

# Uncle Sam on the Scene

*American stereotypes roaming the literary spaces of  
Henry James*



MA Thesis

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## Abstract

This thesis explores how the stereotyping of American characters develops from Henry James's early works to his late works. The research sets out by exploring the American side of the Jamesian international theme. This has been done through the analysis of four different American characters from four different works by James. The research is focused on a shift between James's early and his late oeuvre. There are therefore two American characters selected from his early works and two of his late works. The two works from his early oeuvre are the novella *The Europeans* (1878) and the novel *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881), and the two works selected from his later period are the novel *The Ambassadors* (1903) and the novella *The Jolly Corner* (1908). The first analysis is focused on how the stereotyping of American characters in terms of character descriptions develops in Henry James's oeuvre. The image of America symbolized by two young and innocent American girls changed to the image of America personified by two middle-aged American men. The second analysis is concerned with how the symbolizing of space, as part of the stereotyping of American characters, develops in Henry James's oeuvre. In the early works of James, space is used either to magnify or contrast the stereotyping of the American characters. The girls are restless, isolated but eager to enrich themselves with the desires and cultures of Europe. In the late works of James, space becomes something more complex that could influence a character's mindset. Since the stereotypical image of America has shifted, the two men who portrayed this image of America have different qualities as well. They represent a more matured image of America.

Keywords: Henry James, *The Europeans*, *The Portrait of a Lady*, *The Ambassadors*, *The Jolly Corner*, international theme, American, characters, stereotypes, imagology, narrative space, development, early years, late years

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## Introduction

Most readers of *The Portrait of a Lady*, when they have been away from the book for a while, fall back into the notion that James's heroine, self-willed and naive but stalwart for all that, is undone by wily and wicked Europeans. [...] The book, therefore, is an American drama played out among American characters against a European backdrop. We might say, however, that they have all been tainted, and in some cases corrupted, by Europe, or at least by what Europe represented – paradoxically, perhaps – for the unfailingly Europhilic James: a place, a milieu, tender, lovely and enviably cultured, which yet is sick at heart, and sickens the hearts of those who fall for its all too plausible charms. Ambiguity, as we know, is the essence of James. T. S. Eliot wrote of Webster that he was one who saw 'the skull beneath the skin'. Henry James, when it came to Europe, saw the sin behind the splendour.

(John Banville, *Literary Review*)

This passage was part of an article called "The Master by the Arno" by John Banville which was published in the *Literary Review* last March. It would seem to be very strange that a journalist writes a contemporary piece on Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady*, which was published over more than a century ago. The article is essentially a review of the novel. The article shows and proves that the contrast between Europe and America that was made in the nineteenth century is still of interest now. The ambiguity of James's works shows the ever competing qualities of Europe and America. On the one hand, Europe is perceived as a place of history and culture to the Americans. Europe is a place to enjoy and relax. On the other hand, Europe is associated with the corruption of Americans. For example, there is an article about President Trump that states that "Donald Trump is a European import" (Daub, par 2). This association with Europe is made because of Trump's affiliations with right-wing European populists and this will corrupt the minds of the Americans. The ambiguity of Europe in combination and in contrast with America, like has been explored in many works by Henry James, still lives on in today's society apparently. Last year, David Szalay published a collection of intertwined short stories, *All That Man Is* (2016), in which an English teenager reads a section of Henry James's *The Ambassadors* and becomes inspired by James's book while travelling through Europe. Furthermore, Cynthia Ozick is also known to be inspired by Henry James, and her latest novel *Foreign Bodies* (2010) is seen as a rewriting of James's *The*

*Ambassadors*. For some reason, Henry James has driven to the surface of contemporary literature again and this has actually prompted my interest in him.

Henry James was an American author who has lived most of adult life in Europe, especially England. He is seen as a key figure of nineteenth century literary realism and his writing scrutinizes the consciousness and perception of sometimes unreliable characters in narrative fiction. James's fiction is mostly associated with the international theme. His trans-Atlantic works became known for exploring America, the New World, as an opposition to Europe, the Old World, and the other way around. This is mostly done by placing an American character into a European society. Erik Larsen has explained this in his essay, "Identity and Otherness in two Texts by Henry James," by stating that the international theme is about:

The American going to Europe and experiencing the clash between the American identity and the European origin, the American materialism and the European culturalism, the American vulgarity and the European sophistication and, also, the American dynamics and the European petrification. (1)

The encounters between Americans and Europeans are at the heart of most of James's works. He juxtaposes these characters in either a European or an American setting. The European characters mostly embody an archaic civilization that consists of a beautiful history full of traditions that is perceived as alluring and sometimes even corrupt. The American characters are seen as impulsive, naïve, assertive, capitalists and are very much concerned with their freedom. These two cultures clash immensely in James's fiction but they also try to mend the fences and to coexist with each other.

Several works by Henry James have already been studied in the light of the Old World versus the New World (Wegelin 1958; Buelens 2002; Tredy, Duperray and Harding 2011; Moghadam and Yahyab 2014). These works have discussed the contrast between Old Europe and New America in combination with the international theme and the use of symbolic characters. The Americans are stereotypically portrayed as young and slightly innocent people or as innovative characters. The Europeans are described as characters who are historically aware and traditional, but often stuck in the old ways. Christof Wegelin book, *The Image of Europe in Henry James*, focuses, among other things, on the American as a young lady and the American as an expatriate. He analyzes the role Europe play in James's fiction, especially in relation to the American point of view. Gert Buelens, on the other hand, has written about Europeans in the American scene. His research focuses on how the American scene was

different from the European scene and how Europeans fit into that particular American scene. Dennis Tredy, Annick Duperray and Adrian Harding's book *Henry James's Europe: Heritage and Transfer* focuses on the European culture in Henry James's fiction. The appropriation of both American and European culture and space that is related to the international theme has been discussed thoroughly in this book. Nonetheless, this is mostly discussed in relation to Henry James himself. Davood Mohammadi Moghadama and W. R. Wan Yahya have written about the international theme in the works of Henry James as well. However, they discuss the theme more general and are more interested in the reasons which caused James to write about this international theme. They have also done a case study on the depiction of the contrast between American and Europe through symbolic characters in *The Portrait of a Lady*.

All these researches have focused on the international theme in relation to James's fiction. They have mostly focused on one or two works by James in relation to this theme. I will also identify the international theme in relation to the stereotypical American characters in the four works I have chosen to analyze. However, my main focus will be on the difference in portraying these American characters in his works. I am therefore more interested in describing the change in portraying these American characters instead of only focusing on re-analyzing potential American stereotypical characters in these works. The reason for this is because otherwise I would only be repeating and reproducing the research that has already been done extensively in the past. Thus, what I missed in these researches and what I like to add to it is that the fact that there is a change in the depiction of these American characters from his early works in comparison to his late works. I have used these existing researches as an interesting jumping off point and from there on I have tried to bring the deeper and more complex characterization of these characters and their development to the surface. I have chosen to look only at this progress and change in characterization in relation to four crucial American characters in four works by Henry James. This thesis will therefore build on the analysis of the international theme by extending it into making a distinction between James's early works and late works. I will make use of the theory of imagology and the theory of narrative space to analyze American stereotyping in these four literary works. This has not been done before yet. Thus, I am interested in how these American characters as stereotypes are described not only through the eyes of (Americanized-)European characters, but also how they are molded through the space they are in and how this is different from how James does this in his early works when comparing it to his late works.

This thesis answers the following question: how does the stereotyping of American characters develop from Henry James's early works to his late works? There are two sub-

questions that will assist in answering the main research question. The first sub-question is concerned with how the stereotyping of American characters in terms of character descriptions develops in Henry James's oeuvre. For this part of the analysis, I have made use of Leerssen and Beller's theory of imagology. The second sub-question is concerned with how the symbolizing of space, as part of the stereotyping of American characters, develops in Henry James's oeuvre. For the second analysis of my research, I am specifically interested in narrative space. Unfortunately, the theory of imagology by Leerssen and Beller does not literally mention the relationship between narrative space and stereotypes. Therefore, I have used Marie-Laure Ryan's text on narrative space to help me analyze the texts in relation to narrative space.

The corpus of this thesis consists of four works by Henry James. Henry James's early works are his works until 1883. The works written and published from 1884 onwards are considered to be his late works. My corpus will consist of a novella (*The Europeans*, 1878) and a novel (*The Portrait of a Lady*, 1881) from his early repertoire and one novel (*The Ambassadors*, 1903) and a novella (*The Jolly Corner*, 1908) from his later repertoire. I expect that there will be a slight difference in how these stereotypes are represented in two works selected from his early repertoire when comparing them to the two works selected from his late period. It has been written in several biographies on Henry James that he became more focused on morality and the psychological aspect of his characters in his late works. Another argument could be that James's view on Americans and Europeans has been changed, because he has lived most of his life in Europe by then. Thus, I expect that the perceptions of American stereotypes have changed over the course of his writing years. I therefore predict that these American stereotypes will be nuanced and therefore harder to discern.

### Summaries

*The Europeans* is a short novel by Henry James. The short novel was published in serial form in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1878. Essentially, it contrasts the attitudes of people from the Old World, Europe, and the New World, United States. The story is about two siblings, Eugenia and Felix, who travel from the Old World to the New World. Even though, they are American born, they have lived in Europe since their early childhood. After Eugenia's failed marriage with a German prince, they travel to New England in the United States to seek out a new wealthy husband for her. They visit their distant cousins in Boston, New England. Their uncle, mister Wentworth, is not so fond of foreign influences and therefore disapproves of Eugenia and Felix. In the end of the novel, Gertrude Wentworth – one of mister Wentworth's

children – ends up marrying Felix. The short novel is about the differences between Eugenia and Felix and their American cousins, the Wentworths. *The Europeans* explores the differences between experience and innocence and the difference in morals and manners between the (American-) Europeans and Americans.

*The Portrait of a Lady* is a novel by Henry James published in 1881. The novel was first published as a serial in *Macmillan's Magazine* and *The Atlantic Monthly* between the years of 1880 and 1881 before it was published as a novel in its entirety. This novel also pays a lot of attention to the differences between the old world, Europe, and the new world, America. The story is about a young American woman, Isabel Archer, who visits her family in Europe. Her maternal aunt, Lydia Touchett, invites her to come stay with her husband, Mr. Touchett, and their son, Ralph Touchett, in London, England. From here on, she goes on a journey to find a purpose in her life and finds herself in the position of choosing between different suitors, but she all rejects them because she is very fond of her liberty. She travels through Europe and meets Mr. Osmond and Madame Merle in Italy. She is mesmerized by their passion for art and high culture and ends up marrying Mr. Osmond. In the end, she learns that she has been deceived by Mr. Osmond, Mme Merle and their illegitimate child Pansy. She learns that Mr. Osmond and Mme Merle did not care for her at all and that they were only interested in her money, which she had inherited from the late Mr. Touchett. Isabel goes back to London when she hears that Ralph is dying. After Ralph has died, Caspar Goodwood – one of Isabel's American suitors – tries to persuade her again to marry him. She refuses and travels back to Italy in the end of the novel.

*The Ambassadors* is a novel by Henry James published in 1903. The main protagonist of the tale is the American Lewis Lambert Strether from Woollett, Massachusetts. The story follows Strether's journey to Europe to bring back his fiancée's son Chad. Strether has been sent to Paris to convince Chad to come back to America. He finds Chad in a relationship with a ten-year-older woman, Marie de Vionnet. Strether is convinced that this is a purely platonic relationship. Thus, he leaves them be. His fiancée grows impatient and sends her daughter Sarah to Paris as well. Sarah gives Strether an ultimatum: bring Chad back to America or do not come back at all. Strether chooses the latter one and breaks his engagement to Mrs. Newsome. While being in Paris, Strether falls in love with the artistic European culture. He decides that he wants to surround himself with all the culture of Paris. While being in Paris, Strether experiences difficulties with being American under the influence of European culture, but he decides to hold on to his national American identity. In the end, he discovers that the relationship between Chad and Mrs. Voinnet is not platonic at all. He is thrown off



guard by this but decides to leave it be. He realizes that he cannot change them or himself, for that matter. Thus, he decides to go back to America and leave Europe behind. He begins a new life again.

*The Jolly Corner* is a short story by Henry James published in 1908. The story is quite different from the other three stories discussed in this thesis. The story is essentially a ghost story that describes the tale of how the American Spencer Brydon returns to New York and struggles with the idea of his un-lived American life. He returns to the America after having lived in Europe for thirty-three years. The reason for his return is to look at his properties; his childhood home and another building, that are going to be renovated. While being back in America again, he rekindles his relationship with Alice Staverton, who was an old friend his. The nights after his return, he gets tangled up in his mental web of what ifs. He creates a physical appearance of his American alter ego, who then haunts the jolly corner, which is his nickname for his childhood home. Brydon eventually breaks free from this ghost and awakens on Alice Staverton's lap. It is not clear whether Strether has died and woke up in an afterlife or whether he was unconscious and simply woke up. Alice Staverton tells him that she accepts him for who he is and that she feels sorry for his alter ego.

