



UNIVERSIDAD DE JAÉN
Facultad de Humanidades y Ciencias de la Educación

Trabajo Fin de Grado

A Textual Analysis of Jim Harrison's *Legends of the Fall*

Alumno: Vanessa Colomo Cañada

Tutor: Dra. M^a de la Cinta Zunino Garrido
Dpto: Filología Inglesa

Julio, 2016

CONTENTS:

Abstract and key words/ Resumen y palabras claves.....	3-4
1. Jim Harrison’s Biography.....	6-8
1.1. A sense of freedom: Montana.....	8-11
2. Textual Analysis of <i>Legends of the Fall</i>.....	11-12
2.1. Plot.....	12-13
2.2. Characters.....	13-14
2.3. Setting.....	14-17
2.4. Style and main topics	17-27
2.5. Language.....	27-29
2.6. Narrative voice.....	29-30
2.7. Time.....	30-32
2.8. Allusions.....	32
2.8.1. Religion.....	33-35
2.8.2. Names of characters.....	35-38
2.8.3. Mythology.....	38-40
2.8.4. Influences of other authors.....	40-43
2.9. Symbolism.....	43
2.9.1. Animals.....	43-49
2.9.2. Numerology.....	50-51
2.9.3. Tristan’s voyage.....	51-52
3. Conclusions.....	53-54
4. Bibliography.....	54-56

Abstract:

This project is aimed at accounting for the textual analysis of *Legends of the Fall* (1979) by Jim Harrison. Before starting with the analysis, we will offer a section dedicated to the personal life of this author with the objective of making his personality known to the Spanish reader. Similarly, it is important to mention that his life was based on the anxiety he felt for freedom. This intimate and personal desire will be present in his literature through *out-of-doors* images such as landscapes, mountains, lakes and, last but not least, animals.

Furthermore, we will deal with aspects such as the plot, characters, style and language as well as the classification of the work within the literary genre. After that, the reasons why *Legends of the Fall* has been called *novella* will be considered. Apart from that, this essay pretends to demonstrate that our story introduces more than one literary subgenre because of the variety of topics belonging to the existentialist novel such as life, fate, and death. It is also worth mentioning that this work follows the pattern of historical fiction novel, among others, due to its historical-cultural context in which the plot is developed.

Finally, the reader will observe a detailed study of the narrative techniques employed by Jim Harrison within this complex literary creation, taking into account the role of narrative voice, the change of time in the narration, and finally, the different literary devices, as in the case of allusions and symbolism.

Key words: textual analysis, , *Legends of the Fall*, Jim Harrison, freedom, *out-of-doors* images, plot, characters, style, language, literary genre, *novella*, existentialist novel, life, fate, death, historical fiction novel, narrative techniques, narrative voice, time, allusions, symbolism.

Resumen:

Este proyecto propone un análisis textual de la novela *Legends of the Fall* (1979) escrita por Jim Harrison. Antes de comenzar dicho análisis, ofreceremos un apartado dedicado a la vida personal del autor con el objetivo de introducir su personalidad al lector español. Asimismo, cabe mencionar que su vida estuvo marcada por su ansia de libertad. Este deseo íntimo y personal será trasladado a su literatura a través de imágenes que evoquen la idea de *out-of-doors* como pueden ser los paisajes, montañas, lagos y, por último pero no menos importante, animales.

Además, trataremos aspectos tales como la sinopsis, los personajes, el estilo y el lenguaje que pueden ser observados en la obra así como la clasificación de ésta dentro del género literario. Más tarde, se expondrán las razones por las cuales *Legends of the Fall* ha sido en muchas ocasiones denominada *novella*. Por otra parte, este ensayo pretende demostrar que nuestra obra muestra una mezcla de subgéneros literarios ya que presenta temas de la novela existencialista como pueden ser la vida, el destino y la muerte. Pero también, sigue el patrón de la novela histórica ficcional, entre otros, debido al contexto histórico-cultural en el que se presenta la trama.

Finalmente, el lector entrará de lleno hacia el estudio minucioso de las técnicas narrativas empleadas por Jim Harrison dentro de la obra, teniendo en cuenta el papel que juega la voz narrativa, los saltos en el tiempo durante la narración, el uso de descripciones y los recursos literarios incluyendo las alusiones y el simbolismo.

Palabras claves: análisis textual, , *Legends of the Fall*, Jim Harrison, libertad, *out-of-doors images*, sinopsis, personajes, estilo, lenguaje, género literario, *novella*, novela existencialista, vida, destino, muerte, novela histórica ficcional, técnicas narrativas, voz narrativa, tiempo, alusiones, simbolismo.

In memory of Jim Harrison

“Death steals everything except our stories.”

— Jim Harrison

1. Jim Harrison's biography:

Surprising as it may be, a lot of external circumstances and factors affected the way in which Jim Harrison would write his poems and novels. This is the reason why it is necessary to offer a wide vision of his life in order to understand his writing and, at the same time, examine this author's mind.

James Thomas Harrison was born in December 1937 in Graylin, Michigan. His father, called Winfred Sprague, was an agronomist who awakened in Harrison the passion for the *out-of-doors*. His mother was Norma Oliva Wahlgre Harrison, who provided him with a comprehensive vision about classics of modern literature: James Joyce (1882-1941), Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961), Walt Whitman, (1819-1892) Herman Melville (1819-1891), William Faulkner (1819-1891), Arthur Rimbaud (1854-1891) and John Dos Passos (1896-1970). We can link these authors with the idea of American Modernism and see the main features between Harrison and them such as the evocation of past times because Modernist writers tend to think that past time was always better than the present. Other characteristics are the alternation of the vital and melancholic tone, the use of mythological references, especially with sensual images; and the appreciation for the European literature.

During his childhood, he spent many years in Michigan but when he was seven years old, he was attacked with a bottle by a girl and, as a consequence of it, he lost the vision of the left eye. In addition to this shocking fact, he was considered by himself the *black sheep* of the family because his brothers became deans at university while Harrison abandoned his studies when he was eighteen years old, following his passion to be poet, and as a result, he decided to travel to New York.



Wild youth

Among his most outstanding skills, it is important to mention that he was a self-taught person; although he refused to attend a workshop on creative writing, he wrote about different genres such as novel, poetry and even cook books. His master pieces were published in *The New Yorker*, *Espire*, *Men's Journal* and *The New York Times Magazine*.

However, tragic problems knocked on Harrison's door when he was twenty-one years old because his father and sister died in a car accident. This fact made him a mentally strong person with profound ideas which will be expressed in his writings. After that, he decided to restart his studies at Michigan University where he graduated and became professor at the State University of New York.

In spite of his career, he did not consider himself professor, so he decided to publish his first poem book *Plain Song* (1965) during his stay at Michigan State University. It was during this stage when he met Linda King, who became his wife. He had two daughters, Jamie Potenberg and Anna Hjortsberg. Our man was a good friend of the actor Jack Nicholson, who introduced him in Hollywood when Nicholson proposed Harrison to adapt the script about *Legends of the Fall*.

Although he was a hidden novelist and poet, he wrote sixteen novels of fiction from which we can underline: *Wolf: A false Memoir* (1971), *A Good Day to Die* (1973), *Legends of the Fall: Revenge*, *The Man who give up his name* and *Legends of the Fall* (1979), *Dalva* (1988) and *The Great Leader* (2011).

Apart from that, Harrison was a great admirer of Antonio Machado, Federico García Lorca, Jorge Guillén and César Vallejo and he had the opportunity to claim that “la

poesía en español dominó el siglo XX”¹. Finally, he not only left with his death a great vacuum in the American continent but also in the mind of many readers who are now venturing to know the horizons of this surreptitious author. He died in March 2016 in Patagonia, a town in Arizona.



Life as experience to write

1.1. A sense of Freedom: Montana.

During centuries, the need of freedom has been a common place for the entire human race. It might be considered as an internal feeling that men possess from their birth to their death. This desire is constantly present in the novel *Legends of the Fall* (1979), in which Jim Harrison shows his fascination with this emotion, made perceptible to the readers of the novel especially by means of his descriptions.

In this sense, he describes with steadiness the different landscapes of Montana using as many details as possible. Harrison’s dexterity immerses readers into the novel with the objective of making them feel as if they were one of his characters. For this reason, our author places the story of *Legends of the Fall* in open spaces such as mountains and lakes:

¹ Aguilar, A. (27 de marzo de 2016). Muere Jim Harrison, el escritor de “Leyendas de Pasión”. *El País*. Recovered from <http://cultura.elpais.com/cultura/2016/03/27/actualidad/1459096040_419392.html>(last access 06/06/16)

By the first light the wind blew hard against the yellowed aspens, the leaves skittering across the high pasture and burying themselves in a draw. When they forded their first river the leaves of the cottonwood stripped by the wind caught in the eddies, pasting themselves against the rocks (...) Even in this valley they could hear the high clean roar of wind against cold rock above the timberline. (1994: 195-196)

Even though freedom is present, Harrison knows perfectly well that the characters, who have been created by him, are trapped like a bird in a cage. There is a contraposition because the protagonists need freedom but the novel in itself is their prison. It is important to mention that the lack of freedom is due to different circumstances such as fatality, destiny, historical facts, deaths and culture but all these concepts will be dealt with later.

Having reached this point, one fundamental question appears: what is freedom? Although it has been a very controversial concept because of its subjective essence, Freedom can be defined as “the right to do or say what you want without anyone stopping you”². This idea refers to the action that people do or the idea that people feel to do something. It is a standard definition because *freedom* requires a more specific definition depending on the different perspectives of some authors.

On the one hand, freedom can be positive factor in the man but also negative because of its power of destruction. It is important to point out that men are free in their mind. This conception is based on a psychological point of view because the inner mind of a person is able to imagine and think internally without any kind of restraint, even if the external world is oppressed by laws and cruelty.

In contrast, Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), the Enlightenment philosopher, declared (2000: 364): “l’ homme est né libre et partout il est dans fers.” In this context, Rousseau criticises that society causes the destruction of individual freedom. It might be the closest definition to Harrison’s idea of freedom because our author makes evident in the book that the social and cruel context in which the characters are involved destroys their life due to the succession of fatal events.

² Definition extracted from Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary
<<http://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/>> (last access 6/06/16)

On the other hand, Harrison conceives *freedom* as *out-of-doors*. His literary personas are placed in an external free scenario, which is Montana, but they are prisoners regarding their feelings and emotions. In addition, he explains in an interview how he feels about the external freedom: “your only alternative as an artist is to create your own habitat for your soul. I figured out that my main obsession is freedom, and if I didn’t have the freedom of close access to the natural world, I wasn’t going to survive” (2002:ix).



Montana: Muse of Jim Harrison

Harrison creates and adapts his own sense of freedom essence through the protagonists’ eyes. At the end of this project, readers will understand that the feelings and attitudes of characters in the novel are a chain that needs to be unchained in order to give the characters that freedom that they cry out for. Nevertheless, Jim Harrison will surprise us because this feeling is desired but never fulfilled by the characters and it leads the novel to a tragic realism.

