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POWER AND POWERLESSNESS IN HENRY JAMES' *THE TURN OF THE SCREW* (1898)

Abstract: This article focuses on *The Turn of the Screw* (1898), which has a special status within Henry James's oeuvre as an effort to reestablish himself as a popular author in the literary market. The genre of ghost story that James used occasionally in shorter pieces as well, turns this famous novella into a literary tour de force that has riveted the attention of critics for over 120 years. The article explores James's attitude to his own work in the context of power relations in and around the novella. It addresses the questions of the author's power over his art and his audience, the power of the narrator or narrators over someone else's tale, and complex multidirectional power relations within the ghost story itself. The ultimate question concerns the traditional social hierarchies that James lays bare in his novella. In spot analyses, the article brings to the surface the occurrences of the word "power" in relation to the central character of the unnamed governess and comments on James's nuanced study of power as the other of emotion and affect.

Key words: Henry James, ghost story, authorship, power relations, social hierarchy, emotion and affect

1. Introduction: Meet the Author

The Turn of the Screw (1898) is "certainly the best known and most discussed" of Henry James's more than 100 tales (Drummond, 2009, 289). Its technically sounding title gestures towards the mechanism of creating horror, which in itself sets the author above and beyond the emotions (and to some extent also affects) that the text conveys and provokes. James did not think much of this novella, at least at first and at least on the face of it. In his letters to family and friends, he used to speak slightly about this ghost story, even if his correspondents praised it. In his letter of December 1, 1897, he reported to his sister Alice that he had just finished his "little book," which gave him "two or three mornings of breathing-time before I begin another" (James, 1966, p. 107). To the French essayist and novelist Paul Bourget, he wrote on August 19, 1898, that he had just published "a poor little pot-boiling study of nothing at all, *qui ne tire pas à conséquence*" (James, 1966, p. 109). In letter after letter to H.G. Wells (James, 1966, p. 110–111) and W.D. Howells (James, 1966, p. 113, 115–117), James apparently reveled in belittling his "little book" that has, nevertheless, kept his critics on edge ever since its publication.

Ten years later, when revising and selecting the best of his fiction for the famous New York Edition, James still dismissed the ghost story in a preface as "a fairy-tale

pure and simple.” He qualified somewhat his criticism, however, by remarking that it sprang “not from an artless and measureless, but from a conscious and cultivated credulity” (James, (1962 [1934]), p. 171). In other words, he consistently emphasized the technical skill that a professional author needs to make a text work for him and the reader. His disparaging remarks were – to all appearances – meant to prove that he was in control of his narrative, rather than being possessed or carried away by it, as was the case of the poor governess inside the novella. Being a master storyteller required remaining outside the story. The inclusion of the novella in the prestigious New York Edition means, however, that James thought of it much better than he had ever admitted. His insistence on technical skill and control over the text and its reception amounts to underlining the power that the author claims for himself and the female protagonist of the ghost story so evidently lacks.

Yet, *The Turn of the Screw* does not testify to the possession of power over one’s fiction and the literary market, but, much rather, to James’s aspiration for such power. In writing this ghostly *tour de force*, he sought to solidify, or rather regain, his literary status by reinventing himself under the pressure of contemporaneous popular demand that he at once accepted and begrudged. The text marks a shift in James’s career, from the middle to the late phase of his writing. The phases, distinguished by James’s biographer and editor, Leon Edel, differ in several respects. The tales of the middle period show James as “a brilliant and witty observer of life on both sides of the Atlantic” (Edel, 1962, p. 11). They illustrate “an extraordinary play of intellectual humour” (Edel, 1962, p. 11) and offer memorable portraits of American women (Edel, 1962, p. 12). A dramatic change occurred, as Edel points out, by the end of the 19th century in the plots and styles of James’ late tales, as meticulous depictions of manners gave way to “a study of states of feeling and dilemmas of existence” (Edel, 1962, p. 13). *The Turn of the Screw* is a text of the transition period, as James was moving away from the conventions of realist fiction towards ambiguity and modernist experiments that became his trademark in the late, or major, phase (see Ellmann, 2010). There is little humor in *The Turn of the Screw*, the portrayed characters are without exception English, and the narrative is first and foremost a careful study of emotions and to some extent also affects. The dilemmas concern both existence and perception.

