

THE FIGURE IN THE GALLERY:
Hawthorne's The Marble Faun as a
Modular Influence on James's Development of the
International Novel culminating in The Portrait of a Lady

Katherine L. Morrison

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the literary relationship between Nathaniel Hawthorne's last novel, The Marble Faun (1860), and Henry James's first three international novels; Roderick Hudson (1875), The American (1877), and The Portrait of a Lady (1881). The Introduction mentions some relevant historical facts and lists the principal critical works in this field. It also sets out the three areas in which these four novels are compared: the theme of the fall of man, the technical blending of the American romance form with nineteenth century realism, and the metaphoric use of art objects and historic settings.

The chapter on The Marble Faun examines some of the results of Hawthorne's only attempt to set a romance in cultural surroundings with which he was unfamiliar. An examination is made of some of the difficulties that Hawthorne encounters by attaching excess symbolic meaning to settings that actually exist in Rome and by attempts to combine romance and realism in his characterizations. Hawthorne's lack of understanding of traditional European institutions and some unfortunate attempts to enrich his characterizations by the metaphoric use of art objects is

also noted.

Chapter III offers a detailed comparison of the four principal characters in Roderick Hudson with those in The Marble Faun. In addition, an examination is made into the way in which James makes symbolic use of Italian settings and the way in which Roderick's dramatic rise and fall is defined by his own sculptures.

The Chapter on The American is chiefly concerned with James's first major attempt to deal in depth with an institutionalized European family. Evidence is offered suggesting that James overreacted to Hawthorne's apparent inability to understand the nature of such families. It is further noted that some of James's Europeans recall characters from The Marble Faun and that the symbolic use of historic settings is amplified. James begins to use art as a metaphor for a life style in The American.

Chapter V is primarily concerned with the extensive role of art in The Portrait of a Lady. Aspects of the character of Hawthorne's Hilda can frequently be seen in James's Isabel Archer and both novels make fairly explicit use of the theme of the fall. Particular attention is paid to the skill that James has now developed in the use of metaphor.

Chapter VI recalls the three areas in which the four

novels are compared and concludes that Hawthorne's attempt to set a novel in a foreign country, as well as the novel itself, gave James a particularly deep insight into the nature of American "innocence."

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"It's a complex fate, being an American," wrote Henry James to Charles Eliot Norton on February 4, 1872, "and one of the responsibilities it entails is fighting against a superstitious valuation of Europe."¹ During the decade from 1871 to 1881, James became particularly aware of the complexities faced by an American in Europe and of the need to express those complexities in his fiction, for during that time he moved permanently from America to Europe and completed the first major phase of his writing career. In this early period, which he called the period of the "international subject,"² James published five novels plus numerous short stories, travel pieces and critical commentaries. Among the critical commentaries are James's first published article on Nathaniel Hawthorne--a review of The French and Italian Notebooks, published in The Nation

¹Cited by Peter Buitenhuis, "Henry James on Hawthorne," New England Quarterly, XXXII (June, 1959), 207.

²F. W. Dupee, Henry James (New York, 1951), p. 81.

(March, 1872)--and James's critical biography of Hawthorne for the English Men of Letters Series (1879).

In his early review of The French and Italian Notebooks, James finds Hawthorne "uninformed, incurious and inappreciative" of France and Italy, but in spite of this exasperation with the narrowness of Hawthorne's vision, James admires Hawthorne's strong national flavour and his loyalty to America.³ These were qualities that James himself was currently seeking and finding unattainable. Seven years later, when he wrote the biography, James's attitude had softened only slightly. T. S. Eliot says that the most conspicuous quality of the book is tenderness, but the tone is disapproving, and Buitenhuis had gone so far as to call it patronizing.⁴ It seems quite obvious that while he was deeply interested in what Hawthorne had attempted to do, James felt that he could do it better.

There are so many aspects of James's work that are reminiscent of Hawthorne's, and James's writings are so extensive, that a thesis on this relationship must necessarily

³Henry James, "Hawthorne's French and Italian Notebooks," The Nation, XIV (March, 1872), 172.

⁴T. S. Eliot, "The Hawthorne Aspect," The Little Review, V (August, 1918), 49; Buitenhuis, "Henry James on Hawthorne," 211.

be selective. The Marble Faun (1860), and James's first three international novels: Roderick Hudson (1875), The American (1877), and The Portrait of a Lady (1881) contain many common themes, which collectively illustrate what is known as the "international theme."⁵ These four novels can be said to represent a core of the relationship, the larger framework of which extends from The Scarlet Letter to The Golden Bowl. Hawthorne's ending to The Scarlet Letter, the turning of young Pearl into an heiress who returns to Europe and a brilliant marital career, sets the stage for the international theme, or the story of the American returning to the setting and culture of the Old

⁵Oscar Cargill offers the following definition of an international novel:

"An international novel is one in which a character, usually guided in his actions by the mores of one environment, is set down in another, where his learned reflexes are of no use to him, where he must employ all his individual resources to meet successive situations, and where he must intelligently accommodate himself to the new mores, or, in one way or another, be destroyed." "The First International Novel," PMLA, LXXIII (September, 1958), 419.

Cargill calls James's second novel, The American, the first international novel, because in it James deliberately sets out to contrast national types. According to Cargill's definition, The Marble Faun and Roderick Hudson do not qualify as international novels. Although I find Cargill's definition a useful one, some designation which includes those fictions on an international theme which preceded The American is necessary for this thesis. All four novels under discussion will be referred to occasionally as international novels.

World. Hawthorne completed only one novel dealing with this theme, The Marble Faun, which, in spite of serious artistic limitations, represents a major landmark in American fiction.⁶ James began treating the international theme in his short stories about a decade after the publication of The Marble Faun,⁷ and developed it throughout his early phase. Later he retrieved the theme for the three great novels of what is usually designated his major phase--The Ambassadors (1902), The Wings of the Dove (1903) and The Golden Bowl (1904). Although a few of James's fictional Americans who travel to Europe are men, females become steadily more significant. This study concludes with Isabel Archer, whose activities may be viewed as completing the first turn of a cycle inaugurated by Pearl, while setting the stage for James's last great heroines, Milly Theale and Maggie Verver.

⁶R. W. B. Lewis claims that this novel "had to be written if young [American] Literature was to mature." The American Adam (The University of Chicago Press, 1955), p. 122.

⁷James speaks of three of his early stories with an international theme--"A Passionate Pilgrim" (1870), "The Madonna of the Future" (1872), and "Madame de Mauvres" (1874)--as "sops instinctively thrown to the international Cerberus formidably posted where I doubtless then didn't quite make him out." The Art of the Novel (New York, 1934), p. 194.

The link between Hawthorne and James has been recognized by critics and historians of American literature since early in James's career. Hawthorne's novels were important reading matter in the James household and Henry James senior was personally acquainted with Hawthorne. William James commented on the similarity in style of the two authors after reading The House of the Seven Gables, and in 1918, T. S. Eliot wrote an article commemorating Henry James which he entitled, "The Hawthorne Aspect."⁸ F. O. Matthiessen devotes a chapter in his book American Renaissance (1941) to the subject, and makes the interesting statement that "James's technical development was a direct response to his sense of Hawthorne's limitations."⁹ Another interesting feature of the relationship is noted by Alexander Cowie in The Rise of the American Novel (1948). Cowie claims that Hawthorne was the only American influence on James who, on the whole, paid little attention to such writers as Melville, Poe and Mark Twain and sought as his mentors European novelists like George Eliot, George Sand,

⁸Eliot, "The Hawthorne Aspect," 49-51.

⁹F. O. Matthiessen, American Renaissance (Oxford University Press, 1941), p. 298.

Balzac and Turgenev.¹⁰ In his book Image and Idea (1949), Philip Rahv has two essays, one dealing with Hawthorne and one with James, in which he concentrates on character types and points to some Hawthorne characters who are ancestors of a number of James's most noteworthy characters.¹¹ Marius Bewley's book, The Complex Fate (1952), contains the most complete analysis that has yet been written of the relationship between Hawthorne and James.¹² Five chapters are devoted to the subject, two of which offer a detailed comparison of The Blithdale Romance with The Bostonians, and of The Marble Faun with The Wings of the Dove. More recent critical commentary has come from Peter Buitenhuis, in the above mentioned 1959 article, "Henry James on Hawthorne," and in his book, The Grasping Imagination (1970).¹³ In recent years, a number of critical articles

¹⁰A. Cowie, The Rise of the American Novel (New York, 1948), pp.703-704. Cowie is not strictly accurate for there is some evidence of Poe being an influence. Harry Levin states that there is a direct reference to The Narrative of A. Gordon Pym in The Golden Bowl. The Power of Blackness (New York, 1958), p. 124. Furthermore, Poe's influence on the Art for Art's Sake school of French writers must have been very familiar to James, for this school was flourishing during the year James lived in Paris, 1875-76.

¹¹p. Rahv, "The Dark Lady of Salem" and "The Heiress of all the Ages," Image and Idea (Norfolk, Conn., 1949), pp. 22-40, 42-62.

¹²M. Bewley, The Complex Fate (London, 1952), pp.1-114.

¹³p. Buitenhuis, The Grasping Imagination (University of Toronto Press, 1970), pp. 38-44.

have expanded on various aspects of the relationship between the two authors.¹⁴

The relationship between Hawthorne and James is somewhat distinct from the usual case of one author influencing another.¹⁵ James did not particularly like Hawthorne's style of writing, especially his use of allegory, which he considered "one of the lighter exercises of the imagination."¹⁶ Hawthorne considered himself a romancer and though James made a few minor attempts to write a romance in Hawthorne's style, he abandoned the attempt very early and moved increasingly in the direction of realism.¹⁷ The things that James did admire about Hawthorne were his grasp on the New England consciousness,

¹⁴Recent articles that are particularly significant for this study are: Annette K. Baxter, "Independence vs. Isolation: Hawthorne and James on the Problem of the Artist," Nineteenth Century Fiction, X (December, 1955), 225-231; Jay Bochner, "Life in a Picture Gallery: Things in the Portrait of a Lady and The Marble Faun," Texas Studies in Literature and Language, XI (Spring, 1969), 761-777; Quentin G. Kraft, "The Problem of James's Fictional Thought: From The Scarlet Letter to Roderick Hudson," ELH, XXXVI (June, 1969), 416-439; and S. E. Marovitz, "Roderick Hudson: James's Marble Faun," Texas Studies in Literature and Language, XI (Winter, 1970), 1437-1443.

¹⁵Eliot notes that "there are certain writers whom he [James] consciously studied, of whom Hawthorne was not one." "The Hawthorne Aspect," 49.

¹⁶Henry James, Hawthorne (1879, rpt. Cornell University Press, 1956), p. 49.

¹⁷See James's early short stories: "The Story of a Masterpiece" (1868), "The Romance of Certain Old Clothes" (1868) and "De Grey: a Romance" (1869).

some of his characterizations and certain ideas and themes which crop up frequently in Hawthorne's writings. James used some of these ideas in his own fiction, and although he did not think that Hawthorne had developed his characters or his themes adequately, James paid tribute to Hawthorne as a man with a very superior imagination.¹⁸ Ultimately James blamed most of Hawthorne's failures as a creative writer on the narrowness of the New England cultural milieu.

To sum up, it has become a critical commonplace that James began where Hawthorne left off. With his superior education and broader background, James was able to achieve an artistic success with the international theme for which Hawthorne provided the blueprint, but for which he lacked the worldly experience.

The international theme is not, in itself, sufficient grounds for establishing a meaningful relationship between Hawthorne and James, for they were not the only nineteenth century writers who were drawn toward the international novel.¹⁹ There are three major and related areas, thematic

¹⁸Hawthorne, p. 49.

¹⁹See Christof Wegelin, "The Rise of the International Novel," PMLA, LXXVII (June, 1962), 305-310.

and technical, in which the four novels under discussion can effectively be compared: there is a concern for the theme of the fall of man; technically, all show an attempted broadening of the novel form by a blending of romance and realism; and all display a metaphoric use of works of art and European settings to add particular significance to characters and situations.

The fall of man theme is present in all four novels, the first two of which contain a literal fall over a cliff as well as a metaphoric "fall from innocence." All of the principal Americans in the four novels are 'innocent' in the sense of being unequipped to recognize or come to terms with the evil engendered by a complex society. Their innocence consists of a lack of experience, never a deficiency of intellect. In The Marble Faun, Hawthorne uses a European to represent an archetypal Adam whose 'fall' is associated with an act of violence. A somewhat similar European "innocent" appears in The American.

Most of the Americans in these four novels are, we might say, graduates of the Boston school of Transcendentalism. Neither Hawthorne nor James agreed with the essential optimism of the Transcendentalists or with their belief that man is naturally good and can live a life of happiness and freedom cut off from ties to the past, but there can be little doubt that Hawthorne understood the Transcendentalists and had a

much firmer grip on the New England consciousness than James.²⁰ Hawthorne knew both Emerson and Thoreau and participated in the Transcendentalists most tangible act, the Brook Farm experiment. James, a generation later, was not directly involved, although his father had known Emerson and had been very much a part of the pre-Civil War moral milieu. The views of Emerson and the Transcendentalists, an American version of European romanticism²¹--together with the famous "New England conscience"--constitute the primary distinguishing characteristics of almost all of the Americans in these four novels.

A number of minor themes that are an integral part of the fall of man theme are present in all four novels. There is always a femme fatale, or temptress, who, at some point in the novel, takes on the role of both Eve and the serpent; each novel has a Hawthorne type of villain or a pair of villains who manipulate others; and there is always

²⁰According to T. S. Eliot: "In one thing alone Hawthorne is more solid than James: he had a very acute historical sense. His erudition in the small field of American colonial history was extensive and he made most fortunate use of it." "The Hawthorne Aspect," 50.

²¹Transcendentalism's insistence upon the natural goodness of the free human spirit has caused R. W. B. Lewis, among others, to refer to it as "puritanism turned upside down." The American Adam, p. 23.

a sin from the past, revealed climactically, which provides a motive for evil or unwise actions. These melodramatic aspects, which occur frequently in nineteenth century fiction and drama, are used comparatively crudely in these novels. James's later novels blur or completely abolish these aspects, as he moves away from melodrama towards the psychological orientation which characterizes the twentieth century novel.

It is because romance and realism are so poorly blended in The Marble Faun that the novel can be considered Hawthorne's poorest fictional achievement. Roy Harvey Pearce argues that the traditional American romance form failed Hawthorne when he attempted to use it as a vehicle for the international theme.²² James had little taste for the American romance form, but he made excellent use of romance elements to broaden and to metaphorically enrich his 'realistic' novels. Chase's contention that "a part of James's great program for improving the novel consisted of the reconstitution, on new ground, of romance," can be studied in James's first three international novels,²³ where

²²R. H. Pearce, Historicism Once More (Princeton University Press, 1969), pp. 175-199.

²³Richard Chase, The American Novel and Its Tradition (New York, 1957), p. 119.

romance and realism can often be considered as analagous to innocence and experience.

The metaphoric use of art objects and historic settings, which suggested the title of this thesis, is a final area in which a skillful development of novelistic techniques can be seen to take place. It can be understood as subsuming the fall of man theme and the romance-realism relationship. Art is particularly appropriate as a primary image in an international novel, because art objects, with their traditional associations, were conspicuously absent from nineteenth century America. Under these circumstances, art objects become the apple of temptation for our innocent Americans; the fruit of an ancient and complex civilization, and closely related to the theme of the fall.

