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A Study of Psychological Realism in Holland's Cinematic: Adaptation of James's *Washington Square*

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Abstract

This comparative article studies how the oppressed daughter in Holland's cinematic adaptation of Washington Square (1880) takes rule and analyzes the process through which it occurs via semiotics, images and symbols deployed in the light of psychological realism. Eventually managing to modify her status from a powerless girl into a nurturing one, she turns out to be capable of nurturing children experiencing what she has once experienced. In this study, the steps she takes comprising her mental processes, i.e., attaining identity, having herself authenticate, deploying significant silence, retaliating, securing the upper position, and acquiring self-development have all been analyzed. Even though the film concentrates on Catherine, the tale is as much Dr. Sloper's story, for her father acts somewhat as her foil bringing out her characteristics more clearly when portraying both her being oppressed by others and her emerging desire to grow and attain independence. Also, since demonstrating Catherine's psyche is of prime significance, the audio-visual art deployed presenting gestures, facial expressions and a symbolically suggestive mise-en-sce-ne in order to provide clues of her psychic unfolding revealed for the viewer have been included in this study.

Keywords: *Psychological Realism; Adaptation; Henry James; Washington Square; The Oppressed Daughter*

1. *Introduction*

One of the most common interdisciplinary studies that is categorized under comparative literature today is adaptation studies. In this comparison, the critic is interested in is the ways of the filmmaker's reading of the literary text that can be investigated through the cinematic discourse which is in its turn different from the literary discourse of the source text. Even though the stories presented by Henry James novel and Agnieszka Holland do appear to be quite similar, there are still noticeable differences fundamentally due to the diverse narrative hence medium deployed in each. In *Washington Square* (1997) as a costume drama, the viewer finds themselves at a distance in a different period. James places his story approximately half a century in the past, thus effectively writing a quasi-historical novel. As Gargano observes in "*Washington Square*: A Study in the Growth of an Inner Self," in Washington *Square* "James undertakes the difficult art of making the undemonstrative, psychic unfolding of his heroine arresting and interesting" (Gargano 1976, p.357).

Through examination of popular adaptations, claiming that costume is a vital part of the adaptive process of the text from page to screen since it is, and has been throughout filmmaking history, one of the primary methods of character revelation. Since demonstrating Catherine's psyche is of prime significance, the audio-visual art deployed presents gestures, facial expressions and a symbolically suggestive mise-en-sce-ne in order to provide clues of her psychic unfolding revealed for the viewer. Psychological realism focuses on characters, how and why they make their choices. It "denotes fidelity to the truth in depicting the inner workings of the mind, the analysis of thought and feeling, the presentation of the nature of personality and character" (Cuddon 2013, p. 610). In screenwriting, psychological realism is deployed in creating full-fledged characters going beyond mere depiction in words.

2. *Objectives*

Since literature and cinema belong to two different forms of art, this comparative study is interdisciplinary. It is through interdisciplinary studies that the information and theories of various branches of art and science are interweaved. This essay has two objectives. First, it endeavors through interdisciplinary approach to study this cinematic adaptation in the light of psychological realism and goes through the devices comprising it. Second, since demonstrating the focal character's psyche is of prime significance for acquiring insight into the psychological process she goes through, the audio-visual art deployed presenting gestures, facial expressions and a symbolically suggestive mise-en-sce-ne are analyzed in order to provide clues of her psychic unfolding revealed.

3. Significance of the Study

Even though the psychological realism appears to be almost always the dominant aspect in every work written by Henry James and thus has been deployed and depicted in the adapted visual works in different eras and different contexts, there are still works in which this perception bespeaks of its existence to the mind of the audience more promptly. The selected cinematic adaptation has been chosen accordingly; It discusses how Holland in this cinematic adaptation of *Washington Square* contextualizes and appropriates her portrayal of an oppressed character's both attaining her emancipation and securing her achieved nurturing position.

4. Literature Review

Comparative literature, as A. Anushiravani observes, investigates the relationship between literature and other arts from two perspectives. First, how a specific story, concept or symbol from a written text enters the field of visual arts; it is possible that here the researcher is looking for the discovery of the process of adaptation. The author with the word, that is, the language, his writing, and the artist expresses the same concept using his own artistic tools such as line and color, sound, tone and wood or video camera. It has implications; it inevitably leads to changes in the story. Cinematic adaptations or paintings and music taken from literary works are included in such studies. Second, how a single abstract concept such as death or compassion or despair is manifested in literature and other arts (Anushiravani 2013, p.5).

