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HAWTHORNE'S DEFENSE OF NATURE AGAINST CIVILIZATION

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ABSTRACT

This work contrasts Hawthorne's sympathetic view of nature with his criticism of civilization through the analysis of his four novels and some of his short-stories.

The chapter on nature, entitled "Nature: The Ideal Place For Hawthorne," deals with nature's positive influence on man, as illustrated by the country-bred characters who are described as natural, simple, spontaneous and innocent. The children of Hawthorne's fiction, they are discussed as "natural" characters whose purity has not been corrupted by civilization yet. Even the supposedly civilized people are shown to gain spiritual improvement through their contact with nature.

The chapter on civilization, which is sub-divided into five sections--City, Aristocracy, Science, Religion and Art--shows civilization's negative qualities which cause man to lose his natural virtues and become attached to conventions, prejudices and material values. These influences are shown to be so strong that Hawthorne's characters are not able to escape them, even though they believe in a better life within nature.

RESUMO

Este trabalho tem por objetivo contrastar a visão otimista do Hawthorne em relação à natureza com a sua visão negativa da civilização, através da análise de seus romances e alguns de seus contos.

O capítulo referente à natureza, intitulado "Natureza: O Lugar Ideal para Hawthorne", fala sobre a influência positiva da natureza sobre o homem, e apresenta os camponeses como sendo indivíduos simples, espontâneos e inocentes. Hawthorne apresenta também as crianças como criaturas puras e inocentes, em virtude de as mesmas ainda não terem sido corrompidas pela civilização. Hawthorne mostra também que mesmo os civilizados podem obter um crescimento espiritual quando em contato com a natureza.

O capítulo referente à civilização, o qual se subdivide em cinco partes: Cidade, Aristocracia, Ciência, Religião e Arte, aponta as qualidades negativas da civilização, as quais levam o homem a perder as suas virtudes naturais e se tornar dependente das convenções, preconceitos e valores materiais. Hawthorne apresenta estas influências como sendo de tal forma decisivas, que os seus personagens jamais conseguem se libertar delas, embora cressem que seriam muito mais felizes se vivessem em contato com a natureza.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this work I intend to explore Hawthorne's sympathetic view of nature and his criticism of civilization in his four novels and some of his short stories. I will try to show how Hawthorne exalts the natural goodness of simplicity, spontaneity and innocence which man is able to attain only by being in contact with nature, and how, on the other hand, he presents civilization as a degenerative influence upon man through its conventions, its scientific development and its religious prejudices.

In his own life Hawthorne enjoyed several calm and happy periods when he lived in close harmony with nature. When he was a child he spent three years at Raymond, Mayne--a village surrounded by forests--and he was later to regard those years as the happiest of his life. Later, when he joined the Brook Farm community, Hawthorne's fondness for all the common things of nature was deep and constant, as we can see in one of his letters to Sophia: "Oh, the beauty of grassy slopes, and the hollow ways of paths winding between hills, and the intervals between the road and woodlots, where Summer lingers and sits down, strewing dandelions of gold and glue asters as her parting gifts and memorials!" After marrying Sophia, Hawthorne chose to live at the Old Manse--surrounded by woods and meadows, and the pages in the Notebooks which relate to his life there are to a great extent about his relations with nature, for they treat largely of the pleasures of a kitchen-garden, of the beauty of summer-squashes, and of the mysteries of apple-raising. It was also at the Manse that Hawthorne was acquainted with Thoreau and had happy moments on boating excursions with him, as his Notebooks attest us: "Strange and happy times were those, when we cast aside all irksome forms and strait-laced habitudes and delivered ourselves up to the free air, to live like Indians or any less conventional race, during one bright semicircle of the sun..." Later Hawthorne moved to Lenox, Massachusetts, then to Concord again, and it is very significant that he always chose the countryside. Even while in Europe, he once hired an old villa on the hill of Bellosguardo, near Florence, Italy, and he considered the place--surrounded by olive-covered hills--one of the loveliest spots on the earth.

