

女店員形象：《卡薩瑪斯瑪公主》中的身體、商品與百貨公司

葉雅茹

真理大學英美語文學系 助理教授

摘 要

十九世紀後半葉，鐵路運輸業、工廠機械生產等種種因素促進了倫敦商品零售業的發達，同時販賣多樣商品的百貨公司遂成為新興的購物場所。而雇用眾多女店員的百貨公司，以光線與玻璃櫥窗等方式營造夢幻式的空間特質，將商品化為炫目的視覺景觀，意圖刺激並挑起消費者的購買慾望。在此前題之下，女店員的首要任務則是以自己的身體，展示商品，促進商品的交易買賣。因此作為商品與消費者的中介，意識型態上女店員的身體似乎相等於百貨公司中的某個商品客體，因此女店員的社會地位往往趨向膚淺與卑賤。然而作為商品文化的一線偵察員，女店員的身體經驗並不僅止於扮演一個屈服於資本主義邏輯的商品，其仍擁有身體的獨特能動性。本文試圖探討《卡薩瑪斯瑪公主》中的女店員米莉森，如何挪用身體展示商品的工作經驗，與百貨公司的空間特質相互動，培養出對商品與消費者的敏銳視界。

關鍵詞：女店員、身體、商品、百貨公司、詹姆斯

Figuring the Shopgirl: Body, Commodity, and the Department Store in *The Princess Casamassima*

Ya-Ju Yeh

**Assistant Professor, Department of English
Aletheia University**

Abstract

With the advent of urbanization, railways, and factory production, significant changes occurred in the retail trades, the department store emerged as a new place of business. The ‘shopgirl,’ a pivotal associate in the store, has a task to mediate the process of selling and buying in the way of commodity-display. The shopgirl’s display of the commodity beckoned an ambiguous identity since she seemed to side with the commodity much more than with the consumer. The most significant place where the process of selling and buying took place is the department store. It created a phantasmagoric effect stimulating perceptions and senses of customers through various commodities. The spatiality of the department store imparted a suspicion of the shopgirl as a displayed commodity bound to the conditions of capitalist production, thus making the shopgirl’s body seemingly passive and objective. Yet a shopgirl’s experience of commodity culture is more than that. Millicent Henning in *The Princess Casamassima*, a typical late Victorian shopgirl, was eager to see and to know people in the crowd as well as to become familiar with a spectrum of commodities. This paper will explore three aspects: how a parallel of the shopgirl and commodity is made, how the spatiality of the department store situates the shopgirl, and how the shopgirl takes advantage of her working experiences to develop her special visions.

Keywords: shopgirl, body, commodity, department store, Henry James