

American Literature & Culture
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Mod 01 Lecture Number 02
Henry James: Introduction (Lecture 2)

So Henry James 1843 to 1916.

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(Professor – student conversation starts)

Professor: Now I would like some responses from all of you

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Professor: Who is Henry James? Nayantara, who is Henry James?

Student: Novelist

Professor: Ok a novelist, Ok from, can you tell a little bit more, anything that you know about, Ashwin?

Student: He settled in England

Professor: Ok

Student: He moved from America to England

Professor: He moved from America to England, Ok.

Student: Realism

Professor: Ok the word realism is associated with Henry James. Are you aware of any of his works? What are the great works that he has done?

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Professor: I am just trying to warm all of you

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Professor: the books that he has written, the novels he has, are you familiar with any of his works?

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Professor: The Portrait of a Lady, Ok Are you aware of any trends in fiction writing during this particular period? Who are the other major writers of this period? We are talking about early twentieth century

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Professor: late nineteenth century.

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Professor: Yeah, you are right that this is a period normally associated with the growth of you know, actually novel was doing extremely well during this period and

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Professor: when you talk about novel then it is basically realism that was the key feature, key trend and who were the other writers? Who was...?

Student: Fitzgerald

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Professor: Fitzgerald was very much around that time, yeah.

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Professor: Joseph Conrad yes.

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Professor: Alright,so Henry James was, I am just trying to give you a brief introduction to his life and his times.

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Professor: He was born in New York so he was a true blue New Yorker and a novel of very New York City. This is important. He was educated at Harvard Law School and spent, as you rightly pointed out, he shifted his nationality. He changed his nationality to British citizenship. He lived mostly in Europe for the better part of his life and he had ardent sympathy for the First World War for the British people and therefore he became a naturalized British citizen in 1915.

Major works include *The Portrait of a Lady*, very famous work but then so is *The Europeans* and *The Ambassadors*. *The Golden Bowl* is also one of the most popular novels and so is *The Wings of Dove* and there is a novella called *Daisy Miller*. So if you look at his, the titles of his novels just pay attention to that, *The Ambassadors*, *The American*, *The Europeans*, *The Bostonians*, Ok what does, what do titles like these suggest? He is a novelist of

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Professor: The American, The Europeans,

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Professor: The Bostonians, The Ambassadors yes? Cultural difference, yes, anything else?

Student: People centered

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Professor: People centered. Ok, the setting.

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Professor: The setting is important. So *The Bostonians*, *The Ambassadors*, you know the Americans who act as ambassadors of America to European countries, *The Europeans* and *The American*, not to confuse with a that George Clooney movie, Ok so and *Daisy Miller* this is a, *Daisy Miller* is a titular character here, it is a short novella which I, which I will be doing as well in this course. So, basically Henry James is a writer, a novelist of terrain. So setting is important. So while discussing Henry James these are the features, say style is common to all writers,

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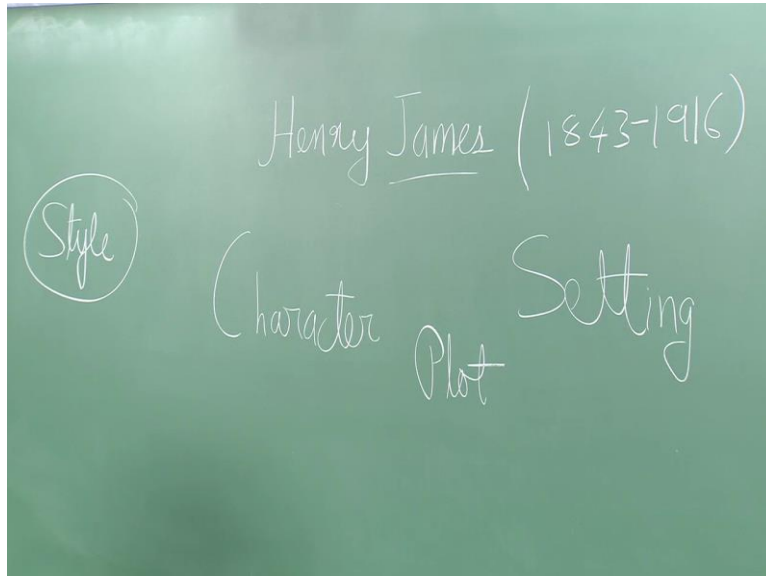
Professor: whenever we talk about...whether we talk about Fitzgerald or Hemingway or someone much later like Tom Wolfe and Jonathan Franzen, we always talk about...style is always at the forefront. In Henry James, character is important.