Thus there is much evidence in Hawthorne's own life which shows how enthusiastic he was about living within nature. It is no wonder, then, that he presented nature as an ideal place in most of his writings, a place of positive influence upon man. But it would be too much an oversimplification to state that Hawthorne favored nature and criticized civilization merely because he enjoyed the countryside and preferred it to urban settings. As I will discuss in the chapter on nature, Hawthorne seems to some extent to have been obsessed with the Prelapsarian age when man was supposed to have freely enjoyed the elements of nature because he had never learned about evil. For Hawthorne, evil meant man's withdrawal from the innocent life within nature and his attachment to civilization.

Civilization, then, presented for Hawthorne many negative qualities, for it causes man to lose his natural virtues and become attached to conventions, prejudices and material values. Thus the city is described as a place of "degenerated mortals," one which is full of temptations, where everybody speaks words of falsehood and worries only about artificial values. Hawthorne's own life presented some evidence for his aversion to the city life. The twelve years which he spent at his mother's house after the college have often been called the "solitary years" for his almost complete seclusion, and in one of his letters written some years later to Sophia about that period, we can clearly perceive his negative view of civilization: "...if I had sooner made my escape into the world, I should have grown hard and rough, and been covered with earthly dust and my heart would have become callous by rude encounters with the multitude." And later, while he was working at the Boston Custom House as a measurer of salt and coal, he wrote his fiancée expressing his eagerness to escape from the contact with the world and become pure like a child: "When I shall be free again, I will enjoy all the things with the fresh simplicity of a child of five years old. I will go forth and stand in a summer shower, and all the worldly dust that has collected on me shall be washed away at once, and my heart will be like a bank of fresh flowers for the weary to rest upon." Hawthorne at times expressed some interest in the cities--particularly Boston and London--but this interest seems to have been temporary, for evidence is strong that he preferred the pure and calm country life. Civilized man in Hawthorne's books, however, was never able to get rid of the influences of city life, even though opportunities were offered to him. Aristocracy, an old product of civilization, was criticized and even ridiculed in Hawthorne's books for its attached values of pride, ambition and falseness. Science, another product of civilization, was a powerful degenerating force for Hawthorne, for it encourages man to become a cold-hearted intellectual who places scientific achievements above his natural feelings. Such is the dehumanizing power of science that it at times sacrifices even human life, as we will see in some of Hawthorne's stories. Thus intellect was for Hawthorne an evil product of civilization, as was religion when it was professed by the people who intellectualize it, making their own laws and compelling everybody to follow them. Hawthorne thought this intellectualization represses man and prevents him from being free and natural. Only the artists escape Hawthorne's harsh criticism in virtue of their sensitivity and close relationship to nature, and they do so despite their self-consciousness that they are superior to ordinary people.

Hawthorne's view of nature was quite similar to Emerson's in his essay "Nature," a very transcendental view of nature as opposed to civilization. Emerson said that "at the gates of the forest, the surprised man of the world is forced to leave his city estimates of great and small, wise and foolish," for "here is sanctity which shames our religions, and reality which discredits our heroes."[1] Nature was for Emerson much superior to any worldly influence, and he even said that it "judges like a god all men that come to her."[2] He was fascinated by everything in nature and was glad that "no history, or church, or state, is interpolated on the divine sky and the immortal year."[1] The enchantments in nature were kindly and native to Emerson, and he felt nature to be an old friend while he thought "Cities give not the human senses room enough."[2] He called nature "a delicate realm of sunset and moonlight," too bright for a civilized, "spotted," man to enter without novitiate and probation. Then he compared himself--a civilized man--with a countryman, lamenting that he himself is taught "the poorness of our inventions, the ugliness of towns and palaces," while the countryman can be considered a "rich, royal man" for his knowledge of "what sweets and virtues are in the ground, the waters, the plants, the heavens."[3] Emerson thought nature wants men, but those who are "as good as itself" with divine sentiment in their hearts.

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[1] Ralph Waldo Emerson, Selected Essays (Mount Vernon: Peter Pauper Press), p. 101.

[2] Ibid.

Thus there is much similarity between Hawthorne's and Emerson's views of nature and civilization, but unlike Emerson's categorical opinion that nature is a sufficient influence on man and that man has no need of society, Hawthorne recognized men's need of being in contact with one another, even though human influence sometimes produces repression and corruption. This is the reason why some of Hawthorne's characters show deep conflict in their hearts by wishing to get rid of the repressive forces of the society, but at the same time not being able to leave it --as happens to Hester and Dimmesdale in The Scarlet Letter, two who could have sought freedom in the forest but remained in the town until the end of their lives.

