UNIVERSITÉ DU BURUNDI
GRENIER DU SAVOIR DU BURUNDI
Dépôt institutionnel officiel
https://repository.ub.edu.bi

La confrontation des civilisations française et persane au 18è siècle dans les lettres persanes de Montesquieu

Nkezimana, Jean Claude; Supervisor: Mr. Nganyu Dominic Nfonni

2009-09
UB, Faculty of arts and social sciences
https://repository.ub.edu.bi/handle/123456789/802

Document téléchargé depuis le **Grenier du Savoir du Burundi** — https://repository.ub.edu.bi

UNIVERSITY OF BURUNDI

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

SOCIAL DECADENCE IN HENRY JAMES' *THE AWKWARD AGE.*

By

Jean Claude Nkezimana.

Supervisor:

Mr. Nganyu Dominic Nformi

A Thesis Submitted in Partial

Fulfilment of the Requirements

for the Award of the Degree

"Licence en Langue et Littérature Anglaises''

Bujumbura, December, 2009

DEDICATION

To my beloved parents;

Brother and sister;

My cousin Ndayiragije;

I warmly dedicate this work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMEMTS

This work has come to completion, thanks to a number of people to whom I owe much gratitude.

I am particularly indebted to my supervisor, Mr. Nganyu Dominic Mformi who, despite his heavy agenda has accepted to supervise this work. His criticism and advice were very foundation for the completion of this work. His availability, support, and patience are praiseworthy.

My thanks also go to Dr. Divine Che Neba, for his advice at the very beginning of this work.

I am also grateful to all my teachers from primary school to the university in general and those of Department of English Language and Literature of the University of Burundi in particular for their contribution in building up my academic and moral make up.

I owe much gratitude to my parents who sent me to school and for everything they did for me. Without their love and financial assistance, I would have not pursued my education.

Lastly, my deep thanks are addressed to those who supported me financially and morally in the realisation of this work.

Jean Claude Nkezimana

ABSTRACT

This work discusses the issue of the environmental influences on mankind. It reveals the degree to which parents' role in the education of their children has been neglected. It also gives a picture of how parents' misbehaviour affects the conduct of their children negatively since they take their parents as models. This work aims at examining the decayed social and moral values of the English society as portrayed in Henry James' *The Awkward Age*. Examining the various facets of parental irresponsibility, we equally show how children are victims of the irresponsible and immoral ways of their parents. This work also aims at redressing the Londoners of the late nineteenth century, urging them to devote their time to work and take care of the education of their children by preparing them to become responsible citizens. Written against the backdrop of psychological and new historicists' theories, the work settles on the assumption that the Victorian parents' behaviour was not fair for, in addition to their immorality, they were irresponsible and lazy, and the awful consequences press on their children.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

DEDICATION.....i

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....ii

ABSTRACT.....iii

GENERAL INTRODUCTION.....1

CHAPTER ONE: IRRESPONSIBILITY OF THE AGE.....12

CHAPTER TWO: THE QUESTION OF IMMORALITY 32

CHAPTER THREE: SATIRE AND YOUTH AS VICTIMS OF THE AGE.....51

GENERAL CONCLUSION.....65

WORKS CITED.....68

GENERAL INTRODUCTON

The nineteenth century is one of incredible change in Great Britain and the United States. Vast cultural, social and technological changes occur. In general, the industrial revolution brings prosperity and urbanisation to United States. The expansion of suburbs is based upon technological innovation and invention and these push a continued drive outward from city's central business district. The people who move out into the suburbs supposedly escape from the problems of social unrest, poor health and vice associated with life in and near the urban business districts.

However, historians regard the Victorian era as a time of many contradictions. A plethora of social movements concern with improving public morals coexist with a class system that permits harsh living conditions for many. The apparent contradiction between the widespread cultivation of an outward appearance of dignity and restraint and the prevalence of social phenomena that include prostitution, child labour, individualism to name but a few. In general, the nineteenth century is economically prosperous but socially and morally decayed and this affects people of the time since they are not independent of what happens around.

Therefore, man is a superior being to other creatures because of his cognitive abilities. In addition to his cognitive abilities, which distinguish him from other creatures, man remains sociable. He lives in a community with others, and that community is called the society. In this respect, man cannot be indifferent to what happens around him. This implies that social values and norms that affect individual in a given community, affect everybody within that society. This web sometimes has negative or positive effects on the individual, depending on his social stance. Therefore, a man is bound to live in accordance with the social values and norms set by the community. Hence, he is the product of his time and society. However, those social mores and virtues may be deceitful and it is later on in life that man decides to shape his own life.

Born in a society, man is expected to live and follow the principles set by elders. What he does is to follow the path marked out by societal norms. However, these may mislead him since it is not always that they work for his welfare. This leads man in perpetual battle for the sake of his own survival. Therefore, he is entering a rebellious relationship with his society that requires him to live on its principles. But these are not always the reason why, man is called to thoroughly analyse his societal principles in order to know whether they are helpful for him or not. In this respect, some questions are persistently raised. To what extent is man the product of time his and society? What hinders Henry James' characters in *The Awkward Age?* Are parents' ways of conduct always fair? If not, who will bear the consequences? These questions will be answered in the course of this work.

Before we proceed with the analysis, it is worthwhile defining some words that will preoccupy us in the course of this work. These include "decadence", and "immorality". To know the meaning of the word decadence, it would be better to know first that the word comes from the verb "decay". According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, the verb "decay" means to decline from a prosperous condition. Another word that will help us to understand the word "decadence" is the noun "decadent". In *The Encyclopaedia Americana*, Volume 8, decadent is defined in terms of "a school of artists and writers, the followers of which delight in the more or less morbid refinements of feeling and style, and pride themselves upon this perversion of state. The decadent is fond of the products of declining civilisation corrupted by many centuries of culture, of works to highly seasoned and vitiated, which presage the final dissolution of a social order fallen into decrepitude, and shuns the simple, the natural, the healthful, clinging only to artificial and complicated in life and character. The name decadents may rightly be given to those who make subtle virtuosity out of art. Then, the word "decadent" is defined by the *Oxford*

Advanced Learner's Dictionary as a falling to a level (in morals, art, literature, etc) especially after a period at a high level. In this work, the word "decadence" will be used according to the meaning given in *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, that is the deterioration of social and moral standards in Aristocratic class as it is illustrated by the Brookenhams in *The Awkward Age*.

To better understand the meaning of "immorality", it will be better to define the word "morality". Morality in the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* is viewed as "principles of good behaviour". Another word that will help us to understand the word "immorality" is the adjective "immoral". The word "immoral" is defined by *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* as" not following accepted standards of morality; not moral". Then, the word "immorality" is defined in terms of "immoral behaviour" by the aforementioned dictionary. In this research, "immorality "will be used in terms of "failure to follow the principles of good behaviour".

For a better understanding of this work, it is necessary to know a bit of Henry James' life as it is written by James D. Hart in *The Oxford Companion to American Literature*. Henry James was born on 15th April 1843 in New York to a theological writer. Desiring his sons to be citizens of the world, his father believed that they should avoid forming definite habits of living or of intellect, until they are prepared to make wise choices of their own. In this respect, James was privately educated by tutors until 1855, when the family went to Europe for a three-year stay. He also lived for a time in New Port before he entered the Harvard Law School in 1862.

After 1866, he lived mostly in Europe. His conception of himself as a detached spectator of life was maturing, as was his idea that American scene was hostile towards creative talents and offered no adequate subject matter. James divided his interest between European and American materials. Encouraged by Howells, C.E Norton, and others in the late 1860s, he wrote

critical articles and reviews, exhibiting admiration of the technique of George Eliot, and so produced short stories, frequently showing the influence of Hawthorne is a realistic nouvelle: "Watch and Ward", and farce titled "Pyramus and Thisbe".

In 1871, he frequented the transatlantic world, which he came to regard as his spiritual fatherland. During a year in Paris, he associated with masters of his art as Turgner and Faubert, but after 1876, he made a home in London. His novels, *Roderick Hudson,* which followed *A Passionate Pilgrim* and other tales, and "Translation Sketches", treat his views of England and Italy. It also focused on the failure of an American sculptor in Rome, resulting from a lack of inner discipline. Other novels and tales of early London period, when James' course of life was still for him a matter of doubt and self-questioning include *The American* which contrasts the French and American standards of conduct; *The European* which focuses on reversing the situation, by bringing Europeans into a new England background; *Daisy Miller, The Portrait of a Lady*, the first of his mature masterpieces and others.

The Awkward Age was first published as a serial in "Harper's Weekly" in 1898-1899 and then as a book later in 1899. Originally conceived as a brief, light story about the complications created in her family's social set by a young girl coming of age, the novel expanded into a general treatment of decadence and corruption in English fin siècle life. James presents the novel almost entirely in dialogue, an experiment that adds to the immediacy of the scenes but also creates serious ambiguities about characters and their motives. In nearly all of James' fiction, interest is the affluence and leisure, in which the preoccupations are with manners and the appreciation of character and arts, including that of conversation. He treats his society with an infinite refinement of particulars, and in a prose style considered to be unapproached in English for subtlety of phrase and rhythm. It is generally said that his works fall into three periods, which Philip Guedalla labelled: James I, James II, and the old Pretender. *The Awkward*

Age belongs to the second period, where he was still occupied with the impact of American life on the Old European civilization. During that period, he developed purely English themes, and in his third period, he returned to his original theme of the contrast between American and European character.

Thus, James completed his cosmopolitan destiny, detached even from the art that absorbed him, for his self-judgements are subtle and well formed as is the substance of his fiction. His artistry was conscious at every point, and he paid the penalty of his intellectual attitude in later life, seeming to have lost contact with the facts and values of normal life. His eminence in the range of his choice, though, is never failing, as his influences in the history of the novel, in which he was the first of psychological realism and formal architectonics, highly complex prose and extremely sensitive apprehension of values of characters. James was naturalised as British citizen in 1915, received the Order of Merit at New York Honours in 1916, and died at Chelsea on 28th of February in 1916.

This work inspects the degree to which man is the product of his time and milieu, sustaining Freud's theory of id, ego and superego that make one's personality and check the impact of superego in the individual and his ideologies and interests. It further aims at highlighting the degeneration of the social mores and values in the late nineteenth century England and its consequences on the growing generation. In this vein, the vices of the different institutions and the figures who pilot them will be exposed. The study of "Social Decadence" is based on critics of the irresponsibility and the deviation to work or sloth that characterise the age. It proceeds to analyse the loss of moral qualities in James' society. The study also makes a satirical analysis of different institutions such as social and marital institutions and exposes its awful effects on youth. Beside the primary text –*The Awkward Age*, other related texts will be used to better highlight this.

Two theoretical approaches will guide this analysis. These approaches are Psychological Approach and New Historicism. Proponents of psychoanalytical

theory comprise Sigmund Freud and his disciples Carl Gustave Jung, Jacques Lucas and Alfred Alder, who developed studies related to mankind in order to know and understand why people act as they do.

The foundation of Freud's contribution to Modern Psychology is his emphasis on the unconscious aspects of human psyche. He assumes that most of human actions are motivated by psychological forces over which we have finite control. To Freud, the unconscious plays a great role in human realisation and feelings, though man is not aware of its presence. The human mind, says Freud, is divided into two: the conscious and unconscious. The conscious part is supposed to determine man's actions in a civilised society, and at the same time helps to suppress those of his actions that are likely to be rejected.

Freud further argues that the mind has three parts: the "id", the "ego" and the "superego". He says that the "id" has instinctive energies of survival values and obeys the pleasure principle. The "id" states Freud, responds to instincts of pleasure, without caring about the logicality of social conventions. The second part, the "ego" is conscious and accountable for reality principles, because it regulates the id, which is not conscious. The ego is then equal to the "self". The superego, on its part, is the conscious and the unconscious simultaneously, but it is largely unconscious. It represents all the moral beliefs and structures, and makes children to be able to memorise and internalise social values instructed by their parents. It respects the moral principles. In *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature* (3rd edition), Wilfred L. Guerin et al state:

> Whereas the id is dominated by the pleasure principle and the ego by the reality principle, the superego is dominated by the morality principle. We might say that id would make us devils that the superego would have us become angels (or, worse, as creatures of social conformity) and that it remains for the ego to keep us

> healthy human beings by maintaining a balance between these two opposing forces. (122)

From the above quotation, we realise the importance of the role of the ego: it has to judge what is good to keep between the demands of the id and exigencies of the superego. If the superego prevails, it is at the expense of the id and vice versa.

This theory will help us to have a better grasp of the behaviour of the characters in *The Awkward Age*, as we will be able to penetrate into their psyche.

The second theory that will be used in this study is New Historicism. It reveals the human past and accordingly allows the establishment of a relation between the past and the present. New Historicism was born in Anglo-American history scholarship and began to be applied to texts by readers in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Its proponents are Louis Althuser, Michel Foucault and James Frederick. D.G. Myers in "New Historicism and Literary study" reveals that the moment was ripe for such a homegrown movement to appear. For several years as he carries on many scholars in English and American Universities- ranging from Frederick Crews, George Watson, and E.D. Hirsch, Jr, on one end of the other had been raising a clamour for a return to historical scholarship in the academic study of literature. As Jean E. Howard frankly says in a defence of the new movement, by the early eighties professors had grown weary of teaching literary texts as "ethereal entities" floating above the strife of history.

