

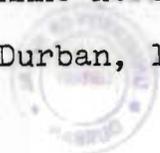
The International Novel

A Study of Its Origins and Emergence as a Genre  
in Nineteenth Century American Fiction

by

Minna Anne Herman Maltz

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Except for the quotations specifically indicated in the text, and such help as I have acknowledged, this thesis is wholly my own work.

M. A. H. Maltz

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It should be noted that the spelling and punctuation used throughout this dissertation conform to American rather than to British usage. The presentation of quotations, notes, and bibliography is also generally in accordance with American conventions of research, as formulated by the MLA.

"Within the history of imaginative literature, limitation to the great books makes incomprehensible the continuity of literary tradition, the development of literary genres, and indeed the very nature of the literary process, besides obscuring the background of social, linguistic, ideological, and other conditioning circumstances" (René Wellek and Austin Warren, Theory of Literature, 3rd ed., 1963; rpt. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Peregrine-Penguin, 1968, pp. 21-22).

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Part I.

The International Novel as a Genre

## Chapter 1.

### Introduction

The need to define its national identity, which so preoccupied the newly independent American republic in its emergent stages of development, co-existed with an uneasy awareness of the pervasive influence that Europe, especially England, continued to exert on nineteenth century American culture.<sup>1</sup> The unresolved conflict between national self-assertion and cultural dependence on the Old World led inevitably to repeated attempts to formulate the American's attitude to Europe and made this issue a crucial one in nineteenth century American thought.

Eager to observe Europe at first-hand, many leading men of letters of the period traveled abroad, recording their impressions of European life in journals or travel-books<sup>2</sup> which indicate that, in the first decades of the century, most Americans displayed a decided ambivalence to Europe. Although they were drawn to Europe and to England, in particular, by a memory of historical ties which had only recently been severed, their national pride was quick to resent the Europeans's instinctive assumption of superiority to the American. These early travelers acclaimed the various cultural attractions of Europe, but their attention was also sharply focused on what they judged to be its vices. As patriots, they maintained that the new American

republic, dedicated to the principles of democracy, liberty, and equality, was morally superior to the Old World,<sup>3</sup> characterized as the latter was by institutions that were manifestly unjust--monarchy or autocratic rule, a rigid class system, and oppression of the poor.

This kind of ambivalence, composed of an affirmation of American moral values curiously combined with a yearning for the cultural advantages of European civilization, persisted throughout the second half of the nineteenth century and can be seen as a natural concomitant of what Richard Chase terms one of the unresolved contradictions of the period--namely, "the dual allegiance of the American, who in his intellectual culture belongs both to the Old World and the New."<sup>4</sup> Even as Americans praised their country's freedom from the yoke of tradition and its concern with the present, they continued to express nostalgia for England as the "mother country" and to feel the fascination of the European sense of a historic past. Increasingly, American travelers who took pride in their national virtue and condemned the dissolute morals of European society nevertheless found themselves unable to ignore their own provincialism, which was so strikingly contrasted to the rich cultural heritage of Europe. They were compelled to concede that, despite America's progress and material prosperity, it lacked the aesthetic embellishments of European civilization--a sophisticated and titled upper-class as well as art treasures, palaces and cathedrals, and ancient ruins. By the end of the nineteenth century, as first-hand descriptions of

Europe aroused wide-spread interest among Americans at home and international travel became both easier and less expensive, large numbers of American tourists began to flock to the Old World as "passionate pilgrims" in pursuit of culture and refinement.

These attitudes to Europe, reflected in the various accounts of the American abroad which appeared in letters, journals, travel-books, and newspaper articles of the period, also provided the dominant theme for numerous works of nineteenth century fiction. Indeed, the absorbing interest in the American's relationship to Europe, an interest that prevailed throughout the nineteenth century, was a major factor contributing to the evolution of the international novel.

The finest examples of international fiction are undoubtedly those of Henry James. Yet it should not be forgotten that James was by no means the first American writer to portray the American in Europe. Although he radically transformed the international novel, he did not invent the genre. On the contrary, James's international fiction belongs to a distinctive literary tradition which was already well-established in American fiction by the end of the nineteenth century by major novelists such as James Fenimore Cooper, Herman Melville, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and William Dean Howells, as well as by popular writers such as Theodore Fay, Francis Parkman, and Nathaniel Parker Willis.

It is all the more surprising, therefore, to discover that there have been so few general investigations of the

international novel.<sup>5</sup> Little has been written on the tradition as a whole even though considerable attention has been devoted to non-fictional nineteenth century travel literature and numerous studies have been made of the particular international novels of individual authors.

It was with a view to making a contribution to this relatively neglected area of American fiction that this study was first conceived, and subsequent research has confirmed my conviction that the international novel merits a thorough and comprehensive investigation. In this dissertation, it is my intention to examine the origins and development of the international novel in nineteenth century American fiction. I propose to trace the emergence of the international novel as a genre, to analyze its distinctive characteristics by discussing various works in detail, and to show its significance in nineteenth century American fiction.

For the most part, the international novel will not be considered within the context of American history of ideas even though there is some justification for doing so. David Rodman Smith suggests, for example, that many of the concerns of the international novel are dictated by "a national need of 'culture' and a better-defined social structure."<sup>6</sup> In his comments on the international novel, Smith also argues: "It is a proving ground for national identity, where a national self-conception, as embodied in the hero, is tested against a social reality as seen in a foreign environment."<sup>7</sup> Christof Wegelin, drawing attention

to the fact that the rise of the international novel corresponds to the sharp increase in the number of American tourists traveling to Europe at the end of the nineteenth century,<sup>8</sup> maintains that ". . . the genre of international fiction developed along with the social experience it reflects."<sup>9</sup> Yet even if the international novel may be viewed as a historical, cultural, and social phenomenon, its primary significance is as a literary form. For this reason, the correlation between international fiction and American cultural and social history will be discussed only when it has direct relevance to a particular work.

Nor does this dissertation propose to consider non-fictional travel literature. Most international novelists also wrote travel-books describing their first-hand observations of European life and culture, but while these books frequently provide an interesting background to a study of the international novel, they do not appreciably enlarge our understanding of it as a fictional genre. Thus, the scope of this study has been limited to include only those works which can be classified as nineteenth century international fiction.

There are, to be sure, works which purport to be novels but are predominantly fictionalized travel-books with no more than a bare narrative framework and a few undeveloped characters to provide human interest. Such is the case in Washington Irving's Bracebridge Hall (1822), Henry Tuckerman's Isabel; or Sicily (1839), Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's Hyperion (1839), and even William Dean Howells's Their

Silver Wedding Journey (1899). What these works have in common is the fact that the author's primary purpose is to present his impressions of a European country he has visited and to give a detailed description of its scenery or life or customs.

In Bracebridge Hall, the American narrator functions less as a character than as a commentator employed by Irving to describe the life on an English country estate and in the neighboring village. The loose framework of the book also enables Irving to recount several tales. In Isabel, most of the book is devoted to a description of Sicily, and the American heroine's romance with a Sicilian count is incidental. Nathalia Wright observes that, "The novel . . . has the basic structure of a guide book."<sup>10</sup> In Hyperion and Their Silver Wedding Journey, the real subject of the two books, different as they are in style, is a journey through Germany: both works are episodic, presenting the Americans' impressions of the country and their brief encounters with Germans in the course of their travels. Hyperion is a particularly disjointed work, filled as it is with tales, literary references, and philosophical discourses.

There are also grounds for including John Lothrop Motley's Morton's Hope (1839) in this category. Like Hyperion, it is a semi-autobiographical work based on the author's student days in Germany.<sup>11</sup> Set in Germany and Austria, it recounts the adventures of several German students and, more briefly, the hopeless passion of an Austrian singer for the American hero; but, as in Hyperion, the American's observations of

Europe and Europeans, which are interspersed throughout the book, are not integrated with the episodes described in the narrative. Commenting on Morton's Hope, Wegelin notes:

Motley's book is much more dominated by the narrative than Longfellow's. Yet, in a sense, the narrative element and the international are separated. Though Morton, the young Bostonian hero, observes and discusses foreign manners, neither his life nor his character is shaped by them or by any conflict between them and his native customs.<sup>12</sup>

The latter part of this statement is, in fact, applicable to all the marginal works of international fiction cited above and is one of the major reasons why they warrant only brief notice.

Those novels which are set in Europe but which have only European characters have also been excluded from this study. Although works of this type, such as James Fenimore Cooper's The Bravo (1831), The Heidenmauer(1832), and The Monikins (1835) or the many popular novels written in the late nineteenth century by F. Marion Crawford, reveal the authors' attitudes to Europe, they are not "international"; they neither describe the American traveler in Europe nor dramatize the contrast between American and European characters and cultures.

The preceding works have all been excluded on the grounds that they are not really international novels. There are, however, several kinds of international novels which are also beyond the scope of this study. The first, an interesting variation of the typical American international novel, is the one which depicts European travelers

in America, such as James's The Europeans. This category could also be extended to include Cooper's Homeward Bound (1838), which shows English and American characters aboard a ship bound for the United States, and its sequel, Home as Found (1838). Among the numerous examples of nineteenth century international fiction, those works describing the European in America are the exceptions to the norm.

In addition, British versions of international novels have been omitted from this study. Such novels may describe the American in Europe, as in Anthony Trollope's The American Senator (1877), or show the Englishman in America, as in Charles Dickens's Martin Chuzzlewit (1844). These works provide an interesting perspective on the American international novel but are irrelevant to this study.

Since this dissertation is concerned with the international novel as a distinct literary genre, it will not focus on shorter fictional works. Among the various international short stories that have been omitted are those by two interesting minor writers--Constance Fenimore Woolson's The Front Yard (1895) and Dorothy (1896) and Henry Blake Fuller's The Other Side (1896) and Waldo Trench (1908).

This study is based on the assumption that the literary tradition of American international fiction was established primarily by the major nineteenth century novelists. Consequently, close attention has been paid to novels by Hawthorne, Melville, and Howells, and for the most part, the works of minor authors have been considered more briefly, to the extent that they illustrate or confirm

trends found in more important works.<sup>13</sup> There are, however, several exceptions. For example, Theodore Fay's Norman Leslie (1835) is the first work of international fiction to portray the American's experience of European corruption and as such, provides a useful introduction to later treatments of this theme. In addition, Nathaniel Parker Willis's Paul Fane (1857), for all its flaws, is commonly recognized to be one of the more fully realized and seminal international novels of the period and has therefore been analyzed in some detail.

Howells's novels have been included in this study because, although he is a contemporary of James, he is a transitional figure: while his international fiction is generally more sophisticated than that of earlier novelists, his treatment of the international theme is less developed than that of James. As to Henry James, the kind of detailed analysis that his international novels require to do them justice is unquestionably beyond the scope of the present investigation. The body of James's international fiction is too vast and too complex to be included in a survey of this kind and has, in any case, been discussed extensively in numerous critical studies of his work. This study has been largely limited, then, to those examples of international fiction which are prior to (or, in the case of Howells, contemporary with) those of James. Nevertheless, because James's contribution to the genre is so significant that it frequently illuminates the works under investigation, even retrospectively, allusions to

James's fiction will be made whenever a particular work of his provides a relevant point of comparison or contrast to one of the novels under discussion.

In a delineation of the scope and methodology of this study, one further note of explanation should be added. In view of the fact that a number of the novels analyzed in this dissertation are not accessible to the South African reader, it has been found necessary to present a fuller and more detailed analysis of these works than is usually warranted. For the sake of internal consistency, it has therefore been decided to employ this approach with all the major works under consideration.

## Chapter 2.

## Defining the International Novel

It is difficult to state conclusively at precisely what point the international novel first emerged as a distinct fictional genre since the grounds for classification are contingent upon the particular definition employed. Consequently, while it is generally acknowledged that the form reached its fullest development in the great works of Henry James's maturity, critics disagree as to which work of fiction should be recognized as the first international novel. Oscar Cargill bestows this title on James's The American (1877),<sup>14</sup> whereas Leon Edel maintains that Roderick Hudson (1875) is "the first important 'international' novel in American literature. . . ." <sup>15</sup> Christof Wegelin, by contrast, advances persuasive arguments for the prior claim that could be asserted on behalf of Nathaniel Hawthorne's Doctor Grimshawe's Secret (written circa 1864 but published posthumously in 1883) or even Nathaniel Parker Willis's Paul Fane (1857), depending on how broadly or narrowly one defines the term "international novel."<sup>16</sup> Indeed, if broadly, an equally convincing case could be made for considering Theodore Fay's Norman Leslie (1835) the earliest version of the type.

Some of the difficulties involved in defining the international novel become apparent when Oscar Cargill's

definition is considered:

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. It is the novelist's equivalent of providing a special medium in a laboratory for studying the behavior of an organism, only here it is a device for the revelation of character. . . .17

Although this definition is a useful one when applied to some international novels, Cargill's argument has several weaknesses. As Christof Wegelin points out in his comments on Cargill's article, Cargill's definition not only excludes many novels by Howells, James, and Wharton which are generally acknowledged to be international novels, but, in addition, does not even properly apply to The American, which is the very novel that Cargill has chosen as the prototype of the international novel.<sup>18</sup> Questioning the validity of Cargill's statement that the hero must accommodate himself or be destroyed, Wegelin finds his definition inadequate:

Either these alternatives are too rigorous or accommodate is too vague. Neither quite fits Strether of The Ambassadors, for instance. . . . Even James's Newman, the hero of Professor Cargill's major exemplar, can hardly be said either to have been destroyed or to have accommodated himself. . . .19

It should also be noted that Newman's actions at the end of the novel present a third alternative to the two proposed by Cargill. Far from demonstrating an accommodation to

European mores, Newman's final decision not to revenge himself on the Bellegarde family is a magnanimous gesture which represents a conscious repudiation of the European concept of honor and of the Old World's system of values; it is evidence, too, of his moral superiority to the Bellegardes. Nor does the conclusion of The American indicate that Newman has been destroyed by Europe. Rather it would seem that Newman's refusal to treat the Bellegardes as they have treated him signifies his personal triumph--his affirmation of integrity in the face of betrayal and corruption--despite the suffering that has been inflicted upon him. His new-found moral strength suggests that, in the final analysis, he is beyond the power of the Europeans.

There are other problems raised by Cargill's definition, particularly his assertion that the international novel provides "a special medium . . . for the revelation of character." This statement, like the one questioned by Wegelin, seems to be too vague and generalized to be meaningful: most novelists, surely, choose settings and situations with a view to their usefulness in illuminating the character of their protagonists.

In his discussion of the special importance of the European setting in international fiction, David Rodman Smith raises a different objection, arguing that, "Cargill's definition, though it asserts that the international novelist used Europe as a test tube, does not tell us why he felt the need to use Europe."<sup>20</sup> The inadequacy of Cargill's

definition in describing the salient features of even those novels which are generally recognized to be international novels may thus partially be accounted for by his failure to come to terms with their "internationalism," the essential quality which makes these works international novels. Smith sums up this failing when he maintains that, in Cargill's definition, "The international novel . . . is defined in a way which doesn't really touch on its international quality."<sup>21</sup>

Another, more serious limitation inherent in Cargill's definition is its failure to take into account early examples of international fiction. As Smith observes, "Such a definition is too restrictive."<sup>22</sup> Cargill's definition follows from his assertion that the international novel originated in James's The American, and its formulation seems intended to deliberately exclude all those works prior to James's which depict the American in Europe. Wegelin, too, implicitly criticizes Cargill on this issue, maintaining that to define the international novel in terms of the novels of only James and Wharton, as Cargill does, is to suggest a definition that fits relatively few novels.<sup>23</sup>

Wegelin's method of dealing with the problem of definition is quite different from that of Cargill. In declining to define the international novel at all, Wegelin could be accused of evading the issues raised by his criticism of Cargill's definition. Yet his approach to international fiction is certainly more flexible and more

useful than that of Cargill. The contrast between the two critics is seen clearly when Cargill's defense of The American as the first real international novel is compared to Wegelin's remarks on the development of nineteenth century international fiction:

A definition must always remain somehow arbitrary. But one thing is certain: though the genre came into its own under James and Edith Wharton, they did not create it ex nihilo. It had a history, and . . . evolution. . . .<sup>24</sup>

Wegelin's point of view is an eminently sensible and realistic one in that it takes cognizance of the differences between early, undeveloped international novels and those of James, while acknowledging that these early works should be considered part of the general tradition of international fiction.

There are, then, several possible ways to approach the problem of defining the international novel. It has been suggested that a critic such as Oscar Cargill employs a definition which is too rigid to accommodate the realities of international fiction, assuming as he does that the term "international novel" either applies fully to a work of fiction or not at all. Indeed, there are grounds for contending that any rigorous definition of the international novel is, by its very nature, overly restrictive, thereby serving no useful purpose.

A more productive approach to the problem of definition would seem to be one adapted from the practice of contemporary British philosophy, which not only employs the concept of a paradigm case--that is to say, an example which provides definitive criteria of a term--but which also

employs the notion of peripheral uses of that term. In this way, borderline cases may be accommodated within the scope of the definition; they may be considered as rudimentary examples of the term in question rather than excluded altogether.

This approach to the international novel seems to present distinct advantages over the one advocated by Cargill: it avoids the limitations of an arbitrary or inflexible definition while providing a model--a characteristic example--of the genre in its fully developed form. Any of James's international novels can easily serve as the paradigm case since they are recognized incontrovertibly as "proper" international novels. The specific novel selected as an illustrative example can be The American, the first work whose claim to the title of international novel is not disputed, or, just as readily, any one of the later works, such as The Portrait of a Lady, The Wings of the Dove, The Ambassadors, or The Golden Bowl.

In this context, it is useful to consider Christof Wegelin's comments on the international novel. Although he states explicitly that he is not concerned with the problem of definition, he does note that, ". . . Howells, James, and Edith Wharton provide the type of the international novel."<sup>25</sup> What Wegelin means by "type" seems to be the prototype, a concept which is similar to that of the paradigm case. Wegelin does not develop this point in his article or propose definitive criteria for the genre as a whole, but in his discussion of specific works by Howells,

James, and Wharton, he does describe the general characteristics found in the international fiction of these writers. In doing so, he gives us a fair notion of the paradigm case or illustrative example as provided by the Jamesian international novel, even though this is not his specific intention. Wegelin observes:

. . . in James, Wharton, and--to a lesser extent--Howells the contact between Americans and Europeans is central, the action in their novels deals with social involvement. Whatever problems their characters have to solve, whatever crises they have to meet, are the result of their transplantation to another country or of the intrusion of foreigners into theirs. . . .<sup>26</sup>

He further maintains:

In such novels the conflict between different sets of manners and mores . . . is essential. Usually it leads to illumination, an illumination sometimes but not always shared by the hero. That depends on his intelligence or character.<sup>27</sup>

These salient features are certainly found in all the international novels of James. However, it is the contention of this study that, while James brought the genre to its most highly developed form, there are numerous earlier works which are more rudimentary examples of international fiction--notably, Theodore Fay's Norman Leslie (1835), James Fenimore Cooper's The Two Admirals (1842) and The Wing-and-Wing (1842), Herman Melville's Redburn (1849) and Israel Potter (1855), Francis Parkman's Vassall Morton (1856), Nathaniel Parker Willis's Paul Fane (1857), Nathaniel Hawthorne's The Marble Faun (1860) and Doctor Grimshawe's Secret (written circa 1864), and William Dean Howells's

A Foregone Conclusion (1875), The Lady of the Aroostook (1879), A Fearful Responsibility (1881), and Indian Summer (1886).<sup>28</sup> It is necessary, therefore, to compare these works to the model provided by the Jamesian international novel and, since the definitive characteristics of the international novel are derived from the paradigm case, to ascertain which basic features of James's novels appear in earlier international fiction.

Even in its simplest form, the international novel presents an international situation: an individual from one country is exhibited in the setting of another country. Although a variety of international situations are theoretically possible, most nineteenth century international fiction in fact depicts an American in Europe--in the novels prior to James, usually England or Italy, and more infrequently, Germany or Austria.

Wegelin suggests that, ". . . the term international fiction is more useful if reserved for the kind of fiction which dramatizes . . ." the international situation.<sup>29</sup> None of the works considered in this study is completely successful in doing this; none achieves the unity of character, situation, action, and theme found in the novels of James. Nevertheless, since these early works do present the American's encounter with the European or Europe as an integral part of the narrative, they should be recognized as works of international fiction, even if only peripheral or rudimentary ones.

In any work of international fiction, there is some degree of interaction between the American and the European or Europe which serves to reveal the fundamental differences between the New World and the Old. This element of international contrast is an essential feature--a definitive characteristic--of the international novel. In this context, it is interesting to consider James's remarks on the importance of contrast in his own international fiction:

On the interest of contrasted things any painter of life and manners inevitably much depends. . . . The reader of these volumes will certainly see it offered in no form so frequent or so salient as that of the opposition of aspects from country to country. Their author, I am quite aware, would seem struck with no possibility of contrast in the human lot so great as that encountered as we turn back and forth between the distinctively American and the distinctively European outlook. . . .<sup>30</sup>

In James's international fiction, this contrast manifests itself as what James terms the ". . . 'international' conflict of manners; a general theme dealing for the most part with the bewilderment of the good American, of either sex and of almost any age, in the presence of the 'European' order."<sup>31</sup> Consequently, the international novels of James take the form of novels of manners, as do those of Willis, Howells, and Wharton. David Rodman Smith goes further, maintaining as he does that, by definition, "An international novel is a social novel of manners. . . ."<sup>32</sup> However, it can be argued that Smith's definition is too restrictive (a criticism that he himself levels at Cargill's definition) and, like Cargill's, excludes from consideration a fair number of works which seem to belong to the body of

international fiction.

It would seem preferable to concede that in its emergent stages of development, the international novel is not necessarily or exclusively a novel of manners but is as likely to focus on general ideological or cultural differences between America and Europe as on social ones. Yet, to the extent that the earlier works juxtapose the American and European points of view, modes of behavior, and value systems, depicting the contrast between them, they anticipate the international novels of James, where the conflict of manners and mores is accompanied by the revelation of the polarity of moral values between the New World and the Old and where the multiple concerns of the earlier writers are fused into an integrated vision. Thus, by employing more flexible standards than either Cargill or Smith does, works such as Fay's Norman Leslie and Melville's Redburn would each be recognized as a species of international novel since, like The American, they present the American innocent's first encounter with European corruption. So, too, would Hawthorne's The Marble Faun, which has a similar theme and prefigures The Wings of the Dove in several important respects.

In a fully realized international novel, the confrontation between the American and the European and the ensuing conflict of manners, mores, cultures, and values is not only present but is central to the work. This is essentially the point made by Wegelin in his discussion of Howells, James, and Wharton quoted earlier and is related

to his assertion that whatever problems the American faces are the consequence of his transplantation to Europe. However, even when it is recognized that the centrality of international contrast found in the paradigm case is not present in most of the works considered in this study, there are still distinctions to be made with regard to the various degrees of importance which this theme may assume.

Compared to the international novels of James, the international contrast in works such as Paul Fane, Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, A Foregone Conclusion, and A Fearful Responsibility is less developed, although it is still of crucial significance. These novels are to be differentiated, in turn, from works in which the encounter between the American and the European is subordinated to other concerns and made peripheral. For example, Cooper's The Two Admirals is a sea-novel, but it has a sub-plot about a young American's ambivalent attitude to his English heritage in which the contrast of American and British cultures is conspicuously present. Smith is correct in calling Cooper's attempts to write international fiction "primitive" ones.<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless, a work of this sort is "international" to the extent that it portrays characters, situations, and attitudes which anticipate those found in later international novels. Mid-way between works such as Paul Fane, on the one hand, and The Two Admirals, on the other, are various novels in which the element of international contrast, though less than central is more than incidental, serving as it does as a dominant theme. Such is the case in Norman Leslie, Redburn, The Marble Faun, and

Indian Summer, novels in which the experiences of the American in Europe reveal the conflict of values between the New World and the Old. To attempt to decide to precisely what extent these works are international novels is futile. Measured against the paradigm case, they are not fully realized international novels; but they do belong to the body of international fiction and represent various stages in the evolution of the genre.

In any work of international fiction, Europe or Europeans are shown to have some impact on the American. In the more rudimentary ones, it is the external circumstances of the American's life which are affected by his experiences in Europe rather than his personality or outlook or values, and the element of illumination that Wegelin recognizes in the more developed international novels is usually absent. In some works of international fiction--namely, Redburn, Paul Fane, The Marble Faun, Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, and Indian Summer--it can be argued that there is indeed a measure of illumination, if by that one means an American's new understanding of his identity as a consequence of his encounter with European characters or culture. It must be acknowledged, however, that virtually no international novel considered in this study shows the American fully conscious of the significance of his experience abroad to the extent that James's characters are in works such as The Portrait of a Lady, The Wings of the Dove, The Ambassadors, and The Golden Bowl. Nevertheless, there is also a disparity in the

degree of illumination present in these works and in Roderick Hudson or even The American. It would seem, therefore, that the element of illumination is not so much a definitive characteristic of the international novel as a qualitative factor--one that differentiates a good international novel from an inferior one.

When the works of international fiction considered in this study are compared to the paradigm case, it is apparent that they do not fully conform to the model provided by James's novels. At the same time, as has been suggested earlier in this chapter, the attempt to decide which works are "proper" international novels and which are not is less functional than a more flexible approach that enables one to view the tradition of American international fiction as a whole. The novels I propose to examine undoubtedly belong to this tradition, for they exemplify the international novel in its formative stages and throw light on its emergence and development as a distinct fictional genre. Moreover, even if they must be recognized as rudimentary works of international fiction, they do possess those general characteristics derived from the paradigm case which may be taken as the necessary minimal requirements for classification as an international novel and, as such, may be termed "definitive": they depict an international situation, presenting the American in a European setting; they describe the interaction between the American and the European or Europe that serves to illustrate some point of contrast between the New World and the Old; they show the

impact that Europeans or Europe has on the American.

This is not to deny that James's international fiction goes beyond the earlier works, representing as it does the fullest flowering of the international novel, the most highly developed and accomplished stage of the genre. Yet it in no way diminishes the magnitude of James's literary achievement to recognize that it constitutes the culmination of a tradition that originated in the early nineteenth century, with the result that many of the preoccupations, themes, and character-types found in his fiction are prefigured in earlier versions of the international novel.

### Chapter 3.

#### A General Survey of Nineteenth Century

#### International Fiction

The particular methodology employed in investigating the international novel, with the view to giving clarity and coherence to the material, invariably reflects certain assumptions on the part of the critic. Thus, while it might seem logical to trace the emergence of the international novel as a genre by organizing the individual novels to be considered in chronological sequence, it is nonetheless misleading to assume that the development from simple to more complex conforms to any uniform pattern. For although the works written in the latter part of the nineteenth century are generally more fully developed examples of international fiction than those written before 1860, there are instances where this is not the case. For example, Howells's Indian Summer certainly anticipates James's The Ambassadors in its portrayal of the American in Europe, but the international theme in Howells's The Lady of the Aroostook and Ragged Lady is less developed than in Willis's Paul Fane. Nor is it altogether satisfactory to compare works of international fiction within the canon of individual authors as can be seen by the fact that Hawthorne's The Marble Faun has as much in common with James's The Wings

of the Dove as it does with Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, while the latter, in turn, shares certain preoccupations with Cooper's The Two Admirals. Because of their respective limitations, neither of these methods seems to be the most useful approach to the study of the genre.

Consequently, the fourteen selected texts in this dissertation have been grouped thematically, according to the dominant concern of the novel (which in each case is the nature of the interaction between the American traveler and the European or Europe) rather than more ancillary considerations such as typology of character or geographic setting. In this way, novels which are related to one another by the way that they render the international situation can be discussed together.

Before proceeding with this analysis, however, it is useful to undertake a general survey of nineteenth century international fiction in order to provide an over-all view of the various configurations of the international situation and to establish the context within which may be found the particular motifs which are the foci of attention in Parts II, III, and IV of this dissertation. This chapter is an attempt to do so, with reference to the works of international fiction which will be considered subsequently in more detail as well as to the peripheral works which have been excluded from this study because they lack the minimal requirements of an international novel. More specifically, the novels which will be cited in this chapter are Washington Irving's Bracebridge Hall (1822),

Theodore Fay's Norman Leslie (1835), Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's Hyperion (1839), John Lothrop Motley's Morton's Hope (1839), Henry Tuckerman's Isabel; or, Sicily (1839), James Fenimore Cooper's The Two Admirals (1842) and The Wing-and-Wing (1842), Herman Melville's Redburn (1849) and Israel Potter (1855), Francis Parkman's Vassall Morton (1856), Nathaniel Parker Willis's Paul Fane (1857), Nathaniel Hawthorne's The Marble Faun (1860) and Doctor Grimshawe's Secret (written circa 1864 but published posthumously in 1883), William Dean Howells's A Foregone Conclusion (1875), The Lady of the Aroostook (1879), A Fearful Responsibility (1881), Indian Summer (1886), Ragged Lady (1899), and Their Silver Wedding Journey (1899), and Mark Twain's A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court (1889).

### i. The American Traveler

There are three basic factors present in all international novels--the figure of the American traveler, the European setting, and the interaction between the American and the European or Europe which provides the dramatic contrast of the international situation. Among the various guises in which the American traveler appears, there are several character-types which recur repeatedly in nineteenth century international fiction. One of the most common figures, particularly in the earlier works, is that of the idealized American hero, the young man who demonstrates his natural nobility in the course of the novel. Although this kind of American traveler functions as the representative of a new republic which has no hereditary rank or titles, he is obviously a gentleman, whose character and behavior attest to the fact that the American is in no way inferior to the upper-class European.

Wycherley Wychecombe in James Fenimore Cooper's The Two Admirals (1842) is a character of this type. A young American lieutenant serving in the British navy during the mid-eighteenth century, he is portrayed as high-principled, honorable, and courageous. Admittedly, he is a rather stereotyped character and, except for his patriotism and manifest pride in being an American, his qualities are not distinctively American. Nevertheless, he is undoubtedly

intended by Cooper to show America in a favorable light by demonstrating that colonial America was capable of producing native sons who were civilized young gentlemen. The revelation that Wychecombe is really the great-nephew and heir of a British baronet is significant, since it is evident that his inherited title is meant to serve as an outward emblem of the noble qualities which the young man has already exhibited.

In Nathaniel Hawthorne's Doctor Grimshawe's Secret (written circa 1864 but published posthumously in 1883), the American visiting England resembles Wychecombe insofar as he is an idealized character who, though seeking to discover his connection to an old British family, has a strong commitment to America. However, Hawthorne's hero is more recognizable as an American than Cooper's. In both drafts of the work, the traveler is a young man who has achieved distinction through a successful political career: Edward Etherege is a lawyer and congressman who is now a minister in the diplomatic corps; Edward Redclyffe is more vaguely described as holding a political position which has been achieved by his energy and ability. Both characters are young men of action and ambition who represent the American ideal of the successful "self-made man"; both are at the same time men of sensitivity, culture, and refinement.

The hero of Nathaniel Parker Willis's Paul Fane (1857) should also be mentioned here. Fane is an artist whose credentials as a diplomatic attaché enable him to gain

entry into European society, where he eventually wins recognition and acclaim for his talent. Fane's artistic genius is the mark of his distinction, but, in the course of the novel, he also demonstrates his fineness of character, his elevated principles, and his impeccable conduct, thereby showing himself to be the natural equal, even the superior, of the well-born Europeans whom he encounters.

The protagonists of two minor novels--Theodore Fay's Norman Leslie (1835) and Francis Parkman's Vassall Morton (1856)--are also portrayed as idealized heroes. Handsome, refined, honorable young men of good family, Leslie and Morton are, to a large extent, stereotyped figures of the type found in popular fiction. Of the two, Morton is a more fully developed character because of his interest in history and philology and his love of nature, particularly the wilderness; he is a scholar and a competent backwoodsman as well as a polished young gentleman.

Because of their unsuspecting natures, both Leslie and Morton fall victim to malicious plots devised by jealous rivals and both are unjustly accused of crimes they did not commit--Leslie, of murder, and Morton, of treason against the Austrian government--with the result that Leslie is forced into exile in Europe and Morton imprisoned in Austria. However, even when faced with hardship, suffering, and isolation, both men demonstrate the typical heroic qualities of courage and fortitude before they finally triumph over adverse circumstances.

In all the instances cited above, it is the idealization of the American hero which defines his character-type. Yet it is interesting to observe that, in these works, the American's virtues are as much social as moral: he is shown to possess integrity, an innate nobility of character, and a highly developed code of honor, but these, together with his manners and refinement, are primarily intended to establish his credentials as a gentleman and prove his natural quality and distinction. Only in Norman Leslie and, to a lesser extent, Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, is the moral superiority of the American to the European emphasized. In The Two Admirals and Paul Fane, it is the social contrast between the American and the European which is pre-eminent, while in Vassall Morton, it is the political contrast.

One other characteristic that the American heroes in these novels have in common is the fact that they all appear in the role of lovers, even though the romantic interest in the novels is made subsidiary to other, more dominant themes: Wychecombe falls in love with an English girl and marries her;<sup>34</sup> Fane is loved by four distinguished English and European women, although he marries the American girl whom he has known from childhood; Leslie and Morton remain faithful to the American girls they love through years of suffering and separation before marrying them at the end of the novels.

There are two other figures in early works who are of passing interest here--Paul Flemming in Henry Wadsworth

Longfellow's Hyperion (1839) and Uncas Morton in John Lothrop Motley's Morton's Hope (1839). Neither has the nobility of character which distinguishes the idealized American hero, and both men can be characterized as melancholy lovers. Both flee America, traveling in Germany, in order to forget the loss of the women they love--Flemming, when his wife dies, Morton, when his fiancée marries his best friend. Both indulge in self-pity, immersing themselves in grief and melancholy, until they finally resolve to forget the past and return to an active life in America. Morton, who has hitherto shown himself to be self-centered and shallow, also realizes the emptiness of his life abroad and returns home as a committed patriot to take part in the Revolutionary War. The figure of the melancholy lover is a character-type which was never really utilized in international fiction. Hyperion and Morton's Hope lack even the minimal requirements of an international novel and, as noted in the Introduction, properly belong to the body of autobiographical travel literature.

The American girl abroad, the feminine counterpart of the idealized American hero, is a character whose youth and beauty make her a fictional descendent of the fair young maiden who is the conventional heroine of romance. Yet, in most instances, she also possesses traits which are commonly regarded as distinctively American. Typically, she is frank, natural, independent, and much less concerned than her European contemporary with rigid codes of conduct

and social conventions. The first example of this type appears in Henry Tuckerman's Isabel; or, Sicily (1839). Although this work is little more than a travel-book about Sicily, Isabel is described as an American girl who is young, attractive, idealistic, candid, and independent. Traveling alone through Europe in search of her father, she is also the first American girl in fiction to make an international marriage.

Two variant versions of the American girl are found in Willis's Paul Fane. Sophia Firkin, a minor character who appears briefly in the novel, is a wealthy young heiress who is attractive, impetuous, flirtatious, and determined to enjoy her visit abroad without submitting to the restraints imposed by European notions of decorum or surrendering the freedom of behavior to which she is accustomed in America. In this respect, she can be regarded as a prototype of James's Daisy Miller.

Mary Evenden, the heroine of the novel, is a more idealized character. A minister's daughter who is lovely, unaffected, sensitive, and possessed of a natural grace and refinement, she is apparently intended by Willis to embody the highest virtues of American womanhood--idealism, purity, and spiritual beauty. Like Sophia Firkin, she also possesses a fundamental innocence which is contrasted to the sophistication and worldliness of European society and which is particularly significant because it is a distinctive characteristic displayed by most American girls portrayed in nineteenth century international fiction, even before the

advent of James's heroines. This characteristic may manifest itself as inexperience, unworldliness, and lack of sophistication, or it may appear as moral innocence, as will be shown subsequently. In either case, it is generally shown to be a positive trait, and one which differentiates the American from the European. However, although her innocence is the source of much of the American girl's charm and appeal, it frequently puts her at a disadvantage in European society.

In his international fiction, William Dean Howells portrays several American girls who are pretty, good-natured, and engaging, but unsophisticated and ignorant of the world. Lily Mayhew in A Fearful Responsibility (1861) displays these qualities when she responds to the overtures made by a young Austrian officer whom she meets on a train in Italy, only to discover that her unfamiliarity with European codes of conduct makes the barrier between herself and the young man impassable. The situation in A Foregone Conclusion (1874) is, in some respects, a similar one. Florida Vervain is warm, generous, and kind-hearted. However, her youthful naivete and inexperience lead her to misinterpret the actions of a young Italian priest. Acting out of compassion, she befriends him until, shocked by his declaration of love for her that she has unwittingly encouraged, she becomes partly responsible for his tragic fate. Imogene Graham in Indian Summer (1886) is another American girl who is misled by her ignorance of life and adult passions. Attractive, charming, intelligent, and

impulsive, she is blinded by the romantic idealism of youth, imagining herself in love with Theodore Colville, a middle-aged American whom she meets in Italy, because she conceives the notion of sacrificing herself to his happiness and compensating him for a disappointment he suffered many years before.

Although Lily Mayhew, Florida Vervain, and Imogene Graham are all unsophisticated and inexperienced, they are also shown to be cultivated and fashionable young women. By contrast, Clementina Claxon in Ragged Lady (1899) is a poor country girl who is provincial and unpolished. Her simplicity, sweetness of nature, and unworldliness differentiate her from the members of fashionable Florentine society whom she encounters and show how unsuited she is to this society. Even when she gains the favor of one of its leaders, she is indifferent to her success and content to leave Europe to return to America. Lydia Blood in The Lady of the Aroostook (1879) has a similar background insofar as she is a poor young schoolteacher who has lived all her life in a backwoods New England village. Yet, although she is trusting and ignorant of the world, she is beautiful, proud, and possessed of a natural poise--qualities which would enable her to gain entry to fashionable European social circles were she inclined to do so.

In The Lady of the Aroostook, Howells also focuses his attention on another aspect of innocence--moral innocence. It is this characteristic more than any other

which distinguishes Lydia Blood from Howells's other American girls abroad. Having acquired a severe and puritanical New England morality which is untempered by any experience of wrongdoing, Lydia judges everyone she meets in uncompromising moral terms. Shocked by European society, she condemns the hypocrisy and immorality which she finds there. Although this novel is only a minor work, Lydia Blood is a character in the same tradition as an earlier American heroine--Hawthorne's Hilda in The Marble Faun (1860).

Hilda is a much more complex character, but she also possesses an absolute moral innocence, untainted by any knowledge or experience of evil. Because of this, her discovery of the reality of sin in the world, a discovery which is forced upon her in the course of the novel, is a painful and traumatic one. Like Mary Evenden, Hilda is essentially intended to be an idealization of the American girl, but even more than Fane's character, she is portrayed as an embodiment of moral perfection: it is her singular moral purity which is the definitive aspect of her character. Hilda is thus an American innocent different in kind from the American girls who precede her, a character who prefigures James's Milly Theale. In Hilda, the American girl abroad takes on a new symbolic dimension as her journey to Europe becomes a confrontation between American innocence and European corruption.

A masculine version of the type who should also be mentioned here is the young sailor-hero of Herman Melville's

Redburn (1849). Redburn lacks the distinctive qualities of the idealized American hero, but he resembles Hilda to the extent that his voyage to Europe represents an initiation of innocence into the knowledge of evil. Yet Redburn's moral innocence is different from Hilda's in that it is shown, not as a primary characteristic, as much as another facet of his naivete and inexperience. Having previously led a very sheltered existence, the young sailor is shocked by the brutality and vice which he encounters on his first sea-voyage, both aboard ship and in England. Kind-hearted, trusting, and idealistic, he is ill-equipped to cope with the sordid reality of life.

If Redburn, Hilda, and Lydia Blood are included with the American heroines discussed above, as examples of the character-type that may be termed the young American innocent rather than the American girl, it is evident that this type appears in nineteenth century international fiction in several variant forms and that the term "innocent" is used in different ways: it may refer to a lack of sophistication and worldly experience, as in the case of Florida Vervain and Imogene Graham; or it may refer to an Adamic moral state, an ignorance of the existence of evil, as in the case of Hilda; or it may refer to the co-existence of both, as in the case of Lydia Blood, Redburn, and so many of James's Americans abroad.

Another distinct type that appears in nineteenth century international fiction is that of the artist. Admittedly, to classify a figure as an artist is to say

less about his character and function in the novel than to describe him as an idealized hero or as an innocent. Moreover, the role of artist may overlap with one of the other typological categories, as in the case of Willis's Paul Fane or Hawthorne's Hilda. Nevertheless, for each of the artists discussed below, the commitment to art is a significant aspect of his identity, even if not a definitive one.

The artist-figure is a central character in four important works of international fiction--Willis's Paul Fane, Hawthorne's The Marble Faun, and Howells's A Foregone Conclusion and Indian Summer. The hero of Paul Fane is a gifted young American painter whose genius attains its full flowering in Europe. Kenyon, the young sculptor in The Marble Faun, is another artist whose talent develops and matures during his sojourn abroad. Unlike Kenyon, Hilda's creative power as a painter declines in Rome because she decides to dedicate herself to reproducing the great masterpieces of the past rather than to attempting any original work of her own. However, she does become a copyist of rare skill and sensitivity until, after witnessing the murder which Donatello and Miriam commit, she discovers that her art no longer has the power to sustain her and is unable to paint. Hilda's experience suggests a new aspect of the impact of Europe on the artist: the artist's experience in Europe may frustrate his artistic potential rather than help him to fulfill it.

The artist-figures who appear in Howells's international

fiction are all men who fail to realize their artistic ambitions. Ferris in A Foregone Conclusion is a painter by profession even though he is serving as the American consul in Venice. However, it gradually becomes clear in the course of the novel that his is a second-rate talent, incapable of achieving greatness. The ambitions of Theodore Colville in Indian Summer are frustrated in a different way. Colville is a newspaper editor who, in his youth, studied architecture and dreamt of combining a career in this field with his literary interests. Returning to Florence in middle-age, he intends to write a book about Florentine architecture, a project he regards as an artistic endeavor, but somehow, the book never gets written. There are two other characters in Howells's minor works whose inability to realize their artistic aspirations resembles Colville's. The first, Owen Elmore in A Fearful Responsibility, is a young college professor and scholar whose attempt to write a history of Venice is not successful. The second, Mr. March in Their Silver Wedding Journey (1899), is the editor of a literary journal who was a writer of prose and verse as a young man until he was compelled to give up his literary ambitions in order to earn a living. Now an elderly man, he goes to Europe with the vague hope that he will write a book about his travels only to acknowledge, at last, that he never will.

Any description of the artist-figure in international fiction must therefore include not only those artists who develop their talent abroad, but also those whose artistic

efforts prove futile or abortive. The main point of resemblance between Howells's artists and those of Willis and Hawthorne lies in their common vision of Europe as a source of artistic inspiration and as a repository of culture and civilization. Thus, it is Italy, with its pictorial splendor and superb art treasures, which is the setting of all those international novels prior to James's that depict the artist as the central figure, with the exception of Their Silver Wedding Journey, a late work which is essentially a travel-book about Germany rather than a novel.

Another figure which is found in several works of fiction, albeit ones which are international only in the most rudimentary sense, is that of the Yankee. This character-type appears in James Fenimore Cooper's The Wing-and-Wing (1842), Herman Melville's Israel Potter (1855), and Mark Twain's A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court (1889). None of these novels belongs to the mainstream of international fiction; yet the picture of the American in Europe that is drawn in these works presents an interesting variation of the one found in the novels discussed above. For example, the Yankee is frequently shown to be a rascal or a victim rather than a hero. Moreover, the aspects of the American national character which he represents are practical, realistic, and shrewd rather than heroic, romantic, or naive. Thus, the Yankee can be seen as the antithesis of both the idealized American hero and the innocent.

The Yankee is a character-type that is derived from early American folk-lore--a native folk-hero who, as Daniel Hoffman points out, has emerged by the 1830's as a well-defined type familiar in popular culture.<sup>35</sup> In Form and Fable in American Fiction, Hoffman traces the various transformations that the Yankee undergoes in the course of his evolution from folk-figure to the characters found in the fiction of Irving, Hawthorne, Melville, and Twain. The basic character-traits of the Yankee which are described by Hoffman include adaptability and the power of metamorphosis,<sup>36</sup> as well as the native common sense and shrewdness which he acquires at a somewhat later stage of development.<sup>37</sup> One guise that the Yankee frequently takes is that of the peddler who, according to Hoffman, may appear as either a "roguish picaro" or a "native trickster" who knows how to drive a sharp bargain.<sup>38</sup> Given the popularity of the Yankee figure in folklore and fiction, it is no surprise to find him in international fiction, retaining many of the traits which Hoffman has ascribed to him.

Ithuel Bolt, in Cooper's The Wing-and-Wing, is a character who is clearly modelled on the popular stereotype of the Yankee. His very physical appearance attests to his New England origins, since he is tall, lanky, sinewy, and speaks with a nasal twang and a New England accent. He is a jack-of-all trades who has been farmer, printer's devil, schoolmaster, stage-driver, tin-peddler, and sailor; in the novel, he is serving under a French privateer during

the Napoleonic Wars. On several occasions, Bolt disguises himself in order to elude capture by the British and, after finally being caught by them and managing to escape, he appears in America many years later as Deacon Bolt, having grown religious, temperate, and wealthy. The ability to change his identity at will, which establishes Bolt as a master of metamorphosis, is one that is a distinctive characteristic of the Yankee. In addition, Bolt is something of a knave--shrewd, wily, devious, and quite unscrupulous when the necessity arises. Avowedly materialistic, he is adept at driving a hard bargain and able to boast that he could best the devil himself in a trade. With respect to these qualities, Bolt's resemblance to the shrewd Yankee peddler is unmistakable.

Ithuel Bolt is not only a Yankee, but he is a Yankee depicted in an international situation. Although Cooper transforms the figure of the Yankee by making him an American sailor in Europe, this role can be seen as an extension of the Yankee's traditional one, that of the picaro. Moreover, the traits that Bolt displays in Europe are consistent with the popular stereotype of the Yankee.

In his discussion of the Yankee, Hoffman points out that the term "Yankee" was originally a derisive epithet which the British Redcoats applied to certain colonial regiments from Connecticut.<sup>39</sup> This point suggests that, in the popular imagination, the Yankee was originally identified as a native patriot. Ithuel Bolt is a character in this tradition. In addition to his pride in his New

Hampshire origins and his antipathy to Italian wine, foreign languages, Catholicism, and European civilization, in general, Bolt has once been a victim of the British practice of impressment of American sailors. As a result of his imprisonment on a British ship, he nurses a fierce hatred towards that nation, joining the crew of a French privateer in order to revenge himself on the British. In pursuit of this aim, Bolt proves single-minded, resourceful, and courageous.

The main character of Melville's Israel Potter resembles Ithuel Bolt in several respects. Like Bolt, he is a wanderer as well as an American patriot and a victim of British injustice. Potter is a soldier in the American army during the Revolutionary War when he is captured by the British, transported to England, and compelled by hardships and poverty to remain in England for fifty years of enforced exile. Even more significant is the fact that Potter, as Hoffman points out, is "closely modelled on the Yankee of popular lore."<sup>40</sup> Like Bolt, Potter is a New Englander who is brave, self-reliant, ingenious, and shrewd. He is also a man who has undergone a series of metamorphoses: he has worked at many trades, having been farmer, hunter, peddler, sailor, harpooner, soldier, gardener, courier, brickmaker, tinker, and ragman. After his escape from his British captors, he has also become adept at hiding his identity by employing a variety of disguises. All these traits are characteristic of the Yankee.

On turning to the protagonist of Mark Twain's A

Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court, one recognizes that the Yankee has undergone a further transformation, although some of the distinctive characteristics of the type are still present. Hank Morgan, the Connecticut Yankee of the title, is described as practical, clever, resourceful, and skilled at various trades, having been blacksmith, horse doctor, arms manufacturer, and general inventor. However, Morgan also possesses qualities which foreshadow the modern age of technology. He combines the common-sense and shrewdness of the typical Yankee with a belief in reason, science, efficiency, the machine, and material progress. When he is transported back to the sixth century, Morgan tries to bring about a radical change in Arthurian England, attempting to remold it into the image of nineteenth century America and to eradicate cruelty, injustice, ignorance, and superstition in the process. Ultimately, his efforts to create a new society fail, with the result that the England of Twain's fantasy reverts to its former barbaric state. Nevertheless, Morgan's attempt to reform England can, in a sense, be seen as analogous to the military battles in which Ithuel Bolt and Israel Potter take part during the Revolutionary War: the actions of all three characters repudiate the idea of British supremacy and represent a struggle against British tyranny and injustice. Morgan is a more developed character than either Bolt or Potter, but although his pragmatism, efficiency, and managerial skills make him a forerunner of the modern technocrat, he is also a descendent of the Yankee folk-hero.

The figure of the Yankee is also important in international fiction because it represents the original type who, after various and sundry transformations, finally emerges as the American businessman in the international novels of James. Wabash Blivins in Paul Fane represents this character-type in a transitional stage. Practical, shrewd, and resourceful, Blivins has these traits in common with the Yankee, although he is, in fact, a "hoosier" from Indiana. After trying various careers, as Bolt, Potter, and Morgan do, Blivins becomes an artist, utilizing his limited skill to paint pious and patriotic pictures which he can sell in large quantities at a handsome profit. Blivins is thus less an artist than a businessman. He regards art as a commodity and industriously builds up a commercial enterprise which enables him to achieve his professed aim in life--to make money. Like the other Yankees discussed above, he is the antithesis of the idealized American hero, who is represented in Willis's novel by Paul Fane.

In addition to the significance of typology in analyzing the figure of the American traveler in international fiction, there is another factor which should also be taken into consideration--his motive for going to Europe. The American travelers in the novels referred to in this study can usually be classified into one of two categories, questers or non-questers. The characters who fall into the second category are generally found in more rudimentary examples of international fiction which fail to develop the potential

of the international situation. They are travelers whose journey to Europe is either fortuitous or incidental, insofar as it is an unforeseen consequence of some act unrelated to Europe itself; or they are travelers whose purpose in going to Europe is to escape some unpleasant situation in America. Three characters who are actually taken to Europe against their will are Ithuel Bolt in Cooper's The Wing-and-Wing, Israel Potter in Melville's novel of the same name, and Hank Morgan in A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court: Bolt is impressed into the British navy, Potter is brought to England as a prisoner-of-war, and Morgan is magically transported in time and place to Arthurian England.

The American travelers in Henry Tuckerman's Isabel and Francis Parkman's Vassall Morton are characters for whom a journey to Europe is the means of attaining a goal quite unconnected, in any integral way, to the countries visited: Isabel, seeking a reunion with her father, who has spent many years abroad, goes to Sicily in order to find him, while Morton is directed by his fiancée's father, who disapproves of his daughter's engagement to Morton, to go abroad for a year in order to win his consent to the marriage. In several peripheral works of international fiction, Europe represents an escape or exile for an unhappy lover: Paul Flemming in Longfellow's Hyperion goes to Germany in an attempt to alleviate the pain and sorrow he feels at the loss of the woman he loves, as does Uncas Morton in John Lothrop Motley's Morton's Hope. The hero of Theodore Fay's Norman Leslie exiles himself in Europe after he is falsely accused of

murder and forced to flee America. In none of these instances is the American motivated primarily by an express desire to see Europe itself.

Occasionally, a character's motive for going to Europe is not readily apparent. For example, the American girl's desire to see Europe would seem to be implicit in the situations presented in Howells's A Foregone Conclusion, The Lady of the Aroostook, Indian Summer, and Ragged Lady. Yet, Florida Vervain in A Foregone Conclusion is residing abroad with her mother, and Imogene Graham in Indian Summer has been sent by her mother to visit an old friend of Mrs. Graham's. In addition, neither Lydia Blood in The Lady of the Aroostook nor Clementina Claxon in Ragged Lady is a character who deliberately, consciously sets out in search of the new experiences or social opportunities which Europe offers. Their journeys to Europe are largely fortuitous, the consequence of action initiated by others on their behalf, as in the case of Florida Vervain and Imogene Graham, rather than the result of any overt act of their own: Lydia is invited for a visit by an aunt living in Venice and Clementina is asked to accompany the woman for whom she works. It is the girls' advisers-- Lydia's aunt and Clementina's minister--who most fully appreciate the social and cultural benefits which a trip to Europe offers, and it is because of their advice that Lydia and Clementina decide to accept the invitations to go abroad. Therefore, when their motives are considered, it becomes evident that none of these girls can really be

classified as a quester; none of them seeks any particular goal or experience in Europe.

By contrast, there are a number of instances in which the American's journey to Europe is presented as a quest, as the pursuit of some value or knowledge or order of experience associated with Europe. In nineteenth century international fiction, this quest generally takes one of two forms--the search for identity or the pursuit of aesthetic values--and occasionally, the two may co-exist.

The quest for identity motivates the American travelers in Cooper's The Two Admirals, Melville's Redburn, Willis's Paul Fane, Hawthorne's Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, and Howells's Indian Summer. Except for Fane, the Americans in these novels seek to discover their identity by confronting and attempting to come to terms with the past; and they associate Europe with the past, whether for historical or personal reasons. In Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, Etherege/Redclyffe goes to England in order to solve the mystery of his birth and discover his ancestry. The situations in The Two Admirals and Redburn are somewhat more ambiguous. Wychecombe finds himself in England as a result of his joining the British navy, but he does make a conscious and deliberate effort to visit his ancestral home when he has the opportunity to do so. Although Redburn's immediate reason for becoming a sailor is his need to earn a living, foreign travel, particularly the chance to see England, is certainly one of the attractions that going to sea represents for him. Moreover, his desire to visit England is a

direct consequence of the fact that his father was once there many years before. Therefore, even if Wychecombe and Redburn arrive in England because of a fortuitous series of events, they both have strong motives for wanting to go there. Like Etherege/Redclyffe, they attempt to define their identity by seeking an ancestral or paternal heritage which will link past and present.

Theodore Colville's quest for identity in Indian Summer follows an analogous pattern, although it is bound up with (but pre-eminent over) his pursuit of aesthetic inspiration. His return to Florence in middle-age represents his attempt to recapture the past--namely, his lost youth--and to relive it. One of the ways that he attempts to do so is to realize the artistic ambitions of that period of his life.

In Paul Fane, the American's quest for identity also encompasses the aesthetic quest. Fane's decision to go to Europe to study art is activated and even dominated by a desire to observe European society and ascertain what his own relative rank would be there. However, his social ambitions are motivated by his need to define his identity and to prove himself, not only as an artist, but as an American and as a man.

In addition, the quest for aesthetic values is depicted in Hawthorne's The Marble Faun and Howells's A Foregone Conclusion. Like Colville and Fane, the Americans in these novels are all artist-figures who turn to Europe, rich in art and culture, for inspiration that is lacking

in America. Kenyon and Hilda both go to Rome to study art and to develop their talent, and Ferris becomes the American consul in Venice in order to be able to have the opportunity to paint in that city which he could not otherwise afford. Yet, it should also be noted that, in all four novels, the aesthetic quest is depicted as a subsidiary theme in the novel rather than as the dominant one.

## ii. The European Setting

The figure of the American traveller (whether idealized hero, innocent, artist, or Yankee) is one component of international fiction; another is the European setting. When one considers even so obvious a factor as the specific country chosen as setting, there are certain patterns which emerge. An examination of nineteenth century American fiction reveals, for instance, that James is virtually the first author to use France as the setting of an international novel. Although Paul Fane does have a brief interlude in Paris, most of the novel takes place in Florence and London. None of the other works considered in this study uses France as the setting of any significant part of the work. Germany or Austria is the background for only four novels, all of them borderline travel-books or rudimentary works of international fiction--Longfellow's Hyperion, Motley's Morton's Hope, Parkman's Vassall Morton, and Howells's Their Silver Wedding Journey. All the major works of international fiction, as well as a number of minor ones, take place in either England or Italy. England is the setting of Cooper's The Two Admirals, Melville's Redburn and Israel Potter, Hawthorne's Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, and Twain's A Connecticut Yankee; Italy is the setting of Fay's Norman Leslie, Tuckerman's Isabel, Cooper's The Wing-and-Wing, Willis's Paul Fane, Hawthorne's The Marble Faun, and Howells's A Foregone Conclusion, The Lady of the Aroostook,

A Fearful Responsibility, Indian Summer, and Ragged Lady.

Frequently, it is possible to attribute an author's choice of setting to biographical factors, particularly since most international novelists drew on their own travels and first-hand observations of Europe. For example, Hyperion and Morton's Hope, as noted earlier, both reflect the authors' experiences as students in Germany. Redburn is also an autobiographical work, based on Melville's voyage to England and his impressions of Liverpool. Much of the source material for Doctor Grimshawe's Secret and The Marble Faun can be found in the Notebooks which record Hawthorne's observations of England while American consul and his impressions of Italy during his extended visit to that country. Similarly, Howells's choice of Italy as the setting for most of his international fiction is certainly influenced by the fact that he served as American consul to Venice for four years and came to know Italy well. However, although an author's experiences in Europe may help to reveal the genesis of a particular international novel, they do not illuminate the function of the European setting within the context of the novel. For this, it is necessary to examine the work itself.

Although there are various rudimentary works of international fiction in which the European setting serves as little more than a colorful background or exotic geographic locale for the American's travels or adventures (for example, Isabel), there is, in the more fully developed international novels, an integral relation between the choice of setting

and the thematic structure of the work. In a number of novels, the specific European country chosen as setting is determined by the nature of the quest undertaken by the American traveler. However, the setting may serve more than one purpose, and the reality of Europe that is revealed to the quester is usually more complex than his preconceptions have led him to expect. Moreover, the descriptions of Europe that are found in novels which have no questers are also worthy of attention. Finally, when the spectrum of nineteenth century international fiction is surveyed, it becomes apparent that different characteristics may be attributed to a particular European country in various works and similar characteristics to different countries. To analyze the general function and significance of the European setting in international fiction, it is necessary, therefore, to consider not only the specific, geographic locale, but also the aspects of Europe which recur in various international novels.

Three distinctive characteristics are ascribed to Europe in nineteenth century international fiction: Europe is associated with the past; Europe is regarded as a center of civilization and culture; Europe is depicted as corrupt or evil. Frequently, these characteristics are interrelated.

The identification of Europe--the "Old World"--with the past is implicit to some extent in most international fiction, but there are a number of works in which this theme is a dominant one. In The Two Admirals, Redburn, and Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, there is a direct correlation between

setting and quest: England is regarded nostalgically as a repository of the past, and it is bound up closely with the American's quest for identity. As noted earlier, Wychecombe and Etherege/Redclyffe both return to their ancestral homes in England, while Redburn attempts to retrace his dead father's footsteps in that country. The American's journey to England in these works thus represents a symbolic pilgrimage to the past.

The ancestral or family ties which bind these characters to England can be seen to correspond to America's colonial ties to the mother country. Indeed, because of America's particular historical experience, England was the obvious and natural choice of setting for the American's quest for identity.<sup>41</sup> In his discussion of the international novel, Smith maintains: "The nature of the American past meant that . . . international attempts at self-definition and self-justification would be made . . . most effectively and particularly . . . in the mirror of England or, at least Englishmen."<sup>42</sup> It is common knowledge that, even after having won its political independence, nineteenth century America had not yet fully divested itself of its former cultural and emotional dependence on England or become entirely self-sufficient. Philip Rahv, among others, remarks: "For despite all bluster the newly created national ego is at bottom uncertain of its identity. . . ."<sup>43</sup> And Hans Meyerhoff contends that, for all the American's repudiation of the Old World, he continued to retain towards it "a nostalgic memory . . . an image of Europe as home, roots,

and a sense of belongingness and identity. . . ."44

The Two Admirals and Doctor Grimshawe's Secret both emphasize the English cultural heritage of the American characters: Wychecombe and Etherege/Redclyffe are examples of what Rahv calls "a certain type of American who comes to 'Mother England' with the intention of re-discovering the original sources of his personality and culture."<sup>45</sup> Thus, the need of Wychecombe, Etherege/Redclyffe, and Redburn to come to terms with their past and their conscious decision to renounce the past for the present after they have done so can be seen to reflect the attempt being made by nineteenth century America to establish its own national identity.

There are two novels in which Italy is associated with the past. In The Marble Faun, where the antiquity of Italian civilization is evoked throughout the novel, Hawthorne is concerned with examining the effect of the Roman past on the present. Although there are also references to Italy's historical past in Indian Summer, Florence represents the past to Colville in a more personal sense. Having visited the city many years before, he identifies it with the time of his youth.

Because of Europe's heritage from the past, the civilization that has evolved there is richer and more developed than that of the new American republic. The acknowledgment that Europe is eminently cultured and civilized, particularly in contrast to America, is a tacit one in most works of international fiction. In The Two Admirals, Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, and Paul Fane, Europe, in fact, functions as a social

proving-ground for the American. In his discussion of the insecurity felt by the nineteenth century American as a citizen of a new nation, Smith alludes to the international novelist's need "to test his own nation's self-image against an assumed social reality or social norm"--namely, that of European society.<sup>46</sup> In view of the European's general assumption of social and cultural superiority to the American, an assumption that is dramatized in The Two Admirals and Paul Fane, it is not surprising to find that several works of international fiction attempt to refute this notion, as has been noted earlier. Wychecombe, Etherege/Redclyffe, and Paul Fane are all characters who demonstrate that the American may be the social equal of the European (although the fact that Cooper, Hawthorne, and Willis felt the need to prove this point so emphatically is, in itself, evidence that feelings of social inferiority continued to dominate the American).

In The Two Admirals, the revelation that Wychecombe has inherited the title of baronet from his English great-uncle seems intended by Cooper to show that an American may have, not only the social accomplishments, but even the rank of an English gentleman. It would also appear that Cooper was reluctant to base the young American lieutenant's claim to distinction solely on his natural merits, finding it necessary to confer on him such status as would enable him to meet the exacting standards of upper-class English society. The description of Etherege/Redclyffe in Doctor Grimshawe's Secret places less emphasis on social virtues,

but Hawthorne's character is clearly delineated as a refined and cultured American whose diplomatic office and prestige may be seen to correspond to Wychecombe's title. In Paul Fane, the young American's need to prove his worth in European society is the dominant theme of the novel. It is only after Fane has been accepted by that society and won acclaim for his artistic talent that his self-esteem is finally secure. Willis goes further than Cooper or Hawthorne in showing Fane to be superior to the Europeans whom he encounters. Yet, Fane, obsessed by what Europeans think of him throughout most of the novel, is far more insecure than either of the other two. European society is also described in Norman Leslie, The Lady of the Aroostook, and Ragged Lady. However, although the American characters in these novels gain entry into sophisticated European circles, they are indifferent to the social distinction conferred upon them.

European civilization is presented, in international fiction, not only in terms of the social but also the aesthetic. The latter constitutes the primary attraction of Europe for the American travelers in several novels. It has been observed earlier that Paul Fane, The Marble Faun, A Foregone Conclusion, and Indian Summer all describe Americans who go to Europe in pursuit of aesthetic interests or values--artist-figures who are drawn to the magnificent art, picturesque antiquity, and rich cultural heritage that characterize Italy. Insofar as Italy was a veritable mecca for the nineteenth century American artist, there is a direct correlation in these novels, as in The Two Admirals, Redburn,

and Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, between the American traveler's motive in going abroad and the country to which he chooses to go.

The vision of Europe as a repository of the past and as a center of civilization and culture is, in itself, essentially a positive one. As Cushing Strout maintains, Europe represented, to the nineteenth century American, "a richly endowed museum of the treasures of Western Civilization, suffused with the romantic haze of antiquity."<sup>47</sup> Nevertheless, despite its manifold historical, social, and aesthetic attractions, Europe is also frequently shown to possess grave moral defects.

Political oppression is depicted as the dominant feature of Europe in several works. In The Wing-and-Wing, Israel Potter, and A Connecticut Yankee, it is England which is described in this manner; in Vassall Morton, it is Austria. The Americans in these novels by Cooper, Melville, and Parkman are all victims of flagrant European injustice: as noted earlier, Bolt is impressed into the British navy from an American ship, Potter is transported to England after being captured by the British during the Revolutionary War and repatriated only after fifty years of exile from his native land, and Morton is falsely accused of treason and unjustly imprisoned by the tyrannical Austrian government. A Connecticut Yankee is a work which is a blend of fantasy and satire. Yet, it is interesting to note that Twain conceives of King Arthur's reign, not as a romantic or heroic era, but as a period when absolute power cruelly

wielded by the few enabled them to enslave the ignorant and superstitious masses. Allusions to European tyranny are also found in A Foregone Conclusion and A Fearful Responsibility, where Howells's awareness of Austria's despotic rule over Venice is distinctly present in the background of the novels.

In Redburn, England is shown as a country where economic and social evils, rather than political ones, abound. However, the many episodes which portray the wretchedness and suffering of the poor all testify to the essential injustice of English society. A similar description of the sordidness and squalor of the English slums is found in Israel Potter. In addition, there are several works set in Italy--Norman Leslie, Isabel, and The Marble Faun--which contain references to the privation and misery of the poor in that country.

A different aspect of Europe is described in Norman Leslie, Paul Fane, and The Lady of the Aroostook, works which are set against the background of fashionable upper-class European society. However, although this society is portrayed as elegant, polished, and sophisticated, it is also shown to be seriously flawed. In Norman Leslie, the American hero observes the decadence under the glittering surface of Italian society. In Paul Fane, the young artist is initially attracted to the brilliant social scene he observes in Paris, Florence, and London, but in time he comes to see its sterility and the falsity of its values. In The Lady of the Aroostook, the American heroine is shocked

by the hypocrisy and worldliness of Venetian society. The moral corruption of the beau-monde in these works thus parallels the political and social injustices in the works discussed above and, like them, is shown to be inherent to the European way of life.

In three of the novels in which Europe is identified with the past, Europe also functions as a symbol of moral corruption. The heritage that the American hero of Doctor Grimshawe's Secret seeks in England is found to be tainted by sin and crime, as symbolized by the bloody footstep on the threshold of the ancestral family home. In The Marble Faun, the beauty and culture that Italian civilization has produced over the ages co-exist with guilt and iniquity; the ancient ruins in Rome evoke, not only the grandeur of antiquity, but an atmosphere of death and decay. Unlike Hawthorne, Melville dissociates the corruption of England from the past. Although the social evils described in Redburn have been mentioned above, the brutality and vice that the young sailor witnesses in the port city of Liverpool attest to a more general moral decay. By describing Redburn's visit to a London club in imagery that suggests a descent to the underworld, Melville emphasizes that the pervasive moral corruption that the American has encountered in England has an archetypal dimension. These three works, then, go beyond those which reveal the defects of European political or social institutions or the immorality of fashionable European society: they present the Old World, for all its civilization, as an embodiment of sin and evil. By doing

so, they cause the European setting to acquire a symbolic force that transcends its literal function as a geographic locale.

### iii. The International Situation

The international situation which exhibits the American in a European setting is essentially a dynamic one: it juxtaposes contrasting aspects of America and Europe; it presents some degree of interaction between the American and the European (what Dorothea Krook has so aptly termed the "interaction of the American mind with the European");<sup>48</sup> it shows the impact of Europe on the American. These salient features of the international situation may be observed in various recurrent patterns found in nineteenth century international fiction.

The contrast between America and Europe is a fundamental assumption common to virtually all international fiction. In the more rudimentary examples of the genre, it may manifest itself in the differences between American and European systems of government, as in The Wing-and-Wing, Israel Potter, Vassall Morton, and A Connecticut Yankee; the contrast between American democracy and European tyranny is also implicit in The Marble Faun, A Foregone Conclusion, and A Fearful Responsibility. The opposition of the New World and the Old takes the form of the conflicting claims of present and past in The Two Admirals, Redburn, The Marble Faun, Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, and Indian Summer. The contrast of manners and mores that differentiate American and European societies is depicted in Paul Fane, A Foregone

Conclusion, The Lady of the Arcostook, A Fearful Responsibility, and Ragged Lady. Finally, the polarity of moral values--the confrontation of American innocence and European corruption--is portrayed in Norman Leslie, Redburn, The Marble Faun, Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, and The Lady of the Arcostook.

In a fully realized international novel, the contrast between America and Europe is dramatized by the encounter between the American and the European, and this encounter constitutes the focal point of the novel. Marius Bewley, for example, asserts that, "The essential note of the international novel is that it provides a stage on which the American and European cultures dramatically encounter, criticize, and possibly supplement each other."<sup>49</sup> However, while this is true of the international novels of James, it does not apply to much of nineteenth century international fiction. In Norman Leslie, The Two Admirals, The Wing-and-Wing, Redburn, Israel Potter, Vassall Morton, Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, The Lady of the Arcostook, Indian Summer, and Ragged Lady, the interaction between the American and the European is relatively minimal, peripheral, and undeveloped. In most of these novels, there are no close relationships formed between American and European characters. Although the Americans in The Two Admirals and Israel Potter do, in fact, marry Englishwomen, the marriages are relegated to a minor role in the narratives: Israel Potter does little more than allude to Potter's marriage to an English girl, and, in The Two Admirals, the marriage between Wychecombe

and Mildred Dutton takes place only at the end of the novel, at which point the English girl renounces her own country in order to go to America. Isabel, which is the first work to describe an international marriage, proves a similar case, since the book is more travelogue than novel, and the primary function of Isabel's marriage to an Italian seems to be to enliven the author's detailed description of Sicily.

There are only four works of international fiction considered in this study in which the interaction between the American and the European can be said to be of central importance--Paul Fane, The Marble Faun, A Foregone Conclusion, and A Fearful Responsibility. Yet, even in these works, the relationships between American and European characters are not fully developed.

In Paul Fane, four English and European women fall in love with Fane in the course of the novel, but the primary purpose of these various episodes is to establish the young American's social success in Europe. None of these relationships is explored in any real depth; none is sustained. Even when Fane falls in love with an English girl, Sybil Paleford, whom he renounces so that she can marry another man, his feeling for her eventually proves to be a superficial attraction rather than any more enduring emotion.

In The Marble Faun, Hilda repudiates her friendship with Miriam after she witnesses the murder that Donatello commits and Miriam inspires. Shrinking from contact with the other girl lest she be tainted by her guilt, Hilda,

like Kenyon, remains essentially an onlooker. Neither American is directly involved in the central drama of the novel to the extent that the European characters are.

In A Foregone Conclusion, the unfortunate situation that is caused by Don Ippolito, an Italian priest, falling in love with Florida Vervain, an American girl, is, in the end, made subsidiary to the relationship between Florida and Ferris, another American. Although both Americans are inadvertently responsible for precipitating the priest's death, they remain unaffected by their encounter with him. The failure of communication between the American and the European which is depicted in this novel is also the subject of A Fearful Responsibility, which describes the abortive romance between an American girl and an Austrian officer. What is common to all four works is the absence of permanent or binding ties between the American and the European. Moreover, in each instance, it is the American who terminates the relationship and rejects the European.

A survey of nineteenth century international fiction thus reveals that in no international novel, other than those of James, is the potential significance of the encounter between the American and the European realized or the subtleties of the international relationship fully explored. Those works which portray relationships between the American and the European which are central and primary fail to develop those relationships; those narratives which describe international marriages do so in a cursory fashion. James is the first to show a close and crucial involvement

between the American and the European. He is also the first international novelist to dramatize the contrast of manners and the polarity of moral values between the American and the European within the context of an international marriage.

Most early works of international fiction, then, tend to depersonalize the international situation. In numerous instances, it is the American's experience of Europe which is the focus of attention rather than his relationships with individual Europeans. The impact that Europe has on the American may be understood, in part, by the attitude that he forms in the course of his travels or sojourn abroad. To be sure, there are several works of international fiction in which the American appears largely neutral or indifferent in his feelings towards Europe--A Foregone Conclusion, A Fearful Responsibility, and Ragged Lady; this is also true of travel-books such as Isabel, Hyperion, Morton's Hope, and Their Silver Wedding Journey. In most cases, however, the American's attitude to Europe is either negative or ambivalent; in no novel is it unequivocally positive.

There is an obvious correlation between the aspects of Europe described in an international novel and the attitude to Europe expressed by the American in that novel. The Americans in The Wing-and-Wing, Israel Potter, Redburn, and Vassall Morton all witness or fall victim to the social and political injustices of Europe; the Americans in Norman Leslie, Redburn, and The Lady of the Aroostook are all confronted with the immorality of European society. In

these works, the American's impressions of Europe are predictably negative.

The American's attitude to Europe is somewhat more complex in The Two Admirals, Paul Fane, The Marble Faun, Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, and Indian Summer. In these novels, the American is attracted to some aspect of Europe--its association with the past or its culture and civilization--but critical of others. Wychecombe and Etherege/Redclyffe are drawn to their cultural and ancestral heritage, but they are committed to the democratic ideals of America. Etherege/Redclyffe recognizes the civilized quality of English life, with its sense of tradition, but he also comes to see that the English past may be tainted by sin and guilt. Colville goes to Italy to recapture the past but eventually realizes that Europe represents an escape from the claims of the present that are identified with America. Fane is attracted to the beauty and brilliance of upper-class European society but discovers that the values of that society are fundamentally false. Hilda reveres the artistic masterpieces which are found in Italy, but she is appalled by the sin and evil which she witnesses in that country. The ambivalence underlying these characters' feelings towards Europe is never fully resolved, although they all eventually decide to leave Europe and return to America.

In his discussion of the international fiction of Longfellow, Motley, Parkman, Melville, and Hawthorne, Christof Wegelin notes:

While the narratives I have mentioned contain serious comments about Europe, and American characters representing various attitudes toward Europe, it is rare that these attitudes issue in action. Even in Hawthorne the international element remains essentially apart from the action.<sup>50</sup>

Although Wegelin's comment is a valid one, it can be argued that the expression of an attitude constitutes, in itself, a form of response to Europe, albeit a rudimentary one. Moreover, in virtually all the nineteenth century international fiction considered in this study, with the single exception of Isabel, the American decides to return to America, an act which can be seen as a rejection of Europe. In a number of works, this rejection is conscious and overt: Fane and Etherege/Redclyffe prefer the freedom and egalitarian ideals of America to the advantages of Europe; Wychecombe and Colville, as well as Flemming and Morton, choose to renounce the past and return to the active, practical life of the present that America offers; Norman Leslie, Hilda, Kenyon, and Lydia Blood reject European corruption for American moral virtue. James is therefore the first international novelist to portray an American who settles abroad and makes a permanent commitment to Europe.

The impact that Europe has on the American can also be observed more directly in several other ways. In a number of works of international fiction, the American's journey to Europe alters the external circumstances of his life without, however, having much effect on his character. Such is the case in Isabel, The Two Admirals, The Wing-and-Wing, Israel Potter, A Foregone Conclusion, A Fearful Responsibility,

and Ragged Lady. The Americans in these works remain essentially unchanged by their sojourn in Europe.

By contrast, a character such as Maggie Verver in James's The Golden Bowl is irrevocably altered by her experience in Europe and her involvement with Europeans: she undergoes a process of enlightenment (which is essentially what Wegelin calls "illumination" in his comments quoted earlier), painfully acquires a new degree of consciousness, and attains self-knowledge and experience of the world. Moreover, Maggie Verver not only learns but acts. Compelled to come to terms with betrayal and disillusionment as a direct consequence of her marriage to an Italian prince, she is enabled to do so by utilizing the power of love to redeem her marriage-- a triumph that represents a synthesis of American and European values but is achieved only at considerable cost. The Golden Bowl provides a standard of measurement which can be used to evaluate the examples of international fiction included in this study. In none of them, however, does an American undergo a comparable degree of transformation. In most cases, the impact that Europe has on the American lies somewhere between that shown in Isabel, on the one hand, and The Golden Bowl, on the other--more than a change of circumstances, less than an expansion of consciousness that demands a new response to life.

Frequently, the American's experiences in Europe lead him to a surer sense of his identity, both as an individual and as an American. This theme, as has already been noted, is a dominant one in Redburn, Paul Fane, Doctor Grimshawe's

Secret, and Indian Summer; it is also present in Norman Leslie, Morton's Hope, The Two Admirals, Vassall Morton, The Marble Faun, and The Lady of the Aroostook.

The American heroes of Norman Leslie, Vassall Morton, and Paul Fane are also affected by their experiences in Europe in another way, even if only to a limited extent. In his discussion of Vassall Morton, Wegelin comments on Morton's imprisonment in Austria: "Though obviously his life cannot be said to be unaffected by this, the political element functions primarily as a means to reveal character, not to shape it."<sup>51</sup> It would appear that Wegelin's remark implies a more static view of Morton's character than is really the case, since there are grounds for concluding that Morton's imprisonment serves a dual function: it reveals his character, but it shapes it too. To be sure, this episode is undoubtedly intended by Parkman to enable Morton to demonstrate the courage and fortitude he has shown earlier in the novel. Furthermore, throughout this work, as in those of Fay and Willis, Europe is used as a background against which the virtues of the American hero are displayed. Nevertheless, insofar as Europe, in all three novels, is the catalyst which calls forth these latent qualities and stimulates their development, it can be seen as a shaping influence no less than as a testing-ground of the American's worth.

Leslie, Morton, and Fane all undergo some kind of trial or suffering in Europe: Leslie, falsely accused of murder, is forced into exile in Europe; Morton is imprisoned in

Austria on a false charge; Fane is induced to renounce the English girl whom he loves. These experiences not only reveal the integrity and nobility of the Americans, but, to some extent, educate them through suffering, thereby causing the young men to mature in the course of their sojourns in Europe. Because these works, particularly Norman Leslie and Vassall Morton, are poor novels, the authors are not entirely successful in their attempts to depict the process of maturation. Yet, it is evident that, in all three instances, the works belong to the tradition of the Bildungsroman<sup>52</sup> (though Paul Fane, which shows the development of the artist, can also be classified as a kind of Künstler-roman), with the journey to Europe envisioned figuratively as a passage from youth to manhood.

This theme is rendered more successfully in Redburn, another American version of the Bildungsroman, in which the young sailor's foray into the world and his coming of age are bound up with his quest for identity. In this novel, as in The Marble Faun, the impact that Europe has on the American is a crucial one, for the international situation portrays the American innocent's first encounter with evil. Insofar as the wickedness that Redburn and Hilda witness abroad is intrinsically European, Europe is associated with a particular order of experience: it represents a civilized equivalent of the forest in Hawthorne's "Young Goodman Brown" or the post-lapsarian world to the Adamic American venturing out of the New World Eden for the first time.

Redburn and The Marble Faun are certainly not the only works of international fiction to depict Europe as corrupt. Nevertheless, they invest the confrontation between American innocence and European corruption with a symbolic dimension which prefigures that found in the international novels of James. The situation in The Lady of the Aroostook has similar potential, but Lydia Blood's introduction to the immorality of European society is shown within the context of an international comedy of manners, so that, while it offends her New England rectitude, it has little impact on her personality. By contrast, Redburn and Hilda both undergo traumatic ordeals in Europe: as archetypal innocents, they are initiated into a knowledge of evil and forced to confront the darker recesses of the human soul. In this sense, the transatlantic voyages in both novels culminate in a re-enactment of the experience which is repeatedly dramatized in the mainstream of nineteenth century American fiction.

Part II.

The American and the European Past

## Chapter 4.

## Selected Works by Cooper, Hawthorne, James, and Melville

Turning from a general survey of nineteenth century international fiction to an analysis of specific texts, one finds that the international situation, as determined by the nature of the interaction between the American traveler and the European setting, consistently takes three variant forms which are correlated to the three distinctive characteristics of Europe referred to in the foregoing discussion. Thus, the dominant motifs recurrent in these novels are the American and the European past, the American in European society, and the American's encounter with European corruption.

The association of Europe with the past is found, to some extent, in most nineteenth century international fiction, but in the case of England, in particular, this association has special significance for the American traveler. The sense of nostalgia which the American feels towards England is expressed in international fiction as early as 1822, in Washington Irving's Bracebridge Hall. Although this work is less a novel than a series of tales and sketches which are interspersed with Irving's observations about English life, it contains interesting passages revealing the author's attitude to England. In his Address to his readers and in his Farewell, Irving sums up the twofold

attraction that England has for him. Contrasting the newness of America, which "unfortunately cannot boast of a single ruin,"<sup>53</sup> to the antiquity of England, he acknowledges his intense interest in "the crumbling monuments of past ages" (I, 6) and maintains that there is "something inexpressibly touching in the sight of enormous piles of architecture, gray with antiquity, and sinking to decay" (I, 7). Moreover, expressing his warm affection for "the land of my fathers" (II, 403), Irving shows himself to be acutely conscious of the "old relationship . . . the ancient tie of blood" (II, 400) which still binds the American to England.

The antiquity and the long-established traditions which Irving finds in England imbue that country with what James has called "the sense of the past"; but it is the memory of the historical ties between colonial America and England, the mother country, which leads the nineteenth century American to identify with the English past more than with that of any other European country. In all of the works considered in this chapter--The Two Admirals, Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, "A Passionate Pilgrim," and Redburn--the American comes to England to seek some kind of ancestral heritage or patrimony. Implicit in these works is the idea that the American must come to terms with the past before he can free himself from it and establish his own identity. In the process of doing so, he is also compelled to recognize the disparity between idealized dream and reality.

### 1. The Two Admirals

James Fenimore Cooper's The Two Admirals (1842) is a historical novel which is set in England during the mid-eighteenth century. A minor work which is usually classified as a sea-novel, it combines adventure and a detailed account of the naval battles between the British and French fleets with politics and romance. At the same time, it is also a rudimentary international novel which portrays a young American in England. Although the international element is relegated to a sub-plot and Wycherley Wychecombe, the American hero, is not the main character of the work, it should be noted that The Two Admirals is the first novel by a major American author to dramatize an international situation.

The eighteenth century setting of The Two Admirals has direct relevance to Cooper's delineation of the international situation. Cooper has chosen to portray a period in history when America, though still a British colony, was characterized by an emerging and increasingly defined national consciousness of its own. It is in this context that Wychecombe's attitude to England must be considered.

Wychecombe has strong ties to England. To him, England represents not only the mother country but a more personal link with the past; it is his ancestral homeland,

the place where his grandfather was born. Yet Wychecombe affirms his patriotism and pride in America repeatedly throughout the novel and, despite his regard for England, makes it clear that his first allegiance is to his native land:

He considered himself an Englishman, it is true; was thoroughly loyal; and was every way disposed to sustain the honour and interests of the seat of authority; but when questions were raised between Europe and America, he was an American. . . .<sup>54</sup>

Wychecombe's feelings towards England are thus ambivalent ones. Nonetheless, even as he asserts his identity as an American, he seeks his ancestral roots in the past and, for this purpose, attempts to re-establish relations with the English branch of his family. As the novel opens, Wychecombe, a lieutenant in the British navy, is in England recovering from a wound received in battle. At his own request, he has been put ashore at the Devonshire village of Wychecombe where his great-uncle, a baronet, resides in order to seek out his relative. It is only after meeting the baronet that the young American decides not to reveal the bond of kinship between them as he had intended. This decision is primarily the consequence of the Englishman's attitude to America.

From his first encounter with Sir Wycherley, it is apparent to Wychecombe that his kinsman's attitude to America is a prejudiced one. In alluding to the baronet's low opinion of the American colonies, Cooper points out that, "Sir Wycherley felt and reasoned on the subject of

America much as the great bulk of his countrymen felt and reasoned in 1745 . . ." (I, 42). To Sir Wycherley, Wychecombe is an alien, an outsider. Without even consciously intending any offense, the old man tells the American that, "'You are not one of us, young gentleman, though your name happens to be Wychecombe; but then we are none of us accountable for our own births, or birth-places'" (I, 43). Thus, when the baronet offers Wychecombe a legacy because of the name he bears, even though he is ignorant of the young American's connection to him, Wychecombe refuses to accept money from a man who views his country with contempt. Wychecombe's reaction to the Englishman's assumption of superiority is indicated even more explicitly after Sir Wycherley's death, when the American explains his reason for not having disclosed his relationship with the baronet:

"I found America and Americans looked down on, in England--colonists spoken of as a race of inferior beings--of diminished stature, feebler intellects, and a waning spirit as compared to those from whom they had so recently sprung; and I was too proud to confess an affinity where I saw it was not desired."  
(I, 232)

Cooper's desire to refute the notion of America's inferiority to England, a view that continued to be prevalent in England even in the nineteenth century, leads him to make England a proving-ground for Wychecombe. In the course of the novel, the young American does eventually win the respect of Sir Wycherley as well as that of Sir Gervaise Oakes and Admiral Bluewater, the two admirals in command of the British fleet. He demonstrates beyond question that he is no uncouth

provincial but a refined and civilized young gentleman who is well-bred and possessed of an impeccable lineage and an independent fortune. Indeed, he is portrayed by Cooper as an idealized hero who has integrity, nobility of character, and a strict code of honor. He distinguishes himself in battle, marries an eligible English girl who is discovered to be Admiral Bluewater's niece, and eventually inherits the old baronet's title and estates. The revelation that he is his great-uncle's legal heir by birth seems intended by Cooper to show that an American may possess the social rank as well as the natural quality of a titled English gentleman and is thus his equal in every respect.

Nevertheless, although he proves himself able to meet the exacting standards of English society, Wychemcombe finally rejects England, with all its civilized traditions and its links with the past, reaffirming his commitment to America, where he finds his rightful place in the present:

His strong native attachments led him back to Virginia. . . . With him, early associations and habits had more strength than traditions and memorials of the past. . . . He really preferred the graceful and courteous ease of the intercourse which characterizes the manners of James's river. In that age, they were equally removed from the coarse and boisterous jollity of the English country-squire, and the heartless conventionalities of high life. In addition to this, his sensitive feelings rightly enough detected that he was regarded in the mother-country as a sort of intruder. He was spoken of, alluded to in the journals, and viewed even by his tenants as the American landlord; and he never felt truly at home in the country for which he had fought and bled. . . . (II, 235)

It is evident from even a cursory examination of The Two Admirals that Wychemcombe is not a fully realized character.

Moreover, the interaction between Wychecombe and the Englishmen he encounters is, to a large extent, superficial. Even the relationship between Wychecombe and Mildred is not developed beyond the stereotyped romance common in popular fiction. However, The Two Admirals does attempt to contrast the American and the English points of view within the context of an international situation. It suggests, furthermore, that the American's journey to England represents an attempt, albeit a futile one, to re-establish a connection with the past. In this respect, it anticipates Doctor Grimshawe's Secret and Redburn.

## ii. Doctor Grimshawe's Secret

The English Notebooks which Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote while serving as American consul in England provide a useful introduction to Doctor Grimshawe's Secret (1883, posthumous).<sup>55</sup> Although Hawthorne did not actually begin working on the novel until he returned to America, it was first conceived during his residence in England from 1853 to 1855 and was shaped, to a considerable extent, by his impressions of that country. The "intentional fallacy" should, of course, be avoided; but Hawthorne's comments about England do provide relevant information about the origins of the novel.

Like Irving and Cooper, Hawthorne recognizes England as the American's ancestral homeland and acknowledges the special tie which binds the American to the mother country. He writes that, "It is our forefathers' land, our land; for I will not give up such a precious inheritance."<sup>56</sup> During his sojourn in England, Hawthorne actually attempted to locate the home of his own English forefather who had emigrated to New England in the seventeenth century,<sup>57</sup> and, as Edward H. Davidson points out, he "liked to imagine that he was the representative of the American Hawthornes who had now come back to the 'old home.'" Davidson notes, too, that Hawthorne's duties as American consul frequently brought him into contact with American tourists who believed that they were the rightful heirs to English titles and estates.<sup>58</sup>

These factors undoubtedly influenced Hawthorne in writing Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, for the American's confrontation with his English past is a dominant theme in the novel, and the hero of the work, one of those characters whom Christof Wegelin has termed "romantic pilgrims,"<sup>59</sup> is a young American of mysterious birth who goes to England to discover his relationship to an ancient English family and to claim his ancestral heritage. However, as in The Two Admirals, the American's attempt to forge a link with the past by returning to his ancestral home proves futile. Like Wychecombe, he discovers that he must renounce the past for the present; he is eventually compelled to acknowledge that his proper place is in America, not England.

Like Irving and Cooper, too, Hawthorne is acutely conscious of the contrast presented by the picturesque antiquity of England, with its long-established traditions and sense of the past, and the newness of America. Hawthorne's veneration for the past led him to appreciate many aspects of English life, but, at the same time, he was also aware that the past could easily become a dead weight on the present.<sup>60</sup> In Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, as in The Marble Faun, Hawthorne's attitude to the past is thus an ambivalent one: the past is shown to represent, not only civilization and tradition, but a heritage of sin and guilt transmitted from one generation to the next.

The symbol that Hawthorne chose to suggest this aspect of the past in Doctor Grimshawe's Secret was suggested to him by a chance encounter at a dinner party in England.

After being introduced to a couple who had just purchased an old manor house called Smithell's Hall, he was told that there was a dark red discoloration on the stone threshold of the house which, according to legend, was reputed to be the indelible mark of a bloody footstep left by a sixteenth century Protestant clergyman who had been committed to prison for heresy by the proprietor of the Hall. The martyr was afterwards burned at the stake but, before leaving the Hall, he stamped his foot in protest against the injustice done to him and left his bloody footprint embedded in the stone.<sup>61</sup> The legend of the bloody footstep was intended by Hawthorne to provide the central symbol of Doctor Grimshawe's Secret. Unfortunately, however, Hawthorne could not decide precisely what the bloody footstep should represent in the novel. Davidson notes:

At the outset of the first draft he had vaguely in mind that the mark signified an old ancestral crime which, like the Pycheon-Maule feud in The House of the Seven Gables, would fester and break out sporadically during the two centuries of a family's history. He wrote pages and pages of meditative asides trying to specify what crime would best suit his purpose. Should it be a martyrdom, like that of George Marsh in 1555 and the persecution of a devout follower who came to New England about the time of the Puritan migration? Or should it emblemize a family feud in the seventeenth century when a younger son of the house of Smithell's had been a "bloody religionist," had participated in the execution of Charles I, and had trod in the King's blood and had left ever after a scarlet trail as a token of his crime? Or should it be the symbol of some nineteenth-century crime--the financial chicanery of one man at the expense of another; the eviction of an heir from his legally inherited estates; the family's interference in a marriage and the revenge which the disappointed lover took on those who had cheated him of his bride? Hawthorne could not make

up his mind and, at the end, left the question unanswered.<sup>62</sup>

Hawthorne's failure to resolve this problem is one of the manuscript's major weaknesses. Nevertheless, despite the ambiguity of the symbol, it is evident that Hawthorne intended the bloody footstep to represent a moral flaw, a taint in the heritage that the American hero goes to England to seek. And it is this aspect of the symbol which is most relevant to a consideration of Doctor Grimshawe's Secret as a work of international fiction.

Before turning to the text of Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, reference should be made to The Ancestral Footstep, which is an earlier version of the work. The Ancestral Footstep consists of a series of dated entries which outline the plot of the projected narrative. It is eight-five pages in length but is disjointed and incomplete. Since this fragment is superseded by the later drafts of Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, it will be considered only briefly, in passing. However, there are several aspects of The Ancestral Footstep which are of particular interest and should be noted.

The central figure of The Ancestral Footstep is a young American, Middleton, who comes to England to learn something about the English branch of his family and to find his ancestral home. The English family to which he is connected has a history that is tainted by some family crime, possibly a murder or the expulsion of a brother from the hereditary house, and the house bears the mark of a bloody footstep on its threshold. The family's past is intended by Hawthorne

to be dark, sinister, and evil. Moreover, the present owner of the estate, Eldredge, is an Italian Catholic who has committed some crime in his own country. He attempts to murder Middleton and in one version is himself killed.

Prefiguring James's "A Passionate Pilgrim," Hawthorne suggests at several points that the American identifies himself with the ancestor who emigrated to America several hundred years before: ". . . he rather felt as if he were the original emigrant who, long resident on a foreign shore, had now returned. . . ." <sup>63</sup> When he arrives at his ancestral home, Middleton finds himself "recognizing the scenery and events of a former dream" (p. 460). He feels that he belongs there: "He was now at home; yes, he had found his home, and was sheltered at last under the ancestral roof after all those long, long wanderings . . ." (p. 510).

