth quoting in full a passage Leavis uses as evidence for this view (James's 'overtreatment' "manifested in the extraordinarily specialized living of his characters"). The passage is from Edith Wharton's A Backward Glance:

Preoccupied by this, I one day said to him: 'What was your idea in suspending the four principal characters in The Golden Bowl in the void? What sort of life did they lead when they were watching each other, and fencing with each other? Why have you stripped them of all the human fringes we necessarily trail after us through life'.⁷¹

The question is a particularly loaded one, and could have been asked by one or all of the critics so far examined. It presupposes a certain view of what constitutes life, especially 'life' as presented (or represented)

69. Ibid., p.55.

70. Ibid., p.102.

71. See The Great Tradition, p.184.

in art, a view that can only be rebutted by seeing it in its undisguised form as a moral demand made by the critic to the artist. James's answer - " 'My dear - I didn't know I had! ' " - perhaps shows this situation clearly. Wharton interpreted this answer as follows : "I saw that my question, instead of starting one of our absorbing literary discussions had only turned his startled attention on a peculiarity of which he had been completely unconscious".⁷² The dichotomy is not only between two views of experience, but also between two views of the novel. One view (with the possible exception of Matthiessen) demands that you represent life with the greatest moral vehemence at your command. In its worst artistic form this would lead to propogandist literature (an end which F.R. Leavis, for one, would not support). The other - which includes James, Conrad and Faulkner - would aim at presenting life with its main 'doctrine' contained in the following statement:

To live in the world of creation - to get into and stay in it - to frequent it and haunt it - to think intensely and fruitfully - to woo combinations and inspirations into being by a depth and continuity of attention and meditation - this is the only thing.⁷³

It is, to use a phrase Matthiessen focuses on, the "art of reflection" - an art which James was constantly pursuing.⁷⁴

But to read criticism of The Golden Bowl, even at its best and

72. Ibid, p.184.

73. The Major Phase, p.10.

74. Ibid, pp.1-17.

most ingenious,⁷⁵ one would think that James had undergone an inexplicable metamorphosis, had become an inferior Upton Sinclair, a forerunner of Dos Passos, or, more incredibly perhaps, a decadent John Steinbeck. Quentin Anderson, for example, attempts to show, in his eagerness to prove James was an American, that the debt he owed to his Father's brand of Swedenborgism was greater than had previously been 'discovered' :

What this meant to the novelist was that he did not have to cobble up himself a set of inclusive values and beliefs about man and his destiny, as did Hawthorne and Melville. He did not so much borrow as to continue to employ a mode of vision which had coloured his childhood.⁷⁶

Largely basing his theory on the axiom that 'man is a product of his environment', Anderson's book is "an attempt to place James as a moralist".⁷⁷ Again, we encounter this conflict over the question of what constitutes 'life' : "to read the later works of Henry James is, not infrequently, to surrender one's own sense of life rather than to enrich it".⁷⁸ This is surprising when one encounters the reason for Anderson's statement : "It is part of my purpose to show that James's morality did not flow out of his art; that those who think it did, make him less substantial and more anomalous than he is".⁷⁹

If we are to accept Anderson's thesis, it would seem that there is no alternative but to adopt the viewpoint that James's Notebooks, Prefaces

75. For example, Spender and Anderson, See pp. 35-41 of this thesis.

76. Q. Anderson, The American Henry James (London, 1958), p.XI.

77. Ibid., pp. 3-4.

78. Ibid., p.10.

79. Ibid., pp.26-27.

and Essays (let alone his artistic achievements) all constitute the largest example of 'double-talk' in the English Language. This is especially true of Anderson's admission, concerning his "divine trilogy": "James provides no external evidence to support this contention".⁸⁰

Continuously, throughout his book, Anderson uses terms that give rise to doubt about the validity of both his approach and his conclusions. The Golden Bowl is expressed in "emblematic terms". It has an "emblematic meaning". There are "emblematic clues" and characters are "emblematic". The novel is a "fable" and, consequently, it is "emblematic". This curious disease, which occurs throughout criticism of the novel, tries to deal with the novel in terms of what it represents, rather than what it presents, without adequate justification or adequate evidence. Thus the novel becomes one of the three churches (the spiritual and divine) as on three tier system roughly analogous to the momentous climb of Dante from the Inferno to Paradise. The results are perhaps the most alarming part of the whole exercise.

Like the theory about James's sexual inadequacy, this explanation has gained credulity because it fits so perfectly (never mind the method by which such a fit has been achieved). James emerges as a writer of limited creative talent who served as a rather loud amplifier for his father's views. Again, as with The Turn of the Screw, it marks a noticeable reductive explanation rather than extensive appreciation. The last three completed novels "are as explicable morally as so many morality plays".⁸¹ They can:"offer no 'news' of life which is not completely

80. Ibid, p.209

81. Anderson, The American Henry James, p.184.

congruous with James's American and paternal heritage".⁸² Hence the 'master' remains a member of the fraternity.

Part of the perfection in fit experienced with regard to Anderson's thesis is that, like the majority of critics, he has either forgotten or chosen to ignore that James considered himself a master-craftsman. This is what his extra-novelistic adventures reflect him talking about, time and again. Primarily, he was talking about his own artistic achievements (even when writing essays and giving talks about Balzac, Zola, Flaubert, Trollope or Tolstoy). Of course, using the mis-used "Intentional Fallacy", one could claim that James never really knew what he was writing about or what he was saying. But this is to overlook the case that, first either James understood his art or was a complete fool" (and the sheer volume and achievement of his critical writing testifies to the contrary), and, second, that criticism of this sort overlooks any artistic prowess (concerned with form) whatsoever.

Instead, the explicatory framework is constructed upon rather insecure ground. If one can find sufficient evidence for this view contained in the content of the novel, then the thesis is evidently acceptable. In any long term consideration of the critical function, this conclusion says more for our understanding of the term "sufficient evidence", as well as for our thirst for ingeniously constructed frameworks. Upon such flimsy argument, an Industry has been constructed.

Fortunately, several critics (among them Leon Edel, and, to an extent, Leavis) have refuted Anderson's thesis on the grounds that it is

82. Ibid., p.184.

totally incredulous. What seems more to the point is that, by providing a 'key' Anderson has reduced the novels to simple tracts which prove, among other things, James's "incapacity for tragic vision".⁸³ Even as an artistic restriction (if one can conceive of this statement as being that), Anderson's conclusion further illustrates the weakness of his argument. This is also an 'incapacity' of every major twentieth-century artist (especially American). Extracting the critical evaluation from amongst the debris of Anderson's defining framework, one is forced to agree with Edel:

(James) held allegory in particularly low esteem. Anderson's book ... seeks to read into each of the late novels a religious allegory with a minuteness that flies in the face of all that we know about James's personality and his creative imagination.⁸⁴

As Edel points out, Anderson is a part of the school of criticism which reads more into James than out of him, which thrives upon the thirst for so-called 'originality' in criticism and which presents the reader with a virus that is hard to dispel - the virus of deep criticism. Anderson's endeavour seems one to make James an American at all costs (a contention that ought to have been left with the 'thirties). In this, it might be argued, he fails. The artist transcends the constricting halter which Anderson tries to construct.

One of the more attractive studies, besides Bayley's⁸⁵, to emerge

83. Anderson, The American Henry James, p.133.

84. Henry James - A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Leon Edel (N. Jersey, 1963), p.9.

85. Bayley's appreciation will be referred to in Pt.III.

from the limited debate concerning The Golden Bowl is that provided by Stephen Spender. His position appears sensible, well-orientated moral criticism which is also alive to some of the complexities of James's role as an artist, especially his comments upon "sympathy as an active faculty". He is aware of the moral dimensions of fiction : "the greatest art is moral even when the artist has no particular moral axe to grind".⁸⁶ To an extent, this is also true of his appreciation of the artistic prowess exhibited by the later James. Yet, he too insists on rushing, without careful consideration, to the view that James's later books are parables of modern Western civilization.⁸⁷ Nevertheless, though primarily orientated towards considerations of morality and content, in these terms Spender's study does offer a balanced view of the moral content of the novel. Perhaps this is attributable to two factors. First, Spender points out that : "in private life there remains few great saints, and absolutely no great sinners."⁸⁸ This point of view perhaps applicable as a part of Spender's essentially 'liberal' Weltanschauung, allows him to react sympathetically to the situation presented in The Golden Bowl. In addition, his conception of the role of the critic serves as an example to many of the Jacobite cult Geismar so loudly derides. Whilst offering "opinions", he is aware that, for reading a contemporary writer, the critic can only be a guide not a dictator : "Impertinent criticism means that the critic is projecting on to writing some fantasy of his own as to how poems should be written".⁸⁹

86. S. Spender, The Destructive Element, p.9.

87. Ibid, p.67.

88. Ibid, p.18.

His 'opinion' of The Golden Bowl centres around the question he sees as being central to an understanding of the novel : "The question James has not yet answered is whether it is possible in the modern world to choose to live: and Maggie triumphantly answers it for him".⁹⁰ This 'triumph' is the outcome of James's analysis of modern civilization in his last three novels, and marks the outcome of Maggie's generosity, her patience, her faith and, above all, her love. The most ambitious of all his novels, The Golden Bowl illustrates the struggle of modern living, the struggle (on the part of the Ververs) to make the picture fit the frame, the constant struggle: "to make their lives worthy of their dead surroundings".⁹¹ Using "sympathy as an active faculty", James has created a novel in which the : "descriptive passages deliberately suggest vast spaces opening out into mystery and vagueness".⁹² Indeed, the effectiveness of the novel is in part attributable to this power of suggestion : "one begins to feel certain that beneath the stylistic surface, the portentous snobbery, the golden display of James's work, there lurk forms of violence and chaos".⁹³

This, in miniature, is Spender's argument, perhaps one of the most perceptive written. Yet, whilst admitting the success of his

89. Ibid, p.14.

90. Spender, The Destructive Element, p.89.

91. Ibid, p.91.

92. Ibid, p.95.

93. Ibid, p.96.

morally-orientated critique, one is reminded of the fact that his insight is largely the result of a certain compatability between his own system of values and those we understand as being a part of James's own system. Spender has ignored questions of form and technique (the "achieved content") and has solely dealt with content. Yet he has produced criticism that is worthwhile, engaging and extends the reader's understanding of the novel.