It is worthy mentioning that New Historicism challenged and resisted the assumptions and goals of traditional historicism, which has as aims to find what really happened at a given time and place. For New historicists then, anyone can never know exactly what happened at a given time and place. We deeply support New Historicists who maintain that all texts are social documents, and as such, they both reflect and affect the world that produces them. For New Historicists,

reading any single text renders an incomplete picture: understanding multiple documents requires piecing them together to produce an interpretation. This is why New Historicists reminders that the job of good reader is to negotiate the various forces claiming his attention and to find meaning in their interaction.

This theory fits well in this study in the sense that we are dealing with a study on an issue well delimited at a precise moment of the past. Then, New Historicism opens the door to a reliable view of the human past, hence his importance. Thus, both theories are rather complementary than contradictory.

Many critics have been interested in the works of Henry James and especially in the novel under study. F.R. Leavis in *The Great Tradition* praised *The Awkward Age* highly, calling it "one of the James' major achievements". Edmund Wilson, on the other hand, showed little patience with the "gibbering crew", surrounding Nanda with their vaguely corrupt schemes. More recently, commentators have expressed similar differences.

F.R. Leavis in the aforementioned work posits that *The Awkward Age*, though it exhibits James' genius for social comedy at its most brilliant, is a tragedy; a tragedy conceived in an imagination that was robustly, delicately and clairvoyantly moral. He goes farther to say that the dialogue in *The Awkward Age* is marvellously good, an amazing exhibition of genius and that it is in this life of dialogue that this novel differs mostly obviously from the late "great", conventionally admired novels, where, while granting the author's right to stylize, we have to complain that his characters speak in a stylization that is too often intolerably like James' own late style. He adds that this life of dialogue, fascinating in itself, also means subtle, vivid and varied life of character. In this line, he keeps up that this novel is a book of "consciousness" that takes on a limiting suggestion: it suggests something too close to what is represented by the witty and sophisticated conversation into which the theme is distilled. And the reading of *The Awkward Age* exacts is, strongly sympathetic as are the feeling generated towards Nanda, Mr Longdon and Mitchy, too intensively and

predominantly a matter of "wits", in a limiting sense, to permit of the profoundest and massive imaginative effect.

Colin Swatridge, in *British Fiction: a student's A to Z* argues that James' prime interested is not only the psychology of late 19th century individualism, but rationality apart, it is the depth and intensity of his character studies that were, and are so striking. Swatridge explains that it is for psychological depth, and this heightening of character that James is thought as a modern writer. He concludes that James' writings are influenced by his own life. James, in fact, was himself the product of a home in which learning was highly valued, and which enjoyed the wealth and leisure to seek it out. He was the product of a country which looked to Europe for its cultural model and he had lived an age that was hampered by the new science of psychology and by what it seemed to reveal about workings of inner mind.

William Morton Payne in *Henry James: The Critical Heritage* contends that if the drawing rooms were the world, and those who have their being in them the whole of mankind, one could have no reasonable ground for dissatisfaction with the novels of Mr Henry James. William further explains that we certainly get from his books about everything, in the way of both conversation and action, and that a decorous drawing room can shelter, and that we get it in such delicate forms of artistic presentation that no pretext of adverse criticism is left. William does not appreciate the volume of *The Awkward Age* when he says that there are nearly five hundred pages of drawing-room talk and incident, all delightfully finished and subtle, all displaying workmanship of the highest cherry-stone order, and that yet we are inexpressibly wearied by it, because it has so little to do with anything that makes life really worth having, and that we sorry through it from a sense of duty rather than for satisfaction with its message.

An unsigned review, in the same work comments on James' writing style and characterisation. It declares that *The Awkward Age* is too voluminous.

> Four hundred and fifty-seven pages of Henry James' analysis, intricacy, dry cleverness, and disheartening suggestiveness make a big dose for one time. To add further weight to the volume, its contents are divided into ten books and each book-dose must be swallowed conscientiously; and you will taste it all the way down. (294)

It goes further to say that in *The Awkward Age*, we have a thoroughly disagreeable study of English society and manners; that it is a study whose detail will occupy many hours of careful reading. The plot itself, it asserts, is a mere thread of a story, deals with a so-called love between a middle-aged man and the grand daughter of his early love. So, this elderly hero is really the only comfortable person in the book. It keeps up to comment that the rest of the volume is given over the worldliness, the selfishness, the scandals, and the gossip of the numerous people who make up its world.

Sir Francis Jeune in *Henry James: The Critcal Heritage* says that Mr Henry James is the wonderful artistic outcome of their national habit of repression. To him, James has learned how to make repression a factor of art instead of an impediment. Sir Francis also adds that *The Awkward Age* is a complex illustration of his method: it is an urban drama of that fast life which, perhaps because of its "fastness", produces an atrophying cleverness that has learned to anticipate naive opinion of its depravity. Finally, he concludes that the story is a sad one, for it traces the gradual development of a tragic sense of the atrophy of which they spoke in two of the only three generous natures with whom it deals.

This study differs from the aforementioned in that it focuses on the impact of decayed social mores and virtues on man since the latter is the product of his time and society. It further analyses or criticizes the loss of social standards

desired by the ancestors. Hence, man is called to fight for his own fate since his society may hamper it.

The present work is based on the assumption that parents' behaviour is not always fair since they may be, immoral, irresponsible and careless of the education of their children and the latter are the ones to bear the awful consequences.

Including the general introduction, this work is made up of three chapters and a general conclusion. The general introduction provides an overview of the whole study. It gives the thesis problem, aim and hypothesis, reviews theories and existing literature and brings out the structure of the work.

The first chapter entitled "Irresponsibility of the Age" examines the degree to which parents of Victorian England neglected the education and the taking care of their children. It also analyses the sloth that characterised the late nineteenth century British especially the city dwellers.

The second chapter captioned "The Question of Immorality" shows how industrial revolution causes the loss or deterioration of moral values in all parts of life especially in marital institutions.

The third chapter titled "Satire and The Youth as Victim of the Age" investigates the humoristic and hypothetical nature of social and marital institutions in the late Victorian England. It also focuses on the negative consequences of the societal principles on the growing generation.

The general conclusion sums up the major arguments, brings out findings and recommendations, and suggests possible areas or future research

CHAPTER ONE

IRRESPONSIBILITY OF THE AGE

In Henry James' *The Awkward Age*, social satire is based on the late nineteenth century London characterized by vices such as irresponsibility and indifference to life. James' society is too careless and awkward; all the Londoners from the younger to aged people are ill at ease. The writer portrays the decay of social values and manners and shows us that the whole society is doomed to destruction for it is peopled by wealthy, leisured pleasure- seekers on one hand and poor people who fail to take decisions of their own fate on the other. Londoners are for most part people who conceive life as a fine art and have leisure to carry out their theories. Rarely are they at close quarters with any ugly task. They are subtle and complex with the subtlety and complexity that comes from conscious preoccupation with themselves. Moreover, they are finely expressive of milieu; each belongs unmistakably to his class and his race ; each is true to inherited moral tragedy of life though so many minutely limiting and apparently artificial conditions, and by means of characters who are somewhat self- conscious and are apt to make of life only a pleasant pastime.

The second part of the nineteenth century is a difficult period because humanity is characterized by many challenges. Buckley in *The Victorian Temper: A Study in Literary culture* states:

> The Victorians, we are told, were "a poor, blind, complacent", yet they were torn by doubt, spiritually bewildered lost in troubled universe. They were crass materialists, wholly absorbed in the present, quite unconcerned "with abstract verities and eternal values", but they were also exclusively religious, lamentably idealistic, nostalgic, for the past, and ready to forego delights for the vision of a world beyond. (2)

By this passage, we see that English society in the Victorian period is not at ease. Material lust causes the degeneration of moral and social values and people are lost in the worldliness.

In his portrayal of the Victorian London, James makes use of characters of whom the majority are clumsy and careless with their life. Through his use of characters, we have a true image of London at the eve of the modern period. James' success lies in the creation of characters of both the observer and the observed. He, himself refuses the role of typical nineteenth century novelist of the commentator standing outside his characters.

While the proponents of the philosophy of existence, Heidegger for instance, claim that "Man is nothing else than his plans. He exists only to the extent that he fulfils himself", Londoners are too careless of their future because they want others to decide on their turn or to work for their welfare. They tend to dwell on the absence of ethic, responsibility and morality.

In fact, most of James' characters want easy life and do not desire to work to improve it. However, we have a benevolent character, Longdon, a middle-aged man with the desired qualities and ideal values and manners; he is the observer of the society in decadence and struggles to redeem it. All others are careless and villainous and are used to highlight specific issues and to enhance their thoughts through criticizing their ideas and deeds. These are Mrs Brookenham called Mrs Brook and her social circle, her children and Jane- the Duchess, her cousin- in- law.

Against the Victorian motto – hard work, James' society lives in a kind of somnolence, most of the time is wasted in Mrs Brook's drawing room at Buckingham Crescent, the "temple of talk" to whom favourites come for solace and stimulation. Further, we see them in country visits but no instance shows them at work.

The theme of irresponsibility is to be tackled through individual characters for no one is spared from that vice.

Indeed, the task of parents to shape the future of their kids is essential. Mrs Brook, having a family – husband and four children, is more attached to her social set instead of labouring for the sake of her family. She even fails to supervise her kids' education and these are free to move to wherever they want and with whoever asks it. Nanda, her grown up daughter spends a long time outside her parents' guidance. Normally, children are protected by their mother's affection; Nanda has lived a life similar to that of orphans because neither her mother nor her father cares for her education. Instead of devoting her full time to search for the welfare of her children, Mrs Brook is more preoccupied by her social set. Her only worry is to marry Nanda off to Mitchy – an influential member of her temple regardless of the girl's consent to know whether she loves him or not. James' Mrs Brook has deviated from the duty of motherhood. Furgerson in *The Images of Women in Literature* (ed.) shows us an ideal mother with a mixture of love and fear for her daughter. He states: "Will she be raped as Europa was by Zeus? Will she be bride of the god of the under-world, sentenced to half a life in darkness in love, as does Miranda in The Tempest?" (94).

Unlike Mrs Brook, this mother shows more interest in her daughter's safety and happy future. Mrs Brook, instead of training her children to face life challenges, shuts her eyes up in front of her responsibilities. Neither Harold nor Nanda benefits from their parents' help. There are some familial tasks that Nanda is not aware of because her mother has not trained her in them. For instance, she does not know how to make tea whereas she is at the age when her mother wants to marry her off. It is not understandable for a girl at eighteen years old who is unable to attend to domestic duties. Houseknecht in "Achievement of Women outside Home is the Phantom Factor in Marital Breakdown" articulates that:

> Traditional values affirm the sanctity of life, hence the children are cherished product of the conjugal union and

> are to be nurtured, protected and trained to responsible adulthood and productive citizenship–to become of maximum value to themselves and their society. (103)

Through this passage, we see how a parent worthy of his/her name must take care of kids' education. He has to train them from the young age preparing them to face bravely the life to come.

Actually, a growing child must be under his parents' guidance, James' Nanda has got all her freedom from childhood to her current state. She spends a long time living either in her house in the country or at Tishy who is unhappily married into bargain, who has no children, and whose house, as you may imagine, has good thick air a partisanship. Therefore, her anticipated free goings makes her unmarriageable for she has discovered life at early age. All these due to the lack of parental care. Her mother exposes her to her immoral world while she is at an age when her appearance attracts a number of people. James posits: "I haven't the least idea. I do all I can to enter into her life, but you can't get into a railway train while it's on the rush" (105).

Realistically, analysing the words Mrs Brook uses when responding to Mr Cashmore asking Nanda's whereabouts, she does not care about her daughter. It is obvious that Nanda and her mother live a separate life. Therefore, the collaboration between them is difficult; hence the deviation of Mrs Brook from the mother's duties.

It is very difficult to a reader to understand and evaluate the behaviour of Mrs Brook because she tries to prevent other people – perhaps even herself from discovering the relationship between her words and her character. It is clear for example that she is jealous of her daughter and desirous of catering for her own needs. Nevertheless, it is also obvious that she wants to be a good mother "Only it's just the depth of my thought for my daughter's happiness that I've clung to this resource" (176).

As for Nanda's marriage, her mother has testified her irresponsible manners in arranging her daughter's life project. As the novel under study evolves at the time of Aristocratic decline and the rising of Bourgeoisie, one notices that the Brookenhams despite their place in Gloucestershire earns meagre funds – £ 1,200 a year. Ensuring the fall of their economies, Mrs Brook wants her daughter to get married to Mitchy, a son of the rich shoemaker whose income is £ 4,000 a year even though she does not love him. The reason behind Nanda's marriage to Mitchy is that he would so absolutely, so unreserved do anything for her. Unfortunately, Mitchy, who for a period seems a possible husband for Nanda, is eventually disqualified because of the young girl's attitude toward him.