### Imagology

Human experience is captured in narratives. The discourse of human experience consists of a character's actions, intentions and feelings (Fludernik 2009, 59). This human experience can be analyzed in the light of national characters. These national characters can be represented as national stereotypes. The theory of imagology will me analyze American national stereotypes in the four selected works of Henry James. This part of the theoretical framework will focus on how these national stereotypes are described in the four selected works by James.

Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen's study on imagology provide a cultural construction of these national characters and their literary representations. The field of imagology is focused on the representation of national stereotypes in literature. It focuses on the stereotypical characteristics of countries and peoples and the way in which these images of countries and peoples are presented in works of literature (7). The creation of these subjective images, which will form stereotypes, will create a distinction between different groups of people. Imagology is therefore a theory of national stereotypes and is not to be mistaken for a theory of national or cultural identities. Imagologists are only concerned with the representations of national stereotypes in literature. It has nothing to do with empirical reality or actual validity (27). It is more or less focused on the understanding of representation

than it is focused on the understanding of a society. It is important to know that these images are nothing more than a product of the imagination. They reflect one's own point of view in a literary text. The familiarity of these national stereotypes are achieved through repetition. These images of national stereotypes cannot be traced back to what Leerssen calls "empirical reality" but they should be traced back to an intertext (26). He explains that literary texts demonstrate "unambiguously that national characters are a matter of commonplace and hearsay rather than empirical observation or statements of objective fact" (26). Leerssen argues that these images are not a reflection of identities but they are a mere possibility of identification (27). Imagology provides evidence that shows that national stereotypes are efficiently formulated, maintained, and advertized in what Leerssen calls the field of "imaginary and poetical literature" (26). The images or tropes of national stereotypes are obtained via repetition.

The imagined discourse, which is a specific set of characterizations and attributes outside of the realm of facts, is concerned with two things. First, it singles out one nation that is different from the rest. Second, it is concerned with the moral and psychological reasoning behind the creation of such images. Leerssen, therefore, states that the imagined discourse is "specifically concerned with the characterological explanation of cultural difference" (28). The first step one has to take when deciphering a national stereotype in an intertext is to establish the "tradition of the trope" (Leerssen 28). Is the character appreciated or depreciated? The question that needs to be answered is whether the background of this national character is "passively or actively echoed or reinforced, varied upon, negated, mocked or ignored by the individual instance in question?" (28). The nature of dynamics needs also to be taken into account since there could be possible "contrasting modalities" and "opposing valorizations" present within a nation as well. It is also important to contextualize this trope.

#### Narrative space

Literary scholar Marie-Laure Ryan has written about the relationship between space and narrative. Narrative space is the "physically existing environment in which characters live and move" (Ryan 421). It can also be used to analyze the stereotypical characteristics assigned to national characters in literature. The representation of space can add to the stereotyping of a character and the character's state of mind. Space can be organized in two different strategies, the map strategy and the tour strategy (Linde and Labov 924-39). The map strategy is concerned with the bird's eye view that mostly functions as an omniscient narrator with an

overarching point of view or a panoramic perspective of the narrative space. The tour strategy is more concerned with space from a mobile point of view in which narrative space is observed from one spatial object onto another. This is seen as a more “natural walkthrough” of narrative space (Ryan 427). Narrative space could therefore serve as a background for literary characters (Ryan 428). Narrative space can also be organized in “thematically relevant subspaces” (Ryan 429). Examples of these thematically relevant subspaces are hallways and rivers, but also openings that “allow these subspaces to communicate,” such as bridges, doors and windows (Ryan 429). This allows a literary character to cross the boundaries between different symbolic spaces and because of this the difference between “contrasting narrative spaces” becomes clear.

There are different levels to a narrative space. The first level is spatial frames. Spatial frames are the “immediate surroundings of actual events” (Ryan 421). Spatial frames may flow into each other as they are “shifting scenes of action” (Ryan 421). For example, when a character moves from one spatial frame, such as a kitchen, into another spatial frame, such as the garden. The boundaries of these spatial frames may be clear or fuzzy. An example of a clear-cut boundary is the description of a hallway between two different rooms. A fuzzy boundary is explained as a slowly change of landscape where a character is moving through (Ryan 422). The second level is setting. Marie-Laure Ryan explains this by stating that setting is the “general socio-historico-geographical environment in which the action takes place” (422). The setting is the when and where of a story. It is a combination of the geographical location and time. The third level is story space. Story space is concerned with the plot of the story. It is the combination of all the spatial frames and all the locations mentioned in the text (Ryan 422). The latter one does not necessarily have to be a physical location, which means that if a character dreams about his or her life in another country than the country she or he is physically in then that location is also part of the story space. The fourth level is the narrative world, which is the story space “completed by the reader’s imagination on the basis of cultural knowledge and real world experience” (Ryan 422). This means that if a story is about America and Europe, the reader will still know that the Atlantic ocean separates these two worlds even though the Atlantic ocean is not literally mentioned in the text.

## Methodology

The main research question will be divided into two different analyses. The first analysis, which will be presented in chapter one, will focus on the stereotyping of American characters either described by European characters (others) and American-European characters (mediators). The sub-research question that is related to this analysis is concerned with how the stereotyping of American characters in terms of character descriptions develops in Henry James's oeuvre. The first step is to analyze what sort of text it is. Textual interpretation plays a large role in understanding the creation of national stereotypes. According to Leerssen, it is important to know which "genre conventions" are at work (28). The next step is to move to a historical contextualization of the text. There will probably be a difference in national stereotypes from the nineteenth century when you compare them to the same national stereotype but then from the twentieth century. After that, it is important to describe the target audience. For example, an American stereotype targeted for a European audience might be different from an American stereotype created for an American audience or even a Mexican audience, for that matter. It is important to understand the nature of dynamics. Imagologists are interested in the dynamics between the images that "characterize the other (*hetero-images*)" and the images that "characterize one's own domestic identity (*self-images*)" (xiv). Thus, the national characters that are represented as stereotypes are seen as the spectated. The spectated is therefore given shape through the spectant, which serves as a context of the discourse (27). This will lead to the next step: othering. This pattern of othering is in relation to what Leerssen calls "the maintenance of selfhood through historical remembrance and cultural memory (29).

The second analysis, which will be presented in chapter two, will focus on how these American characters are represented as American stereotypes through the narrative spaces they are in. The sub-research question that is focused on this analysis is concerned with how the symbolizing of space, as part of the stereotyping of American characters, develops in Henry James's oeuvre. The first step is to identify the different levels of narrative space at play in the text. The first level is focused on the setting. The second level is concerned with the identification of the spatial frames of the narrative space in which the American character is located. The third level is about the description of the story space. The last level identifies the narrative world. It is a possibility that not every level of narrative space is present in or applicable to a story. After the identification of the levels that are present in the four works, it is also interesting to look at the subspaces that allow the characters to cross the boundaries between different symbolic spaces. The second step is identifying the strategies used by

Henry James to structure these narrative spaces in his works. This would either be the map or the tour strategy as has been described above. All these different elements of (narrative) space will help to identify if narrative space serves as a background to the possible stereotyping of American characters or if it either magnifies or contrasts the stereotyping of the American characters present in that space.

## Chapter 1

### The Analysis of Character Descriptions

One of the responsibilities [of being an American] is fighting against a superstitious valuation of Europe.

(Henry James, *The Letters of Henry James*)

#### 1.1 Introduction

The first analysis of this thesis focuses on how the American characters are being perceived and described as stereotypical American characters in these selected four works by Henry James. Moreover, I will highlight James's difference in doing so when it comes to his early works compared to his late works. These American characters are often reduced to stereotypes or are assigned stereotypical qualities. They are often in contrast with their European counterparts. Previous studies on Henry James and the international theme have gathered that there are two types of American characters in the works of Henry James (Wegelin 1958; Galloway 1967; Porte 1990; Buelens 2002; Tredy 2011; Moghadam 2014; Roberts 2017). There is the American expatriate, who has lived in Europe for quite some time, and the somewhat innocent American traveler who wants to enrich his/her life in Europe.

Joep Leerssen's imagology chapter will guide this analysis. The first step is concerned with textual interpretation that will focus on identifying what sort of text it is. Genre plays a large role in the understanding of the creation of national stereotypes. The second step is to determine the historical contextualization of the text. It is important to know when a text was written, because this could be of influence on the stereotyping of national characters. The third step is to identify the target audience. Lastly, the fourth step is concerned with the dynamics between images, the dynamics between a hetero-image and self-image to be precise. Imagologists try to find possible patterns of othering in combination with the concept ethnocentrism. These concepts can be used to describe the stereotypical qualities or tendencies in the portrayal of these American characters.

Ethnocentrism is concerned with sticking to one's own culture and values and judging others on the basis of that. This is in line with the concept othering, which is focused on the contrast of the "other" in the text. The American characters are either described by other characters, or an omniscient narrator. For the analysis, I will make a distinction between European characters, including concepts as othering and ethnocentrism, and American-

European characters, who often function as mediators between the American travelers and European citizens. Point of view will play a large role in interpreting the stereotypical aspects of these American characters.

Henry James's use of the international theme will be explored through the stereotyping of American characters through the description of a character's thoughts and actions and the personality traits described by either Europeans, Europeanized-Americans or an omniscient narrator. I suspect that there will be a difference between the early works and the late works and that this difference will have to do with America's changing role in the world in the beginning of the twentieth century. Thus, the following analysis will answer the question: how does the stereotyping of American characters in terms of character descriptions develop in Henry James's oeuvre?

### 1.2 *The Europeans*

This novella is essentially focused on contrasting the behaviors of Americans and Europeans. Interestingly enough, these Europeans who have come to visit their relatives in New England are American-born themselves. Nonetheless, they are the embodiment of Europe and her culture. The American characters in this novella are focused a great deal on money. The Wentworth's focus on money can be perceived as stereotypically American, since a great deal of the Americans in this novella are concerned with profit and money-making. This is shown for example through the character Mr. Wentworth, the patriarch of the Wentworth family. He is much more concerned with money than love when it comes to his daughter's marriage arrangements, for example. This is in contrast with the Europeans as they aim for love in a marriage. Ironically, the Americans are the ones who are much more focused on tradition than their two European cousins who have come to visit them in this story. Through this, James shows a contrast between the two worlds by changing the values around. Here, the Americans seem to be much more uptight and in line with tradition and rules than the Europeans. They are focused on hard work, money and are intent on following the rules. The European cousins, Eugenia and Felix, are much more concerned with their freedom and independence, and do not care for hard work. That is the irony in this particular story.

For the imagology part of the analysis, it is vital to follow the steps presented in the introduction. *The Europeans* is essentially a comic novella. This plays an important role when it comes to textual interpretation because in essence the novel wants to entertain. Also vital to know is that in a comedy it is light and full of wit. The atmosphere of the novella is pastoral, and "the spirit is predominantly gay" (Ward 1). Thus the fact that two opposing groups, the

Europeans and the Americans, clash is at the heart of this novella. Everything is solved harmoniously. The essence of *The Europeans* is that “the prevailing view of life in the novel is comic” by which James probably means that “faults exist to be laughed at, and errors exist to be corrected” (Ward 2). This is important because it shows that there is a light approach towards the clash between opposing groups; that is meant to entertain.

The historical contextualization of the novella is Boston, New England in the middle of the nineteenth century. This also an important factor to take into account because Europeans and Americans might look differently at each other in the nineteenth century than they did in the twentieth century. The second step is to determine the historical contextualization of the text. The most likely target audience for this text would be an American audience. This novella was written at the beginning of James’s career and he was still very much an American writer at that time. However, it was obviously also picked up by the European audience as it would be of interest to them too. In essence, the novella compares their culture to the American culture. The dynamics between the Americans, which is the hetero-image, and the Europeans, which is the self-image are balancing each other out. James has been known for contrasting Europe and America through “polarized concepts” such as “experience and innocence” and “cosmopolitanism and provincialism” (Seglie 24). This is exactly what happens in *The Europeans*. All the characters are assigned certain qualities related to either European qualities or American qualities.

The character that I will analyze in relation to American stereotyping is Gertrude Wentworth. She is one of the Wentworth daughters who falls for her European cousin Felix. Gertrude is an interesting character because she embodies the innocent American girl who wants more out of life than what she is getting now. She is a restless, naïve, innocent but hard-hearted girl. This is mostly perceived as a true American heroine in James’s works (Ward 3). Gertrude, as an American stereotype and a symbol of America, is keen on her independence and solitude. She likes having the house all to herself, so she can think and roam about through the endless rooms:

This young lady relished highly, on occasions, the sense of being alone – the absence of the whole family and the emptiness of the house [...] this agreeable sense of solitude, of having the house to herself [...] always excited Gertrude’s imagination. (19)

The feeling of solitude adds to Gertrude’s sense of personal freedom. She likes to have the space to herself without people interfering with her. She enjoys giving herself some time to keep her mind busy. It has nothing to do with loneliness but all to do with her individuality.



