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亨利詹姆士的場所之愛：《奉史記》安家在巴黎

Henry James' *Topophilia*:

Homing in Paris in *The Ambassadors*

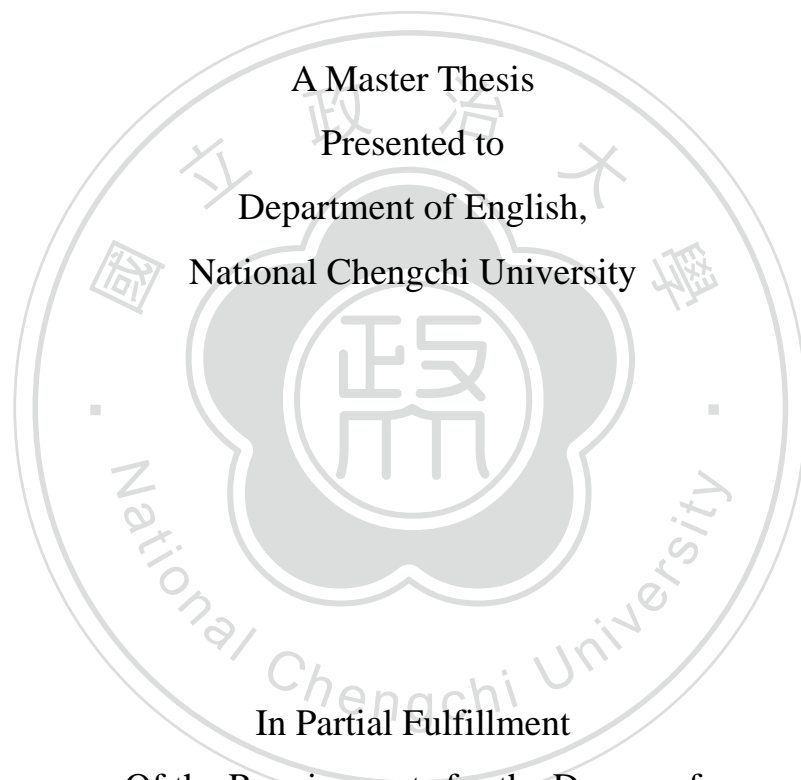
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By
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To my great mother Mrs. A-quan Chang

獻給我偉大的母親 張阿牽女士



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國立政治大學英國語文學系碩士班

碩士論文提要

論文名稱：亨利詹姆斯的場所之愛：《奉史記》安家在巴黎

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論文提要內容：

本論文藉由剖析詹姆斯小說《奉史記》之中年男主角路易斯史垂則，研討亨利詹姆斯的場所之愛（topophilia）。學界研究詹姆斯之作品，慣常將討論聚焦於詹姆斯本人對巴黎文化及社群之疏離感；歸諸於作者本身以浪漫觀光客角度觀看歐美文化差異等範疇。雖論點眾多，但卻忽略將詹姆斯本人早期遊歷歐洲諸國之情感空間經驗，與其虛構人物間連結做一探討，有狹隘與簡化之疑。

因此，本文旨在解析詹姆斯與史垂則之場所與其情感連結：剖析層面針對此小說背景：巴黎的室外空間，室內空間及中間過渡場所。同時揭露史垂則對人性複雜度的深度視角。第一章緒論，首先作文獻回顧，爬梳學術領域如何觀看詹姆斯的文學作品。介紹研究背景理論，包括巴舍拉的原初的家（primitive home），段義孚對場所之愛的概念定義，班雅明的漫遊者（flâneur），及特納的儀式理論文本溯源。第二章回顧檢驗詹姆斯的遊記及文獻，審視其如何將家的概念與其寰宇主義意識間作連結；並且經由探討史垂則在巴黎的空間經驗，展示詹姆斯本人的場所之愛。史垂則對巴黎之熟悉親切感來自於比較兩地：置身在美國故鄉與其在擁有萬花筒般影像之巴黎的多元文化差異而得獲。接續二章將解析在此小說中，史垂則如何在三大主要場域獲得其安家感知經驗：史垂則之室外空間漫步經驗，此小說中主要角色居住之室內空間、及包括花園、陽台、及巴黎近郊等中間過渡空間。尾章為結論，提供本研究之發現與貢獻。

本研究得出結論，大都會巴黎對史垂則來說不僅是一個原初的家，並且展示巴黎為其情感空間感知及意涵重拾年輕活力之隱喻空間。史垂則於巴黎之空間乃其生命過渡時期的闕限空間（liminal space），實際乃詹姆斯刻畫及反映史垂則

延遲成熟期之自我覺察。如同史垂則在巴黎朗必列畫家之印象畫風法國田園畫中感知之內在和諧。無論其未來遊歷置身何處，藉由運用其在巴黎場域中感知的空間意象與靈感啟發，經由自身心靈覺察與感知能力，史垂則將可安家在任何地方。

關鍵字：亨利詹姆斯、奉史記、場所之愛、史垂則、班雅明、漫遊者、巴舍拉、段義孚、儀式理論、巴黎



Henry James' *Topophilia*: Homing in Paris in *The Ambassadors*

Abstract

This thesis will scrutinize Henry James' *topophilia* and how his homely intimacy is associated with his protagonist Lewis Lambert Strether's in *The Ambassadors* (1903) by examining the process of their homing in Paris. Some researches focus on the investigation of Strether's sense of alienation from Parisian community as well as his romantic tourist vision. This thesis seeks, alternatively, to explore both the emotional bonds of James and Strether between people and place in association with the interplay between the interior, the exterior, and the intermediate places in Paris in this novel. Meanwhile, his penetrative insight into human complexities is excavated. The introductory chapter will explore the notion of "homing" by elucidating Gaston Bachelard's notion of "primitive home," Yi-fu Tuan's conceptualization of *topophilia*, Walter Benjamin's ideas of the flâneur and Victor Turner's perspective of the "rites of passage." Chapter Two will render an overall investigation of James' travelogue and records. By investigating James' concept of home in relation to cosmopolitanism, I will show how the notion of *topophilia* is manifested in James' *The Ambassadors* and some of his autobiographical writings. Strether's intimate sense of familiarity with Paris is achieved through discovering the cultural differences between America and France in the kaleidoscopic "Parisian fairyland." The following are two chapters analyzing Strether's perceptual experiences of homing in different spaces in Paris in *The Ambassadors*: the exterior where Strether strolled, the dwellings of the major characters in this novel, and the

intermediate spaces including garden and balcony scenes, and the suburbs of Paris. Chapter Three will probe Strether's growing sense of intimacy with Paris by investigating his walking experiences through the cityscape. Chapter Four will examine the interior spaces of these major characters, focusing especially on Madame Marie de Vionnet's luxurious dwelling with historical objects, and Miss Maria Gostrey's rooms filled with many personal collections. I will look at the intermediate spaces including the balcony of the Pococks' hotel overlooking the Rue de Rivoli, the Italian sculptor's exotic garden in Paris, and the rural site in the suburb of Paris where Strether makes excursions and obtains his "belated vision" after detecting the lies of Marie and Chad. The final chapter concludes that the metropolitan Paris is not only a metaphoric space for Strether's "primitive home" but also a "rite of passage" where Strether experiences a marginal/ "liminal" status. Strether's spatial experiences in the Parisian "fairylad" are actually his self-discovery of his postponed maturity. Like the harmony of what Strether finds in the French painter Lambinet's painting of the picturesque landscape, wherever he goes in the future, by an exertion of the mind, he may home "elsewhere" by recalling these spatial images in Paris.

Keywords: Henry James, *The Ambassadors*, Lambert Strether, *topophilia*, flâneur, Walter Benjamin, Gaston Bachelard, Yi-fu Tuan, *primitive home*, rites of passage, Paris,

Chapter One

Introduction

This thesis scrutinizes Henry James' *topophilia* and how his homely intimacy is associated with his protagonist Lewis Lambert Strether's in *The Ambassadors* (1903) by examining the process of their homing in Paris. Elucidating both of Yi-Fu Tuan's concept of *topophilia* and the spatial infatuations of Benjamin's flâneur and "collector," I contend that the interplay between the interior, the exterior, and the intermediate places in Paris in this novel attests not only James and Strether's initiations of their life ritual but also their cosmopolitan spirit of homing elsewhere.

1.1 The Plot of *The Ambassadors*

The Ambassadors (1903) written in James' final period is a typical exemplification of James' concept of being a cosmopolite. Heading for Paris for a mission consigned by his fiancée Mrs. Newsome, the mild Strether travels to Paris in order to persuade her son Chad Newsome to return to Woollett in Massachusetts. With the company of his older lover Madame Marie de Vionnet, Chad has been staying long in Paris. The elegant transformation of Chad, his friends with beautiful intelligences, and their dwellings all impress Strether. With the experiences of mental freedom, spatial intimacy with the Parisian spaces, and people like his American compatriot Miss Gostrey, Strether chooses to violate against Mrs. Newsome's will and decides not to ask Chad to go back to America. In the course of experiencing a fresh spatial experience in Paris, at the same time, Strether traces back to his painful memory of losing his wife and son since then. After disclosing their lie about — the

ugly truth about the “virtuous attachment” (James, *Ambassadors* 128) between Chad and Madame de Vionnet, Strether decides to return to Woollett in the end. Yet he is emotionally deep in bond with these spatial images of Paris.

1.2 Critical Background and Purpose of the Study

Most discussions center around both Strether’s romanticized tourist vision and his isolation from France rather than his assimilation into the French communities, his spatial intimacy, and changed perspectives in Paris. These observations could be seen from critics such as Edwin Sill Fussell, William Righter, Carolyn Porter, Peter Brooks and Roxana Oltean. In *The French Side of Henry James*, Fussell acknowledges James’ obsession with cosmopolitan experiences. However, he argues that James’ major limitation — James’ romanticized idea about Paris, which results from the “unfamiliar,” the difference, and the other — is romanticized through a tourist’s vision.

Peter Brooks, alternatively, explores the relationship between James’ experiences and his literary experimentation during his Parisian sojourn of 1875-76. Brooks asserts that James’ extreme “perspectivalism” usually involves a displacement of the observer from “a central or frontal positional to a marginal one” (51, 131). According to Brooks, the protagonists in James’ novels frequently have the bafflement in life. Brooks concludes that James’ relocation to Paris in 1875 is apparently a self-conscious apprenticeship to the cosmopolitan city of art and literature. William Righter, alternatively, focuses on James’ recollection of America — his bafflement toward his own American identity. Carolyn Porter further highlights the inability of James’ protagonists as viewers to act and choose between Europe and America. In a matter similar to Fussell, Righter and Porter, Oltean regards James’ Europe as “the space of delay” and suggests his “sweetness of vain delay” (28, 24). For Oltean,

Strether's "improper" interpretations of Paris, his senseless repetitions and his inherent belatedness in *The Ambassador* come from Strether's melancholy reminiscence regarding his first journey in Paris with his wife in his twenties.

Building upon these critics, my thesis argues alternatively that Strether's spatial experiences in Paris brings positive influences on his cultural identification and cosmopolitanism rather than merely his negative experiences. Strether ponders his life possibilities from his reading of revelations in Parisian scenes. His self-discovery and his profound affective tie with French landscapes are obviously exhibited. My thesis thereby accentuates that Strether's journey is a process of homing in a "familiar" city rather than in an "unfamiliar" city.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

The thesis explores James' *topophilia* by looking at the notions of the flâneur and the "collector" in *The Ambassadors* by using Walter Benjamin's major concepts of exteriors and interiors, the French phenomenologist Bachelard's idea of *primitive* home, and the human geographer Yi-fu Tuan's conceptualization of *topophilia*.

Topophilia, a term firstly coined by American poet Wystan Hugh Auden, comes from Ancient Greek τόπος (*tópos*, "place" and *-philia*, "love of"). Introduced by Bachelard, *Topophilia* denotes the love of place. In Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space*, he infuses his idea of *primitive* home, by which he elucidates his concept of *topophilia*.

According to Bachelard, home refers to going back to a state of intimacy, a nostalgic feeling of returning to the *primitive* home in the upmost intimate corner in one's mind. The way is through "daydreaming" (Bachelard 6) — a transcendental state of mind activity. He then suggests that *topophilia* has an essential quality of the "spaces of intimacy" originated from "the house we were born" which has "engraved" within our mind (12, 15). In *Topophilia*, Tuan explores the notions of affective tie between

people and material environment by emphasizing one's personal perception of daily experiences, which sets forth an essential co-relationship of intimacy between place and people. Tuan notes that *topophilia* is "the affective bond between people and place": This affective tie with one's "material environment" (93) denotes one's love of spaces. The transcendental activities of the human mind, both manifested in "daydreaming" (Bachelard 6) and Tuan's "perception" (12) of a nostalgic longing for cultural heritage, lead people to transcend the physical boundaries of the world.

Benjamin explores the intimate connection between space and perception further by revealing his spatial concepts of the flâneur and the "collector." Both the flâneur and the "collector" share the same experiences of spatial intimacy, embracing the sense of liberty and the appreciation of cultural diversities. The empathy of Benjamin's flâneur creates an affective tie with the space, a crucial factor in the Bachelardian notion of *primitive* home. Benjamin develops nostalgic intimacy toward the remnants of cultural heritages in the Parisian Arcade — the modern semi-opened passages made of iron and glasses constructed in early nineteenth-century Paris. Benjamin's first walking experience of the Parisian arcades ("passages") in 1928 demonstrates his cultural initiation and experiences in the space of Paris, a pheromone that he describes as "phantasmagoric." These phantasmagorical images in the Parisian arcades provide Benjamin the topophilic feelings of homing as in "an enchanted world" (qtd. in Hanssen 3). In a similar way, the Benjaminian collector also embraces a sense of familiarity in the house. Similar to the flâneur's sense of intimacy with the Parisian street, according to Benjamin, the notion of dwelling implies the collector's sense of intimacy with the interior. Benjamin highlights in *The Arcades Project*, the collectors' rooms are like a "magic circle" (205) where the collector feels a sense of comfort. Their collections demonstrate "an encyclopedia of all knowledge of the

epoch, the landscape” (Benjamin 205). In this way, the Benjaminian collector is featured with both traits of nostalgia and of infatuation with things in connection to the sense of the collector’s preference of an intimate space, traits that are latent in the discussions of Bachelard and Tuan about *topophilia*. Benjamin’s notions of “flâneur” and “the collector” thus play a crucial role in my reading of James’ *topophilia* with Paris. In a similar vein, in his “The Art of Fiction” (1884), James puts emphasis on one’s keen observations in life. James treats writing novels as writing a personal impression of life. This brings us closer to his core concept of recording vivid objects because these spatial images may bring “the intensity of the impression” (James 4).

In addition, in order to unveil how Strether’s spatial experiences contribute to the process of his self-revelations, I look into the British cultural anthropologist Victor Turner’s concept of the “rite of passage” (46). Succeeding from the French ethnographer Van Gennep’s observation of human rituals containing three successive but separate stages in human life: separation, liminality and aggregation, Turner singles out the liminal, or marginal state as a period of examinations (46). The liminal state of “a transitional being” is for the initiate’s “cross-cultural comparison” (46). In few words, Turner considers that the marginal/liminal stage serves as a period of self-discovery. Hence I conclude that Strether’s revisiting of Paris reveals both his seclusion from Woollett and his re-orientations in Paris.

1.4 Chapter Structure

In the Introduction Chapter, I will explore the concept of home in James, Bachelard Bachelard, Yi-fu Tuan and Walter Benjamin. I will focus on James’ spirit of *topophilia* and cosmopolitanism, Bachelard’s phenomenological concept of *primitive* home, Tuan’s human geographical elucidation of a sense of belonging from the human perception of place/space, and Benjamin’s spatial idea regarding the flâneur

and the collector. Strether's mental process of *homing* contained a nostalgic feeling, a strong delight in his sense of familiarity ignited by the past and the aesthetic objects in the spatiality of Paris. By looking into their concepts of home, we can understand Jamesian cosmopolitanism and its connection to the *primitive* home in Chapter Two.

Chapter Two will look at James' idea of home in relation to the spirit of being a cosmopolite. It will render an overall investigation of the Jamesian cosmopolitanism by offering a close reading of a number of James' travelogue and letters. Also, a background of this novel will be offered here. In James' "Occasional Paris" in *Portraits of Places* (75-95), he writes that being a "cosmopolite" is an accident, which depends not on the idea of being a "concentrated patriot." Instead, one has to "los[e] that sense of the absoluteness and the sanctity of the habits of your fellow-patriots which once made you so happy in the midst of them" (75). In other words, James' core thinking is about being a cosmopolite: having an open-minded perspective to accept different things in different places/countries. One has not to stick to the inherited habits and values of one's countrymen. James' characterization of Strether's openness and acceptance of new things in Paris rather than Sara Pocock's stubborn rejection typically exemplifies the Jamesian spirit of cosmopolite. Meanwhile, James' cosmopolitanism is close to Bachelard's idea of "world conscious" (4) — that the *primitive* home is our corner of the world, a real cosmos, if we may look intimately into the primitiveness dwelling in our mind and be willing to have *daydreaming* (an exertion of the mind). Besides, according to James, another feature of cosmopolitan spirit is making comparisons so that one will get inspiration from the merits of all peoples. In his "Occasional Paris," James emphasizes that one has to form "the habit of comparing," of looking for points of difference and of resemblance, for present and absent advantages . . ." (76). It is clear to see James' writing his personal experiences

into Strether's continual comparisons between Woollett and Paris. In a nutshell, Chapter Two will argue that James does not stand particularly by one's nationality, but rather, is imbued with a cosmopolite spirit. The national boundaries are extinguished so that a cosmopolite may *home* elsewhere by an exertion of the mind and an open attitude.

In Chapter Three, by looking into Benjamin's concept of *flâneur*, I will investigate exterior spaces where Strether walks in Paris in *The Ambassadors*. More than a physical movement, Chapter Three will assert that Strether's walking exhibits an inner process of homing in Paris through an investigation of his strolling routes in the central Paris. As mentioned before, the Benjaminian *flâneur* empathizes the things surrounding him, which demonstrates his spatial intimacy, a nostalgic longing for the cultural heritages. As such, this chapter will indicate that Strether's walking demonstrates the inner process of his own self-discovery.

Chapter Four will analyze the features of a Benjaminian collector in relation to interior spaces. I will then examine the intermediated spaces in this novel. First, I will scrutinize the interior of the major characters, Madame de Vionnet's refined and luxurious old mansion and Miss Maria Gostrey's little charming lodging filled with many personal collections. Though the dwelling styles reveal different characteristics of their owners, their dwellings both offer a homely atmosphere for Strether due to his preference to the aesthetic cultural heritages and things of novelties. In his *Preface* to this novel, James indicates that the depiction of the space is to create an impression of the characters. Hence, in short, there is a subtle correspondence between the space and the people James introduces. This section will seek to demonstrate Strether's love for the spatial images of the Parisian interior by using the Benjaminian concept of the "collector." Second, this chapter then looks at the intermediate spaces involving the

balcony of the Pocock's hotel overlooking the Rue de Rivoli, the great Italian sculptor Gloriani's old exotic garden in Paris, and some rural sites in the suburbs of Paris. I show how James' depiction of landscapes reflects Strether's inner process of *homing* and his initiations to truth in life. In the hotel balcony, standing in the semi-opened intermediate place between the interior the exterior space, Strether does his observation upon his arrival in the first night. Later on, remaining in an intermediate place in the suburbs of Paris, the pastoral places connecting the city and the country, he discovers the lies of Chad and Madame de Vionnet. By maintaining a distance from his American compatriots in Woollett, Strether realizes his own "difference" after his revisiting in Paris. Strether's lover, the American widow Mrs. Newsome who is absent in Paris in the whole novel, serves as an everlasting menace in Strether's mind while he compares Woollett with Paris throughout the novel. Her character is an embodiment of American practical and commercial values and an imposition upon Strether's mind all the time in every corner of the Parisian spaces. Strether's distancing himself from Mrs. Newsome attests to an alienation from America. In short, these Parisian spatial things contribute to sharpening Strether's perception of the "unseen" revelations regarding social complexities and his own becoming.