Actually, Mrs Brook's scheme is bound to failure because Nanda would not marry the rich and ugly Michty, since she does not love him; instead, she hopelessly loves the poor and handsome Vanderbank called Van, who, in his turn, does not, cannot and will not love her because he loves the girl's mother – Mrs Brook. So, Mrs Brook's scheme fails; and the whole awkward situation is resolved by a patchwork of compromises. Thence, the marriage would be profitable to Mrs Brook not her daughter.

Mrs Brook is likened to Dickens' Grandgrind in *Hard Times* whose lust for money pushes him to replace his daughter's happiness with wealth by convincing her to marry Bounderby, and old richman despite the big age difference. He declares:

> Now what are the facts of this? You are, we will say around numbers, twenty years of age, Mr Bounderby is, we will say in around fifty. There is some disparity in your respective years, but in your means and positions there is none, on the contrary, there is a great suitability. (134)

In the light of the above, we see how the nineteenth century parents neglect their kids' feelings. Though not old, Mitchy is appreciated by Mrs Brook thanks to his birthright. Both Mrs Brook and Grandgrind represent the irresponsible and corrupted parents of the era whose lust for material gain pushes them to sacrifice their children's happiness for wealth.

Even though Mrs Brook wants her daughter to get married to Michty, Nanda loves Van. The latter is loved for his attraction to a number of women including Mrs Brook herself. But the man is not appreciated by his mother-in-law to be because he lacks money. James advances:

> Mr Vanderbank, I'm assured, has no means of his own at all and if he does not believe in impecunious marriage it's not I who shall be shocked at him. He has nothing but a poor official salary. If it's enough for one it would be little enough for two, and it would be still less for a half dozen. (152)

From this passage, it is unequivocal that financial means would hamper Vanderbank's marriage to Nanda reason why Mrs Brook cannot encourage it. But in addition to poverty, Van's prospects for Nanda would not happen because the girl's mother wants him for herself. However, Nanda despite her youth exhibits great talents in succeeding to handle her issue. Leavis in *The Great Tradition* propounds:

> The girl Nanda, supposedly a helpless spectator, take the control of the situation and works out for elders. She is the intelligent and expert and self – possessed one of them all; they have only to leave everything to her light manipulation, and the awkwardness – which is their, not heirs is surmounted. By the time she has displayed all her

> art the story is at an end, her action has answered the question and provided the issue. (169)

Aware of her mother's corrupted ambitions, Nanda displays her maturity; she dares reject Mitchy because she cannot get married to him whereas she loves Van. Unfortunately, the latter declines before her because she has been sullied by the immoral world of her mother. Thus, Mrs Brook, aware of the cause of her daughter's marriage failure acknowledges her hand in it. She says:

> The question, don't you know? Of bring girls forward or not. The question of – well, what do you call it? Their exposure. It's the question it appears – the question of future, it's awfully interesting, and the Duchess at any rate is great on it. Nanda of course is exposed. (122)

Indeed, Mrs Brook admits her guilt for not having protected her daughter from the influence of her immoral social set. She finally realises that Jane has been a good mother in supervising her niece Aggie, and consequently she is more marriageable than Nanda. But she comes back to her evil education justifying the carelessness of her daughter's education "The sort of men I know anything about are not looking for mechanical dolls. They're looking for smart, safe, sensible English girls" (50).

Here, it is unequivocal that Mrs Brook is misled by the modernity. Thus, she is the prototype of European mothers at the eve of the modern period. So, Mrs Brook constitutes a strong handicap for her daughter's prospects. James says, "...I've seen perfectly from the first that the only difficulty would come from her mother – but also that would be stiff" (153).

Moreover, the irresponsibility of Mrs Brook is also revealed through her behaviour in front of her family challenges. Harold, her son has been too lazy and she is unable to correct him. Therefore, she pleads with Longdon to solve all

issues besetting the whole family. She utters, "I want him to take an interest in us. Above all in the children. He ought to like us. It will be a sort of poetic justice" (57). Mrs Brook is conscious of the awkwardness of household; no one can stand the challenges. That is why she makes recourse to Longdon to be kind to them all. The man, thanks to his better morals, is not only admired by Mrs Brook but also by her daughter; reason why after her marriage failure, Nanda 's mother adopts a new strategy in trying to work Mr Longdon and make him a benefactor to her daughter. One may argue that at this level, this strategy is admirable since Nanda herself likes him and loves Beccles. Mrs Brook hopes that after the old man's death, her daughter would come back with the wealth, and the two will live together as two intelligent women at Buckingham Crescent.

Besides, Edward Brook – the head of the family is also to be criticized for his carelessness of his family. The man, having a wife and four children among which are Nanda and Harold, plays deaf to the challenges besetting his house. He shows no interest in the family welfare. As his son, Harold, is frantic to everybody, the father of the family shows no attempt to change his son's immoral and irresponsible behaviour. He would have trained him from childhood preparing him to stand the difficulties of life and build his own future if he had been a good parent. Munford in "The Suburban Way of Life" reports:

> Boston holds nothing for you except heavy taxes and political misrule. When you marry, pick out a suburb to build a house in, join the country club, and make your life center about your club, your home, and your children. (34)

From the above passage, Munford gives an example of wealthy citizens of Boston who, unlike Edward Brook, advise their sons not to be lazy but rather to be hard working persons because the future reserves nothing good but challenges. They warn them that life is troublesome and they want them not to

fail to overcome the difficulties of life. They are providing hints to their sons to stand the hardship of life.

The Brookenhams' economies have decayed and Mr Edward Brook is not bothered by the failure. Instead of working hard to rebuild their former status, he dozes in front of his responsibilities to enhance the welfare of his family. Dyer in *Courtship, Marriage and Family* advances that: "For most families, the husband's occupation has been the main source of economic support, and the main basis for the family's social standing in the community" (208).

Here, it is obvious that the fall of the Brookenhams' economies originates from Edward's carelessness. While a husband in the family is called to promote the family welfare, James' Edward does nothing for his household.

Furthermore, his wife flirts with the acolytes of her social circle – Van and Mitchy but Edward Brook is unable to notice it: his wife is more attached to Van. Worse, the fact that his wife calls upon Longdon to solve the challenges inside his house highlights Edward's lack of manhood. While a man in his family is the pillar, Edward in the novel under study is a coward who cannot stand the challenges besetting his house. Concerning his daughter Nanda, he dares declare, "We would not take her" (234). It is shameful for a father who publicly declares his carelessness.

As James' *The Awkward Age* exhibits London city in its moments of flux and corruption, parents have taken the lead to display their awkwardness especially concerning their children's marriage. Not only Mrs Brook but also Jane – her cousin-in-law has been too irresponsible of her niece's marriage. Aggie is thrust through convention by old- fashioned aunt so that she can break down, not settle down. Aggie, a seventeen year old who knows nothing about life is delivered to Mitchy to marry by her aunt. Mrs Brook affirms, "...her aunt will marry her off in the shortest possible time and in the best conditions" (122-3). For her, what matters is the marriage of her niece to a well-off man

rergardless of the happiness of the marriage. James through the character of the Duchess specifies:

> If a married woman has been knocked about, that's only part of her condition. Elle l'a bien voulu (she has certainly wanted it), and if you are married you're married, it's the smoke or call it soot! Of the fire. (151)

The idea behind these words is that Londoners at the eve of this modern period disregard marriage whereas it is an important part of one's life. They take life for granted. Referring to that idea, if Aggie starts being knocked about at her age how would she reach her forties.

Therefore, the marriage to Mitchy would be profitable to her aunt because arranging it, the Duchess was longing for the man's money. Hence, it is regrettable for a parent who values her lust for wealth more than her niece's happiness. Hence, James' devastating criticism of London of the late nineteenth century.

Critics tend to attack young people who, during the Victorian era became lazy whereas the crucial moment is up to them to decide on their own fate. Van is criticized for not committing himself to a marriage with Nanda, and observes in him another example of Jamesian Prufrock. Having lost his parents and family members at early age (seven years old), Van though currently a deputy chairman of a company, is described by the Duchess as having nothing but a poor salary. Since women cost much in London, he cannot afford a marriage. Hence, he pleads with Longdon to back him up. Relying on his own income, he is unable to undertake any project such as marriage. Van puts:

> I shall appear to say that I'm different from the from the world I live in and to that extend present myself. Don't abandon me. See what can be done with me. Perhaps I'm after all a case. I shall certain cling to you. (36)

By these words, it is clear that London of the late nineteenth century was a money-ridden society. A person who does not have a birthright has no room in it. People like Van do not know on which foot to dance. Aware of his lack of means, Van acknowledges his inability to afford a marriage. It is out of sympathy for both Nanda and Van that Mr Longdon accepts to increase the lady's dowry if Van accepts to take her. He wants to back him up to Nanda. James in *The Awkward Age* affirms:

> Of course, what it superficially has the air of is my offering to pay for taking a step. It's open to you to be grand and proud to wrap yourself in your majesty and ask if I suppose you bribeable I haven't spoken without thought of that. (145)

To Longdon's proposition, Van agrees with it if he accepts to increase the dowry of Nanda. He says:

> Yes...but it isn't as if you proposed to me, is it? Anything dreadful. If one cares for a girl one's deucedly glad she has money. The more of anything she has the better, I assure you. (146)

As far as his marriage to Nanda is concerned, Van is given every cause, means and will to do it. The will is there from start: for Van is thoroughly charming and attractive man, who hates, not to do what is desired of him. In addition, this goodwill presently receives the strongest additional encouragement to action by an offer from Mr Longdon to settle a fortune on Nanda if he should marry her. James posits: "Well, so that on the day she does she will come into the interest of a considerable sum of money – already very decently invested that I've determined to settle upon her" (161).

However, Van, whom Nanda attracts, and who in her turn loves, considers this illumination so undesirable that he makes it the ground of declining her hand when Longdon offers it.

The offer is made with the utmost delicacy and circuitousness, but it is definitely made because Longdon, besides himself liking Van enormously, is torn with compassion for Nanda and wishes to do what he can for her happiness.

Nevertheless, with all his goodwill and his desire to oblige, and now with Mr Longdon's money to ease his way, Van still finds that he cannot love Nanda. He admires her, ever so ardently, ever so passionately even, but he cannot love her. For he is after all too old-fashioned to love a girl who knows what Nanda knows: this free, enlightened spirit , this ornament of Mrs Brook's drawing-room, is too old-fashioned to take a wife who is not conventionally ignorant and innocent of the ways of the worldly Buckingham Crescent.

As a justification, Van says that Nanda is a mind that already, at the age of eighteen, has seen through the corruption and falsities of the world – his own world, to which he is committed with all his heart and soul. He can admire, find the beautiful and charming, the unworldly world of Mr Longdon, which, at that time and place, stands as the opposite pole of Mrs Brook's Buckingham Crescent. But Van's world is the world of Mrs brook: he cannot detach himself from it than Nanda can be part of it. It is Nanda's repudiation of the values of that world – crude, childish and helpless as her repudiation is that beyond anything frightens and repels Van.

In defence of Van, one should point out that he has understandable reasons for not marrying her because she has been sullied by the too-free conduct of Buckingham Crescent social circle which he (Van) is the Apollo, her undefined but disturbing relationship with Mr Cashmore, his general fear that she is incipiently promiscuous because of her exposure to immoral people, perhaps Van's reluctance to be seen as having accepted a bribe from Mr

Longdon to marry her " Once I were disposed to act on your suggestion I'd make short work of any vulgar interpretation of my motive" (163).

However, Van is reprimanded for his procrastination and his relationship with Nanda's mother – Mrs Brook, he declines his marriage to Nanda for the sake of the girl's mother. He loves Mrs Brook who is six years his senior though still beautiful. Mrs Brook on her turn loves him, and so does her daughter; and it is up to Van to decide because Mrs Brook cannot be legally married since her husband is still alive. This attraction is to be deplored since the woman, having her own husband, is not eligible to Van because she has already put her money on another man.

Moreover, Van is criticised for the pledge he makes to Nanda when the girl beseeches him not to desert her mother. Advicingly Nanda urges him:

> Do stick to her. What I really wanted to say to you to bring it straight out is that I don't believe you thoroughly know how awfully she likes you. I hope my saying such a thing does not affect you as "immodest". One never knows but I do not much care if it does. I suppose it would be immodest if I were to say that I verily believe she's in love with you. (289)

By these words, one sees the clumsiness of Van, who at the age of thirty- six can be misled a girl of eighteen years. Nanda's action is quite admirable as she succeed to arrange her mother's happiness. She tries to do all her best so as, after her departure to Beccles, her mother stays safely surrounded or protected by the membership of her set. Yet, Van, a self- conscious man tries to make himself feel good by letting Nanda down easily and accept to court a woman whom he cannot take to his house and settle his own family. He is also guilty of spoiling Mr Longdon's effort and kindness, who struggles to save the two young

people – Nanda and Van, arranging their marriage. Edel in *Henry James ...A Life* forwards:

> If a man has had a quite life, but a great mind, one may do something for him; one may also do something with him even if he has had small mind and great adventures. But when he has had neither adventures nor intellectual, spiritual, or whatever inward history, then one's case is hard. One becomes, at any rate, very careful. (312)

From the above quoted passage, we see the extent to which Van is irresponsible for he refuses all the sacrifices freely offered to him by Mr Longdon. At the beginning, the young man's shortcoming to marriage was the lack of means, but currently, Mr Longdon assures to back him up as he accepts to increase the dowry of the girl he loves. It is later on that he declines her hand, giving as an excuse that the girl knows too much. There is no way he can reject Nanda because if the lady is reproached of her exposure to her mother's world, Van, himself is the influential member of Mrs Brook's set, whom she is exposed to in the course of their free-talks in the drawing room at Buckingham Crescent. Therefore, Van must be eager to bear the consequences of their immoral deeds. He is unlike his contemporary – Mitchy who is ready to take a lady from his sullied world. He affirms:

> ...and I'm not ashamed to say that when I like the individual I'm not afraid of the type. She knows too much – I don't say; but she doesn't know after all a millionth the part of what I do. (185-6)

By this quotation, the fact that Nanda has been exposed does not constitute a handicap for Mitchy because he acknowledges his hand in it. He, himself, is among people to whom she is exposed.

