

James Hogg: The Founder of the Psychological Novel

by

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AUGUST 2004

In the name of all I love

To my maternal grandmother,

and to my mother.

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I Introduction.

Dream and reality are two concepts which always interested humanity since its existence. They knew an evolution in their method of approach and interpretation. One can thus regard them as universal and however so individual since settled and perceived in a different way according to such or such society or according to such or such individual. The dream, in opposition to reality, can appear confused and illogical for that who dreams awoken or asleep. It can be buckled, misty as a fog which is not dissipated or which very slowly. It can make emerge from the fragments of memories forgotten and hidden in the memory but by transforming them to reach beyond, at a reality of the dream so that it sometimes happens to the dreamer to take his dream for reality and to know more which is the share of dream, which is the share of reality. It happens that the dream and reality do only one perfectly superimposed or rather confused for the waken or asleep dreamer: what can lead it to the principles of hallucinations, visions and generate pathological cases such as the neuroses and schizophrenia.

The bases of the theory and the interpretation of the dreams goes back to Freud who saw in the dream all that is related to the unconscious since the society, by its social and moral order, establishes interdicts. It is because of these censures that according to Freud man dreams and brings up to date in the dream what he cannot carry out in everyday reality: Freud calls this principle the pleasure principle in the dream. Man does not have the possibility saying all or to do everything in reality and yet he succeeds in doing it in the dream. Freud insisted much on the libido field. The dream would be the setting actually sexual instincts driven back in

diurnal reality. It is true that the dream can be the satisfaction of the sexual instincts derived during the day but it is not only that. Indeed, Freud set the first stage at the building but as the very first stone of the building that allows the opening of a much vaster field: for example, the Lacanian field. Lacan took again considerable Freudian theories but modified, improved or found new prospects with regard to the form and the contents for the dream. He integrates the principle of the Mirror stage, a fundamental principle for any person wishing to study *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of A Justified Sinner*:

"I generally conceived myself to be two people. When I lay in bed, I deemed there were two of us in it; when I sat up, I always beheld another person, and always in the same position from the place where I sat or stood, which was about three paces off me towards my left side. It mattered not how many or how few were present: this my second self was sure to be present in his place; and this occasioned a confusion in all my words and ideas that utterly astounded my friends, who all declared, that instead of being deranged in my intellect, they had never heard my conversation manifest so much energy or sublimity of conception; but for all that, over the singular delusion that I was two persons, my reasoning faculties had no power. The most perverse part of it was, that I rarely conceived *myself* to be any of the two persons. I thought for the most part that my companion was one of them, and my brother the other; and I found, that to be obliged to speak and answer in the character of another man, was a most awkward business at the long run." ¹

"I not only looked around me with terror at every one that approached, but I was become a terror to myself; or rather, my body and soul were become terrors to each other; and, had it been possible, I felt as if they would have gone to war. I dared not look at my face in a glass, for I shuddered at my own image and likeness. I dreaded the dawning, and trembled at the approach of night, nor was there one thing in nature that afforded me the least delight." ²

and Tales written by James Hogg. The psychoanalytical theories of the dream and reality are indissociable of a literary approach where all is signifier, signified or meaning. According to Lacan, a literary text is made to disturb and move a reader and not to

integrate him in the novels and the tales. The dream is present to divert, make reflect, go towards the reality of another knowledge.

James Hogg, Freud and Lacan are interested in the operation of the unconscious in the field of the dream or reality as a closed space or an open space. The unconscious one is the principle even which makes it possible to James Hogg to create a universe of dream. That implies distortions, discontinuances, fragmentations, difficult situations that his characters cannot, at certain times, leave. In James Hogg like Lacan, alive deaths have a fundamental dimension:

"... for their conversation was wholly about the dead, who seemed to be alive, and their minds were wandering and groping in a chaos of mystery." ³

The evidence is that Lacan made revive Freud by his seminars and that James Hogg perpetuates the traditions of the Scottish folk of the last centuries and the nineteenth century. For them the reality of the conservation that it is in dream or actually is of primary importance. Isn't this the most romantic key? Thinking of deaths implies the reality of nostalgia and a form of recognition on several levels. Lacan recreates Freud, just like James Hogg recreates Scotland and the myths. All becomes interrogation since James Hogg creates something different from reality. The Mirror stage makes it possible to play without stop on ambivalence signifier/signified, dream/reality. James Hogg uses this ambivalence constantly. The phallic search represents reality for Freud.