Chapter Five concludes the process of Strether's "rite of passage" (Turner 46) by discussing his alienation from his own country Woollett and his growing sense of attachment to Paris further. The spaces of Paris, a Benjaminian fanciful "fairylnd" or Strether's metaphoric space of "Babylon" (James 63), offer Strether a chance to undergo his liminal stage of the "rite of passage" in his life. In other words, for Strether, travelling in Paris serves as a liminal process of self-examination in association with his returning to the Bachelardian *primitive* home. He separates from his original American hometown and starts his transitional phase of self-discovery in

Paris. His inner harmony found in Émile Lambinet's (1813-77) paintings of French rural scenes is unveiled at the rural sites near Paris in the end of this novel.

Meanwhile, it is shown from his reminiscence of his first visit in Paris during the honeymoon at twenty-five with his wife who died later. In fact, Paris offers him the cultural diversities containing various art forms and intelligent people. With his continual comparison between Paris and Woollett, Strether's final acknowledgement of a transformed self exhibits his becoming with the changed perspectives. His finding of his own difference at the end of this novel shows both his growth and an awareness of his intimate feeling for Paris. In fact, Strether revives his young spirit and acknowledges his postponed maturity. In spite of his perception of the vicious side in the Parisian web of sociality, Strether is still fond of the spaces of Paris.

By unveiling both James and Strether's topophilic feelings, this thesis concludes that homely intimacy associated with the diversified spatial images demonstrates the Jamesian seeking of prolonged youthful spirit. The transformed Strether may home himself elsewhere with a Jamesian spirit of being a cosmopolite through these sorts of cultural illuminations ignited in spaces of Paris in the future.



Chapter Two

Henry James' *Topophilia*

Consistent in James' writings of his later period has been a problematisation of the vacillation between his American and European identities, a problematisation marked by characters — usually the American expatriates — struggling with crisis of identity in different spaces. James' pivotal settings are mostly set in Europe, in which James explores the international theme by comparing the cross-cultural conflicts between sophisticated Europeans and innocent Americans. Not only do his early works *The American* (1877) and *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881) explore the distinct temperaments of the two cultures, but his later novels *The Wings of the Dove* (1902) and *The Ambassadors* (1903) explore the discrepancies, in which he artfully insinuates the interconnectedness between people and spaces.

Fussell's argument about James' tourist's perspective in *The French Side of Henry James* may be regarded as one of the typical scholarly perception of James' romanticizing of Europe. In other words, James' enjoyments of spaces come from not only a different “unfamiliar” (Fussell 8) feeling, but also his cultivation of a sense of alienation through his detachment from a familiar environment. However, more than merely an outsider towards “the unfamiliar” (Fussell 8), I accentuate James' *topophilia* and how he instills the idea into his hero Strether's spatial nearness with Paris.¹ Most importantly, James accommodates himself at home everywhere.

¹ In *The French Side of Henry James*, Edwin Sill Fussell, based upon the bilingual texture of the novels, looks into the textual evidence of the literary connection in the novels of Balzac and James'. Fussell acknowledges James' spirit of being a cosmopolite. However, he identifies James' appreciation of Paris as “foreignness” for the “Tourist Reader” (199).

This chapter therefore investigates not only the interconnectedness between James' early spatial experiences in Europe and their consequent influences upon his *topophilia*, but also how he presents his protagonist Strether's spatial nearness with Paris in *The Ambassadors*. I probe James' affective tie with the physical environment of Europe, especially his walking experience in Paris at age twelve in 1855.² This chapter suggests *topophilia* contains one's intoxicated feeling with various images. The emotional geographer Yi-fu Tuan associates one's birthplace and one's emotional attachment to cultural heritages, which bring one an intimate feeling of nearness. One's *topophilia* is always tightened by the notion of home because it is often ignited by surrounding images containing both old and new qualities. Based on Tuan's concept, this chapter suggests James' intoxication with spatial things is an exhibition of *topophilia*, which brings a spatial intimacy. James' early spatial experiences in Europe, and their possible influences upon his concept of cosmopolitanism will be then probed. More clues regarding the interconnectedness between James' *topophilia* and his spirit of cosmopolitanism may be further investigated. Special attention is paid to the reading of Benjamin's early spatial experiences in Berlin since it is helpful to understand his unique spatial observances of the connection between home and the world. By which, I detect its subtle interconnectedness with James' observance of the interrelationship between home and the world. In *The Ambassadors*, all plots take place in Paris. This chapter unveils how the Jamesian cosmopolite may home elsewhere in consistence with James' early spatial experiences in Paris. The details about the protagonist Strether's *topophilia* in this novel will be further scrutinized in

² Between 1843 and 1844, James was taken abroad by his parents to Paris and London. Between 1855 and 1858, the James family travelled moves in Europe. James attended schools in Geneva, London, Paris and Boulogne-sur-mer and received his private education. James returned to Paris in 1875 (at age of thirty two) — according to the *Chronology of Henry James* compiled by Leon Edel in *The Ambassadors*.

Chapter Three and Chapter Four. This chapter mainly deals with James' own *topophilia* for Europe, which is bound up with his spirit of cosmopolitanism in his work.

2.1 Emotional Geographers' Discussions of Home and *Topophilia*

This section highlights how one's early spatial experience is essential to one's *topophilia* and homely nearness. Spaces are where and how one experiences a topophilic intimacy because one's experiences are often shaped by many standstills in time and space. I focus on Tuan's perspective, who emphasizes the connection between *topophilia* and emotional geography. The concept of *topophilia*, the love of place, is highlighted by Gaston Bachelard. It is then popularized by the emotional geographer, Yi-fu Tuan.³ The affective ties with one's material environment emphasized by Tuan demonstrate how one's perception is connected with one's daily spatial experiences. Tuan's theories of emotional geography apparently involve a sense of familiarity toward the physical environment, which is an intimate impression of one's home as if one returns to one's birthplace. Tuan's exploration of these transitory images in physical spaces suggests the nostalgic feeling of one's spatial intimacy, by which he defines places as "the locus of memories" (93) in his *topophilia*.

In terms of other emotional geographer's discussions, there is an intrinsic connection between this sense of "familiarity" and homely intimacy. This familiar sense could be seen as one's nostalgia, which is originated from one's homesickness.

Fred Davis investigates how nostalgia has been historically connected with home

³ In his eponymous book-lengthy work *Topophilia*, Yi-fu Tuan emphasizes one's personal perception of daily experiences, which set forth an essential and correlational relationship between place and people. Tuan is the first one who brings topophilic emotions into discussions among the studies of emotional geographies.

sickness in his *Yearning for Yesterday: A Sociology of Nostalgia*. Davis states “Nostalgia is from the Greek *nostos*, to return home, and *algia*, a painful condition — thus, a painful yearning to return home” (1). Coined by the Swiss physician Johannes Hofer in the late seventeenth century, the term was meant to a “familiar” feeling, which refers to a “condition of extreme homesickness” (1) among Swiss mercenaries fighting abroad. Because nostalgia is originated from one’s homesickness, there is an intrinsic connection between this sense of “familiarity” and homely intimacy. In response to Davis, the emotional geographer Katy Bennett provides an example of a lodge banner in an ex-mining village on Wheatley Hill, explaining that it is symbolically important to draw the people together. On the one hand, the lodge banner serves as a symbol of continuity of identity, drawing people together. On the other hand, it conveys “a sense of its particular sentiments, beliefs and heritage (Bennett 195). Bennett suggests that “a homeland has its landmarks, . . . These visible signs serve to enhance a people’s sense of identity” (195). An emotional attachment may come simply from a homely familiarity with spatial things. One’s *topophilia* could be ignited by spatial things because of this familiar sense of homely nearness. It is always bounded with one’s early spatial experiences of one’s original home.

Tuan’s expression of spatial intimacy could be found in “a delight in the feel of air water, earth” (Tuan 93). Even though Tuan’s *topophilia* is particularly connected to one’s *primitive* home, this kind of topophilic attachment can be closely linked to a sense of homely intimacy elsewhere. In a nutshell, Tuan and these critics propose that personal spatial experiences in daily life are linked to one’s intimate feeling of familiarity and emotional attachment to one’s homeland. This nostalgic inclination is often associated with the locus of memories embedded in the physical environment.

2.2 James' *Topophilia* in Nineteenth-Century Paris

This section traces three aspects covering the discovery of James' *topophilia* through his daily spatial observance, his imaginative capabilities in reading spaces, and his spatial experiences that ignites James' *topophilia* in Paris in the nineteenth century. The interconnectedness between James' *topophilia* and his spirit of cosmopolitanism may be found in almost all of James' travelogues, and his literary theories. James' *topophilia*, affected by European spectacles, mainly comes from his spirit of being a cosmopolite who enjoys spatial experiences.

2.2.1 James' Spatial Observances

James' topophilic emotion based on his true-to-life experience in the material environment shares common characteristics with Tuan's *topophilia*. In his "The Art of Fiction," James defines a novel as a "personal impression of life" (4), stressing the significance of one's physical environment. One's observance/experiences in different spaces bring not only the most charming pleasures but also the freedom of limitless imagination and revelations. James encourages a novice to write one's experiences in life. While he emphasizes the sharp observance of a novelist from the "air-borne particle" (James 5) in life, it also reveals James' reliance on one's spatial experience. A novelist should be equipped with one's perception imbued with "the power to guess the unseen from the seen" in order to trace "the implication of things" (James 5). In other words, James stresses a novelist's keen perceptions of numerous "implications of things" (5) in daily life. His idea marks the influences of one's material environment filled with many spatial revelations based upon one's mental impression of things.

Renowned for his cosmopolitanism, James' spatial intimacy provoked by spatial images are frequently revealed in his travelogues. In *Portraits of Places*, James

narrates his fondness of the Gothic Cathedral in Reims in France. James enjoys and indulges himself in the emptiness of the church. He writes: “I sat down on a stool near the threshold; I leaned back against the side of one of the stalls; the church was empty, and I lost myself in the large perfection of the place” (103). The surrounding images containing the stalls and the walls all bring him a topophilic feeling for this gothic spatiality. There is an intrinsic connection between the immensity of James’ mind and his experiences of space. The penetrative seeing sharpens both James and his fictional character’s insights and broadens their creative imaginations in a cosmopolitan world of various experiences.

2.2.2 James’ Reading of Spaces

In terms of James’ idea, one space could speak for itself if one uses one’s imaginative capabilities to invest one’s own affections in reading the spaces. For example, in his travelogue “Venice” in *Portrait of Places*, James assimilates the spaces to the “personif[ied]” places (8), with which one associates one’s own affections with his surrounding spaces. James expresses not only his fondness of things but also his consciousness of his own affection for Venice, especially the mutual correspondence between space and one’s mind. He states that space seems to “personify itself, to become human and sentient, and conscious of your affection. You desire to embrace it, to caress it, to possess it. . .” (8). James’ emotions are mingled with the spaces in Venice for example. Hence James’ readings of numerous spaces are an exhibition of his imaginative capabilities.

Out of his interests in Roman relicts and aesthetics, James’ depictions of “the perpetual interest of the place” of Venice expose his affective tie with space most explicitly:

All the splendour of light and colour, all the Venetian air and the Venetian history, are on the walls and ceilings of the palaces; and all the genius of the masters, all the images and visions they have left upon canvas, seem to tremble in the sunbeams and dance upon the waves. That is the perpetual interest of the place—that you live in a certain sort of knowledge as in a rosy cloud. . . you go into them because they offer you an exquisite reproduction of the things that surround you. (24)

The Venetian air and the Venetian history seem to be condensed in every article of the physical corners. James' depiction of living "in a certain sort of knowledge as in a rosy cloud" (24) among all the splendor of light and colour also exhibits his interests in both history and beauty of the architecture, which marks out James' intellectual pursuit for the cultural heritage in Venice. James shows *topophilia* from his keen perception of Venice. His fondness of each "air-borne particles" (5) in his affective mind is indeed bound with his Venetian spatial experiences. His spatial intimacy with these sensual and visual things surrounding him apparently exposes his *topophilia*. The emotional engagement with ones' homelands could be seen as an embodiment of James' topophilic feelings provoked by spatial images.

2.2.3 James' "Dream-Adventure" in Paris

Paris provides young James a dream landscape to adventure into the diversified spectacles from his walking in Paris, which leads him to access a distant world through the interface of spatial things. Nineteenth-century Paris is a marvelous place imbued with the diversity not only of luxurious, delightful and radiant surfaces but also sensuous amusement. James' *topophilia* for Paris is preoccupied with the refreshment of novelties as well as his longing for cultural heritage.

To begin with, I suggest James' spatial experience of empathy with things in

physical environment is close to “felt geography” highlighted by emotional geographers. According to Joyce Davidson and Christine Milligan’s concept of “felt geography” (523), the body is as “the site of emotion” because one’s body is the most immediate and intimately “felt geography,” which takes place within one’s body and is subject mainly to one’s living experiences affected by one’s environments.⁴ I consider this “felt geography” experience to be the feelings taking place when James makes spatial movement, which results from what he feels in mind and what he “experiences” in Parisian spaces. For example, it could be seen from James’ reminiscence “A Small Boy and Others” in *Henry James: Autobiography* in which he describes his walking on the Parisian streets as a “felt adventure, of experience” of “a told story” of the glory of the Second Empire (196, 195). James perceives his spiritual renewal not only from his wonderful spatial experiences in the Galerie d’Apollon in the Louvre (which is famous for its high vaulted ceilings with painted decorations), but also from his cheerful walks across over the bridges with his brother William James.⁵

Aside from the mentioned spectacle of grandeurs, diversity is the pivotal element for James’ topophilic feelings. The phantasmagorias of Parisian spaces are engraved upon young James’ mind by both brilliances of French cultural heritage and cultural varieties. James is deeply affected by the diversified spatial things combining not only the “new and queer” things (196) but also the old things. All these spatial things bring James a glorious world from the distance.

They [those magnificent parts of the great gallery] only arched over us in

⁴ “After all, our first and foremost, most immediate and intimately felt geography is the body, the site of emotional experience and expression par excellence. Emotions, to be sure, take place within and around this closest of spatial scales. . .” (Davidson and Milligan 523).

⁵ He had a “long and beguiled walks” with his brother William James in “that autumn renewed” across the boulevard “Champs-Élysées to the river, and so over the nearest bridge and the quays of the left bank to the Rue de Seine” (“A Small Boy and Others” 190).

the wonder of their endless golden riot and relief, figured and flourished in perpetual revolution, breaking into great high-hung circles and symmetries of squandered picture, opening into deep outward embrasures that threw off the rest of monumental Paris somehow as a told story, a sort of wrought effect or bold ambiguity for a vista, and yet held it there, at every point, as a vast bright gage, even at moments a felt adventure, of experience. This comes to saying that in those beginnings I felt myself most happily cross that bridge over to Style constituted by the wondrous Galerie d'Apollon, drawn out for me as a long but assured initiation and seeming to form with its supreme coved ceiling and inordinately shining parquet a prodigious tube or tunnel through which I inhaled little by little, that is again and again, a general sense of *glory*. The glory meant ever so many things at once, not only beauty and art and supreme design, but history and fame and power, the world in fine raised to the richest and noblest expression. The world there was at the same time, by an odd extension or intensification, the local present fact, to my small imagination, of the Second Empire. . . . (James 195-96)

Young James' walking through a historical tunnel shows his joyful spatial experiences of both the richest and noblest expressions. Here what stunned James are not only its supreme design of beauty, structure and glory, but its "odd extension or intensification, the local present fact, of the Second Empire."⁶ These images all bring him a mixture of new expressions associated with a distant world of a great empire. James' spatial experience of twenty bridges and quays of the Seine is extraordinary,

⁶ Paris was refurnished based on an attempt of providing grand perspectives by Baron Georges-Eugène Haussmann (1809-91) between 1852 and 1870 in the reign of Emperor Napoléon III.

which is shown: the “dream-adventure founded in the deepest, quickest, clearest act of cogitation and comparison” (196). Many years later, he evokes his spatial intimacy for what he calls “the climax” of this walk. His “extraordinary experience” of a “dream-adventure,” which is “an act” of “life-saving energy” exhibit his revived spirits from spatial revelations in Paris (196). Likewise, his touring of the Louvre is quintessentially topophilic, in which numerous revelations and inspirations transport a distant world of “intellectual experience” (196) to young James.

In the eyes of young James, the charm of Parisian spatiality was stamped upon by the abundance of diversified images in daily life. Observing James’ cheerful strolling in Paris on a “charming” last Christmas Day in his *Parisian Sketches*, both things and “friendly stranger” serve as the reminder for the reflective mind to scrutinize “the amazing elasticity of France” (40). The words James uses, “charm, beguilement, diversion” (39) disclose his delightful impression of the whole spectacle on the boulevards. Likewise, in his *Preface* to this novel, James writes that Strether is from the other end — from “the very heart of New England filled with “a perfect train of secrets” (xxxv), and he comes to Paris “in some state of mind” as “a result of new and unexpected assaults and infusions, a change almost hour by hour” (xxxvi). James emphasizes the prudent Strether’s (who comes from a local place of moral constraints) expectations to meet something new and unexpected in Paris. Strether’s fascination with cultural varieties/flexibilities in Paris demonstrates his *topophilia* for Paris, which is akin to James’ own intimate feeling of spatial nearness that has been highlighted.

Moreover, James’ wonderment about Paris could be found in his December *Tribune* letter. He marvels at “the amazing elasticity of France” (qtd. in Brooks 10). For James, Paris as a modern city in the nineteenth century provides more dimensions

of cultural diversities than a historical city like Venice or a conventionally historical English town Chester or London. For example, in “The Passionate Pilgrim: England and London 1872-1897,” James records his trip in Chester, where he “[finds] nothing but the hard, heavy prose of British civilization” from the sermons in stones and pictures in meadows (*Art of Travel* 104). Alternatively, in “Occasional Paris,” James points out the difference between Paris and London, which subjects to a “different pitch” of the “freshness” in Paris (78). There is “a sort of renovated entertainment” while one’s eyes are attuned at “the most brilliant city in the world” (78). The walker James perceives, and is impressed with all these things on new streets build by the imperial system during the twenty years of the Second Empire of Napoleon III.

James’ spatial intimacy could be traced from his depictions such as “safely housed in this glittering capital” and “the problem of existence is solved more comfortably here than elsewhere” (qtd. in Brooks 10). Brooks therefore concludes James’ discovery of his spatial experiences in Paris in 1875 to be “prosperous and comfortable” (10). Hence I regard James’ repeated wordings of “comfortable and “comfortably here than elsewhere” as cogent to his *topophilia* for Paris than anywhere else because of its “elasticity.” After the vast rebuilt urban projects of Baron Haussmann, Paris offers James a desirable mixture of possibilities in life. Being compared with James’ Puritan reservations in New England, the diversified Paris life of writers and artists, of free spirit and comfortable mind, of new and old, and of freedom from family and constraints provides a charming mixture and brings James a spatial intimacy like being at home.

In the novel, Strether has a penetrative insight into the implications of these spatial surfaces. Strether’s observation reveals his reflective mind on old disciplines of British culture while he enjoys the peaceful moment of walking in an old English

town Chester. We could find the different perceptions between his strolling in Chester and Paris respectively. He may observe two types of lives beneath the surfaces in two different historical and aesthetic dimensions. Chester provides Strether with a feeling of inherited confinements from its sense of history. James' characterization of Strether's sense of confinement in Chester is apparently revealed from his accounts of "careful civic hands-wanders, in narrow file, between parapets smoothed by peaceful generation," and "ordered English country" (10). On the contrary, Strether's depictions of these sensuous images of delights, whose excitements over the Parisian spectacles filled with a relaxing atmosphere, show his topophilic emotions differed from what he felt in Chester. For example, Strether's spatial experience in the Tuileries garden in central Paris offers him a "cheerful note — in a soft breeze and a sprinkled smell, in the light flit, over the garden-floor, of bareheaded girls..." (55). This quote unveils James' infusion of his own topophilic feelings into his hero Strether.