The novella was meant as a potboiler, as if in defiance of the previous theatrical fiasco (see Salamensky, 2009, pp. 379–180) and the disappointing sales of his social novels *The Bostonians* and *The Princess Casamassima* (Anesko, 1986, p. 101). After his failed attempt at becoming a popular playwright and social commentator, James once again hoped that he could be a popular novelist and the genre of ghost story seemed to serve that purpose perfectly. In *The Turn of the Screw*, James still managed to satisfy both his simple-minded and sophisticated audiences. The simple-minded were pleased with the gothic scenario and setting, as well as the suspense. The sophisticated could chew endlessly on the dilemma of who sees what in the tantalizingly inconclusive plot.

2. Framing the Governess

The frame narrative is an age-old literary technique of introducing the main plot, setting the scene, and explaining the circumstances of writing a story. *The Turn of the Screw* belongs to this tradition, though it is, in fact, only partly framed. Susan Crowl points out that the novella “has a half-frame which is full of suggestive, if veiled, commentary on the story to follow” (1971, p. 108). In his reading of James’s text, William Goetz calls the frame “asymmetrical” and explains why the novella has no epilogue. He claims that “the governess does not exist as a voice at all but pre-eminently as a written text, one that cannot be questioned, one that is both a court of final appeal [...] and an unsatisfying, incomplete testament” (1981, p. 73). In other words, the reader of *The Turn of the Screw* is confronted with a manuscript of a personal account (allegedly) written by a governess and read out loud by a man who claims to have known her in his youth; he announces that “[s]he was my sister’s governess” (James, 1966 [1908], p. 2).

In James’s novella, the setting of the prologue is a Christmastime storytelling competition that takes place in an old country house. The question tossed at the party is who can tell the scariest ghost story. One of the participants of that round is Douglas, who after some delay (the manuscript he mentions is allegedly “in a locked drawer” in London and needs to be fetched, James, 1966 [1908], p. 2), produces and reads to the audience a personal account of his sister’s late governess. The text he presents has the form of a memoir without dates. Douglas claims that he received the manuscript from the governess herself (“She sent me the pages in question before she died,” James, 1966 [1908], p. 2), but he may have just as well written it himself. There is no one to prove or disprove it. Because of these ambiguities, the question remains how much power Douglas has over this story, how it matters to him, and to what extent it is his story. There is an undeniable analogy between the governess’s charges: Miles and Flora in the manuscript, on the one hand, and Douglas and his sister, who is mentioned in the prologue, on the other. If Douglas is in some way identical to Miles, who dies at the end of the story, is Douglas a ghost exposing the governess’s folly, even though he claims to have been very fond of her? The unnamed narrator in the prologue, in his turn, copied the manuscript and took over the story, leaving the reader in doubt as to his stake in the process of narrating. By the time the unnamed narrator offers the tale in print form, Douglas is dead, and the mystery of his involvement in the narrated story is irretrievable.

From the beginning to the end, *The Turn of the Screw* is a study of power, for which emotions and affects seem to be a litmus test: first, the power of the author over his art and his audience, second, the power of the narrator or narrators over someone else’s tale, and third, complex multidirectional power relations within the ghost story itself. Ambiguities abound and most questions haunting the reader from the beginning, remain without an answer in the end. For example, who is, in fact, the author of the story? What stakes do the narrators have? Does the story strengthen or defy the traditional hierarchies? Power relations within the story of the governess

are quite complex and fraught with dizzying parallels, mirror images, and instances of mimicry.