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Professor: So when we discuss his novels, we have to take into consideration the way characters influence, the characters are fore-grounded. Ok, plot is important but characters are much more important and so is the setting, so is the setting of his works. Henry James has also published; he was a very prolific writer.

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Professor: So number of short stories and travelogues.

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Professor: He has written a seminal essay, *The Art of Fiction* and his work on criticism, literary criticism, *The Art of the Novel* which is one of the seminal, one of the foremost works of literary criticism. We have been talking about literary criticism for quite a while and I strongly suggest that all of you go through *The Art of the Novel* and his essay *The Art of Fiction*.

He wrote a memoir called *A Small Boy and Others*, *Notes of a Son and Brother* is his memoir and *The Middle Years* which was left unfinished and published posthumously. His solitary play includes *Guy Domville* and he has he was a prolific writer as well as a prolific letter

writer. He has written over 10000 letters, Ok, to his friends and his publishers and to his critics; and several of these letters survive. A third of this number has also been published. He also is the author of Nathaniel Hawthorne's biography called Hawthorne. So coming back to who was Henry James and all of you know that he is an eminent preeminent novelist we have to understand that he is regarded as the greatest American novelist. Ok, novel writing was never the same once he came into the picture. Along with Herman Melville and Walt Whitman, he is credited with the flowering of New York. Ok we are talking about the New York writers, Ok and he is one of the foremost writers about New York and of New York. Ok and he is also credited with the flowering of novel during this period along with Melville and Walt Whitman.

What are , what is that particular movement which we generally associate Walt Whitman and Herman Melville? Who were they? Transcendentalists, are you aware of this word? Transcendentalism Ok and transcendentalism; what was the terrain of this movement...? New England.... However Henry James is the writer of New York. Terrain is important and then and then gradually trying to draw your attention to this fact that how setting is an integral part of writers

His major literary influences included Henrik Ibsen Nathaniel Hawthorne Ivan Turgenev who was a Russian novelist and he met him in Paris and he also met people like Balzac, Daudet and Emile Zola and also Flaubert, Gustave Flaubert he is the author of Good Madam Bovary he was extremely influenced by George Eliot and who are all these writers now Was there a common thread common link that

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Student: Novelist?

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Professor: Yes, but what kinds of novelist?

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Student: Realist

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Professor: All, yeah we associate realism with these writers, so Honoré de Balzac, Emile Zola is naturalist, of course but Flaubert, Turgenev, Henrik Ibsen these are the foremost realists. Ok and George Eliot, he was influenced by George Eliot especially in his depiction of portraying interiority, the idea that, portraying the psychological turmoil of his characters. So interiority and George Eliot and are you familiar with any of George Eliot's works?

Student: Silas Marner

Professor: Silas Marner and The Mill on the Floss, Adam Bede, Adam Bede yes Ok anything else that comes to mind. Middlemarch, Ok, the Middlemarch is one of the most enduring novels. Silas Marner of course, but Middlemarch is; belong to that period when George

Eliot's powers were at her peak. George Eliot by the way, was a woman, Ok, don't get misled by her name. What was her real name? Mary Anne Evans.

We were talking about the significant position of Henry James and this should give you an idea that there had been numerous books on James. So you have a Richard Liebmann-Smith, *The James Boys*, a novel account of four desperate brothers which is a book about, which is a book about the James brothers, the four James brothers, David Lodge and also Colm Tóibín they have also written biographies of Henry James and so has Emma Tennant and Michael Heyns. Edith Wharton was another eminent novelist who was extremely influenced by Henry James. He was almost like a mentor to Edith Wharton. The other day we were talking about Edith Wharton and her which novel, *The Age of Innocence*, *The Age of Innocence* which is also again a very important work of New York so she depicts the New York City with an eye of an anthropologist. This is the importance of *The Age of Innocence* when novelist started writing like anthropologist. Yeah, so Edith Wharton and Henry James; he was her guide, her friend, philosopher and also he mentored her in several literary ways.