In a nutshell, this section attests nineteenth-century Paris provides both James and his hero Strether's a dream landscape — a whole landscape filling with visual and sensual stimulations in everyday objects and different experiences. Paris, indeed, exhibits its charming flexibilities containing both new and old things, which attract cosmopolites like James to come by and to write down his works in celebration of its brilliancy and splendors in connection to his spatial intimacy Paris evokes.

2.3 Homely Intimacy in a Distant World

This section makes an extensive discussion of the homely impression brought by one's intoxication with spatial images, probing the subtle interconnectedness between the Jamesian cosmopolitanism and his spatial experiences in his early life.

Meanwhile, Benjamin's spatial experiences in his childhood in Berlin will be

explored in correspondence with the spirit of Jamesian cosmopolitanism.

Before discussing one's affective tie with various localities, I suggest there are some similarities among James, Tuan and Bachelard's concept of home. In his "The Art of Fiction," James puts much more emphasis on one's imagination of viewing the unseen from the seen space, from which one may access the cosmos (5). In a similar vein, Tuan's *topophilia* relies on one's perception of the material environment and one's nostalgic feeling for the original hometown, which bears "the locus of memories" (93) in connection to a world. Likewise, Bachelard's affective tie with one's *primitive* home where one inherits the "World-Conscious" (4) by day-dreaming could be regarded as an exemplification of one's *topophilia*.⁷ For Bachelard, one's inward perception and mental activity like day-dreaming are quintessential to help one to get access to the whole world without crossing real material boundary. Both Tuan's idea that perception is as an activity "reaching out to the world" (12) and his emphasis on one's bodily experiences within material environments, and Bachelard's idea of returning to one's *primitive* home are close to James' imaginative capabilities associated with a spirit of a cosmopolite. Spatial experiences therefore map out how James delineates his emotional geography together with immense imagination through his observance of spaces. Experiences and imaginations have no limits because of James' responsive sensibility toward places. In his "The Art of Fiction," James compares it to a kind of a "huge spider-web of the finest silken threads suspended in the chamber of consciousness and catching every air-borne particle in its tissue" (5). James uses "air-borne particle" (5) again because he is deeply aware of his

⁷ In *The Poetics of Space*, Bachelard emphasizes one's transcendental mental activity of daydreaming to access a cosmos in one's home: "For our house is our corner of the world. As has often been said, it is our first universe, a real cosmos in every sense of the word. If we look at it intimately, the humblest dwelling has beauty. . . , a primitiveness which belongs to all, rich and poor alike, if they are willing to dream" (4).

own excitements and inspirations by the surrounding objects. For him, some of the most interesting experiments are hidden in “the bosom of things” (7). James’ *topophilia* is profoundly provoked by the surrounding images because his penetrative vision and imaginative power could not only make him transcend the surfaces of spatiality but see an ancient world in a distance.

2.3.1 Homely Intimacy and James as a Cosmopolite

I detail James’ cosmopolitanism and its association to his homely intimacy. To begin with, a cosmopolite ignores one’s prejudices or values initiated in one’s original homeland. Instead of seeing things in duality, a cosmopolite casts away local prejudices and embraces an open mind to see through the different dimensions in life all over the world. For instance, James states in his travelogue: “You have formed the habit of comparing, of looking for points of difference and of resemblance, for present and absent advantages, for the virtues that go with certain defects, and the defects that go with certain virtues” (“Occasional Paris” 76). A Jamesian cosmopolite, therefore, may not only get illuminations from different cultural perspectives but also assimilate different ideas and cultural diversities in different localities.

Having an open-minded attitude to the world is significant for being a cosmopolite. In short, James’ cosmopolitanism requires not only losing the absoluteness of habits and values from one’s original place, but also appreciates different local idiosyncrasies exhibited by different people in the world. The consequence of the cosmopolite spirit will accordingly initiate one into “the merits of all peoples” (77), by which a cosmopolite may seize a delight of different spaces filled with history and aesthetics. Since there are numerous national values, no one could judge which are absolutely bad or good since different values come from different perspectives — virtues or defect. In a few words, there is no absolute from

the perspective of a true cosmopolite.

Second, these two words — “home” and “cosmopolitanism” — seem contrary from their literal meanings. Yet, as mentioned, this thesis asserts the concept of home is close to Bachelard’s *primitive* home. It is a mental activity emphasizing an essential quality of “space of intimacy” engraved within our mind, originating from the “personal experience” of our early childhood experiences (12, 4). Borrowing his idea, this thesis foregrounds the concept of “home,” accentuating one’s intimacy with things, which subjects to not only one’s infatuation with novelty and cultural relics, but also one’s spatial experiences in childhood and early days.

In fact, James’ concept of home is always interconnected with his childhood experiences. His visiting of places seems a way for James to recapture not only the lapses of time but the abundance of his nostalgic memory. For example, young James’ *topophilia* is ignited from his first impression of Paris upon his arrival on a hotel balcony in one soft summer night of 1855 (just as he turned twelve) after re-visiting London in the same year.⁸ In “A Small Boy and Others,” James looks back at his own past with the search for the truths of emotions with his memories regarding the places he visited in Europe. James is fond of all sorts of sensual street images upon his first arrival — from the balcony of a hotel overlooking the Rue de la Paix:⁹

I make room for here, since I note after all so much less than I remember, is the intensity of a fond apprehension of Paris, a few days later, from the balcony of a hotel that hung through the soft summer night, over the Rue

⁸ In 1851, James’ family went to London, where James experienced the first World Fair in London. In 1855, the James lived and travelled in Europe for the next three years and James received private education. In the same year, James experienced the first World Fair of 1855 in Paris. In 1858, James’ family returned to the United States.

⁹ In *The Ambassadors*, James makes his protagonist Strether have the same wonderful spatial experiences in Paris. Strether’s second-day walking route starts from the Right Bank of the Seine — from the Rue Scribe, along the Rue de la Paix, which will be further explored in the following section.

de la Paix. I hung with the balcony, and doubtless with my brothers and my sister, though I recover what I felt as so much relation and response to the larger, the largest appeal only, that of the whole perfect Parisianism. (158-59)

His depictions such as “make room,” “the intensity of a fond apprehension of Paris,” and “I felt as so much relation and response” all demonstrate his homely intimacy ignited by these spatial revelations. I accentuate such enjoyment James acquired from Paris to illustrate James’ “perfect Parisianism” (159). His enjoyment of spatial intimacy certainly stays in line with Benjamin’s homely comfort in Paris. The Parisian spectacle from a balcony of Hotel Paix later becomes associated with James’ childhood memory: I regard it is an exhibition of James’ *topophilia* for Paris.

James’ concept of home is always interconnected with his early spatial experiences. The overlapping hours of the past and the present, the comparison of the European and American culture, inevitably, are always interwoven in both James’ autobiographical prose and works. In fact, James confesses his own “young consciousness” (156) in “A Small Boy and Others.” It is disclosed through the description of London in one June afternoon of 1855. James’ intoxication with images could be found in the marvelous spatial experience on a particular “coign of vantage” of the carriage—his seat beside the coachman, on which he was “completely occupied” and “thrilled” with his feeling as “an item in the overflow of a vehicle” completely occupied in a box of a carriage riding on London streets (157). James admits his “very ease of re-capture of my young consciousness” (156) in the carriage ride. In other words, James’ re-capturing of young consciousness demonstrates an inner intimate interaction between places and emotion. It is pivotal to point out his “young consciousness” could be seen as a nostalgic emotion of recollecting spatial

images in connection to his younger age.

James' cheerful feeling on the London streets is quite close to Benjamin's intoxication with images. Young James encountered the rapid images of people on the streets, which reminded him of a "snatch of elation" (157) during the temporary settlement of his family in London. I see it as a space of memory exhibiting James' nostalgic feelings, which evokes the delights brought up not only in the existing place but a sense of intimacy in his mind. This may explain why a cosmopolite like James, in most of his works, consistently uses the vivid sensual depictions about spatial images in order to exhibit his enjoyment of a great variety of things wherever he visits there. This kind of infatuation with spatial images is always identified with one's feeling of home, or *topophilia* as this thesis suggests.

2.3.2 Benjamin's Homing in a Distant world

The cosmopolite James' topophilic emotions share the same traits with Benjamin's penchant for spatial intimacy. Both of their topophilic expressions demonstrate a "profane manifestation of 'nearness'" (Benjamin, *Arcades Project* 205). In his biographical essay "Blumeshof 12" in *Berlin Childhood around 1900*, Benjamin describes how his joyful spatial experience brings him into the worlds at the home of the Blumeshof abode of Benjamin's maternal grandmother.¹⁰ I regard Benjamin's childhood experiences in his grandmother's "high-class residences" (86) as a gateway to a distant world. Obviously, young Benjamin connects the whole

¹⁰ Benjamin records in his autobiographical essay "Blumeshof 12" in his *Berlin Childhood around 1900*: "No bell sounded friendlier. Once across the threshold of this apartment, I was even than in my parents' house. . . Of all the high-class residences I have seen, this was the only cosmopolitan one. Not that you'd think so looking at it. But Madonna di Campiglio and Brindisi, Westerland and Athens, and wherever else on her travels she bought postcards to send me — they all breathed the air of Blumeshof. . . When their mother country then reopened its doors, I would tread its floorboards with just as much awe as if they had danced with their mistress on the waves of the Bosphorus, and I would step onto the oriental carpets as though they still concealed the dust of Samarkand" (86-87).

universe through his grandmother's bourgeois decorations, travel collections and the enduring heavy furniture of the 1870s, which emanates a sense of eternity in the apartment.

Benjamin's detailed description of "her carpeted alcove" and "large comfortable handwriting" (86), and "the oriental carpets as though they still concealed the dust of Samarkand" (87) clearly demonstrates his passion for this "cosmopolitan" (86) house. Meanwhile, Benjamin's awareness of his "almost immemorial feeling of bourgeois security" (88) emanated from the inventories in this apartment is distinctive. It shows Benjamin's feelings of comfort and familiarity. The world is seemingly condensed in the residence of his grandmother. The whole cosmos comes quite near and dwells in this interior because her travel souvenirs like all "postcards" breathe in the air of Blumeshof, to which young Benjamin is profoundly drawn, more so than his paternal grandmother's house.¹¹ It is an Elysium for Benjamin, a realm inhabited by shades of the immortal spirit of his grandmother who passed away. Thanks to his spatial experiences in the "most cosmopolitan" residence, young Benjamin's vision of the whole universe becomes much wider through his imaginative capabilities, which is quite similar to James' cosmopolitanism. With a perceptive mind and free imaginations, young Benjamin receives his initiations of the distant worlds through his grandmother's collections from all over the world.

2.4 A Cosmopolite Homing Elsewhere

Topophilia is enriched by cultural diversities in physical environments while it is comprised of an affective tie or empathy with the things in places. Every spatial movement contains both the extinguishment of national boundaries and a re-setting of

¹¹ Benjamin's maternal grandmother, a widow, was living opposite of his paternal grandmother for years.

perspectives. For philosophers like Bachelard, in the continual movement between here and elsewhere, the physical boundaries are extinguished through mental activity. In *The Poetics of Spaces*, Bachelard states that there are the “world-conscious” philosophers who “discover a universe by means of the dialectical game of the I and the non-I” (4). We could see the “I” as the *primitive* home; the “non-I” as other physical environments, which phenomenologically are away from the inhabited space where one is originally from. One may always recollect homely intimacy of one’s early life through one’s own mental activity.

In a similar way, in his article “Imperial Panorama” (42-44) in his *Berlin Childhood around 1900*, Benjamin describes his initiation into a distant world from contemporary novelty — an art form like “Imperial Panorama” (*Kaiserpanorama*), which brings the distant world to its audience.¹² Benjamin writes that “Distant worlds were not always strange to these arts [Imperial Panoramas]. And it so happened that the longing such worlds aroused spoke more to the home than to anything unknown” (44). By seeing through the circular screen from each double window of the Imperial Panorama, the audience may gain an impressive spatial experience. Each picture would pass through each circular screen, and the audience may view through “a double window into the faintly tinted depths of the image” (43). Each picture seen through the circular screen from each window permeates mysteriously an unknown world, especially for the curious children. The world is instantly accessible through each picture — from a curious child’s creative imagination. In a sense, by exerting one’s mental activity like the Benjaminian or Jamesian imaginative capability, consequently, one may home elsewhere.

¹² In his *Berlin Childhood around 1900*, Benjamin introduces the imperial panorama as an art form surviving in the nineteenth century and dying out with the coming of the twentieth century. The travel scenes could be found from one’s viewing the circular screen through each double window of the imperial panorama while one seats in each station that surrounds each double window. (42-43)

In a similar sense, the Jamesian cosmopolite, like the traveler, makes spatial movement in order not only to obtain different stimulations but to broaden visions. Different physical landscapes are usually interwoven with one's self-identification, which is a process of self-discovery as well as a process of homing. Bachelard's "world conscious" is relevant to the primitive experiences in childhood. It could be regarded as a perspective complimentary to the Jamesian spirit of cosmopolitanism. Bachelard recognizes our physical house as our first universe, a real cosmos, a corner of the world. People may look at its nature intimately, "a primitiveness which belongs to all" (4) if they are willing to exert their mental activity. The philosophers imbued with "world-conscious" embrace a whole universe by means of day-dreaming. The idea that "the values of inhabited space, of the non-I that protects the I" (5) reveals that the being-here ("I") is always supported by the being-there ("non-I"). No matter where we go, either in different new houses or travelling in new landscapes, the memory will always come back to us. Through one's mental activity like day-dreaming, we retain the treasures of childhood days in the various dwelling places in our later lives.

However, what makes the two different is that James emphasizes much more concrete spatial experiences while Bachelard focuses more on one's mental activities. The philosophers adhere to the *primitive* home in their minds since their minds could transcend any physical confinement. A Jamesian cosmopolite in different places embraces the similar trait of homing through his empathy with spatial things. For James, the curiosity to pursue cultural diversities serves as a main drive for his spatial movement. His novel-writing is a practice of presenting different dimensions of life by each of the "parts" ("Art of Fiction" 6) in life; mapping the fragmental facts and objects together discloses their connections. In other way, one may perceive numerous

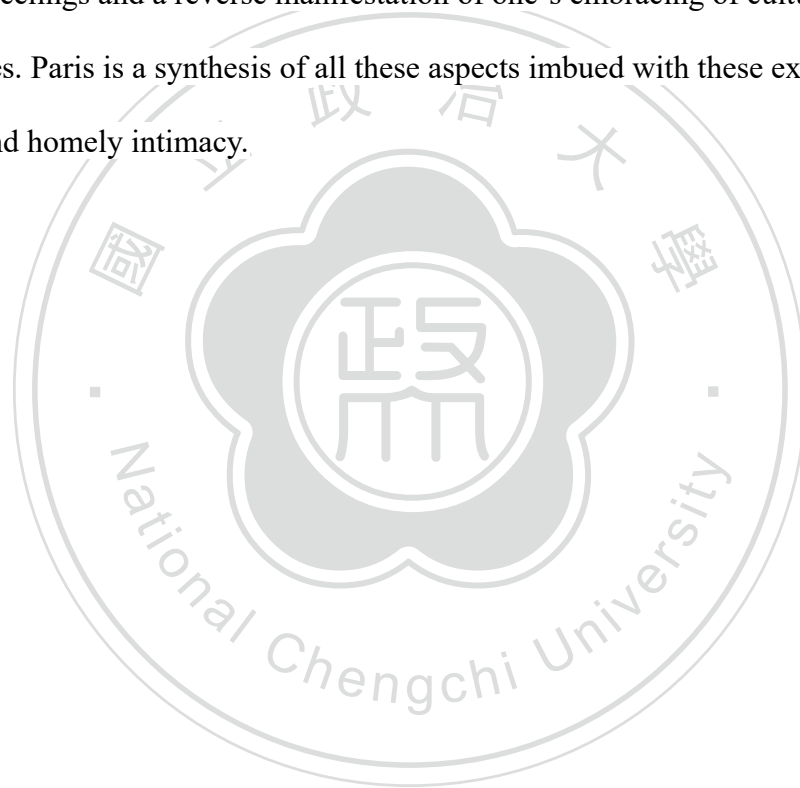
implications from the surface of things. In a few words, a novelist should seek not only to represent life, but to suggest spatial implications. One's keen observations and imaginative capabilities of reading spatial revelations are pivotal for a writer. What is at stake here is that the premise for experience-acquiring is to make spatial movement — through travelling. Not like a regionalist who is bounded by local idiosyncrasies, the Jamesian cosmopolite not only makes spatial movement but also thinks universally.

For James, the curiosity for cultural diversities serves as a main drive to get oneself assimilated into different places, which provides diversified cultural complexities. Only through the depictions of shifting locales does James present his unique observance of cultural diversities in different places. In his "Occasional Paris," James describes both senses of intimacy with the "familiar figure" (79) of the Paris *ouvrier* ("worker") who "swarms in thousands, not only in the region of the Exhibition, but along the great thoroughfare — the Avenue de l'Opera — which has just been opened in the interior of Paris" (79-80).

The Paris *ouvrier* with his democratic blouse, his expressive, demonstrative, agreeable eye, his meagre limbs, his irregular, pointed features, his sallow complexion, his face at once fatigued and animated, his light, nervous organisation, is a figure that I always encounter again with pleasure. (86)

Like Baudelaire, a flâneur James' seeking for the whole landscape in Paris demonstrates his intoxication with street images. His pleasure of encountering a passer-by, the familiar figure of the worker who might appear on every street in Paris unveils James' infatuation with spatial images of ordinary people on streets. The fragmental images of the Paris *ouvrier*, "a figure that I always encounter again with

his expressive, demonstrative, and agreeable eyes” mark out the origin of the flâneur’s great pleasure — his favor of diversified spectacles in a cosmopolitan Paris. The cheerful spatial experience is mixed up with excitements (“nervous organization”). Therefore, James’ intoxication with things is essential to the flâneur’s *topophilia*. The flâneur’s quick glimpse of diversified images on street indicates his keen perception as well as an intimate excitement from his spatial experiences of the Parisian streets. The cosmopolitan Paris is consequently the spatiality which exhibits both one’s topophilic feelings and a reverse manifestation of one’s embracing of cultural complexities. Paris is a synthesis of all these aspects imbued with these exotic elements and homely intimacy.



Chapter Three

Walking in Paris

The Ambassadors mainly centers on the revisit of the middle-aged American Strether in Paris. Nineteenth-century Paris is the main setting of the novel, and it is the city that leads to the problematic issues that this thesis intends to probe — how Strether’s *topophilia* is ignited through his walking. The first part of the chapter will discuss the context and distinguished features of the Benjaminian flâneur, the city walker in the nineteenth-century Paris. I will explore how the movement of “walking” stands for a bodily practice of searching for homely intimacy in Paris. The second part will then move on to explore how Paris becomes a city for the flâneur like Benjamin and James, whose walking exhibits their homely intimacy in a distant world. The following discussions in the third part will testify how Strether’s walking practices the concept of the Benjaminian flâneur. The topographical analysis of Strether’s walking experiences, his flânerie in Bank Right and Bank Left of the Seine in central Paris, will be scrutinized. Strether’s walking exhibits not only his *topophilia*, but a gradual change of vision that shows his process of homing in Paris. Meanwhile, this chapter suggests that James’ topophilic emotion is akin to his figure Strether’s affective tie with Paris.

3.1 The Context of the Benjaminian Flâneur

This section provides the context and main features of the flâneur, mainly in terms of Benjamin’s perspective. The French word “flâneur” means “stroller” or “walker” in Paris in the nineteenth century. Benjamin firstly brings the flâneur into

scholarly research in the twentieth century.

