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Rewriting Innocence:

Innocence after the Acquisition of Knowledge in 1880–1920 American Novels

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation attempts to rewrite the notion of innocence as ignorance and political ideology by examining American novels written at the turn of the twentieth century. Thus far, innocence has frequently been defined as naïveté and lack of knowledge about the world as well as a political means to conceal the violence committed against marginalized groups. If innocence has constituted national identity since the birth of America, both meanings of innocence are problematic. Innocence as ignorance is not endurable as it will be lost at the time of knowledge acquisition. As knowledge is accumulated over time, innocence as ignorance, which would disappear once knowledge is gained, cannot continue to constitute national identity. Innocence equated to political ideology embodies violence and crime which is discrepant from the

meaning of innocence as "lack of corruption" ("Innocence," *Oxford*). Therefore, innocence needs to be revised as a notion that incorporates knowledge and that corresponds to its original meaning. As America accumulates more and more knowledge over time, innocence needs to survive and be formed in conjunction with knowledge in order to continue to constitute national identity.

This study examines three American novels written in the twentieth century by Henry James, Mark Twain, and Edith Wharton. During the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, America adopts the rhetoric of innocence in order to refashion its national identity as it establishes itself as a global power. The escalation of industrialization, urbanization, and modernization together with America's international expansion at the turn of the twentieth century led to a rapid and large scale accumulation of new types of knowledge. During this period, faced with the task of forming a new national identity by adopting the rhetoric of innocence, the prominent issue becomes the union of innocence and knowledge. One of the questions that America at the turn of the twentieth century is concerned with is how to preserve innocence when knowledge about the world and its evils continues to be accrued.

James's *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881), Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), and Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* (1920) reflect America's preoccupation with the combination of innocence and knowledge at the turn of the twentieth century. James is concerned with the union of innocence and knowledge, especially knowledge about evil. Twain examines how innocence, growth, and knowledge can be combined. Wharton explores how innocence can be maintained while knowledge about the mechanism of social structure and social interaction is acquired. In their novels, innocence is not defined as ignorance or political ideology but as a notion that corresponds to the origin of innocence: not harming others ("Innocence," *Oxford*). Innocence means intending not to cause offence, crime, or corruption

in relation to others. In the novels of James, Twain, and Wharton, innocence is demonstrated by characters who renounce self-profit for the benefit of others or for maintaining relations with them. Innocence comes with a cost as it usually demands time, effort, dedication, and sacrifice on the part of those pursuing it. This explains why innocence is unpopular and occurs seldom; simultaneously, it also suggests the value of innocence when it is pursued and achieved.

The first chapter, "Miserable Knowledge in Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady*," examines the relationship between innocence and acquisition of knowledge. Through Isabel's acquirement of miserable knowledge and the process of absorbing this knowledge, *The Portrait of a Lady* explores how innocence and knowledge are united. She regards miserable knowledge as a source of instruction, and her awareness that she lacks this knowledge leads her to pursue the acquirement of miserable knowledge consciously and deliberately. Her marriage to Osmond leads Isabel to obtain the miserable knowledge that Osmond and Merle, whom she believed to be trustworthy and innocent, have used and deceived her for financial profit. Instead of taking revenge, Isabel determines not to repay evil with evil. Isabel maintains her relationship with Pansy who is the product of Osmond and Merle's sin and her relationship with Osmond that has betrayed her. Isabel's choice stems from her belief that avenging those who have committed evil against her will only produce more evil. By embracing the people who have intentionally made her miserable, Isabel demonstrates the meaning of innocence as repaying evil with good.

In the second chapter, "Knowledge Game in Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*," it is explored how Huck's growing knowledge about social evils can be combined with innocence. The racial ideology that endorses and legitimatizes black people as slaves is problematized by Huck's increasing awareness of Jim's humanity. Huck's oscillation between regarding Jim as a slave and as a friend represents the collision between the social morality of

slaveholding society and an individual notion of innocence. By acting as if Jim is his slave in the presence of whites, Huck complies with social morality; however, by helping Jim escape, Huck is carrying out his individual notion of innocence. The novel ultimately questions how innocence can be maintained in a slaveholding society. It explores whether it is possible for the individual, who constantly accumulates knowledge about the evils of the world through socialization, to realize innocence in spite of the constraint imposed by social morality. The controversial scene wherein Huck helps Jim escape with Tom suggests the difficulty of actualizing an individual notion of innocence as it collides with the standards of society and of others. Although Huck is constrained by social morality and by those who occupy more dominant positions in society than himself, he demonstrates his innocence by risking social disgrace and punishment for the sake of helping Jim escape and advocating Jim's humanity.

The third chapter, "Tacit Knowledge in Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence*," illustrates how the meanings of innocence and knowledge become diversified at the turn of the twentieth century. As a result, innocence comes to have multiple forms and therefore should be called innocences. In the novel, the innocences of Newland, May, and Ellen remain tacit and unnoticed by others but take forms that are different from each other. Thus, each character is innocent in their own way. The fact that their innocences cannot be easily detected or noticed by others and by society indicates that the plurality of innocence can be only understood from multiple perspectives. While no character attempts to make his/her innocence understandable to others so as to gain comfort or recognition, Newland, May, and Ellen silently comprehend the cost they each pay for pursuing their own notions of innocence. Newland renounces passionate love; Ellen gives up her membership of New York society, and May endures her husband's love for another woman. Their sacrifices are made for each other, and their innocences suggest that innocence comes with a price; it is valuable because it intends to

protect and benefit others. In their silent understanding and mourning for each other, Newland, May, and Ellen's sacrifices sustain them to lead meaningful lives.

In this study, innocence is established as intending to cause others no harm which rewrites the previously defined meanings of innocence as ignorance and as political ideology. Innocence premises the state of possessing knowledge about the world and about evil and using this knowledge for the purpose of causing others no harm. Innocence combined with knowledge becomes endurable while new types of knowledge continue to be accumulated in American history. The novels written at the turn of the twentieth century by James, Twain, and Wharton embody an innocence that can be sustained after the acquisition of knowledge. The plural forms that innocence comes to take at the turn of the twentieth century opens the possibility for innocence to adapt itself to the changes of American society over time.

Keywords: American innocence, Knowledge, Henry James, Mark Twain, Edith Wharton, American novels, the turn of the twentieth century
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Introduction

"Here's for the plain old Adam, the simple genuine self against the whole world," wrote R. W. Emerson in his journal on March 12, 1833 (99). The story of American innocence, embodied in the figure of the American Adam, goes further back in time than Emerson's era and is in fact as old as the birth of America. Since the beginning of America, American innocence has defined national identity.[1] Viorica Patea explains the "discovery of America" as the "archetypal Adamic fable of innocent beginnings" which is "intimately linked to the promised land and the story of Adam" (33, 17). During the process of forming its national identity, America discards European history "in favor of Adam, the prototype of the innocent man as a symbol as well as the ideal representation of its destiny" (15). As Adam is "fundamentally innocent" in "his very newness," American innocence embodies the idea that America is "something entirely new," ready to confront whatever awaits it with the aid of its own "unique and inherent resources" (Lewis 5, 4). In designating itself as a nation innocent of the crime and the corruption that Europe is guilty of, America adopts the rhetoric of innocence to establish its own identity and legitimacy as an independent nation distinct from Europe. If America has consistently adhered to an idea from its birth to the present, it would be the belief that America is an innocent nation.

The unique and exceptional character of American innocence leads to the dichotomous view that other nations and people are not innocent since it is only America that is innocent,

[1] Sacvan Bercovitch traces the beginning of American innocence in the Great Migration by the Puritans whose "basic elements" are "the divine purpose behind America's discovery, the teleological distinction of the New World from the Old, the sense of history ascending ineluctably towards the American paradise" ("Introduction" 6).

which may turn into self-conceit and exclusiveness.[2] The consistent criticism that American innocence is a political ideology suggests that America's coexistence and interrelation with other nations and other people needs to be taken into consideration. The origin of innocence is "not harming" and refers to an attitude adopted towards others ("Innocence," *Oxford*). Since this attitude does not apply to a solitary man, it can be argued that innocence comes into being in human relations. Therefore, this dissertation is concerned with the relational aspect of innocence and how innocence is actualized within relations with others and within society. Beyond naïve ignorance and an ideology that justifies the supremacy and exclusiveness of America over other nations, this study establishes innocence as a notion pursued for the sake of coexisting and having relations with others.

Discussions of American innocence have flourished since the 1950s and the 1960s by those who advocated American innocence and those who criticized the former.[3] The

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[2] Andrew Delbanco asserts that "nativism" is not only a problem of the America of Thomas Jefferson who was "queasy about admitting strangers to his New Jerusalem" but still of "too many Americans" now (62). According to Delbanco, America must consider the "universal distribution of hope" beyond the "color line" (67, 68).

[3] In *Radical Innocence* (1961), Ihab Hassan states that "it is nowadays proper to invoke the ideas of innocence and experience in any knowing discussion of American letters" (34). In 1974, Bercovitch asserts that there is an "emphasis in the last two or three decades on the crucial role of myth in shaping American history and histography" (6). Jonathan Mitchell argues that many Americanists of the 1950s, after World War II and in the face of America's dominant position, "looked back to the 1850s to retroactively designate an American renaissance and to find a 'usable past' as a foundation for American literature and American identity" (3). Starting with R. W. B. Lewis's *The American Adam* and Leslie Fiedler's *An End to Innocence* in 1955, Harry Levin's *The Power of Darkness: Hawthorne, Poe, Melville* (1958), Henry May's *The End of American Innocence* (1959), Fiedler's *Love and Death in the American Novel* (1960), Charles Sanford's *The Quest for paradise* (1961), and Ihab Hassan's *Radical Innocence* (1961) follow. Then Richard Slotkin's *Regeneration through Violence* (1973) and *The Fatal Environment* (1985) as well as Cecilia Tichi's *New Earth, New World* (1979), William Halsey's *The Survival of American Innocence: Catholicism in an Era of Disillusionment, 1920-1940* (1980), Carolyn Porter's *Seeing and Being* (1981), Jane Tompkin's *Sensational Designs* (1985), Donald Pease's *The American Renaissance Reconsidered* (1985) and *Visionary Compacts* (1987), Irving Howe's *The American Newness* (1986), Russel Reisig's *The Unusable Past* (1986), Sacvan Bercovitch and Myra Jehlen's *Ideology and Classic American Literature* (1986), Myra Jehlen's *American Incarnations* (1986), Richard T. Hughes and Leonard Allen's *Illusions of Innocence: Protestant Primitivism in America 1630-1875* (1988), and Pease's *Revisionary Interventions into the American Canon* (1994) are published. More recent criticisms on American innocence include Viorica Patea and Maria Eugenia Diaz's *Critical Essays on the Myth of the American Adam* (2001), Michael Gellert's *The Fate of America: An Inquiry into National Character* (2002), Richard T. Hughes's *Myths America Lives By* (2004), and Jonathan Mitchell's *Revision of the American Adam: Innocence, Identity and Masculinity in Twentieth Century America* (2011).

discussions of American innocence have been predominantly led by its criticizers since the second half of the twentieth century and up until recently. Whereas one group of the criticizers argues that American innocence has been a sham from the start, the other group is of opinion that American innocence has existed in American history but has disappeared at some point.

The first group of the criticizers is the New Historicists who denounce American innocence as a hegemonic ideology. A representative figure of this group is Sacvan Bercovitch who is critical of the advocates of American innocence, such as F. O. Matthiessen, Henry Nash Smith, and R.W.B. Lewis.[4] Bercovitch criticizes them for forming a "consensus" about the term "literary" that involves the "legitimization of a certain canon" and a consensus about the term "history" that is "legitimated by a certain concept of America," and sees his task as promoting "dissensus" ("The Problem of Ideology" 632, 633). According to Bercovitch, America's major writers including Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville "could not conceive" that American myth is "a certain political system" and an ideology "in the service of power" (646, 641).

Calling into question the "well-worn dichotomy between art and society," Bercovitch asserts re-historicizing major literary works embodying the ideology of the "New Adam" and "Innocence" and "re-see[ing] these fictions historically, in dynamic relation to the culture" ("Afterword" 426; "The Problem of Ideology" 642). Bercovitch claims that historical achievements and violence are together integral to the cultural dynamics which produce the American Renaissance and that, consciously or not, classic writers are all implicated in this

[4] In *American Renaissance* (1941), Matthiessen consecrates American literature as the foundation of American identity and establishes the dominant element in American literature as the American myth of the free individual. Next, Smith's *Virgin Land* (1950) develops a notion of cultural language in terms of national myths and symbols. In 1955, Lewis's *The American Adam* establishes the American Adam as the central American myth and as the foundation of national identity.

process and, therefore, are "accomplices of the culture in its complex totality" ("The Problem of Ideology" 647). The rhetoric of American innocence implies a "programmatic parochialism, a closed and exclusive system developed in opposition" in its power to "conceal, exclude, and repress" (652; "Afterword" 423).

Other New historicists, such as Myra Jehlen and Richard Slotkin, have followed Bercovitch in exposing American literature as an ideological reflection of the dominant sociopolitical interests and in desublimating the Adamic innocence.[5] This tendency to expose Adamic innocence as a "literary transposition of political-economic ideational value systems" has continued well into the twenty-first century (Patea 40). Commenting on 9/11, Donald Pease argues that "at Ground Zero the fantasy of radical innocence" upon which the nation was founded encountered the violence it has formerly concealed (162).[6] Jonathan Mitchell's *Revision of the American Adam* (2011) criticizes Lewis's American Adam as a culturally projected image that "legitimizes American identity as being white, male, heterosexual, industrious and Christian" leading to the designation of woman as Eve, secondary to man and subjected to his rule, and to the ignorance of the "plurality of the nation and the diversity of America's many immigrant histories" (4, 13).[7]

Considering the New Historicists' opposition to reducing the "variety of human

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[5] According to Jehlen, as racial, class, and political conflicts reveal a "heterogeneity" in the 1960s and 1970s, the notion of an "all-encompassing American identity in literature as in society" appears "incomplete" and "actually repressive" (4). Jehlen points out that the universal "man" subsumes "subuniversal woman" and the universal "American" subsumes "others" to whom it denies universality (4). Slotkin describes in *Regeneration through Violence* how "acres of prairie were covered with heaps of whitening bones . . . the Indian debased, impoverished, and killed in return for his gifts; the land and its people, its 'dark' people, especially, economically exploited and wasted; the warfare between man and nature, between race and race" (565).

[6] Gellert argues that "unbridled" innocence can have a very dark side, as it limits one to "a simplistic, one-dimensional view of the world and permit one to engage in immoral acts but with a sense of entitlement and justification" (xiv). James Hillman identifies "the addiction to innocence, to not knowing life's darkness and not wanting to know, either" as America's "endemic national disease" (133).

[7] Mitchell even harshly equates the American Adam with the Aryan Ubermensch of Nazi Germany. Both the American Adam and the Aryan Ubermensch represent "the ideal national identity, and a means of excluding/subjugating those who fall outside the boundaries of the idealized identity" (4).

adaptations to a single triumphant form" and their assertion that the literary text must cease to be a "sacred, self-enclosed, and self-justifying miracle" and lose "the special power ascribed to it," it is logical that they attempt to dismantle the overarching concept of innocence which has defined national identity for centuries since the birth of America (Gallagher and Greenblatt 6, 12). The New Historicists doubt the possibility of constructing a "system independent of our own time and place" (2). As the New Historicists point out, once innocence becomes oblivious to the social and historical circumstances and to its connectivity with others, it may fall into unilateral exclusivism. Innocence is indeed formed in relation to the specific social and historical conditions of America.

While the New Historicists' emphasis on the necessity of incorporating sociohistorical context into the notion of American innocence is significant, their emphasis on criticizing innocence as ideology has become quite repetitive. Mitchell's recent work is one of the examples suggesting that the New Historicists should be predominantly concerned with criticizing innocence as an ideology rather than defining innocence as a historical product and describing its characteristics. For decades, the New Historicists have adhered to the view that the "trans-historical mythic terms" of innocence "mask the deeper, ruthless, reality of America's foundation in violence, devastation, oppression, and racism" (Patea 40). Bercovitch argues that "racism, greed, frontier and urban violence . . . and war" are "inseparable" from the rhetoric of American innocence ("The Problem of Ideology" 647). Barry Spector claims that "America's fundamental narrative" is exposed as "innocent violence and violent innocence" in the massacre of the Indians, slavery, the Cold War, Vietnam, and 9/11 (155, 18). The New Historicists do not offer an alternative meaning of innocence except for their critical identification of innocence with ideology. Therefore, this dissertation focuses more on defining and describing the meaning of innocence rather than criticizing the use of innocence as ideology.

The second group of the criticizers claim that innocence has been lost at a particular time in American history. Henry May marks the end of the First World War as the "end of American innocence" (393). The period before the war is a time of "beginning," "new freedom," and "new poetry" (x). According to May, American innocence embodied in the "set of simple certainties, inherited from the nineteenth century" and the "cheerfulness of prewar America" with "its inveterate optimism and peace" falls to pieces during the First World War (121, 397). The war occasions the "complete disintegration" of the "older order" and of "progressivism with its supreme confidence" (393).

Acknowledging that it is "rare for a Jungian" to comment on the "particularities of contemporary history" as Jung's approach is rooted in "timeless and universal perspectives," Thayer Greene nonetheless asserts that Jung is also "deeply concerned" with the "historical and cultural events of his own time" (137). Wondering what commentary Jung might have offered concerning the "conflict, polarization, and disillusionment" which have characterized America's recent history since his death, Greene argues that the Watergate, the assassinations of John and Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther Jr., and the disaster of Vietnam "unraveled our innocence and optimism about our nation, its leaders, and even ourselves" and "shocked us into awareness" (137). The disintegration of urban life, racial antagonism, and unemployment all lead to the sense of "emptiness, the inarticulate fear that the gods of our forefathers have deserted us" (137). Therefore, Greene declares that "for many Americans the age of our innocence is over" (138).

The characterization of innocence by May and Greene indicates why they consider innocence to have been lost at a particular moment in American history. May defines innocence as the "absence of guilt and doubt and complexity" which is the "common characteristic" of the "older culture and its custodians" (393). Greene construes innocence as "original

unconsciousness" and maintains that a "shaking and shocking encounter with the dark side" brings "the end of innocence" (141). Both May and Greene define innocence as ignorance of the world and unacquaintance with evil. The critics' identification of innocence with ignorance can be attributed to the fact that the narrative of American innocence "picks up the thread of the biblical narrative of Adam" (Patea 16).[8] The story of the biblical Adam traces the "quest for knowledge as a striving to become God's equal" and "Adam's "fall into knowledge" awakens him to a higher self-awareness turning him into a "hero of consciousness and selfhood" (16). Equating innocence with "moral blindness and ignorance," Patea argues that being human is made possible "only by gaining self-awareness" (35). Herbert Morris claims that there is "absent a certain kind of knowledge" in innocent persons and that the acquisition of the "knowledge of good and evil" causes them to "lose innocence" (141, 139).[9] Defining innocence as ignorance implies that innocence is helpless against the world and against evil and that innocence is not endurable as it will be lost after obtaining knowledge.

Yet, a consideration of the meaning of innocence makes the equation of innocence with ignorance questionable. The origin of innocence is "not harming" which is explained as "not involving or intended to cause harm or offence" ("Innocence," "Innocent," *Oxford*). The word "intend" requires attention here as it connotes not only the will to act but also knowledge. To plan that something should be or act as something, to design or destine for a purpose,

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[8] On the connection between the biblical Adam and the American Adam, see Patea 16-18.

[9] The loss of innocence is occasioned by "painful experiences" in which one becomes the "subject or object of evil" and by what one "learns about oneself in relation to others or about others in relation to oneself or to third parties" that may "shatter an illusion" (156). According to Morris, "we are no longer innocent when we realize those aspects of our world connected with the evil that humans are responsible for" (156). Mitchell also takes up the narrative of the biblical Adam: when Adam and Eve disobey God, they are commonly said to have "fallen and to have lost their innocence" (14). In eating of the tree that gives knowledge, each acquires knowledge and it is "this knowledge that must in some way account for their losing innocence" (14). Defining innocence as a "retroactive effect of the knowledge of good and evil or the knowledge of our place in a social structure and that our actions affect others," Mitchell maintains that innocence is "a state of being unaware of concepts," such as nakedness, guilt, pity, remorse etc. and that loss of innocence is a "gaining of awareness" (15).

knowledge is required. To intend not to cause harm, knowledge about what is harmful and how harm can be inflicted and prevented is required.[10] The equation of innocence with ignorance thus overlooks that the origin of innocence connotes knowledge. Also, innocence is lost when knowledge is acquired and cannot be sustained throughout the history of America if innocence continues to be defined as ignorance. Yet, the fact that innocence has constituted national identity since the beginning of America until the present suggests that innocence should not be lost but sustained. Innocence has been sustained as it is not ignorance and has been formed in conjunction with the accumulation of knowledge. This study is concerned with the question "what is innocence and how can it be preserved in a corrupted world?" (Fiedler 185). This query calls for a "more endurable innocence" other than ignorance that can survive its encounter with evil and the world (Lewis 146). In this dissertation, innocence is a notion that is sustained after the acquisition of knowledge and that rewrites the notion of innocence as ignorance.

As the origin of innocence is "not harming," this study focuses on the meaning of innocence as not intending to harm others. One cannot intend not to cause harm unwittingly or in ignorance. To design for this purpose, knowledge is required. As an agent gets acquainted with the world, he/she acquires the knowledge that crime, offence, and corruption, which are opposite concepts of innocence, exist in the world and in human relations. This knowledge that humans inflict harm upon others for the sake of survival and self-profit is inevitably acquired as an agent engages in relations with others within society. Despite having this knowledge, innocence means that one intends not to cause others harm, that one intentionally and

[10] Young Ahn Kang illustrates through the parable of the Good Samaritan that the Samaritan's innocence consists in his "knowledge of what happens" as he sees the situation of the victim and "knew what had happened." Not only the "volitional" but also the "intellectual" aspect of the Samaritan constitutes his innocence as his knowledge leads him to respond to the "call of the other" which goes "beyond race, skin color, language, and culture" (82).

consciously avoids crime, offence, corruption as they inflict injuries upon others. The fact that it is intended premises that one has not unwittingly caused no harm but that one has designed not to do so based on one's knowledge. For instance, an agent may know that stealing another person's possession is economically beneficial. Yet, his/her knowledge that this act will inflict injury upon the other person prevents him/her from harming the other. Therefore, innocence means intending not to harm others based on one's knowledge and acting accordingly. This original meaning of innocence is reflected in the definition of innocence as "the state, quality, or fact of being innocent of a crime or offence" and "lack of corruption; purity" ("Innocence," *Oxford*).