On many occasions, Jim Harrison has been compared with Ernest Hemingway because of his descriptions of the *out-of-doors* landscapes and activities. Nevertheless, he denied it by saying (2002:16): “Oh, I don’t like those at all. I don’t see any similarities, but maybe that’s unusual”. To a certain extent, Harrison’s comment might be considered a reaction against critics who think that he is the *new* Hemingway. Our author probably wanted to assert that every writer has his own way of writing and is different from the rest. This way of writing reinforces the values of the literary identity. Harrison’s opinion could be understood as an affirmation of writing regarded as an individual work. Furthermore, Terry W. Phipps maintains that “the comparison is just a convenience. The comparison may have grown from his lifestyle, his love of the outdoors, hunting

and fishing, or his past reputation for hard living” (2002:166). In this point, it is important to remark that what critics compare here are mainly the personalities and leisure activities of the two writers rather than their literary style. How many writers can use an open place to narrate their stories? There are many authors who make it. In this case, if both writers are Americans, they tend to place their novels in America. It is true that Harrison assumed that he read Hemingway and other authors, but this fact does not implicate that our author wanted to be like him.

2. Textual Analysis in *Legends of the Fall*:

In what follows, we will offer a textual analysis of the novel where narrative techniques play an essential role. It is important to point out that Harrison’s writing is very complex due to its countless influences that were taken from different Modernist as well as Spanish authors. This section will offer a meticulous study on plot, characters, setting, style, main topics, language, narrative voice, time, allusions and symbolism, in order to make readers, especially those who are not familiarized with his figure, aware of Harrison’s universe,.

To begin with, we will focus on the concept of narrative techniques, a controversial notion because whereas for some author they are only literary devices such as metaphors, allusions, repetitions and so on; for others they refers to the analysis of the plot, characters, style, themes and structure:

Narrative techniques provide deeper meaning for the reader and help the reader use imagination to visualize situations. Narrative literary techniques are also known as literary devices. Before we look too closely at narrative techniques, it’s important to understand that literary elements in narratives include such things as the setting, plot, theme, style or structure, characters, and perspective, or voice of the story, since literary techniques are best understood in the context of one of these elements.³

³ Definition extracted from Online Narrative Techniques in Writing: Definition, Types & examples <<http://study.com/academy/lesson/narrative-techniques-in-writing-definition-types-examples.html>> (last access 08/06/16)

In this quote, the reader can observe that narrative techniques implicate to take into account not only literary devices but also structure, plot, characters, setting, style, language and narrative voice.

According to the structure of the novel, *Legends of the Fall* is written in two hundred seventy six pages in which readers will find three independent short novels: *Revenge*, *The Man Who Gave up His Name* and *Legends of the Fall*. However, it is important to clarify that we will focus only on the final one.

Our story is divided into three chapters: in the first chapter, there is a presentation of the setting and characters. The second one is the development of the plot and the final part offers the dénouement. It is also important to point out that the short novel shows an epilogue in order to clarify what happens after the end of the story. Therefore, it might be considered a sequel in which the author explains how his most important character, Tristan, as we will see below, carries on his live and ends it.

2.1. Plot:

The colonel William Ludlow decides to bring up his three sons in the wild Montana, far away from the city and the influence of the Government. His experiences as Colonel make him reflect on the corruption and the cruelty of the American Government. For this reason, he resolves to live in a place separated from the city and start a life in a ranch.

The story starts when Ludlow's three sons Alfred, Tristan and Samuel decide to enlist in the First World War. After that, the brothers' lives change forever when Samuel is killed by the German soldiers during the war; Tristan blames himself for his brother's death and Alfred hates Tristan and blames him for what happened to Samuel.

When Alfred returns from the war, he carries in a box Samuel's heart, which Tristan had preserved in paraffin after extracting it in the Native American way in order to bury it. Tristan is admitted in a Psychiatric hospital due to the shock that he had experienced in the war. He has a temporary madness because the loss of a brother is very difficult to understand.

Tristan comes back to the ranch and marries his cousin Susannah but he does not love her, he only wants to forget Samuel and have a son who might balance his loss. However, they never had a son because of Susannah's infertility and he travel around the world so as to think about himself and his life. After seven years, Tristan returns

again during the Great Depression and finds his father ill due to an embolism but Ludlow recognizes Tristan and feels happy about his arrival. He informs that Alfred is a representative of the American Government and marries Susannah. Then, Tristan observes that Isabel II, the girl of the ranch, has become a beautiful woman and they fall in love. They decide to marry but Alfred and Susannah do not attend the wedding because of a travel. Tristan and Isabel II have two sons, Samuel and Isabel III, who meet their uncles Alfred and Susannah in a dinner in the ranch but the relationship between these brothers is so distant.

Later on, Tristan earns money by smuggling liquor, which is forbidden in American by the Volstead Act and this activity will eventually bring tragedy to Tristan's life because Isabel II will be killed by the police, after being informed that Tristan is selling Canadian whisky. When Tristan sees his dead wife in the car, the anxiety of revenge seizes him and, as a consequence, one of the officers dies as a result of Tristan's anger or fury.

Finally, Susannah commits suicide because she is hopelessly in love with Tristan and cannot bear the fact that he loves another woman. Alfred starts to hate Tristan more and more because he considers that he has snatched Susannah. The story ends when two Irish polices arrive to the ranch in order to kill Tristan because he had killed the brothers of one of the officers, but Ludlow suddenly appears from behind the house and shoots them.

2.2. Characters:

As far as characters are concerned, it is important to note that they play a fundamental role within this complex novel, since they all are active agents that develop the action, awakening in readers a limitless number of feelings or even making them feel sympathy, or even pity, as we will see below. Following this line, we can make reference to William Ludlow, Tristan, Samuel, One Stab, Alfred, Susannah, Isabel I, Isabel II, Pet and Decker:

First of all, William Ludlow is the father of Alfred, Tristan and Samuel and was Colonel but he decided to retire from the Government because he considers that it is a corrupt system for Americans. His personality is very strong because he has seen a lot of cruelty

in the world. For him, the favourite son is Tristan since both of them are very similar in behaviour and thoughts.

Secondly, Tristan is the most important but difficult character to understand due to his feelings and emotions. He blames himself for Samuel's death (the youngest and most innocent of the brothers), thinking that he could have saved him from the poison gas that Germans employ to blind their enemies, and then, kill them. Although Tristan lives among natives, he considers himself one of them, representing wilderness and freedom. After introducing Tristan, it is necessary to mention One Stab since he lives with Tristan in Montana as a free man and is a relevant character within the story because he is a Native American visionary, in other words; he knows what will happen in Ludlow's life.

On the other hand and contrary to Tristan, Alfred can be considered the antagonist because of the conflict derives from the loving triangle between the two brothers and Susannah. Being the oldest well-educated brother, he is calm but feels envy for Tristan, who is impulsive, wild and instinctive. In addition, Alfred is a clear representation of the American Government.

Susannah Fincannon-Ludlow, meanwhile, is a very romantic and sensitive woman that will have mental problems because of Tristan's indifference. She is the cousin of Ludlow family and a well-educated woman, likewise Isabel I (Tristan's mother), who loves Tristan because he is very different from the rest, in other words; he is a wild and free man instead of an educated and calm one like Alfred. Nevertheless, her life is based on a rich world within an upper class society because of Alfred's status. Her emotional feelings to Tristan are so profound that she commits suicide.

Finally, Isabel II, the mestizo woman of the ranch and the daughter of Pet and Decker, with whom Tristan decides to marry and have two children, Samuel and Isabel III, but a tragic accident makes Tristan suffer again: a man kills his wife.

2.3. Setting:

As we have mentioned before, Harrison placed the novel in the American Continent, specifically, in Montana. This atmosphere is used by the writer not only because of the nostalgia of his childhood but because he feels a *sense of Nationalism or Identity*.

What is nationalism? This concept has caused many problems due to the presence of different points of views. Smith (2010:13) makes reference to Core who maintains that

“nationalism is an ideology that places the nation at the centre of its concerns and seeks to promote its well-being.” Our author placed the novel in America because he needed answer to the different historical events were taking place, such as the Great Depression (1929-1930), the First World War (1914-1918) and Volstead Act (1920) .

Furthermore, Sara M. Corse (1997:1) shows that “national literatures have traditionally understood as reflections of the unique character and experiences of the Nation”. This idea exemplifies the fact that writers need to live, know and experiment society in order to tell and narrate it. That is why Harrison decides to put his characters in a social space with Americans and native Americans.

Similarly, he decides to enhance the culture and beliefs of *Cree* Indians because of his respect for the American forebears, in other words, the different native American tribes. Another reason why Harrison introduces Natives is for differentiating two worlds: the *civilization* and the *ranch*. In some pages, he even demonstrated that the *civilization* was guilty for the destruction of many people, family and ideologies:

He had always been repelled by the ostensibly important friends that Alfred had brought up to the ranch for hunting season: they played cards and drank all night, got up late and with few exceptions, the Cree filled their elk and deer licenses, though Tristan refused to cooperate any longer after a rich haberdasher shot a grizzly sleeping on a hillside. (1994:262)

In this quote, Harrison was critic with the American Government by means of the character of Tristan, especially with the hunting attitude which leads to the death of a grizzly bear and this criticism is made by Tristan’s thought. For our author, civilization represents oppression, rules, laws, industry, city, power, money and business while the ranch means freedom, nature and life.

In accordance with Samuel Huntington: “a civilization is the broadest cultural entity short of that which distinguishes human from other species”⁴. This conception is present in *Legends of the Fall* when Harrison narrates an episode in which a barman denies the entrance of One Stab because he is Native:

⁴ Huntington, S. 1992. “The Clash of Civilizations” in Gideon Rose’s (ed.). Foreign Affairs. U.S: Council on Foreign Relations.

Recovered from <<http://users.metu.edu.tr/utuba/Huntington.pdf>> (last access 15/07/16)

I said four beers, Mr Sachtleben - And I said no
Indians

He's quite civilized, I assure you

Give him a beer My father said four, didn't he?

- We'd reached an understanding - Give him a
beer!

Stay out of it!

You're a fool spoiling for a fight with a man that
outweighs you

He's sure to have weapon at hand Right, Mr
Sachtleben?

He'd split your stupid skull and kill you stone-
dead!

I want four beers Now!

The owner doesn't want to serve any Indians

Get back!

You see this man? Do you? His name is One Stab

He's an elder of the Cree nation and a warrior

He's our friend and he's thirsty⁵

This quote explains how white Americans feel superior to native Americans. From the Native point of view, Tecumseh, a Native leader, affirmed in his testimony that:

Brothers—we are friends; we must assist each other bear our burdens. The blood of many of our fathers has run like water on the ground, to satisfy the avarice of the white men, we, ourselves, are threatened with a great cure; nothing will pacify them but the destruction of all the red men. (1996: 10)

Something similar is echoed in the novel when Harrison describes the violent act that Whites committed with savages:

⁵ Words extracted from *Legends of the Fall*'s script <http://www.script-orama.com/movie_scripts/1/legends-of-the-fall-script.html> (last access 10/06/16)

People finally don't have much affection for questions, especially one so leprous as the apparent lack of a fair system of rewards and punishment on earth. The question is not less gnawing and unpleasant for being so otiose, so naïve. And we are not concern with the grander issues: say the Nez Percé children receiving the hail of cavalry fire in their sleeping tents. Nothing is so grotesque as the meeting of a child and a bullet. And what distances in comprehension: the press at the time insisted we had won. (1994: 231)

This turns into a paradox, because indigenous people are not savages, but white people certainly are. From a general point of view, native and white Americans were considered two different ethnic groups and Harrison represents this image through his novel in the sense that all characters are living with natives although they are Americans. This fact might be interpreted as the joining of both cultures, but this union is only possible in Montana, where freedom and wilderness are present and separated from the civilization.