3.1.1 Baudelaire as “The Man of the Crowd”

Baudelaire and Benjamin’s concepts of the flâneur derive from their experiences of the transitory images in Paris. Benjamin regards Charles Baudelaire as his iconic flâneur, whose admiration comes from Baudelaire’s “empathy” with the urban landscape in the nineteenth century. The flâneur’s enjoyment of the crowd, lies not only in the kaleidoscopic street images but also his sense of individuality in the crowd. First, the crowd is the key element to help him to be aware of his fascination with modern landscape.¹³ For example, in “The Paris of the Second Empire in Baudelaire,” Benjamin stresses: “Empathy is the nature of the intoxication to which the *flâneur* abandons himself in the crowd” (55). He also specifies Baudelaire’s enjoyment that “intoxicated him” (59): the flâneur’s “deepest fascination” with “the spectacle of the crowd” (59). In a sense, the flâneur’s fetish, his “empathy” (55) with things is the main source of inspirations he seeks in the crowd.

Baudelaire’s remarkable collection of poetry, *Les Fleurs du Mal* (*The Flower of Evil*), records his walking observations of contingent modern spectacles in Paris in the nineteenth-century.¹⁴ By illustrating Baudelaire famous sonnet entitled “To A Passer-by” (“*A Une Passante*”), Benjamin shows that the flâneur’s delight is from his first glance of a lady on street. In “The Paris of the Second Empire in Baudelaire,” he suggests the flâneur’s passion is provoked out of his partaking in “the shock” with “an imperious desire” (46). In “Exposé,” Benjamin admirably regards Baudelaire as an “allegorical genius” because “with Baudelaire, Paris becomes the subject of lyric

¹³ Baudelaire suggests that “modernity” is comprised of the “ephemeral, the fugitive, the contingent” factors (12).

¹⁴ In “Exposé” of *The Arcades Project*, Benjamin highlights that “The modern is a principal accent of his [Baudelaire’s] poetry” (10).

poetry” (*Arcades Project* 10). Standing on the “threshold — of the metropolis as of the middle class,” the “gaze of an alienated man” falls on the spectacle of Paris (10), especially the crowd. From Benjamin’s admiration for Baudelaire’s enjoyment of modern landscapes in Paris, we observe their fascination with diversified images in Paris.

The flâneur’s obsession is premised on the transitory street images in Paris. In “The Painter of Modern Life,” Baudelaire distinguishes the features of the nineteenth-century flâneur as “The Man of the Crowd” (7). A flâneur’s spatial intimacy is ignited by the urban transitory images — as shown from his depictions like “catch[ing] things in flight” in keeping with “the pace of a big city” (40). Besides, Baudelaire’s viewpoint is based on the characteristic quick sketches of street people’s manners by the watercolor painter Monsieur G. He regards Monsieur G. as “a man of the world” (7).¹⁵ The interest of the street painter is the whole world because of “his delight in universal life” (10). His quick drawing not only records the spirits of his contemporary but conveys a quick impression of ordinary people on streets. In a similar way, Benjamin considers the flâneur as a physiognomist who is “motivated” by surrounding people and things (*Arcades Project* 447). In a broad way, the painter is also like the flâneur, the walker who captures and empathizes with the contingent transitory images of spatial images in his contemporary Paris. Therefore, both Benjamin and Baudelaire, like painters in Paris, enjoy capturing all these transitory street images.

Furthermore, the Benjaminian flâneur’s *topophilia* connotes an ambivalent feeling, a sense of isolation from the surrounding images. On the one hand, the crowd

¹⁵ Constantin Guys (1802-92) was a Crimean War correspondent and a French illustrator for British and French newspapers. After his settlement in Paris in the late 1850s, he was famous for his quick sketches of manners for street people in the nineteenth century, which were published in various journals (*Oxford Reference*).

is the element, to which the flâneur's empathy and spatial intimacy are ignited. On the other hand, his pleasurable intoxication of images is usually based on keeping a certain distance from the crowd because of his seeking his own space in the crowd. Empathy is essential to explain the flâneur's unique combination of spatial intimacy and isolation as Benjamin indicates in "The Flâneur" in *The Arcades Project*:

Trace and aura. The trace is appearance of a nearness, . . . The aura is appearance of a distance, however, close to the thing that calls it forth. In the trace, we gain possession of the thing; in the aura, it takes possession of us. (447)

The flâneur stays in the aura by keeping a distance from the crowd. The flâneur's spatial intimacy is provoked by a self-perception of spatial intimacy and a private space in the crowd. This kind of ambivalent joyful infatuation may come along with two feelings. One is a sense of freedom, the other one the spatial attachment ignited by the waves of the crowd, the things of novelty, beauty and heritage. This kind of feeling can be associated with Tuan's topophilic feeling, which is featured with one's emotional attachment and a sense of freedom provoked by historical and cultural things in spaces. In this way, the distance from surrounding "traces" (Benjamin 447) of things is elemental to the flâneur's intoxicated sense of intimacy in isolation. In conclusion, the flâneur's *topophilia* results not from his isolation from other cultures. On the contrary, it is from an infatuation with different cultural "traces" in spaces. The flâneur, a distant observer in the multitude, alienates himself from the crowd in order to obtain individual's "appearance of a nearness" (447). This is pivotal of situating himself away from the crowd, from which the flâneur experiences a mixed feeling of both nearness and alienation.

3.1.2 The Street as Home

Based upon Benjamin's concept, the exterior of Paris can be seen as a great interior — one's transcendental home on the streets. Paris provides a space of intimacy. The flâneur's self-perception of his inner comfort is exercised through his walking. Parisian exteriors offer, with each approach of the flâneur's own footsteps, a speechless homely intimacy and a sense of personal freedom. I suggest the "room" is a metaphor, with the flâneur's seeking of one's own comfortable space in urban exteriors. In Benjamin's *The Arcades Project*, a typical flâneur finds Paris a big "house"; the *quartiers* ("districts") are like the "rooms" (422). Each space in Paris is like a "great interior" (422) for a typical flâneur. We could regard flâneur's "room" on streets as a transcendental home on the streets for the flâneur. Benjamin specifies the walker's homely intimacy: "the street becomes a dwelling for the flâneur" (37) in "The Paris of the Second Empire in Baudelaire." Situating himself among "the facades of houses" is as "a citizen is in his four walls" in his house (37). In a similar vein, it corresponds to Bachelard's *primitive* home, in which a mental nearness is experienced in the upmost intimate corner in one's mind. Through one's mental activity, one may home anywhere whether one is on the streets or in a house.

Furthermore, Benjamin's spatial intimacy testifies to his sense of individuality in the crowd. Situating oneself in the multitude revives the flâneur's spirit as at home. Meanwhile, Benjamin describes his own intoxication with commodities in the Parisian Arcades in "Exposé" in *The Arcades Project*. For the flâneur, the crowd is as the "veil" turning "the familiar city" into a phantasmagorical "landscape" and a "room" (10). The flâneur's empathy with things brings him with topophilic feelings in a world filled with commodities:

The crowd is the veil through which the familiar city beckons to the

flâneur as phantasmagoria — now a landscape, now a room. Both become elements of the department store, which makes use of flânerie itself to sell goods. The department is the last promenade for the flâneur. (10)

Benjamin's emphasis on both impressions and passions majorly come from the flâneur's "curiosity" and infatuation with street images through his "gazing at the crowd" in Paris. Paris offers Benjamin's flâneur both a kaleidoscopic "landscape" and a homely intimacy like in a "room" (417). Therefore, various images are substantial for the flâneur because of his infatuation with universal things. In particular, seen from the lens of the flâneur, the crowd is transformed into commodity, becoming one fragmental part of modern phantasmagorias.¹⁶ Only by situating oneself among all these spatial things may the flâneur, the ubiquitous spectator, acquire a sense of an individual being— whose *topophilia* is ignited.

Similarly, Benjamin's "intimate nearness" (Benjamin 416) is close to Baudelaire's flâneur's transcendental topophilic emotion of "harmony" (Baudelaire 10).¹⁷ Both of their homely intimacy associated with one's sense of freedom is ignited by numerous revelations in the places of Paris. For example, Monsieur G. embraces his "amazing harmony of life in the capital cities" that is "providentially maintained amid the turmoil of human freedom" (Baudelaire 10) in the capital Paris. The quote below explicates the subtle connection between Benjamin and Baudelaire. The flâneur's marvelous enjoyment of being a "passionate spectator" (Baudelaire 9) in the crowd is relevant to one's individual freedom as well as one's *topophilia*:

The crowd is his element, as the air is that of birds and water of fishes. His

¹⁶ Urry suggests, Benjamin considers that the places like arcades which concern not merely the entertaining function. Urry illustrates the world expositions held in Paris which "transform visitors to the level of commodity as they enter a truly phantasmagorical world" (Urry 79).

¹⁷ Benjamin specifies the flâneur's "intimate nearness" derived from: "At the approach of his footsteps, the place has roused, speechlessly, mindlessly, its mere intimate nearness gives him hints and instructions" (*Arcades Project* 416).

passion and his profession are to become one flesh with the crowd. For the perfect flâneur, for the passionate spectator, it is an immense joy to set up house in the heart of the multitude, amid the ebb and flow of movement, in the midst of the fugitive and the infinite. To be away from home and yet to feel oneself everywhere at home; to see the world, to be at the centre of the world, and yet to remain hidden from the world — such are a few of the slightest pleasures of those independent, passionate, impartial natures which the tongue can but clumsily define. The spectator is a *prince* who everywhere rejoices in his incognito. The lover of life makes the whole world his family, . . . Thus the lover of universal life enters into the crowd as though it were an immense reservoir of electrical energy. (Baudelaire 9)

Because of the emergence of metropolis in the nineteenth century, the crowd is typical of city landscape. The flâneur's immense joy of setting up "house in the heart of the multitude" (9) shows his homely comfort in the crowd. For Baudelaire, the flâneur is an "I" with "an insatiable appetite" for the "non-I" [every image in the crowd] in a universal life (9). Therefore, the flâneur may "be away from home and yet to feel oneself everywhere at home" (9). The observant flâneur's transcendental homely intimacy of "the infinite" (9) in the crowd is disclosed apparently.

Similar to Benjamin's, Baudelaire's statement that "[t]he crowd is his element" (9) firstly explains the inseparable relation between the flâneur and the crowd. This kind of pleasure is accompanied by the "movement," his walking "in the midst of the fugitive and the infinite" (9). Though his movement seems mingling with the crowd (as shown from his dictions of "becom[ing] one flesh with the crowd"), the flâneur is aware of his own passion and freedom as an individual in the crowd: "to be at the centre of the world, and yet to remain hidden from the world" (9). The flâneur revives

energy in the crowd (“an immense reservoir of electrical energy”) (9), which demonstrates his homely intimacy.

To sum up, the spatiality of Paris serves as a physical medium providing stimulation, bringing forth spatial comfort to the flâneur. Baudelaire’s “immense reservoir of electrical energy” (10) and Benjamin’s “charg[ing] time with power like a battery” in the multitude indicate both spatial intimacy (qtd. in Buck-Morss 105) like at home. The flâneur’s familiar sense of inner harmony derives from a cosmopolitan life saturated with an atmosphere of individual freedom, which provides the passionate flâneur a spatial intimacy as at home.

3.1.3 “The Lover of Universal Life”

Both Benjamin and Baudelaire’s flâneurs show the same inclination of being a passionate spectator having great fondness of cosmopolitan spectacles. Baudelaire’s emphasis on “the lover of universal life” (10) unveils the flâneur’s spirit of a cosmopolite. Meanwhile, the flâneur “feel[s] oneself everywhere at home” while being away from home (10). Also, his homely intimacy with Paris in “[t]he lover of life makes the whole world his family” shows the same topophilic feeling for the cosmopolitan landscape in Paris. In other words, the flâneur’s homely comfort in the exterior derives from his individual passion for a universal life in the metropolitan Paris. Furthermore, Baudelaire notes the flâneur’s empathy with things in the multitude. He is rapturously breathing in “all the odours and essences of life” (7) surrounding him.

In fact, Baudelaire’s flâneur, “the man of the crowd,” proposes not only a city stroller but the ubiquitous urban observer. However, by remaining a certain distance, the flâneur puts himself through “the medium of thought,” to experience the multitude and street images. Especially, this kind of pleasure turns into a joy as if returning to

childhood. Baudelaire describes this “drunken” impression “like a return towards childhood” (7).¹⁸

Benjamin’s topophilic feeling is ignited by his infatuation with novelties in the market place. He suggests in “Exposé” in his *The Arcades Project*:

Our investigation proposes to show how, as a consequence of this reifying representation of civilization, the new forms of behavior and the new economically and technologically based creations that we owe to the nineteenth century enter the universe of a phantasmagoria. . . Also included in this order of phenomena is the experience of the flâneur, who abandons himself to the phantasmagorias of the market place. (14)

Benjamin observes that Paris is a place filled with kaleidoscopic images. Like Baudelaire, Benjamin’s subtle delineation of the flâneur’s delights, his haptic experiences include walking, seeing and feeling among “the universe of a phantasmagoria,” which mark out his *topophilia*. However, Benjamin’s focus on urban spatial experiences is associated with the phantasmagorias of things because of his own infatuation with things (or say “fetishism”). Benjamin’s sense of curiosity serves as a main drive to fulfill his intoxication in a world of phantasmagorias made of a montage of spatial images.

To sum up, both Benjamin and Baudelaire’s flâneurs, keeping a distance from the crowd, seek to be a ubiquitous observer, being fond of “the appearance of nearness” in the traces of universal life displayed in the modern spectacle of Paris. However, Benjamin’s flâneur results from his ambiguous attempt to keep the “aura” (*Arcades Project* 447) because the aura has occupied the flâneur’s mind. Only by

¹⁸ Baudelaire writes, “The child sees everything in a state of newness; he is always *drunk*. Nothing more resembles what we call inspiration than the delight with which a child absorbs form and colour” (8).

keeping a certain distance from the multitude may the Benjaminian flâneur be a passionate observer, embracing his immense sense of nearness and individual freedom (or say, his joyful self-alienation in the crowd), which will be further elucidated in the following section.

3.2 Paris, the City for the Flâneur

Paris created the type of the flâneur. It opens up to him as a landscape, even as it closes around him as a room. (Benjamin, *The Arcades Project* 417)

3.2.1 Renovation of Paris

Paris provides the particular spectacle that ignites both Benjamin and James' *topophilia* in relation to their new perspectives/knowledge. The reasons why Paris is such a charming and most desirable destination are her kaleidoscopic things containing the contingent beauty, cultural inspirations and freshness. First, in the eyes of Benjamin, what the Universal Exposition implies is not merely a demonstration of national power or a temporary exhibition of world trade, but a landscape filled with foreign elements containing diversified exotic things and foreign images. The second Universal Exposition (*L'Exposition Universelle*) was held in Paris in 1855, which followed the first Great Exposition held in London in 1851. Together with the founding of Palace of Industry (*Palais de l'Industrie*) — an exhibition hall located between the Champs-Élysées and the Seine River, they set forth an era of “commodity fetish” (*Arcades Project* 7-8). It accordingly provides a kaleidoscopic playground for the flâneur to take a stroll.

Second, James' profound interest in Paris is cogent to his consistent comparison between European and American cultures after he returns to United States. While American culture indicates “bareness,” Paris and London offer great exhibitions with

“illustrations abounded” (150) as James mentions in “A Small Boy and Others.” Of this aspect, James’ passions for diversified images like art could be satisfied either in Paris or London. The things of novelty, like the new invention of photography in the nineteenth century, is a key factor bringing the flâneur pleasures. In the fall of 1875, the thirty-two-year-old James soon found home upon his second stay in Paris, long after his first visit in 1855. Paris offers James not only the fulfillment of his nostalgic longings for history and culture but also new perspectives. The young James obviously experiences the enjoyment of “a positive little orgy of the senses and riot of the mind” (134) in both the English Crystal Palace in London in 1851 and the Palace of Industry (the location of the first great French Exhibition) in Paris in 1855. In “A Small Boy and Others,” we may trace back James’ first spatial experience in the Palace of Industry in 1855:

Little else of that Parisian passage remains with me—it was probably of the briefest; I recover only a visit with my father to the Palais de l’Industrie, where the first of the great French Exhibitions, on the model, much reduced, of the English Crystal Palace of 1851, was still open. (168)

James shows his great love for the two exhibitions since it provides numerous “illustrations” through its spatial images of “figures, faces, furniture, sounds, smells and colours” (134).

The diversified spectacles in Paris not only ignite James’ empathy but his inner hunger for diversified cultural inspirations. Paris was renovated by Baron Georges-Eugène Haussmann (1809-91) between year 1852 and 1870 in the reign of Emperor Napoléon III.¹⁹ Subject to both the Emperor’s and Haussmann’s ambition to “offer

¹⁹ Haussmann’s renovation of Paris carried out a massive program comprising building new boulevards, parks and some public works in Paris. In fact, Paris was rebuilt based upon Haussmann’s design of “rectilinear streets, regulations, and perspectives” (qtd. in Nilsen 94).

perspectives” (qtd. in Nilsen 94), Paris could offer a “landscape” for the flâneur like Baudelaire and James at that time.²⁰ James’ comment that “I wanted something more active” (qtd. in Brooks 7) reveals his preference of a place mixed with “something new” and something old.²¹ Paris is just the city fulfilling young James’ longing, including both traits of cultural heritage and “novelty.”

In a similar way like James’ infatuation with “novelty,” Benjamin probes the phantasmagorias of civilization (Benjamin finds its success in Haussmann as well as its manifested expression in his transformation of Paris). In his Exposé in *The Arcades Project*, Benjamin proposes that in the nineteenth century, people entered “the universe of a phantasmagoria” (14). The stunning spectacle made of new revolutionary materials like iron and glass at that time in those great halls of universal exhibitions of Paris in 1855 was significant for the flâneur. It is because his empathy could be satisfied from being “into the phantasmagorias of the marketplace” (14). Meanwhile, world exhibitions are “places of pilgrimage to the commodity fetish,” arising from the “wish ‘to entertain the working classes, and it becomes for them a festival of emancipation” (Benjamin 17). Therefore, World exhibitions construct a “universe of spécialités” (17), which satisfies a Benjaminian flâneur’s pursuit of new things. These quotes thereby exhibit the spirit of a bourgeoisie flâneur’s pursuit of novelty in a world of phantasmagorias in World exhibitions. The nineteenth-century Paris apparently provides a kaleidoscopic landscape nourishing the flâneur’s desire for a whole spectacle of universal life.

²⁰ The street plan and distinctive appearance of the center of Paris today is majorly the result of Haussmann’s renovation.

²¹ As for “something active” which he had though in New York, James found same features in Paris. However, what Paris offers James were imbued with more features fulfilling James’ nostalgic longings for profound historical and cultural background as well as a landscape of modern renovation.

3.2.2 Benjamin's Cosmopolitan Paris, "A World in Miniature"

Benjamin tends to emphasize the close link between Paris and the flâneur with many spatial metaphors such as "a world in miniature" to describe the arcades. In effect, he unveils the reason why Paris becomes "the promised land of the flâneur". In his "Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century," Benjamin sees the Parisian arcades as the contemporary revolutionary construction materials of glass and iron in the nineteenth-century Paris, which exhibit its newness.²² Benjamin acknowledges the passage is an "invention of industrial luxury"; the "passage is a city," that encapsulates "a world in miniature" (15).²³ For Benjamin, the nineteenth century is "the universe of a phantasmagoria" (15). He regards the arcade as "a world in miniature" (15), because all things displayed in the arcades forge the fanciful impressions of exotic elements for a flâneur like Benjamin:

For if flânerie, can transform Paris into one great interior — a house whose rooms are the quartiers, no less clearly demarcated by thresholds than are real rooms—then, on the hand, the city can appear to someone walking through it to be without thresholds: a landscape in the round. (Benjamin, *Arcades Project* 422)

The shape of central Paris on the map is similar to a round shape, offering an easily accessible distance by walking conveniently. For a Benjaminian flâneur, Paris obviously offers "a landscape in the round" (422). The map of nineteenth-century Paris after Haussmann's renovation is shown in the following page.