She is described in the prologue as a twenty-year-old girl, “the youngest of several daughters of a poor country parson,” who seeks to take “service for the first time in the schoolroom” (James, 1966 [1908], p. 4). Answering an advertisement in person, she comes to London to be dazzled by the owner of the estate, who eagerly employs her and requests that she take complete care of his orphaned niece and nephew. The unnamed master “vacates the chain of command, delegating his authority to the unnamed governess” (Ellmann, 2010, p. 38). He invests her with “supreme authority” (James, 1966 [1908], p. 5) over the household, which as the reader has every reason to expect, cannot go well given her young age and lack of experience. Is the uncle taking revenge on female ambition by setting a modest person so high on a pedestal or does this investiture mean that for all the male power, women are supposed to take responsibility? The key point is that the “high” position is in a country home in Essex, over children and domestic servants, which is the kind of splendor a London gentleman gladly foregoes. To achieve his aim of persuading the girl, he uses the power of elocution, whose samples are offered in the prologue in free indirect speech (James, 1966 [1908], p. 5).

The uncle’s power over the governess rests on several social assumptions about the superiority of a wealthy male aristocrat over an impecunious woman of lower social standing. In addition, his social power also casts an erotic spell on the young governess, who at the age of twenty seeks her first employment. To a young provincial and impressionable woman, the children’s uncle is the embodiment of Prince Charming:

He was handsome and bold and pleasant, off-hand and gay and kind. He struck her, inevitably, as gallant and splendid, but what took her most of all and gave her the courage she afterwards showed was that he put the whole thing to her as a kind of favor, an obligation he should gratefully incur. She conceived him as rich, but as fearfully extravagant—saw him all in a glow of high fashion, of good looks, of expensive habits, of charming ways with women. He had for his own town residence a big house filled with the spoils of travel and the trophies of the chase; but it was to his country home, an old family place in Essex, that he wished her immediately to proceed. (James, 1966 [1908], p. 4)

In the prologue, James plays with the reader’s expectations concerning the governess’s social rise, comparable to that in Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* (1847) (see Duperray, 2011, p. 147), but the uncle in James’s novella woos the governess only to absent himself completely from the story, to become a ghostly presence within that space. He refuses to be bothered and tells her – in his overpoweringly charming way – that “she should never trouble him—but never, never: neither appeal nor complain nor write about anything; only meet all questions herself, receive all moneys from his solicitor, take the whole thing over and let him alone” (James, 1966 [1908], p. 6). However, as the situation escalates, the need to appeal to him for help becomes ever more urgent.

3. The Power of Ghosts

In the rural mansion of Bly, the governess is in charge, which means that she assumes the role of a person in power, despite her inferior position as a woman and an employee in the first place. She is responsible for the household and thus stands above the housekeeper, Mrs. Grose, who has so far taken care of the girl, whose name is Flora. Her brother Miles returns to Bly from a boarding school for the summer, preceded by a letter from the headmaster – forwarded by the absentee uncle – announcing that the boy had been expelled (James, 1966 [1908], p. 10). The boy is charming (just like his uncle), which prevents the governess from confronting him with the issue of expulsion right away. The beginning of the relationship between the governess and her two charges is idyllic, but the countryside idyll is thrown off balance when strange people begin to appear on the property.

The Turn of the Screw is a ghost story, but the word “ghost” is used only once in the prologue with reference to a different tale. The word “specter” also appears once and the word “apparition” – five times. This sparing use of words denoting ghostly presence heightens the reality of ghosts. The word “visitor” appears twelve times in this context and the word “visitant” – four times (see James 1995). The concept of “visitor” does not allow for distinguishing between reality and imagination.