According to *The Oxford English Dictionary*, the definition of "dream" is:

"1 Joy, pleasure, gladness, mirth, rejoicing.

2 A train of thoughts, images or fancies passing through the mind during sleep; a vision during sleep; the state in which this occurs.
waking dream: a similar involuntary vision occurring to one awake.

3 Colloq. phr. like a dream: easily, effortlessly, without difficulty.

4 fig. A vision of the fancy voluntarily or consciously indulged in when awake (esp. as being unreal or idle); a visionary anticipation, reverie, castle-in-the-air; cf day-dream.

5 An object seen in a vision.

6 Something of dream-like beauty or charm, such as one expects to see only in dreams.

7 An ideal or aspiration; spec. a national aspiration or ambition; a way of life considered to be ideal by a particular nation or group of people.

8 attrib and Comb:
dream-consciousness, dream-content, dream-habit, dream-light, dream-picture, dream-play, dream-poem, dream-process, dream-sequence, dream-state, dream-story, dream-side, dream-city, dream-country, dream-experience, dream-fabric, dream-figure, dream-hall, dream-idea, dream-image, dream-imagery, dream-kingdom, dream-landscape, dream-language, dream-life, dream-lore, dream-stuff, dream-wish, dream-bringer, dream-interpretation, dream-interpreter, dream-smith, dream-speller, dream-teller, dream-haunting, dream-awake, dream-awakened, dream-born, dream-built, dream-created, dream-crossed, dream-fed, dream-haunted, dream-perturbed, dream-ridden." ⁴

The definition of reality is also the following one:

"1 a The quality of being real or having an actual existence
b of feelings.
c Correspondence to fact; truth?
d Suggestion of, resemblance to, what is real.

2 a Sincere devotion or loyalty to a person; sincerity or honesty of character or purpose.
b A sincere expression of opinion or feeling.

3 a Real existence; what is real; the aggregate of real things or existences; that which underlies and is the truth of appearances or phenomena.

7 attrib & Comb:
reality principle = the principle propounded by Freud that the actual conditions of living modify the pleasure-seeking activity of the libido". ⁵

Do the dream and the reality or the crossing of appearances according to the famous formula of Virginia Woolf imply that the authenticity comes from the naive one? Are the images conveyed by James Hogg distorted or true? Which are the complex relations

of images? Do they imply a bond and places of meetings, vectors of exchanges which would be real and lived? Is this a Scottish common dream or are there regional dreams?

Are there several levels of realities of which one could be the supernatural one, the strange and paranormal phenomena? The dream and the dreams are mechanisms of the imagination of James Hogg against which he cannot do anything. Dreams can be products of his imagination or social, political, religious and historical constraints which direct his dream and his dreams, his reality and his realities. All the constraints tend to produce fiction, dream, unreality or a different reality: another world. The constraints which weigh on the productions of James Hogg involve contradictions fatally, even oppositions. The process of the dream walks on with the continuation of a dream as a peasant who sows but who does not know what he will collect. For James Hogg, the dream and reality are ways of research of the limits of the universe, limits that he or the Scots can live and of what they have the possibility or not of making. It uses the mythical mechanism and the signs which are at the same time signals and signatures since the speech erases the signs. His imagination circulates from the body to the dream: the dreams which he can have. He employs, for instance, the distorted reference marks and some of its images of dream or reality are incompatible the ones with the others.