The third group of the critics of innocence consists of the advocates of American innocence. A representative figure of the advocates is Lewis who by examining novels "from about 1820 to 1860" demonstrates how "a native American mythology" of the "authentic American as a figure of innocence and vast potentialities, poised at the start of a new history" is challenged, transcended, and dramatized over the years (1, 6). Lewis traces how the optimistic Emersonian innocence transforms into a tragic but more mature version in the novels of Hawthorne, Melville, and Henry James. Lewis identifies the American Adam with "Adam before the Fall" who is "fragile" and "helpless" in the face of the corrupted world due to his "defect of knowledge" (72, 55). His "uncorrupted character" requires the Fortunate Fall which stands for the "necessary transforming shocks and sufferings, the experiments and errors, the experience through which maturity and identity may be arrived at" (126, 61). Through this process, the "childlike cheerfulness of Emerson" is replaced by the "transcendent cheerfulness derived from the experience and the full knowledge of tragedy" (9, 55).

Ihab Hassan takes up Lewis's American Adam but modifies it by incorporating the devastating experiences of the two World Wars into his notion of "radical innocence." Through

the works of novelists "all born after 1910," such as William Styron, Norman Mailer, Frederick Beuchner, Bernard Malamud, Ralph Ellison, Saul Bellow, and J.D. Sallinger, Hassan examines the "disparity between the innocence of the hero and the destructive character of his experience" which defines his concrete, existential situation (7). Being concerned with how innocence can be maintained after the experience of "disillusionment, revolt, collapse of norms following the First World War," Hassan asserts the "dialectic of innocence and guilt" (45, 9). The new figure of the hero in contemporary American fiction includes an element of "despair" and is "flawed in his sainthood and grotesque in his criminality" (6). This "anti-hero" is an "expression of man's quenchless desire to affirm, despite the voids and vicissitudes of our age, the human sense of *life*!" (21). In its refusal to accept the destructive aspects of "reality, including death," radical innocence has a "divine element," an "inner energy of being, creative and sacrificial" which presage the anti-hero's eventual "rebirth" (6, 9).

Concerned with the preservation of American innocence and based on a critical awareness that the "buoyant innocence" of the American Adam is "crowded with illusion" and "vulnerable in the extreme," Lewis suggests a more endurable model in Adam after the Fall (54, 1). Still, Lewis's Adam is included among the texts criticized by the New Historicists as "sidelining . . . history in the criticism of the forties and fifties, or its removal to the periphery of analysis, combined with the period's general ideological conformity" (Jehlen 3). Lewis's attempt to associate innocence with the acquisition of knowledge is significant. Yet, Lewis's model of innocence is not firmly established within the sociopolitical context as the criticism of the New Historicists points out. This calls for an analysis of literary works wherein characters who are in possession of knowledge actualize innocence within the sociohistorical context.

Preoccupied with the maintenance of innocence within the context of historical events,

Hassan is in a sense exempt from the New Historicists' criticism that innocence disregards the sociohistorical context. Yet, Hassan's anti-heroes embodying radical innocence–hipsters, misfits, criminals, rebels, and drug-addicts–are criticized by the New Historicists as "outsiders" who "do not belong anywhere" and "reject socioeconomic definitions of selfhood" (Patea 38). Hassan intends to position innocence within the sociohistorical condition of his time, but his notion of radical innocence is criticized for being separated from the sociohistorical context. Therefore, his radical innocence also calls for revising the notion of innocence as one firmly rooted in the sociohistorical context. By continuously contemplating and revising the meaning of innocence, innocence can be preserved and continue to form and refashion American identity. Paying attention to how innocence is formed and actualized within the sociohistorical context leads to the discovery of a notion of innocence that is revised according to social changes and that can be maintained over time.

To demonstrate how innocence is actualized within the social context, this study establishes the scope of knowledge as knowledge that an individual inevitably acquires during the process of growing and living as a member of society. This dissertation explores how an individual acquires the knowledge that evil exists in the world, that power struggle occurs among members of society, and that an individual's self-realization is inevitably restrained by social structure. To explain the knowledge that an agent acquires as a member of society and the condition of the social structure which forms this knowledge through the process of socialization, the theory of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu will be used.

Although Bourdieu is a sociologist, his work on literature and his sociological theory have been used in analyses of literary works and literary criticism. Laura Sloan Patterson asserts that literature becomes "central to Bourdieu's application of theory" and the "focus" of Bourdieu's *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field* (53). Anna Boschetti,

a former student of Bourdieu, remarks that his notion of "field" is first applied to literature and the "most complete and systematic presentation" of his theory of fields is found in *The Rules of Art*, a work "devoted to art and literature" (135).[11] Critics who use Bourdieu's "sociology of literature" are Jonathan Eastwood that critically assesses Bourdieu's reading of Gustave Flaubert's *Sentimental Education*, and Lynn Wilkinson that interprets Balzac's Rubempré novels with Bourdieu's reading of Flaubert's novel (Eastwood 149).

Yet, Bourdieu is more often used by applying his sociological theory to interpret literary works. Mary Eagleton analyzes contemporary women's fiction through Bourdieu's theory of capital and literary field and in another work interprets Carol Shields's *Swann* as a novel that dramatizes the construction of Bourdieu's literary field. Bourdieu's sociology is also used to analyze literary works focusing on the issues of gender, race, and postcolonialism.[12] Carol Singley, perhaps the most relevant to this study, explains the dynamics of social relations in Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* through Bourdieu's notions of "field," "habitus," and "capital." As Singley analyzes Old New York and Newland Archer's "social position" through "Bourdieu's theories of social interaction," this dissertation uses Bourdieu's theory to explain the dynamics of social structure and social interaction in the novels of James, Twain, and Wharton (498).

According to Bourdieu, an agent is constituted by the socially operative habitus which is defined as "systems of durable transposable dispositions, structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring of practices and

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[11] For an extensive analysis of Bourdieu and literature, see John Speller's *Bourdieu and Literature*.

[12] Through Bourdieu's concepts of field, habitus, and especially cultural capital, Patterson offers a Bourdieuian gender analysis to the field of contemporary Southern women's literature. In a volume called *Power Relation in Black Lives: Reading African American Literature and Culture with Bourdieu and Elias*, various literary analyses demonstrate how Bourdieu's concepts of symbolic violence, habitus, field, and capital explain the "long-term effects of domination" of the blacks in the United States (Buschendorf 14). Jay Rajiva uses Bourdieu's cultural capital in his analysis of the postcolonial outsider in V. S. Naipaul's *The Enigma of Arrival*.

representations which can be objectively regulated" (*Outline of a Theory of Practice* 72). Society is composed of members who are conditioned by habitus and the interactions of members are also conditioned by habitus. In "every single confrontation" between two individual agents or groups, "generic habitus" is "confronted" (72). The "field,"[13] which refers to the social space, is structured in terms of power relations, "relationships of domination, subordination" among members of society depending on the "capitals"[14] that are at stake in the field (Jenkins 83).

The scope of knowledge and the boundary within which innocence is actualized in this study can be explained by Bourdieu's sociological theory. His notions of habitus, field, and capital demonstrate how an agent is socially constituted and engages in dominant and subordinate relations with others within social structure. The society that Bourdieu depicts aptly illustrates the boundary in which innocence is realized which is the social structure that constitutes an individual as well as the formation of innocence within the power struggle among members of society. The realization of an individual's notion of innocence is constrained by social interaction and by social structure as an individual is constituted "under structural constraints" of society and of power relations ("Social Space and Symbolic Power" 18). Simultaneously, Bourdieu mentions the possibility of social change,[15] and this study premises

[13] Bourdieu defines field as "a space of positions that explains how the people inhabit their positions act" (*Habitus and Field* 220). The field is "constructed on the hypothesis that there is a dominant principle of hierarchization" which is the "unequal possession of the specific capital at stake in the field" (220, 221).

[14] According to Bourdieu, the principles that construct the social space are the "different kinds of power or capital that are current in the different fields" ("The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups" 724). These are principally economic capital (money and property), cultural capital (cultural goods and services including educational credentials), social capital (acquaintances and networks), and symbolic capital (prestige, reputation, renown etc.).

[15] Bourdieu explains that the social world may be "constructed in different ways according to different principles of vision and division" and the objects of social world can be perceived and expressed in "a variety of ways," since they "always include a degree of indeterminacy and vagueness, and thereby, a certain degree of semantic elasticity" ("Social Space and Symbolic Power" 19). At the same time that "agents do have an active apprehension of the world" and "construct their vision of the world" through the "potential plurality of possible structuring," Bourdieu asserts that the social world presents itself as "a highly structured reality" (18, 19).

that the realization of innocence is constrained by social structure but possible within that constraining system.

This dissertation illustrates how innocence is formed within the social context through Bourdieu's theory and simultaneously how a notion of innocence which is more individual than Bourdieu's sociology is produced within the social structure. As the individual is constituted within social structure and through social interaction, he/she accumulates knowledge about the nature of power struggle including the evil committed by members for self-profit and knowledge about the restriction imposed by social structure. This dissertation explores the possibility of the preservation of innocence as knowledge is constantly accumulated through social interaction within social structure.

In this study, innocence is combined with the possession of the knowledge that there is evil in the world and that interactions with other members are not ideal but competitive. To survive the power struggle and the constraint of social structure, one must endeavor to gain more capitals and a dominant position within the social space. Social agents are conditioned to use their knowledge about the social position of other members and their knowledge about the social structure for the purpose of personal gain and survival.

Yet, innocence means using knowledge for a purpose other than personal profit and accepting social loss in the process. For an innocent person, the ultimate goal is not to harm others which often demands sacrifice. For example, judging that occupying a dominant position in the social space inevitably means that another agent must become dominated, one can renounce the dominant position to prevent the other from being subjugated. Considering and prioritizing the profit of other agents within the power struggle, an innocent person is critically aware of the evil occurring within power relations and within social structure, and uses his knowledge to overcome it at the cost of personal gain. This notion of innocence may prevent

the occurrence of the historical events mentioned by the criticizers wherein those defined as the other are relegated to the dominated position for America's profit. Unlike the critics who have equated innocence to ignorance, this study defines innocence as a state in possession of knowledge about the evil that occurs within social structure and social interaction and as the endeavor to use this knowledge to tackle it.

During the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries in America, the union of innocence and knowledge becomes a serious issue. At the end of the nineteenth century, the American nation takes the "novel form of overseas imperialism" (Burns 105). Following the Philippine-American War (1899-1902), America suddenly accumulates territories, such as Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and "established itself as an imperial power" (113). Paul McCartney asserts that the emergence of the United States on the "world stage as a great power" has a significant impact on "American identity in a new way" (708). According to McCartney, how the United States engages other states as "leader of the free world," as American liked to think of themselves, "suddenly carried real meaning for the national identity" (708). Mary Heiss argues that Americans in the late 1890s are well aware that the United States was "altering its national identity" by assuming a "colonial role of its own," and the nation after 1898 holds a "different identity than it had before" (527). This is a new era of identity-building when America is "altering its national identity" (527).[16]

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[16] Heiss claims that in the 1840s, which is the era of Manifest Destiny, the U.S. willingness to negotiate "peaceful territorial settlements" with Great Britain with the Webster-Ashburton and Oregon treaties reveals the "nation's identity as a relatively weak power" that knows clearly what it wants but has few tools for getting its way (515). In the 1840s, America is "far too weak militarily, diplomatically, or even governmentally to put much muscle behind its words" (515). For the most part, it relies on "strongly worded political statements and diplomatic pronouncements, fortuitous treaties with other nations, and even an occasional financial transaction" to achieve its goal of neutralizing or eliminating foreign threats to U.S. territory in North America (515). With the US still a "low-rung power with little international clout," its leaders appreciate diplomatic negotiation, rather than aggressive posturing (520). Heiss continues that the US after 1898 becomes "a world imperial power in its own right" after the war with Spain (527). Charles Morris writes about the war with Spain in 1899: "Less than four months of war the United States has taken a new position before the world . . . Europe has discovered that we are . . . destined to be a leader in the van of human progress" (6, 7). Since America is a budding nation as to

As America confronts the task of "constructing a new international identity" at the turn of the twentieth century, the dialectic of innocence is once again adopted to give form to this new identity (Toth 252). Before the 1890s, American innocence is embodied in "an individual emancipated from history, happily bereft of ancestry, untouched and undefiled by the usual inheritance of family and race" (Lewis 4). With America's international expansion as well as the escalation of modernization, urbanization, and industrialization, the nation's rapid growth increases, and the logic of an innocence which is ignorant of the world and of evil is no longer applicable during this period.

As more new types of worldly knowledge are accumulated, Americans at the turn of the twentieth century consider how innocence can be preserved when knowledge coming with rapid growth and knowledge about the evils of the world continue to be accrued. This study explores how innocence and knowledge are united within social interactions and within the boundary of social structure through examining American novels written at the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. It becomes a significant issue how America's rapid growth as global power, the increasing accumulation of worldly knowledge, and innocence can be combined.

This dissertation analyzes three American novels written at the turn of the twentieth century: James's *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881), Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), and Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* (1920). America's demand for combining innocence and knowledge as it confronts the task of refashioning a new international identity

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imperial expansion during the period of Manifest Destiny, it is not yet confronted with the task of forming a new national identity. However, since the 1890s, America acquires a substantial number of foreign territories as well as a new position among powerful nations in the world. It is since the 1890s that America starts to consider fashioning a new national identity. The period from the 1880s to the 1920s is thus "the era of nation-building" (Tyrrell 6).

at the turn of the twentieth century corresponds to these writers' exploration of how knowledge formed and accumulated within social structure and social interaction can be combined with innocence in the novels.

The imperial expansion at the turn of the twentieth century is not reflected in these novels through imperial backgrounds or through characters who are imperialists. The imperial expansion has occasioned more situations wherein other nations and other people can be harmed by America's pursuit of self-profit and dominance as world power. This has called for the need to contemplate how America can avoid inflicting harm upon other nations and people while new types of knowledge are constantly generated and accumulated. Therefore, the imperial situation at the turn of the twentieth century is reflected in considering how knowledge and innocence can be combined and how the newly accumulated knowledge at the turn of the century can be used for the purpose of not harming others.

James is concerned with the relationship between innocence and the knowledge of evil, and how innocence can be preserved in an evil world. Daisy Miller's purity in James's novella and her premature death suggest that lack of knowledge should be vulnerable and helpless against the world. In *The American*, James tests the ability of innocence to overcome evil. Despite Christopher Newman's steadfast belief in his capacity to expose the evil concealed behind de Bellegarde's family history, de Bellegardes remain unperturbed and indomitable. In *The Portrait of a Lady*, James has Isabel Archer accumulate knowledge about evil through Osmond and Merle's betrayal and deception. Isabel's miserable knowledge leads her to embrace misery instead of vengeance or pessimism, and her innocence survives the evil committed against her.

Twain is preoccupied with how growth and innocence can be combined. His novels explore how boys such as Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn gain knowledge about the evils

of the world as they grow up and how their innocence can remain intact. In *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Tom risks his own safety by testifying for the innocent Muff Potter in court and directs a posse to save Injun Joe despite his criminality, revealing his sense of justice and compassion. The novel demonstrates how Tom accumulates knowledge about social evil and yet acts innocently. In *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, the combination of innocence, growth, and knowledge becomes more complicated as Huck's socially acquired knowledge through the practice of slavery becomes questionable by his newly acquired knowledge about a black slave's humanity. Within the social structure that systematically endorses slavery and in his interactions with white slaveholders and Tom who uses Jim for his entertainment, Huck is constrained to use his knowledge for Jim's freedom. Huck still does not abandon his effort to help Jim and grows into a boy who ventures social disgrace and punishment for the sake of an other's freedom.

Focusing on the conflict between the standard of society and an individual's notion of innocence, Wharton's novels explore how an individual constituted and restrained by social structure can actualize his/her own notion of innocence. In *The Custom of the Country*, Undine Spragg's pursuit of wealth and success at the cost of her husbands and child demonstrates how she compromises her innocence for social recognition. Between using all possible means for social success and preserving her sense of conscience which will inevitably be compromised by social success, Lily Bart in *The House of Mirth* chooses to be faithful to her conscience. Her subsequent poverty, sickness, melancholy, and death suggest that her innocence should be self-sacrificial. In *The Age of Innocence*, Newland, May Welland, and Ellen Mingott renounce passionate love, a perfect marriage, and membership of society in the process of actualizing their own notion of innocences within the boundary of the Innocence regulated by society. The price that they pay for preserving their own notion of innocence remains unspoken but is

appreciated and mourned by those who have benefitted from their sacrifice.

The first chapter, "Miserable Knowledge in Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady*," explores the relationship between acquisition of knowledge and innocence. Isabel assumes that the acquirement of miserable knowledge is necessary for her growth and consciously pursues this knowledge. Through Isabel's acquisition of miserable knowledge and the process of contemplating and absorbing this knowledge, *The Portrait of a Lady* examines how knowledge and innocence are combined. As she gains the knowledge that Osmond and Merle, whom she believed to be innocent, have used and betrayed her for their own profit, Isabel learns that social interactions are not innocent but that members of society compete for the increase of capital and the occupation of dominant positions. Osmond and Merle's pursuit of personal profit at the cost of others leads to Isabel's accumulation of knowledge about the evil committed among members of society within power struggles. Isabel neither tries to retrieve the economic capital taken by Osmond and Merle nor to occupy a more dominant position. Isabel accepts the competition and evil within the power struggle as the condition of life and maintains her relations with those who have committed evil against her, instead of avenging or isolating herself from them. In the process of acquiring and processing miserable knowledge, she embraces those who have made her miserable which diverges from the usual practice of competition for dominant positions within the power struggle and thereby revises the meaning of innocence.

The fact that Isabel's refusal of Lord Warburton and marriage with Osmond are based on her theory that miserable knowledge is absent within the conditioning of the upper class but obtainable in the habitus of the lower class suggests that her choices should be influenced by social structure. Yet, the meaning of her acquisition of knowledge and innocence is mainly explored within the boundary of her social interactions.

Therefore, in the second chapter, "Knowledge Game in Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*," the relationship between the ideology at work within society and Huck's innocence will be explored besides the relationship between his innocence and social interactions. Huck's oscillation between regarding Jim as a slave and as a friend represents the collision between the social morality of slaveholding society and an individual notion of innocence. By acting as if Jim is his slave in the presence of other whites, Huck complies with the habitus of society; however, Huck is carrying out his individual notion of innocence by helping Jim escape. The novel ultimately questions how innocence can be maintained in a slaveholding society. It explores whether it is possible for the individual, who constantly accumulates knowledge about the evils of the world through socialization, to realize innocence within social structure and within power struggle. The final scene wherein Huck helps Jim escape together with Tom illustrates the complexity and difficulty of actualizing an individual notion of innocence as it collides with the standards of society and of others. Although the realization of Huck's innocence is constrained by social morality and by those who are more dominant than him in the power struggle, the novel portrays the pursuit and the faint possibility of realizing innocence within the constraint imposed by social structure and by power struggle as meaningful.

The notion of innocence which has become more complex in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is no longer defined as a single concept in the third chapter, "Tacit Knowledge in Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence*." The diversification of the meaning of innocence in this novel leads to the possibility of a more complex form of innocence. As the meaning of knowledge becomes more diversified at the turn of the twentieth century, innocence comes to embody multiple meanings that can no longer be embodied within a single definition. In *The Age of Innocence*, a plural form of innocence or innocences appear through the different

notions of innocence by members of society. While Newland, May, and Ellen comply with the standard of society in general, the innocence of each character is individual and cannot be easily comprehended by others and by society. Thus, the plurality of its meaning can only be understood from multiple perspectives. Although the characters pursue their own notions of innocence, they remain within the boundary of society. Furthermore, the comprehensive notion of Innocence is sustained. By describing how Newland's society changes into a new society over a period of thirty years, *The Age of Innocence* demonstrates how an individual notion of innocence can be actualized over time, expanding the potential of innocence which now takes the multiple forms as innocences.

CHAPTER ONE

Miserable Knowledge in Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady*

The theme of initiation or the "entrance of a young lady into the world" as a peculiarly Jamesian motif has frequently been noted (Brissenden 276). R.F. Brissenden argues that James's novels, particularly *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881) and *The Wings of the Dove* (1902), demonstrate "the fullest development of this theme" (276). Sarah Wadsworth mentions that *The Portrait of a Lady* embodies this Jamesian motif: Isabel is an example of James's "*ingénue*–the fresh, piquant, impulsive, unconventional child of Nature, impatient of restraint, ignorant of forms, charmingly doing wrong and as charmingly repenting of it" (108). In fact, the numbers and importance of female protagonists in James's fictions reflect his peculiar interest in female characters.

Brissenden and Wadsworth's emphasis on *The Portrait of a Lady* as a representative female initiation narrative among James's novels seems proper. While *Daisy Miller* (1879), *The Portrait of a Lady, What Maisie Knew* (1897), and *The Wings of the Dove* all center around American female characters abroad, it is only Isabel Archer who demonstrates strength as a character and reaches maturity. There has been a "longstanding debate about whether James's female characters ever achieve individuality and freedom from societal constraints" which is understandable given the sense of helplessness that Milly Theale, Daisy, and Maisie Farange display (Krzeminski 276). Milly and Daisy die of fatal illnesses and Maisie remains a girl forced to choose a guardian; Isabel possesses a sense of "integrity" and "ethical wholeness or

intactness" and is endowed with an ending wherein she continues her journey as a more mature woman (Cameron 63). This chapter will explore Isabel's strength as a character in terms of her innocence.