The first sighting of a hatless man appears to be part of the governess’s reverie in Chapter III. She goes for a stroll on the grounds and thinks how charming it would be “suddenly to meet someone” (James, 1966 [1908], p. 15). Her reverie – reminiscent of her commerce with the master of the estate in London – turns into reality (of sorts), but what promises to be a friendly encounter, evolves into its opposite, as the governess becomes aware of being stared at and “fixed” by a stranger looking down on her from a tower:

What arrested me on the spot—and with a shock much greater than any vision had allowed for—was the sense that my imagination had, in a flash, turned real. He did stand there!—but high up, beyond the lawn and at the very top of the tower to which, on that first morning, little Flora had conducted me. [...] It produced in me, this figure, in the clear twilight, I remember, two distinct gasps of emotion, which were, sharply, the shock of my first and that of my second surprise. My second was a violent perception of the mistake of my first: the man who met my eyes was not the person I had precipitately supposed. [...] We were confronted across our distance quite long enough for me to ask myself with intensity who then he was and to feel, as an effect of my inability to say, a wonder that in a few instants more became intense. [...] We were too far apart to call to each other, but there was a moment at which, at shorter range, some challenge between us, breaking the hush, would have been the right result of our straight mutual stare. He was in one of the angles, the one away from the house, very erect, as it struck me, and with both hands on the ledge. So I saw him as I see the letters I form on this page; then, exactly, after a minute, as if to add to the spectacle, he slowly changed his place—passed, looking at me hard all the while, to the opposite corner of the platform. Yes, I had the sharpest sense that during this transit he never took his eyes from me, and I can see at this moment the way his hand, as he went, passed from

one of the crenellations to the next. He stopped at the other corner, but less long, and even as he turned away still markedly fixed me. He turned away; that was all I knew. (James, 1966 [1908], p. 15–17)

The man reappears in Chapter IV, peering into the house through a window (James, 1966 [1908], p. 20), which frightens the governess and makes her seek more information from Mrs. Grose, who recognizes in the governess's description, the master's former valet, Peter Quint. The governess learns from Mrs. Grose that Peter Quint was close not only to the master but also to Miles, which alerts the governess to the dangers besetting her two charges. She resolves to protect them. However, her attempt to show her power is very soon challenged once again, this time by a female figure, whom she notices watching her across a lake while playing with Flora by the end of Chapter VI (James, 1966 [1908], p. 29–30). The governess realizes, however, that she is not the object of the strange spectator's gaze. The woman came for Flora, whom she "fixed," as the governess puts it in conversation with Mrs. Grose "with such awful eyes! [...] With a determination—indescribable. With a kind of fury of intention. [...] To get hold of her" (James, 1966 [1908], p. 32). The apparitions come ever closer and one night, the governess encounters Peter Quint inside the house. She shows courage and takes note of it in her account:

dread had unmistakably quitted me and [...] there was nothing in me there that didn't meet and measure him. I had plenty of anguish after that extraordinary moment, but I had, thank God, no terror. And he knew I had not—I found myself at the end of an instant magnificently aware of this. I felt, in a fierce rigor of confidence, that if I stood my ground a minute I should cease—for the time, at least—to have him to reckon with; and during the minute, accordingly, the thing was as human and hideous as a real interview: hideous just because it *was* human, as human as to have met alone, in the small hours, in a sleeping house, some enemy, some adventurer, some criminal". (James, 1966 [1908], p. 41)

Strange events happen in the house, and the children – most notably – keep disappearing from their beds at night, but for a while, there are no more sightings. The governess is, however, convinced that the children continue to see the ghosts:

What it was least possible to get rid of was the cruel idea that, whatever I had seen, Miles and Flora saw *more*—things terrible and unguessable and that sprang from dreadful passages of intercourse in the past. Such things naturally left on the surface, for the time, a chill which we vociferously denied that we felt. (James, 1966 [1908], p. 53)

The power of the governess is thus increasingly challenged by the ghosts of the previous governess, Miss Jessel, and the master's valet, Peter Quint. The two, as Mrs. Grose explains, had developed an intimate relationship and were also very close to the children (James, 1966 [1908], p. 26, 32, 37). The power relations between Miss Jessel and Peter Quint are the usual story of the woman's victimization at the hands of a rude and cruel drunkard. Miss Jessel's somewhat higher social standing counts for nothing against the male brutality of her lower-class lover. What complicates the story further is the companionship that developed between the master and his valet,