²² The Parisian arcades are the centers of commerce in luxury items built mostly in the fifteen years following 1822 (Benjamin, *Arcades Project* 15).

²³ In "Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century" in *The Arcades Project*, Benjamin takes the quote from *Illustrated Guide to Paris*: "These Arcades, a recent invention of industrial luxury, are glass-roofed, marble-paneled corridors extending through whole blocks of buildings, whose owners have joined together for such enterprises. Lining both sides of the arcade, which gets its light from above, are the most elegant shops, so that the passage is a city, a world in miniature" (15).

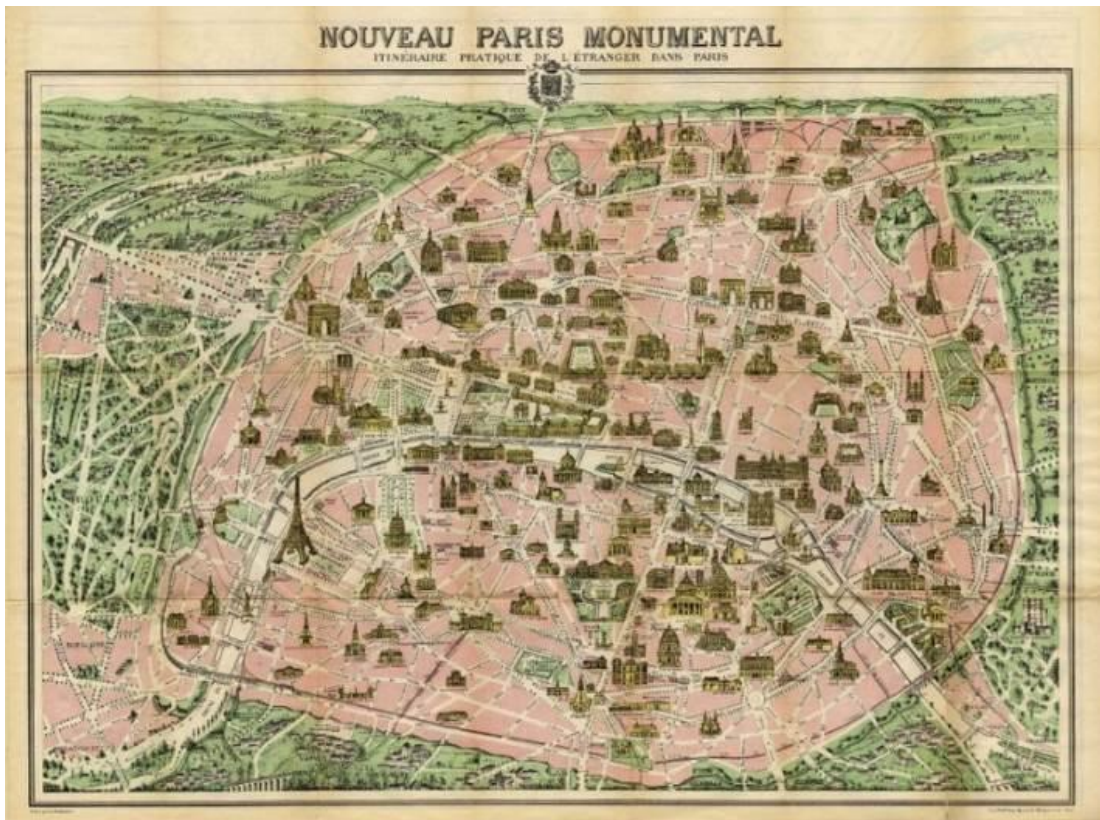


Fig. 1. Paris Map, post-Haussmann.” Map. *An Introduction to Nineteenth-Century Art*. Edited by Michelle Facos. Routledge, 2011, www.19thcenturyart-facos.com/content/maps.

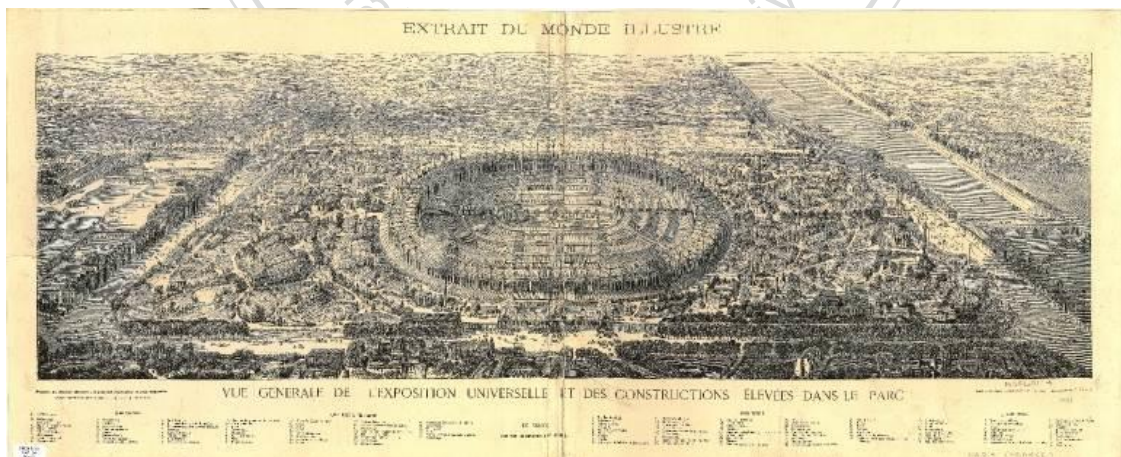


Fig. 2. Deroy, A., et al. “Paris: Imprimerie Auguste Vallée [1867].” Map. *University of Chicago Digital Preservation Collection*. pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/cat/bib/8353592.

For Benjamin, “a landscape in the round” underlies the central Paris landscape, in which many monumental buildings and tourist regions centered around the island of Cité (*Île de la Cité*) along the Seine in central Paris.²⁴

3.2.3 James’ Impression of a Brilliant City

The nineteenth-century Paris provides James with its distinctive cultural diversities. Paris, the most brilliant city for James, offers a marvelous cosmopolitan spectacle comprising various images/things associated with freshness and entertainment. According to *The Complete Letter of Henry James, 1855-1872*, in his letter to Charles Eliot Norton on 18 May in 1869, James discloses his topophilic feelings with the gaslight illuminating the night of Paris. We could see James’ joyful astonishment with the night of Paris: “Paris struck me as a perfect flare and glare of mechanical splendor” (3). Meanwhile, James’ delights in walking in Paris could be traced in another letter addressed to his mother Mary Walsh James (on the next day on 19 May). James describes his impressive strolling through “the eternal Louvre” (5). He experiences the “modern world-on the tumult, the splendor, the crazy headlong race for pleasure” (6):

I spent my time in walking the streets, whereby I was vastly struck with their magnificence. The place has turned into a perfect monotony of glaring would-be monumental splendor. Flare and glare are the only words it suggests—the reflection of torrid asphalte and limestone by day and the feverish torrents of gaslight by night. . . but it did me good afterwards to stroll through the eternal Louvre. I enjoy the maters quite as much as I hoped. They are so respectable, in this profligate modern world-on the

²⁴ Paris was originally from the island of cité (French: “Île de la Cité”) on the Banks of the Seine, and it expanded its city territory after centuries.

tumult, the splendor, the crazy headlong race for pleasure. . . . (James 5-6)

James' wonderful impression of the kaleidoscopic urban images come from his descriptions like "Paris struck me" (3), his being "vastly struck with their magnificence" (5), "a perfect flare and glare of mechanical splendor" (3), "monumental splendor" (5), and "the crazy headlong race of pleasure" (6). The whole Paris, in the eyes of James, is a "brilliant city" (216) with gaslight illuminating the night.

James, like Benjamin and Baudelaire, are infatuated with the spaces of Paris. His *topophilia* is shown from his claiming that he has never seen "Paris more Parisian, in the pleasantest sense of the word" (216) in *The Art of Travel*.²⁵ For instance, it is apparent to see James' astonishment from his depiction of "a good many old impressions" which "recovered their freshness" (215) in Paris, which suggests Paris is the charming mixture of old and new things. For instance, James is impressive by these "magnificent and fantastical" (216) buildings hanged over the Seine after the Exhibition of 1878. He observes the "sudden immensity and glittering newness" of the buildings hanged over the Seine, and people's regarding the Exhibition as a "fairy-tale" (216). James' sensuous enjoyment of street images shows his fondness of modern landscape in Paris. Benjamin also recalls his intimate nearness to the Parisian Arcade, which is seen as a "fairyland" (qtd. in Hanssen 3). In a sense, the walkers like James and Benjamin embrace their innermost individual existence. Their nocturnal walking experiences in the spaces is as walking in a "fairyland." The flâneur may satisfy their pursuit of newness, which ignites their "intimate nearness" (Benjamin 416) in a world filled with exotic objects. These evidences are cogent to James'

²⁵ James' "Occasional Paris" (1877) is categorized in the Section Three: "The Cosmopolite," which mainly records his travels throughout Paris and France from 1876 to 1884 in *The Art of Travel* (216).

affective tie with Paris, exhibiting his spatial intimacy in association with his intellectual pursuit of cultural diversities in a cosmopolitan Paris.

3.3 Lambert Strether's Walking as Homing

In this section, based upon Benjamin's perspectives on Paris, I show how the exterior streets of Paris symbolically provides the flâneur Strether both a distant world and a great interior like a house. The metropolitan Paris provides the middle-aged Strether with a spatial intimacy comprised of cultural freshness and his satisfaction with intellectual pursuit, through which James demonstrates the process of Strether's vision of his belated youth. In this novel, ever since his arrival upon the hotel of Paris, Strether's is highly affected by the Parisian locales, which discloses his spatial intimacy with Paris.

3.3.1 Strether's Topophilic Feeling of "Freshness"

This section explores Strether's walking as a way to satisfy his longing for freshness, which consists of cultural flexibilities and personal freedom in Paris. The spatial experience in the central commercial area along the banks of the Seine served as the key spatial interface igniting Strether's *topophilia* at his middle-age. As mentioned in my previous chapter, *topophilia* is associated with objects of novelty, beauty and heritage. I examine Strether's walking within forty hours through Bank Right to Bank Left upon his revisiting of Paris. His night walk upon the first day of revisiting Paris shows his great infatuation with the surrounding things with exotic elements. His strolling route in central Paris unveils his inner landscape — his longing for a corner where he may accommodate his heart at ease. Strether finds a sense of comfort and freedom in the exterior spaces — in the boulevards and gardens in central Paris. Owing to Haussmann's urban planning, the Right Bank (*la Rive Droite*) usually

refers to a zone of political power and commerce. The Left Bank (*La Rive Gauche*) stands for an academic corner imbued with a scholarly atmosphere, in which Strether is quite at ease. In this novel, upon his arrival at Paris in the first day, Strether starts his nocturnal walking route along the boulevards in the right bank of the Seine. It proves to be his infatuation with various sensuous images on the streets. Strether's second-day strolling routes from the commercial sites in the Right Bank to the Latin Quarter in the Left Bank reveal his inner longing for spiritual renewal. This walking route contains the major tourist sites in central Paris. It starts with the Right Bank of the Seine — from the Rue Scribe, along the Rue de la Paix, to the Tuileries and the river, finally in the Luxembourg Gardens and Odéon in Latin Quarter of Left Bank. Strether then finally returns to his hotel in Right Bank. When passing the Tuileries and the Seine, Strether's repeated use of words like "indulg[ing] more than once" (James, *Ambassadors* 55) and "like[ing]" "too much" shows his spatial infatuation with Parisian exteriors. Strether's night walk at the Right Bank on the first day apparently proves to be his own growing feeling of "nocturnal progress" (54). The commercial area between "the bright congested Boulevard" (54) from Gymnase (theater) to the Café Riche, Place d'Opera presents an interwoven impression of modern landscape in the nineteenth century. Hence James' topophilic feeling of inner harmony in connection to his reviving free spirit is exhibited from his enjoyment of this "freshness" (53) of Parisian novelty and cultural inspirations.²⁶

The other aspect which requires our attention is Strether's celebration of France as "the country of art" (442), which exhibits his heightened emotion being among the surrounding exterior images.²⁷ Strether acknowledges his enjoyment of the Parisian

²⁶ Strether's sense of spatial intimacy with Europe could be traced from the beginning page of Chapter One, from which James draws a first connection between Europe and Strether's self-consciousness of "personal freedom" which "he hadn't known for years" (James *Ambassadors* 1).

²⁷ See Note 55.31 in *The Ambassadors*. Since "France is a country of art" where James' character, with

air. His joyful sense of freedom in the “wonderful” Paris mainly comes from his fondness of art and beauty. For Strether, the air comes with “a taste of something mixed with art” in the garden of Tuileries adjoining the Louvre (55), which attests his topophilia in connection to his intellectual pursuits. Mary Kyle Michael regards James’ repetition of the word “wonderful” as a device of language which emphasizes the irony James creates on purpose throughout the whole novel (117). However, her arguments acknowledge the essentiality of Strether’s spatial experiences that play a major role influencing his insight. Alternatively, I consider Strether’s walking to be James’ exhibition of Strether’s keen perception of his growing intimacy with Paris. The repetition of the word “wonderful” suggests his increasing affective tie with Paris throughout the novel despite the final discovery of his “belated vision” of Madame Vionnet and Chad’s affair. In addition, the word “wonderful” refers to Strether’s final recognition of his efforts for embracing every wonderful thing in Paris. In his letter to Howells, James considers his relationship with some of his friends in Paris to be “an oasis purity and goodness in the midst of this Parisian Babylon” (qtd. in Brooks 38); it shows James’ topophilia is affiliated with his hero Strether’s emotional awakening.

The passion for historical things is one of the features of *topophilia*. Strether’s “historic sense” (James, *Ambassadors* 55) of French buildings is akin to James’ personal interest in the historical buildings. It is reasonable to suggest that James instills his perspective to his figure Strether. In *A Little Tour in France*, James states that “the place [the Chateau de Blois in Touraine] is a course of French history” (26). These historical buildings built in different centuries embody some phases in French history, which present James with a wonderful impression of “a purely domestic architecture—an architecture of security and tranquility” (24) in one bright September

a heightened consciousness of beauty, could “act as a kind of catharsis to the emotions” (442).

morning. James' topophilic feelings are revealed from his indulgence in the charming taste of everything with "the happy proportions, the colors of this beautiful front" that shows revelations and inspirations in association with "an air of youth and gladness" (24). Furthermore, James' keen insight into the violent history of France and his critique of an era of industrialization are exposed. He is aware of "these sinister memories" (27), which are "covered with crimson and gold" (26) in the interiority of the castle.²⁸ James comments on a town near the castle of Blois, this place contains a "quiet white house in its garden on the road by the wide, clear river [the Loire], without the smoke, the bustle, the ugliness, of so much of our modern industry" (28), which suggests James' fondness of pastoral scenes and his perception of the negative influences of modern industry.

Strether's walking experience is akin to James' own spatial experiences in Paris. The charm of Parisian spatiality was stamped upon everything in the places of Paris. For instance, in his *Parisian Sketches*, James describes his pleasant walking on the boulevards on one Christmas Day such as "southern spring" and "the entertainment that a pedestrian relished" (39, 40). James' description regarding displayed things containing a row of booths for sale along each side of the boulevards. James' description of this rustic scene in a cosmopolitan Paris discloses his delightful impression towards the whole spectacle on the boulevards. The evidence could be found from his observing "a picturesque combination of the rustic and the highest Parisian civilization" (40). Strether's nostalgic pursuit of cultural heritage is also shown in the Louvre galleries. The Louvre is depicted as the "temple of taste" (James, *Ambassadors* 61) in the novel. Louvre offers Strether many cosmopolitan elements,

²⁸ Inside the castle of Blois, there are several buildings built in different era, as James indicates in his *Parisian Sketches*: "[t]he place is full of Catherine de Medici, of Henry III., of memories, of ghosts, of echoes, of possible evocations and revivals. It is covered with crimson and gold" (26).

not only tasteful but archaic factors. Strether's longing for novelty and for something intellectual are all substantially provided in Paris. As such, Strether acquires refreshment from his marvelous spatial experiences in the Louvre. Strether's spatial intimacy in connection to his impressive feeling of refreshment ignited by the sensuous stimulation of various things is evident in this novel.

3.3.2 Paris as the "Vast Bright Babylon" for Strether

The modern landscape of Paris emblems as a charming cultural mixture of the ancient heritage and the grandeur of the French empire, by which Strether's pursuit of intelligences and diversities could be nourished and satisfied. In *The Ambassadors*, James' use of "the vast bright Babylon" (63) is a spatial metaphor, which connotes Strether's intellectual pursuit of an archaic culture.

It hung before him this morning, the vast bright Babylon, like some huge iridescent object, a jewel brilliant and hard, in which parts were not to be discriminated nor differences comfortably marked. It twinkled and trembled and melted together, and what seemed all surface one moment seemed all depth the next. . . It all depends of course—which was a gleam of light. . . Was it at all possible for instance to like Paris enough without liking it too much? (63)

The quote above is a symbolic evocation of Strether's *topophilia* for Paris, which provides Strether with a whole landscape in connection to a cosmopolitan vision nourished by cultural varieties. Paris offers Strether impressive spatial experience, which could be seen from Strether's walks from the congested Boulevards to the Luxembourg Gardens. Strether's meditations in the Luxemburg Gardens show his observances of and fondness with Paris: Paris as "the vast bright Babylon," "a gleam of light" and "a jewel brilliant and hard" (63). Strether's imaginative capabilities are

inspired by the hidden revelations and inspiration throughout the scenes in Paris. His transitional/liminal stage of meditation is shown from his self-discovery of his own difference and his finding of “freedom” in the Luxembourg Gardens. He is aware of his “difference of being” (“finding himself so free”) in Paris (57). He becomes different from his being in his American hometown (“where he was and *as* he was,” that “form[s]” his “escape” in Paris) (57).

Strether’s continual comparison of differences in his mind, between Woollett and Paris, shows his changed perspectives and values, which unveil his conscious decision to release himself from his old and local restrictions in Woollett. Different settings underline the course of Strether’s reconstructed vision. His topophilia for Paris and his gradual awareness of human complexities are subtly disclosed along with his spatial experiences in Paris. While Chester in England reflects a quality of a life in order (11), Paris exhibits an alternative life style — a dynamic city providing diversities involving both antiquities and novelty in connection to freedom, intelligence, and sensuous pleasures.²⁹ It could be seen from Strether’s reflective mind to the “wandering western airs” in Paris: Europe is as “an elaborate engine,” which dissociates him from “the confined American” knowledge (55). Unlike Strether’s “first ‘note’ of Europe” in Chester in England, the free air in Paris (compared with his American hometown in Woollett) and his appreciation of old historical monuments in the banks of the Mersey in Chester testify how Paris provides much more cultural diversities.

²⁹ In *The Ambassadors*, Strether talks to Miss Gostrey while they take a walk in Chester, an old English town in the U.K. “Precisely. Woollett isn’t sure it ought to enjoy” (11). Meanwhile, in London, Strether’s meditation that “those before him and around him were not as the types of Woollett” (36) shows his comparison of two different cultures between Europe and America. In addition, with reference of the Notes 12.25 to *The Ambassadors*, Strether remarks on American constitutional values that they are “unimaginative, self-important and provincial, developing commercially but with little place for ideas, protected from ‘life’” in Woollett, which is “without much time for hedonism” (441). It shows the same continual comparison of European and American values in Strether’s mind.