Although as Karen Chandler asserts in "Her Ancient Faculty of Silence": Catherine Sloper's Ways of Being in James's *Washington Square* and Two Film Adaptations**"** film can suggest "cognitive tendencies, it cannot portray consciousness as effectively as fiction. In addition, James's novels often reveal the power of language to describe psychological realities. Hollywood films, by contrast, more adeptly portray action (even passive action such as waiting)" (Chandler 2002, p.171). Stephen Prince, Gregory Currie, and Francesco Casetti all propose versions of psychological realism, holding that film-viewing mirrors our psychological engagement with the world. "Psychological engagement" here can be quite broad, though

as Fiorelli observes in *'A New Defense of Cinematic Realism',* these theorists "typically focus on *perceptual* engagement (i.e., visual and auditory experience)" (Fiorelli 2015, p.65). Apparently "costume drama" has been one of the few choices left for Holland as a director of an adaptation based on James's novella, for due to her intending to be as faithful as possible to the original text, the adaptation's story has consequently been set in a noticeably different period of time that that of the viewers that might even lead to distancing them. Paradoxically, as Christopher Garbowski observes in "The Modernity of Henry James and Agnieszka Holland's *Washington Square*", the "more accurate the historical detail, the more exotic the mise en scene of the film. Contemporary Hollywood does its homework well, and early nineteenth century New York is quite palpable on the screen at times" (Garbowsky 2009, p.123).

Jane Gaines' famous assertion about Hollywood studio-era costume, that "dress tells the woman's story" (Graines 1990, p. 80) ignores the fact that male costume too is generally recruited to evoke character. Although Gaines maintains that the film heroes have narrative action, but the film heroines only costume, by which to illuminate their characters, closer examination reveals that both sexes have generally been characterized through their clothes, not only at the specific period in Hollywood history Gaines is commenting on (1930s–40s) (80) but still: "story-telling wardrobes," as Turim calls them

(Turim 1983, p.8), are as common today as in Hollywood's golden age and found as often on television as on the larger screen. In considering a range of popular films, we end with what as Cartmel asserts as close explorations of two contrasting pairs of adaptations, aiming to reveal "not only how the characters are brought out but also suggesting a further important use of costume within adaptation: providing audiences with a range of visual pleasures, from the desirously acquisitive to the more contemplative joys accompanying cultural capital successfully engaged" (Cartmel 2012, p. 296).

As Holland herself asserts, "James sounds very modern today and offers primarily artistic reasons for her 'choice': 'I prefer to do [the story] in the period because it is visually more fascinating, also it gives a bigger freedom'" (Crnković 1998, p. 4). According to her conception of James's style of writing, she regards is as sounding "modern"; she further observes that "it's about money and relationships. And today everything is about money" (4).

5. Theoretical Framework and Methodology

Comparative literature itself does not have a single definition and does not rely on a specific theory, approach and method. Basically, the vitality and the secret of the survival of comparative literature among the multitude of theories and criticism approaches and literary research methods, especially in the contemporary era, is due to its being dynamic and flexible (Aushiravani 2012, p.3). This study is based on two theoretical bases: Remak's theory about interdisciplinary studies and Hutcheon's theory of adaptation. According to Remak's "Comparative Literature: Its Definition and Function", comparative literature is the study of literature beyond the confines of one particular country, and the study of the relationships between literature on the one hand and other areas of knowledge and belief, such as the arts [in this case a cinematic adaptation], on the other (Remak 1961, p.1-57).

As Linda Hutcheon argues in *A Theory of Adaptation*, "Neither the product nor the process of adaptation exists in a vacuum: they all have a context—a time and a place, a society and a culture" (Hutcheon 2006, p. xvi). Since adaptations occur in different places with their own customs and cultures, the adapted and the original works may vary significantly. Holland's film adaptation of Henry James's *Washington Square* goes through the process of "Repossessing and ... creation to the adaptation's context of reception" (xvi). This is why Holland's cinematic adaptation of Washington *Square* is different from James's text, for the adapted work in its being contextualized, has been "reinterpreted" and then "recreated" (8) in order to delineate her own conception of the focal character's psychological process of self-development.