Furthermore, Van is accused of his pessimism about life. He is discouraged by his poverty but he plans to do nothing to improve it. He realizes that he has no value in his materialistic world. James in *The Awkward Age* articulates: "Here I am. But I've brought nothing. I haven't even brought a box of sweet. I'm not a man of the world" (284). It is clear that the man has been disgusted by the materialism of his society. He is discouraged to such an extent that he sees that he has no room in the society but instead of reacting he sits and complains.

Van is also guilty of his failure to explain in person and apologize to Mr Longdon for not living to the old man's expectations. He asserts:

> Look after my good name. I mean for common decency to him. He has been of a kindness to me that when I think of my failure to return it, makes me blush from head to foot. I've odiously neglected him by a complication of accidents. There are things I ought to have done that I haven't. (292)

Here, Van's lack of manners – and his eagerness for Nanda to cover up for him is unequivocal evidence of his lack of courage. One finally wonders, whether or not Van also will allow his friendship with Mrs Brook to drift apart despite his graceful protestations made in response to Nanda's plea that he be true to her mother. By this point we, like Mr Longdon, should no longer trust Van, even if it is doubtful whether we will share Longdon's intensity of disgust and disillusionment. The portrait that James has drawn in Van by the novel's conclusion is of a man who has allowed his distaste for awkwardness almost to destroy his potential for admirable behaviour.

As *The Awkward Age* evolves in the years following the fall of the Aristocracy, children of the ex- upper class are characterized by a high rate of

idleness to an extent that they cannot afford any work. Harold Brook whose family economies have fallen does nothing for himself or for his family. His financial unscrupulousness is much more than the portrayal of a scapegrace son. His mother is always bored with him and the man is a threat not only to his family but also to the surrounding people until everybody is frantic of him. James comments:

> The children this year seem to fit into nothing, into nowhere and Harold's more dreadful than he has ever been, doing nothing at all for himself and requiring everything to be done for him. (193)

Through these words, it is shameful for a young man like Harold who is unable to afford any work to supply his needs. At the age of twenty, the family expects his contribution to the construction of the society but he cannot stand the preparation of the life to come. If he carries on with borrowing a five-pound note that he requires his mother to pay back, how then will he set up his own family? Paul the apostle in the Bible propounds that "If anyone is not willing to work, neither him eat" (2Thess 3, 10). Thanks to this preaching, Paul is calling on the Thessalonians for work and to avoid any idleness and goes farther to mention that a lazy person has no right to eat. Therefore, Harold infringes both spiritual and societal principles.

Harold, whose family status has decayed, should not fold his arms but he would rather roll his sleeves up to work for the family welfare and rebuild their former economies.

Obvious, Harold is dismal product of his mother's education and immoral circle. Even worse, his insensitiveness and uncompassionate spirit is clearly seen in the way he shows no guilt about borrowing from his mother's guests and his passivity. He is a slave and opportunistic individual purely motivated by self-

interest. Through his portrayal of Harold, James ridicules the deviation to work of the late Victorian period especially in the Aristocratic class.

Moreover, the last years of the reign of Queen Victoria have been a difficult period for both the rich and modest people. Having a wealth inherited from his family, Mitchy is unable to manage his money but rather waste entertaining Mrs Brook's social circle. Instead of being protected by his family estate, the young man is driven into serious challenges of life by his wealth. Buckley in *The Victorian Temper* pictures this situation as follows:

> Confronted with the unpreceeded developments of 19th culture, an emerging middle class with the meagerest intellectual traditions behind it strove desperately to achieve standards of judgements. (10)

Through this passage, it is clear that some members of the bourgeoisie have money but no skills to manage it. Hence, this sometimes causes their fall. Wealth is profited by spongers such as Harold and Lord Petherton. James postulates that "Micthy doesn't care...for himself. I mean for his money. For anything anyone may think..." (147). His money is usually spent in entertaining Mrs Brook's set membership for he has rented a house for the summer and invited them.

Instead of being a kind, poorly treated but sincere and pathetic rich boy, Mitchy could just as plausibly be viewed as individual, guilty in his unprincipled drifting. He has loved Nanda and the girl's mother welcomes the proposal because of his money but unfortunately, the lady rejects him.

Aware of her unattractiveness to Mitchy, Nanda wants him to marry Aggie. By this arrangement, Nanda is seeking to enrich human lives by delivering Aggie from the Duchess and Mitchy from Petherton who preys on him. Here, James shows that Nanda's innocence is still not free of naivety; he succeeds in circumscribing her virtue, without, in any way, lessening it. Then,

Mitchy agrees with Nanda's suggestion though he does not love Aggie. He accepts to take Aggie for the only reason to please Nanda. James puts:

> If I were to go in for Aggie, it would only be only oblige. The modern girl, the products of our hard Longdon facts and of the inevitable consciousness of them just as they are... (185)

Here, it is unequivocal that Mitchy marries little Aggie, the convent flower, not because he wants to but because Nanda persuades him to it; and having married her, he discovers she is an outrageous flirt, who does not hesitate the moment she is married to go off with Lord Petherton, Mitchy's closest friend.

Seeing his marriage failure after Nanda disappoints him, Mitchy becomes cynical, even despairing about life. For him, missing the person he has deeply loved is the end of all his hope. While his contemporaries are facing great challenges due to poverty, Mitchy despite his wealth, is thrust in sorrows. It is hard to sympathise with him because it is ununderstandable to rely one's life exclusively on one individual. If he misses Nanda's hand, thanks to money, he can propose any other woman who would respect him. Worse, he permits his young wife – Aggie to do what she wants with her full freedom.

James' Mitchy tastes the fruits of his disregard for life. He has been too careless until he allows and even encourages Petherton to sponge off him; he even goes farther inviting him on their honeymoon.

Mitchy who had been lucky to be born into a well off family fails to save his wealth but rather he spends it and even calls others to waste it. He is unable to suspect Petherton for his probable cheating with his wife.

Yet, one may wonder how much of Mitchy's enjoyment derives from somewhat sick cherishing of his own unconventionality. We may also speculate that Aggie's coming out is somehow related to Mitchy's sexual unorthodoxy.

We may therefore conclude that it is unwise for him to have married the little girl in the first place whereas he is aware of his weakness.

Similar to Van, it is not clear why he follow Nanda's advice here. Romantic all for Nanda's interpretations are unsatisfactory; perhaps Mitchy is simply indifferent to the institution of marriage.

Finally, the irresponsibility of the era is revealed in the fact that being a foreigner, James is the only person who notices the falling social virtues in England especially in urban areas. A number of British writers have been the spokespersons of the society but their concern was industrial revolution and its consequences such as human exploitations but few have paid attention to social degeneration.

Well, the symbolic picture James presents so far is his stereotype of the hideous results of urbanization. What urbanization has engendered is irresponsibility, moral hollowness, lack of devotion to work, pessimism about life. The Victorian idleness, lust for wealth are therefore a natural next step for those industrious that led to rural exodus when confronted with material gains. Industrial revolution that leads to the growth of cities therefore proves to be deprived of a sense of humanity and responsibility. In their selfish rush for easy gained wealth, Londoners dedicate themselves to sloth and fear to face the life to come and even go farther to fail to take decisions of their own fate.

To sum up, the novel under study depicts a society in which everybody, from the lower to upper level, is careless about life. Life is taken for granted. Parents have been so negligent of their children's future and the latter instead of facing bravely the challenges created by their elders shirk in front of the responsibility to decide their own fate. The whole society has been awkward and lazy until an outsider comes to wake them up in their somnolence and manage to save the victim youth. Longdon is very wounded by Nanda sullied by her mother's corrupting influence and brings her at Beccles after her marriage

failure. Parents instead of protecting and promoting the welfare of their kids are the ones to hinder their good potentialities.

CHAPTER TWO
THE QUESTION OF IMMMORALITY

In this chapter, we are going to focus mainly on different anomalous behaviour and practices that Henry James in *The Awkward Age* portrays through most of his characters. The author of the novel under study displays an urban society which is going to decay from the root to the upper level. He enters for instance in details exhibiting how people are given over to worldliness such as non-marital love, infidelity, selfishness, sexual deviation to name but a few. To catch the source of everything, James captures the very nucleus of the society, which is the family. The family which is targeted in this chapter is the Brookenhams where Mrs Brook and the members of her social circle are involved in all evils of the era.

In fact, James has managed to show through *The Awkward Age* that London of the late nineteenth century is a society which lives in whirl of customs. Therefore, the majority of its inhabitants are lost in search of their individual welfare; lust for flesh, even marriage which is a sacred institution is broken or violated by people who have been corrupted by the so-called modernity. The result is the unavoidable rise of complex relations and customs. In the late nineteenth century London, the line from financial to moral bankruptcy is a direct one. People become property and what cannot be bought is not worth having. Gregor in *The Moral and The Story* states:

> Longdon does not love the latent or the lurking, has neither time nor sense for anything less discernible than the red rag in front of the steamroller. It wants cash over the counter. (157)

The old restraints that were regarded as ideal mores are currently considered as outdated. People of all generations are captured in one of societal periodic

ethical scene-shifts and consequently the failure to follow the ancestors' moral ethics for the sake of modernity indulges them into a dizzy world. No one in the current London exhibits faithfulness to moral virtues. The majority of Anglo-Saxons of the late nineteenth century are caught in that moral bankruptcy. James in the novel under study highlights it as follows:

> You're very odd people, all of you, and I do not think you quite know how ridiculous you are. Aggie and I are simple stranger folk, there is a great deal understands; yet we're none the less not easily frightened. In what it is, Mr Mitchett she asked, "That I've wounded your susceptibilities. (69-70)

In the line of the above, it is clear that nobody in London is spared from that moral depravity. Only new comers such as Jane, her niece and Mr Longdon from Beccles in the Suffolk, who after a long period of absence from the town find everything altered. Instead of being welcomed by their home, they are disorientated among their city fellows. People who are the advocates of the ancient social virtues as Mr Longdon who embodies James' desired qualities for a true Anglo- Saxon and who symbolises his model of ideal nineteenth century society have no room in London. The writer has a pessimistic view of London because, for him, nothing is good but an increasing vulgarity.

> ...For we're in a society, aren't we, and that's our horizon? Can never have been anything but increasingly vulgar? The point is that in the twilight of time and I belong you see, to the twilight – it had made out much less how vulgar it could be. (135)

For Mr Longdon, the epitome of the old school of manners, the society has reached its peak in moral decay and it is very hard to save it. The middle- aged

man is surprised to find everything turned upside down after his thirty years of absence. His world is quite different from that of Mrs Brook characterized by all kinds of evils such as gluttony, negligence, infidelity, non- marital love. Beccles and Buckingham Crescent are two different worlds in that the latter is the source of the vices that beset London.

Coming back after thirty years of absence, Mr Longdon is puzzled by London aristocratic salons like Buckingham Crescent. Beside the frivolous and futile conversation, the complexity of people's relationships, meetings and contacts are remarkable. Nobody can actually know who sleeps with who since, as party grows in number, illicit relationships are increasingly hinted at – the Duchess and Petherton, Vanderbank and Mrs Brook, Mrs Donner and Cashmore. However, the traditional London experienced by Lady Julia and Mr Longdon had had no such challenges. At their time, they had lived in brilliant, asexual and immaterial world. Mr Longdon discovers the city in which he has not revisited for a long period, a city he has known in its Victorian perfection, when the good society displayed respectful appearances and carefully hid all vices; but now, the vices are plain for all to see.

Indeed, everything has a beginning when it is about love, things happen in an awkward way. Yet, love heading to marriage must be a consensus between the two partners and not an interference of another person or an outsider. Therefore, some steps must be followed before people in love live together and settle down their family. More, in a marital household, the mutual collaboration, fidelity between lovers are required. While Mariama Bâ in *So Long a Letter* postulates that marriage is a union between two people who love each other and have chosen each other, James' characters are far from those normal procedures. In most of the cases, we are exposed to people who haste to launch their marriage without any consensus but whose unions are arranged by corrupted individuals who have made themselves marriage brokers such as Mrs Brook and Lord Petherton.

