

A Structuralist Approach to *The Turn of the Screw*

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I. Critical Validity and Structuralist Criticism

The Turn of the Screw(1898), by Henry James, is one of the controversial texts which raises the critical problems endlessly. Certainly it continues to arouse controversy in the critical and learned journals more than eighty years after its publication. Reviewing the numerous critical essays on *The Turn of the Screw*, almost all the critical theories have been applied to it. There are many kinds of interpretations, and each one is as good as the other. All of these interpretations are duly supported by a great deal of evidence from the text and other places. It seems that the critics of different interpretations are all intelligent people who have carefully examined a problem, using effective critical methods, and arrived at some sort of solution. However, there can be no certainty about the correctness or incorrectness of an

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interpretation, probably because what one sees in a work of art is always dependent upon where one is standing. The myth critics see myths. The Freudian critics see neuroses. The christian critics see symbol of Christ and Satan, dramas of salvation and damnation, and so on. No doubt all of those things are in the story. But it would be ridiculous to suggest that they fully represent the meaning of *The Turn of the Screw* as a work of literature.

On the basis of the above viewpoints on the critical validity of the novel, this writer wants to interpret the novel in aspect of the Structuralist criticism. It can be said that almost all critical methods, including the mythic interpretation and the formalistic interpretation, have applied to the novel, but I don't remember having seen the Structuralist approach to the novel.

As René Wellek points out "The New Criticism has, no doubt, reached a point of exhaustion"¹⁾ the "New Criticism" which has represented the modern criticism has reached an end. With the exhaustion of the "New Criticism," Structuralism has appeared the newer criticism and has been developing the main stream of contemporary criticism. Nevertheless, it seems to be still difficult to clarify the basic principles of Structuralism in terms of literary criticism, because the diversity of the critical approaches practiced under this term is immense. However, it might be possible that we have a few fundamental attitudes that are shared under the Structuralist criticism.

According to the Structuralist critical theory, the artist creates a work of literature in an intransitive language system; on the other hand, the critic makes the intransitive artistic object transitive. That is to say, a work of literature is recreated by the critic through the transitive use of language. There is thus a basic difference between artistic activity and critical activity. Roland Barthes describes the critical activity of Structuralism:

The structuralist activity involves two typical operations: dissection and articulation. To dissect the first object, the one which is given to the simulacrum—activity, is to find in it certain mobile fragments whose differential situation engenders a certain meaning . . . Once the units are posited, structural man must discover in them or establish for them certain rules of association: this is the activity of articulation, which succeeds the summoning activity.²⁾

In other words, the Structuralist's activity is to decompose analytically the work and then in critical discourse recompose a model of the structures of the work. Through the process of "dissection and articulation," the Structuralist activity not only reveals the real complexity of the structures, but also creates the psychological, philosophical or aesthetic interpretations of

1) René Wellek, *Concepts of Criticism* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1963), p. 359.

2) Roland Barthes, "The Structuralist Activity," *Partisan Review*, 34 (Winter 1967), 85~86.

the work by raising certain unperceived structural meanings to the level of consciousness. Barthes's "simulacrum" means the very intellectual extension of the work.³⁾ That is, the critic, by adding intellect to the work, extends the systems of the work into the outer world of other systems: anthropology, psychology, philosophy, or aesthetics.

On the basis of these fundamental attitudes of the Structuralist criticism, the Structural critics, it seems, have some methodological principles for the description of a literary work. First, they isolate a structure or a series of structures to concentrate on the structural relations or elements which exist among characters, events, or stories in the work. Second, they make the paradigmatic/syntagmatic distinction which seems to be most essential to Structuralism. The paradigmatic and the syntagmatic axes of language are Jakobson's famous linguistic terms.⁴⁾ According to Jakobson, language is structured either on the selection of elements from the system (selection of sounds, words, sentence), that is to say, substitution (the paradigmatic axis); or on the combination of elements in presence (sequence of sounds, words, sentences), that is to say, contiguity (the syntagmatic axis). The final tenet is that they develop the structures sought into other intellectual realm of the world and art. This tenet results from the assumption that the structures of the work will be something other than that which is immediately evident on the "surface". In terms of this tenet, Barthes says: "Structure is therefore actually a simulacrum of the object . . . since the imitated object makes something appear which remained invisible . . ."⁵⁾ Barthes's "simulacrum" as the result of the structural analysis will be a description of meanings that exist only at a great depth which cannot be uncovered without the application of the structuralist method.