Is this the articulation of the desire? Is this to return to the origin of his writing? Would there be a close connection with the manner of being? Would the dream have reality, something real? Is it about a cyclic dream in this reality, in this real world? James Hogg writes with an apparent simplicity which is the source of dream and reality related to his imagination.

I will not develop or little the idea of supernatural for this work had already been made by Mrs Barbara Bloedé. What interests me mainly is to try to show that the masonic initiation of James Hogg fits perfectly in the logic of his writings.

NOTES

¹ James Hogg, *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of A Justified Sinner*, edited by John Carey, Oxford, 1981, all my references come from the edition of 1984, p. 154.

² James Hogg, *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of A Justified Sinner*, edited by John Carey, Oxford, 1981, p. 227.

³ James Hogg, *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of A Justified Sinner*, edited by John Carey, Oxford, 1981, p. 84.

⁴ *The Oxford English Dictionary*, Second Edition, Clarendon Press-Oxford, 1989, volume IV, p. 1035.

⁵ *The Oxford English Dictionary*, Second Edition, Clarendon Press-Oxford, 1989, volume XII, p. 276.

II The danger of the voyage: "Nancy Chisholm".

Nancy Chisholm seems a text occupying a central position in the work of James Hogg. Indeed, it is a text which introduces the methods, the genius of James Hogg, his techniques as a storyteller as well as principal topics, the psychology of the characters, the way in which the plot is written, the text itself, the narration. The significance and the meaning extend well beyond the characters as well as the sources from dream and imagination of James Hogg's creation: a study of the imaginary structures or imagination or dream, images, the speech and figures of the speech where the reasons are repeated in various passages. They are in relation to the mythical topics: i.e. with the prototypes. It is the Oedipian conflict par excellence. It is conscious and Hogg gives it an intellectual value in the form of the allegory. The mother seems absent but is she really absent or is it an easy way in *trompe-l'œil* on Hogg's part? The topic of the voyage is at the same time on the first and second levels. The prototype of the mother is on this unconscious level. One deals with apparently additional action of manifest tale. Hogg calls upon the meaning, with the significance rather than to refer to the myth by a direct way. His aim as a storyteller is not to write a myth but rather and by definition the world of reality. He deals with objective reality. The Oedipian myth is not expressed directly. It is veiled and transposed. It is there in background. It is suggested by the situations and the characters. As for the prototypes, the veil is sufficiently transparent. The mythical reasons form part of the conscious level. James Hogg seizes reality.

The tailor is not only one character with the first meaning of the term. He also forms integral part of the diegesis on

the second level. He is, on the third level, used like a metonymy of progress, of change. By an indirect way, it is also an instrument of death: a metonymy of death for the father of Nancy. It is in direct relationship with the phallic capacity. That concerns the man as an individual placed in a special environment but in a social environment. He becomes even a metaphor about it: that which brings a new light in the life of Nancy.

James Hogg has the art of the portrait and the features of the characters. He sets up a structure of fitment:

" Mr Chisholm " ¹
" Nancy Chisholm " ²
" old Chisholm " ³
" Nancy Chisholm's " ⁴

Nancy Chisholm structures the tale. The first name and the name are repeated several times. On behalf of Hogg as a writer, it is not the fruit of the chance but learnedly calculated to highlight an entity covered by a doublet. Who is Nancy Chisholm? Who is Chisholm?

On a side, they are presented like two different characters. Chisholm is referred as a "farmer of Moorlaggan"⁵. One thus passes from an agricultural activity to the individual and the individual to an agricultural activity. It is at the same time an entity and a duality. The individual is identified completely with the institution: the more the narration progresses and the more there are references to the farm which is only the institution.

John Chisholm is identified with the farm, with the house: it is his personality and his character who are reflected. He represents the establishment: he is confused voluntarily by the narrator in a state of lack of differentiation: is it the farm, the house or a man? It is constantly impregnated of this state of

ambivalence. The name has two meanings. Chisholm is a multiple metonymy:

- 1) two characters : the girl and the father;
- 2) the Chisholm's house;
- 3) the title of the tale.

