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HENRY JAMESNING “THE BIRTHPLACE” HIKOYASIDA QAHRAMONNING ICHKI VA TASHQI DUNYOSI: PSIXOLOGIK REALIZM, IJTIMOIIY ROL VA MADANIY MIF

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Buxoro tibbiyot akademik litseyi o'qituvchisi*

Annotatsiya. Maqolada Henry Jamesning 1903-yilda “The Better Sort” to'plamida chop etilgan “The Birthplace” hikoyasida qahramonning ichki ong dunyosi bilan uning tashqi ijtimoiy roli o'rtasidagi murakkab munosabat tahlil qilindi. Tadqiqotning dolzarbligi James psixologik realizmini faqat individual kechinma yoki ichki monolog doirasida emas, balki shaxs ongingning madaniy institutlar, iqtisodiy ehtiyoj, ommaviy kutish va kasbiy majburiyat bilan to'qnashuvi asosida yoritish zarurati bilan belgilanadi. Morris Gedge obrazi yaqin o'qish, psixologik-germenevtik, struktur va sotsiokultural tahlil usullari asosida o'rganildi. Tadqiqot natijasida tug'ilgan uy makoni oddiy tarixiy obyekt emas, balki noaniq tarixiy materialni barqaror va ta'sirchan ommaviy hikoyaga aylantiruvchi madaniy mexanizm ekanligi asoslandi. Gedge'ning shubhasi, vijdoniy ikkilanishi, iqtisodiy qaramligi va keyinchalik sahnaviy hikoya qilish mahoratini egallashi ichki va tashqi dunyo o'rtasidagi ziddiyatni murakkablashtiradi. Isabel Gedge obrazi esa qahramonning xususiy qarashlarini oilaviy va ijtimoiy mas'uliyat bilan bog'laydi. Maqolaning ilmiy yangiligi qahramon psixologiyasini adabiy turizm, performativ identitet, madaniy xotira va institutsional bosim tushunchalari bilan yagona tahliliy modelda talqin etishdan iborat.

Kalit so'zlar: Henry James; “The Birthplace”; Morris Gedge; psixologik realizm; ichki dunyo; tashqi dunyo; ijtimoiy rol; adabiy turizm; madaniy xotira; performativ identitet.

ВНУТРЕННИЙ И ВНЕШНИЙ МИР ГЕРОЯ В РАССКАЗЕ ГЕНРИ ДЖЕЙМСА «THE BIRTHPLACE»: ПСИХОЛОГИЧЕСКИЙ РЕАЛИЗМ, СОЦИАЛЬНАЯ РОЛЬ И КУЛЬТУРНЫЙ МИФ

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Аннотация. В статье исследуется взаимодействие внутреннего сознания героя и его внешней социальной роли в рассказе Генри Джеймса «The Birthplace», вошедшем в сборник «The Better Sort» в 1903 году. Актуальность работы определяется необходимостью рассматривать психологический реализм Джеймса не только как изображение частных переживаний, но и как способ анализа давления культурных институтов, экономической необходимости, профессиональной обязанности и коллективных ожиданий на индивидуальное сознание. Образ Морриса Геджа изучается посредством внимательного чтения, психолого-герменевтического, структурного и социокультурного анализа. Установлено, что дом рождения великого поэта функционирует как механизм культурной памяти, преобразующий историческую неопределенность в устойчивый публичный рассказ. Скепсис Геджа, его нравственное колебание и последующее овладение театрализованным повествованием усложняют оппозицию внутреннего и внешнего миров. Образ Изабель Гедж связывает личное сомнение героя с семейной ответственностью и материальной реальностью. Научная новизна исследования состоит в объединении психологии героя, литературного туризма, культурной памяти, перформативной идентичности и

институционального давления в единой интерпретационной модели.

Ключевые слова: Генри Джеймс; «The Birthplace»; Моррис Гедж; психологический реализм; внутренний мир; внешний мир; социальная роль; литературный туризм; культурная память; перформативность.