Middleton carries proof that he is the rightful heir to the ancestral titles and estates, but he is ambivalent in his attitude to his English birthright. As an American and a republican, one who has had an active political career in the United States, he asks himself: ". . . what to him was this old English title--what this estate, so far from his own native land, located amidst feelings and manners which would never be his own?" (p. 452). Yet although he does eventually renounce his claim, Hawthorne notes that he does so with regrets:

. . . Middleton shall not come to the decision to resign it, without having to repress a deep yearning for that sense of long, long rest in an age-consecrated home, which he had felt so deeply to be the happy

lot of Englishmen. But this ought to be rejected, as not belonging to his country, nor to the age, nor any longer possible. (p. 518)

In the course of his visit to his ancestral home, Middleton falls in love with Alice, an American girl now living in England. Alice's origins and background are presented differently in each of the various versions that Hawthorne considered. What is clear, however, is that Hawthorne intended Alice to support and encourage Middleton in his decision to renounce his claim to the English estate. She tells Middleton:

"I should think ill of the American who, for any causes of ambition,--any hope of wealth or rank,--or even for the sake of these old, delightful ideas of the past, the associations of ancestry, the loveliness of an age-long home,--the old poetry and romance that haunt these ancient villages and estates of England,--would give up the chance of acting upon the unmoulded future of America." (p. 505)

When they marry, writes Hawthorne, it shall be partly due to Alice's counsel that Middleton foregoes his claim to the estate, but he shall concur in this decision:

. . . [he shall discover that he] prefers the life of an American, with its lofty possibilities for himself and his race, to the position of an Englishman of property and title; and she, for her part, shall choose the conditions and prospects of a woman in America, to the emptiness of the life of a woman of rank in England. (p. 517)

The dominant motifs that are found in An Ancestral Footstep will be seen to reappear in Doctor Grimshawe's Secret. The most problematic aspect of Doctor Grimshawe's Secret is due to its unfinished state. When Hawthorne died,

he left two drafts of the novel as well as six very brief preliminary studies outlining the plot of the projected work. In the first draft, which is almost two hundred pages, the first twenty-five pages depict Etherege's boyhood in America, and the remainder of the narrative is devoted to a description of the young man's visit to England. This draft is complicated by the numerous revisions, alternate versions, and asides which Hawthorne incorporated into the body of the manuscript. In the second draft, just under a hundred pages in length, the hero's name is changed from Etherege to Redclyffe, and the text is extensively revised to form a more coherent narrative. The hero's boyhood, recounted in the first seventy pages of the narrative, is also described in far greater detail than in Draft I. Only in the last twenty pages is Redclyffe shown in England. The text breaks off abruptly shortly after his arrival in England, however, and the manuscript is left incomplete.

Despite the inconsistencies and revisions in the manuscript of Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, it is possible to discern the major concerns of the two narratives and to note the elements which are common to both versions of the novel. In both drafts, two children, Ned and Elsie, are adopted by a doctor residing in New England. In Draft I, Dr. Etherege is a genial though somewhat mysterious figure, but in Draft II, as the English Dr. Ormskirk and finally Dr. Grimshawe, his character takes on a more sinister aspect, for he is obsessed with the idea of revenging some unspecified wrong he has

suffered at the hands of a noble family in England many years before. In both versions, this family is associated with the legend of the bloody footprint, which symbolizes an act of violence or evil in the family's past. In both drafts, moreover, there is a mysterious connection between the boy, who is an orphan, and this same English family. Although the doctor dies without revealing the secret of the boy's birth, the youth associates England with his past. The journey that Etherege and Redclyffe each make to England is motivated, particularly in Draft I, by their desire to trace their roots and discover their ancestry.

Even more than in The Two Admirals, the American's journey to England is associated with his quest for identity, particularly in Draft I of the novel. This quest is quite literally the American's attempt to discover who he is. It is foreshadowed early in Draft I, in Etherege's childhood, by the young orphan's "yearnings towards his unknown ancestry,"<sup>64</sup> and his curiosity about his origins:

And so the boy's thoughts were led to dwell on by-gone things, on matters of birth and ancestry. . . . And probably it was such meditations as these that led him to think occasionally, what had been his own origin; whence came that blood that circled through his own veins. (p. 37)

Etherege's interest in the past and his desire to learn his true identity are interwoven with his dream-like recollection of the legend of the bloody footstep. Although he cannot remember whether he has heard the legend recounted in infancy or whether he has simply dreamed it, he determines to go to England some day in order to find the footstep which

has entrenched itself in his memory for so long.

In Draft II, there is more emphasis placed on the fact that the boy is a nameless foundling adopted from an almshouse, the location of which is unspecified. In this draft, the doctor implies that Ned is somehow connected to an ancient and noble English family, and Hawthorne suggests that this family is the same one which has wronged the doctor and is identified with the legend of the bloody footstep. In this version, England is again associated with the boy's origins and his memories of the past.<sup>65</sup> That the boy's desire to see England is bound up with his yearning to find his proper home is shown on the occasion when he is asked whether he would like to visit England some day:

"Oh, very much! more than anything else in the world," replied the boy . . . for, indeed, the question stirred up all the dreams and reveries which the child had cherished, far back into the dim regions of his memory. After what the Doctor had told him of his origin, he had never felt any home-feeling here; it seemed to him that he was wandering Ned, whom the wind had blown from afar; somehow, or other, from many circumstances which he put together and seethed in his childish imagination, it seemed to him that he was to go back to that far, old country, and there wander among the green, ivy-grown, venerable scenes; the older he grew, the more his mind took depth, the stronger was this fancy in him. . . . (p. 259)

In both drafts, the second part of the narrative shows Etherege/Redclyffe, now grown to manhood, in England and describes his visit to the ancestral home of the family identified with the legend of the bloody footstep, the same English family to whom the young man has some connection.

In Draft I, Etherege unexpectedly and fortuitously finds himself near the old hall. In Draft II, Hawthorne's account is more credible, as he suggests that the young man has deliberately sought out the house which, he says, "'from certain early associations, I was very desirous of seeing'" (p. 288).

In Draft I, after being attacked by two unknown assailants, who were presumably sent by the Italian heir now living in the hall, Etherege regains consciousness to find himself tended by an old pensioner in an ancient room with antique furnishings which is located in an alms-house built by the English family he is seeking. In this room, two aspects of the past converge. Hawthorne suggests that the room not only embodies the age-old atmosphere of England itself but is also associated with Etherege's personal past, awakening childhood memories and arousing in him a strong feeling of déjà vu: ". . . of these particular things, he had a sort of remembrance, cherished from early youth; and had often . . . had these very images in his mind" (p. 60).

The remembrance of the past which is evoked by the familiarity of the room intensifies the nostalgia which Etherege already feels toward England--a nostalgia which is produced by his awareness of the historical and cultural ties between America and the mother country:

. . . he began to feel the deep yearning which a sensitive American--his mind full of English thoughts, his imagination of English poetry, his heart of English character and feeling--cannot fail to be influenced by, the yearning of the blood within his veins for that from which it had been estranged. . . . This had been Etherege's state

of feeling ever since he landed in England; and every day seemed to make him more at home; so that it seemed as if he were gradually awakening to a former reality. (pp. 70-71)

Hawthorne thus indicates that Etherege's attachment to England is two-fold: England represents the American's spiritual homeland as well as his ancestral home.

Draft II also seems to suggest that England is the young American's probable birthplace since it awakens in him vague recollections of early childhood. As he walks in the countryside near the old hall, his surroundings evoke memories from the past: "'How familiar these rustic sounds!' he exclaimed. 'Surely I was born here!'" (p. 274). After he trips on a spring-gun and is accidentally wounded, he finds himself in a hospital founded by a Sir Edward Redclyffe, where he continues to feel the "dreamlike recognitions" (p. 290) which convince him that he has been there before.

Up to this point, both drafts imply that Etherege/Redclyffe has found his ancestral home in England, that he is at last about to discover his real identity and claim his birthright. However, this proves not to be the case. Since Draft II ends abruptly shortly after Redclyffe's accident, it is difficult to know precisely what Hawthorne's intentions were; but there is evidence to suggest that Redclyffe is aware of the futility of attempting to prove his kinship to the English family in the hall. When he is informed that the family in possession of Oakland Hall bears the same name as he does and asked whether he is related to

them, he replies: "'My countrymen are apt to advance claims of kinship with distinguished English families on . . . such slight grounds as to make it ridiculous. . . . I should not choose to follow so absurd an example'" (p. 289).

In Draft I, Hawthorne incorporates a number of emendations and authorial comments which complicate the narrative, but all of them emphasize Etherege's ultimate discovery that he is not, after all, the rightful heir. In one note, Hawthorne suggests that the doctor will have led young Ned to believe that he is the heir out of motives of revenge against the English family which has wronged him in the past even though the boy is, in fact, not related to the family at all. In another version, Etherege will have received from the doctor what appears to be proof of his ancestry, but when he discovers that these papers are false, he gives up all claim to the estate. In a third version, Etherege is indeed related to the English family but hesitant to press his claim.

Although Hawthorne never decided finally what version to use, there is a scene near the end of the narrative which gives us a clue to his intentions. After a series of melodramatic events characteristic of a Gothic novel, Etherege eludes the villainous Italian heir and is led by the old pensioner to a coffin in a secret vault which is purported to contain the proof of his claim only to discover, after opening the coffin, that it is filled with a mass of golden ringlets into which a lady, long dead, has been transformed. When the pensioner produces a locket containing

a lock of hair matching that in the coffin, the old man offers irrefutable evidence that it is he, not Etherege, who is the rightful heir. At this point, Etherege is compelled to recognize that his own claim is a spurious one. In this context, the symbol of the golden locks is ambiguous since, as Davidson notes, it may represent either the folly of the doctor's attempted revenge or the futility of the American's desire to seek his lost patrimony in England.<sup>66</sup> The evidence of the text, however, supports the second interpretation.

Etherege's final discovery is foreshadowed, to a certain extent, by an authorial comment which casts doubt on the validity of Etherege's feeling of certainty that, in coming to England, he has come home: ". . . his mobile and active fancy were not entirely to be trusted in this matter; it was perhaps his American faculty for making himself at home anywhere that he mistook for the feeling of being particularly at home here" (p. 163). Moreover, whatever the actual place of his birth, Etherege's destiny is shown to lie in America, a fact which is further emphasized by the revelation at the end of Draft I that Etherege is not the heir:

. . . in the end, he shall prove to have no ancestry, an American son of nobody, evolving the moral that we are to give up all those prejudices of birth and blood which have been so powerful in past ages; at any rate, there shall be but vague reason to believe that Etherege is of that descent, and it shall be a rebuke to him for giving up the noble principle that a man ought to depend on his own individuality, instead of deriving anything from his ancestors. (p. 122)

Etherege's realization that he has neither a legitimate claim to an English estate, as he had supposed, nor any

discernible connection to an English family thus serves to confirm his identity as an American. At the same time, "the moral" alluded to by Hawthorne in the passage quoted above would seem to refer not only to Etherege but to the nineteenth century American in general: to find his true identity, the American must look, not to his English past, but to the present and to the future that he can make for himself by dint of his own efforts in America. In this respect, Hawthorne's point of view is similar to Cooper's.

Although the American's quest for identity in England is a dominant theme in the second part of Draft I, there is, interwoven with this quest, a description of the American's attitude to England and his impressions of the English way of life. In the first of his preliminary studies of Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, Hawthorne writes of his intention that, "The English and American ideas [are] to be brought strikingly into contrast and contact" (p. 21). Despite his failure to fully dramatize the contrast between England and America, the polarity of values between the two countries is exhibited in considerable detail. America, with its belief in democracy and equality, is associated, as in The Two Admirals, with the active life of the present; England, with its reverence for heredity and tradition, is characterized by its sense of the past. As Christof Wegelin observes, in his discussion of the novel, "The contrast is between the new world and the old."<sup>67</sup> Aware of the opposing claims exerted on him by both countries, Etherege's attitude to

England in the second part of the narrative comprising Draft I is an ambivalent one: even when he is drawn to his English heritage, believing that his claim to the English estate is a legitimate one, he shows himself reluctant to press that claim and renounce America.

Despite his attachment to England and the possibility that he is English by birth, Etherege/Redclyffe is distinctively American by virtue of his "democratic education" (p. 127) and his allegiance to the land where he has grown up. In addition, he is portrayed by Hawthorne as a character in the tradition of the idealized American hero. Hawthorne takes pains to show that even as a nameless orphan, Etherege's natural distinction--his good looks, sensitivity, intelligence, and pride--is manifested from the time of his youth. Under the tutelage of Doctor Etherege, he also acquires "the old world demeanour of a polished gentleman" (p. 36), with the result that ". . . the beautiful boy . . . looked worthy to be the heir of a princely house" (p. 36). Young Redclyffe, too, is described as intelligent and well-read, with an "inherent refinement, which nothing coarse can soil or offend . . ." (p. 224).

When Etherege is first shown in England, Hawthorne soon establishes that he possesses the finest American virtues:

His dress was not indicative of any high station in life, being a coarse gray suit; but yet it was such as a gentleman might wear of a morning; and evidently he was . . . a man of education and refinement, and there was an indefinable air of authority and position about him. (p. 58)

A lawyer who, for all his youth, has already had an active

political career and served a term in Congress, his status is further enhanced when he is appointed a minister in the diplomatic corps shortly after his arrival in England.

Etherege, then, is a self-made man with both energy and ability. He is a product of a democratic society where a man's worth is assessed by his talent rather than by hereditary rank or birth.

Moreover, since he is unquestionably a gentleman in appearance and manner, Therege, like Wychecombe, is obviously intended to refute the English view of the American as uncivilized and provincial. It is this view to which Therege refers when he tells the English warden of the hospital that, "'In America, you think we kill every third man with the bowie-knife'" (p. 143). When Therege first meets the warden, he finds the Englishman's condescending tone and manner of address to him offensive, for he is conscious of "an undoubting assumption of superiority . . . a certain kindly haughtiness which his previous habits and position in life had not heretofore subjected him to" (p. 65). The warden's attitude to the young American is a characteristic English one. However, on observing Therege more closely, the warden realizes from "the intelligence and cultivation in his face . . . that the stranger was a gentleman" (p. 65). When he subsequently tells Therege that, "'You are just like an Englishman . . .'" (p. 84), he intends to pay the young man "the highest compliment that an Englishman can pay to an American . . ." (p. 84). Yet, Hawthorne suggests that, in fact, Therege is not only the equal of the

Englishman but is, in many ways, his superior:

In manners, I cannot but think that he was better than the generality of Englishmen. . . . His natural sensitiveness, a tincture of reserve, had been counteracted by the frank mixture with men which his political course had made necessary; he was quicker to feel what was right at the moment than an Englishman; more alive; he had a finer grain; his look was more aristocratic than that of a thousand Englishmen of good birth and breeding. . . . (p. 85)

Alluding to one of the major factors which differentiates an American from an Englishman, Hawthorne also maintains that ". . . the courtesy that proceeds on the ground of perfect equality is better than that which is a gracious and benignant condescension--as is the case with the manners of the aristocracy of England" (pp. 85-86). In this respect, Etherege can be seen to represent the democratic ideal.

In Draft II, Redclyffe reveals similar characteristics. An attractive young man, he is described by Hawthorne as one whose recent years "must have been thickly studded with events, turbulent, with action, spent amidst circumstances that called for resources of energy not often so early developed" (p. 275). When he introduces himself to the warden by means of a letter of credit referring to him as the Honorable Edward Redclyffe, the Englishman is favorably impressed by his title: ". . . it showed no ordinary ability and energy for so young a man to have acquired a title of honor . . . in the fiercely contested political struggles of the new democracy" (p. 289). Like Etherege, he has made a successful career for himself by means of his own native abilities despite the obscurity of his birth; like Etherege, his virtues and accomplishments

are distinctively American.

It is precisely because his position has been achieved by means of merit rather than hereditary privilege that Etherege is aware that American democracy offers each man an equal opportunity for success that is not to be found in England. Like Wychecombe, Etherege repeatedly expresses his patriotism and pride in his country. Affirming his commitment to America and to the democratic ethic, he repudiates "the hereditary pretensions" (p. 92) of the English on more than one occasion. For example, he speaks to the warden about the crucial differences between their respective countries:

"I do aver that I love my country, that I am proud of its institutions, that I have a feeling, unknown probably to any but a republican, but which is the proudest thing in me, that there is no man above me . . . nor any below me. If you could understand me, I would tell you of the shame I felt when first, on setting foot in this country, [I] heard a man speaking of his birth as giving him privileges; saw him looking down [on] a laboring man, as one of an inferior race; and what I can never understand, is the pride which you positively seem to feel in having men and classes . . . above you, born to privileges which you can never hope to share. It may be a thing to be endured, but surely not one to be absolutely proud of. And yet an Englishman is so." (pp. 80-81)

Even when he is tempted to press his claim to the English estate which he believes to be rightfully his, Etherege remains conscious of the superiority of America, with its democratic institutions and its opportunities for an active political career, over England:

". . . I cannot help feeling that I, a simple citizen of a republic, yet with none above me,

except those whom I help to place there--and who are my servants, not my superiors--must stoop to take these honors. I leave a set of institutions which are the noblest that the wit and civilization of man has yet conceived, to enlist myself in one that is based on a far lower conception of man, and which therefore lowers everyone who shares in it. Besides," said the young man, his eyes kindling with the ambition which had been so active a principle in his life, "what prospects--what rewards for spirited exertion--what a career, only open to an American, should I give up, to become merely a rich and idle Englishman, belonging (as I should) nowhere, without a possibility of struggle, such as a strong man loves, with only a mockery of a title, which in these days really means nothing--hardly more than one of our own Honorables. What has any success in English life to offer . . . to balance the proud career of an American statesman?" (pp. 141-42)

Nevertheless, despite the sincerity of his ideological commitment to America, England possesses attractions which Etherege finds difficult to resist. Even though he criticizes England's class system, he acknowledges that he is drawn to other aspects of English life. Etherege's inability to resolve his deep-seated ambivalence to England or to reconcile the opposing claims of the New World and the Old is shown throughout much of the first draft, as he endeavors to decide whether or not to attempt to establish his right to the English estate:

"Am I ready to give up all the actual life before me for the sake of taking up with what I feel to be a less developed state of human life [?] . . . If I come back hither, with the purpose to make myself an Englishman--especially an Englishman of rank and hereditary estate--then for me America has been discovered in vain, and the great spirit that has been breathed into us is in vain; and I am false to it all!"

But again came silently swelling over him like a flood all that ancient peace, and quietude, and dignity, which looked so stately and beautiful as brooding round this old house . . . where life was

made so enticing, so refined. . . . What . . . could there be in the wild, harsh, ill-conducted American approach to civilization which could compare with this [?] What to compare with this . . . richness[?]. . ." (pp. 160-161)

Whatever its other defects, then, the aesthetic qualities of English civilization--the beauty and refinement and richness of its traditions--exert a potent appeal. And this appeal is intensified by the other attraction which England has for Etherege as the key to the mystery of his birth. Alluding to his prolonged indecision about pressing his claim to the estate, he admits:

"I do not think that there is much happiness in it. A brighter, healthier, more useful . . . far more satisfactory, though tumultuous life would await me in my own country. But there is about this place a strange, deep, sad, brooding interest, which possesses me, and draws me to it, and will not let me go. I feel as if, in spite of myself and my most earnest efforts, I were fascinated by something in the spot, and must needs linger here, and make it my home if I can." (p. 177)

The "spot" referred to is the site of the old hall, believed by Etherege to be his ancestral home. This passage therefore suggests that, more than ever, it is Etherege's persistent yearning for the past--his longing for family ties, for roots, for tradition--which binds him emotionally to England. He explicitly acknowledges this when he tells the old pensioner what it is to be a nameless orphan adopted from an alms-house:

"If you know anything of me, you know how I sprang out of mystery, akin to none, a thing concocted out of the elements, without visible agency--how, all through my boyhood, I was alone; how I grew up without a root, yet continually longing for one--longing to be connected with somebody--and never feeling myself so. Yet there was ever a looking forward to this time at which I now find myself. If my next step

were death, yet while the path seemed to lead onward to a certainty of establishing me in connection with my race, I would yet take it. I have tried to keep down this yearning, to stifle it, annihilate it, with making a position for myself, with being my own past; but I cannot overcome this natural horror of being a creature floating in the air, attached to nothing; ever this feeling that there is no reality in the life and fortunes, good or bad, of a being so unconnected. . . ." (p. 145)

This passage enables us to understand the compelling fascination that England and the old hall hold for Etherege. Despite Etherege's firm commitment to America and to an active career in the present, Hawthorne emphasizes throughout the novel that, ". . . there was something in his character that made him long for hereditary connections, and the imposing, imaginative associations of the past, beautifying and making venerable the mean life of the present" (p. 63). Etherege is aware, more acutely so than most because of his own sense of deracination, that Americans "'have . . . lost the feeling of the past . . .'" (p. 116). It is this feeling, this sense of the past, that he discovers in England for the first time.

Hawthorne thus suggests that it is Etherege's interest in his own origins which first awakens in him a reverence for tradition and the past, in general, sensitizing him to the graceful dignity and refinement of English civilization. In this context, it is interesting to note the strength of the emotional attachment which Etherege forms to England even before he conceives the idea of claiming the English estate. Hawthorne indicates that his sojourn at the warden's old house, while recuperating from the assault on him, is a peaceful and contented time in which he succumbs to the spell

induced by the loveliness of his surroundings:

. . . the abode in this old place . . . had for this young American a charm like the freshness of Paradise. In truth, it had that charm, and besides it another intangible, evanescent, perplexing charm, full of an airy enjoyment, as if he had been here before. What could it be? It could be only the old, very deepest, inherent nature, which the Englishman, his progenitor, carried over the sea with him, nearly three hundred years before, and which had lain buried all that time under heaps of new things, new customs, new institutions . . . until it seemed dead, and was altogether forgotten as if it had never been; but, now, his return had seemed to dissolve or dig away all this incrustation, and the old English nature awoke all fresh, so that he saw the green grass, the hedge-rows, the old structures and old manners, the old clouds, the old rain-drops, with a recognition, and yet a newness. Etherege had never been so quietly happy as now. . . . (p. 84)

The sense of recognition that Etherege feels in England and that is attributed by Hawthorne to the American's vestigial memory of his English forebears is also reinforced by Etherege's personal recollections of early childhood and by his cultural ties to the mother country, both of which have been noted earlier.

What is particularly significant about this passage, however, is the imagery which is employed to describe England and the past. On the evidence of this passage, England appears to be a veritable paradise, and Etherege's journey there seems to represent a return to an unspoiled Edenic world, an idyllic place in time. Moreover, the choice of diction-- "freshness," "dissolve or dig away all this incrustation," "nature awoke all fresh," "green grass," "newness"--suggests a figurative springtime, a time of re-birth. The associations of the past here are positive, creative, and regenerative.

Yet, this impression proves to be illusory, for set against this lyrical description of old England's charm and beauty is Etherege's increasing awareness of the corruption of the past. As he discovers, the family connected with the old hall has a history stained by evil deeds and crimes of violence. Soon after arriving in England, he is told by the old pensioner that the alms-house, which was built by a member of this family several centuries earlier as an act of atonement, "'was founded upon the moral transgressions of the builders; the wealth unjustly obtained. . . by rapine and spoil . . .'" (p. 63). The young American is also familiar with the legend of the bloody footstep which has been associated with the family from the time of the seventeenth century. However noble and ancient the family's name may be, its past is tainted by sin and guilt. This point is further emphasized in several emendations to Draft I and Draft II in which Hawthorne suggests that the doctor or one of his family has suffered some wrong at the hands of a member of the same family at a more recent date: for example, in one of the proposed versions, the doctor's sister has been seduced.

In addition, Etherege senses that, despite its positive aspects, it is the English reverence for tradition and the past which imbues English life with a static, even stagnant quality, depriving it of spontaneity, creativity, and imagination:

. . . the generations had succeeded one another, over and over, in immemorial succession, in this little spot, being born here, living, dying, lying down among their fathers' dust, and forthwith getting up again, as it were, and recommencing the same

meaningless round, and really bringing nothing to pass; for probably the generations of to-day, in so secluded and motionless a place as this, had few or no ideas in advance of their ancestors of five centuries ago. . . . (p. 92)

Etherege tells the warden of his feeling that, "' . . . there is a deep destruction somewhere in this country . . .'" (p. 80). In response to the warden's accusation that America has no proper respect for the past, he asserts that he hopes never to see in his own country the kind of stultifying burden that England bears--"the Past hanging like a millstone round a country's neck, or incrustated in stony layers over the living form; so that, to all intents and purposes, it is dead'" (p. 82).

These allusions to the corruption and to the deadness and sterility of the past are sharply contrasted to the idyllic description quoted above. Indeed, that passage can be reconciled with Etherege's criticism of the negative attributes of the past only if we regard the two antithetical views of the past as another instance of the ambivalence which Etherege displays to England throughout the narrative. This ambivalence has already been noted, but its special relevance to the American's attitude to the past is most apparent in a passage near the end of Draft I which describes Etherege's inability to overcome the spell of the hall and leave England:

Again, he was frightened to perceive what a hold the place was getting upon him; how the tendrils of the ivy seemed to hold him and would not let him go . . . how, in no place that he had ever known, had he had such a home-like feeling. . . . How should he ever draw himself away[?] No; the proud and vivid and active prospects, that had heretofore spread themselves before him--the

striving to come, the struggle, the . . . victory, the defeat, if such it was to be--the experience for good or ill--the life, life, life--all possibility of these was passing from him; all that hearty earnest contest or communion of man with man, and leaving him nothing but this . . . sombre shade, this brooding of the old family mansion, with its dreary ancestral hall, its mouldy dignity, its life of the past, its fettering foot, as respects all effort, such as he had trained himself for--such as his own country offered. It was not any value for these--as it seemed to Etherege--but a witchcraft, an indefinable spell, a something that he could not define, that enthralled him. . . . (p. 172)

This passage emphasizes the polarity of values between America and England by identifying America and the opportunity it offers for an active, energetic career in the present with the life-force ("life, life, life") and by suggesting that England and the "sombre," "mouldy," ancient hall pervaded by an atmosphere of the past represent its antithesis--the negation of life, even death. Hawthorne shows Etherege to be conscious of this polarity. However, although the young American expresses an unequivocal ideological preference for America, the emotional pull of the past exerts a fascination, an enchantment, that he cannot withstand.<sup>68</sup>

Only when he discovers that he is not the real heir is Etherege's dilemma resolved de facto. At this point, it is made clear that his proper destiny lies in America rather than England, thereby confirming that Hawthorne's intention in the narrative was, as Edward H. Davidson notes, to "show that America was the promise of the future, not England, with her reliance on stale traditions and outworn manners."<sup>69</sup> As the first draft ends, Etherege has an increased awareness of his

identity as an American, but this awareness represents not so much an enlightenment attained by the hero as a revelation made by the author to his readers that, after all, "The new American was stronger in him than the hereditary Englishman" (p. 92).

Turning to Draft II, which breaks off abruptly shortly after Redclyffe's arrival in England, we find that Hawthorne explores, briefly, themes which are similar to those in Draft I. The most significant passages in Draft II are those narrated when Redclyffe, recuperating from his shooting accident, describes the warden's library:

There was a fragrance of old learning, in this ancient library; a soothing influence, as the American felt, of time-honored ideas, where the strife, novelties, uneasy agitating conflict, . . . fresh-springing thought, did not obtain; a good place to spend a life which should not be agitated with the disturbing element; so quiet, so peaceful; how slowly, without a little wear, would the years pass here. How unlike what he had hitherto known, and was destined to know; the quick, violent struggle of his native country. . . . How much would be served, by taking his former existence, not as dealing with things yet malleable, but with fossils, things that had had their life, and now were unchangeable, and recorded here. (pp. 291-92)

As in Draft I, the polarity of values between America and England is explicitly defined:

Redclyffe, whose destiny had hitherto . . . and up to a very recent period, been, to pass a feverishly active life, was greatly impressed by all these tokens of learned ease. . . . He thought within himself, that his prospects [in] his own galvanized country, that seemed to him, a few years since, to offer such a career for an adventurous young man, conscious of native power, had nothing so enticing as such a nook as this, a quiet recess of unchangeable old time, around which the turbulent tide of war eddied, and rushed, but could not

disturb it. Here, to be sure, hope, love, ambition, came not; progress came not; but here was--what, just now, the early wearied American could appreciate better than aught else--here was rest. (p. 293)

In both of these passages, as in Draft I, it is the atmosphere of the past which attracts the young American: the "old learning" the "ancient library," the "time-honored ideas" all suggest a reverence for tradition which, though characteristic of England, is not found in America. Once again, America is identified with the tumultuous life of the present--with strife, conflict, struggle, and activity. By contrast, the room which epitomizes England and its sense of the past represents "a soothing influence"; it is "quiet and peaceful," a "quiet recess of unchangeable old time" which entices him and offers him peace from life's struggles: "Here, to be sure, hope, love, ambition came not; progress came not; but here was . . . rest." Notwithstanding their seductive appeal, the attributes of the past described here suggest sterility, stagnation, and death. Furthermore, Hawthorne implies that Redclyffe's search for the past represents a withdrawal from life, a negation of those activities which constitute the essential human condition.

In its evocation of what can be seen as a kind of death-wish, the passage quoted above seems to have striking analogies to Alfred Tennyson's poem, "The Lotos-Eaters." It is not intended here to claim any direct influence of Tennyson on Hawthorne, although, in fact, Tennyson's poem was first published in 1832 and Hawthorne did not begin work

on Doctor Grimshawe's Secret until 1853; but it is interesting to note the points of similarity between Hawthorne's American traveler and Tennyson's voyagers. Redclyffe is an adventurous young man wearied by his career in America and his journey on the turbulent tide of life; to Ulysses's sailors, "Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the oar, / Weary the wandering fields of barren foam."<sup>70</sup> Redclyffe finds the warden's old library an "enticing" spot which tempts him to give up the struggles of life and remain in England, and it will be recalled that Etherege, too, succumbs to "an indefinable spell . . . that enthralled him . . ." (p. 172). Likewise, the mariners, once they have tasted the "enchanted" fruit (l. 28), are seduced into wanting to remain in the land of the lotos-eaters forever. Redclyffe finds a soothing influence in the old English house where he is staying; the music that the sailors hear in the land of the lotos-eaters is a powerful soporific inducing them to sleep. Redclyffe yearns for quiet, peace, and rest, and his yearning echoes that of the mariners who, asserting that, "We have had enough of action, and of motion . . ." (l. 150), seek cessation of their labors:

Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than  
 toil, the shore  
 Than labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind  
 and wave and oar;  
 Oh rest ye, brother mariners, we will not  
 wander more. (ll. 171-73)

That the rest which Tennyson's mariners are seeking is associated with death is made explicit:

Is there any peace  
 In ever climbing up the climbing wave?  
 All things have rest, and ripen toward the  
 grave  
 In silence; ripen, fall and cease:  
 Give us long rest or death, dark death, or  
 dreamful ease. (ll. 94-98)

Thus, a comparison of Hawthorne's Redclyffe and Tennyson's mariners is illuminating because the analogies to the themes and imagery of "The Lotos-Eaters" which are found in Doctor Grimshawe's Secret serve to reinforce Hawthorne's indication that the lure of the past, for all its potent appeal, is essentially sterile and anti-life. Like the opiate of "dreamful ease" that entices the mariners to leave the work-a-day world, the fascination of the past felt by the American in England is finally equated with romantic fantasies that are self-destructive, representing as they do an escape from reality.

Although the second draft of the novel was never completed, Hawthorne's intention does appear to be similar to that of the first draft. Consequently, there is no reason to suppose that the young American's claim to his English patrimony will prove other than illusory or that he will renounce America and the active life of the present for England and the fossilized atmosphere of the past.

Despite their interest to students of Hawthorne, the working drafts of Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, with their many inconsistencies and emendations, are seriously flawed, and they attest to a decline of the author's talent in the last few years of his life. Yet, in all fairness to Hawthorne's reputation, it should be noted that he never intended the

novel to be published in its present form. Nevertheless, since Hawthorne's instructions to his heirs to destroy the manuscript were disregarded and the work does survive in its incomplete state, it provides us, together with The Two Admirals and, to a lesser extent, Redburn, with a rudimentary type of international novel which, curiously, was never fully developed in nineteenth century international fiction.

In these three works, the American's journey to England is associated with his search for his ancestral or paternal heritage and his attempt to re-establish a connection with the past. In all three instances, the search proves futile, but the protagonist does develop an increased awareness of his identity as an American. These works reflect the nineteenth century American's awareness of his cultural ties to England and his nostalgia for the mother country from whence his forefathers came. However, as American's cultural dependence on England was reduced and it emerged with an increasingly defined national consciousness of its own, the preoccupations of international fiction changed: the polarity of America and Europe continued to be a dominant theme in international fiction, but Italy rather than England became the most popular setting for the international novel and, in most instances (with the notable exception of Howells's Indian Summer), the conflicting claims of past and present were subordinated to the contrast of manners and morals between the Old World and the New.

Before considering Redburn, there is one further work depicting an American seeking his ancestral heritage in

England which merits notice--namely, Henry James's "A  
Passionate Pilgrim." Although James's international fiction  
is, for the most part, beyond the scope of this study, this  
tale is of particular interest because its treatment of the  
American's attitude to the English past resembles that of  
The Two Admirals and Doctor Grimshawe's Secret.

### iii. "A Passionate Pilgrim"

The aura of the past that is felt by the cultured nineteenth century American visiting England is evoked at the beginning of Henry James's "A Passionate Pilgrim" when the American narrator describes his impressions of the old English inn where he is staying:

The coffee-room of the Red Lion, like so many other places and things I was destined to see in the motherland, seemed to have been waiting for long years, with just that sturdy sufferance of time written on its visage, for me to come and extract the romantic essence of it.

The latent preparedness of the American mind even for the most characteristic features of English life was a matter I meanwhile failed to get to the bottom of. The roots of it are indeed so deeply buried in the soil of our early culture that, without some great upheaval of feeling, we are at a loss to say exactly when and where and how it begins. It makes an American's enjoyment of England an emotion more searching than anything Continental. I had seen the coffee-room of the Red Lion years ago, at home--at Saragossa Illinois--in books, in visions, in dreams, in Dickens, in Smollett, in Boswell. . . . 71, 72

The nostalgic attachment to old England that the narrator alludes to in this passage provides a framework which enables the reader to understand the ardent appreciation of that country which is subsequently expressed by Clement Searle, a fellow countryman whom the narrator encounters at the inn. For it is, above all, the sense of the past--the "memories and ghosts and atmosphere" (p. 336) that the narrator notices even in the old inn--which constitutes the

primary fascination that England has for Searle. Ora Segal sums up the tale succinctly when she remarks:

A Passionate Pilgrim . . . depicts a sentimental journey in which James renders the romantic glamour that England inevitably assumes for the . . . American imagination famished for culture and tradition. It centers on the American mystique of England rather than on England itself. . . .<sup>73</sup>

Thus, it is the American's attitude to England, as conveyed by Clement Searle, which is the real subject of James's tale.

Like Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, "A Passionate Pilgrim" (written in 1870) describes the unsuccessful attempt of an American to establish his claim to an ancestral estate in England.<sup>74</sup> However, unlike Etherege/Redclyffe, James's protagonist is no idealized hero. Although Clement Searle, the American claimant, is a man of sensitivity and refinement, he regards himself as one of life's failures, a judgment that is confirmed by the narrator's observation that, "A cold fatal gentlemanly weakness was expressed indeed in his . . . person" (p. 338). When he arrives in England, having lost his ambition, his fortune, and his health, Searle clings to one last desperate hope--that he has a legitimate claim to a distant cousin's English estate. Since his family has been wronged a century earlier and unjustly deprived of its inheritance,<sup>75</sup> he has reason to believe that he can re-establish his ancestral rights. Encouraged by a letter from his lawyer, he has come to England for this purpose only to discover that, lacking sufficient evidence, he has no grounds for legal action nor any real chance of obtaining redress. The realization that

his dream has no possibility of fulfillment is an overwhelming disappointment to him. Yet he admits to the narrator that, "'I felt in my deeper consciousness that it was the crowning illusion of a life of illusions'" (p. 359).

Even though he is compelled to renounce his claim, Searle cannot bring himself to leave England; for, as the narrator notes, "'He has lost his heart to England . . .'" (p. 377). Searle wistfully recognizes that, "'This is a world I could have got on with beautifully'" (p. 359). For Searle, England is his natural home as well as his ancestral homeland: "'Don't I belong here? Have n't I longed to get here all my life? Have n't I counted the months and the years till I should be able to "go" as we say?'" (p. 345). As the passionate pilgrim referred to in the title of the tale, Searle is the American romantic whose yearning for England, with its history and tradition and its aura of the past, dominates his life. Indeed, it is because of this that he has always regarded himself as a misfit in America: "'I had the love of old forms and pleasant rites, and I found them nowhere. . . . I should have been born here and not there. . . .'" (p. 357).

Yet, one of the ironies of James's tale is that, despite Searle's feeling of estrangement from America, he is no less an outsider in the England that he loves. Quite apart from the issue of the validity of his claim to the estate, Searle is a man whose attempt to return to his ancestral homeland and renew his connection to the past seems destined for failure. He is, in fact, warned of this by the American lawyer who has investigated his claim:

"I've heard people say at home that you dress and talk and act like an Englishman. But I know these people here and I know you. You're not one of this crowd, Clement Searle, not you. You'll go under here, sir; you'll go under. . . ." (p. 340)

As it turns out, Searle's decision to stay on in England does have tragic consequences, but at this point, convinced as he is that he will soon die, Searle feels that he has little to lose. Throughout the tale, Searle repeatedly alludes to his own impending death. The narrator notices that his conversations are characterized by an "'intolerable flavour of mortality'" (p. 359). While Searle's passive acquiescence to this sentence is partly due to his conviction that it is inevitable, given his ill health, his indication that death will be almost welcome also stems from his feelings of failure and defeat: Searle appears to be a man who no longer has anything to live for.

What is of particular interest, however, is the fact that Searle's death-wish seems to be closely bound up with that longing for the past which makes him love England; in both instances, he seeks peace and rest from the turmoil of life. For example, when advised by his lawyer to return to America, he insists that, if nothing else, he will at least die in England: "' . . . I shall lay my head in some English churchyard, beside some ivied tower, beneath an old gnarled black yew'" (p. 346).

It would appear, then, that James is suggesting, as Hawthorne does in Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, that the lure of the English past is destructive for the American. Certainly, the quest that begins as a legitimate attempt to secure his

rightful inheritance becomes, for Searle, a sterile preoccupation with his dreams of the past--one that leads to an increasing withdrawal from the present, to a denial of life, and ultimately, to death. The more Searle immerses himself in the past, the more marked his deterioration becomes.

This is particularly evident during the course of Searle's visit to Lackley Park. When Searle sees his ancestral home, he is immediately entranced by its charm, but the emotional attachment he feels towards the old house is due primarily to his appreciation of the fact that everything about the house and grounds evokes an atmosphere of the past. Even the narrator, who has accompanied him, notices that, "The scene had a beautiful old-time air . . ." (p. 378). The antiquity of the house and its furnishings--its "old pictures, old tapestry, old carvings, old armour" (p. 369)--lends it a rich and mellow beauty which Searle finds enormously appealing. To him, the estate appears to be a quiet recess of old time, and he confides to the narrator that he longs for the life he could lead here. Yet the life he envisions is one that is singularly passive, characterized as it is by a surrender to the spell of the past: "'What summer days one could spend here! How I could lounge the rest of my life away on this turf of the middle ages!'" (p. 367).

Searle also perceives that the house is steeped in tradition and imbued with memories. When he meets Miss Searle, the sister of the present owner of the estate, he reveals the depth of his feeling for Lackley Park and attempts to convey all that it represents to him:

"You've some history among you all, you've some poetry, you've some accumulation of legend. I've been famished all my days for these things. . . . When I think of the births and deaths, the joys and sufferings, the young hopes and the old regrets, the rich experience of life--!" He faltered a moment with the increase of his agitation. . . . He went on with a wilder play. "To see it all called up there before me, if the Devil alone could do it I'd make a bargain with the Devil! . . ."

(p. 380)

Unlike Etherege/Redclyffe, Searle indicates in this passage that the active life of the present holds little interest for him. His desperate need to live vicariously by absorbing himself in the events of the past, which have taken such a hold on his imagination, has become an idée fixe for him.

Searle's regard for Miss Searle, which becomes apparent in the course of this visit, should be seen in the context of the feelings awakened in him by his first sight of his ancestral home. A shy spinster who is no longer young, Miss Searle is kind, gentle, and sympathetic, and Searle is charmed by her; but James also suggests that Searle's cousin seems to him to personify the attractions of her home. The narrator observes that, "She had an antique sweetness, a . . . fragrance of old traditions" (p. 374). Searle himself appears to recognize the source of Miss Searle's appeal, for he tells her: "'You're a woman of the past. . . . It has been a romance to see you'" (p. 381). The conjunction of these two ideas, "romance" and "past," is crucial, providing as it does the clue to Searle's interest in Miss Searle, in her home, and in England itself.

At this point, it is evident that a marriage between the two cousins offers a possibility of fulfillment to both--a

way of redeeming the sterility of their lives. After only a few hours spent in each other's company, there is already a mutual sympathy and affection between them, leading the narrator to reflect that if only Miss Searle could be made to consider marrying her cousin, all could yet be well for him. Searle soon confides to the narrator that he has indeed fallen in love with his cousin, but although Miss Searle is willing to marry Searle and thereby help undo the ancient wrong, she is too weak to defy her brother, the owner of the estate. Before Searle leaves Lackley Park, she tells him sadly that she loves him but can never see him again.<sup>76</sup>

Searle's quest for the past manifests itself in three ways in "A Passionate Pilgrim." Two of these, his attempts to secure his claim to his ancestral home by resorting to law and by marrying his cousin, her brother's heir, are, at least, sane and rational methods of pursuing his dream, even though they both prove ineffectual. However, in the course of the tale, Searle's attempt to forge a link with the past gradually takes the form of a morbid and unnatural identification with one of his dead ancestors.

During his visit to Lackley Park, Searle's relationship to the family is confirmed beyond question by the portrait he sees there of his cousin's great-uncle, who died at sea on the way to America. Aware that his resemblance to his ancestral namesake is striking and unmistakable, Searle plays with the fanciful notion that he is the reincarnation of the earlier Clement Searle:

"I have an idea. He perished at sea. His spirit

came ashore and wandered about in misery till it got another incarnation--in this poor trunk!" And he tapped his hollow chest. "Here it has rattled about these forty years, beating its wings against its rickety cage, begging to be taken home again. And I never knew what was the matter with me! Now at last the bruised spirit can escape!" (pp. 371-72)

The underlying intensity and seriousness of the American's words are chilling. In moving towards an absolute repudiation of the present and a denial of his own identity, Searle reveals his pursuit of the past to be an unhealthy obsession.

This obsession becomes even more deeply entrenched when he learns about the old legends surrounding his ancestor. Questioning Miss Searle's brother, the present owner of the estate, he is told by his English kinsman that the subject of the portrait has left a blemished reputation behind him. Not only did he refuse to marry the girl of noble family selected by his family to be his bride, but, after his departure for America, it was discovered that he had seduced and abandoned another young woman, a curate's daughter, who was subsequently cast out by her father because she was pregnant with Searle's child. Seeking refuge at Searle's home, she was, in turn, repudiated by his family and driven forth into a storm in which she died, together with her unborn child.

The legend itself, with its allusions to sexual guilt and betrayal, provides an ironic contrast to Searle's idealization of his English ancestor and may be seen to correspond to the legend of the bloody footstep in Doctor Grimshawe's Secret. Yet, in commenting on the legend, Searle

seems oddly indifferent to the early Searle's moral culpability. Instead, he focuses his attention on the fact that the ghost of the young woman is said to haunt Lackley Hall and, reverting to the notion he has spoken of earlier, associates himself with his ancestral namesake:

"I should be sorry to claim any identity with the poor devil my faithless namesake. But I should be immensely gratified if the young lady's spirit, deceived by my resemblance, were to mistake me for her cruel lover. She's welcome to the comfort of it. What one can do in the case I shall be glad to do. But can a ghost haunt a ghost? I am a ghost!" (p. 391)

Searle's need to identify himself with the legends and traditions of Lackley Hall seems to express itself in the three macabre ideas found in this passage--his emphasis on his resemblance to his dead ancestor, his invocation of the ghost of the girl whom his ancestor has wronged, and his own death-like state. Moreover, once again, the past and death appear to be closely related in Searle's mind.

That Searle's obsession with the past is beginning to cause a mental deterioration in him is confirmed by the narrator when he remarks that the extraordinary notion that Searle has postulated seems to possess a strange and compelling fascination for him, arousing him to a state of unnatural excitement:

The horrible talk, however, evidently possessed a potent magic for my friend; and his imagination, checked a while by the influence of his kinsman [Miss Searle], began again to lead him a dance. From this moment he ceased to steer his frail bark, to care what he said or how he said it, so long as he expressed his passionate appreciation of the scene around him. (p. 392)

The climax of Searle's visit to Lackley Park occurs when Searle's English kinsman suddenly gives vent to the anger he has suppressed so far. Aware of the preliminary investigations conducted on Searle's behalf to establish the validity of his claim to the estate and infuriated by them, he has nonetheless extended a measure of formal hospitality to his American cousin. However, Searle's pretensions so outrage him that he at last abandons all attempts at civility: he insults Searle, accusing him of plotting against his rights and entering into an intrigue with his sister. His denunciation, coming as it does immediately after his sister's rejection of her cousin and the disturbing effect of the legends on Searle, precipitates a crisis for the American.

Shocked and bewildered by the painful scene with his English kinsman, Searle is overwrought when he leaves the hall, overwhelmed by the events of his visit. In the course of the night at the inn, he rouses the narrator and, appearing as "pale as a corpse" (p. 409) and expressing great agitation, declares that he has just seen the ghost of the young woman whom his ancestor has seduced. The spectral visitation of the curate's daughter appears to reinforce Searle's fanciful identification with his ancestral namesake, the notion that the American has twice expressed earlier. When Searle recounts his experience to the narrator, he emphasizes that the ghost of the young woman addressed him as if he were, indeed, the reincarnation of the earlier Clement Searle:

" . . . she took me for my elder, for the other Clement. She came to me here as she would have come to me there. She wrung her hands and she spoke to me. 'Marry me!' she moaned; 'marry me and put an end to my shame!'" (p. 411)

Searle's encounter with the ghost of the young English-woman who lived and died a century earlier serves to confirm, beyond all doubt, the abnormality of his obsession with the past; his declaration that he is now a haunted man makes the narrator feel that his sanity is impaired. Whether or not his vision of the ghost is a hallucination, it causes him to retreat more than ever from the reality of the present to the fantasy of the past. The narrator observes:

I may say that from this day forward I found it difficult to distinguish in his company between the riot of fancy and the labour of thought, or to fix the balance between what he saw and what he imagined. He had . . . begun playfully to exchange his identity for that of the earlier Clement Searle. . . . (p. 415)

Soon afterwards, Searle's health begins to rapidly decline. Even the visit of Miss Searle, who comes to tell him that her brother has died in an accident, leaving her free to marry him, comes too late to rouse him. A few moments after hearing the news that would seem to offer him the fulfillment of all his dreams, Clement Searle is dead.

The longing for the past that finds expression in Searle's attachment to his ancestral home is thus revealed, in James's tale, to be an unnatural obsession that helps lure the unhappy American to his death. Searle's misguided quest for the past ultimately proves both illusory and

destructive. The only place he actually succeeds in claiming in England is a solitary plot in an English graveyard, and the reader is left with a sense of the futility of such a quest, an awareness that, although Searle finally finds peace and ease in death, his life has been wasted.

"A Passionate Pilgrim" is a flawed work in that James fails to properly dramatize the fundamental contrast between the American and English points of view and modes of behavior inherent in the international situation, as he does in his later international fiction. Ora Segal makes a similar observation when she maintains:

A Passionate Pilgrim remains essentially a portrait of the American romantic and does not develop into a dramatized confrontation of the American and English sensibilities--a confrontation on which many of James's works in the vein of emphasized internationalism focus.<sup>77</sup>

Nonetheless, the tale provides an interesting variation on the theme utilized by both Cooper and Hawthorne and, as such, is useful in enabling us to trace the development of the international novel.

iv. Redburn

The choice of England as the setting for the American's pursuit of the past in The Two Admirals, Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, and "A Passionate Pilgrim" is, as has been noted earlier, a natural consequence of the historical ties between the two countries: the American's cultural and ancestral heritage which is sought in the mother country is literal as well as figurative. The association of England with the past takes a variant form in Herman Melville's Redburn (1849), a work that fits chronologically between The Two Admirals and Doctor Grimshawe's Secret but which can be seen to bridge the gap between these two novels and Howells's Indian Summer in its treatment of the American's attitude to the Old World past.

There are two disparate themes in Redburn, both of which are associated with the young American's passage from youth to maturity--with what Michael Davitt Bell terms his "movement from untried adolescence to responsible adulthood. . . ."78 The dominant one is the American innocent's encounter with evil during the course of his first voyage as a sailor and will be analyzed in detail in the final section of this dissertation. Yet, although it is subsidiary and occupies only a brief portion of the narrative, Redburn's journey to England also represents a confrontation with the past which, as in Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, is bound up

with the American's quest for identity. The nature of the patrimony that Redburn seeks in England is different from that of Wychecombe, Etherege/Redclyffe, and Searle, but Melville's novel does show the indisputable attraction of the past to the American and, in this respect, is relevant to the issues discussed in this chapter.

Redburn's attempt to recapture and relive the past is a deliberate one, motivated primarily by his identification with his dead father. Heinz Kosok maintains, correctly so, that before Redburn attains maturity, ". . . he makes several attempts to take refuge in the security of his own childhood and to regain the presence of his father. . . ."79 The fact that England is the destination of Redburn's first voyage is not wholly fortuituous. When compelled suddenly to earn his own living after his father's death, Redburn decides to become a sailor because of his romantic fancy to visit foreign lands, especially those of the Old World, as his father had done before him:

. . . my father, now dead, had several times crossed the Atlantic on business affairs. . . . And of winter evenings in New York, by the well-remembered sea-coal fire in old Greenwich-street, he used to tell my brother and me . . . all about Havre, and Liverpool, and . . . London. Indeed, during my early life, most of my thoughts of the sea were connected with the land; but with fine old lands, full of mossy cathedrals and churches, and long, narrow, crooked streets without side-walks, and lined with strange houses. . . .80

Acknowledging that these tales he had heard of his father's travels many years before had awakened in him, even then, a determination to journey to these same countries

when he is older, Redburn allows these nostalgic recollections of childhood--particularly his boyhood dreams and desire to emulate his father--to determine his choice of career. With singular naivete, he remarks:

As years passed on, this continual dwelling upon foreign associations, bred in me a vague prophetic thought, that I was fated, one day or other, to be a great voyager; and that just as my father used to entertain strange gentlemen over their wine after dinner, I would hereafter be telling my own adventures to an eager auditory. And I have no doubt that this presentiment had something to do with bringing about my subsequent roivings. (p. 7)

Redburn's illusions about becoming a sailor are further reinforced by another image from the past, as he recalls that shipping and wharves and the sea are all associated with his early, happy memories of the seaport where he lived as a child.

England, particularly Liverpool, becomes the focal point of Redburn's attempt to re-enact his father journey. Heinz Kosok observes that, "The most obvious instance of this search for his father . . . is his attempt to retrace his father's steps in Liverpool, with the help of an old guidebook, in which his father, then a wealthy merchant, had marked his sightseeing tours of the town."<sup>81</sup> Relying solely on the guide-book for directions in Liverpool, he tells us that this treasured book is associated with "my father's sacred memory" (p. 150), and is thus to be regarded as infallible:

. . . when I considered that my own father had used this very guide-book, and that thereby it had been thoroughly tested, and its fidelity proved

beyond a peradventure; I could not but think that I was building myself up in an unerring knowledge of Liverpool. . . . (p. 152)

As he wanders through the streets of Liverpool, guide-book in hand, Redburn is acutely conscious that he is, quite literally, following in his father's footsteps:

My intention was in the first place, to visit Riddough's Hotel, where my father had stopped, more than thirty years before: and then, with the map in my hand, follow him through all the town, according to the dotted lines in the diagram. For thus would I be performing a filial pilgrimage to spots which would be hallowed in my eyes. (p. 154)

Redburn's quest proves to be a futile one, however, as he unhappily discovers that the Liverpool of his father's day is quite different from the one of his own time. Seeking his father's hotel, he learns that it has long since been demolished; attempting to locate a fort mentioned in the guide-book, he finds only a tavern in its place. He is brought, at last, to the realization that the book is hopelessly out-dated and inadequate: "The book on which I had so much relied . . . was next to useless. Yes, the thing that had guided the father, could not guide the son" (p. 157).

This discovery is of crucial importance. What Melville seems to be suggesting here is that Redburn's obsessive concern with the past and his continued identification with his father reveal an unconscious refusal to accept the loss of his father. This is shown most clearly when he walks through the streets that seem to evoke his father's presence

before him:

So vivid was now the impression of his having been here . . . that I felt like running on, and overtaking him round the Town Hall adjoining, at the head of Castle-street. But I soon checked myself, when remembering that he had gone whither no son's search could find him in this world. (p. 155)

The death of his father represents the first stage in Redburn's transition to adulthood, but as long as the young man clings to his nostalgic memories, persisting in his childhood dependence on the parental figure for guidance, he is unable to attain real maturity. In order to establish his own identity, Redburn must learn to renounce the past for the present; he must learn to dissociate himself from his father and, as he finally acknowledges, to make his own way in life.

It would appear, at first, that this aspect of Redburn has little relevance to the issues considered in the rest of this chapter. Yet, it should be noted that Redburn's romantic illusions about England are fostered, to a great extent, by his father's attitude to that country and bound up, as it were, with his memory of his father. From early childhood, he has learned to admire the Old World, with its historical traditions and refined civilization. The fascination that Europe has for Redburn as a boy is enhanced by the many beautiful things which his father brings home from France and England--furniture, paintings and prints, and fine, old, leather books. Although Redburn, unlike Wychemombe, Etherege/Redclyffe, and Searle, has no claim to an ancestral estate in England, Melville suggests that the

heritage transmitted from father to son consists of an awareness and aesthetic appreciation of European culture, in general, and of that of England, in particular.

England thus constitutes a two-fold link with the past for Redburn in that it is not only associated with the personal memory of his father's voyages there many years before but, in addition, represents a rich cultural tradition that he has venerated from childhood. Nevertheless, Redburn's search for the legendary old England of his dreams proves as futile as his attempt to retrace his father's footsteps. Contrary to his expectations, he finds no trace of the pageantry or splendor of the past in Liverpool:

And this is England?

But where are the old abbeys, and the York Minsters, and the lord mayors, and coronations . . . which . . . I had been in the habit of associating with England? Not the most distant glimpse of them was to be seen. (p. 133)

As he wanders through the streets of Liverpool, Redburn is disappointed and disillusioned by what he sees; and his impressions of the city bring home to him what F. O. Matthiessen terms, "the difference between anticipation and reality. . . ." <sup>82</sup> Instead of beauty, he encounters sordidness and corruption. The England that his father has described to him seems to have vanished:

Ah me, and ten times alas! am I to visit old England in vain? in the land of Thomas-a-Becket and stout John of Gaunt, not to catch the least glimpse of priory or castle? Is there nothing in all the British empire but these smoky ranges of old shops and warehouses? is Liverpool but a brick-kiln? Why, no buildings here look so ancient as the old gable-pointed mansion of my maternal

grandfather at home. . . . 'Tis a deceit--a gull--a sham--a hoax! This boasted England is no older than the State of New York. . . . (p. 159)

At one point, a scene actually seems to evoke a vague memory from the past. As he gazes at a large stone Moorish arch outside Liverpool, Redburn is conscious of a sense of déjà vu:

. . . there came over me an undefinable feeling, that I had previously seen the whole thing before. Yet how could that be? Certainly, I had never been in Liverpool before: but then, that Moorish arch! surely I remembered that very well. (p. 206)

Yet, even this proves to be a delusion, for several months later, after his return to America, Redburn suddenly recalls that the familiarity of the arch was due to his having seen a picture of that very spot in a magazine many years before.

The inadequacy of the father's guide-book as a means of directing the son's way takes on a wider significance in the light of Redburn's failure to find the England of his romantic fantasy. Melville seems to suggest that the book is associated, not only with Redburn's father, but with the cultural heritage of the past in general. He insists that the past, which at first seems so sacred to Redburn, is, in truth, a useless guide to the present. Redburn eventually comes to acknowledge this when he is unable to find the landmarks mentioned in the guide-book:

Then, indeed, a new light broke in upon me concerning my guide-book; and all my previous dim suspicions were almost confirmed. It was nearly half a century behind the age! and no more fit to guide me about the town, than the map of Pompeii. (p. 157)

He realizes that his reverence for the past has failed to take into account the changes in the present:

Here, now, oh, Wellingborough, thought I, learn a lesson, and never forget it. This world, my boy, is a moving world; its Riddough's Hotels are forever being pulled down; it never stands still; and its sands are forever shifting. . . . And, Wellingborough, as your father's guide-book is no guide for you, neither would yours . . . be a true guide to those who come after you. Guide-books, Wellingborough, are the least reliable books in all literature; and nearly all literature, in one sense, is made up of guide-books. Old ones tell us the ways our fathers went, through the thoroughfares and courts of old; but how few of those former places can their posterity trace, amid avenues of modern erections; to how few is the old guide-book now a clew! Every age makes its own guide-books, and the old ones are used for waste paper. . . . (p. 157)

Abandoning his child-like dependence on his father and his romantic idealization of the past, both of which may be construed as escapism from the demands of the present, Redburn at last confronts reality; admitting that each individual must write his own "guide-book" to life, he takes an important step towards maturity.

In comparing Redburn to The Two Admirals, Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, and "A Passionate Pilgrim," it should be noted that there is irony in the fact that the patrimony which Redburn is seeking so faithfully with the help of the guide-book is no ancestral mansion--no more than a traveler's hotel which has long since been pulled down. What is even more significant, however, is the political implication of the passage quoted above: Melville seems to be suggesting that, just as Redburn must learn to dissociate himself from his father in order to establish his own identity and make

his own way in the world as an adult, so, too, the nineteenth century American must sever his ancestral ties to England, divest himself of his nostalgia for the mother country, and terminate his cultural dependence on Europe in order to enable America to fulfill its destiny as an independent nation. In this respect, Melville's attitude to the Old World resembles those of Cooper and Hawthorne.

## Chapter 5.

Indian Summer

William Dean Howells's Indian Summer (1886) differs markedly in both style and subject matter from The Two Admirals, Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, and Redburn. A relatively late work which is undoubtedly the most Jamesian of the novels analyzed in this study, it is a polished, sophisticated comedy of manners that explores the relationships among three Americans residing in Italy. Nonetheless, it has been included for consideration in this section because, in depicting the American's journey to Europe as a quest for the past (one, moreover, which involves the question of identity),<sup>83</sup> the novel presents an interesting transformation of the same theme that has already been noted in the works of Cooper, Hawthorne, Melville, and James.

Indian Summer portrays an American whose experiences in Europe have a crucial impact on his life. Yet the classification of the work as an international novel is problematic in other respects since it appears to lack one of the definitive characteristics of international fiction. In the more rudimentary international novels of Cooper, Hawthorne, and Melville which have been considered earlier, the interaction between the American and European characters is admittedly minimal; but in Indian Summer, where virtually all the protagonists are American, there

seems to be no interaction at all between the American and the European. One can argue, of course, that since Mrs. Bowen is a Europeanized American, the differences between her and Imogene Graham, her young protégée, do provide some contrast between European and American manners. However, what is even more important is the fact that, despite the absence of European characters in Indian Summer, the underlying international contrast between Europe and America is felt throughout the novel and conveyed primarily through Howells's treatment of the American's attitude to Europe.

The European setting has a prominent function in the novel, for juxtaposed to America, which represents the present, Europe is associated with the past, thereby providing the dominant symbol of the novel and permeating the work with what Marion W. Cumpiano calls a "redolent Old World fragrance."<sup>84</sup> Thus, George N. Bennett errs when he insists: "Except for the diversity of nationalities in the background, the . . . story of love between youth and middle age might just as easily have taken place in Imogene Graham's Buffalo, New York, or Theodore Colville's Des Vaches, Indiana."<sup>85</sup> James L. Woodress, Jr., is more perceptive in his reading of the novel when he asserts: "It belongs among the ablest international novels in American literature. . . ."<sup>86</sup>

Theodore Colville, the protagonist of Indian Summer, is a middle-aged American whose life has been shaped by an episode in his youth. Although he has been a journalist for seventeen years, Colville still regards himself as an artist manqué. Trained as an architect, he once intended to devote

himself to the literary aspect of his profession and write books on Italian architecture. However, because of a romantic disappointment suffered in Europe as a young man, he renounced his aspirations and, nursing his bruised ego and what he fancied to be his broken heart, exiled himself to the small mid-western American town of Des Vaches. The fact that he has had a successful career there as the respected editor of the local newspaper seems, in retrospect, to count for little, for Colville, at forty-one, is a man who regards himself as a failure: he has not fulfilled his youthful ambitions; he has not married; he has not realized his potential. He has allowed life to pass him by.

Colville has all the accomplishments of a sensitive and relatively sophisticated American; he is refined, intelligent, cultured, urbane, and eminently civilized. Yet he habitually displays hesitation, indecision, and passivity, personality traits that tend to make him withdraw from life and experience. The self-deprecating, ironic detachment which he has acquired in middle-age, and which is sharply contrasted to the romantic temperament and tendency to self-dramatization that he displayed in his youth, can be regarded as the product of maturity; but it also serves to isolate him, enabling him to avoid emotional involvement with other people.

When he arrives in Florence at the beginning of the novel, Colville has just experienced another bitter disappointment. He has run for political office, suffered a resounding defeat, and, as a consequence, resigned his

editorship. Moreover, his vanity has again been wounded: ". . . it was a mortification for Colville which his pride could not brook. He stood disgraced before the community. . . ."87 Colville's immediate reason for returning to Europe is thus a negative one. He leaves Des Vaches for Florence in order to escape the scene of his humiliation in much the same manner as he once fled from Florence to Des Vaches twenty years before when the American girl he loved rejected him. Colville's transatlantic voyage also represents an escape, not only from Des Vaches, but from the present: "He wanted to get away, to get far away, and with the abrupt and total change in his humor he reverted to a period in his life when journalism and politics and ambition of Congress were things undreamed of" (p. 6).

At the same time, Colville's journey to Europe does have a more positive significance. Determined to achieve some measure of fulfillment before it is too late, Colville seeks renewal and regeneration in Florence. When he leaves Des Vaches, discarding the habits and career which he had adopted there, he realizes that, "He had, in fact, taken the prodigious risk of breaking his life sharp off from the course in which it had been set for many years, and of attempting to renew it in a direction from which it had long been diverted" (p. 4). Yet he defines renewal by looking back ("reverted," "long been diverted"), not forward; he hopes to redeem past failures, to retrieve the wasted opportunities that have been lost.

Because of his sojourn in Florence at the age of

twenty-three, Colville associates the city with the memory of his youth and with the hope and promise of that period of his life. Florence evokes Colville's nostalgia for the past: in his imagination, it has come to represent an idealized place, an idyllic moment in time, as well as a particular geographic locality. The echoes of Colville's previous visit to Florence continue to reverberate throughout the novel as his memories of the past are repeatedly juxtaposed to the events of the present. It becomes increasingly evident that Colville's return to Florence constitutes a deliberate attempt on his part to recapture the past and to relive it.

Colville's efforts to realize the dreams of his youth take two distinct forms. Recalling his former ambition to combine a study of Italian architecture with his literary interests, in the manner of Ruskin, he now resolves to revive that long dormant project by writing a history of Florentine architecture. In becoming engaged to Imogene Graham, a young American girl visiting Florence, he also makes a misguided attempt to re-enact the romantic episode of his youth. Colville's book never gets written, and his engagement to Imogene is eventually terminated; but his experiences in Florence do ultimately lead him to increased self-knowledge and a new maturity as well as to an unexpected second chance of fulfillment.

Colville's attempt to come to terms with the past is thus presented as the dominant theme of Indian Summer, and throughout the novel Florence serves as the focal point

where the various facets of the past converge. Not only does Colville associate Florence with his personal past--the time of his youth--but he is appreciative of that city's historical past--the antiquity and richness of its civilization. Both aspects of the past are brought together in Colville's projected book on the influence of Florentine history on the city's architecture.

As a type of artist-figure, Colville also seeks aesthetic inspiration in Florence. He romanticizes and idealizes the life of the artist, concluding that, despite their poverty, the expatriate American painters and sculptors in the city are "very happy men, leading . . . lives in a world of the ideal, and rich in the inexhaustible beauty of the city, the sky, the air" (p. 87). His book represents his attempt to prove his own creative ability. At the same time, Howells suggests that this book and Colville's preoccupation with the past, in general, represent an escape from the reality of the present, a withdrawal from the demands of life.

Evidence for this assertion is found fairly early in the novel. Shortly after he arrives in Florence, Colville attends a party where he makes a fool of himself by attempting to perform a complicated dance that he vaguely remembers from seventeen years before and failing so disastrously that he is asked to leave the dancing-set. His embarrassment immediately afterwards is acute: "He did not know where to turn; the whole room must have seen what an incredible ass he had made of himself . . ." (p. 57). On the morning after

the party, he reviews his actions of the previous evening:

The next morning's sunshine dispersed the black mood of the night before; but enough of Colville's self-disgust remained to determine him not to let his return to Florence be altogether vain, or his sojourn so idle as it had begun being. The vague purpose which he had cherished of studying the past life and character of the Florentines in their architecture shaped itself anew . . . and he turned it over in his mind with that mounting joy in its capabilities which attends the contemplation of any sort of artistic endeavor. . . . With this object in his mind, making and keeping him young, he could laugh with any one who liked at the vanity of the middle-aged Hoosier who had spoiled a set in the Lancers at Madame Ucelli's party. . . . (p. 62)

This passage makes it clear that Colville's intention to resume work on his book without delay is a direct consequence of his mortifying experience of the night before. It is because of this trivial incident that he resolves to turn from society to scholarship: "Henceforth his life would be wholly intellectual. He did not regret his little excursion into society; it had shown him with dramatic sharpness how unfit for it he was" (p. 63). We see reflected here too the same pattern of behavior that has been noted previously-- Colville's tendency to run away from painful or unpleasant situations.

It should also be noted that Colville's unfortunate exhibition at Madame Ucelli's party and his sudden renewed interest in his book are similarly motivated in that both reflect Colville's manifest yearning to recapture his youth. Colville is prompted to dance because, wishing to impress Imogene Graham, he is inspired by a "vain and foolish

ambition" (p. 57) to appear youthful in her eyes. Likewise, the passage quoted above reveals Colville's explicit assumption that his work will make and keep him young. He soon recognizes the ridiculous aspect of his behavior at the party, but he seems unaware of the implications of his remarks about his work: he fails to realize that his book represents a different approach to the same objective. Nevertheless, Colville's pursuit of youth is, in both instances, an attempted denial of middle-age,<sup>88</sup> another form of escape from reality that proves to be both illusory and futile.

Paradoxically, the conflicting claims of past and present are recognized by Colville almost immediately afterwards, when he goes to the reading-room to begin work on his book and encounters Mr. Waters, a retired American minister who, like Colville, has come to Florence to devote himself to a study of the Italian past. Comparing his own situation to that of the elderly scholar, Colville has a moment of illumination in which he is suddenly assailed by doubt as to the value of his project:

He [Mr. Waters] gave Colville the scholar's far-off look as he turned to go; he was already as remote as the fifteenth century through the magic of the book which he opened and began to read at once. Colville stared after him; he did not wish to come to just that yet, either. Life, active life, life of his own day, called to him; he had been one of its busiest children: could he turn his back upon it for any charm or use that was in the past? Again that unnerving doubt, that paralyzing distrust, beset him, and tempted him to curse the day in which he had returned to this outworn Old World. Idler on its modern surface, or delver in its deep-hearted past, could he reconcile himself to it? What did he care for the Italians of to-day, or the history

of the Florentines as expressed in their architectural monuments? It was the problems of the vast, tumultuous American life, which he had turned his back on, that really concerned him. Later he might take up the study that fascinated yonder old man, but for the present it was intolerable.  
(pp. 65-66)

Colville's growing reluctance to devote himself to a study of the past at the expense of the present is expressed, in this passage, in terms of his attitudes to Europe and to America. The conflict between past and present, which is so dominant a motif in the novel, thus takes on a new dimension and becomes a contrast between the Old World and the New. Italy is explicitly identified with the past and America with the present, and the polarity of the two is emphasized.

In this passage, Colville also resolves the ambivalence that he has previously displayed towards Europe and America by dissociating himself from Europe and by affirming his commitment to America, even though he continues to remain in Florence for various reasons. The inconsistencies that seem to arise when Colville's remarks here are compared to those found elsewhere in the novel are due to the fact that Howells presents Colville's reactions to two distinct and disparate aspects of Florence--the real city and the city of his imagination. His remarks here are intended to be applied to the former. Hence although Colville is initially attracted to the richness of Italian civilization, regarding Florence as an aesthetic ideal where he can find inspiration for his book, this passage reveals his underlying feelings

of estrangement from Europe and confirms his increasing awareness that his interest in the Florentine past is a sterile preoccupation. At the same time, Colville's realization that Florence, though indisputably a beautiful old city, is nonetheless part of the "outworn Old World" which he repudiates co-exists with his continued idealization of the city of his imagination--the city that he identifies with the memory of his youth.<sup>89</sup>

Abandoning his book on Florence, Colville still clings to his nostalgic images of the Florence he once knew. However, even as he pursues the past, he discovers, almost from the time of his arrival, that it eludes him. He is compelled to admit "the defeat of certain expectations with which he had returned to Florence" (p. 8), and he becomes aware that, "Certain emotions, certain sensations failed to repeat themselves . . . at the sight of the familiar monuments . . ." (p. 8). Contemplating the vivid spectacle of life around him, he acknowledges that ". . . some charm had gone out of all this" (p. 9). This marks the first stage of Colville's disillusionment, but it is only at the end of the novel, when he fully comprehends that his obsession with his own past is as much a renunciation of the claims of life and of the present as his study of Florentine history, that Colville is at last ready to leave Italy and return to America.

The positive view of his native land and the affirmative response to the call of "active life" in contemporary America which are found in the passage quoted above also seem, at

first, to be at variance with the attitude to Des Vaches that Colville expresses elsewhere in the novel. We are told, for example, that as a young man, Colville's initial reaction to the small mid-western town in Indiana was an extremely critical one, even though he eventually learned to come to terms with life there: "He hated it; but he staid. . . . He learned in time to relish the humorous intimacy of the life about him . . ." (p. 7). Gazing back at Des Vaches from the vantage point of Florence, Colville becomes cognizant of how limited his opportunities were during the years he lived there: "He began to see that the time he had spent so busily in that enterprising city had certainly been in some sense wasted" (p. 28). His attitude to Des Vaches at this point is undoubtedly influenced by the bitter disappointment he feels at his recent political defeat, but it also stems from his realization that he has had little scope for the fullest development of his talents there.

Nevertheless, his decision to leave Des Vaches should not necessarily be seen as a rejection of America. When Colville decides to go to Florence, he fully intends to return to America and to establish himself eventually as an architect in New York; Europe is never envisioned as a permanent place of residence. Moreover, the qualifying term used with "wasted," namely "in some sense," is an important one. Despite the disadvantages of life in Des Vaches, Colville has had an interesting and successful career there as the editor of the local newspaper:

. . . he became very fond of newspaper life, its constant excitements and its endless variety; and six months before he sold his paper he would have scoffed at a prophecy of his return to Europe for the resumption of any artistic purpose whatsoever.  
(p. 7)

In the course of his residence in Des Vaches, Colville has acquired a deeply ingrained belief in the value of work, a belief which is an integral part of the nineteenth century American ethic. When he arrives in Florence, Colville has enough money to live comfortably in Europe for some time, but he resolves, from the first, that he will not be idle:

. . . he would keep architecture before him as an object, for he had lived long in a community where every one was intensely occupied, and he unconsciously paid to Des Vaches the tribute of feeling that an objectless life was disgraceful to man.  
(p. 7)

On finding himself home-sick for Des Vaches soon after coming to Florence, Colville realizes that what he misses most of all is the busy, active life to which he has been accustomed:

. . . he suffered keenly and at every moment the loss of the occupation of which he had bereaved himself. . . . A . . . passionate regret for the life he had put behind him, rather than any longing for Des Vaches, swept over him. . . . (pp. 7-8)

In the light of these remarks, it is possible to reconcile the apparent inconsistencies in Colville's attitude to America. Critical as he is of the provinciality of life in Des Vaches, Colville recognizes that America offers a

satisfying career and involvement in the active life of the present. In this respect he resembles Wychecombe and Etherege/Redclyffe, and, like these characters, eventually decides that his proper place is in his own country.

In this context, it should also be noted that Italy is morally neutral to Colville. Nowhere in Indian Summer is Italian society regarded as licentious or corrupt as it is in Howells's The Lady of the Aroostook; nowhere is Italy's past regarded as a heritage of sin and guilt as it is in Hawthorne's The Marble Faun. On the contrary, the only statement which can in any way be termed a moral assessment of the country (a statement made by Mr. Waters but one with which Colville seems to be in tacit agreement) is an indication of praise for the Italian character: "'Most nations sink lower and lower under tyranny; the Italians grew steadily more and more civilized, more noble, more gentle, more grand'" (p. 64).

The polarity of values between Europe and America in Indian Summer, unlike that in the international fiction of Hawthorne, Melville, and James, is thus not a moral one. Instead, it is embodied in the contrast between past and present, aesthetic and practical, escape and involvement. In his final acceptance of his identity as an American, Colville renounces, not only Europe, but his attempt to deny the demands of the present by devoting all his energies to a futile quest for the past.

Before Colville is ready to do so, however, he must first learn to come to terms with his sense of failure and

attain emotional maturity: he must learn to distinguish between illusion and reality, between romantic fantasy and actual life. Looking back over the seventeen years that have elapsed since his previous visit to Florence, Colville is conscious, at the beginning of the novel, of all that he has missed in life. He believes that the romantic disappointment of his youth has ruined his life: "An inexpressible bitterness for that old wrong, which, however he had been used to laugh at it and despise it, had made his life solitary and barren, poured upon his soul . . ." (p. 61).

It is Mr. Waters who once again provides Colville with a standard of measurement. Speaking with the acquired wisdom and understanding of age, he condemns Colville's blindness in mourning the lost opportunities of his youth while overlooking the satisfactions and compensations of middle-age. The old man tells Colville that, from the vantage point of seventy, he regards Colville as a comparatively young man with the richest part of his life still before him. Commenting on his own life, he warns Colville:

"I sometimes feel . . . that I made a mistake in yielding to a disappointment that I met with early in life, and in not permitting myself the chance of retrieval. I have missed a beautiful and consoling experience in my devotion to a barren regret." (p. 128)

This admission makes a strong impression on Colville, knowing as he does that Mr. Waters's remarks could easily be applied to himself.

In acknowledging the sterility of his own life, Colville is overwhelmed by a sense of futility and waste: "He was no

longer young, that was true; but with an ache of old regret he felt that he had not yet lived his life, that his was a baffled destiny, an arrested fate" (p. 66). In these words, we are reminded of the protagonist of James's story, "The Beast in the Jungle" (1903). Like Colville, John Marcher allows life to pass him by until, "as he waked up to the sense of no longer being young,"<sup>90</sup> he realizes that, ". . . at this time of day, it was simply, it was overwhelmingly too late."<sup>91</sup> Blindly rejecting the love of May Bartram, the last chance of fulfillment that is offered to him, he discovers the enormity of his loss only after her death: "The escape [from his fate] would have been to love her; then, then he would have lived."<sup>92</sup> In Indian Summer, the phrase "too late" recurs numerous times throughout the novel. However, Colville's potential fate does not acquire the tragic inevitability that it does in the case of John Marcher, for Colville does finally avail himself of the opportunity that is offered to him to redeem the barrenness of his life before it is too late.

Colville becomes aware of the emptiness and sterility of his life fairly early in the novel, but when he seeks emotional fulfillment, he repeats the error he makes when he tries to revive his former artistic ambitions: he attempts to recapture the past and with it, symbolically, his lost youth. As William M. Gibson points out, he fails to realize that ". . . a sentimental longing for youth when youth is past can result only in the waste of human energy and devotion."<sup>93</sup>

Colville's relationship with Imogene Graham is dominated by two factors: Imogene represents an apotheosis of youth, in general, and she offers Colville an opportunity to relive the romance of twenty years before. From the first, it is the youthful appeal of Imogene's beauty that attracts Colville. When introduced to her, he notices that, ". . . she was . . . beautiful, with a sweet and youthful radiance of look that was very winning" (p. 30). He regards her as "an expression of youth, of health, of beauty, and of the moral loveliness that comes from a fortunate combination of these . . ." (p. 68). Moreover, her freshness, innocence, and candor--the sources of her charm--are the qualities of an unsophisticated young girl as yet untouched by life.

Howells suggests, too, that she awakens in Colville a nostalgia for his own lost youth: "A sense of the girl's beauty lingered in Colville's thought all day, and recurred to him again and again; and the ambitious intensity of her talk came back in touches. . . . How divinely young it all was, and how lovely!" (p. 75). Indeed, one of the gossips of Florence shows considerable perception when she says of Colville: "' . . . men of that age have such an ambition to marry young girls! I suppose that they think it proves that they are not so very old, after all'" (p. 97).

As Colville is drawn to Imogene's youth, she in turn is fascinated by his maturity--his wit, his irony, his experience of life--which makes the various young men she knows seem flat and boring by contrast. When Mrs. Bowen tells her of his unhappy love affair, she is moved by his past suffering and persists in believing that his life has

been spent in grieving for his lost love. In her eyes, he becomes a tragic figure out of a romance, a "heart-broken hero" (p. 108).

Colville is amused by Imogene's youthful adulation, but he is also flattered and moved by it. When he waltzes with Imogene at the veglione, he acknowledges for the first time the feelings which the girl awakens in him: ". . . his . . . heart beat with a sort of fond, protecting tenderness; he felt the witchery of his power to make this young, radiant, and beautiful creature hang flattered and bewildered on his talk . . ." (p. 108). This moment represents a turning point in Colville's relationship with Imogene; yet the emotions which are awakened in Colville are evoked, not only by Imogene herself, but by Colville's memory of the girl he once loved: ". . . he remembered the veglione of seventeen years before, when he had dreamed through the waltz with the girl who had jilted him . . ." (p. 107). As Colville listens to the music, hearing the echoes of the past, the past and present seem to fuse so that he fancies that the girl in his arms is the same one that he held at that earlier ball so long ago.

The convergence of past and present recurs again later in the novel when Colville goes walking in the Boboli Gardens. As he attempts to come to terms with his feelings for Imogene Graham, the memory of Jenny Milbury, the girl he once loved, pervades his thoughts:

When he entered the beautiful old garden, its benison of peace fell upon his tumult. . . . He had not been there since he walked there with one now more like a ghost to him than any of the

dead who had since died. It was there that she had refused him. . . . Except that this had happened in the fall, and now it was early spring, there seemed no change since then; the long years that had elapsed were like a winter between. (p. 164)

In this passage, the garden is associated with the past in two ways: its antiquity gives it an aura of the distant past, and it evokes in Colville the memory of the romance of his youth. Yet, in its peace and tranquillity, the garden is also a place where time seems to be suspended, where past and present seem to co-exist. Recalling his former visit to the garden of seventeen years before as vividly as if it occurred but a few months earlier, Colville can almost believe that he is still a young man wanting to propose marriage to a lovely girl. In this mood, he is ready to re-enact the scene from his past.

Therefore, when Colville encounters Imogene in the garden, it requires only her passionate declaration that she would like him to stay on in Florence for her sake, for Colville to be sure of her attachment to him. Though he half-heartedly protests that he is too old for her, her denial dispels his last doubts. As Colville proposes to Imogene, the memory of that earlier proposal continues to reverberate in the garden. Events seem to be repeating themselves so that Colville is offered an opportunity to retrieve the disappointment he suffered so many years ago in this very place. He seizes that opportunity, and, when he and Imogene leave the garden, they are engaged.

Although the Boboli Gardens, like the veglione,

constitute a link between past and present to Colville, the garden also serves another function. Timeless and beautiful, it represents an Edenic setting, an idyllic pastoral world far removed from reality. It is springtime in the garden when Colville meets Imogene and, as Colville notes in the passage quoted above, the years that have elapsed since his last visit to Florence are like a long winter to him. This imagery evokes the idea of Colville's re-awakening after a period of emotional sterility; winter may be regarded as an interval when Colville's powers lay dormant. The significance of its being spring is emphasized at the end of the chapter when Colville and Imogene are about to leave the garden:

The light under the limbs of the trees had begun to grow more liquid. The currents of warm breeze streaming through the cooler body of the air had ceased to ruffle the lakelet around the fountain. . . . A damp, pierced with the fresh odor of the water and of the springing grass, descended upon them.  
(p. 173)

The imagery of light, water, and growing grass reinforces the associations of springtime and suggests that for Colville this is a time of rebirth and renewal. In becoming engaged to the young girl, he appears to have recaptured the promise of his own youth.

It is only later in the novel that it becomes evident that, for Colville, this is a false spring. As a middle-aged man, his time of life is really that of "Indian summer," the season when the resurgent breath of summer is illusory and evanescent and, inevitably, soon followed by winter.

The scene in the garden is an idyll, but as Colville eventually discovers, the idyll cannot be sustained in the real world; it is a mirage, an illusion, produced by self-deception on the part of both Colville and Imogene.

Colville's state of mind in the garden when he proposes to Imogene is also influenced, not only by the setting, but by the emotional crisis which has just been precipitated by his decision to leave Florence. Looking back over his life at the height of this crisis, Colville is suddenly overwhelmed by self-doubt and by a sense of failure, both of which lead him to change his mind about leaving:

Had he been his whole life one of these weak wills which are a curse to themselves and others. . . . Was that the secret of his failure in life? But for many years he had seemed to succeed, to be as other men were, hard, practical men; he had once made a good newspaper, which was certainly not a dream of romance. Had he given that up at last because he was a weak will? And now was he running away from Florence because his will was weak? He could look back to that squalid tragedy of his youth, and see that a more violent, a more determined man could have possessed himself of the girl whom he had lost. And now would it not be more manly, if more brutal, to stay here, where a hope, however fleeting, however fitful, of what might have been, had revisited him in the love of this young girl? He felt sure, if anything were sure, that something in him, in spite of their wide disparity of years, had captured her fancy, and . . . he felt again the charm of his own power over her. They were no farther apart in years than many a husband and wife; they would grow more and more together; there was youth enough in his heart yet. . . . (pp. 162-63)

In this passage, Colville recognizes the indecisiveness of his character, the weakness of will that has prevented him from finding fulfillment all these years. However, in his new-found resolve not to run away from Florence, he fails

to realize that Imogene Graham represents an escape of a different kind. He blinds himself to the fact that his feeling for her is the product of his obsession with the past. For Colville, marriage to Imogene seems to be his last chance of proving that he still has "youth enough" to fall in love; it is his last hope of recapturing the promise of his former romance--of "what might have been."

Thus, despite his initial misgivings at becoming engaged to a girl twenty years younger than himself, Colville allows himself to be persuaded of the sincerity of Imogene's attachment to him. In doing so, he not only deludes himself but inadvertently encourages Imogene's romantic notion that she will give him back his youth and make up for the disappointment he suffered so many years before. The self-sacrificing idealism that she mistakes for love is best illustrated when she tells him:

"I want you to feel that I am your youth--the youth you were robbed of--given back to you. . . . It's been this idea, this hope, with me always--ever since I knew what happened to you long ago that you might go back in my life and take up yours where it was broken off; that I might make your life what it would have been--complete your destiny--" (p. 198)

This passage reveals the extent of Imogene's self-deception, well-intentioned though it may be. Naive and inexperienced, she is attempting to live her life as if it were a romantic novel. Moreover, there is irony in the fact that Imogene's words echo the very notion that Colville himself has just expressed, even though he now emphatically repudiates this view of their relationship, refusing to

accept the sacrifice she is so intent on offering:

"And do you think I could be such a vampire as to let you? Yes; yes: I have had my dreams of such a thing; but I see now how hideous they were. You shall make no such sacrifice to me. You must put away the fancies that could never be fulfilled or if by some infernal magic they could, would only bring sorrow to you and shame to me. . . . And God forgive me, if I have done or said anything to put this in your head! And thank God it isn't too late yet for you to take yourself back." (p. 198)

There is no doubt as to the sincerity of Colville's words, nor to his willingness to release Imogene from the engagement. However, when she denies that she wants to be released, Colville, vaguely conscious already of the error he has committed in becoming engaged to her, is bound by his code of honor as a gentleman to accede to her wishes.

Colville's uneasiness about his engagement increases when, to please Imogene, he finds himself adopting the guise of a young man. Early in their acquaintance, Imogene's request to Colville not to talk about his age has elicited his jesting response that, "'I promise to be twenty years younger'" (p. 110). After their engagement, Colville discovers that Imogene expects him to keep that promise. If at one time he was attracted to the idea of appearing more youthful than he really is, he is soon disabused of its merits. He gives up the quiet dinner parties which he enjoys and, instead, escorts Imogene to a round of dances and parties: "He went to these places in the character of a young man, but he was not readily accepted or recognized in that character. They gave him frumps to take out to supper, mothers and maiden aunts . . ." (p. 207). Moreover,

the frenetic round of social activity soon proves to be too much for Colville so that, utterly exhausted, he begins to fall asleep in public each time he sits down. Finally, even Imogene is compelled to recognize that he is unable to cope with the late hours and constant activity, and she resolves to adapt herself to his way of life.

During this period, Colville becomes increasingly aware of both the unsuitability of their engagement and the extent to which Imogene is deluding herself about the nature of their relationship. He belatedly recognizes the absurdity of his attempt to appear youthful, and in doing so, he gradually grows in maturity. Confiding his misgivings about his engagement to Mr. Waters, he shows a new degree of self-acceptance, an increased ability to differentiate between illusion and reality:

" . . . the child is full of fancies about me that can't be fulfilled. She dreams of restoring my youth somehow, of retrieving the past for me, of avenging me at her own cost for an unlucky love affair that I had here twenty years ago. It's pretty of her, but it's terribly pathetic--it's tragic. I know very well that I'm a middle-aged man, and that there's no more youth for me. I'm getting gray, and I'm getting fat. I wouldn't be young if I could; it's a bore." (p. 219)

As Imogene begins to have her own doubts about the engagement, doubts that she stubbornly refuses to acknowledge, their relationship becomes more and more strained, but it is not until Colville is injured while attempting to rescue her from a run-away carriage that she finally admits to herself that she does not love him. After the accident, Imogene's mother arrives in Florence, discovers the truth

about her daughter's feelings for Colville, and, to Colville's great relief, demands that the engagement be broken.

Throughout most of the novel, Colville's involvement with Imogene Graham overshadows his friendship with Lina Bowen, so that it is only in the final chapters that the full import of his relationship with the older woman is revealed to him. Yet the juxtaposition of Colville's relationships with the two women serves a central function in the novel, both structurally and thematically.

While Indian Summer does not conform to the normative pattern of most international fiction in that virtually all the characters are Americans, as noted earlier, the differences in behavior exhibited by Imogene Graham and Lina Bowen can be seen to illustrate the contrast between American and European manners. Imogene is spontaneous, impulsive, independent, and careless of convention. Together with a frank and open nature, she displays the engaging innocence characteristic of American girlhood. As William M. Gibson observes, "Imogene Graham, who at twenty is a happier, more impulsive and sentimental Daisy Miller or Mamie Pocock, is . . . a type of the American girl whom Howells and James made famous."<sup>94</sup>

Unlike Imogene, Mrs. Bowen has gradually become Europeanized since the time that Colville last knew her. Having lived in Italy for a number of years, she has adopted the European view of decorum and, in spite of her "own untrammelled girlhood" (p. 15), has decided that her

daughter should be brought up in the European manner. Her adherence to European notions of propriety sets her apart from Imogene and even Colville. She is more formal than either of them, more restricted in her actions by the code of behavior that she has resolved to follow.

When Imogene becomes engaged to Colville, Mrs. Bowen's situation is an extremely awkward one, as she herself is fully aware. Recognizing her responsibilities as Imogene's chaperone and suspecting that the girl's attachment to Colville is no more than a romantic infatuation, she feels it her duty to dissuade Imogene from committing herself so precipitately. Yet because her own affections are involved, she finds it impossible to be frank with the girl or to advise her. Her reluctance to intervene in the affair is due primarily to her delicate sense of integrity as well as to her pride, but it is reinforced by the fact that her habitual reserve, allied to her acceptance of European decorum, has made such interference seem utterly repugnant to her.

There are also other crucial differences between the two women which are directly related to the central dilemma that Colville faces in the novel. It will be recalled that it is Imogene's youth, together with the beauty, candor, and innocence which are the concomitants of her youth, that first captivates Colville, intensifying as it does his nostalgia for his own lost youth. By contrast, Mrs. Bowen is a contemporary of Colville's, and her attractions are those of maturity. Moreover, to Colville, Imogene Graham

and Lina Bowen represent the opposing claims of past and present. Imogene urges Colville to relive his former romance, and by doing so, she offers him an avenue of escape to the past. Mrs. Bowen demands Colville's renunciation of the past, but she offers him a meaningful relationship in the present. At the same time, she also serves to bridge the gap between past and present, enabling Colville to synthesize the two.

It is significant that Colville first encounters Lina Bowen when he is absorbed in nostalgic memories of his previous visit to Florence. Contemplating the prospect of the city from the Ponte Vecchio, he hears a woman speak and recognizes a voice from his past. Although he has not seen Lina Bowen for almost twenty years, he remembers her as the friend of the American girl whom he once loved. Since then, she has been married and widowed and is now residing in Florence with her daughter. Colville's pleasure at seeing her again is caused, in part, by his impression of her being a charming, elegant, and attractive woman, but it also springs from his recollection of her behavior to him many years before:

He then remembered that Lina Ridgely in many fine little ways had shown a kindness, almost a compassion, for him. . . . He perceived that she had always seemed to like him--a thing that had not occurred to him in the stupid absorption of his passion for the other--. . . and he abandoned himself to regrets, which were proper enough in regard to Miss Ridgely, but were certainly a little unlawful concerning Mrs. Bowen. (p. 19)

In this passage, Colville is vaguely aware that the

relationship between himself and Lina Bowen has a potential which has not been realized. He readily acknowledges that, "He was very willing to see more of her, if she wished. . . ." (p. 20). When he renews his friendship with her, they discover a mutual sympathy which soon enables them to be on close terms with one another. Colville attends her social evenings, visits her house frequently, and enjoys her company and conversation. Their compatibility is self-evident, but Colville remains unaware of the nature of his feelings towards her. To be sure, he esteems Mrs. Bowen, frankly conceding that he values her friendship and good opinion very highly. When he displeases her, he resolves to leave Florence; when she receives him coldly, he is upset; when he learns of her friendship with a young clergyman, he is jealous. Moreover, after becoming engaged to Imogene Graham, Colville feels distinctly uneasy in Mrs. Bowen's presence and, aware that he has somehow alienated her, is wretched at the loss of her friendship. On one occasion, he even attempts to tell her of the extent of his regard for her: "'I'm sorry, Mrs. Bowen, to do anything--say anything--that is painful to you,' Colville began. 'You know that I would give the world to please you--' The words escaped him and left him staring at her" (p. 190). Colville makes this admission almost in spite of himself. Yet even at this point, he fails to perceive that he loves her: "'What are you saying to me, Theodore Colville?' she exclaimed. . . . 'Really, I don't believe you know!'" (p. 190).

Not only does Colville remain unaware of his own feelings towards Mrs. Bowen, but he appears equally oblivious of those of Mrs. Bowen towards him. From their first meeting, she gives him tacit encouragement and welcomes his visits. Out of consideration for Colville, she also shows herself willing to be more lenient than usual in her observance of European proprieties, as on the occasion that she allows Imogene and her daughter Effie to attend the veglione with him. Obviously upset by his subsequent involvement with Imogene though she tries to conceal it, she responds to his announcement of their engagement in a manner that any one else would recognize as distraught: ". . . she . . . bowed slightly to him, with a sidelong, aversive glance, and walked out of the room with a slow, rigid pace, like one that controls a tendency to giddiness" (p. 178). Afterwards, she appears haggard and ill, and she avoids Colville's company. Colville does notice Mrs. Bowen's symptoms, but he does not suspect their cause, not even when she suddenly recovers both her health and her looks after his engagement is broken.

The real nature of their relationship is apparent, not only to Mrs. Bowen, who knows that Colville loves her without being aware of it and that she loves him without being able to do anything about it, but to Mr. Waters as well. On several occasions, the astute old man praises Mrs. Bowen's gentleness, refinement, and beauty to Colville, encouraging him to propose marriage to her. Even Imogene is instinctively jealous of Colville's constant defense of

Mrs. Bowen to her and, just before her estrangement from Colville, angrily tells him: "'You always cared more to please her than me. Perhaps you staid in Florence to please her!'" (p. 252).

Although Colville persists in his blindness, his engagement to Imogene is finally terminated because of a series of fortuitous events. By the end of the novel, despite the misunderstandings which have occurred, his relationship with Mrs. Bowen has taken on a new intimacy. On the last evening that Colville spends at her house recuperating from his injuries, he is fully appreciative of the pleasure he derives from her company, and he luxuriates in the quiet moment of domestic harmony that is afforded him as he sits with her, holding her sleeping child on his lap:

Neither of them spoke, and he was so richly content with the peace, the tacit sweetness of the little moment, that he would have been glad to have it silently endure for ever. If any troublesome question of his right to such a moment of bliss obtruded itself upon him, he did not concern himself with it. (p. 262)

In the light of this passage, Colville's continued failure to recognize his love for Lina Bowen appears to be more than error, to be, indeed, gross self-deception. It is only at the last possible moment, when Mrs. Bowen and Effie are about to leave Florence, that illumination finally bursts upon Colville. He suddenly realizes that he must have loved Lina Bowen twenty years ago without knowing it, and that, loving her now, he has very nearly made the same

mistake all over again. Although he is convinced that she must despise him for his behavior of the last months, he proposes to her and, after being berated for his folly, is forgiven.