I have described above the fundamental attitudes and three methodological principles of the Structuralist criticism. The purpose of this paper is to make a description of the structures in *The Turn of the Screw* on the basis of these attitudes and principles of the Structuralist criticism. I will divide my description into two main parts: the mirror structure at the paradigmatic level and the narrative structure at the syntagmatic level.

II. The Mirror Structure at the Paradigmatic Level

The story of *The Turn of the Screw* is itself ambiguous and mysterious. A young woman answering a want ad in a newspaper goes to meet a "perfect gentleman," who hires her to

3) Barthes, 84.

4) Roman Jakobson, "Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances," *Fundamentals of Language*, ed. Roman Jakobson and Morris Halle (The Hague, 1956), pp. 55-82.

5) Barthes, 83

take charge of his niece Flora and his nephew Miles, two little orphans who live in secluded country house belonging to him. The young woman is to become the children's governess, but under the strick condition set down by her employer that she solve singlehandedly any problems concerning them, without at any time turning to him for help or even contacting him for any reason. This condition is no sooner accepted than it begins to weigh heavily upon the governess, especially when a letter arrives informing her, without giving the reason, that little Miles has been expelled from school. In addition, the governess discovers that the house is haunted: several times she finds herself confronted by strange apparitions, whom, with the help of information about the house's past history gleaned from the housekeeper, Mrs. Grose, she finally identifies as the ghosts of two servants, Peter Quint and Miss Jessel, now dead, but formerly employed by the master in this very house. The governess becomes steadily more convicted that the ghosts have come back to pursue their nefarious intercourse with the children, to take possession of their souls and to corrupt them radically. Her task is thus to save the children from the ghosts, to engage in a ferocious moral struggle against "evil." Her strategy consists of an attempt to catch the children in the very act of communing with the spirits, and thereby to force them to admit that communion, to confess their knowledge of the ghosts and their infernal complicity with them. Total avowal, the governess believes, would exorcise the children. The results of this heroic metaphysical struggle are, however, ill-fated. That is, Flora, the little girl, caught by the governess in presence of the phantom of Miss Jessel, denies seeing the vision and falls seriously ill following the vehement accusations directed at her by the governess, whom she thenceforth holds in abhorrence. On the other hand, Miles, the little boy, pronounces—under the governess's pressure—the name of Peter Quint face to face with his ghost, and at that very moment dies in the arms of the governess as she clasps him to her breast in moral triumph. It is with this pathetically ironical embrace of a corpse that the story ends.

Thus, the whole story of the novel is ambiguous and mysterious. The critical debate on the novel starts with the ambiguity from this mystification in the story. It is taken for granted that the readers of *The Turn of the Screw* are familiar with the two basic interpretations—either the governess is a villainess (conscious or unconscious) and there are no ghosts; or there are ghosts, and the children may be villains or innocents, but the governess is an innocent struggling against supernatural evil. In other words, the question is whether the apparitions the governess finds are real ones or not. There are four apparitions of each sex in *The Turn of the Screw*. By analyzing the variation and the repetition of the apparitions we can approach a structure of mirror-effect at the paradigmatic level.

Critics have already remarked on the governess's ability "to project Quint and Miss Jessel

to great distances, across lakes; to the tops of towers and so on."⁶) Van Doren also mentions the fact that the first two apparitions of Quint "do not reveal anything except the upper half of him. Once he is standing behind a sort of balustrade on top of the tower; another time he is merely looking in a window, but the lower half of him is not there—it is as if he were in some ghastly way truncated."⁷) In fact, Quint is never seen whole, but always truncated: the fourth and last apparition is also at the window: the third apparition on the stairs is curiously foreshortened. Miss Jessel, however, is seen both whole and foreshortened. Her first apparition is seen whole at a distance across the lake; secondly also on the stairs but at the bottom, "seated on one of the lower steps with her back presented to me, her body half-bowed and her head, in an attitude of woe, in her hands."⁸) Thirdly, she is seen cut off, sitting at the table in the schoolroom. And lastly she is seen whole on the other side of the lake again.

The second variation is that of height. Quint appears first on a tower(up), then at a ground-floor window(level), then on the stairs(down) and finally at the same window(level). Miss Jessel appears first on the other side of the lake(level), then on the stairs(down), then in the schoolroom(level), and finally by the lake again(level).

The third variation is in the appearance inside or outside the house. Quint's first two apparitions appear outside: one on the tower, the other by the lake. And then he is seen inside the house(on the stairs); lastly he appears outside the house(on the ground). Miss Jessel is seen first outside, twice inside: on the stairs and in the schoolroom, and lastly outside again.

