

The Daisy Doomed to Perish: A Platonic Interpretation of Daisy's Destiny

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Abstract

This paper draws on Plato's allegory of cave, to analyze Daisy's doomed fate in Henry James's Daisy Miller. In this paper, Europeanized Americans and irresolute Winterbourne represent two kinds of humans and capricious Daisy represents light itself in Plato's allegory of cave. Daisy's death reveals a shackled Europe with its stiff values. Her death also reveals a dilemma of some people, who dare not challenge the traditional values and pursue an authentic identity.

Keywords: Allegory of Cave, Daisy, Europeanized Americans, Winterbourne, Plato.

1. Introduction

The international theme, especially reflected in the conflicts between Europe and America, has always been the typical feature of Henry James's works, which laid the foundation of his reputation. As Richard Salmon argues, "James's reputation was built on his invention of an 'international theme' of transcultural conflict" (2008: 460). In analyzing Henry James's international theme, Priscilla Roberts points out that "Henry James's handling of theme international theme can be correlated to the alterations in the international position of America itself" (2012: 89). James's *Daisy Miller* precisely relates to the international theme in which Daisy's death is seen as a crucial point of the novella (Mendelsohn, 1964: 63). Certainly, critics hold different viewpoints on her death. For instance, Hocks asserts that Daisy's death "reveals the pervasive evil of the world" (1980: 173). Whereas in Lukacs's article, he argues that Daisy's death "results from her own ignorance, stupidity, and vanity" (1988: 212). Sarah Marsh asserts that "Daisy may use her malaria to remove herself permanently from the society whose conventional gender ideals she wishes to escape" (2012: 237). Contrary to Lukacs's views, this article attributes Daisy's death to Europe's influences, to argue that Daisy's death is occasioned by others, not herself, and is fated.

In Plato's *the Republic*, an allegory of cave is told through conversations. Initially, some human beings living in some sort of underground cave are postulated. Then, Plato depicts two kinds of human beings: a majority and a minority. The majority stick together and refuse to accept the new. Residing in the darkness inside the cave, they believe that the shadows they saw are the truth, while the second kind of human beings, a person, steps into the light. At first, this person finds that the light is painful, but he finds the truth. However, when the person attempts to set the first kind free, the first kind will kill him. The two kinds of people can be found in *Daisy Miller*. First, Richard A. Hocks's essay mentions that *Daisy Miller* reveals the antagonism between Daisy and the Europeanized 'gang' abroad" and Daisy is "a sacrificial victim of some amorphous 'societal' set of 'female expectations,' of traditional 'role models'" (1980: 164-165). Therefore, the antagonism in Plato's allegory of cave can be related to the antagonism in *Daisy Miller*. In Hocks's essay, the Americans who attempt to normalize Daisy's behaviors are regarded as a Europeanized gang, which indicates the Americans are Europeanized and are greatly influenced by European values. Thus, considering the antagonism between the darkness inside the cave and the light outside the cave in Plato's allegory of cave, this paper regards these Europeanized Americans as the human beings living in the underground cave. Second, Winterbourne, who was born in America but has lived in Geneva for a long time, can be regarded as the second kind of human beings. Winterbourne's aunt says, "You have lived too long out of the country. You will be sure to make some great mistake. You are too innocent" (James, 2005: 21). This proves that Winterbourne has also been deeply influenced by European values, just like the influences of darkness inside a cave on the second kind of human beings in Plato's allegory of cave. However, compared to the first kind, Winterbourne has the courage to step into the light. Therefore, Winterbourne should be regarded as the second kind of people living in the underground cave. Another important figure is Daisy Miller. Daisy was born in America, and she has her unique temperament, which conflicts the European values. In the novella, Daisy resembles the light in Plato's allegory of cave, which contradicts with the darkness inside the cave.