It is also important to mention that Tristan is American in appearance but psychologically Native because of the culture that he has received in his life, unveiling a double nature: "At the end of the three nights seven blond scalps hung in various stages of drying from their tent pole" (1994: 217). This passage shows how Tristan adopts from Natives the way in which they kill their enemies. What is more, he buries Samuel according to the native American tradition: "Tristan detached the heart with a skinning knife and they rode back to camp where Noel melted down candles and they encased Samuel's heart in paraffin in a small ammunition canister for burial back in Montana" (1994: 216).

2.4. Style and main topics:

Harrison employs different literary techniques and strategies to make his creation memorable and convince the reader. The author commented his style in the novel during an interview:

CA: Commenting on the style of the title novella of *Legends of the Fall*, Vance Bourjaily wrote in the *New York Times Book Review*, "In

compression, unexpectedly, lies credibility.” Did it take a lot of revision to achieve the narrative leanness of “Legends of the Fall”?

Harrison: That’s the one about which an unnamed publisher asked me wouldn’t it be wonderful if I had written that in a 400-page form. Long books are popular because people think they’re getting a good deal. It didn’t take a lot of revision; I only took out one sentence after the first draft. That novella came sort of pouring out. I wanted to tell a tale like a romance, sort of like “Once upon a time...” What you do is create the illusion in the first paragraph that this actually happened. You’re very matter-of-fact about it. (2002:26)

With this commentary, Harrison remarked that the most outstanding element of the novel is the *romance*. But this is a very global term because a romantic novel implies other themes in order to create the *romance*. This idea was supported by Arthur O. Lovejoy (1949: I) when he announced that the word “romantic has come to mean so many things that, by itself, it means nothing”⁶ It hints that one of the most important points is not love in isolation but the “love” that emanates from characters and which will be punished by fate because of the fact that Alfred and Tristan are confronted by Susannah’s love. Harrison considers that the love story between characters is the origin of the problems that his protagonists will have to face.

It is obvious that *Legends of the Fall* belongs to the narrative genre because it tells a legend about the Ludlow family through narration, where descriptions of places and characters are present. In the past, narration was also called epic genre because it narrates the great feats of a hero which seemed real, as the author used to tell the legend in a reliability manner. If we pay attention to our novel, it could be considered an epic genre because Harrison tells a legend, as the title of the novel indicates, and narrates the story of Tristan, who could be a hero because he is able survive to his own life and adapt to the different circumstances. In this respect, the narrative of *Legends of the Fall* is clearly defined as a novel. The novel can be classified according to its tone, structure and content. Harrison employs a tone with a didactic purpose because he tries to teach readers how difficult life is or can be by explaining the confrontation between heart and head that people tend to suffer when making decisions in their lives. However,

⁶ Wellek, R. 1949. *The Concept of Romanticism in Literary History*. Durham: Duke University Press. Recovered from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1768457?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents> (last access 10/06/16)

according to the structure of the novel, *Legends of the Fall* could be also considered as a *novella* or short novel, if we pay attention to the definition provided by the Encyclopaedia Britannica:

Novella is a short and well-structured narrative, often realistic and satiric in tone, that influenced the development of the short story and the novel throughout Europe. Originating in Italy during the Middle Ages, the novella was based on local events that were humorous, political, or amorous in nature; the individual tales often were gathered into collections along with anecdotes, legends, and romantic tales. Writers such as Giovanni Boccaccio, Franco Sacchetti, and Matteo Bandello later developed the novella into a psychologically subtle and highly structured short tale, often using a frame story to unify the tales around a common theme.⁷

As we have mentioned above, the whole book *Legends of the Fall* is divided into three short novels but we only focus on the short novel of the same title. It is placed in Montana, a local place of America, describing the habits of the Ludlow family. It would be important to remark that the main topic of the *novella* is the romance from which the others topics like death, anxiety, betrayal and blame derive, and, for this reason, Harrison classified it as a *novella*.

According to its content, it starts to be an adventure in the moment in which Tristan decides to travel around the world because the protagonist abandons his ordinary life to start another new one. Adventure novel and short novels were very popular in the American continent from The Progressive Era to the 1950's. It might have influenced Jim Harrison latest years.

As in the biography was introduced, Harrison was fond of Spanish culture, showing a great passion for literature. As he was an admirer of Spanish authors like Machado, Lorca Guillén and Vallejo, the reader can see features of the *Costumbrismo* movement. From this point of view of the Spanish literary culture, the contents of *Legends of the Fall* could somehow be connected to the main characteristics that define the literary movement called *Costumbrismo*:

⁷ Definition extracted from Encyclopaedia Britannica < <https://global.britannica.com/art/novella> > (last access 12/06/16)

Costumbrismo is a trend in Spanish literature that emphasized the depiction of the everyday manners and customs of a particular social or provincial milieu. Although the origins of costumbrismo go back to the Golden Age of Spanish literature in the 16th and 17th centuries, it grew into a major force in the first half of the 19th century, first in verse and then in prose sketches called cuadros de costumbres (“scenes of customs”) that stressed detailed descriptions of typical regional characters and social conduct, often with a satirical or philosophical intent.⁸

This quotation explains not only what *Costumbrismo* is but its potentiality since it has been present in the Spanish culture during different centuries and has even trespassed frontiers, influencing American writers as in the case of Jim Harrison. These features of *Costumbrismo* might be found in *Legends of the Fall* because it narrates the customs of America society, especially of the Ludlow family. Following the same line, there are also descriptions of nature places, typical animals of the region and characters. The latter are described not only psychologically, but also by means of their social behaviour.

The content of *Legends of the Fall* is also historical given that Harrison uses different historical facts as the starting point of the novel, especially that of the First World War (1914-1918) so as to give it more credibility. The reasons why he places the setting of the novel in the First World War were unknown but there are different theories to explain it. On the one hand, our author considered that few people were aware of what happened before the Second World War (1940-1945) and he supported it by saying “just about; that was 1914. It’s the same sense of that kind of time frame. That’s the only sort of empty period....Politically, nobody seems to know much about what occurred before the second world war; there’s some kind of cutoff” (200:167).

It demonstrates that Harrison uses historical events to teach readers what happened in that time, showing a clear didactic purpose. On the other hand, he needed a troubling basis that complicated the characters’ fate. It caused many deaths and the destruction of many families, so the First World War was the perfect excuse to cause Samuel’s death and, at the same time, to enhance the psychological traumas provoked by war. As a result of using this event, the plot will be well-developed progressively to the end.

⁸ Concept from Britannica.com <<https://global.britannica.com/art/costumbrismo>> (last access 12/06/16)

In order to understand the situation, it is important to define the concept of history. History, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, makes reference to “all events that happened in the past: a turning point in human history”⁹. For Harrison, the term history changes depending on culture and the place where human beings are born. In the case of his novel, historical events are observed from the American perspective.

It would be also convenient to take into account the question of whether all the events that happen are product of a set of decisions or they are something absolutely uncontrollable. Albert Camus affirmed that “life is the sum of all your choices”¹⁰ therefore, historical events appear as the result of human’s cruelty. In contrast, Harrison proposed that not all events and facts are consequences of our decisions because things sometimes happen and you cannot do anything to stop them. One of the best examples to explain it might be the idea of death in the novella because Tristan was not able to prevent his brother’s death.

For the German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831), history is “the story of the development of the consciousness of freedom and world—the development of the human spirit in time through the grown of its own self-consciousness”¹¹. If we apply this conception to Harrison, it demonstrates that historical events affect Tristan’s freedom, showing that freedom cannot be achieved if the historical past intervenes. When Samuel dies, Tristan’s life changes completely, even affecting not only his personality but also his fate.

Not only does The First War World appear as historical fact but there are also other images and devices that show the process of history during the 20th century. The *poison gas* was a lethal instrument and this image was used by poets of the First World War such as Wilfred Owen (1893-1918). He, for example, wrote a poem illustrating the effect of poison gas, “Dulce et Decorum est” (1917):

“Gas! Gas! Quick, boys! – An ecstasy
of fumbling,

⁹ Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary
<http://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/history?q=history> (last access 15/06/16)

¹⁰ Quote extracted from <<http://www.wisdomquotes.com/quote/albert-camus-20.html>> (last access 15/06/16)

¹¹ Hegel, G.1953. *Reason In History, a general introduction to the Philosophy of History*. Stockbridge: Liberal Art Press.
Definition recovered from <<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/hegel/works/hi/introduction.htm>> (last access 17/06/16)

Fitting the clumsy helmets just in
time;
But someone still was yelling out and
stumbling,
And flound'ring like a man in fire or
lime. . .
Dim, through the misty panes and
thick green light,
As under a green sea, I saw him
drowning.”¹²

Owen presents his own experience when his friend Dim was attacked by the gas and it caused his death through suffocation. Harrison conceived this idea in the same line that Owen did: “they had been on a reconnaissance up toward Calais with a mustard gas, then cut to ribbons by machine gun fire as they wandered numbed in a glade of a chestnut forest” (1994:215).



The loss of innocence in trench

In the movie, the spectator is able to see how Samuel is blinded by the gas and then executed by German firearms. When a novel turns into a movie, the director can change some elements within the story, avoid them or be very selective with the narrative material. In this case, Edward Zwich preferred to select the war scene in order to make spectators aware of the human cruelty and raise debate and reflection.

¹² Words extracted from Academy of American poets <<https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/dulce-et-decorum-est>> (last access 17/06/16)

Besides, Harrison reports some other facts that also happened in America like the rejection of Natives and the narration about the *nez percé* tribe. These events make the novel seem realistic because the author's style in the description is pessimistic and atheistic. Thus, Realism is emphasized in the novel and can be an indicator of the opposition between feelings and reality. For this reason, Harrison's characters are not happy because reality is harsher than their feelings. In realistic novels, characters are normally developed from the beginning. Tristan, Susannah and Alfred are psychologically more mature at the end of the story, so not only is there a psychological progress but also genetic and physical growth in the characters.