CHAPTER II

THE MARBLE FAUN

In his "Preface" to The House of the Seven Gables, Hawthorne distinguishes between a novel and a romance. The novel, he says: "is presumed to aim at a very minute fidelity, not merely to the possible, but to the probable and ordinary course of man's experience." On the other hand, the romance: "while, as a work of art, it must rigidly subject itself to laws, and while it sins unpardonably so far as it may swerve aside from the truth of the human heart--has fairly a right to present that truth under circumstances, to a great extent, of the writer's own choosing or creation."¹ In this same "Preface," Hawthorne notes that it is unwise to relate a romance to an actual locality:

The reader may choose to assign an actual locality to the imaginary events of this narrative. If permitted by the historical connection ... the author would very willingly have avoided anything of this nature. Not to speak of other objections,

¹Nathaniel Hawthorne, The House of the Seven Gables, Vol. II of The Centenary Edition of the Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne (5 vols.; Ohio State University Press, 1962-70), p. 1. Subsequent references to Hawthorne's novels are to this edition and will appear in parenthesis within the text.

it exposes the romance to an inflexible and exceedingly dangerous species of criticism, by bringing his fancy pictures almost into positive contact with the realities of the moment. (II. 3)

Hawthorne either forgot this bit of wisdom or felt that it didn't apply in Italy, for in the "Preface" to The Marble Faun he says:

Italy as the site of his [the author's] romance, was chiefly valuable to him as affording a sort of poetic or fairy precinct, where actualities would not be so terribly insisted upon as they are, and must needs be, in America. (IV. 3)

In The Marble Faun Hawthorne brings his romance into positive contact with a realistic setting, for almost every scene takes place in an actual locality in Italy. Henry James describes the results of this superimposition of romance material on a realistic setting;

The fault of Transformation [The Marble Faun] is that the element of the unreal is pushed too far and that the book is neither positively of one category nor of another. ... The action wavers between the streets of Rome, whose literal features the author perpetually sketches, and a vague realm of fancy, in which quite a different verisimilitude prevails.²

Hawthorne's combination of a "vague realm of fancy" and the realities of the Italian setting is considered by a

²Hawthorne, p. 134.

number of critics the basis for the generally held view that the book is an artistic failure.³ Yet Hawthorne's results are not necessarily inimical to the romance as a form and are by no means consistently bad. When they are bad it is usually for one of two reasons. Either Hawthorne has assigned so much symbolism to a setting that the result is a fictional setting which clashes with the setting as it actually exists in Rome, or the actions of certain characters may fail to accord with the national or allegorical roles assigned to them.

In the international novel as it was developed by Henry James, European settings are of the utmost importance in symbolizing the ever present influence of the past, the common stem from which the two cultures have sprung. Hawthorne achieves some excellent and dramatic results when he uses his settings for this purpose, but when he insists on loading a setting with excess symbolic meaning the results are less satisfactory. One example

³See especially: Murray Krieger, "Afterward" to The Marble Faun (New York, 1961), p. 340. Roy Harvey Pearce, Historicism Once More (Princeton University Press, 1969), pp. 180-182; and Jay Bochner, "Life in a Picture Gallery: Things in The Marble Faun and The Portrait of a Lady," Texas Studies in Literature and Language, XI (Spring, 1969), 70-72. One who disagrees with this view is Gary Scrimgeour, "The Marble Faun: Hawthorne's Fairyland," American Literature, 36 (November, 1964), 273.

in the latter category is Hilda's tower. In the novel, Hilda resides in a tower which contains a shrine to the Virgin with an eternal flame. Hilda lives at the top of this tower, tends the eternal flame, wears a white dress, sleeps in a white bed, and befriends a flock of white doves. Near the end of the book Hilda allows the light to go out before the Virgin's shrine, and, as Bochner notes: "we are indeed surprised that the house does not fall, as by all moral and symbolic worlds it should."⁴ The tower, of course, with its eternal flame, really exists and any visitor to Rome can report that it is still standing. With so much symbolic significance added by the author, it would seem to be of considerable importance that the tower exist only in the novel.

A setting which Hawthorne allows to speak for itself and which is used with excellent effect is the Coliseum. Shortly before the "fall," a group of young American artists visit the Coliseum at night. In this scene a number of contrasts are effectively suggested. There is a dark and light contrast achieved by the combination of night, shadow and startling effects of moonlight; there is a gaily-seriousness contrast in the juxtaposition of the young revelers with

⁴"Life in a Picture Gallery," 70.

Miriam's model attempting to pray at the stations of the cross; and there is an ironic juxtaposition of freedom and slavery as is shown by the sense of liberty displayed by the young Americans in this place where other human beings were thrown to the lions. The sense of the past, particularly the violence of the pagan past, lends an appropriately ominous note to this evening of gaiety which will end in disaster. Few settings in Rome, not to mention the city itself, could be more fitting for an international theme and in both Roderick Hudson and The Portrait of a Lady, where the main action takes place in Rome, there are significant scenes in the Coliseum.

The scene in the Coliseum is followed by the dramatic scene at the Tarpeian Rock, believed to be the site of countless executions in the days of the Roman Empire, and the setting is again one of darkness contrasted with startling effects of moonlight. In this scene Donatello, in response to a look in Miriam's eyes which he interprets as an appeal for help, murders her model by hurling him over the cliff.

The association of good and evil with the darkness or lightness of a setting is a feature that is present in all of Hawthorne's novels. The whiteness of Hilda and her elevated abode suggest goodness, purity and a heavenly simplicity. Two dark settings that are effectively

associated with evil are the catacombs and the Cemetary of the Cappuccini. In the Catacombs Miriam encounters the man who is to become her model and tormentor, her former fiancé with whom she shares a mysterious and apparently sinful past. It is a reunion with evil in the darkness of a place fraught with religious and historical significance. Similarly, during their visit to the Cemetary of the Cappuccini--a place of unquiet graves--Miriam and Donatello become aware of the full magnitude of the crime that they have committed. Their sin cannot be buried with the dead model--it will rise again and remain with them, perhaps forever. Both of these scenes in dark underground localities are associated with a sin that has already been committed and both introduce guilt into the story--the primary cause of unhappiness in most of Hawthorne's novels.

The second reason suggested for Hawthorne's occasional failure to combine romance and realism effectively is that the actions of the characters often fail to accord with their assigned national or allegorical roles. All of the characters have allegorical as well as human roles and sometimes the two roles cannot be reconciled. Miriam and Donatello do not display actions or traits normally associated with Italian Catholics, and this is one reason why The Marble Faun does not qualify as an international novel according to Oscar Cargill.⁵ Hawthorne tells us in his "Preface" that he "did not

⁵See page 3, note 5.

purpose attempting a portraiture of Italian manners and character," (IV. 3) but moral decisions are central to the meaning of The Marble Faun and such questions as atonement for past sins and obedience to those in authority are apt to be handled differently by Catholics and Protestants or by Italians and New Englanders.

Considerable confusion exists in The Marble Faun between symbols of Heaven and symbols of Eden or the Golden Age. Donatello represents Adam before and after the fall, and his home at Monte Beni is a post-lapsarian Eden, in all of its simplicity, while still preserving reminiscences of its pre-fallen state. Donatello is never associated with divinity. Hilda and her tower, however, symbolize a heavenly perspective which should provide a resolution for the complexity of Rome, but instead merely rejects it.⁶ Hilda appears to be living in an un-fallen state which she defends against all sinners, if not all humanity, with her "sharp steel sword" of innocence, (IV. 66) a metaphor that is twice applied to her. Hawthorne associates her with the Virgin Mary, the archetypal symbol of love and sympathy, and the constant stressing of her purity and her white and elevated surroundings suggests a comparison to an angel.

⁶Richard Harter Fogle, Hawthorne's Fiction: The Light and the Dark (University of Oklahoma Press, 1952), pp. 196-198.

If this is the case, what are we to make of the following description of Hilda walking alone in the streets of Rome:

With respect to whatever was evil, foul and ugly in this populous and corrupt city, she trod as if invisible, and not only so, but blind. She was altogether unconscious of anything wicked that went along the same pathway, but without jostling or impeding her, any more than gross substance hinders the wanderings of a spirit. Thus it is that, bad as the world is said to have grown, innocence continues to make a paradise around itself, and keep it still unfallen.
(IV. 387)

As an allegorical representation of purity or goodness that comes out looking more like unfallen innocence, Hilda remains constant throughout the novel. Hawthorne also wants her to appear human, however, and in this role she does change, undergoing a metaphorical "fall" which makes her a more tender and sympathetic human being. Hilda's allegorical role and her role as human represent an unfortunate combination of romance and realism. For the reader to accept her in one role almost precludes accepting her in the other.

A 1956 article by Merle E. Brown, entitled, "The Structure of The Marble Faun," suggests a central motif of transformation, repeated four times with each of the four main characters.⁷ Brown claims that they all "fall" or go

⁷Merle E. Brown, "The Structure of The Marble Faun," American Literature, XXVIII (November, 1956), 302-313.

through a process of transformation from a state of innocence to one of adult responsibility. A refutation by Sheldon W. Liebman appeared in 1967, claiming that Miriam and Hilda are never actually transformed; that Miriam represents understanding toward which Donatello moves and Hilda represents comparative ignorance toward which Kenyon moves.⁸ This argument is not entirely convincing either, for a careful reading of the novel indicates that all four characters become more human as they learn to accept adult responsibilities. The change is not very great in the case of the American couple and is far from balancing the change in the Italian couple; except that, as Sidney P. Moss claims, Donatello falls down and Hilda falls up and they meet on human ground.⁹ Moss points out that the results of Hilda's "just severity" are the same as Ethan Brand's unforgiveable sin; estrangement from and pitilessness toward humanity.¹⁰ Hawthorne claims repeatedly that it is a sin to cut oneself off from one's fellow man and the result of Hilda's rejection

⁸Sheldon W. Liebman, "The Design of The Marble Faun," New England Quarterly, XL (March, 1967), 61-78.

⁹Sidney P. Moss, "The Problem of Theme in The Marble Faun," Nineteenth Century Fiction, XVIII (March, 1964), 397.

¹⁰Ibid., 396.

of Miriam is a degree of isolation experienced by only a few of Hawthorne's characters. To live without friends is easy for Hilda as long as she has her Old Masters, but when she loses contact with them, Hilda is truly alone and this she cannot endure. In her role as a human being, Hilda "falls" when she rejects Miriam and the result is exactly the same as the result of Donatello's fall--a tormented isolation. When she steps into the confessional she begins her movement back toward humanity, as does Donatello when he joins Miriam under the statue of Pope Julius III.

Donatello's crime is committed by a being who is more child, or animal, than man; it is committed in a moment of passion to protect a loved one; and the victim is little more than an allegorical representation of evil. After the murder Donatello becomes a mature and fairly admirable adult, much improved over his former childlike state. All of this Hawthorne would have been prepared to concede, but he would not go a step beyond this and agree to the felix culpa concept for two obvious reasons. First, as Edward Wagenknecht has pointed out, "In Hawthorne's morality, it is impious to put oneself into the place of God."¹¹ Man cannot make such decisions. Secondly, to

¹¹Edward Wagenknecht, Nathaniel Hawthorne: Man and Writer (Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 191.

agree to the felix culpa concept is, at least, to imply that sinning is a good idea. Hilda expresses the problem and here she is probably speaking for the author. There is considerable wisdom in what she says:

Do not you perceive what a mockery your creed makes, not only of all religious sentiments, but of moral law - and how it annuls and obliterates whatever precepts of Heaven are written deepest within us? (IV. 460)

Donatello's crime may have had good results, but Hawthorne would never recommend an evil action to bring about a good result. What is strongly implied, however, is that innocence is not an unmixed blessing, and innocence attempting to operate in a fallen world can bring evil results. We see this both in the story of Donatello and the story of Hilda and the point should be borne in mind for Henry James makes widespread use of it. Indeed, it may be a clue to James's admiration of the characterization of Hilda--"one of those things that mark the man of genius"¹²--when most critics have found the character of Hilda one of the most unacceptable features of the novel.

Hilda calls herself a "daughter of the Puritans," (IV. 212) but Hawthorne might have been more accurate if he had called her a daughter of the Transcendentalists.

¹²Hawthorne p. 133.

It is doubtful if the Puritans would have approved of the following dialogue between Miriam and Kenyon in which Kenyon defends Hilda for rejecting Miriam:

... the white shining purity of Hilda's nature is a thing apart; and she is bound by the undefiled material of which God molded her, to keep that severity which I as well as you, have recognized. "Oh, you are right," said Miriam, "I never questioned it." (IV. 287)

The Puritans found evil a very real and terrible force in the world and expected every man to wrestle with the evil within himself. Although a very few were chosen by God for salvation and then received a direct infusion from Him, no human was ever created by God out of undefiled material. It was nineteenth century Transcendentalism that saw the world and man as essentially good.¹³ In order to achieve maximum goodness, the Transcendentalists recommended the breaking of social and institutional ties, particularly historical and traditional ones, and getting close to nature in order to make better contact with God, the Universal Spirit or the Oversoul, as Emerson called it. Very strict social ties were the Puritans most effective means of keeping man's evil nature in check, and for a man to

¹³James calls Transcendentalism "that remarkable outburst of Romanticism on Puritan ground." Henry James, Selected Literary Criticism, ed. by Morris Shapira (Harmondsworth, England, 1968), p. 112.

seek isolation was to run the risk of letting in the devil. On first coming to Rome, Hilda seeks a life of comparative isolation, being largely content to associate with Renaissance paintings. This isn't exactly nature, but neither does it encompass social and institutional ties, and she certainly makes contact with some kind of universal spirit in her ability to "get inside" the mind of an Old Master. Until the matter is forcibly brought home to her, Hilda scarcely recognizes that evil exists in the world and her faith in the goodness of God appears to be matched only by her faith in her own goodness. Hilda never considers the possibility of evil within herself.

Hilda's ideas, and most of Kenyon's, are Emersonian in their faith in the natural goodness of the free human spirit, and this faith becomes the distinguishing mark of all of James's American heroes and heroines. In his 1887 essay on Emerson, James describes Emerson and his New England milieu in terms which suggest both Hilda and Kenyon as well as James's own Americans:

The plain, God-fearing, practical society which surrounded him was not fertile in variations: it had great intelligence and energy, but it moved altogether in the straightforward direction. On three occasions later--three journeys to Europe--he was introduced to a more complicated world; but his spirit, his moral taste, as it were, abode always within the undecorated walls of his youth. There he could dwell with that ripe unconsciousness of evil which is one of the most beautiful signs by

which we know him.... He knows the nature of man and the long tradition of its dangers; but we feel that whereas he can put his finger on the remedies, lying for the most part, as they do, in the deep recesses of virtue, of the spirit, he has only a kind of hearsay, uninformed acquaintance with the disorders.¹⁴

Interestingly enough, James contrasts Emerson and Hawthorne in their attitudes towards evil:

It was a rare accident that made them live almost side by side so long in the same small New England town, each a fruit of a long Puritan stem, yet with such a difference of taste. Hawthorne's vision was all for the evil and sin of the world; a side of life as to which Emerson's eyes were thickly bandaged.¹⁵

James's words are further indication that Hawthorne did not approve of Hilda's rigid morality; that he did intend to indicate a "fall," the results of which leave her a softer and more sympathetic human.

A more likely candidate than Hilda for the role of "daughter of the Puritans" is Hawthorne's Italian "dark lady" and the novel's femme fatale, Miriam.¹⁶ Miriam is

¹⁴Selected Literary Criticism, pp. 101-102.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 116.