“his own man,” as Mrs. Grose somewhat ambiguously puts it (James, 1966 [1908], p. 24). When pressed by the governess, Mrs. Grose reveals, piecemeal, that Peter Quint used to wear his master’s clothes, which – as the reader may assume – amounts to considerable intimacy. In other words, in relation to Miss Jessel, the cruel valet may have assumed the role of the master’s double. What exactly the valet’s relation with the master himself may have been, remains a mystery. As it gradually turns out, the master’s complete loss of interest in his country estate in Essex may well have to do with the passing of his companion, Peter Quint.

The ghosts invade the space and seem to control the children, but the reader never knows for sure how real the ghostly presence is. Is it just persistent memory or actual control over the children? In any case, the ghosts’ power derives at least in part from the living people’s openness to their presence. The governess is not sure and begins to struggle with Miss Jessel and Peter Quint for control over Miles and Flora. Ghosts are by definition elusive and evasive, but the more the governess seeks to control them, the more powerful their presence is in her consciousness and that of the children.

The governess feels manipulated by the children and the ghosts alike. The latter appear to pursue their aims (to be together again and to bring back the master) through the children’s agency. The children (or the ghosts they seem to impersonate) repeatedly ask the governess to write to the uncle and make him come to Bly. This is, however, precisely what she promised the uncle not to do. She struggles with the ghosts and with the children to protect, in fact, the handsome uncle. The children eventually fall prey to her heroic mission to save them and the household. In the end, Flora falls ill and leaves Bly with Mrs. Grose. Left all alone with Miles, the governess boldly faces the devil impersonated by the ghost of Peter Quint, but at the very moment when she seems to have extracted from Miles the admission of his connivance, the boy dies in her arms. There are no winners at the end of the story. The governess’s victory over Peter Quint coincides with the loss of her charge in the final scene of the novella. This in turn amounts to the utter defeat of both her educational mission and the mandate she received from the master.

4. Fe/Male Power/lessness

For all of the governess’s bravado, predicated on her sense of educational (if not pastoral – after all, she is not a parson’s daughter for nothing) mission, she is doomed to fail not only because of her young age and inexperience, but also on account of the double bind she willingly accepts: the responsibility for the children and the household, on the one hand, and the protection of the master against all inconveniences, on the other. Her authority, the power conferred on her by the owner of the estate is an illusion and, possibly, the most frightening ghost of all. She feels responsible for everyone, even though the ghosts are not after her. She seeks to forestall them and in struggling with shadows, she spirals down into powerlessness, which amounts to giving way to emotions and affects. The emotions she experiences

and whose effects she describes in her memoir contain the whole gamut from positive to negative ones: from enjoyment, interest, and surprise, down to fear and shame (see, for example, Silvan Tomkins, 1995). The study of emotions in *The Turn of the Screw* goes beyond the scope of this essay, but their connection to their physical bases and effects requires a detailed analysis because it was studied by the novelist's elder brother, the psychologist William James, around the time Henry James explored the governess's mind, that is, long before Tomkins formulated his theory (see W. James, 1894).

The whole novella is about power, but James uses the word "power" very sparingly. Perhaps not surprisingly, it appears only three times in Chapters VII, XIII, and XV, which is in the middle of the tale, when the question of power is still at a tipping point. Interestingly enough, power in Henry James's novella (and not only this one) is inextricably bound up with its other, that is, powerlessness. A sense of power brings with it negativity that haunts it like a ghost. Power is itself ghostly. It is always someone else's power: that of the owner of the estate, that of God, and that of high principle or a lofty idea (of, for example, saving others).