Colville's relationships with Imogene Graham and Lina Bowen are the means by which he comes at last to recognize the futility of his attempt to be young again and learns to accept instead the compensations of middle-age. Paradoxically, it is only at this point, when he relinquishes his nostalgic memories of the past, that Colville is enabled to retrieve the error he made twenty years before and find real fulfillment. In giving up Imogene Graham and marrying Lina Bowen, Colville renounces the past for the present; he exchanges youth for maturity, illusion for reality, self-deception for self-knowledge, and escape for involvement. Having done so, he is now ready to leave Europe and return to America--a decision which serves to confirm his repudiation of the past and his commitment to the present.<sup>95</sup>

Although Indian Summer does not fully conform to the normative pattern of the international novel, it closely resembles Henry James's The Ambassadors (1903) in certain respects. James L. Woodress, Jr., notes that the two novels have "a common theme of the middle-aged American in Europe."<sup>96</sup> Robert Emmet Long, discussing the influence of Howells's novel on James's conception of The Ambassadors, points out that, "There are, in fact, very striking resemblances between the two works and their heroes, Theodore

Colville and Lambert Strether."<sup>97</sup> Long observes:

. . . Indian Summer deals with a situation similar to that of The Ambassadors--that of a man's having missed his opportunity for life only to encounter in his later years, in Europe, a second chance for personal fulfillment. Colville and Strether experience an awakening to life, particularly to the romance of youth, and long to recover, at their late hour, the life that has passed them by. Not only do they both skirmish with youth and illusion, but their sensibilities are tremendously similar. . . .<sup>98</sup>

William M. Gibson puts the case even more succinctly when he remarks:

The similarity in character, situation, and attitude to the past of Theodore Colville and Lewis Lambert Strether is in fact rather remarkable. Both are editors, both are returning to a Europe they had loved in their youth, both have lost a woman they had loved in their youth, and both had dreamed of raising up a "temple of taste."<sup>99</sup>

Gibson also notes that, while Colville is more committed than Strether to the active life of contemporary America, he shares Strether's self-doubts and regrets for the past:

Then in a moment of revulsion Colville remembers that he is no longer young, and comes to feel "an ache of old regret . . . that he had not yet lived his life, that his was a baffled destiny, an arrested fate." Colville's feeling here is very close to Strether's voicing of his sense, in Gloriani's garden, that he has let his life slip by him. The explanation of the similarities may well be general. Nonetheless, Colville is much like his own creator, and we remember that it was a remark of Howells made some ten years after Indian Summer was published, and reported to James by a mutual friend, which constituted the germinal idea for The Ambassadors.<sup>100</sup>

The remark alluded to by Gibson is recorded in the Notebooks, where James quotes Howells as telling an acquaintance:

"Live all you can: it's a mistake not to. It doesn't so much matter what you do--but live. . . . I haven't done so enough before--and now I'm old. . . . It's too late. It has gone past me. I've lost it. . . . Don't, at any rate, make my mistake. Live!"<sup>101</sup>

This, in fact, is the same advice almost verbatim that Strether urges on little Bilham in Gloriani's garden.

Both novels, then, make the "too late" theme central. Perceiving that the dreams of their youth have eluded them, the two men consider themselves failures, acknowledging that they have not really lived. From this common awareness of wasted opportunities, the resolve grows in both men to seize what they consider to be second chances to redeem the errors of the past. Their attempts to do so lead them both to futile endeavors to relive their youth vicariously-- Colville, through his engagement to Imogene Graham, and Strether, through his identification with Chad Newsome and his determination that Chad should not be compelled to forego the enriching kind of experience that he himself has missed. Discussing Chad and Madame de Vionnet with Maria Gostrey, Strether admits that, ". . . they're my youth; since somehow at the right time nothing else ever was."<sup>102</sup>

Although the conclusions of the two novels are quite different, both Colville and Strether are unexpectedly enabled to alleviate the sterility of their lives through

fulfilling relationships. Moreover, the women who are in love with them have several characteristics in common: both are mature; both are elegant and sophisticated; both are Americans who have chosen to live abroad and have become Europeanized to some extent. Colville finally grasps the happiness that is offered to him and marries Lina Bowen. However, Strether renounces Maria Gostrey, and does so fully recognizing the magnitude of his loss, because of a scrupulous code of honor which makes him determine that, whatever the cost, he must preserve his integrity by knowing, "'Not, out of the whole affair, to have got anything for myself.'"<sup>103</sup>

In addition to these similarities, which relate to the fables of the novels, a comparison of the two works as examples of nineteenth century international fiction reveals another relevant point of resemblance between them--namely, the manner in which the "too late" theme is, in both cases, closely bound up with the symbolic significance of Europe. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, as has been noted earlier, the Old World represented the ancestral homeland, the historical past, for the American. Europe also symbolizes a link with the past for Colville and Strether but in a personal, subjective sense: Europe is associated with the memories of their previous visits and with the time of their youth. The voyage to Europe undertaken by each thus becomes a pilgrimage to the past--an expression of the yearning to recapture lost youth. It is a voyage which makes both men

remember the unfulfilled promise of their youthful love and ambition, evoking nostalgia, a sense of loss, and a futile regret for all that they have missed.

In both novels, there is another aspect of Europe that is also significant--the aesthetic one. Colville and Strether both appreciate the beauty and richness of European culture and are aware that Europe has attained a degree of civilization that America has not yet acquired. F. O. Matthiessen notes that, to Strether, Europe represents "a symbol of abundance,"<sup>104</sup> and this statement is equally valid when applied to Colville. Robert Emmet Long observes that, for both men, "Europe and art are almost equations."<sup>105</sup> Colville's admiration for Italian art and architecture has already been noted, but Strether, too, regards Europe in aesthetic terms. At one point, Paris seems to hang before him "like some huge iridescent object, a jewel brilliant. . . ."<sup>106</sup> France is associated in his mind with a Lambinet painting which he once saw many years before in Boston and has never forgotten because it seemed to him to capture so perfectly the very essence of the beauty and charm found in the rural French countryside.

Because of its aesthetic refinement, Europe represents a medium for self-fulfillment to both men. It appears to them, initially at least, to have a higher, finer atmosphere than America, one that encourages the cultivation of their tastes and stimulates the development of their artistic talents. This romantic view of Europe is reinforced by

their nostalgic recollections of their former visits, when their youthful aspirations were closely identified with their enthusiasm for Europe. In this respect, the two facets of Europe--the past and the aesthetic--are intertwined.

There are several images in both novels which sustain this idea. Howells and James both use books, for example, to fuse the aesthetic aspect of Europe with a more personal association from the past as well as to link past and present. These books, which once represented the two men's literary aspirations, now epitomize the sense of failure that they both feel. For Colville, it is the book on Florentine architecture which he intended to write in his youth and now attempts unsuccessfully to resume. For Strether, it is the lemon-colored volumes of French literature which he bought as an ardent and dedicated young man at the time that he was inspired to devote himself to a study of literature. When he sees them displayed again in the bookshops of Paris on his return there, they evoke his painful memory of a broken vow:

They were still somewhere at home, the dozen--stale and soiled and never sent to the binder; but what had become of the sharp initiation they represented? They represented now the mere sallow paint on the door of the temple of taste that he had dreamed of raising up--a structure that he had practically never carried further.<sup>107</sup>

The juxtaposition of past and present by means of an image which conveys the aesthetic appeal of Europe may be found too in the allusions to gardens in both novels. In

crucial scenes, both men revisit gardens that they remember from their former visits--Colville, the Boboli Gardens in Florence, Strether, the Luxembourg Gardens in Paris--only to become conscious, as they observe the beauty of the scene before them and measure the passage of time that has elapsed since they were last there, of the contrast between their dreams in the past and the reality of the present.

For Gibson, comparing Colville and Strether, ". . . the significant difference lies in the disparity of their ages and Colville's greater commitment to his own country, these facts accounting for the different directions which the two novels take in their endings."<sup>108</sup> Gibson's point is a valid one, but it fails to take cognizance of another important factor. In both works, as has been noted above, Europe is identified with the past and with the aesthetic. However, the most striking point of contrast between the two novels is found, not in the differences between Colville and Strether, but in the third aspect of Europe which is so central to James's work and which is so completely lacking in Howells's--the moral. For Colville, Europe is morally neutral; to Strether, it is not. Despite his mature years, Strether is an archetypal American innocent who is compelled to confront the corruption of the Old World and come to terms with it.

Strether returns to Paris on a delicate mission, undertaken on behalf of Mrs. Newsome, to "save" her son and rescue him from his entanglement with Marie de Vionnet. Initially, he commits the error of confusing aesthetic values

with moral ones. On finding Chad improved, as he thinks, in every way, he proceeds to abandon the preconceived notions he has brought with him from Woollett. When he meets Madame de Vionnet, he perceives only her beauty, her elegance, and her refinement. Sophisticated and eminently civilized, she appears to him to embody the finest virtues of the European.

Strether's romantic, idealized conception of Chad's relationship with Madame de Vionnet is shattered only when he accidentally encounters them both on a visit to the country and realizes that they are spending the weekend together. His idyllic view of the pastoral countryside is abruptly altered as the whole scene is brought into a different focus. Only then does he become aware that he has been used, duped, and lied to by both Chad and Marie de Vionnet; his friendship with them has been betrayed. Realizing that the beautiful relationship he has imagined as existing between the two of them is in fact a sexual liaison, he perceives, for the first time, the more sinister qualities underlying the brilliant façade of civilized European society--duplicity, decadence, and corruption.

Strether's journey to Europe thus becomes, not only a confrontation with the past, but a voyage of discovery that culminates in his initiation into the knowledge of evil and his painful acquisition of experience of the world. The growth of self-knowledge is as much the product of the latter aspects of his passage to maturity as of the former. By contrast, Colville undergoes no comparable process of

development in Indian Summer. As Robert Emmet Long notes, "Colville returns to America fundamentally unchanged, and the threat of Europe remains blurred and unclear."<sup>109</sup> He does attain self-knowledge, but it is the consequence of his relationships with Imogene Graham and Lina Bowen--both Americans--and Europeans play no part in it. Moreover, the insight that he acquires at the end of the novel, important as it is, is more limited than that of Strether. It extends to himself and to the two women, not to the nature of European society or the validity of its values. Howells's dominant concerns in the novel are social, psychological, and aesthetic; they are not moral ones. For although Indian Summer has been described by James L. Woodress, Jr., and correctly so, as "a minor masterpiece,"<sup>110</sup> it displays what Lionel Trilling, citing James's well-known essay on Howells, calls a typical feature of Howells's work--namely, "his indifference to evil."<sup>111</sup>

Notwithstanding all its points of resemblance to Indian Summer, James's work is thus a fully realized international novel in a way that Howells's is not. As well as exhibiting the contrast of manners, The Ambassadors dramatizes the polarity of moral values between the Old World and the New that is the distinctive characteristic of the international situation in its most highly developed form. Indeed, James's juxtaposition of American innocence and European corruption in this novel represents one of the finest, most subtle renderings of the international theme in nineteenth century

American fiction. Taken as a standard of measurement, The Ambassadors goes beyond Indian Summer in the magnitude of its achievement, revealing a dimension that is lacking in Howells's novel

Part III.

The American in European Society

In the works which will be considered in this section, the American is exhibited against the background of European society, and particular emphasis is placed on the contrast between the manners and mores of the New World and those of the Old. Admittedly, this element of contrast is also present to some extent in The Two Admirals, Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, and Indian Summer; but, in these novels, it is subordinated to the American's search for the past, whereas in Nathaniel Parker Willis's Paul Fane and William Dean Howells's A Foregone Conclusion, A Fearful Responsibility, and The Lady of the Aroostook, it is more central, constituting as it does the primary concern of the novel.

Focusing their attention on the American's behavior in a European social milieu or on his relationships with Europeans, Willis and Howells both write novels of manners which portray the gulf between the American and the European as an unbridgeable one. In A Foregone Conclusion and A Fearful Responsibility, this gulf takes the form of a failure of communication, arising from different social codes of behavior; in Paul Fane and The Lady of the Aroostook, it is shown as an irreconcilable conflict of values.

## Chapter 6.

Paul Fane

Paul Fane; or, Parts of a Life Else Untold (1857) by Nathaniel Parker Willis is a minor work, one that is marred by its sentimentality, fulsome tone, and tedious repetition of the same basic point. However, in spite of its flaws, it is important for a number of reasons. Firstly, it represents a significant stage in the evolution of the nineteenth century international novel and as such, can be regarded as a transition between the early, more or less rudimentary works of international fiction by Tuckerman, Fay, and Cooper and later, more developed examples of the genre. Notwithstanding Leon Edel's claim that James's Roderick Hudson is "the first important 'international' novel in American literature" (emphasis added),<sup>112</sup> Paul Fane is still the first novel to make the international theme the *raison d'être* of the work--the first real attempt to write an international novel of manners.

Willis's characterization of a young American who proves himself to be the social equal of an English gentleman before renouncing the traditions of the Old World for the ideals of the New recalls Cooper's Wychemcombe and anticipates Hawthorne's *Etherege/Redclyffe*. Yet, what is even more noteworthy is the fact that Fane's ambivalence to Europe throughout much of the novel--his

awareness that European society, although aesthetically appealing and eminently civilized, is at the same time fundamentally flawed in terms of its values--prefigures the attitude to Europe that is presented in Hawthorne's Doctor Grimshawe's Secret and The Marble Faun and, even more so, in James's international fiction.

Furthermore, Willis's preoccupation with the contrast between American and European manners makes him a forerunner, not only of Howells, but again of James. Commenting on Paul Fane, Robert Lee White notes: "Its significance lies . . . not in its literary qualities, but in the fact that Willis broached a subject which was to be so effectively utilized by James a generation later--the contact and conflict of America with Europe."<sup>113</sup> Christof Wegelin likewise observes: "Paul Fane (1857) strikingly anticipates some of the motifs of the early James and especially of The American. Like James's novel, it brings an American into competition with high European society."<sup>114</sup> Indeed, Willis is the only American novelist prior to Howells and James to scrutinize the inherent differences between American and European societies in such minute, painstaking detail.

Paul Fane also merits consideration in any study of the origins of international fiction for another, related reason. Willis was a noted journalist and writer, the author of numerous stories, sketches, and letters about his travels in Europe, whose work appeared in the New York Mirror and various other newspapers and magazines. In his

chapter on Willis, David Rodman Smith remarks: "Virtually unknown today, in his own time he was a major literary figure with an enormous popular reputation."<sup>115</sup> Citing contemporary sources, Smith shows that, in the mid-nineteenth century, Willis was one of the most successful periodical writers in America and, in addition, was greatly respected as a man of letters.<sup>116</sup> Thus, he is of considerable historical interest in nineteenth century American culture in several ways--in his own right, as an index of contemporary American attitudes to Europe, and as a seminal writer. In our time, Paul Fane, Willis's only novel, has long been forgotten and neglected; but since it was widely read in its day, there is good reason to believe that it served as a model which influenced, whether overtly or indirectly, the international novelists who followed Willis.<sup>117</sup>

Apart from the thematic concerns that have already been noted, the American characters who appear in Paul Fane are the predecessors of ones found in later international fiction. Paul Fane, the American artist-hero, and Mary Evenden, the embodiment of American innocence and virtue, are discussed subsequently in detail, but there are two minor characters who appear briefly in the novel and deserve mention.

Wabash ("Bosh") Blivins, a friend of Fane's, is an avowed pragmatist and materialist who, even at the age of seventeen, is quite practical about his goals in life. While still at college, he recognizes that, "'Latin and

Greek don't sell.'" He decides, furthermore, that it is "'Time a boy like him was making money.'"<sup>118</sup> Abandoning his studies, he tries various professions before deciding finally to utilize the limited artistic skill which he has learned from Fane at college. When he discovers that he can sell pictures which are pious or patriotic in subject as quickly as he can paint them, he raises his prices and industriously applies himself to making his fortune in this way.

Fane and Blivins are both painters at the time of their unexpected encounter in Florence, but Fane is an artist whereas Blivins, a "literal copyist" (p. 339) with neither perception nor imagination, is an entrepreneur--a businessman who is interested solely in marketing a commodity which he can produce cheaply and sell at a large margin of profit. Even Blivins's decision to go abroad is motivated by the fact that Italy is an inexpensive country in which to live as well as a prestigious place of origin for the paintings that have been commissioned by American politicians and religious farmers. Blivins is careful to make profitable use of his time in Italy, and during his residence there, scores of his "masterpieces" are dispatched home by merchant ship.

Although Blivins is radically different from Fane in character and outlook, his attributes are distinctively American. He represents a variation of the Yankee peddler figure discussed earlier and, true to type, is both shrewd and practical. He has also undergone the requisite series of metamorphoses characteristic of the Yankee

peddler in his various experiments with different careers. He serves as a rudimentary example of the American businessman abroad who appears in James's international novels, such as Caspar Goodwood in The Portrait of a Lady and the Pockets in The Ambassadors. Moreover, like these characters, he has virtually no contact with Europeans, no ability to appreciate either the culture or the refinements of European civilization.

Sophia Firkin, the American girl whom Blivins subsequently marries, is a character who can be taken as the prototype for James's Daisy Miller. Christof Wegelin, for example, asserts that, "The 'international American girl,' made famous by James, is represented in Willis' novel . . . though with a difference."<sup>119,120</sup> She is the fresh, attractive, eighteen year old daughter of a prosperous American family which is visiting Florence in order to imbibe "culture" and give Sophia the final polishing that a visit to Europe automatically confers on the traveler in American eyes. Like Daisy, she has a younger brother and a father who is both rich and in business. Although Mr. Firkin's impressive letters of credit do much to compensate for his lack of distinction, he is, in fact, a tradesman, a partner in a large firm of wholesale grocers in Cincinnati--a city which is more distinguished than Daisy Miller's Schenectady but one which is regarded as equally provincial by the European.

However, Sophia is in no way inhibited by any feeling of inferiority to the members of the European aristocracy

whom she encounters. Determined to make the most of her stay in Europe, she plunges into a frank and uninhibited enjoyment of the various entertainments offered by European society and launches herself in her "intended career, 'abroad' . . ." (p. 71). Lively and high-spirited, she refuses to submit to the strict conventions of European society; she is described by the author as a "'fast' young lady" (p. 71). In this respect, in particular, she resembles Daisy Miller. Moreover, like Daisy, Sophia's freedom of conduct and flirtatiousness are essentially innocent. The Princess C--, who is doing a bust of Sophia (who wants to be sculpted in the nude), immediately recognizes this, observing of the American girl that she has "'fearlessness and playfulness, two of the most reliable signs of innocence'" (pp. 250-51).

Sophia observes European society from a different vantage point than Fane does, though their final assessments of that society are essentially the same. When pursued by two titled Europeans, she is amused by the contrast presented between American and European manners. In a letter to an American friend, she writes:

"La! they do things so differently here, Kitty! A girl's admirers have to keep such a distance! You'll scarce believe, now, that these two titled danglers are understood lovers of mine, and . . . yet I have never been a minute alone with either of them!" (p. 79)

Sophia regards her flirtations with her European admirers as an entertaining pastime, but she is shrewd enough to realize that the fact that she is an heiress is her primary

attraction to both of these men. Her description of her suitors' motives, for all its frivolity, indicates her awareness of the underlying worldliness and corruption of European values:

"Such dear little sweet peas as we girls are-- expected to stay podded in our innocent simplicity even till after eighteen, if we're not married-- just as if I couldn't see out enough to understand that these venerable [European] belles are trying each to help an old lover of her own to a rich young wife!" (p. 79)

Sophia eventually marries Blivins, the self-made man who has prospered and who loves her for her own merit. In doing so, she quietly affirms her own preference for American values over European ones.

The narrative of Paul Fane, set in the 1830's, takes the form of a fictional biography which purports to describe the early career of a celebrated American painter. In terms of the development of nineteenth century international fiction, Willis's decision to make his American hero an artist is a significant one. Fane is virtually the first protagonist of this type to appear in an international novel, but he is followed by a number of American artists who attempt to come to terms with their experiences in Europe--Kenyon and Hilda in Hawthorne's The Marble Faun, Ferris in Howells's A Foregone Conclusion, and Roderick Hudson in James's novel of the same name.

Fane is free of the ties that bind Wychecombe, Etherege/Redclyffe, Redburn, and even Colville to Europe.

He cares little for the fact that Europe is his ancestral homeland and is indifferent to its associations with the past. As an artist, Fane's initial interest in Europe is predominantly aesthetic. Regarding Europe, as Colville does, as a center of art, civilization, and culture, he realizes that there, his artistic talent will have its fullest scope for development. Yet important as this motive is in his decision to go abroad, it is subordinated to his desire to observe European society.

As an American, Fane is aware of being a product of a classless society where, in theory at least, all men have equal opportunity for advancement and where social distinction is based on the meritorious recognition of individual achievement. Fane's fascination with the contrast provided by European society is the consequence of an apparently trivial incident that occurs at the beginning of the novel--a chance encounter that he has with an aristocratic young Englishwoman who is visiting America.

This encounter proves to be a disturbing one because, after being introduced to Mildred Ashly at a party, he is slighted by her: he realizes that the English girl's "cold grey eye had passed over his face with no recognition of him as an equal" (p. 19). Until this occasion, Fane had always mixed with people with whom his popularity was unquestioned: his life "had been passed in a circle of very vague social distinctions . . . and the possibility of a society to which he should not be promptly welcomed, or in which he might not find it easy to please, had never

occurred to him" (p. 18).

Miss Ashly's unquestioning assumption of her superiority to Fane offends his pride, both as a man and as an American. His self-esteem is shaken, so that he finds himself unable to either dismiss her attitude or to forget it. The desire to observe European society at first hand becomes increasingly important to him. Driven by the need to ascertain whether the European is indeed superior to the American, the need to know his own relative merit when compared to those who represent "Nature's best" (p. 22) in European society, he acknowledges that this is the primary factor which impels him to go abroad:

Was he of coarser clay than some other human beings? Were there classes on this planet between whom and himself, by better blood or by long-accumulating culture and refinements, there had gradually widened a chasm, now, even by instinct impassable? Were there women who, under no circumstances, could possibly have loved him--men who by born superiority of quality, were insurmountably out of reach of his fellowship and friendship? . . .

It was by these questions that he felt he was now possessed. The thirst to know his relative rank of nature--to gauge his comparative human claim to respect and affection--to measure himself by his own jealous standard, with those whom he should find first in the world's most established approbation was now like a fever in his blood. The temptation to travel, hitherto, had been only for the artistic errand in foreign countries. . . . But travel had another charm, now. A closer view of what was rarest and proudest in older countries promised something beside scholarship in Art. . . .  
(pp. 20-21)

These questions preoccupy Fane throughout most of the novel, as he becomes dominated by his ambition to secure recognition as an equal in the eminent circles of English and European society. His efforts to do so constitute the

central motif of the narrative.

Europe is envisioned by Willis as a testing-ground for Fane. It provides a touchstone which enables him to discover his own "relative rank of nature" and social standing. What must be emphasized, however, is that Fane's determination to prove that he can measure up to the standards of European society indicates an implicit acceptance of those standards as valid criteria of judgment. His constant need to win European recognition and approbation demonstrates how dependent he is on European opinion for the final assessment of his worth. The precariousness of his self-esteem suggests the underlying sense of inferiority which often characterized the American's attitude to Europe in the nineteenth century. The reader is also conscious of the author's tacit assumption that the only convincing way to establish the American's innate quality is to have him conform to the European ideal and then surpass it.

Willis thus portrays Fane as an idealized character who embodies what are intended to be seen as the finest American virtues. His accomplishments, like those of Wychembe and Etherege/Redclyffe, serve to refute the European assumption that the American is provincial and uncivilized; they attest to the fact that the American is in no way inferior to the European. Indeed, Fane shows that, far from being of "coarser clay" than the European of rank or title, he belongs to that natural *élite* which Willis calls "Nature's nobility" (p. 64) and which Christof Wegelin refers to as "an American aristocracy of worth."<sup>121</sup>

Fane gains both social and professional recognition in Europe during the course of the novel: he makes a number of romantic conquests of beautiful or distinguished European women, he proves his honor and integrity as a gentleman, he is accepted into eminent social circles, and he establishes his reputation as a gifted painter. Only then, when he has demonstrated repeatedly and conclusively that he is the natural equal, even the superior of the European, does he finally repudiate European values for American ones and decide to return to his native land.

The narrative of the novel describes various encounters between Fane and a number of Europeans (most of them women) which serve a dual purpose, in that they reveal various aspects of European manners and social mores, and they enable the young American to exhibit the traits that establish his distinction beyond any doubt. Fane's relationships with Europeans fall into three categories--his romance with Sybil Paleford, his involvement with members of the Ashly family, and his friendship with the Princess C--. Since these characters all represent the finest products of English and European society, their attitudes to Fane are of considerable importance. Their acceptance of the young American as an equal is intended by Willis to constitute de facto confirmation of Fane's quality.

Fane first meets Sybil Paleford and her family in Florence, where he has been admitted to the ranks of Tuscan

society after obtaining an honorary appointment as a diplomatic attaché to Leopold's court. Colonel Paleford, a retired British officer who has lost his arm at Waterloo, is described as a man of refinement and distinguished appearance. Despite his reduced circumstances and lack of title, he is welcomed at court because Leopold, a monarch who values Nature's mark of superiority on those around him, recognizes this attribute in Colonel Paleford.

When Colonel Paleford's daughter Sybil makes her appearance at a court ball, she too stands out, even among the members of the aristocracy who are present. Dressed simply, in white, without any adornment, she is nonetheless "indisputably . . . fairer than all around" (p. 85). With her golden hair and tall, graceful figure, she is "superbly beautiful" (p. 64), and it is this quality which first attracts Fane. The initial tribute he pays her as an artist is due to the fact that her singular beauty appears to him to constitute an aesthetic ideal.

Sybil's manifest superiority to the other women at court also has special significance for Fane. Her self-possession and stately dignity, as well as her apparent indifference to the attentions of the lords and princes who surround her, give her a regal quality, leading Fane to observe: "There stood one, who by Nature's unmistakable moulding, should have been a Queen!" (p. 84). To Fane, Sybil possesses the intrinsic nobility that he has expected to find only in the highest echelons of European society. She embodies the type of perfection that he has come to

Europe to observe: "There was upon her the undeniable mark of . . . Nature's finest and purest clay. . . . Around her stood the fairest flowers of Tuscan nobility . . . yet this simple girl . . . queened it over all!" (pp. 87-88).

Fane elaborates this point further when he attempts to explain, in a letter to Colonel Paleford, the nature of his interest in Sybil as well as his admiration for the Paleford family:

There is a kind of knowledge the study of which forms an errand for me abroad, and to which you can scarce be aware of your exceeding value. . . . To find the rarest workmanship of God in human beings, is my enthusiasm of search. . . . The supremacy of beauty awarded to your daughter, last night (in the Palace which is the inner sanctuary of Taste and Art), expresses but the rank which I have found her to occupy as a type of God's perfecting.

In yourself, and in the family around you, I must be excused for saying I have found what takes precedence of all I have yet seen abroad, of superiority by nature and culture. . . . (p. 114)

The Palefords' distinction is all the more striking in that it does not depend on the artificial embellishments of wealth and social standing. Despite their modest circumstances, Fane perceives that "their natural nobility and refinement gave [their small Italian house] the atmosphere of a palace" (p. 67).

Although Fane's esteem for the Palefords is quite genuine, it is their status as members of the natural *élite* that constitutes their primary fascination for him. The fact that they represent an ideal to Fane makes him particularly concerned about their opinion of him. Fane

himself acknowledges the value he places on Colonel Paleford's friendship:

By nothing that had happened to Paul, since his residence abroad, had his pride been so substantially gratified as by this courteous and lofty-minded soldier's preference for his society. It had given him an invaluable self-confidence as to his own quality of nature. (p. 111)

This statement is directly related to Fane's assessment of Colonel Paleford as "the finest workmanship of God he had yet seen in man" (p. 121).

When he first becomes acquainted with the Palefords, Fane is known to them only as a diplomatic attaché since he has concealed the fact that he is an artist from everyone. Resolving to correct any erroneous impression that he may have given, he discloses that he has neither fortune nor any prospect of diplomatic promotion and must depend solely on his own efforts to earn his livelihood. In making this admission, Fane deliberately puts his friendship with them to a test:

Would there be the faintest shade of difference in the manner, towards him, of these, the most refined and lofty-natured people he had ever known, now that he came to them stripped of every worldly advantage, and with no claim beyond his mere stamp by nature and education? (p. 116)

The warmth of the welcome that the Palefords extend to him on his next visit assuages these doubts and gives Fane the assurance he finds so necessary, in being judged worthy of their friendship.

Fane's relationship with Sybil Paleford must be

considered in this context. Despite his professed lack of romantic interest in Sybil and his attempt to convince himself that it is her friendship rather than her love that he seeks, it soon becomes evident that Fane is deluding himself about the nature of his feelings for her. Yet even at this point, Fane's increasing attachment to Sybil is inextricably bound up with his admiration for the ideal that she represents as "the court-acknowledged supremacy of beauty in woman!" (p. 121). Her prestige in Fane's eyes is enhanced considerably by the knowledge that his own recognition of her superiority is corroborated by the tribute--"the unanimous homage" (p. 87)--which has been paid to her by Tuscan court society. Sybil's regard for Fane is thus important to him, not only for its own sake, but for the valuation of his quality that it implies. That Sybil obviously prefers him to Arthur Ashly, the brother of the English girl whom he has previously met in America, is particularly gratifying to his ego and his pride, all the more so because Ashly's haughty attitude of condescension to Fane resembles that of his sister.

However, as Fane's relationship with Sybil alters in character, the young American finds himself put to a new test. He is aware that Sybil is expected to make a brilliant marriage that will enable her to lead the life for which she is so evidently suited. Recognizing belatedly that his own attentions to her have harmed her future prospects by preventing her from giving proper consideration to Ashly, an eminently eligible suitor who can offer her the

worldly advantages of wealth and social position that he himself cannot, he resolves to make amends. He sends Sybil an anonymous portrait of Ashly that reveals the Englishman's hidden depths of character and is intended to arouse her interest in him.

At this point, Fane's dilemma is a painful one because, despite his initial uncertainty about his own feelings for Sybil, he has come to realize that he is in love with her and has good reason to believe that she returns his affections. Moreover, although Mrs. Paleford is aware of her husband's ambitions for Sybil, she herself insists that Fane's personal qualities and "finer fibre of character" (p. 254) make him a suitable husband for her daughter. Encouraged by Mrs. Paleford to propose marriage to Sybil, Fane is sorely tempted to take her advice. Instead, he agrees to Mildred Ashly's request that he aid her brother in winning Sybil for his wife.

The delicacy of Fane's position, his disinclination to take advantage of his friendship with the Palefords in order to further his own interests, and his overscrupulousness all call to mind Lambert Strether's predicament in The Ambassadors. Fane's decision to stand aside for his rival and leave Florence may appear to the modern reader to be an unnecessary martyrdom, but there is no doubt that it is intended by Willis to be regarded as a noble and generous action--one that proves Fane to be a man of integrity with an impeccable code of honor. In a letter to Colonel Paleford, Fane sets forth his reasons for

behaving as he does. Alluding to Ashly's powerful advantages over him with respect to fortune, social position, and birth, he concedes that Sybil should have ample opportunity to consider these factors before making her final choice between Ashly and himself.

In Colonel Paleford's response to this letter, he praises Fane's delicate scruples and the magnanimity of his sacrifice as indicative of the high principles of conduct which he has already observed in the young American. His recognition of Fane's fineness of character and his gratitude for the proof of friendship that Fane has shown him is a solace to Fane in his ordeal. Despite his unhappiness, he derives satisfaction from knowing that he has demonstrated his ability to live up to the ideals which he has set for himself.

This episode serves to enhance Fane's stature, but it diminishes Sybil's. Colonel Paleford's remarks to the young American about his daughter imply that there is an aspect of her character which Fane has failed to recognize--one that accentuates the contrast subsequently emphasized by Willis between American and European values. Although Colonel Paleford insists that he, too, believes Fane to be worthy of Sybil, he differs from his wife in his assessment of their daughter's needs. Asserting his belief that Sybil's love for Fane is the passing infatuation of a young girl attracted to his charm and social graces, he points out that Sybil has no real knowledge of his character, no appreciation of his artistic genius or ability to

share his dedication to art. He maintains that Fane's mode of life is not one which is fundamentally suited to Sybil or conducive to her happiness. She is, says her father, innately luxurious and unable to practice economy: "She feels, as she looks, a queen--with no instinctive sense, apparently, that there can be any propriety of limit to her possession of what naturally befits her" (p. 355). Therefore, admits the Englishman in his letter, he would give preference to Fane's wealthier and less gifted rival, knowing as he does that Ashly's world is Sybil's natural sphere.

The issue raised here is a particularly interesting one because it anticipates, albeit in a rather embryonic form, one of the major themes that later appears in the international fiction of James. Colonel Paleford's analysis of Sybil's character acknowledges the presence (in both himself and her) of a worldliness that is an integral part of the European code of values in James's international novels. Kate Croy, in The Wings of the Dove, is but one of James's many Europeans who recognize that beauty, refinement, and taste--the highest embellishments of civilized society--cannot be sustained in an impoverished and sordid existence, requiring as they do the rarefied atmosphere of wealthy, upper-class society to flourish.

Colonel Paleford's assessment of his daughter proves to be correct since, when Fane encounters Sybil eighteen months later in England, she has just married Arthur Ashly. Fane is bitterly disillusioned by her lack of constancy and

by what he regards as a betrayal of their relationship (a betrayal of the American by the European which again prefigures one of the dominant themes found in the international fiction of James). Her readiness to forget Fane and accept Ashly in his stead serves to confirm that her values are indeed the worldly, superficial ones that characterize European court circles:

Was Paul's romance of belief in woman's unworldliness of love to be thus shaken? Had the girlhood, so independent of a court, and so disinterested in the manifestation of a persevering preference for a poor artist, passed into a womanhood of selfishness--a taste only for luxury and display? . . . By Sybil Paleford, or never in this world, he had thought to be romantically loved. . . . Upon the sad misgiving that Sybil was, after all, more like others than he had dreamed her to be . . . he once more became self-possessed, and calm outwardly. His love-dream for life was over, but, with the certainty of that, he could at least entomb its wreck in his own memory. . . . (p. 374)

In the excess of language and feeling revealed in this passage, Willis depicts Fane with all the self-indulgence of the melancholy romantic hero found in popular nineteenth century fiction. What is of particular interest here, however, is the fact that Fane's disappointment in Sybil's preference of Ashly to himself springs, not only from his failure to win her love for himself, but from his disenchantment with the ideal that she embodies.

In the highly melodramatic scene which follows, one of the weakest in the novel, Sybil is shown in a somewhat altered light. To the background of plangent German music portraying thwarted love and madness, Sybil appears in the

garden in a state of turmoil, beholds Fane there, and after calling his name, embracing him, and screaming, faints at his feet. On discovering her real feelings for him, Fane walks out into the night in a state of joy and delirium.

This episode is intended to reveal that Sybil still loves Fane passionately despite her marriage to Ashly, but, although Fane continues to question her motives in marrying Ashly, her behavior in the garden does not really negate the reasons, given by her father earlier, for her recognizing the desirability of such a marriage. Unless Colonel Paleford has failed to explain the circumstances of Fane's departure, a possibility that Fane himself rejects as inconsistent with the Englishman's honorable nature and one which would contradict the character traits which Willis has taken such pains to establish, there is no alternative but to conclude that Sybil has obviously overcome her reluctance to accept the worldly European kind of marriage which she once found so distasteful. Undoubtedly acting as her father predicted she would, she has succumbed to Ashly's attractions in Fane's absence and married him, only to discover too late the strength of her attachment to Fane. Notwithstanding her futile regrets when she unexpectedly meets Fane again, there is no real evidence to suggest that Colonel Paleford's assessment of his daughter's character is fundamentally unsound, nor any reason to believe that she would be capable of finding happiness were she compelled to sacrifice the social and material advantages that she has secured by her marriage

to Ashly. Like Christina Light in Roderick Hudson, she may despise the worldly society she moves in, but she is nonetheless inexorably bound to it.

Although Fane's romance with Sybil Paleford proves abortive, it is one of Willis's major preoccupations in the novel, representing as it does an important phase of Fane's social quest. His love for the English girl, for all its intensity, is shown to be primarily an infatuation springing from his fascination with her beauty, elegance, and refinement--qualities which epitomize for Fane the attractions of civilized European society. Thus, even when he is disillusioned by Sybil's worldly values, she still represents to him the perfection of a social type, with the result that he continues to assess his own quality by the extent of her regard for him. It is for this reason that what seems most crucial to Fane in his final, melodramatic encounter with Sybil is the fact that she gives indisputable proof of her preference for him over the man she has married, thereby enabling the young American to satisfy himself that he is indeed worthy of her love. Moreover, since Sybil is admired in the highest Italian court circles and Arthur Ashly is a wealthy, distinguished member of the English upper classes, the effect of this revelation is to enhance Fane's own prestige and confirm his status as their social equal.

Like the Palefords, the members of the Ashly family are intended by Willis to represent the élite of civilized Old

World society, but whereas the superiority of Sybil and her father springs from their natural nobility and innate refinement, the Ashlys' position among the English upper classes is their hereditary birthright, secured by the family's distinguished lineage:

It was understood that, though the gentleman [the head of the Ashly family] was simple Mr. Ashly, he was of that class of ancient families who would be demeaned by accepting a title--the wealth and gentle blood having been longer in the line of their descent than in that of most of the present nobility. (pp. 13-14)

As a consequence of his encounter with Mildred Ashly in America, the members of the proud, old Ashly family take on a special significance for Fane. Even though he is aware of their negative traits--their coldness, arrogance, and supercilious manner--they come to represent the standard against which he measures his own worth. Throughout the novel, Fane's confidence and self-esteem seem to depend on the Ashlys' approbation, for he regards that approbation as the definitive mark of his success. Fane's persistent endeavor, his compulsive need, to prove himself the Ashlys' equal can thus be seen as the central motif of the narrative. Only when he has done so, does Fane consider his credentials as a gentleman established beyond question.

When Fane first encounters the eldest son and heir to the large family fortune in Florence, the humiliation he has suffered earlier from Mildred's rebuff is still uppermost in his memory. Although Sybil asks Fane to invite Arthur Ashly, a family friend, to tea on their behalf, his

sensitive pride makes him reluctant to violate the formal rules governing European social intercourse by seeking an introduction to Mildred's brother for fear that it will constitute an admission of his own inferiority. Requesting advice from Tetherly, an elderly Englishman who is extremely knowledgeable about the nuances of European manners, Fane is told that his punctiliousness is excessive in these circumstances, particularly in view of the fact that, "'It is understood in all continental society, I believe, that having no rank, the American may mingle with any rank suitable to his education and manners'" (p. 162). The desire to ascertain precisely what his "suitable" rank is obsesses Fane in each of the three encounters that he has with Arthur Ashly.

During the first of these, the dinner party held at the British Embassy, Fane is once again subjected to a humiliating experience by an Ashly. Fane is, as it happens, introduced to Ashly by his hostess; but before he has any opportunity to extend Sybil's invitation, his smile is checked by Ashly's evident disdain: "It was the Ashly look again which Paul felt in the passive-lidded turn of that reluctant eye upon him! And, by a just perceptible compression of the supercilious lip, the expression was unmistakably confirmed" (p. 171). The mortification that Fane feels at Ashly's slight is beyond all proportion to the cause, as he himself readily admits. Nevertheless, by confirming Mildred's judgment of him as an inferior, Ashly strikes a blow to his pride that undermines all the social success

he has achieved in Europe to date:

What could be the barb, in the repetition, now of that slight so trifling? Why should the sister's unintentional indifference be turned in the wound like a poisoned arrow by the brother's still more unimportant coldness in a civility? . . . A whole court present, with whose throngs of rank and talent to be familiarly friendly, and yet all made inscrutably valueless by the indifference of one undistinguished stranger! (pp. 172-73)

Admonished by Tetherly for placing such excessive value on Ashly's opinion, Fane attempts to explain just why it is so important to him:

". . . I look to that man's cold grey eye for recognition of my quality as a gentleman. . . . While I neither like the man, nor wish anything from him, his opinion on the fineness of my clay, as a superior or inferior human being, is irresistibly and inevitably beyond appeal. . . ." (p. 179)

The significance of this statement lies in Fane's overt acknowledgment of his dependence on Ashly's good opinion as well as in his admission that the other's approval constitutes a confirmation of his own worth. Tetherly tells Fane quite frankly that the young American's attitude to Ashly seems to him like a monomania which he should attempt to overcome. Arguing that he is a better judge of Englishmen than Fane is, he insists that Ashly, though a gentleman of ordinary good judgment, is in no way exceptional. Fane concedes that his own attitude is irrational. Nevertheless, he cannot rid himself of his obsession with the idea that Ashly represents a touchstone for him, "that the impression of what he first and frankly receives of my quality--my stamp from Nature--will be incontrovertible" (p. 181)

The Palefords' informal celebration held in honor of Sybil's birthday represents a particularly significant encounter between Fane and Ashly because it is the first occasion on which the young American proves himself worthy of meeting the Ashlys' exacting standards. However, the confrontation between the American and the Englishman does not begin well. Fane's jealousy of Ashly is aroused when he perceives the other's absorbed interest in Sybil, and his antagonism to Ashly is intensified when he once again feels himself contemptuously dismissed by the other:

Circumstances had combined to present him fairly and fully to the fatal eye in which lay the power of pronouncing what was his grade in nature; and by the unprompted instinct of that eye, he had been looked down upon as inferior. (p. 192)

Fane's preoccupation with the slight which Ashly has unwittingly inflicted on his pride is, of course, disproportionate to its cause, but it confirms yet again how deeply imbedded his feelings of insecurity and inferiority must be for his sense of his own worth to depend on a stranger's valuation. His immediate reaction is a desire to be revenged on Ashly. Taking the first opportunity of retaliation that presents itself, he devotes his attention to Sybil and gains the satisfaction of proving himself first in her favor. Only later does he realize the irresponsibility of his actions in acting against Sybil's best interests.

Fane's subsequent decision to atone for his behavior by painting a portrait of Ashly that will reveal to Sybil

the noble qualities that lie hidden under the young Englishman's mask of pride and reserve is caused in part by his knowledge that he has acted badly. However, his reappraisal of Ashly's character is due even more to the praise he has been unexpectedly been awarded by the Englishman later that afternoon. When Fane's crayon sketch of Sybil is delivered as an anonymous birthday gift, it is admired by everyone present, but Ashly, in particular, expresses his conviction that the portrait is the inspired work of a superior talent, one who undoubtedly "'is a noble-natured and superior man'" (p. 211). Ashly's unexpected, unsolicited appreciation of the unknown artist's genius nullifies the effect of his previous disdain:

Could Paul believe his ears? Was the utterer of these words the man from whom he thought he had received unpardonable contempt? And--second thought!--could he forgive himself for the revenge he had taken for what was now so evidently but a passing impression of himself acted upon with no knowledge of his inner and better nature? (p. 201)

The judgment that Ashly pronounces on Fane is of profound importance to the young American, gratifying him and serving to reassure him of his own quality.

The final meeting between Fane and Ashly takes place shortly after the latter's marriage to Sybil, when Fane happens to be present at a gathering of the family. On this occasion, Fane is aware that, as an artist, he is considered the Ashlys' social inferior. Although he contrives to appear at ease, he is acutely sensitive of the

contempt shown to him by Ashly's relatives: ". . . he was secretly writhing under the sense of being condescended to by those whom he amused" (p. 369). That the attitude of the Ashly family should still matter to him is, as he admits, absurd, since, during the two years he has been in England, he has mixed freely with those whom, by court standards, are considered the Ashlys' superior:

. . . [he had been] made quite at home, by his genius, in houses of the more exclusive nobility where the lesser aristocrats around him had never set foot--yet the thought was of no avail. They were Ashlys--of the blood of the proud woman who had given the first life-sting to his pride--and by that silly yet ineffaceable memory of his boyhood's mortification, they had the power to humiliate him. (p. 370)

Yet suddenly, as he observes the members of the proud, old family around him and acknowledges the envy he feels towards Sybil's husband, he makes a crucial discovery:

In that circle of men--the well-dressed, well-mannered, unexceptionally aristocratic gentlemen who now stood around her [Sybil] . . . there was not one, who, by the instinct of her nature, would ever seem her equal. They were her inferiors--nay--thank God! they were even his! With the husband who stood behind her, there, in lordly possession . . . he had once compared himself and felt worthier than an Ashly of her love.

(pp. 377-78)

The rivalry between the two young men for Sybil is thus shown to constitute the real testing-ground of their comparative merit. Fane has lost Sybil, it is true, but only because he has chosen to renounce her. Moreover, his realization, so long in coming, that Ashly is in no way superior to him is confirmed by Sybil's subsequent tacit

admission that, although she has married the Englishman, it is the American whom she loves. For Fane, this knowledge represents his final victory over his rival, enabling him to free himself from his dependence on Ashly's valuation of him.

Before this occurs, Fane's need to prove himself the Ashlys' equal is manifested in his relationships with two other members of the family whom he encounters in Europe--Ashly's aunt, Winifred, and his sister, Mildred. Fane's primary motive in undertaking to paint the portrait of Winifred Ashly that has been commissioned by her nephew is his desire to win the Englishman's approval a second time by demonstrating his ability to please Ashly's discriminating judgment. In addition, he is eager to prove his worth to another member of the Ashly family: Miss Ashly is "of the blood in which seemed to reside the recognition of quality, to which irresistible instinct made him subject--and the curiosity awoke to present himself anew to this strange touchstone . . ." (p. 219).

Winifred Ashly, a wealthy, middle-aged spinster, is a typical Ashly in being cold, arrogant, and imperious to everyone except her family and intimate friends. Indeed, on the occasion of her first sitting for Fane, her intimidating and "disdainful" (p. 222) manner so unnerves him that he finds himself unable to work. Moreover, once again, Fane feels himself pronounced inferior by an Ashly:

As an artist, known to her only by his manners and his introduction, he had stood again before the tribunal of that cold grey eye; and, this time with complete impartiality of position. If odds there were, in the scale, they were in his favor. Yet . . . on that day's long interview, he had never, for one minute, been acknowledged as an equal. There was kindness, but it was condescension--courtesy and even sociability, but with a graciousness stamping it unmistakably as favor to an inferior. (p. 224)

This situation continues until the day that Fane, arriving unexpectedly, happens to observe Miss Ashly playing the piano. Engrossed in her music, she appears a different person: her cold and forbidding features are transformed by a tenderness and spiritual beauty, and her countenance reflects unexpected depths of feeling. As Fane becomes aware of the portrait he now believes himself capable of painting, the question of his own social standing in Miss Ashly's eye suddenly becomes secondary to him. He succeeds in creating a masterpiece which reveals the inner self that Winifred Ashly hides from the world and by doing so, earns the highest acclaim from her for his artistic genius.

He also unexpectedly wins her affection as well. When a close friendship gradually develops between Winifred Ashly and Fane, the young American has no reason to suspect that his admiration for the older woman's musical talent and intelligence is likely to be misconstrued. Therefore, he is both surprised and embarrassed to receive the letter in which, after confiding that she loves him, she proposes marriage so that her vast fortune can be used to enable him to pursue his artistic career. Fane is aware that her offer

constitutes a singular recognition of his personal distinction, even more so than her commendation of his artistic talent, and he derives considerable satisfaction from "the triumph . . . over . . . an Ashly" (p. 242). Yet although he is now in a position to revenge himself on a member of the Ashly family for his earlier humiliation by Mildred Ashly, he shows his basic integrity of character by declining to do so. Instead, he deftly contrives to re-direct Miss Ashly's affections towards his friend Tetherly, who is far more suitable in age, taste, and character than himself.

Unlike Sybil Paleford, Mildred Ashly possesses neither beauty nor grace. Indeed, Fane feels distaste for her when he first encounters her in America. Yet her arrogant manner, which sets her apart from the American girls he has known, leaves an indelible impression on him. The blow that she strikes to his pride undermines his confidence and self-esteem to such an extent that he comes to regard her and her family as the definitive standard against which he must be judged.

Fane's relationship with Mildred Ashly is analogous to his relationships with her brother and aunt and follows a predictable pattern. After that first meeting in America, Fane only encounters her again more than half-way through the novel. On this occasion, it is evident that the English girl has no recollection of their having met previously; and Fane discovers that the fact that he is introduced to her by mutual friends and is known to be on intimate terms with

her aunt induces a marked difference in the degree of civility which she now accords him. Unaware that Fane is the artist who painted it, she also bestows high praise on his portrait of her aunt, which he cannot resist showing her. Fane is acutely aware of the contrast provided by her current manner and her former disdain:

That such delicious praise could be uttered by the lips he saw before him, was to Paul a surprise for which he could scarce credit his senses! The indifference--almost the scorn--of her whom he had felt to be the coldest and proudest of her sex, changed to the very elixir of flattering appreciation! . . . The calm, grey eye, which had seemed so icy and distant, was now fixed softly and admiringly on his work. . . . (p. 280)

When he tells Mildred Ashly that she has, in fact, met the artist who has painted the portrait, she insists:

"He must bear the mark of his superiority, of course, for observant eyes, and such men are not easily forgotten. I should feel very much ashamed to have met the painter . . . without recognizing his quality; besides . . . he must be a very high-bred man, by the air of birth and breeding which he has given his subjects, and which can be alone given by the instinct of the artist's own habits and manners." (p. 297)

Her remarks are balm to Fane's pride. Her assertion that superiority of quality is usually discernible seems, however, to be inconsistent with her previous failure to recognize this attribute in Fane. It can be explained only by the fact that she places great importance on tradition, breeding, and refinement, and would naturally assume that these qualities are not to be found in an American.

In her discussion of the high standards set by the

Ashly family for all those who would marry into it, her acknowledgment of the family's obsession with personal superiority lends credibility to their function in the novel as the representatives of the Old World social élite, the final arbiters of Fane's own natural quality and status in European society. Yet it should also be noted that Mildred Ashly's values are typically European in that they are predominantly aesthetic rather than moral: in her eyes, quality seems to be determined by the superficial embellishments of beauty and taste. The Ashly family pride, she tells Fane, is not one that seeks honor by alliance with someone of noble birth since the Ashlys are vain enough to think their blood better than that of most titled families and pure enough to give distinction to any with which it might choose to mingle. Nonetheless, although the Ashlys are indifferent to title and wealth, they do require that all who belong to their family should have a look of distinction, an appearance of "'recognizable . . . superiority which tells its rank'" (p. 302); they demand that anyone who marries an Ashly should be "beautiful, and of noble presence'" (p. 302). It is because Sybil Paleford possesses these attributes that Mildred considers her eminently suitable to be her brother's wife.

Despite Mildred's insistence that social status is less important to her than natural quality, her discovery that Fane is an artist by profession induces a marked change in her attitude to him: ". . . he felt that the line between himself and her--the long hated line of difference

of rank and position--was re-drawn . . ." (p. 323). Only when he paints her portrait, exhibiting the same ability to discern and re-create the hidden depths of her character on canvas that he has revealed in his portraits of her aunt and her brother, does her manner to him soften.

Her esteem for him is further enhanced when he renounces Sybil to her brother and leaves Florence so that his rival will not be put at a disadvantage in his efforts to win the English girl. Knowing that Fane is himself in love with Sybil, Mildred recognizes the magnitude of his sacrifice. His actions elicit, not only her gratitude, but her express recognition of his exceptional generosity and fineness of character--a recognition that attests to Fane's ability to measure up to the standards set by the Ashly family.

The definitive act by which Mildred Ashly acknowledges Fane to be her equal is her willingness to marry him, a decision which is particularly significant when considered in the light of her earlier remarks about the exacting standards which are applied by the Ashly family to those whom they marry. When Mildred's aunt, now married to Tetherly, attempts to bring about the marriage of Fane and her niece, Mildred confides to her that she is not averse to the idea. She asserts that the opportunity she has had of testing Fane's hidden qualities has made her realize that, among all the men she has ever known, Fane seems to her the most worthy to be loved. This admission, made by the same young woman who initially pronounced Fane to be an inferior, is intended by Willis to provide irrefutable

evidence of his natural quality. When Fane learns of Mildred's feelings, he recognizes the decisive victory he has secured to his pride, even though he declines to take advantage of the opportunity offered to him.

It can be seen from the preceding discussion that Willis's attempt to portray Fane's encounters with the Ashly family as a testing process is far from successful. The author's description of these encounters is both repetitive and tedious, and Fane emerges as a rather foolish young man with a highly developed inferiority complex. Nevertheless, Willis's characterization of Fane is interesting in the context of American cultural history to the extent that it can be shown that Fane's sense of inferiority to the European is not merely the eccentricity of a fictional hero but an exaggeration of the American attitude to the Old World that was prevalent in the first half of the nineteenth century. Certainly, there is evidence in the letters and journals of contemporary travelers to support this conclusion.

Fane's obsessive need to discover the precise degree of difference between himself and the Ashlys is also important in the development of nineteenth century international fiction. The concern that so preoccupies Willis in this novel--the element of social contrast between the American and the European--is a rendering, albeit in a rather crude and embryonic form, of the same theme that re-appears in the international fiction of Howells and

James.

Moreover, the fact that the American hero is pronounced inferior to the members of the English aristocracy until he has over-compensated for the fact that he is an American recalls Cooper's The Two Admirals and anticipates Hawthorne's Doctor Grimshawe's Secret. In terms of the Ashlys' standards, as established by Willis, Fane's personal attractions and fineness of character are not in themselves sufficient to counterbalance the low status accorded him in Europe as a representative of a classless, democratic society. Only the superiority of his artistic talent, which corresponds to Wychecombe's title and Etherege/Redclyffe's political office in conferring special distinction on him, seems to compensate for the fact that he neither well-born nor of noble rank. It is his achievement as an artist--an achievement that he has attained by his own efforts and not by means of wealth or social position--that first earns Fane the admiration of each of the Ashlys; it is because of this that he is admitted into the ranks of upper-class English society during the latter part of his sojourn abroad and accorded recognition and acclaim.

When assessed in the context of his relationships with Sybil Paleford and the Ashlys, Fane's friendship with the Princess C-- is seen to represent another variation on the same theme. Yet of all the Europeans whom the young American encounters, she is the most interesting and complex. A woman of beauty, charm, and sophistication, her personal

attractiveness is further enhanced in Fane's eyes by her proud, patrician look and air of distinction. Married as a young girl to a wealthy nobleman much older than herself, in a match of family interests, she lives apart from her husband, but, as a high-ranking member of the Italian aristocracy, her social credentials are impeccable.

The self-confidence that the Princess C-- possesses by virtue of her noble birth and social position presents a marked contrast to Fane's own persistent need to win the approbation of others. Although the princess has acquired a reputation for eccentricity, Fane recognizes her independence and indifference to public opinion as proof of her superiority to the other members of Italian court society:

By natural character, she seemed to him, simply eagle-born among the sparrows of society. At the same time that she willingly offended no one, nor took the trouble to defy any prejudice or usage, she had no recognition of a restraint. Her habit of mind seemed a tranquillity of mood--or disregard of what would irritate other people--from a mere sense of superiority. And this superiority would have been thought to be seldom or never asserted, probably, but that her supreme indifference was unpardonably offensive--keeping her in a constant attitude of contempt for what, under the soft name of "appearances" constitutes the covert supremacy of the Many. (p. 95)

Aware of the narrow restrictions imposed by her society, the Princess C-- refuses to conform to them and quietly leads her own Bohemian existence. However, her disregard of social convention is intended to be seen, not as an act of rebellion for its own sake, but as a consequence of her conscious pursuit of intellectual and artistic

excellence. Explaining to Fane that it is the aristocracy of mind that she admires more than the aristocracy conferred by noble birth, she asserts that, "'The men . . . that are least thought of, are, so very often Nature's best'" (p. 100). These men--"'men particularly gifted by Nature'" (p. 101)--are the ones whom she prefers to know. Even when Fane points out that men of genius are as often as not poets, artists, writers, and scholars who are poor and obscure, she insists that this does not affect their natural quality. Although she acknowledges the importance placed on worldly advantages such as rank and fortune by her society, she nonetheless deplores the superficiality of these values:

"How seldom does a woman of rank give herself a thought as to whether she is visited by the intellectually high-born or low-born! Content with her court acquaintances, she has, perhaps, not a man of genius on her list! . . . [T]he wonder to me is, that the same pride which makes them ambitious as the title, house equipage and dress, does not suggest also some aristocracy of conversation." (pp. 101-02)

The Princess C--'s wish to know those whom she regards as "Nature's best" parallels Fane's own quest in Europe. In fact, Fane uses the same phrase to describe those Europeans who seem to him to embody the finest attributes of civilized society. Their motives, however, are very different. Fane's own attempt to study "the world's finer or prouder clay" (p. 48) is the consequence of his need to ascertain just how they differ from himself and of his desire to prove that he is their equal. It is only after his final encounter with Sybil and Arthur Ashly that he

discovers the truth of the Princess C--'s assertion that Nature's best are not necessarily society's best.

In the light of the views that the Princess C-- expresses, it can be argued that her assessment of Fane's character carries more weight than those of the Palefords and the Ashlys. Certainly, her criteria are more exacting than theirs, her powers of discrimination finer. In the course of the novel, Willis attempts to show that the Princess C--'s high rank is a fitting emblem of her own intrinsic nobility of character and of her natural superiority to the other Europeans whom Fane encounters. In doing so, he enhances the value of the judgment that she pronounces on Fane.

The princess's deliberate decision to further her acquaintance with Fane after meeting him at a court ball thus constitutes an important recognition of the young American's distinction. The high esteem in which she comes to hold Fane is based on her instinctive appreciation of his fineness of character, for she is able to discern the inner qualities that are hidden from most people by the mask of courtier that he chooses to wear in public.

The Princess C-- is also intended to represent the aesthetic sensibility in its most highly developed form, more so than any other European character in the novel. Soon after meeting Fane, she discloses her secret life as an artist, confiding to him that she is, in fact, the sculptor known as Signor Valerio. She maintains that, unlike most women, who find fulfillment in love and maternity, she can satisfy her inner needs only by continually

striving to express her conception of ideal beauty through the medium of her art. Her opinions as well as the sensitive beauty of her sculptures confirm Fane's belief that she is an exceptional woman, enhancing his awareness that her friendship with him is a rare honor.

Fane's admission that he, too, is an artist gives his relationship with the Princess C-- a new intimacy. When she invites him to work in her studio, their mutual devotion to art creates a close bond between them, as does the fact that they both pursue their artistic careers secretly while apparently interested only in the fashionable social life of the Italian court. Ardent in her continued assertion of the supremacy of art over society, the princess, unlike Mildred Ashly, cares nothing for the class differences between herself and Fane; unlike Sybil Paleford, she admires him for his artistic genius rather than for his charm and social graces.

Although Fane finds himself physically attracted to the princess, he sublimates his feelings for her by idealizing her: he comes to regard her as a being who reflects the exalted beauty of the mind and, because she cares nothing for fame or recognition, as one who shows the supreme dedication of the true artist. By focusing on these aspects of her personality, Fane contrives to forget that she is a woman and a princess.

Yet although the friendship between Fane and the Princess C-- is presented as a platonic one, based on an intellectual sympathy between them that is described as more

noble than love, the dangerous undercurrents of their relationship are deliberately emphasized by Willis. Thus Robert Lee White is correct in noting: "The princess . . . for a short while . . . is a source of temptation for Willis's hero. Paul's moral fiber remains impervious to her charms, however, and he eventually parts from her with his honor still unstained."<sup>122</sup>

While her slight figure and pale, delicate face give the princess an ethereal beauty, she is also shown to possess a subtle sensuality, to which Fane is by no means indifferent, and a passionate nature that she deliberately holds in check by an effort of will. Willis makes it clear that she is a seductive and alluring woman who could, in other circumstances, readily exert a corrupting influence on the young American. With her worldly experience, sophistication, and fascination, she is, potentially, a figure like Madame de Vionnet in The Ambassadors; and the fact that she does not avail herself of the opportunity to seduce Fane attests, not only to her own integrity, but to his.

When she writes him at the end of the novel, admitting that she has been sorely tempted to make him her lover, she tells him that only his reverent and deferential attitude to her, the elevated tone of his behavior, has enabled her to master her own feelings. Expressing her gratitude to Fane for restoring her belief in the possibility of a pure and noble friendship between the sexes, she praises his honorable character. Her final evaluation of Fane, which combines love, respect, and admiration, is patently

intended by Willis to be seen as the ultimate confirmation of the young American's fineness of quality--both as an artist and as a man. To have won such plaudits from a woman of the princess's stature is a tribute surpassing even that accorded him by Sybil Paleford or the Ashlys.

In the preceding discussion, the element of social contrast between the American and the European has been analyzed in terms of Fane's relationships with Sybil Paleford, the Ashlys, and the Princess C--; but in order to evaluate the significance of Paul Fane in the context of nineteenth century international fiction, it is also necessary to consider the international situation in more general terms. Fane's attitude to Europe is influenced by two disparate factors--his dedication to art and his social ambitions.

As an artist, Fane is initially attracted to Europe by the richness of its culture and by the opportunities which it affords him to pursue his study of art. However, as has been previously noted, the motive that actually makes him set out on his journey is not aesthetic but social. Fane's need to discover his relative rank in European society--his "desire to look close upon the world's finer or prouder clay, and know wherein it differed from himself" (p. 48)--preoccupies him throughout the novel, and, after his encounter with Mildred Ashly in America, art ceases to be the focal point of his life.

When Fane is on the point of leaving America for

Europe, Willis does indicate: ". . . the life-long passion for Art had again found its supremacy and become the absorbing and main interest of his plans. Strong and keen motive as his new pride-thirst of social curiosity continued to be, it fell to its secondary and subordinate place . . ." (p. 30). Yet the accuracy of Willis's comment is called into question by the evidence of the text. Certainly, the narrative devotes far more attention to Fane's experiences in European society than to his career as an artist. Moreover, even when Fane secures recognition of his artistic genius from the Ashlys and the Princess C--, the gratification that this affords him is due largely to the fact that it constitutes an acknowledgment of his natural quality by Europeans who themselves embody the highest standards of civilized European society. Notwithstanding Willis's assertion to the contrary, Fane's dedication to art is repeatedly subordinated to his social ambitions, and the conflict between the two is not really resolved until Fane finally decides to leave Europe at the end of the novel and return to America.

Additional evidence to support this assertion is found in the fact that it is as a gentleman of leisure, not as an artist, that Fane chooses to present himself to European society. On his arrival in Europe, he succeeds in gaining entry to Parisian and Florentine court circles only because he secures an appointment as a diplomatic attaché, a nominal title which is conferred upon him as a result of the letter of introduction that he brings from an American friend to an influential contact abroad:

By this nominal honor, with neither emoluments nor duties, Paul was put at his ease in the court society of the gay capital [Paris]; but it involved the necessity, also, that in accordance with the usual proprieties of position, he should appear in all other respects, a gentleman of leisure. (pp. 47-48)

Knowing as he does that the world of fashionable European society would otherwise remain closed to an obscure and impoverished young artist, he deliberately conceals the truth about himself. While he continues to study art secretly and to paint whenever he can, he publicly adopts the requisite guise of courtier.

Even as he does so, however, he acknowledges the lack of ease he feels in playing a false role and concealing his real identity. In a letter to his mother, he writes:

. . . I am still wondering, occasionally, when I come upon myself in a mirror at a ball, whether that pendant superfluity [his court sword] and gold collar are me! I have swallowed, with some difficulty, gulp by gulp, the daily dishonesty of laying aside the maul-stick of the artist (which I am) and going out into the world decked with the weapon of a cavalier (which I am not). . . . (p. 49)

Yet Fane accepts this dishonesty, even chooses it. In doing so, he conforms to the hypocritical and superficial values of European society which he later deplores.

Fane remains in Europe for several years. During that time, he visits Paris, Florence, and London, though most of the novel is set in Florence. In each city, the society that Fane observes is upper-class, aristocratic, and for the most part, wealthy. In Paris and Florence in particular, it is also sophisticated, mannered, and worldly.

Fane's first impression of European society is a positive one, for he finds the fashionable beau-monde indisputably attractive. Its beauty and brilliance dazzle him, intensifying his desire to be admitted to its ranks:

It was with a secret satisfaction which he scarce dared acknowledge to himself, that he accepted the advantage thus held out to him, and with the magic "open sesame" of a diplomatic title on his card, entered upon the dazzling labyrinths of Parisian life, with its world-pick society of the high-born and brilliant. (p. 48)

In his initial response to Parisian society, Fane's social ambitions are reinforced by his appreciation, as an artist, for that which is beautiful. At this time, he demonstrates a distinct dissociation of moral and aesthetic sensibilities. In the letter to his mother in which he describes this society, Fane acknowledges its moral failings but stresses its seductive aesthetic appeal--its beauty, its refinement, its grace:

Take away but the wickedness that walks unseen in these lighted rooms, and they would be fit places to entertain angels. And it is not merely that there are pictures and statuary which wealth alone could buy, but the beauty of woman . . . seems to be artistically elevated by the wondrous art often shown in its embellishment--made more sacred, I may even say, by the costliness that seems so to enshrine and fence it in. A jewel of great price has great splendor, and a rare flower is the more curious and far-sought work of God--and such gem or flower well worn by the proud and high-born beauty, has the effect (on my eyes, at least) of a choice seal or more precious cipher placed on the wearer to mark Nature's best.

Then these people who "fritter away life," "turn day into night," indulge in "wasteful extravagance," and are, in fact, the very Pharaohs and Pharisees whom good Dr. Evenden [his minister] preaches into the Red Sea, and a still warmer

place with such heavenly perseverance--why, dear mother, they do not look so bad when you come close to them! . . . "Sodom and Gomorrah" . . . "Satan in disguise," very possibly--but may I not admire with suitable precaution (or, till there is some smell of brimstone in the air), what I thus find purest in taste and seeming? (p. 50)

In this passage, it is evident that Fane's valuation of European society is based on aesthetic ("purest in taste") rather than moral criteria. The proverbial wickedness of this society does not alter its attractiveness for him. In marked contrast to the hero of Theodore Fay's Norman Leslie, a young American who finds the superficial brilliance of Italian society repellent because of its underlying decadence, Fane's initial judgment is distorted: he is enticed by the outer semblance of beauty ("purest in . . . seeming") which Parisian and Florentine court societies present to the world and by the artifice which he mistakes for "wondrous art." It is only after he has had an opportunity to observe European society closely for some time that Fane becomes increasingly disenchanted with it and comes to realize that it is deeply flawed. He learns to recognize the superficiality of its values as well as the emptiness and sterility underlying its glittering facade.

Willis's attempt to suggest that the beautiful surface of European society may co-exist with its hidden moral defects is worth noting because it is this theme which reappears and reaches its fullest expression in the international novels of Henry James. Willis does not elaborate this theme further or develop it, but he does allude to the disparity between appearance and reality,

which is characteristic of European court society, in more general terms. The necessity of Fane's appearing to be a diplomatic attaché, thereby assuming a role which is fundamentally false, in order to gain entry to this society is an important example. It is Fane's distaste for this hypocrisy, as expressed in the letter to his mother cited above, that is a major factor in his subsequent decision to reject European society. In the hands of a more skillful writer, the lack of correspondence between appearance and reality might have served as the leitmotif of the novel, but Willis unfortunately fails to utilize its potential. Although there are several further instances--namely, the coldness and pride that mask the Ashlys' hidden facets of character and the disguise that conceals the Princess C--'s identity when she appears as Signor Valerio--there is no thematic unity to knit them together into a coherent pattern.

By the end of the novel, Fane has completed his artistic studies and, what is even more important, has finally proved to his own satisfaction that he is the equal of those who are considered the European social élite. Having done so, he now feels free to leave Europe and return to America. His departure is also precipitated by his desire to forget Sybil after her marriage to Ashly; but this, he insists, is only a secondary consideration.

In terms of the international situation, Fane's decision to return home represents a conscious and deliberate repudiation of European values for American ones. At this point, Fane recognizes the spurious nature of the

success he has achieved abroad and, as art reasserts its primary claim on him, he realizes that his fulfillment as an artist is inextricably bound up with his identity as an American. In doing so, he shows that he has attained not only experience of the world but a measure of self-knowledge and a new degree of maturity during the course of his sojourn abroad. He leaves Europe with a clearer understanding of his real values and an increased awareness of his identity--as an individual, as an artist, and as an American.

The wisdom of Fane's decision to return to America is challenged by the Princess C-- who writes to him, attempting to persuade him to reconsider. Her letter is of interest because the princess is the single European character whose values, throughout the novel, are fundamentally sound. Moreover, the arguments that she advances are ones that were commonly used by nineteenth century American artists and writers to condemn the barrenness of contemporary American culture and, in many instances, to justify their own residence abroad.

Concerned with Fane's future development as an artist, she counsels him to remain in Europe because, unlike America, it is the proper sphere for the maximal cultivation of his artistic talent:

I know little of your country . . . but it seems to me that you are much more in your proper place where you are. The statue should not return to the quarry, my friend! . . . So, why desert the temple where your genius has its fitting pedestal, to go back to the cave where at best you will only serve your country by seeming as patriotically unhewn as the stones around you. (pp. 387-88)

Assuming as she does that America is uncultured and provincial, she asserts that Fane's countrymen are unable to give him the encouragement and appreciation which he requires:

For an artist of your quality, most particularly, there must be discriminating appreciation in the very atmosphere. . . . Call it vanity, if you please, but inspiration faints for lack of praise from judicious lips. And are you to have this (for your Europe-trained pencil), in a country of no leisure? With nothing but hurry and money-making around you, are you to feel sympathy, or breathe freely? (p. 388)

On the eve of his departure, Fane writes to his mother, attempting to clarify his motives for returning home and discussing his attitude to Europe at considerable length. In the course of his letter, which takes on the character of a manifesto, he also refutes the arguments advanced by the Princess C--. Alluding to the fact that he has won recognition and acclaim in Europe--in England, in particular--he maintains that his success is due more to his false social position and to the patronage of his aristocratic friends than to any intrinsic talent he may possess:

It is not to myself or my pencil, that I owe what I may call my present prosperous reputation. . . . I came with court introductions which were wholly unprofessional and accidental--dining with dukes and marquises, and then patronized as an artist for having been their guest. My zealous friends were all aristocrats, and they have brought aristocracy to sit to me. (pp. 395-96)

He declares that he has come to regard this position as intolerably offensive to his pride:

But, while this looks as if high life in England were the most appreciative of Art--as if court air, on the whole, were the most natural element of genius--there are conditions . . . which to republican lungs makes it quite unbreathable. (p. 397)

He asserts that in England, as in Europe in general, the rigid class structure of society precludes the formation of individual opinion or the judging of any artist by his merit rather than by his social status. Thus he has come to realize that, as important as appreciation may be to the artist, personal freedom is even more so. It is an essential prerequisite which he finds he can no longer do without, and for him, it is only to be found in America:

I am coming home . . . to be happy in American liberty. . . . The liberty to rise, or the liberty to fall, and, at any level, to be judged of by the simple individual opinion, without class condescension, class servility, or class prejudice, seems to me to be American only. The hell of social life, and of all life, is false position-- I am fully persuaded--and, in England, an artist, at least, can have nothing else. . . . (p. 398)

In this letter, Fane's ambivalence to European society--his appreciation of its attractions co-existing with his awareness of its inherent falsity--is resolved. Having gained entry to the highest echelons of aristocratic English society, he learns that the cost, in the loss of personal integrity, is too high. His repudiation of a society that assesses an individual by his social position rather than, as in America, by his talent or achievement, is the final stage of his disillusionment with European values and is sharply contrasted to his initial response to Parisian court society. What is equally significant, in the context

of international fiction, is Fane's affirmation of his identity as an American:

. . . I think my own country is my mind's native air. After trying its lungs in the perfumed atmosphere of Europe . . . I find my American soul and brain, as well as my American heart, taste, and temper, pining for America to breathe in. (p. 395)

It is as an American, committed to the ideals of American democracy, that Fane condemns the rigid class structure of European society with its concomitant lack of intellectual freedom, individualism, and social mobility. These aspects of European society are intolerable to him, outweighing any other advantages that Europe may offer. In this respect, Fane resembles the American heroes of The Two Admirals and Doctor Grimshawe's Secret who, though conscious of the attractions of England, reject it on similar grounds.

In concluding the letter to his mother, Fane maintains that the personal liberty which he so highly values as an American is even more essential to him as an artist. While conceding that the rich cultural resources of Europe have enabled him to increase his knowledge of art and to develop his talent, he contends, nonetheless, that the oppressive weight of tradition inhibits originality in Europe; the need for conformity stifles artistic freedom of expression. He insists that, for him, the fullest flowering of his artistic genius is possible only in his native land:

The architecture of the great temple of Art is undoubtedly more complete on this [the European]

side of the water. But, while in it, one artist is but a brick--bricks sustaining him from below, but immovable bricks pressing on him from above--in America he is the tent pitched in the desert, with the sunshine and air all around him. I feel the want of this singleness and free fame. Genius develops here, and is rewarded, by schools--a gregariousness of effort and dependence which (for me, certainly) smothers all hope of individuality and fire. Though I know I have improved in the knowledge and dexterities of Art, while abroad, I wait till I get home for the inspiration to conceive what shall be only my own, and achieve in it a triumph. Republican air must loose the blood in my now fettered wrist and brain. (p. 399)

In the light of Fane's final assessment of Europe, his marriage to Mary Evenden, the American girl whom he has known since childhood, may be seen to symbolize his commitment to America and his repudiation of Europe. Indeed, Robert Lee White argues that Fane's final preference for Mary Evenden and his desire to return to America are analogous: ". . . just as the chosen bride is prized for her mental qualities and her moral attributes, America is lauded as the only proper environment for the mind and spirit."<sup>123</sup>

Throughout the novel, Mary Evenden represents the idealized American girl. She is, in fact, a variation of the lovely, blonde, blue-eyed maiden, chaste and virginal, who so frequently appears as the heroine of nineteenth century American fiction. Mary is also shown to possess that innocence, presented in both its worldly and moral aspects, which is so distinctively American, a trait which subsequently emerges as a definitive characteristic of the American girl in nineteenth century international fiction.

In this respect, she can be seen as a forebear of Hawthorne's Hilda in The Marble Faun and James's Milly Theale in The Wings of the Dove.

Like Hilda and Milly too, Mary is intended to embody an image of purity. From his earliest acquaintance with her, Fane recognizes that Mary's beauty is not only physical but of an elevated and spiritual nature. Employing Platonic imagery to describe her, he asserts:

The body, with all its perfected beauty, is forgotten in the soul. Mary Evenden represents it. She looks as if walking the world with only the spirit-memory of the Heaven she came from-- wholly unconscious of the form that she animates and bears about--yet how full and absolute is her beauty as a woman! (p. 52)

Mary is Fane's childhood companion and intimate friend. From an early age, they are bound together by a mutual sympathy. Moreover, except for his mother, Mary is the only person who is capable of appreciating his artistic talent. Although Fane's father disapproves of his art and urges him to adopt a practical profession which will enable him to earn an adequate livelihood, Mary is an idealist who encourages Fane's secret devotion to art, counseling him to go to Europe in order to further his artistic studies:

. . . Mary's unworldly eye saw only his genius for Art. To develop his intense love for the Beautiful, seemed to her his proper destiny. Better a more slender livelihood, the daily industry of which should ennoble heart and mind . . . than larger wealth, the struggle for the acquisition of which must demean the intellect, and leave Nature's best gifts without culture. Art, to her, was a lofty wall with such spirits as Raphael for guide and company; and all other successes in life were to those of genius, poor and secondary. . . . (p. 28)

After Fane has been abroad for several years, Mary is offered the opportunity of going to Europe as the companion of an American woman. When Fane learns of her impending arrival, he is torn by conflicting emotions. He still regards Mary as his "boyhood's ideal of what was purest and loveliest" (p. 251), but, having already met Sybil Paleford, he is aware that he is increasingly attracted to her regal beauty and refinement. The necessity of having to choose between the two young women presents Fane with a difficult dilemma, one that is crucial to Willis's presentation of the international theme. Mary Evenden embodies the most admirable virtues of the idealized American girl; Sybil Paleford exhibits the finest accomplishments of civilized European society. Thus the juxtaposition of the two girls provides an important element of international contrast, dramatizing as it does the polarity of American and European values which is so central to Willis's novel.

At this point in the narrative Fane is inclined to give preference to Mary. Discussing his conflict with the Princess C--, he acknowledges that, although Sybil has shown that she is not indifferent to him, her regard for him may well prove to be a girlish romantic fancy that will not endure. He is also compelled to admit that Sybil's understanding of him is but partial and superficial insofar as she knows him only in his social role as a diplomatic attaché. Having led her to believe that his art is merely a hobby, he is aware that she is likely to be disappointed when she discovers that he does not belong to the courtly

circles to which she herself is so eminently suited. Moreover, he realizes that, while Sybil possesses natural taste and refinement, this is not sufficient to enable her to offer him the intellectual sympathy which he requires as an artist. To find fulfillment in marriage, he contends, he must be loved more for his artistic genius than for his manners or social accomplishments.

By contrast, marriage to Mary promises to meet his deepest needs. Mary, he knows, admires his artistic talent and his real self: she "'has shown . . . her appreciation of the inner nature for which I desire to be loved'" (p. 265). He is convinced that the longstanding mutual affection between himself and Mary is neither a passing fancy nor an intoxication of the senses, but something much more elevated-- a true sympathy of the mind. In this conversation with the princess, Fane assesses the characters of the two girls correctly. It is only later, when his infatuation with Sybil blinds him to reality, that he almost makes the wrong choice.

Despite Fane's hopes, his reunion with Mary proves at first to be a disappointment. When he sees her after their long separation, she is in the company of Mildred Ashly, and Fane cannot prevent an unnatural constraint of manner from affecting his welcome to her. Unable to break down the barrier between them and recapture their previous intimacy, Fane and Mary discover that they are strangers to each other.

The situation deteriorates further when the Princess C-- offers to present Mary at a court reception. On this

occasion, Sybil is also present, and Fane has his first opportunity to observe both girls together and to compare them. Unfortunately for Mary, the setting is detrimental to her appearing to any advantage. As a minister's daughter, she feels distaste for the ceremonious and ostentatious gaiety surrounding her. The aristocratic society, the formal occasion, and the artificial manners and conversation are all alien to her with the result that she appears awkward and ill at ease. Even the stiff court costume, to which she is unaccustomed, serves to deprive her of her natural grace. Observing her, Fane notices the marked contrast between her evident embarrassment and the dignity and regal poise of Sybil Paleford. His comparison of the English girl and the American one strikes Fane as being unfavorable to the latter in all respects. When measured against Sybil, Mary no longer seems to embody the idealized beauty that Fane remembers from the past:

Of that spiritual elevation of beauty, which Paul had described so glowingly a few days before to the princess, and which his imagination had kept so long, as the cherished ideal, by which all others were excluded from his heart, there was now scarce a trace! Mary Evenden--he was mortified and irritated to see--looked even common-place and inferior. (p. 287)

This passage reveals Fane's blindness as well as his snobbery. Judging Mary by the superficial and fundamentally false standards of European society which he later repudiates, Fane fails to recognize her true worth. On this occasion, he shows himself singularly incapable of distinguishing between appearance and reality, between beauty of the face

and beauty of the soul. The views that Fane expresses here also account for his growing preference for Sybil over Mary. When Fane discovers that Mary neither expects nor desires anything more than friendship from him, he is somewhat disappointed, but he is also relieved to find himself free to devote his attentions to Sybil.

In contrast to Fane's own lack of discernment with regard to Mary, the Princess C-- immediately perceives her unique qualities: she observes that "the wild-flower American girl" (p. 290) possesses, not only loveliness, grace, and sensitivity, but a freshness and innocence which give her an unspoiled, natural charm. For all that she is an aristocrat of high rank, the princess, as has been noted earlier, is devoid of affectation and supremely indifferent to social status. Indeed, she shares Mary's distaste for worldly court society. Moreover, both have similar artistic tastes and, while Mary is not an artist herself, she has an instinctive appreciation of art and beauty which enables her to feel completely at home in the princess's studio. On discovering such a natural affinity with each other, the two young women become close friends.

Two years later, when Mary has studied art under the Princess C--'s tutelage and matured, and Sybil has disappointed Fane by marrying Ashly, the princess finds occasion to remind Fane of his own previous assertion that the American girl would be a far more suitable wife for him than the English one. Observing that he and Mary already share a sympathy of tastes and intellect, the princess expresses her belief

that Mary's dormant feelings for Fane are ready to be awakened; she urges him to devote himself to winning Mary's love. On the eve of his departure for America, Fane has not yet forgotten Sybil; but in the letter he writes to his mother, he tells her that, although he does not feel passion for Mary, he has come to recognize that she offers him another kind of love that may well prove more satisfying:

Yet with my sad knowledge of the incompleteness of all love, I should be happiest, perhaps, with what she would not fail me in. I have a presentiment sometimes . . . that the mind's love . . . is the best worth securing and living for. She would begin with it, at least--our pure, sweet Mary! (p. 399)

The wisdom of Fane's subsequent marriage to Mary is confirmed by the happiness he finds with her--"her love and completeness of sympathy forming the whole sunshine of his life, to himself, as it did its most visible beauty and poetry to the eyes of others" (p. 401).

Mary Evenden's primary function in the novel is directly relevant to the international theme. The contrast between Sybil Paleford and Mary Evenden, as has been noted earlier, reflects the correspondent opposition of European and American values, an analogy which is reinforced when Fane's final repudiation of the Old World for the New is accompanied by his realization that, after all, the English girl is inferior to the American one. At this point, Fane recognizes that even though Sybil possesses all the accomplishments of civilized European society, she also manifests its defects, whereas Mary embodies the highest perfection of American innocence and idealism.

It will be recalled that Sybil's regal beauty appears to best advantage in aristocratic, courtly circles. Her taste, her refinement, and her distinction all attest to the undisputed appeal of the world she represents. Yet as a product of her society, she also exhibits its flawed values by allowing herself to be induced by worldly considerations to choose a well-born, wealthy Englishman for her husband rather than the American whom she professes to love. Although she admires Fane's charm and manners, his external qualities, her constancy proves brief in duration and her behavior is regarded by him as a betrayal.

By contrast, Mary's loveliness, which is described as the elevated beauty of the soul, reflects the sensitivity and spiritual quality of her nature--a nature which makes her dislike the artificiality and superficiality of court society. Innocent and unworldly, she is an idealist who esteems artistic genius over worldly advantages and cares nothing for social prestige or wealth. Bound to Fane by their childhood friendship in America, it is Mary who understands Fane's inner self, Mary whose devotion is faithful and unwavering. As a consequence, Fane's marriage to her can be seen to represent his affirmation of American ideals over worldly European values; it shows his commitment to intellectual sympathy over passion, to art over social ambition, to integrity over hypocrisy, and, above all, to reality over appearance.

Before concluding this discussion of Paul Fane, it is useful, in passing, to compare it to Roderick Hudson (1875), James's first international novel. It must be acknowledged from the outset that Willis's novel is unquestionably inferior to James's as a work of literature. However, despite its flaws, Paul Fane, as noted earlier, has its own place in the development of the international novel as a forebear of later works, focusing its attention on the contrast of manners between the American and the European, between the social milieu of the New World and that of the Old. Although the novel does not probe the moral implications of this contrast, it does depict the American's ambivalence to Europe--his awareness of the aesthetic appeal of civilized European society and his recognition of the falsity of its values. In this respect, Paul Fane anticipates the image of Europe that is presented in Roderick Hudson.

There are also a number of specific parallels between the two works, a fact which suggests a possible influence of Willis on James and supports Charlotte Goodman's contention that, "Although James never referred directly to Willis's writing, it seems probable that he may have read Willis's work, for he mentions in his autobiography that Willis was one of the artists who frequented his father's house."<sup>124,125</sup> Paul Fane and Roderick Hudson are both unsophisticated young Americans, as well as artists of exceptional talent and promise, who come to Europe to enlarge their experience of life and to further their education in art. Both fall in love with beautiful

European<sup>126</sup> women who betray them by marrying other men whose social position and fortune make them brilliant matches in the eyes of worldly European society. And both young artists are loved in turn by American girls named Mary who, in addition to being sensitive, virtuous, and loyal, possess the distinctive American innocence which is so different from the sophistication of the Princess C-- in Paul Fane and from that of Christina Light, who becomes the Princess Casamassima, in Roderick Hudson.

Yet, notwithstanding the similarities of character-types and plot, it is the contrast between the two novels which is even more striking; for although Europe, in both cases, is shown to be a testing-ground for the American,<sup>127</sup> Fane and Hudson represent two polarized images of the American artist abroad. Fane succeeds and even triumphs in Europe because of his natural nobility of character and his artistic genius, but Hudson's experiences in Europe lead him to abandon himself to the excesses of his romantic temperament, revealing his weakness of character and culminating in dissipation, artistic failure, and death. Fane displays the virtues of an idealized American hero-- honor, chivalry, integrity, and a moral code; Hudson, for all his talent, charm, and passion for life, is, as Rowland Mallett recognizes, "'a remorseless egotist'"<sup>128</sup>--spoiled, selfish, hedonistic, irresponsible, and amoral.

Whereas Fane matures in the course of his sojourn in Europe, Hudson deteriorates. Hudson's self-destruction begins in Baden-Baden, where he gets into debt because of

his gambling and his involvement with loose women, but his final ruin is precipitated by his infatuation with the beautiful Christina Light, who represents sophisticated and worldly European society in its most alluring aspects and, to a young man of Hudson's temperament and inexperience, its most dangerous. Fane demonstrates his fineness of character by renouncing his claim to Sybil Paleford so that she can make an advantageous marriage and subsequently discovers the true worth of Mary Evenden, whom he marries. By contrast, Hudson's lack of moral fiber is exhibited most vividly after Christina Light's marriage, when he wallows in self-pity and despair, gives up all attempt to paint, and tells Mallett how bored he is by Mary Garland's virtue. He makes it clear that he is determined to pursue the Princess Casamassima, whatever the consequences, shamelessly borrowing money from Mary, his fiancée, for this purpose.

Fane is shown to be an idealist who eventually discovers that his development as an artist is inextricably bound up with his ideological commitment to American democracy, while Hudson gradually comes to care less and less about conventional moral ideals. Even the limited self-knowledge that Hudson acquires just before his death, as a result of his final quarrel with Rowland Mallett, consists of his admission that he has violated aesthetic principles rather than moral ones. He tells Mallett: "I've been damnably stupid. Isn't an artist supposed to be a man of fine perceptions? I haven't, as it turns out, had one" (p. 325). He recognizes that, "I've been

grotesque!' " (p. 326). However, he shows no sense of having wronged either Rowland Mallett or Mary Garland. As Mallett perceives, "'It was egotism always--the shock of taste, the humiliation of a proved blunder, the sense, above all, of a flagrant want of grace; but never a hint of simple sorrow for pain inflicted" (pp. 325-26).

Fane is the protagonist of Willis's novel, but in James's novel, it is Rowland Mallett, not Roderick Hudson, who is the main vessel of consciousness. James himself states that, "The centre of interest throughout 'Roderick' is in Rowland Mallett's consciousness and the drama is the very drama of that consciousness. . . ." <sup>129</sup> Although he commits what Oscar Cargill terms "the major offense of meddling" with Hudson's life and career, <sup>130</sup> it is Mallett who possesses the scrupulousness, sensitive conscience, and finely developed code of honor that Hudson so singularly lacks. Leon Edel points out: "Rowland's observation of Roderick is that 'the poor fellow is incomplete.' This is true; and it is Rowland who completes him." <sup>131</sup>

Hudson's incompleteness is one of the major factors that differentiates him from the American protagonists of James's later international novels. In his comments on Roderick Hudson, Leon Edel notes that, "The novel foreshadows the massive works of James's future." <sup>132</sup> Certainly, Hudson is the predecessor of the numerous artists and writers who occupy such a prominent place in James's fiction; Mallett is a precursor of the wealthy Americans in Europe such as Christopher Newman in The American and observers of

life such as Lambert Strether in The Ambassadors; Christina Light is a prefiguration of a character such as Kate Croy in The Wings of the Dove.<sup>133</sup> However, the particular version of the international theme that is presented in Roderick Hudson is subsequently altered in at least one crucial respect in the great international novels of James's later career. In these novels, there are American protagonists who are artist-figures, such as Lambert Strether, as well as innocents who possess Hudson's passion for life and experience, such as Isabel Archer in The Portrait of a Lady and Milly Theale in The Wings of the Dove; but these characters also possess a fair measure of Mallett's moral sensibility. The encounter between the American and the European in these later works encompasses the contrast between American inexperience and European worldly sophistication that is found in Roderick Hudson and so many of the tales, but it goes beyond it: this encounter becomes a dramatic rendering of the conflict of values between American morality and European aestheticism, of the confrontation between American innocence, in the moral as well as the worldly sense of the word, and European corruption.

The subtly rendered but pervasive sense of the corruption of European values is already present in Roderick Hudson. Mrs. Light's ruthless manipulation of her daughter and her sacrifice of Christina on the altar of worldly success attest to this. Christina herself also acknowledges to Mallett that, from childhood, she has already acquired

"'the knowledge of evil'" (p. 186). She tells him that, "'I'm corrupt, corrupting, corruption!'" (p. 262). Yet she is as much a victim of her society as Hudson is (although it is Mallett, not Hudson, who has the insight to perceive this).

Despite its remarkable achievement as a first novel,<sup>134</sup> it is in the conception of American innocence, as represented by Roderick Hudson, that the novel's principal weakness is to be found, for the fact that Hudson possesses neither the consciousness nor the moral sensibility of Mallett diminishes his stature. Throughout much of the novel, his suffering appears to be spurious. He does not even struggle against his fate as Christina Light does but passively submits to his destruction as an artist and as a man. James himself acknowledges that, "My mistake on Roderick's behalf . . . is that, at the rate at which he falls to pieces, he seems to place himself beyond our understanding and our sympathy."<sup>135</sup> It is left to the international novels of James's maturity to expand and re-define the concept of American innocence, until it becomes the affirmation of moral integrity in the face of betrayal that is exhibited by Isabel Archer and Lambert Strether, the image of moral beauty and goodness that is embodied by Milly Theale even as she lies dying, and the triumphant power of reconciliation that is finally achieved by Maggie Verver at considerable cost in The Golden Bowl. In these works, unlike Roderick Hudson, the ordeal of innocence is also identified with the painful emergence to consciousness.

When measured against the standard provided by these works, Paul Fane and Roderick Hudson are both seen to be no more than preliminary versions of the international novel in its major phase. Nonetheless, it should be recognized that, as the first examples of international novels of manners in American fiction, each, in its own way, marks a distinct stage in the evolution of the genre, and each introduces aspects of the international theme that are expanded and developed in later works. Although Roderick Hudson is undoubtedly the more accomplished of the two works, the congruities between Willis's novel and James's suggest, as indicated above, that the earlier writer may well have influenced the later one. It should also be noted that Willis's preoccupation with the contrast between American and European social mores makes him a direct forebear of William Dean Howells.

## Chapter 7.

A Foregone Conclusion

William Dean Howells's A Foregone Conclusion (1875) is an international novel of manners which explores the differences in mores between the American and the European, emphasizing the impassable barriers between them. A work which can be seen to anticipate James's international fiction in several respects, it presents interesting parallels to "Daisy Miller" in particular, as will be shown subsequently. Yet it is precisely the aspect of the novel which is at such variance with James's tale that constitutes the dominant motif of the work--namely, that in A Foregone Conclusion, it is the European, not the American, who is unwittingly destroyed by American innocence.

In focusing on the social relations between the American and the European, A Foregone Conclusion resembles Paul Fane, but Howells's treatment of the international theme is more subtle than that of Willis, and he shows a keener perception of the ambiguities and complexities inherent in the international situation. Howells also adopts a different vantage point of observation than Willis does, for the upper-class European social milieu which is so closely scrutinized in Paul Fane is conspicuously absent in A Foregone Conclusion. The disparities between the American and European points of view are exhibited primarily

through the encounter of two Americans with a single Italian. Moreover, in Howells's novel, the American attitude to Europe has undergone a significant transformation. For Fane, obsessed as he is with the need to prove himself the equal of the well-born European, European society provides a touchstone. Howells's American travelers, by contrast, have come of age. Indifferent to European opinion, they make no effort to become accepted into Italian society, and it is they who determine the standards by which the European is judged.

The plot of A Foregone Conclusion deals with two distinct but interwoven situations--the romance between Ferris and Florida Vervain, two young Americans residing in Venice, and the friendship that each forms with Don Ippolito, an Italian priest. The first is a situation, like that of Indian Summer, in which the European setting, though relevant, can be seen as incidental. However, the triadic relationship involving Ferris and Florida and Don Ippolito is a fully realized international situation, one that portrays the basic misunderstanding which exists between the Americans and the European, shows their distorted perceptions of one another, and reveals the failure of communication which is the inevitable consequence. The mechanics of the plot depend, in fact, on the various mistakes which each character makes in assessing the motives and feelings of the other characters. As George C. Carrington, Jr., observes, ". . . they are all continually together, but continually at cross-purposes."<sup>136</sup> In addition, the course of the relationship

between Ferris and Florida is itself shaped and altered by their encounter with Don Ippolito. The priest serves as a catalyst, unwittingly precipitating a crisis which affects the two Americans and has tragic consequences for Don Ippolito himself.