¹⁶In Philip Rahv's well-known essay, "The Dark Lady of Salem," the Hawthorne character type of which Miriam is the fourth example is described in detail. Of her four predecessors, Beatrice Rappaccini, Hester Prynne and Zenobia, Miriam is closest to Hester because they both have a sense of guilt which influences their actions. Other evidence being absent, Miriam's similarity to Hester would mark her as more of a Puritan than an Italian Catholic. Image and Idea, pp. 22-40.

presented to the reader as beautiful, intelligent, independent and strong-minded, but with an obscure background and an air of mental torment. Early in the novel Miriam visits Hilda in her tower and becomes highly emotional over a copy of Guido's portrait of Beatrice Cenci that Hilda is just completing. "I would give my life to know whether she thought herself innocent, or the one great criminal since time began" (IV.88), says Miriam, and Hilda notices a sudden resemblance between Miriam and Beatrice. Some critics deduce from this, plus the fact that Miriam's family seems to be connected to the Palazzo Cenci, that Miriam's obscure background involves incest and/or parricide.¹⁷ This may be, but what is more certain is that Miriam shows inordinate concern over questions of innocence and guilt. Later in the novel and also during a period of mental distress, Hilda resembles the Cenci portrait.¹⁸ Miriam insists that she was innocent when she visited Hilda and the reader knows that Hilda is innocent, so the common factor seems to be the witnessing

¹⁷Bochner, 74-75.

¹⁸A recent article by Spencer Hall claims that since the Cenci portrait is the only art object with a double reference it points toward the heart of the book's meaning--the relationship between Miriam and Hilda. "Beatrice Cenci: Symbol and Vision in The Marble Faun," Nineteenth Century Fiction, XXV (June, 1970), 85-95.

of crime and an almost unbearable awareness of evil in the world. As Brown says: "she [Miriam] cannot endure the idea that there is any evil in herself,"¹⁹ and, unable to confide in her friends, Miriam struggles with her troubles alone. Few things could be more typical of Puritanism than for an individual to wrestle with internal evil. What is never apparently considered in Miriam's case is that she see a priest or enter a confessional.

The details of Miriam's family connections indicate that she must be a Roman Catholic even though she doesn't think or act like one. Old Italian families, almost without exception, are Catholic and Miriam is said to have a relative high in the Papal government who helps her to escape her family and to live in Rome. This is most unlikely, of course, and runs contrary to the tragic implications of the Cenci case. A young unmarried woman in Catholic Italy of the sixteenth century or the nineteenth century would not flee from home to set herself up as an independent artist in a bachelor apartment and wander around the streets of Rome alone as Miriam does. Disobedience to parents is a sin requiring confession and absolution and a principal point in the Cenci case is that even if the head

¹⁹"The Structure of The Marble Faun," 304.

of the family is evil, a son or daughter has no assured right to disobey. In Catholic Europe, the internalizing of authorities has never been encouraged as it has in countries with a strong Puritan tradition. For Beatrice Cenci there was, quite simply, no escape. For Miriam there would probably be no escape either, had Hawthorne understood the true nature of Italian Catholic families.

Miriam, as well as Hilda and Donatello, has her allegorical role, for if Donatello represents Adam, then Miriam can be seen to represent Eve and the serpent. She gives a look, of which she herself is unconscious, and suddenly the devil has taken possession of her. She is visibly a fallen soul and must face a lifetime of penance with the remote hope of salvation in the end. Miriam's allegorical role is not so disturbing to the reader as that of Hilda, since it blends fairly well with her human role. It is the failure of her human role to mesh with the realities of Italian life that causes a sense of discord in Miriam's characterization.

Judging from Hawthorne's words in the "Preface," to The Marble Faun, he did not think an understanding of European family and religious institutions was necessary, but for his characters to fail to relate to the institutions around them is not good Hawthorne. The ties that develop between Hester Prynne and the Puritan community of Boston

provide one of the major artistic and unifying forces in The Scarlet Letter. In The House of the Seven Gables, the house itself becomes so much a part of the Pyncheon family that they can never remain away for long--the house almost literally reaches out and draws them back. By contrast, Donatello's home at Monte Beni is quite unconvincing as the seat of an ancient family institution. As with Hilda's tower, the symbolism almost obscures the setting. We have another tower, this one dark and gloomy, reaching to the sky in an act of repentance; woods, stream, fountain and marble nymph with a great crack all suggest Eden in a post-lapsarian state. Like Hilda and Miriam, Donatello has both a human and an allegorical role. As an Italian count, the last member of an ancient family, Donatello's chief, indeed only concern, should be to insure the continuation of his family to make certain that there are heirs to carry on the family estate. As Adam, Donatello's only concern is with himself as the world's principal sinner. The family history, or mythology, indicates that he is not the first murderer among the Monte Benis and, like the Pyncheon history, suggests a cyclical background which runs somewhat counter to the fall of man concept. Donatello's plan to enter a monastery represents for him the ultimate penance, for it would involve a vow of chastity. Such a decision by an Italian count would have to be made by family and priest, for more is at stake

than an individual's conscience. We have the ludicrous spectacle of Kenyon acting as a priest and giving Donatello the right advice, but for the wrong reasons. The fact that Donatello listens to Kenyon indicates that, like Miriam, he has a New England, not an Italian conscience.

Miriam's tormentor, the model, is a rather poor example of a Hawthorne villain who commits the unforgiveable sin of violating the sanctity of a human heart. He is so slightly drawn that little can be said for him as a literary character, and he is far less effective than Chillingworth and Judge Pyncheon, whose evil deeds are closely related to their natures and the institutions of which they are a part. Miriam claims that the model could force her to obey him by threatening to expose her history. This is doubtful, because Miriam is not that kind of a coward. Since Miriam was betrothed to the man--presumably before he became a monk--he might have the authority of her church and family behind him. In an extreme case, failure to obey could mean excommunication and damnation. Miriam is brave, but not that brave.

T. S. Eliot may have been thinking of Hawthorne's lack of understanding of European institutions when he remarked that The Marble Faun "is of Cimmerian opacity; the mind of the author was closed to new impressions."²⁰

²⁰"The Hawthorne Aspect," 51.

James could not fail to have been impressed with the jarring inconsistencies between the romantic story and the realities of Italian life, and it was undoubtedly an incentive for him to do his homework before relating his own American characters to European institutions. The results of this homework, and a perhaps over-zealous attempt to avoid Hawthorne's mistakes, will be examined in the chapter on The American.

There is one scene in The Marble Faun where a character does relate effectively to a traditional institution and here we have Hawthorne at his best. With the events leading up to Hilda's entering the confessional at St. Peter's Cathedral and pouring out her story to the old priest, realistic setting and romantic story blend into one of the most symbolically effective scenes in all of Hawthorne. In her search for help in her troubles, Hilda goes naturally to those in whom she has faith. Her faith in herself is now inadequate and she has no friends available, so she turns to the Old Masters; faith in whom has given her such excellent copying results. As she wanders, a figure in the gallery, from one ancient work of art to another, the Old Masters lead her surely and inevitably to the earthly institution which represented their own inspiration. In seeking help from the Catholic Church, Hilda is returning to her own pre-Reformation past and is bringing together

her Puritan and Catholic heritages. It is a symbolic reunion of Old and New Worlds and the words of the old priest suggest the warmth of a homecoming:

"Come home, dear child--poor wanderer, who hast caught a glimpse of the heavenly light--come home and be at rest." (IV. 362)

Hilda prefers to abide by the decision of her revolutionary ancestors, but the implications of the scene are important for the international theme. James calls this scene the "purest touch of inspiration" in the book.²¹

There is hardly a chapter in The Marble Faun which does not contain a building, a fountain, a statue, a painting or a ruin, the history of which has some symbolic importance for Hawthorne's story. As F. O. Matthiessen says: "for Hawthorne the shimmer of the now was merely the surface of the deep pool of history."²² From his words in the "Preface," we know that Hawthorne felt assisted by the existence of much more historical material in Italy than in America:

No author without a trial can conceive of the difficulty of writing a romance in a country where there is no shadow, no antiquity, no mystery; no picturesque and gloomy wrong ... Romance and poetry, ivy, lichens, and wall-flowers need ruin to make them grow. (IV. 3)

²¹Hawthorne, p. 133.

²²American Renaissance, p. 355.

Hawthorne had never before had this plethora of ancient art objects to which he could apply symbolic meaning, and in the opinion of at least one critic, he overdid things badly.²³ Three of the four main characters, as well as the villain, resemble a statue or a face in a painting, although except for Miriam's resemblance to Beatrice Cenci, the similarity suggests nothing that the reader doesn't already know or learn in the course of the story. The most notable example is Donatello's resemblance to the Faun of Praxiteles. This resemblance to the statue merely confirms that Donatello is a simple soul, but has no relationship to the central theme of his transformation from child-man to adult or to the fall of man allegory. So little does it have to do with the central meaning of the book that Hawthorne's English publishers refused to accept his title, The Marble Faun, and published the book instead with the title Transformation.

All of Hawthorne's symbolic use of art objects are not so crude as the above example would suggest and he has very effectively associated aspects of art with the moral views of some of the characters. Both Murray Krieger and Paul Brodtkorb have noted the warmth-coldness opposition

²³Bochner, 77.

in the book and the association of Kenyon's marble statues with Hilda's emotional coldness.²⁴ Opposed to the warmth, humanity and corruption of Rome, they represent purity, rigor and dedication.²⁵ Hawthorne was shocked by the nude statues that he saw in Europe and he believed that art should serve a moral purpose, but the expression of his own moral purpose often seems paradoxical. Kenyon's statue of Cleopatra--seen in both clay and marble and admired by all--represents one of the most human and corrupt of historical figures.

Miriam's essentially Puritan view of life can be demonstrated on several occasions by the views she expresses on art. It is unlikely that her tirade against nudity in art would have been uttered by any Italian woman even in the nineteenth century, and while gazing at a marble bust being hewn from a block of marble, Miriam expresses what is essentially a faith in predestination:

"As these busts in the block of marble," thought Miriam, "so does our individual fate exist in the limestone of time. We fancy that we carve it out; but its ultimate shape is prior to all our action."
(IV. 116)

²⁴"Afterward," to The Marble Faun p. 342 and Paul Brodtkorb, "Art Allegory in The Marble Faun," PMLA, LXXVII (June, 1962), 261.

²⁵Brodtkorb sees Kenyon as a priest working in the purest medium of the visual arts, revealing high truths to man and mimicing God. Hilda as a copyist, he sees as once removed from art and twice removed from life. "Art Allegory in The Marble Faun," 256-261.

The best example of conflicting moral views expressed in an attitude toward art is shown in the opposing attitudes of Hilda and Miriam to Guido's picture of the archangel Michael defeating Satan. Hilda, taking an essentially Transcendentalist view, admires the beauty and tranquility of the triumphant Archangel never recognizing that Satan might have some power to mar the angel's beauty. Miriam, on the other hand, thinks in Manichean terms and suggests that a picture representing a battle between good and evil should be a battle in the bloodiest and most extreme sense.

There is such a plethora of art objects in The Marble Faun that only a few can be mentioned. One that does deserve special attention, however, is the statue of Pope Julius III. This God-like statue creates a highly effective and significant setting. It bespeaks both the past and the future, heavenly benevolence as well as human love and guilt. We are reminded of Miriam and Donatello's common Catholic heritage, of the fact that love as well as guilt and responsibility unites them, and possibly, of Milton's Adam and Eve going forth into the world.²⁶ Kenyon's priestly advice seems almost banal when compared to the

²⁶See Roy Harvey Pearce, p. 182.

effect created by this giant art object.

The ending of The Marble Faun is far from satisfactory whether looked at romantically or realistically. The marriage and return to America of Hilda and Kenyon leaves the impression that they have accomplished little and understood less. It appears to be an after-thought--neither an act of love nor a resolution of moral uncertainties. The brief reunion between Old World and New is thus not sustained.

Nevertheless, for its time, The Marble Faun is a truly imaginative creation. While not wholly successful as a piece of literary art, it contains many artistic fragments, most of which Henry James was able to use in his early efforts toward the full realization of the international novel.

CHAPTER III

RODERICK HUDSON

In his book, The Novels of Henry James, Oscar Cargill says that "it takes no profound insight to detect in the grouping of characters and in the final tragedy some influence of The Marble Faun on Roderick Hudson."¹ Most critics writing on Roderick Hudson have noted the connection, although Viola Dunbar has argued that L'Affaire Clemenceau; mémoir de l'accusé, by A. Dumas fils, is the direct source of the plot and Cargill demonstrates considerable influence by Turgenev and George Sand.² Sanford E. Marovitz has raised the issue again in a recent article.³ Disagreeing with Cargill and Miss Dunbar, Marovitz tries to demonstrate that The Marble Faun is the source of the plot and a more profound influence on Roderick Hudson than any European novels. Allowing for considerable European influence,

¹Oscar Cargill, The Novels of Henry James (New York, 1961), p.19.

²Viola Dunbar, "A Source for Roderick Hudson," Modern Language Notes, LXIII (May, 1948), 303-310; The Novels of Henry James, pp. 22-24.

³Sanford E. Marovitz, "Roderick Hudson: James's Marble Faun," Texas Studies in Literature and Language, XI (Winter, 1970), 1427-1443.

there does seem to be much evidence that James did, indeed, begin where Hawthorne left off.

A reader who begins Roderick Hudson after finishing The Marble Faun immediately feels a generation gap between the authors. The attitudes toward life in Roderick Hudson are much closer to those of the twentieth century than the fifteen years between the publication dates of the two novels would indicate. In addition to this felt modernity, there is a sense of the author operating in familiar territory. Much of James's childhood was spent as an American expatriate in Europe, and while we cannot say that Europe was as familiar to him as New England was to Hawthorne, the feeling of "living abroad" was very much a part of his background. Interestingly enough, there are no Europeans among the major characters in his book; James evidently at this stage didn't trust himself to deal convincingly with Europeans or European traditional institutions and he very wisely kept this early novel and its characters quite simple.

In attempting to distinguish romance and realism in James's early novels, it is important to remember that among his longer fictions, James, unlike Hawthorne, never intentionally wrote a romance. The distinction between a romance and a novel--a distinction that is seldom made today--was still of some importance among creative writers. James had little use for the traditional American romance form,

though early in his career he began the process of using elements of romance to enrich his novels.⁴ This was generally done with metaphor, romantic setting and by the sympathetic portrayal of characters who approach life with a romantic point of view. The elements of nineteenth century melodrama which are present in James's early novels can also be seen as romantic. In general, James phased out the melodrama as he acquired greater skill in the handling of metaphor.⁵

There are a number of settings in Roderick Hudson that cast a romantic aura and are quite reminiscent of The Marble Faun, although James inaugurates his international theme by setting his early chapters in New England and thus offering a contrast to the complexity and vigor of Rome. Significant scenes occur in both St. Peter's Cathedral and in the Coliseum, and though the Christian and pagan past has as much symbolic meaning as in The Marble Faun, with James it is more apt to be employed ironically. In the

⁴see Chase, The American Novel and Its Tradition, p. 119.

⁵Dorothy M. Hoare suggests that one of the first characteristics of the early James is a strong romantic sensibility. She cites James's description of Mary Garland as something that "recalls the romantic utterance at its height." Some Studies in the Modern Novel (Port Washington, N. Y., 1966), p. 10.

Coliseum, with its implications of violence, the "fall" motif is first suggested in a fairly literal way. Rowland prevents Roderick from making a suicidal climb after a flower for Christina, and the move is later reflected in Rowland's dangerous climb after a flower for Mary Garland, in Roderick's fall over a cliff and in his metaphorical "falls" from innocence. Mary Garland, with her Puritanical background, and Christina Light, whose background is one of extreme corruption, encounter each other for the first time in St. Peter's Cathedral.