Now, coming to Henry James, his style; generally, yeah he is a realist of course but his style is tentative and obscure and we are often told that one has to chase clues throughout the work to understand what he is trying to...he is extremely obscure he doesn't make things easy for us. He is no Charles Dickens in other words he places great emphasis on portraying the psychological turmoils of his characters and most of his characters feel their way towards insides and understandings.

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Professor: According to Henry James in life one cannot meet big truths, Ok.

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Professor: It is the small events that matter. They make the larger picture. You don't come across grand truths but you have to look at and you have to chase clues, the smaller clues to arrive at a larger picture. Interestingly and this is perhaps one of his most important contribution to literary criticism, the fore-grounding of the literary character and not story so he says character is all, character is plot. It is the character which is the engine of a plot. Character drives a story. So it is the character which is important and not story and if you, therefore at the beginning of this class I wanted to draw your attention to the titles of his works.

So now you understand The Europeans, The American, The Bostonians, The Ambassador, Daisy Miller so The Portrait of a Lady, right, so character. The focus is always on the character. This is what he says. Character is action and his subjective school of fiction foreshadows the works of James Joyce and Marcel Proust, who are those?

Student: Modernists

Professor: James Joyce and Marcel Proust were modernists but how, I mean why do you think that his works, stream of consciousness, yes

Student: Yes

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Professor: So therefore Henry James is brand of subjectivism

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Professor: influenced stream of consciousness. Ok, and that reaches its pinnacle in the works of the likes of Virginia Woolf and Joyce and Proust, those were the modernists. So again we are talking about the interiority of characters. It all began with George Eliot and developed further with Henry James and reached with pinnacle with the modernists. Now this is ...James's setting and his terrain.

Now this is important so his characters aresee he is very urbane, so you won't find pretty depictions of the pastoral and the idyllic and the rural in his works. So he is a novelist of the city. City is important so you have New York, London, Paris and Rome. And cities are almost like characters. They influence the way characters behave and feel. So when read Daisy Miller or when we read The Portrait of a Lady we will feel, we will realize how important cities are. London is so important. And Rome is so important. Paris is a character by itself. Again we know what is a novel of manners. What is a novel of manners? And Henry James is a supreme novelist of manners, and social conventions.

Student: Class

Professor: Good

Student: It is the reflection of the society and how etiquette....

Professor: Good, so the codes and conventions of the society and how they govern characters.

Ok, so people are...people do have their free will

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Professor: and people have their unique agencies; but how these agencies get influenced by

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Professor: by social conventions and codes and nowhere is this idea brought about more strongly than in Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence*. Ok that how our lives are governed and we are talking about the turn of the century society, the New York society and how these people were absolutely governed by codes and conventions and the manners, so therefore the novel of manners. Any questions so far, anything you would like to talk about or comment on; Srinidhi?

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Student: One of the novelists who was sort of with Gertrude Stein in Paris along with Hemingway and rest of them, there are bunch of writers who were in Paris around World War one time, was he one of them?

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Professor: Not really Ok so they belong to the subsequent generation. Yeah,

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Professor: so when we come to Hemingway, we will see he moved in the circle of the likes

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Professor: of Gertrude Stein as you rightly pointed out, Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald

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Professor: yeah, they were a group,

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Professor: the kind of...so therefore we have been talking about Hemingway Ok and when we come down to Hemingway we will be talking about this entire group of writers who were more like expatriates, yeah Americans in exile, not exactly forced but by choice in exile in Europe.

Student: Is he also called as the Decadent Movement because this society of manners which is....

Professor: Not exactly

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Professor: but he offers a critique. He doesn't exactly endorse.

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Professor: Yeah, the typical aesthete or the writer of ...writers associated with the Decadent Movement also known as the fin de siècle, end of the century remember? These are the...symbolist. They actually extolled the idea of Aestheticism and manner. But here he offers a critique. He remains very objective about the whole thing. That's the difference.

Now this is the interesting comparison with people like Oscar Wilde and other Aesthetes because Oscar Wilde too portrayed the lives of very rich people, Ok and so did Henry James. But then people like Henry James and Edith Wharton, they moved beyond what people like Oscar Wilde were doing. They actually talked about the claustrophobia, the claustrophobic and the stifling influence of this kind of society on people. Wilde did not. Wilde actually celebrated this kind of lifestyle, the decadence. They found beauty in excesses, right? But not for people like James and Edith Wharton who could look beyond, see beyond the surface and they knew that how characters are, how people are actually stifled and suffocated because of the social excesses and modes and conventions.