Throughout most of the novel, Howells sustains a delicate structural balance in presenting the dramatic functions of each of the three major characters. Yet although Ferris is the ostensible protagonist of the novel and Don Ippolito, the character most deeply affected by the outcome of events, initiates actions which constitute the mainspring of the plot, it is Florida Vervain who is the pivotal character in the novel, the unifying figure who integrates the two parallel aspects of the plot. This shift of emphasis from the centrality of the traveler-gentleman-artist hero found in Paul Fane and earlier works of international fiction to that of the prototypal American girl illustrates an interesting change in the patterning of the international novel, one that begins chronologically with Hawthorne's The Marble Faun, continues in Howells's A Foregone Conclusion, The Lady of the Aroostook, A Fearful Responsibility, and Indian Summer, as well as in James's "Daisy Miller," and culminates in James's The Portrait of A Lady, The Wings of the Dove, and The Golden Bowl.

The American girl in Europe is thus a dominant figure in the international fiction of the latter part of the nineteenth century; she is a generic type made famous by James. As exemplified by Florida Vervain, she is young,

attractive, engaging, and, as will be shown subsequently, she possesses the distinctive innocence which is displayed by so many of the American girls portrayed by Willis, Hawthorne, Howells, and James in their international fiction. At the same time, her appearance, particularly her golden hair, blue eyes, and fair skin, also suggests the idealized American girl--the pure, lovely, blonde heroine so frequently found in nineteenth century American fiction.

Florida's behavior, like that of Imogene Graham, attests to her youth and immaturity, characteristics that prove vitally important to the international situation depicted in the novel. From the first, Florida reveals a touching vulnerability. Even though she appears to be older than seventeen, she is shy and unsure of herself, frequently displaying the gaucherie of adolescence. Howells indicates: "In the attitudes of shy hauteur into which she constantly fell, there was a touch of defiant awkwardness. . . ." <sup>137</sup> He notes, too, that ". . . she had the air of being embarrassed in the presence of herself, and of having an anxious watch upon her impulses" (p. 19).

It soon becomes evident that Florida is placed at a particular disadvantage in her mother's company. For all that Mrs. Vervain is amiable, kind-hearted, and charming, she is also an exceedingly silly woman who utters the first thought that comes into her head and, oblivious of the effect of her behavior on her daughter, enjoys discussing Florida with other people as though the girl were not present. Florida's painful embarrassment on these occasions

is intense, as Ferris notices when he realizes that she is "tried almost to tears by her mother's helpless frankness" (p. 70). A typical instance of this sort is found at the beginning of the novel when Mrs. Vervain tells Ferris that she wishes she could find a priest to tutor Florida in Italian since all her previous teachers have fallen in love with her. With unconscious irony, she complains that, "'I don't know why Florida should be subjected to such embarrassments'" (p. 32). Though amused by this disclosure, Ferris perceives that the girl is mortified by her mother's candid discussion of the subject with a comparative stranger.

During the course of the Vervains' residence in Venice, the widowed Mrs. Vervain frequently applies to Ferris in his official capacity as American consul for assistance, sympathy, and advice so that he is soon on terms of casual intimacy with both mother and daughter. Observing Florida's relationship with her mother at first hand, he becomes aware both how often the girl is made to feel awkward and ill at ease by her mother's unthinking remarks and how admirably, touchingly, loyal she is to her mother in spite of this, displaying a watchful protectiveness "with which she hastened to shield the foibles of her mother" (p. 71). Ferris's observations reveal a genuine understanding of Florida, but only up to a certain point, since he continues to regard the girl as proud and conceited. In criticizing her manner, he fails to realize that the hauteur and reserve, which she habitually adopts in the presence of strangers, are primarily intended to conceal her shyness.

Florida, in turn, is acutely sensitive to the fact that Ferris is often amused by her mother and herself:

Her pride was on the alert against him; she may have imagined that he was covertly smiling at her, and she no doubt tasted the ironical flavor of much of his talk and behavior, for in those days he liked to qualify his devotion to the Vervains with a certain nonchalant slight, which, while the mother openly enjoyed it, filled the daughter with anger and apprehension. (p. 71)

Florida resents his teasing, frequently finds his behavior offensive, and regards his attitude to her mother and herself as patronizing. At one point, she angrily flings the flowers he has brought her into the canal, remarking to her mother: "'He's detestable. He's conceited and presuming beyond all endurance'" (p. 39). Convinced that Ferris is making fun of them, she insists that, "'He's insulting, and I hate him!'" (p. 39). On Ferris's next visit, he is received by Florida with a cold formality, as she takes refuge in the aloof disdain which he finds so distasteful. When he retaliates by addressing provocative remarks to Mrs. Vervain about her daughter's romantic conquests of her tutors, the girl is unable to conceal how hurtful she finds them: "She looked at him a moment with a sort of defenseless pain that made him ashamed; and then walked away from him towards the window, with a frank resentment that made him smile . . ." (p. 55)

The extent of Florida's self-consciousness in Ferris's company and her vulnerability to Ferris's teasing both reveal how very young she is. On a number of occasions, Florida is, in fact, described as child-like in some way. Ferris, for example, is often entertained by what he calls

her "childish petulancies" (p. 129) and is aware that she is simultaneously "so much a woman; so much a child" (p. 92).

Florida gives further evidence of her youth and inexperience in the lack of confidence in her own judgment that she generally displays in moments of crisis. It is apparent that Mrs. Vervain is incapable of offering parental guidance, as even Florida tacitly acknowledges. Moreover, however provoking Florida finds Ferris's conduct, she does concede, when her anger has cooled and a truce has been established between them, that she values his opinion on worldly matters about which she is ignorant. Aware that he is older, wiser, and more experienced than she is, she repeatedly turns to Ferris for advice and relies on him for guidance. Thus when she quarrels with Don Ippolito, it is Ferris whom she asks what to do; when her mother is ill, she rushes to Ferris to ask him to recommend a doctor; when Don Ippolito tells her about his feelings towards the priesthood, she brings the problem to Ferris and seeks his counsel; when she attempts to help Don Ippolito, she urges the priest to consult with Ferris before making any final decision about his future, insisting that she herself is incapable of advising him properly.

Yet Florida is far from being weak or insipid. Indeed, there is another facet of her personality which should be noted and which is suggested by the nature of her relationship with her mother. For all Mrs. Vervain's foolishness, the bond between mother and daughter is a close and affectionate one; but the intensity of Florida's devotion

to her mother and the degree of fierce, protective tenderness which she displays towards her both indicate a capacity for deep feeling that has not yet found its proper outlet.

Although Florida makes valiant attempts to subdue it through self-control, she also has a strong will and a fiery, passionate streak in her temperament. Howells indicates that she "seemed sometimes a little burdened by the passionate nature" (p. 19) which she has undoubtedly inherited from her late father, a colonel in the United States Army, "whom it would not have been peaceable to cross in any purpose or pleasure" (p. 19). Like Sophia Firkin and Daisy Miller, Florida is capable of being headstrong, self-willed, and impetuous. Moreover, as Ferris has suspected from the first, she is hot-tempered: Ferris tells Don Ippolito, "'I'm afraid she has a bad temper. At any rate, I always expect to see smoke somewhere when I look at those eyes of hers'" (p. 83). One may argue, however, that these flaws are redeemed by the warm heart and generous nature which are also an integral part of Florida's personality.

Both aspects of Florida's temperament are brought into sharp focus in the incident which, setting the scene for the events that follow, represents the first real encounter between Florida and Don Ippolito, the impoverished young Italian priest who has been engaged by Mrs. Vervain, on Ferris's recommendation, to tutor her daughter in Italian. In the course of an excursion which Florida takes with her mother, Ferris, and Don Ippolito, a sketch that Ferris makes

of the girl leads to a general discussion of her personal qualities, to Florida's chagrin and annoyance. When Don Ippolito haplessly comments on Florida's devotion to her mother, thereby making an unwarranted but well-intentioned remark that, as Ferris recognizes, probably springs "from a foreigner's misapprehension" (p. 108), he unwittingly offends the girl and, to the horror of all present, is angrily rebuked by her:

"You are not asked to comment on my behavior to my mother; you are not invited to speak of my conduct at all!" she burst out with sudden violence, her visage flaming, and her blue eyes burning upon Don Ippolito, who shrank from the astonishing rudeness as from a blow in the face. "What is it to you how I treat my mother?" (p. 108)

Deplorable as her outburst is, Florida's subsequent remorse is undoubtedly sincere. The public apology which she makes to the priest later that day is a generous gesture, an attempt to redress the wrong she has committed: "'Don Ippolito,' she cried, 'I want to tell you that I am sorry; I want to ask your pardon--how can you ever forgive me?--for what I said'" (p. 118). Both actions, however, reflect Florida's headstrong, impulsive nature, attesting to the degree that she is governed by her emotions. As Ferris reflects the next day when he observes Florida, chastened and repentant, the girl seems to do everything by extremes:

It was really the same girl who had given poor Don Ippolito that cruel slap in the face, yesterday. But that seemed no more out of reason than her sudden, generous, exaggerated remorse. . . . It was all of a piece. . . . (pp. 128-29)

The traits that are revealed in the first part of the novel by Florida's behavior--her youthful immaturity, impetuous actions, and generous impulses--should be noted because of the extent to which they subsequently influence the course of her relationship with Don Ippolito and the outcome of the international situation depicted in the novel. In addition, although Florida's apology to Don Ippolito does much to mitigate the rudeness that results from her hot temper and it is evident that the priest harbors no resentment, the events of that day have other repercussions. Ashamed of how badly she has behaved towards Don Ippolito, Florida is anxious to make further amends. For this reason, she is particularly eager to help him when, several days after the excursion, he turns to her in despair, divulging the secret which has become an intolerable burden to him.

Encouraged by Florida's friendly manner to him, Don Ippolito confides to her how much he hates being a priest and how totally unsuited he is for the priesthood since, from the time of his youth, his vocation has been secular rather than religious, directed as it is to inventions and mechanical objects. Speaking poignantly of his unhappiness and self-contempt, he bitterly acknowledges to Florida that he abhors the falsehood which characterizes his life as a priest.

Shocked as she is by Don Ippolito's disclosures, Florida is too tender-hearted to condemn him once she learns of the factors responsible for his predicament: "I don't despise you; that is n't for me; but oh, I wish that I could help

you!" (p. 149). Moved by his suffering, she expresses her compassion for his plight: she listens to his revelations "with her proud looks transfigured to an aspect of grieving pity" (p. 144-45) and tells the young priest, "'Oh, I am sorry for you with my whole heart'" (p. 148). Unfortunately, however, the sympathetic nature of her response, for which Don Ippolito is so profoundly grateful, is precisely what misleads him, causing him to misconstrue her kindness and concern for him:

"Madamigella," said the priest, "I never dared believe that I was in the smallest thing necessary to your happiness. Is it true, then, that you care for my being rather this than that? That you are in the least grieved by any wrong of mine?"

"I scarcely know what you mean. How could we help being grieved by what you have said to me?"

"Thanks; but why do you care whether a priest of my church loves his calling or not,--you, a Protestant? It is that you are sorry for me as an unhappy man, is it not?"

"Yes; it is that and more. I am no Catholic, but we are both Christians . . . and I cannot endure to think of your doing the things you must do as a priest, and yet hating to be a priest. It is terrible!" (p. 139)

In this passage, a crucial one, Don Ippolito and Florida are talking at cross-purposes. Ignorant as he is of Americans, the Italian completely misinterprets the nature of Florida's remarks. He takes them as evidence of her regard for him as a man rather than as an expression of sympathy for his dilemma as a priest, investing her words with a more personal meaning than she realizes.

Although Florida is prompted by compassion in speaking to Don Ippolito as she does, she inadvertently errs by failing to anticipate the impression that her interest in

him conveys. To this extent, she can be said to precipitate the misunderstanding which has such grievous consequences. At the same time, it must be emphasized that her insight into the situation is, inevitably, limited by her innocence, a trait which is simultaneously presented by Howells as both a virtue and a handicap.

Florida's innocence is one of the most distinctive traits displayed by the American heroines of nineteenth century international fiction. In one guise or other, it is a definitive characteristic of virtually all the American girls who appear in this study. Florida's innocence is, in large part, an attribute of her youth. In its most obvious aspects, it consists of a lack of sophistication, a lack of worldly knowledge and experience. Thus she remains unaware of the nature of Don Ippolito's feelings to her, naively assuming that he regards her, as she does him, as no more than a friend.

Yet Don Ippolito does give evidence of the intensity of his devotion to Florida on several occasions prior to the exchange quoted above. When she apologizes to him for her rudeness, for example, his response is revealing: "'Oh!' said the priest, with an indescribable, long, trembling sigh. He caught her hand in his, held it tight, and then pressed it for an instant against his breast" (pp. 118-19). More than once, he tells her explicitly how greatly he appreciates her kindness to him; he acknowledges that her trust in him "'is like heaven'" (p. 136) to him. He also confides how much she and her mother have helped alleviate

his loneliness, enabling him, in their house, to escape the narrow restrictions imposed by the priesthood: "'You have been willing to see the man in me, and to let me forget the priest'" (p. 137). Even at this point, however, Florida does not fully realize the implications of Don Ippolito's remarks, although she does suddenly begin to feel vaguely uneasy at his words: "'I am afraid that you may be saying what you will be sorry for'" (p. 137). In spite of this, Florida still fails to recognize the signs of Don Ippolito's growing attachment to her. Inexperienced as she is, it simply never occurs to her that the young priest is also a man who is capable of falling in love with her. For all that she has had similar experiences with tutors in the past, she is unable to see that, in the circumstances, Don Ippolito's predicament is virtually "a foregone conclusion."

The mistake that Florida unwittingly makes in encouraging the priest's friendship with her is due primarily to her youthful naivete and unworldliness; but, initially, it is also caused by the fact that, as an American, she is ignorant of European manners and social decorum. From the first, the Vervains like Don Ippolito, perceiving as they do that he is a kind, gentle, courteous man, and Mrs. Vervain readily welcomes him into their household with an easy, informal hospitality for which he is grateful. It is only Ferris who, knowing how Don Ippolito admires Florida, is uneasy about the situation. On one occasion, he actually attempts to warn Florida about the priest, but since he refuses to divulge the real reason for his reservations

about her friendship with Don Ippolito, he is unconvincing when he advises her that, "' . . . a Venetian family would n't use him with the frank hospitality you've shown . . . because they would be afraid of other Venetian tongues'" (p. 93). This argument, by itself, seems trivial to Florida, for she believes that Ferris is alluding merely to the prevalent Venetian distrust of priests in general because they are suspected of serving as spies for the Austrian government. Therefore, she rejects Ferris's advice, insisting that neither she nor her mother is concerned about Venetian gossip.

It is only subsequently, when Don Ippolito confides his feelings about the priesthood to her, that Florida realizes that he has evidently taken their hospitality as indicative of a more serious personal interest in him than they ever anticipated, though even so, Florida remains ignorant of the extent of the error that her innocent overtures of friendship to Don Ippolito have helped foster. Nevertheless, aware that she has been precipitated into a situation with which she is ill-equipped to cope, she readily concedes that she is not really competent to advise the priest. She is herself conscious of what Howells describes as her "helpless femininity" (p. 19), a quality that is closely related to her youth and inexperience. When the priest first speaks to her about his dilemma, she tells him frankly: "'I do not know what to say to you, Don Ippolito. I am only a foreigner, a girl, and I am very ignorant of these things . . .'" (p. 137). Some time later, she also

admits that, "' . . . now, after what you have told me, I am so helpless and I know so little that I don't understand how to comfort or encourage you'" (p. 146). She recognizes: "'I am not fit to advise any one. I am so young and so ignorant of the world'" (p. 172). Even when she does finally counsel him to leave the priesthood, she shrinks from the magnitude of the responsibility she has assumed:

A panic seemed to seize her. . . . "Don Ippolito, Don Ippolito," she said . . . and stammered and faltered. "I don't know; I am frightened. You must do nothing from me; I cannot let you; I'm not fit to advise you. It must be wholly from your own conscience. . . ." (p. 176)

Anxious to escape the onus of decision, Florida directs Don Ippolito to consult with Ferris: "'No matter what happens, I will be your friend. But he will tell you just what to do'" (p. 176).

Florida's naivete and inexperience--the concomitants of her innocence--play a crucial role in her relationship with Don Ippolito, as has been noted. However, the situation is complicated further by the fact that Florida's behavior in encouraging Don Ippolito to leave the priesthood is motivated, not only by her sympathy for the priest in his unhappy situation, but by her own idealism as well. Florida's innocence has a moral aspect which, allied as it is to her ignorance of the world, leads her to regard good and evil in uncompromising, even simplistic terms. In this respect, she resembles Hilda in Hawthorne's The Marble Faun and Lydia Blood in The Lady of the Aroostook, although the moral views of these two girls are far more puritanical than

hers, causing them to regard Europe itself as evil and corrupt. Yet, in contrast to Ferris, who judges Italy by aesthetic standards, Florida's criteria of judgment tend to be moral ones. For example, when Ferris, admiring some Italian ruins, wishes he could recall the wicked but fascinating past and laments the degree to which it is so singularly lacking in America, Florida emphatically disagrees with him:

"I'm not sighing over it, for one, and I don't want it back. I'm glad that I'm American and that there is no past for me. I can't understand how you . . . can speak so tolerantly of what no one can respect," she added in an almost aggrieved tone. (p. 104)

From the outset, Florida also assesses Don Ippolito's situation in terms of moral criteria. When he confides his real feelings about being a priest to her, her immediate reaction is to judge him by her own moral code and to condemn his hypocrisy:

"If you hate so to be a priest, I can't understand why you should have allowed yourself to become one. We should be very unhappy if we could not respect you,--not trust you as we have done; and how could we, if we knew you were not true to yourself in being what you are?" (p. 138)

It is only when he explains what she regards as extenuating circumstances, describing the manner in which he was compelled to enter the priesthood against his will by family pressures which were brought to bear on him, that she is prepared to exonerate him from blame.

Untried as yet by life, Florida's moral views are both

idealistic and naive. Therefore, when Don Ippolito's disclosures compel her, for the first time, to confront and come to terms with duplicity, she is shocked and bewildered by the attempt to do so. Like Hilda in The Marble Faun, she finds the knowledge of the world that is so suddenly forced upon her traumatic, painful, and disillusioning. Haunted by what Don Ippolito has told her, she finds herself suspecting every priest whom she encounters of wickedness and hypocrisy. While watching the religious procession which is held in celebration of Corpus Christi, for example, she confides to Ferris: "'I never could have dreamed of a priest's disbelieving; but now I can't dream of anything else. It seems to me that none of these priests or monks can believe anything. Their faces look false and sly and bad--all of them'" (p. 167). Knowing nothing about Florida's conversation with Don Ippolito, Ferris cannot understand what prompts her to speak as she does, but he does attempt to persuade her to adopt a more balanced perspective:

"No, no, Miss Vervain," said Ferris, smiling at her despair, "you push matters a little beyond. . . . I don't think their faces are bad, by any means. Some of them are dull and torpid, and some are frivolous, just like the faces of other people. But I've been noticing the number of good, kind, friendly faces, and they're in the majority, just as they are amongst other people. . . . I've even caught sight of some faces in which there was a real rapture of devotion. . . ." (p. 167)

From his remarks, it is evident that Ferris's view of the world and his fellow man is an eminently realistic one;

he recognizes the mixture of good and evil that characterizes human nature. Florida, by contrast, tends to see life in terms of moral absolutes. To this extent, she represents a typological figure found in a number of nineteenth century international novels--the idealized American girl whose innocence and unworldliness is combined with an inviolable moral purity--and is exemplified by characters such as Mary Evenden in Paul Fane, Hilda in The Marble Faun, Lydia Blood in The Lady of the Aroostook, and Milly Theale in The Wings of the Dove.

This aspect of Florida's character is recognized by both Ferris and Don Ippolito throughout the novel. Ferris acknowledges that, whatever Florida's other flaws, "' . . . she is truth itself'" (p. 193). Don Ippolito repeatedly uses religious imagery to describe Florida's beauty, goodness, and purity. Above all, he regards her as a moral ideal, as "'an angel whose immaculate truth has mirrored my falsehood in all its vileness . . .'" (p. 187).

This view of Florida is further substantiated by her devoutness, a quality that surprises Ferris when he discovers it, since he knows that her mother cares little for religion. Yet, in spite of her mother's attitude, Florida faithfully attends the weekly service held for foreign residents and, although she is not an Episcopalian, Ferris perceives that she seems to derive particular comfort from the ritual and formality of the English service.

Florida's religious devotion also shapes her attitude to Don Ippolito. From the first, Ferris observes that she

regards her tutor with a certain "child-like reverence" (p. 73) because of his office as a priest. Ferris notices, too, that when Don Ippolito tries to avoid discussing religious matters or treats them with indifference, as he so often does, Florida finds this disturbing: "At such times Miss Vervain . . . used him with something like rebuke, as if it did not please her to have the representative of even an alien religion slight his office" (p. 73).

It is Florida's own devoutness, moreover, which makes Don Ippolito's disclosures so awful to her. As a Christian, she is appalled, not only by his admission that he has lost his faith and doubts the very existence of God, but by the fact that he continues to perform his priestly duties, even administering the sacraments, in spite of these doubts. That he pretends to believe in the sanctity of such rites when he has ceased to do so is an act of hypocrisy which offends her moral sensibility and her own strict adherence to truth. Even worse, she regards his behavior as a desecration of his holy office: "'How can you go back to these things and pretend to think them holy, and all the time have no heart or faith in them? It's terrible!'" (p. 171).

To Florida, the possibility of Don Ippolito's remaining a priest without faith or belief is a dreadful one. Therefore, when he concedes that there is another alternative open to him, albeit one beset with many difficulties, she sets aside her doubts about her competence to advise him and unhesitatingly encourages him to take it: "'Come,' she implored him fervently, 'you must promise'" (p. 173). Impelled by her

principles and ideals to "heroic sympathy and defiance" (p. 174), she considers neither the complexity nor the difficulty of the decision she is urging him to make. She reveals an impetuous, impractical idealism that takes no cognizance of any obstacles impeding right action--what Howells calls "a heavenly scorn of everything but the end to be achieved" (p. 174). Having previously discussed the priest's dilemma with Ferris as a hypothetical case, she is buttressed in her own beliefs by her recollection of his comment that any priest who loses his faith should leave the priesthood, whatever the cost. Even though Ferris had no notion that Don Ippolito was the priest in question, it is this counsel that she enthusiastically repeats to Don Ippolito:

"Such a man as you ought to leave the priesthood at any risk or hazard. You should cease to be a priest, if it cost you kindred, friends, good name, country, everything! . . . Why need you be down-hearted? With your genius once free, you can make country and fame and friends everywhere. Leave Venice! There are other places. Think how inventors succeed in America"--

"In America!" exclaimed the priest. "Ah, how long I have desired to be there!"

"You must go. You will soon be famous and honored there. . . . Everything will be easy. God is good . . . and you may be sure he will befriend you." (p. 175)

In speaking as she does, Florida is motivated by her sincere conviction that she is advising Don Ippolito to do what is right. Nevertheless, she commits a twofold error. Firstly, her advice to him is impractical because it ignores the almost insuperable difficulties that the young Italian faces if he leaves the priesthood and attempts to earn his living as a penniless inventor in an alien country. Moreover,

notwithstanding all her good intentions, she is responsible, once again, for inadvertently misleading Don Ippolito by becoming so intimately involved in his affairs. Blinded by her naivete so that she is unable even to conceive of the possibility that the priest could be in love with her, as noted earlier, she fails to realize that her insistence that he leave the priesthood and immigrate to America, together with virtually all her subsequent efforts to help him, is open to misinterpretation, reinforcing his belief that she cares for him as a man rather than as a priest.

For example, in her attempt to befriend Don Ippolito and ease his transition to a new life, Florida invites him, on behalf of her mother and herself, to make his home with them in America until he can formulate other plans--a generous offer intended to assure him of their continued assistance and hospitality in a strange land but one which quite naturally leads him to misconstrue her motives. Understanding his insecurity at the thought of renouncing the sheltered life that he has known from childhood, she also tries to give him emotional support by promising that he will not be alone in his troubles. She vows to stand by him whatever the outcome of his actions, without ever dreaming that he is bound to misunderstand her passionate declaration that, "'I should be your friend if the whole world turned against you'" (p. 174). In each of these instances, what Florida intends, in all her innocence, as an expression of sympathy and friendship, is taken by Don Ippolito as further proof that she reciprocates his

feelings.

At the same time, one of the major ironies governing the international situation in this novel is that the factors motivating Florida's behavior and leading to such disastrous consequences for the priest are those which, in themselves, are essentially positive--namely, the kindness, compassion, and generosity which spring from her warm heart, the naivete and inexperience which, even as they render her ignorant in the worldly sense, attest to her essential innocence, and the moral and religious values which are the products of her idealism.

The irony of the situation is also intensified by the fact that the tragedy is so nearly averted by Ferris's accurate assessment of the situation, which the priest refuses to heed. When Don Ippolito asks Ferris's advice about immigrating to America, the consul attempts to dissuade him from doing so. Aware of all the practical considerations which Florida has overlooked, he is pessimistic about the priest's chances of success and, alluding to the difficulties and disappointments which the young Italian is bound to face there, tells him bluntly that he is likely to starve. In response to the priest's insistence that Florida has assured him that he would prosper as an inventor, Ferris refers to her ignorance of worldly matters and drily observes: "'Miss Vervain must have been about twelve years old when she left America. Even a lady's knowledge of business, at that age, is limited . . .'" (p. 185).

When Don Ippolito confides to the consul that he is in

love with Florida and intends to propose marriage to her, this admission, coming from a priest, shocks Ferris, who attempts to warn him that he may be misinterpreting the girl's feelings in supposing that she reciprocates his affections. Unlike the priest, who idealizes Florida but does not understand her, Ferris is aware of the personality traits which would make her capable of a generous act of friendship even to someone whom she did not love. Reminding Don Ippolito of the incident in which she was so rude to him, he suggests, correctly so, that Florida's behavior may well be an attempt to make amends. He refers to her "'extravagant generosity'" (p. 193), and asks the young Italian: "'Has it [not] seemed to you that if such a woman knew herself to have once wrongly given you pain, her atonement might be as headstrong and excessive as her offense? That she could have no reserves in her reparation?'" (p. 193). Ferris's knowledge of Florida's character also enables him to comprehend that the girl's idealism could easily provide a primary motive for her interest in the priest:

"Miss Vervain is very religious in her way. . . . Are you sure that it is not concern for what seems to be your terrible position that has made her show so much anxiety on your account? . . . And may she not only be trying to appeal to something in you as high as the impulse of her own heart?"  
(p. 193)

Subsequent events prove Ferris to be correct, but Don Ippolito, increasingly conscious of the underlying coldness and hostility of the consul's manner without realizing that they are caused by Ferris's jealousy, believes the American

to be prejudiced against him. Because of this, he disregards Ferris's warning.

It is only when Don Ippolito finally discloses his feelings to Florida herself that he learns the truth. After asking whether the fact that he has been a priest need preclude his marrying once he leaves the priesthood, he tells her that he loves her and, as Ferris has predicted, has his illusions shattered by Florida's response:

"What!" shuddered the girl, recoiling, with almost a shriek. "You? A priest!"  
 Don Ippolito gave a low cry, half sob:--  
 "His words, his words! It is true. I cannot escape, I am doomed. I must die as I have lived!" (p. 212)

This scene, which takes place in the Vervains' moonlit garden, represents the climax of the novel. The confrontation between the Italian priest and the American girl culminates in a moment of discovery for both; it reveals each to the other in a new light, radically--and irrevocably--altering their relationship. For Don Ippolito, the realization that Florida does not love him represents the defeat of all his hopes: "The whole edifice of his dreams, his wild imaginations, had fallen into dust at a word; no magic could rebuild it . . ." (p. 213). His overwhelming sense of despair stems from his knowledge that, for him, there will not only be no possibility of marriage to Florida but no new life, no escape from the priesthood to freedom in America. He recognizes, at last, how completely he has misunderstood Florida's intentions by mistaking her friendship and sympathy for love: "'It was your fatal truth that did

it; truth too high and fine for me to have discerned . . .'" (p. 213).

Florida, in turn, becomes aware of how she has inadvertently misled Don Ippolito. Looking back over the events of the past months, she sorrowfully acknowledges, "'Yes, I see it all, how it has been,' . . .'" (p. 212). Too late, she perceives the magnitude of the error she has committed, and although Don Ippolito insists that he, not Florida, is to blame for his disappointment, she accepts full responsibility for her actions. In response to his request that she forgive him, she tells him: "'But who, who will ever forgive me,' she cried, 'for my blindness! Oh, you must believe that I never thought, I never dreamt' . . .'" (p. 213).

For Florida, the most poignant moment in her confrontation with Don Ippolito occurs when she becomes conscious of her helplessness and realizes that, despite her remorse, there is no way that she is able to undo the harm she has done; there is no act of atonement by which she can alleviate his suffering. Her final gesture of farewell to Don Ippolito is one of tenderness and pity; it is both an expression of her grief for his situation and an indication of her own futile regrets:

A great wave of sorrow and compassion and despair for him swept through her. She flung her arms about his neck, and pulled his head down upon her heart, and held it tight there, weeping and moaning over him as over some hapless, harmless thing that she had unpurposely bruised or killed. Then she suddenly put her hand against his breast, and thrust him away, and turned and ran. (p. 215)

It can be argued that, for Florida, the crisis of her relationship with Don Ippolito marks a transition from youth to adulthood. In this respect, her experiences in Europe resemble those of Melville's Redburn and Hawthorne's Hilda, and the theme dramatized by Howells in A Foregone Conclusion, in an international setting, is shown to be a variant of the one that recurs in so much of nineteenth century American fiction. By the act of witnessing and participating in Don Ippolito's tragedy, Florida is abruptly precipitated into maturity. By recognizing that she is the cause, however unwitting, of the priest's suffering, she loses much of the naivete she has previously displayed; but she gains, albeit painfully, a measure of enlightenment--a new degree of self-knowledge, insight into the human condition, and understanding of the harsh realities of life--thereby extending the knowledge of the world and human nature that was first forced upon her by Don Ippolito's disclosures about the priesthood. What Florida discovers in the course of her last meeting with Don Ippolito leads to a perceptible transformation, so that the sorrowing woman who leaves the garden is more conscious, more fully sensitized, than the young girl who entered it.

The scene in the Vervains' garden described above represents a crisis, not only for Don Ippolito and Florida, but for Ferris as well. Although his presence is not noticed by either the priest or the girl, Ferris happens to enter the garden while they are there and, after seeing

Florida embrace Don Ippolito, misinterprets the significance of what he has observed. Ironically, Florida has just admitted to Don Ippolito that it is Ferris whom she really loves, but the consul, standing some distance away, hears nothing of this conversation. Convinced that, after all, Florida must love Don Ippolito, he too leaves the garden in despair, believing that it is too late for him to tell her of his own feelings.

Ferris's presence during this scene is significant, for Howells's bringing together of all three major characters in the garden reflects a recurrent triadic pattern which is one of the distinctive structural features of the novel. While it is the relationship between Florida and Don Ippolito which serves as the focal point of the international situation, Ferris's involvement with both is also important. His life is closely linked to theirs, and his behavior affects them directly. Moreover, the contrast between Ferris and Florida, the two Americans, and the differences in their attitudes to the young Italian are as crucial to Howells's dramatization of the international theme, in their own way, as the misunderstanding between the girl and the priest.

As an artist-figure, Ferris represents a distinctive type of American in Europe, one that is found in a number of other nineteenth century international novels--Paul Fane, The Marble Faun, Roderick Hudson, and Indian Summer. Like Colville, Ferris is attracted to Italy by the richness of its culture and its past; like Fane and Kenyon, he comes to

Italy to paint. Both Ferris and Fane are impoverished, and both hold diplomatic appointments secured by influential political friends. Ferris's position as the American consul in Venice enables him to earn his living, but he regards himself, as Fane does, as an artist by profession. Yet, despite the parallels between Fane and Ferris, there is an essential difference between the two: while Fane is an artist of genius, Howells makes it clear that Ferris's is a decidedly second-rate talent.

Throughout the novel, inspiration and success constantly elude Ferris in his work. Although he is able to reproduce a superficial likeness in his portraits, he is, unlike Fane, incapable of conveying the inner nature of his subjects. On the excursion that Ferris makes with the Vervains, for example, his sketch of Florida is criticized by her mother: "'But you've made her too proud, Mr. Ferris. She does n't look like that'" (p. 105). Even if one grants that Mrs. Vervain may be prejudiced in her judgment, it should be noted that her comments come just after Ferris's own admission that, while he finds the Italian ruins around them picturesque, he is unable to capture the scene on canvas: "'I wish I could paint it, but I can't . . .'" (p. 105).

Moreover, the limitations of Ferris's artistic ability are confirmed by his repeated and unsuccessful attempts to paint a portrait of Don Ippolito. During his visit to the old oratory which Don Ippolito has converted into a smithy where he can work on his mechanical inventions, Ferris is fascinated by the paraphernalia surrounding the priest:

. . . the forge . . . the bellows, the pincers, the hammers, and the other implements of the trade, gave it a sinister effect, as if the place of prayer had been invaded by mocking imps, or as if some hapless mortal in contract with the evil powers were here searching, by the help of the adversary, for the forbidden secrets of the metals and of fire. (p. 49)

Ferris's impressions of this place, like those of the decayed ruins he visits with the Vervains, reflect a tendency to regard the sinister elements in such scenes as intrinsically picturesque. Howells thus suggests that Ferris's aestheticism is not only decadent but defective and limited in its insight; it is the pose of an artist who sees the superficial aspect of things rather than their real meaning.

This point of view is emphasized further by the fact that the focus of Ferris's attention is the atmosphere of the smithy rather than the character of the priest. He regards the old oratory as the key to understanding Don Ippolito and longs to sketch the priest against this particular background, though initially, he resists the temptation of what he himself recognizes to be theatricalization. However, in spite of his awareness that the priest's apparent innocence is at variance with his surroundings, the erroneous impression evoked by the melodramatic setting in which he finds Don Ippolito persists, leading him to question that innocence and influencing, to their detriment, all his subsequent artistic efforts.

Some time after he has begun the portrait, he admits to Florida that so far, all his attempts have been abortive: "I don't say I shall succeed. . . . In fact I've made one

failure already, and I'm pretty well on with a second . . .'" (p. 75). In telling Florida what he is trying to convey about the priest, he concludes with his intention to "'work in that small suspicion of Jesuit which there is in every priest'" (p. 76). Florida insists that if he persists in painting Don Ippolito in this manner, he is bound to fail: "'You won't make a Don Ippolito of him. . . . He has the simplest and openest look in the world,' . . ." (p. 76). When Don Ippolito happens to see the painting on a visit to Ferris's studio, he tells the artist: "'I suppose that it resembles me a good deal,' he said, 'and yet I do not feel like that'" (p. 183). Ferris himself acknowledges the portrait's imperfections: "'I know it's not good. . . . It is conventional, in spite of everything'" (p. 183).

Thus although Ferris's motive in coming to Europe is to paint, his sojourn in Italy proves to be singularly unproductive. Several years later, when he is living in New York, he confides to a friend that most of the sketches and studies which he did abroad are still unfinished. He also admits that, "'There are none of them fit to be seen'" (p. 246). A fellow artist, studying Ferris's portrait of Don Ippolito, concurs in this judgment. Even when he tries to encourage Ferris, the best he can say about the picture is: "'It's hard, and it's feeble. . . . But it is n't so infernally bad'" (p. 247). The final proof of Ferris's lack of artistic talent and real vocation is shown by the fact that he ceases to paint after his marriage, when he no longer finds it necessary to earn his living. An

arm-wound received in fighting during the Civil War does initially provide him with a valid excuse for not working, but even when he has recovered, it soon becomes evident that he has no inclination to resume his artistic career.

Ferris's failure as an artist is significant in the novel, not only because it diminishes his stature as hero, but because it is directly related to his limited powers of perception and understanding. Quite apart from his lack of technical skill, Ferris is incapable of painting a successful portrait of Don Ippolito because he is unable to discern the priest's real character. Although he does have moments of insight in which he recognizes the priest's innocence, he misjudges him for the most part. He acknowledges that Don Ippolito is very different from his fellow clerics; yet he tends to regard him as a stereotype of a Venetian priest rather than as an individual. This is what Don Ippolito himself tentatively suggests when he says of his portrait: "'It is as I should be if I were like other priests, perhaps?'" (p. 183).

In this context, it is interesting to note that one of Ferris's most perceptive comments about Don Ippolito is, in fact, made unwittingly, in a moment when he does not recognize the priest. As he watches the religious procession with Florida on Corpus Christi, he notices a priest whose face is singular because of "the troubled innocence" of its expression (p. 168). Observing the priest from a distance, Ferris tells the girl: "'There . . . that's what I call an uncommonly good face'" (p. 168). Only

afterwards does Ferris realize, to his surprise, that the priest in question is Don Ippolito. This incident is important because it suggests that the error of judgment which Ferris commits with regard to Don Ippolito is, in part, the result of preconceptions which prevent him from seeing the Italian in his true character.

Throughout the novel, Ferris is influenced by the general Venetian attitude of distrust and suspicion towards priests: "Mr. Ferris had the prejudice of all Italian sympathizers against the priests" (p. 4). For this reason, when Don Ippolito initially approaches the consul to show him his inventions and apply for an American passport, Ferris's instinctive reaction is to suspect him of being a spy. He soon realizes the absurdity of his suspicions, and when he learns more about Don Ippolito's circumstances, even feels an unwilling pity and sympathy for the priest that causes him to recommend him to Mrs. Vervain as a tutor for her daughter. Nevertheless, after having done so, he admits to Florida that he still harbors misgivings about the wisdom of having befriended him:

"I acted in the teeth of a bitter Venetian prejudice against priests. All my friends here . . . hate and despise the priests. They believe that priests are full of guile and deceit, that they are spies for the Austrians, and altogether evil." (p. 90)

It is only when his arguments are questioned by Florida that Ferris is compelled to concede how ill-founded they are. He acknowledges as much to her: "'I feel as if I'd been guiltily trying to set you against a man whom I like very much and

have no reason not to trust. . . . And it is n't his fault that he's a priest'" (p. 93).

Yet, despite Ferris's awareness that he has no rational grounds for doing so, he continues to regard Don Ippolito with distrust; despite the priest's manifest innocence and unworldliness, Ferris persists in his attempts to paint him as a somewhat sinister figure, as noted above. It is thus made increasingly clear by Howells that Ferris's failure to complete the portrait satisfactorily is due, more than anything else, to his distorted view of the priest:

It was the half-expectation of coming sometime upon the lurking duplicity in Don Ippolito, that continually enfeebled the painter in his attempts to portray his Venetian priest, and that gave its undecided, unsatisfactory character to the picture before him--its weak hardness, its provoking superficiality. He expressed the traits of melancholy and loss that he imagined in him, yet he always was tempted to leave the picture with a touch of something sinister in it, some aery and subtle shadow of selfish design. (p. 82)

Ferris's misconceptions about Don Ippolito persist to the end of the novel, despite all evidence to the contrary. Even when the priest, mortally ill, sends for Ferris to tell him that he has been refused by Florida and is now reconciled to the Church, Ferris is unable to dispel his lingering doubts about him: ". . . he could not look upon the pallid visage of the priest lest he should now at last find there that subtle expression of deceit . . ." (p. 236). Aware of Ferris's feelings, Don Ippolito reproaches him, in a moment of bitterness, for his blindness: "'You never would see me as I was; you would find no singleness in me, and yet I had

a heart as full of loyalty to you as love for her . . .'" (p. 239).

Ferris recognizes that the distrust he feels towards the priest has imposed a barrier between them and may have led him to misjudge the other, but, lacking Florida's generosity of spirit, he is incapable of overcoming it. In addition, the irreconcilable differences in temperament, outlook, and culture, as well as the disparate degrees of experience between the American and the Italian, have made real friendship between them impossible and, as in the case of Florida's relationship with Don Ippolito, resulted in misunderstanding. Indeed, Ferris tells the priest: "'We might well curse the day we met, Don Ippolito, for we have only done each other harm. But I never meant you harm'" (p. 239).

It should also be noted that in Ferris's last interview with Don Ippolito, the consul's attitude to the priest has hardened into implacable hostility as a consequence of the scene that he has witnessed in the Vervains' garden. Recalling that scene, he finds it difficult to accept the priest's avowal that it is Ferris whom Florida really loves; he refuses to believe the simple truth of Don Ippolito's statement that the girl's embrace was no more than a gesture of compassion, intended to console him. Obsessed by jealousy, he suspects that the priest is deliberately misleading him and, after leaving Don Ippolito, resolves to confront him once more and accuse him--to "tell him that his story had failed of its effect, that he was not to be

fooled so easily, and, without demanding anything further, to leave him in his lie" (p. 241). However, when he returns to the house the next day, Don Ippolito is dead. Ferris is left with the realization that it is too late for any further recriminations, or for any reconciliation: "The terrible stroke sobered Ferris; he woke from his long debauch of hate and jealousy and despair; . . . in abject sorrow and shame he thanked God that he had been kept from dealing that last cruel blow . . ." (p. 242). But it is also too late for him to ever know whether the priest was really speaking the truth: "Death had set his seal forever to a testimony which he had been able neither to refuse nor to accept . . ." (p. 242).

It is only several years later, when he and Florida are finally reconciled, that Ferris acknowledges his error in not believing Don Ippolito's disclosures. Admitting to Florida that he has behaved badly to the priest, Ferris does express remorse for his conduct: "' . . . he had an affectionate and faithful heart. I wish I had been gentler with him. I must often have bruised that sensitive soul. God knows I'm sorry for it'" (p. 264).

Yet even at this stage, Ferris and Florida continue to maintain opposing points of view about Don Ippolito. This is made evident when Ferris questions Florida:

"That story he told you of his childhood and of how he became a priest; did n't it strike you at the time like rather a made-up melodramatic history?"

"No, no! How can you say such things, Henry? It was too simple not to be true." (p. 262)

Furthermore, Ferris still remains convinced that Don Ippolito's doubts about the priesthood, his love for Florida, and even his suffering, were all "'largely imagined'" (p. 263), the result of his being such a dreamer. Ferris's unfeeling remarks suggest that he dismisses the priest's tragedy as insignificant. Even worse, by imputing falsehood and self-deception to Don Ippolito after everything that has occurred, he confirms how completely he has misinterpreted the priest's behavior. Troubled by his attitude, Florida accuses him, correctly so, of being unfair: "'I don't know how to answer you, Henry; but I think that you 're judging him narrowly and harshly'" (p. 264).

In his failure to recognize the truth about Don Ippolito, Ferris displays an insensitivity and lack of insight which reveal his own limitations. Unlike Florida, Ferris is incapable of comprehending the very simplicity and innocence of the priest's nature. As he himself concedes, Don Ippolito remains a mystery to him to the last: he tells Florida that, "' . . . he's a puzzle!'" (p. 264). He admits: "' . . . he baffles me. He always did, for that matter'" (p. 263).

Thus, for all his intelligence, sensibility, and worldly experience, Ferris commits a serious error of judgment in assessing Don Ippolito. Moreover, he makes a similar mistake with regard to Florida. In some ways, Ferris understands the girl better than anyone else in the novel, for he is aware of both her virtues and her flaws. In contrast to Don Ippolito, who idealizes her and thinks her perfection unblemished, Ferris points out that, while she is undoubtedly

beautiful and good and honest, she is also impetuous and hot-tempered. At the same time, he does not recognize that the haughty manner, which Florida adopts towards him and which he so dislikes, serves as a mask to conceal her awkwardness in his presence. Although he perceives her vulnerability, he criticizes her for being too proud, omitting to take her youth and shyness sufficiently into account as extenuating factors.

What is even more significant, however, is Ferris's failure to realize that Florida is in love with him, despite the fact that she repeatedly gives evidence of her feelings for him. It is Ferris's presence during her mother's foolish disclosures about her which so embarrasses her; it is his teasing, ironic attitude to her--his disinclination to take her seriously--which so infuriates her. Throughout the novel, she frequently depends on him for advice and turns to him for guidance whenever she faces a crisis, as noted earlier. Even when she counsels Don Ippolito to leave the priesthood, she sends him to consult with Ferris first, telling the priest that the consul is to be relied on: "'He is so true and honest and just'" (p. 176). She is disturbed by the antagonism that often exists between herself and Ferris and, on one occasion, admits regretfully that, "'It seems to me we are always going wrong--'" (p. 92). Only when she suddenly becomes aware that she is disclosing more than she means to, does she draw back: "She stopped short, with a flush, and then a pallor" (p. 92).

The blindness that Ferris displays towards Don Ippolito

and Florida extends to himself as well. Throughout the novel, he repeatedly shows a lack of self-knowledge and, on more than one occasion, deludes himself about his own motives. Not only does he fail to recognize Florida's feelings to him, but he also refuses to acknowledge that he is attracted to her, even though there are indications that this is so. For example, there is a moment when, advising her, he suddenly becomes conscious of a latent feeling which he ignores: "As she turned to Ferris, and asked . . ., 'What do you want me to do?' the sense of her willingness to be bidden by him gave him a delicious thrill. He looked at the superb creature . . . and he caught his breath before he answered" (p. 92). Again, when Florida visits Ferris to request his assistance in finding a doctor for her mother, he becomes aware that, "Though her face was so wan, it seemed to him that he had never seen it lovelier, and he had a strange pride in her being there . . ." (p. 125). Yet, when Don Ippolito asks him directly why he does not marry Florida, Ferris is extremely annoyed by the question and emphatically denies the possibility of any romantic attachment between them. Only when the priest discloses his own feelings towards the girl is the consul finally compelled to face the truth. Appalled by the priest's words, Ferris realizes belatedly that he is in love with her himself.

In his relationship with Florida, as with Don Ippolito, Ferris continually mistakes appearance, the outer semblance of things, for reality. The scene in the Vervains' garden is the most crucial instance of this: it tests his trust

in Florida and, by evoking the reaction that it does, reveals the extent that he misjudges her. Initially, of course, there is circumstantial evidence to support the erroneous conclusions that Ferris draws. Earlier that same day, the priest has told Ferris that he is in love with Florida and that he has reason to believe that she reciprocates his feelings. Considering the situation, Ferris concedes that there may well be some justification for Don Ippolito's speaking as he does:

He could not help seeing that the priest might have found cause for hope in the girl's behavior toward him. Her violent resentment, and her equally violent repentances; her fervent interest in his unhappy fortunes, and her anxiety that he should at once forsake the priesthood; her urging him to go to America, and her promising him a home under her mother's roof there: why might it not all be in fact a proof of her tenderness for him? She might have found it necessary to be thus coarsely explicit with him, for a man in Don Ippolito's relation to her could not otherwise have imagined her interest in him. . . . (p. 196)

Then, too, Mrs. Vervain's remarks to Ferris, before sending him outside to call the girl, seem to indicate that she approves of a marriage between Don Ippolito and her daughter since she expresses her pleasure in his leaving the priesthood and his being able to marry. She also confirms the priest's statement that he plans to go to the United States with the Vervains, informing Ferris that she intends to introduce the young Italian into society and to assist him financially if necessary. Therefore, when Ferris actually sees Florida embracing the other man, he seems to have valid reasons for misconstruing her behavior as he does.

At the same time, however, it is also made clear that the consul's judgment is so impaired by his jealous suspicions that he is readily disposed to believe the worst of the girl. Until he arrives at the Vervains' house, Ferris does remain sufficiently rational to find Don Ippolito's disclosures far from convincing; he continues to express grave doubts as to whether Florida, whom he has always regarded "as a person wholly abandoned to the truth" (p. 71), can have deliberately deceived him about her feelings for Don Ippolito and flagrantly encouraged the priest in his attentions to her:

He found himself haunted by certain tones and looks and attitudes of the young girl, wholly alien to the character he had just constructed for her. They were child-like, trusting, unconscious, . . . and they appealed to him now with a maddening pathos. (p. 197)

Nevertheless, after witnessing the scene in the garden, he dismisses these doubts and concludes that her passion for Don Ippolito has been demonstrated beyond question.

Ferris thus sets aside his own knowledge of Florida's character even though he has himself previously cautioned Don Ippolito not to misinterpret the girl's actions, suggesting to the priest that her behavior may be no more than an expression of her compassionate and generous nature. He disregards the explanation of Florida's motives that he has accepted as plausible only a few hours before, when he was able to comprehend "how her simple goodness, her sympathy with Don Ippolito, and only this, must have led the priest to the mistaken pass at which he stood" (p. 200).

Moreover, whatever the grounds for his initial conclusions about what occurs in the garden, Ferris wilfully persists in his error even when Don Ippolito sends for him just before his death and tries to tell him the truth. Cynical and suspicious to the last, Ferris is adamant in his refusal to believe the priest, declaring that he has seen for himself what really occurred: "'I saw how Miss Vervain parted from the man she did not love!'" (p. 238).

Don Ippolito is shocked by Ferris's lack of perception: "'Oh, deaf and blind! It was you that she loved! She confessed it to me that night'" (p. 238). The priest's choice of imagery is apt, for Ferris indeed blinds himself to the truth; his insistence on judging by the appearance of things shows sight which is not illumined by insight. In these circumstances, Don Ippolito is powerless to persuade him:

"You saw, you saw," softly repeated the priest. . . . "And how shall I make you believe that what you saw was not a woman's love, but an angel's heavenly pity for me? Does it seem hard to believe this of her?"

"Yes," answered the painter doggedly, "it is hard."

"And yet it is the very truth. Oh, you do not know her, you never knew her! . . . But I know that I waste my words on you," he cried bitterly. . . .  
(pp. 238-39)

Don Ippolito's explanation of what has occurred is completely consistent with Ferris's own previous assessment of Florida's character. Yet the consul is still unable to believe in the girl's innocence. So reluctant is he to accept the priest's version of events that he dismisses it

as a "ludicrous . . . insolent improbability" (p. 240). The most he is prepared to concede is that, even if the priest is not actually lying to him, he is nonetheless deluded in not realizing that Florida was only flirting with him. Ferris tells him: "' . . . I cannot believe you. I cannot--yet. . . . I'm afraid that you don't know. I'm afraid that the same deceit has tricked us both'" (p. 239).

Don Ippolito dies without succeeding in dispelling Ferris's suspicions, but the consul finally resolves to see Florida one more time to tell her of his feelings and to try to discover her own. Although the Vervains have already left Venice, he follows them to America only to discover, when he arrives at their home, that they are still somewhere in Europe. With no money to go abroad again and no knowledge of their address, he gives up all hope of finding them. In despair, he joins the army and goes off to fight in the Civil War.

The scene in the garden emphasizes the differences between the discoveries made by Don Ippolito and Florida, on the one hand, and Ferris, on the other: the priest and the girl learn the truth about each other whereas the consul comes to false conclusions about both. The errors of judgment that Don Ippolito and Florida commit in the course of the novel are largely due to these characters' unworldliness and lack of sophistication. However, Ferris's error is the consequence of his lack of perception; for all his worldly experience, he is unable to recognize the real character of either or to believe in their innocence.

The situation which reaches its climax in the Vervains' garden takes on particular significance in the context of international fiction when Howells's novel is compared to James's "Daisy Miller." Although there is no evidence to show that A Foregone Conclusion, which was published in 1875, had any direct influence on "Daisy Miller," such a possibility cannot be discounted since James's work did not appear in the Cornhill magazine until 1878,<sup>138</sup> and his familiarity with Howells's fiction is well-documented. To be sure, James makes no mention of Howells's novel in his Preface to "Daisy Miller" when he describes the incident, recounted to him by a friend, that first suggested the idea for his tale.<sup>139</sup> Nevertheless, despite the obvious differences between the two works (among them, the fact that James portrays the opposing values of the American girl and Old World society in a way that Howells does not), there are a number of striking analogies between the two works.

From the first, the reader is struck by the degree to which James's concern with the manners and behavior of the American girl in Europe, which is dramatized in "Daisy Miller," is anticipated by Howells in A Foregone Conclusion. Florida Vervain and Daisy Miller represent variations of the same generic type of American heroine. Florida's name is derived from the southern American state, but it also suggests "flora" and is thus similar to Daisy's. Moreover, like Daisy, Florida possesses the freshness and loveliness of youth, attributes traditionally associated with the

imagery of flowers: she is a young person who, as Ferris observes, is "'in the bloom of youth . . .'" (p. 98). An even more important point of resemblance between the two characters is the fact that both are high-spirited, impulsive American girls, whose innocence, combined as it is with an ignorance of European mores, helps to precipitate a tragedy, although in A Foregone Conclusion, it is the priest who dies of a fever and in "Daisy Miller," it is the girl herself.

Florida and Daisy are both visiting Italy in the company of their mothers, and here too, there are parallels between the two works. Mrs. Vervain and Mrs. Miller are both wealthy, fashionable women traveling abroad without their husbands; they represent a type frequently found in international fiction. Mrs. Miller is ill at ease in European society and palpably ignorant of European mores. Mrs. Vervain, despite all her experience of traveling abroad, frankly acknowledges that she feels at a disadvantage in any transaction with Italians and constantly depends on Ferris for advice. Mrs. Miller does not know how to treat her courier; Mrs. Vervain welcomes Don Ippolito into her household with an informality that Venetians regard as eccentric. Moreover, Mrs. Miller, though well-meaning, is a foolish, silly woman. Mrs. Vervain has a charm and graciousness that the other woman lacks, but Ferris soon recognizes her "addledness" (p. 31) and regards her as a "silly woman" (p. 254); he calls her "'the most extraordinary combination of perfect fool and perfect lady I ever saw'" (p. 81). Finally, both mothers are unable to exert any parental

authority or provide any sensible guidance for their daughters, although in this respect, Mrs. Miller is again even more deficient than Mrs. Vervain.

Analysis of the dramatic structures of A Foregone Conclusion and "Daisy Miller" reveals that a major feature of both works is the fact that the behavior of the two girls, particularly as regards their involvement with Italian men, is crucially misinterpreted by the Americans who are attracted to them. The parallels between the works become even more marked when one considers that, although Ferris and Winterbourne are considerably older and more experienced than Florida and Daisy, they fail to recognize the girls' distinctive innocence--a failure that reveals their own lack of discernment.

From the time of Winterbourne's first encounter with Daisy in Switzerland, it becomes apparent to him that her mother countenances a freedom of behavior that, to European eyes, appears decidedly unconventional and "fast": "He was inclined to think Miss Daisy Miller was a flirt--a pretty American flirt."<sup>140</sup> He finds further evidence to support this conclusion when he observes the girl's informal manner to her courier and is informed by his aunt that she treats the courier "like a familiar friend" (p. 156). In Rome, he subsequently learns from his aunt that Daisy goes about alone with a number of local fortune-hunters whom she has picked up, and that she is frequently seen in the company of Giavonelli, an Italian whom she freely acknowledges to be "'an intimate friend of mine'" (p. 177).

Florida's situation is, admittedly, somewhat different. She lacks Daisy's carefree manner and easy sociability, and initially, Ferris has no reason to suspect that she is romantically involved with Don Ippolito. However, her hot temper and passionate, extravagant nature, which Ferris condemns on more than one occasion, are traits which lead him to think that she is prone to excesses of behavior. Thus when he sees Florida embracing Don Ippolito in the garden, he becomes convinced that she is in love with the priest; and when Don Ippolito denies this, he concludes that, at the least, she has amused herself by flirting with him. He admits as much to Florida when he sees her again two years later: "'What could I think but that you had played with the priest's heart . . .'" (p. 253).

Winterbourne soon discovers that Daisy's behavior is endangering her reputation. On one occasion, when he and Mrs. Walker encounter Daisy walking alone with Giavonelli on the Pincio, the American woman attempts to warn the girl that she is being talked about. Supported by Winterbourne, she counsels the girl to leave the Italian and come into her carriage. Although Daisy is less indifferent to the opinion of others than she appears to be, her refusal to accept the older woman's advice shows her deliberate defiance of European convention: "'If this is improper . . . then I am all improper, and you must give me up'" (p. 185). When she alludes to the incident subsequently in conversation with Winterbourne, Daisy makes it clear that, as an American, she is determined to follow American mores and social customs,

not European ones. Repudiating rigid Italian notions of propriety, she emphatically refuses to be bound by them: ". . . I, thank goodness, am not a lady of this country. The young ladies of this country have a dreadfully poky time of it, so far as I can learn; I don't see why I should change my habits for them" (p. 190).

Although Ferris has less valid grounds for his uneasiness about Florida's friendship with Don Ippolito than Winterbourne has about Daisy's relationship with Giavonelli, he does attempt to warn the girl that Venetians, aware of the gossip that such behavior would inevitably occasion, would hesitate to receive the priest with the easy, informal hospitality that the Vervains have shown to him. However, Florida coldly rejects Ferris's advice, insisting that she and her mother are utterly indifferent to European opinion: "'We shall not be troubled. We don't care for Venetian tongues'" (p. 93).

Winterbourne's opinion of Daisy is undoubtedly influenced by his realization that the girl's freedom of behavior has led to her being ostracized by the expatriate American colony in Rome. Observing her conduct, he himself becomes increasingly convinced that she is no lady: "'Would a nice girl--even allowing for her being a little American flirt--make a rendezvous with a presumably low-lived foreigner?'" (p. 181). Therefore, despite his initial ambivalence towards Daisy and his willingness to suspend judgment about her, he gradually finds himself disinclined to believe in her innocence:

He asked himself whether Daisy's defiance came from the consciousness of innocence or from her being, essentially, a young person of the reckless class. It must be admitted that holding oneself to a belief in Daisy's "innocence" came to seem to Winterbourne more and more a matter of fine-spun gallantry. (pp. 197-98)

Ferris's predicament is similar, in several respects, to that of Winterbourne. After Don Ippolito's disclosures, his opinion of Florida alters, and his attitude to her becomes highly ambivalent: he vacillates between the conviction that Don Ippolito has misconstrued the girl's actions and the suspicion that she has given the priest good reason to believe that his feelings are reciprocated until, at last, his doubts about Florida's innocence become implacable. In addition, his interview with Don Ippolito leads him to conclude that Florida has repeated his own remarks, that a priest who has lost his faith should leave the priesthood, to Don Ippolito in order to serve her own purposes and that she has done so knowing full well that he would hear these remarks again from the priest at second-hand. In expressing his repugnance for her conduct, his description of Florida has much in common with Winterbourne's allusions to Daisy's "defiance" and "reckless" nature, for Ferris notes that, ". . . these things could not be accounted for except by that strain of insolent, passionate defiance which he had noted in her from the beginning" (pp. 196-97).

Winterbourne's opinion of Daisy deteriorates further when he pays a visit to the Millers one evening and is informed by Mrs. Miller that her daughter has, as usual, gone out somewhere with Giavonelli: "'She's always going round

with Mr. Giavonelli'" (p. 197). Mrs. Miller also confides: ". . . it seems as if they couldn't live without each other! . . . I keep telling Daisy she's engaged'" (p. 197). Ferris's situation is remarkably similar, for when he calls on the Vervains after his interview with Don Ippolito and learns that Florida is out in the garden with the priest, Mrs. Vervain's unthinking remarks to him seem to confirm his worst suspicions: "'I'm perfectly delighted,' she went on, 'at the idea of Don Ippolito's giving up the priesthood, and I've told him that he must get married to some good American girl'" (p. 204). Ferris takes Mrs. Vervain's statement to be an oblique reference to her approval of a marriage between Don Ippolito and her daughter, particularly so when she announces that the priest will be accompanying them to America.

The climactic scenes in both works also have a number of striking parallels. Winterbourne is returning home from a dinner party late one night when he decides to walk home past the Colosseum. James tells us that, "There was a waning moon in the sky . . ." (pp. 200-01). In the moonlight, Winterbourne unexpectedly encounters Daisy and Giavonelli alone together, admiring the ruins. Ferris is visiting Mrs. Vervain when she asks him to go to the garden and call her daughter. As he steps out onto the terrace, Howells notes that, "The moon was shining brightly into the garden" (p. 206). And Ferris, gazing at the figures so clearly revealed before him, observes Florida embracing the priest.

Both men misinterpret the meaning of the scenes that

they witness between the American girl and the Italian. The conclusion that Winterbourne draws confirms all his previous suspicions about Daisy:

Winterbourne stopped, with a sort of horror; and, it must be added, with a sort of relief. It was as if a sudden illumination had been flashed upon the ambiguity of Daisy's behaviour and the riddle had become easy to read. She was a young lady whom a gentleman need no longer be at pains to respect. (p. 202)

Ferris, too, commits a similar error with regard to Florida. He leaves the garden convinced that the girl is in love with the priest and deliberately absents himself without saying good-bye when the Vervains subsequently leave Venice, so that ". . . he should never more look upon the woman so hatefully lost to him . . ." (p. 228). He thus condemns Florida without a hearing, giving her no opportunity to explain her **behavior**.

Even though there is some evidence to justify their misinterpretation of what they have seen, the conclusions that Winterbourne and Ferris draw about Daisy and Florida are equally erroneous and misguided. The enlightenment that the two men seem to undergo in the moonlit setting is a delusion, the consequence of their distorted vision. Both men attribute guilt where none exists; both fail to understand the essential innocence of the girls' motives in behaving as they do.

After Daisy's death, Giavonelli seeks out Winterbourne at the girl's funeral in order to tell him: "'She was the most beautiful young lady I ever saw, and the most

amiable. . . . And she was the most innocent'" (p. 205). He also insists: "'If she had lived, I should have got nothing. She would never have married me, I am sure'" (p. 206). Only at this point does Winterbourne realize belatedly how he has misjudged Daisy. Don Ippolito makes a similar declaration to Ferris just before his own death when he sends for the consul to tell him that Florida has rejected him and that it is Ferris whom she really loves. He accuses the consul of misconstruing the meaning of the scene he has witnessed, but, unlike Winterbourne, Ferris refuses to believe the Italian. Only when he encounters Florida in New York several years later does he finally accept the truth of Don Ippolito's statement.

The error of judgment that Winterbourne commits with regard to Daisy is shown by James to proceed, to a large extent, from the fact that he has accepted European standards of propriety in the course of his residence abroad and assessed the girl's behavior in the light of them. At the end of the tale, he admits as much: "'I was booked to make a mistake. I have lived too long in foreign parts'" (p. 206). This explanation does not apply directly to Ferris's relationship with Florida, but the fact that he has acquired the prevalent Italian prejudice towards priests does help account for his suspicion of Don Ippolito and his unwillingness to believe the priest's version of events.

Winterbourne's repudiation of Daisy reveals, not only his faulty judgment, but his emotional deficiencies--what R. P. Draper has aptly termed "his Prufrockian nature."<sup>141</sup>

Despite his misgivings about Daisy, Winterbourne is drawn to the girl initially by the very qualities in her that he himself lacks--her freshness, spontaneity, and vivacity. His own name, with its connotations of winter, suggests coldness, deadness, and emotional sterility. Indeed, when Daisy accuses Winterbourne of having rigid notions of propriety, she suggests, at the same time, that he is lacking in feeling: "'As I have had the pleasure of informing you, you are too stiff'" (p. 190). Winterbourne's final cold rebuff to Daisy in the Colosseum helps destroy her. Figuratively, his action suggests the frost of winter which blights all wildflowers in nature, since, after his contemptuous rejection, Daisy gives up the will to live: "'I don't care,' said Daisy, in a little strange tone, 'whether I have Roman fever or not!'" (p. 204). Ferris also displays similar qualities in his relationship with Florida and repeatedly withdraws from any emotional involvement or intimacy with her. Even his name, which sounds like "ferrous," and is thus analogous to Winterbourne's, is associated with iron--a hard, unyielding metal.

Throughout "Daisy Miller," James suggests the potential of the relationship between Winterbourne and Daisy which is never fulfilled. Only after her death does Winterbourne acknowledge his blindness in failing to perceive that Daisy was fond of him; only then does he understand the significance of the message that she sent him after she became ill and realize that she cared about his opinion of her: "'She would have appreciated one's esteem'" (p. 206). Even more

important, Winterbourne represses his own feelings for Daisy until it is too late, so that, as R. W. Draper notes, ". . . the story ends . . . with the realization by her diffident lover of what he has lost both in her and in himself."<sup>142</sup> Ferris likewise displays a corresponding lack of perception in persistently ignoring all the signs which indicate that Florida is attached to him. Moreover, just as Winterbourne is unwilling to acknowledge that he is attracted to Daisy, so, too, Ferris deludes himself by denying that he is in love with Florida.

Finally, neither man recognizes that his distrust of the Italian is due, in large measure, to his own jealousy. Winterbourne despises Giavonelli because he is not a gentleman, but there is evidence to suggest that his dislike of the other man is also motivated by Daisy's apparent preference for the Italian's company to his own. At one point, remarking on the fact that Giavonelli is a foreigner of the worst sort, he adds a revealing comment: "'Damn his good looks!'" (p. 181). Ferris's prejudice towards Don Ippolito is undoubtedly reinforced by his jealousy. The hostility that he displays towards the priest in the last part of the novel is caused primarily by his discovery that Don Ippolito is in love with Florida.

The "too late" theme which is presented by James in "Daisy Miller" in rudimentary form and developed more fully in "The Beast in the Jungle" and The Ambassadors is only suggested by Howells in A Foregone Conclusion. Ferris does acknowledge that, ". . . till it was too late he had not

confessed to his own heart the love that was in it . . . ." (p. 234), believing at the time that he has lost Florida; but his error, like that of Colville in Indian Summer, proves to be retrievable. Two years after the episode in Venice, Ferris fortuitously encounters Florida in New York. At this point, he and Florida finally disclose their love for each other and marry. It should be noted, however, that Howells's contrived ending is the weakest part of the novel. George N. Bennett, for example, notes: "Beginning with James, critics have pointed out that the novel loses dramatic focus by following the death of the priest with a denouement in which Ferris and Florida are married."<sup>143,144</sup>

At the time of his meeting with Florida, Ferris seems to have changed outwardly as a result of having known hardship and suffering: he is penniless, he has been wounded in the Civil War, he has proved a failure as an artist, and he has given up all hope of ever seeing the girl again. Yet in spite of this, it soon becomes evident that Ferris has really learned nothing from the incident in Venice or from his subsequent experiences. His suffering has produced no enlightenment; unlike Winterbourne, he has gained no self-knowledge or insight into his own character. Moreover, Ferris's marriage to Florida only helps him to sustain his illusions about himself. Since Florida is an heiress, wealthy enough to support them both, she cares nothing for the fact that he is unable to earn his living. Even more important, the generous and warm-hearted devotion that she lavishes on Ferris, as she once did on her mother,

is an emotion that blinds her to his limitations: "She had a gift for idealizing him . . . and . . . it was an easy matter for her to believe . . . that he would have been the greatest painter of his time, but for his honorable disability . . ." (p. 260).

In focusing on the flaws that Ferris reveals in his relationships with Don Ippolito and Florida, the reader soon discovers that they are of two different sorts: not only does his lack of perception prevent him from seeing the priest and the girl in their true characters, but, equally important in determining the outcome of the international situation, Ferris continually evinces an unwillingness to meet the claims of friendship exerted by both Don Ippolito and Florida, withdrawing instead from all situations which impose obligations or responsibilities on him. Thus he takes no action to avert the crisis between the priest and the girl, even though it is within his power to do so, and fails them both crucially. Determined as he is to preserve his detachment at all costs, Ferris emerges as a man who is deficient in feeling as well as insight.

This aspect of his character merits further comment since it attests to Howells's preoccupation with a theme that recurs in his later international fiction as well as that of James. Like Winterbourne, as noted above, Ferris reveals an emotional sterility that has direct relevance to the international aspect of the novel; like Colville in

Indian Summer and Strether in The Ambassadors, he tends to be an observer of life--an onlooker who repeatedly demonstrates his reluctance to become emotionally involved with other people. In this context, it is interesting to note Leon Edel's comment about James's later works in which, says Edel, "He begins to probe the 'unlived' life of . . . characters . . . who discover too late the price they have paid for their sensitivity and their insulation against the shock of experience."<sup>145</sup> For Ferris, as has been shown, the consequences of his error are not irreparable, and the "too late" theme is not developed by Howells as it might have been by James. Nevertheless, insofar as his life may be described as "unlived," Ferris prefigures the Jamesian characters alluded to by Edel.

Although he finds the Vervains pleasant company, Ferris's enjoyment of their friendship is considerably enhanced, from the outset, by the fact that it makes no emotional demands on him. He is genuinely fond of Mrs. Vervain and amused by her, but, despite her frequent application to him for assistance and advice, she poses no real threat to his independence: ". . . young men like a house in which no ado is made about their coming and going, and Mrs. Vervain perfectly understood the art of letting him make himself at home" (p. 70). Nonetheless, Ferris is careful to keep the Vervains at a distance. He adopts a teasing, patronizing manner to both which infuriates Florida and cultivates "the ironical flavor" (p. 71) of his conversation with them. His behavior may be seen as a deliberate attempt on his part to

avoid any real intimacy with them.

Ferris is quite prepared to perform small services for Mrs. Vervain and her daughter and to give them advice as long as it puts him under no permanent obligation. When Florida consults him about finding a doctor for her mother, for example, her appreciation of his assistance is gratifying to his ego: "It is flattering to a man to be indispensable to a woman so long as he is not obliged to it . . ." (p. 129). However, he refuses to accept the responsibility of advising her on more serious matters. Soon after Don Ippolito begins tutoring Florida, Ferris does attempt to tell her of his uneasiness about the priest, warning her of the Venetian prejudice against priests in general. Yet as soon as the girl shows her willingness to be guided by him and asks him what he wants her to do, he backs down:

"Good heavens! Miss Vervain, . . . it is n't a serious matter. I'm a fool to have spoken to you. Don't do anything. Let things go on as before. It is n't for me to instruct you."

"I should have been very glad of your advice," she said with a disappointed, almost wounded manner. . . .

Ferris returned her look with one of comical dismay. This apparent readiness of Miss Vervain's to be taken commanded of, daunted him, on second thoughts. "I wish you'd dismiss all my stupid talk from your mind," he said. . . . (pp. 92-93)

This passage illustrates the extent of Ferris's determination to avoid any close involvement with others. It is because his freedom and detachment appear to be threatened by Florida's unexpected submissiveness to his authority that he immediately withdraws from her.

Ferris's behavior in this instance is also influenced

by another, closely related motive. The desire to avoid emotional intimacy with other people makes him particularly wary of any romantic entanglements. Therefore, although he readily acknowledges Florida's attractiveness, he is relieved, from the first, to note that the girl does not appear to consider him as a prospective suitor:

After so long disuse, it was charming to be with a beautiful girl who neither regarded him with distrust nor expected him to ask her in marriage because he sat alone with her, rode out with her in a gondola, walked with her, read with her. (p. 70)

When asked by Don Ippolito if he wishes to marry Florida, Ferris emphatically denies such a possibility, insisting that, "'I don't want to marry anybody'" (p. 82). His role as a detached observer of life at one remove is also reinforced by his being an artist. Indeed, he tells the priest: "'I'm the victim of another passion--I'm laboring under an unrequited affection for Art'" (p. 85). His self-deception in refusing to admit that he loves Florida can thus be seen as part of a consistent pattern of behavior. Only when he believes that he has lost Florida and that it is too late, does he express futile regrets for not having recognized his feelings earlier.

The emotional sterility which determines Ferris's behavior towards Florida is also apparent in his relationship with Don Ippolito. For all his professed friendship with the priest, there is an underlying coldness in his manner to the other man which persists throughout the novel. Despite Ferris's prejudice towards priests, in general, Don Ippolito's

poverty and unhappiness do arouse an unwilling sympathy in him at their first meeting. However, his compassion is mingled with a certain degree of amusement and even contempt for the priest. It is obvious that he pities Don Ippolito almost in spite of himself and that the priest makes him feel uncomfortable: "He presently began to think of him with a little disgust, as people commonly think of one whom they pity, and yet cannot help, and he made haste to cast off the hopeless burden" (p. 17). Moreover, although he suggests Don Ippolito as a possible candidate when Mrs. Vervain asks him if he knows of anyone to tutor her daughter in Italian, he soon regrets his impulsiveness. He even tells Mrs. Vervain that he has had second thoughts about recommending the priest: "'I'm not at all sure he'll do; I've had awful misgivings about it . . .'" (p. 55).

Ferris's behavior in this situation presents an illuminating glimpse of his character. It is obvious, in this instance, that his misgivings about sponsoring Don Ippolito and his belief that he has acted rashly in doing so stem, not from a disinterested appraisal of the priest's possible unsuitability for the post, but from a characteristic reluctance to become involved in another person's affairs. Above all, he is fearful that, having recommended Don Ippolito, he may himself be held responsible for the priest's subsequent conduct.

Throughout the novel, Ferris repeatedly demonstrates a tendency to dissociate himself from any person whose flaws may cast aspersions on his own character or whose actions

may involve him in an unpleasant situation. In such a case, he immediately disengages himself. This pattern is shown, not only when Ferris expresses doubts about Don Ippolito, but also subsequently, when Florida is so rude to the priest in his presence. On this occasion, Howells comments:

"Ferris turned away in cold disgust. . . . 'The girl is a perfect brute. . . . I shall have to tell Don Ippolito that I'm ashamed of her, and disclaim all responsibility. Pah! I wish I was out of this'" (p. 108).

This aspect of Ferris's character is also confirmed by his behavior towards Don Ippolito when the priest, at Florida's urging, comes to speak to him about leaving the priesthood. Don Ippolito's admission that he is in love with Florida is one that appals the consul, and he soon becomes aware of the enormity of the error that the Italian may be committing in supposing the girl to reciprocate his feelings. Yet although he does caution the priest that he may be misinterpreting the girl's actions, he declines to become involved in the situation. Instead of speaking frankly to Don Ippolito, he responds to his request for guidance with a curt rebuff. In marked contrast to the compassion which Don Ippolito's disclosure evokes in Florida, Ferris's reaction is cold, unfeeling, and totally devoid of sympathy. Furthermore, because his jealousy has been aroused, he displays a hostility to the priest which he takes little trouble to conceal.

Unaware that Ferris is in love with Florida, Don Ippolito is completely bewildered by the consul's sudden

enmity towards him. He asks him directly: "'What is it, dear friend? . . . Do I intend anything wrong without knowing it?'" (p. 190). Appealing to Ferris in the name of their friendship, he urges the American to tell him the truth: "'I beseech you not to let me go wrong. I love her so well that I would rather die than let my love offend her. . . . If you can be my friend in this so far as to advise or warn me . . .'" (p. 194). Even though he knows that he is acting cruelly in disregarding this plea, Ferris dismisses Don Ippolito without any real explanation and refuses to help him:

"In this matter," replied the painter, "I cannot advise or warn you. The whole affair is beyond my conception. I mean no unkindness, but I cannot consult with you about it. . . . What do you wish? You tell me that you are resolved to renounce the priesthood; and I have answered you to the best of my power. You tell me that you are in love with Miss Vervain. What can I have to say about that?" (p. 195)

Ferris's contention that he cannot advise Don Ippolito on this matter is, in fact, a way of rationalizing his reluctance to do so; it is an attempt to extricate himself from all responsibility in the affair. The argument that he uses to Don Ippolito, namely that Mrs. Vervain, not he, is the most suitable person to consult about her daughter's interests, is considerably weakened by his awareness that Mrs. Vervain is totally incapable of dealing with such a situation tactfully. Indeed, she is more than likely to turn to Ferris for assistance and guidance.

Soon after Don Ippolito leaves him, Ferris himself

acknowledges that he should have been honest with the priest, but he immediately finds new reasons to justify his behavior: "He blamed himself for not having been franker with Don Ippolito . . . and yet how could he have done this without outrage to a sensitive and right-meaning soul?" (p. 198). Ferris's fear of committing an outrage to Don Ippolito's sensitive nature appears to him to be sufficient grounds for not warning the priest about the probable consequences of his declaring his love to Florida; yet he realizes that Don Ippolito is in danger of being subjected to a far greater humiliation if Florida reacts as Ferris suspects she will. Moreover, his supposed concern for the priest's feelings have in no way deterred Ferris from treating him with coldness and hostility, nor from refusing his request for help. He is fully cognizant that, by his manner to the priest, he has "given a wound to the heart that trusted him" (pp. 195-96).

Ferris's reasons for deciding not to speak to Florida about the matter are equally unconvincing. At first, his unwillingness to warn the girl is due to his suspicion that she may have deliberately encouraged the priest's attentions. However, even when he becomes convinced that she is innocent, he persuades himself that he is powerless to act, thereby setting aside all considerations of what he recognizes to be his duty. His assessment of the situation leaves little doubt as to his weakness of character:

He must not coldly acquiesce and let things take their course. He had introduced Don Ippolito to the Vervains; he was in some sort responsible for

him; he must save them if possible from the painful consequences of the priest's hallucination. But how to do this was by no means clear. . . . If he shrank from the thought of speaking to him [Don Ippolito] of the matter again, it appeared yet more impossible to bring it before the Vervains. Like a man of the imaginative temperament as he was, he exaggerated the probable effect, and pictured their dismay in colors that made his interference seem a ludicrous enormity. . . . And in Heaven's name what right had he, Ferris, to say anything at all? The horrible absurdity, the inexorable delicacy of his position made him laugh. . . . It was the more impossible to him [to speak] because, in this agony of doubt as to what he should do, he now at least read his own heart clearly, and had no longer a doubt what was in it. He pitied her for the pain she must suffer. . . . But Ferris felt that the whole affair had been fatally carried beyond his reach; he could do nothing now but wait and endure. There are cases in which a man must not protect the woman he loves. This was one. (pp. 198-200)

What is emphasized in this passage is Ferris's palpable dismay at the thought of speaking to the Vervains. His contemplation of the awkwardness and embarrassment which he imagines would ensue from his taking action effectively paralyzes him. In his self-centeredness, it is his determination not to appear in a false or humiliating position which is his primary consideration, rather than any concern for Florida's interests. He thus callously disregards what are bound to be the "painful consequences" to the girl of Don Ippolito's misconceptions; he abdicates the responsibility that he himself has initially acknowledged. Deluding himself and rationalizing his own weaknesses, he finally concludes that it is not his place to intervene in the affair: he does so in spite of the fact that Don Ippolito has pleaded with him to tell him the truth, and Florida herself has previously sought his advice about the priest.

Ferris's consideration of the delicacy of the position in which he is placed should also be examined further. He attributes his reluctance to warn Florida, not only to the fact that his own interest in the outcome of events prevents him from being impartial, but to his obligation to Don Ippolito:

On the other hand, besides, he was bound to Don Ippolito, who had come to him as the nearest friend of both, and confided in him. He remembered with a tardy, poignant intelligence how in their first talk of the Vervains Don Ippolito had taken pains to inform himself that Ferris was not in love with Florida. Could he be less manly and generous than this poor priest, and violate the sanctity of his confidence. Ferris groaned aloud. No, contrive it as he would, call it by what fair name he chose, he could not commit this treachery. . . .  
(pp. 199-200)

In this respect, Ferris's predicament appears, at first glance, to have certain parallels to those of Lina Bowen in Indian Summer and Lambert Strether in The Ambassadors. Both of these characters have an extremely refined sense of honor, as well as a scrupulousness which makes them feel that, in order to retain their integrity, they may not derive personal advantage from the situations in which they find themselves. This is what prevents Strether from marrying Maria Gostrey, although in his case, there are other contributing factors. This is also what prevents Mrs. Bowen from advising Imogene Graham not to marry Colville, even when she sees that they are unsuited. However, in both these instances, the characters' scruples and notions of integrity are consistent with their previous conduct; in Ferris's case, it is not. The niceties of behavior and the code of honor which make

him regard violating Don Ippolito's confidence as a betrayal of trust are directly contradicted by the readiness with which he reveals his suspicion of the priest to Florida on the occasion noted above, even though he acknowledges at the time that Don Ippolito "'thinks me so much his friend that he could n't dream of my making any sort of trouble for him'" (p. 93). Nor does the loyalty to Don Ippolito, which prevents him from disclosing the other man's secret to Florida, deter the consul from sending the priest away when he appeals to Ferris in the name of their friendship to advise him what to do about Florida. In these circumstances, the scruples which suddenly emerge when Ferris is faced with an interview with Florida that threatens to be both awkward and unpleasant fail to carry conviction. Moreover, for all that Ferris lacks the self-knowledge to recognize this, his indecision, withdrawal and reluctance to take action--traits which make him resemble Theodore Colville rather than Lina Bowen--are part of a consistent pattern of behavior that he has exhibited throughout the novel.

Thus, despite Ferris's attempt to persuade himself that his conduct is both noble and high-minded, there is evidence to suggest that his notions of honor in this case are spurious ones. What he professes to regard as an act of integrity is, in reality, an act of emotional cowardice which makes him place his own distaste for involvement before his obligations to either Don Ippolito or Florida.

This interpretation of Ferris's behavior is confirmed by Florida when he encounters the girl two years later. Her

response to his admission that he has loved her all the time is to accuse him of having acted badly in Venice, of having failed her when she needed him:

"Oh indeed, did you love me?" she cried, indignantly. . . . And was that why you left a helpless young girl to meet that trouble alone? Was that why you refused me your advice, and turned your back on me; and snubbed me? Oh, many thanks for your love! . . . Perhaps you knew, too, what that poor priest was thinking of?"

"Yes," said Ferris, stolidly. "I did at last: he told me."

"Oh, then you acted generously and nobly to let him go on! It was kind to him and very, very kind to me!"

"What could I do?" demanded Ferris, amazed and furious to find himself on the defensive. "His telling me put it out of my power to act."

"I'm glad that you can satisfy yourself with such a quibble! But I wonder that you can tell me--any woman of it!" (p. 252)

In the light of this passage, there is little doubt that Howells intends the reader to conclude that Florida is correct in condemning Ferris's conduct. Admittedly, Don Ippolito and Florida are also at fault, but, unlike Ferris, they act in all innocence. For all that Florida's attempt to befriend Don Ippolito is misguided and ill-advised, it is motivated by her kindness and concern for the priest and is, at least, a generous error. Despite her remorse, Florida eventually comes to realize this. She tells Ferris: ". . . I have thought it over many times, and I know that I was not to blame, though at first I blamed myself. I never intended him anything but good. That is my consolation, Mr. Ferris'" (p. 251). Ferris, however, has no such defense. Notwithstanding all his attempts at self-justification, his role in the affair emerges as a contemptible one. Knowing what he does, his failure to

warn either the priest or the girl is a culpable act--one that attests to his weakness of character and constitutes a betrayal of his friendship with them. By declining to intervene, he leaves the girl vulnerable and unprepared for the priest's disclosures; he helps bring about the painful confrontation between them which might otherwise have been averted and, to this extent, helps precipitate the priest's tragedy.

Any consideration of the roles that Florida and Ferris play in the international situation makes it evident that their attitudes and behavior to Don Ippolito are shaped, not only by their particular personalities, but by their being American. Florida's failure to realize that Don Ippolito is likely to misinterpret her interest in him and Ferris's prejudice against Venetian priests both reflect a lack of understanding on the part of the Americans for the European qua European.

What is unusual about the international situation depicted in A Foregone Conclusion, however, is the fact that Don Ippolito is not a typical European. He is a misfit in his society: "He was the albino of his species; a gray crow, a white fly" (p. 82). As a priest, he is regarded with suspicion and distrust by his compatriots and is acutely conscious of being an outcast among them. He tells Florida: "'How could you know what it is to be a priest in this most unhappy city? To be haunted by the strict espionage of all your own class, to be shunned as a spy by all who are

not of it!" (pp. 136-37). At the same time, he is also alienated from other priests. Because of his absorption in his inventions, he is regarded by them as a figure of fun and mocked for his eccentricities. His fellow clerics all "looked with doubt or ridicule upon the labors for which he shunned their company" (p. 43), so that between himself and them, there exists "a reciprocal dislike" (p. 81).

Therefore, when Don Ippolito encounters Ferris and the Vervains, he is pathetically grateful for their friendship. Only subsequently does he discover that the barriers between himself and the Americans are, in spite of everything, impassable. In the garden it finally becomes clear to him that his ignorance of American manners has led him to misconstrue Florida's kindness and sympathy. He realizes too that the priesthood, which serves to isolate him from other Venetians, makes him appear an alien being to the Americans as well.

Ferris admits as much when he tells Florida that, to Protestants, a priest is a man apart: ". . . a priest is a man under sentence of death to the natural ties between himself and the human race. He is dead to us. That makes him dreadful" (p. 154). It is because Don Ippolito is a priest that the consul regards him with suspicion; it is because he is a priest that Florida fails to see him as a man capable of falling in love with her. Even when Don Ippolito ultimately finds peace and forgiveness in the Church during his final illness, his decision to renounce the world and become a Carmelite friar represents his acceptance of

loneliness and isolation as his inevitable fate.

As a consequence of the misunderstandings which occur among Florida, Ferris, and Don Ippolito, all three characters undergo personal crises: Florida is grieved by the pain she has unwittingly inflicted on the priest; Ferris believes that Florida is lost to him; Don Ippolito is left alone in despair. However, since the girl and the consul are eventually reconciled, the Italian emerges as the real victim of the situation. After his final interview with Florida, the priest's predicament is considerably worse than before. He has found new hope, only to lose it. Moreover, Florida's well-meaning intervention in his affairs has made the priesthood seem more abhorrent to him than ever. He tells Ferris: "' . . . it has at last become intolerable to me. I cannot endure it any longer and live. I must go away, I must fly from it'" (p. 186). Yet when he leaves the garden, he does so with the realization that he has no avenue of escape; he is doomed to live out the rest of his life as a priest. His final act of reconciliation to the Church just before his death does resolve his dilemma, but, like the fortuituous meeting between Florida and Ferris in New York, it appears contrived and unconvincing. In his final interview with the priest, Ferris voices misgivings which are shared by the reader: "'I am glad that your mind is at rest concerning the doubts which so long troubled you. Not all men are so easily pacified; but, as you say, it is the privilege of your church to work miracles'" (p. 237). Despite Ferris's cynicism and lack of sympathy for Don Ippolito, his skepticism about the priest's sudden

conversion does seem valid. Howells himself seems to sense that this solution to Don Ippolito's problems is too facile, for at the end of the novel, when he alludes to Ferris's inability to understand Don Ippolito and condemns the American's tendency to dismiss the priest's suffering as largely imagined, it is the tragic futility of the priest's life which the author chooses to emphasize:

Thus lapsing more and more into a mere problem as the years have passed, Don Ippolito has at last ceased to be even the memory of a man with a passionate love and a mortal sorrow. Perhaps this final effect in the mind of him who has realized the happiness of which the poor priest vainly dreamed is not the least tragic phase of the tragedy of Don Ippolito. (p. 265)

The failure of Howells's attempt to make Don Ippolito's suffering redemptive and the passage quoted above both appear to reinforce the notion that the priest is the unfortunate victim of circumstances, albeit circumstances which are not confined to the international situation. Don Ippolito's relationship with Florida precipitates the crisis in his life, but the underlying causes of his tragedy go back to his childhood, when he was first persuaded to enter the priesthood against his natural inclinations, as well as to the time when he was compelled by his uncle to take his final vows despite the fact that he had no real vocation for the priesthood. On the occasion that he first confides his real feelings about the priesthood to Florida, he compares himself to those Venetians who are conscripted by the Austrian government as soldiers: "'I was bound as they are bound, by an inexorable and inevitable law'" (p. 144).

Aware that it is his unhappiness in the priesthood, more than anything else, which has ruined his life, Don Ippolito tells Florida in the garden that she must not blame herself unduly for his suffering: "'Ah, the wrong began many years before we met'" (p. 214). The collapse of his dreams during his final interview with Florida is thus the culmination of a long series of disappointments in a life that has been filled with loneliness, frustration, and despair. At the same time, it gradually becomes evident that the priest's own personality and character are also decisive factors in determining his fate.

There is an important modification in A Foregone Conclusion of the recurrent pattern frequently found in international fiction--for example, in Melville's Redburn, Hawthorne's The Marble Faun, and James's The Wings of the Dove, as well as in numerous other novels discussed in this study. In these works, the dominant theme is the American innocent's encounter with European corruption. In Howells's novel, by contrast, the European and the American girl are both innocents.<sup>146</sup> Don Ippolito's tragedy proceeds then, not from corruption, but from his naivete and lack of worldly experience, traits which he has in common with Florida and which lead him, like her, to commit a serious error of judgment. As he himself acknowledges when he speaks to Ferris about his love for the girl and seeks the consul's advice, he is totally ignorant of such matters: "'I am a man with the passions and hopes of a man, but without a man's experience, or a man's knowledge of what is just and

right in these relations'" (p. 194). Therefore, even though Florida is guilty of inadvertently misleading Don Ippolito and Ferris of refusing to intervene in the situation in order to prevent the confrontation between the priest and the girl, Don Ippolito himself is also responsible for what occurs in naively assuming that Florida's interest in him is proof that she reciprocates his feelings.

Don Ippolito's innocence and inexperience are traits which make him vulnerable. Howells points out, for example, that, "He was of a purity so blameless that he was reputed crack-brained by the caffè-gossip that in Venice turns its searching light upon whomever you mention . . ." (p. 82). A child-like, gentle person, he is a dreamer who is sustained by illusions that take little cognizance of the real world.<sup>147</sup> His idealization of America is one such instance. On the occasion of his first visit to Ferris, it immediately becomes apparent that, although he has long dreamt of going to America, he is totally ignorant about that country. His vision of America, which he regards as a land of unbounded promise and opportunity--"a land where the spirit of invention is recognized and fostered" (p. 45)--is extremely naive:

He pinned his faith in all sorts of magnificent possibilities to the names of Franklin, Fulton, and Morse. . . . Heaven only knows what kind of inventor's Utopia, our poor, patent-ridden country appeared to him in those dreams of his. . . . (pp. 44-45)

As he confides to Ferris, America represents to him all "my hopes, my desires, my prayers'" (p. 183).

Although Don Ippolito's plans to immigrate to America

eventually prove abortive, he continues to maintain his illusions about that country to the end of the novel. Florida's own naive faith that he will prosper in America encourages his hopes, and his optimism is further reinforced when he is told by another Venetian that his friend has become rich in New York by working as an artisan in marble. Even when Ferris attempts to warn him that he is doomed to bitter disappointment and probable starvation in America, since few inventors ever manage to overcome the many obstacles to success, he refuses to be dissuaded.

Don Ippolito's dreams about America can be seen as analogous to his image of Florida. Just as he refuses to acknowledge the existence of any difficulties or defects in that country, so, too, he fails to recognize any of the flaws of temperament which Ferris observes in the girl. From the first, the priest regards Florida "with a sort of . . . wonder" (p. 64) and, to him, she embodies physical and spiritual perfection: he asks whether any man can be in the company of "'so divine a flower and not know her grace, nor inhale the fragrance of her soul, nor adore her beauty?'" (p. 191). His view of Florida is poetic, romantic, and idealized; but his inability to see her as she really is is one of the factors that, together with his ignorance of American manners, leads to his misunderstanding of her behavior.

Because he is a dreamer, impractical and ignorant of the world, Don Ippolito is a man who is ill-equipped to cope with the realities of life. When he first visits Ferris,

it is for the purpose of obtaining a passport to America, but he has no idea that he first requires permission and papers from the Austrian authorities; nor does he have the faintest notion of how to cope with the practical details involved in immigrating to the United States. The extent of his actual preparation for going there has been to teach himself English, so that subsequently, when he is in the Vervains' company, he observes their manners carefully: Ferris notes "how anxiously he studied the ways of these Americans, and conformed to them as far as he knew" (p. 77).

Moreover, unaware of how many of his countrymen have attempted to gain entry to the United States by offering their services to the Union cause in the current Civil War, he suggests to Ferris that his talents as an inventor would be useful to the federal government in what he erroneously refers to as its war with South American Spaniards. Indeed, he proudly shows the consul a model of a breech-loading cannon which he has designed to hold an explosive in the breech chamber so that it will blow up if captured by the enemy. When he examines the priest's invention, Ferris's impatience turns to amusement and, finally, to an unwilling compassion. Indicating that the explosive in the chamber is liable to get so heated that it would probably explode prematurely and injure the artilleryman rather than the enemy, he asks Don Ippolito if he has actually had any practical experience of artillery. With shame and mortification, the priest concedes that he has not. He tells the consul:

"It was the wish to produce something of utility which set me about this cannon. Those good friends of mine who have done me the honor of looking at my attempts had blamed me for the uselessness of my inventions; . . . they said that even if they could be put in operation, they would not be what the world cared for. Perhaps they were right. I know very little of the world," concluded the priest sadly. (p. 12)

Don Ippolito's inventions are the passion of his life. Despite his poverty, he starves himself in order to save part of the meager stipend which he receives from the Church to finance his work. However, like the cannon, none of his creations, ingenious as they are, has any utilitarian function. When Ferris visits the priest's rooms and examines the many inventions and mechanical devices, he is aware of the painstaking effort and patience and ingenuity that have gone into their devising, but he perceives, too, that all are flawed in some way:

It seemed to him that they all . . . had some fatal defect: they were aspirations toward the impossible, or realizations of the trivial and superfluous. Yet, for all this, they strongly appealed to the painter as the stunted fruit of a talent denied opportunity, instruction, and sympathy. . . . (pp. 50-51)

Don Ippolito himself confirms Ferris's opinion of his work when he admits to Florida that he is a man who is prone to failure:

"Some ban seems to have rested upon whatever I have attempted. My work,--oh, I know it well enough!--has all been cursed with futility; my labors are miserable failures or contemptible successes. I have had my unselfish dreams of blessing mankind by some great discovery or invention; but my life has been barren, barren, barren. . . ." (p. 144)

Don Ippolito's notion that his efforts are doomed by some ban or curse, like his belief that his inability to leave the priesthood is the result of some inexorable fate, shows his tendency to regard himself as a passive victim of circumstances beyond his control. Yet despite the pathos of his situation, the sense of failure and futility that characterizes his life is the concomitant of his own personality traits. The disappointment of his hopes and dreams is due, at least in part, to their impracticality; and the reason that his plans and efforts constantly prove to be abortive may be attributed to the fact that he lacks the force of will and the strength of purpose to carry them out. Although it is true that his uncle exerted pressure on him in his youth to remain in the priesthood, it is no less true that his own weakness of character made him submit to that pressure. He admits to Florida that on the occasion that he attempted to leave the seminary, his inability to do so was due, not to actual coercion, but to his realization that he was not qualified to earn his living in any other way. In the circumstances, he lacked the courage to take action.