Hence, this paper regards the Europeanized Americans as the human beings living in the underground cave; irresolute Winterbourne as the second kind of human beings who steps into the light outside the cave; capricious Daisy as light itself. This paper focuses on the widely discussed topic, Daisy's death, and its cause, and it will be developed from the following three perspectives based on Plato's allegory of cave: First, the Europeanized

Americans are the human beings living in the underground cave and they are accountable for Daisy's death. Second, Winterbourne's irresolution represents his fear of the darkness inside the cave as well as the light outside the cave. His fear fails to protect Daisy from Europe's harm. Third, Daisy can be regarded as the light itself, which conflicts with the Europeanized Americans who live in the cave but attracts Winterbourne to embrace. Her death reveals the mightiness of the darkness inside the cave. In other words, her death is fated.

2. The Human Beings "Living in the Underground Cave"

This section discusses the first central argument: the Europeanized Americans are the human beings living in the underground cave and they are accountable for Daisy's death. Prior to this part, the "cave", where the Europeanized Americans are living in, should be discussed. In *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, a cave is a place providing privacy or seclusion from others¹. The definition shows that a cave has a fixed boundary, and it cannot be broken from inside or outside. In this way, the internal of the cave is separated from the outside world. In Plato's view, the cave itself forms a certain world of itself, and people in the cave hold similar ideas and behave similarly, because if "anyone who tries to set them free, they could get their hands on him and kill him" (Plato, 2000: 223).

Similarly, the characteristics of the Europeanized Americans in *Daisy Miller* are identical to the human beings in Plato's allegory of cave. The Europeanized Americans in *Daisy Miller* are precisely living in a cave-like environment, which at first reflects themselves in Winterbourne's awareness of social norms: "In Geneva, as he had been perfectly aware, a young man was not at liberty to speak to a young unmarried lady except under certain rarely occurring conditions" (James, 2005: 8). Winterbourne's awareness shows that people's behaviors are restricted by social norms. Generally, there are three kinds of representatives of the Europe values, in which Miss Featherstone is a pure representation of the European values. Mrs. Costello and Mrs. Walkers are the Europeanized Americans "who live in the underground cave".

Miss Featherstone, who is an English lady and represents European values, appears as the first figure who lives in the cave-like Europe and follows the rules. Her following the rules is reflected indirectly in the conversation between Daisy and Winterbourne. When Daisy and Winterbourne are talking about Randolph's education, hither the divergence between the American values and the European values reveals:

There was an English lady we met in the cars — I think her name was Miss Featherstone; perhaps you know her. She wanted to know why I didn't give Randolph lessons — give him 'instruction,' she called it. I guess he could give me more instruction than I could give him. He's very smart'. (James, 2005: 12)

This excerpt shows that there is a difference between Miss Featherstone and Daisy. On Randolph's lesson, Daisy thinks that Randolph could give her more instruction than she could give him because Randolph is smart. However, in Miss Featherstone's opinion, giving Randolph lessons means giving him "instruction". The word "instruction" literally means "the act or practice of teaching"². If one does not know something, then he needs instruction. Therefore, Daisy, an American, believes that Randolph knows more than her because Randolph is smart. In other words, Daisy realizes Randolph's personality and advantages. Besides, the quotation mark of instruction demonstrates Daisy's disapproval of Miss Featherstone and Daisy's words also show that the elder is not necessarily wit. Conversely, Miss Featherstone, an European, believes that Randolph knows a little and he should be instructed, Miss Featherstone finds no personality or advantage in Randolph. In this case, the European values, reflected in Miss Featherstone's words, attempt to exert their influence on Daisy, because of Miss Featherstone's asking why Daisy "didn't give Randolph lessons — give him 'instruction'" (James, 2005: 12).

