



An Analysis of the Internal Colonization Tendency in *The Turn of the Screw* From Power Discourse Perspective

Xingzhu Chen

Department of Chinese & Bilingual Studies, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University,
Hong Kong China

w0994086@gmail.com

Abstract. Since its publication, *The Turn of the Screw* has attracted the attention of scholars and critics, but most studies generally focus on the writing techniques and storyline analysis of the work, such as Gothic novels. But fundamentally, the dilemma faced by the governess in the story is the result of the externalization of colonialism within the estate. Based on this premise, this article uses the theory of discourse of power to analyze the direct deprivation of such rights and the implicit discipline of human desire in the novel, and aims to expose the colonial tendency of the power center represented by the Lord of the manor through the discipline and assimilation of the lower class. On the basis of the text and organize relevant research supporting materials, this paper aims to analyze the internal colonization tendency in *The Turn of the Screw*. In order to reflect on the unreasonable social reality that exists today, where strong power discourse distorts and controls the weak.

Keywords: component; Victorian culture; Internal colonialism; Discourse of power

1 Introduction

Wayne C. Booth once pointed out that "The Turn of the Screw may be the most discussed work in modern fiction, and it can definitely be called the king of similar length works" [1]. The interpretation methods of this novel are diverse. Most of James' contemporaries regarded it as a typical ghost story and believed that ghosts' did indeed exist; some scholars believe that this is just an illusion of a governess, such as Harold C. Goddard, Edna Kenton, and others. In summary, there have been many classic papers and research results on the psychological analysis of this work. However, from the perspective of postcolonial theory, it indirectly reflects the imperialist tendency and postcolonial ideas prevalent in British society at that time.

2 The lord of the manor - colonizer

The novel was created in the Victorian era of the 19th century. The economic and political system of Britain underwent drastic changes, and the dual development of economy and technology brought Britain to the pinnacle of the world. However, at that time, the distribution of wealth in the society was always uneven, and the wealth gap was very obvious. Under the surface of such prosperity, there were increasingly obvious social problems hidden. In order to ensure the interests of the ruling class, the Victorian era was characterized by strict hierarchy, and the upper class made every effort to implement a hierarchical system, oppressing the lower class, controlling social wealth, and manipulating the mainstream ideology of people. The lord of the manor in the novel is just one of them. Since this highly influential owner only appeared twice in the entire text, and he also made a condition when hiring the governess: "That She should never trouble him - but never, never: neither appeal nor complain nor write about anything; only meet all questions herself".^[2]

Although he never appeared in the estate, his authority in the upper echelons was omnipresent, and everyone in the estate sees service to the lord as the purpose of their existence. Heidegger pointed out that authority often "truly demonstrates itself through regression or self retreat"^[3]. In the novel, it is through this absence and retreat that the lord establishes his authoritative position. He not only frequently appears in the conversations of servants, but also firmly occupies their consciousness.

British philosopher Jeremy Bentham proposed the concept of a "circular prison" in 1785. This design allows one monitor to monitor all prisoners, while prisoners cannot determine whether they are being monitored. Therefore, prisoners dare not act recklessly and feel psychologically that they are always under surveillance, constantly forcing themselves to follow the rules. This achieves self imprisonment - imprisonment lurks deep inside.

The monitor in the novel is precisely such a 'prison', and is also seen by the people inside as the embodiment of the lord. They can't help but constantly monitoring their own words and actions. Under such situation, the governess always come up with such a feel like "suddenly encountering someone and smiling approvingly at me" while taking a walk. As Foucault said, "When the discourse of central power monitors each individual through a form of gaze, it can be implemented into their body, posture, and daily behavior, and gaze becomes a symbol of power."^[4]

3 The governess and Mrs. Grose - the accomplice

Besides the gainers of the class system, there are also two defenders disciplined by this power order from the lower class in the novel - the governess and Mrs. Grose. The lord placed the two children in the manor, Mrs. Grose was the butler there, whom not only fully responsible for managing the servants' affairs, but also the nominal guardian of Flora. After the governess entered the manor, she managed everything on behalf of the lord as was promised "Of course, the young lady who is about to become a governess should have the highest authority".