The conjunction of Don Ippolito's weakness of will and Florida's well-intentioned interference in his life proves disastrous since, when her support is withdrawn, his newfound hopes for the future simply collapse. Despite his many years of frustration and unhappiness as a priest, he is actually more or less resigned to his fate until he meets Florida. It is only when she urges him to take

practical steps to renounce the priesthood that he finally decides to do so. Even at this point, aware of the many obstacles confronting him, he is easily discouraged, but her resolution overrides all his objections. He admits to Florida: "' . . . at the bottom of my heart I am afraid that all the hopes and courage I have are . . . yours'" (p. 207). Mrs. Vervain also notices that, for all his avowed intention to leave the priesthood and earn his living as an inventor in America, he seems indecisive and unsure of himself. She tells Ferris: "'He's so enthusiastic about it, and yet he breaks down every little while, and seems to quite despair of the undertaking. But Florida won't let him do that; and really it's funny, the way he defers to her judgment . . .'" (p. 203). When Mrs. Vervain subsequently discovers that Don Ippolito has changed his mind about going to America, she knows nothing of the reasons for his decision. However, her comments to her daughter provide an unexpectedly discerning assessment of his character:

"I am not in the least surprised, not the least in the world. I thought Don Ippolito would give out, all along. He is not what I should call fickle, exactly, but he is weak, or timid, rather. He is a good man, but he lacks courage, resolution. I always doubted if he would succeed in America; he is too much of a dreamer. . . ." (p. 217)

In portraying Don Ippolito as he does, Howells presents a European at variance with the usual type found in international fiction. Neither sophisticated nor corrupt, Don Ippolito is an innocent and, like Florida, is put at a disadvantage because of his naivete and lack of worldly

experience. Even the criticism of Don Ippolito that is implied in Howells's allusions to his weakness of will and to his failure as both an inventor and a priest cannot be attributed to his being a European, since Ferris is shown to have similar shortcomings. Yet, although A Foregone Conclusion diverges from the typical pattern found in the nineteenth century international novel, Howells does emphasize the failure of communication between the Americans and the European; he alludes to the differences of manners and outlook that pervade Don Ippolito's relationships with Florida and Ferris, focusing on the misunderstandings that such differences seem to make inevitable.

In the preceding analysis of the factors that constitute the "international" aspect of A Foregone Conclusion, the Italian setting has not been considered because it has little direct impact on either the relationships or the situation dramatized in the novel and because its primary function appears to be to provide a picturesque background. However, the attitude to the Old World conveyed by Howells is worth noting briefly within the context of international fiction.

That this attitude is an ambivalent one soon becomes apparent. Howells alludes to the natural beauty of Venice, giving an evocative description of the city in springtime: "The spring, which in Venice comes in the softening air and perpetual azure of the heavens, was renewed . . . in all its miraculous loveliness" (p. 99). On the outskirts of the city, ". . . the air was full of the vague sweetness of the

perfect spring . . ." (p. 100). Yet, here, where the air was "almost languorously warm" (pp. 24-25), Howells adds that, ". . . the rich, sweet breath of the vernal land mingled its odors with the sultry air of the lagoon" (pp. 109-110). And in the garden of the Vervains there is an "opulence of leaf and bloom" (p. 100). Although the description of the pastoral loveliness of the city and the surrounding countryside is idyllic, there is also a suggestion that the languorous, perfumed air and the sultry heat are somehow oppressive. The imagery used is that of season renewal, but the fecund vegetation and lush richness of nature are over-ripe; they convey an atmosphere of incipient decay lurking beneath the beauty of the scene.

This dualism is reinforced by the physical appearance of Venice, where even ". . . in the motionless splendors and rich colors of the scene there was a melancholy . . ." (p. 25). In the city's magnificent ruins and relics of antiquity--the symbols of its past--beauty and decay co-exist. When Ferris and Florida make an excursion to the Villa Pisane, a Renaissance palace, Howells describes the houses along the canal which they pass on their journey:

Some of the villas were kept in a sort of repair; some were even maintained in the state of old; but the most showed marks of greater or less decay, and here and there one was falling to ruin. They had gardens about them, tangled and wild-grown; a population of decrepit statues in the rococo taste strolled in their walks or simpered from their gates. . . . (p. 101)

Yet, it is precisely this aspect of the city which most appeals to Ferris, who delights in the fact that Venice is

"so rich . . . in picturesque dilapidation" (p. 103). As an artist, Ferris deplores the singular lack of such inspiration in America, telling Florida that, "It's pretty hard on us Americans, and forces people of sensibility into exile" (p. 103). However, when he is moved "to sigh longingly over the wicked past" (p. 104), Florida disagrees with him, emphatically rejecting the Old World, with its corrupt past, for the New. Her assessment of the past in this scene is exclusively moral, that of Ferris exclusively aesthetic. Florida's judgment is admittedly severe and limited, but Howells does suggest that Ferris's aestheticism is, in turn, tainted. In replying to the girl's criticism of the past, Ferris himself admits: ". . . I'm a painter, and the rococo is my weakness" (p. 105). His appreciation of the "supreme excess of the rococo" (p. 104), a style which, represented as it is in this scene by the grotesque statues in the ruined gardens of the villa, is thus associated with the decay and decadence of the past, shows a defective aesthetic taste which is consistent with the lack of artistic talent that he displays throughout the novel.

Eventually, even Ferris comes to recognize the tainted aspects of the Italian past and the insidious atmosphere of decay that pervades Venice. On the day that Corpus Christi is celebrated, he contrasts the somber Venetian religious observance to the joyous festivity that characterizes national holidays in America, perceiving instinctively that the ritual of the Old World has connotations of death while that of the New World is a celebration of life. As he watches

the religious procession, he realizes that, for all its beauty and splendor, this spectacle somehow symbolizes the moribund quality of Venice itself. He tells Florida:

"There's something extremely melancholy to me in all this. . . . It's phantasmal. It's the spectral resurrection of old dead forms into the present. It's not even the ghost, it's the corpse, of other ages that's haunting Venice. . . ." (pp. 163-64)

The view of Italy which is expressed by Ferris has certain obvious parallels to that of Hawthorne. Ferris's nostalgia for the wicked past as a source of artistic inspiration and his regret that it is lacking in America are sentiments which are also recorded by Hawthorne in his Italian Notebooks. Moreover, just as Ferris describes the ancient religious ceremony he witnesses on Corpus Christi as an embodiment of the dead forms of the past, so, too, Hawthorne refers to the oppressive weight of tradition, although he attributes this to Italy's long accretion of sin and guilt, a factor that is not dealt with by Howells in A Foregone Conclusion.<sup>148</sup>

The criticism of Italy that is implicit in Ferris's comments on its past is even more overt in Howells's presentation of other aspects of Italian society. Although Ferris regards Venetians with tolerant amusement, he takes their dishonesty and duplicity for granted and is well aware that their dealings with foreigners are frequently quite unprincipled. Mrs. Vervain comes to similar conclusions quite early in the novel, when she complains to Ferris of having been cheated, but she is more perturbed by the situation than

Ferris is. She tells the consul:

" . . . I'm always afraid the gondoliers cheat us; and in the stores I never feel safe a moment--not a moment. I do think the Venetians are lacking in truthfulness a little. I don't believe they understand our American fairdealing and sincerity. I should n't want to do them injustice, but I really think they take advantages in bargaining. Now such a thing even as corals. Florida is extremely fond of them, and we bought a set yesterday in the Piazza, and I know we paid too much for them. . . . I'm sure we were cheated."  
(pp. 21-22)

In this context, Mrs. Vervain is shown as a veritable stereotype of the American tourist abroad: she is a woman who shows a characteristic American distrust of foreigners but who, with her good nature and kind heart, is easily taken advantage of. Again, when Mrs. Vervain rents an apartment in Venice, she discovers from Ferris that she has been grossly overcharged. Nevertheless, the consul recommends her landlord because, as he tells her, the Italian is "'a man of excellent feeling . . . and a perfect gentleman, though he is such an outrageous scoundrel'" (p. 57). He adds: "'He'll cheat you, of course, in whatever he can . . . but he'll do you any sort of little neighboring kindness'" (p. 57). Ferris's remarks to Mrs. Vervain make it clear that the man's dishonest practices are common among Venetians and that she must learn to accept such behavior as inevitable as long as she resides in Venice. Thus, although these trivial incidents are treated lightly by Howells, the contrast that Mrs. Vervain makes between American moral standards and Venetian ones is shown to be a valid observation.

Howells's most trenchant criticism of Venice in A Foregone

Conclusion is, however, directed to the prevailing political situation. At the time, Venice is under Austrian rule, and there are several minor incidents in the novel that emphasize the tyranny and despotism of the Austrians. As the American consul, Ferris soon discovers that the Austrian authorities make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for prospective immigrants to the United States to acquire the necessary papers. Severely restricted in their movements, Venetian citizens are deprived of the freedom that every American naturally claims as his birthright.

On one occasion, when Ferris, the Vervains, and Don Ippolito return from a day of sightseeing, they are detained for several hours because their gondoliers, falsely accused of stealing a length of rope, are interrogated by Austrian officials. During this incident, Mrs. Vervain is indignant: ". . . They need never tell me again that the Austrians are tyrants" (p. 112). Even Ferris shares her feelings: "Ferris felt outraged by the trumped-up charge against them" (p. 113). It is only his official position which finally facilitates their departure. On the same evening, their boat also runs aground in the shallows near armed Austrian sentries, and the frightened gondoliers tell Ferris that a fisherman was shot and killed there only a few weeks before. When the travelers, unable to proceed as commanded, arouse the suspicions of the Austrians, the danger is averted only because Don Ippolito jumps in the water and finally succeeds in pushing the boat off, and Florida, who speaks German, is able to explain their predicament to the sentries.

The final reference to Austrian rule that is of particular significance is made by Ferris, while watching the religious procession described earlier. Gazing at the Austrian troops who are present on this occasion, Ferris tells Florida that they are harbingers of death: "' . . . their trade is murder. In a minute, if a dozen men called out, 'Long live the King of Italy!' it would be the duty of those soldiers to fire into the helpless crowd'" (p. 166). Ferris's comment follows directly his allusion to the procession as a spectacle of old dead forms representing the corpse of the past. The imagery of death associated with the past thereby fuses with that of the present to emphasize the taint that is found in Venice, notwithstanding all its external beauty.

Howells's references to Venice are admittedly only incidental to the central concerns of the novel. Yet, by accentuating the contrast between Austrian tyranny and American democracy, between Italian dishonesty and American morality, and between the sense of the past that permeates the Old World and the concern with the present that characterizes the New, he does suggest that the polarity of the two cultures is both basic and irreconcilable.

## Chapter 8.

A Fearful Responsibility

In A Fearful Responsibility (1881), the contrast between American and European manners once again provides the central theme of the work. As in A Foregone Conclusion, Howells focuses his attention on the social and cultural barriers that separate the American and the European, emphasizing the lack of genuine communication between them. Thus, although A Fearful Responsibility is a minor work, little known and stylistically flawed, it is of interest both in its own right and because Howells's preoccupations in depicting the American's experience in Europe recur in James's international novels of manners.

The plot of the novella deals with the abortive romance between an American girl and a European: Lily Mayhew encounters an Austrian officer in Venice; he professes his love for her; she rejects him. This would seem to represent a paradigmatic international situation were it not for the fact that, in this instance, the relationship is impeded and thwarted from the outset. For despite the manifest mutual attraction which the two young people initially feel towards each other, the disparate social conventions that regulate their behavior prevent any natural friendship from developing between them. Instead, the irreconcilable differences in their respective manners and mores alienate the American and

the European from one another, lead to mutual misunderstanding, and make the failure of their relationship inevitable. That these differences are, in themselves, apparently trivial ones only enhances the irony and absurdity of the situation. The question of whether the American girl and the Austrian officer could really have achieved a successful marriage is deliberately left ambiguous by Howells, but the unknown potential of their relationship--what, in other circumstances, might have been--echoes suggestively throughout the work.

Like Florida Vervain and Daisy Miller, Lily Mayhew conforms to the basic prototype of the American girl found in so many nineteenth century international novels. Like them, she is young and innocent, with a "simple, fresh, wholesome loveliness."<sup>149</sup> Her surname suggests springtime (the hue of May) and her first name, like theirs, evokes the image of a flower; in appearance, too, she is described as "blooming as a rose" (p. 39). Moreover, in her first meeting with the European, her behavior, like that of Florida and Daisy, reveals her ingenuousness and her impetuous nature, as well as her unfamiliarity with European mores--attributes that are distinctively American. Finally, her resemblance to Daisy Miller is also reinforced by the fact that she initially appears to be gay and frivolous and prepared to indulge in a light-hearted flirtation without thought of the consequences.

The girl first encounters the European on her way to begin a visit to the Elmores, American friends of her family who are temporarily residing in Venice. The meeting is not

described directly but is recounted by Mrs. Elmore to her husband after Lily has confided to her that, while traveling on the train, she attracted the notice of a young Austrian officer who subsequently engaged her in conversation. Lily frankly acknowledges that, on learning of his interest in America, she spoke to him quite freely without any notion of the possible impropriety of doing so. Only later, when she has become familiar with the strictness of European social conventions, does she recognize that her conduct was open to misinterpretation and could even be considered indiscreet:

". . . I suppose I talked very freely with him-- just as freely, as I should with an American. I did n't know any better. He was very interesting, and I was homesick, and so glad to see any one who could speak English. I suppose I was a goose; but I felt very far away from all my friends, and I was grateful for his kindness. . . ." (pp. 84-85)

When Mrs. Elmore is questioned by her husband as to whether Lily encouraged the Austrian, she defends the girl's behavior: "'It was all in the simplicity and innocence of her heart!'" (p. 35). She reminds him that, as a young American girl, Lily is innocent, inexperienced, and ignorant of European conventions: "' . . . I don't wish you to think that Lily has been imprudent, under the circumstances. She does n't know that it is anything out of the way . . .'" (p. 37).

It is obvious to Mrs. Elmore that the young officer was attracted to Lily; nor is there any doubt in her mind that the girl reciprocated his interest. To Mrs. Elmore, this is all quite natural, for she is aware that Lily is accustomed

to the freedom and gaiety and easy conviviality of social life in a small American town where there is an endless round of visits, picnics, parties, and dances: "'She has come here from a country where girls have always had the best time in the world . . . '" (p. 64). Considering Lily's meeting with the Austrian in this context, Mrs. Elmore quite sensibly observes: "'Of course, it was very exciting and very romantic; girls like such things, and there's no reason they should n't'" (p. 37).

Possessed of a decidedly romantic temperament herself, Celia Elmore evidently shares this attitude. Displaying a natural, if foolish, propensity for match-making, she even shows signs of wishing to encourage the affair. Despite the unconventional circumstances of their encounter, Mrs. Elmore is favorably disposed to the officer. From Lily's description of him, the Austrian, a captain in the engineering corps, appears to be a personable young man, amusing, charming, intelligent, and very attractive--"'a splendid officer . . . tall and handsome and distinguished-looking . . .'" (p. 32). She is also inclined to believe that his admiration for Lily is sincere. She insists to her husband that, according to the girl's account of the incident, "' . . . he was a perfect gentleman in everything'" (p. 34). Owen Elmore, however, disagrees.

The juxtaposition of the attitudes displayed by Celia and Owen Elmore on this issue represents the clash of two sets of mores and is of crucial importance in the work, all the more so because Lily herself never openly divulges her

real feelings towards the young officer but allows her behavior to be guided by the Elmores. The outcome of the affair is therefore determined largely by the decision as to which cultural attitudes should prevail in governing Lily's conduct--American or European ones. Mrs. Elmore, accustomed like Lily to the easy informality of social life in Patmos, a small American town, assesses the situation as an American. Frankly indifferent to European opinion, she sees nothing very wrong in either the Austrian's behavior or in Lily's acceptance of his attentions. By contrast, her husband regards the whole incident in the context of European manners, which are regulated by a code that emphasizes the rigid observance of certain forms of decorum. Thus, despite the two women's insistence that the officer's manners were impeccable, he feels that the young man has taken an unwarranted liberty in approaching an unmarried girl without being formally introduced.

The disagreement between husband and wife over the propriety of Lily's meeting with the Austrian officer and their opposing attitudes towards European convention are closely related to their different feelings about Europe itself. Owen Elmore is strongly attracted to Venice, to Italian civilization, and to the Old World. A professor at a small American college, he has taken a year's leave of absence in order to begin the book on the history of Venice that he has long dreamed of writing. With his scholarly temperament and enthusiasm for the art and antiquity of Venice, he is completely absorbed by his research into what

he regards as "the great and beautiful history of the city" (p. 18).

Unlike her husband, Celia Elmore is bored by her enforced residence in Venice, finding nothing in that city to engage her interest. Warm-hearted, sociable, but essentially frivolous, she is unable to appreciate the aesthetic appeal of Italian civilization and is uncomfortable in the company of the somber Venetians whom she has met. When their visit finally comes to an end, she is frankly delighted to return home, for she sorely misses the life in America to which she is accustomed:

. . . she never even tried to believe that the life they saw in Venice was comparable to that of their little college town at home, with its teas and picnics, and simple, easy social gayeties. There she had been a power in her way; she had entertained, and helped to make some matches: but the Venetians ate nothing, and as for young people, . . . their matches were made by their parents on a money-basis. She could not adapt herself to this foreign life; it puzzled her, and her husband's conformity seemed to estrange them, as far as it went. It took away her spirit, and she grew listless and dull. . . . (pp. 12-13)

In addition to his interest in the city's noble past, Elmore admires the Venetians for political reasons and, as an American, feels it his duty to sympathize with their desire for freedom and with their hatred of their Austrian oppressors. He states this point of view quite explicitly: "It would be a sort of treason to associate with the Austrians. We owe it to the Venetians to let them see that our feelings are with them" (p. 10). On one occasion, when a young Austrian lieutenant happens to visit them and

Mrs. Elmore discovers that his company is very much more congenial than that of the Venetians whom she finds so tiresome, Elmore worries about the consequences of the Austrian's presence in their home: "Elmore was troubled at the lieutenant's visit, and feared it would cost them all their Italian friends; but she said boldly that she did not care . . ." (p. 12).

It is evident from Elmore's remark that his refusal to mix socially with Austrians is due, not only to his dislike of their tyranny, but to his desire to avoid being ostracized by his Venetian acquaintances. It is this same curious mixture of political principles and concern for Venetian opinion that influences his attitude to the Austrian captain whom Lily has met. In discussing the affair with his wife, Elmore admits as much: "'You understand what the consequences would be if we received this officer. You know how all the Venetians would drop us . . .'" (p. 36). Mrs. Elmore's insistence that this possibility does not worry her attests less to her courage than to her discovery that the Venetians whom her husband so admires are, to her, tedious company. Yet ironically, despite the divergence of opinion between the Elmores on this subject, Elmore is, in reality, no less alienated from the Venetians than his wife. When he finally leaves Italy, he discovers that he has formed no real friendships with any of them, and even his history of Venice eventually proves to be unsuccessful.

Nevertheless, like Ferris in A Foregone Conclusion, Elmore's judgment is influenced by the European attitudes

which he has acquired: his awareness of the impropriety of the officer's conduct, in terms of European standards, and his dislike of Austrians, in general, serve to prejudice him against the man from the outset. Even so, his wife's initial comments about Lily's encounter on the train evoke no more than moderate disapproval. When she insists that, ". . . I don't see any harm in it; do you Owen?" (p. 33), he replies: "'It is n't according to the custom here; but we need n't care for that. Of course it was imprudent'" (p. 33).

It is only when Mrs. Elmore subsequently mentions the Austrian's wish to see Lily again, alluding to the young man's intention of staying over a day in Venice in the hope of meeting her somewhere, that Elmore grows angry at what he regards as the man's impertinence:

"It's a piece of high-handed impudence!" cried Elmore. . . . "He thinks he can take any liberty with us because he is an Austrian officer! Lily must not stir out of the house to-morrow. . . . And if he molests us further, I will appeal to the consul. . . ." (p. 35)

When his wife protests that the young man's actions can hardly be termed molesting, and that there is, after all, no reason to be rude to him, Elmore is disturbed by the implications of her remarks: "'Why, Celia, one would think that you approved of this man's behavior,--that you wished her to meet him again!'" (p. 36). In this suspicion, Elmore proves to be correct, but his wife is not prepared to overtly disregard his wishes.

Elmore's disapproval of the Austrian's conduct and his consciousness of "the fearful responsibility" that he has

assumed for the girl's welfare during her visit make him resolve to prevent any further contact between Lily and the officer. Mrs. Elmore, however, refuses to sanction any unnecessary restrictions on the girl's freedom:

"We must manage . . . so that she shall see that we . . . trust in her entirely. I would n't do anything to wound her pride or self-confidence. I would rather send her out alone tomorrow. . . . And if I were with her when she met him, I believe I should leave it entirely to her how to behave."  
(p. 37)

This indeed proves to be the case. Although Elmore wishes Lily to remain at home on the following day, his wife deliberately contrives to arrange a shopping expedition with the girl, and in the course of their excursion, the two women are approached by the Austrian officer.

The reactions of Celia and Owen Elmore to this second episode confirm the differences in their attitudes, and the disagreement between them is worth examining:

"Owen, what is there so wrong about it all? He's clearly fascinated with her; and as the matter stood, he had no hope of seeing her or speaking with her except on the street. Perhaps he did n't know it was wrong,--or did n't realize it."

"I dare say."

"What else could the poor fellow have done? . . . I think he acted very naturally. He acted upon impulse. I'm sure you're always crying out against the restraints and conventionalities between young people, over here; and now when a European does do a simple, unaffected thing--"

Elmore made a gesture of impatience. "This fellow has presumed upon your being Americans--on your ignorance of the customs here--to take a liberty that he would not have dreamed of taking with Italian or German ladies. He has shown himself no gentleman."

"Now there you are very much mistaken, Owen. . . . He is a gentleman; but--he is desperate."

"Oh, indeed!"

"Yes," said Mrs. Elmore, shrinking a little under her husband's sarcastic tone. "Why, Owen," she pleaded, "can't you see anything romantic in it?"

"I see nothing but a vulgar impertinence in it. I see it from his standpoint as an adventure to be bragged of and laughed over at the mess-table and the caffè. I'm going to put a stop to it."

Mrs. Elmore looked daunted and a little bewildered. "Well, Owen," she said, "I put the affair entirely in your hands." (pp. 47-48)

There are several points of interest which emerge in this passage. It is clear that, as before, the divergence of opinion between the Elmore's about Lily's relationship with the young Austrian is due to the different criteria of judgment adopted by each. Considering the situation in terms of American mores, Celia Elmore insists that the officer is a gentleman--polite, respectful, and deferential--in spite of his unconventional behavior. In contrast to his wife, Owen Elmore assesses the Austrian's conduct in the light of European social conventions. To him, the officer's apparent impertinence in accosting Lily in the street is an inexcusable breach of decorum, incontrovertible proof of the baseness of his motives. In both cases, however, the Elmore's tend to cast the Austrian in a stereotyped role and fail to see him as an individual. Thus, to Celia Elmore, he appears to be the hero of a fictional romance, made desperate by love, while to her husband, he emerges as a blackguard and a villain. At this point, there is no conclusive evidence to corroborate either opinion; but although Mrs. Elmore is undoubtedly a rather silly, sentimental woman, Howells also suggests that Owen Elmore is not being completely fair.

Elmore himself acknowledges this possibility after he enlists the aid of the American consul and is assured that, if the Austrian continues to pursue Lily, the military governor will be informed about the affair. Reconsidering the situation in retrospect, Elmore even concedes that, after all, his wife's judgment may have been correct; he recognizes that he may have misconstrued the Austrian's motives:

Since it could be terminated without difficulty and without scandal . . . he was not unwilling to see a certain poetry in it. He could not repress a degree of sympathy with the bold young fellow who had overstepped the conventional proprieties in the ardor of a romantic impulse. . . . Perhaps the officer had inferred from Lily's innocent frankness of manner that this sort of approach was permissible with Americans, and was not amusing himself with the adventure, but was in love in earnest. (p. 51)

In the light of this admission, Elmore's subsequent behavior is far from admirable. Despite his willingness, when he believes the episode to be over, to concede the possibility that the Austrian's feelings may be sincere, he is considerably less generous in his appraisal of the officer when the young man attempts to initiate a correspondence with Lily. Moreover, although he is undoubtedly sincere in his desire to protect the girl's reputation, it is evident that there is also another factor involved.

Elmore is happily married, and he shows no sign of being jealous of the officer's attentions to Lily, but nonetheless, there is an egoism, a subtle love of power attributed to him which taints his motives:

. . . he was sensible of a sort of pleasure in the novel responsibility thrown upon him. Few men at his age were called upon to stand in the place of a parent to a young girl, to intervene in her affairs, and to decide who was and who was not to pretend to her acquaintance. (p. 51)

This trait is also alluded to earlier when Elmore first learns of Lily's impending visit: "He found a charm in the thought of having this fresh young life here in his charge . . ." (p. 18). At this point, Elmore's attitude appears to be no more than that of a teacher who looks forward to acquainting the girl with the beauty and history of Venice, but gradually, as he takes charge of her private life, he assumes a more serious kind of responsibility.

At the same time, Howells deliberately makes Elmore's position a difficult one. When Lily receives a love-letter from the Austrian shortly after their encounter in the street, Mrs. Elmore advises the girl to show it to her husband, with the result that both women proceed to transfer the whole onus of responsibility for dealing with the affair to him: "It appeared to him that the willingness of the ladies to put the affair in his hands had not strongly manifested itself till it had quite passed their own control, and had become a most embarrassing difficulty . . ." (p. 55).

When Elmore questions Lily about what she wishes him to do about the matter, the girl merely seeks his advice, requesting him to tell her what she ought to do. Elmore makes no attempt to exercise any overt pressure on her, but he does make it clear that, by European criteria, the officer's conduct is "'totally irregular'" (p. 55). He tells her that

the Austrian would never think of writing to a European girl in this manner, insisting that if he wanted to correspond with her, he would write to her father first. Rejecting his wife's suggestion that the young man may well think that this is the American way, despite the fact that he has himself previously acknowledged such a possibility, he creates an unmistakable impression that the Austrian's actions imply a lack of respect for Lily. Therefore, even though he leaves the actual decision of whether or not to continue the correspondence entirely in the girl's hands, protesting that he will not undertake any action without her express authority, his manifest disapproval of the man makes Lily's predicament an exceedingly awkward one. Whatever regrets she may have, her pride obliges her to concede that, "'I should think it a liberty for an American to write to me in that way after such a short acquaintance, and I don't see why I should tolerate it from a foreigner, though I suppose their customs are different'" (p. 56). Notwithstanding her wistful hope that Elmore may be wrong in his assessment of the situation, she instructs him to write to the officer, informing him that she wishes to terminate their acquaintance.

In response to his wife's protest that his note is "'a cold, cutting, merciless letter'" (p. 58), Elmore, exasperated by his wife's interference and sick of the whole affair, asks her how she would propose to deal with the situation:

"Do you like this clandestine sort of thing to go on? I dare say the fellow only wishes to amuse himself by a flirtation with a pretty American. But the question is whether you wish him to do so. I'm willing to lay his conduct to a misunderstanding

of our customs, and to suppose that he thinks this is the way Americans do. I take the matter at its best; he speaks to Lily on the train without an introduction; he joins you in your walk without invitation; he writes to her without leave. . . . It is all perfectly right and proper, and will appear so to Lily's friends when they hear of it. But I'm curious to know how you're going to manage the sequel. Do you wish the affair to go on, and how long do you wish it to go on?" (pp. 58-59)

In the circumstances in which Elmore is placed, his indignation at this point does seem justified. Unwilling to take the Austrian's good intentions on trust, he finds no real evidence to disprove his assertion that the man is only amusing himself at Lily's expense. His assumptions regarding the officer's motives are completely consistent with what appear to be the facts of the case. Moreover, not only do his actions have Lily's explicit approval, but even Mrs. Elmore reluctantly and regretfully acknowledges, at this stage, that the affair must be terminated.

Yet the ambiguities of Elmore's motives are apparent when he finally sends the letter he has written on Lily's behalf. Although Elmore's belief that he is acting in Lily's best interests is undoubtedly sincere, Howells points out that his resentment of the young man's conduct is due, at least partially, to the annoyance which it has caused him and once again alludes to Elmore's enjoyment of the power that he holds as the final arbiter of the officer's fate:

He carried it himself to the general post-office that there might be no mistake and no delay about it; and a man who believed that he had a feeling and tender heart experienced a barberous joy in the infliction of this pitiless snub. I do not say that it would not have been different if he

had trusted at all in the sincerity of Captain Ehrhardt's passion; but he was glad to discredit it. A misgiving to the other effect would have complicated the matter. But now he was perfectly free to disembarass himself of a trouble which had so seriously threatened his peace. . . . I will not contend that his motives were wholly unselfish. No doubt a sense of personal annoyance, of offended decorum, of wounded respectability, qualified the zeal for Miss Mayhew's good which prompted him. He was still a young and inexperienced man, confronted with a strange perplexity: he did the best he could, and I suppose it was the best that could be done. At any rate, he had no regrets. . . . (pp. 60-61)

However, many years later, regrets do trouble Elmore, all the more so because, after rejecting Captain Ehrhardt's subsequent proposal of marriage, Lily then proceeds to refuse three other young men whom she meets during her stay in Venice--a European, an Englishman, and the American consul. On her return to America, she resumes an apparently active social life, but the Elmore's observe that she neither flirts with young men as she used to nor marries. For this, Elmore eventually comes to blame himself. Tormented over the years by a painful awareness that he has probably committed an irreparable wrong, he reproaches himself for the error which seems to have ruined the girl's life: ". . . I was meanly scared for my wretched little decorums, for my responsibility to her friends, and I gave him no chance'" (p. 159). His wife denies that this is the case, reminding him that in the final instance he has merely carried out Lily's own wishes. The narrator also notes: "In fact, Elmore's regret did reflect a monstrous and distorted image of his conduct. He had really acted the part of a prudent and conscientious man; he was perfectly justifiable at every step . . ." (p. 162).

Nonetheless, the reader is left with the knowledge that Elmore's self-reproach is at least partially justified, even though Lily finally marries a clergyman and appears to be happy.

Whatever Elmore may have done to discourage Lily's relationship with Captain Ehrhardt in its earlier stages, his attitude undergoes a radical change when the Austrian replies to his note of dismissal with a proposal of marriage to Lily. The captain's letter compels Elmore to reassess the whole situation and to frankly acknowledge how greatly he has misjudged the other man: "'This is the letter of a gentleman. . . . It puts another complexion on the affair completely . . .'" (p. 74). That the Austrian is really in love with Lily can no longer be doubted. Yet even when Elmore withdraws his objections to the young man, it soon becomes evident that the fundamental differences between American and European manners remain unresolved.

Insofar as Elmore has previously condemned the Austrian's conduct because it violated European proprieties, the young man's proposal of marriage serves to reassure him that the officer's intentions are honorable. Ironically, however, Captain Ehrhardt's attempt to rectify matters by resorting to European conventions of behavior rather than American ones creates a new, insuperable difficulty for Lily. The Austrian's proposal shows an impeccable observance of all the formalities of European decorum which are so important to Elmore; but Lily, taken aback by the seriousness that the

affair has suddenly assumed, is unwilling to abandon the American mores to which she is accustomed, unable to conform to European customs which are alien and unnatural to her.

Celia Elmore foresees the difficulties of the girl's dilemma as soon as her husband shows her the Austrian's letter. She maintains that, even if Lily is in love with Ehrhardt, she will undoubtedly refuse him because she is simply too young and inexperienced to know her own mind after such a short time: "'She liked the excitement,--the romanticality of it; but she does n't know any more than you or I whether she cares for him. I don't suppose marriage with anybody has ever seriously entered her head yet'" (p. 76). Protesting that the American way of courtship is so much more sensible than the European one, she suggests that Ehrhardt be invited to visit Lily without the girl being told about his proposal so that they can become properly acquainted. Elmore rejects this possibility as unthinkable, asserting that, unfamiliar as the Austrian is with American mores, he would be bound to misunderstand their actions. It is clear to Elmore that the captain expects a definite answer to his proposal. Celia Elmore is eventually persuaded to accept her husband's judgment on the matter, but she blames the officer's impatience for ruining his chances: "'Of course, she won't have him now. She will be scared, and that will be the end of it'" (p. 77).

Mrs. Elmore's prediction proves to be correct. Even though Lily is obviously reluctant to dismiss Captain Ehrhardt, she is given no viable alternative when Elmore

indicates that, in all fairness, the proposal of marriage should either be accepted or rejected: he tells her that the Austrian "' . . . would consider himself cruelly wronged if you accepted his attentions without the distinct purpose of marrying him'" (p. 82). Lily informs Elmore that, in these circumstances, she must refuse Ehrhardt. Yet, when asked by Elmore whether she is quite certain about her decision, she does concede that the real difficulty is due to the fact that she must choose between either one of the two alternatives. Uncertain about her real feelings, she is not ready to commit herself to marriage on the basis of so short an acquaintance. Showing a surprising degree of maturity and common sense, she tells Elmore:

"I saw so many girls being carried away by their feelings when the first regiments went off [at the beginning of the Civil War] that I got a horror of it. I think it's wicked: it deceives both; and then you don't know how to break the engagement afterward." (p. 81)

For all that Elmore now attempts to be scrupulously fair in his presentation of Ehrhardt's case, he is not inclined to persuade Lily to accept him. Convinced that a marriage between an American girl and an Austrian officer offers very little chance of happiness for the girl, he also feels obliged to warn her of the difficulties inherent in any international marriage:

"I have seen something of international marriages since I've been in Europe," he said. "Sometimes they succeed; but generally they're wretched failures. The barriers of different race, language, education, religion--they're terrible barriers.

It's very hard for a man and woman to understand each other at the best; with these differences added, it's almost a hopeless case." (p. 83)

However, Elmore does concede that if Lily really loved Ehrhardt, this would outweigh everything else. It is the girl herself who dismisses this possibility. Insisting that she has never dreamed that the affair would lead to marriage, she heatedly denies Elmore's suggestion that she could possibly be in love with the captain: "'But I'm not!'" cried the girl. 'How could I be? I've only met him twice. It would be perfectly ridiculous . . . '" (p. 84). Even though her distraught state seems to call into question the credibility of her declaration, she refuses to reconsider her decision.

In spite of his own relief, Elmore is not fully convinced by Lily's emphatic denial. Nor is his wife able to clarify the issue either way. Elmore never learns the truth about Lily's real feelings for Ehrhardt, but Howells's deliberate use of ambiguity in this situation seems to suggest that the answer to the question is largely irrelevant. The course of the girl's relationship with the Austrian is determined, not by their feelings, but by social conventions: Ehrhardt's conduct is criticized by Elmore when he approaches Lily in the informal manner that he evidently believes to be acceptable in American society; he is rejected by Lily when he adheres to the formal decorum that is prescribed by European society. In the first instance, Lily is prevented from meeting the captain because he has not treated her with the same deference and respect that he would show a European

girl; in the second instance, she is unable to become properly acquainted with him because, when he does treat her like a European girl, he expects a commitment that an American suitor would not. Even if Lily does love Ehrhardt, she has no real alternative but to dismiss him in view of the conditions implicit in his letter. However honorable the terms of his proposal may be, the girl finds them impossible to accept as an American.

It should also be noted that Lily is curiously passive about the affair throughout most of the novella. Despite her initial spontaneity in speaking to the young officer on the train, her behavior in Venice, after she comes to live with the Elmore's, is quite different. Whether because she herself is unsure as to what Captain Ehrhardt's motives really are or whether because, aware of her own inexperience, she is unwilling to reject Elmore's guidance, she lacks the independence to deliberately defy the European social conventions that prevent her from becoming further acquainted with the Austrian. It is true that she does refuse to submit to the European mode of courtship by declining to become engaged to a man she hardly knows, but nonetheless, unlike Daisy Miller, she neither asserts her own freedom of behavior nor insists that American mores be allowed to govern the situation. To this extent, however understandable her motives, she is partly responsible for the outcome of events.

There is one final encounter between Lily and Captain Ehrhardt which should be examined--that which occurs in Venice at a masked ball shortly after the girl has refused the Austrian's proposal of marriage. On this occasion, Lily is invited to dance by a masked officer who, in the course of their conversation, gravely reproaches her for her previous behavior to him. Although Lily insists that she has never seen him before, her partner denies this but disappears before the unmasking. He reappears only briefly, still masked, to bid her farewell and ask her forgiveness.

Even though Lily offers no comment about the identity of the unknown officer when she subsequently recounts the incident to the Elmore's, it is obvious to all of them that the man is Captain Ehrhardt. Elmore is angered by the Austrian's behavior: "'A man capable of contriving a petty persecution of this sort--of pursuing a young girl who had rejected him in this shameless fashion--is no gentleman.'" (p. 140). He reverts to his original opinion of the captain, thereby revealing a complete lack of sympathy and understanding for the other man's feelings.<sup>150</sup> Yet what he regards as pursuit and persecution is more probably a last desperate gamble on Ehrhardt's part to discover the nature of Lily's real feelings towards him. Elmore also fails to perceive that the curt letter of rejection which he wrote on Lily's behalf has not only destroyed Ehrhardt's hopes and wounded his pride, but has confirmed the Austrian's own misconceptions about the Americans' behavior.

The episode at the masked ball is of particular interest

because it presents the relationship between Lily Mayhew and Captain Ehrhardt from an altered perspective, reversing their previous roles: in this instance, it is the European who judges the Americans and criticizes their conduct. From Ehrhardt's point of view, each time that he has given proof of the sincerity of his feelings for Lily, his overtures have been callously rebuffed. Aware of Elmore's contempt for Austrians, he attributes the same attitude to Lily. When the girl asks his identity while she is dancing with him, he rebukes her by saying: "' . . . why should you wish to know me? If you met me in the Piazza, you would not recognize my salutation. . . . Your compatriot, with whom you live, wishes to be well seen by the Italians, and he would not let you bow to an Austrian'" (p. 134). Indignantly protesting that he is mistaken, Lily accuses him, as Elmore has done previously, of amusing himself at her expense, only to have him direct this same accusation at her: "'And have you never amused yourself with me?'" (p. 136). It is evident that, in Captain Ehrhardt's eyes, Lily has only been indulging in a flirtation that does not involve any serious emotions; to him, her behavior is proof of her coldness and apparent lack of feeling. He tells her, rather bitterly: "'I have studied the American manner. . . . In America they take everything coolly: life and death, love and hate--all things'" (p. 135). The fact that the Austrian has, in turn, misinterpreted the girl's behavior merely serves to intensify the irony of the situation, thereby confirming the extent of the misunderstanding between them.

Moreover, the setting of the final meeting between Lily and Ehrhardt is itself significant. The elaborate and artificial rituals of the masked ball given by a Russian aristocrat can be seen to correspond to the formal manners and code of decorum characteristic of upper-class European society. Even the masks, which are one of the prescribed conventions of the ball, serve to emphasize the element of disguise, the concealment of identity; they attest to the inability of the girl and the officer to recognize each other's real nature. Indeed, Captain Ehrhardt tells Lily that, even when she wears no mask, she is a mystery to him. The masks are thus symbolic: in this context, they suggest the many barriers of language, custom, and culture that distort the American's and the European's perceptions of one another and lead to their final alienation. Howells also seems to indicate that, in the circumstances in which the girl and the officer find themselves, any relationship between an American and a European is doomed to failure. However strong the mutual attraction that draws them together, the disparity of manners and mores creates an impassable barrier between them so that their differences cannot be reconciled.

The awareness of all this is conveyed by Howells to the reader, but Lily Mayhew and Captain Ehrhardt never fully comprehend the factors that have kept them apart. Like the Elmores, Lily leaves Europe essentially unchanged by her experiences abroad: they produce no enlightenment or growth or reassessment of values. She does seem sobered and less

frivolous on her return home. She may even suffer silent regrets about rejecting Ehrhardt's proposal even though she eventually marries an American some years later and, in doing so, finds what Elmore would regard as her proper sphere of fulfillment. Nevertheless, for all that Howells refuses to make the episode in Venice into a tragedy, he does evoke a poignant sense of the unfulfilled promise of the youthful romance between the American girl and the Austrian officer.

## Chapter 9.

The Lady of the Aroostook

The social and cultural differences which separate the American and the European are dramatized in some detail in both A Foregone Conclusion and A Fearful Responsibility,<sup>151</sup> but in these works, as in Indian Summer, Howells is not concerned with the polarity of moral values between the two societies--the theme that is so central to the international fiction of both Hawthorne and James.<sup>152</sup> It is because of its uniqueness in this respect that The Lady of the Aroostook (1879) has been included for consideration in this study despite its weaknesses. Technically, the work as a whole does not fulfill the definitive criteria of an international novel: the plot describes the romance between two Americans; there is no real interaction between American and European characters; and all but the last third of the novel is set aboard an American ship bound for Europe. It is the presentation of the international situation in the last six chapters, however, which is of particular interest, for The Lady of the Aroostook is the only instance in which Howells, like James, juxtaposes American innocence and European worldly experience; it is the only novel in which Howells portrays the contrast of manners between American and European societies in terms of an underlying conflict of morals.

In some respects, Lydia Blood appears to be an unconventional American heroine. Unlike the lovely, blonde, blue-eyed, feminine stereotype who so frequently represents the idealized American girl in nineteenth century international fiction, Lydia's beauty is rich, foreign, and exotic. Dark-haired and black-eyed, she is Italian-looking in appearance. The contrasting symbolic attributes of the blonde and brunette women in nineteenth century American fiction are by now well known.<sup>153</sup> In this context, it is interesting to note that Howells, too, alludes to the element of suppressed passion in Lydia's nature. This trait, which is emphasized by the surname "Blood," is also manifested in the girl's singing. When Staniford admires the wonderful richness of her voice, he recognizes "the quality of latent passion in it which . . . thrilled him when she sang."<sup>154</sup> Yet this latent passion is transmuted by the inviolable purity which Lydia possesses into what John W. Crowley terms a "chaste sexuality."<sup>155</sup> It would thus appear that the passionate nature attributed to Lydia by Howells is intended to designate a vitality and capacity for intense feeling rather than an overt sensuality.

This aspect of the girl's personality is sharply contrasted to her self-control and apparent coldness. For Lydia, displaying the native reticence of the New Englander, is both proud and reserved. Although she is a young girl from a small, provincial Massachusetts village, she has a poise and an innate dignity that are perhaps due in part to the fact that she has been a school-teacher. As an

orphan who has known poverty, she has learned self-reliance at an early age. Certainly, she is no frivolous or flirtatious American girl intent on amusing herself in Europe.

At the same time, Lydia does display the distinctive innocence which she has in common with James's Daisy Miller, a character to whom she has frequently been compared,<sup>156</sup> and which has virtually become the definitive characteristic of the American girl in international fiction. Despite her poise, she is unsophisticated; despite her intelligence and independence, she has no experience of life or society outside her isolated New England village. Lydia's character is gradually defined in the course of her journey to Europe, but there are two experiences, in particular, which reveal her naivete and lack of worldly knowledge.

The first is her unusual situation as the only woman aboard the ship. Even though her predicament is a potentially awkward one for a sheltered young girl, Lydia shows no visible signs of embarrassment. This response may be attributed in part to her natural dignity and self-possession, but her failure even to perceive the irregularity of her traveling alone on a ship with male passengers, officers, and crew is the direct consequence of her fundamental innocence: "She did not seem to find herself strangely placed, and her presence characterized all that was said and done with a charming innocence" (p. 108).

The fact that Lydia is made to feel that there is nothing exceptional in her situation is also due to the deference and respect which the men on the Aroostook

unfailingly display towards her: ". . . she was . . . the centre about which the ship's pride and chivalrous sentiment revolved. They were Americans, and they knew how to worship a woman" (p. 95). Their behavior is shown by Howells to reflect typically American mores and, as such, subsequently provides an important standard of comparison to European manners. However, until her arrival in Venice, Lydia remains totally ignorant of the differences in the respective conventions regulating American and European societies.

Lydia's relationship with Staniford also serves to confirm her innocence and inexperience. Staniford is an attractive, eligible, young bachelor who is another passenger on the Aroostook. Displaying all the refinement of a wealthy, well-educated Bostonian of distinguished family, he is a gentleman, and like the American heroes in Cooper's The Two Admirals and Hawthorne's Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, is undoubtedly meant to be seen as the equal of the upper-class European. In contrast to Lydia, Staniford is cultured and well-traveled; he has also acquired a considerable degree of sophistication and worldly experience.

Although Staniford is displeased to find an unmarried young girl aboard the ship, he recognizes Lydia's innocence from the outset. Commenting on the unusual circumstances of her situation, he observes to a friend that, ". . . this girl is plainly one of those cases of supernatural innocence, on the part of herself and her friends, which . . . would n't occur among any other people in the world but ours'" (p. 57). Aware that Lydia is both unsophisticated and inexperienced,

he finds her tiresome at first, and his manner to her is aloof and patronizing. He is amused by her provinciality, in particular:

"I'm really curious to know what a girl of her tradition thinks about the world when she first sees it. Her mind must be in most respects an unbroken wilderness. She's had schooling, of course . . . but she can't have had any cultivation. . . ." (pp. 82-83)

Yet among all the men on the ship, Staniford is the one who is most conscious of the girl's potential. Despite her lack of polish, he observes: "'Give that girl a winter among nice people in Boston, and you would never know that she was not born on Beacon Hill'" (p. 72).

Staniford constantly attempts to categorize people and to classify them into types. Thus, Lydia gradually begins to intrigue him, all the more so when he finds her unresponsive to both his irony and his flattery and realizes that she appears to dislike him. As he comes to know her better, his attitude undergoes a transformation. He discovers that it is her very innocence which is the source of her charm: "He felt . . . that he must protect this helpless loveliness . . ." (p. 102). He perceives the girl's moral goodness and is touched by it. As he tells his friend, she seems to him to be "'a breath of fresh-air . . . a taste of spring water'" (p. 224). The imagery he uses suggests freshness and purity, and it is this quality--the extent to which Lydia is completely unspoiled and uncorrupted--that most appeals to him.

In addition, it gradually becomes obvious to Staniford

in the course of his acquaintance with Lydia aboard the ship that the girl is quite innocent about men. Initially, in fact, he finds her behavior misleading:

Staniford had begun to have a disagreeable suspicion that her ready consent to walk up and down with a young man in the moonlight might have come from a habit of the kind. But it appeared that her fearlessness was like that of wild birds in those desert islands where man has never come. The discovery gave him pleasure out of proportion to its importance. . . . (p. 123)

By the end of the voyage, Staniford acknowledges that he has fallen in love with Lydia.

Lydia reciprocates Staniford's feelings and, despite the fact that she has only met him for the first time aboard ship and actually knows very little about him, displays complete trust in his judgment and his integrity. She never doubts that his intentions towards her are honorable, not even when he leaves the ship without proposing marriage. Her assessment of his character does prove to be correct, but, in the circumstances, her behavior can be seen as further proof of her naivete.

Paradoxically, it is Staniford's awareness of this that leads him to act as he does. Unlike Lydia, he is fully cognizant of the irregularity of their relationship in terms of European social conventions. As a consequence of his familiarity with European manners, he knows that in European society young people are strictly chaperoned and not permitted to meet alone. Scrupulous in his observance of the gentleman's code of honor and determined not to take unfair advantage of

Lydia's innocence, Staniford resolves to protect the girl's reputation by conforming to European standards of propriety. He therefore deliberately refrains from proposing marriage to her until she is in the care of her aunt. Attempting, at the same time, to shield Lydia from all knowledge of the irregularity of her situation, he does not disclose his motives for acting as he does.

It is only when she arrives in Venice that Lydia discovers, for the first time, the differences between American manners, as exemplified aboard the Aroostook, and European ones. She is confronted with what Harry F. Arader terms the "contrast between the natural morality and trusting innocence of the American traveler and the artificial mores and sophistication of the older society."<sup>157</sup> At this point, she becomes aware that her situation aboard the ship and her relationship with Staniford are both open to misinterpretation.

It is Lydia's aunt who introduces the girl to the European notion of propriety. On learning that her aunt has accompanied her to church even though she feels unwell, Lydia asks her why she did not let her come alone. Mrs. Erwin's reply astonishes the girl:

"Come alone? To church!" Mrs. Erwin addressed her in a sort of whispered shriek. "It would have been perfectly scandalous."  
 "To go to church alone?" demanded Lydia astounded.  
 "Yes. A young girl must n't go anywhere alone."  
 "Why?"  
 "I'll explain to you, sometime, Lydia; or rather you'll learn for yourself. In Italy it's very different from what it is in America." (p. 256)

Informing her niece that an unmarried girl in Europe is not ever permitted to go anywhere without a chaperone, Mrs. Erwin tells her that to flirt would absolutely ruin a girl's reputation, and that, in Venice, it is considered improper for a girl to walk arm in arm with a young man even if she is engaged to him.

Profoundly disturbed by her aunt's disclosures, Lydia suddenly realizes that Staniford may have misconstrued her willingness to accept his attentions and assessed her behavior in the light of European mores. She begins to question the sincerity of his motives so that, when he fails to appear on the date that he has promised to visit her, she concludes that he has merely been amusing himself by flirting with her. She confides her disappointment to her aunt: "'Oh!' she moaned. 'He has been in Europe, too, and I suppose he's like the rest of you; and he thought because I was alone and helpless he had the right to-- Oh, I see it, I see now that he never meant anything . . .'" (p. 283).

In this, Lydia proves to be mistaken, but since Staniford's letter of explanation to Lydia is inadvertently mislaid, the situation is not resolved until some time later when he finally appears and tells her that his visit has been delayed because a friend was injured in an accident. At this point, he proposes marriage to Lydia and is accepted.

In the course of the conversation with her aunt about European notions of propriety that is cited above, Lydia also acquaints Mrs. Erwin with the fact that she was the only woman aboard ship. On hearing this news, Mrs. Erwin

is profoundly shocked: "Mrs. Erwin fell back on her pillow, and remained gazing at Lydia with a sort of remote bewildered pity, as at perdition not indeed beyond compassion, but far beyond help" (p. 281). She tells her niece quite unequivocally that, in terms of the codes and conventions that regulate European society, her reputation would be irretrievably damaged if the circumstances of her journey ever became known in Venice. With her newly acquired knowledge of European manners, the girl understands the reason for her aunt's reaction, but she defends the conduct of the American men on the Aroostook, insisting that it was, in fact, more honorable than that of the supposedly civilized Venetians whom she has met to date. She tells her aunt:

"Oh, I know what you mean, aunt Josephine, but two days ago I could n't have dreamt it! From the time the ship sailed till I reached this wicked place there was n't a word said nor a look looked to make me think I was n't just as right and safe there as I had been in my room at home. They were never anything but kind and good to me. They never let me think that they could be my enemies, or that I must suspect them and be on the watch against them. They were Americans! I had to wait for one of your Europeans to teach me that. . . ." (pp. 282-83)

It is evident from Lydia's remarks that her encounters with members of Venetian society have conferred perforce a certain degree of worldly knowledge on her since her arrival in Europe such a short time ago. Nevertheless, even when she perceives the contrast between American and European mores, the girl's refusal to accept the validity of the European point of view constitutes a conscious choice of innocence over sophistication and cynicism, of what is

"good" and "right" over what is "wicked."

The critical attitude which Lydia adopts towards Venetian society is markedly different from that of her aunt, and the contrast between the two women accentuates the juxtaposition of American and European modes of behavior. Josephine Erwin, having lived abroad since her marriage to an Englishman many years before, has become thoroughly Europeanized. She herself recognizes this when she is consulted by Lydia about Staniford. Refusing to advise her niece in any way, she tells her: "'I might have advised you when you first came; but now, I--Well I think I've lived too long in Europe to be of use in such a case . . .'" (p. 307).

Mrs. Erwin is portrayed by Howells as a good-natured, warm-hearted but silly woman, a type similar to that of Mrs. Vervain in A Foregone Conclusion. Her preoccupations are frivolous and her values superficial. In her attempt to ingratiate herself into Venetian society, she has completely rejected American customs and slavishly adapted herself to European ways. She readily acknowledges to her niece that she is resolved to follow the fashions of Venetian society, to observe its proprieties, and to adhere punctiliously to its prevailing manners and mores. She tells Lydia, with considerable satisfaction: "' . . . the European ways did n't come natural to me, at all. . . . [But] I determined that no Englishwoman I ever saw should outdo me in strict conformity to all the usages of European society'" (p. 277). Even though she detests the English and her

husband likes and admires her own countrymen, she has deliberately cut herself off from other Americans abroad, choosing to mix in Venetian and expatriate English circles. The reason that she gives Lydia for having done so is an amusing one but curiously naive in its own way--her conviction that it is a matter of national pride "to beat them with their own weapons on their own ground,--to show them that an American can be more European than any of them, if she chooses!" (p. 278).

Her determination to disprove the notion of American inferiority to the European is one that recurs repeatedly in early international fiction. Yet Mrs. Erwin fails to perceive that, whereas Lydia's refusal to accept the Europeans' assessment of her conduct frees her from their hegemony, her own attitude, ironically enough, makes her completely subservient to them. Her behavior constitutes a tacit admission that her own self-esteem is dependent on European approval, all the more so in that her actions are constantly motivated by her desire to impress the English and the Venetians, even in trivial matters. For example, the reason that she proposes taking Lydia to church with her is to display the girl before the eyes of Venetian society. She tells her niece quite frankly that, "'There will be more people there to-day than any other time this fall'" (p. 251). However, she also informs her niece, in all seriousness, that the girl had better not go at all than wear a hat instead of a bonnet, a breach of fashion that would instantly make her recognizable as an American.

Mrs. Erwin's acceptance of the standards of Venetian society and Lydia's rejection of them represent the two irreconcilable extremes of the nineteenth century American's response to Europe. Although Howells offers no direct comment on the validity of either point of view, there is considerable evidence throughout the novel to support Lydia's conclusions. Moreover, it is interesting to note that at the end of the novel, Mrs. Erwin and her husband decide to leave Venice and make their home in San Francisco, an action which reveals their final preference of America over Europe.

When Lydia is obliged to decide whether or not to conform to European mores, the girl, unlike her aunt, firmly asserts the dictates of her own conscience and repudiates what she regards as the worldly, hypocritical values of Venetian society. It is obvious to Lydia that the European rules of decorum, which her aunt accepts without question, are concerned primarily with the superficial appearance of things. Attributing their own base motives to others as a matter of course, the Europeans' code is based on a cynical indifference to real virtue so long as the convenances are observed. From her vantage point as an outsider, Lydia perceives that, beneath its polished and fashionable façade, Venetian society is unquestionably immoral. To her, its sophistication is a veneer which serves to conceal its inner corruption.

Among her glimpses of Venetian society, the beautiful Countess Tatocka appears to Lydia to be typical. She and her aunt see the countess and a young man in a gondola

just after Mrs. Erwin has spoken to Lydia about the strictness of European notions of propriety. Alluding to the countess and to the Neopolitan artist who is accompanying her, Lydia's aunt comments on their relationship:

"He's dead in love with her, they say."  
 "Are they engaged?" asked Lydia.  
 "Engaged!" exclaimed Mrs. Erwin. . . . "Why, child, she's married!"  
 "To him?" demanded the girl, with a recoil.  
 "No! To her husband."  
 "To her husband?" gasped Lydia. "And she"--  
 "Why, she is n't quite well seen even in Venice," Mrs. Erwin explained. "But she's rich and her conversazioni are perfectly brilliant. . . ."  
 "Do you go to her house?" Lydia inquired stiffly.  
 "Why, as a foreigner, I can go. Of course, Lydia, you can't be as particular about everything on the Continent as you are at home." (pp. 256-57)

Ignoring Mrs. Erwin's final comment, Lydia strongly condemns the countess's behavior, making it clear that she herself would have nothing to do with such a woman. In fact, the girl's allusion to Europe as a "wicked place" in the passage quoted earlier is the direct consequence of her encounter with the countess and with the other members of the European *élite* to whom her aunt has introduced her. Lydia insists that all of them seem to be guilty of some kind of immorality, far worse than any breach of decorum that she herself may have inadvertently committed by traveling alone on the ship. She tells her aunt:

"Oh, I see how my coming the way I have will seem to all these people! . . . I know how it will seem to that married woman who lets a man be in love with her, and that old woman who can't live with her husband because he's too good and kind, and that girl who swears and does n't know who her father is, and that impudent painter, and that officer who thinks he has the right to insult

women if he finds them alone! I wonder the sea does n't swallow up a place where even Americans go to theatre on the Sabbath!" (pp. 282-83)

To Lydia, the Europeans' conduct is so wicked and sinful that Venice appears to her to be a veritable Sodom.

Lydia's remarks make it clear that, in judging Venetian society, the criteria which she employs are exclusively moral ones. It should be noted, however, that admirable as her ideals may be in themselves, her sweeping indictment of Venetian society is undoubtedly harsh and puritanical. For example, on the occasion that her aunt proposes attending an opera on a Sunday night, Lydia is shocked at the idea and refuses to go. In expressing her disapproval, she reveals an aspect of her character that is rather cold and repellent: "There was something appalling in the girl's stern voice. . . . Lydia said nothing, but a hard look came into her face, and she shut her lips tight" (pp. 261-62). From her response and her remarks in the passage quoted above, it is evident that, to her, adultery and the failure to observe the Sabbath are sins of almost the same magnitude.

Predictably, Lydia's attitude is utterly incomprehensible to her easy-going aunt. Taken aback by the intensity of the girl's reaction, she attempts to reassure her:

"Lydia, Lydia. It is n't so bad as it seems to you," pleaded her aunt, thrown upon the defensive by the girl's outburst. "There are ever so many good and nice people in Venice, and I know them, too,--Italians as well as foreigners." (p. 283)

She protests that, even among those whom Lydia has condemned, two of the women regularly practice charity to the aged and

the poor. She also points out that, on the Continent, Sunday is considered over after the morning service. There is certainly some justification for Mrs. Erwin's arguments. Although Lydia is upset about Staniford's failure to visit her when she speaks to her aunt, and this makes her denunciation of Venetian society more heated than it might otherwise be, her comments reveal an aspect of her character that has already become apparent earlier aboard the ship.

Lydia's innocence and unworldliness are reinforced by an absolute moral purity--a trait that leads her to regard human behavior naively and simplistically in terms of black and white and prevents her from recognizing any area of gray between the two. In this respect, her resemblance to Hilda in The Marble Faun is a striking one. Moreover, like those of Hilda, Lydia's values tend to be rigid and uncompromising; they reflect a narrow, unassailable sense of rectitude that, for all its virtue, lacks charity and compassion.

Her inability to condone human failings first becomes evident on the voyage to Europe at the time of the incident involving Hicks, one of the other passengers. Hicks is an unfortunate young man who has been taken aboard by the captain as a favor to his father. An alcoholic, he manages to remain sober during most of the voyage, but at the first port of call, he goes off to buy liquor and indulge in a bout of drinking. The next morning, when he appears drunk, Lydia sees him, and the disgust and abhorrence she feels towards him never abate thereafter:

Lydia had never relented in her abhorrence of Hicks since the day of his disgrace. There seemed no scorn in her condemnation, but neither was there any mercy. In her simple life, she had kept unsophisticated the severe morality of a child, and it was this that judged him, that found him unpardonable and outlawed him. . . . (p. 197)

Lydia judges Staniford by the same moral criteria. On the occasion that he heroically jumps overboard to rescue Hicks when he falls into the sea, Lydia tells him that he could have done no less, that his actions were what she would have expected of him. Staniford recognizes that this is intended as praise of his character, but he finds himself awed by "that lofty air" (p. 213) she breathed and tells her frankly that hers is a "'pitiless Puritan conscience . . .'" (p. 214).

The standards that Lydia applies to Hicks and to Staniford are the same ones that she applies to the Europeans whom she encounters. Yet despite the severity of Lydia's moral principles, it should be noted that, up to a certain point, her assessment of Venetian society is corroborated by Staniford, a more sophisticated and impartial observer. As a consequence of his previous travels abroad, Staniford is well aware of the differences between the Old World and the New. When he becomes acquainted with Lydia on the ship and perceives the extent of her innocence--a trait that he recognizes to be generically American--he wonders, from the first, how the New England girl will be able to adapt to Europe: "From South Bradford to Venice,--what a prodigious transition. It seemed as if it must transfigure her" (p. 107).

In the course of the voyage, an incident occurs to

confirm Staniford's opinion that Lydia's naivete and inexperience are bound to place her at a distinct disadvantage in worldly European society. When the ship calls at Messina, Lydia is invited to go ashore by the well-meaning captain, who leaves her to wait in a church while he conducts his business. Recounting her experience to Staniford subsequently, Lydia tells him that people stared at her. Thus, although the girl herself was shocked when a woman in Messina approached Staniford and flirted with him, thereby causing Lydia to express moral condemnation of her unseemly conduct, the American girl fails to realize that, in European eyes, her own situation that day was equally reprehensible. Staniford does not divulge the truth to Lydia, but it is obvious to him that the girl violated European decorum by appearing unchaperoned in public. He already knows what Lydia discovers for herself when she arrives in Venice--namely, that modesty and virtue count for little in European eyes if the appearance of propriety is not preserved: "He was ashamed to know that the beautiful young girl was as improperly alone in the church as she would have been in a café, and he began to hate the European world for the fact" (p. 209).

The distaste for European attitudes which Staniford expresses in this passage serves to validate Lydia's own subsequent criticism of Venetian society. Moreover, although Staniford is sophisticated and worldly enough to be more tolerant than Lydia of human failings and is, at the same time, able to appreciate the culture and refinement

of European society, he has no illusions about the morality of its values; he is fully cognizant of the degree of licentiousness found in what he, like Lydia, alludes to as "'the wicked Old World'" (p. 128). He predicts, in fact, that Lydia's lofty moral ideals will inevitably be brought into conflict with the decadent values of European society:

What would she do with these ideals of hers in that depraved Old World,--so long past trouble for its sins as to have got a sort of sweetness and innocence in them--where her facts would be utterly irreconcilable with her ideals, and equally incomprehensible? (p. 216)

Insofar as Staniford's comment also implies that Lydia will be put at risk when exposed to these values, it would appear that her experiences in Europe constitute a test of her character. As it turns out, Lydia is neither compromised nor corrupted by European society. She does acquire a certain degree of worldly knowledge, but her own moral integrity remains intact. During her visit to Venice, she makes no effort whatsoever to adapt to Venetian society or to court its approval, though paradoxically, as her aunt observes, she possesses precisely those qualities which would enable her to be accepted into the most fashionable Venetian circles--beauty, style, poise, and an apparent hauteur. In spite of this, she refuses the opportunity that is offered to her and, dissociating herself from European society, rejects its standards of success as absolutely as she repudiates its moral criteria.

Lydia's decision is of particular interest in the light of her original motive for going to Europe. Having

grown up in an isolated and provincial New England village with her aunt and grandfather, she is aware that her family regards Mrs. Erwin's invitation to come to Italy as a splendid opportunity for her. Initially, at least, Europe is envisioned as a cultured and civilized world that holds out great promise for the girl, as it does for Isabel Archer in The Portrait of a Lady.

To the extent that Lydia's transatlantic voyage can be regarded as an initiation into the world of experience from which she has previously been sheltered, her journey becomes a figurative as well as a literal one, a rudimentary version of those journeys undertaken by Melville's Redburn, Hawthorne's Hilda, and James's Isabel Archer and Milly Theale. With respect to the American attitude to European society presented by Howells, the international situation portrayed in the novel resembles, in varying degrees, those depicted in Fay's Norman Leslie and James's international fiction. In this sense, Howells, like James, fuses two of the major motifs discussed in this study--namely, the American in European society and the American's encounter with European corruption. Certainly, the episodes of the work which are set in Europe are those of an international novel of manners. Yet Lydia's naivete and inexperience, together with the moral purity which is so integral a part of her character, place her in the tradition of the American innocent whose confrontation with the cynical, worldly values of European society leads to the discovery that, beneath its brilliant surface, there is an insidious moral decay. The contrast

of manners between American and European societies in The Lady of the Aroostook is thus transformed into a juxtaposition of their respective moral values; and the disparity between innocence and sophistication, naivete and worldliness, honesty and hypocrisy, and virtue and decorum is shown to represent the polarity between the moral idealism of the New World and the decadence of the Old.

At the end of the novel, shortly after Lydia and Staniford are married, they leave Venice for America, an act which can be seen as symbolic. Staniford's decision, with which Lydia is in full accord, to go to California and start a ranch there further emphasizes their repudiation of European values. Their choice of the rural American frontier and what John W. Crowley calls "a pastoral ideal in California,"<sup>158</sup> so radically different from Venetian society in every way, confirms their commitment to the ideals of the New World and attests to their disillusionment with the civilization of the Old.

Part IV.

The American's Encounter with European Corruption

## Chapter 10.

## Selected works by Cooper, Melville, and Parkman

The American attitudes to Europe which are expressed in nineteenth century international fiction are frequently ambivalent, even though this fact is sometimes disclosed by the author rather than by any particular character. On one hand, Americans are drawn to the Old World by their yearning for a sense of the past which their own country lacks, and they are attracted to Europe by their appreciation of its civilized qualities--its aesthetic, cultural, and social advantages. At the same time, one of the most persistent themes recurring throughout nineteenth century international fiction is the American's perception that Europe is, to some degree, corrupt. The contrast between the American and the European, which is a definitive characteristic of the international novel, generally reveals an irreconcilable conflict in their respective values. Many of the works considered in this study show a conscious repudiation of European principles and practices on the part of the American for those of his native land, and frequently, this repudiation is made on moral grounds.

What, then, constitutes European corruption in nineteenth century international fiction? And what effect does it have on the American? These questions have been considered in passing in previous sections of this dissertation, but they

are of sufficient importance to warrant investigation in their own right. James's treatment of Europe has already been subjected to extensive analysis by critics, particularly with respect to his exposure of what Dorothea Krook terms "the decadence of the old European aristocracies, with . . . their ripe Old World sophistication issuing in the more insidious varieties of moral corruption."<sup>159</sup> However, the moral assessment of Europe presented by writers such as Fay, Melville, and Hawthorne is also significant, not only because of its influence on the evolution of the international novel as a genre, but because of its integral connection to the mainstream of nineteenth century American fiction.

Before turning to these works, it should be noted that one of the earliest and most fundamental ideological conflicts between America and Europe reflected in international fiction pertains to the inherent differences in their respective social and political institutions. The American traveler's awareness of these differences often led him to criticize the defects of a class structure that was based on an aristocracy of inherited wealth and privilege and of a system of government that, even in England, appeared to him to be autocratic and even tyrannical. Firmly committed as he was to a belief in equality, liberty, and democracy, the native American condemned the injustice of European social, economic, and political practices which violated these principles. The conscious affirmation of the egalitarian ideals of the American republic, where each man is judged by his own talent and merit rather than by his rank

in society is made by Wychecombe in The Two Admirals, Etherege/Redclyffe in Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, and the title character of Paul Fane, and has been discussed earlier. Norman Leslie, Israel Potter, and Redburn are appalled by other aspects of the British and European social systems--particularly the poverty, misery, and oppression of the lower classes--iniquities which they observe and, in the case of Israel Potter, actually experience.

Politically, too, the American's response to Europe is a similar one. Although Howells's repeated allusions to Austrian despotism in A Foregone Conclusion and A Fearful Responsibility have already been cited, there are, in addition, several rudimentary works of international fiction--James Fenimore Cooper's The Wing-and-Wing, Herman Melville's Israel Potter, and Francis Parkman's Vassall Morton--which depict Americans who are actually victims of European tyranny. In these works, Europe is shown primarily in political rather than moral terms, but the abuses proceeding from the arbitrary exercise of power, most notably the violation of individual liberty, which is its natural concomitant, are strongly condemned.

1. The Wing-and-Wing

James Fenimore Cooper's The Wing-and-Wing, or Le Feu-Follet (1842) is a historical novel set in Italy and the Mediterranean during the period immediately after the French Revolution. Primarily a sea-adventure which recounts the exploits of Raoul Yvard, a dashing young French privateer who is captain of Le Feu-Follet, the novel describes Yvard's encounters with the British navy in control of the area and, more briefly, his ill-fated romance with Ghita Caraccioli, an Italian girl.

However, it is Ithuel Bolt, Yvard's second-in-command, who is of particular interest within the context of international fiction. The only American character who appears in the novel, Bolt is an ardent patriot who is proud of his New England origins. His attitude to Europe, in general, is a disparaging one, for he emphatically maintains that his native land is superior in every respect to the countries of Europe: in the course of the novel, he extols the merits of America's political system, its religion, its language, and even its wine.

His motive for joining the French in their struggle against the British is the consequence, not only of his political views, but of his own personal experience of British injustice. Some years before the events narrated in the novel, Bolt was impressed into the British navy,

forcibly detained, and compelled to serve for seven years aboard a British man-of-war. Despite the illegality of this act, it was, as Cooper points out, a common practice during this period. It eventually became one of the major factors leading to the War of 1812 between the United States and Britain. Constantly seeking recruits for their navy, the British, who were empowered by law to impress sailors from British merchant ships, frequently pretended to be unable to distinguish American sailors from British ones.

Bolt has succeeded in escaping from the British ship on which he was imprisoned, but he knows that even though he is an American, he will undoubtedly be hanged as a deserter if ever he is recaptured. Cooper's own attitude to this grave injustice is made explicit:

It may sound revolting, at the present day, to suppose a case in which a foreigner was thrown by violence into the military service of a nation, and then was put in jeopardy of his life, because he used a privilege of nature to fly from such persecution, as soon as circumstances placed the means in his power. The last age, however, 160 witnessed many scenes of similar wrongs. . . .

As a consequence of his impressment, Ithuel Bolt nurses a bitter and implacable hatred of the British. Brooding on "the atrocious wrong" (I, 71) he has suffered at their hands, he can scarcely speak of them without giving vent to an "incoherent tirade of abuse" (I, 62). In particular, he is obsessed by the memory of the Proserpine, the British vessel on which he was imprisoned: "The Proserpine was the bane of this man's life; and he not only

hated every stick and every timber in her, but every officer and man who was attached to her--the king, whose colours she wore, and the nation whose interests she served" (I, 122).

Driven by a desire for vengeance, it is primarily to achieve this end that Bolt volunteers to serve on the privateer under Yvard's command: ". . . he had his clear conceptions of the injustice of which he had been one among thousands of other victims; and . . . he would have held life itself as a cheap sacrifice, could he have had his fill of revenge" (I, 72). Bolt's talents and energies are all directed towards inflicting whatever harm or damage he can upon the British. In pursuit of this aim, he is single-minded and intrepid; and although his obsession is a kind of monomania, Cooper does make it clear that his hatred of the British has ample justification.

Despite Cooper's presentation of Bolt's attitude to the British, it must be emphasized that The Wing-and-Wing is not predominantly an international novel. Not only is Bolt's role in the novel a subsidiary one, but, apart from his personal loyalty to Yvard, there is virtually no interaction at all between the American and the British, French, and Italian characters whom he encounters abroad. Europe merely serves as the setting for a series of adventures in which the American takes part.

Moreover, unlike most of the American protagonists in nineteenth century international fiction, Bolt is deliberately cast in an anti-heroic and anti-romantic mold. He lacks the qualities displayed by Raoul Yvard--daring, élan, and a

highly developed code of honor. Although he is so distinctively American that, even aboard the British ship, he was referred to as "the Yankee," he often seems to be a comic caricature of the type. Tall, lanky, and sinewy in appearance and speaking with a pronounced New England nasal twang, he is an uncouth and inelegant figure, a man who could never pass for a gentleman and is proud of it.

At the same time, it should be noted that Ithuel Bolt conforms in many respects to the traditional prototype of the shrewd Yankee peddler, the folk-hero so popular in American folklore and described at length by Daniel Hoffman, among others.<sup>161</sup> Like the folk-figure, Bolt is cunning and resourceful, though he applies these talents primarily to outwitting the British. An unprincipled and unscrupulous rogue, well-versed in deceit, he has no compunction about lying or fighting the British with every means at his disposal, honorable or not, as shown by "the deceptions he practised on the English and . . . the thousand low inventions he had devised to do them injury" (I, 43). Cooper states quite explicitly that, "A greater knave than Ithuel, in his own way, it was not easy to find . . ." (I, 65). Nevertheless, Bolt has his own peculiar code of honor: ". . . it shocked all his notions of personal dignity, self-respect, and republican virtue, to be . . . unequivocally offered a bribe . . ." (I, 65). He is practical and unsentimental, totally unashamed of his mercenary values and his devotion to his own self-interest; he is incapable of understanding Raoul Yvard's chivalry or finely developed sense of honor or

of appreciating Ghia's love for Yvard or her religious faith. Indeed, it is Yvard, rather than Bolt, who most closely resembles the idealized American hero frequently portrayed in international fiction.

Like most versions of the Yankee peddler, Bolt is also an itinerant jack-of-all-trades, whose common sense and adaptability have enabled him to master a number of professions:

He had been farmer's boy, printer's devil, school-master, stage-driver, and tin-pedlar, before he ever saw the sea. In the way of what he called "chores," too, he had practised all the known devices of rustic domestic economy; having assisted even in the washing and house-cleaning, besides having passed the evenings of an entire winter in making brooms. (I, 52)

He has some knowledge of law and has been a smuggler, a seaman, and a privateer--the last three simultaneously.

Adept at disguise, Bolt also undergoes the requisite series of metamorphoses characteristic of the Yankee peddler and changes trades and identities with the same ease. In this respect he resembles Melville's confidence man, a figure of the same generic type and another descendent of the Yankee peddler. At one point, when he is captured by the British in disguise and his real identity is subsequently discovered, he accounts for his strange garb in the following manner: "'I in disguise. . . . What have I got to disguise? I am an American of different callings, all of which I practise, as convenience demands . . .'" (II, 39). Because of his adaptability, Ithuel Bolt is a natural survivor. Even when Raoul Yvard is killed in battle, Bolt manages to

escape and to elude capture by the British. He reappears in America many years later, calling himself Deacon Bolt and expressing his fervent commitment to religion, temperance, and the abolition of slavery.

Although Bolt cannot be termed a heroic figure, he is engaged in a conflict with the British in which the arbitrary infringement of American liberty is clearly and unequivocally defined by Cooper. To the extent that Bolt, like Israel Potter and Vassall Morton, is shown to be a victim of the injustice which, to many nineteenth century American novelists, characterizes the Old World, this conflict can be seen as a preliminary and rudimentary version of the opposition of American morality and European corruption which constitutes the major theme in more fully developed international fiction.

## ii. Israel Potter

Herman Melville's Israel Potter (1855), based on the autobiographical life of Israel R. Potter,<sup>162</sup> is a historical novel which, like The Wing-and-Wing, is set during the period from 1776 to 1826, a time when the United States's relationship with Britain was particularly problematic. Employing the episodic technique of the picaresque novel, Melville recounts the adventures and vicissitudes of an American patriot who becomes embroiled in the political conflict between the two nations and, as a consequence, acquires first-hand knowledge of British injustice.

Potter's experiences during the American Revolution, when he fights in the colonial army, is wounded, and then volunteers as a sailor, are but a prelude to the subsequent hardships and tribulations which he suffers at the hands of the British. Taken prisoner by the British and transported to England, he eventually succeeds in escaping but is forced to become a fugitive who is hounded and pursued wherever he goes--"Harrassed day and night, hunted from hole to hole like a fox in the woods. . . ."163 Potter finally eludes his captors, only to be impressed, like Bolt, into the British navy. Freed when his ship is captured by an American vessel, he once again finds himself aboard a British ship after another battle at sea. At last, Potter makes his final escape. He disappears in London,

knowing that he is now hunted on two counts--as an American rebel and as a deserter from the British navy.

Nor is Potter repatriated even when the war is over. Unable to pay his passage home, he is compelled to remain in England. By the time he is finally able to secure his own passage, he has a wife and child; he is unwilling to desert his family and unable to pay their fare to America. Only after fifty years of exile in England, at which time the American consul arranges free passage for Potter and his son, does the old man finally realize his dream of returning home.

The animosity that Potter bears towards the British, like that of Bolt, is due in large measure to a personal grievance. As a consequence of his experiences, Potter hates them "Like snakes" (p. 108). He blames the British for their persecution of him, for his many years of misery and suffering, and for his enforced exile. However, Potter's attitude to England is also influenced by political factors. As a patriot dedicated to the cause of American independence, he regards British political doctrine as inimical to the liberty that he so highly prizes. Moreover, his view of the British is reinforced by their contemptible treatment of Ethan Allen, which Potter happens to witness. Allen is an American hero of the Revolutionary War who is captured by the British, transported to England, and, says Melville, subjected to "inexcusable cruelty and indignity" (p. 172). Commenting on this incident, Melville stresses the illegality and immorality of the British position:

". . . the enemy violated every international usage of right and decency, in treating a distinguished prisoner of war as if he had been a Botany-Bay convict" (p. 173).

In the first part of the novel, Potter does have several chance encounters with individual Englishmen who treat him with kindness and decency--the lord who acts as his benefactor when he first escapes, the few sympathizers with the American cause whom he meets, and the shop-girl who nurses him when he is injured in an accident and whom he subsequently marries. For the most part, however, the picture that Melville paints of England in Israel Potter, as in Redburn, is an extremely negative one. Not only does he condemn Britain's arbitrary abuses of political power but, in the last section of the novel, he describes a society where the lower classes are forced to live in the most abject poverty and appalling misery.

In the course of Potter's prolonged sojourn in England, the American has ample opportunity to observe the iniquities of that country at first hand. The latter part of his life is discussed only briefly but most of his time in England is, in fact, spent in the slums of London. The wretched existence that he leads there is one of prolonged and unalleviated hardship, destitution, and suffering. It is a life of degradation and despair: "From the gutter he slid to the sewer. The slope was smooth" (p. 185). His wife bears him eleven children but one after the other, ten of them die, to be followed finally by the unfortunate mother herself.

London, as Melville describes it, presents a striking contrast to the fertile hillsides and pastoral landscape surrounding Potter's rural New England home. It is bleak, ugly, and sordid; it is a city of fog, soot, smoke, mud, and darkness, where the sun is hidden: "The black vistas of the streets were as the galleries of coal mines . . ." (p. 182). Melville also explicitly refers to London as a "City of Dis" (p. 182), whose inhabitants resemble "uninvoked ghosts in Hades" (p. 183). The imagery of Hell and the underworld suggests, not only its vices, but the horror and brutality of life in its lower depths.

Biblical imagery recurs throughout Israel Potter, but it is particularly significant in the last section of the work. Potter's first name is Israel, and his forty years of exile in London are compared by Melville to the wanderings of the Israelites in the wilderness: ". . . what befell Israel during his forty years wanderings in the London deserts, surpassed the forty years in the natural wilderness of the outcast Hebrews under Moses" (p. 183). At the same time, Melville calls this chapter "Israel in Egypt," thereby suggesting that the hardships and suffering that Potter faces during his many years of servitude in London, where one of his various trades is actually that of bricklayer, are analogous to those experienced by the Israelites when they were slaves in Egypt: "Poor Israel! well-named-- bondsman in the English Egypt" (p. 180).

The Biblical imagery thus serves to reinforce the contrast between England and America that recurs throughout

the work. By identifying London with Egypt, Melville makes it clear that that country, in spite of all its wealth and power, is a land of injustice and oppression. By associating Israel Potter, the American who is committed to the cause of liberty, with God's chosen people, Melville suggests that the American republic possesses a moral glory like that of ancient Israel. It is interesting, too, to note that Melville refers to America as "the far Canaan beyond the sea . . . the Promised Land" (p. 189).

The virtues of America are also extolled in the course of the novel by Melville's descriptions of Potter's brief encounters with three American patriots--Benjamin Franklin, John Paul Jones, and Ethan Allen--each of whom embodies a different facet of the American character.<sup>164</sup> Benjamin Franklin shows common sense, practical wisdom, and worldly knowledge. Frugal, industrious, and self-reliant, he is a "homely sage, and house-hold Plato" (p. 58), who is gifted in a variety of pursuits and thus represents a refined version of the shrewd Yankee peddler, the folk-figure whom Israel Potter himself resembles. Melville emphasizes the diversity of Franklin's talents:

Printer, postmaster, almanac maker, essayist, chemist, orator, tinker, statesman, humorist, philosopher, parlor man, political economist, professor of housewifery, ambassador, projector, maximonger, herb-doctor, wit:--Jack of all trades, master of each and mastered by none--the type and genius of his land. (p. 61)

John Paul Jones is an adventurer of English birth who became one of America's most renowned naval heroes. Gallant,

courageous, and daring, and referred to by Melville as "the Coriolanus of the sea" (p. 112), he is a man who declares as his motto: "'I live but for honor and glory'" (p. 70). He is known, above all, for his words to the British commander who, on observing his opponent's badly damaged ship during a battle at sea, asks the American if he is ready to lower his flag and surrender. Melville quotes Jones's reply: "'I have not yet begun to fight,' howled sinking Paul . . . ." (p. 148). Melville notes, too, that Jones then proceeded to destroy the enemy ship.

Ethan Allen, the colonel in the American army who conquered Fort Ticonderoga, is a heroic figure of a different sort. Allen is captured by the British and transported to England to be hanged. Escorted by soldiers and surrounded by a taunting mob when Potter sees him, he is ragged and handcuffed; yet Melville remarks that his "defiant head overshadowed theirs, as St. Paul's dome its inferior steeples" (p. 164). Melville calls this chapter "Samson among the Philistines" and describes Allen as "a martial man of Patagonian stature" (p. 164) whose untamed ferocity is like that of a bull or a tiger or a lion: "Unshaven, beard and hair matted . . . his whole marred aspect was that of some wild beast; but of a royal sort, and unsubdued by the cage" (p. 166). Even in captivity, he proudly declares: "'I love freedom of all things. I'm ready to die for freedom; I expect to'" (p. 169). However, his contempt for even the worst suffering inflicted upon him eventually wins the reluctant admiration of the British, and he is finally

repatriated to America in an exchange of prisoners.

More than even Franklin and Jones, Allen possesses the grand stature of the archetypal American folk-hero:

Allen seems to have been a curious combination of a Hercules, a Joe Miller, a Bayard, and a Tom Hyer; had a person like the Belgian giants; mountain music in him like a Swiss; a heart plump as Coeur de Lion's. Though born in New England, he exhibited no trace of her character. . . . His spirit was essentially Western; and herein is his peculiar Americanism; for the Western spirit is, or will yet be . . . the true American one. (pp. 171-72)

By identifying Allen with the frontier, the particular symbol of America, Melville emphasizes the heroism, courage, and fiercely independent spirit of the new republic, thereby accentuating once again the disparity between America and England.

Melville's use of these three patriotic figures--Franklin, Jones, and Allen--to embody the virtues of the new American republic is an attempt on his part, not only to compensate for Potter's inadequacies as a representative American, but to reinforce the historical authenticity of the work. His intention to present Israel Potter as a quasi-documentary study rather than as a novel is also shown by his acknowledgment in the dedication of the book that his work "preserves, almost as in a reprint, Israel Potter's autobiographical story" (p. 5).<sup>165</sup>

As a consequence, Israel Potter emerges as a curious mixture of satire and treatise on the political, economic, and social conditions of England rather than as an international novel. Potter tends to be a one-dimensional character, and

in the final section of the work in particular, he is depicted, not as hero, but as passive victim, too despondent and worn out to struggle any longer against the forces that overwhelm him. Moreover, despite the many years that Potter resides in England, he remains an observer in that country, an alienated figure who regards his sojourn there as an enforced exile. England is shown as the setting of his misfortunes, but Melville makes no attempt to develop or to dramatize any personal relationships between the American and individual English characters. Even when Potter meets and marries an English shop-girl, this incident is alluded to in the briefest possible manner and not described in any detail. Thus, although Israel Potter is of interest because of its treatment of the American's attitude to England, it does not belong to the main body of nineteenth century international fiction.

### iii. Vassall Morton

Francis Parkman's Vassall Morton (1856) should also be mentioned here because it presents a view of Europe that is similar to those found in The Wing-and-Wing and Israel Potter and, like these works, portrays an American's personal experience of European injustice. However, it does so from a somewhat different perspective: not only does it refer to Austria rather than to England, but its central character is an American who bears little resemblance to either Bolt or Potter.

Vassall Morton is a romance, a popular novel of the same type as Norman Leslie and Paul Fane. As in these works, its protagonist is an idealized American hero who endures numerous trials in Europe, which are obviously intended to test his worth, before returning to America and eventually marrying the girl he loves. Vassall Morton is envisioned by Parkman as the American at his finest. He has wealth, breeding, and a Harvard university degree and, like Leslie, is described as sensitive, idealistic, and courageous. He is a chivalrous and intrepid romantic hero-- a young man who is as willing to climb a steep and dangerous cliff to pick a flower for the girl he loves<sup>166</sup> as to risk his life and fearlessly avert a train wreck when he believes her to be one of the passengers. Yet he combines a love of study and scholarship with a characteristically American

commitment to a life of action. Rejecting a career in commerce or the professions, he resolves to spend his life doing research in ethnology, a subject that will enable him to pursue his interest in comparative literature and anthropology and, at the same time, enable him to fulfill his desire to travel. He is also a skilled amateur backwoodsman completely at home in the wilderness who frequently goes off on hunting and camping expeditions in the forests and mountains of New England and Canada. He thus possesses both the refinement of the European gentleman and the independent frontier spirit which is distinctively American.<sup>167</sup>

Vassall Morton is an interesting work, but for all that it is more normative than either The Wing-and-Wing or Israel Potter, it is not a fully developed international novel. Although there is a long section that depicts the American's adventures in Europe in considerable detail, they are subordinated to other aspects of the plot, and much of the novel is set in America. Unlike Fay and Willis, who both attempt to dramatize the contrast between American and European manners and morals in their novels, Parkman, a noted American historian, deals only with the disparity of their political institutions. Moreover, with one minor exception, a friendship that develops between Morton and a young Austrian soldier, the American does not form any personal relationships with Austrian characters. Throughout the novel, the Austrians are referred to collectively as despots and oppressors whom Morton has good reason to hate.

Morton's journey to Europe, like that of Leslie, is

fortuituous, for he does not consciously embark on a search for identity or self-fulfillment. After proposing marriage to Edith Leslie, the American girl who is the counterpart of Flora Temple in Norman Leslie, and being accepted, the young man is informed by her father that he will consent to their engagement only if Morton goes abroad for a year so that the girl may have time to be sure of her feelings. Morton agrees to do so and, after arriving in Europe, decides to pursue his research by traveling through the provinces along the Danube and studying their cultures.

In his innocence, however, Morton naively underestimates Horace Vinal, another American who had hoped to marry Edith Leslie himself; he fails to recognize the jealousy and hatred that he has aroused in his rival. It is because of this error that he walks unsuspecting into the trap that Vinal devises.

Unscrupulous and vindictive, Vinal bribes a political agitator who has just escaped from Austria to write letters of introduction to his accomplices, all of whom are under observation by the Austrian authorities and suspected of revolutionary activities. Under the pretext of assisting Morton, Vinal arranges to have him carry these letters with him, knowing as he does that they will compromise the young American with the Austrian police and implicate him in a treasonable plot against the Austrian government. His treachery succeeds, with the result that Morton, discovering his dangerous predicament too late to flee, is arrested by the Austrian authorities and imprisoned.

In his account of this episode, Parkman graphically describes the iniquities of Austrian despotism under Metternich and, like Howells, unequivocally condemns the abuses cruelly perpetrated by the Austrian authorities. Austrian rule is referred to as "a monstrous infamy, built on fraud and force."<sup>168</sup> Morton calls it a government of devils, noting that, ". . . the prince of them all is bodied in Metternich" (p. 207). It is also shown to be a system that deprives an honest man of his freedom without due cause and pronounces him guilty without due process of law.

After his arrest, when Morton is examined by a military tribunal in a travesty of a trial, he is repeatedly subjected to threats which are intended to extort his supposed secrets. On being told that he has been sentenced to death, he prepares himself for a summary execution only to be reprieved at the last moment: "In fact, the whole affair was a sham, played off upon the prisoner to terrify him into confession" (p. 262). Although Morton continues to protest his innocence, he is imprisoned in the dungeon of an Austrian castle from which, as he realizes to his horror, he is unlikely ever to be released.

Morton is an innocent victim whose liberty is curtailed at the arbitrary whim of despots who possess absolute power over their subjects. Moreover, as Parkman emphasizes, he is by no means the first man to be falsely accused and unjustly imprisoned by the Austrian authorities. During his captivity, Morton learns that there are many others in a similar predicament: "There are those in these vaults,--

men innocent of crime as I--men who would have been an honor to their race--who have passed a score of years in this living death" (p. 207).

Morton's long incarceration in an Austrian prison is a kind of damnation; it is compared by Parkman to a sojourn in Hell. His suffering is due, not only to the physical hardships and misery which he undergoes during his captivity, but to the mental anguish which springs from solitude and enforced inaction, and which he finds even more difficult to endure:

"It is but a weak punishment to which Milton dooms his ruined angel. Action,--enterprise,--achievement,--a hell like that is heaven to the cells of Ehrenberg. He should have chained him to a rock, and left him alone to the torture of his own thoughts; the unutterable agonies of a mind preying on itself for want of other sustenance. Action!--mured in this dungeon, the starved soul gasps for it as the lungs for air. . . . What is life without it? A marsh, a quagmire, a rotten, stagnant pool." (p. 208)

To the American, his imprisonment becomes a kind of death-in-life leading him to curse the futility of his existence:

"To creep on to my end through years of slow decay, mind and soul famishing in solitude, sapped and worn, eaten and fretted away, by the droppings of lonely thought, till I find my rest at last under these cursed stones! God! could I but die the death of a man!" (p. 210)

Parkman also indicates that, in these circumstances, many other men would have gone mad or been driven to suicide.

The intolerable loss of his freedom and the bitter resentment of the injustice which has been committed initially

lead Morton to despair in prison. Only gradually does he acquire resignation, fortitude, and hope, displaying a degree of courage that confirms the heroic qualities which Parkman has ascribed to him in the first part of the novel. Finally, after five years of imprisonment, he succeeds in escaping, with the assistance of one of the guards who wishes to emigrate to America. Although Morton is pursued and "hunted like a wild beast" (p. 242), and Max Kubitski, the young Austrian, is killed, the American at last eludes his pursuers.

Despite the iniquitous circumstances of Morton's imprisonment, Parkman emphasizes that the young man has learned something of value from his experience in Austria and has matured because of it. Parkman expounds this theme in more detail when he describes an encounter that takes place between Morton and his cousin, Fanny Euston, after Morton's return to America. Fanny Euston is acutely aware of the degree of suffering that Morton's imprisonment has inflicted on him. Knowing his temperament, she realizes that, "' . . . this passive misery must to you have been a daily death'" (p. 355). Nevertheless, when asked by Morton what effect such an experience ought to have on a man, she unhesitatingly replies that it could be educative and, ultimately, even beneficial:

"Such suffering, rightly taken, would strip life of its disguises, and show it in its naked truth. It would teach the man to know himself and to know others. It would awaken his sympathies, enlarge his mind, and greatly expand his sphere of vision. . . ." (p. 359)

In short, suffering and tragedy, no matter how painful, are ordeals which can bring a solace of their own: they confer self-knowledge, wisdom, and maturity; they temper an individual's character and test his real worth. As Fanny observes, Morton has not only heroically endured the hardships imposed by his imprisonment but has triumphed over them. She tells him: "'You are the firmer for what you have passed. Manhood, the proudest of all possessions to a man, is strengthened and deepened in you'" (p. 361).

Despite the effusiveness of Parkman's language, his attempt to invest Morton's suffering with a deeper meaning and to treat his experience in Austria as one which effects a transition from youth to maturity is worth noting, for it is this which makes Vassall Morton a novel in the tradition of the Bildungsroman. It is this too which corresponds, albeit in a rudimentary fashion, to the theme that recurs in Redburn, The Marble Faun, and much of the international fiction of James. However, the initiation into the knowledge of evil that defines the young American's experience in Europe in the works of Hawthorne, Melville, and James is of a radically different order than Morton's experience of Austrian injustice. Not only does Parkman merely recount the change that has occurred in Morton without attempting to dramatize it, but, even more important, he fails to show any integral connection between the degree of enlightenment that Morton is supposed to have attained and the particular or intrinsically "European" characteristics of Austria. The international aspect of the situation described in the

novel is really incidental to the theme of wisdom acquired through suffering. According to Parkman's view, Morton's maturity could have been brought about by any tragic or painful experience: that it happens, in fact, to be the consequence of his imprisonment in Austria is largely fortuitous. Indeed, Fanny Euston herself undergoes an analogous transformation as a result of the deaths of her father and brother and her own illness.