James's concern with the motif of innocence is reflected in his various novels. According to Lewis, the "dialectic of innocence and experience" is an "obsessive and constant theme" for James, so that an "account of innocence in the fiction of Henry James" would be "much the same as a book about James's fiction in general" (153). The "innocent" and "newborn" qualities define his protagonists "in novel after novel" (152). Asserting that an "exhaustive list of James's innocents" would approach a "catalogue" of his major fictions, Lewis names Christopher Newman in *The American*; Daisy Miller; Isabel Archer; Hyacinth Robison in *The Princess Casamassima*; Lambert Strether in *The Ambassadors*; Mille in *The Wings of the Dove*, and Maggie and Adam Verver in *The Golden Bowl* (153).

Lewis continues that one of the "surest" approaches to James's work is that of the "Adamic mythology [he has] been tracing" (153). Reading *The Portrait of a Lady* in terms of the Adamic mythology entails interpreting Isabel as an American Adam. By appointing Isabel as a new American Adam, or rather as an American Eve,[17] James endows the previously marginalized status of women with subjectivity. The subjects of American innocence are no longer only men, but also women. Through the Adamic mythology that unfolds itself in the character of Isabel in *The Portrait of a Lady*, the meaning of American innocence is thus more

[17] In *The Land Before Her*, Annette Kolodny argues that the myth of the American Adam "excludes" women. In the idealized garden described by Lewis, Kolodny argues, an "Eve" could be only "redundant." As American women were "denied" a place beside the abiding myth of the American Adam, they were "understandably reluctant" to proclaim themselves the "rightful New World Eve." It is in the nineteenth century that they at last begin to "embrace that identity" by "redefining" the meaning of the garden and "radically reshaping" the myth of the American Adam (5). According to Kolodny, domestic fictionists of the nineteenth century, such as Alice Cary and Caroline Soule, cast the "guiding of a womanly Eve" as essential to the realization of the New World garden. Although male capital may be required for development, it is only "Eve's presence" which makes a "home of paradise" (198).

expanded and becomes more inclusive. The novel portrays the notion of innocence as including and embracing otherness. By designating the subject of American innocence as a woman, *The Portrait of a Lady* represents innocence as a notion that can be pursued and embodied by those previously designated as the Other.

The Portrait of a Lady embodies James's concern with the union of innocence and knowledge. James explores how a youth unacquainted with the world gains knowledge about evil and whether she has the power to use the knowledge to confront evil. Isabel becomes the object of evil by those who are closest to her, and her ability to survive the evil committed against her and to preserve her innocence is put to the test. This chapter examines Isabel's journey toward maturity as a process in which her accumulation of knowledge does not lead to loss of innocence but to preservation of innocence.

1. Miserable Knowledge as a Means to Arrive at Innocence

In this chapter, the notion of innocence will be mainly discussed in relation to "miserable knowledge," a term introduced in the beginning of the novel. On her first night at Gardencourt, Isabel asks her nephew Ralph Touchett whether there is a ghost "in this romantic old house" (63). Ralph tells Isabel that the ghost she wants to see has "never been seen by a young, happy, innocent person like you. You must have suffered first, have suffered greatly, have gained some *miserable knowledge*" (65, emphasis added).

Ralph's words are parallel to Lewis's assertion that the previous model of American Adam, a cheerful and buoyant innocence, is unendurable as long as it lacks knowledge about the world and about evil. Lewis explains how the elder James is "struck" by the "vulnerability" of the "hopeful ideal" of the Emersonian innocence (56). According to Lewis, the elder James

is of opinion that in order to enter the "ranks of manhood," the individual has to "fall," to pass beyond childhood in an encounter with "Evil," and to "mature by virtue of the destruction of his own egotism" (55). What the American Adam requires in order to continue to exist and to grow up is an "awareness of the heightened perception and humanity" which suffering makes possible (8). It is only through the "necessary transforming shocks and sufferings, the experiments and errors" that "maturity and identity may be arrived at" (60). The American Adam who has gone through this transforming process of suffering takes up a "tragic optimism" which is the "transcendent cheerfulness" derived from the experience and the "full knowledge of tragedy" (7, 55). Consequently, the revised version of the American Adam as suggested by the elder James is "less fragile and more solid" than the buoyant innocence of the "party of Hope" and leads the "young culture" to finally achieve its "maturity" (55). Lewis describes how this revised notion of American innocence is embodied in James's novels:

> Henry James's fiction reflected the peculiar American rhythm of the Adamic experience: the birth of the innocent, the foray into the unknown world, the collision with that world, the fortunate fall, the wisdom and the maturity which suffering produced . . . . James saw very deeply–and he was the first American writer to do so–that innocence could be cruel as well as vulnerable. (154-55)

The idea that innocence needs to incorporate miserable knowledge in order to be preserved is implied in Ralph's comment that Isabel must have gained miserable knowledge and in Isabel's answer that she is "afraid of suffering" (65).

While Lewis mainly refers to this transforming process as suffering and tragic experience, James has Ralph use the term miserable knowledge. Clearly, there is a difference

between experiencing suffering and knowing suffering. The emphasis on knowledge becomes more obvious as James chooses to use knowledge in phrases where experience is commonly used.[18] For instance, when Ralph tells Isabel that she must have acquired miserable knowledge and that he has gained it "long ago," Isabel answers: "I told you just now I'm very fond of knowledge" (65). Ralph subsequently says that the knowledge Isabel is fond of is mainly "happy" and "pleasant" knowledge, but not miserable knowledge (65).

Even before this conversation takes place, Isabel reflects that she has led a "very happy life," that she has been "a very fortunate person," and that it is an "advantage never to have *known* anything particular unpleasant" (49, emphasis added). The next moment, it appears to Isabel that "the unpleasant had been even too absent from her *knowledge*," for she has gathered from her "acquaintance with literature that it was often a source of interest and even of instruction" (49, emphasis added). In a sense, formulating that it is an advantage never to have 'experienced' unpleasant things or that the unpleasant had been absent from her 'experience' sounds more natural, but the word knowledge is chosen over experience.

It can be thus argued that James is deliberately choosing to use the word knowledge instead of experience in order to accentuate the novel's involvement with the motif of knowledge. James emphasizes miserable knowledge rather than miserable experience because the experience of suffering itself does not necessarily lead to maturity. Miserable knowledge implicates an awareness, a conscious deliberation on suffering. Not everyone who experiences suffering but only those who contemplate why they suffer and how they can overcome their misery may arrive at innocence.

[18] Joseph Wiesenfarth points to the novel's emphasis on knowledge: the structural logic of chapters 50 and 55 is meant to provide Isabel with "more and more knowledge" (22). The "new knowledge" that she gains about Madame Merle, Osmond, Pansy, and Ralph induces her to make "an enlightened choice" in the end (22).

James's notion of innocence rewrites the notion of innocence as ignorance. In fact, the juxtaposition of innocence and knowledge as opposing concepts has been a common practice among critics, such as Morris, Patea, and Mitchell. Other critics have discussed *The Portrait of a Lady* as a narrative of American innocence, and they identify innocence with ignorance as well. Julian Murphet argues that Isabel's first "betrothal to Gilbert Osmond" is made "innocently" while the second is made "in full awareness" (194). The differences between Isabel's choices are explained in terms of lack of knowledge and acquisition of knowledge, and Murphet uses innocence and ignorance interchangeably suggesting that he equates innocence with ignorance. According to Joseph Friend, the fact that Isabel, "this blithe spirit," flies into the "meshes of evil" emphasizes the "tragic innocence of James's heroine" as they remind us poignantly of the human condition (89). Friend claims that Isabel combines "innocence and moral rigor" and that she is "another daughter of Eve repeating the archetypal experience" (89). He concludes that Isabel's ironic quest is thus a "familiar, indeed a classical one, from blind confident ignorance to the suffering that brings vision and knowledge" (90).

Lyall Powers offers a new reading in that he argues that Isabel's innocence is not lost after her Fall, but that she achieves a "higher innocence, that superior goodness, which comes to the fallen who are saved" (153). According to Powers, Isabel's innocence is embodied in her "spiritual rebirth" occasioned by Ralph's love, "the means of salvation," and is seen in her determination to return and confront the world, "to work at the redemption of that evil, to do in short whatever work the spiritually regenerate necessarily undertake" (152, 153). Yet, in describing Isabel "first . . . as an innocent young woman freshly unaware of the great wide world and its lurking evils," Powers is identifying innocence with ignorance (148). The notion of innocence in *The Portrait of a Lady* premises the possession of miserable knowledge, so that it revises these critics' assertion that innocence is ignorance.

In the novel, there are two kinds of miserable knowledge related to the question of how one may arrive at innocence. First, miserable knowledge can refer to knowledge that has a miserable content, such as a friend's betrayal or a loved one's death. This knowledge is miserable in itself. Second, some knowledge may be acquired in a manner that is miserable whether the content is miserable or not. Although the knowledge may not be necessarily miserable in itself, one may become miserable in the process of acquiring this knowledge. For instance, knowing that one is loved by another is not miserable in itself, but the circumstance which prevents one from answering that love can cause misery. If the first notion of miserable knowledge concerns the miserable content, the second notion involves the miserable process of acquiring knowledge. The rest of the novel examines which type of knowledge leads Isabel closer to innocence: the acquirement of knowledge about Osmond's cruel nature, Merle's betrayal, their affair, and Pansy's illegitimate birth or the process in which Isabel contemplates and absorbs this knowledge or both (431).

2. The Theoretic Pursuit of Miserable Knowledge

Before her marriage with Osmond, Isabel is mainly concerned with the idea of miserable knowledge. In the beginning of the novel, it is described how Isabel has a "great desire for knowledge" preferring almost "any source to the printed page" (51). Isabel is "fond of seeing great crowds and large stretches of country" and she wants to "see as many countries" indicating her ambition to accumulate a great reservoir of knowledge (51, 99). Even before she meets Ralph, Isabel is aware of her lack of miserable knowledge which she regards as a source of "instruction" (49). Ralph's statement that Isabel must have gained miserable knowledge reinforces her resolve to accumulate miserable knowledge. Isabel's theory that one should "be

one of the best" and "move in a realm of light, of natural wisdom" which is the only "provision life was worth living" is incomplete without her acquaintance with miserable knowledge (68). It is for this purpose that Isabel makes choices concerning her suitors.

Isabel's rejection of Lord Warburton, an English aristocrat, seems strange not only because he is a "territorial, political, social magnate" and "nineteen women out of twenty" would have accepted his hand "without a pang" (130). It is also odd because Isabel likes him "very much" and is attracted to the "peace, the kindness, the honour, the possessions, a deep security and a great exclusion" that he represents (89). Isabel sees Lord Warburton as a man who embodies an innocence of his own, but she still refuses him. Ralph who usually assumes the role of a detached observer "meddles in" and questions why Isabel refuses to marry a man whom even he regards as a "thorough good sort" having "hardly a fault" and combining "intrinsic and extrinsic advantages" (169). Critics have also voiced their sense of bewilderment at Isabel's rejection of the aristocrat. Juliet McMaster argues that, in the figure of Lord Warburton, James has "taken pains to present a man whom we are to take as the right husband for Isabel" and that he and Isabel should "match perfectly, but for her morbid revulsion" at his qualities (52). Cheryl Torsney claims that Lord Warburton might have been Isabel's "savior" and that marrying him would have "guaranteed her all the growing room she might have needed" (95).[19] However, Isabel herself is surprised to find that it costs her "so little to refuse a magnificent chance" (James 130).

Isabel still manages to offer the grief-stricken Lord Warburton an explanation:

[19] Other critics have given their own interpretation of Isabel's rejection of Lord Warburton. Leon Edel sees Isabel's choice as "America's refusal" rooted in the Declaration of Independence to "accept British institutions" ("The Myth of America" 9). Richard Chase contends that Isabel has "higher ideals than any she thinks can be realized by a life with Lord Warburton" (130).

> It's that I can't escape my fate. I should try to escape it if I were to marry you . . . . It's not my fate to give up. I can't escape unhappiness. In marrying you I shall be trying to . . . . I can never be happy in any extraordinary way; not by turning away, by separating myself from life. From the usual chances and dangers, from what most people know and suffer. (151-52)

Isabel considers Lord Warburton's "extrinsic advantages," such as "career, name, position, future" and "fortune, fame" to be happiness, but this sort of happiness is not what she seeks (218, 336). By refusing to find contentment through a union with the aristocrat, she is consciously pursuing miserable knowledge. Isabel does not seek suffering because she revels in "avoidance, non-involvement, solitude" in the "shelter of a closed and defended space" as Sandra Fischer argues (53). Nor does Isabel choose "renunciation over communion," "ignore the fact of human interrelatedness" and "the reality of world" as Dennis O'Connor contends (25, 29). Isabel pursues miserable knowledge not because she is pessimistic but because she believes that it is a means to arrive at the "great fund of life" (James 51).

Isabel's choice can be discussed in relation to Bourdieu's theory of class habitus. Isabel's knowledge of Lord Warburton's social privileges and extrinsic advantages is based on the class habitus which is operative within her society and inculcated in its members. Bourdieu defines class habitus as the "internalized form of class condition and of the conditioning it entails" which functions as the "practice-unifying and practice-generation principle" (*Distinction* 101). The habitus of class as a "system of organic and mental dispositions of unconscious schemes of thought, perception and action" allows the generation of "all thoughts, all perceptions and actions in conformity with objective regularities" because it has itself been generated within and by conditions "objectively defined by these regularities" (Bourdieu and

Zanotti-Karp 705, 706). Differences in basic conditions of existence produce a "basic opposition between the tastes of luxury and the tastes of necessity" between actors whose economic circumstances permit the pursuit of status distinctions and those who can afford no such luxury (*Distinction* 183). Social agents are conditioned by "classificatory schemes and systems" which are the "basis of the representations of the groups" and therefore of their "mobilization and demobilization" (479).

According to David Swartz, Bourdieu's class habitus entails our practical everyday preferences organized around "primary forms of conceptual classifications such as high/low, brilliant/dull, unique/ordinary, and important/trivial" (185). These primary classifications are simultaneously "social classifications" that serve to rank individuals and groups in the "stratification order" which indicate a "sense of place in the social order" and thereby fulfill the "social functions of inclusion and exclusion" (185).

As a "poor" orphan and an unmarried girl who cannot "afford such luxuries," Isabel belongs to the class of what Bourdieu calls the tastes of necessity (James 182). According to Bourdieu, "the dominated" have only two options: being "loyal to the self and the group (always liable to relapse into shame), or in the individual effort to assimilate the dominant ideal" (*Distinction* 384). In Isabel's society, it is uncommon and disgraceful for a woman to remain single; the only socially sanctioned option for her is to marry. Since it is not commonplace for women to have their own career and to support themselves economically, marrying a man who will provide economic means and social security is their fate. From this perspective, marrying Lord Warburton will not only relieve Isabel of the predicament of being a poor, orphaned, unmarried woman, but also move her from the class with the tastes of necessity into the class with the tastes of luxury. Ralph comments that Lord Warburton has "immense possessions" and his wife would be considered a "superior being" (169).

Whereas most women would more than welcome such a brilliant chance, the "splendid security so offered her" is "not the greatest" Isabel can conceive (128). Isabel refuses to assimilate the dominant ideal and decides to marry Osmond precisely for his poverty and social insignificance. Isabel tells Ralph that, although Mrs. Touchett is "horrified" at Isabel's contenting herself with a person who has none of Lord Warburton's "great advantages–no property, no title, no honours, no houses, nor lands, nor position, nor reputation, nor brilliant belongings of any sort," it is precisely "the total absence of all these things" that pleases her about Osmond (375).

Since Isabel believes that the social conditioning of Lord Warburton's class prevents her from acquiring miserable knowledge, she rejects his proposal and marries Osmond whose conditions of existence she believes will grant her the necessary miserable knowledge that she is seeking. Isabel's binary conception of the class habitus and miserable knowledge prevents her from seeing that even in the luxurious conditioning of Lord Warburton's class, miserable knowledge is always inherent. She overlooks that Lord Warburton is troubled with insecurity about his social position and selfhood, and that he is "all in a muddle about himself, his position, his power and indeed about everything in the world" and does not know "what to believe in" (90).

Patrick Fessenbecker argues that "the most vexed" and "also the most obvious" question to ask about *The Portrait of a Lady* is "why does Isabel marry Gilbert Osmond" (69).[20]

[20] Some critics argue that Isabel marries Osmond for reasons that are positive. Paul Armstrong asserts that in marrying Osmond, Isabel seeks "the value of culture, the power of self-sufficiency, the satisfaction of putting the wealth she possesses to meaningful use," referring to Isabel's inheritance from Mr. Touchett (194). According to Dorothea Krook, Isabel marries Osmond for "good and credible" reasons: "He has personal distinction of a kind and in a degree overwhelming to her" (39). Sigi Jöttkandt maintains that Osmond appears to Isabel as "an ideal figure to emulate whose exquisite taste is simply the visible, outward reflection of his equally exquisite morals" (74). Jöttkandt goes on to argue that Isabel's decision to marry is "heavily predicated on her understanding of this decision as an act of freely willed choice" (86). Much of Osmond's appeal is in the way Isabel perceives him as "personifying the act of choice" (71). Other critics view Isabel's decision to marry Osmond negatively. Kristin

Isabel's ardent pursuit of miserable knowledge and her idea that Osmond's conditioning of the class with the tastes of necessity will provide her with this knowledge are accompanied by her idealization of Osmond's intrinsic qualities. Isabel is immensely attracted to what she believes is "his beautiful mind . . . his culture, his cleverness, his good nature, his facility, his knowledge of life" (461). Instead of concealing his poverty from Isabel or being embarrassed by it, Osmond candidly talks about his lack of external advantages: "I could do nothing. I had no prospects, I was poor, and I was not a man of genius. The events of my life have been absolutely unperceived by anyone save myself" (289). It is how Isabel perceives Osmond has "borne his poverty" that ultimately determines her choice to marry him (374). Osmond tells Isabel that he has adopted an attitude of resignation to cope with his misfortunes: "Not to worry–not to strive nor struggle. To resign myself. To be content with little . . . It [my life] has affirmed my indifference. Not my natural indifference. But my studied, my willful renunciation" (289). Unlike the weight of Lord Warburton's magnificent advantages that feels burdensome, Osmond's quiet resignation and aloofness do not oppress Isabel.

Osmond's willful renunciation towards his mischance is interpreted by Isabel as an enlightened embrace of his marginality which she has not detected in others before. Isabel marries Osmond, not because he is just a man stricken by "poverty," but because she believes that Osmond bears his poverty "with such dignity" (374). For Isabel, Osmond has cared for

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Sanner is of opinion that "Isabel gives in to the convention of marriage" (152). Fischer contends that Isabel marries Osmond because he "offers her the private life of the isolated, enclosed chamber" (48). Fischer maintains that Ralph is correct in his assessment that "Isabel wants to see life, not experience it, for throughout the novel she flees from intimate encounters" and "Osmond's reserve, his social mask, his sterile decadence, and his isolation" appeal to her own need for isolation (48). I think that Isabel's decision to marry Osmond is based on her naïve theories and on her misjudgment of Osmond's nature, and therefore is a mistake. However, Isabel regards Osmond as innocent as when she tells Ralph that Osmond "makes no mistakes. He knows everything, he understands everything, he has the kindest, gentlest, highest spirit" (374). Her faith in Osmond's qualities as well as her belief that her marriage with Osmond will enable her to enjoy the "free exploration of life" are sincere and based on "good faith" (130, 375).

"no worldly prize" and marrying such a man is an act of "nobleness and purity" (374). Isabel's "ardent good faith" in Osmond's innocence makes it hard for her to see that her decision is based on an "invented fine theory" (375). Joel Diggory argues that James highlights the "limitations of her naïve presuppositions" as Isabel's commitment to freedom is modified by her "gradual discovery of the ways in which her acts were determined" (213, 214). Leon Edel points out that Isabel is "not ready for the selfhood she has so ardently proclaimed" ("The Myth of America" 15).

Indeed, Isabel enters her marriage with "good faith" in the innocence of Osmond's qualities and in her motive for marrying him, and with a grandiose hope that her union with Osmond will actualize her ideal which is described in the novel as "yet almost exclusively theoretic" (185). Isabel's theoretic pursuit of miserable knowledge may seem helpless against her actual confrontation with misery, but she engages in the process of acquiring miserable knowledge as ardently as her theoretic pursuit of it. Her actual acquisition of miserable knowledge and her attitude towards those who have deliberately made her miserable determine whether Isabel arrives at innocence or not.

3. Knowing Misery and Beyond

After her marriage with Osmond, Isabel becomes acquainted with both meanings of miserable knowledge: the knowledge that she learns has miserable contents and the process of dealing with the knowledge is painful. It will be examined which of the two—the miserable content and the miserable process—occasions Isabel's innocence. Now that she is married to Osmond, Isabel becomes "acquainted with revulsions, with disgusts; there were days when the world looked black and she asked herself with some sharpness what it was that she was pretending to

live for" (431). One of the miserable contents of knowledge that Isabel gains is that Osmond is an oppressive, manipulative man and that she has misread his nature. Osmond envies the Emperor of Russia, the Sultan of Turkey, and the Pope of Rome for the "consideration" they enjoy (289). Osmond would have been "delighted to be considered to that extent," but this is an impossible ideal. As a result, he has made up his mind to "not care for anything less" and resign to his "studied" and "willful" renunciation (289). Osmond is thus a deeply unhappy man whose ideal cannot be actualized in the world that he inhabits. Isabel has misjudged his indifference as an embrace of his misfortunes, while in fact Osmond regards his existence as a curse.

Osmond keeps "all things within limits" and "adjusted, regulated, animated their manner of life" (423). Contrary to her expectation that she would freely explore life by becoming his wife, Isabel is confined to the function of "represent[ing] Gilbert Osmond" (423). As her "appointed and inscribed master," Osmond allows Isabel no freedom of mind: "Her mind was to be his–attached to his own like a small garden plot to a deer-park" (463). As Michael Gilmore aptly points out, Osmond's ideal wife is an "inanimate object, a flesh and blood possession without the faculty of independent thought" (58). Now confined to the narrow margin that Osmond has assigned her, Isabel becomes a "picture of a gracious lady . . . framed in the gilded doorway" (396).