A particularly interesting setting is the garden of the Franciscan monastery near Florence:

The garden hangs in the air, and you ramble from terrace to terrace and wonder how it keeps from slipping down in full consummation of its dishonour and decay into the nakedly romantic gorge beneath.⁶

It is in this setting that Rowland is depressed over Roderick's perversity, while thinking of Mary Garland and of the possibility of winning Mary should Roderick's dissolute ways put a hasty end to his life. The possibility of

⁶Henry James, Roderick Hudson in two volumes (London, 1886), II, 42. Subsequent references are to this edition and will appear in parenthesis within the text. James made extensive revisions in all of his early novels for the New York Edition, 1905-1910. Although the revisions add considerable enrichment, the youthful vigor of James's early style is often lost, and the influence of The Marble Faun can best be seen in the novels written by young Henry James in the 1870's. Early unrevised editions have been used for all three of the James novels under consideration.

hastening Roderick's downfall occurs to Rowland in the form of an image of someone being burned at the stake. It is the only occasion when Rowland battles with his conscience and the conscience threatens to lose. Speaking to one of the monks, he says:

"My brother," ... "did you ever see the Devil?"
 The frate gazed gravely and crossed himself.
 "Heaven forbid."
 "He was here," Rowland went on, "here in this lovely garden, as he was once in Paradise, half an hour ago. But have no fear; I drove him out."
 ... "You have been tempted, my brother?" asked the friar tenderly.
 "Hideously!" (II. 43)

The most obvious similarity between Roderick Hudson and The Marble Faun is the presence in each of four inter-related principal characters. Marovitz says that each takes a corner of a hypothetical square--that Roderick can be compared to Donatello, Rowland to Kenyon, and Christina to Miriam.⁷ Marovitz doesn't link Hilda and Mary Garland, but suggests that Hilda was a model for James's minor character, Augusta Blanchard. [Had Marovitz carefully examined the moral attitudes of the characters], he probably would have found that Hilda and Mary Garland have much in common.

⁷"Roderick Hudson: James's Marble Faun," 1435.

The interrelationship between the four characters is tighter and more complex in Roderick Hudson than in The Marble Faun. In The Marble Faun there is never any question of how the couples will form. Both passion and conscience link Miriam with Donatello and Kenyon with Hilda. Kenyon associates with both Miriam and Donatello, and Hilda has an interesting relationship with Miriam, but there is very little connection between Hilda and Donatello. Neither love nor morality alone dictate coupling in Roderick Hudson, where there exists a rather complex set of relationships. Here we could draw a diagram in the form of a square or a circle. Roderick is passionately attracted to Christina, who longs to impress Rowland, who dreams of marrying Mary Garland, who is deeply in love with Roderick.⁸ Whether or not these "influences" are for good or evil and just what constitutes good and evil in many of these cases is not always easy to determine.

There is never any confusion between symbols of Eden and symbols of Heaven in Roderick Hudson as there is in The Marble Faun. However, the "fall" motif is subject to

⁸Cargill claims that this complex of relationships results in over-plotting and melodrama, which are the real faults of Roderick Hudson. See The Novels of Henry James, p. 26.

misinterpretation because of the nature of Roderick's "innocence." Roderick Hudson is the only one of our four novels that does not describe in some detail an American Transcendentalist. Mary Garland can be seen in this role, of course, but Mary is a slightly drawn character and Mary does not "fall." Roderick is innocent because he is a narrow and self-centered genius and there is never any suggestion, as there is with Donatello, that he is a simpleton. Roderick does not distinguish between himself as a person and himself as an artist, and what feeds him as a person feeds him as an artist--he cares nothing for any other morality. Unlike Hilda, Christopher Newman or Isabel Archer, Roderick "falls" because of a basically selfish nature. The falls of the other characters result from encounters with the evil engendered by a complex society. In Roderick the "evil" which is internal and kept in check by the narrow New England culture, is allowed to flower in Rome. James himself speaks of Roderick as a young man with a "large capacity for ruin,"⁹ and I think we must see Europe rather than Christina Light as the catalyst causing his ruin. His gambling and drunkenness

⁹The Art of the Novel, p. 13.

during a holiday at Baden-Baden suggest that without her, he would have found someone else to hasten his downfall.

In effect, Roderick falls three times--twice metaphorically and once literally. His fall as an artist is closely associated with his passion for Christina Light. Roderick, looking upon Christina as a muse in human form, believes that his inspiration is destroyed when he is forced to separate from her, while his friends and relatives believe that he neglects his work in order to pursue a beautiful and dangerous woman. It is difficult to say who is correct, for Roderick does neglect his work to pursue Christina, but when forced to separate from her he finds himself unable to work. It is worth noting that this fall as an artist is predicted by another artist, Gloriani.

Roderick's second metaphorical "fall" takes place during his final conversation with Rowland. Roderick asks Rowland for money to pursue Christina--now the Princess Casamassima--and in the angry exchange that follows Rowland admits to a two year concealed passion for Mary Garland. Surprised and shocked, Roderick begins, for the first time, discussing his own selfishness. It is the innocent self being destroyed by self awareness. "I have been damnably stupid," he says, "Isn't an artist supposed to be a man of perceptions?" (II. 181). Roderick begins to walk away,

still muttering to himself and Rowland feels a sudden desire not to lose sight of him.

He called and Roderick turned. "I should like to go with you," said Rowland. "I am fit only to be alone. I am damned!" (II. 182)

Roderick's third fall, the literal fall over the cliff, follows closely on the second and, whether it is accident or suicide, Roderick no longer has the desire to preserve a ruined life.

There is considerable ambiguity implicit in Roderick's sins. Is his primary responsibility to himself and his art, or to his family and patron, and is there a choice to be made between becoming a great artist and becoming a moral human being? For Roderick there is no choice; he either lives as an artist or he ceases to live. Rowland, on the other hand, thinks that Roderick is capable of making a choice in favour of morality and that that choice would produce in him the ability to create great art. Speaking against Roderick's decision to pursue Christina, he says:

"Isn't it very plain? If you have the energy to desire, you have also the energy to reason and to judge. If you can care to go, you can also care to stay, and staying being the more profitable course, the inspiration, on that side, for a man who has his self-confidence to win back again, should be greater. (II. 173)

If Roderick's view is the correct one, then self-knowledge is for him destructive rather than beneficial. An awareness

that he is selfish merely confirms for Roderick that he is dead, and he prefers literal death to the death in life that he would face with a return to his family.

Marovitz notes that both Roderick and Donatello have distinguishing characteristics which are emphasized by association with statues.¹⁰ Roderick's youth and desire for life's experiences has its analogue in his statuette of the drinking youth, while Donatello's innocence and primitive qualities are manifested in his resemblance to the Faun of Praxiteles. Both young men grew up with little control and both are compared to animals; suggesting a lack of acquired moral restraint. Finally, and most important, both suffer a fall from innocence largely through succumbing to the spell of a beautiful woman.

Mary Garland is free of such encumbrances as a tower, a flock of doves and a shrine to the Virgin, all of which tend to obscure Hilda as a character. In spite of this difference and the fact that Mary is not a practicing artist she occupies a position in Roderick Hudson that is very similar to that of Hilda in The Marble Faun. Both women set a standard of moral excellence that is accepted by the

¹⁰"Roderick Hudson: James's Marble Faun," 1435.

other characters in their respective novels, and in both cases this standard is formed by the Puritan heritage of nineteenth century New England. Mary has the same Emersonian tendency to think well of herself and the rest of humanity as Hilda, but Mary is much more willing to look evil in the face, to recognize ambiguities and consequently to live more fully than Hilda. Part of the reason for Mary's greater sophistication reflects the generation gap between Hawthorne and James. By James's day, it was no longer fashionable to keep young girls in the rarefied air on top of a pedestal, and James was able to maintain her moral excellence at the same time as he allowed her to find joy in life's experiences:

"I used to think," she answered, "that if any trouble came to me I should bear it like a stoic. But that was at home, where things don't speak to us of enjoyment as they do here. Here it is such a mixture; one doesn't know what to choose, what to believe. Beauty stands here--beauty such as this night and this place and all this sad strange summer, have been so full of--and it penetrates to one's soul and lodges there and keeps saying that man was not made to suffer but to enjoy. This place has undermined my stocism, but--shall I tell you? I feel as if I were saying something sinful--I love it." (II. 138)

Philip Rahv sees Mary Garland as a figure from the Blithdale Romance or The Marble Faun and claims that this passage recalls "one of the most telling and precise relationships in our literature, that of the early James to Hawthorne." Mary Garland is a slightly drawn heroine and Rahv says

that "in Mary the ferment of experience is more potential than actual."¹¹ She is one of the earliest of James's famous American heroines, an ancestress of Isabel Archer, Milly Theale and Maggie Verver.

One of the features of Roderick Hudson that is of considerable importance in establishing Mary Garland as the counterpart of Hilda is the attitude of Christina. We see Christina as a temptress--much as we see Miriam in The Marble Faun--and Mary also sees her in this role and rejects her. "I don't like her.... I think she's false," says Mary and the reader is reminded of Hilda's rejection of Miriam (II. 84). Rowland is unable to convince Mary that Christina may be more pitiful than evil, just as Kenyon was unsuccessful in a similar venture in The Marble Faun. Mary sees only evil in Christina and, in effect, closes her mind against her. The interesting part of all of this, in that it bears particular resemblance to The Marble Faun, is that Christina accepts Mary's judgment of her, continues to like and admire her in spite of the rejection, and accepts Mary's standards as something to which she would like, but can hardly hope, to attain. She breaks her engagement to the Prince because, "she [Mary]

¹¹"The Heiress of all the Ages," pp. 49-50.

in my place wouldn't marry Casamassima:"

"She is full of intelligence and courage and devotion.... I told her I liked her immensely, and she frowned as if I had said something disgusting. She looks very handsome when she frowns ... I don't often like women," she went on. "In fact I generally detest them. But I should like to know that one well. I should like to have a friendship with her; I have never had one; they must be very delightful. But I shan't have one now--not if she can help it. Ask her what she thinks of me; see what she will say. I don't want to know; keep it to yourself. It's too sad. So we go through life. It's fatality--that's what they call it, isn't it? We please the people we don't care for, we displease those we do. But I appreciate her, I do her justice; that's the most important thing." (II. 81-82)

This speech is made to Rowland Mallet, and in spite of the greater modernity, the reader is inevitably reminded of Miriam's agreement with Kenyon about the "white shining purity" of Hilda's nature. (IV. 287) However, because Mary is such a slightly drawn character and seldom speaks her mind, the reader is apt to find her somewhat unconvincing. The high opinion that Rowland and Christina have for her is not as mystifying as that of Kenyon and Miriam for Hilda, but the basic situation is the same.

Christina Light, like Miriam, tends to overbalance the other characters in the novel. She is the only complex character in Roderick Hudson and is so impressive that she often makes the others look pallid, or mere types rather than fully drawn characters. Christina's complexity

is due to a dual nature. On the one hand, she is the most beautiful woman in Europe, she would like to become a princess and has sufficient confidence in herself to believe she would make a good one. As Mme. Grandoni says: "she is an actress, but she believes in her part while she is playing it." (I. 146) On the other hand, Christina would like to become a friend of Mary Garland, she would like to live by an ideal, and she fears evil within herself. This latter aspect links her closely to Miriam. When this second or moral side of her nature predominates, Christina almost looks upon herself as a lost soul. "You would be horrified to learn even the things I imagine about myself." she says to Rowland Mallet, "and shocked at the knowledge of evil displayed in my very mistakes." (II. 11) Except for Rowland, almost every character in the book sees only the worldly side of Christina's nature--the beautiful woman and intelligent actress. It is the only side seen by Mary Garland, who, as a result, can neither like nor pity Christina.

Rowland alone, is able to by-pass this first side and to appeal to Christina as a moral human being, capable of struggling with her own internal evil. It is the source of his influence on her. The scene in the church of St. Cecilia--reminiscent in name and in its atmosphere of conciliation of Rowland's cousin Cecilia--when Rowland

asks her to give up Roderick simply because it would be a "good" thing to do, shows us the nature and intensity of her internal struggles. Christina's response is a mark of her pathetic desire that the worldly side of her nature not triumph over the moral side:

"... simply as a friend," she continued, gently, "you think I can do him no good." The humility of her tone combined with her beauty as she made this remark was inexpressibly touching...

"I won't hesitate to say all my thought," said Rowland. "For better or worse you seem to me to belong both by character and by circumstance to what is called the world, the great world. You are made to ornament it magnificently." . . . Christina continued in a moment, "you take a low view of me--no, you needn't protest--I wonder what you would think if you knew certain things."

"What things do you mean?"

"Well, for example how I was brought up. I have had a horrible education. There must be some good in me, since I have perceived it, since I have turned and judged my circumstances."

"My dear Miss Light." Rowland murmured remonstrantly.

"It's really very comfortable to be expected to do something good, after all the horrid things one has been used to doing--instructed, commanded, forced to do." (II. 10-13)

The most crucial struggle between the two sides of Christina's nature occurs after she breaks her engagement to Prince Casamassima. She admits her desire to be a princess and to be surrounded by luxury, but she does not love the Prince and breaking the engagement is a pathetic attempt to see the moral side of her nature triumphant. This cannot be, of course, and the speed with which Christina succumbs to her mother's blackmail--the threatened

disclosure of her illegitimate birth--shows how weak her moral self is when her worldly self is seriously threatened. Christina marries the Prince and consequently she must pay the price of submitting to blackmail; she must live the life assigned to her as Casamassima's wife. This is not quite the same as Miriam's lifetime of penance, but there are similarities. Is Christina repentant? The reader can never be certain, just as the reader of The Marble Faun can never be certain that Miriam is fully repentant over her part in the death of the man she hated.

Perhaps Roderick and Christina can be seen as romantic metaphors for artist and work of art. Both are in a developmental stage and both are defeated in their attempts to reach perfection in their respective roles. Seen from this perspective, it is difficult to say that Roderick is wrong in his belief that he is destroyed as an artist when he is separated from Christina. Witness his words to Rowland during their final conversation:

"The case is simply this, I desire immensely to be near Christina Light, and it is such a huge refreshment to find myself again desiring something, that I propose to drift with the current. As I say, she has waked me up, and it is possible that something may come of it. She makes me feel as if I were alive again." (II. 172)

Would Christina Light be an evil influence on Roderick? As the Princess Casamassima she probably would, but if she was allowed to develop into a perfect work of

art, if her moral development could reach the level of her physical and intellectual development, Christina probably could have provided the inspiration necessary to turn Roderick into a great artist. As she is, Christina is James's first Golden Bowl; a magnificent art object with a fatal flaw. This is the view of her that James develops in his later novel, The Princess Casamassima, and as such she can only cause Roderick harm. There is an element of Jamesian irony here. The perfect work of art could produce a great artist, but a flawed work of art causes his destruction. Christina and Roderick's need for each other is different, but almost as devastating as the final relationship between Miriam and Donatello in The Marble Faun.

Richard Poirier says that Rowland occupies a middle ground between a systematized society and the book's detached visionaries, and that his position as an observer and interpreter of art and life is one with which James is most congenial.¹² Most writers are observers and interpreters of life and James undoubtedly projected part of himself into the character of Rowland, as did Hawthorne with the character of Kenyon. It is, however, particularly

¹²Richard Poirier, The Comic Sense of Henry James (London, 1960), p. 36.

significant that moral interpretations of the action are made by the conscience of Rowland Mallet and that Rowland's conscience is very much under the influence of Mary Garland, just as Kenyon's is under the influence of Hilda.

In her study, The Early Development of Henry James, Cornelia P. Kelley notes the prevalence of conscience versus passion in many of the novels that James studied.¹³ Conscience usually wins in the novels of George Eliot, for example, and passion in the French novels. The French, says Miss Kelley, want fulfillment in this world, expecting the church to look after the next one. Had a French author written Roderick Hudson, the reader would probably have seen Roderick's love for Christina in the pathetic sense of a penniless young artist literally dying for love of a beautiful woman. Instead, he sees it in terms of Roderick's egotism and lack of loyalty to his mother, his fiancé and his patron. Rowland's conscience interprets every action in the novel and this central position of his conscience justifies the long, seemingly superfluous, section at the beginning of the book where James describes in detail Rowland's Puritan background.