However, despite Spender's obvious talent placed in the total context of criticism of The Golden Bowl, one wonders at, not only the isolated nature of his achievement, but also at the element of 'chance' for want of a better term, that gave rise to such criticism. In a 'discipline', whose fundamental axioms are concerned with communicating the experience of the novel, of giving a 'fine' or balanced insight into the total experience presented, it is strange that only one critic has managed to arrive anywhere close to such an appreciation. The position one arrives at is full of scepticism and possible cynicism at the credibility of the critical function.

Two possibilities might prevent such a situation. The first has been outlined at length by Wayne C. Booth in his extensive study The Rhetoric of Fiction. (However, it is extremely relevant to the ensuing discussion that Booth omits The Golden Bowl from his analysis). In Chapter Thirteen of his book, he hits upon the central problem:

Of all the criteria one might, for some purpose, employ in such judgement - social, psychological, sexual, historical ... only one is strongly forced upon me by the nature of my subject that I cannot pass it by : impersonal narration has raised moral

difficulties too often for us to dismiss
moral questions as irrelevant to technique.⁹⁴

Seeing a certain amount of "moral confusion" in modern fiction, Booth lays the blame for such an atrocity at the door of the writer rather than the critic or reader. Thus: "The moral question is really whether an author has an obligation to write well in the sense of making his moral orderings clear, and if so, clear to whom".⁹⁵ The conclusions of such an argument can only be:

The author makes his readers. If he makes them badly - that is, if he simply waits, in all purity, for the occasional reader whose perceptions and norms happen to match his own, then his conception must be lofty indeed if we are to forgive him for his bad craftsmanship. But if he makes them well - that is, makes them see what they have never seen before, moves them into a new order of perception and experience altogether - he finds his reward in the peers he has created.⁹⁶

As far as The Golden Bowl is concerned, it would appear that the "occasional" reader is exactly what the novel has required to make any attempt to transmit, what has been termed in this thesis, the 'subject' of the novel. The situation borders upon solipsism, that is, if we delegate any 'blame' that exists to the author. Indeed, as James has been singled out as the strongest influence with regard to impersonal narration, he emerges a remarkably black sinner.

However, if we look at the criticism of the novel, it can be seen that the fault lies primarily with the critics, both those who

94. Wayne C. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago, 1961), p.378.

95. Wayne C. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction, p.386.

96. Ibid., pp.397-8.

have written about content (questions of morality, life and so forth), at the expense of technique, and, also, those who have written about technique at the expense of content. Form and content are indivisible and one can only meaningfully talk about one in terms of the other (that is, in terms of "achieved content"). One without the other must inevitably give rise to the anarchic state of criticism concerned with this and other novels. Studies that concentrate on point of view, the famous dramatic method, tend to overlook the point that these are only valid in terms of their relationship to the material being presented. The dramatic method, as reflected in the "achieved content", reveals a Weltanschauung as much as any other method of narration. One cannot, as much as this alternative appears to simplify the problem, simply write about James as a 'story-teller', because the method of selection, isolation and patterning reveals a world-view peculiar to the individual artist.

Conversely, and of more direct relevance to the present discussion of The Golden Bowl, one cannot ignore form and concentrate on content, since, as the criticism bears witness, the likelihood (but not the inevitability) is that the critic will disturb the relationship, the indivisible relation between form and content. The result is likely to be the repeatedly 'lop-sided' accounts of what the critic conceives the content to be, as viewed through his own biased ethical perspective. Without paying attention to the guide-lines provided by 'method', the critic runs the risk of writing an imagined fantasy about some moral point of view that lies far outside the total experience of the novel. The debate moves from the level of artistic debate to the

level of quasi-anarchic 'tub-thumping'. Perhaps this is the situation. James intended to provoke (one can only guess at the answer James might have given). But neither approach can lead, with any degree of reliability or insight, to a full account of the novel that can be communicated to persons other than "the occasional reader" Booth speaks of. Certainly, Booth's alternative, to make demands of the artist, to lay the blame at his door, would appear to take us no nearer to a solution. Despite its apparent respectability such an approach seems akin to the "impertinent criticism" that Spender, the "occasional reader," has noticed.

Undoubtedly, the appreciation of the 'subject' of The Golden Bowl is closely linked with these questions. Clearly, the novel points a certain moral viewpoint towards external 'reality' ('the world out there'), whilst observing internal rules concerning the 'reality' of presentation, the "intensity of illusion", James pursued so adroitly. The main question that emerges is how best to convey an essentially subjective insight into concrete terms without **f**alling into the pitfall of either representing James as a 'story-teller', given to excessive verbiage, or as a rampant moralist. The Golden Bowl is not an amoral work, it exists in time and space and not in a vacuum (despite common accounts to the contrary). But neither is the novel a moral tract, a clever piece of pulpit oratory disguised in a sugar-coated pill for consumption by those of us who cannot stand the pain of a wooden pew. It exists as a work that engages the total being of its reader. To give only a part of oneself is to betray the engagement asked for. The exercise of moral judgement seems such a betrayal.

The possible solution to this question perhaps lies in descriptive accounts of the "achieved content" of the novel. Despite his protestations concerning the amorality of the novel, in "The Art of Fiction", he nevertheless provides a brilliant insight into the artistic process, namely in "The Lesson of Balzac". However, "The Art of Fiction", an article that first appeared in Longman's Magazine, in September 1884 (reprinted in Partial Portraits, 1888), reveals an author who wishes to emphasize the need for the reader to appreciate "execution", rather than any "conscious moral purpose". A novel is "a direct impression of life" and this "constitutes its value". However, given the difference between a novel that has life and that which fails to possess it ("the only classification of the novel" possible), when we (the reader-critic) come to engage in discourse about a particular novel, our sense of that life can only be conveyed in terms of "execution" : "We must grant the artist his subject, his idea, his donnee : our criticism is applied only to what he makes of it".⁹⁷ The idea is conceived of as being independent from execution : form and content are apparently divisible. The idea does matter, James admits, but we do not 'judge' the artist with fairness unless we grant him his "starting point" : "because if I did not I should seem to prescribe to you, and heaven forbid I should take that responsibility ... I have no right to tamper with your flute and then criticize your music".⁹⁸ But,

97. "The Art of Fiction", The Future of the Novel, p.17.

98. Ibid, p.18.

is the corollary also true? Can one praise the flute and praise the music? James, in this article, apparently thinks so. But, given the inseparability of form and content, the two become interdependent. Without an interesting idea, the author cannot hope to gain the greatest possible value in his "execution". The idea "matters, to my sense, in the highest degree" ... "artists should select none but the richest". Conversely, a "good" idea cannot be really "good" unless it is properly executed, unless it is properly executed, unless it has had all its value squeezed from it. Otherwise, it remains a germ lost in the void or chaos from which the artist has failed to rescue it. Thus, James later admits:

The story and the novel, the idea and the form, are the needles and thread, and I never heard of a guild of tailors who recommended the use of the thread without the needle, or the needle without the thread.⁹⁹

But one result of this connection James finds difficult to resolve, namely the connection between form-content and, what Besant terms, the "conscious moral purpose" (a branch of the subject James finds to be of immense importance). He declares:

We are discussing the Art of Fiction; questions of art are questions (in the widest sense) of execution; questions of morality are quite another affair, and will you not let us see how it is that you find it so easy to mix them up?¹⁰⁰

99. "The Art of Fiction", The Future of the Novel, p.21.

100. Ibid, pp.24-25.

Perhaps it would be simpler if this were the case. As a theory closely linked with so-called "pure" art theories, it would prevent many of the contradictions and much of the inconclusiveness apparent in the language of criticism. But The Golden Bowl depends upon both the full range of the author's experience (his view of the world) which, involving morality, cannot be seen as independent of that concern. James, indeed, almost admits this point:

There is one point at which the moral sense and the artistic sense be very near together; that is in the light of the very obvious truth that the deepest quality of work of art will always be the quality of the mind of the producer.¹⁰¹

May not this be also true with regard to the critic-reader? (Hence our elevation of certain critical minds to positions of esteem).¹⁰² Such a mind, both critical and artistic, belonged to Henry James.

To reject James's position, as expressed in "The Art of Fiction" does not mean a return to the anarchy of moral judgement, the quasi-solipsistic pronouncements of 'truths' about life. The Golden Bowl is an addition to life rather than a doctrinaire statement on it.¹⁰³ The novel is not a work of philosophy, psychology, ethics, sociology and so forth. It contains some or all but is none of these. In reading the novel, to use C.S. Lewis's terms we "seek an enlargement of our being", "we demand windows" (a noticeably Jamesian phrase).¹⁰⁴

101. "The Art of Fiction, The Future of the Novel, p.26.

102. See W. Righter, The Logic of Criticism, pp.133-145.

103. See C.S. Lewis, An Experiment in Criticism (Cambridge, 1961) p.81.

104. See Preface to The Portrait of a Lady.

As a broad generalisation we may agree that:

But in reading great literature I become a thousand men and yet remain myself. Like the night sky in the Greek poem, I see with a myriad eyes, but it is still I who see. Here, as in worship, in love, in moral action, and in knowing, I transcend myself; and am never more myself than when I do.¹⁰⁵

In a later essay, "The Lesson of Balzac", first published in Atlantic Monthly, August, 1905, James comes nearest to stating this position. Balzac, for James, exists as the paradigm case for those wishing to study, talk about and enjoy the genre he finds so rewarding: "He [Balzac] lived and breathed in his medium, and in the fact, that he was able to achieve in it, as man and as artist, so crowded a career remains for us one of the most puzzling problems..."¹⁰⁶ Thus: "

The point at which the emulous admirer, however diminished by comparison, may closely approach him is, it seems to me, through the low portal of envy, so irresistibly do we lose ourselves in the vision of the quantity of life with which his imagination communicated.¹⁰⁷ (my emphasis).