THE INNER AND OUTER WORLDS OF THE HERO IN HENRY JAMES'S "THE BIRTHPLACE": PSYCHOLOGICAL REALISM, SOCIAL PERFORMANCE, AND CULTURAL MYTH

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Abstract. This article examines the interaction between inner consciousness and external social performance in Henry James's "The Birthplace," first collected in The Better Sort in 1903. The study approaches Jamesian psychological realism not merely as introspection but as a form of narrative analysis in which consciousness is shaped by institutions, economic necessity, professional obligation, public expectation, and cultural memory. Morris Gedge is studied through close reading, psychological-hermeneutic interpretation, structural analysis, and a socio-cultural perspective. The analysis demonstrates that the birthplace operates as more than a historical setting: it is a cultural mechanism that converts uncertainty, fragmentary evidence, and inherited anecdote into a stable public narrative. Gedge's skepticism, moral unease, material dependence, and eventual mastery of theatrical storytelling complicate the opposition between his inner and outer worlds. Isabel Gedge, meanwhile, connects private judgment with the realities of marriage, livelihood, and social responsibility. The article argues that Gedge's final adaptation is neither simple capitulation nor complete victory. Its ambiguity reveals the relational nature of James's psychological realism. The study's contribution lies in integrating character psychology, literary tourism, cultural memory, performative identity, and institutional pressure within a single interpretive model.

Keywords: Henry James; "The Birthplace"; Morris Gedge; psychological realism; inner world; outer world; social performance; literary tourism; cultural memory; performative identity.

INTRODUCTION. Henry James's short fiction occupies a distinctive place in the history of American psychological realism because it repeatedly shifts the centre of dramatic interest from outward event to perception, interpretation, hesitation, and moral self-observation. In many Jamesian narratives, the decisive change is not a spectacular action but a change in consciousness: a character notices a contradiction, recognizes the pressure of a social expectation, revises a previous judgment, or discovers that an apparently stable reality has been constructed by convention. "The Birthplace," first collected in *The Better Sort* in 1903, offers a particularly concentrated version of this method [1]. Its plot concerns Morris Gedge and his wife Isabel, who become custodians of the birthplace of a celebrated national poet. The poet is never directly named, yet the Shakespearean network of allusion is strong enough to make the cultural reference unmistakable, a feature that has long attracted critical attention [3].

At first, the appointment appears to be a fortunate change in the Gedges' circumstances. It promises employment, social advancement, a more dignified daily routine, and a connection with a revered literary past. However, the same appointment gradually produces an ethical and psychological conflict. Morris is expected to speak confidently about a historical past that does

not always justify confidence. Visitors want a coherent story, memorable anecdotes, emotional proximity to genius, and the reassurance that the site they have travelled to see possesses an authentic and recoverable meaning. The institution responsible for the birthplace depends upon precisely this expectation. Its cultural authority and practical success require a persuasive narrative, while Gedge's growing awareness of uncertainty makes such certainty increasingly difficult for him to reproduce without discomfort.

This situation makes the tale valuable not only as a satire on literary tourism but also as a study of the relation between consciousness and social role. Gedge's inward world is composed of skepticism, conscience, intellectual seriousness, ambition, irritation, economic anxiety, and imagination. His outward world is structured by professional obligation, institutional authority, visitor expectation, marital responsibility, and the ritualized language of cultural commemoration. These two domains are not simply opposed. They constantly enter one another: external pressure becomes inner unease, while private interpretation changes the way Gedge performs his public function. The hero's psychology is therefore best understood as relational rather than self-contained.

The relevance of this approach lies in the fact that "The Birthplace" can be read as a model of how cultural institutions produce stable meanings from incomplete evidence and how individuals adapt themselves to the roles created by those institutions. The problem is broader than the truth or falsity of a tourist lecture. James asks how belief is organized, how authority is performed, how imagination can both resist and serve institutional demands, and what happens to personal integrity when livelihood depends on satisfying expectations one does not fully share. The present study therefore focuses on the interaction among psychological realism, cultural memory, literary tourism, social performance, and the ambiguous ethics of adaptation.

The purpose of the article is to identify the narrative mechanisms through which James represents the inner and outer worlds of Morris Gedge and to clarify how these mechanisms contribute to the tale's psychological realism. Particular attention is given to the birthplace as an institution, Gedge's gradual self-division, Isabel's mediating role, the transformation of the custodian into a performer, the production of cultural myth, and the ambiguous resolution in which skepticism survives inside successful public performance. The study also aims to show that the story's psychological depth is generated not by isolated introspection alone but by the continuous exchange between consciousness and social environment.