6. Research Questions

1. How does the oppressed character attain her freedom in action?

2. How is the mental process of acquiring self-development and nurturing position delineated?

3. How are the images and symbols comprising psychological realism deployed?

7. Discussion

7.1. Mental Processes

7.2 Identity

Holland's conception of self-development in James's novella appears to get along well with what Charles Taylor states in Sources *of the Self*: *The Making of Modern Identity* concerning the modernity of the "Victorians." Taylor observes that "culturally, in the conceptions that shape our sense of self, and in our moral perspective we continue to bear the imprint of the rationalism of the Enlightenment and what he calls the expressivism, basically expressive individualism, of Romanticism" (Taylor 1989, p. 393). According to Taylor, "moral exceptionalism,", is very much a Victorian idea" (Taylor 1989, p. 394). Even when it comes to analyzing *Washington Square* 1997, as Garbowsky asserts in "the contemporary critics' curiosity for instance, as to whether Holland renders a feminist reading of *Washington Square* or not it is visible we are still children of the nineteenth century" (Garbowsky 2009, p.124).

7.3. Authenticity

Another good that cannot be overlooked is what Taylor observes in *The Ethics of Authenticity* that "since we develop dialogically, these goods can be said to interact dynamically within us, each staking a claim on our modern sense of self" (Taylor 1991, p.32-4). Dr. Sloper does appear to be always "right" in the course of the story to the extent that apparently rationality is ascribed to his character. Even though he might appear a liberal character intending not to interfere with the relationships, it is ultimately his cultured wit and senses that give direction to others. It is through his being reasonable enough that fortune hunters can well be detected and announced.:

"Her fortune is already more than sufficient to attract . . . the unscrupulous

adventurers" (*Washington Square* 1997, 1:39: 28-46).

Catherine, on the other hand, is described as "dim-witted":

Dr. Sloper: "As stubborn as a mule and twice as stupid" (*Washington Square* 1997, 1:15:51-3).

7.4. The Significance of Silence

Holland's film does not portray any negative outcome for a strongly oppressed and even bruised self when situated under circumstances apparently out of their control, even if it be a lonely girl oppressed by her father. Although as Chandler observes, "neither of the film adaptations foregrounds a woman's silence as consistently and completely as Campion's esteemed *The Piano* (1993), they both draw on James's book's silences and on conventions of melodramatic narrative to test the possible manner and extent of woman's agency "(Chandler 2002, p.172). A melodramatic instance followed by significant silence is deployed in the long conversation ascribed to both Catherine and Morris in one of the most decisive scenes of *Washington Square* (1997) in which Catherine's silence is followed instantly by an

unprecedented action. Holland has consequently decided to portray Catherine's attained growth of mind through her unpredictable action rather than merely her words:

-Catherine:" I'll go to my-my father, and I'll beg him. What do you want me to do? Just-just tell me what you want me to do". (*Washington Square* 1997, 1: 29: 20-42)

Despite the fact that melodrama's nature is woven with its noisy theatrical genre and that its mode of expression is of wordy type found in journalism and mostly fictional media, silence's role can hardly be overlooked. Even in the confrontation between the oppressors and the oppressed, silence acts as a determinant. It is in fact silence that steps in when speech proves inefficient or inadequate. As Peter Brooks has observed some facts concerned with the silences in eighteenth-century theatrical melodrama in The *Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama, and the Mode of Excess*, "[I]mplicit in this proposition of a dramaturgy of inarticulate cry and gesture is no doubt a deep suspicion of the existing sociolinguistic code" (Brooks 1976, p. 66). Holland also deploys silence to bespeak of Catherine Sloper's requirements, for not all feelings and thoughts can be put in words and consequently delineates more ambiguity in her treatment of silence in portraying the protagonist than James's novella.

7.5. Modification from a Powerless Figure into a Nurturing One

Catherine is not depicted as a woman content with her state but as the one who has eventually managed to modify her status from a powerless woman into the one capable of nurturing children who are experiencing what she has once experienced. It can somewhat in a similar way to also stand for revolting against patriarchal authority imposing masculine order upon female beings in order to abuse them. As Laurence Raw observes, "it might be argued that by preserving the classical narrative form—which sustains the familiar images of woman as natural, realistic, and attractive—her approach was conservative rather than radical. Unlike Jane Campion's *Portrait*, *Washington Square* represents it story in a narrative form that ultimately limits women's options (Raw 2006, p. 224).