Some critics emphasize Isabel's stagnation and decree it as her permanent state. Diggory claims that Isabel arrives at a "despairing nihilism in which she loathes how her choices have seemingly condemned her to live only to suffer, such that she even wishes she were dead" (214). Jessica Krzeminski claims that Isabel "renders herself static, inhabiting the role of the subject waiting to be recognized and given meaning" (280). Pointing out Isabel's "baffling inability to actualize" her vast potential, Jonathan Warren emphasizes Isabel's

stagnation: "Isabel is revealed as an icon of imminence confounded by stasis. Isabel is tied to the static. She shrinks from raising curtains and looking into unlighted corners in an expression of her fine capacity for ignorance, which is linked to her sense of the stasis in which she imagines and she exists" (7-8).

However, the novel describes how Isabel's contemplation of miserable knowledge and the process of coping with her miserable knowledge imbues her with a sense of activity. The vigil scene in chapter 42 emphasizes Isabel's awakening consciousness of the contents of her miserable knowledge and her realization of her own share in it. Isabel is quietly sitting up by the dying fire and James comments that this scene is a "representation simply of her motionless SEEING" (14).[21] Yet, James explains that "it throws the action further forward than twenty incidents have done. It was designated to have all the vivacity of the incident" (15). "Isabel's mind, assailed by visions, is in a state of extraordinary activity" despite her "physical stasis" (467; Hussey 182).[22]

The fact that James imbues her contemplation with a sense of activity implies the significance that he places on the notion of knowledge. James considers Isabel's knowledge, her awareness, and her conscious deliberation on her miserable knowledge as effective as twenty incidents. Arriving at innocence premises acquisition of knowledge and giving one's own interpretation of its meaning. Isabel ponders on Osmond's nature and acknowledges her misconception of him: "She saw the whole man. She had mistaken a part for the whole . . . .

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[21] This is cited from James's preface in *The Portrait of a Lady*. Ed. Robert Bamberg. New York: Norton, 1995.

[22] Sandra Zagarell and Hussey assess Isabel's vigil scene positively. Zagarell asserts that Isabel carries out "her relation to herself" which "lies at the heart of the processes of thought and feeling that she comes to terms with her marriage–the chapter that James, and many readers, consider the best thing in the novel" (28). Hussey argues that Isabel is "able to transcend her situation–not by effacing herself as she had when she first met Osmond, but by at last availing herself to her own consciousness" (182). Hussey continues: "James captures the beautiful excess as Isabel emerges from the static portrait of the title and into the amplitudes of inward vision . . . The reemergence of Isabel's consciousness engenders a structural transgression which leads her to an unknown path" (183).

Under all his culture, his cleverness, under his good-nature, his knowledge of life, his egotism lay hidden like a serpent in a bank of flowers" (457, 461). Looking back on her choice to marry him, Isabel sees that her logic was flawed: "That he was poor and lonely and yet that somehow he was noble–that was what interested her and seemed to give her her opportunity" (458).

What is crucial to an assessment of Isabel's innocence is her acknowledgment that she is one of the producers of her own misery. She realizes that, at bottom, the money she inherits from Mr. Touchett "had been a burden" and that "transfer[ring] the weight of it" to Osmond would rub off a certain "grossness attaching to the good luck of an unexpected inheritance" (349). Isabel also recognizes that she has not revealed herself honestly to Osmond before their marriage. During his courtship, Osmond tells Isabel that she has too many ideas and must "get rid of them" (459). Isabel admits that, in a way, she has deceived Osmond too: "She had known she had too many ideas; she had more even than he had supposed, many more than she had expressed to him when he had asked her to marry Him. Yes, she had been hypocritical" (460). By presenting herself as a woman with few ideas to Osmond, Isabel has made Osmond believe that he could manipulate her.

Isabel's recognition that she is also responsible for her misery implies that she has acquired the ability to see her relationship with Osmond from an objective perspective. Isabel's recognition of her own fault and her adoption of a balanced perspective on her marriage can be seen as signs of her maturity. Osmond's accusation of Isabel's disobedience and "opposition" against him implicates his self-absorption and his inability to examine himself objectively and to grow in a relationship (570).

Isabel is further confronted with a series of miserable contents of knowledge concerning her husband and Madame Merle. Merle is an acquaintance of Mrs. Touchett who introduces Isabel to Osmond. The "cultivated," "civilized," "wise," and "easy" Merle presents

herself before Isabel as a "model" of a "great lady" whom Isabel wishes to emulate (211, 212). Isabel's admiration for Merle blinds her to Merle's faults. Lamenting her absence of husband, child, fortune, position and beauty, Merle insinuates that her sense of disillusion and bitterness are deep-rooted: "I think we're a wretched set of people . . . . We're mere parasites, crawling over the surface; we haven't our feet in a soil" (217). Merle also remarks that she has been "shockingly chipped and cracked" and that she is "a horror" when she comes out into a "strong light" (214). Merle's words are not exaggerated, and she is surprisingly honest about her dark nature here. Yet, Isabel fails to read the danger inherent in Merle's nature and continues to believe in her exquisite goodness.

In chapter 49, Isabel learns from her confrontation with Merle that her marriage is devised by Merle. Although Isabel considers Merle to be "deeply false," she acknowledges her own fault in having flattered herself that she had a "much richer view of things" than Mrs. Touchett who has warned her against Merle and Osmond (551). Isabel's reaction to Merle's betrayal stems from her earlier resolve in chapter 40 where she suspects Merle's design: "Whatever happens to me, let me not be unjust. Let me bear my burdens myself and not shift them upon others!" (434). Isabel understands that blaming others for one's misery will lead to bitterness, renunciation, and pessimism, and that only by examining oneself objectively and acknowledging responsibility for action can misery be embraced.

There is still more miserable knowledge to be unveiled about her husband and Merle's past. From Countess Gemini, Isabel learns that Osmond and Merle have had an affair for seven years and that Pansy is their illegitimate child. Merle has conspired to marry Isabel to Osmond, so that he and Pansy can benefit from Isabel's inheritance. As the secrets of her betrayal are revealed, Isabel's sense of misery deepens; at discovering that Merle has renounced "all visible property in the child" to save her own skin, Isabel bursts into tears (579). Not only the timing

of Isabel's sobbing, but also her subsequent reaction is notable and somewhat strange: "Ah, poor, poor woman!" (579). Although Isabel's suffering is caused by being horribly made use of by her husband and her friend, she reacts strongly to Merle's suffering.

Isabel is not naïve to the extent that she unconditionally pities her traitor as she later tells Merle: "I should like never to see you again" (594). Yet, even as she suffers from Osmond and Merle's betrayal, Isabel considers the perspective and the circumstances of Merle. If Isabel had remained self-absorbed, she would have taken revenge or resigned to bitterness. For Isabel, neither is a viable option. Isabel is determined not to allow the suffering caused by Merle and Osmond's evil intent to define her. Isabel makes up her mind never to "accuse" or "reproach" Merle (588). Isabel's resolve suggests that accepting misery as the condition of life and choosing to bear all consequences "with the highest grandeur" enable one to rise above misery (435).

Now that her dark secrets are laid bare before Isabel, Merle neither apologizes nor repents. Merle senses that Isabel will not take revenge or sink into pessimism, and a twisted desire to make Isabel permanently miserable and bitter takes possession of her. Merle tells Isabel that her inheritance is her uncle's money, but the idea is Ralph's. Merle wants Isabel to think that her misery is fundamentally caused by Ralph, since his bestowal of money has led her to fall prey to Osmond and Merle. Isabel responds: "I believed it was you I had to thank!" attributing the cause of her misery to Merle and not to Ralph as Merle intends (594). Merle finally sees that it is impossible for her to make Isabel sink into resentment and misery, and acknowledges her defeat.

Critics have mixed views on Ralph and his bestowal of inheritance. Laurel Bollinger asserts that Ralph arranges for Isabel to inherit a fortune "for the pleasure of watching her actions" being motivated by a "selfish intention" (144). Elizabeth Allen argues that Ralph's

"spectatorship" and his "concept of entertainment, of watching Isabel to see what will happen, of seeing her as a series of images from amusement" turn Isabel into a "performer" (63, 64). Chris Foss claims that Ralph is "just as much the controlling subject to Isabel's object as is Osmond" (255). On the other hand, Ralph "appreciates her living qualities artistically" and has "no thought of dominating or manipulating her" while Osmond wants to turn Isabel into a "work of art" according to Tony Tanner (156). Ralph asks his father to divide his inheritance and give half of it to Isabel because he takes "a great interest" in her and should like to "put it into her power to do some of the things she wants" (James 204). Ralph believes that Isabel is "entirely free" of him and that he can exercise "very little influence upon her life" (204). If Isabel has an easy income, she will never have to marry for support which is something Ralph keenly wants to prevent. Ralph reasons that Isabel "wishes to be free" and the inheritance will "make her free" (205). His father warns him that a young lady with sixty thousand pounds may fall a victim to fortune-hunters, but Ralph responds that it is a "small" risk (207).

Unfortunately, his father's warning comes true, and Ralph wailingly tells Isabel at his deathbed that her betrayal by Osmond and Merle is "unhappy" and that he thinks he has "ruined" her (612). Although it has been his idea to bequeath Isabel the money, it is not Ralph's intention to bring misery upon Isabel. Ralph has meant to make Isabel free so that she does not have to be confined to an economic marriage. While the intention of Merle and Osmond is evil, Ralph's intention is not. Ralph's opposition to Isabel's marriage to Osmond implies that he deeply cares about her. Ralph warns Isabel that Osmond is "narrow, selfish" and that she is going to be "put into a cage" (372, 368). Seeing that Isabel is determined to marry Osmond, Ralph laments that it "hurts" him as if he has "fallen" himself (371). Ralph feels "sick" and "ashamed" about his initial idea that his inheritance will set Isabel free (375). Ralph thus acknowledges his mistake and his share in Isabel's misery, and repents.

Contrary to Merle's evil intention to make Isabel hate Ralph and blame him for her misery, Isabel interprets Ralph's bestowal as an act of generosity and thereby escapes from bitterness and pessimism. Isabel laments that she has never "thanked" Ralph for his gift and tells him that he has been "everything" (611). Instead of isolating herself from the people that are related to her misery, Isabel continues to be connected to them. Instead of ignoring Pansy, the symbol of Merle and Osmond's sin, Isabel resolves not to "turn away" from her (584). Isabel and Pansy's "silent embrace, like two sisters" epitomizes Isabel's embrace of the misery embodied in Pansy's illegitimate birth (592).

Isabel's final choice to return to Osmond should be interpreted in the same vein: Isabel is bearing the consequences of her misery and embracing the person who makes her miserable. Isabel's unconventional choice to return to her cruel husband has led some, such as Edel, to the confused conclusion that Isabel's choice is an unknowable mystery. Edel notes that "readers today—particularly those in search of a happy ending—tend to feel that the central drama of Isabel's life remains unresolved" ("Introduction" xx). James has already speculated that his ending might be criticized for this reason: "The obvious criticism of course will be that it is not finished—that I have not seen the heroine to the end of her situation—that I have left her en l'air" (15).[23] Some critics simply acknowledge that they do not know or understand Isabel's motive. Judith Fryer states that she "does not really know where that straight path leads Isabel" (142). Leslie Keith is unsure both of Isabel's destination and of her achievement: "It is unclear whether Isabel will stay with Osmond or choose to lead a new life . . . . Even if we suppose that Isabel has achieved a kind of insight, the question remains; what will she do next?" (140, 150).

[23] This is cited from James's preface in *The Portrait of a Lady*. Ed. Robert Bamberg. New York: Norton, 1995.

Others assert that the unknowability of Isabel's choice is James's deliberate intention. Kimberly Lamm claims that Isabel's straight path points to "a direction that *The Portrait of a Lady* does not quite contain" (256). According to J. Hillis Miller, the "unknowable . . . moment of decision itself" points to the "failure of knowledge" (744). How Isabel gets the knowledge that she must return to Osmond is an "impenetrable mystery" and the novel teaches that "ethical decisions are never fully justifiable by rational explanations" (744, 746). However, James clearly states that the ending is thorough: "What I have done has that unity–it groups together. It is complete in itself" (18).

James's statement that Isabel's final choice embodies unity and completeness implies a positive assertion of Isabel's choice and of her growth. Some critics recognize Isabel's attainment of liberty in the ending. Joseph Wiesenfarth asserts that "the last picture" of Isabel shows "the woman who has regained her freedom" (23). Debra MacComb claims that Isabel makes the "essential transition from looking to knowing, from darkness of her surroundings to enlightenment" and that her final choice embodies "personal liberty" (135, 129). Miciah Hussey recognizes Isabel's "infinite state of potentiality" and "her potential for agency" (187). James's description of Isabel's return to Osmond confirms this view: "She had not known where to turn; but she knew now. There was a straight path" (628). Isabel chooses to reunite with Osmond knowing that she will suffer from Osmond's oppression as he has warned her that visiting Ralph will be regarded as "the most deliberate, the most calculated opposition" (570).

Yet, Isabel is determined to bear the consequences of having married Osmond and to accept her miserable marriage as the condition of her life. Isabel's acceptance is not a form of renunciation or nihilism, but an affirmation of her belief that misery can be overcome and that miserable people can be embraced. Isabel's final choice embodies her affirmation of life,

together with the misery it inevitably involves. The meaning of the straight path that James leaves short and unexplained is implied in chapter 53 where Isabel is devastated by the knowledge of Osmond and Merle's betrayal and unsure of the continuation of her marriage. Isabel's sense of suffering is so deep that she wishes to "cease utterly, to give it all up and not know anything more" (596). Isabel still manages to get a "multilated glimpse" of her future:

> She saw herself, in the distant years, still in the attitude of a woman who had her life to live, and these intimations contradicted the spirit of the present hour. Deep in her soul–deeper than any appetite for renunciation–was the sense that life would be her business for a long time to come. It was a proof of strength–it was a proof she should someday be happy again. It couldn't be she was to live only to suffer. To live only to suffer it seemed to her she was too valuable. Isabel recognized, as it passed before her eyes, the quick vague shadow of a long future. She should never escape; she should last to the end. (596-97)

This passage exudes the sense of Isabel's strength and her affirmation of life in the midst of deep misery. As Nancy Miller aptly asserts, Isabel survives the "destruction of illusion, the loss of innocence, to continue, to begin again" (328). Isabel's innocence, which makes the renewal of her affirmation of life possible, consists in her resolve to embrace the people who deliberately make her miserable.

The Portrait of a Lady portrays how miserable knowledge is simply a theoretical idea before Isabel's marriage and how she acquires that knowledge afterwards. The miserable knowledge that Isabel gains is what she used to regard as a lack, an essential element that can complete her ideal of life, but which is missing. When she becomes acquainted with miserable

knowledge, Isabel is no longer occupied with the idea of achieving maturity as she used to. Instead, the novel focuses on how Isabel perceives and copes with miserable knowledge. While the emphasis is on the acquisition of miserable knowledge before her marriage, it is the process of coping with miserable knowledge that is accentuated thereafter.

As is indicated in the vigil scene in chapter 42, James stresses the importance of contemplating and consciously interpreting miserable knowledge since he regards it as a condition necessary for arriving at innocence. Isabel might have initially thought that the acquisition of miserable knowledge itself may occasion a state of maturity; however, the contents of miserable knowledge do not bring about an instantaneous growth. The arrival at innocence is rather demonstrated in the novel as a constant, repeated process of acquiring, contemplating, and embracing miserable knowledge.

Although Isabel makes certain choices in consideration of the class habitus of her society, such as her rejection of Lord Warburton, the narrative of her innocence is mainly discussed within the boundary of her individual notion of innocence and in her relationship with a few other characters. Isabel is not an isolated character who refuses to have relations with others, even after they have been false to her. Isabel's innocence consists in her embrace of the people who make her miserable, so that her innocence exists only within her relations with others. Yet the scope of her notion of innocence concerns herself and a few others.

Therefore, in the second chapter about Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, this scope will be expanded to include the protagonist and others whose interests collide with each other, so that the notion of innocence becomes more complicated. The notion of Huckleberry Finn's innocence also implicates a closer affinity to his society than Isabel's innocence, so that the relation between an individual's notion of innocence and the standard of society will be examined as well.

CHAPTER TWO

Knowledge Game in Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

As much as *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* has been praised on the grounds of Huck's morality, it has also been steadily decried, especially for its ending. As Lionel Trilling, one of the first major defenders of Huck, argues that America sees "a deterioration of American values" such as "simplicity," "innocence," and "peace" after the Civil War and Huckleberry's "morally sensitive" and "heroic" character has a "particular moral reference" to the United States after the war (111, 113). T. S. Eliot is impressed by the "pathos and dignity of the boy" who accepts the "responsibility of a man" and Smith by the "boy's capacity for love" embodied in his decision to "sacrifice himself for Jim" (324; 93).[24] More recently, Huck's moral virtues have been defended by various critics including Charles Bailey who claims that Huck awakens to a "moral vision" of "life and humanity" and A. N. Kaul who maintains that Huck's commitment to "the slave's freedom" is motivated by "an ethic which includes but also goes beyond the disapproval of slavery" (164; 286).[25]

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[24] Other early critics have also defended Huck's morality. Gilbert Rubenstein claims that Huck's "courage and dedication" proves that "the spirit of democracy" can be found in the "goodness" of the heart and the "love" for others (379, 384). Hamlin Hill and Walter Blair argue that Huck finally "does mature morally and does reach the point of revolting against the mores of antebellum slaveholding society" (3). According to John Bird, the "ethical parallel" in the ending is that Huck's "morality is deep, true and natural, while Tom's morality, like society's, is shallow, base, and self-deceiving" ("These Leather-Face People" 79).

[25] Bailey further argues that Huck's "awakening moral consciousness" is gained through the "moral lesson of imaginative reciprocity" in his understanding of Jim's sorrow and in their "closeness" (162, 169). Craig Taylor is of opinion that Huck's inability to turn Jim in is "a genuine moral response" and "morally praiseworthy insofar as it involves his recognition of his shared humanity with Jim" and his sympathetic response to Jim's suffering

However, critics have been generally skeptical about Huck's innocence. Leo Marx argues that Huck represents "innocent helplessness" and Leslie Fiedler claims that Huck embodies the "regressiveness of American life" (339; 95). Jay Martin asserts that Huck can "never return into the Eden of innocence" on the river or in the territory (193). Scott Donaldson and Ann Massa are of opinion that "the innocence he tries to preserve by escaping is a fragile thing" (139). Daniel Traber claims that, despite Huck's "moral revelation . . . the dominant ideology remains wholly intact and in control at the end" and that "his identity and sense of morality, unable to break free from society and history, has not transformed" (41). These critical views may result from the novel's portrayal of the harsh realities of slaveholding society and their impact on Huck and Jim's friendship. Although it may seem that the novel emphasizes the impossibility of innocence within slaveholding society, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* explores the possibility of actualizing innocence within the constraining boundary of society that regulates the notion of innocence.

Some critics have portrayed Huckleberry Finn as an "outcast" separated from society (Cox, "Remarks" 148). Eliot asserts that Huck "must come from nowhere and be bound for nowhere" and that he possesses the "independence of a vagabond" (327). Marx claims that freedom in this novel "specifically means freedom from society and its imperatives . . . from social constraint" and Huck is "entirely free of anxiety and guilt" when he can "divest himself of the taint of social conditioning" (338). However, the novel portrays Huck as a socially constituted agent and his innocence as a concept that is formed within the boundary of society. It accentuates how Huck engages in social relationships and how these relationships are

(586, 587). Alan Goldman asserts that Huck "is clearly morally motivated" in helping Jim escape although he is not aware of it (6). One of the central moral lessons of Twain's novel is the development of "moral concern" through "emotional attachment in personal relationships" and through "our concern for others, like Huck's" (15).

habituated to the norms of society. Huck, the people he interacts with, and their relationships are thus subject to social conditioning.

As Huck engages in a series of interactions with one or two persons, the theme of innocence in this chapter will be mainly explored on the level of interactions between Huck and a small group of people. First, Huck encounters Jim and gets involved with the duke and the king later. Then he gets acquainted with Mary Jane and interacts with Tom finally. Although what occurs within this small group cannot wholly represent society in its scope, their interactions are conditioned by what society dictates as innocence. Huck and the characters he interacts with have internalized society's notion of innocence, so that deviating from that standard is considered abnormal and scandalous. While the novel demonstrates how the characters are socially conditioned in formulating their notion of innocence, it simultaneously illustrates the possibility of a different notion of innocence through Huck's interactions with Jim and Mary Jane. The novel illustrates how a notion of innocence deviating from society is subsumed under the powerful mechanism of society, but how it is not useless or meaningless. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* affirms the potential and value of this notion of innocence precisely for the rarity and difficulty of its actualization.

Bruce Michelson has interpreted *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* in terms of a game, as "a novel about people who play games, who make games out of everything." He discusses the notion of innocence in relation to game. According to Michelson, the impulse of game can be perverted into "destructive childishness, evasive mock-innocence which turns the celebrations of true play into cruel, selfish, and pointless rituals which threaten social order and the best in the human spirit" (213). The evil in Huck's world consists of a "failure to keep play separate from serious moral action" and "no evil is so frightening as that which pretends to innocence" (213, 221). Yet, Michelson's notion of game is based on the idea that Huck's games

are separate from the real world. Michelson argues that the novel reflects Twain's idea that "the play world is one physically and imaginatively distinct from everyday life." Citing "two widely accepted authorities" on the theory of games, Johan Huizinga and Roger Caillois who regard game as "a fictive art," Michelson's basic premise is the game's "separateness from real life" which differs from this chapter's idea that a game is a representation of the social world (212).[26]

Bourdieu's theory will be used in this chapter to understand Huck's social interactions and his relation to society as Bourdieu establishes "social game" as a concept that reflects the reality of the social world (Bourdieu and Lamaison 111). A social game refers to socially conditioned interactions among socially conditioned agents. According to Bourdieu, agents participate in "social activities" beginning in childhood through which they gain a "practical sense" of the "social game" (112). The notion of "strategy" is the product of this practical sense of the game which Bourdieu calls "a feel for the game" meaning the "practical mastery of the logic or immanent necessity of a game" which is gained through experience of the game (111). As Huck engages in a series of social games, the boy acquires and accumulates the practical sense of the game which he uses to resolve the tension between social morality and his own notion of innocence and to actualize his notion of innocence. The mechanism of Huck's social games is complicated as not only his own feel for the game is at stake but also the diverse interests of other players who usually possess a better sense of the game as they are older than Huck and therefore have more experiences in having played social games.