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid., p. 106.

[3] Ibid., p. 110.

Hawthorne's view of human nature is thus more realistic than Emerson's, and he confesses at one point that though he "admired Emerson as a poet of deep beauty and austere tenderness," he "sought nothing from him as a philosopher."[1] Emerson, in turn, despite his attraction to Hawthorne's personality, wrote about him: "Nathaniel Hawthorne's reputation as a writer is a very pleasing fact, because his writing is not good for anything, and this is a tribute to the man."[2] Emerson is criticized by F. O. Matthiessen for his extreme individualism--based on the transcendental belief that, since all knowledge comes from the divinity within, a man can scarcely attain to any full relation with another--which prevented him from penetrating Hawthorne's significance.

R. W. B. Lewis, in his The American Adam, also compares Hawthorne to Emerson by saying that the characteristic situation in Hawthorne's fiction is that of the Emersonian figure, the man of hope, who by some mischance has stumbled into the time-burdened world of Jonathan Edwards. The situation, Lewis says, regularly led in Hawthorne's fiction to a moment of crucial choice: an invitation to the lost Emersonian, the thunder-struck Adam, to make up his mind--whether to accept the world he had fallen into, or to flee it, taking his chances in the free wilderness. Unlike Thoreau or Cooper, Hawthorne never suggested that the choice was an easy one, for he acknowleged the dependence of the individual upon organized society, though he knew that the city could harm as well as nourish and was apt to destroy the person most in need of nourishment. And while he was responsive to the attractions of the open air and to the appeal of the forest, Hawthorne also understood the grounds for the Puritan distrust of the forest, where possibility was unbounded and evil unchecked, where witches could flourish and evil be freely explored. Lewis concludes that for Hawthorne the forest was neither the proper home of the admirable Adam, as with Cooper; nor was the hideout of the malevolent adversary, as with Bird; instead, it was the ambiguous setting of moral choice, the pivot in Hawthorne's reccurring pattern of escape and return.

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[1] F. O. Matthiessen, American Renaissance (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 193.

[2] Ibid., p. 194.

Lewis also states that many things are being tested as well as exemplified in the characters' circular journeys, in the pattern of escape and return. Lewis mentions the proposition, implicit in much American writing from Poe and Cooper to Anderson and Hemingway, that the valid rite of initiation for the individual in the new world is not an initiation _into_ society, but, given the character of society, an initiation _away from_ it.

By emphasizing Hawthorne's impulse towards nature and Hawthorne's kinship with transcendentalist writers, Lewis departs from the general view of the author; yet it is along the lines of Lewis' argument that I will proceed in this thesis. I am aware that my view of Hawthorne runs contrary to the usual view of him as one of the "party of the past" who sticks to the doctrine of Original Sin and thus regards nature as an evil, "unchristianized" place where evil inclination is unchecked. According to those critics who hold the traditional, Calvinistic view of Hawthorne, his characters are eager to satisfy society's demands which they accept as divine laws.

I think, however, it can be shown that Hawthorne does not regard nature as an evil place, but rather as a shelter for those who feel repressed by the social influence and seek for freedom. In my opinion, Hawthorne's characters are not mere robots living for the society's sake, but human beings conscious of their rights and desirous of living their own lives. This may be illustrated by The Scarlet Letter in which Hester, the central character, feels that her effort to demonstrate the moral purity of her love as sanctioned by nature is totally undermined by the social, intellectual, and theological demands of Puritan society. The townspeople and Chillingworth represent negative and hostile forces in the life of Hester as opposed to the redemptive possibilities offered by nature. It is thus that the rebellious woman tries to convince her lover that they should leave the town together and seek for freedom in some other place. They very nearly persuade themselves that they can escape along the forest track, which, though in one direction it goes "backward to the settlement," in another it goes onward--"deeper it goes, and deeper into the wilderness..." But the sense of guilt aroused by their encounter drives them back instead, at the end, to the heart of society, where they are destroyed. This does not, however, necessarily mean that all Hawthorne's characters ought to be thus confined and have Dimmesdale and Hester's fate, for we see Pearl escape the "closed circle" of Puritan society and have her own way. Dimmesdale and Hester's end, however, shows how decisively civilization has caused man to become attached to its influences, even though they make him repressed and unhappy. Hawthorne suggests in this and some other stories tha his characters should be much happier if they gave up the town and lived within nature, free from any conventions. On the other hand, he recognizes that it is not easy for them to make this decision, since they are not able to shake off the strong corruptive influences of civilization.