In the eighteenth and nineteenth century societies, the idea of woman's confinement has been emphasized repeatedly in costumed dramas. Catherine, In Wyler's *Heiress* (1949), at the time of her departure looks out of the window wondering whether she will see Washington Square again. She has obviously been used to watching life pass her by in Washington Square rather than taking any significant part in it. When she eventually takes control of the house and becomes its master closes the window curtains, bolts the door and it is depicted in a way as to suggest that she is no longer in need of escape Her behavior emphasize that she has earned her long sought for release from patriarchal bondage and imposed power which is by itself reminiscent of "I am what I can imagine I will be" (Erikson 1998, p. 116) regarding the formation of identity and self-esteem.

7.6. The Attained Freedom

Even though the image of Catherine looking out through her bedroom window in Holland's *Washington Square* 1997 is suggestive of confinement, it simultaneously portrays her opportunity to act according to her own self and emotions rather than upon the imposed social norms and rules. Likewise, she dashes away from the window as she notices her father coming toward the house. Thus she celebrates his arrival at the top of her voice. as Catherine rushes to the front door, the camera observes her from the top of the stairs, followed closely by Aunt Penniman. The older Catherine in another scene, throws open the window and leans out, letting her long hair blow in the wind as if demonstrating her attained freedom or even power. Before focusing on Catherine in close-up looking at Morris, there is a shot of the curtains fluttering in her bedroom. Before running back indoors, she gives a smile of contentment. As Catherine kisses the bedroom mirror (*Washington Square* 1997, 52:57-9), strokes it with the back of her hand, and looks up to the heavens with pleasure, the camera slowly focuses on her (*Washington Square* 1997, 53:09-11). Obviously, she does not act sensibly when she opens the window and calls to Morris in full view of the square. Mr. Sloper would have certainly forbidden her to see Morris, had he known about this

action of hers. Apparently Holland has intended to give a role to love in encouraging point is to Catherine to revolt against the established conventions and act upon her natural instinct.

7.7. Retaliation and Securing the Upper Position

When Catherine bolts the door against Morris after pretending to accept his proposal, not only does she retaliate the cruel behavior of her father and suitor, but also manages to secure an upper position for herself to compensate for the losses she has suffered:

Dr. Sloper: "How does he take his dismissal?" (*Washington Square* 1999, 1: 32:15-17)

Catherine: "I don't know". (*Washington Square* 1997, 1: 32:18-19)

Dr. Sloper: "You mean you don't care. You're very cruel, after encouraging him . . . and playing him for so long". (*Washington Square* 1997, 1: 32:19-24)

Catherine: "I am my father's daughter". (*Washington Square* 1997, 1: 32:25-7)

The "symmetrical acts of the revenge plot" according to Julie H. Rivkin in "Prospects of Entertainment", "register a transfer of both knowledge and power; Catherine's knowledge operates as power precisely because it is communicated, and the act of communication assumes a sadistic dimension that compensates for earlier suffering even as it inflicts pain of its own" (Rivkin 2002, p. 149).

Catherine's transformation from the passive obedient figure into the one intending to take action can be read in relation to the changing expectations for women in the post-World War II years, when they were expected to return to the home and their traditional status. Even strong women who did not follow the established rules, were portrayed in films as characters whom the society generally disapproved and even punished. "One effect of empowering Catherine in this way, however, is that" as Rivkin asserts "the film's plot acquires the melodramatic elements that the novel satirizes in the figure of Mrs. Penniman and renders suspect in the smooth performances of Morris Townsend. In considering the 1949 version of this tale, then, it is important to make sense of the reclaimed value of melodrama, as it provides a medium of female agency" (149). The heroines of late 40s film noir have seldom been credited for acquiring a masculine power over the male characters, for it would strongly repel the spectators who would find no justifiable reason in it. Likewise, Wyler's Catherine won no acclaim for attaining her father's authority, for his alleviating wit is one of the attributes she obviously did not possess. Under such circumstances, both the film and the spectators become increasingly sympathetic to the father rather than the daughter.