In addition, the style is considered naturalist because the narrative voice indirectly maintains that life cannot be controlled because it is dominated by natural forces such as genetics and social environment. Harrison's characters are controlled by their instincts and passions observing life in an objective manner. Therefore, readers are in front of a psychological novel because not only does it explain why things happen but the purpose of these things, which are also evident within this *novella*. Nevertheless, there are also existentialist connotations, as the following quotation suggests:

People finally don't have much affection for questions, especially one so leprous as the apparent lack of a fair system of rewards and punishments on earth. The question is not less gnawing and unpleasant for being so otiose, so naive [...] Even gods aren't exempt: note Jesus' howl of despair as he stepped rather tentatively into eternity. And we can't seem to go from large to small because everything is the same size. Everyone's skin is so particular and we are so largely unimaginable to one another. (1994: 231)

With these words, we might consider *Legends of the Fall* as an existentialist text because its protagonists are worried about the problems that affect their fate and they wonder why fate is so cruel to them. Existentialism is, according to the Encyclopaedia Britannica, "any of the various philosophies dating from about 1930 that have in common an interpretation of human existence in the world that stresses its concreteness and its problematic character".¹³ It is important to mention that many existentialist works like those of Louis-Ferdinand Céline (1894-1961), Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980),

¹³ Denotation extracted from Online Encyclopaedia Britannica
<<https://global.britannica.com/topic/existentialism>> (last access 17/06/16)

Albert Camus (1913-1960) or Henry Graham Greene (1904-1991), were inspired by Franz Kafka (1883-1924), and subsequently translated and introduced in America. These existentialist authors had an impact on the American sensibility. This fact changed the way in which Americans perceive the human existence in this tragic world. Guillermo de Torre explained the concept of existentialism applying it to the novel:

Es un esfuerzo por conciliar lo objetivo con lo subjetivo, lo abstracto con lo relativo, lo temporal con lo histórico; pretender captar en el sentido del corazón de la existencia; y si la descripción de la esencia corresponde a la filosofía propiamente dicha, sólo la novela permitirá reconstruir en su verdad completa, singular y temporal el flujo original de la existencia. (1968:152)

The reader can find some existential characteristics in the novella because Tristan tends to think that events happen without sense, which in literature is denominated as *the absurd*. Tristan shows anxiety because he does not find answers that explain the reason why Samuel had died:

Anxiety provides a lucid experience of that freedom which, though often concealed, characterizes human existence as such (...) freedom is the dislocation of consciousness from its object, the fundamental “nihilation” or negation by means of which consciousness can grasp its object without losing itself in it: to be conscious of something is to be conscious of not being it, a “not” that arises in the very structure of consciousness as being for-itself. Because “nothingness” (or nihilation) is just what consciousness is, there can be no objects in consciousness, but only objects for consciousness.¹⁴

With this definition, we can demonstrate that the ideas of anxiety and *nihilation* walk hand in hand in the novel. It is important to mention that *nothingness* implies the idea of doubt because Tristan is very conscious about what is happening but at the same time, he is conscious that he really knows *nothing* about what happens in the universe up to the point of he rejects God because he thinks that the world does not help him. Once and again, “there was the unspoken, unthought, unrehearsed sense that time and

¹⁴ Argument selected from Online Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy
<<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/existentialism/>> (last access 20/06/16)

distance would reveal to him why Samuel died” (1994:237). Not only is the theme of anxiety present in the novel but also the concept of life, as Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) emphasizes:

Kierkegaard’s argument that life is a series of choices – and that these choices bring meaning (or not) to our life – is a cornerstone of existentialism. Rather than offloading the responsibility onto society or religion, each individual is solely responsible for making their life meaningful and living it authentically¹⁵

Our author explains that life is not a series of choices. For Harrison, life shows choices but also external forces that we cannot control. At the very beginning of the novel, Ludlow sees the world in a positive way because he wants his sons to return safe and sound from war: “At midnight Ludlow went to bed with a warm steady feeling that the world indeed was a good place, that the war would be quickly over, and that he and Decker would have a good hunt the next day” (1994:204).

Although, this desire that the Colonel feels is hope, it dampens when Samuel is killed (something that is not a choice), and as a result, hope disappears from Ludlow’s perception: “And what was this mustard gas that killed so that men ran around helplessly with blinded eyes and burning lungs and the horses screamed under them. The world was no longer fit for a war and Ludlow privately seceded from it” (1994:221). If life is not a set of choices, it is controlled by something that we cannot avoid called fate:

Only One Stab watched Ludlow open the letter, not fearing the worst possible or probable because he owned the Cheyenne sense of fatality that what had happened had already happened. You couldn’t change it and trying to was like throwing stones at the moon. (1994:220)

¹⁵ Case, A. 2014, “You are your life, and nothing else” in Zan Boag’s (ed.). *New Philosopher* Australia: The Bull Publishing.
Quote taken from
<<http://www.newphilosopher.com/articles/you-are-your-life-and-nothing-else/>> (last access 22/06/16)

Fate is defined, according to the *Online Macmillan Dictionary*, as the things that happen to someone, especially unpleasant things¹⁶. In this passage, Harrison narrates how fate is an external force that men cannot change through One Stab's eyes. It is important to mention that the narrative voice reflects about fate in the novel:

If he or she were naïve believer, might threaten God saying leave him alone or some such frivolity. No one has figured out how accidental is the marriage of the blasphemy and fate. Only a rather old fashionable theologian might speculate on Tristan damning God so many years before in France when he and Noel encased Samuel's heart in the paraffin. The contemporary mind views such events properly as utterly wayward owning all the design of water in the deepest and furthest reaches of the Pacific (1994:272-273)

With these words, Harrison criticizes those people who think that they can find the origin of fate. In this case, the origin is God. However, this search is vain because people can intuit something about the existence of fate but they cannot demonstrate it. There are certain things that do not depend on us, for example, death. In *Legends of the Fall*, death is very difficult to analyse because there are two types of deaths. On the one hand, there is a spiritual death but, on the other hand, there is also a physical one. At the beginning of the story, Samuel dies, which implies the death of his body but he never dies in the mind of the rest of characters. Samuel's memories are present from the beginning to the end of the novel, thus Samuel does not die in the novel but he is the unifying thread of it.

In contrast to it, there is a spiritual death in character's feelings because they are only suffering and the rest of feelings are dead: "Your husband is forever dead, please marry another" (1994: 245). These words are an evidence of Tristan's dead feelings. Furthermore, death is represented by means of killing and suicide. In the case of Samuel's and Isabel II's death, it produces an impact on the rest of characters, especially on Tristan. In addition, Susannah dies by committing suicide because she thinks that she is alone in the world, God is not even present in her life:

¹⁶ Definition taken form Online Macmillan Dictionary
<<http://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/fate>> (last access 22/06/16)

He said that she mustn't take her life because life was so awkward and complex that one they might be together again. He would at least return in a year and they would see each other again when their spirits and minds had cleared and they could talk calmly. (1994:265)

The idea of suicide is shown when the character realizes that she exists. All men have to die so, why does not she hasten to die if her life is always full of suffering instead of happiness?

The exaltation of nature constitutes another essential element to support existentialism. Harrison took this idea from William Wordsworth who considered that (1984:232) nature implies the reconciliation between heart and head, in other words, the joining of feelings and reason. In the novel, nature is conceived as something inexplicable, the spectator does not achieve to know the ways and movements of Nature through life, leading this difficulty to a lack of explanation. From Wordsworth's point of view (1984: 233) "we come from God, our home: we come trailing clouds of glory with shadowy recollections that illuminate our lives. And our early joy in natural beauty is movingly enriched by passing of man's mortal lot". Additionally, This Romantic writer maintains that there is a design in people's life, that is, if people come from God, he is the owner of our fate because he has designed it.

In the novel, *pessimism* is attributed to themes such as: revenge, unrequited love, death, thirst for revenge, betrayal between brothers, doubt, obsession and distance. *Pessimism* was a term introduced by Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860) and Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834), whose ideas concerning pessimism were similar and claimed that the "pessimism was emotional: the pessimistic individual was one for whom suffering outweighed happiness".¹⁷

¹⁷Sander, D. & Scherer, K. (eds.).2009. *The Oxford Companion to Emotion and The Affective Sciences*. Oxford: University Press.

Recovered from

<https://books.google.es/books?id=bl25BgAAQBAJ&pg=PT431&lpg=PT431&dq=%E2%80%9Cpessimism+was+emotional:+the+pessimistic+individual+was+one+for+whom+suffering+outweighed+happiness%E2%80%9D.&source=bl&ots=f5yUGX7ce2&sig=JakoIUuWxcDGNdXv-5qnAXxY5h8&hl=es&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjhh42X3drNAhWHUhQKHUEFB2sQ6AEIHjAA#v=onepage&q=%E2%80%9Cpessimism%20was%20emotional%3A%20the%20pessimistic%20individual%20was%20one%20for%20whom%20suffering%20outweighed%20happiness%E2%80%9D.&f=false> (last access 24/06/116)

2.5. Language:

The language employed by Jim Harrison is simple and natural and he uses everyday words. As we know, the author is American; in consequence, his writing is in American English but with words used in Cornish language. Why does Harrison apply it? Because William Ludlow belonged to a Cornish family that immigrated to the United States and, for this reason, he inherits his language.

Whenever our writer wants to emphasize some particular word, it appears written in italics for example *cree*, *nez percé*, *finca* or *caballero*. This exaltation shows that the italics words belong to other languages different from English, in other words, borrowings. In addition, there are sentences that are written in capital letters, which are meant to imitate the words of a tombstone:

SAMUEL DANT LUDLOW 1897-
1915
WE WILL NOT SEE HIM
BUT WE SHALL JOIN HIM
(1994:225)

The narrative voice introduces rhetoric questions to readers: “who reasons death anymore than they can weigh the earth or the heart of beauty?” (1994:197), “how could mustard gas be considered normal warfare and not scalping, in reaction to the death of a brother?” (1994:218). These questions are put in the book with the aim of making readers reflect on their condition according to their perception about life. This is the reason why the reader could find words in inverted commas, for instance: “thus he was fascinated with the arrival of Tristan when the ambulance driver advised him that a true “crazy” was waiting to be unloaded” (1994:218) and “he settled on a large adjoining ranch calling it a wedding present for his daughter and son-in-law though he retained a half share to insure what he referred to as “prudent business practices” (1994:227)”. This is employed to make words ambiguous.

In the case of “crazy”, Harrison wants to say that Tristan has not mental problems but a shock after Samuel’s death. It could be a criticism to psychiatrists because they maintained that the soldiers became crazy after the war and had to be taken in the hospital during years. In addition, the author puts in inverted commas the words

“prudent business practices” to criticize the economic system of the time because Harrison considers that businesses are not prudent but careless and corrupt.

Inverted commas are also employed to indicate direct speech: for instance, whereas Tristan said, “I am William’s son, Tristan” (1994:222), One Stab only said, “I know it” (1994:229). Not only does direct speech introduce inverted commas but also words that characters receive from letters: “He paid a frayed, alcoholic English photographer twenty dollars to send the photo to One Stab, c/o William Ludlow, Choteau, Montana, USA. The message was to read, “Here is a dead one who stopped the train if only for a moment” (1994:239)

There is also brackets to clarify information or add it, for example: “Decker (for no one called him Roscoe, a name he disliked) was about forty with the slender legs of a horseman but with a bullish chest and arms, got from a youth full of digging fence-post holes” (1994:202). This use is very appropriate for readers who don’t know some information. To help readers, Jim Harrison uses the symbol *** in order to indicate that there is a change in the scene. It is useful for readers because it helps to follow the reading without problems.

Finally, syntax is not complex but easy due to its logical order. Nonetheless, there are interruptions in language when information about past and future are added in the present narration but Harrison narrates with great skill so that readers can follow the different interruptions.

2.6. Narrative voice:

The narrator is the voice that tells the story. In this case, our narrative voice is not a character of the story because it is not narrated in the first person but in the third one. Therefore, our narrator is an omniscient narrator that knows the character’s points of view, thoughts and feelings, as well as what happens in the past, present and future of the protagonists.