This is quite stereotypical for her character as an American stereotype. The stereotype that James has created here has to do with a young, naïve, intelligent individual who symbolizes an independent and strong-willed America.

The two Europeans, Felix and Eugenia, personify the quality of opportunism and the Americans characters are symbols of discipline. These American and European characters are quite the opposite from each other. This becomes clear in the next dialogue between Gertrude, the American girl, and Felix, her European cousin:

[Gertrude says] You have seen people like yourself – people who are bright and gay and fond of amusement. We are not fond of amusement.’

‘Yes,’ said Felix, ‘I confess that rather strikes me. You don’t seem to me to get all the pleasure out of life that you might. You don’t seem to me to enjoy [...] You seem to me very well placed for enjoying. You have money and liberty and what is called in Europe a “position”. But you take a painful view of life, as one may say.’ [...] ‘I don’t think it’s what one does or one doesn’t do that promotes enjoyment, [...] it is the general way of looking at life.’

[Gertrude answers] ‘They [Americans] look at it as a discipline – that’s what they do here. I have often been told that.’

‘Well, that’s very good. But there is another way,’ added Felix, smiling: ‘to look at it as an opportunity’

‘An opportunity – yes,’ says Gertrude. ‘One would get more pleasure that way.’ (62-63).

This conversation between Felix and Gertrude shows that they have very different outlooks on life. This is obviously been done on purpose to highlight the differences in their characters. Without the opposition of Felix, the character of Gertrude might not seem very American at all. It is the contrast that makes Gertrude appear more American. Since the story is written as a comedy, all is well in the end. Gertrude and Felix are happily married and thus the reconciliation between the Americans and Europeans is successful in the ending of the story. They have breached the gap between Europe and America by their commitment to each other. This story proves that even though Felix and Gertrude were very different from each other, Europe and America could be reconciled.

The American stereotype of Gertrude is successful but she does not have any depth to her character. *The Europeans* is a short story that also provides the space for other characters to evolve, and therefore the characters are not deepened out enough to get a better sense of the

contrast between Europe and America. The character of Gertrude seems to be quite flat. On the other hand, this flatness is also quite useful for a stereotype. This is because a stereotype is stronger when it is simple and reduced to one or two qualities. Gertrude embodies the lack of substance of America. It shows that there is not much there behind the façade. America is known for the notion that they are lacking the rich culture and history of Europe. James further explores the character of Gertrude in another format. He has created the character of Daisy Miller in the novella *Daisy Miller* (1878) and the character of Isabel Archer in *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881). In essence, these characters are much alike but their character development throughout their individual storylines is quite different from each other.

### 1.3 *The Portrait of a Lady*

*The Portrait of a Lady* (1881) can be seen as a Bildungsroman in which a young girl comes of age. According to Beth Sharon Ash, the story is a portrait of “female psychology under patriarchy [...] or of the narcissistic and submissive tendencies typical of women trying to cope with a culture defined largely by the dominance of male desire” (124). The American young lady, Isabel Archer, is the American character that is analyzed in relation to this novel. The historical contextualization of the novel is England and Italy in the middle of the nineteenth century. This is vital to the understanding of this novel because the historical contextualization has an influence on the American stereotyping of the character of Isabel. The most likely target audience for this novel are both Americans and Europeans. It was probably addressed to middle and upper class citizens, since there are a lot intellectual references present in the novel.

There are a lot of patterns of othering present in this novel. The constant shift in dynamics between hetero-images and self-images are at the heart of the story. There are Americans, such as Isabel Archer, Henrietta Stackpole and Caspar Goodwood, but there are also Europeanized-Americans, such as Ralph, Lydia and Mr. Touchett, Mme Merle and Gilbert Osmond, and there is also one important European character in the novel, Lord Warburton. Moghadam and Yahya have written in their article on *The Portrait of a Lady* that the European culture is “distorted and corrupted” and they have stated that Osmond is one of those characters that portrays this European quality (16). This statement puts Osmond in contrast with Isabel, who is perceived as a symbol of innocence. Isabel is an extremely gullible young lady. There are a few characters in the novel that take abuse of her because of this. She trusts people too easily and therefore relies too much on other people for adding to her happiness. She has a burning desire for high culture and appears to follow this blindly.

This leads her into the evil hands of Madame Merle and Gilbert Osmond. These two characters are extremely interesting in contrast with Isabel Archer. Madame Merle can, like Gilbert Osmond, be seen as a symbol of Europe. By trusting her blindly, even though she does not know her very well, Isabel's character becomes corrupted by Madame Merle. Madame Merle, like Europe, wants to enrich Isabel's life by helping her to reach her dreams and by assisting her in bettering her life. Isabel believes that Madame Merle is all about that high culture she has desired for so long. Only to learn in the end that she has been used for selfish reasons.

Thus, the most interesting character in this novel when it comes to American identity and stereotypical tendencies and qualities is the character of Isabel Archer. These stereotypical tendencies become clear through her relationships with her cousin Ralph, her aunt Lydia, and her acquaintances with Madame Merle and Gilbert Osmond. The character of Isabel Archer, the supposed heroine of the story, is corrupted by the wicked Europeans. However, that is not the case at all. There is only one genuine leading European character in the novel and that is Lord Warburton. The rest of the leading characters are also all American in essence. They might have lived in Europe for quite some time, but they still remain Americans. Mr. Touchett and Ralph Touchett even called this their American physiognomy (3). They could never really let go of their American identity and would therefore always hold on to it. Because someday, they might return to America again. Therefore, as John Banville has noted in his article, *The Portrait of a Lady* is an "American drama played out among American characters against a European backdrop" (par. 8). It is, however, a paradox because one could argue that these Americans have already been tainted by the Europeans and their charms. This would make them semi-Europeans.

Isabel Archer is the embodiment of a typical innocent American girl who is ready to enrich herself with the high culture of Europe. Her being a young girl adds to the notion of America being a young and new country compared to the European countries. Like America, Isabel Archer herself is very much concerned with appearance instead of reality. In Isabel Archer's case this relates to her character trait of naivety. The fact that she is therefore portrayed as an innocent, ignorant and inconsequent young lady is related to this new world in the international theme. This is shown in the next passage:

She [Isabel] was too young, too impatient to live, too unacquainted with pain. She always returned to her theory that a young woman whom after all everyone thought clever, should begin by getting a general impression of life. This was necessary to prevent mistakes, and after it should be

secured she might make the unfortunate condition of others an object of special attention. (57)

This passage relates very well to Isabel being the personification of young America. America did not have the maturity of Europe. They did not have the history that Europe had. This was because America was still a relatively new country and was bound to make some rookie mistakes before it would be able to compete with the big guys in Europe.

Isabel is described as an American young lady who comes across as an innocent but smart girl. Her knowledge does not come from life experiences but more from the books she has read. She is book smart but inexperienced in life. In chapter six, she is described as follows:

[...] with her meager knowledge, her inflated ideals, her confidence at once innocent and dogmatic, her temper at once exacting and indulgent, her mixture of curiosity and fastidiousness, of vivacity and indifference, her desire to look very well and to be if possible even better; her determination to see, to try, to know; her combination of the delicate, desultory, flame-like spirit and the eager and personal young girl. (51)

America as a county has fought very hard for its independence. It has therefore become an important quality to the country itself. Isabel embodies this need for independence. She is in fact extremely fond of her independence: "Isabel Archer was very fortunate in being independent, and that she ought to make some very enlightened use of her independence" (55). She has a strong desire to keep her independence, and therefore she refuses several marriage proposals as she is not ready to give it up.

The paradox central to Isabel's character is that of intelligence and ignorance. Even though, she is described as an intelligent and free girl, she was not ready to commit to any sort of marriage yet. Her destiny was not the same as for other women at that time. She did not desire a man to provide her with a destiny. She gave the intention of wanting to create her own destiny:

She was intelligent and generous; it was a fine free nature; but what was she going to do with herself? The question was irregular, for with most women one had no occasion to ask it. Most women did with themselves nothing at all; they waited, in attitudes more or less gracefully passive, for a man to come that way and furnish them with a destiny. Isabel's originality was that she gave one an impression of having intentions of her own. (68)

Even though the character of Isabel is considerably further developed than the character of Gertrude in *The Europeans*, Isabel still remains a shell of a person like Gertrude is. Isabel is all about the façade of being pretty, intelligent and a strong individual. There is not much substance behind the mask of an innocent young lady. She is a symbol of the emptiness of America. This shell or façade by which she herself is characterized is also a pitfall for her knowledge of people. The fact that she has been easily deceived by Madame Merle and Gilbert Osmond shows that she only judged them by their façade, their shell. She is flattered by their interest in her and their knowledge and collection of art. This naivety is Isabel's character flaw. She is symbolizing the shallow image of America. The image of America as a self-centered country as Isabel herself is a self-centered girl:

She was always planning out her own development, desiring her own perfection, observing her own progress. Her nature had for her own imagination a certain garden-like quality, a suggestion of perfume and murmuring boughs, of shady bowers and lengthening vistas, which made her feel that introspection was, after all, an exercise in the open air, and that a visit to the recesses of one's mind was harmless when one returned from it with a lap full of roses. But she was often reminded that there were other gardens in the world than those of her virginal soul, and that there were, moreover, a great many places that were not gardens at all – only dusky, pestiferous tracts, planted thick with ugliness and misery. (56-57)

This passage illustrates this self-centeredness but it also adds something interesting to that notion. Namely, that Isabel is aware of other people and that those other people and their personalities might not always be good people. She has knowledge of the corruptness of other people's minds. However, she is not a very good judge of character. Osmond has corrupted Isabel's mind. When it comes to the notion of Europe corrupting Americans, Gilbert Osmond is their golden boy. He would therefore make a good European stereotype besides the fact that he is an American character. If Osmond is seen as an European stereotype, then the corruption and deceiving of Isabel can be put into the hetero- and self-image contrast.

Like America, Isabel is extremely fond of her liberty. She is extremely fortunate in "being independent" and the narrator states that "she ought to make some very enlightened use of her independence" (55). Isabel likes her independence and solitude, nevertheless, she never "called it loneliness" (55). She feels that loneliness is a weakness, and she believes that she is not weak. She also feels like she would have to give up her liberty in order to get married. That is why she refuses a lot of marriage proposal from her suitors. She is also

extremely devoted to her liberty in general. When Lord Warburton asks Isabel if Mrs. Touchett has adopted her in the beginning of the novel, Isabel answers by saying: “Oh, no; she has not adopted me [...] I am not a candidate for adoption [...] I’m very fond of my liberty” (19). In chapter thirteen, Isabel is thinking about Lord Warburton’s proposal and the narrator then says that “[t]he idea of a diminished liberty was particularly disagreeable to her at present, since she had just given a sort of personal accent to her independence” (127). In chapter sixteen, Caspar Goodwood has another go at proposing to Isabel and she explains her refusal by saying: “I like my liberty too much. If there’s a thing in the world I’m fond of [...] it’s my personal independence” (180). But then, her sense of liberty becomes corrupted by Gilbert Osmond who deceives her into marrying him after all the others have failed. Ralph Touchett says that she has changed and tries to talk her out of marrying Osmond: “You must have changed immensely. A year ago you valued your liberty beyond everything. You wanted only to see life” (385). She replies to Ralph by saying: “I have seen it [...] it doesn’t seem to me so charming” (385). Europe has changed her. Her innocent outlook on life has disappeared. Her mind has been corrupted and she finally sees life what it really is: cruel.

Tradition was a symbol of Europe. America did not have the association with that kind of tradition yet. Osmond is obsessed with Europe; he is “fond of the old, the consecrated, the transmitted” (485). He is infatuated with tradition and makes clear that it was the best thing to have in the world. The contrast between Isabel and Osmond in relation to tradition is described in the next passage:

He had an immense esteem for tradition; he had told her once that the best thing in the world was to have it, but that if one was so unfortunate as not to have it, one must immediately proceed to make it. She knew that he meant by this that she hadn’t it, but that he was better off; [...] he had got his traditions [...] He had a very large collection of them. (485)

Osmond is extremely opportunistic and fond of tradition. These are two qualities associated with a European stereotype. Isabel is a creature of habit, freedom and solitude and she is in contrast with the character of Osmond. The end of Isabel’s character development shows that she has learnt a great deal about people and their intentions. She is not that naïve young girl from the beginning of the novel anymore. She has learnt from her extended life abroad. She has gained experience in life.