Similar to Miss Featherstone, Winterbourne's aunt, Mrs. Costello, also believes that people should follow the rules. Regarding the Millers, she believes that the family is "very common", and "they are the sort of Americans that one does one's duty by not — not accepting" (James, 2005: 19). When Winterbourne tries to present Daisy to her, Mrs. Costello refuses and believes that Daisy is "a dreadful girl" (James, 2005: 21). Later, when Mrs. Costello knows Daisy alone goes to the Castle of Chillon with Winterbourne, she "sniffed a little at her smelling-bottle, exclaiming that this is the young person Winterbourne wanted her to know" (James, 2005: 38) and the Millers "are hopelessly vulgar" (James, 2005: 39). In fact, Mrs. Costello is an American. However, confronting her compatriots, she neither defends them from being slandered nor makes acquaintance with her compatriots. Although Winterbourne attempts to present Daisy's innocence to her, she refuses to see Daisy. Mrs.

Costello is a Europeanized American. Thus, she can be regarded as a representation of European values. Mrs. Costello's influence on Daisy is not direct. She exerts her influence on Winterbourne and to a great extent causes Winterbourne's unstable and irresolute sentiments toward Daisy.

The third one who sticks to the old traditions and represents the European values is Mrs. Walkers. Identical to Mrs. Costello, Mrs. Walkers is also a Europeanized American, because "she was one of those American ladies who, while residing abroad, make a point, in their own phrase, of studying European society" (James, 2005: 57). When Daisy is going to Pincio with Mr. Giovanelli, Mrs. Walkers tries to stop Daisy moderately by saying, "I don't think it's safe, my dear" (James, 2005: 43) and "don't walk off to the Pincio at this hour to meet a beautiful Italian" (James, 2005: 46). Realizing her vain efforts, she takes a carriage to stop Daisy from being with two gentlemen, because "it is really too dreadful" (James, 2005: 51). In Mrs. Walkers's view, Daisy is ruining herself by strolling with two gentlemen and she is crazy. Mrs. Walkers's final waterloo made her no choice but to make a clear line with Daisy. This is reflected at the party: Mrs. Costello turns her back to Daisy. Mrs. Walkers's attempt in changing Daisy's behaviors failed. Then, she turns to Winterbourne, asking him to cease the relations with Daisy. Therefore, her influence on Daisy changed from directness to indirectness. In this way, the European values exert their indirect influence on Daisy.

In Plato's allegory of cave, people have lived in the underground cave since their childhood, and "they have to stay where they are and straightly look ahead because their legs and necks are chained and the chains prevent them from turning around" (Plato, 2000: 220). For Miss Featherstone, her chains are traditional rules. What she sees is superficial, which is the elder knows more than the younger. This renders her to know nothing about the truth of Randolph's personality and intelligence. Therefore, she wonders why Daisy "didn't give Randolph lessons — give him 'instruction'" (James, 2005: 12). Conversely, Daisy focuses more on Randolph's intelligence, the internal characteristic of Randolph. Therefore, she believes that Randolph is smarter than her. The sharp contrast between Miss Featherstone and Daisy shows that the Europeans and the Americans have different ways of thinking.

Mrs. Costello has also lived in Europe for a long period of time, and she deems that the Millers "are hopelessly vulgar" (James, 2005: 39). She is also greatly influenced by European values and only believes what she sees. Therefore, the improper behaviors of the Millers are her only impression of the family. Thus, she refuses to make acquaintance with Daisy. Like

the first kind of people in Plato's allegory of cave, Mrs. Costello has two distinctive features: First, she believes what she sees. This is the surface of the truth. Second, she refuses to accept new ideas or namely the truth. Therefore, when Winterbourne tries to present Daisy's innocence, she still follows her own way of thinking, although she has no acquaintance with Daisy. Mrs. Walkers shares the same views with Miss Featherstone and Mrs. Costello. She believes that following the rules is the only way to show Daisy's dignity.

Miss Featherstone, Mrs. Costello, and Mrs. Walkers, all exert their influences on Daisy, directly and indirectly. Miss Featherstone, in the name of education, questions Daisy about why she does not give Randolph instruction. Her real purpose is to preach the European values that the elder should educate the younger and people should follow the rules and traditions. In Miss Featherstone's view, one's personality is completely ignored.