Because of the central position of Rowland and his

¹³Cornelia P. Kelley, The Early Development of Henry James (University of Illinois Press, 1965) pp. 66-67.

conscience, the reader often sees him, like Kenyon, in the role of a priest. Mrs. Light calls him in to persuade her daughter to do the "right" thing, he advises Mrs. Hudson what to do in order to bring about the "salvation" of her son and, when Mary admits to feeling like a sinner over her enjoyment of the beauties of Florence, he says: "If it is sinful, I absolve you--in so far as I have power." (II. 139) It was noted in the last chapter that Kenyon's position as priestly advisor to two Italian Catholics is highly inappropriate. Since Rowland's conscience will not allow him to profit from Roderick's failure and the presence of this powerful conscience blinds him to Roderick's needs, Rowland is not an impartial advisor and a priestly role for him is almost as inappropriate as it is for Kenyon.

The question of guilt which occupies so large a part of The Marble Faun appears to be reduced in Roderick Hudson to a short period at the end of the book when Rowland waits beside Roderick's body:

He watched for seven long hours and his vigil was for ever memorable. The most rational of men was for an hour the most passionate. He reviled himself with transcendent bitterness, he accused himself of cruelty and injustice, he would have lain down there in Roderick's place to unsay the words that had yesterday driven him forth on his lonely ramble. (II. 191)

The question of assigning guilt is, of course, subtly present throughout Roderick Hudson. Hawthorne's

fiction stresses the extent to which we are all involved in the fabric of guilt and in Roderick Hudson James continues to explore this weighty problem which is so central to the psychologically oriented twentieth century novel.

The use of one character to parallel and to point out ironies in the actions of another, was used by James very effectively throughout his career. A similar but less sophisticated technique--the splitting of a single role between two characters--was sometimes used by Hawthorne.¹⁴ Let us examine for example, the role of Mrs. Light. Mrs. Light lacks the darkness symbolism with which Hawthorne normally surrounds his villains, but in her manipulation of her daughter and her former lover, she is a typical Hawthorne type of villain. Mrs. Light is not just a villain, however, for she serves to emphasize certain ironies in the actions of Mrs. Hudson and of Rowland Mallet. Mrs. Light wants to realize her own frustrated ambitions by marrying her daughter to a man with a title

¹⁴In his last two novels, Hawthorne splits the role of heroine between a blond and brunette--the blond winning all of the prizes and the brunette coming to grief. Cornelia Kelley sees a geminian theme in the characters of Roderick and Rowland and suggests that this "complete artistic man" is James himself. Cargill takes vigorous objection to this interpretation. See The Early Development of Henry James, p. 191 and The Novels of Henry James, p. 27.

and a fortune--a most unworthy ambition. Mrs. Hudson is an archetypal self-sacrificing mother--desiring nothing except her son's happiness. The actions of Mrs. Light and Mrs. Hudson have a similar effect however, since both tend to smother development and deflect their respective offspring from realizing their immense potential.

Mrs. Light is particularly effective as a foil for Rowland Mallet, for Rowland is every bit as responsible for Roderick's defeat as Mrs. Light is for Christina's. The supreme irony of the situation is that Rowland destroys Roderick by demanding moral actions from him, while Mrs. Light destroys Christina by insisting on immoral ones. Mrs. Light then occupies a fairly pivotal position in the novel. While her actions are in no sense morally ambiguous, she serves to point out ambiguities in the "good" actions of others. This aspect of Roderick Hudson represents a development of the hesitantly suggested ideas of Kenyon that perhaps good and evil are not always so easy to define and separate as Hilda seems to think. It also emphasizes what Oscar Cargill calls the central theme of the book--the right of one person to devise the destiny of another.¹⁵ This, incidentally, is a very Hawthornian theme.

¹⁵The Novels of Henry James, p. 31.

Hawthorne tries to define some of his characters by linking them to ancient works of art. James uses the technique with only one of his characters and instead of associating him with works from the past, Roderick is defined by his own sculptures. Edwin T. Bowden points out that each of Roderick's sculptures defines one phase of his career.¹⁶ His statuette of the drinking youth indicates not only his eagerness for life's experiences, but his potentiality as a great artist. The life-sized statues of Adam and Eve--an interesting reminder of Donatello and a forecast of Roderick's "fall"--suggest naiveté as well as the strength of early manhood. The strength is indicated by the size--these are life-sized, while the drinking youth is merely a statuette. His bust of Christina represents his peak as an artist--his full realization of the power of beauty in the world. The abortive effort to devise a statue of culture for Mr. Leavenworth signals a rapid decline, and Roderick's bust of his mother, his arrival at the old age of an artist.

The American artist colony in Rome provides another link between The Marble Faun and Roderick Hudson. James makes use of minor characters to show different approaches

¹⁶Edwin T. Bowden, The Themes of Henry James (Yale University Press, 1956), p. 24.

to art, while Hawthorne relies strictly on his major characters. With both authors, approaches to art reflect approaches to life and the morality of an artist is closely associated with his attitude toward art. The minor artists Gloriani and Augusta Blanchard, who have little talent but take themselves quite seriously, are treated with gentle satire. Rowland has little use for them and we get the impression that James doesn't either. The most important artist, aside from Roderick, is Sam Singleton. Singleton's most noteworthy characteristic is his humility. With only a minor talent, but a reverent attitude toward life and beauty, Sam Singleton is the polar opposite of Roderick Hudson. He has a large capacity for success in life.

Unlike Hawthorne, James gives very few descriptions of Rome in Roderick Hudson, but the atmosphere of the city permeates the book. Hawthorne seems to have had a love-hate relationship with Rome and, in a sense, so did James. Particularly noticeable is the fact that the powerful beauty of the place can be as destructive of creativity as it can be inspiring. Cornelia Kelley notes that James loved Rome, found it immensely inspiring, but was unable to write there.¹⁷

¹⁷The Early Development of Henry James, p. 188.

The Marble Faun does not qualify as a fully realized international novel, largely because Hawthorne didn't understand Europeans or European traditional institutions. Roderick Hudson does not qualify for that title any more than The Marble Faun, for James simply avoids Europeans and their traditional institutions. It is a very good first novel, written by an American and set in Italy. It details the particular stresses and strains that Americans living abroad are apt to encounter, but there is no conflict established between opposing cultures. In The American, James begins the true international novel, the innovation in American literature for which he is so justly famous.

CHAPTER IV

THE AMERICAN

If there are obvious similarities between The Marble Faun and Roderick Hudson, the same cannot be said for The Marble Faun and The American. No critic, to my knowledge, has ever suggested a relationship here and writers like Cornelia P. Kelley and Oscar Cargill, who have studied the literary influences on James, never mention Hawthorne in connection with The American. This is unfortunate, I think, for the link between The Marble Faun and The American directs the reader toward a permanent relationship; aspects of Hawthorne's work that can be found recurring in James's novels and stories to the very end. This particular relationship is often manifested in contrast rather than similarities; sometimes giving the impression that James is overreacting to features in Hawthorne's work that he found particularly objectionable.

Henry James was not intentionally writing a romance when he wrote The American, but thirty years later, in the "Preface" to the New York Edition of the novel, James tells us that he "had been plotting arch-romance without knowing

it."¹

What I have recognized then in "The American," much to my surprise and after long years, is that the experience here represented is the disconnected and uncontrolled experience--uncontrolled by our general sense of "the way things happen"--which romance alone more or less successfully palms off on us.²

James is speaking of a romance as something distinct from a novel³--the way Hawthorne uses the word--and he objects to this approach to fiction writing because the results lack "verisimilitude."⁴ It is important to note the distinction between a romance and the romantic aspects used to enrich a novel, which we noted in the chapter on Roderick Hudson. The "Preface" to The American is almost exclusively devoted to the subject of romance and realism and James notes the above distinction in a reference to Flaubert's Madame Bovary.⁵ Madame Bovary herself approaches life from an extremely romantic point of view, yet nothing could be less of a romance than the story of her adventures.

¹The Art of the Novel, p. 25.

²Ibid., p. 34.

³In his essay, "The Art of Fiction" (1884), James claims that there can be no serious distinction between a novel and a romance: "I can think of no obligation to which the 'romancer' would not be held equally with the novelist; the standard of execution is equally high for each." Henry James: Selected Literary Criticism, p. 89.

⁴The Art of the Novel, p. 37.

⁵Ibid., p. 33.

Christopher Newman is the first American among those under consideration to face a genuine European cultural situation and James emphasizes his new world characteristics. Newman comes through as an American far more clearly than Hilda and Kenyon or the Americans in Roderick Hudson. He is particularly strong on individuality and egalitarian concepts and in his belief that individuals, particularly unencumbered individuals, can and should be happy. James makes it clear that Newman is a "good" man, and Newman sets the American standards of moral excellence in this novel as surely as Hilda does in The Marble Faun and Mary Garland does in Roderick Hudson. The scene at the beginning of the book in which Newman renounces his chance to take revenge on a business competitor and willingly foregoes sixty thousand dollars serves a number of functions. It foreshadows his decision at the novel's conclusion not to take revenge on the Bellegardes, it points up the essential goodness of Newman's nature and it emphasizes his Emersonian qualities. We see Newman driving to Long Island to look at the first green leaves of spring and making a sudden inspirational decision to give up his business connections and travel in Europe. There is much significance and irony in his statement: "I seemed to feel a new man inside my old skin, and I longed for a new world."⁶ How

⁶Henry James, The American, in two volumes (London, 1883), I. 26. All subsequent references are to this edition and will appear in parenthesis within the text.

very romantic and ironic that this young man with his emblematic name, his Emersonian mind, his personal sense of freedom and self-confidence is seeking a "new world" in which he will soon be trying to rescue a beautiful and noble lady, virtually imprisoned in an old world castle.

Edwin T. Bowden sees Christopher Newman as a direct contrast to Roderick Hudson, because he has such a fine character and such poor artistic taste.⁷ More accurately, Newman is a contrast to both Roderick and Rowland since he has neither Roderick's intellectual arrogance nor Rowland's puritanical conscience and lacks the artistic taste and the intensity of both. Reverend Babcock, who can be seen as a kind of reduced Rowland Mallet, complains of Newman's "gross intellectual hospitality" and of his "want of moral reaction." (I. 72) These complaints merely make Reverend Babcock look ridiculous, for Newman's moral superiority is never called into question. Similarly, Newman's poor artistic taste--the result of a limited education--is an accepted feature of his personality. The reader never sees Newman as a philistine. The lack of moral ambiguity in The American is unusual for a James novel as is the author's defensive attitude toward his hero.

⁷The Themes of Henry James, p. 29.

The fact that the Europeans in The American do not always recognize Newman's moral superiority and that they seldom wish to emulate it indicates only that they have a different ethical standard. When they do envy Newman it is usually for his money or for his sense of personal freedom--aspects of Newman that are strongly interrelated.

"What I envy you is your liberty," observed M. de Bellegarde, "your wide range, your freedom to come and go, your not having a lot of people, who take themselves awfully seriously, expecting something of you. I live," he added with a sigh, "beneath the eyes of my admirable mother."

"It is your own fault; what is to hinder you ranging?" said Newman

"There is a delightful simplicity in that remark. Everything is to hinder me." (I. 105-106)

There is only one kind of personal slavery that Newman is capable of understanding and that is the kind caused by poverty. Money to Newman means freedom and, because of his goodness, he delights in offering freedom to others.

Valentin's comment about a "delightful simplicity" suggests that he sees Newman as the typical American innocent abroad. Newman's innocence, like that of Roderick Hudson, is caused by a one-sided view of life and not because he is in any way a simpleton like the unfallen Donatello. In the context of the novel, Newman is innocent, but Claire and Valentin are as unaware of or as innocent of Newman's cultural background as he is of theirs.

In both The Marble Faun and Roderick Hudson a metaphorical fall from innocence is associated with an actual fall over a cliff. There is no literal fall in The American, but the duel in which Valentin is shot, can be seen as fulfilling the same function, for The American, like The Marble Faun, has the interesting feature of a European as well as an American innocent. These European innocents can be seen as foils which set-off and tend to clarify the nature of American innocence. Both Valentin and Donatello come from old world aristocratic families and both have been raised to assume an elevated position in a hierarchical society, rather than to attempt to function in a competitive society. In the eyes of the modern world, their actions are childish. Though admirable characters who command much sympathy from the reader, neither is particularly associated with moral superiority as are most of the American innocents in these four novels.

Interestingly enough, both Roderick Hudson and Valentin de Bellegarde leave the country in which the principal action takes place and go to Switzerland for their violent deaths. Valentin has faith in an aristocratic way of life, of which the duel is an integral part. In the exercising of this faith, he gets himself shot, but before he dies he suffers a metaphorical fall

in the form of a loss of faith in the Bellegarde family and in an accepted way of life. When Newman tells Valentin that the Marquise and Urbain have forbidden Claire to marry him, Valentin accepts the collapse of his ethical system and the sinfulness of his own family. Valentin, taking on the sin of the family as though it were a personal one, pays what is for him a supreme penance. He apologizes for his family and gives Newman information which will make it possible to hold that family up to public shame and ridicule:

Valentin turned back again and found a certain force to press Newman's arm. "It's very bad--very bad. When my people--when my race--come to that, it is time for me to withdraw. . . . I apologize," he said. "Do you understand? Here on my deathbed. I apologize for my family. For my mother. For my brother. For the ancient house of Bellegarde." (II. 100)

Valentin, with his animal spirits, originally narrow view of life and his violent and untimely end, has much in common with both Roderick and Donatello; although his old world sophistication, like Roderick's artistic sophistication, makes him a more fully realized literary character than Hawthorne's Donatello. Valentin's animal spirits make it possible for him to see over the horizons of the French aristocracy and more than any other character in the book, he shows an ability to change and develop. No other character comes so close to achieving an understanding of both

the European and American cultures, and the ridiculous nature of his death stands in sharp and ironic contrast to the stature he is rapidly achieving. Alone among the Europeans, Valentin shows an ability to acquire freedom, and the friendship between him and Newman is one of the best features of the novel; more skilfully developed than the friendship between Kenyon and Donatello or between Roderick and Rowland.⁸

Newman, as well as Valentin, suffers a metaphorical fall in The American. Although he never fully understands what motivates the Bellegardes or why Claire rejects the happiness and freedom that he offers her, he does experience, for the first time in his life, a loss of faith in his ability to control his own destiny. At the end of the novel, the reader is left with the impression that Newman is in a permanently fallen condition. There is a sudden speed-up of the time scheme in the last two chapters, covering a year or two of Newman's life after he loses Claire. During that time he accepts the fact that she is permanently lost, gives up his plans for revenge and decides to leave France forever. No suggestion of future

⁸Oscar Cargill notes that the grounds for affection between Newman and Valentin are more clearly exposed than those between Newman and Claire. See The Novels of Henry James, p. 48.

happiness is ever given.

Newman's reaction to Valentin's proposed duel and to Claire's decision to enter a convent are reminiscent of Kenyon's reaction to Donatello's proposal to enter a monastery. All of these cases show a typical American reaction to an incomprehensible feature of the Old World which they can only liken to self-destruction. Kenyon, who is less personally involved with Donatello than Newman is with the Bellegardes, suggests a lifetime of philanthropy as an alternative. It is a naive suggestion and shows a profound lack of understanding of an Italian Catholic mind. Newman's response to both Valentin and Claire is an almost overwhelming sense of frustration. As well as being unable to understand the reasons for such decisions, he must accept the fact that he is powerless to prevent their enactment.