3.1 The Governess

Being put in such situation, the governess developed the illusion of being in control of power and incorporate herself into the upper class. While visiting the manor, "I had an illusion that we were a few passengers drifting on a large ship, and I was actually the captain". Not only did she not resist this social status, but consciously became defenders of the order and enjoyed the advantage of being "superior" in the manor due to such slightly more rights. In fact, the governess, like other servants, play the role of being marginalized and oppressed.

The social status of the governess during the Victorian era was very special, as they received good education but came from a humble background. Employed at the employer's home, with dual responsibilities of educating children and babysitting. Although their status is higher than that of ordinary servants, they are only senior servants to their masters.

Foucault believed that knowledge has a dual oppressive nature, on the one hand, it oppresses the people it excludes, and on the other hand, it oppresses those who are forced to accept this knowledge. As a representative of knowledge and a part of the power system, the governess not only imparts knowledge and discipline others, but also accepts oppression from knowledge. It is both a tool of oppression and an object of oppression.

As a member of the oppressed class, the governess should have a sense of resistance, but due to the strong economic status and mainstream ideology, she, like other oppressed individuals in the manor, was internalized by mainstream ideology, not only willing to be oppressed, but also became an unconscious defender. The reason for this is not only personal emotional infatuation with the lord, but also obedience to the instincts of the upper authorities.

In this way, the imperial consciousness and dreams of the British Empire were influenced by the children through the tutors, passed down from generation to generation, and remained in the depths of people's consciousness and accumulated in the culture. ^[5] The governess impose upper authority on personal will, making herself the colonized other on her own initiative.

3.2 Mrs. Grose

Mrs. Grose's obedience to authoritative discourse is not only manifested in her view of the hierarchical love between the servant Quint and former governess Jessel as evil and depravity; in her education of Miles with a strong sense of hierarchy, but also manifests in the unconditional obedience to the governess who is the "superior", that is, although she has never seen the ghost in the governess's mouth with her own eyes, she firmly believes in it.

Apart from the death of Quint and Mrs. Jessel, the most important thing that bothers her is her deep-rooted Victorian hierarchical concept and the creed of maintaining the reputation and prestige of her master as a servant. ^[6]

That's the reason why when Mrs. Grose mentioned Quint, she used a series of derogatory words, such as "behaving casually, with many bad deeds". She also held a negative attitude towards Quint and Jessel's love, believing that such thing was not

accepted, and therefore they were evil. And criticized Miles and Quint for getting too close, reminding Miles that "young gentlemen cannot forget their identity" and "Quint is just a lowly servant" . In other words, she believes that Miles should not get too close to Quint, who is lower in status than him. From this, it can be seen that Mrs. Grose, like the governess, consciously maintained such class system.

In *Discipline and Punishment*, Foucault mentioned that the "circular prison" ensures the effect of the watcher's observation on prisoners from a design perspective, forcing them to develop a state of loneliness and being monitored, gradually giving up resistance and entering self imprisonment, ultimately achieving the effect of self discipline. Under this kind of surveillance, the governess and Mrs. Grose became the objects of surveillance, as well as the monitors, disciplining themselves while also disciplining the thoughts of the next generation.

4 Quint and Jessel- silent rebels

Quint and Jessel are seen as symbols of terrifying evil in the novel, described as "infamous, evil, disgraceful, and detestable". In fact, the two are victims of hierarchy and rebels who have failed to suppress mainstream society.

4.1 Quint

James once pointed out in the preface of *The Tragic Muse* that to successfully shape characters, one must follow the principle of "speculating and judging them from the perspective of others, and reflecting them through those somewhat confused eyes".^[7] In order to effectively achieve this objectivity, a method of using multiple character perspectives was adopted in writing, keeping Quint almost always under the observation of other characters. The reader's understanding of Quint has to rely on the governess and Mrs. Grose's observation and evaluation of him. The two describe Quint as a terrifying stranger with red hair. However, the reader must pay attention to the fact that the inner structure of the whole novel is narrated from a limited first-person perspective, in other words, the new governess is the only point of view in the core story, and the description of Quint and Jessel's evil deeds is based on her own vision.^[8] "His hair is red, very red, dense and curly, with a pale long face, a sparse and peculiar mustache, and the color is as red as his hair." The red hair is exactly the Celtic's important facial features, and have been given various negative inherent impressions in history.