#### 1.4 Recapitulation

The American stereotype of a young and innocent girl seems to have taken a great deal of interest by Henry James. Gertrude Wentworth and Isabel Archer are wonderful examples of this sort of American character. Daisy Miller, another young American female created by Henry James, should also be mentioned in relation to this type of a stereotypically American girl. It seems that James identifies America -or to be more concise, The United States- with youth, innocence and naivety. This is also the reason why I have chosen to focus on one of the young female Americans in each work selected from his early oeuvre. Both girls embody the pitfalls of a young country. They are easily manipulated and are easily corrupted by their European counterparts. They are restless and impatient and have a romantic and superficial view of their so-called European predators. They think they need Europe and its history to mature them. The interesting difference between *The Europeans* and *The Portrait of a Lady* is the physical and psychological embodiment of the two continents. Gertrude does not travel to Europe, Felix and Eugenia embody the European continent as well as Gertrude embodies the American youthful continent. Isabel physically travels to Europe and interacts with these Europeans and Europeanized-Americans. There is more to *The Portrait of a Lady* than just the embodiment of these two continents. Therefore, the Americanness of Isabel becomes much more present in the interaction with many different Europeans than the character of Gertrude does. The concept of othering is much more present in *The Portrait of a Lady* than in *The Europeans*. Gertrude only stays in New England, and therefore her character is only compared to two European characters. The contrast between the Europeans and Americans is therefore less intense in *The Europeans* than it is in *The Portrait of a Lady*.

#### 1.5 *The Ambassadors*

*The Ambassadors* is a dark comedy with a third-person narrative. The narrative is told from Strether's point of view and focuses on his pilgrimage to Paris. Strether is the embodiment of America; a little bit older and matured than the young girls but yet not experienced enough for his age. While being seduced by the charm of Europe, he awakens to a new way of living. Strether ponders about the idea that he might have missed his youth because of all his hard work in America. When the novelty of Europe starts to disappear, Strether finds himself wanting to go back to America. He wants to start over, but not in the same place with the same life he had before he went to Europe.

For the imagology part of the analysis, it is key to follow the steps presented in the introduction. *The Ambassadors* is essentially a comic. This plays an important role when it

comes to textual interpretation because in essence the novel wants to entertain. The historical contextualization of the novel is Paris in France, Chester in England and Woollett in Massachusetts, America. The story takes mostly place in early twentieth century Europe. The most likely target audience for this text would be both an American and European audience, and probably a well-educated audience as well. The dynamics between the Americans, hetero-image, and the Europeans, self-image, are balancing each other out. Although, the character differences are less obvious than they were in *The Europeans* and *The Portrait of a Lady*. The concept of othering is more frequently used for the Europeans than the other way around. This is because the story is told from Strether's point of view, which makes it harder to decipher the stereotypical tendencies that are supposed to be mentioned or talked about in relation to the character of Strether.

Thus, the character that I will analyze in relation to American stereotyping is Lambert Strether. He is a typically American businessman with a "loose grey overcoat" and he is from a factory town called Woollett. The color grey is used as an association with maturity but also with business. It could also mean that he is in transition. The color grey is neither black nor white, it is in transition. Strether is in transition in Paris. He becomes a new person with a mix of American and European qualities. Grey is also associated with solid, stable and isolation, which refers to Strether's rather isolated life in Woollett, Massachusetts. His life is "grey in the shadow of his solitude"(79). His life as a businessman was stable and solid without any colors in his life. Grey is also not a very stimulating or energizing color. This is exactly what Strether was missing in his life, some color and some energy. He compares himself to a stone by saying that the stone was "a cold fair grey, warmed and polished a little by life" (89). Strether as an American stereotype portrays the image of a business America, a grey America. And the city of Paris, that is a representation of Europe, is full of color and energy

Lambert Strether embodies the stereotypically American businessman of middle age who has lost touch with the perks of a cultural life. In fact, Strether never knew this kind of life. He is used to an industrial but predictable and safe life back in Woollett. This is also the way he would do it in Paris, because he was there to conduct business:

It would serve, this spurt of his spirit, he reflected, as, pausing at the top of the street, he looked up and down the great foreign avenue, it would serve to begin business with. His idea was to begin business immediately, and it did much for him the rest of his day, that the beginning of business awaited him. (74)



Conducting business is the only way he knows to live his life. There is no room or profound interest in culture if it does not benefit from doing business. It is not so much that he does not enjoy it, it is more of a lack of room and time in his head that prevents him from enjoying life. Business is all he knows.

Lambert Strether embodies the image of America that is concerned with “Puritanism, freedom, frontier spirit and individualism” (Akiyama 129). He is also a sympathetic and idealistic man and he has been longing for a life that might or could have been:

Live all you can; it's a mistake not to. It doesn't so much matter what you do in particular so long as you have your life. If you haven't had that what have you had? [...] I haven't done so enough before – and now I'm too old; too old at any rate for what I see. Oh I *do* see, at least; and more than you'd believe or I can express. It's too late. [...] What one loses one loses; make no mistake about that. [...] Still, we have the illusion of freedom; therefore don't be, like me, without the memory of that illusion. I was either, at the right time, too stupid or too intelligent to have it; I don't quite know which. Of course at present I'm a case of reaction against the mistake. [...] Do what you like so long as you don't make my mistake. For it was a mistake. Live. (176-177).

Since all he knew was business, life had passed him by so quickly that he forgot to enjoy it. This is also America's pitfall as a country that is too much focused on progress. And therefore, America and in this case Strether forgets that there is another way of living that includes the enjoyment of high culture.

The angle of freedom that America has been so keen on has changed. It is not a youthful sense of freedom that aims for a sense of individuality, but this new kind of freedom is related to power and business. Strether needs to reinvent his sense of (personal) freedom and this is what he has done in Europe. Europe has helped him to reinvent his true American nature of independence and freedom again:

[...] it was the freedom that most brought him round again to the youth of his own that he had long ago missed. He could have explained little enough to-day either why he had missed it or why, after years and years, he could care that he had; the main truth of the actual appeal of everything was none the less that everything represented the substance of his loss, put it within reach, within touch, made it, to a degree it had never been, an affair of the sense. That was what it became for him at this singular time,

the youth he had long ago missed – a queer concrete presence, full of mystery, yet full of reality, which he could handle, taste, smell, the deep breathing of which he could positively hear. (384)

Strether moulds over the fact of his missed youth. He finds a version of his youth again in Paris. Strether, the symbol of an American expatriate, is concerned with the American desire for Europe. The stereotype of the American expatriate, marks James's interest in the internationalist idea or dream of an Anglo-Saxon unification (Wegelin 148). Strether is not the inexperienced girl from James's early works. He is a matured symbol of America and full of life experience. Thus, the social relation between Europe and America has changed. America is not the youthful and innocent one as opposed to Europe's symbol of experience. However, Europeans still know how to enjoy life. Americans has forgotten that part in their money-driven mentality.

### 1.6 *The Jolly Corner*

*The Jolly Corner* is a ghost story and is therefore meant to shock. This intention is important to take into account. The novel entertains the idea of an identity crisis which was present for many Americans that lived abroad for quite some time. The idea of an identity crisis is almost relatable to the split personality of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. *The Jolly Corner* is focused on the idea of an unlived life: the life you might have had but sadly you did not. The historical contextualization of the text is New York City in probably early twentieth century and it was presumably written for an upper-class audience either European or American. The dynamics between hetero-image and self-image is much more complicated in this particular text than in the other three.

Spencer Brydon is a Europeanized-American. The easy go-to interpretation of the text is the analysis of Brydon's unlived life. Some even feel like this story is almost autobiographical. That Brydon is really a symbol of Henry James himself, and James's own idea of an unlived life. Christof Wegelin explained interpretation of *The Jolly Corner* by saying that:

The theme of the American's return now replaces his earlier theme of the American pilgrim to Europe. One of these stories reads in fact like a symbolical rendering of James's own return and the revelation it brought him. [...] the final note of pity for Brydon's disfigured alter ego as an expression of James's own sense that the ravaged businessman is no less victim of his conditions and therefore no less worthy of sympathy than an

Isabel Archer or a Strether. Nevertheless, the man Brydon would have been had he stayed in America is “grim,” “worn,” “ruined” despite his “million a year”; he appeals to the lady’s sympathy; the man he has become by living in Europe charms her. (Wegelin 155-156)

This passage shows that there could indeed be a possible connection between James’s wondering about his unlived life as an American in America and Brydon’s unlived life. For Spencer Brydon, it is haunting and suffocating to confront his ghost of his unlived life. It is an obsession that he has been carrying around for quite a while now. His ghost-like alter ego becomes a symbol of American wealth, and James’s association with the “vast mechanical, industrial, social, financial power everywhere in evidence” that symbolizes this American wealth (qtd. in Wegelin 156).

The story of *The Jolly Corner* is different from *The Ambassadors* because *The Jolly Corner* is certainly criticizing America for its cosmopolitan, capitalist and opportunist behavior. Moreover, there is a part of Brydon’s that possesses the American spirit of cosmopolitanism, capitalism and opportunism as well. Brydon tries to suppress that part of himself, but eventually fails:

He had lived his life with his back so turned to such concerns and his face addressed to those of so different an order that he scarce knew what to make of this lively stir, in a compartment of his mind never yet penetrated, of a capacity for business and a sense for construction (199).

What is interesting here is that James explores the possibility of suppressing a different part of one self. For Brydon, it is his American counterpart. His alter-ego with an eye for business, who is only concerned with working hard and making money. This is in contrast with the European side of Brydon who wants to enjoy life and take it slow. The contrast between the hetero-image and self-image is in Brydon himself. He is his own contrast.

Thus, Brydon is not a plain stereotypically American character such as Gertrude, Isabel and Strether. He is, in fact, not very American at all. After having lived in Europe for so many years, all he is left with is his American physiognomy and his obsession with his unlived American life. However, the fact is that Brydon’s alter-ego, as a part of his identity crisis that haunts him at night, does belong to the American stereotype symbolizing America at that time. America has become this greedy and profit driven country that has almost no value for cultural heritage, as it seems. Certain interpretations, such as the darkness of this business side of America, are a bit extravagant in this particular story but in essence the

destruction of all these buildings are part of the American profit-driven spirit. A spirit that is somewhere deep down in the character of Brydon as well:

Horror, with the sight, had leaped into Brydon's throat, gasping there in a sound he couldn't utter; for the bared identity was too hideous as *his*, and his glare was the passion of his protest. The face, *that* face, Spencer Brydon's? - he searched it still, but looking away from it in dismay and denial, falling straight from his height of sublimity. It was unknown, inconceivable, awful, disconnected from any possibility--! He had been 'sold', he inwardly moaned, stalking such game as this: the presence before him was a presence, the horror within him a horror, but the waste of his nights had been only grotesque and the success of his adventure an irony. Such an identity fitted his at *no* point, made its alternative monstrous. (228-229)

Spencer Brydon is a much more complex character and poses many threats to the alleged American stereotype. Brydon is the embodiment of both a European with stereotypically European qualities and an American character with stereotypically American qualities. His European side is perceived as a creature of leisure and culture, and his American side is perceived as a businessman with no concern for preserving culture in relation to Europe and its history. However, there is also something universal in his portrayal of the American stereotype that is in reality his alter ego. The next passage contemplates Brydon's universal tell to the story:

If I had waited I might have seen it was, and then I might have been, by staying here, something nearer to one of these types who have been hammered so hard and made so keen by their conditions. It isn't that I admire them so much - the question of any charm in them, or of any charm, beyond that of the rank money-passion, exerted by their conditions *for* them, has nothing to do with the matter; it's only a question of what fantastic, yet perfectly possible, development of my own nature I mayn't have missed. (207)

This passage shows that there is a broader function to the character of Brydon. He is in fact a spokesperson for what happens to American blokes who are too keen on business, money and opportunism. Thus, his alter ego becomes a stereotype for this group of Americans.

## 1.7 Conclusion

The shift between the old Henry James and the new Henry James when it comes to American characters viewed as stereotypes is noticeably present after having analyzed these four works of literature. The hypothesis stated that there is a development in the stereotyping of these American characters selected from these four works by Henry James. This is definitely the case. The stereotyping of American characters in James's early works, *The Europeans* and *The Portrait of a Lady*, shows a clear distinction between Americans and Europeans. The image of young America is the focus point. This, however, is not necessarily the case in James's late works, *The Ambassadors* and *The Jolly Corner*. These works have shown that the stereotypical tendencies and qualities assigned to American characters have changed over time. The image of America has changed. America is more mature now. Europe has become a playground for these Americans to play in, but when they are done playing they would go back to America again.

In James's early works, the stereotyping of American characters are focused on the young innocent American girl who wants to enrich her lives. The difference here is that Gertrude Wentworth in *The Europeans* does not travel to Europe, but does end up marrying the "European" Felix. Isabel Archer does travel to Europe in *The Portrait of a Lady*. These American characters in the works of Henry James are contrasted with the European characters. The Americans are often associated with innocence and ignorance whereas the Europeans are mainly associated with decadence or sophistication. America is perceived as a young country and the people are perceived as shallow and inexperienced when they are compared to Europeans. Europe, therefore, has become a museum in which the Americans are to learn about sophistication, and how to evolve as a person.