The Labyrinth in which Balzac lost himself is one that can be shared by the reader: "It is a question you see, of penetrating into a subject, his corridors always went further and further and further; which is but another way of expressing his inordinate passion for detail".¹⁰⁸

105. An Experiment in Criticism, p.141.

106. "The Lesson of Balzac", The Future of the Novel, p.105.

107. Ibid., p.107.

108. Ibid., pp.110-111.

Central to our understanding of The Golden Bowl, James declares:

His plan was to handle, primarily, not a world of ideas, animated by figures representing these ideas; but the packed and constituted, the palpable, provable world before him, by the study of which ideas would inevitably find themselves thrown up.¹⁰⁹

If the reader is to do some justice to the novel, here is where the germ of such criticism lies, not in the moral-allegorical exegesis that seems to offer safety. For we have to be prepared to suspend our own egocentric notions of experience and judgement in a struggle to see and understand the presented portrait. Eventually the reader may experience a relationship with the material that is akin to that suggested by James:

He at all events robustly loved the sense of another explored, assumed, assimilated identity - enjoyed it as the hand enjoys the glove when the glove ideally fits ... for what he liked was absolutely to get into the very skin and bones of the habited, featured, colored, articulated form of life that he desired to present. How do we know given persons, for any purpose of demonstration, unless we know their situation for themselves, unless we see it from their point of vision, that is, from their point of pressing consciousness or sensation? without our allowing for which there is no appreciation.¹¹⁰

As James declares : "It all comes back, in **fine**, to that respect for the liberty of the subject which I should be willing to name as the great sign of the painter of the first order".¹¹¹ Ultimately, this "respect" is what is asked of the reader, an involved sympathy. Whilst engaging the total sum of experience gained by the reader, it involves

109. Ibid, p.112.

110. "The Lesson of Balzac", p.116.

111. Ibid, p.117.

transcending his own limited and limiting consciousness. In this "respect", vision, understanding, act of love, call it what we will, the reader escapes from the prison of selfhood and enlarges the sense of individuality he possesses as a result (see Lewis). This is the possibility that The Golden Bowl would appear to offer, but an enrichment perhaps unparalleled in the genre of which it is a representative. From the packed, provable world emerges the resonance that reverberates through our consciousness of the external world. The last thing asked for is moral judgement, the first is seeing or understanding the presented consciousness. Here lies the "germ" of a possible approach to The Golden Bowl.

But this is far from being a universally applicable, easily generalised theory of criticism (although it has some relevance to authors in the so-called Jamesian 'school', from Faulkner to Salinger or Updike). Rather, it is an attempt to describe or particularize the individuality of the novel under discussion. Such an account relies heavily on the indivisibility of form and content, the overall vision presented to the reader (which also involves the moral dimension). This vision can only be realized in terms of the engagement of the total being of any or all readers, shared, perhaps, through the medium of Literary Criticism ("the common pursuit of 'true' appreciation"). Without a consideration of the fusion of these two entities, an unbalanced account may ensue. We gain our insight through the method in which the material is presented to us. Technique is not a supplementary but a primary concern for the critic. As Schorer points out:

Technique is really what T.S. Eliot means by "convention": any selection, structure, or distortion, any form or rhythm imposed upon the world of action; by means of which, it should be added, our apprehension of the world of action is enriched or renewed. In this sense, everything is technique which is not the lump of experience itself, and one cannot say that a writer has no technique, or that he eschews technique, for, being a writer, he cannot do so.¹¹²

Technique is the way in which we are guided into the 'subject' of the novel. It is an integral part, and not independent, of that experience. Through form we see the value of that endeavour. In this openness of response, we become involved in the 'mystery' of life itself, of which the novel is a part, an addition, an impression. As such, like the novelist, we gain the "enrichment" Schorer mentions, an apprehension that engages the total being (Moral, philosophical, sociological, political 'senses' which the novel reflects). Here lies the 'art' of The Golden Bowl.

112. M. Schorer, "Technique as Discovery", Hudson Review, I (1948), 67-87.

III

"We're distinctly bourgeois!"

Keeping James's comments in "The Lesson of Balzac" as a point of focus rather than dogma, The Golden Bowl may be seen as perhaps James's greatest achievement in the art of penetration, and, as a result of this art, his greatest achievement in "achieved content" (in the art of fusing the concerns of form and subject-matter).¹ Squeezing the utmost value from the situation (or donnee), James creates a subject whose scope and depth testifies to the comprehensiveness of his imaginative faculty, whilst also testifying to his microscopic eye for detail (for the minute shades and colours which go to making such an effective picture). With these two 'talents' in mind, it can be seen how this novel, more than any other, almost belittles the critical act. As already shown, this is a testimony to the power of its 'subject'.

Perhaps by briefly looking at an earlier novel - The Portrait of a Lady (1881) - we can see how that 'subject' gains its power. At a first glance, the two novels appear to be very similar. Both seem to be primarily concerned with the 'international theme'. Both present a young American innocent, possessing of acquiring immense wealth, who, by coming to Europe, finds that the world is not all ~~she~~ believed it to be. Both novels make great use of the famous dramatic method, incorporating the point of view technique. Yet to use those rather

1. For further discussion of the art of penetration, see pp.47 - 51 of this thesis.

fatuous terms adopted by the major part of criticism on both novels, one portrays 'failure' and the other 'triumph'. Here lies the 'germ' of their essential difference, namely in the relative success of the dramatic method employed in each novel, and the relation between this, the final achieved content and the 'subject' (its value). This is possibly where The Golden Bowl emerges as a finer production.

However, it must be stressed that such evaluative criticism is not to be placed at the centre of this argument. Nevertheless, within a given frame of reference, such evaluation does help to enlarge an understanding of the later novel. This frame, now a commonplace of Jamesian criticism, is 'the master's' search for form, for the perfect form, throughout his literary career (with all the accompanying implications that are a part of that search). The point of view that states all of James's heroes and heroines are the artist déguisé undoubtedly does a disservice to the individual existence of the characters and to the pains to which James went to efface himself from his work (a requirement of the famous method). This viewpoint certainly will not be pursued in this appreciation. Yet, such an approach does put James's work in a perspective, giving it a direction that otherwise perhaps fails to exist.

Despite James's comments to the contrary, this 'search' is perhaps best fulfilled in the novel under discussion. However, in his Preface to The Portrait of a Lady, he writes:

So far I reasoned, and it took nothing less than
that technical rigour, I now easily see, to inspire

me with the right confidence for erecting on such a plot of ground the neat and careful and proportioned pile of books that arches over it and that was thus to form, constructionally speaking, a literary monument. Such is the aspect that today "The Portrait" wears for me: a structure reared with an "architectural" competence, as Turgeireff should have said, that makes it, to the author's own sense, the most proportioned of his productions after The Ambassadors...²

The later novel, according to James, possesses a "superior roundness". The Golden Bowl is thus excluded from the upper ranks of his evaluative sense. This exclusion goes hand in hand with his noticeable silence on the novel (apart from the scenario - in the Notebooks - and his Preface there is very little). Such a silence is perhaps one of the greatest oddities in modern fiction. As will be shown, it appears very strange that he should have failed to have appreciated the perfect form of this particular work. For, in such a form, lie many of the answers to both the dramatic and human concerns in his earlier work. It is in this novel, to use Maggie Verver's terms, that finally, the picture is made to fit the frame. James's relative silence over this is quite staggering.

But, to return to The Portrait of a Lady, and in particular, James's Preface to that novel, we can see how far James's handling of his material had progressed from, say, The American (1877), and how far it was to progress by the time of The Golden Bowl. From the almost melodramatic collapse of The American, to the success of his first real 'Portrait' is a development that never ceased to amaze. In this

2. The Art of the Novel, p.52.

development, there is a superior awareness in James's handling of his material. Thus we are shown "my grasp of a single character", around which a literary monument is raised consisting of "subordinate characters" who are reflections of that young woman. This effect is achieved by making : "it predominantly a view of their relation and the trick is played : you give the general sense of her effect, and you give it, so far as the raising on it of a super-structure goes, with the maximum of ease".³ To testify to the complexity of his heroine, these reflectors would be : "contending, conflicting lights, and of as many different colours, if possible, as the rockets, the Roman candles and Catherine-wheels of a 'pyrotechnic display'".⁴ However, the weight is overwhelmingly placed in the consciousness of the central figure, and the other characters are subordinate to that concern and fail, in a relative sense, to live free, individual lives:

'Place the centre of the subject in the young woman's own consciousness,' I said to myself, 'and you get as interesting and as beautiful a difficulty as you could wish. Stick to that - for the centre; put the heaviest weight into that scale, which will be so largely the scale of her relation to herself'.⁵

Everything else is subordinate to that concern, which depicts the growing awareness of Isabel Archer to the massive complexities and mysteries of experience. In this awareness nothing, even technique, is irrelevant. Thus Mme. Merle, Isabel's mentor, declares:

3. The Art of the Novel, p.51.

4. Ibid., pp.52-53.

5. Ibid., p.51.

'There's no such thing as an isolated man or woman: we're each of us made up of some cluster of appurtenances. What shall we call our "self"? Where does it begin? Where does it end? It overflows into everything that belongs to us - and then it flows back again. I know a large part of myself is in the clothes I choose to wear. I've a great respect for things! One's self - for other people - is one's expression of one's self; and one's house, one's furniture ... these things are all expressive.' ⁶

In her awareness of this concept of selfhood lies the germ of Isabel's near collapse. She fails to see the total possibilities that surround her, how, for example, her husband can hate her for the very things she deems attributes. In the technique of point of view can be seen the multiple possibilities she fails to fully realise until it is too late. As a result of this failure, we can view the incompatibility of American 'values' in an European setting. However, in this realization is perhaps an acknowledgement of the seeming impossibility of finding the perfect form, the order that will give meaning both in artistic and human terms.