MATERIALS AND METHODS. The primary material of the study is Henry James's "The Birthplace" as published in *The Better Sort* in 1903 [1]. James's essay "The Art of Fiction" is used as an important theoretical point of reference because it emphasizes the freedom of fiction to transform experience through perception and rejects narrowly prescriptive definitions of representation [2]. The article also draws on scholarship devoted to James's relation to Shakespeare, his narrative technique, the presentation of consciousness, and the critical reception of his fiction [3-7]. Studies of the short story as a genre provide an additional framework for understanding the formal concentration and suggestiveness of James's shorter prose [8; 9].

Methodologically, the research combines close reading, psychological-hermeneutic interpretation, structural analysis, and a socio-cultural approach. Close reading is applied to changes in Gedge's perception, diction, hesitation, and performance. Psychological-hermeneutic interpretation reconstructs the motives behind his decisions without reducing him to a fixed moral type. Structural analysis examines oppositions that organize the tale: private doubt and public speech, evidence and anecdote, shrine and workplace, historical uncertainty and narrative completion, resistance and adaptation. The socio-cultural approach treats the birthplace as an

institution of literary memory in which authorship, tourism, reverence, authority, and economic interest intersect.

The study is qualitative and interpretive. Its principal analytical criterion is functional: a narrative detail is treated as psychologically significant when it changes the reader's understanding of Gedge's relation to himself, to Isabel, to the governing institution, or to the visiting public. The same criterion is applied to space and speech. The house is analyzed not only as setting but as a structure that regulates behavior, while Gedge's lecture is examined not merely as verbal content but as a social act whose meaning changes according to audience, purpose, and the speaker's degree of belief. This method allows the analysis to distinguish between the external form of conformity and the internal persistence of skepticism.

The article's original analytical contribution lies in bringing several interpretive planes together rather than treating them separately. The psychological problem of conscience is considered alongside the institutional production of cultural memory; the problem of truth is connected with the economics of literary tourism; and Gedge's final performance is read simultaneously as adaptation, self-protection, imaginative mastery, and ethical compromise. This integrated approach makes it possible to explain why the ending remains unresolved and why that unresolved quality is central to James's psychological realism.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION. 1. The Birthplace as Cultural Institution and Scripted Space

The first result of the analysis is that the house functions as more than a physical setting. It organizes movement, speech, expectation, and authority. Visitors enter not simply to look at an old building but to participate in an already prepared cultural experience. The objects in the house receive significance through explanation; rooms become meaningful because the custodian connects them to a biographical story; and the authority of the site depends on the assumption that material proximity can produce emotional proximity to literary genius. In this sense, the birthplace operates as a scripted space in which the visitor is guided toward a particular form of reverence.

The custodian's role is therefore interpretive from the beginning. He is not a neutral guard who protects objects. He must convert space into narrative and narrative into belief. This requirement explains why historical uncertainty becomes a professional problem for Gedge. A scholar may be able to say that evidence is incomplete, that an anecdote is doubtful, or that a tradition developed after the fact. A tourist institution, however, is under pressure to offer continuity, clarity, and memorability. The economic and symbolic value of the place increases when uncertainty is minimized. Gedge's discomfort emerges because his intellectual standards do not fully coincide with the communicative demands of the institution.

2. Morris Gedge's Inner World: Skepticism, Conscience, and Material Dependence

Gedge's inward conflict develops gradually rather than appearing as a fixed ideological position. The appointment initially answers practical needs and offers the prospect of a better life. Only after he begins to inhabit the role does the contradiction between evidence and expectation become persistent. James thereby gives the conflict a realistic temporal structure. Moral unease is not presented as an abstract principle detached from circumstance; it grows from repeated acts of speaking, observing visitors, comparing claims with evidence, and recognizing how much professional success depends on maintaining a tone of certainty.

The complexity of Gedge's psychology lies in the mixed nature of his motives. He values intellectual honesty, but he also values the job. He is skeptical, but not indifferent to literary greatness. He resents the simplification demanded by tourism, yet he possesses an imagination capable of producing precisely the kind of vivid narrative that tourists desire. He wishes to preserve self-respect, but he is also conscious of Isabel and the material consequences of failure. This

combination prevents him from becoming a simple moral emblem. His conscience is genuine, but so are the needs and ambitions that make compromise attractive.