Therefore, instances of couples that launch out into love and make haste to live together are quite evident in *The Awkward Age*. Most of the time they end in crash, infidelity and disobedience towards one another. In such families, the education of children is problematic because they are exposed to the immoral world of their parents at their fragile age. This is what happens to Mrs Brook whose social set contributes much in sullying her daughter whose attempts at marriage are foiled by various members of her mother's circle and, ultimately, by her own mother. Nanda advances: "Mother didn't come; because she wants me now, as she says, more to share her own life...She's throwing me out into the world" (212). Mrs Brook's most desire for her daughter, is that she be with them and live with them naturally and easily, listen to their hollow talk, feel their confidence in her.

Beside her act of sullying her daughter's future, the priestess of Buckingham Crescent (Mrs Brook) is involved in different kinds of vices such as non- marital love, infidelity and selfishness. While Lucas in *Woman in Middle Age* argues that "The good wife is far more precious than jewels" (105), James's Mrs Brook is a threat to everybody. Neither her husband, her children nor her guests benefit from her deeds or plans.

Having her own family – husband and children, the woman seems to be frivolous, predatory and unfaithful to her husband. She is described as a character who does not know on which leg to dance with men but who, at the same time, has the tact of catching them by means of her youthful appearance despite her age and intelligence. James says:

> She had about her pure light of youth, would she always have it, her head, her figure, her flexibility, her flickering, her colour, her lovely silly eyes, her natural, quavering tone, all prayed together toward this effect by some trick that had never yet been exposed. (Ibid, 38)

Though married, Mrs Brook still longs for everyman especially the members of her drawing- room to be all her lovers. For instance, having heard that Mr Longdon had hopelessly loved her mother Lady Julia, she yearns for the man's affection. She voices, "If his line is to love the mothers why on earth doesn't he love me? I'm in all conscience enough one" (116). Here, it is not understandable why Mrs Brook yearns for Mr Longdon's love because she is already engaged to Edward Brook with whom she has already four children. This is a proof that she is not committed to her marital engagement. She usually violates her marriage vow made to her husband opposing God's plan for marriage, which requires the spouses to live in full chastity. Hereafter, it is obvious that the Brookenhams's household lacks the foundation, which is love because the woman has no motive of looking for further partners whereas her husband is still alive.

From the Christian perspective, marriage is regarded as the most important institution created by God himself. Solomon, King of Israel in Proverbs 31:10-24 gives a picture of a good wife.

> A loyal wife rejoices the heart of her husband and he will complete his years in peace. A wife's charm delights her husband, and her skill puts fat on his bones, A silent wife is a gift of the Lord and there is nothing so precious as a disciplined soul. A modest wife adds charm to charm, and no balance can weight the value of a chaste soul. Like the sun rising in the heights of the Lord, So is the beauty of a good wife in her ordered home.

The above quotation is an illustration of the desired qualities for a good wife, which is not the case for most of James' couples. Mrs Brook is not attached to her legal husband but to most influential members of her circle – Van and Mitchy. Her charm is rather inclined to Van whereas her husband is folding

himself up in his room. Few instances expose us to mutual conversations between Mr Brook and his wife, but we realise that the woman spends a long time entertaining the members of her social circle where the talks would not lack to raise suspicious relationships (My dear Van; Mitchy, love).

The motives of Mrs Brook's unreliability to her husband are unknown to us but some critics suggest her husband's ill life. Even though her husband shows a physical weakness, she would not be tolerated to have opted to cheat on him. She could rather support him in his weaknesses since marriage is based upon vows to live together as husband and wife and to be faithful to each other whatever the circumstances. Therefore, those who marry must understand that they have entered into a lifelong union; there is no turning back, no second chance – the marriage vow is "till death do us part". This is why it is important for spouses to be faithful to each other. The fundamental principle is that the marriage bond is indissoluble hence non- marital or any other relationship out of wedlock would be condemned everywhere. Watt in *The Fallen Woman in the Nineteenth Century English Novel* opines that "If there is one sin I hate – I utterly loathe more than others it is wantonness. It includes all other sins..." (Qtd Ruth, 3). So, one will hereby acknowledge that infidelity is not tolerated anywhere.

The majority of couples in *The Awkward Age* are vacillating or are destroyed by relationships out of wedlock or infidelity. So, James' London is doomed to decay since marriage is good for the stability of the society, for the protection of the children and the moral welfare of the nation.

A number of views condemn sexual immorality that is against the norms of the bible and many other societies. In "Sexual Conduct: Biblical Advice for Young People" Dr William posits:

> Sexual purity provides a solid foundation for marriage ...
> Impurity, sexual immorality, fornication and adultery
> are the enemies of marriage, and God's plan for marriage

> cannot flourish if sexual immorality is widespread and accepted as the norm. (7)

From the above words, it is clear why most couples in James' society end in crash or infidelity. They lack the foundation that is sexual purity. All people in the late Victorian England especially urban areas like London are exposed to sexual immorality. In many households, we are shown married people who are implicated in extra- marital flirtation and consequently the young generation is infected by that undesirable behaviour. The beautiful young girls, the future mothers are not looked after but exposed to immoral adults and their purity is wasted.

It is clear that Mr and Mrs Brook do not love each other for few instances show them sitting together dealing with their family issues such as the fall of their economies and the education of their children. Rather, Mrs Brook collaborates much with her acolytes for the sake of her social circle. Therefore, Edward's family lacks love, which is the basis or cornerstone of a marriage.

In reality, a man is enchanted by his wife's charm but the characters James uses are far from that paradise. A number of couples in *The Awkward Age* are void of those desired qualities: neither Edward and his wife nor Cashmore and Lady Fanny exhibit cheerfulness and fidelity in their households.

Beside her unfaithfulness, Mrs Brook acts foolishly and strangely when arranging her daughter's marriage. Seeing that Nanda constitutes the ornament of her social circle, Mrs Brook wants her daughter to get married to one of the male members of her salon. The marriage to Van whom Nanda is not working because Mrs Brook wants him for herself; that is why she does all her best to marry her off to Mitchy. Krook in *The Ordeal of Consciousness in Henry James* remarks that:

> What's really "superior" in her is that, though show her an interference with a favourite plan, her personal

> resentments nothing – all she wants is to see what may really happen, to take in the truth of the case and make the best of that. She offers me the truth, as she sees it, about myself, and with no nasty elation if it does chance to the truth that suits her best. It was a charming stroke. (Qtd, Ibid, 149)

Mrs Brook's main preoccupation is to maintain the unity of the temple of analysis; she does not care about the happiness of her daughter's marriage. Another reason behind that scheme is to get Van's affectation.

Longing for Mitchy's wealth, Mrs Brook struggles so that the man from the well-to- do family marries her daughter. It is hereby understandable that marriage is arranged for Mrs Brook's sake. Murray in *Love, Freedom and Society* voices: "True marriage is the permanent relation of man and a woman who have become real in themselves, and acknowledge and revere and delight in each other's reality" (38).

Instead of being a commitment between the two partners, the marriage of Mitchy and Nanda would be Mrs Brook's plan. These would be pushed to live together whereas they do not thoroughly know each other.

Being one of the most influential members of her set, Mitchy is well known to Mrs Brook. She is aware of all his qualities and weaknesses such as sexual unorthodoxy. Instead of looking for a happy marriage for her daughter, she is more interested in the man's wealth. The lust for material gain is one of the major causes of the moral decay in the late Victorian England. Nijimbere Cecile in "Morality and Materialism in Charles Dickens' *Hard Times* and Ayi Kwei Armah's *Fragments*" pictures this situation when she says, "The alienating effect of materialistic attitudes and the degrading morality is shown to have neutralizing effect on the underprivileged" (83). In all these mischiefs and immoral practices, most of the time, the weaker is the one to bear the awful

consequences. Nanda, who represents the victim youth, is thrust in many challenges due to her mother's lust for material gain hence we are bound to say that money was the cause of downfall of the Victorian society.

Again, Mrs Brook would not be tolerated for having planned an affair between Nanda and Mitchy since she is aware of the man's sexual inability – a thing that Nanda would hardly bear. She is cocksure that her daughter married in the too- hot teenage, would not cope with sexual dissatisfaction. Even Mrs Brook herself, is frustrated by her non-consummated relations with Van and Mitchy. Then, arranging that affair, her target is not Nanda's happiness but her own interests. Fortunately, Nanda rejects either her husband to be or her mother's drawing room; she decides to follow Mr Longdon to Beccles because she is tired with London's corruption. She needs a rest.

While Neibuhr in "The Conflict Between Individual and Social Morality" articulates, "The most perfect justice cannot be established if the moral imagination of the individual does not seek to comprehend the need and interest of his fellow" (684); Mrs Brook is accused of excessive selfishness in planning her daughter's marriage. She yearns for Mitchy's wealth only regardless of her daughter's welfare. In all her deeds, she looks for the welfare and the stability of her social set; she even goes far in valuing her social circle more than her daughter's happiness. The woman is more attached to mundane advantages since she yearns for all wonders heading to her house, every handsome man to be her lover, all the money to be at her home. Mrs Brook is a woman who arouses only hostilities in her entourage. She represents the English mothers who have deviated from their duties of educating their kids but whose only worry is worldly lusts. She is the antithesis of the Victorian attitude, which expects women to be submissive, gentle, clinging, uncomplicated and, above all pure.

As the English society is shifting from a period to another, Mr Brook is not the only mother in the novel to exhibit the moral emptiness. She is joined by her

cousin-in-law – the Duchess who, after Nanda disappoints Mitchy, swears that Aggie her niece, must get married to that well off man. Despite the insults, she has accused him of being ugly and poorly dressed; she is currently attracted to him thanks to his money. She says:

> I don't say at all that I should sniff at poor Mitchy. We must take what we can get and I shall be the first to take it. You can't have everything for nine pence...He takes, moreover, his ease in talk, but that ...is much a matter of whom he talks with. And after marriage what does it signify? He has forty thousand a year. (168)

Aggie with her innocence and virginity, knowing nothing about life, is forced to marry a man she does not love.

Given the speed of the arrangement of that marriage, its vices start early at the beginning. Whereas love is the cornerstone of a marriage, James' couples launch their households without a full commitment between the lovers and consequently their engagement would not last for long. Similar to Mrs Brook, the Duchess shows the same material lust when arranging her niece's marriage to Mitchy. That marriage illustrates the family collapse in the Victorian England. The two young people are pushed to settle their household though no one is committed to the other. This is due to the greed of wealth on the part of the Duchess. To this, one may add that no one of the two fiancés loves the other and consequently there is a high probability that their union will not last.

As we can see in the novel under study, James has created a story far from the perfect lover stories like Romeo and Juliet. He just imagines a situation of everyday life, which is believable. For instance, contrary to what we are accustomed to, James founds a situation of love where the beginning is provoked by an outsider and not the lovers themselves. The actual procedure is when the beginning emanates from the two and no matter how they get to be in

love, the great question to be posed is whether they will reach the stage of living together through marriage. Therefore, we can ask ourselves if Aggie and Mitchy can easily succeed in marriage through love. Here, the first thing to be considered is the duration of the engagement between the fiancés since they have been pushed into marriage by people corrupted by mundane advantages. Therefore, they do not get enough time to know each other. In this regard, Samuel and Byron Sherwin submit:

> Love is an art. Love takes time to develop, to actualize, to perfect. It is not infatuation. It is not physical possession. It is not the satisfaction of impulse. It is total involvement and concern with another is present; sharing mutual future. (Internet source)

The idea behind this passage is that, Mitchy would have to be patient in order to examine thoroughly his future lover before they get married. This must be reciprocal because the two have positive qualities and weaknesses that have to be known to all of them. A number of views focus on a clear and long preparation of a marriage. At the end of a conference on marriage, a booklet titled "Mille et une Attitudes de la Politesse" was compiled by catholic priests in which they advocate:

> Ayez le courage de rompre si vous remarquez que vos deux personnalités ne convergent pas ; ou bien si avez une information inquiétante pour votre avenir, vous ne pouvez pas changer votre époux après le mariage ça serait trop tard. (12)

> Have courage to break off if you see that your two personalities do not converge, if you get worrying

> information for the future, you will not change your spouse after marriage it would be late. (Translation mine)

By these words, Mitchy's marriage to Aggie is doomed to decay because they have not taken a sufficient time to examine their personalities. Then, knowing fairly the qualities and failings of one's partner may lead him or her to an anticipatory knowledge of how to accept them. For instance, if Aggie were aware of Mitchy's sexual unorthodoxy, she would not accept to marry him. So, her husband's sexual inability pushes her to be more attached to Lord Petherton more than to her legal husband. The Duchess pictures this situation as: "I quite grant you" said the Duchess gaily "that my niece is wherever Petherton is. This I'm sure of, for there is a friendship if, you please, that has not been interrupted (245).

No one would doubt that this is due to the hasty nature of the marriage since neither Mitchy nor Aggie has got an opportunity to examine his or her love. The one who would be blamed for that failure is Jane (the Duchess) but she is gaily criticizing her niece's marriage break down instead of being ashamed by Aggie's infidelity to her husband. Given the relationships between Aggie and Petherton, the period between marriage and the engagement would be profitable to interrupt them so that they get married and settle down on a family void of adultery and flirtation.