His line, again you know...we know people like Jane Austen who generally confined her

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Professor: plot and her world view and her characters to a very narrow section of society

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Professor: What is the term used for her? She lived in an ivory tower, right? An ivory tower writer and also she was a miniaturist, miniaturist of sorts. Why? You are taking a very narrow section of society and then you become an expert in representing or portraying, portraying that kind of society. So did Henry James. So he portrayed invariably the extremely rich, the aristocratic Americans Ok, and their lives. But this is not the way Oscar Wilde would portray his rich people, his rich class or section of society. Ok, he is interested in their relationships and thought processes and his characters are invariably complicated and also self-destructive. So rich people caught in their own social modes, in their own set of life, in their sets, in their customs and manners and conventions; they are eloquent. They talk a lot. There are lengthy

dialogs in Henry James. They are perceptive but still at the same time, they are also self-destructive.

One expression that is commonly associated with Henry James' characters is innocent abroad. So innocence abroad; now who are these innocents? Who are these innocents?

Student: The Americans

Professor: The rich Americans, the extremely rich Americans and what is this abroad?

Student: Europe

Professor: Europe, Ok so just remember that it's, you know, globalization for people like Henry James meant Europe. So you travel to Europe and you have seen the world. So his Americans are innocent people, the proverbial innocent who is caught in the tangled web of the cunning European, the manipulative European. This is a common theme.

Now most of them are impulsive and reckless. They are millionaires, all the time and they are aesthetes. This is very important, given to the life of luxury and beauty. Coming back to your, you know, comment, one key term that is associated with the Aesthetic movement is art for art's sake, Ok. In Henry James you wouldn't find that. There are plenty of discussions of art, of beauty but then you also know beneath the surface there is lot of turmoil. There is lot of... people are weak willed, Ok; people suffer, Ok, although they surround themselves with beautiful things.

So it is never like beauty for its own sake. There has to be something. There is a strong moral tone in Henry James. So the people and individuals and characters always have to take up moral responsibility for their actions in Henry James so this is the key attribute of his characters.

At this point let me read out this passage from...this is a short novella

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Professor: Daisy Miller and this is the point where the hero, Lord Winterbourne, he first sets his eyes on the young heroine Daisy Miller. Both of them are Americans and innocents abroad and they meet in Switzerland. This is how he describes, Winterbourne describes.

Winterbourne presently risked an observation upon the beauty of the view. He was ceasing to be embarrassed; for he had begun to perceive that she was not in the least embarrassed herself. There had not been the slightest alternation sorry alteration in her charming complexion; she was evidently neither offended nor flattered. If she looked another way when he spoke to her, and seemed not particularly to hear him, this was simply her habit, her manner. Yet, as he talked a little more and pointed out some of the objects of interest in the view, with which she appeared quite unacquainted, she gradually gave him more of the benefit of her glance; and then he saw that this glance was perfectly direct and unshrinking. It was not; however, what would have been called an immodest glance, for the young girl's eyes were singularly honest and fresh.

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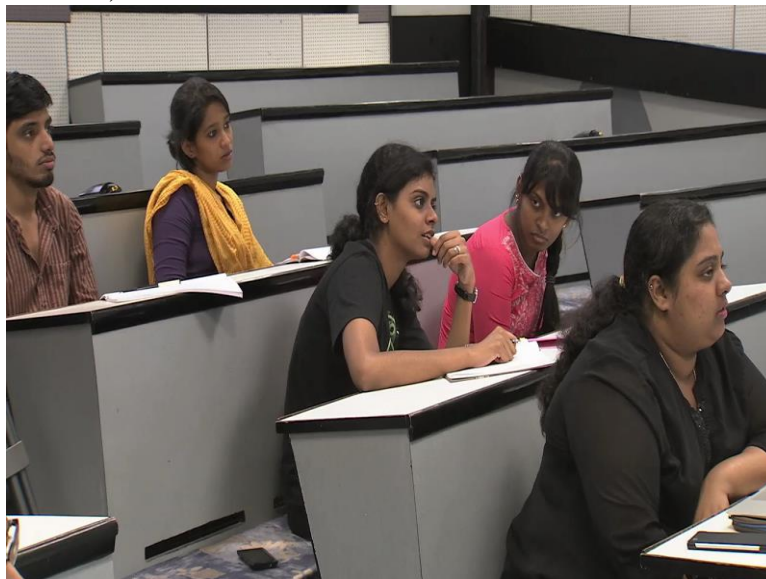