The first occurrence of the word "power" at the end of Chapter VII is built into a description (in fact, a self-description) of the governess breaking down in view of what seems to be the ghosts' intrusion and, what is still worse, the children's connivance. She confides her educational failure in the housekeeper, Mrs. Grose, who is both good-natured and illiterate, as the reader knows all too well. The governess's reaction in itself shows the degree of her despair. She trusts and seeks help from a motherly figure rather than her own intellect:

It brought out again all her [Mrs. Grose's] compassion for me, and at the renewed touch of her kindness my power to resist broke down. I burst, as I had the other time made her burst, into tears; she took me to her motherly breast, and my lamentation overflowed. "I don't do it!" I sobbed in despair; "I don't save or shield them! It's far worse than I dreamed—they're lost!" (James, 1966 [1908], p. 33)

What breaks down and calls for another woman's compassion is the governess's "power to resist." The reader can only speculate about what exactly she would like to resist. Perhaps it is precisely powerlessness that may well be a general term for overpowering emotions, disorientation, and lack of firm ground that the governess experiences and that robs her of the "authority" she was so mockingly invested with by the male aristocrat. Powerlessness in the face of the ghostly intrusion, which parallels her own ghosts of patriarchal power, puts her on a par with an illiterate housekeeper and thus shatters her dream of upward mobility. This dream is only implicated in fashioning herself as a person (a man or a woman – as assuming power involves transgenderism) responsible for "saving" and "shielding" those who are weak. In other words, the governess's imagery belongs to the sphere of a medieval romance, in which a knight – this is the role she seems to be assuming – is responsible for saving and shielding others.

The word "power" appears again in Chapter XIII, in the report on an exchange between the governess and Mrs. Grose, following the scene on the lake, in which

Flora seemed to have seen the ghost of Miss Jessel. The governess refers to her own (supernatural) power to see what she expects the children can also see, that is, the ghosts:

I had said in my talk with Mrs. Grose on that horrid scene of Flora's by the lake—and had perplexed her by so saying—that it would from that moment distress me much more to lose my power than to keep it. I had then expressed what was vividly in my mind: the truth that, whether the children really saw or not—since, that is, it was not yet definitely proved—I greatly preferred, as a safeguard, the fulness of my own exposure. I was ready to know the very worst that was to be known. (James, 1966 [1908], p. 52)

Especially the word “safeguard” in this excerpt harks back to the self-perception of the governess as a knight in shining armor, who is ready to jeopardize his/her safety for the sake of others. If she has no power over the ghosts and their relations with her young *protégés*, at least she can use her power to know the worst. However, the possession of that power is also insecure. The governess voices her wish to keep this power in a way that suggests that having or losing it is only a matter of degree of distress. Both possession and loss cause distress, and it is the sense of responsibility for others that makes the difference in the degree of distress.

The third occurrence of the word “power” in Chapter XV follows the confrontation between Miles and the Governess on their way to church. They discuss the matter of the uncle's intervention, which Miles explicitly requests. Miles is composed enough to march on to church after this exchange, whereas the governess is so upset that she stops to think the situation over and does not enter the church: “The business was practically settled from the moment I never followed him. It was a pitiful surrender to agitation, but my being aware of this had somehow no power to restore me” (James, 1966 [1908], p. 57). The awareness that in Chapter XIII still figured as a bridgehead, crumbles at the beginning of Chapter XV. It has no longer the power to “restore” the governess.

The word “power” is thus used in the positive sense of “supernatural power” only once in the whole novella. The first and the third examples are a negation of power. The whole novella consists of twenty-four chapters, but from the beginning of chapter XV, the word is not used again, which is a significant absence. The governess's mind spirals down into powerlessness, which finds its readily recognizable modality in madness. She loses power and control. Similarly, Douglas, who brought her story to the audience's attention, has no more power; he is silent and dead. There is hence no epilogue at the end to match the opening prologue.