There is also an expansion and compression of space. The first of Quint is at a distance and the first and last of Miss Jessel. All the others are explicitly or implicitly close: at the window, on the stairs, or in the schoolroom.

The fifth and last variation I have been dealing with is that of framing; at the semantic level, that is, the signified is itself framed by other signifiers or not. For example, the very apparitions of Quint are described as if framed: by the crenellated wall, by the dining-room window, by the staircase and by "the tall window that presided over the great turn of the staircase" (p.40). However Miss Jessel is free at least of such explicit framing; she appears twice by the lake; the other two apparitions are framed implicitly: at the foot of the stairs and in the schoolroom.

There are thus five axes of variation: far or near, up or level or down, out or in, whole or

6) Van Doren, "James: *The Turn of the Screw*," *A Casebook on Henry James's The Turn of the Screw*, ed. Gerald Willen (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company), p. 165.

7) Doren, p. 164.

8) Henry James. *The Turn of the Screw* (New York: Norton and Co., 1963), p. 43. Further references from this text will be given parenthetically by page number.

cut, and framed or unframed. The whole text of *The Turn of the Screw* is elaborately structured on the repetition and variation of the apparition scenes. From the above variations of the apparitions, what kind of image do we have? It must be that of a mirror. A mirror makes idealized or ugly reflections on ourselves according to our emotional needs and physical states; it reflects parts of ourselves or whole of ourselves according to different angles, lights, and positions. As a mirror makes the varied frames on ourselves and sometimes projects our psychological or emotional states, the variation of the apparitions in the novel modulates the narrative both psychoanalytically and poetically. When the governess sees the unknown man she had seen on the tower, her reaction is exactly that of monkey in front of a mirror: to go behind the mirror. She rushes out, sees nothing. Further, she places herself in his position and peers in as if to see what he saw, herself where she no longer is.

In a sense, Quint reflects the master's psychological images, partly wearing his master's clothes; whereas Miss Jessel, who is not only the governess's actual predecessor, is closer to the governess's own identity. However, considering the fact that the apparitions are experienced only by the governess, the whole system of the variation represents the governess's neurotic unconsciousness. As we are afraid of the revelation of our dark unconsciousness, the governess feels a kind of horror from the apparitions. There is a deep exchange of looks like mirror reflections, but the apparitions are silent. And silence is horror: "It was the dead silence of our long gaze at such close quarters that gave the horror, huge as it was, its only note of the unnatural" (p. 41). Each apparition is called a horror: "what is he? He's a horror" (p. 22), "For the woman's a horror of horrors" (p. 32). Shoshana Felman suggests: "In the governess's eyes, the word 'horror' thus defines both what the ghosts are and what the letters suppress, leave out."⁹⁾

Certainly the structure of the mirror-effect includes the letters in the story. In fact, *The Turn of the Screw* is organized around a double mystery: the mystery of the ghosts and the mystery of the letter's content. From the prologue of the novel, the readers have a kind of mystery and curiosity of the letter of the manuscript itself. And the letters in the story strikingly resemble the letter of the manuscript. In a sense, the manuscript-letter is itself a story about letters: the first narrative event of the governess's story is the cryptic letter announcing Miles's dismissal from school; then the governess mentions that she intercepts the children's letters to the Master. And there is the troubling question for the governess of the letter Mrs. Grose wants sent to the Master about the goings-on at Bly, which the governess promises to write herself; and finally, the governess's letter to the Master is intercepted and destroyed by Miles.

9) Shoshana Felman, "Turning the Screw of Interpretation," *Yale French Studies*, 55~56 (1977), 150.

What is interesting in these letters is that they all bear a curious resemblance to the letter of the manuscript. For example, in the story as in the prologue, the letters, like the manuscript, seem to have a problem of beginnings. Like Douglas, the governess finds it difficult to begin: "I went so far, in the evening, as to make a beginning . . . I sat for a long time before a blank sheet of paper . . . Finally I went out" (p.62). The readers will later learn that this letter from the governess to the master will never be more than just an envelope containing that same blank sheet of paper.

The letters to the Master can convey, indeed, nothing but silence. Their message is not only erased; it has its own erasure. This precisely what Miles discovers when he steals the letter which the governess has intended to send to the Master:

"And you found nothing!" — I let my elation out. He gave me the most mournful, thoughtful little headshake. "Nothing."

"Nothing, nothing!" I almost shouted in my joy.