Bourdieu further argues that the social game takes place within the social world constructed on the basis of "principles of differentiation or distribution constituted by the set

[26] See Huizinga 132; Caillois 9-10.

of properties" which are capable of conferring "strength" and "power" on their holder ("The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups" 724). The principles that construct the social space are the "different kinds of power or capital that are current in the different fields" (724). These are principally economic capital (money and property), cultural capital (cultural goods and services including educational credentials), social capital (acquaintances and networks), and symbolic capital (prestige, reputation, renown).[27] Agents are defined by their relative position within the social space in accordance with their capitals, which function as a "set of objective power relations that impose themselves on all who enter the field" and impact the "intentions of the individual agent" as well as the "direct interactions among the agents" (724). Since those who occupy the "dominated positions within the social space" are also located in "dominated positions in the field of symbolic production," the dominated accommodate to the dominant who direct and set the rules of the game (735). As the rules set by the dominant player are conditioned to be followed in the game, they function as a standard that regulates the direction of the game, the actions of the players, and the principle of morality. It is taken for granted that the rules of the dominant are obeyed; noncompliance means violation of the moral of the game.

Since Huck engages mostly in games in which he is placed in the dominated position, he is conditioned to follow the rules of the dominant player leaving little room for the actualization of his own notion of innocence. Yet, the novel is not pessimistic about the actualization of innocence within power relations, especially by a player in a dominated position. Appointing a boy who has a weaker practical sense of the social game than adults, who possesses basically no capital to dominate the game and still strives to realize his notion

[27] The distribution of these various forms of capital, "like the aces in a game of cards," are "powers that define the chances of profit in a given field." Bourdieu argues that the capitals or powers define "the position of a given agent within the social space" depending on the "overall volume of the capital they possess" and on the "relative weight of the different kinds" of capital ("The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups" 724).

of innocence as its main character, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* problematizes the pursuit of self-interest by dominant players. While they use Huck and other dominated players for their own profit, Huck endeavors to help another player who is more marginal than himself. Huck's effort suggests that innocence is not only possible when one possesses more power and influence over others and that innocence is rather a matter of attitude towards others, especially towards those who are marginalized, regardless of one's dominant/dominated position as well.

1. Social Morality and Huck's Divergent Notion of Innocence

The sense of oppression that Huck feels within his society is reflected in his distress at the efforts of Widow Douglas, an aristocrat in St. Petersburg, to "sivilize" him and in his subsequent flight from St. Petersburg (11). The widow teaches Huck to be "regular," "decent," and "respectable" (11). She also teaches him the Bible and calls him a "poor lost lamb" when he is disobedient (12). Widow Douglas's sister Miss Watson admonishes Huck that, if he does not "behave," he will go to the "bad place" reflecting how Christianity functions as a moral standard in Huck's society (13).

The fact that Jim is Miss Watson's slave is contradictory as a Christian is supposed to love one's neighbor.[28] In fact, it points to the reality of the slaveholding society of the nineteenth-century America when slaveholders justified slavery by using Christianity as an ideology. Shelley Fischer Fishkin argues that Twain is born into a world at a time when the "black inferiority argument–bolstered by both religion and pseudo-science" reigns as the preeminent justification for slavery (130). Twain recalls in his autobiography that in his

[28] The Bible commands to "love your neighbor as yourself" in Mark 12:31.

schooldays, he had "no aversion to slavery," that he was "not aware that there was anything wrong about it," and that local churches taught that "God approved it, that it was a holy thing" (*Autobiography* 101). Whites and blacks were constantly told how "servants must obey their masters" as the Bible commands (Holcombe 809).[29]

When Huck and Jim run into each other on Jackson Island, their interaction is conditioned by the racial ideology of slaveholding society. Huck becomes intolerant of widow Douglas and Miss Watson's effort to civilize him as well as Pap's physical violence and murder threats, so that he stages his own murder and leaves St. Petersburg. On spotting Jim on the island, the first thought that enters Huck's mind is that "it was Miss Watson's Jim" (52). Jim is thus perceived by Huck primarily as the property of a white master.

The ideology of white supremacy and black inferiority operates within their relationship as is reflected in Huck's view of Jim. Huck considers Jim to be ignorant in accordance with the ideology that blacks have the intelligence of an infant.[30] Huck comments that Jim has an "uncommon level head for a nigger" (87). Huck also takes it for granted that love is to black people "more an eager desire, than a tender delicate mixture of sentiment and sensation" (Gosett 44). Thus, he is surprised to find that Jim cares "as much for his people as white folks does for their'n" which does not seem "natural" to Huck (Twain 166). Although Huck's view of Jim is racist and troublesome for contemporary readers, it is the view that is

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[29] The wide circulation and acceptance of white supremacy and black inferiority in nineteenth-century America is reflected in the rhetoric of American presidents and experts. Thomas Jefferson suspects blacks to be "inferior to whites in the endowment both of body and of mind" (Gosett 44). Jefferson finds that blacks are emotional, impulsive and lacking in "fore-thought" as well as dull, unimaginative, and incapable of expressing "a thought above the level of plain narration" (195). Jefferson argues that black "inferiority," rather than being the "effect merely of their condition of life," is natural (Frederickson 142). Abraham Lincoln states in 1858: "There must be the position of superior and inferior, and I as much as any other man am in favor of having the superior position assigned to the white race" (Gould 66). In 1850, the renowned southern physician S. A. Cartwright claims that the "adult negro" has the capacities for learning of "a white infant" (Fishkin 142). See also Klinkner and Smith 14.

[30] It is believed in nineteenth-century America that the intelligence of blacks is "much inferior to that of whites" (Jefferson 104).

shared by most Americans in slaveholding society. Deviating from this socially sanctioned racial ideology would be a breach of social norm and of social morality for Huck.

Since Jim is a runaway slave and Huck a white who is supposed to report him, their relation is determined by the social positions allocated within slaveholding society. Simultaneously, Huck and Jim can use their knowledge of their social positions to consider and determine their subsequent actions within the social game. According to Bourdieu, knowledge of what a game is and of what agents can do with it "from the position they occupy within it" determines how they position themselves against the other player and whether they can "win at this game" (Bourdieu and Lamaison 114). Anyone who wishes to win the game needs to "have a sense of the game" (114). An agent's sense of the game which contributes to the necessity and the logic of the game is "a form of knowledge of that necessity and logic" (113).

More specifically, knowledge means "knowledge of the position occupied" in the social space and "information as to the agents' intrinsic properties (their condition) and their relational properties" ("The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups" 725). Knowledge, as the "sense of one's place, as a sense of what one can or cannot permit oneself" implies a tacit acceptance of one's place, "a sense of limits ("that's not for the likes of us")" or a "sense of distances, to be marked and kept, respected or expected" (728). This knowledge is used to "situate oneself in a social space or to place others" by "behaving comme il faut with persons and things that have and give class (smart or unsmart), finding the right distance by a sort of practical calculation, neither too close (getting familiar) nor too far (being distant)" (*Distinction* 472-73). Based on this knowledge, "power relations" are present in the agents' minds, in the form of categories of perception of these relations ("The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups" 729).

When Huck asks Jim why he is on Jackson Island, Jim contemplates whether he should

tell Huck that he has run away or not. Looking "pretty uneasy," Jim "didn't say nothing for a minute" (53). The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 requires all escaped slaves to be returned to their masters upon capture and all American citizens to cooperate. Twain narrates how the "whole community was agreed as to . . . the awful sacredness of slave property" and also to the legitimacy of the Fugitive Slave Law: "To help a hunted slave or hesitate to promptly betray him to a slave-catcher when opportunity offered was a much base crime, and carried with a stain, a moral smirch which nothing could wipe away" (*Autobiography* 101). In this circumstance, Jim can either hide from Huck that he is running away and go on without him or he can risk telling Huck the truth. Jim asks Huck: "You wouldn't tell on me ef I 'uz to tell you, would you, Huck?" When Huck promises he will not, Jim says: "I b'lieve you, Huck. I–I *run off*" (53).

The fact that Jim discloses his secret to Huck, a secret that may cost his safety, implies that he has judged that Huck will not report him. Forrest Robinson argues that Jim involves Huck in his escape because Huck gives him "eyes and ears, information, an alibi," as the townspeople think that Jim is Huck's murderer, and offers "some small leverage when the inevitable disaster strikes" (367). James Kasteley asserts that Jim's "confidence" in Huck is not "a simple act of faith" for Jim "knows that Huck is also running away from St. Petersburg and will not return as long as Pap is around" (418). Indeed, Jim's judgment that Huck will not report him must be based on such careful calculation as one mistake may cost his freedom. Jim is thus conditioned to be extremely cautious as a slave in slaveholding society.

Huck contemplates how he will react to Jim's escape. Huck has already told Jim that he will not disclose Jim's secret and that he will "stick to" his promise (53). Huck is also aware of the consequences of violating the Fugitive Slave Law: "People would call me a lowdown Abolitionist and despise me for keeping mum" (53). Huck knows that he will suffer social

disgrace and punishment for keeping his promise to Jim. Huck still tells Jim that "that don't make no difference. I ain't a-going to tell, and I ain't a-going back there, anyways" (54). Huck reasons that compliance with the Fugitive Slave Act is of consequence if he continues to live in St. Petersburg. Since he has staged his own murder and does not intend to return to St. Petersburg, Huck thinks that he is free from the domination of its law. It is a naive idea as it turns out that the racial ideology is at work everywhere he goes. For now, Huck's decision is based on his reasoning that noncompliance with the Fugitive Slave Act is unlikely to be of consequence and therefore there is less chance for him to suffer social disgrace and punishment. Simultaneously, Huck also feels responsible for the promise he has made to Jim. Huck's sense of integrity towards Jim indicates that he may still choose to go against social convention to keep his promise to Jim when he realizes that racial ideology is at work not only in St. Petersburg but basically everywhere he goes.

Obtaining from Judith Loftus the information that her husband and a townsman will search for Jim on Jackson Island that night, Huck tells Jim that "they're after us!" indicating his identification of Jim's situation and fate with his own (73). Beyond keeping mum about Jim's escape, Huck is now helping Jim to escape which has become the purpose of his own journey now. As his sojourn with Jim continues, Huck starts to vacillate between his identification with Jim and the racial ideology that operates within slaveholding society. Huck's oscillation symbolizes the struggle between social morality and a notion of innocence which deviates from it.

Huck's notion of innocence refers to the recognition of Jim's humanity against social morality and the willingness to suffer social punishment for upholding Jim's freedom. Huck's readiness to suffer social loss for the purpose of not harming Jim coincides with the original meaning of innocence. The fact that Huck believes noncompliance with the Fugitive Slave Act

will not affect him as he has left St. Petersburg suggests that the scope of his knowledge about the social game is limited as a thirteen-year-old child.[31] Huck may be aware of the Fugitive Slave Act, but he does not fully grasp the reality of the consequences of violating this law. The more he confronts the fact that the same racial ideology is at work everywhere, the more intense his inner struggle between social morality and his notion of innocence becomes.

One such moment is portrayed in chapter 16 where Huck feels offended by Jim's talk about his freedom: "Here was this nigger, which I had as good as helped to run away, coming right out flat-footed and saying he would steal his children . . . I was sorry to hear Jim say that, it was such a lowering of him" (99). Huck's social conditioning implicates the habituation of racial ideology as social morality which condemns Jim's claim on freedom. In compliance with social morality, Huck makes up his mind to paddle ashore and report Jim. Being aware of Huck's intention, Jim deliberately reminds Huck of their friendship appealing to the notion of innocence which has been forming since the moment Huck decides to keep his promise to Jim: "Jim won't ever forgit you, Huck; you's de bes' frend' Jim's ever had; en you's de *only* fren' ole Jim's got now . . . . de ole true Huck; de on'y white gentleman dat ever kep' his promise to ole Jim" (100).[32] The notion of innocence embodied in Jim's words dictates Huck to protect and help his friend. Huck narrates how he is "all in a sweat to tell on him; but when he says this, it seemed to kind of take the tuck all out of me" and he subsequently gives up on reporting

[31] Bernard Prusak argues that Huck's "fluctuations from one point of view to another" should remind us that "he is just a boy" (13).

[32] Critics have pointed out Jim's shrewdness in this scene. According to Robertson, Jim senses that Huck is "about to betray him" and thus he offers an "oblique but quite moving and effective appeal to Huck's loyalty" (365). Jim is "shrewd enough" to recognize that the greater wisdom for a slave resides in the "stimulation of a boyish simplicity" (365). Edward Griffin asserts that Jim "knows what struggle is going on in Huck's heart and head" (12). Jim shrewdly leaves Huck little option: "Will Huck remain the only white gentleman that ever kept his promise to the black man, or will he act like all the rest?" (12). Robert Lamb claims that, beneath Jim's "seeming gratitude," he is "threatening to reveal that Huck has helped a fugitive slave" and Huck "grasps the threat, if not the conscious intention" (482).

Jim (100).

Huck's awareness of the realistic implications of his violation of social morality has increased in the meantime. Yet, his growing knowledge about social morality does not stop him from acting upon his own notion of innocence. Huck chooses to abide by his own notion of innocence which implies that his notion of innocence is becoming more established despite his developing awareness of the implications of social morality. Huck's decision to give up on reporting Jim for the sake of their friendship has been assessed positively by critics. W. H. Auden praises Huck's choice as a "pure act of moral improvisation" (114). Craig Taylor finds it to be "morally praiseworthy insofar as it involves his recognition of his shared humanity" with Jim (586-87). Bernard Prusak explains that, for Huck, "not to love Jim would be unreasonable" (15). Huck's decision to defy social morality in favor of his own notion of innocence is noteworthy considering the dominance of racial ideology at work in his society and the price he has to pay for helping Jim. The difficulty of continuing to preserve innocence under the domination of social morality is reflected in the following episode wherein the mechanism of social morality powerfully invades the raft of Huck and Jim. Yet, Huck's acquaintance with a character who plays the social game in a manner that deviates from its usual one continues to suggest the possibility of innocence.

2. Getting a Glimpse of the Possibility of an Innocent Game

Huck's encounter with the duke and the king in chapter 19 depicts how the difference in the scope of knowledge impacts which player gains more power in the social game. Huck takes upon the raft two white men who are running away from the people they have swindled. While the duke is "a white male aged thirty," the king is "aged about seventy" (Nissen 57). Since the

social game is played with the knowledge about the positions the players occupy within the social space and the knowledge about their intrinsic and relational properties in the social space, the more experience in having played social games, the more knowledge and chance at winning are gained. As a thirteen-year-old boy, the scope of Huck's knowledge of the social game is markedly limited compared to the duke and the king who are about twenty and fifty years his senior.

Huck's narrow scope of knowledge in comparison with the duke and the king's is emphasized when the duke and the king decide to lie to Huck that they are of royal birth. First, the duke solemnly states: "The secret of my birth . . . I will reveal it to you, for I feel I may have confidence in you. By rights I am a duke!" The duke continues that he has been "forlorn, torn from my high estate, hunted of men" (133). Seeing that the duke is gaining pity and admiration from Huck, the king makes up his own story: "You ain't the only person that's ben snaked down wrongfully out'n a high place . . . I am the late Dauphin! . . . the wanderin,' exiled, trampled-on, and sufferin' rightful King of France" (134, 135). These stories would not be believed by adults and mark the duke and the king as "lunatics onshore" (Mensh and Mensh 63). Yet, Huck's naïve belief in the truth of the frauds' stories implies that, based on their knowledge and diverse experiences accumulated through long years of having played social games, the duke and the king have judged, and rightly so, that the scope of Huck's knowledge is narrow enough to believe their absurd stories.

The power that the duke and the king have gained over Huck by using their superior knowledge of the social game is reflected in Huck's submission to their demand to "bow" and call them "Your Grace," "My Lord," or "Your Lordship," to wait on them at dinner, and to "do any little thing" they want him to do for them (133, 134). All the while, Huck does not suspect the truth of the frauds' stories and believes that he is simply helping everybody on the raft to

be “satisfied and feel right and kind towards the others” (135). Eventually, the difference in the accumulated knowledge and experience of social game renders the duke and the king as the dominant players and Huck as the one accommodating to their rules.

Over time, Huck discovers that the duke and the king are “liars” who are no duke and king at all, but “just low-down humbugs and frauds” (136). However, Huck’s newly gained knowledge does not induce him to change his attitude towards the duke and the king or to use his acquired knowledge to play the game in a more strategical way. Instead, Huck continues to succumb to the game dominated by the duke and the king in an accommodating and submissive manner: “I never said nothing, never let on; kept it to myself; it’s the best way; then you don’t have no quarrels, and don’t get into trouble . . . . If I never learnt nothing else out of pap, I learnt that the best way to get along with his kind of people is to let them have their own way” (136). Huck’s subjection to the duke and the king’s domination of the game suggests that the unequal possession of knowledge and the uneven distribution of power among players within the social game should be conditioned to remain intact and unchanged. Huck’s knowledge that the duke and the king have lied about their royal birth is powerless to alter the dynamics of power in the game dominated by them. Huck’s understanding of the inevitability of his subjection to the duke and the king’s game forces him to keep mum about his knowledge and to submit to their demand to cooperate in their frauds.

However, Huck’s encounter with Mary Jane brings about a change in his belief that the power relation within the social game is permanent and that the only option available for the dominated player is passive submission. The duke and the king plan to steal the inheritance of the orphaned Mary Jane, Susan, and Joanne, whose uncle Peter Wilks has recently passed away, by pretending to be Peter’s brothers who have lived in England for a long time. The duke and the king’s crying act wins over the hearts of the girls and the townspeople: “They looked

in the coffin, . . . then they bust out a-crying so you could 'a' heard them to Orleans, most . . . . It worked the crowd like you never see anything like it, and everybody broke down and went to sobbing out loud–the poor girls, too" (174). Huck feels moral contempt at the duke and the king's pursuit of personal profit at the cost of the bereaved families and friends: "I never see anything so disgusting" (175).

Nevertheless, Huck's contempt for the frauds "formed from the nation's scum" and his knowledge about their fraud on the Wilks girls are no game changer; they are powerless against the schemes of the shrewd adults (De Voto 296). Therefore, despite his criticism of the frauds, Huck is forced to play the role of the duke and the king's servant from England and waits on them at dinner. After supper, Joanne asks Huck a series of questions about England and Huck makes a few blunders. Huck answers, for instance, that he has seen William the Fourth who is already dead. Joanna gets suspicious: "Hain't you been telling me a lot of lies?" (184). Huck is in a tight place and then suddenly Mary Jane steps in and comes to his aid:

> It ain't right nor kind for you to talk so to him, and him a stranger and so far from his people. How would you like to be treated so? The thing is for you to treat him kind, and not be saying things to make him remember he ain't in his own country and amongst his own folks. (185)

Up until now, Huck's interactions with other characters have illustrated the logic of the social game in which social morality is operative and knowledge of the game determines the dominant and dominated positions among players. Huck's relationship with Jim is conditioned by the racial ideology of slaveholding society and Huck's limited scope of knowledge of the game subjects him to the domination of the duke and the king. Nevertheless, Mary Jane's words

reflect a new logic which diverges from the convention of the game of Huck's society. Mary Jane advocates treating a person in a dominated position with kindness and understanding. Mary Jane admonishes the taken-for-granted subordination of the dominated by the dominant as an injustice, subverting the logic of the social game.

Instead of dismissing Mary Jane's logic as unrealistic or inapplicable, Huck is deeply moved by her words and, moreover, resolves to make an unconventional choice:

> I says to myself, this is a girl that I'm letting that old reptile rob her of her money! . . . They all jest laid theirselves out to make me feel at home and know I was among friends. I felt so ornery and low down and mean that I says to myself, my mind's made up; I'll hive that money for them or bust. (185-86)

Until now, Huck's lack of knowledge and his subsequent submission to the domination of the more knowledgeable duke and king have forced him to acquiesce and participate in their frauds despite his contempt of their immorality. Huck's paradox reflects the predicament of the dominated player forced to submit to the rules set out by the dominant player. However, Huck's interaction with Mary Jane enables him to enact a notion of innocence that deviates from social morality. Whereas the mechanism of the social game dictates following the dominant player's rules as morally appropriate, Mary Jane subverts this logic by her notion of innocence, by intending not to harm those who occupy a dominated position.

Mary Jane gives him the idea that the social games that he and others take for granted may not be absolute but that there may be other ways, such as protection and prioritization of the dominated player. Through Huck's determination to adopt Mary Jane's notion of innocence, the possibility of actualizing an idea of innocence subverting social morality is explored in the

following episodes of the novel.

Reversing the plans of the duke and the king and returning the stolen money to the Wilks girls require subverting the dynamics of dominance and subjection between Huck and the shrewd adults. This seemingly unrealistic possibility is taken seriously by Huck who is convinced by the legitimacy of Mary Jane's notion of innocence. Critics have pointed out the significance of Huck's interaction with Mary Jane for producing a significant change in him. John Bird argues that, up to this point, Huck has mainly acted "to protect himself and Jim" but seeing that the Wilks girls will get hurt, he is led to "reformed action" ("And Then Think of Me!" 74). Bailey asserts that this scene attests to the "emergence of Huck's moral conscience" rooted in the "metaphor of reciprocity": the moral lesson of the Exodus–love the stranger as thyself–becomes the message of the novel (170). To retrieve the Wilks girls' money from the duke and the king, Huck ventures sneaking into their room, hiding the money in Peter's coffin, and writing Mary Jane a letter indicating the location of the money once he is far down the river.

The appearance of Peter's real brothers and the threat of being lynched as the frauds' accomplice drive the previously hopeful Huck into despair: "Everything was going so different from what I had allowed for; stead of being fixed so I could take my own time if I wanted to, and have Mary Jane at my back to save me and set me free, here was nothing in the world betwixt me and sudden death" (213). After the possibility of a notion of innocence that differs from social morality is suggested, the novel portrays how Huck is again overtaken by the force of the socially conditioned game. A glimpse of hope reappears when Huck manages to escape only to discover that the duke and the king have also escaped and sold Jim to Silas Phelps. Twain seems to suggest by the turn of the events that a notion of innocence that deviates from social morality is an unrealistic dream and that the only social reality is the logic of domination

and subjugation in the social game.