Much the same may be said of the other two novels of the "major phase". Yet, to point this out is not to detract from the success of these works. All are masterpieces of world fiction - with the possible exception of The Wings of The Dove - and testify to James's imaginative genius. Rather, this 'failure' (if, for the moment, such success may be facetiously called that) illustrates the sheer enormity of finding such a form. In cultural terms, for example, the cards were stacked

6. The Portrait of a Lady, Volume III, 287-8.

against the realization of such a perfection. The twentieth-century trend has been against meaning, against order and for the 'reality' symbolised by Absurdist philosophy. Certainly, James contributes his share to that trend (as in The Portrait of a Lady, The Ambassadors or a nouvelle like "The Beast in the Jungle" 1903'). And yet there The Golden Bowl stands, a veritable rock in an otherwise seething, chaotic current. What is more to the point is the nature of such a 'triumph', as it also marks an artistic fulfilment on the part of its author. That it goes against the trend of the analytic, explanatory, consciousness - as evolved by characters such as Isabel Archer - perhaps points to its peculiar individuality. In this reversal lies the power of its subject.

Placing the novel beside, say, The Portrait of a Lady, one can see how developed James's art of penetration has become, even in so seemingly a technical asset as 'point of view'. As previously pointed out, point of view is subordinate to the central consciousness in the earlier novel. This is also true of The Golden Bowl, though only in an absolute sense. In the later production the scales have been more evenly balanced, the multiplicity of possibility, the very complexity of the whole canvas being enhanced as a result of such a balance. Bayley has singled this out as being a characteristic of the medium of dramatic poetry:

...it is one of the properties of the greatest dramatic poetry to suggest complexities of character which are beyond the scope of the most discursive analysis ... [which has] the power of creating

contradictory glimpses of a personality and holding them in suspension without the smallest touch of defining control.⁷

However, despite James's voyages into the world of the theatre, it is in a novel that this skill finds its full realization. In this handling of such complex materials lies the art of penetration, with its accompanying values of seeing, understanding, believing in the liberty of an individual character with all the imaginative sympathy possible.

However, to read the Preface is to be slightly misdirected as to the movement of the novel. Certainly, "the indirect and oblique view of my presented action", "my account of somebody's impression of it", becomes central to an understanding of the quality of that complexity, as is his avoidance of "the more muffled majesty of irresponsible authorship". Thus he declares his desire to get:

...down into the arena and do my best to live and breathe and rub shoulders and converse with the persons engaged in the struggle that provides for the others in the circling tiers the entertainment of the great game.⁸

Nevertheless we read that:

... the whole thing remains subject to the register ever so closely kept of the consciousness of but two of the characters. The Prince, in the first half of the book, virtually represents to himself everything that concerns us... The function of the Princess, in the remainder, matches exactly with his... the Princess, in fine, in addition to feeling everything she has to, and to playing her part just in that proportion, duplicates, as it were, her value and

7. Bayley, The Characters of Love, p.175.

8. The Art of the Novel, p.328.

becomes a compositional resource, and of the finest order, as well as a value intrinsic.⁹

As a result, James hopes to fulfil the "most exquisite of all causes the appeal to variety, the appeal to incalculability, the appeal to high refinement and a handsome wholeness of effect".¹⁰

But, this scheme does not fully convey the essential differences between the two volumes. It is true that the second volume belongs entirely to the Princess (with only a brief punctuation provided by Bob and Fanny Assingham). But the first volume, marked by the almost total absence of Maggie, contains a multiple viewpoint that noticeably contrasts with the second. Thus, we see not only through Amerigo's eyes, but also those of Charlotte Stant, Adam Verver and the Assinghams. The Prince does provide some form of frame to the proceedings, but his consciousness is not allowed to dominate as the other characters reflect on him and each other, and, in turn, on Maggie Verver. This diversity creates a splintered effect. No one consciousness can create a picture which will include the others. In this respect, the effect reflects the 'action' of that Volume. Each character, for the most part, acts from his ~~other~~ point of view without being asked to take into account, or allow for, the complexity of the total situation (there are several exceptions to this, such as Adam's desire to be married for Maggie's sake). There is no character to give form, to create a frame-

9. The Art of the Novel, pp. 328-9.

10. Ibid., p.329.

work that will utilize the available material to its utmost (given inexorable incalculability, the very difficulty of finding such form in so complex a situation). In this complexity lies the germ of Maggie's structuring, her grand success in making the picture fit the frame.

But this diversity - the very lack of a central defining consciousness - does not detract from the value of each point of view presented in the first volume. It is a part of Maggie's success that the materials with which she works are worth the trial she endures. Thus Amerigo, because of all his attributes and his faults, emerges as a magnificent personage in whom Maggie is justified in believing. Here we can see James's art of penetration (an art that will become Maggie's in the second volume), as Amerigo reflects on the faults and attributes of his new American relations. In this portrait can be seen the "liberty for the subject" that James praised in Balzac, consisting of the utmost belief and sympathy, the greatest possible respect for the individual existence of a particular character. In realizing the 'sterness' of such a figure as Amerigo, James creates the level of seeing and understanding which precludes judgement. Thus, if we are to fully enter into the presented consciousness, this must entail a full acceptance of the complex, many-faceted character portrayed, including his idiosyncratic devotion to money and power:

What was this so important step he had just taken but the desire for some new history that should, so far as possible, contradict, and even if need be flatly dishonour, the old? If what had come to him wouldn't do he must make something different. He perfectly recognised - always in his humility - that the material for the making had to be

Mr. Verver's millions. There was nothing else for him on earth to make it with; he had tried before - he had to look about and see the truth ... He was allying himself to science, for what was science but the absence of prejudice backed by the presence of money? 11

For this possible affront to "our profoundest ethical sensibility", we receive an illuminating perspective into Amerigo's view of his own situation visà vis the Ververs (in particular the Princess). Flashing back to a remembered conversation with his future wife, he sees himself as Maggie called him, "a morceau de musee" collected for the museum at American City. The sharp discrepancy between her appreciation of his history and his single self (the unknown quantity) is attributable to Maggie's romantic disposition, which thrives on innocent pleasures without penalties. Perhaps the difference is best summed up in Amerigo's own image (used to describe Adam Verver):

'I'm like a chicken at best, chopped up and smothered in sauce; cooked down as a creme de volaille, with half the parts left out. Your father's the natural fowl running about the bassecour. His feathers, his movements, his sounds - those are the parts that, with me, are left out'. 12

This is where the "international fallacy" has importance. The European "chicken" is alive to tone and forms, indeed these very forms are an intricate part of his makeup. Without them, there is little doubt that Amerigo's ability to function would be greatly diminished, possibly resulting in total collapse. They give him a point of

11. The Golden Bowl, Volume XXIII, 16-7.

12. Ibid, p.8.

reference, a system of arrangements and a 'method' of perception and action. Whenever Amerigo enters into conversation, he can be seen listening for the right tone, the right note with which to continue. It is tone that is also crucial to the other 'Europeans', such as Fanny Assingham. Thus, with Charlotte, we see Amerigo undergoing such a process:

He bent on her a kind, comprehending face. 'You mustn't miss anything! He had got it, the pitch and he could keep it now, for all he had needed was to have it given him. The pitch was the happiness of his wife that was to be - the sight of that happiness as a joy for an old friend.¹³

As Fanny later observes, Charlotte is "extraordinary" because she "observes the forms" : " 'And the forms ... are two thirds of conduct'.¹⁴ They allow people to exist with the maximum ease in a social milieu. Thus, as long as that ease or 'safety' is maintained, the forms can be used or arranged so that 'illicit' relationships - such as Charlotte's post-marital liason with Amerigo - may be continued whilst maintaining splendid surface appearances. It is when these appearances show signs of strain (or cracking) that the social situation seems in greatest danger of disintegration or collapse. The forms can be used both in a destructive (Charlotte) and in a creative (Maggie) sense. It is this realization that is at the centre of Maggie's 'adventure' : how to change the cracking social fabric into a meaningful one where the other characters may exist with the maximum ease, dignity, happiness and

13. Volume XXIII, 52-3.

14. Ibid, 390.

safety possible. To destroy such a fabric - which is a possibility open to Maggie - would be to destroy her husband's capability to continue as a "magnificent" personage. In her 'respect' for conventions (and her rejection of the ideal of complete knowledge), she triumphs. She becomes aware of the creative use to which such conventions may be put whilst rejecting the cathartic outburst. Through her action she finds the perfect form, and her success is also James's triumph.

However, in Volume one we see the materials for her success. At the beginning of the novel, these attributes (such as the art of penetration) are, on the whole, only possessed by the novelist himself. He penetrates, he respects the 'otherness' of his characters, and his eye for detail testifies to this grasp. No detail is irrelevant to our understanding of the characters and their situation. Objects, particular scenes, repeated phrases all have an interweaving, interlocking system of cross-reference that reverberates throughout the novel. As with Balzac: "the relations of parts to each other are at moments almost multiplied to madness".¹⁵

But, as previously mentioned, this treatment contrasts with the views presented by each viewpoint. With all their "extraordinary" "magnificence", nearly all the characters have a noticeably egocentric bias towards the external world. Therefore, with Amerigo, it is his London, his pursuits (especially of Maggie Verver), his fate that are

15. "The Lesson of Balzac", The Future of the Novel, p.111.

of primary interest to him. In this concern, he is particularly susceptible to the arrangements created by Fanny or Charlotte Stant as long as they take care not to disturb the easy balance in which he exists.

Thus, Charlotte Stant has considerable room in which to exercise her manipulative skill, as, for example in the Bloomsbury shop scene where she carefully works to emphasise her relationship with Amerigo:

'We, clearly, were right people - he knows them when he sees them; and thats why, as I say, you could make out, or at least I could, that he cared for us. Didn't you see ... the way he looked at us and took us in? I doubt if either of us have ever been so well looked at before. Yes, he'll remember us ... because, given his taste ... he was pleased with us, he was struck - he had ideas about us. Well, I should think people might; we're beautiful - aren't we? - and he knows'.¹⁶

Such manipulation is oppressive and finally destructive; each character such as Charlotte, wanting to possess another in an essentially selfish sense. Thus, Bayley is surely right in seeing their use of the word "sacred" - as they "passionately seal their pledge" - as being a "blasphemous imitation of the sacred trust of the marriage tie".¹⁷ Even Adam Verver's "selfless act" is tinged with the same selfishness.