"Nothing, nothing," he sadly repeated. (p. 85)

Thus, just as the ghost seen by the governess is like "nobody" (p. 23), the letter opened by Miles turns out to contain "nothing": nothing means silence; silence brings about horror. Therefore, Felman points out: ". . . could it not be said that the ghosts are in reality nothing other than the letters' content, and that the letters' content could thus itself be nothing other than a ghost-effect?"¹⁰⁾

What has the governess read in the erased letters? Certainly the governess reads what she wants into these silent letters; that must be the images of the apparitions resulted from the projections on her neurotic unconscious; that is to say, to see letters is to see apparitions. It is beyond doubt that one does not want to reveal his dark unconsciousness; therefore, there is nothing in the governess's letters for the projection on her diseased unconsciousness. Thus, the mirror-effect in *The Turn of the Screw* is used for both the apparitions and the letters. To discuss the process and meaning of the mirror-effect more specifically, the extension to the other realm is needed: to that of the psychoanalytical interpretation. Of course, the psychoanalytical interpretation of the novel means a so-called "Freudian reading."

As a matter of fact, the main stream of the contemporary essays on the novel is the publication of the Freudian reading. According to the Freudian reading, *The Turn of the Screw* is not a ghost story, but a madness story. That is, it is a study of a case of neurosis: the ghosts, accordingly, do not really exist; they are but figments of the governess's sick

10) Felman, 150.

imagination, mere hallucinations and projections symptomatic of the frustration of her repressed sexual desires:

The theory is, then, that the governess who is made to tell the story is a neurotic case of sex repression, and that the ghosts are not real ghosts but hallucinations of the governess."¹¹

To discuss in detail, the governess is in love with the Master, but is unable to admit it to herself, and thus obsessively, hysterically projects her own desires upon the outside world, perceives them as exterior to herself in the hallucinated form of fantastic ghosts. That is, the ghosts the governess finds are merely the symptom of pathological, abnormal sexual frustration and repression.

Ⅲ. The Narrative Structure at the Syntagmatic Level

According to the Structuralist assumptions, a narrative has no referential certainty, but it must convince the reader of its truth; a narrative's only resources are linguistic; by examining how its linguistic units attempt to convince, the readers understand the significance of the particular narrative. In *The Turn of the Screw*, James calls attention to his narrative strategy by underlining the admissibility of two mutually exclusive meanings for the same narrative structure.

The governess-narrator in the novel uses language to confirm the reality of what she thinks she sees; thus she makes her suspicions "real" not only to herself but to the readers. The readers consent to accept the governess's words as truth; they consent to play with the rules of her language, the structural laws of her discourse. For, through the most skillful of structural manipulations, James sustains the governess-narrator's narrative authority and credibility.

Once she begins her story, the governess-narrator acquires all the authority which comes to the narrator of a traditional novel. Moreover, in the first section of the tale, Douglas describes the governess as "awfully clever and nice" and says "I liked her extremely," giving her a good character reference before she even begins her narrative (p.8). When the illiterate Mrs. Grose refuses to examine the letter from Miles's school, the readers realize that it is the governess alone who relates and confirms its content. The governess is thus granted authority and credibility of her narrative.

11) Edmund Wilson, "The Ambiguity of Henry James." *A Casebook on Henry James's Turn of the Screw*, ed. Gerald Willen (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, Inc., 1969), p. 115.

However, the first real crack in the governess's narrative credibility occurs when Peter Quint appears to her for the first time. That is, the objective nature of her narrative suddenly becomes questionable by showing her imaginative longings causing the reader to doubt the actuality of the experience of the first ghost: "What arrested me on the spot — with a shock much greater than any vision had allowed — was the sense that my imagination had, in a flash, turned real" (p.15). Coming to this passage, the reader begins to hesitate over what is true and what is false in terms of the narrator's predisposition to perceive things as she will. And this hesitation increases, since more and more textual evidence suggests the governess' lack of credibility (pp.18–20). As a result, there is a subtle tension between the governess's narrative voice and the facts of the world outside that voice: to use the terms of Tzvetan Todorov, a tension between a "marvelous" world of ghosts and an "uncanny" world of neurotic governess.¹² Throughout the novel, the readers have this structural tension which results in the ambiguity.