Moreover, it would be difficult to understand Petherton interfering in Mitchy's marriage. Being Mitchy's closest friend, his acts of cheating on him are blameworthy. James' London is difficult for the complexity of the relationships among its inhabitants.

Besides, the relationship between Lord Petherton and Aggie would not lead to a marriage but an adulterous union, which is an iniquity condemned in all moral societies. Everybody would condemn Petherton's interference in spoiling other households cheating on him or her. *The Awkward Age* provides a

true picture of a society in which the people are implicated in a number of wickednesses especially dishonesty and sexual immorality. Most of the characters in the novel under study are caught in adulterous acts; women are related to more than one man and vice- versa.

Furthermore, London of the late Victorian period is dominated by scandals, gossip and illicit relationships. Mr Cashmore for instance is the heart of all mischiefs of the era. As his name suggests, he stands for individualism or capitalism because he uses all cunnings to sponge off everybody of his surrounding. He lives on Mitchy and Mrs Brook's money. Mr Cashmore presents a danger to the whole circle since in addition to material greed; he is involved in sexual dissatisfaction. Being husband to Lady Fanny, he has Mrs Carrie Donner as a mistress. His wife has no animosity towards her husband's mistress not because it does no matter, but because she wants to cover her own infidelities. Again, Mr Cashmore is not satisfied with his two partners and currently he announces to Mrs Brook his liking for Nanda. He forwards that "If you don't believe Mrs Donner is a dust and ashes to me, you do little justice to your daughter...Awfully I can't tell you how I like her (226).

Mr Cashmore as many characters in *The Awkward Age*, has failed to master his sexual desires which connect him to women and girls of his surroundings. His sexual drives have no limits for he is sexually attracted to both mother and her daughter. Dyer in *Courtship, Marriage and Family* condemns extramarital behaviour when he utters:

> It (extramarital behaviour) is believed to be a threat to the institution of marriage and family, it is seen as a source of distrust and conflict between marriage partners, leading to personal disillusionment, unhappiness and broken marriages, it's considered deviant and immoral by many traditionally oriented people. (226)

It is hereby clear why the majority of couples in *The Awkward Age* vacillate. No single family is enjoying the mutual collaboration expected of married people because of sexual relations out of wedlock. There is no way Lady Fanny and Mr Cashmore could settle down their family whereas they are both unfaithful to one another.

Similarly, the marriage of Mitchy to Aggie is doomed to failure since his wife has been sullied from her childhood. James in the novel under study states: "Mitchy's marriage to Aggie is an act of saving her from the awful situation she lives because the Duchess and Lord Petherton form a couple around her" (140). Therefore, it is clear that Aggie has been soiled in her young age, and consequently she has no chance of being a good wife. Her aunt in her widowhood has exposed her to odd people and her immoral conducts, which would undoubtedly have negative effects on her future behaviour. Objectively judging, Aggie as most of the young people in *The Awkward Age* would be spared of critics because her attitudes towards her husband result from the immoral world of her aunt: She is copying out the Duchess's manners of life. Gilles Richard in *Sociology* highlights this when he defines socialization as a "Process whereby one acquires a sense of personal identity and learns what people in the surrounding culture believe and how they expected one to behave (113). Then, a person is expected to live up to the standards desired and cherished by the community.

Thus, Aggie's disloyalty to her husband is to be charged of both her aunt on one hand and her mate at the other. Firstly, the Duchess has failed to keep her from the corrupted world of Mrs Brook and herself. Being raised in such an environment, there is no way she can display desired manners. Secondly, Mitchy with his sexual inability would not marry her because she will hardly cope with sexual dissatisfaction. Consequently, he is not to be tolerated for having married a too- hot teenager whereas he is aware of his sexual unorthodoxy.

Moreover, some critics are tempted to say that he is homosexual given his relationships with Lord Petherton. The fact that he invites him on their honeymoon is suspicious. Their friendship would not lack to raise suspicions.

In addition, it is very hard to understand Lord Petherton accompanying the newly married couple in their honeymoon since such a travel concerns the lovers only. The author posits:

> Why, he was with them at Corfu, Malta, Cyprus I don't know where; yachting, spending Mitchy's money "larking" he called it I don't know what. He was with them for weeks. (254)

This quote is evidence that Petherton is not in good faith. The question that comes up is to know his role in that journey, spending weeks and weeks outside his own family. Once again, Dyer in *Courtship, Marriage and Family* promotes the honeymoon to a high level when he opines:

> For many, honeymoon is a time to adjust to the new meaning of being husband and wife; a time to celebrate their commitment and love; a time to symbolize their transition to marriage. (135)

Here, it is clear that honeymoon is important to the newly married couple since it helps them to develop the desired qualities expected in married life. Therefore, it is hard to know Petherton's act of interfering in Mitchy's family.

Again, what is more surprising in English fin siècle life is not only the disregard for marriage institution but the fact that even those who manifest physical weaknesses are caught in that sexual wickedness. Mitchy, having failed to maintain Aggie in his house, is still lingering with Nanda, who, thanks her intuitions, has already suspected his sexual inability. It is uncomprehending why he keeps on proposing to her whereas his body is not endowed with male potency. He says:

> Well, I mean the establishment of something between us. I mean your arranging somehow that we shall be drawn more together something nobody else knows. I should like so terrifically to have a secret with you...Be one of mine – a perfectly awful one. (207)

From the beginning, Nanda has refused him but out of sympathy, she arranges his affair with Aggie to save him from his most- destructive inclinations. Her refusal to marry Mitchy or permit to be touched by him toward the end of novel is not motivated by cold prudery. She is not attracted to him sexually, perhaps because she has noticed through her own observation of him and Lord Petherton that he may be homosexual. Certainly, she discerns something wrong in their friendship.

It is very hard to understand Mitchy's sad devotion to Mrs Brook's daughter, his untiring search for unusual, prurient sensations and his obsessive need to be unconventional.

As James' *The Awkward Age* deals with societal challenges such as the appalling parental or quasi- parental influence on the youth, instances of adults who induce the youth to do what is against moral principles are not missing. The future of Mrs Brook's children is questionable because of their exposure to their mother's corrupted social circle. Instead of devoting her full time to the education of her children which constitutes the great part of her responsibilities, the latter are free to move and go with anyone who asks it. Their free- goings and talk constitute the incontestable cause of their undesired conduct. Nanda, her old daughter has been sullied from her childhood to the adolescence by Buckingham Crescent membership. While the asexuality of the youth is the motto of the Victorian era, kids in the novel under study are nurtured in a vicious world where sexual immorality has been a common practice and the most vulnerable are exclusively young girls. James posits:

> ...is quite awful for girls, and any big house in the country is as much worse – with the promiscuities and opportunities and all that as you know for yourselves, "I know some places" ... Where, if I had any girls, I'd seem shot before I'd take'em. (228)

From the above passage, we see how Nanda has been exposed to dirty places where she is mixed up with people whose only favourite pastime is sex and hollow talk. This is the case of Nanda while at Beccles where they had an orgy in the refreshment- room at the museum, "Yes, at the museum. We had an orgy in the refreshment- room. But he took me afterwards to Tishy's where we had another" (198). So, all the people she is mixed up with such as Tishy Grendons, Carrie Donner, and Cashmore to name but few, are not of good conduct. Consequently, nothing good will come out of these free-goings but impure behaviour.

It is also important to talk about the dishonest and irresponsible acts of Harold Brookenham. The young man has removed a five-pound note from his mother's desk, and with a perverted honesty, has stayed to tell her so. She cannot afford the luxury of moral condemnation, because he needs the money to finance a parasitic visit to friends, which she has arranged:

> Don't you think your children are good enough mummy dear? At any rate, it's as plain as possible that if you don't keep us at home you must keep us in other places. One can't live anywhere for nothing. (41)

Given the fall of their economies, Harold instead of working to reconstruct his decaying family, rather wants her mother to pay his gambling debts. The presentation of Harold the author gives us is of financial unscrupulousness that is more than the portrayal of scapegrace son. This moves outwards to include the

whole circle since he goes farther to be a threat to his mother's guests from whom he always borrows money that he wants her mother to pay back. Some of her mother's social set members support him in all his mischiefs. Mitchy says:

> He's saving up to start a business. Harold's irreproachable – hasn't a vice. Who knows, in these days, what may happen? He sees further than any young man I know. Do let him save. (62)

Through these words, we see how immoral adults assist or justify the youth involved in wrong- doings. Instead of being model to them, they encourage them to do what is abnormal. Mitchy, the most influential member of Buckingham Crescent is the one who helps Harold in his acts of borrowing. For him, the young man is behaving in good way because he is saving his money to start a business but actually, he is aware of the fact that Harold is wasting the money carelessly. He keeps up confirming that Mrs Brook's son is to be blamed of nothing.

Therefore, Mitchy is an instance that clears corruption on the part of adults who, instead of leading the youth to a prosperous future, mislead or induce them into evil. Hence, Harold's failure to follow moral principles is partly understandable since he has no one to emulate in the surrounding.

Worse, the young man does not hesitate to rob the family wealth. Harold's mother is bored and tries hard to change him but all her efforts are wasted and he wants his mother to comprehend his case.

> I dare say I am selfish, but what I was thinking was that the terrific wigging, don't you know. Well, I'd take it from her. She knows, all about one's like about our having to go on, by no fault of our own, as our parents start us. She knows about wants no one has more than Mamma. (104)

From this, it is clear that Harold's misbehaviour has reached its peak. No one would bear with him for stealing his mother's wears: this is a shameful act. Dissatisfied with his borrowing of a five-pound note, he is presently involved in robbing his mother wears. Even though he tries to justify himself, no excuse would be provided to him because no matter the conditions, no single motive will be provided to vindicate such a mischief.

However, Harold acknowledges his offences but he wants his parents especially his mother to bear the blame. Partly, we accuse his parents for being responsible for their son's misbehaviour but on the other hand, Harold at his age is mature enough to distinguish good from evil. He even goes farther saying that his mother is to be the first to understand his needs. The young man would be condemned because he is endowed with physical strength, which would be devoted to work for the satisfaction of his needs instead of waiting for his parents' offer. He would not live on borrowings or gift from his parents but it is up to him to roll up the sleeves and labour for the sake of his future. Parents have to work for their kids' welfare while they are still young but when they reach the active age, they are free to shape their life, reason why Harold's mischief has no raison d'être.

In a nutshell, a number of evils characterized James' London of the late nineteenth century, the majority of the city-dwellers deviated from the old school of manners and devoted themselves to sexual promiscuity, the antithesis of chivalry, and modesty, which degrades manhood, devalues womanhood and destroys marriage. Most of the families are void of fidelity, which is based on faithfulness that rejoices in the lifelong nature of marriage, and so provides security for all members of the family. Consequently, they end in crash or infidelity.

CHAPTER THREE
SATIRE AND YOUTH AS VICTIM OF THE AGE

A presentation of satire in this chapter, aims at giving a caricatured view of London as it is viewed in *The Awkward Age*. It deals with character portrayal and how James uses them as satirical vehicles, to ridicule the social, juridical and marital institutions of his time. Satire is defined as literature that exhibits or examines vices and folly and makes them appear ridiculous or contemptible. James makes use of it to expose and mock the evils besetting the English society of the late nineteenth century in order to correct them.

The novel under study uses polarity of technique, which consists in opposing characters in their way of thinking, action and behaviour. It also brings out the ambivalent nature of characters. Such a technique is relevant in a satirical presentation. Sutherland in *English Satire* propounds:

> The motives that lead to satire are varied, but there is one motive that may almost be called a constant: the satirist is nearly always a man who is abnormally sensitive to the gap between what might be and what is. (4)

Likewise, as James portrays the English society especially the urban areas, he cannot shut his eyes up in front of the anomalies that prevail in London. The advent of the industrial revolution has brought many changes to the society. H. Gijssels in *An Anthology and Short History of English Literature in Great Britain and USA* advances that "By the end of the century the whole body of Victorian morality and conventions was submitted to sharp criticism and even ridicule" (217). Indeed, taking his characters from various generations, James wishes to give us a social and moral sense of the late nineteenth century in order to criticise the attitude of the time.

So, the characters in the novel under study are not chosen randomly as everyone represents his generation and they are used to illustrate their deeds and thoughts that render them ridiculous. In other words, they are the mirror through which London is seen in all its spheres.

Therefore, James paints Londoners as they go about their daily lives. He watches them through their relationships towards one another and reveals that the Puritanism advocated by Queen Victoria is nothing but misguided piety. P. Holden in *Anti- Puritan Satire* reveals, "It is true that for the puritan the Bible remained through the years a particularly living and personal source for instruction, inspiration, and pleasure" (106). However, this is not the case in James' London for the way people act and behave is far from expectation. James' characters question the Victorian morality of what ought to be taken socially as moral barriers. James creates characters who may be divided into three categories: the aged who stand for ancient ideal manners, the middle- aged who represent the immoral parents and the innocent youth who is victims of the period.