In James's late works, the stereotyping of American characters has changed since his earlier works. The two works of his late period show two different American characters than the two works from his early oeuvre. The two American characters of *The Ambassadors* and *The Jolly Corner* feel like they have wasted their youth. It is important to note that this is only the case for the American alter ego of Brydon. Both characters experience an identity crisis. Strether experiences this in Paris and Brydon in New York. Both men are very much concerned with the achieved life and have an eye for business. They are a symbol of business America.

Thus, the stereotyping of American characters does change in terms of character descriptions in Henry James's oeuvre. The early works are more focused on the young version of America. This version is perceived as innocent, naïve, inconsequential, but also free and

rather isolationist. Gertrude and Isabel portray this version of America. They are extremely keen on their independence and have showed that they wanted more in life than they bargained for. They want to learn about high culture and European history and not just from the books they read. The late works have shown that America has matured since then. Europe is seen as a corruption of the pure and free American spirit. This version of America in James's late works is still focused on individualism and capitalism. They do not need Europe in order to succeed. This version of America is portrayed and symbolized by Strether and Brydon. The only difference with the image of America and these characters is that these characters want more in their lives than making money. They want to enjoy life. They have learnt about that in Europe. Thus, the stereotyping of these American characters are harder to discern. These characters are more complex than their stereotypical counterpart. James is known for this. He is known for making his characters more complex in his later oeuvre.

The contrast between two different stereotypes are the symbol of change in his works on the international theme. James calls this "the growing divorce between the American woman (with her comparative leisure, culture, grace, social instincts, artistic ambitions) and the male American immersed in the ferocity of business" (qtd. in Wegelin 160). This change in representation of stereotypes fits the image of America at those times. America has shifted from a young isolated bystander, personified by the young American girl, to a growing world power, symbolized by the American businessman in all its grayness.

## Chapter 2

### Analysis of Character in Narrative Space

The gentleman on the divan was a powerful specimen of an American [...] A fine American.

(Henry James, *The American*)

#### 2.1 Introduction

There are different ways in which a national character can become a stereotype. The previous analysis has researched the character descriptions and the stereotyping of the American characters in the four works by Henry James. This second analysis, however, will explore how narrative space can add to the stereotyping of these American characters or perhaps magnify or contrast the stereotypical tendencies and qualities of these American characters. A spatial perspective can offer a room for a character to identify with or rather be in contrast with. An American character in a European setting can become even more of an American than he or she would be in an American setting, for example. This also works the other way around with European characters in an American setting. This chapter will look at the American character in an American setting in contrast with an American character in a European setting. I have done this so I can see whether space is used as a magnifier or an addition to the American stereotyping in these selected four works by Henry James.

Literary scholar Marie-Laure Ryan's chapter on narrative space will structure this analysis. The first feature is to identify the different levels of the narrative space. The four different levels were previously mentioned in the introduction of this thesis. The first level is the spatial frames which are the "immediate surroundings of actual events," which flow into each other when a character moves from one spatial frame into the other (Ryan 421). The boundaries of these different spatial frames are either clear-cut, such as a hallway between two different rooms, or fuzzy, such as a natural walkthrough from one spatial frame into the other. The second level is setting, which is the geographical location and time of the story. The third level is the story space which is concerned with the plot of the story. It is a combination of the two levels above and the imaginary spaces that a character is in as well. This could be a dream of another country, for example. The fourth level is the narrative world, which is the story space plus the reader's knowledge of a certain place or area. The example was given of the ocean between Europe and America, which has not been mentioned literally in a text, but the reader knows it is there separating the two continents of Europe and America. The second feature that will be identified is the strategies Henry James might have

used in structuring his literary spaces in his works. The map strategy which functions as a bird's eye view can give a panoramic perspective of the narrative space. Moreover, the tour strategy will explore the narrative space as a natural walkthrough. The third feature is to analyze whether the narrative space serves as a background to the stereotyping of these American characters or whether the narrative space is also part of the mental projection of the American character.

Thus, James's international theme will be further explored in relation to the use of fictional spaces and thematically relevant sub-spaces. I expect that the narrative space in which these American characters roam about does add to the stereotypical tendencies and qualities assigned to these American characters. I expect that the contrast between an American character in a European setting will add more to the stereotyping than an American in an American setting will do. The following analysis will answer the question: how does the symbolizing of space, as part of the stereotyping of American characters, develop in Henry James's oeuvre?

## 2.2 *The Europeans*

Space, in general, is used in a realistic manner in the works by Henry James. The early works of James are often known for their mix of romanticism and realism (Kelley 261). *The Europeans* (1878) is about the view Europeans have of America, Boston in this case, and the view New England has of these two Europeans. The Europeans, Felix and Eugenia, are looking at their distant cousins, the Wentworths, and they let these distant cousins look at them (Kelley 261). Most of the story plays out in the Boston scene, which serves as a background to all the conversations the characters have with each other. Europe has come to America, so to speak, in this particular novella of James. Gertrude, the American girl, is one of the first modern American maids in the works of James. In my previous analysis, I have focused mostly on the character of Gertrude. For the purposes of this chapter, it is also important to look at Gertrude's family in an American setting. For this novella, I have identified the stereotypical American scenes according to the Europeans and I have looked at the way the American family was described in that particular narrative space.

The first feature in relation to narrative space are the different levels. There are indeed different levels of narrative space present in this novella, but the most interesting levels are the setting and the narrative world. The setting of the story is Boston, New England mid-nineteenth century and the narrative world of this novella consists of Boston but also Europe as Felix and Eugenia often daydream about their life in Europe. The Atlantic ocean is



therefore also part of this equation, because it belongs to the reader's knowledge of the separation of the two continents. The second feature that is of relevance to the analysis is James's use of the natural walkthrough strategy. Many description of spaces start off as a map strategy but James zooms in rather quickly and switches over to the tour strategy. The different sceneries appear as a character is walking through them or gazing out of a window. The third feature is to analyze whether the narrative space serves as a background to the stereotyping of these American characters or whether the narrative space is also part of the mental projection of the American character.

The space of the Wentworth family is situated in a domestic space, which is in essence a very private space. The domestic space offers also a space for interaction because, as scholar Amy Kaplan has stated, the word domestic can have "a double meaning that not only links the familial household to the nation but also imagines both in opposition to everything outside the geographic and conceptual border of the home" (581). Thus, the private familial sphere has been invaded by these European foreigners who belong to the public sphere as they are not yet part of the private familial sphere. These two Europeans become part of the private familial sphere once it is known that they are actually family and thus the Europeans' private sphere mixes with the domestic domain of the American Wentworths. Intimacy is, therefore, created by these two families through "employing domestic space as a way through which to articulate national identities" (Seglie 24).

The first impression that is given of the American scene is through the eyes of Eugenia, the European baroness. According to her, Boston is a gloomy place even though it is already the middle of May. She describes the scene as follows:

A narrow grave-yard in the heart of a bustling, indifferent city, seen from the windows of a gloomy-looking inn, is at no time an object of enlivening suggestions; and the spectacle is not at its best when the mouldy tombstones and funereal umbrage have received the ineffectual refreshment of a dull, moist snowfall. If, while the air is thickened by this frosty drizzle, the calendar should happen to indicate that the blessed vernal season is already six weeks old, it will be admitted that no depressing influence is absent from the scene. (1)

This particular scene can be described as two different spatial frames but with a fuzzy boundary because she gazes out of the window of her room into the street. This window is a thematically relevant subspace as it shows the boundary between the outside world and the inside world. When Eugenia is looking out her window onto the graveyard and the street next

to it, she notices “an assemblage of Bostonians were trampling about in the liquid snow” (James, 1878, 2). They are apparently waiting for the horse cars to take them to their destinations. Eugenia has a very supercilious view of Boston with its dark and dirty streets full of people. What she hates the most about this scene is the ugly “tall wooden church-spire, painted white” which “rose high into the vagueness of the snow-flakes” (2). The reader gets a profoundly gloomy and depressing view of this little piece of America, Boston. This view is, however, eminently different from Gertrude Wentworth’s, Eugenia’s distant American cousin, view on her American surroundings.

When Gertrude goes for a walk, in chapter two, she observes the scenery. She walks from the “large square house in the country” and “strolled about in the spacious garden which separated it from a muddy road” (14). It is a sunny morning in springtime and there are “magnificent trees” (14). She also notices that there is an “intensely habitual stillness offered [by] a submissive medium to the sound of a distant church-bell” (14). She then describes the scene as follows:

The doors and windows of the large square house were all wide open, to admit the purifying sunshine, which lay in generous patches upon the floor of a wide, high, covered piazza adjusted to two sides of the mansion – a piazza on which several straw-bottomed rocking chairs and half a dozen of those small cylindrical stools in green and blue porcelain, which suggest an affiliation between the residents and the European trade, were symmetrically disposed. It was an ancient house – ancient in the sense of being eighty years old; it was built of wood, painted a clean, clear, faded gray, and adorned along the front, at intervals, with flat wooden pilasters, painted white. These pilasters appeared to support a kind of classic pediment, which was decorated in the middle by a large triple window in a boldly carved frame, and in each of its smaller angles by a glazed circular aperture. A large white door, furnished with a highly-polished brass knocker, presented itself to the rural-looking road, with which it was connected by a spacious pathway, paved with worn and cracked, but very clean, bricks. Behind it there were meadows and orchards, a barn and a pond; and facing it, a short distance along the road, on the opposite side, stood a smaller house, painted white, with external shutters painted green, a little garden on the one hand and an orchard on the other. All this was shining in the morning air, through which the simple details of the picture

addressed themselves to the eye as distinctly as the items of a 'sum' in addition. (14-15)

It is quite a long description of the scene but it contains many typically American features such as the straw-bottomed rocking chairs and the wooden built house. Also interestingly enough, it hints at the European influence on American culture. Since the settlers were Europeans themselves, it would only make sense that this part of European culture remains a part of American culture today. This scene hints at the mix of American and European elements that America is known for. As it is a land of immigrants; a melting pot, it is bound to include a little bit of Europe in the mix of their identity and their surroundings. This particular scene, as described above, stages the setting in which the American girl, Gertrude, grew up into the person she is becoming now. This particular scene is, perhaps, much more related to Gertrude as a character in general, than it is related to Gertrude as an American character. When Gertrude roams about the house, she notices the lonesomeness of the house. The emptiness of the house and its rooms adds to Gertrude's sense of individuality and solitude:

The front door of the big, unguarded home stood open, with the trustfulness of the golden age; or what is more to the purpose, with that of New England's silvery prime. Gertrude slowly passed through it, and went from one of the empty rooms to the other – large, clear-colored rooms, with white wainscots, ornamented with thin-legged mahogany furniture, and, on the walls, with old-fashioned engravings, chiefly of scriptural subjects, hung very high. This agreeable sense of solitude, of having the house to herself, of which I have spoken, always excited Gertrude's imagination. (19)

Gertrude's sense of solitude reflects on the emptiness of the house. The fact that there are no people present in the house reflects onto the image of solitude. America as a country is separated from Europe by the Atlantic ocean. America is a "symbolic island" far away from Europe. The same goes for Gertrude as she is alone in the house and the others are "far away," in the church.

The first encounter between Gertrude and her European cousin Felix is in the office/library of the house. Gertrude is reading a book. The fact that she is reading in the office has a very officious air to it. This room in this scene is related to the business side of America - the office as the heart of the house; the heart and center of America. The fact that she is reading a book for pleasure in a place that is meant for business could be stereotypical and symbolical for the fact that she is still young. The character of Gertrude is the start of a

list of young American girls in search for life and their own identity that James has written about quite extensively. After Gertrude Wentworth, he created the character of Daisy Miller in *Daisy Miller* (1878) and the character of Isabel Archer in *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881).

### 2.3 *The Portrait of a Lady*

In the previous analysis, I have focused on how Isabel Archer as a character develops through the storyline and is assigned all sorts of stereotypically American qualities and characteristics by several European and Europeanized-American characters. For this second analysis, I have analyzed the stereotyping of the American young woman, Isabel Archer, in relation to narrative space. Donatella Izzo states in her essay on *The Portrait of a Lady* that the novel is “centered on a character, and not a story,” and that it is “like a portrait, static and not dynamic” (43). This is also why narrative space is such an important factor in this novel because it illustrates the surroundings of Isabel. It paints a picture or portrait of Isabel.

The first feature in relation to narrative space are the different levels of narrative space. There are many different levels of narrative space present in this novel. The first level, which contains the different spatial frames, will be discussed separately in relation to particular scenes that illustrate the relationship between narrative space and the character of Isabel Archer. The setting of the story is much more complex in this novel than for example in *The Europeans*. The most important places are Albany, New York, Gardencourt, England but also Florence and Rome, Italy. The story takes place around the 1870s. Also for this novel, the Atlantic ocean is part of the narrative world. The second feature that is of relevance to the analysis is James’s use of the natural walkthrough strategy. The different sceneries appear as the character of Isabel is walking through them or when she is gazing out of a window, for example. The third feature is to analyze whether the narrative space serves as a background to the stereotyping of these American characters or whether the narrative space is also part of the mental projection of the American character.

