

## Chapter Two

### Application and Assessment

This chapter provides an application of the theory, which serves the dual purpose of evaluating the theoretical propositions of each model, and highlighting the pillars for the synthesized model proposed in the following chapter. The chapter provides an analysis of sample real-readers' responses to a questionnaire devised by the researcher. The aim behind the use of a questionnaire is solely to ensure that the responses acquired from the participants, especially those with no training in literary criticism, cover all the required aspects of responses.

#### I. Steps of the Experiment

The experiment was carried out in three steps: pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. There were various aims behind this division. First, it was intended to decrease the fatigue effect expected to affect the participants due to the length of the questionnaire and the reading extracts. The second aim was to help obtain clear answers for each phase. Third, this division also permitted the assessment of each proposition through more than one question in order to ensure the consistency of the answers. The questionnaire given to the participants included an instructions section that guided their exercise in a manner that would ensure achieving the above mentioned goals.

#### The Criteria for the Choice of the Novel

The choice of a novel for the experiment was based on two criteria. Pollock's novel *Precipice* met both criteria in addition to providing other bonus points. The first criterion was that the novel should be interesting to read. This was accounted for based on the

reviews the novel received since its publication. The novel belongs mainly to the thriller genre which typically contains gaps, twists, and revelations. However, it goes beyond the accustomed thriller formulas to handle family issues, corporate-world struggles, world-scale economic crises, etc. The second criterion was that the novel would lend itself easily to various theories of criticism; something that is of particular importance for the assessment of the propositions of the psychological/social models. The novel has the potential for a traditional psychoanalytic account, a Marxist account, and a feminist account.

In addition to these two criteria, the novel also provides other bonus points. First, it tackles various different institutions, apart from the scope of literary criticism, something that provides a further beneficial chance for evaluating the propositions of the social model. The novel exposes the inner worlds of military life, corporate tycoons, logisticians, as well as issues of corporate espionage, and counter cyber-hacking. Second, it comes with published authorial intentions. The Council of Logistics Management has ordered a novel that would raise the awareness of the public to the importance of logistics in everyday life. This gives a unique chance of having the author's intention clearly stated. Measuring this intention against real readers' responses as to what they believe is the main objective of the author or the main theme of the novel, provides a bonus point to the process of measuring the propositions held on behalf of the author by the inter-subjective model theorists.

### **The Development of the Questionnaire:**

The preliminary step was to decide on the types of questions that can be used ensure that all the required aspects of response are covered by all participants, and to ensure the

assessment of the all the propositions advocated by the three models. After preparing an extensive list, the questions were short-listed by various means. First, some questions were modified so as to allow for the evaluation of more than one proposition through one question, even if those propositions belonged to different models. Second, some propositions were common in two/the three models, in which cases the assessment was carried out once. This was achieved bearing in mind the choice of an extract from the selected novel that would allow for the propositions to be assessed within the contexts required by each model. Also, as mentioned before, each proposition was assessed via more than one question in order to ensure the consistency of the answers. After that a quick piloting of the questionnaire was carried out to ensure the effectiveness of the questions.

### **Choosing the Participants**

As for the participants, the choice was based on three basic criteria. First, language competence should be at least adequate. This was, in some cases, based on the data collected about the participants. Other participants sat for a personal preliminary meeting or were sent an email in which a detailed description of the steps of the questionnaire was presented in English, and they were requested to confirm approval of participation through a responding e-mail. The second criterion was the attempt to secure a variation of the following sub-criteria; age, gender, educational background, cultural background, ideological tendencies, and institutional contexts. This was achieved to varying degrees though. Table 1 demonstrates the general groupings of the participants: age-groups, gender, and level of language (See appendix A: Table 1). Table two presents the specific

information about each participant. (See appendix A: Table 2). The overall number of valid participants is 23.

## **II. Application**

### **i. The Inter-subjective Model**

The first feature in this model is the “horizon of expectations”. This horizon is shaped by the contribution of three sources. The first source is contextual, the second is personal/subjective, and the third is textual. The contextual source involves the social norms as well as the historical situation, both of which naturally entail certain cultural dispositions, in addition to the rules of the genre. The second source involves the reader’s horizon of experience. As for the third, it involves the textual instructions whose role is to guide the reader’s progress within the limits of the text.

This feature, with its multiple sources, reflects itself clearly in real readers’ responses to various questions. In response to question 2A:1, the participants’ answers reveal ample evidence of social/cultural dispositions. Resorting to traditional gender oriented issues as the main criteria of deciding on the gender of the author is the clearest of these evidences. For example, at least eleven participants resort to the criterion of gender roles as the basis for their decision. Participant S, for instance, believes that the author is a male “because he is talking about [the] gulf war”, and participant U believes “[t]he details given about military life show ... full awareness about it, which is rather connected with men not women”. Four other respondents place this criterion of gender roles within an institutional context. Such typical socially and culturally dictated gender roles, indicated

in the answers of an overall of fifteen participants, reflect the role of context in the process of shaping the respondents' horizons of expectations.

Respondent L documents that “war description makes [her] feel as if it is a male writer as the description of the attacks is really masculine”. This response adds a new dimension to this point; the gender-based stylistic dimension. Some such responses put this stylistic criterion within the cultural dictation of gender roles such as this participant who finds that the mere reference to war is not an indicator of the gender of the author; it's the description that is an indicator as it is masculine. Others participants depend on the linguistic features of the text as evidences for this criterion. Participant B, for instance, resorts to traditional characterization of the feminine versus masculine styles of writing as the criterion of decision. Women according to this criterion are more concerned with describing feelings than men. This stylistic criterion is also reflected in the answers of sixteen other participants. Further analysis of the influence of the social/cultural context of the reader on her/his response will be carried out while assessing the propositions of the social model.

The historical situation is revealed in the participants' responses to the historical context handled in the text, which is mainly the globalization era, with a specific reference to the Gulf War as part of this era. The period of the War is *explicitly* identified by at least three respondents. These are respondent I, who recognizes the importance of “the historical background and dates ... concerning the Kuwaiti-Iraqi war in 1991 and the occurrences at the Saudi borders” provided in the prologue (2A:3), respondent K, who identifies Jane as a Gulf War hero, and respondent S, who was mentioned earlier. In

addition to that, at least ten other participants implicitly imply identifying the war through their responses to such elements as Jane's usefulness, and the missile scene (2A:3).