By nineteenth century, however, the now- emancipated female is often morally stronger than the male, after he leaves her as well as before. That is, as Irving Singer observes in *Cinematic Mythmaking Philosophy in Film*, in Holland's movie Dido "is reborn in the Catherine who seemed so pitiful at the beginning but ends up having risen, even blossomed, by courageously dealing with the sorrows of her ill-fated romance. In this re- creation, Holland's cinematic mythmaking illumines all the Jamesian heroines who suffer as Catherine does but come out victorious in alternate responses that basically resemble hers" (Singer 2008, p.137). The heroine in *The Heiress* (1949) and *Washington Square* (1997), like Isabel Archer in *The Portrait of a Lady* (1996)," attest to the unremitting validity of the Dido myth in our mentality alongside the other myths of love" (137).

Throughout *Washington Square*, (1997) Catherine attempts to marry the man she has chosen, but her father, even after his death, seeks to prevent her from falling victim to the scheme of a presumably untrustworthy adventurer. The repeated power struggle formed between father and daughter is depicted through high- and low-angle shots. The flow of life at Mrs. Elizabeth Almond's home and subsequently its remnant in Washington Square are portrayed via lengthy sequence shots. There is a mise-en-shot during which Dr. Sloper consults Mrs. Almond's about Catherine's engagement. The camera displays a

hallway behind Dr. Sloper as he stands. When he walks to the window on the right, it leads to a door, through which a young woman walks, pauses, and then retreats. Through all these walkings, pauses and even retreats, apparently several stages of love have also been displayed, for the infant Miss. Catherine Sloper portrayed at the starting sequence leading to her healthy growth first into childhood as a little girl then into youth and later into adulthood moving through the house experiencing various stages of life. The infant Sloper introduced in the initial sequences, grows, first to a girl, then a young woman, and an adult as he is portrayed moving through the house.

The effects of mise-en-scene and montage are mixed when the infant is handed to the grandmother and the departure scene is portrayed around doors, into halls, and also through walls. When it comes to Morris Townsend's courting Catherine in Dr. Sloper's parlor, the mise-en-scene turns into a formalized one. When the two discuss her father's decision to disinherit her if she ever marries him, Catherine is suggestively demonstrated as being dressed in purple complemented by the Victorian parlor, damask wallpaper and mahogany there. The color Purple, a mixture of red and blue, "associated in medieval times with the Zodiac signs Virgo and Gemini and with the planet Mercury" as Ian Patterson states is a "symbol of rank and the color of the robes of emperors kings and nobility. (Those next in the hierarchy would be allowed to wear colors such as gold, silver and red but the hoi polloi would not be allowed any color exuberance in their wearing apparel!)" (Patterson 2004, p.316). As if their departure in rank is colorfully highlighted in her being posed as such with Morris Townsend's being left in the scene.

Washington Square) 1997) as Dianne F. Sadoff asserts *"*represents the arts as an index of acculturation. First, the woman is framed, portrayed as portrait or representation. Three times, Catherine watches out her window, framed by its frame, with caged bird by her side, looking for her father (or, ironically, lover), then runs down the stairs, screaming 'Father's home!' (or murmuring, 'I've been missed')" (Sadoff 2002, p. 270). In these scenes, Catherine's face dissolves into various stages of her life: the weeping girl who spoiled the family party becomes older, though still somewhat confused, turns out to poise as a young woman. The portrayal of such scenes connotes some sort of ascension. As Mircea Eliade has observed, "ascensions of all kinds, such as climbing mountains or stairs or soaring upwards through the air, always signify that the human condition is being transcended and that higher cosmic levels are being attained" (Cirlot 2001, p. 20). Also, based upon "the concept of energy, the action of rising expresses an increase in intensity, whether it concerns domination or the lust for power, or any other urge whatsoever" (20).

Catherine's mother, once portrayed as dead in initial sequence, reappears throughout the film in pictures this time, hanging alongside pictures of other women on the walls. Catherine is reflected several times in framed mirror: first near Morris Catherine enters the mise-en-shot from outside the frame, later when she feeds her dying father, her face is mirrored. Also, her images appear in a glass as she is pondering over her intimate thoughts.