Nevertheless, Huck's subsequent action suggests that a different notion of innocence may be difficult to achieve but not an impossible fantasy. Whereas Huck has generally complied with social morality before his interaction with Mary Jane, his reaction to the news that Jim is sold illustrates how the notion of innocence that Mary Jane has awakened is operating within his consciousness, diminishing the influence of social morality: "After all we'd done for them scoundrels . . . they could have the heart to serve Jim such a trick as that, and make him a slave again all his life, and amongst strangers, too, for forty dirty dollars" (223). Huck criticizes the duke and the king for objectifying Jim as a means for economic gain, for turning him into "an object, a possession which can be bought and sold for money" (Fetterley 73). Huck's mention of "strangers" here refers to Mary Jane's use of the word implying that Huck is following Mary Jane's notion of innocence.

The scene in chapter 31 is crucial as Huck confronts the opposition between social morality and his own notion of innocence, and chooses to abide by the latter from now on. Huck is prompted by his moral indignation at the duke and the king's selling of Jim. Initially, Huck has decided to help Jim escape on Jackson Island believing that the grip of social morality would not impact him as long as he is away from St. Petersburg. Yet, his knowledge game with the duke and the king and his narrow escape from the lynching of the townspeople have taught him that social morality is operative everywhere and that he will always be under its influence.

Therefore, Huck's determination to set Jim free from Silas Phelps has a different implication this time. Huck has now become more aware of the realistic implications of defying social morality and helping a slave escape: "And then think of *me*! It would get all around that Huck Finn helped a nigger to get his freedom; and if I was ever to see anybody from that town again I'd be ready to get down and lick his boots for shame" (223). The powerful operation of

social morality and the consequences of defying it incite fear and guilt in Huck: "The more I studied about this the more my conscience went to grinding me, and the more wicked and low-down and ornery I got to feeling" (223).

As much as the new notion of innocence appeals to Huck, the authority of social morality is also powerful. To rid himself of the sense of guilt incited by the morality of slaveholding society, Huck writes Miss Watson a letter indicating Jim's location. At first, he feels "good and all washed clean of sin for the first time," but then he is reminded of Jim and of the time they have spent together:

> "I see Jim before me all the time: in the day and in the nighttime, . . . and we a-floating along, talking and singing and laughing. But somehow I couldn't seem to strike no places to harden me against him, but only the other kind. I'd see him standing my watch on top of his'n, 'stead of calling me, so I could go on sleeping . . . At last I struck the time . . . he said I was the best friend old Jim ever had in the world, and the *only* one he's got now." (225)

Huck is aware of the opposition between these principles and knows that he must choose to abide by one and discard the other: "I was a-trembling, because I'd got to decide, forever, betwixt two things, and I knowed it. I studied it [the letter] for a minute, sort of holding my breath, and then says to myself: 'All right, then, I'll *go* to hell' and tore it up" (225). Huck decides to disobey social morality and enact the new notion of innocence, an act that has been praised by critics. Prusak argues that the "unconsciable" for Huck would be to act contrary to "his love for Jim," and he freely chooses, "taking full responsibility for his choice," a course of action contrary to the prejudices of slaveholding society and begins to "free himself from its

fetters" (17). Andrew Spencer recognizes it as "the quintessential moment of Huck's being empowered to do what he believes to be right" and the "single most adultlike decision he makes . . . more adultlike than many of the chronological adults that inhabit his world" (141).[33] In Huck's decision to go against social morality and to help Jim, the possibility of the notion of innocence suggested by Mary Jane is enacted in a specific act. Whether this possibility can be actualized and maintained within social games wherein social morality is at work is the question raised in Huck's final game with Tom Sawyer.

3. The Powerful Mechanism of Social Morality and the Meaning of Innocence

No scene in the novel has received more criticism than the final one wherein Huck tries to help Jim escape with Tom. Ernest Hemingway calls chapter 31 the "real end" of the novel and the rest "cheating" (22). Marx complains that he becomes Tom's "helpless accomplice, submissive and gullible" and "regresses to the subordinate role" while Huck has "grown in stature throughout the journey" (333). Thus, the ending diminishes the "importance and uniqueness of Huck's victory" (338). Traber claims that the ending disrupts the "promise of Huck's eventual liberal acknowledgement of Jim's humanity" as Huck "succumbs to Tom's romanticized, self-interested desires" and "allows himself to be manipulated by Tom" (30, 32).[34] These negative

[33] James Kastely claims that Huck's decision is "fully altruistic" and there is "no self-interest" in this choice as "Jim's freedom is Huck's only end" (432). For Smith, "the boy's capacity for love" is embodied in his decision to "sacrifice himself for Jim" (93).

[34] James Cox points out the "flatness" of the ending and sees Huck's adoption of Tom's name in the evasion scene as a symbol of his "long, arduous, and disillusioning initiation" ("Remarks" 142, 154). He also argues in another work that, while a quest is a "positive journey, implying an effort, a struggle to reach a goal," Huck is "escaping" and his journey is "primarily a negation, a flight from tyranny, not a flight toward freedom" (*Mark Twain* 172-73). Michelson criticizes Huck's "passivity" and "moral silence" in the ending (225). According to Albert Stone, Huck reaches the point of "maximum moral awareness" when he is prepared to go to hell for Jim only to surrender the "moral maturity so painfully picked up on the river" in the ending (156). Eventually, Huck's initiation proves to be "temporary and incomplete" suggesting that he could "not escape his natural or his social setting–nor finally, the limitations of his private world" (158). Stuart Hutchinson asserts that Huck "always

assessments are understandable as Huck's innocence previously demonstrated in his interactions with Mary Jane and Jim is subsumed under Tom's domination. Since Huck is subjected to Tom's power and is limited and hindered in his attempt to save Jim in his own way, the critics' disappointment and disillusionment are understandable.

Yet, the fact that Huck accommodates to Tom's ways does not diminish or nullify the meaning of Huck's innocence. Understanding Huck's final game with Tom as a representation of the social game wherein the dominated player is subject to the rule of the dominant player explains why Huck submits to Tom's power. In comparison with Huck, Tom possesses more social, economic, symbolic, cultural capitals, so that he occupies a dominant position in their game. Tom is "respectable and well brung up" and has "a character to lose"; his family at home also "has character" (245).

Some critics have pointed out that social conditioning differentiates the dominant and dominated positions of the boys. Sharon McCoy mentions that "Tom's secure sense of self within society's hierarchy exposes Huck's tenuous positions" and Tom's "relative security in his overall social status enables him to maintain dominance in their relationship" (46, 50). Susan Derwin argues that Huck and Tom's relation is "reassigned" by the "customary distribution of power" in the social structure (440). Tom's dominant position in the social space conditions Huck's submission to the rules Tom sets out. As Judith Fetterley compares Tom to a "petty tyrant" who derives "pleasure from other people's suffering," Tom's marginalization

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frustrates our desire to assume we are en route to a meaningful end" and that he cannot have a "substantial identity because there is no motive, moral and plot" (115). Lawrence Buell is another critic who sees Huck as a regressive character: "This backwater gamin personifies southern uncivilization" and symbolizes an "immature state of development . . . to avoid the responsibility of ever having to grow up" (273). V. S. Princhett is skeptical of Huck's potential and growth as a character. Princhett doubts whether Huck is the "kind of boy who will grow up to build a new civilization" (308). Being a "natural anarchist and bum," Huck is the first typical American portrait of the "underdog" (308). For other critics who criticize the ending of the novel, see Fulton 84; Carrington 162; McCoy 62-3; Van O'Connor 513.

and oppression of Jim represent the dynamics between white masters and black slaves of slaveholding society and have realistic impacts on the game; therefore, he imposes restrictions on Huck's effort to set Jim free (71).

When critics complain about Huck's submission to Tom, they overlook that agents are socially conditioned to occupy either a dominant or dominated position in the social game. This dynamic of domination and subjection is conditioned and does not change easily. These critics' expectations may have been fulfilled if Huck had overtaken the initiative over the game and rescued Jim as fast and effectively as possible or if Huck had banished Tom altogether from the game and played it by his own rules. However, such scenarios overlook the social conditioning of the game and of the positions that the players are habituated to occupy. Since Tom possesses more capitals and power, he is designated as the dominant player. On the other hand, Huck is conditioned to subject to his rules. The point is not to expect this power dynamics to change in order for innocence to be achieved, but to explore the possibility of actualizing innocence within the limited position in the power relation.

Huck's subjection to Tom's game does not mean that Huck renounces the notion of innocence that Mary Jane has awakened or that he abandons Jim in the final scene. David Burg argues that Huck "accepts slavery" and "participates in the cruelties of the Evasion" (310). However, Huck's intention to set Jim free remains unchanged throughout this scene. As Tom's rules become increasingly cruel towards Jim, Huck endeavors to dissuade Tom from carrying out too time-demanding, ineffective or harsh plans. When Tom claims that Jim must keep a journal as prisoners commonly do, Huck replies that "Jim can't write," and Tom does not proceed with his plan (252). Tom also comes up with a ridiculous idea that they should dig the foundations out from under the cabin and Huck retorts: "Confound it, it's foolish, Tom" (255). Huck attempts to set Jim free without subverting the dynamics of domination and subjection

of the game. If Huck protests too strongly, Tom may take offense and diminish Huck's role or even banish him from the game. Huck is conditioned to maintain the game and to set Jim free without reversing the dynamics of the game. The fact that Huck's intention to free Jim remains intact throughout the ending implies that he remains faithful to the notion of innocence suggested by Mary Jane.

The novel realistically portrays how difficult it is for an individual's notion of innocence to be realized in social games in which the dynamics of power operates. Some critics argue that the novel's ending reflects Twain's ultimate pessimism. Burg asserts that the final chapters of the novel epitomize "Twain's emergent nihilism, his antimoral precepts" and his "belief that the value systems are malign shams" (299, 306). Peter Messent claims that the novel presents and accepts "social fragmentation and inequality and personal alienation as the unalterable realities of American life" (118). The potential of innocence is subsumed under social morality operative within social games as Huck's game with Tom indicates. Nevertheless, Huck's effort to set Jim free does not ultimately portray the futility of innocence. Instead, it endorses the meaning of innocence that has been kindled by Mary Jane and is embodied in Huck's persistent determination to set Jim free.

The ending accentuates the novel's emphasis on the realistic portrayal of the power dynamics operative within social relations and its impact on the actualization of innocence. Innocence is not achieved by overthrowing or stepping outside of the socially conditioned positions of dominance and subjection. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* illustrates that it is only within the socially habituated positions and the constraint imposed by the power dynamics that innocence is actualized. Huck's innocence does not consist in the realization of heroic ideals, such as setting Jim free by his own rules or banishing Tom from the game, as these potential scenarios neglect the social reality wherein the dynamics of power and subjection

operates. Huck's innocence is rather embodied in his intention to regard a black slave as a fellow human being and to protect him from the socially sanctioned harm inflicted upon slaves. The success or failure of Huck's attempt to actualize his innocence is not identical to his innocence and cannot serve as a criterion for dismissing his innocence as nonexistent or futile. The complexity and difficulty of realizing his notion of innocence reflects that the actualization of innocence is conditioned and constrained by social morality and by power relations and that it is all the more seldom and valuable when it is pursued.

The potential of innocence illustrated in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is more extensively explored in *The Age of Innocence*. While both societies of Huck and Newland condition the individual to succumb to social morality, the story of Huck starts and ends when he is still thirteen-years old, and innocence remains a faint possibility. By describing how Newland's society changes into a new age over a period of thirty years, *The Age of Innocence* illustrates how an individual notion of innocence can be actualized over time, expanding the potential of innocence and demonstrating the actualization of innocence in reality.

CHAPTER THREE

Tacit Knowledge in Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence*

While innocence is attributed to one protagonist in *The Portrait of a Lady* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *The Age of Innocence* presents multiple characters who embody innocence. May is innocent in her own way and so are Ellen and Newland, so that innocence is no longer maintained as a singular and fixed meaning. While all three characters intend to cause no harm to each other, the choices they make for this purpose are expressed in different ways and have mixed consequences as their interests intersect. The characters' intentions remain tacit from others, so that innocence is neither directly detectable nor easily understood by others. In this novel, innocence demands that each character be assessed according to their own intention and choice suggesting that innocence comes to have more complex forms.

Some critics present innocence in *The Age of Innocence* as having a singular meaning. Cynthia Griffin Wolff argues that innocence in this novel refers to the "prelapsarian state" of the "stable pre-First World War society of old New York" (642). According to Sarah Kozloff, the title is linked to "pre-war optimism and naïvete in general, and to New York's society's comparative youthfulness and self-image of purity in particular" (212). While Wolff and Kozloff interpret innocence as having one meaning and belonging to one particular age, the novel demands adopting multiple perspectives on innocence. The novel demonstrates how the notion of innocence cannot be maintained as a singular notion and how it becomes diversified.

Therefore, in *The Age of Innocence*, innocence should no longer be used in its singular form but in its plural form: innocences.

As the standard of innocence comes to differ from one person to another and its meaning becomes diversified as innocences, it can be questioned whether it is necessary to still explain the various motives and behaviors of people with the concept of innocence. If each individual acts on what seems right to him or her, it seems redundant to explain their behavior in terms of innocence. As the title of the novel indicates, *The Age of Innocence* simultaneously demonstrates how there are different meanings of innocence and how these innocences remain within the boundary of a comprehensive, inclusive concept of Innocence. Innocence no longer has a singular meaning and its meaning has become diversified as innocences; at the same time, innocence can be still subsumed under the universal notion of Innocence. This may seem contradictory, but it will be discussed in this chapter how Innocence and innocences are not mutually exclusive but interrelated.

To begin with, Innocence is a broad, umbrella-like and basic framework through which the standard of society is shared among members of society. This framework is originally created for members of society to live together in peace and harmony. If there had been a solitary man on a desert island, Innocence as a social pact would not be necessary as the man can focus on his own survival. When more than two people come together, one's survival and self-profit will inevitably collide with those of the other. If they choose to pursue self-profit without considering the other's needs, there will be endless strife and their cohabitation will become eventually impossible. Therefore, in order for more than two persons to live together, a social pact needs to be made that takes into consideration the existence and the need of the other. This pact aims at protecting and not harming the other for the sake of a harmonious coexistence. Without this framework that provides a standard of what people should or not do

to each other, crime, offence, and corruption will occur as people are naturally inclined to pursue self-preservation and self-profit. The universal framework of Innocence is thus necessary in society for people not to harm each other which coincides with the origin of innocence.

Innocence as a social pact made among members of society in order to live peacefully together and not to harm each other is inculcated within social structure and the mental structure of its members. The notion of the Innocence of society can be understood with Bourdieu's concept of tacit knowledge. According to Bourdieu, habitus is "the dispositions of agents . . . through which they apprehend the world" which are "essentially the product of the internalization of the structures of that world" ("Social Space and Symbolic Power" 17). Bourdieu explains the effect of the acquirement of habitus through "the lasting experience of a social position" (19):

> The categories of perception of the social world are, as regards their most essential features, the product of the internalization, the incorporation, of the objective structures of social space. Consequently, they incline agents to accept the social world as it is, to take it for granted, rather than to rebel against it, to counterpose to it different, even antagonistic, possibles. The sense of one's place, as a sense of what one can or cannot "permit oneself," implies a tacit acceptance of one's place, a sense of limits ("that's not for the likes of us," etc.), or, which amounts to the same thing, a sense of distances, to be marked and kept, respected or expected. ("The Social Space and The Genesis of Groups" 728)

As Bourdieu refers to the "tacit acceptance of one's place" here, for him, "tacit" means that

schemes of habitus "function below the level of consciousness" and beyond the "control by the will" (*Distinction* 466). Elsewhere, he explains that the habitus, as "embodied history, internalized as a second nature and so forgotten as history" is a "spontaneity without consciousness or will" (*The Logic of Practice* 54). The "homogeneity" of habitus causes practices to be "immediately intelligible and foreseeable, and hence taken for granted" (54).

Referring to the working of Bourdieu's habitus as "tacit knowledge," Philip Gerrans defines tacit knowledge as "knowledge not consciously possessed by the agent or able to be articulated by her in propositional form but which nevertheless regulates her activities" (54). Gerrans explains that tacit knowledge "identifies knowledge with the socially acquired capacities, propensities or tendencies of an agent to act appropriately in given circumstances" (54). The tacit acceptance of one's habitus in Bourdieu's theory and Gerran's subsequent naming of the operation of Bourdieu's habitus as tacit knowledge explain how societies commonly operate and agents are socially constituted by habitus.

Members of society are conditioned by habitus, but their conditioning always occurs tacitly. If habitus had operated not in a tacit manner and society had instead imposed stipulated rules directly on its members, they would have resisted and struggled for their freedom. However, since the working of habitus within society is tacit, members of society are unconscious of their being regulated by the habitus, and it becomes possible for society and its members to operate communally. In this tacit manner, Innocence is shared by society and by its members without publicly revealing and articulating what is innocent or not.

There is a consent among members of society not to talk about what is considered scandalous by society that is described in *The Age of Innocence* as the "ritual of ignoring the unpleasant" (25). Something that can cause "publicity" or "scandal" to one's family, such as a divorce or an affair, can harm members of society and their relations, and is regarded as

"unpleasant" by Newland Archer's society (168). Instead of openly discussing unpleasant behavior and the person who demonstrates it, members of society agree to keep silent. In the presence of Sillerton Jackson, Mrs. Archer complains that "Newland's engagement" is "mixed up with that Olenska woman" who is rumored to have run away with her husband's secretary (37). It is narrated through Newland's perspective how "it was against all the rules of their code that the mother should ever allude to what was uppermost in their thoughts" (37). As such, Innocence operates tacitly within society.

The social framework of Innocence is inculcated in society and in its members as tacit knowledge, as a tacit acceptance of one's place and of the boundary that protects and respects the others' places. While the mental structure of society's members and the social structure are based on Innocence, their operation is tacit, so that members of society are conditioned to follow the rule of Innocence but simultaneously allowed to form their own notions of innocence. Since the rules of Innocence are not outrightly stipulated, there is room for members of society to formulate their own notions of innocence as long as these do not deviate immoderately or too obviously from the social Innocence. Within the boundary of Innocence, each individual member is allowed to create his/her own notions of innocence, so that multiple forms of innocence or innocences come into existence.

This chapter focuses on how members of society produce different innocences in their own way under the umbrella of Innocence. Tacit knowledge includes the diversified forms of innocences under the umbrella of Innocence and encompasses the complex relationship between Innocence and innocences. *The Age of Innocence* demonstrates how the Innocence of society is shared among its members, and simultaneously, how the universal notion of Innocence does not always represent the innocences of the members. For instance, May's idea that people who genuinely love each other should be united even by getting a divorce

contradicts Old New York's taboo on divorce. Although members of society have inculcated the Innocence of society tacitly and their individual notions of innocence remain within the boundary of Innocence, there are tensions and conflicts between the Innocence of society and the innocences of its members.

The characters in *The Age of Innocence* struggle between the Innocence of society and their own notions of innocence. Their attempt to resolve these conflicts suggests that they should be keenly aware of the inextricable relationship between the Innocence of society and their innocences. The fact that social Innocence does not always represent their individual notion of innocence does not lead members of society to dismiss Innocence as irrelevant or to break away from it. Although the Innocence of society does not always represent their innocences, members of society remain within the boundary of Innocence. As they recognize that their existence is not found in isolation but in relation to others, Innocence makes the coexistence with others possible. Innocence is, thus, a social concept formed within social interactions and social structure, so that it is within the framework of the Innocence of society that members can produce their own notions of innocences. This inextricable relationship between Innocence and innocences will be embodied in the notion of tacit knowledge in this chapter.

1. Old New York's Tacit Knowledge

In the beginning of the novel, it is described how the Innocence of society is shared among members of Old New York. Keeping to "the ritual of ignoring the unpleasant," Newland's society turns what is considered unpleasant tacit and is therefore a "world of faint implications and pale delicacies" (15). Kenneth Pimple calls this the "ritual of turning a blind eye to any

untoward event or unwelcome development" (144). In Newland's world, "any impropriety must be kept semi-hidden; an affair is one thing, a divorce something qualitatively more scandalous and virtually unthinkable" (144). Therefore, Old New York is a "hieroglyphic world, where the real thing was never said or done or even thought, but only represented by a set of arbitrary signs" (Wharton 44).

To protect the honor of the Mingott family which may be compromised by the return of May's cousin Ellen, Newland prematurely makes the announcement of his engagement to May. As issues concerning "family dignity" are unspeakable according to social convention, Newland and May cannot talk about the matter with each other. Since this is the way "they had been brought up," Newland and May remain silent and yet they understand each other "without a word" (16). Newland sees how May has "instantly understood his motive" and it is described how her eyes say: "You see why Mamma brought me" and he returns in silence: "I would not for the world have had you stay away" (16). According to Lee Clark Mitchell, Newland and May inhabit a "stifling environment" but its narrowness allows for "instant mutual understanding" and communication occurs "without the need for words at all, allowing something like immediate mute dialogue" (207). The circulation of tacit knowledge thus allows for a tacit method of communication among members of society.

The working of Bourdieu's notion of habitus is apparent in the conventions of Old New York and in the members' compliance with conventions. Newland is socialized according to Old New York's habitus and abides by it. Newland keeps himself to "the conventions on which his life was moulded," such as the duty of using two silverbacked brushes to part his hair and never appearing in society without a flower in his buttonhole (5). Since the divorce that Ellen seeks and the rumor of her affair are scandalous according to social convention, it is preferable that her presence remains within the circle of her family, but the Mingotts' "resolute

championship of the few black sheep that their blameless stock had produced" leads them to take her to the opera (12). Newland's sense of discomfort at Ellen's public exposure and his concern over Ellen's bad influence on his fiancée suggest the extent to which he is habituated to the standard of his society. The fact that May faithfully abides by social convention and that they can communicate in the tacit manner of his society makes Newland thank "heaven that he was a New Yorker, and about to ally himself with one of his own kind" (31).[35] Thus far, the Innocence of society functions as an umbrella that subsumes both Newland and May's innocence.