The globalization era in its more general dimensions is identified, implicitly or explicitly, as part of the contextual elements that contribute to the reader's horizon of expectations in the participants' answers to various questions as will be evident in the analysis of some answers to questions 2A:2, 2B:3, 3:3, 3:6, and 3:7 among others. Participant E, for instance, writes in response to question 3:6 that she thinks "the message is about the interconnectedness we have in modern life[;] that means that seemingly local problems have global consequences". Respondent Q, in response to question 2:A2, lists the domestic as well as the international repercussions of the era as exemplified in the novel when she writes:

It is very important to highlight Royal Aker's monopoly of the market ... not only in Ocean Plains by putting many small retails out of business, such as Mr. Skoggs' who "had closed his doors a dozen years ago, unable even to sell the business" (174) but also across the world, when toppling the industrial power of the Hyon Group and the economic downfall of Korea at large, "Korea's export-driven economy had slipped seriously from its peak growth rates of the mid 1990s" (215), which resulted in trade union demonstrations sweeping the country with political turmoil ... "putting people out of work during a time of nationwide labor unrest".

As for the rules of the genre, they are most evident in the participants' responses to question 1:1. The answers of most participants are almost identical with such words as crime, suspense, revelations, and fear featuring in almost all responses. For example, the

word “crime” (including examples of crimes) features eleven times in twenty answers. Some of these answers are brief like participant J’s “[a] crime would take place, suspense, revelation at the end”. Some other responses are more detailed such as participant N’s response in which he guesses that the work “would trigger the sense of mystery, the anticipation of mental puzzles and revelations with some fear induced, shady characters, and a twist to every expectation I’ll have throughout my reading process”.

The most notable responses to that question are the ones that engage the second source which contributes to the shaping of the reader’s horizon of expectations, the personal/subjective source. This feature is apparent in the responses that explicitly reflect the readers’ horizon of experience as a consequence to the rules of the genre. In participant L’s answer, she starts by giving the same above quoted formula, only she adds that this “triggers CSI Miami, Sherlock Holmes, ... and Conan”. This is also highlighted in Participant I’s response in which she writes two paragraphs starting with “the revelation [that it is a thriller novel] would trigger details of past readings such as those of Agatha Christie”. After that, she goes on to detail what this horizon of experience triggers in her mind.

Seven responses to this question also explicitly reveal a total/partial subjective reference for their expectations from the novel as a thriller. Four out of those seven responses link their subjective responses to objective textual elements. Participant C, for instance, expects that, if the novel is well written and swift paced, it “[will] give [him] that feeling that [he] would not want to put it down”. There are three other responses that ignore any objective elements and depend solely on their subjective responses to the novel as the criterion for judging whether it is a thriller or not. Participant P provides the most

subjective criterion of all, she announces that she “will call certain adjectives to describe her feelings ... excitement, suspense, and curiosity”. Her feelings represent her criterion of classifying the novel as a thriller.

As for the third element to contribute to the shaping of the reader’s horizon of expectations, the authority of the text, it finds its expression in the participants’ answers to more than one question, the most important of these is question 2A:3. This question, being based on an almost self-contained portion of the novel, allows the participants to choose whatever they believe is important in the prologue without being given any choices or clues. Moreover, as the word “significant” is left without specifying any particular references, the space is open for participants to elude any textual authority and decide purely as subjective readers. What is assessed after that is whether any of the answers offer a misinterpretation or reflect a response that has no roots at all in the text. Twenty-two out of the twenty-three participants answered this question. However, not one answer reflects any of the above mentioned symptoms. All answers can be clearly traced back to the text. Furthermore, all answers can be categorized under a limited number of themes/scenes as illustrated in table 1:1.

The discussion moves on now to the next proposition. As explained earlier, the reader proceeds according to a certain mechanism. After the reader forms her/his expectations, she/he is faced with gaps that must be filled in by her/him. After that, the expectations as well as the gap filling processes are all subjected to being confirmed, modified, or revoked by what the text subsequently reveals. In the attempt to evaluate the validity of this proposition, the analysis will continue with the same question 2A:3, particularly the answers of those seven respondents who find the reference to the

father and “*that* woman” in the last scene the most important element in the prologue. After that, an analysis of the answers to questions 1:2 and 1:3 will be carried out. Lastly, some of the participants’ answers to question 3:8 will be analyzed.

Concerning the last scene in the prologue, the readers first meet Jane who finds herself by the military base as it gets hit by a missile, she tries to help, Chevy comes to her aid, they succeed, they are on the verge of kissing, she registers the wedding ring and stops abruptly, plainly disturbed, she announces that she “just can’t”, after a quarter of an hour she is “angry for the thousandth time at her father. If he hadn’t ...”. The last sentence, in the light of the scene, requires gap filling by the reader. Maybe even before that, Jane’s explicit disturbance when seeing the wedding ring might have triggered questions, she could have just stopped. The participants now have to try and guess the missing piece of information. Participant L writes:

Even though the sentence is incomplete, it is brilliant. It opens a space for implications and connotations about her relationship with her father. She is angry at him, but it feels like she loves him ... Then, the reader’s guessing is followed by a paragraph elaborating on her dilemma with her father. He had a second woman in his life and it left a stamp on her. She became sensitive to the issue.

The comment indicates that the incomplete sentence sheds uncertain lights on something in Jane’s past regarding her father, something that seems to be haunting her. The answer also reflects that the incomplete sentence sheds lights on half the truth only, the readers are left “guessing” until the other half, that he “had a second woman”, is revealed in the following paragraph. Participants H and F demonstrate similar depositions, but with

traces of modifications of expectations. Participant H, for instance, writes, “[a]t first I thought the battle scene is the most significant one but after finishing the prologue I think the last scene is the most significant one, specially the part when she mentioned her father and that he used to have an affair. It shows that she does not have a good relationship with [him] and that it might affect her future relationships with men”. As for participant M, she chooses “*that woman*” as the most important phrase as it “seems to set up the rest of the book. I expect she and Chevy will meet again after the war, and she will become that woman”. This participant provides her expectations for the rest of the work as well. However, as she proceeds, the text partly confirms/partly revokes her expectations; Jane and Chevy do meet later, but she does not become involved with him.

As for the participants’ answers to the two questions 1:2 and 1:3 concerning the novel as a thriller meeting their expectations, the answers reveal various evaluative responses which can be claimed to be affected by personal variations regarding taste. That is, while the answers reveal that the expected elements of crimes, secrets, twists, revelations ... etc., there is a discrepancy in the participants’ answers concerning whether the novel is exciting or not. This can be taken as a proof of Fish’s inter-subjective proposition, which he withheld later when shifting to the social model, that there can be two levels of response; one basic, factual, or primary, while the other displays the emotional reaction of the reader. This is evident in these responses; for where the criterion is the presence of certain elements which are determined by the rules of the genre or by textual instructions, the answers profess their presence, but when it comes to the personal or emotional response to these elements, variations appear.