The very first scene in which Isabel Archer is introduced is immediately a contrast with her as an American person. James starts the description of the scene with a bird’s eye view zooming in on the characters present in the Gardencourt garden. Isabel enters the English garden where Ralph, Mr. Touchett, and Lord Warburton are having tea. The English house near London had a long history which relates to the European characteristic of tradition:

The house that rose beyond the lawn was [...] the most characteristic object in the peculiarly English picture [...]. It stood upon a low hill,

above the river – the river being the Thames, at some forty miles from London. A long gabled front of red brick, with the complexion of which time and the weather had played all sorts of picturesque tricks, only, however, to improve and refine it, presented itself to the lawn, with its patches of ivy, its clustered chimneys, its windows smothered in creepers.

The house had a name and a history. (2)

This opening scene illustrates the English traditional tea in the garden setting that the English are known for. What is interesting here is that the Europeanized-Americans are accustomed to this English tradition. When Isabel Archer enters the scene she “made her appearance in the doorway” (James, 13). It could be argued that she literally enters the world of Europe through that doorway. The doorway is identified as a thematically relevant subspace. Isabel is not properly dressed as she is not wearing any headgear. In her black dress, she clearly stands out in the soft English garden. Also, the fact that she is not accompanied by Mrs. Touchett added to the notion that Isabel is a modern American girl. She compares the English scene she is taking in to the ones she has read about in the novels. The English garden magnifies the Americanness of the young girl because of her naïve imaginary vision of English tea in an English garden. Isabel is very much fixated on the house and its history. The interest in high culture is something that can also be related back to her American identity. Americans are often portrayed as collectors of art and history because their art and history are quite new and young at their time.

Isabel has an extremely lively imagination that attributes to her youthful appearance. It is stereotypical of a young girl to have a “certain nobleness of imagination which [renders] her a good many services and [plays] her a good many tricks” (53). Isabel’s thoughts busies her with “thinking of beauty, and bravery, and magnanimity” (53). Isabel arrives in Europe with great expectations of the people and the culture. She regards the world as “a place of brightness, of free expansion, of irresistible action” (53). She has a particularly naïve outlook on life. She wants her life to be in harmony with “the most pleasing impression she should produce,” and she believes that “she would be what she appeared, and she would appear what she was” (54). This infatuation with appearances is depicted and reflected in the European landscape. She comes to Europe with a great deal of sunny prospects, but only to find out that it is not always sunny in Europe. The minute she finds herself being deceived by Madame Merle and Gilbert Osmond, the appearances of Europe turn sour. It was not the same Europe that she had read about in all her books. She becomes a “prisoner” in a beautiful but joyless place in Rome: Palazzo Roccanera. A palace was something magical and romantic in her

books, but it appears to be something grotesque and dark in reality. This way of viewing the palace is of course related to her experiences with Osmond. Therefore, it is noted that her experiences and feelings influence the way she looks at her life and the landscape surrounding her. All of a sudden, the palace appears to be full spacious dark rooms with “dark, heavily-timbered ceiling” (526). Pansy’s room is full of “diffused brightness” (413). Even Isabel is dressed in a dark color; “black velvet” (414).

All the open and public spaces are confined spaces with the contour already made out. The garden of Gardencourt is described as being close to an extension of the living areas inside the house. The garden is compared to a living room – a room which is enclosed by walls. The Gardencourt garden is described as follows:

[...] the wide carpet of turf that covered the level hilltop seemed but the extension of a luxurious interior. The great still oaks and beeches flung down a shade as dense as that of velvet curtains; and the place was furnished, like a room, with cushioned seats, with rich-coloured rugs, with the books and paper that lay upon the grass. (3)

This very British scenery is enclosed in and related to the confined space resembling a living room. When Isabel Archer appears in the doorway facing this enclosed garden, she is under the impression that she will enter into a state of freedom while walking into the open space which a garden normally represents. Although, in this case the garden represents a confined space and hence giving the intention of being open when it is essentially closed. Donatella Izzo states that this freedom is illusory and thus “what appears to be an opening reasserts closure” (44). This scene also relates to Isabel’s sense of freedom and isolation that we have accounted in the previous paragraph. She wants to be free and open but instead finds herself always in spaces that are enclosed and to some extent isolated as well. Isabel can also be perceived as an independent isolationist, which is also a stereotypical image of America at that time. America had just become independent from England and sealed itself off from global affairs.

The first encounter between Isabel and her aunt Lydia Touchett was in the office of the house. Isabel was reading a book:

It was in the ‘office’ still that Isabel was sitting on that melancholy afternoon of early spring which I have just mentioned. At this time she might have had the whole house to choose from, and the room she had selected was the most depressed of its scenes. She had never opened the bolted door nor removed the green paper (renewed by other hands) from

its sidelights; she had never assured herself that the vulgar street that lay beyond. A crude, cold rain fell heavily; the spring-time was indeed an appeal- and it seemed a cynical, insincere appeal – to patience. Isabel, however, gave as little heed as possible to cosmic treacheries; she kept her eyes on her book and tried to fix her mind. (24)

The American scene in this passage is cold and wet. The gloomy atmosphere is linked to the grayness of a day in the fall. Isabel does not care for this weather and seals herself off by focusing on reading her book. The room symbolizes the business side of America, but young Isabel does not care for it. Nevertheless, the narrative space, meaning this particular spatial frame, magnifies the stereotypical image of the isolationist Isabel sitting alone in gloomy room. Also, the link to the office is the same as in *The Europeans*. Gertrude was also reading her book in the office of the house when the European Felix wanders into her life. Thus, the office space in *The Portrait of a Lady* is also related to the growing business side of America. Isabel does the same thing in Osmond's villa where she seals herself off from everything around her. She never opens the door that opens to the street and she never removes the paper from the windows. She is completely sealed off from the outside world in that way. For this reason, Isabel has not changed at all. Isolationism brings about the sense of America being closed off from Europe and the rest of the world. America only began to get involved around the time of the World Wars.

Furthermore, the landscape and narrative space in general describes Isabel's life journey from innocence towards experience: "Isabel steps from her grandmother's dark house in Albany right into the pastoral beauty of Gardencourt, and from there into a world steeped in duplicity, nuance, and evil" (Smith, 1990, 84). Thus, Isabel's experiences in Europe are reflected in her surroundings. In the beginning, everything seems beautiful and open and in the end, she finds herself feeling trapped.

## 2.4 Recapitulation

The spatial elements used in both *The Europeans* and *The Portrait of a Lady* are metaphors that add to the characters of the novella and novel. Narrative space is an addition to the characters who are in that particular narrative space, that is a spatial frame. The American girls, Gertrude and Isabel, often find themselves in confined spaces. This relates back to the notion of America being an isolated country that is extremely fond of its freedom. This idea of freedom is much more present and further developed in Isabel's storyline than in Gertrude's. The symbolizing of space seems to be add to the stereotyping of these American girls. This is

especially visible in *The Portrait of a Lady* because Isabel is mostly in Europe. The European backdrop highlights her American identity. Gertrude, on the other hand, finds herself in a purely American setting back in New England. The fact that she is in “New” England is also interesting because it could be interpreted that this place is more improved than “Old” England back in Europe. This relates to the idea that the American girls are young and new to Europe. The image of a business America is also made in both literary works. The office space that is sealed off from the rest of the house in a gloomy weather adds to the grayness of business that is in contrast with the young and colorful personalities of both girls. They stand out against this grim and serious background which is in contrast with their personalities. However, the feeling of isolation that is linked to this confined office space separated from the rest of the world also adds to the girl’s isolationist quality. This isolationist quality is also a symbol of America. Furthermore, the infatuation with appearances, that plays a large role in *The Portrait of a Lady*, adds to the false appearance of Europe according to Isabel Archer. This is something that will be further explored and developed in *The Ambassadors* as well.

## 2.5 *The Ambassadors*

This novel from James’s final period is mostly perceived as one of his masterpieces alongside *The Portrait of a Lady*. *The Ambassadors* is a dark comedy. In a way, it is relatable to *The Jolly Corner* in the sense that they both explore the idea of an un-lived life. Unlike *The Jolly Corner*, *The Ambassadors* explores the un-lived life of an American on a trip to Europe. The European spaces in the novel add to the emotional state of mind of its main character Lambert Strether. Unlike Isabel Archer, Strether does not intend to absorb the European culture and make it his own. Europe merely teaches him to look at life differently; without having prejudices about situations. This is reflected in the European spaces in which Strether roams about on his journey through Europe.

Firstly, it is vital to describe the narrative space of the novel. The different levels of narrative space are quite complex in this novel. The novel is set in the beginning of the twentieth century and Strether mainly roams about in Paris. He also briefly visits Chester in England before he arrives in Paris. The story space is quite interesting for this novel because there are shadows mentioned of his hometown Woollett, Massachusetts as well. This is interesting because he is never physically there in the novel. Thus, Woollett becomes part of the story space but not the actual setting of the story. The second feature that will be identified is the strategies Henry James might have used in structuring his literary spaces in his works. For this novel, James mostly uses the natural walkthrough. The tour strategy explores the



narrative space of this novel as Strether is walking from one spatial frame into another. The third feature is to analyze whether the narrative space serves as a background to the stereotyping of these American characters or whether the narrative space is also part of the mental projection of the American character.

When Strether arrives in Europe, he immediately experiences a sense of freedom. The independence he feels, while being in Paris, is in contrast with his difficult fiancée who is convinced that Europe only corrupts the mind of the Americans – in this particular case, her son Chad. It seems that Strether sees everything for the first time when he is in Paris. The town of Woollett symbolizes the secure but predictable life that Strether has always had. Paris, on the other hand, symbolizes the high cultured life that he did not bother to have back in America. The narrator notes that Strether can finally see life happening around him:

These first walks in Europe were in fact a kind of finely lurid intimation of what one might find at the end of that process. Had he come back after long years, in something already so like the evening of life, only to be exposed to it? (46)

It seems that Strether, who is noticeably stuck in his old ways, finally experiences the world outside of his hometown. The freedom of his walk in Paris is in contrast with his life in Woollett. The feeling of isolation and the feeling of being stuck in one place are symbols for Strether's life back in America. When he arrives in Paris, he realizes that he desperately wants to change that part of his life. He regrets the fact that he has not done this earlier on in his life.

The narrative spaces, or more specifically speaking Strether's surroundings, become less important than they would be in James's early works, such is the case in *The Portrait of a Lady*. James himself has argued that "another surrounding scene would have done it as well" but at the same time he undermines his own statement by adding one other detail to it: "could [the surrounding scene] have represented a place in which Strether's errand was likely to lie and his crisis to await him" (qtd. in Tredy, 44). When James speaks of Strether's errand, he is referring to Strether's mission to save Chad from the sensations and temptations of Paris, and to bring him back to America. The city of Paris serves a purpose for the novel. Paris is the symbol of modernity. Paris represents the freedom of spirit and culture. It is the northern star of the literary scene. It is not a coincidence that James has sent Strether to Paris instead of letting Strether run "his errand" in London, for example. Strether is a stiff and plain businessman and he needs to loosen up and enjoy his life again. Paris is the place to be for that kind of "errand". The image of the city of Paris plays a large role in understanding the

complexity of Europe. When Strether is on his walk through Paris, he paints a picture of the Parisian scenery:

In the garden of the Tuileries he had lingered, on two or three spots, to look; it was as if the wonderful Paris spring had stayed him as he roamed. The prompt Paris morning struck its cheerful notes- in a soft breeze and a sprinkled smell, in the light flit, over the garden-floor, of bareheaded girls with the buckled strap of oblong boxes, in the type of ancient thrifty persons basking betimes where terrace-walls were warm, in the blue-frocked, brass-labelled officialism of humble rakers and scrapers, in the deep references of a straight-pacing priest or the sharp ones of a white-gaitered red-legged soldier. He watched brisk little figures, figures whose movement was as the tick of the great Paris clock, take their smooth diagonal from point to point; the air had a taste as of something mixed with art, something that presented nature as a white-capped master-chef.  
(76-77)

This passage shows that Strether has an extremely romantic view of Paris. He is navigating through the busyness of Paris in this particular scene. James has created this scene by using the natural walkthrough strategy in which Strether notes everything around him while he roams the city. As an American stereotype, Strether stands out in the description of this spatial frame. Strether is described as a plain and simple businessman, who has no connection with art and the vibrant life of culture in Europe. This image of Europe is profoundly different from the image of Europe in *The Portrait of a Lady*. Paris as the Mecca of Isabel's father has an "old-world quality" (57). In *The Ambassadors*, James creates a particularly romantic but cosmopolitan image of Paris as a city of worldly people who are free but full of culture and creativity. Paris is the city of art to Strether. The paradox of such a vibrant city is that even though it is a symbol of old Europe, the experience of being there was new to Strether, who is from the new world, America.