The main purpose of James' detailed depiction of the setting is to introduce the mentality of his fictional figures, which is shown from his spatial metaphor referring to Paris as "the vast bright Babylon" (*Ambassadors* 63). On the one hand, Strether's intoxication with things exhibits his *topophilia* with Paris because its cultural varieties. On the other hand, James characterizes Strether's spiritual longing for his own space through his mediations in Paris. Strether's process of seeing is unveiled by a series of incidents and scenes. Accordingly, his longing for reviving his free young spirit demonstrates an intimate nearness as returning to one's *primitive* home—one's utmost comfort corer in one's mind. Unlike many moral absolutes and constraints in Woollett, Paris provides Strether with moral flexibilities and much more opportunities to develop his artful pursuit. It could explicate why Paris provides Strether with the utmost spatial intimacy. The first reason is that Paris is a place filled with brilliant and new things (novelty).³⁰ James himself considers Paris as a city of happiness. Obviously, a "Babylonic" culture that Strether sees in Paris implies double meaning. On the one hand, it refers to its urban life filled with kaleidoscopic things and people of intelligences, to which Strether is strongly allured. On the other hand, he perceives the intricate side of human complexities and human degeneration (as what Babylon literally means). He fully experiences his spatial intimacy and what is beneath the surface of man-made brilliance (gaslight). The major attractiveness that evokes Strether's topophilic feelings also brings a sense of personal freedom from old restrictions like in either Woollett or Chester.

The observant James discloses the ugly truth of international commerce. Despite his strong infatuation with Parisian images, James is not satisfied with a

³⁰ From Strether's walk in the Garden Luxembourg Gardens, we know he is thinking of the nocturnal walk in the right bank of the Seine at the first night upon arrival. Even after the night walk, in the second morning, the brilliancy of the night scene of Paris still hung before the eyes of Strether, which proves to be a great stimulation stirred in Strether's mind (James, *Ambassadors* 63).

single-minded perspective. In *The Art of Travel*, we could trace his comparison of Paris to a “fairy-tale” as well as his criticism of the “dullness of trade, the emptiness of its pockets” (216). Instead of a purely romantic tourist vision, we will find some sharp observation from Strether. All in all, James’ repeated evocation of the Babylonian culture could be seen as his fascination for the brilliant Parisian images and his archaic pursuit of historical heritages. In a way similar to Benjamin’s fascinations with things, I prove both James and Strether share the similar topophilic emotions for Paris — their fabulous impressions of the Parisian cultural heritage and cultural varieties. Paris obviously symbolizes “a vast bright Babylon.” The connection between James and Strether’s *topophilia* is clear.

3.3.3 Strether’s Enjoyment of Homely Detachment

To be away from home and yet to feel oneself everywhere at home; to see the world, to be at the centre of the world, and yet to remain hidden from the world, . . . (Baudelaire 10)

As mentioned before, the crowd is an inseparable essentiality contributed to the flâneur’s spatial intimacy. The flâneur’s *topophilia* is obviously based upon this unique topophilic infatuation comprised of both cheerful attachment and detachment — namely — a homely intimacy mixed up with a cheerful sense of detachment from the crowd. The first example could be seen from Strether’s feeling of solitude in the crowd, which marks out his homely sensation in Paris. James’ depiction of the “intrinsic charm” (*Ambassadors* 63) of the Luxembourg Gardens exhibits Strether’s pleasant walk. This scene introduces how his walk in the Luxembourg Gardens influences Strether’s emotional tie in connection to his artful pursuit in his youth (57):

It was at present as if the backward picture had hung there, the long crooked course, grey in the shadow of his solitude. It had been a dreadful cheerful

sociable solitude, a solitude of life or choice, of community; . . . (58)

Strether's "find[ing] himself young" (57) and his enjoyment of solitude is ignited by the "happiest of accidents" (James xxxiii), which is an exhibition of his *topophilia*. On the one hand, Strether is nostalgic for the familiar landscape he had ever visited with his wife in his youth. On the other hand, his enjoyment of being alone is shown from his "cheerful sociable solitude" in the Left Bank. In fact, Paris offers a room, a wide range of "possibilities" for him to think over his life to explore his potentialities and make cheerful adventures. Strether's walking consequently proves that the cosmopolitan Paris is the spatiality which exhibits his revision of a potential self as in youth and a chance of experiencing cultural diversities in Paris. Accordingly, James' *topophilia* can be seen from both his concept of cosmopolitanism and his characterization of Strether. Strether's inner perspective demonstrates the difference of the spatial atmosphere between the Right Bank and the Left Bank. His spatial intimacy shows his embrace of freedom and rejuvenation from his pondering of having more possibilities in his later life. Strether's homely intimacy is thus characterized by his sweet detachment from the Parisian landscape.

3.3.4 Strether's Belated Youth

This chapter concludes with James' depiction of Strether's "Process of Vision" (xxxvii). Strether's acquiring a new vision, both cosmopolitan (not local-restrictive) vision and perceptions of human complexities are fully visible throughout the scenes in this novel including two walking scenes in the Luxembourg Gardens, and in the tele-office before Strether visits Madame de Vionnet's mansion.

First, as mentioned in the last section, Strether's longing for freedom in Luxembourg Garden may be regarded as a longing for the comfort and freedom of being at his *primitive* home. At the same time, his seeking for releasing from local

constraints in Woollett is revealed. Strether's meditation marks the great differences between his hometown Woollett and Paris. It is Paris where his power is recharged from reconstructing his own life in the Luxembourg Gardens. Likewise, Strether's longing for intellectual connections with Paris could be traced from James' associating Théâtre de l'Odéon in Latin Quarter with "old imaginations" (63). It is as "the charming open-air array of literature classic and casual" (66). Thus, all the surrounding scenes and atmosphere like the "pleasant cafes that overlapped, under an awning, to the pavement" could be read as James' introduction of Strether's joyful impression of Paris. All these scenes reveal his pondering of the possibilities of reconstructing his life in a more cosmopolitan location.

Strether's values change further in Book Twelve, which forms an interesting comparison with the beginning of the novel. In comparison of the pivotal setting of finding the truth, his "belated vision" (393) after discovering Chad's affair with Madame de Vionnet in Book Eleventh, I detect Strether's self-revelation of his becoming in Book Twelfth.³¹ His becoming is shown from his epiphany that he is comfortable of being "mixed up with the typical tale of Paris" (398). The flâneur Strether's enjoyment of walking by the telegraph-office on the boulevard remains as usual, just like the days upon his arrival of Paris. His being struck with his own ease at treating their affairs shows his changed perspectives from old moralities in Woollett to the flexible perspectives he initiates in Paris. Strether's amusement about his own discovery of the other sides of Parisian society exposes his changed values: "he was really amused to think, on the side of the fierce, the sinister, the acute" in the "national

³¹ In his *Preface to The Ambassadors*, James identifies Strether as a "belated man of the world" who has "presented himself at the gate of that boundless menagerie primed with a moral scheme of the most approved pattern which yet framed to break down on any approach to vivid facts; that is to any at all liberal appreciation of them" (xxxvii). It suggests Paris offers Strether a fanciful landscape filled with many cultural dimensions and flexibilities, which not only reminds Strether of his belatedness but also revives his youthful spirit.

life” in Paris when he observes the little prompt Paris women in the tele-office (398). This setting demonstrates his reconstructed moralities as well as his understanding of the intricate facets of human relationship. Moreover, his walking along the boulevard to the telegraph-office shows his spatial infatuation with the busy daily life in Paris: “the vibration of the vast strange life of the town” (398). After the disclosure of Chad and Madam de Vionnet’s secret, Strether does not treat their adultery as seriously as what he used to be in Woollett. On the contrary, he perceives that good and evil qualities cannot be so simply opposed like in New England.

Furthermore, Strether’s sharpened insight of his appreciation of life than ever before in his middle-age attests to his belated maturity. For instance, in one of the beginning walking scenes, his wonderment at the Parisian spaces is apparent from his walking with the company of Miss Gostrey and John Little Bilham on the Boulevard Malesherbes. They are “strolling in a state of detachment practically luxurious for them, . . . that day with the sharp spell of Paris. . . They walked, wandered, wondered and, a little, lost themselves; Strether hadn’t had for years so rich a consciousness of time—” (78). Comparing the beginning walk with the final few scenes in Book Twelfth of this novel, in the summer’s end, we see how Strether becomes much more perceptive to the Parisian landscape. At the end of this novel, his cheerful walks with Miss Gostrey in one afternoon of the boulevard Champs-Élysées shows his emotional ties with Paris, as indicated in his description of “something of the innocent pleasure of handling rounded ivory” (414). Strether’s understanding of “the quiet lapse of life” after seeing the scene of “so melancholy a charm” exhibits his “sweetness of vain delay” (414). Strether’s self-reconfiguration is shown clearly: he is there “to see” his belated sweet youth:

They [Strether and Miss Gostrey] now took on to his fancy, Miss Gostrey

and he, the image of the Babes in the Woods; they could trust the merciful elements to let them continue at peace. He had been great already, as he knew, at postponements; but he had only to get afresh into the rhythm of one to feel its attraction. It amused him to say to himself that he might for all the world have been going to die — die resignedly; the scene was filled for him with so deep a death-bed hush, so melancholy a charm. That meant the postponement of everything else — which made so far the quiet lapse of life; . . . he was to see, at the best, what Woollett would be with everything there changed for him. . . Well, the summer's end would show; his suspense had meanwhile exactly the sweetness of vain delay. (414)

At the same time, the nearby arcade (shop) near Odéon, with which Strether is quite infatuated, offers a deeper disclosure of his affective tie with the things imbued with the dual qualities of history and novelty, which suggests his pursuit of prolonged youthful spirit:

He wasn't there to dip, to consume—he was there to reconstruct. He wasn't there on some chance of feeling the brush of the wing of the stray spirit of youth. He felt it in fact, he had it beside him; the old arcade indeed, as his inner sense listened, gave out the faint sound, as from far off, of the wild waving of wings. (66-67)

The “old arcade” ignites Strether's “inner sense” with the “far-off” “faint sound” of the “wild waving of wings” of his youthful spirit (66-67). On the streets of Latin Quarter, Strether's existential thirst for something wild and free could be seen in his diction of “wild waving of wings” (66-67). His wish to be out of a regular life at his middle age is revived through the revelations of old arcade as well as other scenes in Paris. This “inner sense” connecting to one's deeper mind could be seen as a kind of

spatial intimacy. Provided with his walking experiences in Latin Quarter, Strether may release his mind and start to listen to his inner voice, embracing his free spirit of youth, which he had not tried for years.





Chapter Four

The Collectors, the Interior and Intermediate Space

The discussion in this chapter falls into two major dimensions, containing an investigation on the interconnectedness between the collector's spatial nearness and the interior, and a scrutiny into how intermediate space serves as a transitional space providing rooms for Strether's finding of a renewed self in *The Ambassadors*. On the one hand, by using Benjamin's notion of the collector in connection to the interior, I explore how Strether's intimate nearness is ignited through a number of significant interiors. On the other hand, through exploring the intermediate space including gardens, balconies, and some rural sites near Paris, this chapter thereby unveils Strether's process of changed perspectives. In *The Arcades Project*, Benjamin shows how a collector's intoxication with a constellation of things provides one with a dream world by an act of collecting. In order to explicate how collecting is a way of homing, this chapter firstly examines Benjamin's childhood experiences in relation to his concepts of home and the world in his *One Way Street* and *Berlin Childhood around 1900*, and his insight of the collector in *The Arcades Project*. Through one's collections, the collector embraces homely comfort and a sense of freedom in a cosmopolitan house. Then, it brings forth further discussions on Strether's spatial nearness with the collector in the second section: Madame Marie de Vionnet and Miss Maria Gostrey in this novel. The third section analyzes Strether's observations of the interior decorations in the places of Chad Newsome and John Little Bilham. His intimate nearness with these interior spaces unveils his longing for the revival of his free youthful spirit. In the fourth section, I exhibit how Strether's emotional tie with

intermediate spaces in this novel demonstrates a process of his changed perspectives and his becoming. Strether's inner harmony in the French rural scenes is in line with the intimate nearness he finds in the French landscape painter Lambinet's pictures.

4.1 Collecting as Homing

Collecting is a form of practical memory, and of all the profane manifestations of "nearness" it is the most binding. (Benjamin 205)

All of these—the "objective" data together with the other—come together, for the true collector, in every single one of his possessions, to form a whole magic encyclopedia, a world order, . . . (Benjamin 207)

In Benjamin's "Collector" in *The Arcades Project*, a collector's gatherings are featured with both one's pursuit of past memory and novelties, and the bourgeoisie coziness in a cosmopolitan house. On one hand, Benjamin's statement of collecting as "a form of practical memory" and all "the profane manifestations of 'nearness'" exhibits a bourgeoisie collector's homely intimacy in amidst of one's private collections (205). On the other hand, Benjamin's emphasis on the "true" collector's fascination with "a whole magic encyclopedia" — "a world order" (207) in a constellation of his private possessions — marks out a collector's cosmopolitan perspective. In particular, Benjamin's juxtaposition of "practical memory" and "profane manifestation" points to a bourgeoisie collection of merchandized items instead of valuable possessions. Each of the collected items demonstrates a spirit of cosmopolitanism.

According to Benjamin, each object contains a private history—a landscape—and symbolizes worlds/cosmos. If Benjamin's Paris is seen as a great domestic

interior space, his embrace of “all human knowledge” (205) through the collector’s domestic space exhibits not only a collector’s homely comfort but one’s spirit of cosmopolitan. These collections represent not only their current images but also their “entire past” (207) that demonstrates their cultural past in association with private memory. In Benjamin’s *One-Way Street*, an essayistic account of his daily observations in Berlin, Benjamin’s collections manifest his topophilic feelings. His description of an antique spoon regarding its “capacity to feed” the heroes of “the greatest epic writers” (Benjamin 73) shows his nostalgic pursuit of homely intimacy, especially his memory with his family.

Benjamin’s strong “passion” for butterfly collections could be also seen as his infatuation with things in connection to a distant world. In his *Berlin Childhood around 1900*, Benjamin’s butterfly collection evokes his homely intimacy with his family remembrance in connection to the word “Brauhausberg” (52). In “Butterfly Hunt” (50-53), once Benjamin sees his butterfly collection in his room, he recalls the well-kept garden of “the Brauhausberg” near Potsdam (“Brewery” Hill) (52), where his family had summer residence: “The air teeming with butterflies in his boyhood room vibrates the word” (52). The name “the Brauhausberg,” imbued with “the wind and scents, foliage and sun,” reminds him of his cheerful summer at a “bluemisted hill” with his parents (52). All these surrounding images have been interwoven into a beautiful and unforgettable harmonious picture in connection with his emotional bond with his homeland.

A Benjaminian collector’s empathy with things always linked with the interior objects, indicating a sense of bourgeois coziness and cosmopolite’s *topophilia*. In his “Exposé” of *The Arcades Project*, Benjamin’s concept regarding the connection between home and the world sheds light on our understanding of the interior, which is

not only like a “shell” but “a box in the theater of the world” (4, 19). Benjamin’s idea of how “dwelling becomes a shell” (4) is close to Bachelard’s concept of “an immense cosmos house” (Bachelard 51), where one finds inner peace in one’s utmost inner corner in one’s mind. Namely, a whole universe comes to inhabit in one’s house of imagination, an “immense cosmic house” — a house dynamically allows “the universe comes to inhabit his house” (Bachelard 51). Benjamin’s idea of a “shell” refers to the pursuit of one “private individual” for homely comfort in one’s interior (*Arcades Project* 4, 19):

The private individual, who in the office has to deal with realities, needs the domestic interior to sustain him in his illusions. . . From this derive the phantasmagorias of the interior—which, for the private individual, represents the universe. In the interior, he brings together remote locales and memories of the past. His living room is a box in the theater of the world. (19)

Empathy with things extinguishes the physical boundary between the interior and the exterior world. In an industrial society, the Benjaminian collector may sustain one’s individuality in one’s “universe” filled with collections, which brings the collector a sense of comfort. Owing to the emergence of the bourgeois, there is a pursuit of one’s individual “coziness” (Benjamin, *Arcades Project* 6) at home during the off-hours. Thus, the habitant’s domestic interior filled with collections serves as the interface that connects one’s mind with one’s “universe” (19) or “shell” (4). Benjamin’s metaphor of “living room” as “a box in the theater of the world” (19) marks out the collector’s transcendental connection with things. In a sense, the collector’s *topophilia* can be considered as embracing “bourgeoisie security” (88) as Benjamin mentions in

his *Berlin Childhood around 1900*.³² In *The Arcades Project*, Benjamin's tracing of the etymology of "comfort" requires our special attention. "Comfort" originally refers to a sense of "consolation" (225). It is used extensively as an implication of "well-being," and "rational conveniences" later (225). The interior is to a collector's private "universe" as the exterior is to the flâneur's home on the streets. The common key factor is one's intoxication with things, in which one is imbued with the comfortable feeling of "well-being" (19). For a true Benjaminian collector, home is therefore the interior where one may find one's longing for things in connection to the past and the world, which brings him a sense of individual coziness and of intimacy.

4.2 The Collectors in *The Ambassadors*

To dwell means to leave traces. . . . the traces of the inhabitant are imprinted in the interior. (Benjamin 9)

[E]verything would happen right before our eyes; everything would strike us. But this is the way things are for the great collector. They strike them. How he himself pursues and encounters them, what changes in the ensemble of items are effected by a newly supervening item — all this shows him his affairs in constant flux. . . we may say, the collector lives a piece of dream life. (Benjamin 205)

Benjamin explains the collector's longing to sustain one's private past in one's private space, and one's pursuit of new things in *The Arcades Project*. On one hand, we could regard all of the inhabitant's "traces" (9) as a personal history. On the other hand, the

³² This "bourgeois security" (88) is suggested in Walter Benjamin's essay "Blumeshof 12" in his *Berlin Childhood around 1900*, in which he describes his intimate nearness with a whole world from the bourgeoisie collections from all over the world in the house of his maternal grandmother.

inhabitant's collections mark out the collector's fascinations with the "dream life" (205) filled with the "phantasmagorias" (19) of kaleidoscopic things in his own interiors. Benjamin's interest in novelties is seen from his shock by how every collection would "strike" his eyes through a "constant flux" of the novelties (205) — a constellation of things in one's interiors. In his *Preface to The Ambassadors*, James has an affirmative connection to things: all "actualities" in places contain "excitement" evoked by "the unseen and the occult, in a scheme half-grasped, by the light" (xxxiii), through which one may read numerous revelations and impressions. He characterizes Strether through a constellation of scenes and things, as he states in the *Preface* that "[t]here is the story of one's hero," and "thanks to the intimate connexion of things, the story of one's story itself" (xxxiv). Strether's cheerful strolling in a Paris garden on a Sunday afternoon attests to the importance of offering a suitable situation, which provides a "supplement of situation logically involved" (xxxiii). We observe how James' presenting of situations is managed in order to exhibit Strether's process of seeing through his reading of a constellation of enchanting implications in different scenes.

4.2.1 Miss Maria Gostrey's Crowded Rooms

In James' *The Ambassadors*, the first private space, Miss Maria Gostrey's rooms in the little entresol of the Quartier Marboeuf, provides a typical exemplification of a Benjaminian collector's space. Her crowded rooms, filled with bargain collections from markets all over the world, not only exhibit Miss Gostrey's bourgeoisie collections, but also underline her spirit of cosmopolitanism. After several cheerful walks with Miss Gostrey, in the U. K. and in Paris respectively, Strether visits her apartment. The American expatriate lives in an apartment displaying her collections of fanciful objects and ornaments. He is drawn to her places full of exotic

collections, which reveals traces of all her travelling experiences in Europe. Miss Gostrey spends most of her life in Europe. She surprises Strether with her young looking though she is in her mid-thirties. She is a well-educated and clever observer, and “a woman of fashion” (28). She becomes Strether’s confidante during his stay in Paris.