Apart from that point, the answers mainly reflect three dispositions. There are those who believe that their expectations are completely met (eight), those who believe that their expectations do not completely match the text, whether meeting it half way, or being surpassed by it (five), and those who believe that their expectations are not met at all (two). First, there are those who find their expectations completely met. Most of those participants' answers mainly focus on the presence of crimes, suspenseful events, and revelations. Participant E writes, "I think all of the expectations were met. There was plenty of crime, a mystery, and plenty of suspense". Other participants find their expectations partially modified. Participant N details where each of his expectations was met. However, he writes that, "I did encounter a twist in my expectations, ... the moment Chevy was introduced I speculated a spark of romance of some sort, but I was met with ... rejection". He modifies his expectations to exclude the romantic link as it has been revoked by the text. Those whose expectations are fully or partly met mainly focus on the themes/scenes of sabotage, murder, and war as the primary parts where their expectations are met. This is documented in their answers to question 1:3.

The last disposition is especially revealed in participant M's answer. She writes, concerning the fulfillment of any of her expectations: "[n]one. The excerpt of the book alluded to murder and conspiracy, but did not include any of the relevant portions of the story. It was frankly quite difficult to follow the story line with the huge gaps in the text". She writes later in her answer to question 3:8: "I would be curious to read this novel in its entirety, as the excerpts were interesting. However, I cannot comment ...based on such a limited portion". Participant M, who happens to have been a lawyer for eight

years, believes the gaps too vast for her to be able to fill them in based on the extracts given. Therefore, whatever expectations she laid earlier remain unfulfilled.

Unlike the rest of the participants who managed to use whatever revelations the extracts provide to fill in the spaces and come up with their own interpretations and expectations, as will be revealed in their answers to question 3:8, M seems to have found that quite impossible. As a lawyer, the crimes and twists get her attention. However, based on the conventions of the institution of law in which she is trained, she is frustrated over not getting the whole story. To build a case, you need to find the whole story. Therefore, she refrains from passing any judgments despite confessing her interest in whatever is revealed. This particular answer will also be very useful later when assessing propositions of the social model.

This takes the analysis to the rest of the answers to question 3:8, which asks the participants about their expectations for the ending of the novel. Again, the answers reveal a procession within the limits of the text, even in cases of revoked expectations. Five specific expectations find their ways to the sixteen answers provided for this question as detailed in table 3:8, and all five expectations proceed on the basis of textual input. Even the five participants that provide detailed specifications of their expectations build these assumptions on certain textual elements. It is, after that, left to the text to maintain, modify, or revoke these expectations.

This takes us to the other propositions that complete the mechanism of the reading process. These propositions are: the polysemantic nature of a literary work, the readers' endeavors at finding unity in the text, and their interpretation of its meaning or message

using the selection mechanism and the rejection of alien associations. The evaluation of the notion of the polysemantic nature of a text is assessed through the participants' previously discussed answers to question 2A:3 as well as the participants' answers to questions 2B:3 and 3:7. As summarized earlier, the participants' responses to question 2A:3 reveal a variation of choices which can all be referred back to definite textual themes. Concerning the responses to the two other questions, the answers reveal the same result. All options provided in both questions, whether as quotes or as abstract themes, receive a varying amount of attention from the participants, and they all have their roots in the text. Moreover, each question provides the option of choosing other quotes or themes as the most significant. However, for the first question, twenty-two participants answer it; only two of them give answers from outside the given options, and their chosen quotes prove related to one or the other of the themes suggested by the provided quotes. The same applies to the second question as well.

One more point is that in the first question, the option that is least chosen is option one, while options two, three, seven, and eight are often chosen, with option two being chosen twelve times, thus becoming the option chosen the most. Moreover, options two and eight are relevant to one theme; Jane's relationship with her father. This reflects that from the abundance of themes and interpretations the polysemantic nature of the text provides, there seems to be some themes receiving more attention, or a collective unannounced agreement as more relevant than the others. This fact is further reflected in the answers of the second question where option f, the father-daughter relationship, is chosen the most (sixteen times). The analysis so far proves the potentiality of the text to provide multiple themes and interpretations at once. The polysemantic nature of the text

as a literary work is thus justified by real readers. However, even among those polysemantic possibilities, some themes receive more attention than others.

The evaluation now moves to the notion of finding unity in the text through the mechanisms of selection and rejection. The evaluation will be based on the participants' answers to the same two questions. The feature that finds its voice in fifteen answers to questions 2B:3 and 3:7 is the tendency to choose a quotation (which is important to the novel) and a theme that are united by one main idea. For instance, participant A chooses two of the quotations that handle the issue of sabotage, five and seven, in his answer to question 2B:3, and chooses the main theme that tackles the sabotage issue, b, in his answer to question 3:7. This feature is apparent, in a more or less clearer manner, in fourteen other answers. Some of those answers even agree with the participants' choices of the main word/ phrase, etc., in the prologue (2A:3). This is especially apparent in the answers of participants I and L. This can be a proof that the search for unity is justified to a considerable extent, it can also be a proof of what Iser refers to as the mechanism of grouping. However, it remains a fact that some participants' answers do not achieve pure unity.

An additional feature that can also be evaluated via the congregation of both the fifteen answers that display the feature of unity, and the remaining eight that do not is the application of the selection mechanism. Even the ones that do not display unity do indicate the application of the selective mechanism. None of the participants, for instance, finds all themes significant or important. As for the rejection of alien associations, the answers justify that proposition too but to a more limited degree. The same argument that proves their search for unity also proves their neglect of what is alien to the unity each of them

achieves. However, the participants, even most of those whose answers achieve unity, display the tendency to choose more than one theme, or to choose themes or quotations that belong to other themes in addition to the unified ones.

The next proposal to evaluate is that concerning the role of authorial intentions. As explained earlier, the author of the novel did write it with a particular publicized intention. The participants, unaware of this authorial intention, are asked to answer question 3:6. Answers to the question reveal that authorial intentions play a significantly minor role in the readers' response to the work. Out of the twenty participants who answered this question, ten believe that the author merely intends to show a slice of modern life. Only eight participants think that the author has a specific message to deliver, and two participants believe that the author intends both. However, only two out of those last ten participants believe that the message is to make the reader acquainted with the importance of logistics; those are participants V who states that she "believe[s] in the importance of ... effective logistics more than ever now ...", and participant W.

However, there are traces of other authorial intentions left within the novel which can be proven to have been attained by the readers. The author did leave hints throughout the novel that would lead the readers to suspect certain characters of being behind the sabotage. Some readers, picking such threads, reflect suspecting those characters in their specific expectations for the ending of the novel. Moreover, as many participants express their trust in Jane's character and in her success, it can also be claimed that the author, by depicting Jane as a more than an ordinary person, does intend his readers to identify with her. Therefore, it can be claimed that while authorial intentions can secure the readers'

responses on some levels, there is no mechanism to assure the achievement of such security.