Indeed, the Brookenhams – Mr and Mrs Brook are the prototype of English parents who do not take care of their kids' education. Normally, in married home, mutual understanding and collaboration are expected. The preoccupations and challenges of the family are solved or dealt with together between parents and children. But for the Brookenhams, this is not the case. Dyer in *Courtship, Marriage and Family* maintains:

> The family may be defined as a group of persons united by marriage, blood or adoption, constituting a single household; interacting and communicating with each other in their respective roles of husband and wife, brother and sister, mother and father, son and daughter, brother and sister, creating and maintaining a common culture. (16)

The Brookenhams do not constitute a good family since Mr Brook and his wife are not acting for the sake of their household. Consequently, their kids are thrust into great challenges since they have no one to take care of their education. Regarding the family organization, Mr Brook evades his responsibility of taking care of his house. No one is preoccupied with the family since his wife at her turn, is more worried about her temple of analysis instead of devoting her full time to promote the welfare of her family. Again, Dyer provides us the duties of a good husband in his family when he says:

> The status or position of "husband" consists of a bundle of duties, rights, obligation, privileges, and so on that are in reciprocity to example, the husband's traditional duty to support his wife financially is reciprocally tied to her right to receive this support, she is in her turn has the duty to provide a home for him to return to after work, which becomes of his rights as her husband. (145)

The author is using Mr and Mrs Brook to satirise marital institution since no single instance shows them sitting together dealing with their family challenges. The parents are the ones who must be responsible for their children's education but James' Brookenhams shut the eyes in front of their duty to raise their kids. R. Schumm in "Marriage and Parenthood are Necessary for both Men and Women" voices, "The world needs parents who will train wanted, loved children, who according to virtually all research (Rollins and Thomas 1979) end up as the most responsible, caring adults" (97). Hence, we are bound to say that the Brookenhams have deviated from the duty of nurturing their children by preparing their future.

Therefore, Edward Brook does not care neither for his wife nor for his children. While the Victorian father had an authority, which was undisputed and often tyrannical, James' Mr Brook has no power in his household. He does not

care about his family. This is seen through his words when answering Van's question when he asks him the whereabouts of her daughter, he replies, "We wouldn't take her" (283). More, his wife flirts with the acolytes of her social circle but Edward cannot notice it. Houseknecht in "Achievement of women outside the Home is the Phantom in Marital Breakdown" gives us the roles expected of a father when he utters,

> Traditional and natural authority define the father's role as the head or leader of the home a masculine role model, a protector, provider, and one who sets parameters and standards of discipline, although this does not preclude father's nurturing and mother's disciplining their children. (103)

Nanda and Harold have no chance to develop desired behaviour since they have no one to emulate. Neither their father nor their mother is worried about their fate. Consequently, Nanda's unconventional looks and peculiar style may make her ineligible to marriage and this is a worry to her mother – as well as being a real problem to her family with affluent tastes and meagre funds. Harold, an older son is talented only for sponging; and two younger children will create problems of their own. In other words, Mr Brook is a ridicule for the Victorian fathers who lack a sense of manhood. His wife on her turn is the one who sullies her daughter exposing her to Buckingham Crescent's membership who undoubtedly would hamper her good potentialities. She, like her husband, has deviated to the mother's role as it is advocated by Houseknecht in the afore mentioned article when he articulates:

> The role of wife and mother is one of commitment to the husband and children as a full- time homemaker, teacher, homebuilder and a role model of a fully feminine woman. (103)

In addition to the carelessness to her kids' education, Mrs Brook finds herself in rivalry with her daughter for Van. The latter, who is an eligible fiancé to Nanda, is loved by Mrs Brook so does her daughter Nanda. Van exists to receive the kind of love which he cannot return. Long before Nanda knows that Van will reject her, she has made up her mind to reject him because she recognizes that, in spite of everything, he is all her mother possesses, all that she has. Such a profound skill is further evidence of her undesirable maturity.

Nanda despite her youthful innocence is thrust into the vicious, immoral circle that has gathered around her mother. Worse of all, she finds herself in competition with her mother for the affection of the man she admires – a thing which is blameworthy of a mother. Therefore, Mrs Brook constitutes a ridicule analysis of sexual dissatisfaction of the Victorian women who cannot overcome their sexual drives.

Though beautiful, Nanda loses any man who is ready to accept her because she is sullied by her mother's drawing room. Her ineligibility to marriage is due to her exposure to the vertiginous world of her mother. Nevertheless, Mrs Brook in *The Awkward Age* defends herself accusing the laws of the time. She points out:

> No, she tremendous dear, and we're great friends. But she has free life, which by that law of our time that I'm sure I only has precious freshness of feeling which I say to myself that, so far as control is concerned, I ought to respect. (106)

From the above quotation, James accuses the laws of the English society at the eve of the modern period. These promote children's freedom and forget their welfare. They allow them too much freedom that would bring about nothing but increasing immorality. Nanda has her own sitting room, latch- key, servant, and her freedom to visit friends or receive them on her own, smoke and especially to decide her future. Thus, this child is a victim of the freedom given to youth at

the time. For instance, Nanda has been exposed to the promiscuous world of Tishy Grendons, Carrie Donner, and Fanny Cashmore and at times Nanda feels herself no longer clean. She yearns for the cathartic quasi-parental disapproval that she has not provoked from her nonentity of a father. All her wanderings among odd people have brought her nothing but the exposure to sexual immorality which disqualifies her for marriage.

So, the aftermath of that independence is the harmful impact on the innocent youth. Conventional forms of social protection mostly damage the youth's potentialities. The manner in which the Duchess promotes sensual interest in Aggie's purity, though expert and social admirable, comes close to that of bawd. Nanda, on the other hand, with no purity to display, emancipated from all this little- girl whiteness, has access to the many shades of existence. Aggie and Nanda says James in his preface, "were projected as small things, yet finally had to be provided for as comparative monsters" (3). One of them has been removed from the sphere of the play of her mind by early marriage due to her aunt's material lust; the other is disqualified for marriage because of her exposure to the immoral world of her mother.

While the asexuality of the children was part of the preferred Victorian dream, James exposes us to a society in which the youth is not protected from sexual immorality. Through the characters of Nanda and Aggie, James caricatures the hypocrisy of Victorian society since the principles they advocate and their actual deeds are quite different.

Furthermore, given the complexity of the relationships in *The Awkward Age*, families we are presented deserve criticism. They are void of desired qualities such as love that is the basis of a marriage. Londoners are characterized by sexual vagrancy. Therefore, we are bound to say that the period was hard for couples. James in *What Maisie Knew* advances:

> This is but to say that the light in which the so readily grew to a wholeness was that of a second marriage on

> both sides, the father having in the freedom of divorce, but to take another wife, as well as the mother under a like licence; another husband, for the case to begin, at least, to stand beautifully on its feet. (7)

Through this passage, it is unequivocal that extra- marital love or divorce is somehow legalized. We will mention Mr Cashmore who, having a legal wife Lady Fanny and a mistress – Mrs Carrie Donner, keeps on looking for Nanda because of his sexual dissatisfaction. He is unable to control his sexual drives even though married. What is astonishing is that, instead of being ashamed by his unconventionality, he justifies himself when he says, "Why wouldn't it be just the thing? It would exactly prove my purity" (110). For him, cheating with one's wife is an act of exhibiting one's purity. Cashmore is supporting the idea of Watt in *The Fallen Woman in the Nineteenth Century English Novel* when he proclaims:

> A man could vent his sexual passion on someone other than his wife, often managing to keep the purity of his wife intact: In absorbing the destructive excess of intemperate and overwhelming male sexuality, it was sometimes argued, the prostitute not only prolonged the marriage relationship, but created conditions as a result which favoured the smooth transfer of property through unbroken inheritance and stable. (7)

From the passage, it is evident that marriage in the Victorian England lost its meaning. Neither men nor women testify the faithfulness to the marital vow. When Cashmore is giving himself to sexual vagrancy, his wife on her turn is also involved in sexual wickedness. Gregor in *The Moral and the Story* explains,

> Any feeling of tension has been removed by the observation, made by the knowledgeable few, that Lady Fanny has no animosity towards Mrs Donner, as the illicit relationship provides her with a ready- made excuse to cover her own infidelities. (162)

Given the complexity of relationships in married homes, we are bound to say that James' time was very hard for the marital institution since extramarital relations have been a common practice. None of the characters drawn in *The Awkward Age* especially the married ones, is committed to his/ her marital engagement. As a result, children emerged from such families have no chance to develop desired qualities once married. An illustrating example is Aggie who cheats her husband with Petherton since she was nurtured in an immoral milieu. James' characters support the view of Holden in *Anti- Puritan Satire* when he posits: "I have heard of a sect that maintained, when the husband was asleep the wife might lawfully entertain another man, for then her husband was as dead" (115). (Qtd, The Malcontent)

Here, it is undoubtedly acknowledged that in addition to money, sex is another source of moral decay in James' London. All marriages are doomed to fail because of adulterous relations and flirtation. This supports the myth of the two women prevailing in the late Victorian Europe. To many middle- class Victorian men, there were, indeed two women: the pure one to be married, the other to be used. It was essential that there should be no meeting of the two. Gregor in *The Moral and the Story* puts, "...Sex was a dominant factor in life in a way that the Victorian novelists ignored rather than concealed" (180). By this, he did not mean the portrayal of physical passion, but the effects it had on the human personality. All marriages James portrays fail because of sex. Burgess in *English Literature* articulates:

> It (the Victorian age) was also, with all its ideals, a curiously puritanical age: it was easily shocked, and subjects like sex were taboo. It was an of conventional morality. (180)

Nevertheless, Buckingham Crescent is peopled by men and women who are not saints and whose conducts are questionable. In other words, Mrs Brook and the membership of her social circle are made to illustrate the hypocrisy and deviation from moral principles in Victorian London.

Indeed, Mr Longdon who stands for the ideal old school of manners, attends one of the social functions at the Brookenhams, is amazed at how much Nanda resembles her grand-mother, his long-ago love who married another man. He wants to see Nanda safely married away from what he views as her mother's corrupting influence. It is in that perspective that he promises to major her dowry if Van accepts to marry her. But we may say that it is not an act of benevolence because from the first sight of Nanda, Longdon is seemingly attracted to her but he regrets the big difference in their ages. James holds:

> ...of course I've not seen so much of Nanda if between my age and hers, that is, any real contact is possible – without knowing that she now regards you as one of the very best of her friends, treating you, I almost fancy, with a degree of confidence. (275)

Here, it is unequivocal that Mr Longdon has fallen in love with Nanda and his intended act of saving her would be profitable to both of them. Mr Longdon articulates:

> It's she again, as I first knew her, to the life and not in feature, in stature, in colour, in movement, but in every bodily mark and sign in every look of the eyes, above

> all – oh to a degree! In the sound, in the charm of the voice...she's all Lady Julia. There isn't a touch of her mother. It's unique – an absolute revival. (94-5)

Still thinking about Lady Julia after almost a half century, and since Nanda is a true image of her grand-mother, she would totally attract him. Fortunately, the designed task to save her from her mother's corrupted influence would be easier since Nanda's intuition about Longdon's importance for her is certain, "I'm about as good as I can be – and about as bad. If Mr Longdon can't make me different, nobody can" (131).

Tired with the hardship created by her mother's drawing room, Nanda decides to go with Longdon to Beccles because she wants a rest. Moreover, although some critics have read sterility into this choice, James' description of Longdon's estate suggests a healthy, thriving tradition: things such as the flowers that adorn Nanda's room grow at Beccles. James contends: "Temples of peace, the ancients used to call them. We will set up one, and I shall be at least door- keeper. You will come down whenever you like" (140). From this quotation, it is clear that Mr Longdon does not yearn for a simple adoption of Nanda but the establishment of close relationship between him and her – the relations that may lead to a marriage.

Another point is that Nanda herself may be sexually attracted to Longdon for some critics thought the two would marry. He is, after all, neither infirm nor aged. One might even argue that he is actually the most masculine male in the novel.

Longdon at his side is not prude, although he suspects that he is and partly blames himself for being prudish; nor is his final rejection of Buckingham Crescent moralistic. James, in fact, repeatedly makes the reader aware of the conflict between Longdon's impulses to be accepted by Mrs Brook's world, partly because he blames his failure to marry himself at the right age. Because

he vacillates during much of the novel, his final and unequivocal rejection of this new world should seem meaningful to the reader. No one knows whether his incandescent image of Lady Julia is insignificant. But, what is important is that it sustains him and causes no harm. By the time he brings Nanda to Beccles he seems no longer thinking of- or at least talking about her resemblance to her grand mother: a proof that it is not for Nanda's sake that he wants her but Longdon who is sexually attracted to her. He wants Nanda out of her mother's corrupting influence and wants her with him. It is undoubtedly that he is in love with her in sexual way. Some of the imagery used to describe their departure and extreme impatience that Longdon experiences as he waits for Nanda's reply to his offer are suggestive of the would be lover. James notices: "Well he raised his hands and took her face, which he drew so close to his own that, as she gently let him, he could kiss her with solemnity on the forehead" 310).

Besides, Longdon who, in his youth, had hopelessly loved two women – Lady Julia and Van's mother missed the opportunity to marry himself at the right age. Currently, an elderly bachelor, he is waking up to the perils threatening the society to take Nanda's hand, the grand daughter of a woman he hopelessly loved. No one would expect Longdon to be attracted to Nanda since at the first he intends to save her from the Buckingham Crescent.