Miss Gostrey’s collections obviously exhibit both qualities of a Benjaminian collector and a Jamesian cosmopolite.³³ She demonstrates her quality as a Benjaminian collector. On one hand, Miss Gostrey’s collections of objects from “a thousand flights” (83) testify to her spirit of individuality, free movement and her cosmopolitanism. Strether describes her collections in her crowded rooms: “she had gathered, as she said, picking them up in a thousand flights and funny little passionate pounces, the makings of a final nest” (83). They all explicitly show Miss Gostrey’s strong passion for collecting exotic objects, which contribute to her homely comfort in a cosmopolitan house/ “nest” (83). On the other hand, Strether’s spatial intimacy is revealed from the moment he crossed “the threshold of the little entresol of the Quartier Marbeouf” “she had gathered” (83). More than his fondness of Chad’s place, Strether shows much infatuation with Miss Gostrey’s crowded little rooms, in which his sense of “liberty” (83) exhibits his homely comfort. James’ depictions such as “the empire of ‘things’” and “the pride of life” in “their temples” demonstrate Strether’s intense impressions about her personal territory (83). These examples unveil not only Miss Gostrey’s obsessions with collecting, but Strether’s own enjoyment in her places.

Furthermore, Strether sees unmeasurable values in those accumulated items in

³³ Her experiences of cosmopolitanism could be traced from her early education in Geneva in Switzerland where she attended school and met Marie de Vionnet in her girlhood.

her crowded dusky rooms. Miss Gostrey's collected items might not be luxurious and normal, but his fondness of her collections such as "an old ivory or an old brocade" could be noticed. Her place is "the innermost nook of the shrine — as brown as a pirate's café. In the brownness were glints of gold, patches of purple were in the gloom; objects all that caught, through the muslin, with their high rarity, the light of the low windows" (83). The two juxtaposed descriptions, her "compact and crowded little chambers, almost dusky" in the beginning, and "the brownness" — "glints of gold" later, expose Strether's topophilic feelings as well as his new perspectives of his changed values from pragmatism to cosmopolitanism. His new perspective is unveiled through his depiction of her places as a "circle" filled with the atmosphere of a "warm" life between Miss Gostrey and himself (84). Her "circle" of her bourgeoisie collections, in the eyes of Strether, evidently marks out a spirit of cosmopolitanism, a different life style aside from his past spatial experiences. The clues above demonstrate both Strether's feeling of intimacy with her places and his longing for worldwide experiences like Miss Gostrey's.

Strether's expression "the lust of the eyes" (83) attests to his wonderment at various exotic collections in Miss Gostrey's small rooms. Her collections might not be mostly valuable objects in terms of utilitarianism in an industrial era, but they account for her numerous spatial movements in Europe. Behaving not like a traditional American woman at that time, she is certainly in tune with a Parisian style of living — to which Strether is strongly attracted and feels intimate with. Strether's *topophilia*, ignited by the amazing collections in her places, influences his consideration of an alternative life style like hers. He describes "this first occasion" as "his development of that truth" after their pleasant gathering (84).

In comparison with the initial expression when entering Miss Gostrey's

crowded rooms, Strether increasingly feels homely intimacy and inner harmony with her back house and Dutch-looking dining room. In Book Ninth, he develops a sense of comfort and familiarity in the retreat at Miss Gostrey's back house with a view of an old garden that had been saved from modern ravage. Miss Gostrey's place serves as his shelter for him to seek advices. Strether's admiration for Miss Gostrey is revealed from his growing intimacy with her places: he describes her and her place as a "pure flame" in "her cave of treasure" and "a lamp in a "Byzantine vault" (299). The depiction corresponds to the first spatial impression of her apartment. His awareness that Miss Gostrey is his "blessing" (84) exposes his topophilic feelings influenced by his contact with her in Paris. In Book Twelfth, at the final ending scene in Maria Gostrey's little dining room at the back house with a view of a strap of old garden, he acknowledges that his Paris impressions are "all phantasmagoric" (420). He reveals his homely comfort at her warm place filled with collections of "beauty and knowledge" (438) through her "selection" (438) — her bourgeoisie behavior as well her free spirit. Strether is deeply moved in her "little Dutch-looking dining-room" (433):

[T]he place had never before struck him as so sacred to pleasant knowledge, to intimate charm, to antique order, to a neatness that was almost august. To sit there was, as he had told his hostess before, to see life reflected for the time in ideally kept pewter; which was somehow becoming, improving to life, so that one's eyes were held and comforted. Strether's were comforted at all events now—and the more that it was the last time—with the charming effect, on the board bare of a cloth and proud of its perfect surface, of the small old crockery and old silver, matched by the more substantial pieces happily disposed about the room. (433)

Maria Gostrey's little dining room surprises Strether with its "haunt of ancient peace," which ignites his intimate nearness with their "sacred" "pleasant knowledge," and the "intimate charm" of "antique order" (433). This is the *primitive* home where he may ease his mind, with the feelings of comfort and liberties. It is in the interior that Strether may reflect upon his whole life as well as find a better self.

James' characterization of Strether's spatial experiences in Miss Gostrey's rooms, on one hand, exhibits Miss Gostrey as a typical Benjaminian collector because of her fondness of collecting various exotic collections. It exhibits her free spirit and her independence. Her unconventional collections probably may not be easily categorized in her contemporary time, which exhibit a new spirit in her time — her individuality. Strether's longing for freedom and a sense of familiarity is thus evoked through her amazing collections in her interior spaces.

4.2.2 Madame Marie de Vionnet's Old Grand Mansion

This section examines Strether's profound fondness of Madame Marie de Vionnet's old grand mansion on the Rue de Bellechasse, which reveals his passion for an old glorious Paris. Unlike Miss Gostrey's apartment with bargained items from markets, Madame de Vionnet's old house in the Rue de Bellechasse represents a different old world with some Napoleonic glamour. Strether's first joyful impression regarding her valuable collections could be seen from his description: "in the midst of possessions not vulgarly numerous but hereditary cherished charming" (James 171). His observations of their moments together regarding "the very air in which they sat, by the high cold delicate room, the world outside and the little splash in the court, by the First Empire and the relicts in the stiff cabinets" (175) show Strether's deep infatuation with the ancient style of her space. Lots of revelations in connection to the ancient Paris inspired by her large court impress him, which could be seen from his

depictions: “the habit of privacy, the peace of intervals, the dignity of distances and approaches,” “the house, to his restless sense, was in the high homely style of an elder day, and the ancient Paris that he was always looking for —” (171). Strether marks out the old glory and “some prosperity of the First Empire, some Napoleonic glamour, some dim lustre of the great legend” from “all the consular chairs and mythological brasses and sphinxes’ heads and faded surfaces of satin striped with alternate silk” (172). His admiration for her charming and tasteful possessions is clear.

The place itself went further back—that he guessed, and how old Paris continued in a manner to echo there; but the post-revolutionary period, the world he vaguely thought of as the world of Chateaubriand, . . . a stamp impressed on sundry small objects, ornaments and relics. He [Strether] had never before, to his knowledge, had present to him relics, of any special dignity, of a private order. . . (172)

Strether delineates his topophilic longing for some knowledge in connection to a grandeur and special dignity of some historical past, seen from a piece of ornamental relics and small objects. He could see all periods of history coexist in her house with “a private order — little old miniatures, medallions, pictures, books; books in leather bindings, pinkish and greenish, with gilt garlands on the back, ranged, together with other promiscuous properties, under the glass of brass-mounted cabinets” (172). The relics of history leave their traces on one’s collections — namely — the things before his eyes represent a fragmental personal history of the glory of her family. Strether’s perceptions “sharpen” through “the view of something old, old, old, the oldest thing he ha[s] ever personally touched” (402), which marks out his imperious desire for some connections with cultural heritages. The glory of the history of her splendid family is revealed through the fragmental relics of her personal collections in her

luxurious house.

The interior also represents one's character. Strether is impressed with his new discovery of Madame de Vionnet's "own note" of "simplicity" (402), which can be traced from his descriptions of his final visit to her grand mansion:

[A] mystic touch the pathetic, the noble analogy. . . The associations of the place, all felt again; the gleam here and there, in the subdued light, of glass and gilt and parquet, with the quietness of her own note as the centre . . .
(401-02)

Strether describes her "wonderful" (402) way thus towards the end of novel: "What was truly wonderful was her way of differing so from time to time without detriment to her simplicity" (402). Paris, the Babylon-like city, the city of delights and freedom, to his astonishment, unveils virtues even after in his new discovery of the adulterous *Femme Du Monde* Marie de Vionnet's devoted love for Chad. This scene explicates Strether's changed values — from a person of moral absolutes in Woollett to a cosmopolite with flexible perspectives he initiates in Paris. Nothing is absolute right or false. He sees through Madame de Vionnet's virtues of her simplicity in a noble family and her devotion to Chad, instead of merely focusing on their adultery.

In comparison, unlike Madame de Vionnet's family collections, the bourgeois Miss Gostrey is a true Benjaminian collector because of her fondness of collecting various objects exchanged from the markets. Miss Gostrey apparently has great enjoyment in collecting. Madame de Vionnet is a collector in a broad sense, but she is not a Benjaminian collector, because her collections are mostly inherited for centuries, not common items she collected from the markets. In contrast with Miss Gostrey's "little museums of bargains" and "Chad's lovely home" filled with the selected exchanged items from the markets (172), the valuable properties in the occupant of

the old mansion of Madame de Vionnet obviously are inherited for centuries. Her valuable possessions reveal the “private honour” (173) of her grand family history in connection to “some prosperity of the First Empire” (172). Her “old accumulations that had possibly from time to time shrunken than on any contemporary method of acquisition or form of curiosity” (172) impress him. Strether’s fondness of her precious possessions inherited for centuries is originated from his pursuit of archaic things, which brings him a familiar sense of spatial intimacy.

4.3 The Interior

Strether’s inner upmost longing for freedom, a renewal of his life released from the Puritan restrictions in Woollett, is further exhibited in his spatial experiences in two of his young compatriots’ dwellings, the chic apartment of Chad Newsome and the shabby room of John Little Bilham. Strether’s great admiration for these two young intelligences, Chad Newsome and Little Bilham who come from two different family backgrounds, is connected to the revival of his prolonged youthful spirit.

4.3.1 Chad Newsome’s Apartment on Boulevard Malesherbes

Chad’s dwelling accounts explicitly for its host’s refinement and a different life style. Strether’s change of his prejudice toward Chad is shown from his first visit to Chad’s house. In Book Second, Strether strolls on Boulevard Malesherbes where Chad’s apartment is situated. Strether’s astonishment and fondness of its outlook stem from its fanciful “[h]igh broad clear” outlook with “the complexion of the stone” made of “a cold, fair grey stone warmed and polished by life” (James 68). His love of Chad’s house is exhibited when he perceives his place as “a charming place; full of beautiful and valuable things” (75). Though the host Chad is absent, he visits his apartment on the third floor (where he meets young Little Bilham, a friend of Chad’s,

who is a poor apprentice studying painting in Paris). Strether's shock at and appreciation of Chad's transformation when he finally meets him can be traced from his shock with Chad's "refinement" (99). He is curious to fathom how Chad's manner is being transformed in Paris. Out of his new discovery of Chad's appearance and temperature comes his impression that it is a "wonderful" change (98). Despite in Book Twelfth, it turns to be an irony that Strether judges Chad as a "creature" (408) exploiting Madame de Vionnet's deep love for him.

Strether's pursuit of different life style is revealed in his observation of "a different stamp" (317) in one festive gathering in Chad's apartment. In Book Tenth, the most festive scene that he has ever seen in his life appears in Chad's room. He is infatuated with his surrounding images, which contain Chad's young guests made "by selection" (317), and sensuous things displayed — the quantity and quality of the meals, the decorations, the light, the sound, and the fragrance. His perception of the scene containing "the overflow of hospitality" and "the high tide of response" exposes a strong influence upon his mind (317). Strether's spatial intimacy in connection with his spirit of youth is obviously revived in Chad's dwelling.

4.3.2 Little Bilham's Shabby Place

Strether is attracted to Little Bilham's creative power of painting contemporary art, his dignity despite his shabby place, and his innocence. Like his appreciation of Chad's refined transformation, he finds "an equal fond of familiarity" (James 88) in Little Bilham. He admires Little Bilham's "beautiful intelligence" (88), not only with his company of the walking tour in the Louvre but also with his creativities in painting. Little Bilham's modern paintings displayed in his place symbolizes a spirit of youth, which ignites Strether's youthful spirit connected with his own artful pursuit in his twenties. Young artists like Little Bilham are nourished in a contemporary

metropolitan Paris, which provides an infusion of old and new landscapes that stimulate the young art apprentice's creativities.

Strether is also profoundly affected to Little Bilham's dignified manner in his poor place, which is revealed from his descriptions such as "fresh" with "an odd and engaging dignity," even though the neighborhood in which he lives is "sort of social shabbiness" (89). Strether is attracted to the charm of his place: "these things wove round the occasion a spell to which our hero unreservedly surrendered" (89). In this social occasion, his awareness of his changed perspective from a pragmatist to an idealist is unveiled from their talks. He enjoys the intellectual talks with Little Bilham and his "ingenuous compatriots" (89). Their "candour" surpasses the candor of Woollett because of their "delicate daubs and the free discriminations" (89) involving "references" and "enthusiasms and execrations" (89). Despite they are with the strange outlook: "red-haired and long-legged" and "quaint and queer and dear and droll" unlike decent people he knows in Woollett (89). All these direct communications and sharing of intellectual thoughts regarding contemporary art have interwoven into Strether's enjoyment in their intellectual talks. He is impressed by their talks such as "the aesthetic lyre" drawing from the "wonderful airs" (89).

Strether's observation of Little Bilham's life style with an "admirable innocence" (89-90) marks out his appreciation and comprehension of their golden qualities. His appreciation of "the small sublime indifferences and independences" in Little Bilham's poor place (89) shows his intimacy and identification with them. He is overwhelmed in "its overflow of taste and convictions and its lack of nearly all else" (89). His empathy with his surrounding images as well as his nearness to Little Bilham are in connection to his own prolonged young spirit like his young compatriots.

Strether's pursuit of freedom is in association with his longing for being a cosmopolite who casts out local constraints and prejudices. It could be seen from his meditation: he wants to be able to "like his specimen with a clear close conscience" at a world in which he has no "prejudice" (88). His admiration for Little Bilham is based on his "small artist-man's way" (88) out of innocence, and his "serenity" (88) as a poor painter. He sees what he wants in Little Bilham, who is quite comfortable with his shabbiness. The intelligent Little Bilham's dignified manner in contrast to his shabby place impresses Strether.

Strether's belated vision of youth is shown from his advice to Little Bilham, who is of Chad's age but with different family backgrounds. The poor Little Bilham does not have family support, with whom Strether feels to whom he can relate. He advises Little Bilham to try the "affair of life" (153) — the "wonderful" (152) experience that Strether has missed in his prime. James' perception of his free youthful spirit in the Louvre is akin to his hero Strether, who is always looking for freedom to revive his youthful vigor in Paris. James writes down his own topophilic emotions for the "wondrous Galerie d'Apollon" (196) in the Louvre in his early days. Even after many years, James terms his "extraordinary experience" in the Louvre as "a splendid scene of things," from which he gains his "historic vision" from his "intellectual experience" (196). Likewise, not only does Strether feel "fresh" (89) in Little Bilham's shabby place, but his encounter with Chad in his chic house makes him feel "young" (100). Both James' "young consciousness" (156) and Strether's "stray spirit of youth" (66) are closely bound up with their early spatial experiences in Paris.

4.4 Intermediate Space

Strether's topophilic feelings in relation to his changed perspectives is further explored through the transitional spaces between the interior and the exterior, in which I explicate how Strether is alert and aware of human complexities in Paris involving balcony and garden scenes in this novel. Strether, a New Englander, acquires his spatial intimacy in Paris than in his American hometown Woollett. His homely intimacy in connection to his longing for the mixture of old and new, and flexibilities of life dimensions in Paris will be further explored in this chapter.

4.4.1 The Balcony

The balcony, a private corner from the exterior, provides both street view and private space for Strether's meditation. By comparing several balcony scenes in Chad's places, I elucidate how Strether achieves his maturity in the end. This section firstly examines Strether's spatial experiences of Chad's balcony on the Boulevard Malesherbes. In Book Two, Strether's first impression of Chad's space is revealed from his meditation in Chad's balcony in a high broad house. His reflections on and full occupation with these kaleidoscopic images in the summer night scenes reveal his enjoyment in Paris. Chad's places symbolize the spirit of freedom which Strether enjoys. In Book Eleventh, Strether spends one hour on meditation in Chad's balcony before midnight. It is an hour full of revelations and recognitions of the freedom he longs for, which is in connection to his remorse containing a sense of loss in his youth. Strether's finding himself in possession of the youth invoked in Chad's absence, "the spirit of the place" (James 354). It is freedom that he had come for: the freedom was "the freedom that most brought him round again to the youth of his own" (354). Several months later, at the end of his adventure, Strether still shows his fondness of the lightened city of Paris at the tender night. As James states, all things

have its merit beneath its surface. The “spirit of the space” he finds in Chad’s place is the freedom that evokes his youthful consciousness.

Strether’s “circle” is a concept similar to Benjamin’s “magic circle” (205) referring to the collectors’ interior spaces filled with things that bring the collectors much homely intimacy. In describing Chad’s places as “circle[s]” (317, 353), Strether uses the same word “circle” (84) to depict Miss Gostrey’s place. His sense of freedom is evoked in his *topophilia*. His thirst for reviving his prolonged youth is seen: “the youth he had long ago missed — a queer concrete presence, full of mystery, yet full of reality (354). The same spatial intimacy is also found by Strether in Little Bilham’s shabby place. He desires to spend some more quiet minutes with him, “at an unprecedented point of intimacy” (321) which he always finds “soothing and even a little inspiring” (320). In a sense, Strether finds homely intimacy in relation to freedom in Miss Gostrey, Little Bilham and Chad’s spaces.

Strether’s changed vision through the revelations inspired in Paris is demonstrated from his courage to face reality and to embrace freedom. He originally comes to Paris for the reason of being an envoy consigned by his lover Mrs. Newsome to take her son Chad back to Woollett: “he had come for some wrong, and yet as excited as if he had come for some freedom” (354). After a number of significant scenes in Paris, Strether is imbued with a sense of excitement, which is probably accompanied with an acceptance of loss and pain in life: “the actual appeal of everything was none the less that everything represented the substance of his loss” (354). His imaginative capability keeps his life going wherever he goes.

Strether’s change of values could be also seen in another scene in the hotel where Sara Pocock stayed — another envoy sent by her mother Mrs. Newsome. In the balcony of her hotel room, his perception of her salon reveals his judgement of her —

an infertile life of emptiness and coldness in comparison with the intellectual and flexible life in Paris: “the room looked empty as only a room can look in Paris, of a fine afternoon, when the faint murmur of the huge collective life, carried on out of doors, strays among scattered objects even as a summer air idles in a lonely garden (306-07). After visiting both Miss Gostrey and Madame de Vionnet’s fantastic spaces, Strether’s observations of Sara’s “empty” and scattered objects “as a summer air idles in a lonely garden” show his sharp perceptions of Sara. Her “conscious eyes” (319) and her “fine cold thought” (376) come from old moralities — values emphasized in Woollett. He thinks in a reverse way now. While Paris stands for the vast intellectual pursuit of “Babylonian culture” in a great extent, the life in Woollett where Sara comes from represents a different practical life filled with restrictions. Strether has moved from an old world of morality and decency to a modern world of cultural varieties and flexibilities.