What can also be claimed to have been justified to a certain degree is the fact that there are traces of identifying with the authorial entity by those participants that referred their own responses to authorial intentions. This justifies Iser's proposition that some readers seek the author in the text and try to recreate her/his experience. Such attempts are evident in the responses of some participants including B and T. This leads to the evaluation of his proposition that there is some sort of a virtual dimension where the text is realized. This dimension exists somewhere between the artistic pole and the aesthetic pole. This is achieved, according to this model, within the limits of the text. Our evaluation of textual authority and the polysemantic nature of texts justify this proposition. However, the limited justification of the authorial intentions weakens the power of this concept.

The best verdict concerning virtual dimension thus is that it is mainly carried within the vicinity of the text, under some readers' unconscious attempts at recreating the author's experience as the true experience. This may be triggered by some readers' psychological dispositions at validating their interpretive accounts via resorting to the author as a figure of authority and identifying with her/him, as Iser suggests, by introjecting her/his experience. However, some readers develop a higher level of response; they develop metacognitive stances that allow them to detach their experiences from that of the author, and sometimes even from that of the text. This is best exemplified in the answers of the three participants who provide totally subjective criteria for judging the novel as a thriller (1:1).

Concerning the issue of horizontal change, the analysis of the two responses of the participants who identified the author's original intention behind writing the novel proves that participant W cannot be guaranteed to have achieved a horizontal change. This is due to the fact that, as a student of the very field under discussion, her realization can be argued to stem out of self-gratification. Participant, V, however, does achieve horizontal change. She is now aware of something which she has been previously unaware of. In contrast, some participants, especially those who do not find a specific message in the work, do not achieve any level of horizontal change. Participant C, for instance, writes, "... I do not sense that this is trying to 'change' the reader in any way". The novel, thus has failed to cause any horizontal change in this reader. The issue of horizontal change thus can be announced possible, depending on the unique subjective entity of the reader.

This result takes the discussion to the issues of the role of literature as a mirror of personal as well as social/cultural dispositions, and the ability of literature to lead the reader to a metacognitive stance concerning her/his individual dispositions as well as the collective dispositions of any groups the reader belongs to. As already mentioned, an overall of ten participants believe that there is a message embedded in the text. Excluding the two participants who choose the importance of logistics as the intended message, the other eight participants can be grouped under a limited number of messages (See table 3:6). Aside from the fact that these messages can all be justified using elements present in the text, all messages reflect an awareness of a certain issue or disposition. This naturally triggers an evaluation in the reader of her/his own personal stance concerning this issue or that disposition, and maybe even of her/his society's or culture's stances as well. This is reflected in some cases such as participant E's announcement: "I think the author may

have been going ... with a specific message, and that the message is about the interconnectedness ... I agree with the message, but I think the world may be going through a period of denial about that right now”.

She identifies what she thinks is the main theme of the novel, assesses it, and provides her own response to it. Moreover, in this case she also provides her diagnosis of the collective human response to the issue at hand. This participant has thus achieved a higher level of response by attaining a metacognitive response. Further examples can also be found in participant H’s response to the gender of the author question (2A:1), she concludes that she “think[s] it is because of personal and cultural background but not textual or linguistic reasons” that she forms her judgment. She bases her decision that the author is a female, on the cultural orientation that women tend to be more expressive of feelings.

Also, in their answers to a question about the reason why the American reaction to Jane’s decision to leave her biggest deal to her assistant and rush to her father’s funeral is on the opposite end of the spectrum from the Chinese one,(2B:2), the three American participants refer the issue to cultural differences. Participant C directly professes that “the reactions being opposite may be an issue of American versus Chinese culture. Work comes before anything else to many Americans, but other cultures do not operate that way”. This is also reflected in the answers provided by participants E and M. With this point, the application/assessment process of the propositions of the inter-subjective model ends, and it moves on now to the propositions of the social model.

## ii. The Social Model

The most important proposition of the social model advances the idea that texts do not produce interpretations; rather interpretive acts or strategies produce texts. These interpretive acts or strategies do not come from the reader, but from the interpretive community the reader belongs to. For our assessment we will tackle this issue from two perspectives, the cultural perspective and the institutional perspective. Concerning the cultural perspective, the answers of the participants to four questions will be analyzed: 2A:1, 2A:2, 2B:2, and 3:3. The first two questions assess the influence of the social/cultural context on the readers' response. The first question is the one concerning the gender of the author, (2A:1). As indicated before, most answers resort to cultural oriented gender roles, or to the culturally/institutionally dictated female linguistic style versus male linguistic style dichotomy as the criterion for their decisions (see above pages 63 and 64).

As for question 2B:2, again, most answers display cultural oriented dispositions. Concerning the item of personal choice, thirteen answers reveal culturally influenced choices though this influence sometimes seems to be unconscious. However, some participants prove to have metacognitive awareness about their choices' cultural orientation, and some even show a tendency to resist collective dispositions. The answers indicate that out of the eighteen participants hailing from Egypt, an eastern culture that supposedly values family ties, fourteen participants do make a personal choice between the two reactions, twelve of whom choose to side with the Chinese reaction. Concerning the part about the reason behind the opposition of the two reactions, seven participants out of those fourteen participants display an awareness of the cultural orientation being

the main cause of opposition in the reactions. As for the three Americans, interestingly their reactions either side with the Chinese or remain objectively in the middle. This may be due to their contact with the Egyptian culture. However, as indicated before, all three display a metacognitive awareness of the root of the opposition between the two reactions being buried in cultural orientations.

The other point concerning this question is that three answers reveal that there may be a slight tendency towards the generalization of the issue, a stereotypical view is projected: a tendency to label the Chinese, or the East at large, as a collective entity that respects familial relationships, while the Americans, or the West at large as a collective entity, are quite professional people who do not value family relationships. This tendency we come across in the answers provided by participant L who writes commenting on the Chinese reaction, “I like the Chinese attitude. However, it can be expected from them as in their culture, such death events and funerals are considered grand. The Asian culture also values family bonds and relationships”. Commenting on the American reaction, she writes, “[h]owever, the opposite is viewed in the U.S. ... which belongs ... to a different culture; a materialistic world that focuses more on money and work way more than any spiritual value”. The same essence is reflected in the responses of participants T and W. Five other participants take the stance even further by providing judgmental responses. This stands in opposition to the answers of participants I and J, both of whom analyze the issue from a distance, and from different institutional perspectives, without being judgmental.

While the metacognitive stances in addition to the resisting responses of the American participants to question 2B:2 provide evidences of the ability of metacognitive

awareness to allow for objective stances of evaluation, these generalized, judgmental stances prove the corollary of this proposition. That is; the lack of metacognitive stances may lead to stereotypical, manipulated, prejudiced, or inaccurate responses to the perception the reader holds of her/his own culture, or that of “the other’s” culture.