In Plato's allegory of cave, "a fire is lighted behind the humans, and they can only see the shadows of some objects and these people would take the shadows for truth" (Plato, 2000: 220). In the allegory, the first kind of human beings refuses to accept the truth and sees the shadows as the truth. When the person, who steps into the light, tries to tell them the truth, they kill him. Therefore, the truth refers to the light outside the cave. The Europeanized Americans in *Daisy Miller* refuse to accept Daisy's unique behaviors and disposition, which resembles the refusal of the light outside the cave. They have lived in an atmosphere of darkness for a long time, so the Europeanized Americans regard what they see as the truth. When Winterbourne tries to set them free, to tell them about the true nature of Daisy, they refuse to admit it and say "You have lived too long out of the country. You will be sure to make some great mistake. You are too innocent" (James, 2005: 21). Their constant sermon causes Winterbourne's vacillation between admiring Daisy and resenting Daisy. In their cave, light cannot survive. Therefore, Daisy's death can be regarded as the disappearance of light in the darkness, occasioned by the Europeanized Americans' excessive doctrines and so-called orthodoxies.

3. Winterbourne's Instability

However, the cave in Plato's *The Republic* is not completely seclusive. It has "an entrance long enough and as wide as the cave itself", and "opens to the light" (Plato, 2000: 220). Therefore, human beings living in the cave can access the outside world if they want to, which is to say that the Europeanized Americans have their chance to step into the light

outside the cave. In *Daisy Miller*, Winterbourne can be seen as the one who steps into the light. For one thing, he realizes the extraordinary glare of the light outside the cave which attracts him much. For another, the glare of the light makes his eyes painful. So, he finds “shadows the easiest things to look at” (Plato, 2000: 221-222). At last, Winterbourne sees the truth. “He’d be able to look at the sun by itself, in its own place, and see it as it really was” (Plato, 2000: 222). Therefore, Winterbourne is in a state of instability, lingering between darkness and light, just like the one who steps into the light in the allegory of cave. Similar to the one who steps into the light in Plato’s allegory of cave, Winterbourne’s sentiments toward Daisy are unstable. At first, he is attracted by Daisy’s elegance. Then, he becomes doubtful about Daisy’s behaviors. At last, after Daisy’s death, Winterbourne finally realizes the truth.

In general, James’s description when the two are in the Castle of Chillon shows Winterbourne’s perplexed sentiments for Daisy: “She seemed to him, in all this, an extraordinary mixture of innocence and crudity” (James, 2005: 37). The first glimpse of Daisy demonstrates Winterbourne’s admiration: “As soon as Winterbourne saw Daisy advancing, he cheerfully said, ‘American girls are the best girls’” (James, 2005: 7). However, considering others’ words, Winterbourne “was inclined to think Miss Daisy Miller was a flirt — a pretty American flirt” (James, 2005: 14). When their first contact ends, Winterbourne “stood looking after her; and as she moved away, drawing her muslin furbelows over the gravel, said to himself that she had the *tournure* of a princess” (James, 2005: 18). Therefore, Winterbourne’s sentiments for Daisy are in a state of instability.

Later, on their way to the Castle of Chillon, Daisy chooses to go in a steamboat, where she can meet lots of people. However, the people in the steamboat “are all looking at her very hard” (James, 2005: 34), because Daisy begins to chatter as soon as she joins Winterbourne. This is not proper to the Europeans, which makes Winterbourne disappointed, because:

Daisy Miller was extremely animated, she was in charming spirits; but she was apparently not at all excited; she was not fluttered; she avoided neither his eyes nor those of anyone else; she blushed neither when she looked at him nor when she saw that people were looking at her (James, 2005: 34).