Like portraits of women there at Washington Square demonstrated as representation of themselves rather than specific qualities attributed to women, Catherine is somewhat stuck with her father and with staying in Washington Square, even though she has to go on her way to realize it. When the young Catherine tries to sing at a party, she confronts a misfortune. When with her lover, she harmonizes the song in a loving manner at the piano, there is also Lavinia who joins in ("la, la, la, la, la, la," together with Sloper's disparaging smile in the background. However, there is no trace of any sneering directed towards Catherine, for as soon as her image dissolves into the frame occurs, Catherine appears as turning into a cultured lady, listening and weeping over music. When she is demonstrated as smiling, she is the one, who after commanding Morris not to ever see her again, plays it, in an obviously different manner at the end:

-Morris: "Do you hate me?" (*Washington Square* 1999, 1:46: 07-08)

-Catherine: "No. But please don't come here again". (*Washington Square* 1999, 1:46: 09-08)

The soundtrack's music as Sadoff aptly remarks "represents culture with a capital C, and learning Culture, the heiress increases her value as bearer of Culture and as cultured object. Yet the film represents her ironized acculturation as fitting her only for a womanly life as spinster and surrogate nurturer" (Sadoff 2002, p.270).

In Holland's adaptation of *Washington Square*, after Morris's departure, Catherine can be seen as working in the kitchen preparing meal for her father. She also hurriedly goes to her father's aid when he has a stroke. Even when it comes to Dr. Sloper's debility, Catherine is the one who spoon feeds him in bed devotedly. Afterwards, when the lawyer reads her father's will, Catherine, dressed in black, refuses to defy her father's will to donate all but the house to charities. Through deploying these details, Holland as Singer observes remains faithful to the Jamesian novella. "Goetz / Wyler's version had altered that provision in the will, giving Catherine the larger sum that Morris anticipated, but Holland's retains her partial disinheritance as in the novel" (Singer 2008, p. 125).

As far as moral vision is concerned, its various types together with their weaknesses can well be noticed in the drama of Washington *Square*. Highly assured of his sound and impeccable rationality, Dr. Sloper expects others to respect and follow his attitude wholeheartedly. Even though he manages to see through Mr. Townsend's adventures concerning Catherine, his attitude does not turn out to be all that fruitful .His own daughter's inner growth is strangely enough overlooked by his discerning eyes. Catherine, on the other hand, with her "transcendentalizing imagination," as Garbowsky observes "sees profoundly, but misses the superficial. Enriched as she is by her modest adventure and misfortune, for the longest time she is simply wrong both about her father and her lover" (Garbowsky 2009, p.125).

Even though at first glance it might appear as if it is fundamentally Catherine's fault not to see through her suiter's true intentions, Dr. Sloper's all seemingly sound reasonability, on the other hand, cannot be labeled as flawless, for merely seeing through Mr. Townsend's intentions doesn't really safeguard his daughter's life and happiness. This principle that "it is right to deny another person an experience which one supposes to be harmful" (qtd in Gargano 1976, p.355) isn't necessarily applicable to all circumstances and apparently that is the point that Dr. Sloper fails to implement. Mrs. Elizabeth Almond, however, despite being as rational as her brother, Dr. Sloper, does not share his attitudes, for genuinely discerns what her brother fails to notice:

> "If there's one thing I've learned of my brother after all these years, it's that he's generally not the approving sort". (*Washington Square* 1997, 11:13-21)

In the concluding scene, Morris Townsend stands before Catherine and she eventually sees through his mind and for the first time manages to perceive the figure of a fortune hunter in him inside out and thus the climax of the story occurs. Since James's novella has been embellished with much detail, Holland apparently has selected her own perspective to secure her adaptation's integrity, for as Joy Gould Boyum asserts in *Double Exposure: Fiction into Film*, "The rhetoric of fiction is simply not the rhetoric of film, and it's in finding analogous strategies whereby one achieves the effects of the other that the greatest challenge of adaptation lies" (Boyum 1989, p. 96). R. P. Blackmur and Richard Poirier observe that *Washington Square* (1880) contains recurrent Jamesian themes, character types, and relations, and the consequent dynamics and ramifications of power as if building from Roderick Hudson toward the central situation of *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881) and beyond to major novels. "New elements have been introduced in Washington *Square* (1880) that will themselves recur in later novels. James' intensifying interest in the interaction of one's circumstances with the development of one's mind and personality is one of these new concerns" (Zacharias 1990, p. 208).