3. From Custodian to Performer: The Formation of a Performative Identity

A decisive change occurs when Gedge stops treating qualification and correction as the only ethically defensible forms of speech. He discovers that visitors are not primarily seeking methodological caution. They want an experience capable of transforming the house into the visible trace of genius. Once he recognizes this, imagination becomes a professional resource. The same critical intelligence that had made him suspicious of conventional stories now allows him to understand how those stories work and how they can be made more persuasive.

This development produces what may be called a performative identity. Gedge's public self is no longer merely the expression of his private belief. It becomes a role consciously shaped for an audience. The difference is crucial. A person who simply repeats institutional dogma and a person who knowingly performs a discourse may sound similar to visitors, but psychologically they occupy different positions. Gedge's success depends on the fact that he understands the artificiality of the narrative even while making it effective. His inward skepticism is not erased; it is incorporated into the competence with which he performs certainty.

4. Isabel Gedge and the Social Mediation of Consciousness

Isabel's role is essential because she prevents Gedge's crisis from being interpreted as a purely intellectual dispute. His decisions take place within marriage, shared livelihood, and the practical conditions of everyday life. Through Isabel, the narrative reminds the reader that private convictions have consequences for other people. Gedge cannot simply withdraw into skepticism without considering what such withdrawal would mean for their common circumstances. The moral problem is therefore social from the beginning.

Isabel also functions as a mediator between inward hesitation and outward adaptation. Gedge's understanding of himself develops through conversation with her, and the anticipated effect of his choices on her becomes part of his consciousness. This feature is important for Jamesian psychological realism. The mind is not represented as a sealed chamber. It contains the imagined reactions of others, the memory of conversations, the pressure of obligations, and the need to interpret social signals. Gedge's inner world is therefore partly made from external relations.

5. Literary Tourism, Cultural Memory, and the Production of Myth

The tale's treatment of the unnamed poet broadens the psychological conflict into a problem of cultural memory. The visitor expects the birthplace to provide access to the authentic person behind the works. Yet historical persons cannot be fully recovered through rooms, objects, local anecdotes, or commemorative rituals. The gap between material remains and desired intimacy is filled by narrative. Once repeated often enough and endorsed by an institution, that narrative acquires the force of cultural memory.

James's refusal to name Shakespeare directly is especially significant. It shifts attention away from the biographical person and toward the machinery of reverence that surrounds literary genius. Stafford's discussion of James and Shakespeare helps illuminate this dimension of the story [3]. The Great Poet becomes a cultural function: a name around which belief, tourism, scholarship, national pride, and institutional authority accumulate. The birthplace does not simply preserve memory; it organizes a way of remembering.

From this perspective, Gedge's discomfort arises because he can see the mechanism from inside. Visitors experience the completed narrative, while he sees the omissions and transformations required to produce it. His role resembles that of a translator between uncertain evidence and public desire. The problem becomes especially acute because effective cultural memory often depends on narrative compression. Complexity, contradiction, and absence must be reduced if the

story is to remain memorable. Gedge resists this reduction intellectually, yet his later performance demonstrates that he is exceptionally capable of producing it rhetorically.

6. Truth, Fiction, and the Jamesian Paradox of Imagination

The relation between truth and fiction is more complex in the tale than a simple opposition between fact and falsehood. Gedge's invented or embellished presentation is ethically questionable because it converts uncertainty into authority. At the same time, the power that makes the presentation effective is imagination, the very faculty central to James's conception of fiction. In "The Art of Fiction," James insists on the openness of artistic experience and the writer's right to make meaningful form from life [2]. "The Birthplace" places a related imaginative faculty inside a commercial institution, where its ethical status becomes less secure.

This displacement creates a distinctive paradox. Imagination can deepen experience by discovering relations that bare fact does not articulate; it can also manufacture a satisfying illusion. Gedge's performance contains both possibilities. His narrative gives visitors an emotionally coherent experience, yet the coherence exceeds the evidence. The story therefore asks not whether imagination is true or false in itself, but under what conditions imaginative construction becomes legitimate. Artistic freedom and institutional persuasion are not the same thing, even when both rely on narrative skill.

7. Psychological Realism as a Relational and Institutional Form

The analysis supports a broader definition of psychological realism in "The Birthplace." It is not based on exhaustive interior monologue or on the isolation of the self from social reality. Instead, consciousness becomes visible through the pressure exerted by other people, roles, institutions, and expectations. Gedge's skepticism intensifies because visitors demand certainty; his conscience becomes painful because professional success has material value; his imagination becomes socially consequential because it offers a way to satisfy the public. Psychological depth is therefore generated by interaction.