Professor: So what do you make out of this? What do you make of Daisy Miller? She is seen through the eyes of the hero who is an American, a good American and they are all visiting Europe and they would visit Europe for several months at a stretch. So they are in Switzerland and here he meets Daisy Miller who is visiting this country with her younger brother and an aunt. And he meets so...what kind of a person does she appear to be in his eyes?

Student: Naive

Professor: Naive,

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Professor: Ok, what are the words, what are the keywords?

Student: Fresh

Professor: Fresh

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Professor: yes, direct, honest. Ok, glance has ...and there is, she can look very directly at a man and we are talking about nineteenth century. Ok, please understand that, Ok, so nineteenth century glance of a woman is very different, extremely different from the way you would describe a woman looking at a man today, Ok so, what were the women, what were women supposed to be like in those days? Shy, shy and quiet, Ok but was she? No, Ok but still, that is still doesn't make her immodest or

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Professor: brazen in his eyes. He knows that this is a way

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Professor: an American girl would be. Ok. She is very direct and that directness is a part of her innocence and her honesty which he wouldn't say about a European girl. Ok European women are never; I mean they are complete opposite, complete anti-thesis of an American, an average American girl.

So the idea of American versus European is a recurring idea in all Henry James' works. So America represents innocence, even naiveté and young. It is a young country. People are innocent, they are naive. Whereas Europe is old, decadent and well already you know crumbling under the pressure of its own civilization, under the pressure of its own grandeur. For Henry James, America and Americans lack complexity which is good for him, Ok. Lacking complexity may be a negative feature for many. Ok, it may too naive, too simplistic, may be not intellectually too, too deep Ok but that's not the case in Henry James. They are innocent therefore they lack those kinds of complications and complexities which we find in Europeans, Ok.

They, the cultural distinction between the two continents is repeatedly brought out. The idea that America is a country with not a very serious past Ok, after all it is a young country, Ok where as Europe, yeah it is an old country, sorry an old civilization. It is an old continent and it is burdened with its past. Again the idea that Americans are less stifled by convention.... and therefore more accepting of spontaneity; therefore people like Daisy Miller, they are spontaneous. So when they say yes, when the American girl says yes, she actually means yes. When she says no, she means no unlike a European woman Ok, who is more worldly.

Whereas an American girl is naive, simple and honest, that's the idea. Europe is artificial with suffocating manners and again the notion of treachery; complexity coupled with treachery, betrayal and intrigue, ok that is Europe for Henry James, Ok but those things absolutely lack in Americans like Daisy. So he always, he talks in terms of binaries. So like we have seen in Daisy Miller, she is a young American woman travelling in Europe. She is charming yet reckless. Now women are supposed to be charming, but not reckless. They have to be shy and quiet. Ok, but she is not.

It is a very short novella and we see her only through the hero Lord Winterbourne's point of view. So it is his guess/gaze on her and how he reads her. , because she is direct and she is open and very honest with people, she is misunderstood. Her manners attract wrong kind of attention from various quarters, Ok and then there is the basic plot of the story.

So again the major themes in Henry James are the innocence of the new world that is America is always in conflict with the corruption of the old, so the binaries; innocence and the corrupt, innocence and the corrupt Europeans, the innocent American, the corrupt Europeans. As I was telling you there is also the concept of treasury treachery and betrayal and he talks about the Judas complex. And who are the treacherers, the Europeans. They always let you down; they always stab you in the back.

You can always compare Henry James with Jane Austen who also wrote about a narrow section of society but the major difference between the two writers is that James is more experimental, Ok. He was, remember, a literary critic as well unlike Jane Austen. And also we are, when we talk about Henry James we have to also understand his depiction of the psychological realities of his characters, the inner turmoils of the characters so the subconscious and which later gave way, paved way for the development of the stream of consciousness.