Newland attributes May's innocence embodied in her "whiteness, radiance, goodness" to her ignorance of the evils of the world which has been occasioned by the tacit operation of the Innocence of society dictating unpleasant behavior to remain tacit, especially among young women (23).[36] While Newland associates May's innocence with ignorance, Ellen's innocence consists in her "freedom of judgment" and in her being "highly trained and full of conscious power" (44, 60). With the depth of her knowledge, Ellen is innocent in her own way. By presenting the innocence of May and the innocence of Ellen which differ from each other, the novel suggests that understanding innocence in a singular form is no longer viable and that innocence comes to embody multiple meanings.

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[35] Newland thinks that May is "always going to understand" and "always going to say the right thing" and the "discovery made the cup of his bliss overflow" (24).

[36] Some critics share Newland's view and argue that May's ignorance is socially formed which they assess negatively. Elizabeth Ammons condemns May as being "still in the nursery." May is "her class's ideal of helpless humanity" and "a lovely human doll whose uselessness aggrandizes her owner's social standing" (147). According to Richard Lawson, May is "staid and already completely predictable"; she is "the tribal member par excellence . . . trained to go any lengths to ignore the unpleasant" (16, 22). However, these critics overlook the fact that May possesses knowledge and that she sometimes makes choices that go against social convention. Other critics mention May's strength and assess her positively. Margaret McDowell considers May to be "a woman of considerable strength" with "a toughness and a tenacity of purpose which show that she is more than the clinging, helpless woman so much as the New York aristocrats' ideal" (99). Carol Wershoven asserts that May is "not the cardboard stereotype that Archer perceives" but one with "the potential for growth and change" (87, 89). Evelyn Fracasso describes May as a "perceptive, strong-willed and determined woman" who develops into a person of greater depth than Newland could ever have imagined (43).

Gilles Mayné compares the innocence of May and that of Ellen and asserts that Ellen's innocence is genuine while May's is false:

> There are clearly two innocences: pure innocence or innocent innocence, that of Ellen who is perpetual vivacity and who does not worry about winning–an ageless innocence; and an innocence guilty of having killed innocence by transforming innocence into a power. In *The Age of Innocence* it is the latter–a cold and cynical innocence– which triumphs in the end. (14)

Mayné's description of May's innocence is strictly speaking not a description of innocence, as innocence entails a sense of purity and goodness. Mayné is in fact depicting May as a character who kills the innocence of Ellen which contradicts the notion of innocence. Mayné's judgment derives from the idea that innocence has a singular meaning, so that anything that deviates from this standard is the opposite of innocence.

However, both May and Ellen can be innocent in their own ways even if their innocences are different from each other. The innocences of each character take multiple forms, so that a single definition of innocence is no longer viable. Rather than using one standard to judge the innocence of a character, it is now demanded that multiple standards or perspectives should be adopted to comprehend and assess the innocences of characters.

2. May and Ellen's Tacit Innocence: Imagining the Plurality of Innocence or Innocences

As members of society, subsumed under the umbrella of the Innocence of society, have different innocences, the standard of innocence demands pluralization as well. Whereas

Newland associates May's innocence with his society's Innocence, it is demonstrated how May's innocence escapes the definition of innocence as a singular notion. Unlike Newland's idea that May's innocence consists in her ignorance of the unpleasant, May already knows that he loves Ellen and that he hastens their marriage. The reason for this is that his feelings for her might diminish during a long engagement. Jean Witherow argues that the "seemingly dim, guileless May" might be "superior in perception to many other New York society women" (176). According to Witherow, being aware of Newland's love for Ellen and of his clandestine meeting with her, May is "capable, at the outset of the novel, of knowing Newland's thoughts" (176). Based on her knowledge of their situation, May makes a choice that escapes both the expectations of society and of Newland.

Knowing that Newland hastens their marriage for the fear of his intensifying love for Ellen, May tells Newland:

> When two people love each other, I understand that there may be situations which make it right that they should–should go against public opinion. And if you feel in any way pledged . . . pledged to the person we've spoken of . . . and if there is any way . . . any way in which you can fulfill your pledge . . . even by her getting a divorce . . . Newland, don't give her up because of me! (149)

May can either choose to live with a husband who loves another woman or break off their engagement. Although Newland's love for Ellen obstructs the possibility of a happy marriage, May neither blames him nor pressures him to adhere to his social vow. Instead, May allows Newland to choose between her and Ellen. May judges that pressing on with marriage in accordance with social custom is "a wrong–an unfairness" to the woman whom Newland loves

and that such a marriage will only bring unhappiness (148). For May, giving Newland the opportunity to achieve his genuine love is significant. To Newland's surprise, May thus offers him something that goes against public opinion. May is ready to give up their marriage and to endure social humiliation which both her and Newland's family will suffer if he leaves her for a divorced woman. In her decision to endure social and personal disgrace, May is innocent as she rather chooses to suffer loss than deprive Newland of his happiness.

May understands that Newland's conflict derives from the fact that his love for Ellen can only be achieved by breaching social convention–by breaking off his engagement to May and by Ellen's divorce. Although Newland regards May as "a terrifying product of the social system he belonged to," her suggestion that he break off their engagement and get Ellen divorced indicates that May's innocence does not coincide with the Innocence of society (42).[37] While the Innocence of their society forbids divorce and Newland conceives of May's innocence as the Innocence of society, her innocence consists in prioritizing his happiness over her own at the cost of being abandoned by her fiancée. May's innocence thus becomes one of the innocences that diverges from the Innocence of society.

Since she has lived outside New York society for a very long time, Ellen is ignorant of the operation of tacit knowledge in New York and misinterprets it. For Ellen, to start over and become a legitimate member of Old New York, a complete break with her past is necessary in the form of a divorce. However, the divorce that Ellen seeks is an explicit and stipulated form which is against the convention of Old New York that prescribes tacit rules and disdains the blatancy of a divorce. Instead of getting divorced, estranged husbands and wives are to live separately in New York. Being ignorant of these tacit rules, Ellen thinks that she needs to "wipe

[37] Linette Davis points out that the signs of May's "sagacity are apparent" in this scene but that Newland refuses to read them as he persists in believing that he is the "discerning" one (3).

out all the past" by getting a divorce in order to be accepted as a member of New York society (108). She, thus, reasons that her membership in New York can be acquired only through a complete rupture with the promiscuity of Europe. Yet, her divorce would prevent her from being accepted into New York society. The solution that Ellen opts to become a member of New York society thus ironically prevents her from becoming one.

Ellen's ignorance of Old New York's convention is also reflected in her inability to read and adopt its tacit manner of communication. To Ellen who is used to "the straight-up-and-downness, and the big honest labels on everything," New York's tacit method of communication is a "labyrinth" (76). Being used to articulating and sharing what is utmost in her mind, she feels that members of Old New York who refuse to hear "anything unpleasant" only "pretend" and that no one wants to know the "truth" (77).

Ellen's direct method of communication becomes apparent when Newland and she talk about their illicit relationship which is to remain tacit within New York society. When Newland pursues her romantically after his marriage, Ellen asks: "Is it your idea, then, that I should live with you as your mistress?" (289). It is described how "the crudeness of the question startled him: the word was one that women of his class fought shy of" (290). The word mistress is a blatant expression for an affair which is one of the unpleasant things to remain tacit according to social custom. While Ellen used to be ignorant of and uncomfortably at odds with the tacit knowledge of New York society, by now she is aware of it, enough to point it out. Ellen is still inclined to use her own direct method of communication instead of adopting the manner of New York society. Her oscillation reflects the conflict that she experiences as she attempts to become a member of society and to understand and adopts its tacit knowledge.

The first time that Ellen realizes that she is ignorant of New York's convention is when her family opposes to her divorce and Newland persuades her to give it up. Newland tells her

that the individual is “nearly always sacrificed” to the “collective interest” and Ellen realizes that her divorce will bring “notoriety, scandal on the family” (111). Understanding now that a divorce will exempt her from membership, Ellen chooses not to go through with it. Carmen Skaggs claims that Ellen understands that the “protection” that society offers from “self-destruction” must not be “relinquished” despite her realization of remaining “entrapped by the binds of social convention” (54). In the end, “unbridled passion and fulfillment” are not allowed to triumph and social convention triumphs (61).

Indeed, Ellen understands that society’s tacit knowledge originates from the need to establish a social pact for members of society to lead a peaceful communal life. That is why Ellen tells Newland when he confesses his love to her: “You’re engaged to May Welland; and I’m married” (170). She emphasizes the boundary that is placed between Newland and May who have made a social vow and herself. Ellen repeatedly reminds Newland of the boundary and of their duty not to cross this boundary. She understands that deviating from the standard of society by going through with the divorce or having an affair will deprive her of her membership in society and violate the social pact which makes the cohabitation of members of society possible.

As Ellen becomes acquainted with the tacit knowledge of Old New York and abides by the Innocence of society, her own notion of innocence becomes apparent. As the novel progresses, Ellen begins to remark how an affair with Newland is a “lie” to May and to her family who have helped to “remake” her life and how it would “destroy” their lives (312). In addition, Ellen mentions to Newland how those who have an affair become “promiscuous” and “miserable” (290). Preventing Newland and herself from such depravity becomes an inner motive for her not to commit adultery. Protecting Newland, May, her family, and herself from such misery goes hand in hand with and is supported by the Innocence of society which decrees

adultery as scandalous and unpleasant. The Innocence of society and the innocences of members thus do not exclude each other but engage with each other in their formation and operation.

The farewell party that May gives for Ellen symbolizes the relationship between the Innocence shared within society and its members who possess different innocences under the umbrella of Innocence. Newland interprets this party as "the tribal rally around a kinswoman about to be eliminated from the tribe" according to the "Old New York code" (332). Newland sees all participants of the party as "a band of dumb conspirators" who celebrate "the separation of himself and his partner of guilt" (334, 335). Newland believes that tacit knowledge functions at this party as "the whole tribe had rallied about his wife on the tacit assumption that nobody knew nothing" (335). For Newland, May's party is nothing more than "the old New York way of taking life without effusion of blood" (335).

A number of critics have described Newland and Ellen as victims of society, and May as an accomplice forcing the lovers to separate. Fryer describes the party as a cruel "ceremony of inclusion and exclusion" intended to expel Ellen from New York (164). Judith Saunders points to the "power of community to squelch rebellious individuals" (95). According to Edwin Moseley, May's family "sends Ellen back to Europe and the tribe devours its scapegoat" (159). Nir Evron mentions the "sacrificial dimensions of Ellen's banishment" and "the brutal practices of inclusion and exclusion" that underlie Newland's social reality (38). As Newland and these critics think, some of the people at the party may believe that Newland and Ellen are having an affair and that it has to end by sending Ellen back to Europe.

However, viewing the party as a tribal ceremony to expel Ellen or interpreting the intention of all participants as the separation of Ellen and Newland overlooks that the party symbolizes society wherein people with different notions of innocence live together. Despite

the fact that this social occasion is a farewell party, not all participants are there because they want to bid Ellen farewell. In fact, each of them comes with their own intention: to witness May's triumph, to divert themselves from boredom, to be included in a prominent family's party, etc. Even the fact that May has organized the party and that members of society including Newland and Ellen participate in her party does not mean that May's intention prevails. For May, the party means confirming and finalizing the legitimacy of her marriage. Simultaneously, Ellen's participation in the party does not mean that she agrees with or gives in to May's intention. Ellen has given up her divorce to become a member of New York society and endeavored not to have an affair with Newland. Quitting New York society comes with a great price, but Ellen comes to May's party with the painful recognition that her departure is the only way to protect Newland, May, her family, and herself.

Although they ostensibly participate in May's farewell party for Ellen, both May and Ellen have their own notions of innocence. They both are innocent in their own ways, and their innocences do not exclude each other. Their innocences are different, and it is the party which makes the coexistence of their different innocences possible. Although members of society have different innocences, the fact that they share the Innocence of society allows their cohabitation within society. The party thus symbolizes the society which consists of members who have their own unique innocences under the umbrella of Innocence.

3. Tacit Innocence at the Turn of the Century

Thirty years have passed, and Newland is looking back on Old New York. May has passed away and New York of the 1870s is a bygone age. Now living in the 1900s, Newland asks "what was left of the little world he had grown up in, and whose standards had bent and bound

him" (352). In the 1870s, Julius Beaufort's business failure was a "monstrous dishonor," but in the 1900s, Beaufort's past is a "half-forgotten fact" (272, 352). As Lawrence Lefferts predicted in the 1870s that "if things go on at this rate our children will be marrying Beaufort's bastards," now in the 1900s, Fanny Beaufort is marrying Newland's own son. The business scandal that Newland's Old New York used to keep tacit no longer functions as tacit knowledge in the 1900s. The change of tacit knowledge implies the change in the social norm and the transformation of society. The New York in the 1900s has its own tacit knowledge which will in turn bring about change in society over time, but for now, the focus is on how the tacit knowledge operative in the 1870s has brought about change in society after thirty years.

In fact, the change brought about by tacit knowledge is not a sudden or revolutionary change. The transformation that Newland witnesses in the 1900s is the result of a gradual process that goes back to the 1870s. Beaufort's entrance into Old New York itself is part of the operation of tacit knowledge which causes gradual social change. Beaufort's English origin, dissipated behavior and mysterious antecedents are incompatible with the standard of Old New York. Some critics have described Old New York society as an exclusive community that refuses to accept outsiders. Mary Gibson claims that New York society is "not a class defeated by Invaders from without but a clan rallying to eject one of its own whose situation is anomalous" and rather than "collapsing when threatened from within," it still has "intact its rituals for self-preservation" (66). Describing Old New York as a "sparklingly cool gallery," Emily Ridge claims that the "ejection" of outsiders serves the purpose, above all, of "preservation through closure" (91).[38] However, these critics overlook that the operation of

[38] Other critics have also argued that Old New York is a closed society preoccupied with the preservation of its own members by means of excluding outsiders. According to Sydney Bremer, the novel exposes preservation, which is the "rejection of change," as the "critical flaw" in Old New York's embodiment of the "American myth of community" (277). Saunders asserts that New York society is "guilty of culpably complacent provincialism"

tacit knowledge allows outsiders who are unacceptable by the standard of society to live within society despite their ineligibility.

Originally, Old New York only accepts descendants of established upper class families as its own members. Those who are not born within these families but have entered the upper-class by means of marriage or newly acquired wealth are differentiated from the original members but are allowed to stay, albeit uncomfortably. As the matriarchal head of the Mingott family and one of the prominent members of Old New York, Mrs. Manson Mingott herself is not an original upper-class member. She used to be "only Catherine Spicer of Staten Island" with neither money nor position but had allied herself with the head of the wealthy Mingott line by marriage. Despite her unconventional origin, she is accepted and respected as a member of New York society. The fact that even foreigners become a part of Old New York is indicated by Beaufort's case. Although New York's business conscience is very strict, New York society enjoys "going to the Beaufort" for over twenty years (20).

Outsiders who invade New York society are first treated as "a traitor in the citadel," but Old New York has no stipulated rules for membership as to their nationality, family line, wealth, or morality (259). Whenever outsiders with different backgrounds and characteristics visit New York, they are regarded as "strange weeds pushing up between the ordered rows of social vegetables" (256). Since the standard which regulates membership is ambiguous, these outsiders are allowed to remain in society and, over time, their strangeness gradually becomes a part that constitutes New York society. As Sillerton Jackson notices how outsiders enter New York and New York "was certainly changing," even to people who live in the 1870s, the social change brought about by the incorporation of outsiders is visible (256). As Dongshin Yi

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as it refuses to acknowledge the worth of any social order but its own and displays a "collective ethnocentrism that Wharton targets from the opening pages of her novel for ridicule and contempt" (99).

comments, after all, the prolonged presence of these outsiders will "bring some changes to their manners inevitably" and to society at large over time (250). Old New York's acceptance of Beaufort and other outsiders in the 1870s has brought gradual change to the manner of society and in the 1900s brings about the change of social norm. Whereas it was scandalous to align oneself with an outsider who is morally ambiguous in the 1870s, marrying the bastard of a foreigner is no longer against social convention in the 1900s.

Singley discusses social changes in *The Age of Innocence* with Bourdieu's theory. According to Singley, Bourdieu adopts a "both and rather than either/or approach to individuals and their environment" and shows how "the two work together to shape habitus, which is in turn self-shaping" (495). Individuals thus participate in "changing culture" at the same time that they are "subject to changing culture" (495). While Newland becomes "constrained by a habitus shared with May," the "processes of social change" is affirmed through Ellen, Catherine Mingott, Bob Spicer, Beaufort, Emerson Sillerton, and Dallas Archer. Although one "cannot help replicate social hierarchies and taste," one can "participate in the constructing one's social destiny" (510). Singley asserts that the change that Newland witnesses in the 1900s illustrates how "possibilities for altering habitus do exist, especially at times affected by rapid change: if conditions of the social environment are different for a new generation of individuals, these conditions can inculcate new dispositions and result in an altered habitus" (507). Singley describes how Bourdieu's theory accounts for both the "fixed and fluid qualities of cultural power" in *The Age of Innocence*.

Yet, Singley concludes that Newland fails to see that change is possible and that the social boundaries "separating insiders and outsiders have always been more fluid than he realizes" (510). Singley characterizes Newland's attitude in the 1900s as "resignation," as "his acquiescence to a stultifying and deadening existence" (515). Perhaps she does not see social

change as a gradual process over time. Her disappointment at Newland indicates a potential overestimation of the "genuine constitutive power" of "a person's habitus" (507).

At the same time that agents "have an active apprehension of the world" and "construct their vision of the world" through the "potential plurality of possible structuring," Bourdieu asserts that this construction is carried out "under structural constraints" and that the social world presents itself as "a highly structured reality" ("Social Space and Symbolic Power" 18, 19).[39] Yet this world does not present itself as "totally structured" either, or as "capable of imposing upon every perceiving subject the principles of its own construction." The social world may be "constructed in different ways according to different principles of vision and division" and the objects of social world can be perceived and expressed in "a variety of ways," since they "always include a degree of indeterminacy and vagueness, and thereby, a certain degree of semantic elasticity" (19). The "objective element of uncertainty" provides a base for "symbolic struggles over the power to produce and to impose the legitimate vision of the world" (20).

Symbolic struggles may take two different forms. On the "objective side," one may

[39] Some critics have asserted that the characters in *The Age of Innocence* are passively determined by social forces. Ekaterini Kottaras describes New York society as a "social stage" set up by Wharton wherein the characters function as "trained" actors who are to carry out their "social performance" (10). Kottaras asserts that Newland "cannot free himself from his role as a member of his society" and that "most characters do not express themselves through clear performatives" so that "they trap themselves in a state of inaction" (11). Saunders claims that the "final anthropologically inspired insight" of the novel is that "awareness of the variety of human cultures, and of the transience of any one set of customs" does not enable individuals to cast off the external constraints of their social environments (97). Although Wharton is preoccupied with the "repressive force of culture," she finally shows that "no human life is possible outside established social systems" (98). According to Mitchell, the assumption that one can suspend social categories and create one's own social context is "of course never true" as Newland and Ellen are themselves not "transcendent" (210). Jill Krees argues that "an interior untouched by social codes, consciousness set apart as private" are "suspicious categories" for Wharton so that any sense of personalized consciousness is incorporated into society in the novel (164). Viola Hopkins maintains that the price of social conformity is Newland's very selfhood and that, for Wharton, of the "two evils, the disintegration of the social order is worse than the death of the spirit" (346). However, I argue that Newland and other characters are more than society's puppets that cannot act autonomously. While they comply with society's standard, they also think and act independently, and pursue their own notion of innocence.

act by "actions of presentation, individual or collective, meant to display and to throw into relief certain realities." On the "subjective" side, one may act by trying to "transform categories of perception and appreciation of the social world" ("Social Space and Symbolic Power" 20). It is to be noted that Bourdieu mentions that the process of social change is subject to "variations in time" and "can be only obtained as the outcome of a long process of institutionalization" (23). Marrying Fanny Beaufort is not a sudden change taking place in the 1900s from a void. It has taken at least thirty years since Beaufort's entrance into Old New York or even further back when Beaufort's entrance itself would have been impermissible.

Bourdieu's idea of social change as a gradual process is implicated in tacit knowledge. If society had operated in the opposite manner of tacit by stipulating explicit rules, every behavior of members of society would have been regulated as either acceptable or unacceptable. Since the standard and behavior are fixed, it becomes extremely difficult to bring about change. Such a change can be only brought about by a radical revolution. Tacit knowledge, however, does not stipulate rules leading to the constant formation of grey areas. As these grey zones expand by degrees, gradual changes in society become possible. Since the rules remain tacit, social change can occur gradually over time.

Although Bourdieu's theory explains how the New York society of the 1870s has gradually changed into the New York of 1900s, the gradual progress of social change applies to every society. What *The Age of Innocence* specifically demonstrates is that the plural forms of innocence or innocences in the novel reflect the change in the notion of knowledge and innocence at the turn of the twentieth century. According to Henry May, in the "last decades of the nineteenth century," Americans become impatient with the "Victorian universe of regular, predictable evolution" and consider the world to be "fluid and plural rather than orderly and single" (141). During this period, knowledge becomes more professional and diverse, so

that multiple meanings of knowledge come into existence. Innocence is no longer maintained as a singular concept, but its meaning becomes pluralized. The pluralization of the meanings of knowledge and innocence thus characterizes the turn of the twentieth century.

This change, however, is not total to the extent that the past has completely vanished. In the beginning of the 1900s, the vestige of the culture of the late nineteenth-century is still present and Newland's presence in Dallas's society is a proof. The turn of the twentieth century is thus a period in which new changes and remnants of the past coexist. Newland recognizes that "there was good in the old ways" and that "there was good in the new order too" (347, 348). Newland thus perceives that different manners and notions can coexist in one society.

Despite the fact that the old and the new manners are intertwined in the 1900s, it is no longer the social convention of Old New York in the 1870s but the Innocence of the new society that Newland is to abide by. While tacit knowledge still functions in the society of his son, it has undergone some changes during the past thirty years. Whereas communication in Old New York occurs in a tacit manner on matters such as divorce, affair or business scandal, Dallas's society allows free self-expression and a candid communication method. Dallas compares his age to his father's:

> "You never did ask each other anything. And you never told each other anything. You just sat and watched each other and guessed at what was going underneath. A deaf-and-dumb asylum, in fact! Well, I back your generation for knowing more about each other's private thoughts than we ever have time to find out about our own." (356-57)

Whereas Newland's society takes it for granted that one should not get what one wants, the members of Dallas's society "take it for granted that they're going to get whatever they want"

(353). At Dallas's suggestion, Newland comes to Paris to visit Ellen whom he has not seen for thirty years. People in the 1870s do not talk about anything unpleasant or what is utmost in their mind, but what used to be considered unpleasant back then is no longer indecent in the 1900s including his reunion with Ellen. As May has passed away and Ellen has never returned to her husband, there is "nothing now to keep her and Archer apart" (357). His reunion with Ellen is inappropriate neither in terms of the new Innocence nor according to the old Innocence.