However, this selfishness is more the result of a certain innocence, rather than any grand experience that is behind Charlotte's behaviour. By marrying Charlotte Stant, he hopes: "that in forming a

16. Volume XXIII, 106.

17. Bayley, p.189.

new and intimate tie he should in a manner abandon, or at the best signally relegate, his daughter".¹⁸ This shows little concern for his future wife, for her concerns or desires or for their relationship. Thus his "majestic scheme" is bound for failure as a result of his inability to see beyond a limited horizon. In part, this failure is due to his being "as a taster of life, economically constructed" as it is also due to his "romantic disposition":

He cared that a work of art of price should 'look like' the master to whom it might perhaps be deceitfully attributed; but he had ceased on the whole to know any matter of the rest of life by its looks.¹⁹

The 'collector' has partly been responsible for Maggie's marriage to Amerigo (a responsibility Maggie shares and must eventually face). His aesthetic principle governs this and other actions, even to the point of wondering whether his previous wife might possibly have diverted him from his path of cultivating the intelligence he possesses, never mind the relationship.

But, there are "beautiful intentions all round".²⁰ In spite of the evident bias towards egocentricity, these characters are aware that they exist in some form of relation to other people. As Amerigo declares, in a statement which perhaps best sums up the whole situation

18. Volume XXIII, 206.

19. Ibid., 146-7.

20. Ibid., 392.

in the first Volume: "My dear friend.. it's always a question of doing the best for one's self one can - without injury to others".²¹ Therefore, one cannot simply dismiss them in black and white terms as what is conventionally understood by the terms 'good' and 'evil' can exist within one character (see for example, the Bridge Party scene in Volume Two). This complexity is something that Maggie must take into account. She must not give them up, and it becomes increasingly clear that this is what they depend on her for. As a result, Amerigo increasingly comes to realise the "extraordinary" character to whom he is married.

This "incalculability" multiplies throughout the first Volume until the situation reaches a point of near collapse, the crack in the social milieu becoming an enormous gulf or abyss. Perhaps this downward slope is best illustrated by the Assinghams, as they reflect the total situation in miniature. She is the 'explainer' par excellence, possessing an analytic consciousness that peers into nooks and crannies for every discernable 'fact' (it is of her that Max Beerbohm should have drawn his cartoon). As Fanny points out, she has analysed and spoken: " 'So many things, no doubt, that they make a chance for my having once or twice spoken the truth' ".²² Yet she is not a complete person (like so many others in the earlier part of the novel), the two gaps in her "completeness" being her want of children and her want of wealth.²³

21. Volume XXIII, 58.

22. Ibid., 384.

23. Volume XXIII, 35.

In addition, she has this apparently inexhaustible desire to wallow in her "favourite element" (or play her favourite game), an activity for which Colonel Bob has difficulty in finding an image:

He watched her, accordingly, in her favourite element, very much as he had sometimes watched, at the Aquarium, the celebrated lady who, in a slight, though tight, bathing-suit, turned somersaults and did tricks in the tank of water which looked so cold and uncomfortable to the non-amphibious.²⁴

Fanny is decidedly amphibious. Indeed, her predilection for such an environment contrasts sharply with the novelist's portrayal of her own and Bob's particular situation. Fanny and Bob emerge as reflectors of the general movement in the novel, depicted with a respect and selflessness perhaps matched only in the work of Balzac and Faulkner. In Bob, we have a minor gem, both in his own ability to exercise sympathy - a 'function' noticeably independent from his supposed lack of intelligence (his stupidity in his wife's eyes) - and in the sympathetic manner in which James has created such a portrait. The novelist's eye for detail, his very art of penetration, is quite astounding. Even in the description of Bob's foot, we can feel this imaginative sympathy:

The Colonel sat back at his own ease, with an ankle resting on the other knee and his eyes attentive to the good appearance of an extremely slender foot which he kept jerking in its neat integument of fine-spun black silk and patent leather. It seemed to confess, this member, to consciousness of military discipline, everything about it being as polished and perfect, as straight and trim, as a soldier on parade. It went so far as to imply that someone or other would

24. Ibid, 65.

have 'got' something or other, confinement to barracks or suppression of pay, if it hadn't been just as it was. ²⁵

His wife is the creature who disturbs this enjoyable meditation. She observes on the situation surrounding them, and never ceases to delight in commenting on the environment in which she has involved herself (rather than been involved). At times, her comments have insight: " 'Our relation, all round, exists - it's a reality, and a very good one; we're mixed up, so to speak, and it's too late to change it. We must live in it and with it' ".²⁶

But, like Adam's "majestic scheme", her understanding of events, her scheme, leaves out a great deal. Her unquenchable thirst for explanation, is to little avail when it comes to explaining, to accounting for the complex, incalculable possibilities that confront her (the very mystery of experience). She makes mistakes and these threaten to destroy not only her framework of reference, but her personality, her ability to function as a human being, her capability to go on with life. In her midnight vigil, we see this near collapse, and, in this episode, one of the rare moments of genuine love can be found (in the first Volume) - of the ability to transcend the limitations of the essentially ego-bound, individual point of view. Noticeably, the move is made by none other than the Colonel. From the beginning of this chapter - Volume XXIII, Book Third, Chapter Ten - we can see Bob preparing

25. Volume XXIII, 66.

27. Ibid, 86.

himself and aware of this inner need:

The solemnities, at the same time, had committed him to nothing - to nothing beyond this confessions itself of a consciousness of deep waters. She had been art as these waters, for him, visibly; and his tribute to the fact had been his keeping her, even if without a word, well in sight. He had not quitted for an hour during her adventure, the shore of the mystic lake; he had on the contrary stationed himself where she could signal to him of need.²⁷

This need soon becomes apparent. Her complicity in the whole affair acknowledged - " 'So they may do as they like. But I've worked for them all' "²⁸ we then encounter one of the most concentrated and effective pieces of writing in the Jamesian canon, a passage, curiously enough, that has been ignored by most critics of the novel. The mystic-lake passage should be quoted at length, but to do so would be to ruin the movement of the chapter. However, one short passage might illustrate the argument:

He went to her and put his arm round her; he drew her head to his breast, where, while she gasped, she let it stay a little - all with a patience that presently stilled her. Yet the effect of this small crisis, oddly enough, was not to close their colloquy, with the natural result of sending them to bed; what was between them had opened out further, had somehow, through the sharp show of her feeling, taken a positive stride, had entered, as it were, in that more words, the region of the understood, shutting the door after it and bringing them so still more nearly face to face. They remained for some minutes looking at it through the dim window which opened upon the world of human trouble in general..²⁹

27. Volume XXIII, 366.

28. Ibid, 377.

29. Volume XXIII, 378.

It is here one glimpses at the complexity and the very 'atmosphere' of the novel. James leads us to the very centre of that mystery, the region where, despite the apparent friction and continuous bickering between these two characters, they reach a realm of understanding that seems independent of the restrictions that they have imposed upon each other and upon themselves. It marks the couple's highest moment in The Golden Bowl, and resounds throughout until it is finally captured and equalled in the last scenes between Maggie and her husband. Here Bob saves Fanny from collapse and, though transitory, his fulfilment of her need is remarkably valid : "He held himself so ready that it was quite as if the inward man had pulled off coat and waistcoat."³⁰ It is only matched by Maggie's understanding of the other characters, and her creation of a more permanent relationship through her utilization of the very conventions which hem in this couple so much. Here lies another strand of the fabric Maggie must weave in order to gain a meaningful relationship with her husband.

The multiple complexity of point of view, of individual concern, thus dominates the first half of the novel. Each character has "beautiful intentions", but these intentions fail to give any sense of permanence and meaning to the social and personal relationships that threaten to crumble into an abyss by the time the first Volume reaches its conclusion. Generally speaking, their actions lack the ability to transcend the restricting ego, to be able to see with another

30. Ibid, 366.

character's pair of eyes. Either their 'solutions' are too egocentric - too preoccupied with what they are going to get out of the whole affair - or too explanatory, too analytic, in their failure to account for all possibilities, (generally, most 'explanations' in the novel fail because they are too self-centered). There is little fully engaged appreciation of another character or of the mystery of their beings, other than some vaguely used 'Assingham-ite' term that covers all characters at all times. In the realm of appreciation lies the art of penetration and the realization of form.

But the fragmented view we are shown - in spite of, perhaps because of James's own penetrative skills - has little internal structure or form. The points of view are isolated as we range from one pair of eyes to the next. We begin to appreciate the intricacy of the whole situation, and yet seem incapable of providing a 'solution' except for the most mechanical or scientific form of self-destruction of the social milieu in which these characters exist. In this, the picture rebounds from the microscopic situation which James is painting into the macrocosm of which the reader is a part. The 'solution' lies with Maggie Verver and Henry James (though one does not wish to identify one with the other at all). Where the fusion does exist is in the indivisible cohesion between the artistic quest for form and the internal quest for order. Finding the 'solution' engages the reader's imaginative sympathy in a way rarely equalled in modern fiction.