In other words, a contrast can be noticed between Longdon's design and his actual achievement. The hypocrisy lies in that he claims to save Nanda when he means to marry her. While Feldman et al in *Current Controversies in Marriage and Family* affirms, "Most marriages take place between people who share cultural, racial, religious and social backgrounds and who are similar in age" (67), a great disparity in Longdon and Nanda's age is obvious. Nanda marries a man who is three times her age.

Therefore, James' creation of Longdon deserves a high attention. It is evidence that it is not only Nanda's generation that is awkward but also Longdon's is a moribund generation. Nanda, disappointed by Van, a man she

has loved and she, at her turn refuses Mitchy's proposal, would not wait to be taken by Longdon, a man who would have been her grand father if Lady Julia had accepted him. Then, the union between Nanda and Longdon is a satire to aged people who profit from the difficulties created by the society to make up for their lost marriages. Longdon was expected to save the youth helping them to arrange happy marriages as he has begun with Van when he promises to increase Nanda's dowry once Van accepts to marry her. Yet, instead, he seizes the day to achieve his long forgotten marriage project. His marriage to Nanda would be a vengeance over her grand mother's disappointment.

Moreover, the satire operates in such a way that only an outsider realizes the vices that beset London. Absent for thirty years from the town, Longdon finds everything altered. James through the character of Longdon points, "I'm no critic; I'm no talker myself I'm old- fashioned and narrow ad full. I've lived for years in a hole. I'm not a man of the world" (37). He is the only person to be aware of the increasing vulgarity in the city. Among all Londoners, no one is able to notice it. Instead, they are lost in the prevailing movement which is very hard for the growing generation. The latter grows in a sullied world and this will affect their future. Even parents, who are supposed to be preoccupied by their kids' education, shut the eyes up in front of their responsibility. However, Longdon, admired for his better morals and manners, endeavours to change Victorian London. Therefore, James' choice of an outsider to observe and criticize the moral depravity of Buckingham Crescent is a great satire to the late nineteenth century Anglo-Saxons especially the city dwellers.

Nevertheless, Nanda whose generation is awkward is the one to come back and master the whole situation and display humanity. Leavis in *The Great Tradition* clarifies:

> The girl Nanda, supposedly a helpless spectator, takes control of the situation and works it out for her elders. She is the intelligent and expert and self- possessed one

> of them all, they have only to leave everything to her light manipulation, and the awkwardness – which is theirs, not hers is surmounted. By the time she has displayed all her art the story is at the end, her action has answered the question and provided the issue. (169)

From the above quotation, it is clear that the youth though victim, turns out to take control of everything in Buckingham Crescent. Aware of the moral decadence of her mother's world, Nanda succeeds to handle the situation rejecting the corrupted London. She even goes farther arranging her mother's future as she pleads with Van and Mitchy not to desert her. She holds:

> I don't want her to lose everything. Do stick to her. What I really wanted to say to you- to bring it straight out – is that I don't believe you thoroughly know how awfully she likes you. (289)

Indeed, as far as social life is concerned, Nanda is memorable for her endeavour to redress things, her optimism for a better future while at Beccles in the Suffolk.

In other words, in the opposisition to adult characters such as Mrs Brook, the Duchess, Lord Petherton, Cashmore to name but a few, Nanda is painted with dignity and decency. Actually, Nanda is threatened by the corrupted world of her mother. Considering her behaviour, we dare say that she is better than other characters in *The Awkward Age.* Actually, Nanda is presented as a moral character who is not at all awkward. Despite her exposure to the corrupting influence of her mother's drawing room, Nanda is not at all corrupted. It would seem that she is the only person who disapproves of what is going on in Victorian London.

Effectively, Nanda is capable of rejecting the prevailing mores of her society. Therefore, the ability she displays when arranging her mother's future testifies her social sense and warm- heartedness. She would be expected to exhibit the misbehaviour resulting from Buckingham Crescent but she proves the opposite. Nevertheless, Harold her brother and the two little other children, would not get that chance to leave London. They would keep on undergoing the moral depravity of their parents. Then, one may wonders how would their future look like since they have no one to bring their education to a successful conclusion.

In conclusion, this chapter aimed at showing how James ridicules different vices in Victorian London. He satirizes the carelessness of the parents who fail to lead the education of their children training them to become responsible and caring citizens. He also condemns the unfaithfulness in married homes whose infidelity has led to the downfall of their households. Hence, James suggests the coming back to the virtues of the ancestors, which are based on responsible parenthood and fidelity in married life for the sake of social prosperity.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

This work set out to prove the hypothesis that parents' behaviour is not always fair because they may be immoral, irresponsible and careless of the education of their children and the latter are the ones to bear the awful consequences.

In the course of this work, we analysed the deviation of parents to take care of their children's education. Victorian parents grew awkward and ran after material gain at the expense of their kids' welfare. Consequently, the latter encountered many difficulties caused by irresponsible and immoral ways of their parents. Thus, the heroine Nanda, was exposed to her mother's drawing room which contributed much to her ineligibility for marriage. The Brookenhams – Mr and Mrs Brook were careless of the supervision of their children. Harold, their older son was talented only for sponging since his parents did not train him to work at early age and the gentleman wanted her mother to do everything for him. Instead of devoting her full time to the supervision of her children's education, Mrs Brook was more preoccupied by her temple of analysis. Her husband did not care neither for his wife nor for his children.

Our discussion also went through the analysis of the negligence besetting the youth during the late Victorian period. Van could not afford a marriage because of poverty. Out of sympathy for both Van and Nanda, Mr Longdon accepted to increase the girl's dowry if Van accepted to marry her. Nevertheless, Van missed his marriage to Nanda for the only reason that people would say that Mr Longdon bribed him. Mitchy at his turn, with a wealth inherited from his family, failed to manage his birthright and invited other people to sponge off him. Therefore, instead of being protected by his money, it led to him to his downfall.

We also found how industrial revolution affected the morality of the Victorian Anglo-Saxons. The technological development of the time gave rise to

lust for wealth, selfishness and sexual immorality to name but a few. Parents, the supposed model to the growing generation ran after their own interest at the expense of their children. Mrs Brook used her drawing room to satisfy her material and emotional needs whereas her children – Nanda and Harold had no one to take care of their education. She was preoccupied with the safety of her temple of analysis regardless the welfare of her family.

Besides, the study showed how the whole society was doomed to decay since marriage, which is the key to the stability of any society lost its meaning. Thus, the late nineteenth century was very hard for marriage since out of wedlock relationships became a common practice. Mrs Brook though married was not satisfied with her husband; Cashmore married to Lady Fanny, had Carrie Donner as a mistress and was still yearned for Nanda to be his third partner. Aggie cheated her husband Mitchy with Petherton. In other words, we are bound to say that in addition to money, sex was another cause of moral and social decay in Victorian Longdon since no single household was upstanding because of sexual immorality. Nurtured in sullied areas, the youth was affected and this hindered their good potentialities.

We further investigated the existence of different interests and desires among people of the same society, and the different means they used to satisfy the self. Material lust was cited as one of the principles that people frequently made recourse to satisfy the self.

We further explored how James ridiculed Victorian England in order to correct its vices. In *The Awkward Age*, the author mocked parents who shirk the duties of motherhood and fatherhood. He went further to condemn the English women who exaggerated their sexual drives until they competed with their own daughters for the affection of the men they loved. We also analysed the age difference between marriage partners where a young girl married a man who would have been her grand father.

This work also found that man is subjected to the social and moral standards of his society. Since in young age, a person is called to live on the societal standards, and it is once mature that he can take his own line. If these are unfair, man is thrust in challenges he is unaware of the cause and these hinder his future.

Lastly, this work will serve as the basis for further research on the concept of social and moral standards of a society. Researchers interested in this domain can attempt to investigate the influence of technological innovations on people's ways of conduct, and how societies can promote or hinder the social and moral qualities of its citizens. Given the challenges brought by the society on man's personality, psychological courses should be promoted in colleges to prepare people for needs the of the society. Therefore, authorities should beware of the influence of economic development on social morality. Hence, social and cultural mores are to be preserved for the sake of the future generations since the latter will need to fetch from their ancestors' source that constitutes their social identity. Thus, each society ought to have its identity that makes it different from others.

WORKS CITED

Primary Source

James, Henry. *The Awkward Age*. London: Penguin Group, 1899.

Secondary Sources

Armah, Ayi Kwei. *Fragments*. London: Heinemann, 1969.

Bâ, Mariama. *So Long a Letter*. London: Virago Press Ltd, 1982.

Buckley, Jerome Hamilton. *The Victorian Temper: A Study in Literary Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1981.

Burgess, Anthony. *English Literature*. Harlow: Longman, 1985

Dickens, Charles. *Hard Times*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.

Dyer, Everett D. *Courtship, Marriage and Family*. London: The Dorsey Press, 1983.

Edel, Leon. *Henry James...A Life*. New York: Harper α Row, 1985.

Furgerson, Mary Anne (ed.). *Images of Women in Literature* London: Houghton Muffin Company, 1973.

Gard, Roger. *Henry James: The Critical Heritage*. London: Routledge α Kegan Paul Ltd, 1985.

Gijssels, H. *an Anthropology and Short History of English Literature in Great Britain and the United States*. Brussels: Belgium, 1965.

Gregor, Ian and Brian Nicholas. *The Moral and the Story*. London: Faber α Faber, 1962.

Guerin, Wilfred L. *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature.* Oxford: University Press, 1992.

Hardy, Barbara. *Forms of Feeling in Victorian Fiction*. London: Peter Owen Ltd, 1985.

James, Henry. *What Maisie Knew*. Middlesex: Penguin books Ltd, 1985.

Hart, James D. *The Oxford Companion to American Literature.* New York: Oxford University Press, 19650.

Holden, William P. *Anti- Puritan Satire*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954.

Krook, Dorothea. *The Ordeal of Consciousness in Henry James*. Cambridge: University Press, 1963.

Leavis, F. R. *The Great Tradition*. London: Chatto and Windus Ltd, 1960.

Lucas, Angela M. *Women in the Middle Ages*. Sussex: Harverster Press Ltd, 1978.

Macnaughton, William R. *Henry James: The Later Novels*. Boston: A Division of G. K. Hall and CO, 1939.

Murray, Middleton J. *Love, Freedom and Society*. London: Thirty Bedford Square, 1957.

Surtherland, James. *English Satire*. Cambridge: University Press, 1958.

Swatridge, Colin. *British Fiction: A Student's A – Z.* London and Basingstoke: Macmillan Publishers Ltd. 1985.

Watt, George, *The Fallen Woman in the Nineteenth Century English Novel*. New Jersey: Barnes and Noble Books, 1984.

Articles

Houseknecht, Sharonk. "Achievement of women Outside the Home is the Phantom Factor in Marital Breakdom" in *Current Controversies in Marriage and Family* ed. Harold Feldman and Margaret Feldman. London, New Dheli: Sage Publications Beverly Hills, 1985, 99-162.

Mumford, Lewis. "The Subarban Way of Life" in *A Preface to Our Times* ed. Buckler E. William. New York: American Book Company, 1968, 32-36.

Neibuhr, Reinhold. "The Conflict Between Individual and Social Morality" in *A Preface to Our Times* ed. Buckler E. William. New York: American Book Company, 1968, 684-695.

Sir Francis, Jeune. " Unsigned Review, Academy May 1899" in *Henry James: The Critical Heritage* ed. Roger Gard. London: Routledge α Kegan Paul Ltd, 1985. 284-85

Schumm, Walter R. "Marriage and Parenthood are Necessary for a Happy Life For Both Men and Women" in *Current Controversies in Marriage and Family* ed. Harold Feldman and Margaret Feldman. London, New Delhi: Sage Publications Beverly Hills, 1985, 67-106.

William, Morton Payne. "Review, Dial" in Henry James: The Critical Heritage ed. Roger Gard. London: Routledge α Kegan Paul Ltd, 1985.291- 293

Unpublished Works

Nsengiyumva, B. "Love and Immorality V.S. Naipaul's *Guerrillas*" Bujumbura: Dissertation: University of Burundi, 2005.

Munyana, C. "Polygamy and Christian Morality in Flora Nwapa's *Efuru* and T.M. Aluko's *One Man, One Wife*" Bujumbura: Dissertation: University of Burundi, 2006.

References

A Dictionary of Literary Terms. London: London Group Ltd, 1984.

Encyclopedia Americana.Volume8. New York: Americana Corporation.Inc, 1924.

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English. Oxford: University Press, 2006.

Longman Dictionary of contemporary English, New Edition, 2003.

Websites

Alibris.com. "Freud and psychoanalysis".

http://www.websearch.com/search/results.aspx?qkw=freud%20psychoanalysis&bid=50162

Biblical perspectives. "Sexual immorality".

http://personal.nbnet.nb.ca/mercury/c-lust.html.

My jewish learning.com. "The reality of non-marital sex".

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/ideas belief/sex sexuality/overview Non Marital Sex/Modern- Rabbinic views/sex If Nonmarital Dorff Matter.htm

Christian Answers.Net. "Sex, love and relationships".

http://www.christiananswers.net/love/home.html.