Fanny Euston should also be mentioned briefly in her own right, although she is not shown at all in an international situation, because she is an American girl who, like Willis's Sophia Firkin, can be regarded as an early prototype of James's Daisy Miller. She is described by Meredith, a friend of Morton's who admires and eventually marries her, as an attractive young girl who, for all her wealth and intelligence, is unformed and unpolished: she has "an abundance of education, and a good deal of a certain kind of accomplishment . . . but no breeding at all" (p. 42). Frank, outspoken, unaffected, and independent, she detests deceit and pretension; and, as Meredith points out, ". . . she cares for nobody, and does and says whatever comes into her mind, without the least regard to consequences or appearances" (p. 42). She is also a dare-devil, self-willed and impetuous. Morton observes: "She delights in lawlessness and rejoices in the zest of breaking established bounds" (p. 77). Yet her passionate and high-spirited nature has its own attractiveness, as Meredith acknowledges: "'There is fire enough in

her to make a hundred women interesting. She is none of our frosty New England beauties. . . . Every thing about her is wild and chaotic, the unformed elements of a superb woman'" (p. 43). Morton too is aware of both her virtues and her flaws: "She seemed to him the most wayward of mortals; yet in the midst of this lawlessness, generous instincts were constantly betraying themselves, and a certain native grace, a charm of womanhood, followed her wildest caprices" (p. 59).

Fanny Euston's subsequent maturation corresponds to that of Morton himself, although in her case it is caused by tragic personal and family circumstances. When Morton sees her again after he returns from Austria, he immediately perceives that she has attained a new serenity and understanding. He tells her that he can see in her "'such traces as on gold that has passed through the furnace . . .'" (p. 356). The image of refinement through fire or transformation through the ordeal of suffering is one that is frequently applied to Jamesian heroines such as Isabel Archer and Maggie Verver. Thus, despite the fact that Fanny Euston's particular experiences have no direct relevance to international fiction, she remains an interesting figure to students of the genre.

The American's awareness of the undemocratic nature of European social and political institutions, reinforced at times by his personal experience of the injustice perpetrated by tyrannical European governments, accounts for the trenchant criticism of Europe that is manifested in various works of international fiction. More frequently, however, particularly in the more developed international novels, the American's condemnation of Europe is based on more purely moral factors: it proceeds from his discovery that European mores and codes of conduct violate his own ethical norms and from his realization that European civilization, for all its accomplishments, is tainted by an insidious moral decay. This recognition on the part of the American of the underlying polarity of moral values between the Old World and the New is one of the most distinctive themes in nineteenth century international fiction.

Paradoxically, it is precisely those aspects of Europe that are most attractive to the American which frequently reveal themselves, on closer observation, to be the most corrupt.<sup>169</sup> In a number of instances, as has already been noted, the veneer of elegance and sophistication--the quality that seems to make upper-class European society so eminently civilized--also serves to mask its moral flaws. Despite the initial fascination that Paul Fane feels towards the English and European beau-monde, he eventually comes to despise its hypocrisy and worldly values, a reaction that is also shown by the Americans in The Lady of the Aroostook even more emphatically. Unlike Fane, Lydia Blood is

indifferent to the glamour of fashionable Venetian society and is conscious only of its wickedness, but even Staniford, who recognizes its attractions, is acutely aware of its vices. In a similar manner, Norman Leslie, in Theodore Fay's novel of the same name, both perceives and condemns the decadence underlying the beautiful façade presented by Italian society. It is also significant that one of the dominant themes in both Hawthorne's The Marble Faun and James's international fiction is the American's discovery that the indisputable aesthetic appeal of European civilization co-exists with its moral corruption.

Even the heritage of the past, which invests the Old World with a picturesque grandeur and sense of tradition that the New World lacks, may be found by the American to be a taint as well as an asset. Despite Hawthorne's insistence that an American writer of romances requires a sense of the past as an inspiration, he is conscious in both The Marble Faun and Doctor Grimshawe's Secret that the past also represents an oppressive burden, an accretion of sin and guilt that former ages hand down to the present.

The moral corruption which is attributed to the Old World is thus depicted, in varying degrees, in a number of nineteenth century international novels considered in this study--Fay's Norman Leslie, Melville's Redburn, Willis's Paul Fane, Hawthorne's The Marble Faun and Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, and Howells's The Lady of the Aroostock. In the case of Paul Fane, Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, and The Lady of the Aroostock, where this theme is subordinated to others,

the novels have been considered in earlier chapters; but in Norman Leslie, Redburn, and The Marble Faun, the American's encounter with European moral corruption will be analyzed in detail and the nature of his response examined.

## Chapter 11.

Norman Leslie

Written by Theodore Fay, a well-known nineteenth century American journalist, Norman Leslie (1835) was a popular novel in its time (indeed, Robert Lee White cites evidence to show that it was "one of the most popular novels of the first half of the nineteenth century"),<sup>170</sup> but one which, lacking any enduring literary merit, is virtually forgotten today. Its defects and limitations are readily discernible: it abounds in melodrama, intrigue, and improbable coincidence;<sup>171</sup> its characterizations tend to be stereotyped; and Fay constantly resorts to an overblown and sentimental style of prose. Nonetheless, the work is of particular interest because it provides fertile ground for analyzing the emergence of the international novel as a genre. Even though only about a third of the book is actually set in Europe, it constitutes the first American attempt to write an international novel, predating all the works included in this study with the single exception of Washington Irving's Bracebridge Hall (1822), which is a collection of tales and sketches rather than a novel. Equally noteworthy, as will be shown subsequently, is the fact that Fay unequivocally portrays Europe and Europeans as evil, making the American's encounter with European corruption one of the central preoccupations of the novel.

There are several elements in Norman Leslie which recur in later works of international fiction. One of the most conspicuous of these is the mirror-image of Fay's depiction of European corruption--namely, the extent to which America and American characters are idealized in the novel. For example, Flora Temple, the American girl whom Leslie loves, represents a highly romanticized concept of American femininity. Her first name, "Flora," evokes the natural grace and freshness--the flowering of youth--that are associated with "Florida" Vervain and "Daisy" Miller; and, like so many of the American girls in nineteenth century international fiction, she conforms to the stereotype of the lovely, blonde, blue-eyed maiden. On one of the occasions that she appears to Leslie to be at her loveliest, she wears a simple, white dress which accentuates her purity and innocence. As with Mary Evenden in Paul Fane and Hilda in The Marble Faun, the imagery associated with Flora is spiritualized. Her surname, "Temple," suggests devotion, adoration, and worship, and these are precisely the feelings that she evokes in Leslie; his love for her reveals his reverence for a feminine ideal rather than sexual passion. He remarks that she is a woman with a soul, expressing his appreciation of her "'pure and exalted'" nature<sup>172</sup> and alluding several times to her angelic attributes.

Although Flora Temple plays a relatively minor role in the novel, she does provide the standard of measurement against which Leslie judges the various women whom he encounters abroad. She presents a sharp contrast to the Countess D--, in particular, and the juxtaposition of the

chaste American blonde and the passionate European brunette that is implicit in the novel is one that is frequently utilized in subsequent nineteenth century international fiction, most notably The Marble Faun, where Hilda and Miriam are more complex versions of Flora Temple and the Countess D--.

Whereas Flora's loveliness, like that of Hilda, reflects her virginal purity, the countess, like Miriam, possesses a dark, eastern, exotic beauty, an aura of mystery, and a vibrant sensuality; she is a woman whom Leslie compares to Cleopatra. A wealthy young widow who is the leader of one of most fashionable and sophisticated aristocratic circles in Italian society, she appears to be cold, proud, and inscrutable, until Leslie discovers that her cool manner conceals a tragic past and a bitter hatred for the scoundrel who has ruined and betrayed her in her youth. Whereas Flora represents the archetypal American innocent, the countess is a woman of experience who has encountered European corruption at first hand and been tainted by it: she "had . . . seen the world, and suffered from its blight" (II, 107-08).

Unlike the Countess D--, Antonia is one of the few European characters in the novel who appears to be completely untouched by the decadence that surrounds her. The daughter of the wealthy Italian nobleman who befriends Leslie in Florence, she is young and lovely, with a grace and sweetness and gentleness that lead him to compare her to a faun. From the first, Leslie perceives her to be artless and completely lacking in guile, qualities that attest to her sheltered

upbringing. In her innocence, she shows herself totally ignorant of the world.

Although Leslie is determined to befriend her after her father's death, his concern for her welfare stems from altruistic motives and brotherly affection. It is only when Antonia confesses her feelings towards him that he realizes that she is no longer a child. Her ardent and passionate declaration of love suddenly reveals her in a new light. Leslie finds himself tempted by Antonia's personal attractions as well as by the worldly advantages which marriage to a titled heiress would confer upon him, but the memory of Flora compels him to refuse her. In preferring Flora to Antonia, he gives proof of the fidelity and loyalty of his devotion. However, he is also influenced by another factor.

In the scene with Antonia referred to above, Leslie is undeniably drawn to the girl's charm and beauty. Yet, at the same time, there is an implicit withdrawal on his part from the awakening force of her passion:

He had forgotten that in Italy love is everywhere; and that the rich blood which flows in the veins of her women has been nursed by voluptuous customs, and kissed for ages by a burning sun, till it flashes to the heart of each individual with hereditary fires. (II, 152)

This "rich," smoldering sensuality that is attributed to Italian women by Fay reflects a fairly common American attitude depicted in nineteenth century international fiction. The passionate nature of the Princess C-- in Paul Fane and that of Miriam in The Marble Faun attest to similar assumptions about dark Italian women on the part of Willis and Hawthorne.

Notwithstanding Antonia's loveliness and essential innocence, the element of passion manifested by the girl in this scene is apparently intended by Fay to be seen as a taint; it indicates a sensuality in her that is vaguely repugnant to Leslie. Antonia herself senses the distaste that her declaration to Leslie evokes, accusing him contemptuously of being cold. Although her point of view is a biased one, there is no doubt that the tempestuous emotions that she reveals to Leslie for the first time are radically different from the cool and serene self-possession consistently displayed by Flora Temple. Moreover, as a nineteenth century American whose attitude towards women has been shaped both by the Puritan heritage of the past and by the contemporary view that women are noble beings unsullied by baser instincts, Leslie prefers Flora's qualities. Fay implies that, to him, Antonia's passion is inferior to the chaste and spiritualized concept of love, the pristine purity, associated with Flora; and, as in Paul Fane and The Marble Faun, it is the American girl rather than the European one who is shown to embody the more perfect romantic ideal.

Norman Leslie himself represents the masculine counterpart of Flora Temple. Throughout the novel, the depravity of the European villains is strikingly contrasted to the exemplary morality and intrinsic nobility of the young American. He is an idealized American hero who embodies all the attributes displayed, in varying degrees, by other characters of this generic type--Wychecombe,

Etherege/Redclyffe, Fane, Morton, and Staniford: he is unquestionably a gentleman; he possesses the natural advantages conferred by good looks, wealth, education, and a distinguished family background; he has courage, intelligence, sensitivity, refinement, integrity, and a highly-developed code of honor. Fay alludes to both "his noble countenance" (I, 86) and his "lofty character" (I, 176).

And yet, it is his very virtue, with its concomitant innocence and lack of cynicism, which, as in the case of Vassall Morton, initially blinds him to the virulence of Count Clairmont's hatred for him, making him fall prey to the European's villainy and treachery. From the first, he distrusts the foreign nobleman who has ingratiated himself into New York society and feels an instinctive aversion for him; but, honorable himself, he is left defenseless because he does not anticipate the ruthlessness or unscrupulousness of the methods which the count is prepared to utilize in order to revenge himself on the man who has incurred his enmity.

The hatred and malice that Clairmont bears towards Leslie spring from several sources. From their first meeting, Clairmont, sensing the dislike and distrust that Leslie feels towards him, reciprocates in kind. Moreover, Flora Temple's indifference to his attentions leads Clairmont to suspect the girl's preference for Leslie. Flora's refusal of Clairmont's proposal of marriage enrages him, intensifying his jealousy of Leslie.

The actual quarrel between the two men is precipitated by an incident involving an acquaintance of Leslie's, a

foolish young fop who inadvertently offends Clairmont. Although the provocation that Morton offers is harmless and trivial, Clairmont threatens to flog him with a whip. The frightened young man invokes the aid of Leslie, who happens to be present but is reluctant to intervene in the affair. However, when the count strikes Morton, sneeringly taunting Leslie as he does so, Leslie accuses the European of being a scoundrel and knocks him down. By doing so, the young American incurs Clairmont's implacable hatred: "' . . . Norman Leslie,' he said, 'I will have your heart's blood! . . . I swear it!'" (I, 69).

As a consequence of this incident, Clairmont, a deadly marksman, challenges Leslie to a duel which is averted at the last moment only because Flora and her mother intervene. At their request, Clairmont magnanimously withdraws his challenge and even apologizes to Leslie. Believing that he may have wronged the count by misjudging him, Leslie is taken aback when he chances to observe the malignant glance that Clairmont directs towards him.

A short time later, Leslie is attacked at night in a remote part of town and stabbed by an unknown assailant. Although he is seriously wounded, he does recover, only to learn that Clairmont has been circulating vicious slander about him, accusing him of dissipation, cheating at cards, and stealing an acquaintance's ring, and making various other insinuations which calumniate his character. When he confronts Clairmont in public, the count provokes Leslie into quarreling with him in order to have an excuse to shoot

him. He fires at Leslie, but when he misses his target, Leslie overpowers him and whips him, denouncing the count to the assembled onlookers for the very crimes of which he has accused Leslie and adding that, according to all evidence, Clairmont is also a cowardly midnight assassin.

By exposing Clairmont's real character, Leslie believes the episode closed, but once again, he underestimates his adversary; he fails to realize that Clairmont's sworn oath of revenge is only intensified after his public humiliation by the American. Maddened by hatred and vindictively determined to destroy and dishonor Leslie whatever the cost, the count conceives a vicious plot which results in Leslie's being falsely accused of murder when a young girl of his acquaintance mysteriously disappears. Only at the end of the novel is it revealed that the count has persuaded the supposed victim to elope with him secretly, before proceeding to circulate rumors and contrive evidence to suggest that she has been murdered by Leslie.

Although Leslie is technically acquitted at his trial for lack of evidence, he is condemned as guilty by public opinion and regarded as a murderer. Shamed and humiliated, he is aware that his reputation is irreparably damaged, his good name irretrievably lost. In despair, he flees New York in order to wander abroad in self-imposed exile.

The second part of the novel takes place six years later in Italy, where Leslie is temporarily residing after his extensive travels to remote parts of the world. Despite his determination to prove his innocence, Leslie has been

unable to do so and, with the passage of time, has all but given up hope of ever being able to return home or marry Flora Temple. Although the American has gradually come to suspect Clairmont of being responsible for his misfortunes, he knows that the count's sudden disappearance from New York has left him with no clues nor any means of establishing Clairmont's connection to the crime.

It is only after many complicated intrigues that Leslie at long last succeeds in tracing Clairmont's whereabouts in Rome with the help of the Countess D--, another of the count's victims whose life Leslie has once saved in New York.<sup>173</sup> The climax of the novel, which is enacted in the vast, moonlit ruins of the Colosseum, shows the final confrontation between the American and the European. After shooting Rosalie Romain, the girl whom Leslie was supposed to have murdered in New York, and threatening to shoot Leslie as well, the count is killed by a friend of Leslie's. Since the events of the evening are witnessed by Flora, her parents, and several others, Clairmont's confession is overheard by all of them. At this point, with his innocence firmly established, Leslie returns to America and marries Flora Temple.

The complex machinations of the plot, taking up hundreds of pages of the narrative and summarized above, reveal the basis of Clairmont's hatred for Leslie while detailing the methods which he employs to revenge himself on the young American. It is evident, however, that even without these particular grievances, Clairmont would still be Leslie's mortal foe, for the enmity between the two men originates,

above all else, in the basic disparity of their natures and the polarity of their ideals: it is the natural antipathy between good and evil. When the conflict between Leslie and Clairmont is stripped of its melodramatic trappings, it thus reveals the timeless elements expressed in the medieval morality plays. Yet its particular significance in the context of international fiction is due to the fact that it is the American who is the hero, the intrinsically good man, and the European who is the villain.

Leslie's integrity and inherent nobility accentuate Clairmont's own baseness. Instinctively aware of this, the count's hatred for Leslie seems to spring from the kind of "motiveless malignity" ascribed to Iago by Coleridge:<sup>174</sup> Clairmont resents Leslie in much the same way that Iago despises Othello for being what he is--the noble Othello. Leslie's very existence offends Clairmont, and it is what Leslie represents as much as what he actually does to Clairmont that inspires the count's hatred. Underlying the contempt that Clairmont expresses towards his victim, the envy and jealousy that he refuses to acknowledge are apparent.

Initially, Clairmont is readily accepted into fashionable New York society because he is an eligible young bachelor, handsome, polished, urbane, and wealthy, and because he has the distinction of being both foreign and titled. However, his credentials as a French count prove to be as spurious as his superficial charm and assumed virtue. Indeed, when his real character is unmasked, Clairmont is shown to have virtually no redeeming qualities, no humanity; his commitment

to evil is a fundamental part of his nature. Malevolent and cruel, sly and deceitful, treacherous and completely ruthless, he is capable of any villainy, no matter how base, in pursuit of his own ends.

He is an adventurer, a coward, a swindler, a liar, a thief, and a murderer. In addition to the plot which he weaves to destroy Leslie, he attempts to kill the American on five separate occasions: he challenges Leslie to a duel, knowing that he is the superior marksman, after Leslie first knocks him down; he tries to shoot the young American in New York and again in the Colosseum even though Leslie is unarmed on both occasions; he is the midnight assassin who stabs Leslie in New York and the unknown assailant who, disguised and masked, tries to do so again at the Carnival in Rome.

Nor is Leslie his only victim. The Countess D-- eventually reveals that Clairmont is the man who seduced her in her youth, callously deceiving her by entering into a mock-marriage with her, and then abandoned her. He has murdered her brother, and, to ensure her silence about his elopement with Rosalie Romain, kidnapped her young son and imprisoned him. He has seduced Rosalie Romain in a similar manner in order to acquire her jewels, and when the girl, realizing that Clairmont has no intention of marrying her, attempts to leave him, she is incarcerated by the count and driven to madness. When she does finally escape several years later, Clairmont pursues her, attempting to kill her so that she cannot betray him to the authorities.

The demonic imagery which is consistently employed to describe Clairmont confirms Fay's intention of portraying the European as an archetypal figure of evil. Alluding to the hatred that Clairmont displays towards Leslie when he intercedes in the quarrel with Morton, Fay notes that the count regarded the American "with the fiendish fixedness of a serpent about to dart his death-fang" (I, 68-69). Clairmont is compared to a snake by the author in two subsequent passages (I, 120 and I, 177), and when Leslie finally confronts the count in the Colosseum with proof of his villainy, he refers to the European as a reptile, a description confirmed by the Countess D--, when she curses Clairmont as he lies dying: "'Miserable, crushed reptile, die!' she said, gazing down on him as on a serpent she had slain . . .'" (II, 187). Moreover, on the occasion that Leslie first quarrels with Clairmont, the look that he observes on the count's face is described as "the black scowl of a demon . . . malignant and inhuman" (I, 69). When Clairmont is whipped by Leslie, Fay notes that he appears to be "more like a devil than a man" (I, 179). Leslie's suspicion that Clairmont is responsible for his ruin leads him to recall "that demoniac expression, whose fiendish malice made him shudder . . .'" (II, 39). These two clusters of imagery--serpent, snake, reptile and devil, demon, fiend--intensify the diabolic qualities ascribed to Clairmont throughout the novel.

Furthermore, Clairmont is not the only European to be described in this manner. Father Ambrose, the priest who resides in the palace of the Marquis Torrini in Florence,

where Leslie is also staying, is another example of a European whose villainy and wickedness are alluded to as demonic. Even before Leslie actually has any reason to suspect the priest's motives or any knowledge that he is, in fact, Clairmont's brother, Father Ambrose appears to him to be a sinister figure for whom he feels an instinctive aversion and loathing: ". . . with all the graces of his person and manner, there was about him something wily and insincere, something which . . . awakened distrust" (II, 63). Haunted by a strange foreboding, Leslie dislikes the priest's "insinuating smile" (II, 63) and "his oily smoothness of manner" (II, 68), a judgment which is justified by subsequent events. Like the serpent, Father Ambrose is sly and cunning in his efforts to deceive. A master of guile and duplicity, he ingratiates himself with the marquis and his daughter in order to betray the old nobleman and gain power over Antonia.

Father Ambrose is trusted by all and praised for his remarkable holiness, but his supposed sanctity is a mask which conceals his moral corruption. Although the priest is Antonia's religious instructor, Leslie senses, from the manner in which the priest caresses her, that his interest in the girl is blatantly sexual rather than religious. Leslie is repelled by the notion of such a person assuming the role of spiritual guide to an innocent young girl in order to infect her with what Leslie regards as his monstrous dogma. He perceives that there is "something . . . devilish" (II, 68) about the priest; to Leslie, ". . . he

looked like the tempter watching by Eve and studying her ruin" (II, 68).

Among the various other allusions to Father Ambrose as a devil or demon, the most significant are those found in the scene which confirms Leslie's suspicions of the priest. In the chapter entitled "The Cloak falls from the Cloven Hoof," Father Ambrose's moral depravity is fully revealed. Having been bribed by Antonia's cousin, Alezzi, to coerce Antonia into marrying her kinsman after her father's death, the priest sanctimoniously attempts to convince the girl that it is her religious and filial duty to do so; but first he attempts to seduce the girl himself. When he reveals the passion that he has previously concealed from Antonia, she is horrified. Fay states that she recoils from his kiss "As if an adder had stung her . . ." (II, 149), thereby evoking the image of the serpent betraying feminine innocence that Leslie has employed earlier. Threatening to kill Antonia if she reveals what has occurred, Father Ambrose regards her "with the dreadful malice of a demon" (II, 149), betraying his "fiendish fury" (II, 149). However, as soon as he leaves her, Fay notes that, ". . . the . . . fury and tempest of his countenance were changed to the soft smile and cloudless repose of a summer's day" (II, 149). It is this final image of the priest's hypocrisy and duplicity which makes his treachery all the more repugnant.

In relation to the villainy of Clairmont and Father Ambrose, that of Alezzi, Antonia's cousin, takes a somewhat more moderate form. Leslie's own first impression of Alezzi is that he is a "strange mixture of good and bad" (II, 129).

Yet despite the fact that he is an Italian nobleman who has not debased himself to the extent that the other two have, Alezzi reveals himself to be a man without honor; he is an opportunist and knave whose devotion to his own self-interest makes him quite unprincipled.

Initially, he plots with Father Ambrose to secure the Marquis Torrini's fortune for himself by having the priest use his influence to persuade the old man to make a new will naming him the heir instead of Antonia. Playing upon the dying man's fear and superstition, Father Ambrose does so. It is only because Leslie intervenes in the affair, secretly substituting a worthless document for the will, that Alezzi's plan fails.

When Alezzi first discovers that the marquis's new will is invalid, he confides his rage and disappointment to the priest, openly declaring that his ruthless craving for wealth and power is the overriding ambition of his life:

"I thought to-night to be the master of princely riches. . . . Beauty would be at my feet, and power in my hand. With the wealth of this little soft-faced girl, I could wield Jove's thunder! These were my thoughts an hour ago; now . . . what am I?--a beggar! the prey of gamblers--the outcast of his circle--a beggar--a fool--a wretch--a baffled, useless reptile!" (II, 123-24)

His use of this last image is particularly revealing insofar as he is the only one of the three villains to display even this degree of introspection and self-knowledge.

Alezzi lacks the demonic qualities ascribed to Clairmont and Father Ambrose, but nonetheless, his moral corruption is intended by Fay to be quite unmistakable. Apart from the

intrigue he plots with Father Ambrose to defraud his kinsman and his unsuccessful attempt to blackmail Leslie by threatening to reveal his past history, this is confirmed by his renewed attempt to acquire the marquis's fortune--this time, by marrying Antonia. What Fay depicts as particularly vile is his proposal to Antonia that, if she agrees to become his wife, he will permit her to take Leslie as her lover. His worldly, cynical values, contemptible in themselves, are shown by Fay to be even more so when measured against the code of honor to which Leslie scrupulously adheres throughout the novel.

One of the major themes of Norman Leslie, as has been noted in the preceding discussion, is the emphasis on the fundamental contrast between the virtuous American hero and the corrupt European villains--the former being shown as the embodiment of good and the latter of evil. Equally important, and closely related, is the fact that the novel depicts the general polarity of moral values between the New World and the Old. Like the American characters who appear in the work, America itself is consistently idealized by Fay, in terms of both its civilized qualities and its moral virtues. Even in the first part of the work, which is set in New York, there is a curious insistence on Fay's part that America is equal, and even superior to Europe in virtually every respect. That this assertion is made so repeatedly, whether or not it is relevant, suggests a conscious attempt by the author to refute the commonly accepted nineteenth

century view that America is provincial and uncouth whereas Europe is eminently civilized. At the same time, however, Fay's constant need to use Europe as the standard of comparison by which he assesses America indicates that his dependence on European taste, like that of Cooper, is probably greater than he is willing to recognize.

During his sojourn in Italy, Leslie remarks that New York is even more beautiful than Venice (II, 85), and even when Fay is describing New York at first hand, he notes, for example, that the city presents "a scene of singular splendour which, when the western continent shall be better known to European tourists, will be acknowledged to lose nothing by comparison with the picturesque views of Florence or Naples" (I, 12). He maintains, too: "An Italian vale . . . is but a dull picture compared with Broadway on the bright morning after a heavy fall of snow" (I, 15). He points out that New York has greater signs of commercial prosperity than London and that its broad streets and elegant houses are equal in every respect to those of Paris. In his description of Washington, he stresses the similarity between that city and ancient Rome, comparing the "passionate and lofty eloquence" (I, 161) which characterizes legislative debate in the nation's capital to that of the Roman Forum. He states that the capitol's "ponderous dome reminds you of St. Peter's" (I, 159), insisting that, when compared to the Potomac, ". . . the Seine and the Thames are but rivulets" (I, 159).

However, Fay's highest praise is directed towards the lofty ideals and principles on which the American republic

is founded. The view of America which is presented in the novel is expressed most succinctly by an eminent American judge who is widely respected for his integrity. Commenting on the "'perfect simplicity and absence of ostentation'" (I, 163) which characterize a presidential reception in Washington, he insists that they are symbolic: "'Here is the palace, court, and throne of your country--the highest ornament, its moral glory. . . . Here you breathe the pure atmosphere of liberty and reason'" (I, 163). This assessment of America is subsequently confirmed by Angelo, a young Italian whom Leslie encounters in Florence and whose admiration for the American's country is enhanced by his awareness of the tyranny and injustice prevalent in his own. Praising America's "'sublime moral fabric'" (II, 84), he tells Leslie that its statesmen and soldiers are even more enlightened than those of ancient Greece or Rome: "'Your government and your heroes have been disinterested. The happiness of their race is their sole object. Your nation steps along the career of moral right. . . . Oh that I had been born in such a land!'" (II, 84-85).

The moral virtue which is ascribed to America by Fay accentuates, by contrast, the moral flaws which are to be found in Europe. Fay conveys his criticism of the Old World in three ways--by means of his characterizations of the three Italian villains discussed above, by his allusions to the general corruption pervading Italian society, and by his descriptions of the decadence of Italy's upper classes.

Moreover, it should also be noted that the wickedness

of Clairmont, Father Ambrose, and Alezzi, melodramatic though it may be, serves to reinforce the moral defects of Italian society. Although it is true that Clairmont's pretensions to nobility are spurious ones, adopted to conceal his lowly origins, Alezzi is a count and Father Ambrose a priest--figures who would be expected to embody the highest virtues of their society; instead, like so many other members of the nobility and clergy, they display all its worst vices. The ruthlessness and duplicity of these men can be seen to represent the cynical hypocrisy of Italy's upper classes at its most extreme. Their lust for wealth and power attests to the inevitable deterioration of a society where pomp and splendor are prized more highly than virtue, where worldly values take precedence over moral ones.

Leslie's criticism of the corruption that pervades Italian society is a trenchant one, all the more so because he frankly acknowledges the many attractions of Italy. He praises the splendor and grandeur of its historic past and the magnificence of its architecture, as exemplified by buildings such as the Colosseum and St. Peter's which "exalt the mind" and "overwhelm the imagination" (II, 166). He pays tribute to the inspired genius of men such as Michelangelo, Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, and Galileo, marvels at the unrivalled beauty of Italy's artistic treasures, admires the luminous loveliness and picturesque charm of its natural landscape, and recognizes the polish and brilliance of its aristocratic social circles. At the same time, however, he is acutely aware that the aesthetic refinements of Italian

civilization co-exist with its underlying moral decay. As Robert Lee White points out, "Italy, to Norman . . . and to Fay and his audience, was the visible symbol of evil entwined in a spurious beauty."<sup>175</sup>

Leslie is repelled by the poverty and misery of the lower classes, the superstition of the prevailing religion, the despotism of the government, and the licentiousness of the upper classes. Unlike the New World, the Old World is scathed by the "footmarks of gaunt and bloody ages" (II, 190); it is steeped in an atmosphere of cruelty, violence, crime, and terror. Fay is quite explicit about this. Alluding to the differences between America and Italy at the beginning of Leslie's self-imposed exile abroad, he writes:

Oh, Italy! who treads thy stricken and terrible domains, from the fresh and virgin dells of the new world, feels then, perchance, for the first time, appalled that he is a man. Beneath him every field has a voice, and a story--around lean crumbling monuments full of gloom and agony--unburied ghosts flit through the dusky shade: like Aeneas, he shrinks, lest the very branch, as he plucks it, may shed drops of blood. War and hate, murder and superstition have made themselves tokens that frown and bristle from every hill and dale. . . . The genius of aristocracy and despotism stalks by the prone columns and the broken arch; the bloated tyrant yet revels in his golden house; the wailing of wo yet mingles with the tread of stern armies; the ulcerous beggar starves in the costly temple; the desperate ruffian stabs in the abandoned amphitheatre. This is the moral aspect of Italy. (II, 35)

Contrasting the nation's past glory to its present moral decay, Fay sets forth a scathing indictment of the perverted nature of contemporary Italian principles and practices:

. . . her dilapidated edifices and walls are the

sublime wrecks of once perfect things, while her monstrous shapes of politics and morals appear but the phases of a mighty chaos, which has never had bright order and perfection. Her morals, her customs, her laws, her governments, have no general connection with truth, wisdom, and virtue. Every object, every principle is bent, warped, and distorted from the beauty and glory of happier countries. Hence, opinion is a crime--the press is a danger--religion, a cheat--and female dishonour, a fashion. (II, 145)

The author's direct comments on Italy give added weight to Leslie's criticism of the injustice and oppression that he sees prevalent everywhere in Italy. As an American, committed to the democratic ideals on which his own country is founded, he is particularly appalled by the gulf between the privileged classes and the poor. He is shocked, not only by the callous indifference of the nobility and clergy to the suffering of the masses, but by the fawning humility and self-abasement displayed by the lower classes towards the men whom they regard as their natural masters. Yet of all the Italians whom Leslie meets, only Angelo, an impoverished but sensitive, gifted, young sculptor, shares his feelings.

In Angelo's company, Leslie has occasion to witness the spectacle of the duke riding by in pomp and splendor, with a magnificent equipage, while all around him the starving beggars and orphans, the crippled, blind, and diseased, whose own circumstances provide such a shocking contrast to his own, take off their hats and lower their eyes in respectful deference as he passes. The two men also see a friar, a coarse and vulgar man, receive the adoration of the masses as they throng around him in the

public square, kissing the hem of his garment to show their reverence for his supposed sanctity.

It is at this point that Angelo reveals his own awareness of the degradation of his countrymen. He condemns the injustice of a social order where the decadent nobility indulges in surfeit while artists of genius live in abject poverty and the lower classes starve. Bitterly denouncing the evils of Italian society, the young sculptor confides to Leslie that he is sickened by the degenerate state to which his country has fallen:

"Can you wonder . . . that I hate, deeply, eternally, those who have brought my noble country to this? those who keep her trampled down in this abasement? Nature gave me a gentle and a loving heart. I sadden over the pain of a wounded bird . . . but, for the tyrants of my country I have no mercy. It has been drained utterly from my bosom by years of bitter experience and observation. I hate them. Oh! how I hate them! I would lay down my life . . . to hurl into the dust these proud, haughty oppressors." (II, 82-83)

As an idealist intent on eradicating the suffering and oppression of his countrymen, Angelo has become a revolutionary committed to reforming Italian society. Although Leslie agrees with the young Italian's assessment of his country's ills, he opposes revolution and violence as a means of bringing about change. Cautioning Angelo about the futility of the course of action to which he is pledged, Leslie insists that he and his confederates will achieve no lasting regeneration of Italy in this manner; he contends that their efforts are far more likely to result in the death of those very patriots whom Italy most needs. Leslie's words prove

prophetic, for later, after he has left Italy, he learns that Angelo has been arrested by the authorities, having been betrayed to them by Father Ambrose, and subsequently executed as a traitor.

The scene that Leslie witnesses with Angelo in the public square is significant, particularly so because Angelo's indictment of the abuses of the nobility and clergy serves to confirm Leslie's own observations. However, it is the palace of the Marquis Torrini in Florence, where Leslie is invited to stay by the elderly nobleman who befriends him, that becomes the focal point of the disparities found in Italian society. Furthermore, it is here that Leslie has an opportunity to observe both the refinements and the vices of the Italian aristocracy at first hand; it is here that he realizes that the semblance of beauty displayed by eminent Florentine social circles, like the aesthetic appeal of Italian civilization itself, is vitiated by the moral decadence within.

Because of their wealth and rank, the marquis and his daughter lead a luxuriously sheltered existence. The palace has spacious, beautiful gardens surrounded by high walls which shut out the sight of the squalor and misery beyond the gates. In describing this, Fay deliberately emphasizes the gulf between the nobility and the masses, the contrast between the lovely gardens of the palace and the sordid spectacle in the streets outside:

The outward world of beggars and troops--of monks and friars--of filth and gloom--of poverty and pomp--of hollow-eyed despair and supercilious wealth--the lean and starved cripple, the fat and bloated monk--were utterly shut out from this sylvan scene. (II, 128)

In another passage, Fay makes his criticism of the wealth and privilege enjoyed by the nobility even more explicit. Describing the splendor and magnificence of the marquis's palace, Fay alludes to the stateliness of the rooms with their elegant furniture and rich carpets, the loveliness of the classical statues, and the unrivalled beauty of the paintings of Claude and Guido and Raphael. He maintains, however, that this lavish and ostentatious display of wealth makes the contrasting poverty of the masses even more unpardonable. This storehouse of art and beauty which is intended to represent the highest refinement of taste only serves to reveal its owner's deplorable lack of moral sensibility:

Scarcely the eye believed the splendour real . . . so prodigal, costly, unused, and useless appeared the waste and riot of magnificence. . . . But however dazzled for a moment, you are still soon fatigued with this monotonous and unmeaning grandeur. So much unnecessary parade seems strained and idle, if not ridiculous and vulgar. . . . In a country, too, where . . . every place, indeed, of any description, not guarded perforce by the insolence of aristocracy or the bayonet of despotism, is haunted and swarmed with all forms of loathsome and blasted misery that ever humanity produced;--this blaze of rank, power, and abundance shows not only absurd, it becomes shocking and cruel. (II, 60)

The juxtaposition of aesthetic beauty and moral corruption which is suggested in this passage, prefiguring the theme that is so central to Hawthorne's The Marble Faun and James's international fiction, is reinforced by the behavior of the aristocracy, which Leslie observes in the palace. Attending one of the weekly soirées given by the

marquis, Leslie is fully cognizant of the dazzling splendor of the scene before him: the superbly decorated rooms of the palace provide the perfect setting for the "glittering array of rank and fashion" (II, 74) assembled that evening. Leslie perceives the brilliant façade of the aristocratic beau-monde--the polish and sophistication of their manners, the wit and beauty of the women. Yet in spite of this, these external refinements cannot disguise the dissolute morals and decadent values that prevail in this society.

Fay indicts its licentiousness in particular, indicating that the members of the nobility who are present on this occasion are people "accomplished in all but morals, who lived only to shine, to captivate, and to love" (II, 74). He adds: "This atmosphere of rank was as a new existence--stupid virtue dwelt in the lower world. 'Modesty? Leave it for plebeian breasts.'--'Reputation? What can the person mean?'" (II, 74). Like that of Lydia Blood, Leslie's condemnation of such behavior is unequivocal: "Much as he knew of Italian society, Norman was shocked and almost incredulous. The most admired females were giddy runaways from husbands and fathers--some, the charming protegeés of lords or kings . . ." (II, 75).

It is in the context of this society that one must consider Alezzi's proposition to Antonia that, if she consents to marry him, he will not object to her taking Leslie as her lover. Alezzi's remarks reveal, not only his own cynical indifference to the sanctity of marriage, but the corruption of the worldly aristocratic circles in which

marital infidelity is quite unexceptional.

Moreover, even Antonia, young and innocent as she appears to be, is neither shocked nor repelled by this offer and is even prepared to give it serious consideration for all that she dislikes her cousin. Influenced by the decadence of her society without even being aware of it, she knows that Italian law allows her to incorporate this type of arrangement into the marriage contract. Indeed, many of her friends have actually done so. She recalls too that her own mother had married her father without loving him, continuing her liaison with a young duke after her marriage. Antonia's refusal of Alezzi's offer is prompted, then, less by moral reservations than by Leslie's declaration that he loves someone else.

It is evident, throughout the second part of the novel, that despite the aesthetic refinements of Italian society, Leslie is repelled by its pervasive moral decay. His decision to leave Italy at the earliest opportunity, when his innocence is finally established, may be seen as an act which confirms his repudiation of European values, although Leslie's preference for America is influenced by other factors as well.

Unlike those characters whose journey to Europe is motivated by positive goals--an attempt to find self-fulfillment or to discover their identity--Leslie's sojourn abroad is fortuitous; it is an exile necessitated by circumstances. His leaving America is in no way a renunciation of his native land but an escape from the shame and ignominy that surround

him after his trial for murder. During the course of his travels, his commitment to America remains unchanged, so that his disillusionment with Italy merely serves to reinforce his desire to return home.

Since Leslie's various experiences of European corruption constitute the dominant theme of the novel, it is essential to ask how significant an influence they have on his life. That Clairmont is responsible for destroying Leslie's reputation, prospects, and hope of marrying Flora Temple is readily apparent. It can also be argued that the encounter between the American and the European compels Leslie to recognize a capacity for evil in human nature to which his naivete and idealism--the limitations of his innocence--have previously blinded him.

Fay indicates, too, that Leslie has changed greatly after leaving America; his character has developed in the course of his years of wandering in Russia, Turkey, Greece, and other remote parts of the world before coming to Italy. However, this period in Leslie's life is alluded to by the author only briefly and is not dramatized. It occurs during the six year interval which elapses between the time of Leslie's flight from America and his arrival in Italy, at which point Fay observes that his hero has passed from youth to manhood; he is said to have acquired the wisdom and understanding of maturity through reflection, study, and travel. Consequently, even if Fay's assertion is accepted at its face value, this aspect of Leslie's development has no real relevance within the context of international fiction.

For Leslie remains essentially unchanged by his experiences in Italy and by the relationships which he forms there. Although they are important to the extent that they affect the external circumstances of his life and enable him to prove his innocence, they are peripheral in other respects: they confirm Leslie's integrity and courage, but they have no real impact on his character.

What is significant, however, within the context of international fiction is the emphasis throughout Norman Leslie on the contrast between the virtue of the American hero and the corruption of the European villains as well as on the corresponding polarity of moral values between the New World and the Old. This pattern, established in the work which can be termed virtually the first nineteenth century American international novel, is one which recurs repeatedly throughout the evolution of the genre and is found palimpsestically even in the international fiction of James. It should be noted, then, that whether the version is Fay's or Melville's or Hawthorne's or James's, the moral dimensions of the confrontation between the American and the European tend to render the New World and the Old in symbolic rather than literal or geographical terms: America and Europe are shown respectively to represent good and evil, virtue and corruption, or some such antithetical states of innocence and experience as may suggest Eden and the fallen world. When this is understood, it becomes apparent that the dominant concerns of the international novel frequently reflect those found in the main body of nineteenth century American fiction.

## Chapter 12.

Redburn

Ostensibly, Herman Melville's Redburn (1849) purports to be a sea-novel rather than a work of international fiction, as is evident by its full title--Redburn: His First Voyage: Being the Sailor-boy Confessions and Reminiscences of the Son-of-a-Gentleman, in the Merchant Service. Employing the device of a first-person narrator whose tale is set forth as autobiographical, Melville has his sailor-hero, now grown to manhood, recount his various adventures as a boy on his first voyage at sea.<sup>176</sup> The verisimilitude of this narrative technique is further enhanced by the fact that the book is based on Melville's own experiences as a young sailor on his first voyage to England.<sup>177</sup>

Inasmuch as the preoccupations of Redburn appear to be quite different from those of the main body of nineteenth century international fiction, the novel would seem, at first, to belong with minor works such as Cooper's The Wing-and-Wing and Melville's own Israel Potter. For example, the major portion of the narrative takes place at sea and is devoted to a detailed description of Redburn's life aboard ship. About a third of the novel is actually set in England, but there is no real interaction between Redburn and the English, with the single exception of his friendship with

Harry Bolton. Throughout his visit, the young American remains an onlooker in England, an outsider. Moreover, apart from the excursion that Redburn makes to London, Melville focuses his attention on the dock-side area of Liverpool, presenting a graphic and realistic eye-witness account of life in the lower depths of the city.

These aspects of the novel, however, are somewhat misleading, for Redburn turns out to be a far richer and more complex work than is at first apparent. To assess Redburn as a work of international fiction, one must first strip away the outer garb that the work assumes as an autobiographical sea-novel or quasi-documentary social study and discern the underlying significance of Redburn's journey. Only then does it become evident that, adapting the form of the Bildungsroman, Melville uses the motif of the voyage embarked on by a young man to represent Redburn's development from youth to adulthood. Merlin Bowen makes this point succinctly when he notes: "The voyage which gives the book its outward shape is itself a metaphor for a more significant movement, the young man's painful journey to maturity."<sup>178</sup>

Redburn's need to come to terms with the past and with the loss of his father in order to establish his own identity has already been discussed in a previous chapter as one aspect of his coming of age. Yet the knowledge that Redburn acquires in the course of his voyage--knowledge which compels him to leave his boyhood behind him and leads him gradually to attain maturity in its stead--applies, not only to himself, but to the nature of the world at large. Above all,

the novel charts the young man's passage from innocence to experience as he is exposed to the harsh and disillusioning reality of life for the first time and confronted with the iniquity of his fellow man.<sup>179</sup> As Newton Arvin so perceptively observes in his discussion of Redburn, it is this which constitutes the real theme of Melville's work:

The outward subject of the book is a young boy's first voyage as a sailor before the mast; its inward subject is the initiation of innocence into evil--the opening of the guileless spirit to the discovery of "the wrong" as James would say, "to the knowledge of it, to the crude experience of it."<sup>180</sup>

Despite the failure of Redburn to conform to the usual conventions of the international novel, this subject is a recurrent one in a number of works of international fiction. It is true that Redburn's discovery of evil is a gradual one which is not confined to England but takes place aboard the ship as well. Nevertheless, the episodes that are set in Liverpool and London dominate the novel; they also have a traumatic impact on the young man. Like Fay, Melville depicts the Old World, in this case, England, as wicked and portrays the American innocent's encounter with European corruption in considerable detail, making it one of the dominant concerns of the novel. At the same time, it is evident that the nature and implications of this encounter have undergone a distinct transformation in Melville's novel, as compared to earlier works of international fiction. In Redburn, it is the inner dimensions, the psychological as well as the symbolic aspect of the confrontation between

the New World and Old that is stressed, notwithstanding the apparent realism of the novel. Moreover, the theme that Melville explores in this work is one that is closely related to those that are found in Hawthorne's The Marble Faun and James's international fiction.<sup>181</sup> It is an archetypal pattern that, as will be shown subsequently, links the international novel to the mainstream of nineteenth century American fiction.

Although Redburn is not portrayed as an idealized hero in the usual sense, his innocence is a distinctive characteristic frequently attributed to the American protagonist in international fiction and generally intended to attest to his natural virtue. Redburn may indeed be taken as a prototype of the American innocent, and in this respect, he resembles Norman Leslie, Vassall Morton, and characters such as Florida Vervain, Lydia Blood, and Hilda in The Marble Faun. Like them, too, his innocence has two facets--worldly and moral.

At the beginning of the novel, Redburn is described as a youth who has grown up in a genteel home, with an indulgent and loving family. Having led a comfortable, sheltered existence, he has been shielded from contact with the more unpleasant facts of life. He has never been faced with hardship or privation; he has never had to fend for himself. It is only when his father dies suddenly and is discovered to be bankrupt that the idyllic world of childhood is abruptly shattered. At this point, Redburn is compelled to leave home for the first time and earn his own living.

Singularly naive and ignorant of the world, Redburn is revealed from the first as a romantic and a dreamer, an impractical youth who decides to become a sailor, not because he has any particular qualifications for this career, but because the idea of seeing the world seizes his fancy and appeals to his imagination. As he acknowledges, it is his "roving disposition" (p. 3)<sup>182</sup> which sends him to sea to seek adventure as well as the fact that the ship advertisements "all . . . possessed a strange, romantic charm to me" (p. 3). Recalling his childhood memories of his father's tales of his own travels abroad, he also has a nostalgic wish to follow in his father's footsteps, a quixotic desire to make a kind of "filial pilgrimage" (p. 154) to all the exciting places his father had visited many years before. The romantic illusions that impel Redburn to go to sea are rapidly dispelled, however, by the hardships and humiliation that he endures aboard the Highlander; the exotic appeal of foreign shores that he envisions proves very different from the sordid reality of life in the slums of Liverpool. Even his attempt to recapture the past proves to be a futile one, as he discovers that the England of his father's time has changed beyond recognition.

Redburn's various adventures in the course of the novel thus constitute a rude awakening for him. From the moment that he ventures forth from home, alone and friendless, his plans to continue his education abandoned for lack of money, the world reveals a hitherto hidden aspect to him, suddenly appearing to be a harsh and hostile place: "Cold, bitter

cold as December, and bleak as its blasts, seemed the world then to me; there is no misanthrope like a boy disappointed; and such was I, with the warm soul of me flogged out by adversity" (p. 10). Painfully conscious of his poverty, Redburn faces life in a figuratively naked state--unprotected and stripped of the material comforts to which he is accustomed. He cannot even afford to outfit himself properly as a seaman, so that, when his shabby clothes fall apart at the seams during the voyage, he becomes an object of ridicule to the other sailors.

Moreover, it soon becomes evident that Redburn is ill-equipped to deal with the rough usage which the world at large accords innocent and impoverished young gentlemen. Kind-hearted, virtuous, and idealistic, he begins his travels with his childhood trust in the natural benevolence and amiability of his fellow-man still intact: "Then I . . . never knew that there were hard hearts in the world . . ." (p. 36) However, he is rapidly disabused of this notion by his dealings with other men. William H. Gilman notes, for example, that Melville's characterization of Redburn portrays "the tragedy of innocence, idealism, and brotherhood exposed to a world of evil and cynicism and self-interest."<sup>183</sup> Newton Arvin observes: ". . . he has hardly gone a mile from home before the world's wickedness and hardness begin to strip themselves before him. Man, Redburn quickly finds, is a wolf to man."<sup>184</sup> In the circumstances in which he finds himself, Redburn's youthful naivete, his inexperience, and his almost total lack of worldly knowledge--what Merlin Bowen refers to as

"his guileless simplicity"<sup>185</sup>--all prove to be distinct handicaps which render him vulnerable and defenseless. Because he is honest and trusting, he finds himself cheated and taken advantage of by unscrupulous men; he is easy prey-- a natural victim.

When he arrives in New York, for instance, he makes the rounds of the pawn-shops, trying to sell his brother's gun so that he can equip himself for his sea-voyage. The pawnbrokers, always ready to turn the misfortunes of others to their own profit, are quick to note his youth and inexperience as well as his obvious need of money. The niggardly sums which they are willing to advance Redburn represent a mere fraction of the gun's real value, but his situation is so desperate that he is finally compelled to accept one of these offers: "In vain I expostulated; he was not to be moved, so I pocketed the money and departed" (p. 22)

Nor does Redburn fare any better at sea in the company of his fellow sailors. His genteel manners, his naivete, and the fact that he is a "greenhorn," ignorant of nautical terminology and custom, soon make him an object of contempt aboard the Highlander. Most of his attempts at friendship with the crew are rudely repelled, and his ignorant presumption in daring to pay a social call on the captain, who had seemed so friendly at their first meeting, nearly results in his being put in irons. Instead of the kindness and consideration which he expects his shipmates to show to "a poor, friendless boy" (p. 52), he is soon made to feel that he is "the most forlorn and miserable wretch that ever

breathed" (p. 52). Although a few of the sailors do behave decently, he is subjected to derision and abuse by most: he is taunted, cursed, bullied, tormented, and generally ill-used; he is deliberately singled out and given the dirtiest, most unpleasant tasks to perform. Under these conditions, he finds his lot a hard one to bear: "Miserable dog's life is this of the sea! commanded like a slave, and set to work like an ass! vulgar and brutal men lording it over me, as if I were an African in Alabama" (p. 66). Finally, at the end of the voyage, he is cheated of his wages by the unscrupulous captain, so that he leaves the ship as penniless as he has boarded it.

Redburn's moral innocence at the outset of his journey is closely related to his ignorance of the world, for he is a youth who has absolutely no conception of evil. Indeed, Newton Arvin, like R. W. B. Lewis, regards him as an Adamic figure,<sup>186</sup> noting that, ". . . Redburn sets out from his mother's house in a state of innocence like that before the Fall. . . ." <sup>187</sup> Only gradually in the course of the novel does he lose his innocence as he becomes acquainted with the way of the world and acquires first-hand knowledge and experience of man's capacity for evil. He discovers, not only the hard-heartedness and rapacity of his fellow-man, but far graver defects--his iniquity, depravity, and general moral corruption. The culmination of this discovery takes place in England, but the episodes aboard the ship also play an important part in it.

Although Redburn finds his shipmates' harsh treatment

of him difficult enough to bear, his misery aboard the ship is intensified by the moral aversion that he feels for such men. From the first, he regards them as an immoral and unregenerate lot: ". . . at the outset I had deemed them such a parcel of wicked hard-hearted rascals that it would be a severe affliction to associate with them" (p. 47). Repelled by their coarseness and brutality, even before their dislike for him is fully apparent, he feels increasing distaste for the idea of being subjected to their intimate company for the duration of the voyage: "And are these the men, I thought to myself, that I must live with so long? these the men I am to eat with, and sleep with all the time?" (p. 34). He is shocked, too, by their vices and by their dissipation--their constant swearing and foul language, their drunkenness, their lack of piety, their boastful admissions of marital infidelity.

The moral judgment that he passes on them must be qualified, however, in one respect. Redburn's idealism and rigorous moral scruples make him virtuous, but they also make him uncompromising and severe, even puritanical, as in the case of Howells's *Lydia Blood*. In fact, his condescending, self-righteous attitude at the outset of the voyage brings him perilously close to the point of being a moral prig. Defining morality very narrowly, he prides himself on his own upright values and rectitude, on his membership in the local temperance society and anti-tobacco league, and on his regular attendance at church. The failure of the other seamen to adhere to these conventional

virtues is enough, in itself, to convince him of his own moral superiority to them:

And it was now, that I began to feel a good degree of complacency and satisfaction in surveying my own character; for, before this, I had previously associated with persons of a very discreet life, so that there was little opportunity to magnify myself, by comparing myself with my neighbors. (p. 49)

When he is naive enough to make his disapprobation of their conduct evident, the sailors, predictably, turn against him with renewed animosity.

At the same time, Redburn himself, prepared to concede that initially he may have been unfair in censuring the crew, is soon inclined to adopt a far more charitable view of their behavior:

Yes, I now began to look on them with a sort of incipient love; but more with an eye of pity and compassion, as men of naturally gentle and kind dispositions, whom only hardships, and neglect, and ill-usage had made outcasts from good society; and not as villains who loved wickedness for the sake of it. . . . (p. 47)

It is only when their malice and cruelty to him continue to be sustained without provocation and Jackson, their leader, threatens to murder the young sailor by pitching him overboard if he ever crosses his path, that Redburn finally becomes convinced that such men, surely, "must be capable of almost any enormity" (p. 52).

At this point, Redburn's own feelings of good will give way to an outburst of impotent rage and a reciprocal hatred: "I loathed, detested, and hated them with all that was left of my bursting heart and soul . . ." (p. 52). This, then,

is the effect of the crew's inhumanity: even when it does not destroy Redburn's innocence, it threatens to corrupt him by bringing him down to their own level. That Redburn deliberately attempts to prevent this from happening despite everything that has occurred, is proof of the young man's fundamental goodness and decency--more so, indeed, than any of his conventional virtues.

Even after this incident, Redburn renews his efforts to remain on amicable terms with the other men. His failure to do so is due primarily to the intervention of Jackson, who is determined to persecute Redburn and to incite the crew against him. It is Jackson, weak and small as he is, who bullies and intimidates the other sailors, compelling them by sheer force of will to do his bidding: "They all stood in mortal fear of him . . ." (p. 59); they "durst not contradict him, or cross his path in any thing" (p. 57).

Because of Jackson, all of Redburn's attempts to get along peaceably with the men and endure their slights patiently are to no avail:

. . . yet I could not avoid Jackson's evil eye, nor escape his bitter enmity. And his being my foe, set many of the rest against me; or at least they were afraid to speak out for me before Jackson; so that at last I found myself a sort of Ishmael in the ship, without a single friend or companion. . . . (p. 62)

Nevertheless, even as an outcast, Redburn continues to struggle against succumbing to the feelings of hatred which have been aroused by such treatment and which threaten to overwhelm him. He refuses to allow himself to be completely

embittered or dehumanized, and it is this, in particular, which differentiates him from Jackson: ". . . and I began to feel a hatred growing up in me against the whole crew--so much so, that I prayed against it, that it might not master my heart completely, and so make a fiend of me, something like Jackson" (p. 62).

Although the crew of the Highlander are guilty of weakness and complicity in allowing themselves to be dominated by him, it is Jackson who is the focus of evil aboard the ship. In contrast to Redburn, the archetypal innocent, Jackson is repeatedly referred to as a demonic figure. For example, Redburn notes his physical ugliness, describing him as "such a hideous looking mortal, that Satan himself would have run from him" (p. 57). He also alludes to the fact that Jackson is a "clever, cunning man" with a "subtle, infernal looking eye . . . cold, and snaky, and deadly" (p. 57). Jackson recounts his past adventures "with a diabolical relish" and seems to take pride in boasting that ". . . he had passed through every kind of dissipation and abandonment . . ." (p. 57) and practiced "infamous vices" (p. 58). However, these experiences do not leave him untouched, for ". . . he carried about with him the traces of these things, and the mark of a fearful end nigh at hand . . ." (p. 58). The unspecified fatal disease, probably syphilis, with which he is infected "in consequence of his sins" (p. 58) symbolizes his spiritual corruption; the pestilence he carries within him is not only physical but moral.

Like Claggart in Billy Budd, Jackson reveals a depravity

that is both natural and innate:<sup>188</sup> "He was a Cain afloat; branded on his . . . brow with some inscrutable curse; and going about corrupting and searing every heart that beat near him" (p. 104). What sets Jackson apart from the other men, even more than the magnitude of his sins and vices, is his inability to love. He is a man obsessed with a corrosive hatred and malice directed against the world at large, and it is this which strips him of his humanity and makes Redburn regard him as "a fiend": "He seemed to be full of hatred and gall against every thing and every body in the world; as if all the world was one person, and had done him some dreadful harm, that was rankling and festering in his heart" (p. 61). He is, by instinct and nature, a destroyer:

. . . he was spontaneously an atheist and an infidel; and during the long night watches, would enter into arguments, to prove that there was nothing to be believed; nothing to be loved, and nothing worth living for; but every thing to be hated, in the wide world. (p. 104)

Even as he lies weak and ill on the return journey, he continues "panting out his maledictions" (p. 276), unable to do anything but revile his fate: "The prospect of the speedy and unshunnable death now before him, seemed to exasperate his misanthropic soul into madness; and as if he had indeed sold it to Satan, he seemed determined to die with a curse between his teeth" (p. 276).

Redburn is singled out as a particular object of Jackson's hatred soon after the voyage commences. The implacable enmity which Jackson bears towards the young sailor, like that which Claggart displays towards Billy Budd, seems to have no logical

cause, though Redburn himself attempts to account for it by supposing that Jackson's awareness of his impending death is what makes him regard Redburn with such malevolence: "For I was young and handsome . . ." (p. 58). This may be so, but Melville also suggests that Jackson's rancor is motivated by even more than the resentment that the diseased feel for the healthy, the ugly for the handsome. As in Norman Leslie and Billy Budd, it springs from the instinctive hatred of the corrupt for the innocent--what James E. Miller, Jr., terms "the natural antipathy of innate depravity toward naive innocence."<sup>189</sup> Redburn's very existence offends Jackson and seems to constitute a threat to him.

Whereas Jackson is dominated and spiritually destroyed by his corrosive hatred, Redburn's effort to retain his charity of spirit for his fellow man is what enables him, finally, to endure the trials of the voyage and emerge uncorrupted. This is shown most clearly when the feelings of pity, which Redburn has displayed towards the crew earlier, are extended to Jackson himself. Conscious as he is of Jackson's depravity, Redburn is yet able to express compassion for him:

. . . there seemed even more woe than wickedness about the man; and his wickedness seemed to spring from his woe; and for all his hideousness, there was that in his eye at times, that was ineffably pitiable and touching; and though there were moments when I almost hated this Jackson, yet I have pitied no man as I have pitied him. (p. 105)

The episodes on the ship have been considered in some detail because they represent an important stage in Redburn's

development: they compel him for the first time to recognize and come to terms with the wickedness of his fellow man. In this sense, they foreshadow the events that occur in the second part of the novel, in England. Moreover, it is interesting to note that, unlike that in most early works of international fiction, the moral corruption described in Redburn is universalized and not confined exclusively to the Old World.<sup>190</sup> Jackson and the crew are Americans, a detail that differentiates Melville's work from the typical international novel of the period in which the consistent moral superiority of the American to the European is emphasized.

Even the social evils which Redburn observes in England are paralleled, to some extent, by the plight of the emigrants aboard the Highlander on the ship's return voyage to America. The hardships and suffering of the five hundred steerage passengers are a direct consequence of the unscrupulous practices commonly resorted to by American shipping companies of the time. Although British law specified that the captain of the ship was responsible for ensuring that each passenger was provided with a ration of food for sixty days, Redburn points out that ". . . this has not deterred mercenary ship-masters and unprincipled agents from practicing the grossest deception . . ." (p. 241). The captain of the Highlander is one such master. As a consequence of being told that the voyage to America will take far less time than it actually does, the emigrants bring inadequate food for the journey, and they are saved from actual starvation only by the meager supplementary

rations issued by the captain in amounts just sufficient to sustain life.

What is even more shocking to Redburn are the appalling conditions in which these people are forced to live during the voyage. Their bunks appear to him like "dog-kennels" (p. 239), scarcely fit for human habitation, and all five hundred of them are "packed like slaves in a slave-ship . . ." (p. 241). During stormy weather, which continues for days at a time, they are confined to their quarters without light or air and deprived of sanitary facilities. The steerage soon becomes like an "opened cess-pool" (p. 241) and this, combined with the fetid air, the overcrowding, and the hunger, soon leads to an outbreak of pestilence aboard the ship, in which thirty passengers die and many more fall ill--an occurrence which, as Redburn indicates, is by no means uncommon on ships carrying emigrants to America.

Yet such people, poor and ignorant as they are, have no choice but to accept their wretched lot. They have neither power to protest nor any means to seek redress of their wrongs. Once aboard the ship, they are completely at the mercy of the captain, and many, like Captain Riga of the Highlander, do not hesitate to abuse their power:

For the emigrants in these ships are under a sort of martial-law; and in all their affairs are regulated by the despotic ordinances of the captain. . . . And as for going to law with him at the end of the voyage, you might as well go to law with the Czar of Russia. (p. 263)

Thus, whatever bitterness and resentment they feel, they are compelled, observes Redburn, to endure the bonds "by which

their social superiors hold them subject" (p. 264).

Redburn alone shows concern for the emigrants and outrage at their plight. He points out that, despite American legislation restricting the number of emigrants which ships are permitted to carry and British legislation directing that an adequate supply of food must be provided, both of these laws are honored more in the breach than in the observance. Legislation is useless, he realizes, unless the dictates of conscience and concern for humanity prompt man to act morally: "We talk of the Turks, and abhor the cannibals; but may not some of them, go to heaven, before some of us? We may have civilized bodies and yet barbarous souls" (p. 293). And not until man learns to abandon his cruelty to his fellow man and show compassion, asserts Redburn, ". . . will we become what Christianity is striving to make us" (p. 293).

It is within this framework--the malevolence of Jackson and the crew towards Redburn on the outward voyage and the exploitation of the hapless emigrants on the return trip--that Redburn's adventures in England must be viewed. Like the first and last sections of the narrative, the central one deals with Redburn's increasing awareness of the inhumanity of his fellow man, but, in this instance, within the context of an international setting. Redburn's experiences in England thus provide a link between this work and the main body of international fiction; they also constitute the focal point of the novel, confirming and

extending as they do his knowledge of evil in its manifold forms.

The Liverpool described by Melville in Redburn has all the nineteenth century social evils of Dickensian London and the London of Israel Potter. If America represents the new Eden, "Earth's Paradise" (p. 169),<sup>191</sup> the sordid dock-side area of Liverpool, with all its graphically detailed horrors, is an image of Hell. It is a city with a tainted past: ". . . the African slave-trade once constituted the principal commerce of Liverpool; and . . . the prosperity of the town was once . . . indissolubly linked to its prosecution" (p. 155). It is also a city which confronts Redburn with an unlimited vista of human suffering, misery, and degradation in the present. He describes, for example, the hordes of beggars that accost the sailors on the docks, noting that the scene represents a "picture of all that is dishonorable to civilization and humanity" (p. 186). His account of what he sees is a horrifying one:

The first time that I passed through this long lane of pauperism, it seemed hard to believe that such an array of misery could be furnished by any town in the world.

Every variety of want and suffering here met the eye, and every vice showed here its victims. Nor were the marvelous and almost incredible shifts and stratagems of the professional beggars, wanting to finish this picture of all that is dishonorable to civilization and humanity.

Old women, rather mummies, drying up with slow starving and age; young girls, incurably sick, who ought to have been in the hospital; sturdy men, with the gallows in their eyes, and a whining lie in their mouths; young boys, hollow-eyed and decrepit; and puny mothers, holding up puny babes in the glare of the sun, formed the main features of the scene.

But these were diversified by instances of

peculiar suffering, vice, or art in attracting charity, which, to me at least, who had never seen such things before, seemed to the last degree uncommon and monstrous. (p. 186)

Wherever he wanders in the dismal slums of the city, Redburns finds filth, squalor, poverty, and destitution stripping away all vestiges of human dignity. As an American, he is shocked by the gross injustices of a society which condemns its lower classes to such a wretched existence. Moreover, he is conscious of the contrast afforded by America: "For there, such a being as a native beggar is almost unknown; and to be a born American citizen seems a guarantee against pauperism; and this, perhaps, springs from the virtue of a vote" (p. 202).

Sickened and appalled by the human misery that surrounds him, Redburn finds his encounters with the destitute, the diseased, and the dying traumatic; but of all the painful sights arrayed before him in the vicinity of the docks, none is worse than what he witnesses in the alley called Launcelott's-Hey:

. . . there, some fifteen feet below the walk, crouching in nameless squalor, with her head bowed over, was the figure of what had been a woman. Her blue arms folded to her livid bosom two shrunken things like children, that leaned toward her, one on each side. At first, I knew not whether they were alive or dead. . . .

I made a noise with my foot, which, in the silence, echoed far and near; but there was no response. Louder still; when one of the children lifted its head, and cast upward a faint glance; then closed its eyes, and lay motionless. The woman also, now gazed up, and perceived me; but let fall her eye again. They were dumb and next to dead with want. How they had crawled into that den, I could not tell; but there they had crawled to die. . . . (pp. 180-81)

Kind-hearted and compassionate, Redburn is profoundly affected by the scene before him:

I stood looking down on them, while my whole soul swelled within me; and I asked myself, What right had any body in the wide world to smile and be glad, when sights like this were to be seen? It was enough to turn the heart to gall. . . . For who were these ghosts that I saw? Were they not human beings? . . . (p. 181)

Although he is aware that he is powerless to save them, Redburn's natural sympathy makes it impossible for him to stand idly by, watching them die, without even attempting to alleviate their suffering.

Venturing out into the filthy, near-by alleys, he attempts to solicit aid for them. He soon discovers, however, that the slum-dwellers themselves are so inured to the daily sight of suffering and death that they display only callous indifference to the plight of their neighbors, appearing completely unmoved by the scenes of horror that surround them. Indeed, Redburn's own efforts are regarded with contempt and annoyance. When he stops a policeman, he is told to mind his own affairs; when he asks the porter of the warehouse beneath which they are sheltering to allow them to go inside, he is told by the man that he is not running a hospital. Even worse, he is unable to find a single person in the neighborhood willing to give him a crust of bread or expressing the slightest concern whether these unfortunate human beings live or die. His exchange with several ragged old women in the alley makes it clear that, in this part of the city, no man is his brother's

keeper:

. . . accosting one, I asked if she knew of the persons I had just left. She replied, that she did not; nor did she want to. I then asked another. . . . Looking at me for an instant, she resumed her raking in the rubbish, and said that she knew who it was that I spoke of; but that she had no time to attend to beggars and their brats. Accosting still another, who seemed to know my errand, I asked if there was no place to which the woman could be taken. "Yes," she replied, "to the church-yard." I said she was alive, and not dead.

"Then she'll never die," was the rejoinder. "She's been down there these three days, with nothing to eat;--that I know myself."

"She deserves it," said an old hag . . . "that Betsey Jennings deserves it--was she ever married? tell me that." (p. 181)

Finally, in desperation, Redburn steals some bread and cheese from a boarding-house since he has no money to buy food and brings it and some water to the starving woman and her daughters. Although the children eat and drink, their mother refuses to do so. Only at this point, does Redburn realize that there is a third child, a baby who has been dead for some time, clasped in her arms. Seeing the apathy and weakness of the pathetic figures before him, Redburn himself acknowledges the futility of his errand: "I . . . almost repented that I had brought them any food; for it would only tend to prolong their misery, without hope of any permanent relief: for die they must very soon; they were too far gone for any medicine to help them" (p. 183). Nevertheless, he continues to bring them food until, three days later, they are all dead.

Long after their deaths, Redburn is haunted by the memory of those "pale, shrunken forms" (p. 184) and their

suffering; he is shocked by the heartlessness of those who refused to aid these wretched beings. By contrast, even as a stranger, he is unable to ignore the images of horror and pain and woe that surround him. His feelings of pity and concern for the plight of his fellow man, as well as his acceptance of his own responsibility to others, reveal a deep-seated sense of compassion, one which is also reflected in his sympathy for the emigrants on the ship, which has been noted earlier. Although he is powerless to do anything to ameliorate the emigrants' conditions or to save the woman and her children from death, he is, at least, able to cry out in indignation at the injustice of their fate. It is this compassion for others which attests to the young sailor's basic humanity. It is this too which constitutes the saving grace that enables him to witness such misery and despair, part of the sordid reality of life, without become hardened or brutalized by them.

The desire to expose the social evils which afflict the lower classes in England is undoubtedly one of Melville's primary aims in Redburn, as it is in Israel Potter. Yet the most significant aspect of Redburn's experiences in Liverpool, within the context of the novel, is the fact that it brings him face to face with the ugliness and horror of life, compelling him to recognize the iniquity of his fellow man. Redburn discovers that the slums are the breeding-ground, not only for human misery, but for the moral decay that is the inevitable concomitant of the

degradation and brutalization of man. Vice, perversion, and depravity are rampant in the dock-side area of Liverpool; this part of the city is infested with violence and crime of every variety.

As a port-city, Liverpool thrives on the sordid exploitation of visiting sailors. In fact, Redburn notes that its inhabitants are like the most vicious and rapacious natural scavengers: ". . . of all sea-ports in the world, Liverpool, perhaps, most abounds in all the variety of land-sharks, land-rats, and other vermin, which makes the hapless mariner their prey" (p. 138). The dock-side area is filled with squalid taverns, boarding-houses, and pawn-shops--all run for the purpose of cheating visiting sailors of their wages. Its streets are thronged with beggars, peddlers, prostitutes, pickpockets, and thieves. Nor is this all. Redburn observes that visiting sailors face even worse danger "from the denizens of notorious Corinthian haunts in the vicinity of the docks, which in depravity are not to be matched by any thing this side of the pit that is bottomless" (p. 138).

The atmosphere of Sodom, which seems to Redburn to permeate this part of the city, is evoked most powerfully when, passing a crowd gathered outside a tavern, he learns that a prostitute has just been murdered there by a drunken Spanish sailor. Redburn's description of the event is worth noting:

This passing allusion to the murder will convey some idea of the events which take place in the lowest and most abandoned neighborhoods frequented

by sailors in Liverpool. The pestilent lanes and alleys . . . are putrid with vice and crime; to which, perhaps, the round globe does not furnish a parallel. The sooty and begrimed bricks of the very houses have a reeking, Sodom-like, and murderous look; and well may the shroud of coal-smoke, which hangs over this part of the town, more than any other, attempt to hide the enormities here practiced. These are the haunts from which sailors sometimes disappear forever; or issue in the morning, robbed naked, from the broken door-ways. These are the haunts in which cursing, gambling, pickpocketing, and common iniquities, are virtues too lofty for the infected gorgons and hydras to practice. Propriety forbids that I should enter into details; but kidnappers, burkers, and resurrectionists are almost saints and angels to them. They seem leagued together, a company of miscreant misanthropes, bent upon doing all the malice to mankind in their power. With sulphur and brimstone they ought to be burned out of their arches like vermin. (p. 191)

The imagery of darkness, disease, death, and decay which recurs in this passage vividly conveys the moral corruption that is prevalent in this dismal and infernal neighborhood.

The dock-side area, described in this passage, presents a striking contrast to the rest of Liverpool. When Redburn ventures out into the more prosperous areas of the city, he is amazed to discover that the streets around him could easily be mistaken for those of New York. Nevertheless, Melville makes it clear that the moral evils which Redburn observes in the slums are by no means confined to the lower classes.

Redburn makes one friend in Liverpool--Harry Bolton, a handsome, young Englishman whom Redburn finds charming, good-natured, and amiable. When Redburn first encounters him, the circumstances of the two young men seem very similar.<sup>192</sup> Although orphaned at an early age, Bolton, as Redburn perceives,

is undeniably the son of a gentleman. Recently impoverished and compelled to make his own way in life, Bolton has made one voyage as a seaman and found himself ill-suited to the rigors of life aboard ship. However, having resolved to seek his fortune in America, he has decided to work his passage across the Atlantic and, after meeting Redburn, impetuously signs on as a seaman aboard the Highlander for the homeward voyage. In these details, the resemblances between the situations of Bolton and Redburn are obvious. Yet there are also crucial differences between the two friends which soon become apparent.

While Redburn is an innocent, Bolton is polished, sophisticated, and indisputably worldly. He enjoys the company of sportsmen and dandies, boasts of mixing in fashionable upper-class circles, and is enamored of the fascinations of London high-life. While Redburn is sober and serious, Bolton is gay, carefree, and improvident. While Redburn adheres to the conventional New England virtues, even to the point of being puritanical, Bolton, by these standards, is a dissipated young man: he smokes, drinks, enjoys frivolous amusements, and gambles. He reveals to Redburn that he has, in fact, squandered away his entire inheritance of five thousand pounds at the gaming tables during the course of one winter in London.

There are other things as well which lead Redburn to question the soundness of his friend's character. The young American has reason to doubt the veracity of Bolton's reminiscences about his experiences in the fashionable

London beau-monde and his claims to friendship with various aristocratic figures. He also begins to wonder about the reasons for Bolton's strange behavior in deliberately avoiding a lord who is supposedly a friend of his and in disguising his appearance in London in order to prevent his former acquaintances from recognizing him. He does not realize that Bolton probably owes these people money from gambling debts.

Redburn's relationship with Bolton is not explored in any real depth, but it does represent a rudimentary version of the typical relationship found in more fully developed international novels in one respect: the ambivalence that Redburn feels towards Bolton is due to the fact that, although he likes the engaging young Englishman immensely and is drawn to him, he is aware nonetheless of the disreputable aspects of his friend's character. And it is this theme--the American's discovery that the European's charm and attractiveness may co-exist with serious moral failings--that is depicted, albeit in a far more subtle manner, in the international novels of James.

The corresponding disparity between the brilliant façade of Old World society and its underlying decadence is also shown quite explicitly in the episode describing Redburn's experiences in London. It is Bolton who organizes their mysterious night-time visit to London in order to introduce Redburn to one of the pleasure-houses of the West End. In Aladdin's Palace, which is identified only as a "semi-public place of opulent entertainment" (p. 228),

Redburn glimpses the dissolute morals which are part of the secret life of the upper classes beneath their veneer of respectability.

Outwardly, Aladdin's Palace displays a semblance of beauty and "splendor" (p. 229); it is described as "brilliant" and "superb" (p. 228). In the grand set of rooms which Redburn first enters with Bolton, the rich furnishings, painted frescoes on the walls and ceiling, and lavishly spread tables around which fine gentlemen are seated, all appear to Redburn to be a "magnificent spectacle" (p. 228) which dazzles the beholder. Yet from the first, Redburn feels misgivings when he surveys the scene around him, sensing an echo of despair which seems to mock the elegant array before him. He soon realizes that the adjoining rooms which Bolton visits are private ones set apart for gambling. When his friend returns, flushed and excited and somewhat inebriated, he conducts Redburn upstairs to an even more richly decorated and luxuriously furnished room, with numerous closed apartments, which are probably used for gambling, leading off from it, and bids Redburn wait for him there until he returns.

Despite its opulent, sumptuous beauty, this room too makes Redburn feel strangely uneasy and fearful: ". . . all the time, I felt ill at heart; and was filled with an undercurrent of dismal forebodings" (p. 231). The imagery that he employs in describing the exotic furnishings conveys the disparity he senses between their apparent beauty and the taint of evil that they seem to exude: he alludes to

"the Persian carpeting, mimicking parterres of tulips, and roses, and jonquils, like a bower in Babylon" and to the "oriental ottomans, whose cunning warp and woof were wrought into plaited serpents, undulating beneath beds of leaves . . ." (p. 230). His use of "Babylon" and "serpents" makes the aura of corruption unmistakable.

Above all, it is the mythological paintings on the walls which dominate the room, serving to bring the decadence of Aladdin's Palace into sharper focus:

They were such pictures as the high-priests, for a bribe, showed to Alexander in the innermost shrine of the white temple in the Libyan oasis; such pictures as the pontiff of the sun strove to hide from Cortez, when, sword in hand, he burst open the sanctorum of the pyramid-fane at Cholula: such pictures as you may still see, perhaps, in the central alcove of the excavated mansion of Pansa, in Pompeii . . . such pictures as Martial and Suetonius mention as being found in the private cabinet of the Emperor Tiberius: such pictures as are delineated on the bronze medals, to this day dug up on the ancient island of Capreae: such pictures as you might have beheld in an arched recess, leading from the left hand of the secret side-gallery of the temple of Aphrodite in Corinth.  
(pp. 230-31)

The eroticism of these paintings compels the reader to view Aladdin's Palace from a somewhat different perspective, for it suggests that the palace is not only a gambling-house but some kind of high-class brothel. The vices practiced in its hidden rooms, implies Melville, include the licentious indulgence of all manner of sexual proclivities.

Whether intentional or not on Melville's part, his account of Redburn's visit to Aladdin's Palace presents some

fascinating parallels to Book II, Canto xii of Spenser's Faerie Queene--the section recounting Guyon's visit to the Bower of Bliss.<sup>193</sup> It is worth looking again, for example, at Melville's choice of words to describe the "cunning[ly] . . . wrought" furniture and the flowers of the carpet "mimicking" those of "a bower." What should be noted, too, is the fact that Redburn refers to the ornate decoration of the first room that he enters in a similar manner: "The walls were painted so as to deceive the eye . . . and groups of columns . . . supported a resplendent fresco ceiling, arched like a bower, and thickly clustering with mimic grapes" (p. 228). Even if one takes the repetition of the word "bower" in both instances as coincidental, there is nonetheless a striking resemblance to the Bower of Bliss in Melville's conception of a place where art and artificial adornment are skillfully employed to imitate nature<sup>194</sup> in order to provide a luxuriant setting for pleasure. Melville also makes it clear that there is something wrong with this art: it is false and deliberately misleading, as is shown by his use of words such as "deceive the eye" (p. 228), "mimic" (p. 228), "mimicking" (p. 230), and "cunning[ly] . . . wrought" (p. 230).

So, too, is this the case in Acrasia's Bower of Bliss. As C. S. Lewis has emphasized in his classic study, The Allegory of Love, Spenser is explicit in stating that Acrasia's garden is art, not nature; and by art, as Lewis shows, Spenser means artifice,<sup>195</sup> "the artificial in its bad sense--the sham or imitation."<sup>196</sup> Spenser tells us that the garden is situated in

A place pickt out by choice of best alie,  
That natures worke by art can imitate. . . .197

Even where the garden appears to be natural, Spenser discloses that nature is, in fact, augmented and embellished by art. It is, he notes,

. . . goodly beautifide  
With all the ornaments of Floraes pride,  
Wherewith her mother Art, as halfe in scorne  
Of niggard Nature, like a pompous bride  
Did decke her, and too lauishly adorne. . . .  
(II.xii.1.4-8)

Moreover, the art in the garden, like that in the rooms of Aladdin's Palace, is deceptive, contriving as it does to counterfeit the real thing. The artificial ivy, for example, is disguised to mislead the observer:

And ouer all, of purest gold was spred,  
A trayle of yuie, in his natiue hew:  
For the rich mettall was so coloured,  
That wight, who did not well auis'd it vew,  
Would surely deeme it to be yuie trew. . . .  
(II.xii.61.1-5)

Even Acrasia herself is referred to as an enchantress who "Tryde all her arts, and all her sleights . . ." (II.xii.81.9).

One also notices a correspondence of specific details between Melville's description of the decorations in Aladdin's Palace and Spenser's description of Acrasia's garden. Like the mimic woven flowers in the carpet that Redburn refers to earlier, the garden has "painted flowres" (II.xii.58.5). Like the painted bower on the ceiling of the room, thickly clustered with mimic grapes, the second gate in the garden is arched overhead by a grapevine whose

branches bow down with the weight of their fruit. And here, too, among the real grapes are imitation ones, ". . . of burnisht gold, / So made by art, to beautifie the rest . . ." (II.xii.55.1-2).

Commenting further on the negative attitude to art which Spenser expresses in his description of the Bower of Bliss--namely, his view that art, unlike nature, is spurious, lifeless, and sterile<sup>198</sup>--Lewis notes that Spenser's detailed descriptions of pictures and tapestries throughout The Faerie Queene are significant: ". . . he usually puts such artefacts in places which he thinks evil."<sup>199</sup> Turning again to Redburn, the reader is aware that art serves an analogous purpose in Aladdin's Palace. For all their beauty and richness, Redburn is strangely repelled by the furnishings and decorations of the rooms he enters; they seem to him to have an inexplicably sinister quality. Moreover, it is the erotic, mythological paintings which become the visible symbol of the vice that Redburn senses around him.

Another point of resemblance between Aladdin's Palace and Acrasia's garden is found in the luxuriant beauty and sensuous appeal of both places. The opulent furnishings and ornate decorations of Aladdin's Palace provide a sumptuous setting for the entertainments which are offered there. Although the rooms possess a sybaritic splendor and magnificence that are absent from the garden, Spenser's description of that place conveys a corresponding impression of voluptuousness, abundance, and lushness. The Bower of Bliss is referred to as a "daintie Paradise on ground" (II.xii.55.

a place "In which all pleasures plenteously abound . . ." (II.xii.58.3). It is also a place, Spenser tells us,

In which what euer in this worldly state  
Is sweet, and pleasing vnto liuing sense,  
Or that may dayntiest fantasie aggrate,  
Was poured forth with plentifull dispence,  
And made there to abound with lauish affluence.  
(II.xii.42.5-9)

Yet the very lushness of adornment is, in both cases, shown to be excessive. Melville conveys Redburn's awareness of the surfeit of richness and luxury surrounding him: as he sits in the upstairs room waiting for Bolton, he acknowledges that ". . . a terrible revulsion came over me . . ." (p. 233). Spenser is even more explicit, using words like "too lauishly adorne" (II.xii.1.8) and "ouer-wrought" (II.xii.60.6) to describe the garden. It is interesting to note, too, that the words "sweet" or "sweetly" recur sixteen times in Canto xii. One of the most striking instances of this over-ripe and cloying beauty found in Acrasia's garden is that of the grapes. Spenser refers to the grapevine whose ". . . weake bowes, with so rich load opprest, / Did bowe adowne, as ouer-burdened" (II.xii.55.5-6). The grapes tempt all who pass by to taste "Their lushious wine . . ." (II.xii.54.4). However, one notes that in the porch, over which the vines grow, sits Excesse, and the sweet wine that she prepares is made from "the riper fruit" (II.xii.56.2), the fruit "that with fulnesse sweld . . ." (II.xii.56.3).

Another clue to what is subtly wrong with Aladdin's Palace and Acrasia's Bower of Bliss is, in both instances, found in the suggestion of corrupt sexuality--in the fact

that both places contrive to arouse lascivious desires. In Aladdin's Palace, this is done by means of the erotic paintings so prominently adorning the walls of the room upstairs. In the Bower of Bliss, these pictures have come to life, so to speak, and the tableau enacted before Guyon's eyes opens with the two naked girls bathing in Acrasia's pool:

Two naked Damzelles he therein espyde,  
Which therein bathing, seemed to contend,  
And wrestle wantonly, ne car'd to hyde,  
Their dainty parts from vew of any, which them eyde.  
(II.xii.63.6-9)

That their sportive play is intended to titillate the observer is stated even more explicitly in the following stanza, when we are told that, after plunging beneath the water,

Then suddainly both would themselues vnhele,  
And th'amarous sweet spoiles to greedy eyes reuele.  
(II.xii.64.8-9)

Their actions are deliberately provocative, designed to kindle Guyon's lust and arouse his desire. In fact, when one of the girls sees Guyon watching her, she

. . . rather higher did arise  
And her two lilly paps aloft displayd,  
And all, that might his melting hart entise  
To her delights, she vnto him bewrayd:  
The rest hid vnderneath, him more desirous made.  
(II.xii.66.5-9)

Guyon subsequently arrives at the Bower itself, where Acrasia is displayed beside her sleeping lover after having satiated her lust. Spenser notes that she

. . . was arayd, or rather disarayd,  
 All in a vele of silke and siluer thin,  
 That hid no whit her alabaster skin. . . . (II.xii.77.3-5)

Lest we miss her resemblance to the girls bathing in the pool, Spenser adds that, "Her snowy brest was bare to readie spoyle / Of hungry eies . . ." (II.xii.78.1-2).

Again, Lewis succinctly sums up Spenser's evident intention when he points out that, despite the erotic imagery used to describe the Bower of Bliss, there is actually no passion enacted there, no sexual activity at all:<sup>200</sup>

The Bower of Bliss is not a picture of lawless, that is, unwedded, love as opposed to lawful love. It is a picture, one of the most powerful ever painted, of the whole sexual nature in disease. There is not a kiss or an embrace on the island: only male prurience and female provocation.<sup>201</sup>

In this sense, the scenes that Guyon witnesses correspond in function to the paintings that Redburn sees, since what is emphasized in both instances is the attempt to arouse the sexual desire of the beholder. Thus although Melville implies that sexual pleasures are among the entertainments offered by Aladdin's Palace, Redburn's growing awareness of being surrounded by wickedness and vice is enhanced, not by any specific indication that this is so, but rather by the nature of the paintings themselves.

It is evident that the incitement to lust and the deliberate provocation of lewd desires are of central importance in the Bower of Bliss, whereas in Aladdin's Palace, the paintings merely serve to intensify the general atmosphere of corruption that Redburn senses there from the

moment he enters. However, Lewis makes an interesting comment about the Bower of Bliss that is relevant to this discussion, enabling us, once again, to relate Acrasia's Bower to Aladdin's Palace. He contends: ". . . the Bower is the home not of vicious sexuality in particular, but of vicious Pleasure, in general. . . . The Bower is connected with sex at all only through the medium of Pleasure."<sup>202</sup> He notes, too: "The Bower is not the foe of Chastity but of Continnence. . . ."<sup>203</sup> Although Lewis's statements are somewhat categorical, there is evidence to support his claims. He cites the line which describes the Bower of Bliss as a place "Where Pleasure dwelles in sensuall delights. . . ." (II.xii.1.8). Equally significant, one should add, are Spenser's allusions to Acrasia earlier in Book II, when he states that, "Her blisse is all in pleasure and delight" (II.i.52.1) and refers to her as

The vile Acrasia, that with vaine delightes,  
And idle pleasures in her Bowre of Blisse,  
Does charme her louers. . . . (II.v.27.2-4)

Although Melville uses the term "entertainment," instead of "pleasure," his attitude to Aladdin's Palace resembles that of Spenser to the Bower of Bliss. Moreover, in the sense that Lewis uses the term "vicious"--that is, to denote that which is a vice or is morally evil--this term may also be applied to the drinking and gambling that the patrons of Aladdin's Palace engage in. These activities represent the intemperate, self-indulgent gratification of man's baser appetites.

Spenser also alludes to the fact that pleasure and delight are the means used by Acrasia "Wherewith she makes her louers drunken mad . . ." (II.1.52.2); he tells us that her former lovers, who succumbed to the spell of her enchantment, have been transformed by her into ". . . wild-beasts, that rag'd with furie mad" (II.xii.84.5). In this context, it is interesting to recall that after a night of dissipation, spent drinking and gambling and, perhaps, participating in other unspecified entertainments, Bolton bursts into the room where Redburn is waiting for him and reveals himself to be in a state near madness--wild, delirious, hysterical, and shouting "with the foam at his lips" (p. 235).

Finally, a comparison of Spenser's Bower of Bliss and Melville's Aladdin's Palace reveals more general thematic correspondences as well. The second book of The Faerie Queene recounts the allegorical journey of Guyon, the Christian knight of temperance, as he finds his virtue assailed by various temptations which he resists with the aid of the palmer's counsel. Of all of these, the sensuous beauty and the sensual delights of the Bower of Bliss are the most seductive, so that when Guyon at last binds Acrasia and destroys her Bower, refusing to allow himself to succumb to the spell of her enchantment, he achieves his most difficult moral victory.

The dominant motif that recurs throughout Canto xii, the section describing Guyon's visit to the Bower of Bliss, is that of the disparity between appearance and reality. Spenser tells us that near the gate, at the entrance to the

garden, sits Genius,

That secretly doth vs procure to fall,  
Through guilefull semblaunts, which he makes vs see.  
He of this Gardin had the gouernall,  
And Pleasures porter was deuizd to bee. . . .  
(II.xii.48.5-8)

The deceptiveness of outward appearances in the garden is illustrated, not only by the fact that what seems to be natural is really artificial, as noted earlier, but even more important, by the fact that what is beautiful is nonetheless morally corrupt.

Guyon is surprised by the loveliness of Acrasia's garden: "Much wondred Guyon at the faire aspect / Of that sweet place . . ." (II.xii.53.1-2). However, he does not allow this to blind him to its wickedness. He resists its appeal: ". . . [he] suffred no delight / To sincke into his sence, nor mind affect . . ." (II.xii.53.2-3). Although the garden appears to him to be a veritable "Paradise" (II.xii.70.4), with sweet music harmoniously blended to include "all that pleasing is to liuing eare" (II.xii.70.7), he is aware that it is a false Paradise. It should be recalled, too, that when first approaching the island where the Bower of Bliss is situated, Guyon is warned by the palmer that before them, ". . . a perlous passage lyes, / Where many Mermayds haunt, making false melodies" (II.xii.17.8-9). Indeed, Acrasia herself is referred to as "a false enchaunteresse" (II.1.51.3). To avoid evil when it is ugly does not constitute much of a moral triumph; but to reject the alluring beauty and enticing erotic pleasures which are displayed in the garden,

as Guyon does, is to offer convincing proof of moral virtue.

There are obvious points of correspondence between Redburn and Guyon. Like the Christian knight, Redburn is innocent, virtuous, and temperate; like Guyon's journey, his own voyage represents a series of encounters with evil in its various guises. James E. Miller, Jr., points out, correctly so, that, "If in Liverpool Redburn finds that evil is repulsive . . . he discovers in London that evil can also be attractive. . . ."204 Whereas the scenes that he witnesses in the slums of Liverpool reveal vice in its most sordid and degrading forms, his visit to Aladdin's Palace can be seen as a temptation or test of character which is analogous to that which Guyon faces in the Bower of Bliss. Moreover, it is one from which he, like Guyon, emerges uncorrupted even though he lacks a moral guide such as the palmer and is, in fact, in danger of being led astray by his companion, Harry Bolton.

Redburn also resembles Guyon in readily acknowledging the fair aspect of the rooms in Aladdin's Palace; he is cognizant of their superficial beauty, their richness and elegance. Nevertheless, like Guyon, he refuses to be beguiled by outward appearances, perceiving as he does that the attractions of Aladdin's Palace represent a kind of enchantment of the senses: he speaks of being "enchanted . . . fast to my chair; so that, though I . . . wished to rush forth from the house, my limbs seemed manacled" (p. 233).

It is this notion of enchantment, a quality that is also found in Acrasia's garden, which helps account for an

otherwise puzzling aspect of the episode portrayed in Melville's novel--its unreal, dream-like quality. When Redburn first enters the house, he fancies that it is, as its name suggests, a veritable palace of Aladdin, for its gorgeous and exotic splendor seems to him to evoke a fabulous scene from the Arabian Nights. Moreover, the entire episode has a strange and mysterious phantasmagoric quality. Redburn discloses that, on his arrival in London, ". . . I thought . . . myself somebody else: so unreal seemed every thing about me" (p. 227). After entering Aladdin's Palace, he adds that, ". . . my head was almost dizzy with the strangeness of the sight . . ." (p. 229); shortly afterwards, he refers to "the delirium of the moment" and to his "confused visions" (p. 229).

The atmosphere of enchantment which Redburn feels in Aladdin's Palace has pejorative associations: it suggests that which is unreal, illusory, and spurious. Sensing that the splendid façade of the palace is deceptive, Redburn is not enticed by the entertainments which are offered there but, on the contrary, is made increasingly uneasy by the sinister quality of his surroundings. As he sits in the magnificent upstairs room awaiting Bolton's return, his dream-like state takes on the characteristics of a nightmare, and he is suddenly overwhelmed by a strong presentiment of evil:

I shuddered at every footfall, and almost thought it must be some assassin pursuing me. The whole place seemed infected; and a strange thought came over me, that in the very damasks around, some eastern plague had been imported. And was that

pale yellow wine, that I drank below, drugged?  
 thought I. This must be some house whose  
 foundations take hold on the pit. . . . (p. 233)

The dominant imagery of this passage is that of disease, danger, and damnation, attesting to the fact that the opulent beauty of Aladdin's Palace does not blind Redburn to its iniquity. Instead, he realizes that even artifice and adornment cannot effectively disguise the true nature of evil:

But . . . spite of the metropolitan magnificence around me, I was mysteriously alive to a dreadful feeling, which I had never before felt, except when penetrating into the lowest and most squalid haunts of sailor iniquity in Liverpool. All the mirrors and marbles around me seemed crawling over with lizards; and I thought to myself, that though gilded and golden, the serpent of vice is a serpent still. (p. 234)

Despite his unworldliness, Redburn is able to discern the presence of vice, however richly it is caparisoned with beauty; despite his lack of experience, he is able to recognize the similarity between Aladdin's Palace and the low haunts of sailors in the slums of Liverpool. That he can do so attests to his moral virtue. Furthermore, his ability to withstand the appeal of Aladdin's Palace without succumbing to the temptation which it represents constitutes an important moral victory. In both respects, Redburn's resemblance to Guyon, Spenser's knight of temperance, is confirmed.