This model is important because it explains why apparently minor social details carry so much psychological weight. A visitor's expectation, an institutional rule, a conversation with Isabel, or the repeated necessity of giving the same explanation may alter Gedge's relation to himself. The external world is not background; it is an active force within consciousness. Conversely, Gedge's inner interpretation changes the meaning of the external world. The house becomes oppressive because he reads it through doubt, and later becomes a stage because he reads it through performance.

8. Irony and the Ethics of Ambiguous Adaptation

Irony is the narrative principle that prevents the story from settling into a single moral interpretation. If Gedge were presented only as a victim of commercialization, the tale would become a straightforward critique of institutions. If he were presented only as a clever performer who masters his audience, the ethical cost of his adaptation would disappear. James keeps both perspectives active. The reader sees the institutional pressure and the hero's intelligence, the compromise and the survival, the loss of literal honesty and the gain in performative control.

The ambiguity is especially productive because it reproduces Gedge's divided experience. He cannot return to naïve belief, but he also cannot live comfortably in permanent refusal. His final strategy allows him to remain inside the institution while mentally standing at a distance from it. This may appear as irony within irony: he performs reverence for an audience while privately understanding the mechanisms through which reverence is produced. Yet that private awareness does not absolve him completely. He still benefits from and sustains the institution whose logic he recognizes.

9. The Ending: Divided Agency and Belated Mastery

Gedge's final accommodation should not be read as complete reconciliation between inner and outer worlds. The conflict persists, but its form changes. Earlier, he experiences the institutional role as something imposed upon him. Later, he develops the ability to inhabit that role strategically. He becomes effective without becoming fully convinced. The result is a divided form of agency: outwardly he performs the expected narrative, while inwardly he retains knowledge of its construction.

This divided agency helps explain why the ending can appear comic and disturbing at the same time. It is comic because Gedge, once troubled by the absurdities of the institution, becomes extraordinarily successful at reproducing them. It is disturbing because success depends on the very practice that had created his moral discomfort. Yet the ending also contains a form of mastery. By understanding the theatrical logic of the birthplace, Gedge ceases to be merely its victim. He recognizes the rules and learns how to use them.

CONCLUSION. The analysis shows that the inner and outer worlds of Morris Gedge are not independent spheres but competing and mutually formative systems. Internally, the hero seeks intellectual coherence, resists unsupported certainty, and remains alert to the difference between evidence and public narrative. Externally, he occupies a role defined by institutional authority, economic necessity, visitor expectation, marital responsibility, and the ritual language of literary commemoration. Psychological realism arises from the continuous movement between these two domains.

The birthplace itself functions as a central analytical category. It is simultaneously a house, a shrine, a workplace, a tourist destination, and a stage. Its cultural power depends on transforming fragmentary historical material into a coherent experience. This transformation places Gedge in the position of mediator between uncertainty and public desire. His initial resistance exposes the ethical problem of such mediation; his later theatrical competence shows how imagination can turn the same problem into a workable social role.

The study also demonstrates that Gedge's final adaptation is deliberately ambiguous. It may be read as compromise because he contributes to the production of a cultural myth he does not fully believe. It may also be read as a form of agency because he understands the conventions of the institution and learns to manipulate them rather than simply submit to them. James preserves both meanings. The hero's outward conformity therefore coexists with inward distance, and this coexistence becomes the psychological core of the ending.

Isabel's mediating role confirms that consciousness in the story is relational. Gedge's decisions cannot be separated from shared livelihood, marriage, and the anticipated reactions of others. More broadly, the tale suggests that individual identity is shaped by social scripts but is never fully exhausted by them. People may inhabit roles while continuing to reinterpret those roles from within. In "The Birthplace," the tension between authenticity and performance, historical uncertainty and cultural myth, private judgment and institutional demand allows James to combine psychological analysis with social satire in a highly concentrated form.

The article's principal contribution is to interpret these elements within one model. Character psychology, literary tourism, cultural memory, institutional pressure, and performative identity are not parallel themes but interdependent mechanisms. Gedge becomes psychologically divided because the institution requires performance; the institution requires performance because cultural memory demands narrative completion; and narrative completion becomes ethically problematic because the hero remains aware of uncertainty. This chain of relations explains why the story continues to reward close analysis and why its psychological realism extends beyond introspection

to the social production of consciousness itself.

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