

# Henry James: The Turn of the Screw - Realistische Ghost Story ohne eindeutigen Interpretationsansatz? (German Edition)

Meike Julia Schurreit (geb. Greinert)



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**Interpretationsansatz? (German Edition)** Meike Julia Schurreit (geb. Greinert) Studienarbeit aus dem Jahr 2002 im Fachbereich Amerikanistik - Literatur, Note: 1,5, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen (Seminar für Englische Philologie), Sprache: Deutsch, Abstract: [...] But probably his short novel The Turn of the Screw would

remain unmentioned. The following will take a closer look at this "little tale of horror", as James himself has called it in a letter to W. D. Howells. Dealing with literature, one always has to take into consideration the fact that the literary work cannot be interpreted without the context of the time in which it was written. Consequently, the time of interest in this case is the American realism, to whose greatest writers Henry James definitely belongs. Having chosen The Turn of the Screw as basis for the following analysis, the question how the short novel fits into the scheme of realism will be present throughout the whole work. Of course, it would have been possible to concentrate on The Portrait of a Lady, which is said to be the best and obvious example of the literature of the American realism, but in my opinion James's short novel The Turn of the Screw serves as a splendid example to show how the aims of realism can be developed and shown on the basis of one individual character. It is not always necessary to write a book full of complex characters and interweaved actions. My work intends to show that James has succeeded in setting out his realistic ideas in a short novel of about 80 pages; 80 pages that are "loaded" with tension, unanswerable questions and mysteries and which are therefore really worth being given a closer look at. The most interesting part of The Turn of the Screw is the unusual and ingenious way of narrating and the special and independent position the reader has to take if he does not want to remain on the text's surface but to understand its underlying structure. Therefore, my main interest while writing the following pages will be the complex juxtaposition of different narrators and their significant effect on the novel's content.

Furthermore, the analysis is going to show that it is almost impossible to come to a final and integrated interpretation of the short novel, although there can be found innumerable critical essays dealing with The Turn of the Screw. In the end, it will become obvious that this apparent inconspicuous little piece of fiction shows better than any other the complexity of human psyche and how much the latter depends on the right ability of realistic perception

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