The ambiguity of Quint's second visit is especially important in that the actual description of the scene reflects the structural tension of the entire novel. The governess, whose objectivity is now in serious doubt, sees Quint from her position inside the schoolroom: Quint appears suddenly in the window, and then vanishes immediately; the governess dashes outside and then vanishes immediately; the governess dashes outside and puts herself in his just vacated place. Meanwhile Mrs. Grose has entered the classroom, sees the governess peering through the window, and screams in fright. In this second apparition scene, we have two perspectives: the first one is that the governess apparently sees Quint through the glass; the second one is that she sees her own manic image reflected in the same glass from the opposite point of view. Which is the metaphor for the governess's vision: the transparent glass or the reflective glass? The governess has of course retained enough credibility to make Quint's appearance plausible. But her statement that "it was as if I had been looking at him for years and had known him always" (p. 20) and the fact that it is the governess, not Quint, who frightens Mrs. Grose cause the readers again to waver in his judgement of the scene and the entire narrative.

Thus James is continually swinging the pendulum of the structural tension throughout the novel. This structural tension reaches its highest point when Miss Jessel makes her second appearance to the governess. With her second sighting of Miss Jessel the governess's narrative credibility, which had been rapidly breaking down, reaches its lowest ebb. With Mrs. Grose, she follows Flora to the lake and frantically demands that the girl acknowledge the presence of Miss Jessel standing across the water in the distance. The housekeeper, like

12) Tzvetan Todorov, *The Fantastic* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975), p. 25.

Flora can see nothing, and when the governess madly insists that they both see the ghost, Flora falls into paroxysm from emotional strain. At this point, the narrative would surely dissolve into the ravings of a lunatic woman.

However, James saves his narrator through one more masterful turn of the screw. That is to say, James confronts the readers with some important pieces of evidence which lend new credibility to the governess's suspicions. First of all, there is the confirmation of Miles having committed some shadowy and morally disgraceful deed at school: he confesses that he stole and burnt the governess's letter to his uncle. Miles's confession is the most damning indictment against the children and the most favorable evidence in support of the governess's claims. That is, Miles breaks the silence of uncertainty which has surrounded the children and speaks the words: "Yes—I took it"; "I opened it"; "I've burnt it"; "I said things"; and "Yes, it was too bad" (pp. 84-86).

Yet despite Miles's admissions, the final scene seems to be still ambiguous in the novel: it is never clear what exactly was Miles's crime at school. In addition, the emotional state of the governess becomes more and more dubious: her nervous excitement reaches a pathological intensity. Consequently, when in a flash of sight, the governess questions her position; she touches on a monstrous possibility: "for if he were innocent what then on earth was I" (p. 87)? In this final scene, James has so finely balanced two supportable but opposing readings of the novel that it is virtually impossible to choose between them. Miles may indeed have been touched by evil and the ghost of Quint may have occupied the grounds of Bly; on the other hand, the governess may have been insane. Finally, with Miles's death the narrative stops at a point of perfect balance between supernatural dispossession and total nervous breakdown, which are equally possible explanations for the boy's death, given the weight of evidence on both sides.

I have discussed a narrative whose structure admits two opposite interpretations on the basis of the same narrative events. In fact, the critical controversy over *The Turn of the Screw* is based on the ambiguity of two possible but opposing meanings: the one is that the meaning of the novel is the succession of real events objectively reported; the other is that the meaning of the novel is the diseased unconsciousness of the narrator. However, this ambiguity basically results from the author's narrative strategy by which the narrator challenges the reader to accept fiction as fact. By constantly undermining and restoring his narrator's credibility, James transforms a narrative which is potentially either a ghost story or a mystery tale about a neurotic governess into a very subtle fiction about the process of fiction itself. Todorov confirms this connection between fantasy literature and self-reflexive narrative art:

Whence the ambiguous impression made by fantastic literature: on the one hand, it represents the quintessence of literature, insofar as the questioning of the limit between real and unreal, proper to all literature, is its explicit center. On the other hand, though, it is only a propedeutics to literature: by combating the metaphysics of everyday language, it gives that language life; it must start from language, even if only to reject it.¹³⁾

It seems to me that Todorov's comments should provide the last words on *The Turn of the Screw*. When we admit Todorov's comments of the Fantastic as a kind of literary genre, we do not even have the right to say "the governess is moral or not," or "Miles and Flora are innocent or not."