It is a metonymic chain which is operational since the whole beginning. What element of the chain do we deal with? Hogg employs the process of the setting in abyss of the meaning. What is Nancy Chisholm? It is the short story, the tale themselves. We are thus in the position of reading a traditional structure of the characters: the two principal characters are characterized very easily by one physical portrait and by a portrait on the level of the speech as well as an analysis of the characters by the narrator.

The physical portrait is located in the second paragraph of the tale. Parallels suggest at the same time a contrast and an identity between Nancy, the girl and Chisholm, the father. This parallel is repeated several times: what makes it possible to locate the characters in space, in Time thanks to the description of their face. Their face is in direct relationship to Time, with their physical occupations. Time is only pure speculation. We see the narrator speculating in his proper name. Time works like a visible index for a subjacent reason. It is omnipresent throughout tale.

The last but one paragraph of page 243 introduces the two characters in the space which functions like an indirect personification. It means the reflection of the characters in their opposition.

Chisholm represents verticality for it is associated with the shade and with the cold as for Nancy, it represents the design of horizontality, heat and the light: "her yellow hair"⁶. A very clear

opposition, thus appears. However, there is a common denominator: the element of unfixity: "a wandering unsettled life,"⁷. It is not a calm life. On the contrary, one progresses towards a life increasingly agitated to lead to a return to normality. All functions according to the principle of the dynamism. The concept of change is constantly introduced:

"There never was perhaps a human being whose circumstances in life were as suddenly changed, or more deplorable than Nancy Chisholm's were that night. But it was not only her circumstances in life that were changed: she felt at once that the very nature within her was changed also, and that from being a thing of happiness and joy, approaching to the nature of a seraph, she was now converted into a fiend." ⁸

In this life, the concept of time is permanently subjacent. She is the echo of a preparation, an operation to come and in progress. It inevitably implies the concept of change which one finds as a prefiguration of the first lines of this tale. This element of change does not have anything comic in oneself and the metaphor of time covers with the most serious connotations. Indeed, time takes care with the destruction or the construction of the characters. It will eat the father like Mr Gordon but not Nancy. The allegory of time is thus already present as of the first paragraph of the tale. It is Cronos which eats its children. There is thus a reversed structure. The existence of Nancy who is young in the history is privileged. Time influences the destiny and the future of the characters. The father becomes an expendable item who passes from the social and professional success to that of decline and poverty:

"he was about to become a bankrupt," ⁹

"He never had more heart for any thing in the world. All his affairs went to wreck; he became bankrupt, and was driven from his ample possessions, and was forced to live in a wretched cottage in a sort of genteel penury." ¹⁰

That is not without pointing out the proper bankruptcy of the father of James Hogg in 1777. Behind the speech, the image of time does not weigh on the same manner on the father and Nancy. Chisholm believes that he can play with Time, that he can have Time. At the time when he occupied a stable social position he was professionally powerful and he believed being the Master of Time. From the point of view of the narration, there is a disproportion between the beliefs of Chisholm and what becomes his destiny: he is presented to us like a blind man with regard to the circumstances of his own life and that of the other characters who surround him. His excessive pride prevents him from seeing reality and locks up him in a world which is clean for him and how much disproportionate compared to daily reality.

The effect which results from this is irony. The narrator handles the character of Chisholm. He draws us up of it already a moral portrait: Chisholm is proud. His complete self-centredness met in states of extreme violence. To reinforce this idea of self-centredness, James Hogg uses a circular form of speech. The only aim of the speech of Chisholm is the importance of the name and the row which one can be made in the company. This point appears determining to him and as forming a whole unit which one cannot leave. That forms the whole of his existence: what he lives by and for. He does not know another aim but that of the social advancement. There is reiteration. All the words which he uses refer to the production of the language limited to its function of identification: what reinforces the concept of circularity concerning the speech of Chisholm. He likes to get along and be listened to speak: what produces an effect of synesthesia. All this shows the magic effect of the use of the language in order to lead

to the incantatory capacity. Chisholm's psyche does not know the principle of reality as such. It transforms and transposes reality. The case of Chisholm calls upon the solipsism. Indeed, the subject cuts reality completely.