Winterbourne has lived in Europe for a long time, and he is greatly influenced by European values. Therefore, Daisy's capricious disposition makes Winterbourne feel disappointed. To him, Daisy is no longer a girl of dignity, but a girl of disgrace. However, then "Winterbourne began to think he had been wrong to feel disappointed in the temper in which the young lady had embarked" (James, 2005: 37). The ambiguity arises in Winterbourne's unstable sentiments for Daisy: is he intoxicated with Daisy or not?

In his aunt's letters, Winterbourne knows that Daisy "is also very intimate with some third-rate Italians, with whom she rackets about in a way that makes much talk" in Rome (James, 2005: 38). After his conversations with Mrs. Costello, Winterbourne meditated and said, "They are very ignorant — very innocent only. Depend upon it they are not bad" (James, 2005: 39). At any rate, Winterbourne's sentiments for Daisy changed again. Mysteriously, when Mrs. Walkers persuades Winterbourne to cease his relations with Daisy, Winterbourne declined, because he likes her very much: "'I'm afraid I can't do that,' said Winterbourne. 'I like her extremely'" (James, 2005: 55). He also said that Daisy is "a very nice girl, but he wishes Daisy would flirt with him, and him only" (James, 2005: 60). After Daisy's death, Winterbourne leaves Rome immediately. When talking about Daisy with his aunt, he says, "she sent me a message before her death which I didn't understand at the time. But I have understood it since. She would have appreciated one's esteem" (James, 2005: 78). Winterbourne finally realizes his misunderstanding of Daisy, which "is the real horror for him (Newberry, 1982: 232).

Ron Childress believes that "fear, one of the most pervasive influences on behavior, must almost by necessity play some part in a fictional study of the human condition" (1986: 24). Winterbourne's vacillation can be regarded as a fear of the darkness inside the cave and a fear of the light outside the cave. On the one hand, Winterbourne does not dare to challenge European traditions. He loiters between darkness and light. Therefore, his sentiments for Daisy consistently change. On the other hand, he does not dare to be completely exposed to light. This can be seen in his change of attitude when others talk about the "improper" behaviors of Daisy. In Plato's allegory of cave, the one, who steps into the light outside the cave, "came back to down into the cave and took up his old seat, his eyes were swamped by darkness" (Plato, 2000: 222). The darkness stops him from seeing the truth. Therefore, when Winterbourne was inside the cave, surrounded by the European doctrines, his sentiments toward Daisy changed and Daisy becomes undignified to him.

The one who steps into the light finally works out that “it was the sun which caused the seasons and the years and governed everything in the visible realm, and which is responsible for everything they used to see” (Plato, 2000: 222). In *Daisy Miller*, Winterbourne said to his aunt, “you were right in that remark that you made last summer. I was booked to make a mistake. I have lived too long in foreign parts” (James, 2005: 78). This indicates Winterbourne’s realization of the true nature of Daisy. However, everything is too late for him. It is his cowardice that causes Daisy’s death. It is his vacillation that fails to protect Daisy from the darkness of the cave-like Europe. Winterbourne’s pursuit of Daisy resembles the pursuit of light but it was greatly restricted by European values. His aunt’s words influenced his view of Daisy, which reflects his cowardice. But on the other hand, he has the courage to pursue Daisy to Rome. The courage indicates his pursuit of light. His pursuit makes Daisy surprised because Daisy thought that European men will not chase after her. Therefore, compared with the other human beings living inside the cave, Winterbourne is special. At the end of the story, Winterbourne returned to Geneva, which seems to avoid remembering Daisy, but his coming back to Vevey indeed reveals his contact with Daisy. Therefore, Winterbourne’s return to Geneva implies his complex feelings for Daisy.