This voice is very strange because there is a moment in which it says: “No one but his far- flung crew knows much of Tristan’s next six years except for a few details, all the more teasing because of their incompleteness” (1994:281). These words show us that the narrator does not know all about Tristan because he summarizes Tristan’s journey explaining indirectly that he is not present in it, so a part of information is avoided by

the narrator. It gives the feeling that this narrator is close to the ranch but this fact is not revealed. Nevertheless, if we pay attention to the cinematographic adaptation the narrator is, without any doubt, One Stab:

I wrapped him in a bear skin and held
him all that night.
As he grew into a man, I taught him
the joy of the kill.¹⁸

As we have mentioned above, One Stab is the Native Cree who lives with Ludlow family. The pronoun “I” reveals that he is the person who tells the story to the spectator. It is important to mention that he is like a clairvoyant who is able to discern the future of characters. This could have been the reason why the director and Harrison selected the character One Stab to be the narrator of the story in the movie.

2.7. Time:

The narrative strategies show that the work is a circular story because there is a literary game about seasons. It might be influenced by the Spanish writer Antonio Machado. Agustín Lara wrote that “Machado sentía el paso del tiempo en las tardes casi de primavera y de otoño, mientras que las largas tardes de verano le producía una sensación de lentitud y estancamiento” (1980:34).

The story starts *in medias res* and the reader knows through the narration that it begins in autumn: “Late in October in 1914 three brothers rode from Choteau, Montana, to Calgary in Alberta to enlist in the Great War (the U.S. did not enter until 1917)” (1994:195); ending again in the same season: “one warm Sunday morning in mid-October a few weeks after the burial Samuel and Three were playing on the porch swing with their ponies saddled and tethered to the railing” (1994:273)

During the story line, the reader experiences flashbacks, flash-forwards and premonitions. As the Encyclopaedia Britannica puts it, “Flashback is a narrative technique of interrupting the chronological sequence of events to interject events of

¹⁸ Words taken from the script of *Legends of the Fall*
<http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/l/legends-of-the-fall-script.html> (last access 25/06/16)

earlier occurrence. The earlier events often take the form of reminiscence. The flashback technique is as old as Western literature.”¹⁹ As the story starts *in medias res*, the author has to place past information about the characters in the narration because readers need to know about the past of protagonists to understand the things that are actually happening in the current narration.

On the contrary, flash-forward or prolepsis is “a literary device in which the plot goes ahead of time i.e. a scene that interrupts and takes the narrative forward in time from the current time in a story.”²⁰ In this regard, the narrator is like a visionary that knows everything including future at the same time that he narrates the present. Harrison adds pieces of information about the future of characters to the current narration, especially in the case of Tristan:

The voyage never really ended, except as it does for everyone: in this man’s life, on a snowy hillside in Alberta late in December in 1977 at the age of eighty-four (a grandson found him beside the carcass of a deer he had been gutting, his hand frozen around the skinning knife One Stab had given him that day in Great Falls- the grandson hung the deer in the tamarack and carried the old man home, his snowshoes sinking only a little deeper in the snow). (1994: 229-230)

This can be considered an anticipation of Tristan’s death because the author assumes that readers know that the life of the protagonist will be long but full of misadventures. There is another kind of anticipation in time called premonition, in other words, a strong feeling that a person has when something bad is going to happen, particularly One Stab about Tristan’s future in this case: “he embraced the old Indian and said that he would return, to which One Stab only said, “I know it”, as he rigged a lead line for Tristan’s horse”. (1994: 229). With One Stab’s premonition, the reader knows that Tristan will come back to the ranch in any moment of the narration.

Restarting the seasons that appear in the novel, the reader also experiences other seasons such as winter, spring and summer but the most important is autumn. This is probably why Harrison called his novel *Legends of the Fall*. This season represents misfortune,

¹⁹Argument extracted from Encyclopaedia Britannica <<https://global.britannica.com/art/flashback>> (last access 25/06/16)

²⁰ It is taken from Literary Devices <<http://literarydevices.net/flash-forward/>> (last access 25/06/16)

deaths and bitterness, especially if we consider that autumn is characterised by a sort of metaphorical degradation and a dim atmosphere. But, why did the writer choose this title?

Fall could refer to the autumn season, because it is a circular story, and the damaging events taking place in it. Harrison made it remarkable through the description but why did he decide to choose the word *fall* instead of *autumn*? The answer is simple because he wanted to create ambiguity, in other words, a title with a double meaning. *Fall* refers not only to the decline of seasons but also to the *fall* of characters, particularly their emotional destruction.

2.8. Allusions:

The author makes reference to religion, mythology, characters and influences of other authors. It is true that readers must have a thorough knowledge of the different allusions that are shown in the descriptions if they want to provide a good analysis of the novel.

According to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* allusion is defined as follows:

Allusion, in literature, an implied or indirect reference to a person, event, or thing or to a part of another text. Most allusions are based on the assumption that there is a body of knowledge that is shared by the author and the reader and that therefore the reader will understand the author's referent.²¹

However, Harrison adapted the narration to all readers, and in consequence, it is not necessary to have a wide literary background to enjoy his work:

²¹ Meaning taken from Online Encyclopaedia Britannica <<https://global.britannica.com/topic/allusion>> (last access 27/06/16)

2.8.1. Religion:

On the one hand, religious allusions are very present in the novel. The author makes allusion to Cain:

So perhaps Tristan in a genetic lapse had become his own father and would like Cain never take an order from anyone but would build his own fate with gestures so personal that no one in the family ever knew what was on his seemingly thankless mind. (1994:209)

Harrison probably uses Cain, a biblical person, because he wanted to compare Cain's fate with Tristan's. This seems to anticipate for readers what will later happen to the protagonist. If we remember the passage in which Cain appears, we know beforehand that Cain is the first murderer of the humanity because he killed his brother Abel due to envy:

6 Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? 7 If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it."

8 Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." [d] While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

9 Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?"

"I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's keeper?"

10 The Lord said, "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground. 11 Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. 12 When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth." (Gn. 4: 6-12)

In this passage, we can see that Cain was punished by God because of the murder of Abel. He is cursed by the Lord as Tristan in the novel. Tristan is cursed because he rejects God in different moments: one of them is when his mother abandons him alongside his brothers, and the other one, when Samuel dies in the War. Then, this Christian rejection is punished with suffering in his life.

In addition, there could be a parallelism between Tristan's life and the author's because Jim Harrison used to feel as the *black sheep* in comparison with his brothers due to his behaviour and way of thinking. Therefore, the image of Cain is probably a representation of the feeling of self-frustration that the author was experiencing.

Another recurrent element within the work is the plague of grasshoppers. This plague about which Tristan speaks might be similar to the eighth plague that God sends to Egypt. Indeed, it was called the plague of locusts and these insects are very similar to grasshoppers:

He remembered well the plague of grasshoppers Tristan had found interesting: I counted twenty-five one morning on what I judged to be an average square foot of ground. A brief calculation at that rate over a million to the acre...exceedingly rapacious, their capacity for destruction to living vegetation may be imagined. Their powers of sustained flight, too, are wonderful...they appear able to keep on the wing of a whole day, always moving with the wind, and filling the air to a vast height... (1994:207-208)

The quote indicated above shows the power of destruction that these insects had over vegetation. The same happens in the Biblical passage when locusts start to eat the trees and vegetation of Egypt. We do not know clearly how the plague that Tristan sees appears in the novel but that of the Bible was a punishment of God for disobeying his commands. Tristan is a character that does not obey orders from others, then, he might be like the Pharaoh who did not want to obey God's commands. For this reason, Tristan is the only character that sees the plague of grasshoppers, a bad sign of his future.

Besides, the figure of Jesus Christ is used in order to criticize Christian religion by means of a sequence of words used by the narrative voice to explain the moment in which the massacre of the *nez percé* tribe took place: "even gods aren't exempt: note Jesus's howl of despairs as he stepped rather tentatively into eternity. And we can't seem to go from large to small because everything is the same size" (1994:231). This might be considered a criticism to cruelty of men, emphasizing that Jesus Christ also suffered on the earth. If God has power over humanity: why did Jesus Christ allow his own suffering? Harrison admits that all men are equal or have *the same size* because all of us suffer in life even Christ, suffering goes from Deities' power to humans'.

In the moment in which Tristan joins the British Government, he receives a Bible from his grandmother: “when Tristan set sail for Africa that morning after a silent lamplit breakfast with his grandmother—she gave him a Bible wrapped in an untreated lambswool sweater she had knitted—he was fulfilling a number of inevitabilities” (1994:236). Life could be established in two different perspectives: on the one hand, it is not controlled by fate and all things that happen in it are by chance, whereas on the other, life is subjected to a fate that has been previously fixed by a superior entity. The image of The Bible indicates the second perspective of life because Tristan’s life is established from the moment he is born, in other words, Tristan’s fate is written like, for example, The Bible. At this moment, the reader may appreciate a kind of criticism in the sense that Christian people are cursed with the feeling of resignation.

In contrast, Buddhism is also present in the novel, represented by means of the allusions to the founder of Buddhism, Buddha: “One year Ludlow’s Christmas present would be a shrunken head from Java and the next a small gold Buddha from Siam and a constant flow of mineral specimens came from throughout the world.” (1994:209). If we pay attention to this Asian religion, it maintains that life is suffering, in other words, birth is suffering, death is suffering, diseases are suffering and old age is also suffering. The followers of Buddha proclaim that the origin of suffering lies in the anxiety caused by desires, feelings and sexual pleasure.

Nonetheless, suffering might be eliminated if its cause is eliminated, that is to say, humans must abandon sexual pleasures and passion if they want to stop suffering. For all these religious features, Buddhism tries to establish a dualism between mind and heart through meditation. The reference to Buddha is important because Harrison demonstrates with it that the novel is a continuous suffering for characters, stirring reader’s consciousness.

2.8.2. Names of characters:

Harrison did not choose the name of characters by chance. He studied their names etymologically in order to make them fit the circumstances and personalities. This is the reason why the names that appear in *Legends of the Fall* are appealing and contribute to help readers to memorize them easily: “After the first son had been properly named after the grandfather, the second caught the brunt of her few impulses, being named

“Tristan” gleaned from medieval lore in her years at Wellesley” (1994:201). The narrator blames Ludlow’s woman for the behaviour of Tristan because she is a very impulsive woman and, as a result of this, his son Tristan is also impulsive and spontaneous.

Concerning Tristan’s name, it is important to mention that this name is not connected to religion. Harrison wanted to emphasise the name of the protagonist in order to make him different from the rest. For this reason, he decided to choose Tristan. There might be some reasons why Harrison called him Tristan. The first one is because of semantic connotations²²: it came from the Celtic word *drystan* which means *disciple* but it also comes from the root *dru* that means *oak* or *drest* or *drust*, that is, *noise*. In German, the name Tristan means *Thor’s stone* and *sorrow* in French.

Nevertheless, Harrison was inspired by the Celtic legend called *Tristan and Isolde*, as he mention in the quote. This legend tells the story of Tristan, who is a hero and the nephew of the king Marc. The king wanted to marry Isolde but Tristan betrayed him because Isolde and Tristan fell in love due to the potion made by Isolde’s mother. They abandoned the kingdom and decided to hide in the forest where the couple had misadventures

Finally, the effect of the potion disappears and they decide to return to the kingdom. In the cinematographic adaptation, the spectator can infer the reason why Tristan is named in this way:

May we join you? Sit down We're
feeling lonely in there

- What's her name? - Lady Tristan's
Lady

- Tristan's lady was Isolde - You know
the story, don't you?