But the first Volume is structured around something other than a focusing, form-giving consciousness, namely the Bowl itself. As Matthiessen, among others, has pointed out: "James uses the bowl as a

means of bringing to a focal point the varying and diverging complexities in such human relations."³¹ In the first Volume the Bowl has more than just a symbolical value. It serves as a point of reference, and in addition, acts as a grand reflector upon the complex situation that surrounds it. The use of the Bowl as a central agent is perhaps unmatched in James's fiction, certainly surpassing his use of objects in, say, The Spoils of Poynton (1897). The important scene, where Charlotte almost buys the object, illustrates this use of the Bowl. Again, like so many others, it is a scene that is held uppermost in the consciousness during the remainder of the novel. The episode is shrouded in mystery, perhaps stemming from the shopkeeper himself who:

... fixed on his visitors an extraordinary pair of eyes and looked from one to the other while they considered the object with which he appeared mainly to hope to tempt them. They had come to him last, for their time was nearly up.³²

The ensuing description vibrates with an elusive interest which, for the more speculative reader, might be 'interpreted' as one of those rare visits of the artist into the arena with which he is so intensely involved, and yet so noticeably absent:

He was clearly the master, and devoted to his business - the essence of which, in his conception, might precisely have been this particular secret that he possessed for worrying the customer so little that it fairly made for their relations of a sort of solemnity. He had not many things, none of the redundancy of 'rot' they had elsewhere seen, and our friends had, on entering, even had the sense of a muster so scant that,

31. Matthiessen, p.83.

32. Volume XXIII, 104.

as high values obviously wouldn't reign, the effect might be almost pitiful.³³

In this sense, the man skillfully controls his visitors, creating an aura of mystique which leaves Charlotte with the impression that he: "himself was the greatest curiosity they had looked at".³⁴

As "their entertainer", it is the shopkeeper who gives the "pitch" for the following encounter. It is as "the master", who loves his art pieces, that he tries to hand over his objects: "to right people, people perhaps who can see their true value":

His slim, light fingers, with neat nails, touched them at moments, briefly, nervously, tenderly, as those of a chess-player rest, a few seconds, over the board, on a figure he thinks may move and then may not.³⁵

It is his array of objects that are brought out one by one in an effort to sell them to the pair of visitors. However, both Charlotte and especially the Prince fail to believe in what is presented for their view:

They looked, the visitors, they touched, they vaguely pretended to consider, but with scepticism, so far as courtesy permitted, in the quality of their attraction. It was impossible they shouldn't, after a little tacitly agree as to the absurdity of carrying to Maggie a token from such a stock.³⁶

"The master" continues to show his articles, and the visitors are resolute in their visible scepticism, the lapse into Italian heralding the high point in the scene:

33. Ibid., 104-5.

34. Ibid., 105.

35. Volume XXIII, 106-7.

36. Ibid., 107.

Then the shopman, for Charlotte, momentarily broke silence. 'You've seen, disgraziatamente, signora principessa', he sadly said, 'too much' - and it made the Prince face about. For the effect of the momentous came, if not from the sense, from the sound of his words; which was that of the suddenest, sharpest Italian.³⁷

Both have seen too much, as is witnessed by their scepticism and desire for explanations. In relation to this scene, it is noticeable that they lack the essential "good faith" that would enable them to believe both in the value of the objects presented (particularly the Bowl), and, in a wider sense, in the value, or 'otherness', of the characters with whom they are inextricably involved. Thus, Amerigo's thirst for the explicable, the rationally perceivable entities:

It was no secret to Maggie - it was indeed positively a public joke for her - that she couldn't explain as Mrs. Assingham did, and that the Prince liking explanations, liking them almost as if he collected them, in the manner of book-plates or postage stamps, for themselves, his requisition of this luxury had to be met.³⁸

This form of knowledge, so antithetical to belief, denies any appreciation of the innermost mystery of another person's being. Furthermore, in any final reckoning, such analysis fails to explain, merely resorting to the artificial category or term.

Thus, both visitors question the possible value of the Bowl, and Amerigo refuses even to believe that it has any value whatsoever. "The master", however, believes in his object:

37. Volume XXIII, 111.

38. Ibid, 160-161.

...By turning straightaway toward a receptacle to which he had not yet resorted and from which after unlocking it, he extracted a square box, of some twenty inches in height, covered with worn-looking leather. He placed the box on the counter, pushed back a pair of small hooks lifted the lid and removed from its rest a drinking-vessel larger than a common cup, yet not of exorbitant size, and formed, to appearance, either of old fine gold or of some material once richly gilt. He handled it with tenderness, with ceremony, making a place for it on a small satin mat. 'My Golden Bowl' he observed - and it sounded, on his lips, as if it said everything.³⁹

Noticeably, the Bowl: "seemed to warn off the prudent admirer", which includes Charlotte and Amerigo.⁴⁰

In a general sense - and with its warning - the Bowl is the eternal problem of the novel, namely the nature of form. In it we see reflected that problem which is at the heart of the indivisible fusion between form and content. It is as if the artist has, with the aid of this central object, presented the problem to his characters in a form in which those eager for explanation will not recognise. The problem is concerned with the possibility of form, or permanent meaningful relationships between seemingly irreconcilable "splinters". It involves values such as seeing, understanding, sympathy, belief, penetration, order and imagination (in a creative sense). The question would appear to be how these values and "splinters" can be moulded into an order of permanent harmony, without a crack that threatens to bring chaos and breakdown, whilst taking account of the

39. Volume XXIII, 112.

40. Ibid, 112.

essential mystery of experience, and not reducing that experience to a set of futile, but easily explicable, gestures.

As baldly stated as this, such a description hardly does justice to the essence of the problem which exists, because that problem can only be vaguely hinted at and never explained. In its statement, which can only be expressed in an artistic form, lies the shared ground between art, life, and the 'sense' of life (or organic growth) James was continually striving for in his fiction. In this complex mystery lies the subject of The Golden Bowl.

Expressed in terms of the novel's internal relations, the 'solution' to the quest for the perfect form lies in the realm of faith or belief. Once the characters have ceased to believe in the mystery of life - by remaining on the ground level of explanation, rationalization and scepticism - then the seeming futility of experience (as observed by Amerigo) becomes a 'fact', with its accompanying devotion to the power of money and science. Furthermore, without the Ververs' "good faith" (an American attribute if we play the 'international theme' for all it is worth), there is no hope but the futility of Amerigo's and Charlotte's analytic awareness. Noticeably it is Maggie who buys the Bowl, who accepts its value and builds her own Bowl as a result of her belief in the original object. Thus, as she points out, her relationship with "the little man in the shop" is crucial:

'I inspired him with sympathy - there you are!
But the miracle is that he should have a sympathy
to offer that could be of use to me. That was

really the oddity of my chance. That I should have been moved, in my ignorance, to go precisely to him'.⁴¹

Amerigo's reply is, in its broadest sense, characteristic of him: " 'But I remember the man's striking me as a decided little beast' ".⁴² Even more to the point is his crucial admission. " 'But I didn't believe in it, and we didn't take it' ".⁴³ Maggie did "believe in it", and, as a result, has the shopkeeper as a friend who, in turn, believes in her "good faith and charming presence." Indeed, there is a strong irony in her friend's words as he recollects Amerigo's grand effect and how: " 'he would see how wisely you had guessed the flaw and how easily the bowl could be broken' ".⁴⁴ The two kinds of wisdom are totally different, and in this difference lies the essence of Maggie's success. As a result of her belief, her essential sympathy, she is given full value for her acquisition (visà vis the shopkeeper's visit). It is what she does with this information that leads to the construction of her own 'Golden Bowl'. It is much the same problem Lambert Strether faces and cannot 'answer', as those "clouds of explanation" descend.

As the full value of Maggie's faith can only be expressed in relation to an appreciation of the second Volume, it is perhaps more beneficial, at this stage, to see the value of the Bowl in another

41. Volume XXIV, 196.

42. Ibid, 197.

43. Ibid, 194.

44. Volume XXIV, 197.

(less easily demonstrable) context. The problem of the Bowl is, in any artistic sense, again one of form - the search for a complete rounded and satisfactory work where all the 'pieces' fit. It is as if, with the entry of the shopkeeper and his Bowl, James has handed over the problem to the inhabitants of his imagination, those characters such as Maggie Verver. To imitate his own brand of, for James, more colloquial criticism, the situation might be expressed as follows:

"Here is my little problem, in the shape of the 'Golden Bowl' I present to my characters: how to find the most perfectly rounded work of art, the work whose colours and shades, whose very bricks most perfectly fit. My Bowl contains all the necessary artistic prowess I have hitherto managed to engage. But, as you will eventually see, it all has a minute crack that threatens to grow. The problem is which of you will believe in my Bowl long enough for me (and you) to draw the greatest value, the greatest lesson, from it; the value that will, it is hoped, enable us to find the most perfect form we can build."

And through Maggie, James finds that form, all the more remarkable an achievement for his failing to acknowledge this (at least, in the writings we have available by him).

Therefore, with the presentation of the Bowl, the first volume finds its defining point, its reference, and its very impetus. As it continues to reflect the Gordian knot, that increasingly grows in size, the Bowl begins to accrue value and attract values that will lead to the construction of a Bowl without a crack. For example, this can be seen in the questioning process Charlotte makes the shopkeeper undergo:

'Does one make a present', she asked, 'of an object that contains, to one's knowledge, a flaw?' 'Well if one knows of it one has only to mention it. The good faith,' the man smiled, 'is always there.' 45

Again, this can be seen in Adam's description of Amerigo: " 'As it is, for living with, you're a pure and perfect crystal' ". 46 To this, Amerigo replies: " 'Oh, if I'm crystal I'm delighted that I'm a perfect one, for I believe that they sometimes have cracks and flaws - in which case they're to be had very cheap! ' " 47 Thus, the Bowl reflects upon the values that must be realized if the perfect crystal is to be constructed. The fact that it is crystal, covered with gilt, illustrates the need for Maggie to maintain appearances whilst making the Bowl itself whole. Unless she maintains such appearances, the whole social fabric would threaten to collapse around her. Thus, the absence of a cathartic outburst.

The system of arrangements, whilst maintaining the appearance of stability, are therefore on the verge of breakdown by the end of Volume one. The multiple point of view, the absence of a meaningful order, the lack of belief, the very egocentricity dominating most of the characters' actions all reflect, indeed epitomize, the possibility of a complete collapse. The crack is a very deep one, and, as the second Volume opens, it is only the thin surface of appearances that Maggie can use to create a new Bowl. For her to dig any deeper - without having

45. Volume XXIII, 115.

46. Volume XXIII, 138.

47. Ibid, 139.

faced and dealt with the thin gilt surface - would be to give these characters up, to surrender her very belief in them. They are worth her belief, and, through his sympathetic portrayals (which preclude the possibility of judgement), James has left us in no doubt that this is so.