Newland tells Dallas to go up without him when they arrive at Ellen's house. Alone, looking at what he thinks is Ellen's apartment, Newland contemplates, until now, if given the opportunity to choose between May and Ellen, he has always chosen May because he recognizes that he cannot escape from the framework of the Innocence of his society. In addition, it was impossible for him to abandon and bring disgrace upon May and her family. Newland realizes that his choices have eventually led him to become what people call "a good citizen" for the past thirty years and his days to be "full" and "filled decently" (346, 347). His marriage with May has taught him that albeit a "dull" duty, it is one with "dignity" and that "lapsing from that, it became a mere battle of ugly appetites." For Newland, meeting Ellen again and achieving the "flower of life" he has missed means a lapse from the dignity of this duty (347).

Although neither the Innocence of the new age nor that of Old New York requires Newland to abstain from meeting Ellen, Newland chooses what he considers to be honorable. Knowing that his choice seems out of sync with both ages, Newland tells Dallas: "Say I'm old-fashioned: that's enough" (361).[40] Both the Innocence of the new age and that of the old age

[40] Critics have given their own interpretations of Newland's final decision not to see Ellen. Emily Orlando argues that Newland misreads Ellen as an inaccessible vision, "an ideal beloved" with whom he can never be united because she can never be for him a "reality" (57, 59). Being a "victim of his own illusion, his misperceptions," Newland does not meet Ellen because he "refuses to adulterate the vision he reads as reality" (72). However,

do not represent Newland's notion of innocence, but his innocence gains meaning only within the framework of the Innocence of society. It is in relation with the Innocence of society that the different innocences of members of society become different, unique, and therefore meaningful.

Newland's choice is not based on a misconception; rather, he is choosing to protect what he respects. Another critic who assesses Newland's choice as a regression is Moseley who claims that Newland has a "Faustian thirst for knowledge" but "no faculty for translating his relativistic attitudes into action." Newland becomes "increasingly pathetic" as he "cannot undo the trap of his society" despite his new learning" (158). Others assert that Newland becomes more mature near the ending. According to Michael Nowlin, Newland has not just suddenly grown old but "gradually grown up" which entails that he has overcome the "transitional sense of alienation" that led him to regard social practices as unreal (106). Wolff claims that the moral and psychological core of the novel is Newland's journey toward "emotional integrity, maturity, and self-respect" (641). His refusal to meet Ellen reflects an "affirmation of the life he has committed himself to" and confirms the coherence of his own identity as well as the achievement of "genuine maturity" (657).

Conclusion

In order to be sustained, innocence is to incorporate knowledge. If innocence continues to be defined as ignorance, it will be lost at the time of knowledge acquisition. Innocence has frequently been defined as naïveté and lack of knowledge about the world and about evil. Innocence has been regarded as something that does and should disappear once knowledge about the world is acquired. As a consequence, innocence has been devaluated. If innocence is indeed ignorance, there is no reason for America to have adhered to this notion for so long. A naïveté that lacks knowledge about the world and the ability to confront evil is too weak and trivial to define American national identity. In order to constitute American identity, innocence is to be more endurable and solid. In other words, innocence is to survive after knowledge is acquired.

As knowledge about the world and about evil is accumulated, the subsequent action and attitude adopted based on that knowledge will determine one's innocence. Even upon the accumulation of knowledge, innocence can be sustained because it depends upon the attitude one adopts based on that knowledge. For a decision or act to be considered innocent, it needs to be related to the origin of innocence: not harming others. Although an innocent person is aware that others can be used for self-profit based on his/her knowledge of the world, he/she intends not to inflict harm upon others and refrains from crime, offense, and corruption. As more knowledge about the world and about evil is accumulated, one becomes more capable of promoting and using others for self-profit. As a result, it becomes more difficult to renounce self-profit for the sake of others. The more knowledge is accumulated, the harder it is for

innocence to be achieved and the more valuable innocence therefore is.

The consistent and still continuing criticism that innocence is used as a political ideology has mainly focused on the act of criticizing rather than recovering and defining the original meaning of innocence. The criticism that innocence has been used to conceal the violence committed against the marginalized does not fully articulate the meaning of innocence; however, assessing whether American innocence has always functioned as it should is needed. Therefore, being on the lookout for abusing innocence for purposes other than its original meaning should go hand in hand with defining and reconstituting the original meaning of innocence. The view which identifies innocence with ignorance cannot offer much help as innocence is believed to be lost once knowledge is acquired. The attitude one adopts based on the knowledge about the dynamics of power relations among members of society and about the prevalence of the sacrifice of the dominated for the profit of the dominant defines the meaning of innocence.

Innocence refers to an attitude towards others. A solitary man can never be innocent. Only when others exist and one recognizes one's connection with others does innocence come into existence. As the origin of innocence, not harming, presupposes others who are not to be harmed, innocence is formed within relations with others. Knowledge about the world and about evil is to be used for the purpose of not harming others, especially those who are socially vulnerable and marginalized. As American innocence has been constantly criticized as a political ideology concealing America's crimes committed against dominated groups since the late twentieth century, it is timely to restore the meaning of innocence as not harming others at this juncture.

In the process of acquiring knowledge about the world and about evil and choosing not to harm others, the characters of the novels discussed in this dissertation demonstrate the

original meaning of innocence. In *The Portrait of a Lady*, Isabel's innocence is reflected in her attitude towards the people who have committed evil against her. The miserable knowledge that Isabel acquires about Osmond, Merle, and Pansy can be used as a weapon for avenging her husband and friend for intentionally deceiving and betraying her. Since Osmond and Merle have taken the first step to commit evil against her, Isabel's revenge can be justified.

Yet, Isabel does not take revenge because it is important for her to preserve her own innocence by not repaying evil with evil. The preservation of her innocence functions as an impetus for her to embrace miserable knowledge and affirm life. Isabel's choice saves her from falling into misery and corruption by repaying evil with evil. If Isabel had taken revenge, she would have injured Osmond and Merle, but the consequence of committing evil would eventually have reached her as well. By choosing not to avenge Osmond and Merle and embracing Pansy who is the fruit of their sin, Isabel intends not to commit evil, and her choice prevents Osmond, Merle, Pansy, and herself from falling into complete ruin and desolation. In preventing the poison of evil from spreading into relationships and potentially within society, intending not to repay evil with evil reflects the positive function of innocence.

Through characters who protect and support those who become objects of violence and oppression, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* represents the original meaning of innocence that can respond to the criticism that innocence is an ideology concealing the crimes of America. The taken-for-granted perception and attitude towards people of a particular race within society is revealed to be discriminatory and unjust through the transformation of Huck's perception and attitude towards Jim. By institutionalizing slavery, Huck's society has turned black people into slaves less worthy than human beings and has made its members accept this as a natural and justifiable phenomenon. For Huck's recognition and acknowledgment of Jim's humanity, Huck treats him as a human being in a society wherein violence and oppression of black people

are endorsed and legitimatized.

If critics have mostly focused on criticizing the oppression of the marginalized, this novel is concerned with Huck's innocence who treats Jim respectfully and thereby problematizes racial ideology. Rather than criticizing what is not innocent, the focus of the novel is more on representing the meaning of innocence which also results in criticizing what is not innocent. Exposing how innocence is abused as ideology is meaningful in itself, but considering that critics have neglected defining the original meaning of innocence in the process, Huck's innocence is meaningful as it embodies the original meaning of innocence.

The Age of Innocence illustrates that innocence is different from one person to another and takes multiple forms, so that it is complicated and difficult to recognize the innocences of others and to make others understand one's own notion of innocence. The preservation of innocence is not gained without a cost; it demands more effort and sometimes sacrifice in order not to harm others. Newland, Ellen, and May lose or give up passionate love, membership of society, and undivided love of a spouse. Since the cost paid for preserving innocence is likely to go unnoticed and unrecognized by others, the effort and sacrifice made for the preservation of innocence must be meaningful and valuable in itself. Newland, May, and Ellen all lose or sacrifice something or someone that is valuable to them, but they do not try to make this known to others for comfort or recognition.

Yet, Newland, May, and Ellen still manage to understand the price each of them has paid and mourn for each other. Ellen leaves New York for Newland and May's marriage; Newland continues to harbor his respect and sense of indebtedness to May and Ellen; and May comforts Ellen by giving her a farewell party and guards Newland's secret. Their wordless sacrifices have been made for each other, and in silence they appreciate and mourn for their sacrifices. If they had had no consideration for each other and had only pursued their own desire

and profit, Newland and Ellen would have committed adultery and May would have taken revenge which would lead to their joint downfall. However, their sacrifices for the preservation of innocence serve as a catalyst for a meaningful life for each of them. Paying a price or sacrificing something valuable for the sake of others is revealed as meaningful both for oneself and for others.

Since innocence is not acquired without a price and demands effort and sacrifice, it is rare and difficult to achieve. Intending not to harm others requires renouncing self-profit and investing more time and energy for others which makes innocence an unpopular choice. Isabel relinquishes compensation and self-justification offered by a revenge; Huck gives up social honor and security, and Newland, Ellen, and May sacrifice what is dear to them. By renouncing what is profitable and valuable for themselves, it is demonstrated that the purpose of innocence is not survival or self-profit but coexistence with others. A solitary man on a desert island pursues only his own survival and profit. Yet, a person who recognizes that he/she exists with others within society renounces what is beneficial and meaningful for oneself for the sake of a peaceful and harmonious coexistence with others. Innocence thus premises knowledge about one's connection with others and about the need of sacrificing self-profit.

The possession of knowledge makes the achievement of innocence more difficult. Since Isabel can anticipate her imminent misery in her continued marriage with the cruel and oppressive Osmond, she hesitates to make her final choice. Huck's knowledge about the social disgrace and punishment he will suffer for helping Jim causes an intense inner struggle. Knowing that he will miss the flower of life by giving up Ellen, Newland falters in his determination to remain with his wife. Since they possess knowledge about the cost implicated in their choice, only those who overcome their fear and self-justification can achieve innocence. Those who do not want to pay the price will suffer less and be more comfortable, but eventually

other people will have to pay the price that they are unwilling to pay for self-profit. Those who are innocent know that they will experience suffering and have to endure sacrifice, but they also know that they will not harm others and can coexist with them in peace by renouncing their own comfort and desire. As innocence comes with a great price, it is unusual and valuable.

Innocence does not characterize an America that is separated from other nations and other people, but is formed only within America's relationships with other nations and people. A definition of American innocence as the self-renewal of a self-enclosed nation eventually leads to the sacrifice of other nations for the profit of America. Therefore, American innocence is to be considered within the boundary of America's relations with other nations and other people. American innocence refers to the attitude that America adopts towards other nations and other people with the intention of not harming them. American innocence means that America uses her knowledge for the peaceful coexistence with other nations and people and that she makes sacrifices for them if necessary.

America's attitude towards Native Americans and black slaves violates the notion of innocence and has justly been criticized. However, using these instances to utterly deny American innocence would be an inordinate condemnation. In the novels discussed in this dissertation, American innocence respects and protects the marginalized and problematizes the oppression and violence against them. By not avenging those who have committed evil against oneself, an innocent prevents evil from spreading into society, and by renouncing what is of personal value benefits others. This definition of innocence can function as a standard to critically reflect upon incidents that violate American innocence and to continue to constitute national identity in a manner that complies with the original meaning of innocence.

This study has explored how American innocence can be maintained as America accumulates more and more knowledge. As innocence is not ignorance but a matter of attitude

which intends not to harm others and uses knowledge for this purpose, it can be maintained without being lost as knowledge continues to be accumulated. The novels by James, Twain, and Wharton illustrate the process wherein the notion of innocence comes to embody plural meanings at the turn of the twentieth century. While the intention to promote the benefit of others remains the same, the concepts of knowledge and innocence become complex and each agent adopts a different attitude for the purpose of not harming others. As a result, the original meaning of innocence takes multiple forms in practice and the notion of innocence is sustained through this process.

Through those who attempt to benefit others, especially the vulnerable, in their own ways, American innocence can adopt itself to the changing social and historical circumstances of America over time. The plural forms of innocence or innocences embodied in American novels at the turn of the twentieth century have the potential to be sustained by constantly revising and adapting themselves to the transformations of the nation by the efforts of those who recognize its meaning.

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국 문 초 록

본 논문은 20세기 전환기에 쓰여진 미국소설들을 살펴봄으로써 무지와 정치적 이데올로기로 정의되어 온 순수 개념을 재구성하고자 한다. 지금까지 순수는 주로 순진함, 세상에 대한 지식의 결핍 또는 미국이 약자에 대해 자행한 범죄를 은폐하는 정치적 수단으로 규정되어 왔다. 미국의 건국부터 순수가 국가 정체성을 형성해온 것이 사실이라면, 이러한 순수의 의미에는 양자 모두 문제점이 있다. 무지로서의 순수는 지식의 획득과 함께 상실되기 때문에 지속될 수 없다. 지식이 생기면 사라지는 무지로서의 순수는 시간이 지날수록 축적되는 지식의 특성상 국가 정체성을 구성하는 역할을 이어가는 것이 불가능하다. 폭력과 범죄를 은폐하는 정치적 이데올로기와 동일시되는 순수는 타락 또는 부패의 부재를 의미하는 순수의 의미와는 모순되고 반대되는 개념이다. 따라서 현 시점에서 순수는 지식을 포함하고 순수의 본래 뜻에 상응하는 의미로 재구성되어야 한다. 미국의 역사 속에 시간이 흐르며 지식이 계속 축적되어가는 상황에서 순수가 국가 정체성을 구성하는 역할을 지속하기 위해서는 지식의 축적과 함께 형성되고 지식의 개념을 포함하는 개념으로 재정립되어야 할 것이다.

본고는 19세기 말과 20세기 초에 헨리 제임스(Henry James), 마크 트웨인(Mark Twain), 에디스 와튼(Edith Wharton)에 의해 출간된 소설들을 통해 순수의 의미를 재고한다. 19세기 말 무렵 미국은 국제사회에서 강대국으로 자리 잡아가기 시작하면서 국가 정체성을 재정립하기 위해서 순수 개념을 사용한다. 20세기 전환기에 가속화된 산업화, 도시화, 현대화의 영향과 더불어 미국의 국제사회로의 확장으로 인하여 새로운 지식들이 대규모로 급속하게 생성되고 축적된다. 새로운 국가 정체성을 구성하는 과업에 순수

개념을 차용한 이 시기의 핵심 쟁점은 순수와 지식이 결합하는 가능성과 방식이다. 20세기 전환기의 미국이 스스로에게 던진 중요한 질문은 세상과 악에 대한 새로운 지식이 계속 축적되어가는 상황에서 어떻게 순수가 보존되고 유지될 수 있는가이다.

제임스의 『여인의 초상』(*The Portrait of a Lady*, 1881), 트웨인의 『허클베리핀의 모험』(*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, 1884), 와튼의 『순수의 시대』(*The Age of Innocence*, 1920)는 공통적으로 19세기 말과 20세기 초의 순수와 지식의 결합에 대한 관심을 반영한다. 제임스는 순수가 지식, 특히 악에 대한 지식과 맺는 관계를 탐구한 작가이다. 트웨인은 성장소설을 통하여 순수, 성장, 지식의 결합에 대해 고찰하였다. 와튼은 사회구조와 사회관계의 작동방식에 대한 지식이 획득되는 가운데 어떻게 순수가 유지될 수 있는지를 모색한다. 이 작가들의 작품에서 순수는 무지 또는 정치적 이데올로기가 아니라, 순수의 어원인 타자를 해하지 않는 의도를 가지는 것으로 나타난다.

순수란 타자에 대하여 범죄행위나 부패를 자행하지 않는 것을 의도하는 것을 의미한다. 이 세 작가들의 소설에서 순수는 다른 사람들의 이익이나 이들과의 조화로운 관계를 유지하기 위해 자신의 이익을 포기하는 방식으로 나타난다. 순수는 다른 타자와의 관계와 타자의 이익을 위하여 더 많은 시간, 노력, 헌신, 희생을 요구하기 때문에 그냥 얻어지는 것이 아니라 값을 치르고 나서야 얻을 수 있다. 그렇기 때문에 순수는 사람들이 쉽게 찾거나 이루어지지 않지만, 동시에 순수가 추구되고 성취될 때에는 그만한 가치가 있다.

제임스의 『여인의 초상』을 다루는 본론 1장에서는 순수와 지식 획득의 관계를 논의한다. 이사벨(Isabel)이 비참한 지식(miserable knowledge)을 획득하고 자신만의 방식으로 흡수하는 과정을 통하여 이 작품은 순수와 지식이 어떻게 결합하는지를 모색한다. 이사벨은 비참한 지식을 일종의 배움의 원천으로 인식하고, 자신에게 이 지식이 결핍되어 있다는 이사벨의 자의식은 그녀가 의도적으로 비참한 지식을 추구하도록 이끈다. 이러한

추구의 일환으로 오스몬드(Osmond)와의 결혼을 선택한 이사벨은 그녀가 순수하다고 믿었던 오스몬드와 멀(Merle)이 자신들의 이익을 위해 그녀를 이용하고 속였다는 비참한 지식을 얻게 된다. 이들에 대한 복수를 선택하는 대신, 이사벨은 악을 악으로 되갚지 않겠다고 결심한다. 이사벨은 오스몬드와 멀이 지은 죄의 산물인 팬지(Pansy), 그리고 자신을 배신한 오스몬드와의 관계를 유지한다. 이사벨의 선택은 자신에게 악행을 저지른 이들에 대한 복수는 더 많은 악을 생성하기에 이를 방지하려는 의도에 기인한다. 그녀를 의도적으로 비참하게 만든 사람들을 포용함으로써 이사벨은 악을 선으로 갚는 순수의 의미를 재현한다.

트웨인의 『허클베리핀의 모험』에 대한 2장에서는 사회관계와 사회구조 내에서 발생하는 악에 대한 지식이 축적되면서 어떻게 순수가 보존될 수 있는지를 살펴본다. 흑인을 노예로 전락시키는 제도를 합법화하는 인종 이데올로기는 짐(Jim)의 인간성에 대한 헉의 인식이 확장되면서 문제시된다. 짐을 노예와 친구로 바라보는 관점 사이에서 헉이 겪는 갈등은 노예제 사회의 윤리와 개인의 순수 개념 사이의 충돌을 상징한다. 다른 백인들 앞에서는 짐이 자신의 노예인 것처럼 행세함으로써 헉은 사회 윤리에 순응하지만, 짐의 도망을 도움으로써 자신이 생각하는 순수를 실천에 옮긴다. 이 작품은 순수가 노예제 사회에서 어떻게 유지될 수 있는지를 근본적으로 질문한다. 또한 사회악에 대한 지식이 계속 축적되고 사회 윤리로 인해 제한받는 상황 속에서도 개인의 순수가 실현될 수 있는지를 모색한다. 헉이 톰(Tom)과 함께 짐의 탈출을 돕는 마지막 장면은 개인의 순수 실현이 사회와 다른 사회 구성원들과의 기준과 충돌하면서 겪는 어려움을 재현한다. 사회 윤리와 자신보다 높은 사회적 지위를 가진 이들에 의한 제한에도 불구하고 헉은 짐의 도망을 돕고 그의 인간성을 옹호하기 위해 사회적 불명예와 처벌을 감행하는 순수를 구현한다.

와튼의 『순수의 시대』를 다루는 3장은 20세기 전환기에 순수와 지식의 의미가

다양해지면서 순수가 복합적인 형태를 띠게 되고 복수형(innocences)으로 쓰이게 되는 것을 논한다. 뉴랜드(Newland), 메이(May), 엘런(Ellen)의 순수는 서로 다른 형태를 띠고 이들은 각자 자신만의 방식으로 순수를 추구하고 구현한다. 이 세 인물들의 순수가 다른 이들과 사회에 의해 쉽게 발견되거나 인식되지 않는다는 사실은 순수의 다양성은 복합적인 관점을 통해서만이 이해될 수 있다는 것을 시사한다. 이 인물들 중 어느 누구도 자신의 순수를 다른 사람들에게 인정받기 위해 애쓰지 않지만, 뉴랜드, 메이, 엘런은 무언 중에 각자가 순수를 추구하기 위해 치른 값을 알아차리고 이해한다. 뉴랜드는 사랑의 열정을, 엘런은 뉴욕사회의 구성원이 되기를 포기하고 메이는 다른 여성에 대한 남편의 사랑을 감내한다. 이들의 희생은 서로를 위한 것이고 순수란 자신에게 소중한 것을 포기하는 값을 치러야 하지만, 타자의 보호와 타자의 이익을 목적으로 하기 때문에 가치가 있다. 서로에 대한 침묵 속의 이해와 애도 속에 뉴랜드, 메이, 엘런의 희생은 이들이 의미있는 삶을 지속할 수 있도록 지탱해준다.

본고에서 순수는 다른 사람들에게 해를 입히지 않는 것을 의도하는 것으로 정립되면서 순수를 무지와 정치적 이데올로기로 정의하는 기존 순수의 의미를 재구성한다. 순수는 세상과 악에 대한 지식의 소유와 다른 사람에게 해를 입히지 않는 목적으로 이 지식을 사용하는 것을 전제로 한다. 20세기 전환기에 순수가 띠게 되는 복합적인 형태는 순수가 미국 사회의 지속되는 변화에 맞추어 국가 정체성을 형성할 수 있는 가능성을 열어준다. 시간이 흐르면서 새로운 지식이 계속 축적되는 미국 역사에서 지식과 결합된 순수는 유지될 수 있다. 20세기 전환기에 쓰인 제임스, 트웨인, 와튼의 작품들은 지식의 획득 이후에도 보존되는 순수를 재현한다.

주요어 : 미국적 순수, 지식, 헨리 제임스, 마크 트웨인, 에디스 와튼, 미국소설, 20세기

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