The Portrait of a Lady which was published in 1909 Henry James describes the novel as conception of a certain young lady affronting her destiny. He is not using the word confronting. Affronting, what is affronting? Yes Ashwin?

Student: Offending

Professor: Offending,

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Professor: any other different meaning of what is an affront?

Student: An outrage

Professor: An outrage

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Professor: Ok. She is not confronting. Generally we would use the word confronting her destiny. But here she is actually affronting her destiny. She has sort of offended her destiny. And how can a certain young lady affront her destiny, offend her destiny? By, by, by not doing what she is supposed to do or perhaps by making grave errors in her decisions, by making extremely wrong choices. That's the ...perhaps her destiny laid out everything for her, Ok but she turned her back to, at the destiny and made all the wrong moves, all the wrong choices.

The major characters in the novel that is our lady, the portrait, whose portrait we see is Isabel Archer; Ralph Touchett, her cousin in England, so Isabel Archer is an American. She is travelling abroad and she is in England, Mr. and Mrs. Touchett; that is Ralph Touchett's parents. We have Lord Warburton who is an English aristocrat. So we have this lady and we have several suitors. So Lord Warburton, Ralph Touchett, Caspar Goodwood, he is Isabel's American admirer and then Gilbert Osmond, the European, he is the man who Isabel chooses over all these suitors.

So at, we have these clear admirers, Ralph Touchett who is her cousin, Caspar Goodwood and Lord Warburton and she had a choice but who does she choose; the European Gilbert Osmond and therefore how she affronts her destiny. Now from here, we have to start reading the novel Ok, because it is practically impossible for me to read out the...you can look at the size of the novel and I am not capable of doing the entire novel in class.

I would suggest that you look and you can make, mark the pages on chapters. My particular edition

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Professor: Oxford University Press but it is an old edition. I don't know whether you will get it now. I would suggest and please mark it down what are the chapters that I want you to read. First is the preface. Prefaces are, Henry James was a prolific writer, novelist but he also was a prolific preface writer so he would give prefaces to all his novels. But they are not glossaries. It is not like he is giving you a, you know, better understanding of his, this particular, any particular novel. He doesn't do that. Ok. What he does is talk in very general

terms about the art of writing. Ok, so he is not going to give you the key to anybody's heart here. Ok, he will talk about novel in general, the art of literary criticism and novel writing in general and you have to pick these pieces and all this jigsaw puzzles and put the pieces together. Ok. So, as I said in the beginning, he is very obscure. Even in his prefaces, he is obscure. Ok, he will give you plenty of clues which he expects you find answers to. So preface is important and from this, I would suggest that when we meet for our next class, you read at least the first 100 or so pages, first 12 chapters. Chapter 1 to 12 along with the preface and this is only your first day's reading.

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Professor: Yeah, Ok. so

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Professor: as we were talking about the art of the novel, which is a collection of these prefaces where he talks about how a novel, what is a novel all about. But that still doesn't mean that he gives interpretations of his own novels. It is about the art and that's about it. Ok, so Henry James and his Art of the Novel, he is credited with laying the foundations of the modern criticism of the novel, his principal contribution to the criticism was to make writers and critics fully conscious of the narrative method, the point of view, so this is important. Henry James is not, if not the most but one of the most important contributions towards literature is the point of view. Now Gayatri, tell me what's the point of view?

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Student: View towards his work (())

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Student: how the writer reaches the reader (())

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Professor: So the point of view is the perspective, Ok. Anyone else?

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Professor: What about you Pragya? What is your point? You have done a quite of bit of literature.

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Student: It is seeing the point of view of characters, how they feel, like how the reaction makes them...every small instances....

Professor: Give me an example

Student: Who the narrator

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Professor: Ok so point of view establishes who the narrator is. Alright, that's one of the features of the point of view, one of the uses of the point of view. But what does, what does the point of view do to us?

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Student: I think the point of view narrator method gives both the interior monologue and the observations to circumstances of one person so we know the story completely through the eyes of one character involved.

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Professor: Could there be multiple points of view?

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Student: Yeah

Professor: Can you give an example?

Student: My name is Red

Professor: Ok

Student: (())

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Professor: So these are multiple points of view.

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Professor: Now when you have point of view and when you theorize the point of view what happens? This is what Henry James did. He theorized the point of view.