4.4.2 The Fantastic Garden of the Italian Sculptor Gloriani

The garden, a semi-opened space between the interior and the exterior, provides a transitional space for Strether’s observation and thinking in association with his comparison of two values. His infatuation with archaic and exotic things is exhibited in the sophisticated and fanciful garden of the great Italian Sculptor Gloriani: “a small pavilion, clear-faced and sequestered, an effect of polished parquet, of fine white panel and spare sallow gilt, of decoration delicate and rare, in the heart of the Faubourg Saint-Germain. . . .” (James 136). He feels the nearness of history: “he had the sense of names in the air, of ghosts at the windows, of signs and tokens, a whole range of expression, all about him, . . . (137). Seeing through a constellation of dazzling spatial images in Gloriani’s garden, Strether forms a deep affection for people and things. His thinking of the great Gloriani as “the prodigy of type” (137)

reveals his profound enjoyment of talking to him. Strether's finding of "the happy instant" and "a new light" (138) exhibits his spatial intimacy as well as his reading of hidden revelations in this exotic garden.

According to James, the "germ" (qtd. in Cargill 439) of this novel derives from an anecdote. At the Paris garden of an American painter, young Jonathan Sturges (1864-1909) chanced upon the novelist William Dean Howells (1837-1920) and was advised by him: "Live. Live all you can: It's a mistake not to" (qtd. in Cargill 439). James took note one year later in October 31, 1895. This anecdote later becomes the inspiration for this novel. Below is the frequently quoted dialogue regarding Strether's advice to Little Bilham in the sculptor's garden in *The Ambassadors*, which shows his longing for a prolonged youth:

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? . . . and now I'm 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. The affair—I mean the affair of life—couldn't, no doubt, have been different for me; . . . Still, one has the illusion of freedom; therefore don't be, like me, without the illusion of freedom. I was either, at the right time, too stupid or too intelligent to have it, and now I'm a case of reaction against the mistake; . . . The right time is *any* time that one is still so lucky as to have. You've plenty; that's the great thing; you're, as I say, damn you, so happily and hatefully young. . . Do what you like so long as you don't make *my* mistake. For it *was* a mistake. Live!' (James 153-54)

Though Little Bilham is poor, he has plenty of time to pursue the intellectual life in

Paris. In spite of “an illusion of freedom” (153), one had better try than not to try in one’s youth. Strether’s advice to the young Little Bilham, whom he likes and desires to befriend, seemingly encourages himself to rebuild his later life because of his infatuation with every sort of sensations and revelations in these places. They all remind him of his twenties in Paris.³⁴

The other reason why Strether feels empathetic towards Little Bilham might be that he wants to be an art student in his prime. His longing for free spirit in his middle age is shown: “in a foreign town, in the afternoon of life,” “he would have liked to be free to be” himself (206-07). In Book Seventh, his spatial experience in Notre Dame reveals his nearness with the place provides him with “a sense of safety, of simplification” (206): “the mighty monument laid upon him its spell. In a sense, his thinking suggests the mid-aged Strether’s inner harmony originated from his longing for freedom like what he embraces in the air of Paris in his later life.

In fact, as indicated by James himself in his *Preface*, Strether’s spatial movement in Paris is a demonstration of his “process of vision” (xxx):³⁵

Such is the gist of Strether’s appeal to the impressed youth, whom he likes and whom he desires to befriend; the word ‘mistake’ occurs several times, it will be seen, in the course of his remarks—which gives the measure of the signal warning he feels attached to his case. . . *Would* there yet perhaps be time for reparation? . . . The answer to which is that he now at all events *sees*; so that the business of my tale and the march of my action, not to say the precious moral of everything, is just my demonstration of this process of vision. (xxix-xxx)

³⁴ In a sense, Strether seems to treat Little Bilham as his young son who died young.

³⁵ *The Ambassadors* was first published 1903. In 1985, Christopher Butler’s *Introduction and Notes* added to the first issue of a World’s Classics paperback provide the readers further readings.

James' elucidation of "this process of vision" (xxx) supports my argument that Strether's perception of what he "*sees*" marks out the course of his reconstructed vision in connection to his tophobic emotions— one's freedom as being young. His search for his youthful spirit is shown not only from his advice to the impressed youth Little Bilham — to try every possibility in life. By presenting different situations set in various scenes in Paris, James demonstrates the course of Strether's seeing in different locales.

Strether's being bounded up with time results from his anxieties in his fifties, and his hurry to grasp "the wing of the stray spirit of youth" (James 66). Like many critics, Landau regards Strether's fiancée in Woollett — the rich and demanding widower Mrs. Newsome as the major menace for Strether. Landau suggests this novel is "seeded with reference of time" (62), which implies his "sense of spatial and temporal separation" from Mrs. Newsome, "paradoxically conjures" "an intensity of connection and a feeling of freedom" (62). It could be traced from his habits of looking at his watch, the clock on which he contemplates in the Tuileries, or the old clock he likes at Berne. Alternatively, I consider Strether's being bound up with time as exposing his anxieties of belated actions while he is under the menace of the encroachment of time in his fifties.

Fussell highlights how James' enjoyment of being away from his homeland ("the romanticism of the self-determining exile") cultivates an art of alienation out of the "unfamiliar" (8). Rather than a tourist's romantic vision, I argue Strether is quite alert about something sinister behind the radiant surface of Parisian people and things ever since his arrival upon Paris. For instance, in the novel, Strether keeps his mind sober upon arrival in Paris. Even though he is shocked and wonderfully impressed by the kaleidoscopic images in Gloriani's garden, this garden scene reveals his

perception of his affective tie with a “new light” (James 138) coming from the pleasures of things he experiences in this garden. However, he sees through human complexities behind Gloriani’s back. “The deep human expertness in Gloriani’s charming smile — oh the terrible life behind it! — was flashed upon him as a test of his stuff” (138). He finds the cultural diversities and considers these fanciful things and people as a trial to challenge his original values and duties in life.

In Gloriani’s fanciful garden, Strether is shocked by and fond of Chad’s transformation in his refined social skills. Both Chad and Little Bilham get along well with “Chad’s strange communities” (151) at the garden party. Strether meets the Parisian Miss Barrace there, who impresses him with her frivolous manners and her free movements like “some high-feathered free-pecking bird” (143). His longing for freedom could be found in his thinking of Miss Barrace’s “wonderful crescendo” along with her quick recognitions and movement, which is “like the darts of some fine high-feathered free-pecking bird, to stand before life as before some full shop-window” (143). Unlike his judgement of Pocock’s pretending good manner — her “refined disguised suppressed passion of her face” (298), Strether is impressed by Miss Barrace’s free spirit of expressing herself. A sense of freedom is also akin to one’s sense of *topophilia*.

The inner-garden symbolically implies a secluded secret corner of personal privacy. One pivotal garden scene appeals at the end of Strether’s journey in Paris, right in an inner-garden near the hotel Cheval Blanc (386) in a rural site near Paris. This scene unveils his peaceful mental state of *primitive* home. However, this inner-garden which people scarcely visit is also the foreground for Strether’s later disclosure of truth. James’ depiction of the inner-garden scene demonstrates Strether’s *topophilia*. His inner harmony is shown in a “small and primitive pavilion” (387) at

the edge of the inner-garden with little maintenance. His “peace” is also exhibited through his enjoyment of “the lap of the water, the ripple of the surface, the rustle of the reeds on the opposite bank, the faint diffused coolness and the slight rock of a couple of small boats” (388). The climax takes place with the appearance of Chad and Madame de Vionnet on this boat. Their “virtuous attachment” (128) is eventually proved as a lie when Strether acquires his “belated vision” (393) after returning to Paris. He detects Madame de Vionnet’s manners of pretense in the rural sites of Paris when they accidentally meet in the inner garden and the Cheval Blanc. He recalls their dialogues at the hotel and perceives her pretense as a “performance” (394) of “comedy” (395), with which she tries to cover up her adultery with Chad. Finding some clues regarding her “shawl and Chad’s overcoat and her other garments, and his [Chad]” (395) and their destined date returning to Paris being changed, Strether believes that they lied to him to conceal their secret of adultery.

Even if Strether feels lonely and cold after discovering the “deep truth of the intimacy revealed” (396), he still expresses appreciation for Paris from his recognitions at the final few scenes in both Madame de Vionnet and Miss Gostrey’s spaces. In his introduction to *Ambassadors*, Christopher Butler indicates the completion of Strether’s quest that “combines seeing (vision) and betrayal” (xvii) — his “impressionistic and aesthetic apprehension” (xvi-ii) from the first wonderful “note of Europe” to the “deep taste of change” (xvii). All of these scenes show Strether’s sharpened perceptions of the interplay between places and people who are “all the vulgar weaknesses of human beings” (xviii). It exhibits his initiations into a world filled with different values and perspectives. Rather than having Strether being shocked by the adultery of Chad and Madame de Vionnet, James depicts Strether’s final serenity after disclosing their lies: there is “a difference liable to be denounced as

a shock, I could still feel it serene, nothing betrayed, . . .” (xxxii). James highlights Strether’s final maturity, which mainly comes from his prime faculty of imagination. Thus his serene feeling is an attestation to his maturity along with the changed perspectives, which are released from local prejudices in Woollett. Strether — the “painter” of his own life — will be capable of peace himself in serenity when he faces dilemmas in his life with a cosmopolite’s vision.

Furthermore, Strether’s recognition of his “belated vision” (393) in Book Eleventh shows the aftereffect on him. His understanding of and compassion for Marie de Vionnet could be traced from the wonderful impression he gets from the surrounding: “there was nothing of violence in the change — it was all harmony and reason” in Madame de Vionnet’s spaces (402-03). Strether’s talks with Miss Gostrey exhibits his new discovery of Madame de Vionnet’s fragility originated from her devoted love for Chad: “She’s [Mrs. Newsome] the same. She’s more than ever the same. But I do what I didn’t before — I *see* her” (436). His perception of Madame de Vionnet’s virtue of her devoted love for Chad demonstrates his changed perspective, which exhibits not only his growing intimacy with Madame de Vionnet, but his release from moral strictness. In spite of his admittance of something different than before, Strether will return to the United States with his topophilic feelings for Paris. His imaginative faculties provoked by his revelations in Paris will allow him to accept all flexible human perspectives and knowledge all over the world.

4.4.3 French Ruralism

The French pastoral scenes provide Strether with an inspirational background for artful creativities in connection to his homely intimacy. In *The Ambassadors*, at the rural sites near Paris, Strether’s meditation of his fondness of “French ruralism” (380) could be seen as a typical demonstration of the initiation of an intellectual life.

The paintings of the romantic landscape painter Lambinet symbolize Strether's unfulfilled dream in his prime that is "beyond a dream of possibilities" (380). For example, on a train from Paris to the countryside, Strether recalls the charming effect that Lambinet's pastoral painting had on him in a dusty day at an art exhibition in Tremont Street, Boston. His bargaining for a work of art he had dreamed for was his first sweet "adventure" (380) even though he could not afford to buy Lambinet's painting at last. Now the picturesque French landscape he has seen in real life symbolically draws him closer with his sweet dream he longs for his whole life. Strether finds inner harmony in Lambinet's French picturesque paintings, which is shown from his empathy with his paintings that is with "a composition, full of felicity, within them [Lambinet's paintings]" (381).

In effect, by retaining a distance from his American hometown, Strether gains visions of what he really wants. He prefers solitude than staying with his American compatriots. For example, at hillsides in the suburb of Paris, his pleasure in the enjoyment of the surroundings shows his topophilic feeling in expressions such as "full of felicity" (same wordings describing Lambinet's pictures as above), "his heart of content," and "sense of success, of a finer harmony in things" (383). Most of all, Strether's love for Lambinet's French scenes speaks out his wish of escaping from his original life in Woollett. Mrs. Newsome and Woollett represent both conventionally and morally restricted life. He regards Mrs. Newsome as a woman of "delicacy and discretion" (45), who is "behind the whole thing" in Woollett (45). Strether's [lifting] the "last veil" in "the prison-house" (46) reveals his withdrawal from her. In a sense, his consent ("Yes — I really think that described her") in response to Miss Gostrey's judgement of Mrs. Newsome ("She's *just* a moral swell") suggests Mrs. Newsome's powerful dominance and influences of strict moralities upon Strether's mentality (46).

James' interest in Lambinet's paintings can be associated with Strether's

fondness of the Lambinet's pictures. In James' "A Small Boy and Others," he could not conceal his appreciation for Lambinet's paintings. The painter is famous for his French pastoral landscapes drawing in an impressionist manner in the nineteenth century. James regards him as one of the few masters who drew finely interesting landscapists and attracted the collectors in the New York and Boston markets. James' description that it was a "comfortable time" (193) reveals his fondness of Lambinet's paintings, in which he finds inner harmony. Strether also finds inner harmony with Lambinet's pastoral paintings, which symbolize a beautiful dreamscape of an intellectual life in connection to his youthful spirit. Strether's infatuation with Lambinet's paintings suggests the same intimate nearness like James'. It is reasonable to suggest that James instills his fondness of Lambinet's paintings to characterize Strether's *topophilia* for Paris.

In a nutshell, this chapter proves how Strether's intimate nearness is associated with his young consciousness in connection to his artful pursuit and freedom in different interior and intermediate scenes in Paris. This chapter also exhibits that Strether's visiting Paris is his liminal phase. His separation from his American hometown Woollett, his cheerful sense of alienation in the crowd, and his short journey away from central Paris to the suburbs of Paris all show his spiritual renewal and a seeking of one's space as in a *primitive* home.



Chapter Five

Conclusion

This thesis contributes to scrutinize not only James and his figure Strether's *topophilia* for Paris are in line, but Strether's homely intimacy with Paris through a demonstration of his seeing in different places in Paris — from local prejudices to a cosmopolitan vision. In Chapter One, I introduce my purpose of the research and my argument for James' *topophilia* in response to the literature disputes that mainly focus on James' romanticized vision and his alienation from European cultures. In Chapter Two, I firstly introduce the interconnectedness between *primitive* home and *topophilia*. I disclose James' *topophilia* according to his early spatial experiences in Europe, which is essential to his observances and reading spaces. James' cosmopolitan and Benjamin's concept of homing in a distant world are further explored. Accordingly, how a cosmopolite like James and Benjamin find spatial intimacy everywhere mainly lies in their empathy/spatial infatuation with kaleidoscopic things in spaces. In Chapter Three, I elucidate how the flâneur, the city walker, exhibits one's sense of nearness to the streets of Paris in terms of Baudelaire's metaphor of streets as rooms, I then look at the flâneur's fondness of a universal life filled with kaleidoscopic things in Paris. I also explore how Paris becomes the city for the flâneur by explaining the renovation of Paris. I discuss how Benjamin and James' cosmopolitan Paris becomes a distant world by examining their early spatial experiences in Paris. Finally, I look at how Strether uses walking as a way to acquire his homely intimacy in connection to his perception of his belated youth. In Chapter Four, I show the interconnectedness between the act of collecting and the process of

homing. Also, the interior and intermediate spaces in association with one's sense of spatial intimacy in this novel are discussed. This chapter firstly examines and compares main characters including Miss Gostrey's crowded rooms and Madame de Vionnet's grand mansion. The interior spaces of the two young intelligences from different family background, Chad and Little Bilham, are then excavated. Their dwellings symbolize their young spirit and freedom, which are what Strether longs for. Intermediate spaces containing balcony and pastoral scene in suburb of Paris stand for the transitional spaces for Strether. Alienating himself from his original communities, Strether discovers his self-becoming and changed values.

By investigating James' characterization of Strether's consistently reflective and analytic perspectives, this thesis shows how James' focus on the different settings in Paris helps the readers' gradual realization of Strether's transformed self in response to the varieties and flexibilities of lives. In spite of his failed mission of taking Chad back to Woollett, Strether eventually decides to return home with the flexible perspectives beyond Woollett respectability and moral absolutes. James' depiction of different scenes corresponds to his concept of "tightness' of the place" which intensifies "the strength of any respectable hint" (xxxiii). These spaces bring his figure Strether numerous revelations and inspirations, which serve as his liminal spaces. James highlights, Strether experiences "the authenticity of concrete existence" (xxxiii). Thanks to James' "intimate connexion of things" (xxxiv), he exhibits how Strether acquires his imaginative capabilities from spaces in Paris. The implication of spaces is just like "a child's magic-lantern — a more fantastic and more moveable shadow — a more fantastic and more moveable shadow" (xxxiii). However, Strether is not really converted to Parisian values and styles either, because he longs for a simple relationship instead, which is shown from his content with the "essential freshness of a relation so simple" (413-14) with Miss Gostrey's company.

Nevertheless, Strether values his new perception of cosmopolitanism beyond other restricted local absolutes in Woollett or elsewhere. His acquiring insights from the wonderful spatial experiences in Paris is the core of my conclusion that he has been through his liminal stage in the transitional spaces of Paris.

This thesis perceives Strether to be in his marginal period of his middle-life, whose revisiting Paris is both a symbolic and physical removal from his American town to Paris, spatially and culturally. James' depiction of Strether reveals his *topophilia* of Paris. It also provides the flexible perspectives under numerous spatial revelations and inspirations. In other words, Strether's journey in Paris can be seen as a marginal phase at his middle age, whose true maturity comes from his self-discovery of intellectual and spiritual freedom through these Parisian spatial practices. The intermediate spaces, especially the pastoral places in the suburbs of Paris, provide Strether more than a familiar landscape which he has firstly experienced in Lambinet's pastoral painting in Boston. His journey attests to his transition, a liminal process of initiation through being away from his original communities. Strether feels a strong sense of isolation from those people including Mrs. Newsome, the Pococks and the lawyer Waymarsh, who represent pragmatism and social sternness in Woollett. Furthermore, he recognizes those pastoral scenes in the familiar French landscapes because of his passion for Lambinet's impressionistic paintings, which symbolize an intellectual connection with his mind, a *primitive* home which makes his mind at peace.

This thesis therefore concludes that Strether should be situated in the intermediate/transitional spaces, especially in the inner-garden in the rural sites where his visions become much more penetrative into the essence of people and things in Paris. As discussed in Chapter Four, Strether's journey to the suburbs of Paris shows his feelings of "wonder" containing the sense of "liberties" and inner harmony when

he is at the hillside (382). It is a remarkable moment of ease (see quote “the taste of idleness”) for Strether, especially after the Pococks and Waymarsh’s departure for Switzerland altogether. His delight about their departure discloses his self-willed seclusion from his original communities. Expressions like Strether’s finding “some proof of his freedom,” his “lost himself anew in Lambinet,” his moment of being “luxuriously quiet, soothed and amused by the consciousness of what he ha[s] found,” and “a murmurous couple of hours” that “how happy ha[s] been his thought” (383) show how Strether finds a different but happier self. These wordings exhibit his self-becoming in the transitional phase in his rite of passage. From his enjoyment in solitude at the hillside, Strether’s keen awareness of “a composition of felicity” (381) of the familiar pastoral landscape exhibits his profound *topophilia*, which is in connection to the inner harmony he finds in Lambinet’s pastoral paintings. Lambinet’s paintings represent Strether’s *primitive* home, which is at the most intimate corner of his mind in connection to his prolonged youthful spirit for artful pursuit. Thus, Strether’s self-discovery of a renewed self in the suburbs of Paris exhibits his crossings at his liminal state.

Different scenes suggest James’ gradual unveiling of Strether’s course of vision. James has commented on the liminal state of Strether’s position as a “belated man of the world” (xxxvii). The change of his visions at the final scenes in this novel, his final visit to Madam de Vionnet’s historical mansion as well as his farewell in Miss Gostrey’s little Dutch-looking dining room, explicitly indicate his finding of a transformed self.

Just like Miss Barrace claims, no one could resist the wonderful “fault” of the “dear” “old light” of Paris (145-46):

We’re all looking at each other — and in the light of Paris one sees what things resemble. That’s what the light of Paris seems always to show. It’s

the fault of the light of Paris — dear old light! (145-46)

Paris delivers Strether numerous wonderful impressions, like the significance of Lambinet's painting from the beginning to the end. Strether's topophilic emotions would never fade away wherever he goes. His final recognition of his feeling of felicity justifies my assumption of his intimacy with Paris, even with the dark sides lurking behind it. Strether's trip could be regarded as his spiritual initiations. His mature self recaptures his young consciousness so he may go elsewhere with his imaginative capabilities and flexible perspectives to face all possible challenges or illusions in his later life.





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