James Hogg does not make any reference to the wife of Chisholm: the reader knows nothing about it. Did she die? Is she alive? We may suppose that she died since it would seem that Chisholm had dealt only with the education of his daughters. Or a subtle literary process on behalf of James Hogg in order to reinforce the presumption of Chisholm and the patriarchal character of the Scottish society of the time?

The girls of Chisholm do not represent anything for him if these are not objects that he believes having the capacity to handle, an appendix with his name. He allures himself. He does not understand that his existence is already vain and blocked. His name Chisholm occults reality since dedicated with a perennality: something which is located above the change of weather. Chisholm thinks that his name cannot deteriorate and he makes a serious error there. To be able to fight time through the magic of a name proceeds of the illusion. While refusing to give Nancy to a tailor, he shows that he wants not to keep his daughter near him from a subsidiary point of view but from an onomastic one Nancy Chisholm becomes a reality, a truth for the father: the first name and the proper name take all their significance for him for it is him the creator. One thus passes from the word to the flesh. It usurps the capacity of God. In fact, Chisholm does not have any autonomy since it is handled by the narrator. He does not have any fire exit and at the end the reader learns that he has one of them.

Chisholm becomes aware that he has a formidable girl and that she really exists. James Hogg gives us a prefiguration in preceding passages of it:

"... old Chisholm, with an agitated heart and tembling frame,"¹¹

"... but the eyes of the father were beaming with love and tenderness"¹²

"The old man spread out his arms to embrace her;"¹³

"... he sent her a letter fraught with tenderness and sorrow,"¹⁴

The existence of Nancy is introduced in positive terms. There is no place for irony since it will become the heroin of the tale. Its presentation gives the reader an impression of harmony.

The narrator mentions Nancy. This effect will generate the emotion in order to enlarge contrasts which exist between the father and the girl. This former does not see anything while the latter perceives. We arrive here at the level of the reality of the human relations. One passes from this reality to another reality: that of the life of Chisholm, his new existence related to the direct opposition past-present. It is the beginning for him of a new evolution, of something of inevitable, that the House does not control his destiny:

"He then desisted, calling her the ruin of her sisters, of himself, and all her father's house;"¹⁵

Chisholm appears as the center of cosmos. It is a kind of sphere to him all alone. He wants to be in position of prevalence. The female nature of Nancy is associated with fire and water: what emphasizes the irony which discredite better Chisholm. The threat is on his house and the genealogy of the family. Chisholm represents mechanical Time. With him, Time is only one repetition without end. He refuses to give in Nancy the

possibility of living a happy love. He wants to be the only cannibal of the life: "an inexorable tyrant"¹⁶. The tyrant will be in his turn devoured by the element which always disavowed: namely that of femininity. The characters are seen interior. The situation is at the same time visualized and commented on.

Which is the significance of this tale? Which of it is the aim? Hogg reveals us a social aspect which calls satire. He makes the satire of the church as a social institution, of a Scottish company which would like to keep conventions of the church in a society which is already in the process of disappearance. What is absent is faith.