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Professor: Before that, there was always this particular omniscient point of view, right. Think of Victorian novel, Ok and you have omniscient point of view. But in Henry James we start to see multiple points of view. That's the biggest contribution. He, he was one of the foremost writers because he was also a literary critic he could theorize about it, he could think about it that there has to be , you know, novelist starts giving his own perspective about the characters in the plot. But there has to be something more to it. Otherwise it becomes a very...yeah, yeah you know the entire idea of truth, ok reliability, so now when we talk about the post modern literature specially talks about the concept of the unreliable narrative, Ok so the entire concept of reliability is suspect when you have only one singular point of view.

Remember Henry James is the one who gave us his short story, the brilliant piece, The Turn of the Screw. Are you familiar with it? The Turn of the Screw, please note it down. We will be talking about point of view in using

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Professor: The Turn of the Screw as an example.

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Professor: So for James through this point of view, this is a device used to maintain control through the ... novelists generally use point of view to control the third person narrative. So through the third person narrative, the omniscient point of view but he also renders the experience through the consciousness of the created character. So this is there when you are talking about interior monologue. So it is not just the third person's point of view, generally it is the narrator's point of view and we are supposed to take it as the ultimate definitive truth, right? Ok but when starting listening to other voices, especially the interior monologue of a character, what does that do? It is the modernist feature, yes but what does that do? It gives us another point of view. Yeah, this is what the narrator thinks, this is what the character herself

or himself thinks and this is how the other characters see this character; so diverse points of view. And the idea was to maintain, to create a sort of flexibility rather than maintain one single, unified control over the characters and their thought process, the idea was to give some kind of flexibility to character because this character is seen through different perspectives, from several points of view.

Therefore I said one of the earliest examples of unreliable character narrator is found in Henry James The Turn of the Screw

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Professor: so it is important that we read, Ok. For this course you have to read on, like it or not. Like if you are the reading kind,

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Professor: then it is very good.

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Professor: If you are not the reading kind then we are in trouble. so talking about modernism, I am sure most of you are familiar with the key features of modernism. Modernism is preoccupied with the complexity of its form, so we have this word, the introverted novel. Modernism is also concerned with representation of inner consciousness and also concerned with the sense of the nihilistic disorder behind the apparent order and stability of life and reality. And one of the most important, significant contributions of modernism towards the novel especially was freeing the art from the shackles of the plot. Inner consciousness, we are gradually moving towards a stream of consciousness, the modernism and, of course Henry

James is not the first American novelist. Who was one of the, who was the first American novelist? Yes?

Student: Mark Twain

Professor: Yes?

Student: Mark Twain

Professor: Oh Mark Twain but even before Mark Twain, things are happening.

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Student: Transcendentalists

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Professor: Well you see the transcendentalists came later. Are you aware of someone called James Fenimore Cooper? The Last of the Mohicans, at least

Student: Yeah, The Last of the Mohicans

Professor: That means something to you.

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Professor: Ok, if you know the film

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Professor: so The Last of the Mohicans and that is Cooper. That is one of the foremost, premier examples of American novel otherwise we didn't have the concept of

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Professor: American novel, we had English novels. We had European novels. There are people like Miguel de Cervantes who wrote Don Quixote, yeah. So we had novels in various parts of the world but in America Fenimore Cooper gave it a sustained form, the novel the way the novels are now. So, going to James and the introverted novel, so he calls himself and this is important, the chronicler of his character's lives. What does the chronicler do?

Student: (())

Professor: He records. So he observes he is very objective about the lives of his characters. Ok, so it is not going to be just a sentimental depiction. No emotional involvement with his characters rather he just gives you a dispassionate record of his characters' lives. And of course as we have been talking about his characters display enormous psychological depths.

He also is interested in this term called the Janus Face world, what do you understand? This is a two-faced world, yeah and we were talking about the treacherous European, yeah, people who betray, Judas Complex. The world according to James is paradoxical, duplicitous world which is doomed to end tragically. So he has a nihilistic world view. Ok, there are no pretty endings for Henry James. I mean, you got to read and many people think that that's his best novel; it is called The Wings of Dove, The Wings of Dove. And for Henry James modern man is doomed to end tragically.

(

Ten minutes?

Professor: How much time do we have?