In conclusion, Winterbourne is paradoxical. On the one hand, he fears the grave influence of European values. His hesitation reflects his long-period residence in Europe, which deeply affects his judgment. On the other hand, he attempts to pursue light-like Daisy, which resembles the one in Plato’s allegory of cave who pursues the light outside the cave. His so-called inexperiencedness gave him chance to contemplate. Compared with those living in the cave-like Europe, Winterbourne has his advantage, which is his self-awareness: Having the ability to judge the world.

4. Daisy: An Image of Light and Authenticity of Self

The European values reflected in the doctrines of the Europeanized Americans formed a solid fortress around Winterbourne and Daisy. Winterbourne’s vacillation reveals that he is greatly influenced by European values. He even tells Daisy that “when you deal with natives you must go by the custom of the place” (James, 2005: 60). However, he is also greatly attracted by Daisy. His incapacity to break the shackles of European values fails to prevent Daisy from being hurt. Contrarily, to some extent, he becomes the one who hurts Daisy. The failure of his protection resembles the disappearance of light in Plato’s allegory of cave. Daisy conflicts with the European values reflected through the Europeanized Americans but attracts

Winterbourne. Consequently, Daisy can be regarded as the light itself in Plato's allegory of cave.

For Daisy, she is not a native of Europe. Therefore, her coming to Europe is equivalent to the light's entering the cave. She wants to be free which is intolerable to the old system of Europe, just like the darkness inside the cave cannot tolerate the light brought by outsiders. Daisy refuses to change her behaviors according to European values. It seems that the European values lost their power on Daisy. Although they attempt to normalize Daisy's behaviors, Daisy expresses her own feelings authentically. As Daisy says, "I don't see why I should change my habits for them" (James, 2005: 59). Therefore, on the one hand, Daisy can be regarded as an image of light. On the other hand, Daisy can be regarded as the representation of self-authenticity.

First, as the aforementioned, the European values dominate everything in the European continent, which enables the European values to form a sense of seclusion. The darkness was born in the cave-like continent, because of which, the Millers found the continent hard to accustom. For instance, Randolph says "I haven't got any teeth to hurt. They have all come out. I have only got seven teeth" (James, 2005: 6). For him, teeth problems are caused by Europe, because "it's this old Europe. It's the climate that makes them come out. In America, they didn't come out. It's these hotels" (James, 2005: 6). Mrs. Miller got the dyspepsia. She thought that "it's this climate; it's less bracing than Schenectady³, especially in the winter season" (James, 2005: 41). For Daisy, her unaccustomedness is death. Obviously, the Millers are not accustomed to Europe, which resembles the unaccustomedness of the light outside the cave in Plato's allegory of cave. The light cannot survive in the darkness inside a cave. Therefore, many problems arise. When Daisy tries to chat with Winterbourne, others "look at her very hard" (James, 2005: 33). When Daisy wants to go out for a walk with a friend, people say "she is very crazy!" (James, 2005: 51). And finally, the Europeans and the Europeanized Americans, "these shrewd people had quite made up their minds that she was going too far. They ceased to invite her" to their parties (James, 2005: 67). It can be seen that Daisy and the European values conflict with each other. Given the rigid traditions of Europe, Daisy can be regarded as the image of light.

Second, from Daisy's point of view, she should not and cannot endure the Europeanized Americans' doctrine. Lisa Johnson believes that Daisy's "story of enculturation and personal defiance, on the surface a cautionary tale for wayward girls, contains what Patrocino

Schweickart calls an ‘authentic kernel’ or ‘utopian moment’ (2001: 41). Therefore, her behaviors are the representation of her self-authenticity. Her incompatibility with Europe reflects her personality, like the conflict between the darkness inside the cave and the light outside the cave. Daisy is a “‘stylish’ young girl”, with “a sound of high-pitched voices at all times” (James, 2005: 3). Her personality is in sharp contrast to the classical, luxurious, and mature European traditions. When Winterbourne first meets Daisy, “she talked to Winterbourne as if she had known him a long time” (James, 2005: 12). She tells Winterbourne that she had “a great deal of gentlemen’s society” (James, 2005: 14), which seems to be normal for her. However, Winterbourne “had never yet heard a young girl express herself in just this fashion; never, at least, save in cases where to say such things seemed a kind of demonstrative evidence of a certain laxity of deportment” (James, 2005: 14). Therefore, Daisy expresses her feelings freely without considering European values.