Volume two opens with a new tone, an inward voice that tells Maggie something is wrong. Through our penetration of her consciousness, we see this expanding panorama unfold. The huge structure, that "outlandish pagoda", that has been raised, marks this change in consciousness. Maggie has become aware for the first time in her life (in a more spiritual than explanatory sense):

The pagoda in her blooming garden figured the arrangement - how otherwise was it to be named? - by which, so strikingly, she had been able to marry without breaking, as she liked to put it, with her past. She had surrendered herself to her husband without the shadow of a reserve or condition and yet she had not, all the while, given up her father by the least little inch.⁴⁸

In spite of the seeming amiability of all those concerned, at this fine arrangement, Maggie becomes aware of "a false position". As the images are marvelously piled on top of each other, she begins to see, whilst acting as if nothing had happened to her:

She had lived long enough to make out for herself that any deep-seated passion has its pangs as well as its joys, and that we are made by its aches and its anxieties most richly conscious of it. She had

48. Volume XXIV, 5.

never doubted of the force of feeling that bound her to her husband; but to become aware, almost suddenly, that it had begun to vibrate with a violence that had some of effect of a strain would, rightly looked at, after all, but show that she was like thousands of women, everybody acting up to the full privilege of passion.⁴⁹

Nevertheless, she must not undergo such an exercise, because she will incommode those who had "never uncommoded her by the egoism of their passions".⁵⁰ Thus, she begins to see their "beautiful intentions" whilst awakening to their need that she will transcend the egoism of her own passion.

The images are multiplied endlessly, in an effort to fully convey Maggie's situation. She is like a spaniel or a timid tigress. Above all, she is involved in a drama, the images associated with that genre being dominant throughout this Volume:

...she reminded herself of an actress who had been studying a part and rehearsing it, but who suddenly on the stage, before the footlights, had begun to improvise, to speak lines not in the text. It was this very sense of the stage and the footlights that kept her up, made her rise higher.⁵¹

Thus, the past: "fell, for retrospect, into a succession of moments that were watchable still; almost in the manner of the different things done during a scene on the stage...". Her role as an actress couples with her need to keep up appearances whilst storing "confused objects" which have not yet been "sorted".⁵² whilst recalling these "accumulations"

49. Ibid, 7-8.

50. Ibid, 8.

51. Volume XXIV, 33.

52. Ibid, p.15.

she makes the decisive move of waiting, at their home, for her husband's return. This act marks a turning point in their relationship, a moment when Amerigo begins to take a greater personal interest in his wife.

Perhaps the most important part of Maggie's growing awareness, especially with regard to the fusion between form and content, is her notion of "the equilibrium". Referring to Adam's situation, we learn:

...that any alteration of his consciousness, even in the possible state of enlivenment, would make their precious equilibrium waver. That was at the bottom of her mind, that their equilibrium was everything, and that it was practically precarious, a matter of a hair's breadth for the loss of the balance.⁵³

With language reminiscent of James's Preface to The Portrait of a Lady, the equilibrium is expressed in terms of weights and scales: "It would be like putting this friend into her scale to make weight - into the scale with her father and herself."⁵⁴

The equilibrium, the precious condition, lasted in spite of rearrangement; there had been a fresh distribution of the different weights, but the balance persisted and triumphed: all of which was just the reason why she was forbidden, face to face with the companion of her adventure, the experiment of a test. If they balanced they balanced - she had to take that; it deprived her of every pretext for arriving, by however covert a process, at what he thought. ⁵⁵

This delicate sense of balance must be maintained, the equilibrium, that

53. Volume XXIV, 17.

54. Ibid, 97.

55. Ibid, 73.

intricate set of arrangements which prevents the total collapse of the social scene and enables the characters to continue to live despite the deep crack. The sense of equilibrium is thus closely connected with the surface appearances that must be maintained. Even if one sees the crack, things must appear as if nothing on earth has happened. This is where Maggie's "good faith" is so central. If she destroyed the balance, such as in a revelatory outburst, then the resulting chaos would be irretrievably destructive. The other way is to believe in her companions, effect the changes she sees necessary, whilst allowing them the dignity that prevents collapse.

In order to see as much of the situation as possible, Maggie, in addition, must engage the most demanding faculty that exists in the novel; imaginative sympathy. She must project herself outside her own self-bound consciousness, beyond the confines of her own ego, both in order to see the situation from a distant point of view and in order to feel what it is like in another character's skin (so she may act accordingly). Whilst leaving "the family coach", she has to maintain the sense of balance if she is to succeed in her task. She begins to learn what the existence of storms means and, as a result, must begin to improvise "heroically" within the confines of them:

She had but one rule of art - to keep within bounds and not lose her head... She said to herself in her excitement, that it was perfectly simple: to bring about a difference, touch by touch, without letting either of the three, and least of all her Father so much as suspect her hand.⁵⁶

Therefore, she begins to "make her picture", which involves seeing that, among other things, Charlotte and the Prince are "treating her by a plan that was an exact counterpart of her own", by being fundamentally interested in restricting her freedom of movement. But, as her consciousness becomes more sensitive to "notes", "pitch" and "shades", so she becomes more capable of thwarting such a plan. More to the point, as Volume one has illustrated, she embodies the values and perspectives more likely to succeed, she has an openness of response that was lacking in the more fragmented - but not more claustrophobic - atmosphere of the first half of the novel. It is only with the end of the novel that such a claustrophobic blanket has been lifted. The resulting sense of freedom is shared by Maggie with the reader, with the accompanying state of the realization that freedom is a state of anxiety, the vision that when one is free that this state is one of terror (which Maggie herself feels).

But, before gaining this freedom, Maggie has to see the "queer things in our life". She is in complete control of her own point of vision, eventually becoming the author of the play that unfurls in front of her. She becomes a "mistress of shades" who, in her "blameless egoism" (possibly the original spur to action), has taken "the constructive, the creative hand".⁵⁷ In the second central scene concerning the Bowl, these resplendent qualities she possesses are shown to the full. With the smashing of the Bowl - the break with the past, the moment at which a new Bowl begins to be created - Maggie

57. Volume XXIV, 140, 145.

starts to take the upper hand. Noticeably, the Bowl is smashed by the 'queen' of the 'explainers', Fanny Assingham. Amerigo's unheralded entry is a high point where Maggie allows him time to think, to recollect himself. Noticeably, she asks for no explanations and, in this act, lies the essence of her respect for her husband's 'otherness'. The effect is immediate:

...her husband would have, on the whole question, a new need of her, a need which was in fact being born between them in these very seconds. It struck her truly as so new that he would have felt hitherto none to compare with it at all; would indeed, absolutely, by this circumstance, be really needing her for the first time in their whole connexion.⁵⁸

This is reminiscent of Fanny's 'need' for Colonel Bob, a need that is also born out of a moment of near breakdown. As a support, she offers Amerigo the opportunity of working together to make something out of the smashed pieces that lie on the floor. The desire for "the bowl without a crack" - " 'a happiness without a hole in it big enough for you to poke in your finger' "⁵⁹ (the bowl "as it was to have been") - begins to take shape from this moment. It involves Maggie in a 'duplicity' which is all the more difficult to bear as she must endure her burden in isolation. She has to see with many pairs of eyes, as a result, and this is nowhere more apparent than at the evening Bridge party:

Whilst being tired - "a tiredness of the spirit rather than of the sense"⁶⁰ - she fully sees the precarious balance between the order

58. Ibid, 186.

59. Volume XXIV, 216.

60. Ibid, 232.

reflected in the formal setting of the game of bridge and the chaos that she could so easily bring about:

After it had been thus vividly before her for a little that, springing up under her wrong and making them all start, stare and turn pale, she might sound out their doom in a single sentence, a sentence easy to choose among several of the lurid...⁶¹

But she must not do this, as, indeed, she must not be the "scapegoat of old" who had "gone forth into the desert to sink under his burden and die"⁶² (one is reminded here of Milly Theale, the 'dove' who is destroyed). Instead, she must : "live, live on somehow for their benefit, and even as much as possible in their company, to keep proving to them that they had truly escaped and that she was still there to simplify".⁶³ To live on requires belief in them, a belief that involves seeing the Evil that lurks behind everything as well as the 'good'.

Furthermore, Maggie possesses a key:

They might in short have represented any mystery they would; the point being predominantly that the key to the mystery, the key that could wind and unwind it without a snap of the spring, was there in her pocket.⁶⁴

She now controls "possibilities":

Spacious and splendid, like a stage again awaiting a drama, it was a scene she might people, by the press of her spring, either with severities and dignities

61. Ibid., 233.

62. Ibid., 234.

63. Ibid., 235.

64. Volume XXIV, 236.

and decencies, or with terror and shames and ruins, things as ugly as those formless fragments of her golden bowl she was trying so hard to pick up.⁵⁵

In order to pick them up, the key has to be hidden away. To use it, to use "the ways usually open to innocence outraged and generosity betrayed, would have been to give them up."⁶⁶ This she refuses to do, and the mystery is maintained as the other figures are allowed to preserve their identities. The "straight vindictive view" is rejected in favour of the construction of a meaningful pattern of relationships. Whilst we can see this form taking shape, it is, nevertheless, a long way off. Part of the shaping is not only to make her husband more interested in her, but also ensure that Charlotte, too, will have a victory by which she can withdraw to American City with her husband. But now the complex scenes of internal relations have found an author, a director who is open to varieties of interpretation ("differing always for a different interpreter"),⁶⁷ and, in addition with the ability to look "with Charlotte's grave eyes". Such a vision must also involve helping a "soul in pain". In all, Maggie proceeds with the utmost sympathy: "it was only a question of not, by a hair's breadth, deflecting into the truth".⁶⁸

Her interview with her father marks another phase in this process. The thin wall that keeps them separate and individual almost

65. Ibid., 236.

66. Ibid., 237.

67. Ibid., 244.

68. Volume XXIV, 250.

breaks down in this scene. Both are frantically trying to save the equilibrium and both, from Maggie's point of view, manage to do so. In doing this, she penetrates with a resplendent sense of sympathy for her father : "that placed him in her eyes as no precious work of art, probably had ever been placed in his own".⁶⁹ Finally, she sees him for his true value:

Before she knew it she was lifted aloft by the consciousness that he was simply a great and deep and high little man and that to love him with tenderness was not to be distinguished, a whit, from loving him with pride.⁷⁰

This comes as a "relief", so strong in its effect that she can openly declare: " 'I believe in you more than anyone' ".⁷¹ At this point, their relationship is cemented in the new form Maggie has created.