You're in need of education

²² Etymological connotations of characters’ names extracted from Online Etymological Dictionary
<<http://www.etymonline.com/>>

She can read and write School might
be awkward for her

- I'll teach her myself - May I help?²³

The spectator and the reader must have a wide knowledge of literature in order to understand what the word Tristan hides. It is possible to claim that our author is constantly punishing the protagonist, as the author of the Celtic legend did with Tristan. It might be considered a tradition in Harrison.

On the other hand, the way in which the name of William Ludlow is introduced in the work implicates that Tristan's father is a real character, making readers wonder if the whole story and the rest of character are also real or not "Back near Choteau, William Ludlow (Colonel, Engineers U, Army. Ret) spent sleepless nights." (1994:199). In an interview, Harrison affirms that Ludlow is a real figure but the personal story that surrounds him is not. Then, the rest of the characters are invented and are a creation of Harrison's mind. The only real inspiration is the Colonel:

In *Legends of the Fall* I found the character William Ludlow in journals; he's actually my wife's great grandfather. But I've changed all the details of his life except the initial ones. He did lead an expedition into the Black Hills with Custer as his adjutant; he also did loathe Custer. And in real life he ended up owning some copper mines in Northern Michigan, but I'd read his journals and was fascinated by the kind of man he was (2002: 42).

Regarding Alfred, his comes from the word *elf* plus *counsel*, and it is useful in order to contrast Tristan's personality with Alfred's. We know that Tristan is a wild character while Alfred is pacific and civilised one. Alfred's name is also related to his profession. Susannah, meanwhile, means "a lily", a romantic woman who wants to bloom but she cannot do it due to the circumstances. Susannah is also a biblical woman that is married with a rich man like Alfred.

²³ Words taken from *Legends of the Fall*'s script <http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/l/legends-of-the-fall-script.html> (last access 15/07/16)

1 There was a man living in Babylon whose name was Joakim. 2 He married the daughter of Hilkiyah, named Susanna, a very beautiful woman and one who feared the Lord. 3 Her parents were righteous, and had trained their daughter according to the law of Moses. 4 Joakim was very rich, and had a fine garden adjoining his house; the Jews used to come to him because he was the most honored of them all. (Dan. 13:1-4)

This part is very similar to Susannah's life in *Legends of the Fall* because it narrates that the house of Susannah and his husband has a garden like the garden that appears in the novel when Tristan decides to visit Susannah to know how she is. It is possible that Harrison moved the Christian Susannah to his novel.

2.8.3. Mythology:

Some references to mythological images make us realize that Jim Harrison had a wide knowledge of classical literature, as the following quotation from the book suggests: "he picked up Samuel's sadness as if he were picking up doom herself, doom always owning the furthest, darkest reaches of the feminine genre. Pandora, Medusa, the Bacchantes, the Furies, are female though small goddesses beyond sexual notions." (1994:197).

On many occasions, our writer has been considered a male author due to his male point of view towards his female characters. Harrison shows three main important women in *Legends in the Fall*, who are Isabel I, Susannah and Isabel II. They have something in common, that is, they are present in Tristan's fate. In the case of Isabel I, the mother of Tristan, she abandoned him and his brothers when they were children.

This situation leads Tristan to reject God because it caused very sorrow in him. Then, Susannah marries him but he doesn't love her, as a result, it is a cursing wedding that instigates Susannah's suicide in the future. Finally, Tristan falls in love with Isabel II and they have two sons but their happiness ends in the moment in which she is killed by the American Police.

According to Harrison's view, these three women are the origin of Tristan's tragedy. He even mentions that the feminine genre is a curse for men.

One relevant myth which can be closely associated with Harrison's conception of women is that of Pandora, whose history was included in *Works and Days* (700 BCE) written by Greek poet Hesiod (750 and 650 BC):

So he ordered. And they obeyed the lord Zeus the son of Cronos. Forthwith the famous Lame God moulded clay in the likeness of a modest maid, as the son of Cronos purposed. And the goddess bright-eyed Athene girded and clothed her, and the divine Graces and queenly Persuasion put necklaces of gold upon her, and the rich-haired Hours crowned her head with spring flowers. And Pallas Athene bedecked her form with all manners of finery. Also the Guide, the Slayer of Argus, contrived within her lies and crafty words and a deceitful nature at the will of loud thundering Zeus, and the Herald of the gods put speech in her. And he called this woman Pandora (2), because all they who dwelt on Olympus gave each a gift, a plague to men who eat bread. (1914:73)

The quote explains how Pandora, the first woman, was created by Zeus. She was made because Zeus wanted to punish Prometheus for stealing the fire of Gods. As punishment, Zeus introduces Prometheus's brother to Pandora and he falls in love with her. In their wedding, Zeus gives her a mysterious box that contains the harms of the world but she does not know what it has inside.

Then, Gods punishes her with the wish of curiosity and she opens the box, and the harms of the world leave from it except the feeling of hope because she closed the box when she saw the harms catching the last one, that is, hope.

From this myth, we can say: "hope is the last to die". This idiomatic expression is applicable to the novel because characters never lost hope in their lives.

In addition, Medusa is another female mythological figure that tends to destroy men who stare at her. Dionysius, God of wine, feels rage because king Penteo does not believe in this God, in consequence, Dionysius decides to punish the lack of belief leading the king to madness.

In his madness, Penteo visits the Bacchantes who dismember him as they do with animals. After that, his mother, who is one of the Bacchantes, cut his head. It is interesting to mention that the Bacchantes are three women: Agave, Ino and Autonoe. The number coincides with the same of women that appears in Tristan's life. It is not something written by chance but studied before by the author with the objective of

identifying the Bacchantes with Tristan's women. Furthermore, the same happens with the Furies because they are three women as well: Alecto, Megaera and Tisiphone. They are malevolent female figures because they avenge crimes of mortals.

In the same way, there is an indirect allusion to Aphrodite, the Goddess of love and sensuality. Jim Harrison personifies Aphrodite in Susannah, with an image that Tristan visualizes while he is dreaming:

Susannah arrived as a pale pink sexual ghost and her womb covered him, saline like the spray off the bowsprit until he was a ghost, too, and he was the ocean, Susannah herself, the bucking horse beneath him, the wood of the sea horse beneath him, both wind ripping the sails and the moon above the sails and the light of the dark between. (1994: 244)

The description of this passage reminds us to the image in which the Goddess of Love emerges nude from the ocean. Tristan's dream shows sexual connotations because the image of horse represents the intimate relationship between Tristan and Susannah. In fact, it can be closely connected with an erotic impulse that the protagonist feels during his voyage. The reader might think when reading this passage that Tristan loved Susannah, but passion and love are different feelings:

and a white foam spread around them from the immortal flesh, and in it there grew a maiden. First she drew near holy Cythera, and from there, afterwards, she came to sea-girt Cyprus, and came forth an awful and lovely goddess, and grass [195] grew up about her beneath her shapely feet. Her gods and men call Aphrodite, and the foam-born goddess and rich-crowned Cytherea, because she grew amid the foam, and Cytherea because she reached Cythera, and Cyprogenes because she was born in billowy Cyprus, [200] and Philommedes³ because she sprang from the members. And with her went Eros, and comely Desire followed her at her birth at the first and as she went into the assembly of the gods (1914: 199)

2.8.4. Influences of other authors:

Among the wide variety of external references and influences in *Legends of the Fall*, it is important to point out the presence of the poet Heinrich Heine, as the following quote suggests: "Untypically Samuel took a liking at dinner to the oldest daughter and quoted a

verse of Heinrich Heine to her in German, her native language” (1994: 197). Heine has been considered the last Romantic writer. He tends to create a literary romantic world so as to destroy it and his characters. This feature might be attributed to Harrison because he creates a world but it destroys the characters because of the circumstances introduced in the novel. The quote probably makes reference to a Heine’s book called *Book of Songs* (1827) because it is the most famous of his work. This book shows themes such as the permanent presence of feelings and emotions, the conflict between reason and heart, passion, death, fear, desires, anxiety, lack of understanding, melancholy, the presence of mythological character, tragedy, solitude and predestination. Most of them appear in *Legends of the Fall*, thus, Heine could have been an inspiration for Harrison. Apart from Heine, the Romantic writers such as William Wordsworth, John Keats and Percy Bysshe Shelley are used with the objective of identifying Susannah’s personality and behaviour: “She spent her time either walking with Samuel’s botanical and zoological handbooks or sitting in her room reading Wordsworth, Keats and Shelley, favourite from the two years at Radcliffe before her marriage to Tristan” (1994:232). It makes readers think that she is a romantic and sensitive woman. This passionate woman loses her reason after Tristan’s rejection.

This situation triggers a pessimistic perception of life in Susannah. The philosophy of reason appears in William Godwin’s *Political Justice* (1793) and the idea of pessimism in *Guilt and Sorrow* (early 1790s)²⁴, both poems were written by Wordsworth and could have been an inspiration because Susannah tends to contemplate problems about her existence and this leads her to an emotional crisis that takes her to commit suicide, finding in death the only possible solution in her life.

In addition, Amy Lowell, the American poetess characterised by her use of Imagism, is present in our novel. She was probably an influence for Jim Harrison because both of them shared the same passion: poetry. She was a very daring woman in her lifetime due to her sexual condition that was exhibited in her erotic poems. Harrison perhaps wanted to establish parallels between Lowell’s personality and Susannah’s:

She held a dinner for a distant cousin, the poetess Amy Lowell who was somewhat a scandal, given as she was to smoking cigars in public. Susannah, whose health had been weak, was delighted with the grand orotund lady who asked for a goblet of

²⁴ Ideas extracted from Blamires, H. 1984. *A short history of English Literature*. London: Routledge.

brandy after dinner, lighted a cigar and read her slight, fragile poetry so absurdly different from the bearer. (1994: 240)

Another reason why our author deals with her is because they were very similar in behaviour and way of thinking. This quote describes one of her habits, smoking cigars, a habit she shared with Harrison. In many interviews, he affirmed that one of his passions was smoking and drinking. He used to like madness in people, particularly a healthy kind of madness. For this reason, he felt attraction for Lowell because she was very different from the rest of writers.

In the last pages of the novel, there is an allusion to Herman Melville's *Pierre, or the Ambiguities* (1852). It could be like a key because if readers have knowledge of this particular work of Melville, they may deduce that there are similarities between *Pierre, or the Ambiguities* and *Legends of the Fall* in terms of loving relationships: "She was reading to him from Melville's *Pierre, or the Ambiguities*. Ludlow loved Melville while Isabel I found the author tiresome" (1994:273).

In the case of Melville, the main character is Pierre, who lives with his mother since his father's death. His mother has a strong personality because she wants to control Pierre to marry Lucy, a rich woman. However, the story changes when he meets and falls in love with Isabel, a mysterious woman that claims to be the half-sister of Pierre. After that, he decides to marry Isabel and his mother chases him out home and they travel to New York. In the city he earns money writing a book but notices that his mother had died and Lucy and his cousin Glen Stanley had married, inheriting Pierre's house.

Because of a host of things, he kills Glen and, as a consequence, he goes to prison where Lucy and Isabel visit him. Lucy dies in shock when she knows Pierre and Isabel are brothers, after that, Isabel and Pierre drink venom to die as well.