IV. A Pure Fantastic Literature

I have done a Structuralist approach to *The Turn of the Screw* by describing two possible structures in the novel: the mirror structure at the paradigmatic level and the narrative structure at the syntagmatic level. The former is framed by the variation and repetition of the apparitions and letters, while the latter by the author's narrative strategies. The structure at the paradigmatic level underlies a mirror-effect; the mirror-effect results in the extension to psychoanalytical interpretation: the ghosts do not really exist; they are but figments of the governess's sick imagination, mere hallucinations and projections symptomatic of the frustration of her repressed sexual desires. The narrative structure at the syntagmatic level results in the ambiguity of meanings of the novel; however, the ambiguity is at the core of the pure fantastic as a kind of literary genre. It is the reason why Todorov describes the genre of fantasy as a mode of literature with rules strikingly similar to those James posits for his ghost stories.¹⁴⁾

According to Todorov, fantasy is situated between the genres of the marvelous and the uncanny.¹⁵⁾ In marvelous literature, the supernatural is unquestionably real: ghosts and spiritual presences are as factual as the more usual events of the narrative. In contrast, the strange happenings in uncanny literature can be explained by logical and rational means. Mediating between both of these modes is fantastic literature.

Consequently, even if *The Turn of the Screw* has received a critical controversy because of

13) Todorov, p. 168.

14) Todorov, p. 44.

15) Todorov, p. 25.

two possible meanings: the area of fact and the area of fancy, the key to the novel is found not in one or the other of the two, but in narrative ambiguity itself, because in fantastic literature the readers are dealing with a genre which defines itself by the ambiguity it creates. *The Turn of the Screw* is one example of typical pure fantastic literature.

國文抄錄

*The Turn of the Screw*에 대한 構造主義的 批評

卞 鍾 民

The Turn of the Screw(1898)를 Henry James의 대표작으로 보기에는 많은 무리가 따르지만 James의 작품중 가장 많은 독자를 확보해온 인기소설이라고 하는 데는 異見이 있을 수 없다. 작품 자체의 내용이 지니고 있는 괴기성 내지 신비성 만큼이나 이 소설에 적용된 비평의 방식과 종류 또한 다양하고 풍부하기 이를 데 없다. 그리고 각각의 비평내용은 나름대로의 충실한 논거 자료를 제시하며 설득력 있는 논리전개를 이루고 있다. 따라서 어느 특정한 비평방법이 이 소설에 대한 최적의 방식이라고 단언할 수는 없다.

소위 New Criticism(新批評)의 퇴조와 더불어 현대 비평이론의 주류를 형성하고 있는 構造主義는 실제 문학에 대한 적용원칙이나 방식에 있어 일정한 틀을 규정할 수 없을 정도로 다양하고 복잡하다. 本稿에서는 構造主義라는 비평사조하에서 이루어진 여러가지 문학적 적용방법의 실재를 통해 추출될 수 있는 공통적인 개념과 원칙을 *The Turn of the Screw*의 분석에 적용시켜 보므로서 소설문학 작품에 대한 構造主義 비평방식의 한 모형을 제시하는 데 초점을 맞추고 있다.

무엇보다 이 소설에 대한 비평에서 가장 논란이 되고 있는 점은 가정교사에 의해 경험되는 유령은 實在인가 아니면 幻影인가의 문제이다. 다음으로 중요한 측면이 문제의 가정교사에 의해 전개되는 이야기의 視點이 어느정도의 일관성과 신뢰성을 지니고 있느냐는 것이다. 따라서 유령이 등장하는 여러 장면을 系列的 構造單位(paradigmatic axis)로 분리시키고, 가정교사의 視點을 통해 이루어지는 서술적 구성(narrative plot)을 連合的 構造單位(syntagmatic axis)로 분리시켜 構造主義的 分析을 시도하였다. 그 결과 系列單位 측면에서는 投影的 效果(mirror-effect)가, 連合單位 측면에서는 敘述의 技巧(narrative manipulation)가 논의되었다. 여기서 投影的 效果는 결국 비평적 논란의 초점이 되는 유령의 등장이 實在의 사건이 아니고 가정교사의 心理的 幻影에서 비롯된 것임을 논거시키게 되며, 따라서 系列的 構造單位에서는 심리 분석학적 측면으로 논의의 확대가 가능하다.

그러나 連合的 構造單位에서의 서술적 기교를 논의해 볼 때, 이러한 심리적 환영의 이야기는 작가의 교묘한 기법에 의해 철저히 위장되어 있다. 그 결과 이 소설은 괴기성과 신비성으로 가득찬 幻想的인 문학형태를 이루게 된다. 요컨대 系列單位的 構造分析에서 추출된 心理分析學的 幻影의 이야기는 連合單位的 構造分析을 통해 하나의 幻想的 문학형태(a pure fantastic literature)로 승화되고 있다.