The related concepts of “strength” and “force” are likewise sparse in James's novella. “Strength” appears in the positive upbeat sense at the beginning of Chapter VI (James, 1966 [1908], p. 25). The governess's strength is put to the test at the end of Chapter IX (James, 1966 [1908], p. 41). At the beginning of Chapter XIII, she has no more strength, as she admits that speaking to the children “proved quite as much as ever an effort beyond my strength” (James, 1966 [1908], p. 50). Finally, at the end of Chapter XIX, it is only the pang of envy that is strengthened when the governess compares her complex relationship with the children with the simple

one that Mrs. Grose has established. This comparison again signals the conviction that awareness, knowledge, or simply literacy can give the governess no advantage. The concept of “force,” which appears seven times in the novella, is mostly related to others: Mrs. Grose in Chapters II (James, 1966 [1908], p. 11), VII (James, 1966 [1908], p. 31), and VIII (James, 1966 [1908], p. 37), to heavy rain in Chapter IV (James, 1966 [1908], p. 20), and to a frightening idea in Chapter XI (James, 1966 [1908], p. 46). The governess’s sarcastic force towards the illiterate Mrs. Grose is “not fully intended” in Chapter XVI (James, 1966 [1908], p. 61), and in the final chapter (XXIV) in confrontation with Miles, the governess mimics Mrs. Grose’s “homely force” (James, 1966 [1908], p. 87), which is in turn mocked by the tragic finale of the novella.

4. Conclusion: Inside Out

James’s text raises more questions than it ever answers, which has provoked critics over the past 120 years to subordinate the novella to a succession of readings that pull it in one direction or another (see Beidler, 1989). Thus the reader is invited by the author (who revels in delegating his authorship to others, that is, the narrators) to take the place of the governess in dealing with the ghosts and “educating” the text. This effort inevitably leaves the text dead in the end, without ever managing to save anyone or dispel the ghosts. The author remains safely outside all these efforts and defines his power over the novella, the literary market, and the reception by distancing himself from his text. Thus the novella with all its paratexts is, in a way, a lesson in practical psychology, and thus a complement to the academic work of the novelist’s brother. In his letters and his preface to the novella, Henry James reserves for himself the role of the charming master, the children’s uncle, who refuses involvement because it would require an emotional response and would rob him of his power as an absentee.

The first known use of the word “governess” goes back to the 15th century, when its sense was “a woman who governs.” The institution of “a woman who cares for and supervises a child, especially in a private household” is older than that (see Merriam-Webster online dictionary), but it was only in the mid-eighteenth century that “[t]he transformation of the governess into a major literary character” occurred, parallel to the feminization of the novel (Hughes, 2001, p. 3). James may have resented the competition of “scribbling ladies” of his time and he may have, quite traditionally, insisted on his masterly, patriarchal noninvolvement, but in penning the famous story of an unnamed, and thus representative, governess, he exposed the mechanism of investing a young woman with the power that is illusive and exceeds by far her real capability, especially if she takes it upon herself to serve the patriarch and obey patriarchal hierarchies. In dispensing with the happy ending of social mobility, James lays bare some of the mechanisms of power in Victorian society, of which the woman is a willing victim.

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МОЋ И НЕМОЋ У ХЕНРИ ЦЕЈМСУ *ОКРЕТ ЗАВРТЊА* (1898)

Овај чланак се фокусира на *Окрет завртња* (1898), који има посебан статус у опусу Хенрија Цејмса као покушај да се поново успостави као популаран писац на књижевном тржишту. Жанр приче о духовима који је Цејмс повремено користио и у краћим комадима, претвара ову чувену новелу у књижевни *tour de force* који привлачи пажњу критичара више од 120 година. Чланак истражује Цејмсов став према сопственом делу у контексту односа моћи у и око новеле. Она се бави питањима моћи аутора над својом уметношћу и његовом публиком, моћи наратора или наратора над туђом причом и сложеним вишесмерним односима моћи унутар саме приче о духовима. Коначно питање се тиче традиционалних друштвених хијерархија које Цејмс открива у својој новели. У детаљним анализама, чланак извлачи на површину појаву речи „моћ“ у односу на централни лик неименоване гувернанте и коментарише Цејмсову нијансирану студију моћи као супротности емоција и афекта.

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