As we can observe, there is a very complex loving triangle between Pierre, Lucy and Isabel. The same happens in *Legends of the Fall* but in this case, the loving triangle is formed by Tristan, Susannah and Isabel. As we know, Tristan marries his cousin Susannah but he abandons her when he decides to travel around the world.

When he returns, he discovers that Susannah is married Alfred, Tristan's brother. Tristan realizes that Isabel II has become a beautiful woman and they fall in love. Susannah and Lucy are very similar because they are well-educated women but abandoned by their lovers, but they do not forget them. Additionally, Susannah and

Lucy decide to marry a relative of Tristan's and Pierre's. Finally, the fate of them is tragic because both of them die: one by suicide and the other in shock.

Tristan and Pierre are the protagonists; they have two women in their lives. They abandon the first woman and marry the second one. Tristan suffers because Susannah has married his brother the same as Pierre does because Lucy has married his cousin. Isabel II and Melville's Isabel marry the respective protagonists and are loved by them.

2.9. Symbolism:

Harrison's images suggest emotions and ideas through images which are showed by means of visual elements and experiences such as animals, numerology and Tristan's voyage. The symbolism of *Legends of the Fall* is very subjective, non-rational and fantastic, depicting the idea of materialism rejected by Harrison. With the use of symbols, the writer wants to find the universal truth and understand the physical world and the spiritual one:

Symbolism, a loosely organized literary and artistic movement that originated with a group of French poets in the late 19th century, spread to painting and the theatre, and influenced the European and American literatures of the 20th century to varying degrees. Symbolist artists sought to express individual emotional experience through the subtle and suggestive use of highly symbolized language.²⁵

2.9.1. Animals:

Many figures are hidden in the novel. One of the most important images are animals. On the one hand, Harrison uses them because they are symbols of power and freedom. In addition, he places the novel in an open space (out-of-doors), so he employs wild animals in order to do the setting more reliable. On the other hand, he probably mentioned these animals because he wanted to identify the personalities of the characters with them;

²⁵ Definition taken from Online Encyclopaedia Britannica < <https://global.britannica.com/art/Symbolism-literary-and-artistic-movement> > (last access 1/07/16)

The bear is a creature of contrasts, as it possesses enormous strength. Because of their habit of hibernation during winter months, bear can stand for resurrection (...) In Jungian psychology; the bear represents danger caused by the uncontrollable contents of the unconscious, and with this is often associated as an attribute of the man who is cruel and crude.²⁶

If we apply this definition to the novel, we might observe that Tristan wants to hunt the bear. This situation is very ambiguous because it could be interpreted in two different ways: Tristan only wants the bear as a trophy of hunting or the protagonist needs to control his unconscious to live in peace and, as a consequence, he has to kill this animal because it represents his unconscious.

The second hypothesis is the most appropriate for the analysis of the symbolism in the book. The author presents some passages in which the image of bear is introduced, as in “this amused Ludlow who secretly favoured Tristan’s misbehaviour even though after the engagement dinner Tristan inexcusably disappeared with One Stab for a week on the track of a grizzly that had taken two cattle” (1994: 200). In this quote, the author explains that the character looks for the bear.



The hunting of bear

The bear does not only appear in the book but also in the movie. It is important to mention that the bear is very essential in the cinematographic adaptation because there

²⁶ Extract from online symbolism dictionary
<<http://www.umich.edu/~umfandsf/symbolismproject/symbolism.html/B/bear.html>> (last access 1/07/16)

is a reference to the animal at the very beginning when the narrative voice says: “every warrior hopes a good death will find him but Tristan couldn’t wait. He went looking for his”²⁷. These are the words that the narrator uses when Tristan looks for the bear to face it. This situation might be understood as the awakening of the animal, that is, the internal animal that everybody possesses in their interior. In the case of Tristan, he awakens his internal animal called unconscious.

In another scene, the first person narrator declares: “but every year, in the moon of the Falling Leaves I would dream that the bear’s voice inside him had grown silent and that Tristan might again come to live in the world”²⁸. These words explain that the voice of the animal is like madness.

But madness is a passing madness because after Tristan’s travel, his personality changes. The change might have been caused by the years of reflection that Tristan had. It is a proof that the protagonist is able to control his internal animal.



The controlled bear

“I don’t know why Tristan did not kill that damn old bear. The old ones say: “when a man and an animal have spilled each other’s blood they become one.”²⁹” These are the words that One Stab says when he discovers where the bear is. Tristan is ready for

²⁷ Quote from *Legends of the Fall*’s script <http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/l/legends-of-the-fall-script.html> (last access 1/0/16)

²⁸ Words extracted from Online *Legends of the Fall*’s script <http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/l/legends-of-the-fall-script.html> (last access 01/07/16)

²⁹ Words extracted from *Legends of the Fall*’s script <http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/l/legends-of-the-fall-script.html> (last access 15/07/16)

shooting the animal but something happens in his mind that stops the killing of the bear. The protagonist probably knows that the animal forms part of the world and without it, the world would not be the same. This world is the mind where there are two individuals: human and animal. Tristan understands that if he kills the animal, he destroys one part of himself.



The understanding between man and animal

At the end of the movie, there is a confrontation between Tristan and the bear. It might be understood as a fight between the strength of conscious and unconscious.



The embrace

If we pay attention to the image, the bear embraces Tristan. This fact could make reference to the power of unconscious over conscious, that is to say, the conscious does not have access to the unconscious but the last one can access to the first one through dreams, lapses and symptoms. This symbolical image is essential to understand that both unconscious and conscious need to be complemented. Unconscious is composed of instincts, desires, impulse, dreams and passion; and it is necessary to live because they form part of our nature. We have to remember that human beings are animals but with thoughts and language:

It is a maternal archetype, and it might also symbolize impulsiveness, impetuosity of desire, the instinctive impulses that motivate man. This association of the horse with a darker man drives, such as virility and sexuality, has been resented by Nietzsche (...). In addition, it is related to air and wind, acting as the mediator between heaven and earth (...). In psychology, it can be the unconscious, subhuman side (...)³⁰

Another important animal is the horse. It appears many times in the book. According to the definition, it represents the unconscious, as the bear does. The choice of the animal is not coincidence because Jim Harrison wanted to portray the function of the hidden part of the mind through animals:

Tristan returned from the short ride in a mood so foul that he tried to break a young stallion that they had had no luck with. It was a tough beefy-looking animal that years later would be referred to as a quarter horse. He intended to breed it to three of his father's thoroughbred mares which Ludlow thought to be an interesting idea, but which Susannah's father, an aficionado of racehorses, thought outrageous (1994: 228)

This symbolism is used to express that our impulsive part is present everywhere. We can control our desires and instincts but we cannot eliminate them.

The wolf is defined as “an evil, the devouring, fierce creature which haunts and stalks. Wolves are crafty and in the Christian faith they are considered the spoilers of the folk.

³⁰ Extract from the Online Symbolism Dictionary
<<http://www.umich.edu/~umfandsf/symbolismproject/symbolism.html/H/horse.html>> (last access 02/07/16)

In psychology, the wolf represents untamed energies”³¹. For Harrison, wolf is the animal that anticipates what will happen in the future when he states that “and a little further on when they all heard the doleful cry of a wolf at midday, they pretended that they had not heard it for the cry at midday was the worst of omens” (1994:196). This quote explains that none of the three brothers wanted to hear the cry of the wolf, so it might be understood as a belief in superstition. It is important to mention that the wolf has bad connotations in many cultures but in the Native American culture, it is a good animal because natives thought that they come from wolves. These wolves transformed into men and natives are the result of this transformation.

In this novel, the image of eagle could represent a sense of nation or the representation of freedom as the definition below explains: “they took lunch as they rode as if to escape the mournful sound and not wanting to sit at the eagle of a glade where the sound might descend on them again” (1994: 196). In this passage, the eagle can be a typical animal of out-of-doors places in America or the freedom that characters won’t reach in their lives:

The eagle is often a solar symbol, and can be linked to all sky gods. It signifies inspiration, release from bondage, victory, longevity, speed, pride, father and royalty (...). In psychology, the eagle is viewed as ‘a mightily winged creature in the heaven of the mind’ (Biederman, 110). Dante has called the eagle of ‘bird of God’, while Jung defines it merely as height.³²

“Tristan shot a deer to the disgust of Samuel who only ate the deer out of instinctive politeness. Alfred, as usual, was ruminative and noncommittal, wondering how One Stab and Tristan could eat so much meat. He preferred beef” (1994:197). This extract is very symbolic because the deer that Tristan eats is not only a question of biological necessity but it has to do more with a question of interpretation. Harrison uses two different animals in this part. On the one hand, the deer that is eaten by Tristan and, on the other hand, the beef, which is consumed by Alfred.

³¹ Idea selected from Online Symbolism Dictionary
<<http://www.umich.edu/~umfandsf/symbolismproject/symbolism.html/W/wolf.html>> (last access 02/07/16)

³² Definition taken from the Online Symbolism Dictionary
<http://www.umich.edu/~umfandsf/symbolismproject/symbolism.html/E/eagle.html> (last access 02/07/16)

In many literary texts, the deer is a symbol of innocence, peace and compassion.³³ For this reason, Tristan needs to feed himself from these feelings because his personality and behaviour is opposite to them.

Nevertheless, Alfred prefers eating beef which is the representation of power and strength, but these senses do not form part of Alfred since he is psychologically a weak person with strong feelings. The author wants to feed the two brothers with the internal feelings that they do not possess in their minds.

Concerning the Buffalo, it is important to remark that it is a symbol of life, blessing, strength, power and abundance. In Native American culture, superstitions are very important because native Americans believe that if a man eats the meat of an animal, he will acquire the powers of this animal:

The most hunting paragraph, though, was a description of buffalo skulls which Ludlow recognized foresaw One Stab's Ghost Dance superstitions and Tristan's boyish passion: "A man who shoots a buffalo and not eat the entire body and make a tent or bed of the skin should himself be shot, including the bone marrow which Stab says restores all health to the human body." (1994:208)

Another relevant animal is the badger, which might have been used with the objective of anticipating the future of Tristan with Isabel II. This animal implies courage, confidence, energy and concentration. When readers finish the book, they acknowledge that Tristan goes back home and sees Isabel II, who is sixteen years old. He falls in love with her and this feeling implies confidence and concentration on a person. Love is a very energetic emotion and courage might make reference to Isabel's:

He watched Isabel, Decker's nine-year-old daughter, named after Ludlow's wife; make her way across the barnyard carrying something. She came through the pump shed and in the kitchen door and the something turned out to be a little badger a few weeks old that Tristan had given her. (1994: 202)

³³ Ideas taken from < <http://www.whats-your-sign.com/cow-animal-symbolism.html>> (last access 02/07/16)

2.9.2. Numerology:

Numerology is another symbolic element in *Legends of the Fall*. But why is numerology so important? According to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*³⁴, numerology is “the use of numbers to interpret a person’s character or to divine the future”. There is a moment in which the narrative voice interprets Tristan’s future with the number seven:

Tristan’s life seemed to be moving through time in increments of seven: and now he was to have seven years of grace, a period so relatively peerless and golden in his life that far into the future he would return back to that time; the minutiae of the book of days, a hieratica relived slowly so that each page was turned with some eagerness. (1994:249-250)

The number seven signifies the number of change, in other words, the end of a cycle and the beginning of the other. This change is present in Tristan’s life when the narrator explains that the protagonist tends to have seven years of bad luck and seven of good luck. It is like a balance that compensates happiness and sadness. This hypothesis makes us think that Tristan is bound to this kind of life. Therefore, the number seven could have religious connotations because it might be the seven days of creation. If Tristan rejected God, God might have punished him for it.