One interesting feature that reveals itself in the analysis of all these responses is that seven participants picked the word “dutiful” from the quoted Chinese reaction and commented on it without being asked to. Five participants agreed with the word and praised Jane for being a “dutiful” daughter, and two participants objected to the word despite having no issues with the Chinese reaction itself. The interesting point is that the first five are Egyptians, while the other two are Americans. If this is to be taken as an evidence of anything at all, it is a further proof of the collective social/cultural influence on the readers’ responses to the same text.

Based on the analysis of the answers discussed so far, it can be claimed that social/cultural orientations do contribute a major portion to responsive attitudes. The third question: 2A:2, puts this theoretical proposition provided by the participants in their answers to the two previous questions in practice. The participants are asked to provide their own interpretation of an action carried out by the protagonist. Again, eleven answers reflect a considerable amount of culturally influenced responses. Respondent B, for instance, writes, “... her morals and ethics prevent her from having a relation with a married man”. Likewise respondent H writes: “I felt that she is a kind of person that respects traditions”. In such answers, words such as noble, moral, ethics, traditions, and virtuous reoccur. The other recurrent characteristic of all such responses is that they all

feature in Egyptian answers to the question, thus featuring as a collective cultural disposition towards the issue; one which informs their response to the action.

As for question 3:3, six answers further prove the presence of the cultural metacognitive abilities of some participants. Participant C, for example, writes that his “biggest response” to the work is to the section which exhibits the different reactions of the Chinese and the American delegates to Jane’s departure for her father’s funeral. He admits that he is aware of the origin of this interest being in the fact that “[he] live[s] in a different culture from that of [his] own. [Therefore, he] think[s] about these things all of the time”. Participant L also declares: “I respected her decision to leave everything behind when she hears of her father’s death based on our oriental culture that views death in utter respect”.

The discussion now moves to the institutional account. The beginning is with the Marxist/leftist institution. There are three cases in particular that provide Marxist/leftist accounts: participants B, Q and T. What is most significant in the answers of these three participants is that they *all* tend to choose the same elements to comment on. They all choose the change of town quotation and theme and comment on them using the same ideological rationale; that capitalist consumerism is adversely affecting the majority for the sake of the minority; small business owners, employees, and families are suffering in their competition with the capitalist pervasive culture. In addition to that, they all choose one or more of those down-trodden characters to identify with or as an interesting character. Participant B, for instance, who identifies himself as a “leftist” in his answer to question 3:3, chooses the quotation about the change of town as the one most significant to him. He writes:

I think the author should have spread more space for talking about the differences taking place in the country. However ... the change was not only in the places, the satellite dishes or even the business markets, it was even in the people themselves, although the author was more interested in this difference through the business world, showing us the Mega markets and their effects on the small businesses.

(2B:3)

In the following part, he provides evidences and examples from the novel to prove his points, as well as other elements related to his horizon of experience:

... [b]ut we were [shown] as well some of the human difference [that] took place, especially through Mr. Skoggs' story. We can see how the small business gave [a] warm[er,] friendl[ier] and [more] touching service than the megamarkets. (This theme is near to that of the movie "You've Got Mail" and [in] both – the movie and our novel – the new globalizing nature of marketing will win and we have to accommodate to it). These changes are very evident in those parts: Page 40 (The neighborhood the house was in ... death sentence), Most of the talk with Mr. Skoggs, ... , it reflects a lot of difference[s] between old life in the country and what is happening now. (2B:3)

Participant B reflects on the issues of capitalization, globalization, mega businesses taking over small ones, and the loss of the human personal touch as a symptom of the epoch. In addition to that, he chooses the professionally overwhelmed Wade Crane and the victimized Mr. Skoggs as the interesting characters in the novel (3:5). He also metacognitively admits: "being a leftist, affected my indifference towards the big

business issues, I wasn't so much affected by their failure; I was more touched by Mr. Skoggs character" (3:3). This indifference towards what features as a major theme of the novel, is further emphasized when he announces his expectation for the ending of the novel starting by declaring that "[whether] Jane succeeded or failed, I guess she will stick to her family ..." (3:8). These same issues, except for the lack of interest in Jane's success, were more or less expressed by participants Q and T. The Marxist readers thus have provided institutionalized comments on the novel; one that bears shared sets of terminology, themes of interest, and concern for the same sort of characters. The three participants also reflect a metacognitive awareness of their institutional ideological dispositions in their answers to question 3:3.

Moving on to the feminist institution, the answers of participants I, N, Q, and T provide the most feminist accounts among the answers provided. All four of these participants believe that the author is a female. Their answers are all concerned with the characterization of Jane. Participant Q believes that the author is a female, something that is mainly reflected in the author's "redundant use of the word 'other' in the prologue" (2A:1). This word is "... mentioned when the protagonist is thinking ... to herself about the 'qualified others' (p.4), for whom she should make way, by disappearing from the scene, which suggests alienation". According to her, these are symptoms of the effects of traditional chauvinistic attitudes towards women which are usually reflected in women's failure to trust their abilities, a feeling that the author displays linguistically as well as on the action level.

As for Participant T, she thinks that the author is a female because the author intends the reader to sympathize with Jane "through describing the hardships she has been through".

Moreover, the author intends the reader to “think highly of her”, this is achieved “through portraying her as a strong, brave, civilized, and self-sacrificing ... as opposed to Chevy who is inferior to her – hence ‘her helper’ ... whose language is full of cursing ... and who seems to be willing to cheat on his wife” (2A:1). This comparison also features in participant N’s answer. The answer is quite unique given by a male teenager. The amateurish feminist flavor in his account is interesting and quite evident. Also his tendency to identify himself with strong female characters like Jane and Aunt Lou, and their relationship is expressed openly in his answers.

In general, the four feminist participants display a tendency to consider the author a female based on a shared belief that the strength and independence of the protagonist, as well as her plights and emotional traumas, all suggest an author more in touch with the female plights and feelings. Moreover, most of these participants reflect on the same characters, especially Jane and Aunt Lou, the same features of feminist heroines. Interestingly, despite the vast area of shared ideology between the four participants, the author is not a female. However, it is clear that as readers, their answers to the chosen questions, and elsewhere, reflect that certain elements do stand out for those in search of a conventional feminist reading of a literary work.

Other institutional responses include participant M, the lawyer, whose answers were commented on earlier and participant W, a student of logistics, who identifies the author’s real message quite easily. On the professional level, the novel proves beneficial as she integrates it easily into her life and future expectations of herself. She identifies herself with Jane justifying: “because I usually have this doubt of excelling at logistics since it’s a male dominated industry”, and explains that “... looking at ... how she [Jane]

handled it and went through the toughest times” influences her (3:1). Moreover, in her choice of the most important word/phrase, etc. she writes: “[a]s an upcoming logistician, it was the ‘[n]ever waste transportation space. Logistics 101’ because it has a connection with my study ... it worked as [the] ... ‘first law in the book’” (2A:3).