The dignity and gentle stoicism of Claire de Cintré bears some resemblance to Mary Garland, but perhaps a more interesting comparison can be made between Claire and Hilda and Miriam of The Marble Faun. Like Hilda, Claire is seen as a symbol of purity somewhat cut off and elevated from the rest of humanity.⁹ Claire is spoken of as a delicate

⁹Cargill notes that the greatest failure of The American is that the reader is not made more fully acquainted with the heroine, Claire de Cintré. My impres-

and innocent creature, a saint, and her name and typical romantic setting suggest that she is a light in the darkness. She is usually dressed in white until her final interview with Newman when she appears in black, indicating that her light has been extinguished. Like Miriam, Claire is tormented by evil in her past and her willingness to take the sins of others on her shoulders suggests both Miriam and Hilda. James's symbols of darkness gathered around Claire are as powerful as Hawthorne's images of darkness surrounding Miriam. Claire never appears out-of-doors and except for one brief appearance at the home of Mrs. Tristram, never outside of one of her ancestral homes. The Paris home is so dark that Valentin must hold up a candle in order to see the date 1627 over the mantle and the home at Fleurières reminds Newman of a Chinese penitentiary. These old houses are places of cheer, however, compared to the Carmelite convents into which Claire flees at the end of the novel. In the first building the nun's singing sounds "like the lamentations

sion is that James intended her to be somewhat distant and mysterious. The story is conveyed to the reader through the consciousness of Christopher Newman, and Newman never understands her. See The Novels of Henry James, p. 51.

of the damned," (II. 165) and the second is surrounded by a "high shouldered blank wall," (II. 203) and located on the Rue d'Enfer.

Both Claire de Cintr  and Christina Light yield to maternal coercion, but Claire, unlike Christina and Miriam, is not blackmailed by a sin from the past. James, for all his mishandling of the Bellegardes, knew that blackmail was not necessary in the case of Claire for heads of old aristocratic European families had every right to command. Mrs. Tristram tries to explain the situation to the incredulous Newman, who wonders why Claire, over twenty-one and a widow, is not her own mistress:

"Legally, yes, I suppose; but morally, no. In France you must never say Nay to your mother, what-ever she requires of you. She may be the most abominable old woman in the world, and make your life a purgatory; but after all she is ma m re, and you have no right to judge her. You have simply to obey. The thing has a fine side to it. Madame de Cintr  bows her head and folds her wings."

"Can't she at least make her brother leave off?"

"Her brother is the chef de la famille, as they say; he is the head of the clan. With those people the family is everything; you must act, not for your own pleasure, but for the advantage of the family." (I. 85-86)

Two of Hawthorne's principal characters in The Marble Faun are from old Italian families, but Hawthorne never shows the slightest understanding of the true nature of such old families. When Mrs. Tristram says that, "with those people the family is everything," she means that the

family is the unit and individual members are like arms and legs. Conscience and authority rest with the family and to detach a member of this family without providing a comparable institutional framework is to leave him something less than a complete human being. Christopher Newman, who internalized his authorities at an early age offers Claire freedom, but freedom is the last thing in the world that she wants. When her family commands her to give up Newman and she has become convinced that her family is an evil institution, she takes what is for her the only possible route of escape--she appeals to a higher authority and takes refuge within a stronger institutional framework. For a brief moment Claire stands fascinated with this vision of freedom then turns and flees into a dungeon. Mrs. Bread tries to explain the situation to a still incredulous Christopher Newman:

"She was afraid," said Mrs. Bread, very confidently... That was the real trouble sir. She was like a fair peach, I may say, with just one little speck. She had one little sad spot. You pushed her into the sunshine, sir, and it almost disappeared. Then they pulled her back into the shade and in a moment it began to spread. Before we knew it she was gone.
(II. 131-132)

In the matter of treating families as institutions, The American is somewhat reminiscent of Hawthorne's second novel, The House of the Seven Gables; particularly near the end of the novel when Claire cries out melodramatically,

"There's a curse on the house." (II. 113) In his critical biography of Hawthorne, James suggests that the Pyncheon family falls apart too easily and that the novel could have done with a lusty conservative as a contrast to Holgrave's liberalism. In this first attempt to deal in depth with an institutionalized family, James seems to have overreacted to what he considered to be a serious literary fault in Hawthorne's novel. The Marquise de Bellegarde is about as lusty a conservative as is to be found in American literature and the Bellegarde family holds together with a rigidity that James later considered quite unrealistic.

Ford Madox Ford has pointed out that "James knew perfectly well that the matrons of the most corrupt of European aristocracies do not go murdering their husbands in order to secure eligible partis for their daughters."¹⁰ In his "Preface" to The American James admits that the case for the Bellegarde's objecting to Newman as a "commercial person" is quite unrealistic and that they "would positively have jumped" at this rich and easy American.¹¹

¹⁰Cited by S. Gorley Putt, Henry James: A Reader's Guide (Cornell University Press, 1966), p. 115.

¹¹The Art of the Novel, p. 35.

The Bellegarde's objections to Newman's commercial connections are the central irony of the novel, of course, because they themselves behave in the most sordidly commercial way possible. These melodramatic aspects make The American, as James says, more of a romance than a realistic novel. Hawthorne and James lived in an age that liked melodrama, but neither of these authors is at his best when he depends on it.

The Bellegardes imply that they are acting only for the good of the Bellegarde family and that what they do to Claire and Christopher Newman is perfectly right and good in their world. Richard Poirier, who claims that the comedy in The American is almost entirely social satire, notes that "if we do not accept the validity of a claim to superiority, then all expressions of it become comic."¹² The Bellegardes, particularly the pompous Urbain, do appear rather funny early in the novel, but as the story progresses, James uses more and more satanic imagery in connection with them. Madame de Bellegarde usually appears in black and is an integral part of the darkness surrounding Claire; later she seems to exhude evil and finally is seen with "eyes like two scintillating globules of ice." (II. 170) While

¹²The Comic Sense of Henry James, p. 77.

waiting beside Valentin's deathbed, Newman suddenly feels that he is "playing a part, mechanically, in a lugubrious comedy" (II. 98). The comic elements gradually disappear as the Bellegardes appear more and more evil until finally the reader learns that Mme. de Bellegarde and her son are murderers. Apparently James had an unhappy year in Paris while he was writing The American and left in disgust feeling that the French were "terribly flawed moralists."¹³ Had James not allowed his irritation with the French and the current taste for melodrama to push him into making murderers out of the Bellegardes, he might have created exceptionally good villains of the Hawthorne type--people who manipulate others, often for intellectual reasons. In addition, the irony of the cultural contrasts might also have come through more clearly, for the Bellegardes insist that they are acting only according to the "highest" ethical standards.

James makes the entire world of the French aristocracy appear as a kind of mass villain in this novel--the world of darkness and death around Claire de Cintré. The relatives and friends of the Bellegardes are generally

¹³cited by Roy Harvey Pearce, Historicism Once More p. 252.

physical freaks, usually of an advanced age and almost always intellectually subnormal. M. de Cintr  is spoken of as a horrible little man over sixty and under five feet, the Duchess d'Outrville looks like the fat lady in a circus, her friend the Italian prince is top-heavy, Lord Deepmere is short and bald with pimples and no front teeth and Mme. de la Rochefidele has an aged cadaverous face complimented by a falling of the lower jaw. The entire image is of a purgatory in which the lovely Claire is imprisoned. Newman tries to draw her out into the light of his heaven, but he fails and the devils around her secure her for their hell.

No mie Nioche, the femme fatale or temptress of The American, who is indirectly responsible for the death of Valentin de Bellegarde, is a much less complicated character than Miriam and Christina. Unlike Miriam and Christina, No mie is not being manipulated by the novel's villain and is not at all troubled with the morality of her life style. She accepts the social situation in which she has grown up and is even less capable of imagining or desiring freedom than Claire de Cintr . No mie occupies a fairly pivotal position in this novel, however, for she is closely associated with the once more central role of art.

Like The Marble Faun, The American opens in an art gallery, with the figure of Christopher Newman, who knows

only one word of French, combien, trying to buy a copy of a masterpiece which Noémie is currently working on. She asks a ridiculously high price for the picture and even the artistically unsophisticated Newman recognizes that the price is too high, though he indicates a willingness to pay it. Quite a few of the main themes of the book are established in this first scene. Newman, who knows nothing about art or the French language, is obviously wealthy, wants to buy paintings and is willing to be cheated. It is just as obvious that Noémie is not in the Louvre for the primary purpose of studying art, that she is a coquette and that her talents do not lie in the field of painting. Valentin de Bellegarde recognizes Noémie's nature as soon as he meets her:

"She is very remarkable, Diable, diable, diable," repeated M. de Bellegarde, reflectively; "she is very remarkable."

"I am afraid she is a sad little adventuress," said Newman.

"Not a little one--a great one. She has the material." And Valentin began to walk away slowly...

"She is very interesting," he went on. "She is a beautiful type."

"A beautiful type? What the deuce do you mean?" asked Newman.

"I mean from the artistic point of view. She is an artist--outside of her painting, which obviously is execrable." (I. 163-164)

Edwin T. Bowden claims that every character in the novel is presented with irony and that the irony is often conveyed by the arts.¹⁴ Just as Noémie's art is the art

¹⁴The Themes of Henry James, p. 31.

of the coquette, the other Europeans have a style of living that approximates an art form. Living the life of a French aristocrat is an art and Newman's failure to understand art is closely associated with his inability to live effectively in the Old World. The Europeans know their art. Just as Valentin immediately recognizes Noémie's talents, so the Bellegardes are able to recognize Newman's basic good nature. It doesn't take an understanding of America for them to realize that Newman is entirely too kind a person to ever go through with his threatened revenge. Mrs. Tristram points this out to Newman and the book ends on as ironical a note as it begins.

The central irony in the early scene in the Louvre is the fact that Newman is trying to buy something that he doesn't understand. It is just as possible to view Claire de Cintré as a work of art as it is Christina Light and Newman tries to buy her before he understands her just as he does with Noémie's picture. Describing what he is looking for in a wife, Newman sounds very much like a shopper in the art market:

"I want a great woman. I stick to that. That's one thing I can treat myself to, and if it is to be had I mean to have it. What else have I toiled and struggled for all these years? I have succeeded, and now what am I to do with my success? To make it perfect, as I see it, there must be a

beautiful woman perched on the pile, like a statue on a monument. She must be as good as she is beautiful and as clever as she is good.... I want to possess, in a word, the best article in the market." (I. 39)

This initial approach is in a sense the right one, for Claire de Cintré is up for sale. She has been sold once and on the first sale the Bellegardes got cheated. They don't want to be cheated again, of course, and much of the humour in the book is essentially a dickering over price. When the Bellegardes order Claire to give up Newman, they think they can get a higher price from Lord Deepmere. Newman gets cheated because he doesn't understand the nature or complexity of her price, or that he really isn't as wealthy as he thought he was. The Bellegardes also get cheated, however, because by behaving in such a low commercial manner they lose their prize item of merchandise.

In The Marble Faun, Hawthorne uses works of art to tie the present to the past, and to give particular significance to persons and events. James does the same thing with settings--individual works of art are not discussed in The American. Claire's dark surroundings partly symbolize her ancient pedigree and are somewhat reminiscent of Donatello's dark and gloomy tower. The setting in the Louvre reminds the reader that Newman is in the midst

of a complex and artistic culture, as well as an old one, and his gaudily decorated rooms--"chiefly furnished with mirrors and clocks" (I. 84)--imply that he will not penetrate that complex culture. Newman meets Mrs. Bread in an ancient gothic ruin to discover the details of an old murder, which appropriately enough, took place at Fleurières, the place that looks like a Chinese penitentiary. Perhaps the setting with the most profound significance is the one in the Rue d'Enfer where Newman stands and stares at the stone wall surrounding Claire's convent and is finally released from his ineffectual desire.

William J. Maseychik, who has written on the theme of controlling environments in some of James's novels, notes that "as the vitality of the characters wanes, the physical environment grows powerful."¹⁵ It is then significant that with the ending of the engagement and the sudden death of Valentin, powerful settings like Fleurières, the gothic ruin and the two Carmelite convents, seem to crowd in and almost overpower the reader. We might almost say that there are two sets of characters in The American, humans and physical settings, and that the settings ultimately triumph over the humans.

¹⁵William J. Maseychik, "Points of Departure from The American," Henry James: Modern Judgements, ed. Tony Tanner (London, 1968) p. 117.

The American was a successful novel when it was published in spite of public distress over the unhappy ending. It was later made into a mediocre play in which James, yielding to public taste, substituted a happy ending and eliminated many of the novel's more complex and artistic features. In 1907, James revised The American for the New York Edition, but in trying to create subtlety he often, as Constance Rourke says, "emasculated a vigorous speech."¹⁶ The "Preface" suggests that James considered the novel a failure, but like The Marble Faun it is of immense importance in American literature, and not just because Oscar Cargill has given it the distinction of being the first international novel.¹⁷

¹⁶Constance Rourke, "The American," The Question of Henry James, ed. F. W. Dupee (New York, 1945), p. 157.

¹⁷See page 3, note 5.

CHAPTER V

THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY

The Portrait of a Lady is more complex and is almost twice as long as any of the other novels that have been considered in this study. Each of the first three novels have four principal characters, a few minor characters and a villain or pair of villains that grow in stature from novel to novel. There are at least seven principal characters in The Portrait and many minor ones, but the men who pay court to Isabel make up a foursome. The themes with which we have been dealing all reappear, but with more subtlety and complexity and are generally more fully developed. Many of these themes--at least in the obvious forms in which they appear in these three early Jamesian novels--are being used by James for the last time. In his later work, James avoids such nineteenth century theatrical devices as villains and climactically disclosed sins from the past. The Portrait marks both a turning point in the history of the English novel--away from melodrama, toward the psychological orientation of the twentieth century--and the conclusion of James's early period.

The elements of romance and realism are skillfully blended in The Portrait, though the novel appears to be written according to the best conventions of realism.¹ When he wrote the "Preface" to The Portrait, twenty-six years after the novel's publication, James did not accuse himself of having inadvertently written a romance as he did with The American. Nevertheless, as Peter Buitenhuis suggests, "the romance elements of the American tradition deeply influence the nature of the story."² Buitenhuis says that the principal romance element amounts to "a modern version of the fall of Adam and his exile from Paradise."³ R. W. B. Lewis calls this the archetypal form of the American romance.⁴ Richard Chase's comments about romance in The Portrait are reminiscent of James's comments about Madame Bovary in the "Preface" to The American.⁵

¹Oscar Cargill shows that the sources of the novel are primarily from such nineteenth century French and English realists as Balzac, Flaubert, George Eliot and Charles Dickens. See The Novels of Henry James, pp. 82-85.

²Peter Buitenhuis, "Introduction" to Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Portrait of a Lady, (Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1968), p. 9.

³Ibid., p. 4. Buitenhuis also sees elements of the sleeping beauty myth and of the story of the poor girl who winds up a princess living in a castle. These seem rather far-fetched as Isabel hardly finds herself with a Prince Charming when she awakens to the world and she doesn't live happily ever after as a princess in a castle. Ibid., pp. 9-10.

⁴The American Adam, p. 155.

⁵The Art of the Novel, p. 33.

The conscious assimilation of romance into the novelistic substance of The Portrait took place in two ways. It was assimilated into the language of the book and produced a general enrichment of metaphor. It was also brought in in the character of Isabel Archer, the heroine, who is to a considerable extent our point of view as we read. Isabel tends to see things as a romancer does, whereas the author sees things with the firmer, more comprehensive, and more disillusioned vision of the novelist. Thus James brings the element of romance into the novel in such a way that he can both share in the romantic point of view of his heroine and separate himself from it by taking an objective view of it.⁶

By seeing life as a romancer, Chase does not mean that Isabel is operating under any fairy tale illusions. Isabel's rejection of Lord Warburton's proposal assures us that she is not nursing any hidden dreams of a poor American girl marrying an English lord. Her impression that by marrying him she would be trying to escape her fate indicates a fear of losing control over her own developing identity and taking on the identity with which Lord Warburton is so thoroughly endowed.⁷ Chase claims that Isabel's brand of romance is that which is associated with the American tradition of puritanism and transcendentalism--she "subscribes to the American romance of the

⁶The American Novel and its Tradition, p. 119.