In individualizing Catherine's character than any previous novel character, James has not avoided involving her in the implicit social commentary raised by her father's inserting financial relations into his family. Consequently, Catherine's involvement in the tale is not merely her personal problem, for as Zacharias asserts in "Henry James' Style in *Washington Square*", it"raises a problem for James: how to

individualize a character without sacrificing the didactic component of the fiction, which may be carried more effectively by flatter, more representative characters as vehicles" (ibid). Holland individualizes Catherine in her own way through ascribing the role of an independent woman to her and it's being attained and enacted through her self-made growth particularly portrayed in the concluding scene when Morris Townsend suggests putting the painful past behind:

-Catherine: "I will not allow it. You hurt me too badly. I felt it very much. I felt it for years. It made a great change in my life". (*Washington Square* 1997, 1:45: 09-22)

Catherine in Holland's film as Laurence Raw argues is depicted as someone not content with "picking up her morsel of fancy-work", the work of her own plain nature, as the novel suggests, but rather as a youngish woman who has transformed the house of her former powerlessness into a place of nurture for other children, some of whom have been as deprived of love as she once was. While this wish-fulfilling ending is directed at those who have been victims of masculine authority it has also been judged inappropriate to the sociohistorical context of James's novel. (Raw 1997, p.223-4).

7.8. "Self-development

That Catherine, both as a preteen and a young woman, has been depicted as a dim-witted character obviously controlled and repeatedly rejected by her father somewhat paves the way for her celebrating her new-found freedom and identity both as a governess and the ruling lady of Washington Square by herself enacting the role of an independent woman. Even though she has earlier been depicted as an isolated girl whose sole companion in her room has been a bird imprisoned in a cage, apparently influenced by her father's rejection, but she sings "the prettiest music of all", the moment she feels released to take "a plain little piece of string" on her own without the helping hand of either her father or Morris Townsend. She is no longer portrayed as that young girl who would appear as unsuccessful in public when trying to perform the song "The Tale of the String" chiefly to please her father, for she is depicted as a governess surrounded by young children in whose childhood she sees hers revisited under her care performing the same song successfully this time and her grin is suggestive of her contentment with a song that has been made hers this time. This scene by itself is highly reminiscent of Margaret Fuller's theory stated in "Woman in the Nineteenth Century", which regards a woman's "self-development as a prior condition of social progress". Fuller envisions a woman whose "thoughts may turn to the center, and she may, by steadfast contemplation entering into the secret of truth and love, use it for the use of all men, instead of a chosen few, and interpret through it all the forms of life" (Fuller 1845, p.207).

7.9. Suggestive Anachronisms Deployed in *Washington Square* (1997)'s Soundtrack

In the soundtrack of the movie *Washington Square* (1997), composed by Jan A.P. Kaczmarek, there is one song, which Morris Townsend (Ben Chaplin) and Catherine (Jennifer Jason Leigh) sing at the piano. As James Harbeck observes, Salvatore Quasimodo's poem is too modern for *Washington Square* (1880). In fact, "Tu chiami una vita" was written more than 40 years after *Washington Square*, but the poem speaks of truths, of the heart, and of love and its effects, and it reflects on what happens in the story. So it is as if in the manner of a truth (quasi modo veri) to use it in the movie.

The song, "Tu Chiami una Vita," is "one of the film's anachronisms that has drawn criticism " (qtd. in Griffin 2002, p. 186). The "Puccini-like music seems at least fifty years ahead of the couple's time, and the lyrics are a setting of a famous poem by Salvatore Quasimodo. Yet the late romantic swell of the music as suits Quasimodo's words, which assert the power of love to: 'call on a life / that inside, deep, has names / of skies and gardens'" (Quasimodo 1984: 38). More openly as Karen Michele Chandler observes "the song points to the gifts that only love uncovers. It asserts the need to look beyond Catherine's, plain, clumsy surface to her inner riches, which are akin to the beauties of nature" (Chandler 2002, p.186-7). Catherine's singing the song with Morris, is indicative of his love bringing promising

means for expressing her gifts. It is through this love at this step that Catherine has managed to deploy her inner gifts to convey her art. At the end of the film, however, even though the same song recurs, it does not signify the same, for at the time of their final parting, she has eventually been released from her father's patriarchal attitudes and has become Washington Square's lady, preferring to take care of children there instead and this time finding the required love in herself as if nothing has happened and thus turning the outcome that could otherwise be "bitter" into a "sweet" one as it is expressed in Quasimodo's song.