The second social proposition to be assessed is about the notion of competence. It can be claimed that the answers of those participants who received professional training in the literary institution, as an example, reflect more metacognitive awareness about their processing of the text, and of the literary criticism institutions they represent. Their accounts are more detailed such as Participant I’s expanding account of the most important word in the prologue, taking her to the most important sentence, then to the most important scene. This is also reflected in such accounts as those of participants Q, L, and T. Those without any literary training mostly provide more general responses. However, some of those participants, such as C and E, also provide consistent detailed accounts. One more thing that can be maintained here is that participant S, who happens to have the lowest linguistic level, fails to answer most of the questions, or to offer the least acceptable amount of data that can help conjure an overall perception of her experience of the text. This proposition thus proves considerably justified by the participants.

What is left then is the proposition that the criterion for the judgment of an interpretation is its acceptability. This can be proven by the fact that those who share the same institution or culture have mostly come to the same conclusions, picked the same themes, identified with the same characters. If we add this to the proposition that a text yields different interpretations, the criterion then is proven on both its levels. The rest of

the propositions offered by the social model have already been assessed in the previous model as they occupy an area of shared grounds between the two models. These include the propositions that a text yields various meanings, that it is potentially bigger than any of its realizations, and that different genres are different sets of conventional expectations. The application/assessment process now moves on to the propositions of the psychological/subjective model.

### **iii. The Psychological Model**

The evaluation of this model will start with David Bleich's first two propositions; that intellectual judgments have their roots in subjective emotional responses. Therefore, they are subjective though covered in fake masks of objectivity and intellectualism. Studying the answers of those participants who provide institutional oriented accounts of the novel again in search of personal or subjective roots for their objectively masked intellectual proposals can help evaluate this proposition. Answers to various questions tackled before will be analyzed again. Some answers to some other questions such as 2B:1, 3:1, 3:2, 3:3, 3:4, and 3:5 will also be analyzed.

The answers yield some proofs of a link between the offered intellectual accounts and the subjective dispositions of those participants. Participant B, who provides a profound Marxist account for example, states in his response to question 3:3: “[b]eing a leftist, affected my indifference towards the big business issues ...”. He justifies his indifference by his ideology. This he reinforces later in response to questions 3:1 and 3:5 by identifying himself with Aunt Lou whom he describes as “[t]he one living alone, not interested in business, just caring for the family affairs. ... Maybe we have things in

common like keeping herself away from business”. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, he announces his indifference to Jane’s success or failure in her mega-business struggles, what is important to him is that she won’t leave her family again and “return to her old life” (3:8).

Despite the fact that his account can easily be categorized as leftist, studying his answers closely reveals the recurrent themes of unconscious worry over loneliness, preoccupation with familial relationships, and fear of failure to express his feelings to his beloved ones. He analyzes Jane’s feelings toward Chevy as maybe stemming from her loneliness and her desire to “get a life” (2A:2). He identifies with Jane’s relationship with her father, both of whom he does not identify with professionally, and states: “I have no similar relation in my life, except that I have a continuous fear not to express my feelings well to my beloved, maybe I thought about the late discovery of feelings by Jane” (3:2). Moreover, in spite of his extensive leftist account, he identifies the main message of the novel as “concerning the effect of modern life on the familial relations, the author through the novel delivers us a message about the importance of having good familial relations, helping them ...” (3:6). He also identifies with the Chinese reaction to Jane’s departure which is a controversy, he believes, the author intended to reveal “the difference between the inhuman business atmosphere Jane working in, and another *normal* reaction” (2B:2; emphasis mine).

It won’t be far off, therefore, to claim that participant B’s Marxist account which announces its antagonistic disposition to the life of business and capitalism may have its origin in his unconscious hatred of the adverse effects of the business life on the more human relationships. His only concern for Jane is that she does not go back to her old

life, a life of loneliness and deprivation of human emotions. He finds Mr. Skoggs humanity amiable while he announces his indifference towards Royal who devastated his family life (3:4 and 3:5). The same proposition can also be argued to apply to participant N's feminist account, in which strong identification patterns with strong female figures, and with motherly relationships can be traced back to specific personal relatives and relationships (3:1, 3:2, 3:4, and 3:5).

The outcome that can be claimed after this analysis of such answers is that they can yield themselves to Bleich's account easily. However, analyzing participant T's Marxist account is important as it reveals a new dimension to the proposal, one that can cause a substantial modification to the proposition. In response to question 3:1, she identifies herself with Jack Dunn. She justifies this identification on the basis that:

[t]here are a lot of similarities between my character and his and between his suffering and mine. Both of us are so dedicated to work and such full-time hard workers with lots of responsibilities and suffering. Though he is just an assistant, he suffers more and has more responsibilities than his senior at work. He is also a man of action, as far as work is concerned, which is very much true of me. I also have to admit that I am often intolerant of my subordinates making mistakes at work as him, yet I would rather not go as far as "cut[ting] a guy loose" and "not car[ing] what the union says."

She identifies herself with a character that embodies her suffering and sense of injustice. In addition to that, there seems to be a pattern for the sort of characters participant T identifies herself with. She writes in her answer to 3:3, commenting on the

psychological aspects that affected her response, “[t]his is also true of the way I sympathize with the plight of Steve, Phil Leavitt, and Wade Crain at work”. Her identification extends to other characters that represent the same category of people. More interestingly, despite the fact that she defines herself as a feminist as well, she identifies herself with quite a number of male figures; this is due to the fact that these figures happens to match her unconscious concerns.

So far, participant T’s answers also seem to justify Bleich’s proposition. However, as exemplified in the quotations, she detaches herself from the last of Dunn’s traits; that he can resort to “cutting a guy loose”, also she won’t go as far as neglecting what the union would say despite the fact that Dunn’s threats and actions are justified professionally. She adds commenting on his character: “I admire how he takes work seriously, but may be against oppression with the excuse of defending materialism and capitalism”. This provides us with the alternative proposition that the relationship between the subjective/affective response and the intellectual one may also be applicable in the opposite direction. Participant T’s complete subjective identification with Jack Dunn can be argued to have been hindered by her being a leftist, something that prevents her from sympathizing with his extensive efforts to save a capitalist, materialistic empire, or his strategy against working hands. Her approach to the whole identification issue may have been either consciously or unconsciously affected by her ideological tendencies. The same applies to the answers of participants M and W. The point here is that the argument Bleich provides can be argued to work both ways; something that undermines the subjective model or at least prevents it from being the one and only model.

Another important observation, which has been mentioned earlier but must be mentioned again here due to its relevance, is that none of the answers, despite the availability of personal analogizing and associations as will be examined shortly, seems to have gone out of the text's potentiality to support it. This poses another question about the direction in which the process moves. If the origin is the subjective input, emotional or otherwise, how come none of the answers, for instance, offers a misinterpretation, or suggests that the whole novel is about the Gulf War and its repercussions on the human level, or on the Arabian as well as the international economic welfare?