Further on in the novel, Strether leaves the city of Paris to visit the French countryside. The French pastoral is in contrast with Strether's cosmopolitan image of the city of Paris. He enjoys the freedom of the countryside and it reminds him of a painting he once saw back in America. The next passage shows the natural walkthrough strategy of this particular pastoral spatial frame:

French ruralism, with its cool special green, into which he had hitherto looked only through the little oblong window of the picture-frame. It had

been as yet for the most part but a land of fancy for him – the background of fiction, the medium of art, the nursery of letter; practically as distant as Greece, but practically also well-nigh as consecrated. Romance could weave itself, for Strether's sense, out of elements mild enough; and even after what he had, as he felt, lately "been through," he could thrill a little at the chance of seeing something somewhere that would remind him of a certain small Lambinet that had charmed him, long years before. (410-411)

In this passage, Strether moves from an image that resembles a painting he has seen in America, to seeing the scene through a "little oblong window of the picture-frame," to seeing it in real life. The window is a thematically relevant subspace that separates Strether from the actual physical scene. This "natural walkthrough" of the scene shows the constant moving of the character of Strether. This is certainly a symbol of America. America is perceived as a country that is extremely keen on progress. Europe is viewed as stationary. Europe does not change in that stereotypical sense; it is stuck in the old ways. America is viewed as a moving country. A country that keeps on expanding westward. Strether is a symbol of that movement. And in this particular scene, he is literally moving towards a scenery he has once seen in a picture. This movement can be viewed as him wanting to see, taste and enjoy the view of what can merely be a picture back in America. And this scenery unfolds in the next passage:

The oblong gilt frame disposed its enclosing lines; the poplars and willows, the reeds and river- a river of which he didn't know and didn't want to know; the name- fell into a composition, full of felicity, within them; the sky was silver and turquoise and varnish; the village on the left was white and the church on the right was grey; it was all there, in short- it was what he wanted: it was Tremont Street, it was France, it was Lambinet. (411)

In America, there is only an image of Europe; an opinion. Now, Strether is moving towards a physical object of a part of Europe. This scenery symbolizes a dream of possibilities. It is Strether's fairytale scenery of Europe and he is appears right in the middle of it:

He walked and walked as if to show himself how little he had now to do; he had nothing to do but turn off to some hillside where he might stretch himself and hear the poplars rustle, and whence- in the course of an afternoon so spent, an afternoon richly suffused too with the sense of a book in his pocket- he should sufficiently command the scene to be able to

pick out just the right little rustic inn for an experiment in respect to dinner. (412)

Here, Strether could walk and let go of his business side and just enjoy the scenery. It became his Mecca; his place to find peace. This scene also suggests that Europe is a place to relax and enjoy. The insinuation can be made that America, as a contrast to Europe, is a place to work. This all relates back to the idea of Europe being America's playground and when the Americans are done playing or enjoying themselves, they would go back home to America again.

The landscape of Europe changes when Strether finds out about the true nature of Chad's and Madame de Vionnet's relationship. While he is travelling the French countryside, he discovers that he has been deceived. He views Madame de Vionnet as an ambassador of appearances (Higgins 172). Strether starts to doubt if everything he has seen and experienced in Europe was actually true or if it was a mere appearance of Europe, like he was deceived by Madame de Vionnet's appearance rather than her true face. Strether takes solace in the fact that he trusts Madame de Vionnet will stay true to her appearances. Strether believes he could "trust her to make deception right" (435). Therefore, he chooses not to do anything about the situation he has encountered. It does, however, make him decide that it is time to go home and live his life again. It may be a tad too late for him to relive his youth, but he will make his amends back in America anyway.

Furthermore, the scenery adds to Strether's notion of Paris, France and Europe. Besides the fact that he discovers that appearances are not always what they appear to be – hence, the word "appearances" – he still has learnt a great deal about himself in Europe. Strether's experience with the scenery of Paris and the countryside becomes questionable, though. Is the scenery true to what he had seen or is it a mere reflection of his imagination projected on the scenery of France? Thus, this concludes that there is a psychological layer added to the narrative space of the novel – a layer concerned with morality.

## 2.6 *The Jolly Corner*

The subject of alternative lives is a central theme in this novella. Narrative space has a powerful effect on the story's main character, Spencer Brydon. Space in *The Jolly Corner* flows from physical spaces into mental landscapes. There are different levels of narrative space present in this novella as well. The boundaries of different spatial frames are quite fuzzy as they are part of Brydon's mental process. Space becomes a combination of physical rooms and objects and a psychological state of mind. The story is set in New York City

probably around the beginning of the twentieth century. The story space of *The Jolly Corner* is a combination of New York and all the spatial frames of the jolly corner. The same goes for the narrative world. James has structured the literary spaces in this story with a tour strategy. Brydon walks through different rooms and spaces of his house. This is related to the natural walkthrough strategy as is identified by scholar Marie-Laure Ryan. In general, narrative space serves as a part of the character's state of mind in this novel. Brydon's state of mind influences the way he sees the world around him, especially his childhood home.

The use and function of space in this novella of James is different from the other three works that were analyzed. Space in this novella functions not only as a physical space but it also has a "mental" layer to it. Since the story resembles a ghost-like story, space becomes influenced by the character's state of mind. Deborah Esch states that the house on the jolly corner becomes "the emblem of a mind". What she means by this is that the mind is struggling with the idea of a higher consciousness; of becoming more aware. Moreover, this is also what the house symbolizes in this novella. The idea of a higher consciousness that could show what could have been if life had taken on a different direction. This is the darkness that surrounds Brydon while he is fantasizing about his un-lived American life. The story of Spencer Brydon opens "in the splendid autumn – the autumn at least was a pure boon in the terrible place" (James 2). This relates to Brydon's alter ego as an American who would have made a million a year. This version of Brydon is dark. If he would have stayed in America instead of moving to Europe, he would become this "grim, worn, ruined" person (Wegelin 156). These words – dark, worn and grim – can all relate to the autumn weather that surrounds Brydon when he comes back to New York after all those years spent abroad. James shows that Brydon's alter ego is a monstrous person and that Brydon would probably have become that person if Europe had not saved him.

The family home plays an important role in the formation of identity. Brydon's childhood home is part of his identity. Madame Merle stated in a conversation with Isabel Archer in *The Portrait of a Lady*, that a person's identity is "everything that belongs to [that person]," and she calls this "the whole envelope of circumstances" (225). This is still an eminently European way of looking at identity. America is seen as a bit more materialistic and would therefore also perceive property as a part of an identity. Thus, all possessions are also part of a character's identity. Thus, the house on the jolly corner is a part of Brydon's identity. Hence, coming back to this place is coming to terms with what he has given up when he left for Europe. Brydon obsesses about "what he personally might have been, how he might have led his life and 'turned out,' if he had not so, at the outset, given it up" (206). His

alter ego is born, takes over his life and pushes his Europeanized-American self into the shadows for the time being. And for this reason, his childhood home becomes a representation of his mind. Brydon's childhood home becomes an empty spacious house with open rooms and lacking any color (James 226). It describes the same feeling as the immense large skyscrapers that will be built next to his house. The gloomy narrative space in *The Jolly Corner* is a symbol of the coldhearted American who puts capitalism before culture. Spencer's house was once full of warmth and happy childhood memories. And now, the many "great grey room[s]" are filled with the cold and with emptiness. (James 203).

The gothic setting of the novel is an addition to the Brydon's mindset. It is a reflection of Brydon's state of mind. The property of his childhood home is described as a lonely house in which everything is gloomy and old such as "old silver-plated knobs of the several mahogany doors". Brydon describes his house as follows:

The house, withal, seemed immense, the scale of space again inordinate; the open rooms, to no one of which his eyes deflected, gloomed in their shuttered state like mouths of caverns; only the high skylight that formed the crown of the deep well created for him a medium in which he could advance, but which might have been, for queerness of colour, some watery underworld. (226).

The description of the house sounds sad and feels gloomy and adds to the loneliness of Brydon himself. Brydon goes on by describing the house with "the influence of the lower windows, of half-drawn blinds, of the occasional gleam of street-lamps, of the glazed spaces of the vestibule" (226). The darkness of the house was a reflection of the darkness in Brydon himself. His inner American child was affected by the state in which his childhood home was in. The sadness was reflected in the dark and gloomy rooms of the house.

Thus, narrative space has a different purpose in this novella. It does not so much highlight or contrast the American stereotype, Brydon's alter ego, as it offers Brydon's alter ego a space to roam about. The mental space which is part of the narrative world becomes a background in which Brydon's alter ego identifies with the surroundings of Brydon's childhood home. *The Jolly Corner* criticizes America for being an opportunistic, capitalist and industrial country. Brydon's alter ego embodies and symbolizes a model citizen of such a country. Brydon's inner selves are at war with each other over what his true identity should be. This is related to the cultural value of buildings in New York. The capitalist version of Brydon wants to tear these buildings down and wants to build money-making skyscrapers. The European version of Brydon is all about preserving culture and history. This shows that

the image of America in *The Jolly Corner* is an image of industrialism, cosmopolitanism and capitalism. Brydon's alter ego is a mere casualty of this capitalist way of thinking.

## 2.7 Conclusion

This second analysis has looked at American characters in an American setting in contrast with American characters in a European setting. I have done this so I can see whether space is used as a magnifier or an addition to the American stereotyping in these selected four works by Henry James. Narrative space, in general, is used as a mechanism to contrast or magnify certain elements or characteristics assigned to the American characters. The shift between the old Henry James and the new Henry James when it comes to American characters viewed as stereotypes in relation to their surroundings is noticeably present in the analysis. The hypothesis states that space does indeed have an influence on the stereotypical tendencies and qualities assigned to these American characters. The influence literary space has on the stereotypical qualities of the American characters in James's early works, *The Europeans* and *The Portrait of a Lady*, shows a clear distinction between Americans and Europeans. This, however, is not necessarily the case in James's late works, *The Ambassadors* and *The Jolly Corner*. These works have shown that the stereotypical qualities assigned to the American characters becomes much more harder to decipher. The spatial frames of this narrative space in which these American characters roam about are as complex as the American characters themselves.

In James's early works, space is seen as a contrast and/or magnifier of the much more clearer stereotypical tendencies and qualities of the analyzed American characters. The American characters Gertrude, from *The Europeans*, and Isabel, from *The Portrait of a Lady*, show that their surroundings add to their "Americanness". This is especially present in *The Portrait of a Lady*, because this story plays out mostly in Europe. Thus, the contrast between the American girl Isabel and her European surroundings is stronger than the contrast between Felix, the European cousin, and Gertrude, the young American, in *The Europeans*. This is because the story of *The Europeans* plays out in America instead of Europe. However, the American scene of *The Europeans* magnifies the Americanness of Gertrude. Thus, these two literary works selected from James's early period, therefore, paint a picture of a European or American scene in which the surroundings add to the Americanness of the characters.

In James's late works, space is seen as a complex setting in which the psychological state of mind is present in the surroundings of these American characters. These stereotypical American characters are in their own way concerned with or related to corporate capitalism.

This way of thinking in combination with their individual outlook on life influences the way they perceive their surroundings. Therefore, the spaces that are explored through these characters magnifies their American state of mind. These stories from James's late period are more concerned with "a story of individual consciousness" than painting a portrait of a character and his/her surroundings (Wegelin 88).

The spatial elements in James's later works are differently wired than in his early works. The America of the early twentieth century has a different view on Europe than the America of the mid- and late nineteenth century. In *The Europeans* and *The Portrait of a Lady*, America is an isolated space but is interested in Europe because of their rich culture and history. Something America does not really have. In *The Ambassadors* and *The Jolly Corner*, America is seen as a country full of discipline and hard work and focused on money and success. Europe, on the other hand, is much more laid back and about enjoying life.

Thus, to answer the question how space becomes a part of the stereotyping of American character in these selected four works of Henry James is that the works from his early period are more concerned with creating a scene in which the characters are roaming about. This mostly happens to magnify or contrast their American characteristics. This becomes a tad more complicated in the two selected works from his final period where space becomes more psychologically wired. In *The Jolly Corner*, for example, space becomes a mere reflection of a character's state of mind. Henry James does this in a profound way by using spaces to mirror a character's state of mind. In *The Ambassadors*, space still functions as a magnifier or contrast to the Americanness of the analyzed characters. Strether, the American protagonist of *The Ambassadors*, becomes extremely fond of Paris and its rich culture but seems to be unable to escape his American physiognomy.



## General Conclusion

For the most part we do not first see, and then define, we define and then see.

(Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinions*)

This research has focused on the stereotyping of American characters in four stories by Henry James. I have chosen to research this in two of his works from his early oeuvre, *The Europeans* and *The Portrait of a Lady*, and two texts from his late works, *The Ambassadors* and *The Jolly Corner*. The two American characters analyzed in his early works are two American girls. They represent the innocence and naivety of America. The two American characters analyzed in his late works are two American men. They represented a more mature version of America. This thesis has analyzed how the stereotyping of American characters develops from Henry James's early works to his late works. This has been done via two different analyses. The first analysis has focused on how the stereotyping of American characters in terms of character descriptions develops in Henry James's oeuvre. And the second analysis has focused on how the symbolizing of space as part of the stereotyping of American characters develops in Henry James's oeuvre. In general, the shift in the stereotyping of these four American characters shows that the formation of complex characters with stereotypical tendencies and qualities belongs to James's late period. The stories of Henry James, the transatlantic novelist, are focused a great deal on the cosmopolitan American expatriates. These cosmopolitan American expatriates come in all sorts and sizes.

Joep Leerssen's and Manfred Beller's theory of imagology has proven to be very useful in identifying the stereotypical tendencies and qualities that were assigned to the main American characters in James's works. Leerssen and Beller's study on national stereotypes is focused on the dynamics between the images that characterize the other, which they called *hetero-images*, and images that characterize the self, which is called *self-images*. There is no American character with stereotypical qualities if there is not, for example, a European character or a Europeanized-American who is there to contrast this American character. The narrative space and environment of a national stereotype also adds to the stereotypical tendencies and qualities of a character. The European setting is mostly used to contrast these American characters. This has been shown in *The Portrait of a Lady* and *The Ambassadors*. This has not been the case for the two novellas *The Europeans* and *The Jolly Corner*. The stories of these two novellas are set in America and that makes the contrast between America and Europe only visible on a smaller scale. Thus, the stereotyping of these American happens

on a much smaller scale, as well.

The narrative space in these four selected works is used either as a backdrop for a character or as a reflection of a character's state of mind. The spatial frame of a particular scene involving a sad character will be either gloomy, wet, grey or dark. These narrative spaces can be viewed either in a map strategy or a tour strategy. The map strategy is concerned with a bird's eye view of the scenery, and the tour strategy is more of a character's walkthrough the scenery. It seems that James's use of these strategies are intertwined. He has used the map strategy at the beginning of several chapter to survey the area. Nevertheless, he has mostly made use of the tour strategy in which the narrator walks the reader through different spatial frames and identifies the surroundings.

Both theories, imagology and narrative space, have been useful in analyzing these four selected works by James. They have helped to understand the different aspects of stereotyping and how those aspects plays out in, for example, narrative space. It would however been a tad more easier if these theories would have an overlap in terms of space in relation to stereotypes. Imagology notices the presence and role of narrative space in the creation of stereotypes, but the Joep Leerssen and Manfred Beller's theory of imagology does not really focus on that part of the analysis. The theory of narrative space from Marie-Laure Ryan's chapter has helped to fill in the gap that concerns narrative space. However, it was still hard to combine two theories that are not designed to be combined. The results of both analyses are interesting, though. Moreover, the shift that I was looking for has definitely been identified through the use of these two theories combined.

In the first analysis, I have looked at how these four selected American characters in the works of James are represented as stereotypes. I have narrowed it down to the descriptions of characters in terms of how they look, act and come across according to Europeanized American characters, European characters and the omniscient narrator. The stereotypical qualities or characteristics that have been assigned to the American characters in James's early works are innocence, naivety, self-determination, curiosity, audacity, individuality and restlessness. They represent an America that still needs to mature and gain life experience. These girls are extremely fond of their freedom and solitude: Isabel from *The Portrait of a Lady* is a great deal more focused on her freedom than Gertrude from *The Europeans* is, though. This is different for James's late works. The stereotypical qualities or characteristics that have been assigned to the American characters in James's late works have to do with the fact that these American characters have become more complex in their stereotypical tendencies. Thus, the stereotyping of these American characters were harder to discern. These

two American characters from James's late period are solitude, freedom, maturity, and business. Henry James is also known for making his characters more complex in his later period. He had become more interested in the psychology of the characters he would create. Thus, the return to the international theme in his later period served James "primarily as a means to the larger end of analyzing the nature of morality" (Wegelin 8). For that reason, there is another purpose added to the international theme than plainly highlighting and mapping out the international differences between Europe and America. The psychology behind these American characters from his late period play also a large role in the stereotyping process.

In the second analysis, I have looked at the role of space in representing these American characters as stereotypes. A European space could make the American characters even more American. This is viewed as a contrast. An American scene could magnify the American stereotypical tendencies and quantities of an American character. This is viewed as an intensification of the American national stereotype. The shift that is represented, when comparing two of his early works to two of his late works, is due to the complexity of the American characters themselves. There is also a difference in the stereotyping of these American characters when they are placed in an American setting or in a European one. In general, the American characters stood out more in a European setting. However, James's novella *The Jolly Corner* has proven to be an exception. The main character, a Europeanized-American, has his Americanness again whilst being back in America. Thus, narrative space has mostly highlighted the stereotypical qualities of these four American characters.

Thus, all four works revolve around the debate on what it could possibly mean to be an American. The possible answers that are given to this question are eminently different within his early works when they are compared to his late works. There is a clear shift in the representation of James's American characters. In the early works I have researched, most of the American characters are the victims of European's culture of corruption. Their innocence is used against them or it blinds them from the real world. In the eyes of Gertrude's father in *The Europeans*, the European intruder, Felix, is corrupting his American daughter's mind. Isabel's innocence and youth is corrupted by the older Gilbert Osmond, who represents the deceiving part of Europe. These two American girls also represent the image of an isolationist America that is extremely fond of its freedom. James's stories from the early 1900s, which are concerned to be his late works, return to this international theme. By this time, James has revisited America. And he has begun to think about how his life might have looked like if he, for example, would have stayed in America rather than moving away to Europe. James has

explored this idea further in *The Jolly Corner*. America has changed from a country in need of culture into a business driven world that is keen on its freedom and the power that goes with it. This means that there is a shift in the representation of American characters as stereotypes. The American characters in his late works are more complex and less stereotypical than the American characters in his earlier works. The business side of America has turned its back on Europe. This side of America does not need Europe to succeed. America has become a grey place full of “grey rooms” and skyscrapers, and businessmen with grey suits. Associations with darkness are made in, for example, *The Jolly Corner*. This has become especially clear when I analyzed these four American characters to a European and American backdrop.

There is also shift in attention from space and scenery to persons in James’s works. James’s early works are very much focused on the surroundings of the characters. Especially, the American characters in *The Europeans* and *The Portrait of a Lady* seem to be in need of their surrounding in order to paint a picture of a certain situation. The intensification of stereotypical behavior of an American character is also related and needed from his or her surroundings. This is not necessarily the case for the American characters in James’s late works. The American characters in *The Ambassadors* and *The Jolly Corner* are much more focused on the treatment of persons. The stories selected from James’s late period suggest a sense of growth within the character’s state of mind. The narrative space these characters are in adds to this notion of ambiguity and complexity in the development of a character. This is not so much related to the American stereotypical characterization of the characters. Space becomes a part of the character instead of contrasting the stereotypical character traits. It also seems that James uses the tour strategy more often in describing narrative spaces in his works. This has particularly changed in the shift from space and scenery to persons. There are instances where the map strategy is used to survey the landscape in which a character is presented, but almost always after that, it shifts to a tour strategy that describes a character’s natural walkthrough of a particular spatial frame within the narrative space.

The characters from his late works have also aged. Both men are past their middle age and have matured in life already. They are not the same as the young innocent girls that represent an naïve but isolated version of America in late nineteenth century. The America, that these men from the start of the twentieth century represent, has matured since then. America is coming out of isolation and has grown past Europe. Europe is starting to become something different to these Americans. What they came to find in Europe is something that they can only find at home, in America. Because it does not matter how long you have lived abroad – there is no escaping your American physiognomy. Hence, the stereotyping of

American characters has changed because America itself has changed as a country. The other difference might be that James himself, getting to the end of his life, has changed as well. Maybe even he cannot escape his American physiognomy. Perhaps, he also will remain an American at heart.

There are also some similarities that I came across while analyzing these four different American characters. Even though a lot has changed with these characters, this shows that certain aspects are not changed at all. All four American characters represent an isolationist quality of America and America's need for freedom and liberty. This is something that does not particularly change in the development of stereotyping American character in James's oeuvre. The feeling of solitude is another quality that all four characters possess. They are not all necessarily lonely, but they do prefer being on their own from time to time. The other element that comes back in all four literary works is discipline. All four characters are used to having rules to live by and to stick to their own ideals. The business aspect does also come back in all four literary works. However, this element is in development. The two literary works from James's early period describe the relation between business and the young girls as an element that is simply there in their society, but they are not the ones who are or will be conducting business. The two men from James's late works, Strether and Brydon, do have an eye for business and are focused or obsessed with their business side one way or the other. The last notion that all four literary works have in common is what James calls the "superstitious valuation" of Europe (Wegelin 19). The stereotypical view of the international theme is that Europe represents the old world and America represents the new world, which would mean that America symbolizes and lives in the present and Europe is living in the past. This is of course not true as Europe has a present living of her own. However, this is not present in the stereotypical view of these two participants in the international theme. James does try to paint a picture of modern Europe, but the stereotypical tendencies that were used to describe or contrast Europe with America play a larger role in, at least, these four works that are analyzed in this thesis.

It has been made clear that there is a shift present in the works by Henry James. This shift is concerned with how the stereotyping of American characters has changed when two of his early works are compared to two of his later works. It would therefore be certainly interesting to look at all the other American characters in these four works to test if these results remain the same or if they might change the equation. It would be even more fascinating to look at the American characters in combination with the European characters as well. This would work even better if there are more works by James included in that particular

research. Another issue that can be raised is that all these characters of James are very complex and compelling, and therefore, one could also argue that these characters are more than just stereotypes. Because even though, some definitely fit the description of a stereotype, there is still more to a character than just the stereotypical element. This might also be a valuable angle to look at in James's characters. For further research, it would be interesting to look at all the American characters in James's novels and stories. It would be useful to look at these different layers to American characters in relation to Europeanized-Americans as well. This definitely concludes the fact that even though many research has been done on James and his works already, there are still a lot of possible but interesting angles that can still be studied in Henry James Studies today.

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## Samenvatting

Deze master scriptie gaat over de stereotypering van Amerikaanse personages in de werken van de Amerikaanse schrijver Henry James. Henry James is geboren in de Verenigde Staten in 1843 en is overleden in Engeland in 1916. Hij heeft het grootste deel van zijn volwassen leven doorgebracht in Europa en wordt daarom ook vaak gezien als een Brits auteur. Henry James is erg bekend geworden met zijn transnationale werken die vaak gaan over de verhoudingen tussen Europeanen en Amerikanen. Dit thema wordt ook wel het internationale thema genoemd. De werken die besproken worden in deze scriptie zijn: *The Europeans* (1878), *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881), *The Ambassadors* (1903) en *The Jolly Corner* (1908).

Deze scriptie houdt zich bezig met de stereotypering van de Amerikaanse personages en hun ontwikkeling. Dit wordt gedaan door te kijken naar de omschrijving van het Amerikaanse personage door andere personages in het verhaal. En door de functie van de belangenruimte te onderzoeken. Er vindt namelijk een betekenisvolle verandering plaats in de stereotypering van de Amerikaanse personages, die volgt uit de analyse in de vergelijking van James werk uit zijn vroegere oeuvre met de werken uit zijn latere periode. Ook is er een ontwikkeling te signaleren in de verhouding tussen Europeanen en Amerikanen.

Voor de eerste analyse is gebruik gemaakt van de imagology theorie zoals die is beschreven door Joep Leerssen en Manfred Beller. Deze theorie houdt zich bezig met het typeren van literaire nationale stereotypes. In deze analyse wordt de vraag gesteld hoe de stereotypering van Amerikaanse personages zich heeft ontwikkeld in het oeuvre van Henry James, door te bestuderen hoe de Amerikaanse personages worden beschreven en hun karaktereigenschappen worden neergezet. Deze karaktereigenschappen staan vaak symbool voor het stereotype beeld van Amerika.

De tweede analyse houdt zich bezig met de betekenis van de ruimte en het Amerikaanse personage. Dit wordt onderzocht door naar de belangenruimte te kijken binnen de vier werken. De werken zijn geanalyseerd aan de hand van Marie-Laure Ryans hoofdstuk over narratieve ruimte. Deze analyse houdt zich bezig met de vraag hoe het gebruik van ruimte als onderdeel van het stereotyperingen van Amerikaanse personages, verandert en ontwikkelt in het oeuvre van James.

Het resultaat van deze twee analyses laat zien dat het stereotype beeld van Amerikaanse personages in de werken van James, verandert van een naïef, onschuldig en jong meisje naar een volwassen en geldgedreven zakenman. En dat de ruimte waarin deze stereotypes zich bevinden deze Amerikaansgerelateerde karaktereigenschappen reflecteert of juist contrasteert.