⁷F. W. Dupee claims that Warburton "is congenitally unable to break into the American circle ... because his identity is so largely defined by his inherited functions." See Henry James, p. 104.

self."⁸ Isabel has an American identity which she wishes to retain, the outstanding features of which are a belief in her own freedom as an individual and a dedicated search for idealism. As she says to Mme. Merle: "I don't know whether I succeed in expressing myself, but I know that nothing else expresses me."⁹ When she finds an aesthetic idealism, she makes the great mistake of assuming that it is equally a moral idealism. "Mr. Osmond makes no mistakes," she says, defending him to Ralph: "He knows everything, he understands everything, he has the kindest, gentlest, highest spirit." (II. 167) Isabel is quite determined to retain these American aspects of her identity, but she also wants to add European ones--in other words, she wants to become a Europeanized American. It is not surprising, therefore, that she refuses the proposals of both Lord Warburton and Caspar Goodwood. The former seems to threaten her American identity, the latter would prevent the enrichment of Europe. This being the case, Isabel is limited to Europeanized Americans--Ralph Touchett and Gilbert Osmond--and since the former declines

⁸The American Novel and Its Tradition, p. 131.

⁹Henry James, The Portrait of a Lady, in three volumes (London, 1883), I. 234. All subsequent references will be to this edition and will appear in parenthesis within the text.

to enter the competition for her hand because of ill-health, Isabel is left with the logical candidate for her husband, Gilbert Osmond. In a 1965 article, "The Fearful Self," Tony Tanner shows the essential logic behind Isabel's choice of Osmond for a husband:

Osmond is an egotist, but so, we are told is Isabel: he is cold and dry, but so is she; he pays excessive attention to appearances rather than realities, and up to a point so does she; he prefers art to life, and so does she; he has more theories than feelings, more ideals than instincts, and so does she. He is a collector of things, and she offers herself up to him as a fine finished object. Isabel accepting Osmond's proposal of marriage is the uncertain self thinking it is embracing the very image of what it seeks to become. Her later shock and revulsion is the self discovering the true worthlessness of what it might have become. Osmond is Isabel's anti-self.¹⁰

It should be noted that Ralph shares this list of personal traits and he and Osmond, unlike Warburton and Goodwood, have a fairly clear understanding of what Isabel is seeking. They have been through a similar developmental process. There are echoes of Roderick and Rowland in these two aesthetically oriented Europeanized Americans. Ironically, the one who wants to make art something dead has a healthy body, and Ralph, who would bring life to his art, is dying.

¹⁰See "The Fearful Self," reprinted in Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Portrait of a Lady, p. 72.

A number of features point to the fact that James intended to appropriate the fall of man allegory in his story of Isabel Archer. The story opens in a lovely peaceful garden, beside an old home, where the beautiful Isabel makes her appearance like a breath of fresh air. As Richard Chase says: "In a novel which describes a fall from innocence, it is suitable that the tragic action should be metaphorically mirrored in the heroine's mind by this conjunction of the garden and the ancient house, in which the garden stands for Isabel's Eve-like innocence and the house for a civilization that has lost its innocence, but has acquired the whole involved and valuable accretion of culture."¹¹ The importance of this opening scene can hardly be overestimated for it sets the metaphoric tone of the entire novel. Gardencourt is the first, though most important, of a series of houses and gardens in which almost every important scene in the novel takes place. Besides the crucial opening and closing scene in the garden at Gardencourt, Isabel begins to fall in love with Osmond in the garden of his home in Florence and defends her choice of Osmond to the heartsick Ralph in the garden of his aunt's home. These two scenes can be likened to Eve listening to the wiles of the serpent

¹¹The American Novel and Its Tradition, p. 132.

and defending her actions to her still unfallen Adam. ^{Ralph}
 Looking back on her decision to marry, Isabel likens
 Osmond to a serpent in a garden. "Under all his culture,
 his cleverness, his amenity, under his goodnature, his
 facility, his knowledge of life, his egotism lay hidden
 like a serpent in a bank of flowers." (III. 35)¹²

The settings in The Portrait are so important that
 it is almost impossible to discuss a principal character
 without also discussing a setting. In his "Preface" to
 this novel, James describes his construction of it in the
 metaphoric terms of building a house around Isabel.¹³
 Cornelia Kelley notes that there are no sustained passages
 of description--the settings are worked into the dialogue¹⁴--
 and this lack of description plus the intensely felt pre-
 sence of the settings shows how far James has developed
 his novelistic techniques beyond those used by Hawthorne
 in The Marble Faun.

In The Portrait we return to Rome as a particularly
 appropriate "historic" setting for the type of metaphorical

¹²Hawthorne's short story "Egotism: or the Bosom
 Serpent" may have suggested this metaphor.

¹³The Art of the Novel, p. 48.

¹⁴The Early Development of Henry James, p. 299.

"fall" described by Hawthorne and James--i.e. the return of the New World to its complex and sin-ridden past. Isabel's travels take her back over the migration routes of her ancestors. She travels from America to England and down through France to Italy. Shortly before her "fall," Isabel makes a trip to Greece and Egypt, Europe's ultimate past, then returns to Rome where she becomes engaged to Gilbert Osmond.

Again we have a significant scene taking place in the Coliseum, site of some of life's most brutal realities. Isabel, Pansy and the Countess Gemini encounter the heart-sick Ned Rosier who tells them that he has sold his bibelots in order to get enough money to marry Pansy. The Countess Gemini, who like Madame Bovary, has an exceedingly romantic point of view, though her life is anything but romantic, meets Ned and has her faith in romantic love restored. Isabel, on the other hand, who was recently starring in her own romance, is now in the realistic position of her creator. She is now in the position of the novelist who realizes that this romance will never reach fruition.

Although all of these Jamesian heroes undergo a metaphorical "fall," it is difficult to say how they have sinned. Their actions are dictated by their characters and they are not aware of doing anything evil. In this they are very different from Hawthorne's fallen "innocents,"

Hester Prynne and Donatello, who break clearly defined rules. Chase says that Isabel's sin is her "cold moral aloofness,"¹⁵ but in marrying Osmond Isabel thinks that she is involving herself in life, that she is dedicating her money and her life to a noble cause, the advancement of beauty. Roderick, Newman and Isabel would be almost incapable of wrongdoing in the simple cultures which produced them; it is only their innocence combined with the complex culture of Europe that produces evil, and in this they resemble Hilda in The Marble Faun. It was noted in Chapter I that the story of Hilda suggests that innocence attempting to operate in a fallen world can bring evil results, and that this is probably the reason that James admired Hilda as a literary character.¹⁶ None of these characters is capable of recognizing evil when it is first encountered; therefore, the evil not only goes unchecked but is encouraged to grow and the harm that results is just as bad as if the innocent party had sinned. Their falls from innocence are fortunate falls in so far as the innocence is lost and the character is

¹⁵The American Novel and Its Tradition, p. 132.

¹⁶Hawthorne, p. 133.

now equipped to encounter evil, although no tangibly good results can be seen.

The bird imagery that Ralph uses to describe Isabel makes her somewhat reminiscent of Hilda, the Dove.¹⁷

Advising her how to live with money, he says: "Spread your wings; rise above the ground." (I. 319) His description of her "falling" for Osmond makes the image more explicit:

"You seemed to me to be soaring far up in the blue--to be sailing in the bright light, over the heads of men. Suddenly, some one tosses up a faded rosebud--a missile that should never have reached you--and straight you drop to the ground. (II. 164)

how?
This last is reminiscent of Hilda drawing Kenyon's attention by tossing him a rosebud.

It was noted in the last two chapters that Christina Light and Claire de Cintrè could be seen as art objects. Hilda isn't specifically compared to an art object although at one point she resembles the portrait of Beatrice Cenci and Murray Krieger has noted her relationship to Kenyon's marble statues.¹⁸ Kenyon does a model of Hilda's hand in

¹⁷Marius Bewley claims that Hilda is a direct inspiration for Millie Theale in The Wings of the Dove. See The Complex Fate, pp.31-54.

¹⁸"Afterward" to The Marble Faun, p. 342.

marble and her obvious sexual coldness parallels the coldness of the marble. Isabel is likened to an art object many times in The Portrait; in fact, the entire book as well as the title suggests that she be seen in this light. Speaking of the sadness of his life, and the sudden change wrought by Isabel's arrival, Ralph says to himself:

I had never been more blue, more bored.... Suddenly I receive a Titian by the post, to hang on my wall--a Greek bas-relief to stick over my chimney piece. The key of a beautiful edifice is thrust into my hand and I'm told to walk in and admire. (I. 70)

Contemplating his marriage to Isabel, Gilbert Osmond thinks of her very much as Ralph does:

He was immensely pleased with his young lady; Madame Merle had made him a present of incalculable value ... His egotism had never taken the crude form of desiring a dull wife; this lady's intelligence was to be a silver plate, not an earthen one--a plate that he might heap up with ripe fruits, to which it would give a decorative value, so that talk might become for him a sort of served dessert. He found the silver quality in this perfection. . . in Isabel; he could tap her imagination with his knuckle and make it ring. (II. 171)

Ralph and Osmond have quite different ideas, however, on the meaning of turning a human being into an art object. Ralph, with his images of sailing and soaring, wants to add as much life as possible, while Osmond sees a perfect art object as one devoid of life. Osmond is particularly

noted for coldness in his human relations. There is perhaps a reminder here of Miriam's comment to Kenyon when he fails to respond to her need to confess; "You are as cold and pitiless as your own marble." (IV. 129)

A great deal of critical commentary has been devoted to the subject of Isabel's sexual frigidity. Her name, of course, suggests the goddess Diana. After refusing Lord Warburton's proposal, Isabel wonders to herself if she is cold and the strong sexuality of both Warburton and Caspar Goodwood seem to inspire fear and withdrawal in her. Just as Hilda seems to think that she can devote herself to the art of the Old Masters and avoid human intimacy, Isabel becomes inspired with the idea of dedicating her life and her fortune to an aesthetic ideal. Both Hawthorne and James recognize the error in this conception of art and both try to make the point in their respective novels that art must be life-giving. Complaining that art has strayed from its legitimate paths and aims and no longer serves a moral purpose, Hawthorne says; "It cannot comfort the heart in affliction; it grows dim when the shadow is upon us." (IV. 340) James, taking a more sophisticated view, does not blame the artist or the work of art for failing to inspire life, but objects to the use of art objects for other than life-enhancing purposes. Perhaps the best expression of this "deadly" attitude in The Portrait

is contained in a conversation between Osmond and Mme.

Merle:

She [Mme. Merle] looked about the room--at the old cabinets, pictures, tapestries, surfaces of faded silk. "Your rooms at least are perfect. I'm struck with that afresh whenever I come back; I know none better anywhere. You understand this sort of thing as no one else does."

"I'm sick of it," said Osmond.

"You must let Miss Archer come and see all this. I have told her about it."

"I don't object to showing my things--when people are not idiots."

"You do it delightfully. As a cicerone in your own museum you appear to particular advantage."

Mr. Osmond, in return for this compliment simply looked upon his companion with an eye expressive of perfect clairvoyance.

"Did you say she was rich?" (II. 43)

One of the most noticeable features of the American innocence displayed by both Hilda and Isabel is their faith in the ability of great art to inspire life, both morally and aesthetically. Even in their periods of greatest unhappiness Hilda and Isabel continue to try and draw inspiration from the art objects of Rome. "And as for these galleries of Roman palaces, they were to Hilda--though she still trod them with the forlorn hope of getting back her sympathies--they were drearier than the whitewashed walls of a prison corridor." (IV. 341) "After the departure of her cousin and his companions she [Isabel] wandered about more than usual; she carried her somber spirit from one familiar shrine to the other." (III. 139)

Pansy Osmond is the living image of what her father would like to make of Isabel. Even more than Isabel she is likened to a work of art. Her lover, Edward Rosier, thinks of her as a Dresden-china shepherdess:

She was admirably finished--she was in excellent style. He thought of her in amorous meditation a good deal as he might have thought of a Dresden-china shepherdess. Miss Osmond indeed, in the bloom of her juvenility, had a touch of the rococo which Rosier, whose taste was predominantly for that manner, could not fail to appreciate. (II. 179)

Rosier is not as sterile an aesthete as Gilbert Osmond, because he genuinely loves Pansy. He is, however, as dedicated an art collector and since Pansy has been raised to be a work of art, they are admirably suited. Rosier doesn't have enough money or prestige to suit Pansy's father, however, and Osmond is determined to continue adding finishing touches to Pansy until she has been utterly destroyed in the process. Speaking of Pansy being sent back to her convent, James says:

He [Osmond] had wanted to do something sudden and arbitrary, something unexpected and refined; to mark the difference between his sympathies and her [Isabel's] own, and show that if he regarded his daughter as a precious work of art it was natural he should be more and more careful about the finishing touches. If he wished to be effective he had succeeded; the incident struck a chill in Isabel's heart. (III. 156)

Pansy's being "put up for sale" by her father is a more ironic situation than the other forced marriages, attempted

and achieved, that we have encountered. Unlike Miriam, Christina and Claire, Pansy is not capable of commanding a very high price and Edward Rosier is quite likely to be the highest bidder. Her extreme docility, plus her limited intelligence and lack of financial means make her a high priced object only in the eyes of her villainous father.

Madame Merle has the role of temptress in The Portrait, and she represents a distinct advance in characterization over her predecessors. Miriam and Christina are complex characters and excite much sympathy from the reader, as their evil actions are more than accounted for by the evil that has been done to them. Noémie Nioche--unique in this role--is a simple little product of a hierarchical system. She shares with Mrs. Light of Roderick Hudson the distinction of being a simple character in a pivotal position. Leon Edel says that Mme. Merle is the first of James's "bad heroines,"¹⁸ although Cargill shows that she doesn't quite qualify for that designation.¹⁹ James's "bad heroines"--characters like

¹⁸See "Two Kinds of Egotism," reprinted in Twentieth Century Interpretation of The Portrait of a Lady. p. 112. For James's description of what constitutes a "bad heroine," see The Notebooks of Henry James, ed. F. O. Matthiessen and K. B. Murdock, Oxford University Press, 1961, pp. 140-141.

¹⁹The Novels of Henry James, p. 136.

Olive Chancellor, Kate Croy and Charlotte Stant--perform evil deeds, but the reader is fully aware and sympathizes with their motives. If the reader knew from the beginning of The Portrait that Mme. Merle was Pansy's mother and that her schemes against Isabel were motivated by a desire to help Pansy, he would sympathize and Mme. Merle would qualify as a "bad heroine." As it is, she appears to be merely an evil partner of the villain, even, perhaps, the true villain. By the time the reader and Isabel learn Mme. Merle's secret, it is too late for sympathy. The evil that she has perpetrated on Isabel fills out her image, and no one feels inclined to weep over the fact that Mme. Merle must separate from her daughter, probably forever.