In addition to that, despite the fact that some of the answers do reveal the presence of subjective perceptive, affective, and associative responses, this is accomplished to widely varying degrees. Some answers are open about the personal aspects of the participants' responses such as the answers of participants H who identifies with Jane whom she finds "to a great extent similar to [her] in a lot of aspects" (3:1). Out of these aspects she chooses two to mention; Jane's plight in being torn between her parents, and her fear of relationships with the opposite sex. She writes: "Jane's relation with both her mother and father reminded me of myself, being torn to satisfy both of them. She, most of the time, has conflicting feelings towards her relationship with her father and struggling to conquer her fears of establishing new relationships with other men".

She qualifies this subjective declaration by generalizing the issue and including even her reader in the generalized version of her issue. She states: "[m]ost of us have family issues, so with each family issue scene I feel closer to the characters and touched by their feelings and problems" (2B:3). She is thus objectifying the subjective nature of her response. However, this subjective nature is further emphasized when she chooses the

personal aspect as the element that affected her most (3:3); she admits: “[w]hen I usually read any piece of art I compare every scene and quote to real events of my life. I always try to separate them but I found out that I only enjoy reading by doing so”. The same justification is also given by participant N. Both only identify with what matches their identity themes. Any attempts at modifying this tendency, fails and affects their experience of the literary text. Participant T also exhibits the same tendency.

Other answers are less open such as those provided by participant B, which have been examined earlier, and participant G, who admits to having “family issues” (2B:3). He does not discuss these issues explicitly. However, he comments on every theme related to the importance of preserving family ties and of the importance of not destroying a family. He offers recurrent objectified versions of picking those particular themes as ones of personal importance and emotional value to him. In contrast, there are also answers which are given quite an objective air such as the answers of participants F and K. In the latter’s answers, except for one or two sentences, she offers a mainly depersonalized analysis of each character, emphasizing the fact that she identifies with Jane. However, she follows this announcement by the declaration that “[this identification is] not because she bears any resemblance to me, or to someone I know” (3:1). Also, she refrains from giving her own personal judgment on the opposite reactions to Jane’s departure, providing the rationale behind each disposition (2B:2). This same attitude is more or less exemplified in Participant F’s account.

The point is that apart from the answers that are open about their subjective associations, and the ones that demonstrate clear, even if unconscious, traces of subjective dispositions, the absence of a mechanism to trace every objective judgment back to a

personal subjective origin leaves the whole proposition within the vicinity of being a possible mechanism. Nothing ensures its taking place in each and every account, but left over traces prove that it sometimes does take place. Moreover, again the fact that all answers come from within the limits of the text suggests that in case that mechanism is applicable, there is a certain force that halts it from running outside the territory of the text. This, in turn, proves Bleich's proposition of rank subjectivism unjustified by real readers in this application.

The final verdict against the first two propositions of Bleich thus is that there is indeed some level of personal/subjective input into the readers' responses. However, this mainly works within the vicinity of textual borders. Also, the degree of this input is subjectively variable. On a different level, the direction in which the procession of the response moves between the emotional or affective and the intellectual levels, is, in the least, not fixed. As a matter of fact, whether there is a rule in the first place to govern this process or not, is left uncertain. The issue seems to be left within the subjective vicinity of each reader as a unique entity. Both directions, however, are justified by real-readers as possible.

This takes the discussion to the third proposition; deciding on literary importance. Bleich suggests that one never talks about the story only, but about the story as something of personal importance or emotional value. Here comes the importance of ignoring certain elements in the story, and the bigger importance of ignoring the fact that some elements are being ignored, maybe even lying about that, or adding alien elements to the final intellectual response to cover up for the original subjective nature of the response. This is best exemplified in the paradoxes found in some accounts, such as participant Q's, which, despite its heated feminist/Marxist nature, displays a sneaking admiration for

the unfaithful/capitalist father. She finds that Royal Akers “could be the last standing capitalist who reached out to everyone who needed him” (3:4).

Royal, before his assassination, has arguably been neglectful of his eldest son, unfaithful to his first wife, helped those whom he knew could be of benefit to him and to his empire. These are traits that cannot be identified with by a feminist/Marxist respondent. However, this paradox in participant Q’s account is due to the fact that, as will be studied in Holland’s section, she can be the only participant exemplifying a complete case of a psychoanalytic Electra complex. She has thus introduced an alien element to her own response in order to cover up for her original subjective response. The same argument can be applied to other participants such as Participant T who identifies herself with quite a number of male figures despite her feminist orientation, and B’s concern for Jane’s personal life despite her efforts in saving a capitalistic empire that was adversely affecting the personal lives of many others. Assessment of this proposition thus can yield the same result as that of the two previous propositions. It is a possible mechanism. However, in the face of the similar institutionally based congregations of most of the participants that display this trait, and the firmly objectified responses of some others, and in the absence of a mechanism to return every subjective hint or paradox to a subjective origin, this proposition, and its degree, remain, in case of taking place, subjectively variable from one reader to another.

In the face of such similar interpretations, readers responding to the same elements in similar responses, such as the collective unified descriptions of some characters in the novel reflected in answers to questions 2B:1, 3:1, 3:2, 3:4, and 3:5, and the presence of a range of established interpretations for a certain work, Bleich proposes his fourth

proposition; that of interpretation as a subjectively based communal act. He announces that there is some sort of a collective subjective entity for each community, similar to that of individuals. The validation and the acceptability of an interpretation, which is vital for the reader, within that collective entity is based on the persuasive capacity of the interpreter, and on the others' measure of response to it; their willingness to accept it and integrate it as part of their responses. The congregations found in the institutionalized responses, and in the responses provided by the respondents who share the same cultural background, justify that proposition. Also participant R, who refrains from providing any expectations, or evaluating any of the characters may support the proposition; the idea that your responses could be rejected or proven wrong triggers frustration, something that she avoids by claiming that forming expectations ruins the experience of the work!

One more thing that Bleich announces at this point is the role of the author. He announces that there are no objective truths and that what is relevant is the relationship between the reader and her/his emotions, something that the author manipulates. The reader, in return, may respond to the author as a figure of authority. However, in the light of the application of his propositions so far, both claims are proven to be limited not only by/within his proposed collective truth values, but as somehow limited by/within the authority of the text. This cannot be within the power of the author alone. The author cannot be imagined to have intentionally and consciously exhausted all the potentiality of meaning borne in the text; as the text is always "larger than any of its realizations", even those intended by its author. Pollock has a certain message; the readers explore various other possibilities, some shared more than the others, but do not go beyond textual

borders. However, as proven earlier, some readers identify what they claim as the author's original experience to validate their answers (see above page 75).