However, her expression of feelings causes much trouble for her. For instance, when Winterbourne attempts to present Daisy to his aunt, Daisy’s expression of feelings becomes vulgar and Daisy is “bad enough to dislike, at any rate; and for this short life that is quite enough” (James, 2005: 39). When Daisy just wants to take a walk with a friend, she is told that “it is really too dreadful” and “girl must not do this sort of thing” (James, 2005: 51). Besides, “her behavior was not representative — was regarded by her compatriots as abnormal” (James, 2005: 68). For Daisy, the greatest trouble is that she was trying to tell Winterbourne that she was not engaged. But Winterbourne said that “‘well, what do you believe now?’ ‘I believe that it makes very little difference whether you are engaged or not!’” (James, 2005: 75). At this moment, Daisy feels life becomes trivial. Consequently, when Winterbourne bids her take pills, Daisy says, “‘I don’t care’, in a little strange tone, ‘whether I have Roman fever or not!’ (James, 2005: 75). Under this circumstance, Winterbourne causes Daisy’s disappointment. For Daisy, others’ misunderstanding is of no importance. Winterbourne’s understanding plays an important role in her life. When she finds Winterbourne’s misunderstanding, her life becomes worthless. Therefore, her expression of authenticity sustains her life as well as her admiration for Winterbourne. His misunderstanding is the last straw to her death.

Apparently, light cannot survive inside the cave. Thus, Daisy eventually died in the cave-like Europe. In the cave-like continent, Daisy, the image of light, may evoke some people’s consciousness. As in Winterbourne’s words: “‘She sent me a message before her death which

I didn't understand at the time. But I have understood it since. She would have appreciated one's esteem" (James, 2005: 78). Fortunately, Winterbourne realizes that he is living in a cave-like continent: "you were right in that remark that you made last summer. I was booked to make a mistake. I have lived too long in foreign parts" (James, 2005: 78). At this moment, Winterbourne realizes his failure of protecting Daisy.

April daisies are blossoming. Daisy, a flower of spring and summer, perishes. Her death reveals the mightiness of the darkness inside the cave. In other words, her death is fated.

5. Conclusion

To sum up, Daisy is different from those who resist the light, and those who hesitate. She does not intend to break all the shackles brought by European values. She just wants to be free and what she thinks is that "they understood nothing else!" (James, 2005: 60). However, the people with European values, especially Europeanized compatriots, determine to "normalize" her behaviors. Therefore, conflicts emerge. In all these conflicts and rebukes, Daisy cares nothing. She just cares about Winterbourne. However, Winterbourne continuously changes, which at last causes her loss of faith, and eventually dies. Therefore, Daisy faces the cave-like continent, a fortress. Her struggle for the expression of self-authenticity is doomed to lose and Winterbourne does not become supportive during the whole process. In fact, "Winterbourne is presented as the captive of women, not their protective gallant" (Deakin, 1983: 19). Therefore, the people with European values, especially Europeanized Americans, are responsible for Daisy's death and Winterbourne's unstable sentiments, namely hesitation, catalyze Daisy's death. As M.J. Hooper argues, "Winterbourne's failure is to allow Daisy to be not a type but a person, a human being" (1991: 34).

For one thing, the novella reveals the difficulty of expressing one's personality in the cave-like Europe. For another, it also reveals that some people, like the Europeanized Americans, insist on the traditions and are reluctant to break the rules and pursue an authentic self.

Notes:

1. "Cave." *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/cave>. Accessed 27 May. 2022.

2. "Instruction." *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/instruction>. Accessed 15 Jun. 2022.

3. An American city.

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