Edward Wadie Said pointed out in *Culture and Imperialism* that as an ideology, colonialism and imperialism were already considered a "fundamental element" that enabled Britain to prosper in the late 19th century.^[9] During the centuries of British colonial rule over Ireland, in addition to political oppression and economic exploitation of Ireland's current affairs, Britain also supported its colonial activities through ideologies such as morality, culture, and racial superiority, using "cultural symbolism and display" to assert its hegemony, without "creating a living channel for the exchange and dissemination of colonial images and ideals".^[10]

Therefore, in their text, in addition to emphasizing the fairness of colonial rule, they also deliberately vilify the Irish in order to consolidate their rule. Irish historian Patrick O'Farrell once commented that since the Middle Ages, the British had attempted to firmly establish an image in people's minds: "Celtic society was barbaric, Celtic people were poor, lazy, and cruel, in order to provide a moral basis for Britain to continue to dominate or eliminate the Celts".^[11] The British colonizers spared no effort to vilify the image of the Celts in historical and literary texts, in order to deprive them of their national self-esteem and consolidate British colonial rule.

During his interactions with the lord and Miles, Quint did not pay attention to their identity differences. He even wore his master's clothes and was casual with everyone, often inseparable from Miles. In Miles' eyes, Quint was "a dignified teacher". This behavior is considered a "barbaric heresy" that violates the rules of the class system. To some extent, it conforms to the stereotype of the Celts.

4.2 Jessel

Spivak pointed out in *Can Subaltern Speak* that "subaltern" refer to groups that do not have the right to speak or cannot express themselves, especially those women who suffer from multiple oppressions of gender, race, and class and cannot speak herself, and lose their physical subjectivity. They are the silent "other" groups who suffer from dual discourse of rights, namely the oppression of white centrism and male centered ideology.

Regarding Jessel's death, Mrs. Grose hesitated to speak, which was a "gap" in the text. On the one hand, it was due to the maintenance of the lord by the servants under the class concept, and on the other hand, it was Queen Victoria's promotion of pure and perfect family life, making the topic of sex taboo. But through the hint of words, the whole story can be restored: miss Jessel was unmarried and pregnant, and the child's father was the lord who abandoned her. "You are not the first, nor will you be the last (to be captivated by the owner)."

Jessel realized that social hierarchy was an insurmountable boundary, and in the Victorian era, an unmarried and pregnant governess was absolutely not allowed to exist. Under the oppression of mainstream ideology, she chose to commit suicide by throwing herself into the lake. However, the lord, who was supposed to be equally condemned, was perfectly invisible from the blame.

When discussing the views on Jessel, the governess, due to her deep-rooted sense of hierarchy, believed that falling in lovewith a servant lower in status than herself was corrupt and contrary to social norms. But she kept silent and did not mention her admiration for the higher class - the lord. Beauvoir once mentioned in *The Second Sex* that "as we can see, he can always occupy a woman of lower status, but it is shameful for a woman to submit herself to a man of lower social status than her; she belongs to submission and degradation in both cases."^[12] In this situation, whether Jessel chooses to sacrifice herself to the lord or to Quint, it all belongs to submission and degradation.

Priscilla L. Walton believed that Victorian women could be divided into three categories: mothers, prostitutes, and witches.^[13] Patriarchy requires women to remain

chaste and consistent throughout their lives. Miss Jessel was rated by Mrs. Grose as "despite certain differences in their status and circumstances", "infamous", and "pitiful woman, she deserved it" for failing to meet this criterion of chastity and loyalty to a man.

5 Conclusion

The social hierarchy and patriarchal dictatorship symbolized by the lord have been internalized into the ideology of the ruled, represented by Mrs. Grose and the governess, making it difficult for them to see that Quint and Jessel, who were in the same situation as themselves, actually died at the hands of the upper class. What reflects is the unreasonable social reality of strong culture and power discourse distorting and controlling the weak. Speech is in fact a form of oppression and exclusion of power, representing one party, meaning that it must have an opposing party, and the opposing party must be suppressed and limited. Whoever has the power gains the right to speak. Quint and Jessel, as 'ghosts', are driven by reason and exiled outside, suppressed and reduced to silence.

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