In his account of Redburn's excursion to Aladdin's

Palace, Melville dramatizes the contrast between American virtue and European vice, emphasizing the decadence of upper-class Old World society. In doing so, he expresses an American attitude to Europe that is prevalent in nineteenth century international fiction. Yet the numerous parallels between Redburn and The Faerie Queene, which have been explored on the preceding pages, also enable one to place this episode in the context of a wider literary tradition.

To be sure, Redburn's visit to Aladdin's Palace represents a type of situation which is found, in various and sundry transformations, in a number of international novels. It can be seen to encapsulate the American's journey to Europe insofar as the theme that recurs in so many of the works of international fiction considered in this study is the American innocent's discovery that Europe, for all its outward aesthetic appeal--its art and civilization, its elegance and refinement, its polish and sophistication--is nevertheless tainted by an insidious moral corruption.

However, while this is a distinctively American rendering of the international experience, it has also been noted that the dominant motif of the section of The Faerie Queene dealing with the Bower of Bliss is Guyon's repudiation of the beautiful for the good. It is important to recognize, then, that it is the same motif found in Spenser's work which reappears, in new configurations, not only in Redburn, but in Norman Leslie, Paul Fane, The Lady of the Aroostook, and The Marble Faun. Furthermore, the conscious affirmation of moral values over aesthetic ones reaches its finest, most

subtle expression in the international fiction of James. A comparison of Redburn and The Faerie Queene is thus particularly illuminating because it confirms that the moral issues treated in the nineteenth century international novel are archetypal rather than merely cultural ones.

Moreover, it can be argued that the polarity between the moral values of the New World and the aesthetic ones of the Old that is so often portrayed in the nineteenth century international novel is also an expression of the antithesis of nature and art, of reality and appearance, of the genuine and the spurious, that, as C. S. Lewis has shown so convincingly, Spenser was concerned with when he wrote The Faerie Queene.<sup>205</sup> It is interesting, too, to recall Lewis's comment that Spenser consistently rejected the sophistication of Elizabethan court life because of its artificiality, regarding it as inferior to unspoiled nature.<sup>206</sup> If one accepts that European civilization and worldly European society--the equivalents of the court--can be associated respectively with art and artifice, and that America so frequently regarded as a new Eden which is comparatively pastoral and unspoiled, can be associated with nature, it is easy to see the congruity between the concerns of Spenser and those which belong to the province of the nineteenth century international novel.

It is evident from the foregoing discussion that, thematically, Redburn can be regarded as a significant work in the evolution of the nineteenth century international

novel, even though the international situation itself is admittedly rudimentary and undeveloped. Equally noteworthy is the fact that the dominant concerns of Redburn reflect those found in the mainstream of nineteenth century American fiction.

In summing up Melville's novel, it must be emphasized that the two distinctive, seemingly disparate aspects of Redburn's adventures abroad--his search for the past and his encounter with evil--are related insofar as they represent analogous phases of the young man's development. When Redburn sets forth on his voyage on the metaphoric sea of life, he embarks on a journey of discovery, both as regards himself and the world at large.

The death of his father precipitates Redburn's transition to adulthood, but in order to establish his own identity, as has been noted earlier, he must first learn to relinquish the past and to dissociate himself from his father. Although he is greatly disappointed when he realizes that the cherished guide-book which belonged to his father is useless to him because the landmarks in Liverpool have changed since his father's time, this discovery compels him to recognize the futility of attempting either to recapture the past or to relive it. Unable, quite literally, to follow in his father's footsteps, he finally becomes aware that he must make his own way in life.

At the same time, Redburn is also compelled by circumstances to venture forth into the harsh and brutal world of reality and to accommodate himself to it; he is

forced to come to terms with those aspects of life from which he has previously been shielded. R. W. B. Lewis points out: "Going to sea, both in deed and symbol, was always Melville's way of fronting what Thoreau called 'the essential facts of life'. . . ." <sup>207</sup> In the course of the novel, Redburn, obliged to fend for himself, learns to endure the many tribulations resulting from his impoverished and friendless state. As Merlin Bowen observes, he makes "the discovery that hardship and loneliness are not his isolated misfortune but the natural condition of man." <sup>208</sup> Furthermore, he is repeatedly confronted with what can be termed "natural evils"--disease and death, in particular. <sup>209,210</sup> Above all, he becomes increasingly aware of the presence of moral evil in the world as he encounters man's cruelty and inhumanity to his fellow man, witnesses social injustice, and is exposed to depravity and vice.

This ordeal, however painful and traumatic, is a necessary part of growing up; it is an initiation into adulthood. Redburn survives the voyage without being brutalized or corrupted. Nevertheless, the price that the young man must pay for acquiring worldly experience is the loss of innocence. In both phases of his development--his renunciation of the past and his encounter with evil--Redburn's facing up to the realities of life destroys the romantic illusions of youth. <sup>211</sup> Yet, as compensation, it leads to a new degree of maturity, extending his knowledge of himself, his fellow man, and the world at large, and ultimately bringing him, in his persona as narrator, to

what Merlin Bowen calls an "acceptance of the whole of life with all its mingled good and evil."<sup>212</sup>

The unifying factor in Redburn, then, is the rite de passage from youth to adulthood.<sup>213</sup> This theme is of particular interest because it is one that repeatedly appears, not only in various international novels (where admittedly it is often less developed than in Redburn), but in a number of other works of nineteenth century American fiction as well--notably, Charles Brockden Brown's Arthur Mervyn,<sup>214</sup> Nathaniel Hawthorne's "Young Goodman Brown" and "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," Herman Melville's Moby-Dick, Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn, and Stephen Crane's The Red Badge of Courage. It also recurs, in the twentieth century, in Ernest Hemingway's Nick Adams stories, A Farewell to Arms, and For Whom the Bell Tolls, William Faulkner's "The Bear," Saul Bellow's The Adventures of Augie March, Carson McCullers's A Member of the Wedding, and J. D. Salinger's The Catcher in the Rye, among others, and continues to be a major preoccupation of contemporary writers.

All these works portray the youthful protagonist's attempt to come to terms with the adult world, the disillusioning and often brutal world of reality. In general, the passage to manhood takes a number of variant forms in American fiction: it may be dependent on a test of courage, an acceptance of suffering and death as an intrinsic part of the human condition, or a confrontation with evil.<sup>215</sup> Although Redburn's voyage resembles those of Ishmael and Huck Finn, in particular, it should be noted that

in virtually all the works of nineteenth century fiction cited above, with the possible exception of Crane's novel, the youthful hero's passage to manhood is bound up with his acquiring first-hand knowledge and experience of evil in the world.

That the American's discovery of evil so consistently plays a crucial role in his coming of age, that the rite de passage so frequently takes this distinctive form in nineteenth century American fiction, is due, in part, to another major feature of American literature of this period--namely, the fascination with the problem of evil in its own right. Despite the prevailing commitment to a belief in freedom, progress, and reason, it has frequently been observed that there is also a darker current running through nineteenth century American fiction. The absorbing interest in speculative metaphysical inquiries into the nature of evil is reflected in numerous works, among them, Brockden Brown's Wieland, Edgar Huntly, and Ormond, Hawthorne's "Young Goodman Brown," "The Birthmark," "Rappaccini's Daughter," and The Scarlet Letter, Melville's Moby-Dick and Billy Budd, and James's The Turn of the Screw.

It thus becomes increasingly evident that, despite its distinctive features, the international novel is not merely a genre set apart from the main body of American fiction but, on the contrary, is integrally related to it. In this respect, the international situation may be regarded essentially as providing a different framework, another context, for the dramatization of those same themes that are

found in nineteenth century American fiction. For although the paradigmatic international novel portrays the contrast between the American and the European and the conflict of values between the New World and the Old,<sup>216</sup> it also quite frequently utilizes the international situation to express the American writer's dual concern with the rite de passage and the problem of evil. In particular, it is the American's passage from youthful innocence to worldly experience, as a consequence of his encounter with European corruption, that dominates so much of nineteenth century international fiction. This is the shaping vision, not only of Redburn,<sup>217</sup> but of Hawthorne's The Marble Faun and James's international novels, especially The American, The Portrait of a Lady, The Ambassadors, and The Golden Bowl. To a lesser extent, it is also present in Norman Leslie, Vassall Morton, Paul Fane, and The Lady of the Aroostook.

Moreover, although the European setting is one of the definitive characteristics of the international novel, Europe generally serves a symbolic as well as a literal function. Although most international novels present a detailed description of some aspect of European manners or morals, or some comment on its political institutions, Europe usually represents more than a specific geographic locale. At the least, it symbolizes what Dorothea Krook terms "the worldly world,"<sup>218</sup> or it represents the corruption of civilization that, in a work such as Arthur Mervyn, is epitomized by the city. Furthermore, in its most suggestive form, as in Redburn, The Marble Faun, and the international

fiction of James, the transatlantic voyage from America to Europe takes on the dimensions of an inner psychological journey to the darker recesses of the human soul. It becomes, in effect, a transposition of Goodman Brown's midnight walk into the New England forest.<sup>219</sup>

Finally, it should be noted that there is present in Redburn yet another motif--namely, the Adamic one--which recurs in nineteenth century American fiction, including various international novels, and is related to these same concerns. Commenting on Arthur Mervyn, The Scarlet Letter, Moby-Dick, and Billy Budd, as well as works of international fiction such as The Marble Faun, The Portrait of a Lady, The Wings of the Dove, and The Golden Bowl, R. W. B. Lewis observes that in all these novels, the figure of the American Adam reappears and is involved, to some extent, in a re-enactment of the Adamic experience.<sup>220</sup> Lewis's analysis of the Adamic hero and his tradition is both useful and illuminating, but he fails to consider the differences between those novels set in America and those set in Europe. Nonetheless, this distinction is an important one.

The juxtaposition of America and Europe in international fiction frequently takes on a particular symbolic and mythological level of meaning, thereby providing a framework for the Adamic experience. By virtue of his moral innocence and lack of worldly experience, the American protagonist in international fiction is often depicted, as Redburn is,<sup>221</sup> as an Adamic figure; he is portrayed as a representative of an unspoiled New World which is invested with the qualities of a new Eden.

These assumptions are grounded in nineteenth century American thought which, as Lewis indicates, regarded the American as "a new kind of hero," as "an individual emancipated from history, happily bereft of ancestry, untouched and undefiled by the usual inheritance of family and race. . . ."222 According to the prevalent American myth, notes Lewis, the American "was . . . identified with Adam before the Fall"; and this myth also considered the New World to be a new beginning for mankind: "It described the world as starting up again under fresh initiative--in a divinely granted second chance for the human race. . . ."223

It should be recalled that in Redburn, the narrator alludes to America in similar terms: "The other world beyond this, which was longed for by the devout before Columbus' time, was found in the New; and the deep-sea-lead, that first struck these soundings, brought up the soil of Earth's Paradise" (p. 169). Contemplating the destiny of the New World, Redburn envisages "a future which shall see the estranged children of Adam restored as to the old hearth-stone in Eden" (p. 169).

By contrast, despite its veneer of civilization, the Old World's heritage of crime and guilt, as well as its decadent moral values, imbues it with the qualities of the fallen world, attesting to the corruption of post-lapsarian man. In this context, the American's voyage to Europe that is depicted in international fiction can be seen as a special kind of rite de passage: like that of Redburn, it becomes, simultaneously, a mythical rendering of the generic American's

transition from youth to adulthood as well as a national, distinctively American version of the archetypal innocent's initiation into the knowledge of evil and experience of the world. Moreover, insofar as the American Adam's voyage to the wicked Old World brings him face to face with sin and vice for the first time, and leads to the loss of his state of innocence, it can also be regarded as a figurative or symbolic re-enactment of the Fall of Man, with interesting parallels to the Biblical account.

Commenting on this aspect of the Adamic experience, R. W. B. Lewis argues persuasively that, because the Adamic hero acquires wisdom and maturity through suffering, his transformation should be regarded as a "fortunate fall."<sup>224</sup> However, Lewis's use of this term must be understood, not in the Christological sense that Adam's fall was fortunate because it enabled Christ to redeem man's sins, but in a more humanistic context. Certainly, there is evidence to support his assertion in the international fiction of Melville, Hawthorne, and James. In these works, there is little doubt that the informed innocence so painfully acquired by the Adamic figure reflects a higher order of consciousness than his previous ignorance, extending his self-knowledge and, in the works of James in particular, investing him with a heroic stature and nobility.<sup>225</sup>

The confrontation between the American and the European (and the corresponding contrast between America and Europe) thus frequently reveals itself to be a richly suggestive one, with multiple levels of meaning. It may serve, not only to

illustrate the conflict of mores, cultures, and values between the New World and the Old, but to dramatize the American's passage from youth to maturity, from naivete to worldly knowledge, from innocence to experience. In doing so, it brings together several motifs that are also present in the mainstream of nineteenth century American fiction--the rite de passage, the problem of evil, and the re-enactment of the Adamic experience.

It can be argued that as a genre, the international novel serves a more important mythological function in nineteenth century American culture than has previously been recognized. It has already been noted that the foray of the Adamic American innocent into the corrupt Old World can be seen to represent a re-enactment of one particular myth--the Biblical story of the Fall of man--in the light of prevailing nineteenth century American views.

However, it is also illuminating to apply the general, albeit controversial theory of myth advocated by Claude Lévi-Strauss to the structural elements of the international novel. As noted by G. S. Kirk, Lévi-Strauss maintains that the primary function of virtually all myth is the attempt to harmonize disparate elements of reality, to mediate between two polar extremes, or to reconcile opposites.<sup>226</sup> Although this sweeping claim seems to require some modification, and Kirk, in his analysis of Lévi-Strauss's approach, cites a number of specific myths which cannot be categorized in this way,<sup>227</sup> there is no doubt that, at the least, Lévi-Strauss's

description may be usefully applied to certain myths, if not others. Kirk explicitly acknowledges the major contribution that Lévi-Strauss has made to the study of myth:

From now on it will always be necessary to consider the possibility that any myth, even in the western tradition, may turn out to provide a model for mediating a contradiction, in terms of structure as well as content--along, of course, with other possibilities. . . .<sup>228</sup>

In this context, it would seem that the international novel provides such a model. The polarization of the New World and the Old, which is one of the most distinctive features of international fiction, and the concomitant juxtaposition of their respective moral values can be seen as an externalization of the archetypal conflict between innocence and corruption (or good and evil) and, to a lesser degree, of those between nature and civilization and between present and past, all of which may be found in a number of myths. In its most fully developed form, the international novel also seeks to reconcile these polarities, although nowhere is the synthesis as effective as in The Golden Bowl. Consequently, it is possible to conclude that, to the extent that its structural and thematic components resemble those defined by Lévi-Strauss, the international novel represents a literary formulation of myth, with a corresponding function in nineteenth century American culture.

Furthermore, even if one turns from Lévi-Strauss's general theory of myth to Kirk's description of various particular types of myth, it can be argued that the

international novel constitutes a literary equivalent of the model or charter myth, a kind of validating myth which in primitive cultures serves primarily to provide authority for tribal customs and institutions as well as to reaffirm basic tribal beliefs.<sup>229</sup> By asserting the moral superiority of the American over the European, the international novel effectively validates America's historic decision to renounce its ties with the Old World and to pursue its destiny as an independent nation. In doing so, it fulfills an important cultural need, one indicated, for example, by Perry Miller in his remarks on nineteenth century American fiction:

In all its many guises, the romance pits untutored virtue against sophistication. In the American romance this conveniently required that America, nature's nation . . . be vindicated against urban, civilized Europe, against sophistication and corruption.<sup>230</sup>

This view of the international novel is admittedly a highly speculative one, but it does suggest that international fiction is a rich field for further mythological study.

## Chapter 13.

The Marble Faun

Of all the novels considered in this study, Nathaniel Hawthorne's The Marble Faun (1860) is undoubtedly the most significant in terms of the development of the international novel, anticipating as it does the complexities and ambiguities of the international theme portrayed by James and bridging the gap between James's international novels and earlier works of international fiction in its treatment of the American innocent's traumatic encounter with evil in the Old World. Yet paradoxically, The Marble Faun does not readily lend itself to classification as an international novel in the usual sense.<sup>231</sup> Not only does Hawthorne himself call this book a "romance," but, as F. O. Matthiessen points out, Hawthorne's use of the term "romance" to describe his fiction indicates a different purpose from that of the novel, with its more realistic conventions: "He . . . wanted . . . liberties from literal verisimilitude. For the main concern of the romance was not external details, exactly presented settings, turns of speech, or characterizing gestures."<sup>232</sup> The nature of the romance would thus seem to exclude the usual concerns of international fiction. Certainly, The Marble Faun is permeated with Gothic elements<sup>233</sup> as well as mythic and allegorical levels of meaning that have little direct bearing on the international

theme.

Even more important, Miriam and Donatello, the central figures in the drama of sin, guilt, and remorse which is enacted against a Roman background, are both Italians; and it is they who are the primary focus of Hawthorne's attention as he probes the origins and nature of evil. Consequently, this aspect of the novel, however fascinating in its dramatization of moral, psychological, and theological concerns found elsewhere in Hawthorne's work, is largely irrelevant to a study of international fiction.

A concomitant of Hawthorne's decision to make the Europeans the principal players on the stage is the fact that the Americans, Hilda and Kenyon, are not direct participants in the central tragedy of the novel. They are spectators--Hilda, quite literally so, when she inadvertently witnesses the murder--and, as such, remain on the periphery of the action, incidental to the main events that occur. It is Donatello and Miriam who suffer tragic fates at the end of the novel as Donatello surrenders himself to the authorities to be imprisoned, probably for the rest of his life, and Miriam is doomed to wander as a penitent, an outcast from society, with the added burden of knowing that she is responsible for the suffering of the man she has grown to love. Hilda, by contrast, suffers no irreparable harm from her experience. She marries Kenyon, and Hawthorne leads us to envisage a life of quiet contentment for them in their union.

Moreover, the Americans in The Marble Faun form no

close relationships with the Europeans; their fates are in no way bound up together. Despite the Americans' friendship with the Europeans and their interest in them, they remain detached from them. Although the Americans, Hilda in particular, are affected by the Europeans' actions, the Europeans have no lasting impact on their lives. At the end of the novel, Kenyon and Hilda disengage themselves from the Europeans' problems and, deciding that they have been too long abroad where, it is observed, "the reality of life" is deferred,<sup>234</sup> they leave Italy and return home to America.

The lack of binding ties between the Americans and the Europeans in The Marble Faun (and in Norman Leslie and Redburn as well) is one of the distinctive factors differentiating these novels from the international novels of James, where the involvement between the American and the European generally takes the form of a closer relationship which crucially affects the American: in Roderick Hudson, The American, and The Wings of the Dove, the Americans are in love with Europeans and betrayed by them; in The Portrait of a Lady and The Golden Bowl, the American's confrontation with European corruption is exhibited and dramatized, for the first time, within the context of an international marriage.<sup>235</sup>

The international novel reaches its fullest flowering only in the works of James; but although The Marble Faun fails to conform to the pattern of the paradigmatic international novel in some respects, it nonetheless marks

an important stage of development in the evolution of the genre. In addition, Hawthorne's work does fulfill the basic criteria for a work of international fiction. The American characters are exhibited against a European background, and despite the absence of close relationships between the Americans and Europeans and the divergence of the lives of Hilda and Kenyon from those of Miriam and Donatello, there is still sufficient interaction between the Americans and Europeans to constitute an international situation.

Unlike James, Hawthorne does not concern himself with the contrast of manners and social mores between America and Europe in his romance. However, he does share James's preoccupation with the polarity of their moral values. In The Marble Faun, this polarity is first disclosed by the American narrator's comments on Rome; it is dramatized by Hilda's experiences there. Closely interwoven with the fable of Miriam and Donatello, Hilda's story is a highly developed rendering of the international theme.

As an archetypal American innocent whose traumatic encounter with evil is forced upon her by Europeans, Hilda is a character in the same tradition that includes Norman Leslie, Redburn, and Lydia Blood; she is also, as Harry Levin notes, "the precursor . . . of James's international heroines" such as Isabel Archer, Milly Theale, and Maggie Verver.<sup>236</sup> Insofar as The Marble Faun is concerned with the problem of the young American's transition from innocence to experience of the world, the novel presents a

variant version, a transposition to an international setting, of the theme that dominates the mainstream of nineteenth century American fiction, as noted in the preceding chapter. Moreover, this theme is also a prevalent one in James's international fiction. Commenting on Hawthorne's achievement in the novel, Cushing Strout maintains: "The Marble Faun is . . . an intricately designed and firmly controlled dialectical encounter . . ."--one, much like that portrayed by James, between "American innocence and European experience."<sup>237</sup> Thus, despite its limitations, The Marble Faun merits recognition as a seminal work of international fiction.

More than in any other work of international fiction considered so far, Europe itself has a major function in The Marble Faun. As David Howard indicates, the novel conveys ". . . a myth of Europe, and Europe and America, unattached to the historical moment of its setting."<sup>238</sup> The pervasive presence of Rome dominates the novel, serving not merely to provide a dramatic setting that enhances the impact of the events that occur, but shaping and influencing those events as well: this is true of the murder which is the pivotal event of the novel, for example, since it is partly inspired by the ancient Roman practice of throwing traitors to their deaths from the precipice of the Tarpeian Rock. The impression of Italy, and of Rome in particular, that is conveyed in the novel is a complex one, characterized by apparent ambiguities that are also reflected in the fable.

Therefore, in analyzing The Marble Faun as a work of international fiction, it is useful to begin with an examination of the American attitude to Rome and to the Old World, in general, that is found in the novel.

An important aid to understanding Hawthorne's treatment of Italy in The Marble Faun is provided by his remarks in the Preface:

No author, without a trial, can conceive of the difficulty of writing a Romance about a country where there is no shadow, no antiquity, no mystery, no picturesque and gloomy wrong, nor anything but a common-place prosperity, in broad and simple daylight, as is happily the case with my dear native land. It will be very long, I trust, before romance-writers may find congenial and easily handled themes either in the annals of our stalwart Republic, or in any characteristic and probable events of our individual lives. Romance and poetry, like ivy, lichens, and wall-flowers, need Ruin to make them grow. (p. 3)

The two key words in this well-known passage are "picturesque" and "wrong": they correspond to the two different standards by which Europe can be evaluated by the American--the aesthetic and the moral.

It is evident from the Italian Notebooks, which contain so much of the source material for The Marble Faun, that Hawthorne is acutely conscious of the aesthetic attractions of Italy and of the Old World. Although he dislikes the shabbiness and physical discomforts of Rome, he pays tribute to the superb richness of its art. In his numerous descriptions of Italian paintings and sculptures, of churches and palaces, the word "gorgeous" is repeatedly found,<sup>239</sup> as he acknowledges the great "sublimity and beauty" of Rome.<sup>240</sup>

He also contrasts the cultural refinement of Rome to the Provinciality of his native New England, particularly Concord, Massachusetts, where he makes his home and where, he tells us, ". . . there are no pictures, no statues, nothing but the dryness and meagreness of a New England village."<sup>241</sup> Equally attractive to Hawthorne, as indicated in the Preface, are Italy's sense of the past, which is a source of inspiration to the writer of romance, and its artistic freedom, both of which are lacking in America.

At the same time, what is also implicit in the Preface, in Hawthorne's description of his native land as a "stalwart republic" characterized by "commonplace prosperity," "daylight," and the singular absence of "gloomy wrong," is an underlying assumption of the moral superiority of America to Europe. When this assumption, so central to The Marble Faun, is juxtaposed to Hawthorne's comments about Italy's attractions, it would appear that the two points of view are irreconcilable, indicating a deep-seated ambivalence on Hawthorne's part to that country. It might appear, too, that Hawthorne himself is unaware of this ambivalence. Yet, by acknowledging his aesthetic appreciation of Italy while deliberately emphasizing the opposition of moral values between the New World and the Old, Hawthorne, in fact, reveals a more subtle and sophisticated attitude to Europe in The Marble Faun than those found in Norman Leslie and Redburn, one that anticipates and perhaps even influences James's own treatment of the international theme.

In the light of the Preface, the ambivalence displayed

to Italy and to the Italian characters in The Marble Faun can more readily be explained. It originates, not only in Hawthorne's perception of the two facets of Italy which are present simultaneously--its aesthetic attractions and its moral defects--but in his awareness of the co-existence of two disparate sets of values which can be applied to the Old World: in terms of aesthetic criteria, Italy, and Europe, in general, has every advantage over America; in terms of moral criteria, the Old World is indisputably inferior to the New.

While the conflicting claims of the aesthetic and the moral are readily discernible in James's international fiction, an analysis of The Marble Faun reveals that they are prefigured in Hawthorne's novel. Christof Wegelin, citing Hawthorne's ambivalent attitude to Rome, alludes to the writer's awareness of the conflict between moral and aesthetic values: ". . . Hawthorne expresses his sense of the contrast between the bleak but morally unencumbered prosperity of America and the aesthetically rich but morally heavy atmosphere of a Rome haunted by the 'majestic and guilty shadows' of the past."<sup>242</sup> Commenting on Hawthorne's attitude to Italy, Robert Lee White also observes: ". . . Hawthorne . . . apprehended the ambiguous fascination of Italy felt by so many Americans. Italy was a land of beauty, but it was also a land of evil--Eden after the fall."<sup>243</sup> In his remarks about the ambivalent feelings of love and hate directed towards Rome in The Marble Faun, Paul Brodtkorb, Jr., maintains that whenever the novel displays a love of Rome,

it is usually expressed in terms of aesthetics, with Rome shown as picturesque; whenever the novel displays a hatred of Rome, it is expressed in terms of ethics, with Rome shown as corrupted.<sup>244</sup>

More specifically, Hyatt H. Waggoner notes: ". . . Hawthorne anticipates James in developing the Europe versus America theme: Rome is the past, experience, culture, and corruption, in contrast with America's present, ideals, morality, and innocence. . . ." <sup>245</sup> This conclusion is confirmed by Murray Krieger's observation that James's version of the international theme ". . . makes its earlier and influential appearance in The Marble Faun." <sup>246</sup> Comparing Hawthorne's novel and James's international fiction, Krieger argues persuasively that the points of correspondence linking the visions of the two writers are crucial ones:

. . . it is not only that in Hawthorne, as later in James, the novel is grounded in a profound conflict between the limited claims of American moralism and of European aestheticism, but also that in Hawthorne, as later in James, the totality of the novel in its multidimensionality sees round any single moral vantage point. The earlier as well as the later writer is aware, in the moral-aesthetic polarity, of an irresolvable either/or and displays an ambivalence toward either pole that forces any total choice to be made only with a tragic sense of loss. It is as much a mistake to deny Hawthorne a finally cosmopolitan awareness of the mutual attractions and disadvantages of his alternatives as it is to deny him the awareness of the conflict itself.<sup>247</sup>

Cushing Strout adopts a similar point of view to that of Krieger, although he does not deal with the opposition of the aesthetic and the moral, when he asserts:

. . . Hawthorne could pioneer the exploration of the international theme because he had a certain measure of what Henry James defined [in Portraits of Places] as the essence of cosmopolitanism: "the habit of seeing the virtues that go with certain defects, and the defects that go with certain virtues." That habit enabled Hawthorne to see that neither his Americans nor his Europeans in The Marble Faun had a monopoly on truth. . . .<sup>248</sup>

The arguments advanced by these critics are verified by a close reading of the text.

The recognition of the beauty and splendor of Rome is present throughout The Marble Faun and, for the most part, is taken tacitly for granted by Hilda and Kenyon. As the glory of the city's art treasures and the magnificence of its churches are described by the narrator, it becomes evident, from the nature of the things that are singled out for admiration, that the manifest attractions of Rome and of Italy--the "Pictorial Land" (p. 371), as Hilda calls it--may be categorized as almost exclusively aesthetic.

For example, the narrator notes Hilda's appreciation of the "gorgeousness" (p. 345) of the churches of Rome: "Many of them shine with burnished gold. They glow with pictures. Their walls, columns, and arches, seem a quarry of precious stones, so beautiful and costly are the marbles with which they are inlaid" (p. 345). Inside these churches, there are chapels, commissioned by princes and lavishly decorated: "In these, the splendour of the entire edifice is intensified and gathered to a focus. Unless words were gems, that would flame with many-coloured light upon the page . . . it were vain to attempt a description . . ." (p. 345).

Among the churches of Rome, St. Peter's is unrivalled: the narrator calls it "the grandest edifice ever built by man, painted against God's loveliest sky" (p. 107). When Hilda's impressions of the church are described, its "manifold magnificence" (p. 350), its "glory" (p. 351), its "rich adornment" (p. 349), and the overwhelming impact of its lofty dome--"gorgeous . . . sublime" (p. 351)--are accentuated all the more by the implicit contrast between this elaborate edifice of Catholicism and the stark austerity of New England Puritanism. Even Kenyon, distrustful as he is of Catholicism, shares Hilda's awe of St. Peter's: "Before leaving the church, they turned, to admire again . . . the glory . . . and the effect of visionary splendour and magnificence . . ." (p. 368).

Similar feelings are expressed by Kenyon when he travels through the Italian countryside and visits old Gothic churches with antique painted glass windows whose "unfading colours transmute the common daylight into a miracle of richness and glory . . ." (p. 304). As in the passage cited above, it is the beauty created by Italian artistic genius that evokes the American's admiration: ". . . the sculptor blessed the mediaeval time, and its gorgeous contrivances of splendour; for surely the skill of man has never accomplished, nor his mind imagined, any other beauty or glory worthy to be compared with these" (p. 304).

Contrasted to the aesthetic attractions of Rome, often by implication, are the cultural deficiencies of America. The narrator alludes to the impact that Rome frequently has

on the American visitor, making him reassess his opinion of his native land, which he is "apt thenceforward to look upon as provincial, after once having yielded to the spell of the Eternal City" (p. 213). The disparity between Italy and America is also emphasized satirically in the course of a midnight excursion to the Fountain of Trevi. As a group of artists, Kenyon among them, gaze at the loveliness of the fountain in the moonlit piazza, one of the Americans remarks that in America, the water would probably be used for a more utilitarian function: "'What would be done with this water-power,' suggested an artist, 'if we had it in one of our American cities? Would they employ it to turn the machinery of a cotton-mill, I wonder!'" (pp. 145-46).

The aesthetic advantages of Rome over America are implicit, too, in the narrator's description of that city as "the favourite residence of artists--their ideal home, which they sigh for, in advance, and are so loth to migrate from, after once breathing its enchanted air . . ." (pp. 131-32). Rome represents a mecca for the American painters and sculptors who make up the artists' colony in that city. Thus, the journey to Italy undertaken by both Hilda and Kenyon can be characterized as an aesthetic pilgrimage to the shrine of artistic genius, motivated by their desire to develop their artistic talent by studying the great Italian masters of the past whose works are found in Rome in such rich abundance.<sup>249</sup>

Most of the direct comments about Italy, as can be seen in the passages quoted above, are made by the American

narrator of the novel, an apparently omniscient observer who adopts the guise of author, purporting to have heard the story he is recounting from his friend, Kenyon. The narrator does not participate in the events of the novel, but he is the principal spokesman for the expression of the American attitude to Italy. His views coincide most closely with those of Kenyon, whose reliability is attested to by Miriam's acknowledgment that, "'You are a man of refined taste . . . of delicate sensibility'" (p. 286). The fact that the narrator seems to be speaking with the author's voice gives him an added air of authority; the validity of his statements is also reinforced by the events of the fable.

Although it is evident that Hawthorne's own views about Italy, as recorded in the Italian Notebooks and the Preface to The Marble Faun, are reflected in the novel, it should be noted that there are no real grounds for identifying the narrator of the novel with Hawthorne, as is so frequently done. Indeed, evidence for arguing the dissociation of the narrator from Hawthorne can be found in the fact that, whereas Hawthorne describes the artistic treasures of Rome in great detail in the Italian Notebooks, there is scarcely any mention of the city's moral defects.

Nevertheless, the evocation of the iniquity of the Old World is both powerful and pervasive in The Marble Faun. Juxtaposed to the splendor of Rome is the atmosphere of evil in which the city is steeped--an atmosphere which permeates the novel even before the murder of Miriam's persecutor takes place and which, in some respects, vitiates

the beauty of the city.

The loveliness of the Italian natural landscape is deceptive: despite the idyllic appearance of the lush gardens of the Villa Borghese, they are tainted by the disease and death which lurk there, attesting to the correspondence between natural and moral corruption. Describing the sunlit freshness and fragrance of these gardens, the narrator notes: "The final charm is bestowed by the Malaria. . . . For if you come hither in summer, and stray through these glades in the golden sunset, Fever walks arm in arm with you, and Death awaits you at the end of the dim vista" (p. 73). A similar comment is made about the Pincian Garden, when the narrator points out that the very air, sweet and mild as it seems to be, is in fact deadly, for here is found "a climate that instils poison into its very purest breath" (p. 100). Alluding to the Roman fever that is also present in the Campagna, the narrator suggests that the disease which makes these surroundings so inimical to man can be regarded symbolically as a consequence of man's sinful nature:

. . . the feverish influence . . . lies in wait in the Campagna, like a besieging foe, and nightly haunts those beautiful lawns and woodlands . . . just at the season when they most resemble Paradise. What the flaming sword was to the first Eden, such is the malaria to these sweet gardens and groves. We may wander through them, of an afternoon, it is true; but they cannot be made a home and a reality, and to sleep among them is death. (pp. 326-27)

Contrasted to the imagery of light associated with Rome's aesthetic splendor and glory is the imagery of darkness and squalor which suggests its moral debility. Kenyon's studio

is situated in "an ugly and dirty little lane" (p. 114), a sordid street which is typical of Rome: ". . . though chill, narrow, gloomy, and bordered with tall and shabby structures, the lane was not a whit more disagreeable than nine-tenths of the Roman streets" (p. 114). Kenyon eventually comes to regard the city as "a labyrinth of dismal streets" (p. 413), and Hilda, too, concedes that, "'In Rome, there is something dreary and awful, which we can never quite escape'" (p. 371). The narrator also alludes to "the mouldy gloom" (p. 75) that is found in Rome in the "dark, narrow streets" (p. 74)--streets "so indescribably ugly . . . into which the sun never falls" (p. 325). He notes that in winter, one is particularly conscious of the dismal aspect of the "narrow, sunless, sepulchral streets" (p. 376). Everywhere in Rome, amidst the wretched houses that are no better than hovels, there is "dirt and defilement" (p. 388), and the narrator asserts that, "Rome . . . seems like nothing but a heap of broken rubbish . . ." (p. 110). Even the flowers that are thrown in the streets during the annual Carnival are soon "defiled . . . with the wicked filth of Rome" (p. 440).

These descriptions of the unwholesome aspects of Rome are reinforced by various references to the immorality of the city. There are allusions to its "evil streets" (p. 180) and to its being a "wicked . . . city" (p. 238). The narrator speaks of its "corrupted atmosphere" (p. 54) and of all that is "evil, foul, and ugly, in this . . . corrupt city . . ." (p. 387). However, the most explicit indictment of the vices found in Rome is expressed by Kenyon:

It seemed to Kenyon . . . that all modes of crime were crowded into the close intricacy of Roman streets, and that there was no redeeming element, such as exists in other dissolute and wicked cities.

For here was a priesthood, pampered, sensual, with red and bloated cheeks, and carnal eyes. . . . And here was an indolent nobility, with no high aims or opportunities, but cultivating a vicious way of life as if it were an art, and the only one which they cared to learn. Here was a population, high and low, that had no genuine belief in virtue; and if they recognized any act as criminal, they might throw off all care, remorse, and memory of it, by kneeling a little while at the confessional, and rising unburthened, active, elastic, and incited by fresh appetite for the next ensuing sin. Here was a soldiery, who felt Rome to be their conquered city, and doubtless considered themselves the legal inheritors of the foul license which Gaul, Goth, and Vandal have here exercised, in days gone by. (pp. 411-12)

Kenyon's condemnation of Catholicism, which is apparent in this passage, is of particular interest because, elsewhere in the novel, he and Hilda both pay tribute to the magnificence of its churches and its sacred art. Yet, despite his recognition of its aesthetic qualities and of its infinite convenience, due to the fact that it is a religion marvelously adapted to meet every human need, Kenyon, unlike Hilda, regards the Catholic church as one of the most corrupt elements in Rome. He alludes to "'the Papal despotism'" (p. 109) and to "'that mass of unspeakable corruption, the Roman Church'" (p. 366). In his view, monks are depraved: "A monk--I judge from their sensual physiognomies, which meet me at every turn--is inevitably a beast! Their souls, if they have any to begin with, perish out of them, before their sluggish, swinish existence is half-done" (p. 267). Although Kenyon's denunciation of the Catholic church stems from a particularly prejudiced and hostile attitude, there is

evidence to show that the American narrator shares his basic distrust of Catholicism. The narrator observes that, in Rome, one finds "everywhere . . . a Cross--and nastiness at the foot of it" (p. 111). He maintains that one is repeatedly "disgusted with the pretence of Holiness and the reality of Nastiness, each equally omnipresent . . ." (p. 326). He also refers to Rome as a city which is marred by "the grime and corruption which Paganism had left there, and a perverted Christianity had made more noisome . . ." (p. 412). The decadence and corruption of Rome which are evoked in these passages are intensified by the references to the influence of the past on the city.

The sense of the past, which is such a distinctive characteristic of the Old World, evokes the same kind of ambivalence as Rome itself. Despite the picturesque appeal of the past as a source of inspiration to writers and artists, its negative aspects are cited in detail. In one passage, which can be seen as an ironic comment on the remarks set forth in the Preface, the narrator discusses the houses found in the ancient towns of Italy, arguing that their very picturesqueness can be regarded as a concomitant of the country's decay:

An artist, it is true, might often thank his stars for those old houses, so picturesquely time-stained, and . . . [they] might impress him as far better worth his pencil than the newly painted pine-boxes, in which (if he be an American) his countrymen live and thrive. But there is reason to suspect that a people are waning to decay and ruin, the moment that their life becomes fascinating either in the poet's imagination or the painter's eye. (p. 296)

Moreover, despite the greatness of Rome's history, the past is described as an oppressive burden, weighing down the present. The narrator speaks of "the massiveness of the Roman Past" (p. 6) and sums up the impression that one often has in Rome: "It is a vague sense of ponderous remembrances; a perception of such weight and density in a by-gone life . . . that the present moment is pressed down or crowded out . . ." (p. 6). The past is shown as an anti-life force, stifling the present: Kenyon becomes increasingly aware of "all the ponderous gloom of the Roman Past" (p. 410) and of ". . . what a terrible weight is there imposed on human life . . ." (p. 409).

Kenyon's travels through the Italian countryside, visiting towns dating back to antiquity and observing their edifices "of ponderous durability" (p. 301), lead him to contrast America, which represents the land of the present, to Italy, which is dominated by the past: "'In that fortunate land, each generation has only its own sins and sorrows to bear. Here, it seems as if all the weary and dreary Past were piled upon the back of the Present'" (p. 302). Confirming Kenyon's remarks about the Italian past, the American narrator makes a similar point:

. . . we may build almost immortal habitations, it is true; but we cannot keep them from growing old, musty, unwholesome, dreary, full of death-scents, ghosts, and murder-stains; in short, habitations such as one sees everywhere in Italy, be they hovels or palaces. (p. 302)

The contention that the crimes of the past linger on

in the present, exerting a deleterious moral influence, is one that recurs in several passages of the novel. Corroborating the correspondence between natural and moral corruption that has been noted earlier, the narrator links the malaria which infests the grounds of the Villa Borghese to the evil deeds that have been committed there in past ages. This spot is one ". . . where the crimes and calamities of ages, the many battles, blood recklessly poured out, and deaths of myriads, have corrupted all the soil, creating an influence that makes the air deadly to human lungs" (p. 90). Elsewhere, too, the narrator tells us that Rome is ". . . corrupted by myriads of slaughters . . ." and alludes to ". . . the Infinite Anathema which her old crimes have unmistakably brought down . . ." (p. 326).

The notion of a curse from the past exerting a kind of evil fatality on the present--a theme which is found in Doctor Grimshawe's Secret as well<sup>250</sup>--is made more explicit when the narrator comments on the ancient Romans: "There appears to be a kind of malignant spell in the spots that have been inhabited by these masters of the world, or made famous in their history . . . an inherited and inalienable curse . . ." (p. 388). Even the splendid monuments of antiquity, vestiges of Rome's former imperial glory, are shown to be steeped in blood and death. The Colosseum, for example, where thousands of Christians were murdered for Roman sport, is "one of the especial blood-spots of the earth" (p. 154), marked by "crime and suffering" (p. 154). It is in Rome, in the dark catacombs where a pagan betrayed

Christians centuries ago, that the sinister specter from Miriam's past first reveals himself; it is in Rome, on the precipice of the Tarpeian Rock, where Romans executed traitors, that Donatello, the sylvan faun, commits murder; it is in Rome, on that same site, where the memory of the pagan practice still lingers, that Miriam unwittingly incites Donatello to do the fearsome deed and shares his guilt.

The heritage of the past is thus shown to be an accretion of sin and guilt which corrupts Rome in the present. The corrosive effect of evil engendering evil is shown most forcefully, finally, when the narrator describes Kenyon's impressions of Rome near the end of the novel:

And what localities for new crime existed in those guilty sites, where the crime of departed ages used to be at home, and had its long, hereditary haunt! What street in Rome, what ancient ruin, . . . what fallen stone was there, unstained with one or another kind of guilt! In some of the vicissitudes of the city's pride, or its calamity, the dark tide of human evil had swelled over it. . . . To Kenyon's morbid view, there appeared to be a contagious element, rising foglike from the ancient depravity of Rome, and brooding over the dead and half-rotten city, as nowhere else on earth. It prolonged the tendency to crime, and developed an instantaneous growth of it, whenever an opportunity was found. . . . (p. 412)

Closely associated with the corrupting influence of the past, as can be seen in the description of Rome as "dead and half-rotten" in this passage, are the ruin and decay which are pervasive throughout the city, physical emblems of its insidious moral decay. The narrator alludes to the "ancient dust, the mouldiness of Rome, the dead atmosphere . . . the smell of ruin, and decaying generations" (p. 74) and to

"its little life, deriving feeble nutriment from what has long been dead" (pp. 110-11). Once again, the remains of the past are shown to taint the present: it is ancient Rome, buried in its grave beneath the modern city, which imbues the latter with an aura of death analogous to that found in the gardens. On several occasions, ancient Rome is compared to a corpse, afflicting the modern city with its presence: ". . . the Rome of ancient days . . . lies like the dead corpse of a giant, decaying for centuries . . . until the dust of all those years has gathered slowly over its recumbent form and made a casual sepulchre . . ." (p. 110). The narrator notes: ". . . it seems to be the effort of Time to bury up the ancient city, as if it were a corpse . . . so that, in eighteen centuries, the soil over its grave has grown very deep, by . . . the accumulation of more modern decay upon elder ruin" (p. 149). Finally, even modern Rome is described in these terms: "Rome . . . lies, like a long decaying corpse, retaining a trace of the noble shape it was, but with accumulated dust and a fungous growth overspreading all its more admirable features . . ." (p. 325).

Rome, then, is characterized by a duality, displaying as it does both aesthetic attractions and moral defects. Co-existent with its beauty, magnificence, and splendor are its manifestations of evil in the present and its long heritage of crime and guilt from the past. Throughout the novel, the Americans admire the city's art and architecture and picturesque interest, but they are repelled by its moral corruption; they implicitly commend America's moral virtue,

but they are aware of its aesthetic deficiencies. Consequently, the ambivalence displayed to Rome by the Americans--Hilda, Kenyon, and, above all, the narrator--is never really resolved.

This point is confirmed by two passages in particular. In the first, near the beginning of the novel, the narrator comments on the negative aspects of Rome, emphasizing the aura of ruin, decay, and death that pervades the city. However, he concludes his remarks by describing the appeal of Rome:

Yet how is it possible to say an unkind or irreverential word of Rome?--the City of all time, and of all the world! . . . At this moment, the evening sunshine is flinging its golden mantle over it, making all that we thought mean, magnificent; the bells of all the churches suddenly ring out, as if it were a peal of triumph, because Rome is still imperial. (p. 111)

Again, near the conclusion of the novel, the narrator denounces the modern vices and the ancient crimes which infest Rome, making one curse and vilify the city. Nevertheless, he still acknowledges:

When we have once known Rome, and left her . . . hating her with all our might, . . . we are astonished by the discovery, by-and-by, that our heart-strings have mysteriously attached themselves to the Eternal City, and are drawing us thitherward again, as if it were more familiar, more intimately our home, than even the spot where we were born!  
(pp. 325-26)

Hawthorne's awareness of the opposing and irreconcilable claims of the aesthetic and the moral in The Marble Faun is significant in terms of the evolution of the nineteenth century international novel. To be sure, the perception

of the brilliant façade of European society is present even in an early work such as Norman Leslie, but the dominant emphasis of Fay's novel is on that society's wickedness and immorality. A similar point can be made about Redburn's visit to Aladdin's Palace, a place where decadence and licentiousness are accompanied by the appurtenances of beauty and opulence. However, in both these instances, the beautiful is recognized by the Americans to be a mask of evil and rejected by them. The claims of the aesthetic and the moral are more equally balanced in Paul Fane, where Fane is very much attracted to elegant European society even though he eventually rejects it because of its hypocrisy and false values. Nonetheless, this work concentrates on the social aspects of the international situation, and the ambivalence is presented in a relatively rudimentary form. Thus, The Marble Faun can be seen as a transition between these earlier works and, as noted previously, the international novels of James, where the potent appeal exerted by the beauty and refinement of civilized Old World society co-exists with the American's painful awakening to the European's duplicity and corruption.

Quite apart from these considerations, the narrative attitude to Rome is central rather than incidental to The Marble Faun because it is dramatized and reinforced by the fable of the novel.<sup>251</sup> It should be noted, however, that whereas the element of ambivalence is predominant in the narrator's comments on Rome, it is the moral contrast between America and Europe--the motif that constantly reappears in nineteenth century international fiction--which is given

particular prominence in the fable. Despite the fact that they are treated sympathetically, the Italians, Miriam and Donatello, are presented as murderers, whatever their justification; the Americans, Hilda, especially, are appointed to act as moral arbiters throughout the novel. Yet even if the juxtaposition of Hilda and Miriam is intended primarily to embody the polarity of moral values between the New World and the Old, the ambiguities of their relationship are clarified when it is considered in the context of the American's ambivalence to Italy.

One of Miriam's functions in The Marble Faun can be seen as that of a catalyst on the other characters, since she inspires the murder which leads to Donatello's transformation and is indirectly responsible for Hilda's crisis. She is also a pivotal character who gives dramatic unity to the work, bringing the two parts of the fable together through her involvement with Donatello, on the one hand, and her friendship with Hilda and Kenyon, on the other. However, although her relationship with Donatello is central to the novel, it is, for the most part, irrelevant to a study of international fiction. It is Miriam's relationship with Hilda and the contrast between the two young women which provides the crucial international situation of the novel.

Miriam is portrayed throughout the novel as a product, and as an embodiment, of a corrupt Old World. Like Rome itself, which is cursed by the crimes of earlier generations, her destiny is shaped by events of the past which influence the

present--by a legacy of evil which dates back, as we learn only at the conclusion of the novel, to the marriage that was arranged for her in childhood to a relative considerably older than herself, a marchese, who is ". . . so evil, so treacherous, so wild, and yet so strangely subtle, as could only be accounted for by the insanity which often develops itself in old, close-kept breeds of men, when long unmixed with newer blood" (pp. 430-31). Although Miriam repudiates the marriage contract when she comes of age and severs her ties with her father's powerful, noble, Italian family, she finds that she cannot escape the man to whom she was once betrothed. This demonic figure, whom she so unexpectedly encounters again in the Catacombs and who dogs her footsteps thereafter, is the specter from her past; he is "the Evil Fate that had haunted her through life" (p. 432). As Roy R. Male points out, Miriam is thus "affianced to satanic evil," both literally and symbolically.<sup>252</sup>

Even before this meeting occurs, Miriam is enmeshed in a sinister web of horror and evil from her mysterious past and haunted by some terrible memory. Unknown to her friends, she is linked to some sin or crime that stains her name, even though she insists to Kenyon subsequently that she is, in fact, blameless of any wrongdoing.<sup>253</sup> She implies that this act of depravity was committed by the man to whom she had been betrothed but admits that the suspicion of being at least an accomplice to the deed fell on her, making it necessary for her to flee and to renounce her former identity. The nature of this crime is never specified by Hawthorne,

who leaves it to the reader to imagine what act could be so frightful as to fit Kenyon's allusion to "' . . . one of the most dreadful and mysterious events that have occurred within the present century'" (p. 467).<sup>254</sup>

When Kenyon first learns Miriam's real name, it evokes a shudder of horror in him because he remembers the name in connection with the infamous crime. Hawthorne thus suggests to the reader that, even if she herself is guiltless, as she maintains, Miriam is nonetheless associated with the taint of evil. This impression is intensified by Miriam's fascination with Guido's haunting portrait of Beatrice Cenci.<sup>255</sup> As an Italian, she is undoubtedly familiar with Beatrice Cenci's tragic history: the daughter of a wealthy and powerful, sixteenth century, Roman nobleman who was reputed to be both vicious and brutal, Beatrice Cenci was arrested by the authorities after her father's murder and was eventually executed for her alleged complicity in the crime. The actual extent of her guilt has never been fully determined, but in most later accounts of the Cenci tragic history, including Shelley's Preface to The Cenci, Beatrice Cenci is said to have been repeatedly raped by her father and, for this reason, driven to avenge her defilement.<sup>256</sup>

In his comments on Hawthorne's use of the Guido painting in the novel, Claude M. Simpson confirms that the version of the legend which was extant in the nineteenth century and with which Hawthorne was undoubtedly familiar was one in which Beatrice Cenci figured largely as a tragic victim rather than as a criminal:

In the important journal entry of February 20, 1858, he wishes that people could judge the Guido portrait without knowing Beatrice's history, thereby making it clear that his own response has been influenced by the legendary account of Beatrice as incestuous victim whose complicity in parricide seemed justifiable.<sup>257</sup>

Discussing Guido's painting with Hilda, Miriam closely identifies herself with its subject.<sup>258</sup> She expresses a passionate yearning to know Beatrice Cenci's secret thoughts: "Ah . . . if I could only get within her consciousness! . . . I would give my life to know whether she thought herself innocent, or the one great criminal since time began!" (pp. 66-67). As she utters these words to Hilda, the American girl is startled to see that ". . . her friend's expression had become almost exactly that of the portrait . . ." (p. 67). Moreover, it is the Cenci family, with its terrible heritage of sin and crime, with whom Miriam has some connection. It is to the Palazzo Cenci, which is described as "'a spot of ill-omen'" (p. 389), that Hilda is asked by Miriam to deliver the mysterious packet that is entrusted to her. Finally, it should also be noted that, to Hawthorne's contemporary readers, Miriam's Jewish ancestry probably suggested the blood-guilt ascribed to the Wandering Jew.

Admittedly, the factors linking Miriam to some act of horror or evil at the beginning of the novel are only tenuous ones, all the more so since the possibility that her involvement in the mysterious crime from the past may indeed be entirely circumstantial is clearly established in the course of her interview with the sinister figure who

doggedly pursues her after their encounter in the Catacombs. At one point in their conversation, when Miriam, in desperation, contemplates suicide as her sole means of escape from him, he deliberately misinterprets her use of the word "death" and, with a terrible, unconscious irony, in view of subsequent events, asks her if she speaks of her own death or his. In their ensuing exchange, her persecutor taunts her with allusions to the suspicion of guilt which surrounds her, but Miriam emphatically refutes his accusation:

"Do you imagine me a murderess?" said she, shuddering. "You, at least, have no right to think me so!"

"Yet," rejoined he, with a glance of dark meaning, "men have said, that this white hand had once a crimson stain."

He took her hand, as he spoke . . . in spite of the repugnance, amounting to nothing short of agony, with which she struggled to regain it. Holding it up to the fading light, . . . he appeared to examine it closely. . . .

"It looks very white," said he; "but I have known hands as white, which all the water in the ocean could not have washed clean!"

"It had no stain," retorted Miriam bitterly, "until you grasped it in your own!" (p. 97)

Although the exact nature of Miriam's suspected involvement is never disclosed, this conversation can be seen to reinforce the notion that Miriam may, in fact, be blameless of any crime and yet somehow contaminated by both the shadow of suspicion which surrounds her and by her past association with the man who committed it. The ambiguity surrounding the question of Miriam's guilt is deliberately left unresolved by Hawthorne. Describing this same interview between Miriam and her persecutor, the narrator makes observations which are decidedly equivocal:

In their words, or in the breath that uttered them, there seemed to be an odour of guilt, and a scent of blood. Yet, how can we imagine that a stain of ensanguined crime should attach to Miriam! Or, how, on the other hand, should spotless innocence be subjected to a thralldom like that which she endured from the spectre. . . .  
(p. 97)

Nevertheless, despite the semblance of guilt which is attributed to Miriam in this passage, the probability that she is intended by Hawthorne to represent an unfortunate victim of circumstances is suggested, not only by her own protestations of innocence, but by the narrator's own words elsewhere in the same chapter:

Yet, let us trust, there may have been no crime in Miriam, but only one of those fatalities which are among the most insoluble riddles propounded to mortal comprehension; the fatal decree, by which every crime is made to be the agony of many innocent persons, as well as of the single guilty one. (p. 93)

The real point that Hawthorne seems to be making here is that, even if her declaration that she is innocent of any crime is accepted at its face value, Miriam's corruption can be seen to consist of her corrosive knowledge of evil, her first-hand, intimate experience of it. Even if she were acquitted in a court of law and her name cleared, she could never again regain that state of innocence which has no conception of evil--the kind of innocence that Hilda possesses.

Miriam's dark secret sears her soul, isolating and estranging her from her fellow man: "For it is one of the chief earthly incommodities of some species of misfortune, or

of a great crime, that it makes the actor in the one, or the sufferer of the other, an alien in the world . . ." (p. 92). Thus, although Hilda and Kenyon are her closest friends and Miriam longs to turn to them for sympathy and advice, she is conscious of "the voiceless gulf between herself and them" (p. 113) that cannot be bridged:

This perception of an infinite, shivering solitude, amid which we cannot come close enough to human beings to be warmed by them . . . is one of the most forlorn results of any accident, misfortune, crime, or peculiarity of character, that puts an individual ajar with the world. (p. 113)

Tragically, the only person to whom she is bound by the past is the sinister figure whom she so hates and wants to escape:

. . . there seemed to be a sadly mysterious fascination in the influence of this ill-omened person over Miriam; it was such as beasts and reptiles, of subtle and evil nature, sometimes exercise upon their victims. Marvellous it was to see the hopelessness with which . . . she resigned herself to the thralldom in which he held her. That iron chain, of which some of the massive links were round her feminine waist, and the others in his ruthless hand--or which perhaps bound the pair together by a bond equally torturing to each--must have been forged in some such unhallowed furnace as is only kindled by evil passions and fed by evil deeds. (p. 93)

It soon becomes evident, however, that an equally plausible explanation of the power which this man has over Miriam is his threat to reveal her real identity and history, both to her friends and to the Roman authorities. Certainly, it is this implicit threat which he uses in order to attempt to coerce her to leave Rome with him.

Even more significant, Miriam's strange subjugation to him seems to be connected to his assertion that her future will be determined, not by what she wills, but by fate:

"We have a destiny, which we must needs fulfil together. I, too, have struggled to escape it. I was as anxious as yourself to break the tie between us--to bury the past in a fathomless grave--to make it impossible that we should ever meet. . . . And what was the result? Our strange interview, in the bowels of the earth [the Catacombs], convinced me of the futility of my design."  
 "Ah, fatal chance!" cried Miriam, covering her face with her hands." (pp. 94-95)

He insists that it is futile for Miriam to attempt to escape him because the dark necessity which governs their lives has decreed otherwise:

"In all that labyrinth of midnight paths, we should have found one another out, to live or die together. Our fates cross and are entangled. The threads are twisted into a strong cord, which is dragging us to an evil doom. Could the knots be severed, we might escape. But neither can your slender fingers untie those knots, nor my masculine force break them. We must submit!" (p. 95)

Although Miriam recognizes that this demonic figure is probably mad, his belief in a malignant and inexorable fate shaping their lives gains credibility in the novel because, as has been noted, it is a notion that Hawthorne has invoked previously in alluding to Miriam's past. Moreover, for all that she denies her persecutor's words, maintaining that what he calls necessity is, in this instance, only his own immitigable will, there is evidence elsewhere in the novel that Miriam, too, feels herself to be subject to such a fatality. When she views Kenyon's sculptures in his studio,

for example, she reflects: "'As these busts in the block of marble . . . 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'" (p. 116). Soon after she meets Donatello, whose happy, sportive nature is so different from her own, she tells him that she is ". . . a girl . . . burthened with a doom that she tells to none" (p. 82). The idea that she is cursed by fate is expressed even more forcefully when she warns Donatello to flee from her if he would choose to continue to enjoy a peaceful, happy, innocent life. She warns him:

"I tell you . . . there is a great evil hanging over me! I know it; I see it in the sky; I feel it in the air! It will overwhelm me as utterly as if this arch should crumble down upon our heads! It will crush you, too, if you stand at my side! Depart, then; and make the sign of the cross, as your faith bids you, when an evil spirit is nigh. Cast me off; or you are lost forever!" (p. 158)

Donatello refuses to leave her, however, and a short time later, Miriam's prediction is proved correct.

Thus, even if her own innocence has initially been betrayed through no fault of her own, Miriam herself eventually becomes a corrupting influence on others--the agent, albeit unwittingly, of Donatello's fall and Hilda's first experience of evil. Her association with the sinister figure from her past and her mysterious connection with the crime he has committed seem to lead her, with a kind of tragic inevitability, to direct involvement in the second crime, in the present--namely, the murder of her persecutor.

When she finally reveals her former history to Kenyon at the end of the novel, he, too, recognizes the evil destiny that has apparently pursued her: "'I shudder at the fatality that seems to haunt your footsteps, and throws a shadow of crime about your path, you being guiltless'" (p. 430). At the same time, Miriam's reply to Kenyon constitutes an acknowledgment that it is her own culpability, as much as that fatality, which has determined the course of her life: "'There was such a fatality,' said Miriam. 'Yes; the shadow fell upon me, innocent, but I went astray in it, and wandered . . . into crime'" (p. 430).

It is Donatello who actually kills her persecutor, but, accepting the validity of his statement, subsequently corroborated by Hilda, that her look urged him to do the deed, Miriam admits that she is guilty of complicity in the crime: "'Yes, Donatello, you speak the truth!' said she. 'My heart consented to what you did. We two slew younder wretch'" (p. 174). Although her assent to his act was neither conscious nor overt, her own admission of guilt is further reinforced by the narrator's allusion to the deleterious influence that Miriam has had on Donatello's life: "She turned to him--the guilty, blood-stained lonely woman--she turned to her fellow-criminal, the youth, so lately innocent, whom she had drawn into her doom" (p. 173). Elsewhere, too, her horrified realization of the misfortune that she has inadvertently brought to Donatello leads her to refer to herself as "' . . . she, most wretched, who beguiled him into evil . . .'" (p. 283).

In the moments following the murder, Donatello and Miriam are bound together by their common crime in an intimate union of sympathy and passion. Yet even Donatello, who has long loved Miriam, soon begins to imagine ". . . the ever-increasing loathesomeness of a union that consists in guilt" (p. 175). It is a relationship of outcasts that recalls to mind that which existed between Miriam and her persecutor before his death.

Despite the shock and horror that Miriam and Donatello both feel after the dreadful event that has occurred, Miriam demands that Donatello expunge the memory of their crime from his mind: "'Forget it! Cast it all behind you! . . . The deed has done its office, and has no existence any more'" (p. 176). Unlike Donatello, she expresses no real remorse for the death of her persecutor. Instead, she suggests that because of his depravity, they are exonerated of guilt: "'Surely, it is no crime that we have committed. One wretched and worthless life has been sacrificed, to cement two other lives forevermore'" (p. 175).

Again, when she views the corpse of the dead Capuchin monk, which suddenly begins to bleed, as if to assert the truth of the old superstition that blood flows from a dead body in the presence of its murderer, Miriam's reaction is one of unnatural fortitude rather than shame. Scarcely believing that this monk could be the demonic figure from her past until she establishes his identity beyond any doubt, she is sustained in her ordeal by her unshakable belief that he deserved to die--by the knowledge that ". . . this form

of clay had held the evil spirit which blasted her sweet youth, and compelled her, as it were, to stain her womanhood with crime" (p. 190). Though she trembles initially at the corpse's reproachful glance, she refuses to submit to it: "She . . . gazed sternly at her dead enemy, endeavouring to meet and quell the look of accusation that he threw from between his half-closed eyelids" (p. 191). Above all, she denies his right to accuse her: "'No; thou shalt not scowl me down!'" said she. 'Neither now, nor when we stand together at the Judgment Seat. I fear not to meet thee there'" (p. 191). Even if one concedes that Miriam is still in a state of shock at this point, it should be noted that this attitude is confirmed subsequently in the novel when she describes her feelings about the murder to Kenyon: "'It is not remorse! Do not think it! I . . . feel neither regret nor penitence on my own behalf'" (p. 280).

By attempting to justify the murder on the grounds that her persecutor deserved to die because he was evil,<sup>259</sup> Miriam in effect absolves herself of guilt, at least in terms of her own conscience. In doing so, she puts herself beyond the law of church and state which decrees that such a deed is both sin and crime. She implies that she is a law unto herself, bound by no established code of moral conduct.

It is for this reason that she is unable to understand Donatello's ultimate decision to surrender himself to the authorities. She acknowledges as much to Kenyon:

"Here is Donatello haunted with strange remorse, and an immitigable resolve to obtain what he deems

justice upon himself. He fancies (with a kind of direct simplicity, which I have vainly tried to combat) that, when a wrong has been done, the doer is bound to submit himself to whatever tribunal takes cognizance of such things, and abide its judgment. I have assured him that there is no such thing as earthly justice, and especially none here, under the Head of Christendom!" (p. 433)

The cynicism of these remarks reveals the disparity of values between Donatello and Miriam, confirming Miriam's contempt for the rule of law. Indeed, it will be recalled that it is the necessity of harsh Roman justice, which in ancient times summarily ordered traitors to be thrown to their deaths from the Tarpeian Rock (the very method of execution employed by Donatello), that Miriam so ruthlessly defends--a notion of justice which is pagan. Furthermore, by implying that she has the right to revenge herself upon her enemy for the wrongs that she has suffered at his hands in the past, she takes upon herself the power that, even in ancient Rome, was reserved for the authorities of the state.

To the modern reader, perhaps, Miriam's deliberate refusal to submit her actions to any judgment but the criteria of her own conscience may be seen as a heroic stance, an existential act of courage, but in terms of the traditional theology of Hawthorne's day, it is undoubtedly intended to represent a sinful act of pride. Moreover, the corollary of Miriam's insistence that she is devoid of any remorse or repentance may be found in the fact that she is likewise incapable of attaining the kind of spiritual redemption that Donatello ultimately undergoes.

In the macabre and melodramatic scene described above, in which Miriam confronts the corpse of her dead enemy,<sup>260</sup> one is reminded of a group of her paintings which are referred to earlier in the novel--Jael driving the nail through the temple of Sisera, Judith holding the severed head of Holofernes, and the daughter of Herodias receiving the head of John the Baptist. In all these Biblical scenes of violent death and murder, there is one common theme: "Over and over again, there was the idea of woman, . . . acting the part of a revengeful mischief towards man" (p. 44). In all these paintings, notes the narrator, Miriam's imagination repeatedly depicted ". . . stories of bloodshed, in which woman's hand was crimsoned by the stain . . ." (p. 44). By the end of the novel, Miriam has come to resemble the figures in these paintings. At this point, she is no longer merely an innocent victim of fate. Instead, by acquiescing to Donatello's murder of her persecutor, she has become a willing participant in a deed which, however she may attempt to justify it, is presented by Hawthorne as evil. She has become a woman stained by sin and crime.

Yet such is the nature of the role assigned to Miriam by Hawthorne that, even as she is revealed to be tainted by the corrupt Old World, she is also shown to embody its allure. For despite her moral defects, Miriam is a singularly attractive young woman. She is beautiful, a fact that is emphasized at several points in the novel, as when the narrator refers to ". . . the beauty which Miriam

possessed in a remarkable degree" (p. 22). It is confirmed again when he describes her painting of a sad, young, Jewish woman with black hair and dark eyes--a painting which, as Donatello recognizes immediately, is a self-portrait which captures the exact likeness of Miriam herself:

. . . there appeared the portrait of a beautiful woman, such as one sees only two or three, if even so many, in all a lifetime; so beautiful, that she seemed to get into your consciousness and memory, and could never afterwards be shut out, but haunted your dreams. . . . (pp. 47-48)

Secretive about her past, Miriam is surrounded by an aura of tragedy and shrouded in ambiguity when she first appears in Rome. Because of her mixed aristocratic Italian, English, and Jewish parentage, which she discloses later in the novel, she is both European and foreign. She thus emerges as one of those mysterious and exotic Dark Ladies of romance whose fascination and implicit sensuality are so compelling.<sup>261</sup>

Throughout the novel, Miriam is also presented as a striking and dramatic figure, a vibrant personality whose ". . . nature had a great deal of colour" (p. 21) and one who displays vitality and a "personal magnetism" (p. 36). Hilda, Kenyon, and Donatello all respond, from the first, to "the abundance of the personal charms" (p. 22)--to her "warm, tender, and generous characteristics" (p. 386). Above all, there is an intensity about Miriam. It is noted that whatever her paintings lack in technical skill is more than compensated for by their "warmth and passionateness" (p. 20) and by their "remarkable power" (p. 43).

So, too, does Miriam herself possess a forceful character, a strong will, and a "passionate and glowing . . . disposition" (p. 396). Speaking to Kenyon after the murder about the love that she feels for Donatello and expressing her desire to devote her life to him, she is aware that her frank declaration must appear to Kenyon as a "'reckless, passionate, most indecorous avowal'" (p. 286). Predictably, Kenyon is ". . . startled to perceive how Miriam's rich, ill-regulated nature impelled her to fling herself . . . on one passion . . ." (p. 280). Yet it is entirely consistent with Miriam's character traits that when she does commit herself to Donatello, she does so absolutely and without any reservations.

If Hawthorne were the moralist he is sometimes accused of being, unjustly so, one could argue that, in depicting Miriam as he does, his aesthetic judgment is at war with his moral principles, since there is little doubt that his creation is a vivid, fascinating figure who compels the reader's interest and sympathy. However, to adopt this point of view is to misinterpret Hawthorne's intentions in The Marble Faun. When Miriam is considered in the light of the ambivalence displayed to Rome throughout the work, it becomes evident that Hawthorne's emphasis on her attractiveness cannot be other than deliberate. Indeed, the manner in which he has chosen to portray Miriam can be seen as an extension of that same ambivalence--as an acknowledgment that in Europeans, as in Europe itself, aesthetic appeal and moral corruption may co-exist side by side.

Moreover, when one undertakes an appraisal of Hilda and compares her to Miriam, it becomes apparent immediately that Hilda can be taken as proof that the converse is also true: moral virtue, albeit admirable, may nonetheless be lacking in aesthetic interest and appeal. In his discussion of Hilda, Hyatt H. Waggoner argues: "She is not only a far less impressive character, as a literary character, than Miriam, she is far less attractive . . . as a person."<sup>262</sup> The contrast between the two girls can thus be taken to reflect the corresponding differences between America and Europe: just as Miriam possesses the sensuous appeal and fascination of the Old World, so Hilda suggests the aesthetic deficiencies of the New.<sup>263</sup>

In this context, it is useful to reconsider the implications of Hawthorne's remarks in the Preface to The Marble Faun. It will be recalled that Hawthorne alludes there to the picturesque appeal that Europe has to the writer of romance because of its sense of the past and its aura of mystery, shadow, and gloom.<sup>264</sup> He also comments on America's lack of such appeal, noting that his native land is characterized by a concern with the present, an atmosphere of prosperity and well-being, and an association with daylight. These remarks, which can be used as a frame of reference, are also applicable to Miriam and Hilda.

As has been noted, Miriam's mixed Jewish and aristocratic, Italian ancestry, together with her dreadful secret, make her an exotic and romantic figure, whereas Hilda, in this respect, is a more ordinary American girl. Like Rome itself,

Miriam is haunted by the memory of the past; her life is enveloped in tragedy, mystery, ambiguity, and fatality. As an American, Hilda represents the life of the present and is absorbed in the peaceful routine of daily life; her life is characterized by a quiet serenity and contentment. Miriam, the European, is surrounded by shadow; Hilda, the American, is associated with light.

Moreover, if this comparison is extended to their personalities, the contrast between the two girls becomes even more marked. Miriam is dark, vivid, and intense, while Hilda is relatively pallid: fair in appearance, she is repeatedly described as shy, gentle, sensitive, delicate, and ethereal. Hawthorne's depiction of the two young women suggests that Miriam's portrait would require richly-colored oils and the use of chiaroscuro, while Hilda's would be delicately drawn in softly-colored pastels. Finally, Miriam is warm and passionate; she acts impetuously and is motivated by the impulses of the heart, even when she goes astray. Hilda, however, is comparatively cold and reserved; her feelings are restrained, so much so that she seems fearful of love and incapable of passion. Unlike Miriam, her behavior is governed by the dictates of her conscience and by her religious beliefs. In this respect, the contrast between Hilda and Miriam takes on an added dimension, becoming a variation of what Hyatt H. Waggoner calls one of the most persistent themes in Hawthorne's work--namely, "the opposition between head and heart."<sup>265</sup>

A comparison of Miriam and Hilda on aesthetic grounds

readily confirms that the European girl possesses attractions that the American girl lacks. Yet, even though Hawthorne's acknowledgment of this is undoubtedly conscious and deliberate, his major preoccupation in the fable of the novel is gradually revealed to be less with the disparity of aesthetic appeal between the European and the American than with the polarity of their moral values. The focal point of contrast between the two young women is shown to be the fact that, whereas Miriam, as has been noted, represents the corruption of the fallen Old World, Hilda embodies the moral virtue of the New,<sup>266</sup> displaying what F. O. Matthiessen terms, "the ideal innocence of a New England girl. . . ."<sup>267</sup> Consequently, when the differences between them are evaluated in terms of moral criteria rather than aesthetic ones, it becomes evident that, in this particular context, it is Hilda, not Miriam, whom the reader is intended to regard as superior.<sup>268</sup>

While Miriam is the dark European, figuratively as well as literally, associated as she is with passion, crime, and death, Hilda is the fair-haired, pure, young maiden who so frequently appears as the heroine of nineteenth century American romance. The fictional forebears of both young women are found in James Fenimore Cooper's The Last of the Mohicans, for Miriam is a character in the same tradition as Cora, the brunette of mixed racial ancestry, and Hilda, the same generic type as the blonde Alice. In this context, Leslie A. Fiedler's remarks about Cooper's novel are germane,

since he maintains that, "Cora and Alice . . . the passionate brunette and the sinless blonde, make once and for all the pattern of female Dark and Light . . ." that is found in American fiction;<sup>269</sup> they illustrate what Fiedler terms the bifurcation of woman into sinister Dark Lady and Fair Virgin.<sup>270</sup> Harry Levin makes a similar point when he alludes to Hawthorne's tendency to present in his fiction two heroines ". . . in a polar relationship which accords with all the romantic stereotypes of the delicate blonde and spirited brunette, as well as with Hawthorne's inveterate symbolism of innocence and experience."<sup>271</sup>

Even more than most American girls portrayed in international fiction, Hilda is an idealized character, as can be seen by the imagery which is consistently associated with her throughout the novel. Chaste and virginal, she is habitually dressed in white, an emblem of her physical and spiritual purity, for, unlike Miriam, she is "without a suspicion or a shadow upon the snowy whiteness of her fame" (p. 54).

The dominant image for Hilda is the dove, which is suggestive of gentleness and, again, purity, as well as being the traditional symbol of the Divine Presence or Holy Spirit. A flock of white doves surrounds Hilda in her aerial apartment, and the reader is told that, ". . . her customary white robe bore such an analogy to their snowy plumage, that the confraternity of artists called Hilda The Dove . . ." (p. 56). On seeing Hilda feeding her doves, Miriam, too, perceives, "' . . . how like a dove she is herself, the fair, pure creature!'" (pp. 52-53). This analogy is sustained and

even extended throughout the novel as Hilda's purity is revealed in all its moral and spiritual dimensions, as will be shown subsequently.

Hilda is also repeatedly compared to a saint and to an angel, metaphors that reinforce the notion of her purity, suggest her sanctity and ethereality, and emphasize the dominance of the spiritual over the physical in her personality. Hilda's natural piety and religious faith are definitive aspects of her character. She is devout in her religious observance and, though a Protestant, faithfully tends the lamp which must be kept burning permanently at the shrine of the Virgin in the tower where she lives. Although Kenyon, her compatriot, is extremely critical of Catholicism, Hilda is very much attracted to its beauty as well as to the solace that it offers.

The counterpart to Hilda's devotion to religion may be found in her attitude to art. She is ". . . a pure soul, in whom religion and the love of beauty were at one" (p. 404). In both instances, she finds fulfillment in serving what she regards as the ideal or the absolute. Endowed with a sensitivity which enables her to discern and appreciate the greatness of the Old Masters more than most, she sacrifices her own career as an artist soon after her arrival in Rome in order to become a copyist, dedicating her talents to recreating their works with exquisite skill. Hilda thus becomes a "handmaid of Raphael" (p. 61) and others, serving them with much the same devotion that she tends the Virgin's shrine.

The analogy between art and religion is also suggested by the recurrent religious imagery which Hawthorne employs to describe Hilda's attitude to art. Hilda's reverence for the Old Masters is that of "a worshipper of their genius" (p. 58) who has a "devout recognition" of "the beauty and glory" (p. 60) of their paintings. She becomes, in effect, their artistic disciple:

Beholding the miracles of beauty which they had achieved . . . nothing now was so desirable as to diffuse those self-same beauties more widely among mankind. . . . All that she would henceforth attempt--and that, most reverently, not to say religiously--was to catch and reflect some of the glory which had been shed upon canvas from the immortal pencils of old. (p. 57)

The religious diction in this passage--"miracles," "reverently," "religiously," "glory," and "immortal"--is significant, and it is used again to describe Hilda's own inspired efforts: ". . . she wrought religiously, and therefore wrought a miracle" (p. 60).

Insofar as the works of the Old Masters are predominantly religious in subject matter, they can also be seen to represent a fusion of the sacred with the beautiful. Moreover, the portion of the painting that Hilda chooses to reproduce in her own work as epitomizing the essence of the picture is, typically, something holy, such as ". . . the Virgin's celestial sorrow, for example, or a hovering Angel, imbued with immortal light, or a Saint, with the glow of Heaven in his dying face . . ." (p. 58). In this way, Hilda invests her paintings with a religious significance as well as an aesthetic one.

Hilda's morality is grounded in the same idealism as her art. Her moral principles are sanctified by her religious beliefs, and it is because of this that she regards them as inviolable. Throughout the novel, Hilda herself is identified with an ideal of moral perfection in various ways; she is regarded as a touchstone of moral values by the other characters. She is repeatedly shown to represent an absolute, transcendent form of goodness or virtue that is rarely found in the real world.<sup>272</sup> This aspect of Hilda's character is emphasized in a conversation between Kenyon and Miriam early in the novel. Kenyon says of Hilda: "'Her womanhood is of the ethereal type, and incompatible with any shadow of darkness or evil'" (p. 128). Miriam confirms his observation: "'She would die of her first wrong-doing;-- supposing, for a moment, that she could be capable of doing wrong. Of sorrow . . . Hilda might bear a great burthen;-- of sin, not a feather's weight'" (p. 128).

Hilda thus displays the innocence which is such a distinctive, even definitive American characteristic in nineteenth century international fiction. Her innocence is exhibited in both the moral and the worldly sense of the word: not only is she herself sinless, but, unlike Miriam, she is untainted by any knowledge or experience of evil. She possesses an unblemished purity that distances her from ordinary people: Kenyon tells Miriam, for example, that "' . . . the white, shining purity of Hilda's nature is a thing apart . . .'" (p. 287). It is predominantly for this reason that she is regarded by Kenyon and Miriam as both

saint and angel, as noted above. Kenyon recognizes this: "Ah, yes; she was so pure! The angels . . . were of the same sisterhood . . ." (p. 413).

Living at the top of her tower, high above the ground, with only the flock of white doves for company and tending the Virgin's shrine in an atmosphere of sanctity, Hilda is removed from contact with the world below--symbolically as well as literally.<sup>273</sup> On visiting Hilda's studio, Miriam tells her:

"You breathe sweet air, above all the evil scents of Rome; and . . . you dwell above our . . . moral dust and mud, with the doves and the angels for your nearest neighbors. I should not wonder if the Catholics were to make a Saint of you. . . ." (p. 53)

Yet even when Hilda does walk through the streets of the city, her innocence shields her from the wickedness surrounding her and makes her impervious to it. When the narrator describes the corruption of Rome, for instance, he speaks of Hilda "walking saintlike through it all, with white, innocent feet . . ." (pp. 412-13). He makes this point again, even more explicitly, when he alludes to her wanderings in Rome:

With respect to whatever was evil, foul, and ugly, in this . . . corrupt city, she had trodden as if invisible, and not only so, but blind. She was altogether unconscious of anything wicked. . . . 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. (p. 387)

As an archetypal innocent, Hilda is a character in the

same tradition as Redburn and Jamesian heroines such as Isabel Archer and Milly Theale. Like theirs, her voyage to Europe culminates in an initiation into the knowledge of evil--a passage from innocence to experience--which proves to be traumatic. When she inadvertently witnesses Donatello's murder of Miriam's persecutor and observes Miriam's tacit assent to his terrible deed, she is finally brought face to face with passion and violence and crime; she is confronted with the darker aspects of human nature which she has previously ignored. Referring to this crucial scene, Henry James observes: "This is her revelation of evil, her loss of perfect innocence."<sup>274</sup>

She is compelled to recognize the reality of evil in the world, and her shock and horror at having to do so are intensified by the fact that the man who commits the murder is someone she knows and the woman who acts as his accomplice, her closest friend. What she feels, the reader is told, is ". . . that peculiar despair, that chill and heavy misery, which only the innocent can experience . . . that dismal certainty of the existence of evil in the world . . ." (p. 328). She sheds ". . . those tears (among the most chill and forlorn that gush from human sorrow,) which the innocent heart pours forth, at its first actual discovery that sin is in the world" (p. 204).

Commenting on the significance of this discovery immediately afterwards, the narrator notes:

The young and pure are not apt to find out that miserable truth, until it is brought home to them

by the guiltiness of some trusted friend. They may have heard much of the evil of the world, and seem to know it, but only as an impalpable theory. In due time, some mortal, whom they reverence too highly, is commissioned by Providence to teach them this direful lesson; he perpetrates a sin; and Adam falls anew, and Paradise, heretofore in unfaded bloom, is lost again, and closed forever, with the fiery swords gleaming at its gates. (p. 204)

In this passage, Hawthorne invests the international situation with a mythic dimension: because of her innocence, Hilda is identified as an American Adam, and her first encounter with sin and evil in the Old World, with the terrible knowledge that it imposes on her, is presented as a symbolic re-enactment of the expulsion from Eden.

After the murder, Hilda undergoes a psychological and spiritual crisis--a dark night of the soul. It appears to her ". . . as if the catastrophe involved the whole moral world" (P. 329). She tells Miriam: "'While there is a single guilty person in the universe, each innocent one must feel his innocence tortured by that guilt. Your deed, Miriam, has darkened the whole sky!'" (p. 212). The knowledge that she has so unwillingly acquired is loathsome to her, as James recognizes when he writes: "She has done no wrong and yet wrongdoing has become a part of her experience, and she carries the detested knowledge upon her heart."<sup>275</sup>

She feels herself contaminated by the scene she has witnessed; she feels her own purity tainted:

To this innocent girl, holding the knowledge of Miriam's crime within her tender and delicate soul, the effect was almost the same as if she

herself had participated in the guilt. Indeed, partaking the human nature of those who could perpetrate such deeds, she felt her own spotlessness impugned. (p. 329)

This is shown most poignantly when, gazing at the portrait of Beatrice Cenci, she fancies that the young woman's expression is now mirrored on her own face: "'Am I, too, stained with guilt?' thought the poor girl, hiding her face in her hands" (p. 205). The knowledge that she has acquired and that she feels can be divulged to no one isolates her, even from Kenyon, until her loneliness becomes insupportable.

In her desolation and despair, Hilda seeks relief in the confessional of St. Peter's, availing herself of the solace and comfort of the Catholic church even though she is a Protestant. She confides all that has occurred to a priest: ". . . she poured out the dark story which had infused its poison into her innocent life" (p. 357). By sharing her secret with him, she is relieved of it. The crushing burden of guilt and horror that her knowledge has imposed upon her is finally lifted. Her suffering is alleviated and her purity restored (a point which is of crucial importance): "And, ah, what a relief! When the hysteric gasp, the strife between words and sobs, had subsided, what a torture had passed away from her soul! It was all gone; her bosom was as pure now as in her childhood" (pp. 357-58). After her confession, she feels herself purged of the taint of evil. The narrator alludes to her "transfiguration," noting that, ". . . it was a marvellous change from the sad girl, who had entered the confessional,

bewildered with anguish, to this bright, yet softened image of religious consolation that emerged from it" (p. 364). Her serenity is apparent: "For peace had descended upon her like a dove" (p. 371). The narrator also observes--and his choice of imagery is significant--that ". . . this glory of peace made her as lovely as an angel" (p. 358).

In any discussion of the impact of the murder on Hilda, it is illuminating to compare her to Donatello. Despite the manifold differences between Hilda and Donatello, which are not relevant to the international situation,<sup>276</sup> the congruity between them is established by the fact that both the American girl and the Italian youth are portrayed by Hawthorne as Adamic figures.<sup>277</sup> The two characters are acquainted with one another because each is a friend of Miriam, but there is no relationship or even dialogue between them. Yet their lives converge at one point: they both lose their innocence at the moment that Donatello kills Miriam's persecutor--Hilda, because she witnesses the crime, and Donatello, because he commits it.

Hilda acquires first-hand knowledge of evil and of the darker aspects of human nature as a consequence of what she has seen, but this knowledge, unassimilated as it is, proves to have virtually no enduring impact on her; she undergoes no concomitant expansion of consciousness or transformation of character. Because she is an observer of the crime rather than a participant in it, she also suffers no irreparable harm. By severing her ties with Miriam and ridding herself of her terrible secret in the confessional,

she attempts to eradicate the scene of horror from her memory, to expunge the corrosive knowledge of evil from her consciousness. For the most part, she succeeds in doing so. James observes that she ". . . pours out her dark knowledge into the bosom of the Church--then comes away . . . lightened. . . ." <sup>278</sup> After her ordeal is over, she regains her innocence and purity, as indicated above; at the end of the novel, she is essentially restored to what she was at its beginning. In this respect, she differs crucially from Donatello.

The English title of The Marble Faun, Transformation, suggests how Hawthorne intended his readers to regard Donatello. Although Hawthorne is deliberately ambiguous about whether or not Donatello's fall is finally "fortunate," as Miriam contends, Hilda denies, and Kenyon is uncertain, there is no doubt that Donatello is radically transformed by guilt, remorse, and suffering. After the murder, he loses his pagan qualities--his close harmony with nature, his spontaneity, his joyousness, his simplicity--but he painfully acquires a conscience and a new intelligence in their stead, thereby attaining a higher, more developed level of consciousness. As Kenyon recognizes, "'Out of his bitter agony, a soul and intellect . . . have been inspired into him'" (p. 282). Donatello, at the end of the novel, is irrevocably altered. The narrator notes, quite unequivocally, that his very tone of voice attests to the change that he has undergone:

. . . [it] bespoke an altered and deepened character; it told of a vivified intellect, and of spiritual instruction that had come through sorrow and remorse; so that--instead of the wild boy, the thing of sportive, animal nature, the sylvan Faun--here was now the man of feeling and intelligence. (p. 320)

Summing up what he regards as the central action of The Marble Faun, R. W. B. Lewis contends: "That action is the transformation of the soul in its journey from innocence to conscience: the soul's realization of itself under the impact of and by engagement with evil--the tragic rise born of the fortunate fall."<sup>279</sup> The weakness of The Marble Faun as an international novel is due, in part, to the fact that Lewis's statement about Donatello cannot be applied to Hilda. In her case, there is no real engagement with evil and thus no subsequent transformation.

In this context, it is also useful to consider briefly William M. Gibson's comments on The Ambassadors. Citing William Troy, Gibson argues that in James's novel, the European garden is identified with the Garden of Eden and, like it, contains the tree of knowledge of good and evil.<sup>280</sup> Strether eats the fruit of the tree of knowledge, says Gibson: in fact, ". . . he attains stature only as he acquires, however painfully, knowledge of the world and of good and evil."<sup>281</sup> Accepting the validity of Gibson's analysis of James's metaphor, one finds that it provides a standard of measurement which can be applied to The Marble Faun.

It will be recalled that in Hawthorne's novel, Rome's

beautiful gardens, with their poisoned air, are shown to represent a post-lapsarian Eden, while Donatello and Hilda, in their innocence, are both referred to as Adamic figures. Yet one of the major points of contrast between Hawthorne's novel and James's is due to the fact that, although Donatello, the Italian, undergoes a process of development analogous to that of Strether, Hilda, the American, does not. She tastes the fruit of the tree of knowledge, but because it is bitter, she does not eat it; she rejects the knowledge of evil before it can be assimilated.

That Hilda, unlike Donatello, undergoes no change of character or consciousness as a result of her experience does not diminish her moral virtue. On the contrary, her inability to accept man's capacity for evil as a fundamental reality of human nature or to come to terms with it can be taken as further proof of her unassailable purity. Indeed, Peter D. Zivkovic argues convincingly that Hilda's blindness, her deliberate refusal to permit herself to learn from the experiences that are available to her<sup>282</sup> or to be altered by them,<sup>283</sup> is an inevitable consequence of her absolute idealism.<sup>284</sup>

Nevertheless, the nature of Hilda's response is the distinctive factor which differentiates her from those other American innocents in international fiction who are educated by life in the course of their sojourn in Europe and who attain maturity as a direct consequence of their being confronted with the existence of evil--characters such as Redburn and Isabel Archer, for example, for whom the traumatic transition

from innocence to experience is accompanied by a passage from youth to adulthood. By contrast, Hilda is shown to be a more limited character, one who lacks the potential for such growth or development. At the most, one can concede that at the end of the novel Hilda is somewhat softened and sensitized, not by the knowledge of evil, which she repudiates, but by her experience of solitude, suffering, and despair during the period following the murder: she acquires a new insight into art, she becomes more responsive to Kenyon, and she gains a limited degree of self-knowledge, as will be shown subsequently. But in all the fundamental aspects of her character, she is unaltered. As Paul Brodtkorb, Jr., indicates, ". . . the book does not present the change in Hilda as basic or permanent. . . ."285

Precisely because she is so idealized, there is a frozen, static quality about Hilda; her perfection is that of a figure untouched by life.

Hilda's disengagement from life is corroborated in several ways in the course of the novel. Alone in her medieval tower, with only the doves for company, she is not only sheltered from contact with the corruption of Rome but immured from the world at large. Miriam aptly describes Hilda's lofty studio as "'a hermitage'" (p. 53) and comments on the unreal character of Hilda's life: "'What a sweet, strange life you lead here; conversing with the souls of the Old Masters, feeding and fondling your sister-doves, and trimming the Virgin's lamp!'" (p. 59).

Moreover, the figure of an artist living alone in a

tower, isolated from the world below, inevitably evokes associations in the reader (whether intentionally on Hawthorne's part or not) with Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott," a poem which was first published in 1832, more than twenty years before The Marble Faun. The Lady of Shalott sits in her tower and gazes into a mirror as she weaves her magic web, depicting in her tapestry the reflected shadows of what passes beneath her window. Alluding to the Platonic view of art as an imitation of the physical world which is, in turn, an imitation of the "real" world, Tennyson uses the device of the mirror to make the artist figure, the Lady of Shalott, at still one further remove from reality.

In this context, it should be recalled that Hilda is a copyist who has given up her own career as an artist in order to reproduce the works of the Old Masters. No matter how finely wrought her paintings may be, they are still copies of the works of others; they are not direct observations of life but imitations of art which is, in turn, an imitation of life. Even her original sketches which date back to an earlier period of her life are described as ". . . scenes delicately imagined, [but] lacking, perhaps, the reality which comes only from a close acquaintance with life . . ." (p. 55).

During the crisis she undergoes after the murder, Hilda herself is compelled finally to question the value of art. Not only does she lose the faculty of appreciating those artistic masterpieces which have always inspired and

sustained her, but, apart from the work of great religious painters such as Raphael, she comes to acknowledge their falsity: "A deficiency of . . . absolute truth is generally discoverable in Italian pictures, after the art had become consummate" (p. 338). Sadly, she becomes aware of the "hollowness" (p. 338) of so many of the paintings that she has previously venerated: ". . . her perceptive faculty penetrated the canvas like a steel probe, and found but a crust of paint over an emptiness" (p. 341). She also makes another discovery about art: "It cannot comfort the heart in affliction . . ." (p. 340). This insight is confirmed after her ordeal has ended, when she returns to art ". . . with a deeper look into the heart of things . . ." (p. 375).

The narrator notes:

She had known such a reality, that it taught her to distinguish inevitably the large portion that is unreal, in every work of art. Instructed by sorrow, she felt that there is something beyond almost all which pictorial genius has produced. . . .  
(p. 375)

She learns that there is a vast gulf between art and life, between imitation and reality.

Hilda resembles the Lady of Shalott in another respect as well. She is isolated not only from the physical world below her window but from human emotions. Miriam tells her that, living in her tower as she does, "' . . . you dwell above our vanities and passions . . .'" (p. 53). Because of her ethereality and purity, she is compared to an angel on several occasions. This metaphor is intended to be

complimentary, but it also serves to suggest her aloofness and emotional detachment: for all their moral and spiritual perfection, angels are not sensate beings capable of human emotions. The narrator notes that Hilda appears to be "a partly ideal creature, not to be handled, nor even approached too closely" (p. 63). He also comments on the "subtle attribute of reserve, that insensibly kept those at a distance who were not suited to her sphere" (p. 63). Early in the novel, when alluding to his love for Hilda, Kenyon tells Miriam: "'Hilda does not dwell in our mortal atmosphere; and . . . it will be as difficult to win her heart, as to entice down a white bird from . . . the sky. . . . She is abundantly capable of sympathy . . . but she has no need of love!'" (p. 121).

Hilda's maiden innocence and virginity are also repeatedly emphasized in the course of the novel as emblematic of her purity. At the same time, her chastity is frequently shown to be allied to an emotional frigidity which makes her a veritable snow-maiden,<sup>286</sup> incapable of passion<sup>287</sup> and deficient in the impulses of the heart.<sup>288</sup> Evidence for this assertion is found, for example, in two passages in which the allusions to Hilda as a virgin are linked to imagery of coldness and lack of feeling. The relief that Hilda feels immediately after emerging from the confessional makes her appear to Kenyon to be ". . . softened out of the chilliness of her virgin pride . . ." (p. 370). However, this impression proves to be somewhat misleading. Despite her friendship with Kenyon, her "maidenly reserve" (p. 121)

persists, and the narrator notes that, ". . . the snow will sometimes linger in a virgin's breast, even after the Spring is well advanced" (p. 373). The narrator also points out that, in view of the congeniality that Hilda finds with Kenyon, her continued withdrawal from him is an anomaly:

". . . it was strange that she so reluctantly admitted the idea of love . . ." (p. 374). He observes: ". . . Hilda, like so many other maidens, lingered on the hither side of passion. . . . She hesitated to grasp a richer happiness, as possessing already such measure of it as her heart could hold, and of a quality most agreeable to her virgin tastes (p. 374).

Even after Hilda comes down from her tower and finally consents to marry Kenyon, her feeling for him is described as one of "shy affection" (p. 461) rather than any stronger emotion. Her marriage is envisaged as one that will provide a sanctuary similar to that which she enjoyed in her tower: "Another hand must henceforth trim the lamp before the Virgin's shrine; for Hilda was coming down from her old tower, to be herself enshrined and worshipped as a household Saint, in the light of her husband's fireside" (p. 461). As Hyatt H. Waggoner indicates, the only change anticipated for Hilda in her marriage is that "from priestess to goddess."<sup>289</sup>

It should be noted that Kenyon is a suitable partner for Hilda. His moral views are similar to hers, although he is more moderate and tolerant than she is, and there are several other points of resemblance between the two Americans. More than any other character in the novel, Kenyon shares the narrator's ambivalence to Italy: he is fully appreciative

of its aesthetic attractions but is critical of its moral corruption. From the first, he displays an objective awareness of the duality of Rome that Hilda only attains through her personal experience of evil. However, both characters are alike in affirming their commitment to American moral values and in expressing their repudiation of European ones, as can be seen by their decision to leave Italy at the end of the novel in order to return to their native land.

Like Hilda, Kenyon is an artist. He is a sculptor of great sensitivity and power whose statue of Cleopatra attests to his understanding of human passions--an understanding that Hilda lacks. Yet in terms of the international situation, his role, even more than Hilda's, is primarily that of a detached and dispassionate observer who is not directly affected by the events of the novel; he refers to himself as a "'by-stander, though a deeply interested one'" (p. 321). He is prepared to act as friend and adviser to Miriam and Donatello up to a certain point but is reluctant to become involved too deeply.