In addition, it is important to mention that autumn starts in September. September means *seven* in Latin. It might be a proof that the number seven is very important in the novel. During this stage, the cycle of seasons changes because summer ends and autumn begins. Autumn is composed by September, October, November and part of December. October coincides with the number ten that means the end of a cycle. In the tenth month, autumn is well-established in nature. November is represented by the number eleven that signifies *time goes by* because the clock shows twelve hours and eleven is the last, time is finishing. It might be observed when the author describes autumn because he wanted to explain that autumn is interpreted by the passing of time. Finally, December is the last month of the year what implicates the end of a cycle.

The number three is also important in the book because when an unpleasant situation happens then, three days always pass: “On the third day of their trip the wind let up and

³⁴ Definition extracted from Encyclopaedia Britannica <http://global.britannica.com/topic/numerology> (last access 02/07/16)

the air warmed, the sun dulled by an autumnal haze” (1994:196-197). This number represents past, present and future; birth, life and death or beginning, middle and end. In addition, it could be related to Christian religion because there are three essential elements in it: The Holy Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Ghost. If readers think about this number, they will realise that three means the third day in which Christ resurrected.

2.9.3. Tristan’s voyage:

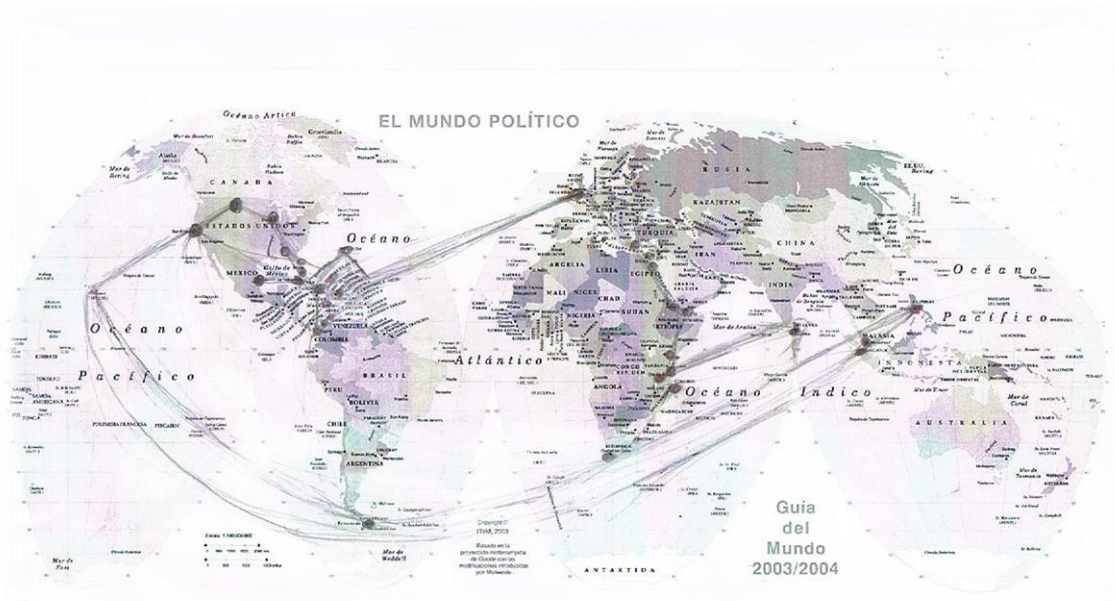
The image of Tristan’s voyage represents the life as a train in which he is anchored: “the voyage never really ended, except as it does for everyone” (1994:229). These words are written at the moment in which Tristan decides to start this relentless voyage. Considered a symbol of reflection in his life, for him, the voyage is necessary to order his life and understand the things that have happened. In this case, it is made by ship, so this image implicates the element of water. “Water popularly represents life (...) Christians are baptized with or in water, symbolizing a purification of the soul, and an admission into the faith (...) Flowing water usually represents change and the passage of time”³⁵.

As mentions above, the voyage represents a change in Tristan’s life; he needs to think about himself and his feelings but this change lasts seven years: “Oddly, and like many men compelled to adventure with no interest in the notion of adventure but only a restlessness of the body and spirit, Tristan did not see anything particularly extraordinary about his past seven years” (1994:248). This fact proves that the voyage is not a wish but a necessity of the protagonist.

The number seven (seven years) shows that Tristan’s cycle goes from seven in seven years as we mentioned before in the passage about numerology. The author enumerates the places which are visited by Tristan. One of the reasons why Harrison decides to put the different places in his writing is due to his good knowledge about Geography. There is a part in which Tristan is defined as “that child crazed with maps” (1994:236). The use of Geography might be used to offer readers a vision of the different sites around

³⁵ Definition from Online Symbolism Dictionary
<http://www.umich.edu/~umfandsf/symbolismproject/symbolism.html/W/water.html> (last access 03/07/16)

the world. However, another reason could be that the author wanted to say something to his readers with the coordinates. If we take a world map and mark the sites mentioned in the novel (Chicago, New Orleans, Mobile, Florida, Key West, Havana, Cabo Antonio, Barranquilla, Windward Channel, Caicos, Gulf Stream, England, Falmouth, Crete, Port Said, Suez Canal, Bab el- Mandeb, Gulf of Aden, Malindi, Mombasa, Nairobi, Singapore, Dar-es- Salaam, Colombo, Malacca, San Francisco, Manila, Hawaii, Cape Horn River Caribbean, Bermuda, Martinique, Cartagena, Isla de Pinos, Dakar, Cape of Good Hope, Mombasa, Zanzibar, Singapore, Manila, Hawaii, San Francisco, Havana, Veracruz),



we realize that the coordinates leads readers to the mountains of Montana. This can be considered a metaphor: although Tristan travels around the world for seven years, the memory of Montana is always present in his mind because men cannot avoid memories.

3. Conclusions:

After the analysis of Jim Harrison's *Legends of the Fall*, several conclusions can be drawn:

First of all, it is difficult to define freedom due to its inherent complexity. There are diverse ways in which it can be represented depending on the relative perspective of characters. In contrast, the writer places the main character on the scene as a victim of the historical events, being the literary women the origin of his misfortune. This is the reason why the work is full of misogynistic connotations using mythological images such as Medusa, Pandora, the Bacchantes and the Furies in order to portrait them as curses for men. Furthermore, Harrison conceives freedom as a psychological condition that leads Tristan to the existentialist universe in which Samuel's death transforms his life into cruelty. This cruelty or decadence is symbolized in the moment that the author describes the autumn season where things progressively wither. This conception of season is considered as the life cycle where the pass of time is inevitable for the characters and death is not controlled by Tristan, and consequently, by nobody.

For Harrison, it is evident that literature is freedom, and the latter, a means of expressing without fears and limitations. If we apply this approach of freedom as a way of expression to other fields such as Didactics, it is possible to reinforce its importance because by means of freedom we can open horizons in the way we teach our students. In this respect, by allowing our students to feel free to reflect on the process of learning and make mistakes, we can make them learn on their own and create their own education as active protagonists.

The idea of freedom also constitutes and justifies the coexistence of two worlds: the civilization and the ranch. Whereas Tristan reincarnates freedom through the image of the ranch, civilization represents oppression with the example of his brother Alfred who wants to get access to the American Government. It is also remarkable that Harrison's invites readers to sympathize with native Americans, who are portrayed as free individuals, and who help Harrison develop the idea of American identity through them.

Other important aspect derives from the conflict between freedom and oppression which are portrayed in the novel like the internal battle between unconsciousness and consciousness of Tristan where the former prevails over the latter, in order words,

unconsciousness, represented in the figure of a bear, manages to defeat Tristan, who is an image of consciousness.

After this exhaustive analysis, the reader of *Legends of the Fall* may then still wonder if it is their love for their brother what actually leads Alfred and Tristan to their fatal end or if they are in fact condemned to that kind of suffering from the beginning of the story as a consequence of external factors, or even fate, as we have suggested in this analysis.

4. Bibliography:

Adamson, L.1998. *Literary connections to American History*. Eaglewood: Libraries Unlimited.

Bird, G. 2008. *The Cheyenne Indians: History and Life Ways*. Lincoln & London: World Wisdom.

Blamires, H. 1984. *A short history of English Literature*. London: Routledge.

Breidlid, A; Chr. Brogger, F, Guilliksen, O & Sirenay, T. 1996. *American Culture: An Anthology of civilization texts*. London & New York: Routledge.

Case, A. 2014. “You are your life, and nothing else” in Zan Boag’s. (ed.). *New Philosopher*. Australia: The Bull Publishing.

Corse, S.1997. *Nationalism and Literature: The Politics of Nationalism in Canada and the United States*. Cambridge: University Press.

DeMott, R. (ed.). 2002. *Conversations with Jim Harrison*. University Press of Mississippi: Mississippi.

De Torre, G. 1968. *Ultraísmo, existencialismo y objetivismo en literatura*. Madrid: Guadarrama, D.L.

Harrison, J. 1994. *Legends of the Fall*. New York: Delta.

Harrison, J. 1996. *Leyendas de Pasión*. Barcelona: Ediciones B, S. A.

Herbert, T.W. 1980. *Marquesan Encounters: Melville and the Meaning of Civilization*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.

Hernández de López, A. M. 1997. *Narrativa hispanoamericana contemporánea: entre la vanguardia y el posboom*. Madrid: Pliegos.

Hesiod.1914. The Homeric Hymns and Homerica in Hugh's G. Evelyn-White. (ed.). *Works and Days*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.

Huntington, S. 1992. "The Clash of Civilizations" in Gideon Rose's (ed.). *Foreign Affairs*. U.S: Council on Foreign Relations.

Lara, A. 1980. "Espacio, lugar y tiempo en la lírica de Antonio Machado". *Homenaje a Machado*. Málaga: Diputación.

Mazlish, B. 2004. *Civilizations and its contents*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

McBride, W.L. (ed.) 1997. *Sartre and Existentialism*. New York & London: Garland Publishing, Inc.

Pearce, R. H. 1988. *Savagism and Civilization: A Study of the Indian and the American Mind*. California: University of California Press.

Shaw, D. L. 2008. *Nueva narrativa hispanoamericana*. Madrid: Cátedra.

Smith, A.D. 2010. *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology and History*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Steiner, R. 1988. *Necessity and Freedom*. United States of America: Anthroposophic Press.

Steiner, R. 2011. *The Philosophy of Freedom: The Basis for a Modern World Conception*. U.K : Steiner Press.

Tecumseh.1996 [1811]. "We all belong to One Family". In *American Culture: An Anthology*, ed. Anders Breidilid et al. New York: Routledge.

The Holy Bible. 1999. New York: American Bible Society.

Trousseau, R. 2000. *Jean-Jacques Rousseau*. Sobornne: Presses de l' Université de Paris.