The rather melodramatic device of a climactically disclosed sin from the past is here used by James for the last time. His later fiction employs both more subtle and more realistic motives for questionable actions. The discovery that Mme. Merle is Pansy's mother and that Pansy is therefore illegitimate completes for Isabel the evidence of a conspiracy against her. It represents the final plunge in her fall from innocence. Isabel is, of course, not coerced, but is tricked into her marriage with Osmond and Mme. Merle, as temptress, uses her wiles on another woman rather than a man. There is never any suggestion that this skeleton in the closet of Mme. Merle will be used

for blackmail purposes. In addition, Pansy is not forced to obey her father by being threatened with exposure as she might have been by Hawthorne or by a younger Henry James. James knew, at least since writing The American, that unquestioning obedience to those in authority could be and frequently was taught in old world cultures. Pansy is so docile and has been so thoroughly indoctrinated with the principle of obedience that her father doesn't even need the strong family institution which gives added strength to the tyranny of the Bellegardes. There is an additional irony here in the fact that her illegitimate birth makes Pansy less qualified for an exalted marriage than even her more obvious limitations suggest.

Oscar Cargill has remarked that Gilbert Osmond is the most evil character ever created by Henry James.²⁰ He is also James's last villain, for in the future novels James would rely strictly on the "bad hero or heroine" for villainous actions. Osmond almost dedicates his life to committing Hawthorne's "unpardonable sin"--as Richard Chase points out: "The sin is the same whether one's cold, theoretical manipulation of others has an aesthetic motive or, as with Hawthorne's Chillingworth or Ethan Brand, a

²⁰Ibid., p. 87.

quasi-scientific one."²¹

Osmond who is always associated with things or buildings, personifies the spirit of darkness and death that permeates his house. Although he travels to Rome twice to court Isabel, the reader is seldom aware of encountering Osmond outdoors, and his two houses in sunny Italy always seem to be cold and prison-like. Note the description of Osmond's house in Florence:

There was something rather severe about the place; it looked somehow as if, once you were in, it would not be easy to get out.... Mr. Osmond met her [Isabel] in the cold antichamber--it was cold even in the month of May. (II. 56-57)

Edward Rosier sees the Osmond's palace in Rome as a dungeon-- "a kind of domestic fortress" (II. 187)--and in the crucial Chapter 42, where Isabel sits before the dying fire and looks back over her life with Osmond, she thinks of him as an integral part of a house of death:

She could live it over again, the incredulous terror with which she had taken the measure of her dwelling. Between these four walls she had lived ever since; they were to surround her for the rest of her life. It was the house of darkness, the house of dumbness, the house of suffocation. Osmond's beautiful mind gave it neither light nor air; Osmond's beautiful mind indeed seemed to peep down from a small high window and mock at her. (III. 34)

²¹Chase, The American Novel and Its Tradition, p. 132.

In The American the characters are, to a large extent, defined by their settings. In The Portrait they are defined by settings and by "things"--usually art objects. Most of the characters in The Portrait are Americans and to a large extent their association with art objects indicates the degree of Europeanization that they have undergone. Americans like Casper Goodwood and Henrietta Stackpole are partly defined by the tools of their trade--a lumber mill and writing supplies. After hundreds of pages of European exposure, Henrietta begins to yield to the influence and acquires a favourite painting--The Corregio of the Tribune. The extreme cases of Europeanization--Osmond, Mme. Merle, Pansy and Edward Rosier--become almost obscured by art objects, just as some of the characters in The American become lost behind the settings. Edward Rosier is defined by his bibelots and when he sells them for money to marry Pansy, he has, as Bowden notes, quite simply sold his identity.²² Mme. Merle is the most interesting case in this connection, because she defines herself as an "envelope of circumstances:"

What shall we call our 'self'? Where does it begin? Where does it end? It overflows into everything that belongs to us--and then it flows

²²The Themes of Henry James, p. 56.

back again. I know a large part of myself is in the clothes I choose to wear. I've a great respect for things. (I. 233)

Earlier Mme. Merle describes herself as a chipped and cracked pot that has been cleverly mended, indicating to the reader that her flaws are covered and that the woman may be dangerous. This image of the moral flaw as a crack in porcelain is a forerunner, as Bowden suggests, of James's famous Golden Bowl.²³ Later the image is repeated with a china cup that has a tiny crack. (III. 146)

The references to pictorial art in The Portrait are so numerous that it is only possible to mention a few. Sometimes, as in The Marble Faun, characters are compared to actual paintings as when Pansy is spoken of as an Infanta of Velasquez and Osmond sees Mrs. Touchett's portrait in a fresco by Ghirlandaio. More frequently, however, references to pictorial art are in the form of mental images. These can be figure pieces, like the description of Isabel framed in the doorway of her home, or landscapes. Osmond describes his future life with Isabel using the pictorial imagery of a long Italian summer afternoon. The Portrait of a Lady is then a very appropriate title for this novel, which is really a series of literary portraits surrounding

²³Ibid., p. 61.

and augmenting the central portrait of Isabel. The use of "things" in The Portrait tends to augment and add depth to the characterization. They never unintentionally detract or steal life from the characters as they do in The Marble Faun.

In The Portrait we can see considerable change and improvement over James's earlier use of art objects. Roderick Hudson is rather mechanically defined by his own sculptures, as is Noémie Nioche by her thickly varnished and gaudily framed copy of a madonna. Although Mme. Merle and Gilbert Osmond do a bit of painting--there are no serious practicing artists in The Portrait--what they produce themselves has little relevance to their characters. In addition, there are no discussions of the pros and cons of a particular work of art as there is in The Marble Faun when Hilda and Miriam disagree about Guido's picture of the Archangel Michael fighting the devil. Art objects, as well as settings, are used in The Portrait strictly to help define characters and situations and are never allowed to assume an independent life or importance of their own.

The final major scene in The Portrait occurs in the garden at Gardencourt at night when Caspar Goodwood begs Isabel to leave her husband and return with him to America.

He kisses her passionately--a kiss that goes through her like "a flash of lightening" (II. 224)--but she runs from him and returns to Rome and Gilbert Osmond. Pausing on the threshold between house and garden we read: "She had not known where to turn; but she knew now. There was a very straight path." (III. 224) Isabel now belongs to the "fallen" world; she cannot remain in the garden of her innocence, but must return to the house of civilization.

Almost all of the numerous critical pieces that have been written on The Portrait attempt an explanation of the meaning of Isabel's return to Gilbert Osmond. James himself predicted that the ending would cause a great deal of comment--he has "left her en l'air," as he said.²⁴ Most critics agree that returning to Osmond is what Isabel would be most likely to do, but there is a wide range of views as to why. Marion Montgomery claims that when Isabel discovers that her marriage is a failure, that she has lost her liberty; she turns desperately to duty and as romantically exaggerates her duty as she had formerly exaggerated her liberty. Isabel, she says,

²⁴The Notebooks of Henry James, p. 18.

"commits a spiritual suicide."²⁵ Walter F. Wright says that "Isabel is a romantic and the portrait of herself which she keeps before her is a romantic ideal the alternative [to returning to Osmond] is not really a life of comparative happiness with Goodwood, but the smashing of her ideal portrait of herself."²⁶ Tony Tanner suggests that, "The self has to return to the place where it made its most defining, if mistaken choice. That is where the work of re-habilitation and re-education must go on."²⁷ Isabel could not reject her fallen self to return with Caspar Goodwood whom she does not love in spite of the electrifying effect of the kiss. I cannot agree with R. P. Blackmur that Isabel flees from the man she at last knows to be her rightful lover.²⁸ Her rightful lover is Ralph Touchett and she can and does leave Osmond for him.

²⁵Marion Montgomery, "The Flaw in the Portrait," reprinted in Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Portrait of a Lady, pp. 63-64.

²⁶Walter F. Wright, "Puritanism and Isabel," reprinted in Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Portrait of a Lady, p. 110.

²⁷"The Fearful Self," p. 78.

²⁸R. P. Blackmur, "The Portrait of a Lady," reprinted in Perspectives on James's The Portrait of a Lady (New York University Press, 1967), p. 254.

There is one aspect of the ending of The Portrait that has not, I think, been given sufficient consideration. What Isabel could or would do is one thing; what James could or would do might be something slightly different, and one thing that he would not do is put an inartistic ending on a novel. Referring to the "en l'air" ending, James says in his Notebooks: "The whole of anything is never told; you can only take what groups together."²⁹ This is true of life, no doubt, but a novel is a literary work, not a human life, and it must have a beginning and an end. Richard Chase has commented about the lovely poetic prose in the early pages of The Portrait,³⁰ and James would hardly have lavished less attention on his ending than on his beginning. Leon Edel has compared Isabel's return to Osmond to Hester Prynne's return to the Puritan community of Boston.³¹ One need only compare the ending of The Scarlet Letter to that of The Marble Faun to see the difference between an artistic and an inartistic ending. For Isabel to turn her back on Pansy and Gilbert

²⁹The Notebooks of Henry James, p. 18

³⁰The American Novel and Its Tradition, p. 118.

³¹cited by William T. Stafford in his "introduction" to Perspectives on James's The Portrait of a Lady, p. xi.

Osmond would leave the reader with the same impression left by Hilda and Kenyon when they turn their backs on Miriam and Donatello; the impression that she had never really understood a thing.

In The Portrait of a Lady, Henry James has created a metaphorical "portrait" of Isabel Archer. Ralph Touchett and Gilbert Osmond are no more concerned to turn Isabel into a flawless work of art than Henry James. Besides noting the profound significance that James attaches to the word "portrait," it is important also to remember the significance of the word "lady" in James's day. No longer used exclusively as a title for a female member of the nobility, a lady was expected to have, among other things, a profound sense of responsibility and a mature understanding of life. Isabel is young and as a human being her life will continue. As a character in a Jamesian novel, however, she is complete, a finished work of art.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

No matter how seriously or intensively Henry James studied the works of European writers like George Eliot, Balzac and Turgenev, the success of his international novels largely depends upon an understanding of Americans and American thought. Since Hawthorne was the only major American literary influence on James and since Hawthorne attempted a literary form which James was able to bring to successful fruition, intensive comparisons of the works of the two authors, as I have attempted to demonstrate, is apt to be especially rewarding. I think James's comments on Hawthorne need to be taken very seriously, and, it is important to remember that his biography of Hawthorne was written during the period covered in this study--after The American and before The Portrait of a Lady.

As I have indicated, James's admiration for the character of Hilda was not just a chance remark, as can be seen from the many reminders of her that can be found in Mary Garland, Claire de Cintré and Isabel Archer. Particularly interesting is the fact that Isabel recalls

Hilda even more strongly than Mary or Claire. A superficial reading of the four novels suggests that Roderick Hudson is the closest James novel to The Marble Faun, while a more intensive study may put The Portrait of a Lady in that position. Not only can we see Hilda more clearly in the character of Isabel, but the very explicit use of the fall of man theme and the intensive metaphoric use of settings and art objects links The Portrait closely to The Marble Faun.

In Chapter I, I noted that there are three basic categories, thematic and technical, in which the four novels under consideration can be effectively compared. All make some allegorical use of the theme of the fall, all attempt some technical blending of the American romance form with nineteenth century realism, and all make considerable use of art objects and historic settings to amplify plot and characterization.

Beginning with The American, James's Americans abroad begin to look very much like Nathaniel Hawthorne himself in Europe. Not in their actions, of course, but in their attitudes toward the two outstanding features of the Old World conspicuously missing from nineteenth century America. The great works of medieval and Renaissance art and the still powerful aristocratic families are features of the Old World for which the Boston School of Transcendentalism

did not provide an adequate education. Hawthorne's lack of understanding of these features shows in his European notebooks and is made explicit in The Marble Faun.¹ The mistakes made by Hawthorne in writing The Marble Faun are not unlike the mistakes made by Christopher Newman and Isabel Archer when they attempt to find success and happiness by merging themselves with the culture of Europe. Hawthorne, taking an essentially "unfallen" point of view, tries to establish a "romance" in a fallen world and Newman and Isabel attempt much the same thing.

Ancient works of art plus buildings and settings that recall a semi-mythical past tend to create a romantic aura when worked into the fabric of a novel. In Roderick Hudson James begins to use this technique in his novels by setting significant scenes in places like the Coliseum and St. Peters, and by contrasting the Italian setting with the simplicity of a New England town and the ruggedness of nature in Switzerland. The works of art discussed by the characters are not ancient, but the life-sized statues of Adam and Eve have a similar effect--suggesting the theme of the fall and amplifying the characterization of Roderick. In The American James abandons any discussion of art objects

¹See The Heart of Hawthorne's Journal, ed. N. Arvin (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1967) pp. 206, 240, 255, 265, 275.

except for the satirical use of Noémies' copy of a madonna, and his settings lack contrast, being almost universally dark and gloomy. Only the setting in the Louvre has particular historical significance and, like The Marble Faun, the settings have such unsubtle symbolic meaning that they tend to detract from the characters. The innovation in The American is the use of art as a metaphor for a life style. By the time he wrote The Portrait of a Lady, James had learned the technique of presenting art objects and settings strictly through the eyes of the characters. Only then does he attempt to use these features on the scale that Hawthorne uses them in The Marble Faun, but with greatly enhanced effectiveness. Jay Bochner has noted the difference in approach of the two authors:

Symbolic meaning in Hawthorne is general, even cosmic when he is at his best; most often, it is moral in a social or religious sense. Symbolic meaning in James is particular and human; a matter of personal not of social or religious morality. Things seen by Hilda and Miriam point through them to us, but things seen by Isabel point always to Isabel.²

In examining the metaphoric use of art objects and settings in these four novels, it is well to keep in mind that Hawthorne believed that all forms of art, including his romances, should serve a moral purpose.³ The Marble

²"Life in a Picture Gallery," 761-762.

³In his famous sketch "The Custom House," Hawthorne gives an imaginary description of the shocked reaction of his

Faun, to recall briefly, opens on four figures in an art gallery discussing the resemblance of one of their number to an actual ancient marble statue of a faun. It soon becomes apparent that the significance of the resemblance lies in the fact that Donatello looks like a faun, is therefore an incomplete human being and is apt to be amoral. The fact that the statue is a work of art has no bearing on its relationship to Donatello. This rather static and unsophisticated approach to art is maintained throughout The Marble Faun. Although Henry James regrets Hawthorne's philistine attitudes,⁴ he himself was no indifferent moralist and did not disdain to link art to morality in his fiction. By showing the character's attitudes toward the art objects and settings around them and linking these attitudes to a general moral approach to life, James is able to accomplish Hawthorne's objective while ostensibly concentrating strictly on literary technique. Isabel's moral victory is very much a part of her "portrait." She can indeed be seen as a figure in a gallery, the gallery being all of Europe or perhaps all of life.

Puritan ancestors to his chosen occupation of writer, and assures the reader that "strong traits of their nature have intertwined themselves with mine." (I. 10)

⁴See "Hawthorne's French and Italian Notebooks," p. 172.

The ending of The Portrait of a Lady can be seen as a kind of composite--it is built on the endings of the three preceding novels. James, quite obviously, rejected the ambiguously "happy" ending of The Marble Faun for the very simple reason that it would have detracted from the stature that his heroine had developed. Her maturity and moral sensibility had to survive its ultimate test. It is interesting, and again recalls The Marble Faun, that the only choice she is given is between returning to Gilbert Osmond and returning to America. In both Roderick Hudson and The American the ending, which includes a return to America, is an anti-climax. The death at the end of Roderick Hudson and the renunciation after an electrifying kiss at the conclusion of The American are both included in the ending of The Portrait of a Lady.

I submit that F. O. Matthiessen's contention that James's technical development was a direct response to his sense of Hawthorne's limitations stands up under very intensive scrutiny.⁵ Hawthorne visited the art galleries of Rome and was inspired to write The Marble Faun, a romance dealing with a culture which was unfamiliar to him. It is not just The Marble Faun, therefore, but Hawthorne's actual

⁵F. O. Matthiessen, American Renaissance, p. 298.

attempt to write such a romance that probably gave James a particularly deep insight into the nature of American "innocence."

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