On one important occasion, after seeing his model of Cleopatra, Miriam is impelled to tell him about her past. Speaking passionately of her loneliness and of the secret that tortures her so much that she longs to confide it to another human soul, she asks for Kenyon's help. Although he does offer to listen to her story, Miriam discerns "a certain reserve and alarm" (p. 128) in his response; she is aware of "his reluctance . . . whether he were conscious of

it or no . . ." (p. 129). Repelled by his attitude, she maintains her silence about her past and tells him accusingly: "'You are as cold and pitiless as your own marble'" (p. 129). This scene can be seen to foreshadow the confrontation between Miriam and Hilda after the murder: like Hilda, Kenyon fails Miriam; he withholds his help when she sorely needs it. As Murray Krieger indicates, ". . . his American moral overscrupulosity leads him to turn aside from Miriam in her need. . . ." <sup>290</sup> Miriam reproaches Kenyon once again at the end of the novel, reminding him of this occasion when she sought his assistance. She tells him: "' . . . finding you cold to accept my confidence, I thrust it back again. Had I obeyed my first impulse, all would have turned out differently'" (p. 433).

Miriam's accusation may be too extreme an indictment of Kenyon, but in contrast to her own passionate nature, Kenyon's constraint of his feelings, while not as marked as Hilda's, is readily apparent. The discomfort that Kenyon feels in the presence of Miriam's strong emotions is shown again when she speaks to him later of her feelings for Donatello. When she asks him frankly whether he is shocked by what must appear to him as her "'reckless, passionate, most indecorous avowal'" (p. 286), he acknowledges that this is so.

Nevertheless, unlike Hilda, Kenyon does shown an "earnest sympathy" (p. 321) for Donatello and Miriam subsequently; he feels an "infinite pity" (p. 261) for Donatello's suffering. He does not condemn, as Hilda does, but offers

Donatello a measure of hope. Adopting a pragmatic attitude that is consistent with the beliefs of American Protestantism, he tells the Italian: "'Not despondency, not slothful anguish, is what you now require--but effort! Has there been an unutterable evil in your young life? Then crowd it out with good, or it will lie corrupting there, forever . . .'" (p. 273). Kenyon counsels Donatello to devote himself to good works instead of choosing a monk's life; he urges him to take active, practical steps to demonstrate his remorse--to undertake "'good deeds to mankind'" (p. 267). He gives similar advice to Miriam and Donatello when, perceiving the bonds of love and guilt that join them irrevocably, he approves their union in marriage with the proviso that it be directed to good rather than to happiness.

At this point, Kenyon's function in the novel closely parallels that of Hilda in that he becomes an embodiment of moral authority who is recognized by the Europeans to be "'honourable'" (p. 130) and "'true and upright'" (p. 321). At the same time, in advising Miriam and Donatello, Kenyon is ". . . anxious not to violate the integrity of his own conscience" (p. 322). Thus, for all his good intentions, he delivers what is, in effect, a moralistic and rather pontifical sermon, one offering a bleak vision of their future, when he enjoins the guilty pair to remember that their marriage must be one of duty and of mutual support in the struggle for spiritual improvement:

"Not, for earthly bliss, therefore," said Kenyon,  
 "but for mutual elevation and encouragement  
 towards a severe and painful life, you take each

other's hands. And if, out of toil, sacrifice, prayer, penitence, and earnest effort towards right things, there comes, at length, a sombre and thoughtful happiness, taste it, and thank Heaven! . . ." (p. 322)

How different the proposed marriage between Miriam and Donatello is from that of Hilda and Kenyon can be seen when this passage is contrasted to Kenyon's own proposal to Hilda: "'Were you my guide, my counsellor, my inmost friend, with that white wisdom which clothes you as with a celestial garment, all would go well'" (pp. 460-61). Although both couples aspire to "'mutual elevation,'" the Europeans' love is tainted by crime and guilt while that of the Americans is sanctified by Hilda's purity and goodness as well as by Kenyon's appreciation of these qualities.

However, it is also evident from Miriam's declaration of her love for Donatello that her commitment to him is both total and absolute; it involves a depth and intensity of feeling that are absent in Hilda. Warm and passionate as she is, Miriam makes Hilda appear cold and unfeeling by contrast.<sup>291</sup> Hilda's affection for Kenyon, as noted above, is as chaste and ethereal as Hilda herself, and it seems to be primarily a passive acceptance of Kenyon's devotion. Their concept of marriage is based on an idealized, platonic view of love in which Hilda represents a model of moral and spiritual perfection rather than a woman of flesh and blood.<sup>292</sup>

Thus far, the limitations ascribed to Hilda have been those of an archetypal American innocent who displays idealized moral qualities but is isolated from the reality of life and from human emotions. However, Hilda also represents another tradition in American fiction: she is a girl from New England who refers to herself as "'a daughter of the Puritans'" (p. 54) and, as such, reveals more serious defects than those noted above.

Like Lydia Blood in Howells's The Lady of the Aroostook, another young American Puritan, Hilda possesses a moral rectitude that is rigorous and uncompromising. She sees things in terms of moral absolutes, insisting to Kenyon that, "' . . . there is, I believe, only one right and one wrong . . .'" (p. 384). She herself represents one extreme, in her unblemished purity, and by her very nature, is incapable of condoning any wrongdoing. Kenyon alludes to this aspect of her character when he tells Miriam: "' . . . she is bound, by the undefiled material of which God moulded her, to keep that severity which I, as well as you, have recognized'" (p. 287).

Paradoxically, it is her moral perfection that constitutes her handicap as a human being. Sinless herself, she has no understanding of human weakness, as Miriam recognizes when she reproaches Hilda for rejecting her:

"I always said, Hilda, that you were merciless; for I had a perception of it, even while you loved me best. You have no sin, nor any conception of what it is; and therefore you are so terribly severe! As an angel, you are not amiss; but, as a human creature, and a woman among earthly men and women, you need a sin to soften you!" (p. 209)

When Miriam approaches Hilda for the first time after the murder, the American girl recoils in horror from the Italian one: ". . . she put forth her hands with an involuntary repellent gesture, so expressive, that Miriam at once felt a great chasm opening itself between them two" (p. 207). In her despair, Miriam pleads her case with Hilda. Speaking movingly of the love and affection that she has always felt for Hilda, she alludes to the claims of friendship:

"In any regard that concerns yourself, I am not changed. And believe me, Hilda, when a human being has chosen a friend out of all the world, it is only some faithlessness between themselves, rendering true intercourse impossible, that can justify either friend in severing the bond. Have I deceived you? Then cast me off! Have I wronged you personally? Then forgive me, if you can! But, have I sinned against God and man, and deeply sinned? Then be more my friend than ever, for I need you more!" (p. 208)

By remaining impervious to Miriam's plea, Hilda unfeelingly denies Miriam help in her greatest hour of need; she withholds the solace that she herself finds so essential when she turns to the confessional. Her failure is succinctly summed up by Murray Krieger when he remarks: "In her severity, she fails Miriam irrevocably and crucially as a friend."<sup>293</sup> Even if this is not a moral shortcoming, it is a serious human one.<sup>294</sup> For all that she resolves not to betray Miriam to the authorities, she repudiates her friendship with her, adamantly vowing to sever all ties with her. In doing so, Hilda confirms that she is indeed severe--harsh and pitiless--in her judgment. She demonstrates that she is

incapable of showing compassion or forgiveness for the sins of others. In Christian terms, she is devoid of both charity and mercy.

The justification that Hilda offers for her behavior is that she cannot help Miriam without endangering her own spotless purity; she fears contamination from the other girl's guilt. She tells Miriam:

"If I were one of God's angels, with a nature incapable of stain, and garments that never could be spotted, I would keep ever at your side, and try to lead you upward. But I am a poor, lonely girl, whom God has set here in an evil world, and given her only a white robe, and bid her wear it back to Him, as white as when she put it on. Your powerful magnetism would be too much for me. The pure, white atmosphere, in which I try to discern what things are good and true, would be discoloured. And, therefore, Miriam, before it is too late, I mean to put faith in this awful heart-quake, which warns me henceforth to avoid you!" (p. 208)

Hilda's insistence on the importance of her own salvation, whatever the cost, reflects a self-centeredness which is repellent. Her attitude is one which also comes perilously close to the sin of spiritual pride which Hawthorne so abhors.

Despite Hawthorne's evident intent to create in his American heroine an image of perfect moral purity that can be juxtaposed to the fallen Old World, there is little doubt that Hawthorne is, at the same time, decidedly ambivalent towards Hilda. In her absolute goodness and innocence, Hilda represents the most admirable aspects of New England Puritanism; in her human insufficiency, she represents its least appealing ones.

Nor is there any reason to suppose that Hawthorne is

unaware of Hilda's defects, as Hyatt H. Waggoner, among others, suggests when he refers to "what, for Hawthorne, is Hilda's awe-inspiring virtue and compelling attractiveness."<sup>295</sup> F. O. Matthiessen, too, argues that, ". . . the unintended impression of self-righteousness and priggishness that [Hilda] exudes . . . brings to the fore some extreme limitations of the standards that Hawthorne took for granted."<sup>296</sup> Although they are both astute critics, it can be argued that in this instance the assumptions held by Waggoner and Matthiessen are unwarranted, for they fail to do justice to Hawthorne's powers of discernment as an artist. It is surely possible for Hawthorne to intend Hilda to embody a conventional feminine ideal of virtue that is commendable in terms of nineteenth century American values, and yet, simultaneously, to recognize the limitations of that ideal, in much the same manner that he deliberately sets out to show that Miriam's attractiveness can co-exist with her corruption. Indeed, Hawthorne himself provides several clues to indicate that he is conscious of Hilda's failings.

Firstly, there is the textual evidence found in the novel itself. It may be argued that Miriam's criticism of Hilda, when she is rejected by her friend after the murder, is not sufficiently objective to be taken at its face value. Yet, long before this occurs, there is a revealing incident in which Hilda, after gazing at the portrait of Beatrice Cenci, remarks that her crime is inexpiable and her terrible doom justly deserved. Miriam's response to Hilda's comment on this occasion is to exclaim: "'Oh,

Hilda, your innocence is like a sharp steel sword. . . . Your judgments are often terribly severe, though you seem all made up of gentleness and mercy'" (p. 66). Kenyon makes a similar accusation near the end of the novel when Hilda's condemnation of Miriam and Donatello shows her to be as uncompromising as ever. Much as he loves Hilda, Kenyon tells her that she makes no allowance for human failings:

"I always felt you, my dear friend, a terribly severe judge, and have been perplexed to conceive how such tender sympathy could coexist with the remorselessness of a steel blade. You need no mercy, and therefore know not how to show any!"  
(p. 384)

Moreover, although Hilda's severity of judgment remains untempered to the last, and it is made clear that, given her nature, she is incapable of behaving otherwise, she herself does eventually acquire sufficient self-knowledge to feel "a painful doubt whether a wrong had not been committed" (p. 385) on her part towards Miriam:

Something that Miriam had said, in their final conversation . . . seemed now to deserve more weight than Hilda had assigned to it, in her horror at the crime just perpetrated. It was not that the deed looked less wicked and terrible, in the retrospect; but she asked herself whether there were not other questions to be considered, aside from that single one of Miriam's guilt or innocence; as, for example, whether a close bond of friendship . . . ought to be severed on account of any unworthiness, which we subsequently detect in our friend. For, in these unions of hearts . . . we take each other for better, for worse. Availing ourselves of our friend's intimate affection, we pledge our own, as to be relied upon in every emergency. And what sadder, more desperate emergency could there be, than had befallen Miriam! Who more need the tender succour of the innocent, than wretches stained with guilt! And, must a

selfish care for the spotlessness of our own garments keep us from pressing the guilty ones close to our hearts, wherein, for the very reason that we are innocent, lies their securest refuge from further ill! (p. 385)

Hilda recognizes, belatedly, that whatever the moral issues involved, her behavior to Miriam has been a betrayal of their friendship: "'Miriam loved me well,' thought Hilda, remorsefully, 'and I failed her at her sorest need!'" (p. 386). The narrator, with his characteristic ambiguity, questions Hilda's attitude, supposing her to be "misled by her feelings" (p. 386); but the reader is left with the awareness that Hilda's remorse is justified.

Hilda's behavior is also condemned if one considers the theme that is found in so many of Hawthorne's works--namely, that the inability to love and the failure of the impulses of the heart are deficiencies which serve to isolate man from his fellow man and are to be deplored.<sup>297</sup> Here is the way that Hawthorne describes Ethan Brand, the man who has discovered the Unpardonable Sin:

But where was the heart? That, indeed, had withered,--had contracted,--had hardened,--had perished! It had ceased to partake of the universal throb. He had lost his hold of the magnetic chain of humanity. He was no longer a brother-man, opening the chambers or the dungeons of our common nature by the key of holy sympathy, which gave him a right to share in all its secrets; he was now a cold observer. . . .<sup>298</sup>

When assessed in the light of this well-known passage, so central to Hawthorne's vision, Hilda's behavior to Miriam is seen as culpable. Indeed, Hyatt H. Waggoner observes that, ". . . it is impossible not to see her as a feminine

version of the man of adamant. . . ."299

Even though Hilda is guided by "the warmth . . . of a woman's sympathy" (p. 56) and by the instincts of the "heart" (p. 57) in her appreciation of art, she directs these feelings to paintings--inanimate objects which are beautiful and unflawed. She fails, however, to show a comparable degree of love and sympathy to Miriam. Her coldness and severity to the friend who regards her as "'a younger sister'" (p. 207) confirm the inability to love that she reveals in her relationship with Kenyon and attest to the fact that, despite her moral virtue, she possesses grave shortcomings as a human being.

Hilda's defects are further accentuated when she is compared to another American girl in international fiction--Milly Theale in The Wings of the Dove. In The Complex Fate, Marius Bewley maintains that Hilda's innocence and purity, together with the dove imagery that is "the persistent metaphor, the definitive symbol that occurs everywhere Hilda is discussed"<sup>300</sup> all serve to make her "the . . . artistic model, the fictional prototype"<sup>301</sup> for Milly Theale. Bewley was the first to make this important critical discovery, and the evidence that he offers to support his claims about the extensive influence exerted by The Marble Faun on The Wings of the Dove is convincing, leaving no real ground for contention.

However, in noting the many similarities between the two girls, Bewley also asserts that, as an apotheosis of

purity, so saintly and sinless that she sets "an impossible example in moral perfection unattainable by ordinary . . . mortals,"<sup>302</sup> Hilda closely resembles Milly Theale: ". . . the symbolism with which James presents Milly and that with which Hawthorne presents Hilda . . . carries implicit moral values that shed nearly identical lustres over the two girls."<sup>303</sup> It is with regard to this last point that Bewley's conclusions can be disputed, for in terms of the analysis of Hilda set forth in this chapter, his statement requires qualification and modification.

By making Hilda the standard of measurement for evaluating Milly, Bewley's comparison of the two characters, though valid as far as it goes, is strikingly incomplete. He takes no cognizance of Hilda's human failings<sup>304</sup> which, while they do not impugn her moral virtue, make the model of goodness she represents crucially different from that which Milly embodies. Ignoring the disparities between the two girls, Bewley overlooks the fact that the contrast between Hawthorne's heroine and James's is as significant as the resemblance between them.

Admittedly, both are American innocents who have the knowledge of evil painfully forced upon them by Europeans whom they trust, with the result, as Bewley points out, that Hilda undergoes a grave psychological crisis after witnessing Miriam's part in the murder, and Milly dies after learning about the treachery of Morton Densher and Kate Croy.<sup>305</sup> Yet Bewley concludes from this that the two girls are basically alike: "Both the Doves are personally

stainless, but the guilt of others is unbearable to them; they are both incapable of submitting to the profane touch of the world, or of taking the shock of another's evil."<sup>306</sup> In making this statement, Bewley shows no awareness that the situations of the two girls are not the same: Milly's discovery that she has been lied to and used by her friends for the most sordid of motives, her realization that the man who has led her to believe that he cares for her has been engaged to another woman all the time, constitutes a personal betrayal of such magnitude that it cannot simply be described as "the shock of another's evil" or considered to be of the same order as Hilda's discovery of Miriam's guilt.

Moreover, Bewley also makes no mention of the fact that the responses of the two girls to their discoveries are radically different: in judging Miriam as severely as she does and repudiating their friendship, Hilda manifests her limitations--her inability to show compassion or mercy for any wrongdoing; in forgiving Densher, Milly exhibits her beauty and generosity of spirit. Unlike Hilda, she shows a selfless love and a concern, not with her own salvation, but with that of others. Thus, while Bewley is correct in noting that both girls are idealized Americans whose moral purity is contrasted to European guilt,<sup>307</sup> he fails to recognize that James's American princess has special attributes that Hawthorne's Puritan lacks. Indeed, Oscar Cargill, referring to what he regards as Bewley's "fallacious assumption that Hilda and Milly Theale are

essentially one character,"<sup>308</sup> argues that Hilda's puritanical nature is in itself enough to indicate the contrast between her and Milly: "This should make us look for differences as much as resemblances between the two girls."<sup>309</sup>

One approach to analyzing the differences between the two girls is to understand how the image of the dove, which serves primarily to emphasize Hilda's innocence and spotless purity in The Marble Faun, is expanded to new dimensions in James's novel so that it assumes a dual function. In this context, R. P. Blackmur's observation that the dove imagery in The Wings of the Dove is grounded in the Book of Psalms is particularly illuminating:

There is this from the 68th Psalm: "Though ye have lain among the sheepfolds, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove that is covered with silver wings, and her feathers like gold." And there is this from the 55th Psalm: "The enemy crieth so, and the ungodly cometh on so fast; for they are minded to do me some mischief, so maliciously are they set against me. My heart is disquieted within me, and the fear of death is fallen upon me. Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and an horrible dread hath overwhelmed me. And I said, O that I had wings like a dove! for then I would flee away, and be at rest." This last is the voice of the American princess, Milly Theale, and the first is the acknowledgment of her power by those who betrayed her, Kate Croy and her lover, Morton Densher. . . .<sup>310</sup>

In alluding to the mischief directed towards Milly, Blackmur refers to the fact that she is the victim of the plot conceived by Kate Croy and carried out, however reluctantly, by Morton Densher. The American girl is an orphan, mortally ill and very rich. Because of the worldly values that prevail in Lancaster Gate, the English lovers

are unable to marry without money, and Densher has none. Therefore, Densher is to make Milly fall in love with him, marry her, and after her death, inherit her money so that he can marry Kate.

In Kate Croy, a character who displays Miriam's magnetism, passionate nature, and strong will, James personifies all that is beautiful--and all that is corrupt--in the sophisticated, upper-class, English society into which Milly has been introduced. In her innocence, the American girl seems defenseless against Kate's ruthlessness and worldly ambitions. Indeed, on the face of it, the plot succeeds even though Milly eventually learns of Densher's intentions.

When Lord Mark reveals to Milly that Densher and Kate are secretly engaged, the terrible knowledge of how she has been betrayed quite literally kills her. Until now, Milly has held her illness in abeyance by sheer force of will, insisting to Densher: "'If I want to live. I can. . . .'"<sup>311</sup> However, after Lord Mark's disclosures, she turns her face to the wall and ceases to make any further effort. At this point, despite her impending death, Milly is still able to thwart Morton Densher and Kate Croy through her power to dispose of her money in quite a different way from the one for which they had hoped and plotted. Instead, she summons Densher just before she dies in order to let him know that she forgives him. She subsequently confirms this, in an extraordinary gesture, by leaving him all her money.

Yet at the very moment that their plans come to fruition,

Densher finds that he cannot take advantage of Milly's bequest after all. Although he is still attracted to Kate, his feeling of shame and, above all, Milly's influence make it impossible. It is the particular nature of this influence which is so important in the novel and which differentiates Milly from Hilda.

The suffering of the dove as victim (as described in Psalm 55) is due in large part to Milly's innocence, a characteristic which she has in common with Hilda; but the splendor of the wings of the dove (as evoked in Psalm 68) emanates from Milly's goodness, which is of quite a different order from that of Hilda. When Densher first recognizes the power of the dove, he attributes it to Milly's wealth, as Kate does. For example, Densher's impressions of Milly at the party she gives, when she appears dressed in white and wearing a necklace of priceless pearls, is worth noting:

Milly was indeed a dove; this was the figure, though it most applied to her spirit. Yet he knew in a moment that Kate was . . . exceptionally under the impression of that element of wealth in her which was a power, which was a great power, and which was dove-like only so far as one remembered that doves have wings and wondrous flights, have them as well as tender tints and soft sounds. It even came to Densher dimly that such wings could in a given case--had, truly, in the case in which he was concerned--spread themselves for protection. Hadn't they, for that matter, lately taken an inordinate reach, and weren't Kate . . . and he, wasn't he in particular, nestling under them to a great increase of immediate ease? (p. 403)

Milly's power, as it turns out, extends even beyond her death. By leaving her fortune to Densher, she ensures that the spread of her wings continues to enfold them. However,

Densher's perception of Milly in the scene above is only partially correct, for, as he himself subsequently comes to acknowledge, Milly's money is less significant than the largesse of spirit which directs her disposal of it.

The real power of the dove is the vital force of her goodness reaching out to others. It is this which, in some measure, redeems Milly's death, despite its cruel and tragic waste. It is this which continues to be felt by Densher and Kate even after her death and which transforms Densher by forging his conscience: as Blackmur points out, the novel ". . . is also the story of the creation of conscience . . . in Densher."<sup>312</sup>

The dominant image of the dove in James's novel, then, is not one of weakness and docility but of moral strength and beauty. Despite her suffering, Milly is no mere passive victim. On the contrary, as Dorothea Krook maintains, her manner of dying attests to her final victory over the world of Lancaster Gate--a victory which she attains, notes Krook, ". . . by injecting into it its first knowledge of an order of goodness and power greater than any this world . . . can show."<sup>313</sup>

In the last interview with Densher before her death, the full measure of Milly's goodness is revealed to him; to use the word describing her elsewhere in the novel, she is "magnificent." Although she has previously refused to see Densher because of Lord Mark's disclosures, she now summons him to her, ostensibly to tell him that there is no need for him to remain in Venice for her sake any longer. When Densher goes to her, he believes that she intends to

question him about his relationship with Kate. He later tells Kate: "' . . . what, to my own mind, was before me in going to her was the certainty that she'd put me to my test. She wanted from my own lips--so I saw it--the truth. But I was with her for twenty minutes and she never asked me for it'" (p. 481). Kate asks Densher: "'Did she show anything of her feeling? I mean . . . of her feeling of having been misled'" (p. 483). Densher's reply is that: "'She showed nothing but her beauty and her strength'" (p. 483).

Recalling this last meeting with Milly afterwards, Densher is aware that something momentous had occurred: "The essence was that something had happened to him too beautiful and too sacred to describe. He had been, to his recovered sense, forgiven, dedicated, blessed; but this he couldn't coherently express" (p. 493). This is one of the most crucial passages in the novel--the moment when, despite her imminent death, the spread of the dove's wings and their splendor are most clearly felt. James's use of religious diction in these lines ("sacred," "blessed") is undoubtedly deliberate, for Milly's lovingkindness, compassion, and mercy are intended to be seen as a sanctification, a conferral of grace on Densher. Her forgiveness in the face of his betrayal is a selfless act of transcendent goodness and resplendent beauty, one that takes full cognizance of evil but yet triumphs over it. It is an act of love which, attesting to the highest potential of the human spirit, proves to be redemptive in that it transforms Densher.

The full extent of Milly's generosity is shown in

concrete form by her posthumous gift to Densher of her money--a gift that is all the more remarkable because it is unmerited. Nevertheless, the memory of that last interview with Milly, in which her real worth is fully revealed to him only when it is too late for him to make amends, haunts Densher. Paradoxically, the money for which he has risked so much now becomes tainted for him. He refuses to accept the bequest for himself, giving Kate the choice of marrying him without the money or taking the money and giving him up. His ultimatum to Kate is a renunciation of all that they have plotted for, of what Milly has died for. Thus, although their plan has succeeded and destroyed Milly in the process, it has failed, after all. The price that Densher has had to pay for marrying Kate suddenly appears to him to be too great. Even though the money is now within their grasp, the memory of Milly hovers over them, changing things irrevocably. Kate acknowledges this in the final words of the novel, after rejecting Densher: "'We shall never be again as we were!'" (p. 539).

Therefore, to say, as Marius Bewley does, that James looked back to The Marble Faun when he wrote The Wings of the Dove, using Hilda as a model for Milly Theale, is correct but insufficient;<sup>314</sup> for James transmutes Hawthorne's image of the dove, with its primary associations of innocence and purity, into a richer, more powerful symbol of moral beauty that becomes the fulcrum of the novel.

When measured against Milly, Hilda is clearly seen to

lack the moral stature of James's heroine. Pure and sinless as Hilda is, she represents a narrower, more restricted concept of moral perfection than Milly does. Milly's goodness manifests itself through the redemptive power of love which transforms Densher. Hilda's goodness is synonymous with virtue, but it is cold, unfeeling, and inhuman--devoid of charity and compassion. Unlike Milly, who commands our awe and admiration, Hilda has no such effect on the reader.

Yet even though Hawthorne demonstrates his awareness of Hilda's defects, she is still the moral touchstone for the other characters in the novel. Kenyon, as he himself repeatedly acknowledges, does not measure up to the ideal that she embodies. And when juxtaposed to the Europeans, who are tainted by crime and guilt, she does indeed serve as an example of American moral innocence.

Some of Hawthorne's difficulties with Hilda are attributed by Roy R. Male to the fact that, ". . . he tried to make Hilda both an allegorical ideal and a character. . . ."315 Even Marius Bewley concedes that Hilda is "a symbol that fails to convince one that its value is valid"316 and notes that, in this respect, she is an artistic failure as a character.<sup>317</sup> Hyatt H. Waggoner, asserting that Hilda is "a nineteenth century stereotype," also concludes that, "Hawthorne . . . failed with Hilda. . . ."318 And Richard Harter Fogle maintains that, "As a literary character Hilda . . . fails to satisfy."<sup>319</sup>

In the course of the novel, the reader gradually

becomes aware that the moral excellence of the American heroine, however admirable it may be in contrast to European corruption, is, in its own way, singularly deficient and unappealing. To be sure, Hawthorne employs his characteristic device of ambiguity throughout the novel, alluding to both Hilda's moral perfection and her human failings, so that it is difficult to assess how he regards her finally;<sup>320</sup> but everywhere in the novel, there is evidence of his own underlying ambivalence to America and Europe and to the values embodied by each. Consequently, one wonders whether his crucial choice of a daughter of the Puritans as his American heroine is not an attempt, whether overt or unconscious, to show the limitations of American morality and to emphasize once again the contrasting richness and attractiveness of Europe, with all its moral flaws.<sup>321</sup>

Certainly, the affirmation of the supremacy of moral values over aesthetic ones that is suggested at the conclusion of the novel and is corroborated by the Americans' departure from Rome when they abandon their Italian friends to their fates, as decreed by law, is never absolute. It does not negate the powerful appeal of the aesthetic that is felt throughout the novel, nor does it resolve the ambivalence to Europe that is so often evoked: despite its heritage of sin and crime, Rome's splendor is undiminished; despite her corruption, Miriam remains a compelling and attractive figure; despite his "fall," Donatello has developed an intellect and a soul.

It is true that within the framework of the novel,

Hawthorne does compel his Americans to make a choice, finally, between the values of New England and those of Rome. Given the need to do so, they make it clear that American morality, with all its limitations, is to be preferred to European aestheticism, with its attendant moral corruption. Nevertheless, Hawthorne leaves the reader with the awareness that this choice is not really satisfactory, even though he also acknowledges implicitly that the other alternative would be no better. We are made to recognize that, whatever choice the Americans make, they are forced to pay a price--to be deprived of an essential aspect of human experience and thereby diminished. They may have the good, as represented in this novel by American Puritanism which, in its moral absolutism, is severe and unfeeling, or they may have the beautiful, as represented by the "fallen" but eminently civilized and attractive Old World; but they cannot have both. In terms of the international situation depicted in the novel, no real accommodation of American and European values is possible. By dramatizing the American ambivalence to America and Europe in this manner and by showing that it results from the opposing, irreconcilable claims of the moral and the aesthetic, The Marble Faun makes a significant contribution to nineteenth century international fiction. Moreover, by focusing his attention on this aspect of the international situation, Hawthorne, as noted earlier, anticipates the international novels of Henry James.

That The Marble Faun fails, at the same time, to

realize its potential as an international novel is due in large part, not only to the dominance of the Miriam-Donatello part of the fable, but to Hawthorne's decision to make his American heroine a puritanical figure who, for all her moral virtue, is incapable of growth or development. It has been shown that, like Redburn and Jamesian heroines such as Isabel Archer, Milly Theale, and Maggie Verver, Hilda is portrayed as an archetypal American innocent whose initiation into the knowledge of evil by Europeans is a painful and traumatic one. Unlike the experiences of these characters, however, her own produces no real enlightenment. The girl who is about to marry Kenyon and return to America at the end of the novel is an Adamic figure who has virtually had her innocence restored, a figure who repudiates the knowledge she has acquired and unequivocally rejects the corrupt Old World and its inhabitants.

It is left, then, to the international novels of James to portray American innocents who undergo what Dorothea Krook so aptly terms "'the ordeal of consciousness'"<sup>322</sup> and who are radically altered and transformed by their involvement with Europeans. It is only in the work of James that one finds American girls such as Isabel Archer and Maggie Verver who, because they are bound to Europeans--and to the Old World--by the indissoluble ties of marriage, are compelled to confront European corruption and to come to terms with it. In Maggie Verver, one finds an American Adam who is able to use the informed innocence that she has acquired through suffering and betrayal to redeem her marriage to her Italian

prince; in The Golden Bowl, one becomes aware that the polarity of America and Europe is finally reconciled and synthesized. This novel, more than any other, corroborates Cushing Strout's assertion that James's later work presents "an ideal of fully developed consciousness in which both American innocence and European experience, with their limited share of relative truths, played their necessary parts."<sup>323</sup>

It has been acknowledged from the outset that the work of Henry James represents the culmination of nineteenth century international fiction. However, this study has attempted to show that the origins of the international novel and its emergence as a genre are to be found prior to James, in the various works which have been considered in the foregoing chapters. Whatever their imperfections, these works provide an important introduction to the paradigmatic nineteenth century international novel, enabling one to trace its earlier (and in the case of Howells, its parallel) stages of development and to examine alternate versions of the international situation to those depicted by James.

Of the various thematic motifs which have been analyzed in this study, the American's encounter with European corruption, found in so many works of international fiction, is particularly significant insofar as it can be seen as a transposition or symbolic re-enactment in an international setting of the young American's passage from innocence to

experience--a rite which constitutes a recurrent leitmotif in nineteenth century American fiction. The recognition of this fact, together with the discovery that so many major nineteenth century American novelists--Cooper, Hawthorne, Melville, and Howells, as well as James--have all attempted some version of an international novel,<sup>324</sup> confirms that the international novel is a genre that is neither minor nor idiosyncratic to James but one that is integrally related to the mainstream of nineteenth century American fiction.

## Appendix 1.

## Redburn's Movement from Isolation to Involvement with Others

In citing the works of nineteenth century fiction which deal with the rite de passage (most notably, Moby-Dick, Huckleberry Finn, and The Red Badge of Courage), it should be emphasized that, in these novels, the passage to manhood is accompanied by the young American's increased awareness of the common humanity which all men share and by his affirmation of the bond of brotherhood and love between men. Although this theme is also present in Redburn, it is, for the most part, absent in international fiction. It does appear in The Marble Faun but is expressed in this novel between the two European characters rather than between the Americans and the Europeans. Only in The Golden Bowl is it fused with the international theme, with James synthesizing the polarity of the New World and the Old through the redemptive power of love attributed to Maggie Verver.

In Redburn, this theme is of considerable importance, anticipating as it does Melville's treatment of Ishmael in Moby-Dick. However, since it is not an integral part of the international situation, it is, strictly speaking, beyond the scope of this study. It suffices to call attention to the fact that Redburn's relationship with Harry Bolton can be seen, not only as indicative of the American's ambivalence to Europe, but as part of Redburn's

movement from isolation and alienation from his fellow man at the beginning of his voyage to connection and involvement with others at the end.

When Redburn sets out on his journey, he frankly acknowledges his misanthropic feelings towards his fellow man, as noted earlier. Yet in the course of the novel, his attitude changes, as he endeavors to maintain a charity of spirit and feeling of compassion for others even when he has little reason to do so. Despite the fact that he is made to feel an outcast on the ship, he continues to make overtures of friendship to the other seamen. Moreover, although the bitter enmity of Jackson is what sets the other sailors against him, Redburn is able to feel a measure of compassion for the man.

Throughout the novel, there is evidence to show that Redburn regards himself as involved in the fate of his fellow man. He is unable to ignore the suffering of others--the plight of the starving woman and her children in Liverpool and the miserable conditions of the emigrants on the ship--and in the former instance actively intervenes on their behalf.

However, the transition from isolation to fellowship and increased sociability with other men is exemplified, above all, by Redburn's friendship with Harry Bolton--the only close relationship that he forms in the course of the novel. Even though Melville presents Bolton as morally flawed, for all his charm and amiability, the friendship between the two young men is shown as a positive one to the

extent that it forges a close tie between Redburn and another human being.

Redburn finds solace and comfort from the world's harshness in his friendship with Bolton, particularly after the terrible loneliness imposed on him aboard the Highlander by Jackson and the crew on the outward voyage. He feels warmth, affection, and a sense of comradeship for the young Englishman, and the similarity of their circumstances unites them in a bond of brotherhood. By eliciting these emotions--what Hawthorne would term the impulses of "the heart"--Bolton alleviates Redburn's bitterness and alienation, thereby enabling the young American to attain emotional maturity.<sup>325</sup>

## Appendix 2.

The American Adam, Redburn, and the International Novel

To the extent that Redburn has been presented as an archetypal innocent who acquires knowledge of evil and the world, the interpretation of Melville's novel which has been developed in Chapter xii is consistent with the one set forth by R. W. B. Lewis in The American Adam. Lewis argues persuasively that Redburn is a typical Adamic hero; he maintains that he is a figure who belongs to the nineteenth century literary tradition of the American Adam, which is considered in detail in Lewis's book.<sup>326</sup> As Newton Arvin has also observed, in passages quoted earlier, Redburn sets out in a state of innocence like that of man before the Fall, losing his innocence when he is initiated into the knowledge of evil during the course of his voyage. Citing Arvin's remarks to support his own thesis, Lewis emphasizes "the Adamic coloration of the experience" which Melville describes in the novel.<sup>327</sup>

Lewis's interpretation is a fascinating and perceptive one, but it appears nonetheless to be too limited an approach to adequately encompass all the disparate features of the work. In emphasizing the Adamic motif to the extent that he does, Lewis ignores other important aspects of the novel, as he does with many of the works that he discusses. In particular, he fails to consider the significance of European

corruption in international fiction, making no real distinction between the experiences of the various Adamic figures in America and those in Europe. Lewis's argument is also somewhat weakened by his failure to account for, or even to note, the discrepancies between the American Adamic experience and the Biblical one.

Lewis also analyzes Hawthorne's The Marble Faun<sup>328</sup> and James's The Portrait of a Lady, The Wings of the Dove, and The Golden Bowl<sup>329</sup> in terms of the Adamic experience. On these novels, he is far more convincing. His conclusions seem more germane to the central visions of the works, though again, there is so much in these novels that does not fit into his categories. What is particularly interesting, however, is Lewis's brief discussion of the American Adam figure in James's works. Commenting on James's rendering of the Adamic experience, he sums up its basic pattern as ". . . the birth of the innocent, the foray into the unknown world, the collision with that world, 'the fortunate fall,' the wisdom and the maturity which suffering produced."<sup>330</sup> This passage may be usefully applied, not only to the international fiction of James, but to Redburn and The Marble Faun as well. Although the significance of the European setting and the polarity of America and Europe must also be considered as vitally important factors in these works, Lewis's statement helps reveal the underlying points of congruity among them.

Moreover, despite my reservations about the validity of Lewis's method because of its reliance on a single,

exclusive approach to these texts, there is no doubt that his interpretation of the international novels under consideration is a highly suggestive one, investing them with a mythological dimension ignored by many critics. Equally important, Lewis establishes an integral connection between these works of international fiction and other contemporary American writing which, as he convincingly shows, likewise portrays various versions of the American Adam and illustrates the recurrence of the Adamic experience in nineteenth century American fiction.

## Notes

### Chapter 1.

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to the early nineteenth century American attitude to Europe, Cushing Strout maintains that it "was accentuated by a literary sense of cultural dependency on an older and richer civilization." See Cushing Strout, The American Image of the Old World (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 76.

Benjamin T. Spencer, among others, makes a similar observation about America's ties to England: "As mid-century approached, it was clear that England still exerted on the American mind an influence so strong that . . . [it was termed by some as] 'pernicious.'" See Benjamin T. Spencer, The Quest for Nationality (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse Univ. Press, 1957), p. 74.

<sup>2</sup> For examples of nineteenth century travel literature which reflect the American view of Europe, see James Fenimore Cooper, Gleanings in Europe (1837-38); John W. De Forest, European Acquaintance (1858); Ralph Waldo Emerson, English Traits (1856); Margaret Fuller, At Home and Abroad (1856); Nathaniel Hawthorne, Our Old Home (1863), Passages from the French and Italian Notebooks (1868), and Passages from the English Notebooks (1870); William Dean Howells, Venetian Life (1866) and Italian Journeys (1867); Washington Irving, The Sketch-Book (1819); Henry James, Transatlantic Sketches (1875), Portraits of Places (1883), and A Little Tour of France (1884); James Jackson Jarves, Parisian Sights and French Principles Seen Through American Spectacles (1852), Parisian Sights (1855), Italian Sights and Papal Principles Seen Through American Spectacles (1856), and Italian Rambles (1883); Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Outre-Mer (1833-34); James Russell Lowell, "Leaves from My Journal in Italy and Elsewhere" (1864); Herman Melville, Journal of a Visit to Europe and the Levant (1855); Charles Eliot Norton, Notes of Travel and Study in Italy (1860); Mark Twain, The Innocents Abroad (1869); and Nathaniel Parker Willis, Loiterings of Travel (1840) and Pencilings by the Way (1844).

<sup>3</sup> Cushing Strout sums up the nineteenth century American's view of his native land in this way: "The New World remained unquestioned as the land of the free, the home of virtue, and the hope of the future. . . ." See Strout, American Image, p. 76.

<sup>4</sup> Richard Chase, The American Novel and Its Tradition, (New York: Anchor-Doubleday, 1957), p. 11.

<sup>5</sup> The most useful analysis of the genre remains Christof Wegelin's article on the subject. See Christof Wegelin, "The Rise of the International Novel," PMLA, 77 (1962), 305-310.

<sup>6</sup> David Rodman Smith, "Origins of the International Novel: Studies in Transatlantic Fiction--1812 to 1865," Diss. Claremont Graduate School 1960, p. 5.

<sup>7</sup> Smith, p. 5. Although Smith's description of the international novel is valid for some works, this is too sweeping a generalization. As will be shown subsequently, the international novel is more complex than Smith's statement would suggest.

<sup>8</sup> Wegelin, "International Novel," p. 305.

<sup>9</sup> Wegelin, "International Novel," p. 310.

<sup>10</sup> Nathalia Wright, American Novelists in Italy: The Discoverers: Allston to James (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1965), p. 58.

<sup>11</sup> Wegelin, "International Novel," p. 306.

<sup>12</sup> Wegelin, "International Novel," p. 306.

<sup>13</sup> There are several obscure works by minor nineteenth century writers which, though they also belong, in varying degrees, to the general body of international fiction, have been excluded from this study because of their singular lack of literary merit or significance--namely, Anne Hampton Brewster's Compensation; or, Always a Future (1860) and St. Martin's Summer (1866), Henry Greenough's Ernest Caroll, or Artist Life in Italy (1858), Sara Dana Greenough's Lilian (1863), and Henry P. Leland's Americans in Rome (1863). For a survey of these works, see Wright, American Novelists, pp. 78-114.

## Chapter 2.

<sup>14</sup> Oscar Cargill, "The First International Novel," PMLA, 73 (1958), 421.

<sup>15</sup> Leon Edel, Introd., Roderick Hudson, by Henry James (New York: Harper, 1960), p. xi.

<sup>16</sup> Wegelin, "International Novel," p. 310.

Wegelin acknowledges: "With some adjustment of one's definition one might claim it [the title of The First International Novel] in fact for almost any of the novels which deal with Americans in Europe. . . ." See Wegelin, "International Novel," p. 310.

- 17 Cargill, "International Novel," p. 419.
- 18 Wegelin, "International Novel," p. 305.
- 19 Wegelin, "International Novel," p. 305.
- 20 Smith, p. 4.
- 21 Smith, p. 4.
- 22 Smith, p. 4.
- 23 Wegelin, "International Novel," p. 305.
- 24 Wegelin, "International Novel," p. 310.
- 25 Wegelin, "International Novel," p. 305.
- 26 Wegelin, "International Novel," p. 307.
- 27 Wegelin, "International Novel," p. 305.
- 28 As noted earlier, Henry Tuckerman's Isabel; or, Sicily (1839) and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's Hyperion (1839) are more travel-books than novels. A case could certainly be made for considering John Lothrop Motley's Morton's Hope (1839) a rudimentary international novel, but this semi-autobiographical work has more in common with Hyperion than with the works listed above.
- 29 Wegelin, "International Novel," p. 306.
- 30 Henry James, The Art of the Novel: Critical Prefaces, introd. Richard P. Blackmur (1934; rpt. New York: Scribner, 1962), p. 198.
- 31 James, Art of Novel, p. 132.
- 32 Smith, p. 3.
- 33 Smith, p. 58.

### Chapter 3.

- 34 Hawthorne recorded his intention of describing the American hero's romance with an English girl in Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, but in the sections of the novel which he left behind at his death, he had not yet carried this out.
- 35 Daniel Hoffman, Form and Fable in American Fiction (1961; rpt. New York: Galaxy-Oxford Univ. Press, 1965), p. 34.
- 36 Hoffman, p. 34.

- 37 Hoffman, p. 47.
- 38 Hoffman, p. 51.
- 39 Hoffman, p. 44.
- 40 Hoffman, p. 296.
- 41 Two novels that describe the American's quest for identity--Paul Fane and Indian Summer--are set in Italy, but in these works, the American traveler is also an artist-figure seeking aesthetic inspiration.
- 42 Smith, p. 5.
- 43 Philip Rahv, ed., Discovery of Europe: The Story of American Experience in the Old World, 2nd ed. (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor-Doubleday, 1960), p. xii.
- 44 Hans Meyerhoff, "An American Odyssey," Partisan Review, 25 (1958), 446.
- 45 Rahv, p. xii.
- 46 Smith, p. 5.
- 47 Strout, American Imaze, p. 62.
- 48 Dorothea Krook, The Ordeal of Consciousness in Henry James (London: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1962), p. 9.
- 49 Marius Bewley, The Eccentric Design: Form in the Classic American Novel (1959; rpt. New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1963), p. 86.
- 50 Wegelin, "International Novel," p. 306.
- 51 Wegelin, "International Novel," p. 306.
- 52 Smith, in fact, maintains that ". . . the international novel customarily takes the form of a Bildungsroman." See Smith, p. 3.

#### Chapter 4.

- 53 Washington Irving, Bracebridge Hall; or, The Humorists (London, 1822), I, 12. All further references to this work appear in the text.
- 54 James Fenimore Cooper, The Two Admirals: A Tale (Philadelphia, 1842), I, 42. All further references to this work appear in the text.
- 55 When Hawthorne died in 1864, he left the manuscript

of Doctor Grimshawe's Secret unfinished. Although he had requested that this manuscript be burned, his instructions were disregarded, and the work was published in 1883 by his son Julian in an edition that combined sections from both drafts.

56 Nathaniel Hawthorne, Passages from the English Note-Books of Nathaniel Hawthorne (London, 1870), II, 268.

57 Hawthorne, English Note-Books, II, 128.

58 Edward H. Davidson, Introd., Hawthorne's Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, ed. Edward H. Davidson (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1954), p. 2.

59 Christof Wegelin, "Europe in Hawthorne's Fiction," A Journal of English Literary History, 14 (1947), 219.

60 Hawthorne, English Note-Books, I, 452.

61 Hawthorne, English Note-Books, I, 177.

62 Davidson, Introd., pp. 9-10.

63 Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Dolliver Romance, Fanshawe, and Septimus Felton: With an Appendix Containing The Ancestral Footstep, Vol. XI of Hawthorne's Works (Boston, 1864), p. 493. All further references to this work appear in the text.

64 Edward H. Davidson, ed., Hawthorne's Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, introd. and notes Edward H. Davidson (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1954), p. 54. All further references to this work appear in the text.

65 For a brief but interesting discussion of Redclyffe's attempt to discover his origins and identity in England, see Jac Tharpe, Nathaniel Hawthorne: Identity and Knowledge (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1967), pp. 138-41.

66 Davidson, Introd., p. 6.

67 Wegelin, "Europe in Hawthorne," p. 235.

68 This point recurs in Draft II and will be discussed subsequently in more detail.

69 Davidson, Introd., p. 2.

70 Alfred Tennyson, "The Lotos-Eaters," in The Complete Poetical Works of Tennyson (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1953), II, 41-42. All further references to this work appear in the text.

71 Henry James, "A Passionate Pilgrim," in The Reverberator, Madame de Mauves, A Passionate Pilgrim, and Other Tales (New York: Scribner, 1908), pp. 335-36. All further references to this work appear in the text.

72 This passage also echoes Etherege's allusion, in Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, to "the deep yearning which a sensitive American--his mind full of English thoughts, his imagination of English poetry, his heart of English character and feeling--cannot fail to be influenced by . . ." (p. 70).

73 Ora Segal, The Lucid Reflector: The Observer in Henry James' Fiction (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1969), pp. 1-2.

74 Ora Segal points out that the central figure of James's story, "'the American claimant,'" is a type "which had achieved in his time the status of a literary convention. . . ." See Segal, p. 2.

75 The idea that the English family that owns the estate has committed some wrong in the past is also found in Doctor Grimshawe's Secret.

76 It should also be noted in passing that Miss Searle's life presents a parallel to that of Searle. She is a woman untouched by life, a veritable "Sleeping Beauty" (p. 381), who confides to the narrator that, "'I think I've hardly lived'" (p. 396). Fearful of disobeying her brother even though she realizes that marriage to Searle represents her last chance of fulfillment, she acquires her freedom too late to save Searle or herself. James's description of the wasted lives of the two cousins in "A Passionate Pilgrim" can thus be seen as an early version of the "too late" theme which reappears in works such as "The Beast in the Jungle" and The Ambassadors.

77 Segal, pp. 2-3.

78 Michael Davitt Bell, "Melville's Redburn: Initiation and Authority," New England Quarterly, 46 (1973), 559.

79 Heinz Kosok, "Redburn's Image of Childhood," Emerson Society Quarterly, 39 (1965), 40.

80 Herman Melville, Redburn: His First Voyage, ed. Harrison Hayford, Hershel Parker, and G. Thomas Tanselle (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern Univ. Press; Chicago: Newberry Library, 1969), p. 5. All further references to this work appear in the text.

81 Kosok, p. 40.

82 F. O. Matthiessen, American Renaissance: Art and Expression in the Age of Emerson and Whitman (1941; rpt. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1968), p. 397.

## Chapter 5.

83 In his discussion of Indian Summer, David L. Frazier maintains, in fact, that ". . . its central concern is the problem of Theodore Colville's identity, a problem which involves the meaning of time." See David L. Frazier, "Time and the Theme of Indian Summer," Arizona Quarterly, 16 (1960), 260.

84 Marion W. Cumpiano, "Howells' Bridge: A Study of the Artistry of Indian Summer," Modern Fiction Studies, 16, No. 3 (1970), 363.

85 George N. Bennett, William Dean Howells: The Development of a Novelist (Norman, Okla.: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1959), p. 75.

86 James L. Woodress, Jr., Howells and Italy (Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 1952), p. 184.

87 William Dean Howells, Indian Summer, ed. Scott Bennett and David J. Nordloh (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana Univ. Press, 1971), p. 4. All further references to this work appear in the text.

88 Although he does not analyze Indian Summer primarily as an international novel, Marion W. Cumpiano provides a thorough and insightful discussion of Howells's treatment of the youth-age theme. See Cumpiano, pp. 363-82.

89 Although Colville tends to regard Florence (the Florence he associates with his youth) nostalgically throughout much of the novel, his attitude is occasionally altered when events in the present cause him to readjust the focus of his memories of the past. For example, when his humiliation at Madame Ucelli's party reminds him of the romantic disappointment of his youth, the bitterness evoked by this memory is projected by him onto the city: "A whole world of faded associations flushed again in Colville's heart. This was Italy; this was Florence; and he execrated the hour in which he had dreamed of returning" (p. 61). Nevertheless, his momentary disenchantment with the city, like his idealization of it, is determined by his insistence on viewing present-day Florence not only objectively, as a city in the Old World, but subjectively, as a mirror of his past.

90 Henry James, "The Beast in the Jungle," in The Complete Tales of Henry James, ed. and introd. Leon Edel, XI (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1964), 379.

91 James, "Beast," p. 378.

92 James, "Beast," p. 401.

93 William M. Gibson, Introd., Indian Summer, by

William Dean Howells (New York: Dutton, 1951), p. xvi.

94 Gibson, *Introd.*, p. xiv.

95 It should be noted that the idea of Europe being associated with the American's youthful past is also treated by Howells in *Their Silver Wedding Journey* (1899), a work that is more travel-book than novel, in which an elderly American couple celebrate their silver wedding anniversary by returning to the places in Europe, mainly Germany, that they had visited thirty years before. Like Colville, March attempts to recapture his nostalgic memories of his lost youth and to revive his former literary ambitions; like Colville, too, he fails to do so, eventually relinquishing the past and reconciling himself to the reality of the present.

96 Woodress, p. 184.

97 Robert Emmet Long, "*The Ambassadors and the Genteel Tradition: James's Correction of Hawthorne and Howells*," *New England Quarterly*, 42 (1969), 45.

98 Long, pp. 45-46.

99 Gibson, *Introd.*, p. xv.

100 Gibson, *Introd.*, p. xvi.

101 F. O. Matthiessen and Kenneth B. Murdock, eds., *The Notebooks of Henry James* (1947; rpt. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1961), p. 374.

102 Henry James, *The Ambassadors*, introd. Leon Edel, Vol. VIII of *The Bodley Head Henry James* (London: Bodley Head, 1970), p. 271.

103 James, *Ambassadors*, p. 468.

104 F. O. Matthiessen, *Henry James: The Major Phase* (1944; rpt. New York: Galaxy-Oxford Univ. Press, 1963), p. 25.

105 Long, p. 46.

106 James, *Ambassadors*, p. 93.

107 James, *Ambassadors*, p. 91.

108 Gibson, *Introd.*, pp. xv-xvi.

109 Long, p. 62.

110 Woodress, p. 184.

111 Lionel Trilling, "W. D. Howells and the Roots of Modern Taste," *Partisan Review*, 18 (1951), 532.

## Chapter 6.

- 112 Edel, Introd., Roderick Hudson, p. xi.
- 113 Robert Lee White, "Some Passionate Pilgrims: The Image of Italy in American Romanticism," Diss. Univ. of Minnesota 1959, p. 196.
- 114 Wegelin, "International Novel," p. 308.
- 115 Smith, p. 150.
- 116 Smith, pp. 150-51.
- 117 Smith cites James's reference to Willis in A Small Boy and Others as evidence to support the possibility of Willis having influenced James. See Smith p. 196 and p. 203.
- 118 Nathaniel Parker Willis, Paul Fane; or, Parts of a Life Else Untold (New York: 1857), pp. 36-37. All further references to this work appear in the text.
- 119 Wegelin, "International Novel," p. 309.
- 120 David Rodman Smith also alludes to the many similarities between Sophia Firkin and Daisy Miller (including the almost identical names of their younger brothers--Rodophus and Randolph), but he does not develop the analogy between the two girls, and his discussion of Sophia Firkin reflects a different point of view. See Smith p. 185, p. 188, and pp. 202-03.
- 121 Christof Wegelin, "Social Criticism of Europe in the Fiction of N. P. Willis," American Literature, 20 (1948), 319.
- 122 White, p. 200.
- 123 White, p. 202.
- 124 Charlotte Goodman, "Henry James's Roderick Hudson and Nathaniel Parker Willis's Paul Fane," American Literature, 43 (1972), 642.
- 125 David Rodman Smith alludes briefly to the connection between Paul Fane and Roderick Hudson, but he does not discuss the salient points of resemblance between the two novels. See Smith, p. 194 and pp. 201-02.
- 126 The term "European" is used here, as elsewhere in this study, to denote women who are the products of the Old World, even though Sybil is English and Christina Light's mother is American (albeit a Europeanized American).
- 127 This point has already been made earlier about Paul Fane, but it should be noted that Oscar Cargill, for

example, also calls Europe "a supreme testing ground" for Roderick Hudson. See Oscar Cargill, The Novels of Henry James (New York: Macmillan, 1961), p. 29.

128 Henry James, Roderick Hudson, introd. Leon Edel (New York: Harper, 1960), p. 322. All further references to this work appear in the text.

129 James, Art of Novel, p. 16.

130 Cargill, Novels of James, p. 26.

131 Edel, Introd., Roderick Hudson, p. xiii.

132 Edel, Introd., Roderick Hudson, p. xvi.

133 Edel, Introd., Roderick Hudson, p. xvi.

134 This novel is, in fact, preceded by Watch and Ward (1871), but James preferred to ignore this work, referring to Roderick Hudson as "my first attempt at a novel." See James, Art of Novel, p. 4.

135 James, Art of Novel, p. 12.

#### Chapter 7.

136 George C. Carrington, Jr., The Immense Complex Drama: The World and Art of the Howells Novel (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State Univ. Press, 1966), p. 25.

137 William Dean Howells, A Foregone Conclusion (Boston, 1875), p. 19. All further references to this work appear in the text.

138 James, Art of Novel, p. 268.

139 James, Art of Novel, p. 267.

140 Henry James, "Daisy Miller: A Study," in The Complete Tales of Henry James, ed. and introd. Leon Edel, IV (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1962), 151. All further references to this work appear in the text.

141 R. P. Draper, "Death of a Hero? Winterbourne and Daisy Miller," Studies in Short Fiction, 6 (1969), 603.

142 Draper, p. 607.

143 Bennett, p. 58.

144 In fact, Howells had originally intended to end the novel after the garden scene in which Florida rejects Don Ippolito, but he added the epilogue at the request of

his publisher. See William M. Gibson, William D. Howells, Univ. of Minnesota Pamphlets on American Writers, No. 63 (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1967), p. 20.

145 Leon Edel, General Introd., The Complete Tales of Henry James, ed. Leon Edel, I (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1962), 13.

146 In The Marble Faun, Donatello is an Italian who is also shown to be an innocent initially, but the murder he commits in the course of the novel leads to guilt, suffering, and remorse. Moreover, Miriam, the other principal Italian character, is shown to be tainted by the corruption of the Old World.

147 Indeed, George N. Bennett makes a valid point when he argues that, "Don Ippolito is pathetic rather than tragic because he never comes to grips with real life." See Bennett, p. 58.

148 It should also be noted that Ferris's attitude to Italian Catholicism resembles that of Kenyon in The Marble Faun. Both Ferris and Kenyon are artists who recognize the beauty and splendor of the Church's religious ritual, but unlike Florida and Hilda, who are attracted to it, they believe in a more rational form of worship. They find its superstition, its morbidity, and its mystery distasteful and distrust priests, regarding them as sinister figures.

#### Chapter 8.

149 William D[ean] Howells, A Fearful Responsibility and Other Stories (Boston, 1881), p. 39. All further references to this work appear in the text.

150 Elmore's reaction at this point is difficult to reconcile with his subsequent feelings of guilt and remorse. However, his apparent inconsistency of attitude may be accounted for by the fact that it is only much later, in America, that Elmore comes to suspect that Lily's love for the Austrian has prevented her from marrying anyone else.

#### Chapter 9.

151 Another novel by Howells that deals, in part, with an American girl's journey to Europe is Ragged Lady (1899)--a work that is contrived, sentimental, and of poor quality. Its heroine, Clementina Claxon, is an uneducated girl from a rural background who, like Howells's other American girls abroad, is characterized by innocence, simplicity, and ignorance of the world. Acting as a companion to a wealthy American widow, the girl travels with her employer to

Europe where, the reader is told, her natural grace, beauty, and innate dignity enable her to be accepted by upper-class Florentine society. However, she turns out to be completely indifferent to her worldly success and to the social advantages which it confers upon her. Deciding that her way of life in Europe is really too much trouble, she chooses to leave Europe and return to her native New England village.

152 Apart from his criticism of the political tyranny of the Austrians, A Foregone Conclusion is the only work in which Howells discusses this point at all, and then it is merely to allude to the dishonesty of Italian merchants and to suggest that the past which haunts Venice, however picturesque, is also decadent.

153 See, for example, Leslie A. Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel, 2nd ed. (London: Jonathan Cape, 1967), p. 200.

154 W[illiam] D[ean] Howells, The Lady of the Aroostook (Boston, 1879), p. 120. All further references to this work appear in the text.

155 John W. Crowley, "An Interoceanic Episode: The Lady of the Aroostook," American Literature, 49 (1977), 183.

Crowley also provides an interesting analysis of Lydia Blood's sexuality and purity as compatible aspects of an ideal American womanhood; he regards them as a combined source of moral vitality which is sharply contrasted, not only to the depravity of the Old World, but also to the sterility and repression of New England. See Crowley, pp. 180-91.

156 See, for example, Annette Kar, "Archetypes of American Innocence: Lydia Blood and Daisy Miller," American Quarterly, 5 (1953), 31-38.

157 Harry F. Arader, "American Novelists in Italy: Hawthorne, Howells, James, and Crawford," Diss. Univ. of Pennsylvania 1953, p. 227.

Arader actually makes this statement about the theme employed by James, but he adds: "Howells made use of this same contrast in The Lady of the Aroostook." See Arader, p. 227.

158 Crowley, p. 180.

#### Chapter 10.

159 Krook, p. 8.

160 James Fenimore Cooper, The Wing-and-Wing, or Le

Feu-Follet (Philadelphia, 1842), II, 8. All further references to this work appear in the text.

161 Hoffman, pp. 33-82.

162 See Israel R. Potter, Life and Remarkable Adventures of Israel R. Potter (Providence, R.I., 1824).

163 Herman Melville, Israel Potter: His Fifty Years of Exile (New York: Dolphin-Doubleday, 1965), p. 40. All further references to this work appear in the text.

164 Analyzing the novel from a different perspective, Alan Lebowitz argues persuasively that each of the three patriots has a particular lesson to teach Potter:  
". . . three historical Americans . . . like all such heroes, serve specifically to inspire and educate an American Everyman to feats of emulation. From Franklin, Israel learns prudence, though the practice of it does him little good. From John Paul Jones, he momentarily absorbs a tigerish warrior's energy and daring, as well as an implacable hatred of the enemy. From Ethan Allen, he learns to be a captive in a strange land, and it is this lesson that ultimately prevails." See Alan Lebowitz, Progress Into Silence: A Study of Melville's Heroes (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana Univ. Press, 1970), p. 173.

165 In fact, although Melville faithfully presents the basic events narrated in Potter's autobiography, the portraits of Franklin, Jones, and Allen are not found in the original source. For useful discussions of how Melville's novel diverges from Potter's autobiography, see Bert C. Bach, "Melville's Israel Potter: A Revelation of It's [sic] Meaning," Cithara, 7, No. 1 (1967), 39-50 and Arnold Rampersad, Melville's Israel Potter: A Pilgrimage and Progress (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green Univ. Popular Press, 1969).

166 This incident is remarkably similar to one in The Two Admirals in which Cooper also shows Wychemombe as a romantic hero. Moreover, it is repeated again in Roderick Hudson when Hudson is only prevented by Rowland Mallett from risking his life to pick a flower for Christina Light, and Mallett himself makes a similar gesture to Mary Garland.

167 Cooper's intrepid Natty Bumppo serves as the prototype of the frontiersman in nineteenth century American fiction.

168 Francis Parkman, Vassall Morton (Boston, 1856), p. 255. All further references to this work appear in the text.

169 Frequently, in fact, this accounts for the American's ambivalent attitude to Europe that has been noted earlier--particularly in works such as Paul Fane, Doctor Grimshawe's Secret, The Marble Faun, and the international fiction of

James. It should be emphasized, however, that the American's ambivalence to Europe may be present even when a particular aspect of Europe is not shown to possess both positive and negative attributes; it may proceed from the fact that he admires one aspect of Europe and condemns another, completely disparate one, as in The Two Admirals, a work in which the American is drawn to England because it represents a link with the past but is critical of its social institutions. On the other hand, in novels such as Norman Leslie and The Lady of the Aroostook, the ambiguous nature of Italian society is suggested by the fact that Italian society is polished and sophisticated but undeniably corrupt; yet the unequivocal condemnation of this society by Norman Leslie and Lydia Blood reveals no ambivalence whatsoever on their part.

#### Chapter 11.

170 White, p. 214.

171 These are, of course, stock elements in the Gothic novel. In her comments on Norman Leslie, Nathalia Wright observes: "Melodramatic throughout, it is typically Gothic in volume two, which abounds in mystery, intrigue, and crime." See Wright, American Novelists, p. 64.

172 Theodore Sedgwick Fay, Norman Leslie: A Tale of the Present Times (New York, 1835), I, 149. All further references to this work appear in the text.

173 Although the Gothic aspects of the novel have been noted above, Nathalia Wright's description of the influence of the Gothic romance on nineteenth century American fiction is particularly relevant to the events that take place in the second half of the novel. Wright observes: "Throughout most of the nineteenth century the influence of the Gothic romance on American fiction was pronounced. In consequence such fiction of the period as is concerned with Italy largely reflects the Elizabethan-Gothic tradition about the country and its inhabitants." Certainly, this statement applies to Norman Leslie. See Wright, American Novelists, p. 30.

174 Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "The Motiveless Villain," from Coleridge's Shakespearian Criticism, ed. T. M. Raysor (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1930); rpt. in A Casebook on Othello, ed. Leonard F. Dean (New York: Crowell, 1961), p. 127.

175 White, p. 221.

## Chapter 12.

176 Since there is considerable controversy over the question of point of view in Redburn, it should be emphasized that the evidence of the text supports Merlin Bowen's contention that the controlling center of consciousness in the work is the mature Redburn, a retrospective narrator looking back to the time of his youth. See Merlin Bowen, "Redburn and the Angle of Vision," Modern Philology, 52 (1954), 101-02.

177 For a detailed study of the extent to which Redburn is actually autobiographical, see William H. Gilman, Melville's Early Life and Redburn (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1951).

178 Merlin Bowen, Introd., Redburn, by Herman Melville (New York: Rinehart Editions-Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), p. xxi.

179 Cushing Strout, too, stresses that, ". . . Redburn is not only a prosaic narrative of a young sailor's first voyage; it is also the story of an innocent's initiation to experience. . . ." See Strout, American Image, p. 87.

180 Newton Arvin, "The Author of Typee, Omoo, etc.," in Herman Melville (New York: William Morrow, 1950); rpt. as "Mardi, Redburn, White-Jacket," in Melville: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Richard Chase (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1962), p. 27.

Arvin also notes that Redburn's voyage is "a metaphor . . . of the passage from childhood and innocence to experience and adulthood. . . ." However, he gives Redburn's transition from childhood to adulthood less prominence in his article than it merits, alluding to it only briefly and associating it with the imagery of death and re-birth that recurs throughout the novel rather than relating it to Redburn's initiation into the knowledge of evil--a crucial connection and one which will be elaborated subsequently. See Arvin, p. 29

181 Newton Arvin, in fact, asserts: "The subject [the initiation of innocence into evil] is a permanent one for literature, of course, but it has also a peculiarly American dimension, and in just this sense, not in any other, Redburn looks . . . forward to The Marble Faun and to so much of James himself." See Arvin, p. 27.

182 See p. 574, n. 80.

183 Gilman, p. 215.

184 Arvin, p. 27.

185 Bowen, Introd., p. xxiv.

186 See R. W. B. Lewis, The American Adam: Innocence, Tragedy, and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century (1955; rpt. Chicago: Phoenix-Univ. of Chicago Press, 1958), pp. 136-38. This idea will be discussed subsequently at greater length.

187 Arvin, p. 27.

188 John J. Gross, among others, points out that he embodies "the concept of 'natural depravity' which is to be further developed in the character of . . . Claggart in 'Billy Budd.'" See John J. Gross, "The Rehearsal of Ishmael: Melville's 'Redburn,'" Virginia Quarterly Review, 27 (1951), 584.

189 James E. Miller, Jr., "Redburn and White-Jacket: Initiation and Baptism," Nineteenth-Century Fiction, 13 (1959), 282.

190 Michael Davitt Bell makes a useful distinction between "natural depravity," as exemplified by Jackson, and "social evil," which is "an evil resulting not from nature but from the institutions of man." See Bell, p. 560.

191 Despite the fact that individual Americans are shown as wicked in Redburn, particularly aboard the ship, America itself is unequivocally referred to in these terms-- as "Eden" (p. 169).

192 Merlin Bowen, in fact, maintains: "The parallel between the boys is carried out in such detail as to cause one to wonder that it has not been more commonly noted." Bowen then proceeds to analyze this parallel at some length. See Bowen, "Angle of Vision," p. 107 and pp. 107-09.

193 It is reasonable to suppose that Melville was familiar with Spenser even though the list of Melville's reading compiled by Merton M. Sealts, Jr., indicates that he only acquired a copy of Spenser's Poetical Works in 1862 (more than a decade after Redburn was published). See Merton M. Sealts, Jr., Melville's Reading: A Check-List of Books Owned and Borrowed (Madison, Wis.: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1966), p. 95.

In this context, it is useful to cite Nathalia Wright's comment on Melville's use of Spenser in Mardi: "The last episode in Herman Melville's Mardi, the meeting of Taji and Hautia on the island of Flozella, contains several notable parallels with Canto xii of the second book of Spenser's Faerie Queene, wherein Sir Guyon visits Acrasia's Bower of Bliss." Since Redburn was written directly after Mardi, Wright's discovery lends credence to the idea that the parallels to Spenser's Faerie Queene found in Redburn are deliberate. See Nathalia Wright, "A Note on Melville's Use of Spenser: Hautia and the Bower of Bliss," American Literature, 24 (1952), 83.

194 Although the parallels between Aladdin's Palace

and the Bower of Bliss have generally been overlooked by critics, they are noted briefly by John Seelye. Seelye alludes to the fact that Aladdin's Palace "is an Acrasian bower, planted with insinuating diction which suggests deception, mimicry, similitude--'sculptured . . . vine-boughs,' 'mimic grapes,' and 'porcelain moons'--hints that all is counterfeit, illusory, false" (p. 51). However, Seelye does not explore the significance of the parallels between Melville's work and Spenser's. Contrasting the artificial garden of Aladdin's Palace to the garden in the fort which Redburn's ship passes as it first sails out of the Narrows into the open sea and which is intended to represent a symbol "of the past, of childhood, a kind of Eden or Arcadia" (p. 50), Seelye maintains that, in Aladdin's Palace, Redburn "reaches the nadir of his experience, a polar opposite to the idyllic garden of youth" (p. 51). See John Seelye, Melville: The Ironic Diagram (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1970), pp. 50-51.

195 C. S. Lewis, The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition (1936; rpt. London: Galaxy-Oxford Univ. Press, 1968), pp. 325-28.

196 C. S. Lewis, p. 327.

197 Edmund Spenser, The Faerie Queene, Vol. I of The Poetical Works of Edmund Spenser, ed. J. C. Smith (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1909), II.xii.42.3-4. All further references to this work appear in the text.

198 C. S. Lewis, pp. 326-28.

199 C. S. Lewis, p. 326.

200 C. S. Lewis, pp. 330-32.

201 C. S. Lewis, p. 332.

202 C. S. Lewis, p. 339.

203 C. S. Lewis, p. 340.

204 J. E. Miller, p. 284.

205 C. S. Lewis writes: "I had intended only a short digression to show the deliberate contrast between nature and art (or reality and imitation) in all Spenser's good and bad places, but I find that I have stumbled on another of those great antitheses which run through his whole poem. Like Life and Death, or Light and Darkness, the opposition of natural and artificial, naive and sophisticated, genuine and spurious, meets us at every turn." See C. S. Lewis, pp. 327-28.

206 In making this point, C. S. Lewis notes: "He is not

at home in the artificialities of the court, and if, as a man, he was sometimes seduced, as a poet, he never was." See C. S. Lewis, p. 328.

207 R. W. B. Lewis, p. 142.

208 Bowen, "Angle of Vision," p. 103.

Bowen also suggests that it is this discovery which leads Redburn to move from the resentment and self-pity that he displays at the beginning of the novel to "a wider concern for the sufferings of others." See Bowen, "Angle of Vision," p. 104.

209 For example, Jackson is afflicted with a fatal disease, pestilence breaks out among the emigrants on the homeward voyage, and Redburn observes the sickness which infests the slums of Liverpool.

Death is an even more frequent occurrence in the novel. The book opens with the reference to the death of Redburn's father. The outward voyage begins with a drunken sailor, maddened by delirium tremors, jumping overboard, and the ship has hardly set sail for home on the return voyage when another drunken sailor is found dead in his bunk, his body flaming with a strange and frightening phosphorescence. Before arriving in Liverpool, the Highlander passes a wreck with three dead sailors lashed to the railing, and just before landing in America, Jackson falls to his death from the rigging. In addition, many emigrants fall ill and die on the homeward journey. In Liverpool, Redburn witnesses the death from starvation of a woman and her three children and arrives on the scene just after a prostitute has been murdered by a drunken sailor.

Yet, it should be noted that, with the exception of the three dead sailors on the ship wrecked by a storm at sea, death and disease are shown as the consequence of moral evil (drunkenness or dissipation) or of social evil (filth and hunger, the afflictions of the poor). In short, even those things that appear to be "natural" evils are really often man-made.

210 Newton Arvin, too, refers to the fact that, ". . . Redburn abounds in the imagery not only of moral evil but of disease, disaster, and death." However, in his view, the primary function of these occurrences is a symbolic one: "The voyage itself, here as elsewhere, is a metaphor of death and rebirth, of the passage from childhood and innocence to experience and adulthood; the crossing, to and fro, of a sea in the waters of which one dies to the old self and puts on a new." See Arvin, p. 29.

211 Heinz Kosok describes Redburn's development in a similar manner: "Through a series of disillusionments, and through the experience of death, isolation, and evil, Redburn gains an adult understanding of the realities of life." See Kosok, p. 40.

212 Bowen, "Angle of Vision," pp. 103-04.

In his perceptive discussion of young Redburn's gradual transformation into the enlightened narrator, Merlin Bowen also describes the inner change effected in Redburn as "dissolving his illusions, deepening his knowledge of the world and of himself, forcing him on to the attainment of a new equilibrium at a higher level." See Bowen, "Angle of Vision," p. 102.

213 In this context, Joseph Campbell's discussion of the rite de passage is a particularly illuminating one to apply to nineteenth century American fiction, although it is too complex to consider here in detail. Campbell is concerned specifically with myth in literature as well as with its religious and psychoanalytical functions. Emphasizing the fact that the rite de passage effects a transformation of attitude, he comments on the description of the coming of adolescence found in folk and fairy tales: ". . . [it is presented as a] transfiguration--a rite, or moment, of spiritual passage, which, when complete, amounts to a dying and a birth. The familiar life horizon has been outgrown; the old concepts, ideals, and emotional patterns no longer fit; the time for the passing of a threshold is at hand." See Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces (New York, 1949; rpt. London: Abacus-Sphere, 1975), pp. 52-53.

214 Indeed, in some respects, Redburn's experiences in Liverpool and London can be seen as an international version of Arthur Mervyn's in Philadelphia. Certainly, R. W. B. Lewis's description of Brockden Brown's young American is one that could almost be applied to Redburn: "Arthur Mervyn is a guileless young man . . . who comes . . . from his country farm into the city of Philadelphia, and there discovers the prolific reality of evil in every imaginable moral and physical form." See R. W. B. Lewis, pp. 92-93.

215 See p. 563, app. 1.

216 It can even be argued that the confrontation between the representative of the young American republic and Old World civilization is itself suggestive of a cultural rite de passage.

217 In this context, it should be noted that there are, in fact, two distinct narrative sections in Redburn. Redburn's experiences on the ship represent the type of encounter between an untried youth and the cruel, rapacious world that is found, for example, in Arthur Mervyn and Huck Finn, while the portion of the novel that takes place in Liverpool and London portrays the American innocent's confrontation with evil within the framework of an international situation

218 Krook, p. 216.

219 Indeed, because of its dream-like quality, Redburn's visit to Aladdin's Palace resembles Goodman Brown's midnight visit to the forest.

220 See R. W. B. Lewis, pp. 90-155.

221 See p. 433.

222 R. W. B. Lewis, p. 5.

223 R. W. B. Lewis, p. 5.

224 R. W. B. Lewis, p. 153.

225 See p. 566, app. 2.

226 G. S. Kirk, Myth: Its Meaning and Functions in Ancient and Other Cultures (1970; rpt. London: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1973), pp. 42-83.

227 Kirk, pp. 84-251.

228 Kirk, p. 83.

229 Kirk, pp. 254-57.

230 Perry Miller, "Melville and Transcendentalism," in Moby-Dick Centennial Essays, ed. Tyrus Hillway and Luther S. Mansfield (Dallas: Southern Methodist Univ. Press, 1953), p. 125.

### Chapter 13.

231 For a useful discussion of The Marble Faun as an international novel, see Cushing Strout, "Hawthorne's International Novel," Nineteenth-Century Fiction, 24 (1969), 169-81.

232 Matthiessen, American Renaissance, p. 271.

233 Leslie Fiedler, among others, refers to the Gothic aspects of the novel. See Fiedler, p. 142.

234 Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Marble Faun: Or, The Romance of Monte Beni, ed. William Charvat et al. (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State Univ. Press, 1968), p. 461. All further references to this work appear in the text.

235 To be sure, there are international marriages in several other works--Isabel, Israel Potter, and The Two Admirals--but the relationships are not explored in any depth. Isabel is more of a travelogue than a novel; Israel Potter does little more than allude to the marriage between Potter and an English girl; and in The Two Admirals, the

marriage takes place at the end of the novel, with the English bride renouncing her own country in order to go to America.

236 Harry Levin, "Statues from Italy: The Marble Faun," in his Refractions: Essays in Comparative Literature (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1966), p. 209.

237 Strout, "Hawthorne's International Novel," p. 170.

238 David Howard, "The Fortunate Fall and Hawthorne's 'The Marble Faun,'" in Romantic Mythologies, ed. Ian Fletcher (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967), p. 101.

239 Nathaniel Hawthorne, Passages from the French and Italian Notebooks of Nathaniel Hawthorne, Vol. X of The Complete Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne (Cambridge, Mass., 1883), p. 52 and p. 85.

240 Hawthorne, Italian Notebooks, p. 85.

241 Hawthorne, Italian Notebooks, p. 219.

242 Christof Wegelin, The Image of Europe in Henry James (Dallas: Southern Methodist Univ. Press, 1958), p. 24.

243 White, pp. 313-14.

244 Paul Brodtkorb, Jr., "Art Allegory in The Marble Faun," PMLA, 77 (1962), 254.

245 Hyatt H. Waggoner, Hawthorne: A Critical Study, rev. ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap-Harvard Univ. Press, 1963), p. 223.

246 Murray Krieger, Afterword, The Marble Faun, by Nathaniel Hawthorne (New York: Signet-New American Library, 1961), p. 335.

247 Krieger, p. 335.

Krieger quotes the same passage from the Preface to support his assertion that the aesthetic-moral conflict between the Old World and the New leads to Hawthorne's ambivalence to both. Thus although the arguments set forth in this chapter were arrived at independently, the conclusions are similar to Krieger's. See Krieger, pp. 335-42.

248 Strout, "Hawthorne's International Novel," p. 179.

249 Although not strictly relevant to the international theme, the aesthetic dimension of the novel is accentuated by Hawthorne's use of art imagery to illuminate character--Praxitiles's Faun, Guido's paintings of Beatrice Cenci and the Archangel Michael, and William Wentworth Story's statue of Cleopatra, which is attributed to Kenyon in the novel.

250 It will be recalled that in Doctor Grimshawe's

Secret, Hawthorne also describes the American's ambivalent attitude to the past: in England, the past represents a sense of tradition and an ancestral heritage which the American seeks, but it is also the taint of an ancient family crime, symbolized by the bloody footprint which can never be eradicated.

251 In this context, it is useful to cite Sidney P. Moss's comments on the function of the Italian background in the novel: "Critics of The Marble Faun have assumed that the Italian background is literal and non-functional. There might be grounds for this assumption if the author were anyone other than Hawthorne; if we were not by now fully aware of Hawthorne's symbolic imagination. . . ." Moss also indicates that to understand how the Italian background relates to the theme, the reader's attention should be drawn to "one of Hawthorne's favorite devices"-- that is, to the "repetition motif or . . . mirror image," which is "the process by which Hawthorne underscores the literal by the figurative or, conversely, the figurative by the literal." See Sidney P. Moss, "The Symbolism of the Italian Background in The Marble Faun," Nineteenth-Century Fiction, 23 (1968), 332 and 333.

Although the interpretation of The Marble Faun set forth by Moss is from a different perspective than the one developed in this chapter, Moss's insistence on the correspondence of background and theme confirms the importance of the link between Hawthorne's treatment of Italy and his presentation of his characters.

252 Roy R. Male, Hawthorne's Tragic Vision (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1957), p. 169.

253 To be stained and yet blameless is also, of course, the condition of original sin, of fallen being, which is apt in Miriam's case insofar as she is identified with the corrupt Old World, the abode of post-lapsarian man.

254 Claude M. Simpson suggests that the incident which Hawthorne had in mind may well have been a Paris scandal of 1847 which was given a great deal of publicity in both America and Europe: "Shortly after Henriette Deluzy-Desportes was discharged as governess, her employer, Charles Laure Hugues Théobald, Duc de Choiseul-Praslin, murdered his wife and a week later died of arsenic poisoning." Citing Nathalia Wright's research on the Praslin murder, Simpson notes that Mlle. Deluzy was suspected of complicity in the crime and of inciting the Duke to commit the murder. After being held in custody and interrogated by the police, she was finally found to be innocent by a court, but the scandal surrounding her forced her to immigrate to the United States, where she changed her name and eventually married. See Claude M. Simpson, Introd., The Marble Faun, ed. William Charvat et al. (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State Univ. Press, 1968), p. xlii.

Yet although Simpson seems to be correct in suggesting

that this particular incident stimulated Hawthorne's imagination, Miriam's situation is one that precludes her being identified with Mlle. Deluzy: her noble birth and station are not those of a woman who would seek employment as a governess, and the man who pursues her is named as a relative who was once engaged to her rather than as a former employer. It should also be noted that the horror which is aroused in the reader is, in fact, considerably diminished by a knowledge of the specific details of a real incident. Hawthorne's suggestive allusions to an unspeakable crime are far more effective for his purposes.

255 In view of the fact that she is compared to Beatrice Cenci, it would appear more likely that the crime alluded to by Hawthorne is the murder of Miriam's father, a member of the Italian nobility. Though Miriam is legally innocent, she is implicated in the crime since the criminal is her cousin and fiancé. This hypothesis is presented by Roy R. Male. See Male, pp. 168-69.

The parallel between Miriam and Beatrice Cenci also suggests that Miriam may have been a victim of incest--an act which would leave her "blameless" if perpetrated by her father as rape but which would be accompanied, nonetheless, by a loss of innocence and a feeling of guilt. Moreover, if the murder of Miriam's father was committed by her betrothed in order to avenge her honor, she would feel responsible for the deed, as she does for Donatello's subsequent murder of her cousin.

256 For a detailed discussion of the legend of Beatrice Cenci and evidence that Hawthorne was probably familiar with Shelley's Preface, see Roland A. Duerksen, "The Double Image of Beatrice Cenci in The Marble Faun," Michigan Academician, 1, Nos. 3-4 (1969), 45-55.

257 Simpson, p. xl.

258 For a useful discussion of the significance of Guido's portrait of Beatrice Cenci in Hawthorne's characterizations of both Miriam and Hilda, see Spencer Hall, "Beatrice Cenci: Symbol and Vision in The Marble Faun," Nineteenth-Century Fiction 25 (1970), 85-95.

259 Hawthorne's pointed reference to Guido's painting of the Archangel Michael slaying the dragon, which represents the devil, would seem at first to support Miriam's contention that she and Donatello are exonerated of guilt in this particular crime. Since the specter is himself a demonic figure, it could be argued that killing him can be considered a victory of good over evil. However, within the context of the novel, there is no evidence to show that Hawthorne disputes the traditional theological view that vengeance rightfully belongs to God and that it is a sin of pride for man to aspire to assume the power of God. Indeed, evidence that Hawthorne subscribes to this view can be found in the fact that, at the end of the novel, Donatello

is punished for his crime. Having developed a conscience as well as a soul, he experiences genuine remorse for his deed and insists on surrendering himself to the authorities.

Finally, it should also be noted that the hero doing battle with the fiend in Guido's painting is not a man but an archangel--that is, a spiritual being who has been delegated by God to fight the devil on His behalf. Michael's victory is really God's, prefiguring as it does the ultimate triumph of good over evil which will take place at the end of days as predicted, for example, in Isaiah (xxvii.1): "In that day, the Lord with his sore, and great, and strong sword, shall punish Leviathan the piercing serpent, even Leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea."

260 In this scene and in recounting Miriam's history and relationship with her persecutor, Hawthorne, like Fay in Norman Leslie, is obviously influenced by the Gothic romance.

261 Cushing Strout, among others, calls her a "'Dark Lady' of Romantic fiction." See Strout, "Hawthorne's International Novel, p. 172.

262 Waggoner, Hawthorne, p. 222.

263 Murray Krieger, in fact, maintains that Miriam can be taken as "the essence of Rome . . . its literal incarnation." He also points out that, "If Miriam is the Roman ideal, certainly Hilda is the Puritan." See Krieger, p. 343.

264 Hawthorne suggests that it is the very presence of evil itself ("gloomy wrong") which makes Europe so picturesque and aesthetically interesting to the novelist or poet. In doing so, he implicitly veers towards a rather decadent philosophy of art which warrants further investigation, although this problem is outside the scope of this thesis. It should be noted, however, that James also seems to espouse a similar point of view insofar as his corrupt European characters are much more interesting and refined, aesthetically, than his moral ones.

265 Hyatt H. Waggoner, Introd., Nathaniel Hawthorne: Selected Tales and Sketches (New York: Rinehart, 1950), p. ix.

266 At the same time, it should be noted that the contrast between Miriam and Hilda has many dimensions. It can also indicate a polarity of feeling and conscience, and perhaps even Id and Superego, with the result that each is singularly deficient without the other. Or, as some critics contend, it can indicate the polarity of sexuality and the erotic, creative forces, on the one hand, and sexual repression and frigidity, on the other. This point of view is expressed by Frederick C. Crews and Nina Baym.

Crews and Baym are both persuasive in the arguments they advance, but their approach to The Marble Faun tends to overlook the crucial significance of the moral contrast between the two women and is thus too restrictive an interpretation of the novel to illuminate Hawthorne's treatment of the international theme. See Frederick C. Crews, The Sins of the Fathers: Hawthorne's Psychological Themes (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1969), pp. 213-39 and Nina Baym, "The Marble Faun: Hawthorne's Elegy for Art," New England Quarterly, 44 (1971), 355-76.

267 Matthiessen, American Renaissance, p. 357.

268 Since there is considerable controversy surrounding the question of what Hawthorne's own attitude to Hilda really is, it should be noted that support for the view that Hilda is admirable is found in the argument, advanced by various major critics, that Hilda is modelled on Hawthorne's beloved wife, Sophia. Hyatt H. Waggoner, for example, asserts that, "Hilda is . . . Hawthorne's tribute to Sophia." Richard Harter Fogle, in his comments on Hawthorne's characterization of Hilda, maintains: "He believes that there are such women as she--his own wife, for example--that . . . they are worthy not only of reverence but of love." Malcolm Cowley, citing the high-minded qualities in Sophia which were regarded as virtues by nineteenth century Bostonians, writes that, ". . . Hawthorne admiringly painted her portrait (as Hilda, in The Marble Faun). . . ." See Waggoner, Hawthorne, p. 221; Richard Harter Fogle, Hawthorne's Fiction: The Light and the Dark, rev. ed. (Norman, Okla.: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1964), p. 201; and Malcolm Cowley, "Hawthorne in the Looking Glass," Sewanee Review, 56 (1948), 555.

269 Fiedler, p. 200.

270 Fiedler, p. 296.

Leslie A. Fiedler also maintains that the Dark Lady in American fiction represents dangerous sexuality and death, and the Blonde Maiden, sexual repression--a provocative but controversial theory that is similar to the points of view held by Frederick C. Crews and Nina Baym. See Fiedler, pp. 296-302.

The polarization of the idea of woman reflected in prevailing Victorian conventions likewise corresponds to the idea of Dark (sexuality and guilt) and Light (purity and repression). In this context, Hawthorne's juxtaposition of European experience and American Puritanism would seem to suggest the two fragmented aspects of woman which, in his time, were seen as antithetical.

271 Harry Levin, The Power of Blackness: Hawthorne, Poe, Melville (1958; rpt. New York: Vintage-Knopf, 1960), p. 87.

272 Murray Krieger also refers to "her transcendent

moral perfection." See Krieger, p. 343.

273 For an illuminating discussion which treats Hilda's isolation as a direct consequence of her idealism and purity, see Peter D. Zivkovic, "The Evil of the Isolated Intellect: Hilda, in The Marble Faun," The Personalist, 43 (1962), 202-13.

274 Henry James, Hawthorne (London, 1879); rpt. in The Shock of Recognition, ed. Edmund Wilson, 2nd ed. (London: W. H. Allen, 1956), p. 554.

275 James, Hawthorne, p. 554.

276 The primary difference between them is found in the fact that Hilda is identified with moral perfection whereas Donatello, the reader is told explicitly, possesses neither moral virtue nor severity. Moreover, Hilda's nature is spiritual and ethereal whereas Donatello, with his joyous, animal spirits, is likened to a faun, a creature close to nature.

277 Although Hawthorne identifies Donatello with Adam because of his innocence and subsequent fall, he is unlike the Biblical prototype in other ways. Elsewhere in the novel, Hawthorne does indeed recognize that, as a faun--a sylvan creature who is sportive, spontaneous, and amoral--he is more accurately described as a figure from Arcadia or from the Golden Age, which represent the pagan counterparts of the Biblical Eden.

278 James, Hawthorne, p. 555.

279 R. W. B. Lewis, p. 122.

280 William M. Gibson, "Metaphor in the Plot of The Ambassadors," New England Quarterly, 24 (1951), 291-305; rpt. in Henry James: Modern Judgements, ed. Tony Tanner (London: Macmillan, 1968), pp. 312-13.

281 Gibson, "Metaphor in Ambassadors," p. 314.

282 Zivkovic, p. 208.

283 Zivkovic, p. 212.

284 Zivkovic, pp. 203-04.

285 Brodtkorb, p. 266.

286 The term, "snow-maiden," is used by Leslie A. Fiedler to describe the archetype of the virginal blonde heroine in American fiction, but it is derived, of course, from Hawthorne's tale of the same name. See Fiedler, p. 296.

287 A provocative analysis of Hilda's guilt-feelings,

inhibitions, and sexual repression is provided by Nina Baym, who contends that Hawthorne's pure young heroine is a figure representing both the ideals and the ills of Victorian morality. See Baym, pp. 355-376.

288 In this context, it can be argued that the murder which Hilda witnesses is psychologically traumatic, not only because it is an act of evil, but because it is an act of violence and passion. Because of her moral innocence, Hilda is horrified by the crime; because of her emotional repression, she is shocked and threatened by the unleashing of the dark forces of human nature that she has previously ignored. Indeed, Frederick C. Crews goes further, maintaining that Hawthorne creates ". . . an intricately detailed analogy between sexuality and crime, so that the murder which Hilda witnesses becomes a vicarious sexual initiation." See Crews, Sins of Fathers, p. 217.

289 Waggoner, Hawthorne, p. 222.

290 Krieger, p. 342.

291 Frederick C. Crews's analysis of Hawthorne's deep-seated ambivalence towards Hilda and Miriam, and the opposing sexual attitudes embodied by each, is different from the point of view set forth in this chapter but fascinating in its own right. See Crews, Sins of Fathers, pp. 213-239.

292 In her discussion of their marriage, Nina Baym goes further, contending that, in marrying Hilda, Kenyon repudiates the erotic: ". . . he flees . . . towards the safety represented by Hilda. Her virginal conventionality is antithetical to the disruptive sensuality of Miriam and Donatello . . . [and] Kenyon gladly makes the exchange." See Baym, p. 356.

293 Krieger, p. 343.

294 Citing Miriam's criticism of Hilda, Murray Krieger makes this same distinction. See Krieger, p. 343.

295 Waggoner, Hawthorne, p. 221.

296 Matthiessen, American Renaissance, pp. 356-57.

297 Peter D. Zivkovic makes a related point when he condemns the isolation that is imposed on Hilda by her absolute idealism. Zivkovic writes: "Many prominent characters in Hawthorne's most important work . . . are characters involved in the evil of the isolated intellect: Rappaccini, Ethan Brand, Aylmer, Wakefield, Richard Digby in the tales; Westerveldt, Judge Puncheon, Chillingworth in the novels. Most of these characters are materialists who are deluded by appearances [sic], and are, as a result, wrongheaded in their placement of values. Hilda is equally

wrongheaded in her self-delusion [her denial of reality, of evil], and her misrepresentation of appearances [sic]; and although she is not guilty in the same way, she is guilty to a similar degree. The sole important difference is that Hilda is a complete idealist rather than a complete materialist. While she does not have the same driving, powerful force of imposed evil, she is as resolute in her isolation as any of these characters. . . ." See Zivkovic, p. 212.

298 Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Ethan Brand," in The Snow-Image, and Other Twice-Told Tales (Boston, 1876), p. 112.

299 Waggoner, Hawthorne, p. 222.

300 Marius Bewley, The Complex Fate: Hawthorne, Henry James and Some Other American Writers (London: Chatto and Windus, 1952), p. 39.

301 Bewley, Complex Fate, p. 46.

302 Bewley, Complex Fate, p. 53.

303 Bewley, Complex Fate, p. 37.

304 Marius Bewley does point out Hilda's flaws, but what he criticizes primarily is the artistic failure of Hawthorne's characterization, particularly the weakness of the dove as a convincing symbol. See Bewley, Complex Fate, pp. 52-54.

305 Bewley, Complex Fate, p. 46.

306 Bewley, Complex Fate, p. 46.

307 Bewley, Complex Fate, p. 53.

308 Cargill, Novels of James, p. 349.

309 Cargill, Novels of James, p. 349.

310 R. P. Blackmur, Introd., The Wings of the Dove, by Henry James (New York: Laurel-Dell, 1958), pp. 13-14.

311 Henry James, The Wings of the Dove, introd. Leon Edel, Vol. VII of The Bodley Head Henry James (London: Bodley Head, 1969), p. 423. All further references to this work appear in the text.

312 Blackmur, p. 14.

313 Krook, p. 220.

314 More specifically, Marius Bewley asserts that, ". . . the most forceful influence shaping James's conception of Milly Theale's character and function came from The

Marble Faun." See Bewley, Complex Fate, p. 36.

315 Male, p. 159.

316 Bewley, Complex Fate, p. 53.

317 Bewley, Complex Fate, p. 52.

318 Waggoner, Hawthorne, p. 221.

319 Fogle, p. 201.

320 For an analysis of Hawthorne's ambivalent attitude towards Hilda's innocence and purity, see Virginia Ogden Birdsall, "Hawthorne's Fair-Haired Maidens: The Fading Light," PMLA, 75 (1960), 250-56.

321 As indicated earlier, it is probably also an attempt to suggest that the Victorian feminine ideal of the pure, blonde virgin represents a restricted and repressive concept of woman which is juxtaposed to that of the Dark Lady, in this novel the European, associated with passion, sensuality, and guilt. What Hawthorne seems to be pointing to in the novel is an awareness that, given the mores and cultural milieu of nineteenth century America, the two aspects of woman cannot be integrated or harmonized, with the consequence that the artist (Kenyon and perhaps Hawthorne himself as author) is compelled to choose between two extremes, each of which is fragmented and incomplete.

322 Krook, p. 213.

323 Strout, "Hawthorne's International Novel," p. 170.

324 Even Mark Twain's A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court, which cannot really be classified as an international novel, can be seen as an attempt to show the contrast between characteristic nineteenth century American attitudes and deep-rooted English ones.

#### Appendices

325 For an interesting discussion of this theme, see J. E. Miller, pp. 273-293.

326 R. W. B. Lewis, pp. 136-38.

327 R. W. B. Lewis, p. 136.

328 R. W. B. Lewis, pp. 117-26.

329 R. W. B. Lewis, pp. 152-55.

330 R. W. B. Lewis, p. 153.

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