However, the greatest problem for Maggie is Charlotte Stant. In her treatment of her husband's ex-lover, Maggie proves once and for all how creative her 'art' can be. By allowing Charlotte to rescue her husband, Maggie allows the two couples to part "absolutely on Charlotte's value". But she has had to work hard for this value, the price being a great deal of self-effacement:

" 'I've failed! ' she sounded out before Charlotte, having given her time, walked away. She watched her, splendid and erect, float down the long vista; then she sank upon a seat. Yes, she had done all.⁷²

69. Ibid., 273.

70. Ibid., 274.

71. Ibid., 275.

72. Volume XXIV, 317.

Charlotte's "plan is completely formed", and she can sail to America having kept the man she married.

The reward, if one can crudely call it that, comes from seeing Amerigo through his "ordeal":

This was, no doubt, partly because he stood out so wonderful, to the end, against admitting, by a weak word at least, that any element of their existence was, or ever had been, an ordeal; no trap of circumstance, no lapse of 'form' no accident of irritation, had landed him in that inconsequence.⁷³

Thus, she can meet him "on his terms" and not hers: "or that, in other words, she must allow his unexplained and uncharted, his own practicably workable way".⁷⁴ Like Charlotte he is caged, but the cage is of his own making. What he has come to see and in this Maggie has succeeded "beyond her intention", is that his wife now mystifies him. His thirst for explanation has apparently been assuaged, as ~~has~~ his touchstone of taste:

He was with her as if he were hers, hers in a degree and on a scale, with an intensity and an intimacy, that were a new and strange quantity, that were like the irruption of a tide loosening them where they had stuck and making them feel they floated.⁷⁵

With her husband, for the first time, she can part with Charlotte and Adam "with the due amount of form", can pay her sacrifice without allowing herself to breakdown in an excess of emotion. After their departure, the true value of her adventure emerges : "Stillness, when the

73. Ibid, 321-2.

74. Ibid, 322.

75. Ibid, 339-40.

Prince and Princess returned from attending the visitors to their carriage, might have been said not so much restored as created"; so that whatever next took place in it was foredoomed to remarkable salience".⁷⁶

Thus: "everything now, as she vaguely moved about, struck her as meaning so much that the unheard chorus swelled." ⁷⁷

Their "freedom" now becomes clear - "the golden fruit that had shone from afar",⁷⁸ and Maggie sees how she has worked for this end, with and not without its "terror". For one awful moment, she feels that a part of this reward will be the confession she dreads most hearing.

But this fear is silenced and Maggie finds her husband:

" 'See' "? I see nothing but you! And the truth of it had, with this force, after a moment, so strongly lighted his eyes that, as for pity and dread of them, she buried her arm in his breast."⁷⁹

With this moment, Maggie's 'Golden Bowl' has been finally formed. This completion is perhaps one of the most intense in the Jamesian canon, making the point where "the master" finds his perfect form. James, and Maggie have made the 'pieces' of Volume one so perfectly fit that one is amazed at the supreme quality of the final picture. Maggie has triumphed, but not in the quasi-religious sense propounded by so many critics. The success is essentially of this world. Her essential "good faith" - its penetrative skill, its imaginative sympathy and belief -

76. Volume XXIV, 367.

77. Ibid., 367.

78. Ibid., 367.

79. Ibid., 369.

have ensured her reward and enabled the other characters to live on.
In this, lies the 'affirmative' vision which is at the very centre of
the subject of the novel.

IV

... the good health of an art which undertakes so immediately to reproduce life must demand that it be perfectly free. It lives upon freedom, and the very meaning of exercise is freedom.¹

This 'affirmation', in The Golden Bowl, is both one of life and of art (in particular, a faith in the very genre with which James is dealing). Indeed, both art and life have become inextricably fused - as they have failed to be in so many inferior productions - and in this fusion lies the essence of our understanding of the success created in this novel. James continually strove for 'organic form', and the necessary freedom which comes with the full realization of that form. Yet nowhere can the accomplishment of that form have been more fully realized than in this novel, one of his last adventures into his "favourite element". In the attributes that were a necessary part of this realization - the art of penetration, belief and a magnificently evident imaginative sympathy - lies the germ of our growing understanding of the novel. To alter slightly the statement quoted as a preface to this conclusion (with all due respect to its writer), James did not reproduce life, he produced it. In the difference between these two terms lies his 'affirmative' vision, his very accomplishment in The Golden Bowl. By fusing form and content in a momentous artistic form

1. "The Art of Fiction", The Future of the Novel, p.9.

he affirmed his belief in the mystery of existence, and his belief in the power of art to give that existence an imaginative shape, an essential meaning. As a testimony to that affirmation, The Golden Bowl should quieten those of us who feared that "the master" had lost his essential faith. In this respect, not only does The Golden Bowl stand as a lesson for many writers of the twentieth-century, who have ceased to be capable of exercising such an imaginative faculty, but the novel also stands as a source of re-discovering such an affirmation for the general reader. As such, the lesson of James, like "The Lesson of Balzac", never ceases in its power to enrich the numbed consciousness.

LIST OF WORKS CONSULTED

Primary Sources:

- James Henry. The Novels and Tales of Henry James, XXIV Vols.
New York: Scribner's Sons, 1907-9.
- _____. The Art of the Novel : Critical Prefaces by Henry James.
New York: Scribner's Sons, 1934.
- _____. The Future of the Novel. (edited by Leon Edel),
New York: Vintage Books, 1956.
- _____. The Notebooks of Henry James. (edited by F.O. Matthiessen
and K.B. Murdoch). New York : O.U.P., 1947.

Secondary Materials:

Books:

- Anderson, Quentin. The American Henry James. London:
John Calder, 1958.
- Bayley, John. The Characters of Love. New York : Collier Books, 1963.
- Beach, J.W. The Method of Henry James. Enlarged edition.
New Haven : Yale University Press, 1954.
- Blackmur, R.P. The Lion and the Honeycomb. New York:
Harcourt Brace Inc., 1955.
- Booth, Wayne C. The Rhetoric of Fiction. Chicago :
University Press, 1961.
- Brooks, Van Wyck. The Pilgrimage of Henry James. New York:
Dutton and Co., 1925.
- Cargill, Oscar. The Novels of Henry James. New York:
McMillan and Co., 1961.
- Cox, C.B. The Free Spirit. Toronto : Oxford University Press, 1963.

Dupee, F.W. Henry James. New York : A.M.L.S., Dell Publishing Co., 1951.

-----, ed. The Question of Henry James. New York : Holt and Col., 1945.

Edel, Leon, ed. Henry James - A Collection of Critical Essays. N. Jersey : Prentice-Hall Inc., 1963.

Fadiman, Clifton. Appreciations : Essays by Clifton Fadiman. London : Hodder and Stoughton, 1962.

Ford, M.F. Henry James : A Critical Study. New York : Octago Books, 1964.

Forster, E.M. Aspects of the Novel. London : Arnold, 1927.

Geismar, Maxwell. Henry James and his Cult. London : Chatto and Windus, 1964. First Published in U.S.A. as Henry James and the Jacobites. Boston : Houghton Mifflin, 1963.

Holder, Alan. Three Voyagers in Search of Europe. Pennsylvania : University Press, 1966.

Holland, Lawrence. The Expense of Vision. Princeton : University Press, 1964.

Jefferson, D.W. Henry James and the Modern Reader. London : Oliver and Boyd, 1964.

-----, Henry James. London : Oliver and Boyd, 1960.

Krook, Dorothea. The Ordeal of Consciousness in Henry James. Cambridge : University Press, 1962.

Leavis, F.R. The Common Pursuit. London : Chatto and Windus, 1952.

-----, The Great Tradition. London : Chatto and Windus, 1948.

Lewis C.S. An Experiment in Criticism. Cambridge : University Press, 1961.

Lodge, David. Language of Fiction. New York : Columbia University Press, 1966.

Matthiessen, F.O. Henry James : The Major Phase. Oxford : University Press, 1944.

Poole, R.H. and P.J. Sheperd, ed. D.H. Lawrence : A Selection.
London : Heinemann, 1970.

Putt, S. Gorley. The Fiction of Henry James. London :
Thames and Hudson, 1966.

Righter, William. Logic and Criticism. London : Routledge
and Kegan Paul, 1963.

Segal, Ora. The Lucid Reflector : The Observer in Henry James's
Fiction. New Haven : Yale University Press, 1969.

Spender, Stephen, The Destructive Element. London
Johnathan Cape, 1935.

Stoval, F. ed. Eight American Authors. New York :
The Norton Library, 1963.

Warren, Austin. Rage for Order. Michigan : University Press, 1948.

Wegelin, Cristof. The Image of Europe in Henry James. Dallas :
Southern Methodist University Press, 1958.

Articles:

Beebe, M. and William T. Stafford. "Criticism of James : A
Selected Checklist"; Modern Fiction Studies, XII (Spring, 1966),
149-50.

Fergusson, Francis. "The Golden Bowl Revisited", Sewanee Review,
LXIII (Winter, 1955), 13-28.

Gard, A.R. "Critics of The Golden Bowl", Melbourne Critical Review,
VI. (1963), 102-109.

Gordon, Caroline. "Mr. Verver, Our National Hero", Sewanee Review,
LXIII (Winter, 1955), 29-47.

Rose, Alan. "The Spatial Form of the Golden Bowl", Modern Fiction
Studies, XII (Spring, 1966), 103-116.

Schorer, Mark. "Technique as Discovery", Hudson Review, I.
(1948), 67-37.

Todasco, Ruth T. "Theme and Imagery in The Golden Bowl",
Texas Studies in Literature and Language, IV (Summer, 1962),
228-240.

Wilson, E. "The Ambiguity of Henry James", Hound and Horn,
(April-June, 1934), 385-406.

Wright, W.F. "Maggie Verver : Neither Saint Nor Witch",
Nineteenth-Century Fiction, XII (June 1957), 59-71.