The narrator directly condemns the moral attitude of Chisholm. This tale voluntarily mixes confusion in order to juxtapose various ceremonies which do not take place and which should be sacred. Indeed, the reader becomes aware that Nancy and Gillespick are in love but James Hogg does not draw their marriage although this last seems to be obvious at the end. For the father, at the beginning, this union means death. The interior of the Church of Scotland is in fact presented in full decline. Chisholm is a materialist and corruption invades his heart. The true sin is not in the church but in the person even of Chisholm. The whole universe means its alienation. Chisholm belongs to a mechanical microcosm of the company. The unvoluntary distance of his daughter he threw out means for him death whereas Nancy represents the communion. Chisholm does not have any notion of the substance of the human relations. For Nancy, the church represents life. Chisholm belongs to the metonymic network for he acts like a paralysing force. He works the metaphor and the metonymy. He is a frustrated being. The forces of alienation corrode him since by

definition he cannot take possession of them. The world of Chisholm will break down because of the female capacity. The text is thus polysemous. The other feeling of Chisholm is jealousy. He notes that he misses something and that it will have to delegate a part of his capacity. What makes him nervous is the woman who dares to hold head with her male capacity. Owing to the fact that the mother is not mentioned, he must assume at the same time the role of father and mother. He refuses to admit it. His anger is only one means of self-defence. The danger is inside himself. He occults reality. It is a play which was established in order to obliterate an insupportable reality. By anger and jealousy, the reader foresees his secret personality. However, he is a determined ogre. He disavows people as human beings. He wants to be exclusive of any attachment. He believes capacity to neutralize the force of life which exists at the different ones. Reality alienates him. He is only opposite with the multitude. His three daughters symbolize the proliferation. Chisholm was to be a man of the body: there was the passage of the body to the words.

Gillespick, Mr Gordon and Nancy represent the sphere of reality. They have the capacity to resist the universal force of alienation which lives within Chisholm. This last built a sphere of obstruction and abstraction. By this process, he also got away from himself. This sphere can only generate disappointment. He takes pleasure in this structure of self-defence for the female figure which holds head to him appears him dangerous for his ego. The topography of the House is central. It takes all its meaning starting from the departure of Nancy: from where the development of the trope which is a metonymy. There is continuity between Nancy and her environment. The speech goes from Nancy to her environment and

conversely. The House extends its significance to the character of Nancy.

James Hogg employs a sequence of repetition, an idea of chorus which makes only underline the effect of the narrative rhythm. The mode of narration is descriptive: what implies various stages in the observation. Description is far from being static. It is an exploration. However, there is no apparent explorer. The place of focusing is that of the interior: it is an internal focusing. The eye is that of Nancy where the vision of a crushing loneliness has its place. James Hogg colours focusing by the subjectivity of that which focuses and highlights the psychological principle of the desolation which is at the same time in the object and the subject. To some extent the metonymy becomes operational. The omniscient narrator uses the strategy of focusing.

What about the narrative voice? The extra-diegetic narrator produces the speech and sets up the process of exploration and description by the means of the rhetoric strategy. One passes from an inanimate situation to an animated one. A duality exists not only in the House, in the personality of Chisholm but also sees the day in the personality of Nancy:

"but the whole bent of her inclinations was to do evil ; she felt herself impelled to it by a motive she could not account for, but which she had no power or desire to resist. She felt it as it were incumbent on her always to retaliate evil for good,-the most fiendish disposition that the human heart could feel. She had a desire that the Evil One would appear in person, that she might enter into a formal contract to do evil. "¹⁷

"She was at this period quite a vagabond, and a pest wherever she went."¹⁸

This negation is not any more at the level of the speech but at the level of the words. It suggests the idea of a disappearance. We enter a world of fairy tale, in a negative ghostly world and yet all

is not negative. A movement takes place between action and presence, a kind of paradoxical continuity in a movement of change. The magic influence calls the description of unreality of the House. Two complementary processes come into play: the first results from an apparent disappearance of life which involves an image of petrification, the idea of a stopped movement. It is not death as such but the suspended life. Enchantment is the expression of this metonymy. It is right an illusion. It is a House from where the heart flees. There is divorce between the spirit and the matter. A different perception from reality appears: a reality without spirit and heart. It is the world of Chisholm in its monstrous form. Nancy is a central character in the narration. She has a human statute. She has an obliterated ego which becomes the prey of all kinds of phantasms:

"The first resolution she formed was that of full and ample revenge. She determined to make such a dreadful retaliation, as should be an example to all jealous sisters and unnatural parents, while the world lasted. Her plan was to wait till after midnight, and then set fire to the premises, and burn her father, her sisters, and all that pertained to them, to ashes. In little more than an instant was her generous nature so far altered, that she exulted in the prospect of this horrid catastrophe. With such a purpose, the poor wretch went and hid herself until all was quiet; and there is no doubt that she would have put her scheme in execution, had it not been for the want of fire to kindle the house ; for as to going into any dwelling, or seeing the face of an acquaintance, in her present degraded condition, her heart shrunk from it. So, after spending some hours in abortive attempts at raising fire, she was obliged to depart, bidding an eternal adieu to all that she had hitherto held dear on earth. "¹⁹

With the eyes of Nancy, the House becomes a monster with multiple facets and a transfer of her ego invaded by the forces of her unconscious. The moral aim of James Hogg results from this. He regards Nancy as pertaining to a higher order. As being higher, the threat and the monstrous truth of the House cannot

reach her. Belonging to the spiritual order, she incarnates the spirit which forgives like the Sleeping Beauty. The father will be able to know a rebirth only thanks to his daughter who becomes his catalyst. Nancy has two facets: on the one hand, James Hogg presents her like a teenager in full revolt; in addition, he wishes that it is a symbol, a kind of allegory (half-daemon, half-angel) to lead to the concept of a complete angel. It is not a fairy tale and at the same time it is a fairy tale. Nancy opens the eyes on her House: the truth hatched for her as a fairy tale. At the end Good will win as in a very good fairy tale. The House as the image of the anguish is much more evocative than the evocation of the spiritual power of Nancy. The imagination of James Hogg is at its climax when it is concrete, when it calls upon a concrete reality. James Hogg is not discursive: he is good in the imaginative speech and the rhetoric process.

What does the death of Mr Gordon really mean, which truth can the reader draw from it? Up to what point this character wouldn't be a double of Chisholm or the counterpoint of this last? Death is not represented directly:

"Old Simon Gordon died shortly after,"²⁰

The reader does not know what caused Mr Gordon's death but this detail is not important and does not affect of anything the meaning and the outcome of the tale. This death will imply a bringing together and not a contrast. It relates to the same topic which cannot stop developing. It offers the possibility of a triangular interpretation: on the one hand, the allegorical representation of open death; tangible signs of closed death; in addition, what the characters outside this death will draw. There is

thus coexistence of life and death and their effects which proceeds of the narrative strategy. However, James Hogg does not wish that his readers are shocked. He wants that they read this sequence like a natural phenomenon. There is a distance compared to death. James Hogg employs a therapeutic process: he makes us pass from a shock which tends to disappear gradually with the image of death which will generate a calm and a serenity entirely in the world of the alive ones. He shows us that death and life are compatible by a figure of a diptych. By the dialogues, James Hogg makes his tale particularly alive. The complexity of the reality of the characters in fact makes their charm. They represent a chain of separate elements. Chisholm lives in a world of meaning: it is necessarily insulated. With regard to focusing, all the other characters are inevitably disconnected at the space level: however they are connected the ones to the others by the same denominator. Mr Gordon had not understood the true meaning of life since it was the miserly one and Chisholm does not understand the real meaning of his life and the life of others. The belief of James Hogg is that of the spirit which would be at the same time immanent and transcendent. The spirit is that of love. He demonstrates us that this communion with the love is possible in the real world, namely in the reality of alive and not of deaths. Up to what point is the fiction of James Hogg able to represent and capture the reality of life? There is not a subjacent exposure of a reality exposed by James Hogg through his characters? The character of Chisholm must be considered, on the second level, like a symbol. Nancy Chisholm thus presents a formidable unit of the aims and topics to reach. The principal topic developed is well that of pride to which are opposite humility, human feelings and voluntary help. The