The discussion now reaches Holland. The first announcement about this evaluation is that it is based on the analysis of the analysis provided by the participants; since none of them provide any open, properly based psychoanalysis account. The first proposition that is evaluated is his concept of identity theme. This concept does leave its traces throughout most of the assessments of the previous models and of Bleich's proposals. Cases that demonstrate consistent identity theme include participants B, G, H, K, R, Q, and T, all of whom have been tackled before.

Concerning Holland's final, four-phased model, the novel provides several elements on which a fantasy can be built, the most obvious of which are the father/daughter relationship. Only six participants out of all those that find the father/daughter relationship the main theme according to their answers to questions 2B:1, 2B:3, and 3:7 identify with the relationship in their answers to question 3:2. Half of those six participants are males and none of their responses provide any indicators of introjecting/ recreating a fantasy, or applying any defense mechanisms. As for the female participants who identify with this relationship, participant Q provides the most elaborate response. Two things distinguish Q's response; the use of some sentences which may indicate the introjection of a fantasy/the application of a defense mechanism, and the interesting incident that this whole process happens to be identical not only with Bleich's account of his response to Lawrence's "The Rocking Horse", but also with the psychoanalytic account of Jane, the novel's protagonist.

The first element that suggests the introjection of a fantasy and the application of defense mechanisms is the selection of a set of sentences that suggests something in Jane's past which she holds against her father and using responsive statements that suggest identification with the case on the part of the participant. Among these sentences is: "[s]he seems to be haunted by a painful past that she doesn't want to forget". Also, "the phrase 'angry for a thousand time at her father' condemns the father for something that he must have committed against the protagonist, which, ... is referred to in the following paragraph, 'the horrendous fight with her mother over that woman' ... Jane was not - ever- going to be the 'other woman' and risk tearing some other family apart". This explains Jane's inability to have a proper relationship with a man, especially if the man is married, something that reminds her of her father. This is highlighted in participant Q's account when she describes this past as "a past that shaped her current being and which she is trying hard to overcome by finding something useful to do in her life, and by trying not to be judgmental towards men who remind her of her (unfaithful) father".

There are also some sentences that suggest the use of a defense mechanism. When Jane tries to justify her refusal to become involved with Chevy, she resorts to morals and ethics, a strategy that displays her censor inhibitions in the form of a defense mechanism by which she explains her inhibited desires according to the acceptable, even praised, social and moral constitutions. She has raised the issue to her consciousness within an acceptable intellectual context. This is resounded in participant Q's responses when she admits: "I could relate the most to Jane, the protagonist, whose complex relationship with her father reflects many social relationships we live every day" (3:1). She also identifies

with “the complex feelings” of the protagonist towards “her father and mother” (3:3). She has thus resorted to the same defense mechanism applied by Jane.

Jane seems to have been locked between her phallic and latent phases of psychosexual development. The death of the father puts her unconsciousness in a more explicit display. Jane is now blaming herself for the loss of her father for good, she now feels “desolate”. This brings about her antagonizing relationship with her mother to the light. She blames her for being the barrier between herself and her father, this is especially apparent after Anne reveals the returned letters. At this point, Jane expresses her anger towards her mother. Participant Q comments on this turn of events by recalling, “[t]heir 2<sup>nd</sup> phone call [Jane and her mother] [which] ended in ‘serrated breath. The hurt, the anger, over what her mother had done all those years ago ...’ ... accordingly, we come to realize how far Jane has always been stranded between the complex feelings she feels inside towards her father and the apathy she shows on the outside” (2A:2).

Also like Jane, She condemns Joycelyn, describing her as “perfect for a cold woman, who fails to understand her husband ... Although at first she seems victimized, her apathy towards Royal’s funeral reflects how materialistic and self-wrapped she is” (3:4). She also condemns her being the barrier between Jane and Royal when she writes that “because of her personal conflicts with Royal she prevents Jane from knowing the truth about her father who never ceased to care about her. She distorted his figure before Jane, influencing her to cut contact not only with him but the entire family ... She is the epitome of materialism in a consumer society” (3:4). The last sentence again bestows an ideological mask on the real reason behind the condemnation of the mother.

Along the journey, especially after Jane's motherly conversation with Aunt Lou, Jane comes to her much belated maturity. For the first time in the novel she accepts Royal as "daddy", she comes to terms with his marriage to Anne, accepts Anne herself, and returns to her home. Moreover, towards the end, she starts a relationship with Wade Crane. Participant Q identifies Royal's death and the subsequent conversation with Aunt Lou as the beginning of the second part of the novel (2A:2). This is quite significant; she is tracing the novel, not on the basis of the sabotage issue, but on the development of Jane's character, and her relationship with Royal.

Applying this account to Holland's four phases or principles confirms some points and revokes others. Beginning with the first principle, we find that participant Q responds positively to the characters and themes that prove to match her identity theme such as Jane as a character and her success, and responds with anxiety to the elements that triggered an alarm of danger for her. Such elements include the relationship between Jane and her father, and the presence of the mother as the barrier. These elements require her to move her defense mechanisms against them. Here comes the second principle in which the defense mechanisms must be matched. Participant Q introjects the textual elements that match her defense mechanisms to ward off her anxiety. Like Jane, she resorts to objectifying the issue as a social problem that tackles the intellectual contexts of morality and ethics. Form as defense also comes in display here as she ignores the author's division of the novel into a prologue, part one, and nine days during which Jane saves her father's empire, and divides it into two parts. The first part constructs the fantasy while the second includes the defense mechanisms and the culmination processes.

Now comes the third principle in which fantasies project fantasies. Participant Q introjects the material and defense mechanisms that match her identity theme, and recreates a fantasy. The flow now pushes the process towards the upper level of the experience; the consciousness. However, to pass the censor, Participant Q resorts to the last principle in which the character transforms the experience characteristically. She makes sense of the work by providing an interpretation based on the intellectual institutions of Marxism and feminism both of which she belongs to. However, this does not pass before she adds something alien to her subjective response to hide its original nature.

So far the account seems to support Holland's proposition. However, there are a few points at which this evaluation must stop. First, the discussion proves that has this been indeed the process that took place within this reader, then the phases themselves are applicable, but not the totally subjective nature of the experience. Participant Q seems to have introjected the most apparent fantasy in the text, if not the oldest in the book of fantasies, and she even applied the very same defense mechanisms applied by the protagonist. Basically, then, the main revision Holland carried out of his first model, in which he withdrew the authority of being the container of the core fantasy and defense from the text, is unjustified by the real reader. The account provided by participant Q rather suggests that the first model is truer to the virtual experience than the revised one.

This conclusion ends the application/assessment process. In the following chapter the results and the findings of this process will be presented. The chapter will also draw on these results and findings to try and find a synthesized model that integrates the validated propositions of the three models.