There is also another suggestive song included in the soundtrack of *Washington Square* 1997 and it is "The Tale of the String" (*Washington Square* 1997, 1:41:34-57). That it is played right after reading Dr. Sloper's will, does not appear to have occurred with no implication of what has gone between Catherine and Morris in the earlier part of the movie when they would practice and perform music together in front of her father. It appears to be reminiscent of Catherine's feelings then that the one complementing her has stepped into her life: (*Washington Square* 1997, 1: 40: 32-41:57).

That might be the reason why the song "The Tale of the String" (*Washington Square* 1999, 1:41:34-57) has not been included right after Catherine's starting to believe in Morris's love and companionship for a life time. What it takes for a "a plain little piece of string" to become "the prettiest music of all" bespeaks well of Catherine's enduring process of trying all through her life up to this point. She has suffered an overwhelming failure in her childhood when she when was expected to sing for her father and his guests but her wetting herself made things much worse (*Washington Square* 1997, 06:54-6).

7.10. Death Obsession

Dr. Sloper's "empirical studies as a physician and social observer and Lavinia's escapist, romantic scheming", as Chandler states "yield far less knowledge of experience" (Chandler 2002, p.187). The film indicates that Catherine's way of attaining self- insight differs drastically from the ones deployed by her own father, who as a physician deals mainly with empirical studies some which have evidently been displayed. The interview between Dr. Sloper and Morris Townsend. is held in a theater where a corpse is taken and it occurs just when Morris enters. This is not the only reference to death and dead bodies, for Dr. Sloper's specialty is concerned with cutting up dead bodies. The diagram depicting human skeleton or the jar containing an organ are all highly replete with death thought as if these all hint at impeding hindrance in any blossoming thought of new life and rebirth and it is in such a place that Morris intends to ask for Catherine's hand. Even at the very beginning of *Washington Square* (1997), the idea of the infant's stepping into the world is more concerned with its mother's death. That at first the sound of the crying infant is heard (*Washington Square* 1997, 3:14-26) and then the dead body of her mother (*Washington Square* 1997, 3:14-26) is suggestive of death's being replaced by life, but it is thought of as the other way round by the infant's father:

"How obscene . . . that your mother should give her life, so you could inhabit

space on this earth". (*Washington Square* 1997, 1: 07:15-39)

Dr. Sloper's obsession with death may well be noticed even when he is imagining an ideal future life for his daughter from his own perspective: "I thought she'd end her days at Washington Square in the best of comfort. Oh, I suppose that in some years to come, some man might happen along, and . . . a widower, perhaps, who wouldn't mind how she was too much, who would be intent to live out the remainder of his life with her". (*Washington Square* 1997, 1:17:26-51)

It should not be overlooked that "a widower", who according to his calculations "wouldn't mind how she was" too much, is related to a man who has lost, most probably through death, his spouse.

Or when he appears to be evaluating his daughter's worth, he cannot help thinking of death even if it be an animal's being killed: "Now your value is twice as great with the knowledge and taste you've acquired. We have fattened the sheep for him before he kills it". (*Washington Square* 1997, 1: 07:15-39)

Beside his obsession with death, his other obsession that keeps assailing his mind is that of money to the extent that even his own sister, reminds him of what might come in the aftermath:

> Lavinia: "You've worked all your life to amass this fortune . . . knowing that Catherine would be the only one to leave it to. Shouldn't she have some happiness with it, even if it does mean she has to buy it? There is no evidence to suggest that he will not make a fine husband. (*Washington Square* 1997, 1:16:40-17:03) With the depiction of how far her father's attitude is replete with issues devoid of rebirth and growth, i.e. death and money, Catherine's vehement zest for attaining independence and acquiring a nurturing position is further juxtaposed.

Conclusion

The present study has demonstrated how Catherine, totally oppressed by her father, endeavors to act on her own in order to turn from a nurtured figure into a nurturing one in the light of psychological realism. In this study, the steps she takes comprising her mental processes, i.e., attaining identity, having herself authenticate, deploying significant silence, retaliating and securing the upper position, and acquiring self-development have all been analyzed. Even though the film's focal character is Catherine, her father, i.e. Dr. Sloper, has not been overlooked, for he acts somewhat as her foil when both her being oppressed by others and her attempt to grow and attain independence are portrayed. Also, since demonstrating Catherine's psyche is of prime significance, the audio-visual art deployed presenting gestures, facial expressions and a symbolically suggestive mise-en-sce-ne in order to provide clues of her psychic unfolding revealed for the viewer have been included in the study.

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