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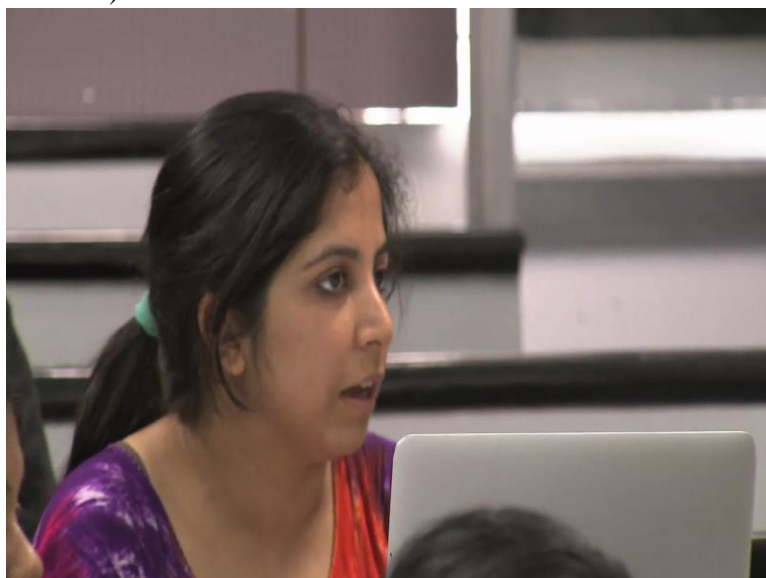
Professor: Ok, so while talking about his characterization, so Henry James remains interested but as I was telling you about, he remains dispassionate and detached from his characters. He employs the omniscient point of view and mostly he perceives himself as a dispassionate onlooker, Ok very objective onlooker at his characters. In his preface to *The Golden Bowl* he says the impersonal author's depute or delegate is present to give some near individual view of the business. Now what is impersonality? I am sure you have done little bit criticism, right? What is impersonality, concept of impersonality? Yeah, Ashmita

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Student: Negative capability that you can...

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Student: Yeah, the author writes about characters, that there is no similarity to him.

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Student: He does not have to draw from his own experiences to write.

Professor: Ok and also...that is one part and also the author remaining detached, yeah with his characters, not to get emotionally involved with his characters' lives. See we have done Brecht. All these people, they sort of anticipate Brecht. Ok, because what did after all Brecht tell us? The word, give me that word, the theater of...alienation

Student: Alienation

Professor: Alienation, yeah so to remain alienated, to think from your to feel from your mind and not from your heart is the idea. So that is what Henry James told us in fiction. He continues in the preface that it is not that the muffled majesty of authorship doesn't here ostensibly reign but I catch myself again shaking it off. While I get down into the arena and rub shoulders with persons engaged in the struggle, now what does it, who do I understand from this? What is majesty of authorship, ...?

Student: Author is taking control (()) feeling suppressed

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Professor: Exactly, he has to struggle hard and that is what he suggests. That is what he advises all authors

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Professor: that you know, an author has a desire, an uncontrollable desire to take charge, to control everything. Ok but a good writer has to learn how to suppress those feelings to take control over his characters' lives and sometimes he has to get down into the arena. Arena is like battlefield kind of play and...

Student: He is saying that he should get involved, right, get down in the arena and rub shoulders...

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Professor: Put himself into every character's shoes, yeah.

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Student: Can't help but get involved but at the same time you have to hold yourself back

Professor: Yes, you have to remain detached without making moral comments

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Professor: and judgments about characters. You have to feel what every character is going through. So there are no villains here.

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Professor: Every person see, therefore your heroine is also not confronting but is affronting her destiny, Fine

Yes, then he is also interested in interior monologue, as you know this is a device where much of the action takes place inside the minds of the characters and Henry James is again credited being the first novelist to use such intense examination of the psychological workings, happenings of his characters, their feelings, their motivations why they behave. So it is not society that compels people to become what they are. It is also their own workings, Ok making them into what they are. so this is the, this is his legacy, he influenced people like Henry James sorry James Joyce particularly in his Ulysses which, I am very sure, have you

done Ulysses? Yeah there are extensive interior monologues and stream of consciousness devices which indicates continuous flow of thoughts with no authorial intervention. Ok, so the author, sometimes he steps in but many a times he steps back. Author cannot control the mind of the characters all the time. So we will continue with this in our next class. Thank you.

(Professor – student conversation ends)