This is a reccurring conflict in Hawthorne's books which proves him to be a both idealistic and realistic author who, while he paints nature as an ideal influence on man, does not ignore civilization's force which, though corruptive, attracts and imprisons man within its powerful grasp.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF CRITICISM

Critics have greatly differed in their discussion of Hawthorne's treatment of civilization and nature, because of the complexity and ambivalence of his attitudes. Some critics present a Calvinistic view of Hawthorne by dealing with the Puritan influence on the characters whereas others paint him as a liberal, transcendental author who deems nature as a place of freedom in contrast with the repressive forces of society.

In American Renaissance, F. O. Matthiessen presents Hawthorne as a realistic author who has a mature understanding of the relation of the individual to society, and, more especially, of the nature of good and evil.

As for the relation of man to society, Matthiessen suggests Hawthorne's dissatisfaction with the transcendentalists' dichotomy between society and solitude as seen in Emerson's journal of 1838: "Solitude is naught and society is naught. Alternate them and the good of each is seen... Undulation, alternation, is the condition of progress, of life." Matthiessen points out that Hawthorne did not have Emerson's opportunity to say good-bye to the "proud world" and go home to find himself in solitude. Matthiessen thinks Hawthorne could never feel that a man became more human in this way, and quotes a passage from Hawthorne's essay "On Solitude" to illustrate his convictions on man's need of society: "Man is naturally a social being... It is only in society that the full energy of his mind is aroused. Perhaps life may pass more tranquilly, estranged from the pursuits and vexations of the multitude, but all the hurry and whirl of passion is preferable to the cold calmness of indifference."

As for the nature of good and evil, Matthiessen claims that Hawthorne had a profound awareness of the mixed nature of life, of the fact that even the most perfect man cannot be wholly good, and that man's existence may become real only through suffering and experiencing evil. To illustrate this, Matthiessen mentions Donatellos's transformation from innocence to experience, and quotes the following passage: "...the faun had had glimpses of strange and subtle matters in those dark caverns, into which all men must descend, if they would know anything beneath the surface and illusive pleasures of existence." Dimmesdale is another example given by Matthiessen, from whose long suffering Hawthorne concluded that "the only truth" that continued to give the minister "a real existence on this earth was the anguish in his inmost soul." This realistic view of man's nature, Matthiessen says, made Hawthorne consider Emerson a "mystic, stretching his hand out of cloud-land, in vain search for something real," for his lack of the vision of evil, as seen in the following passage from "Spiritual Laws" (1841): "Our young people are diseased with the theological problems of original sin, origin of evil, predestination and the like. These never presented a practical difficulty to any man, --never darkened across any man's road who did not go out of his way to seek them. These are the soul's mumps and measles..." Thus Emerson thought that "the ugly facts are merely partial and can be transcended," and that "all fragmentary sorrow and suffering would disappear in the radiance of good." Hawthorne would never agree with such an optimistic view of life, for, says Matthiessen, though the hard concreteness of his mind was indifferent to any religious dogma, he saw the empirical truth behind the Calvinist symbols and recovered what Puritans professed--the spirit of piety, humility and tragedy in the face of the inscrutable ways of God.

In spite of this acknowledgment, Matthiessen does not agree, in his analysis of The Marble Faun, with the critics who have used Miriam's speculation to assert that Hawthorne's theme upon the fall of man was really his rise. Miriam argues to Kenyon that since Donatello's crime seems to have been the means of educating his simple nature to a level of feeling and intelligence it could not reach under any other discipline, may it not be that Adam's sin "was the destined means by which, over a long pathway of toil and sorrow, we are to attain a higher, brighter, and profounder happiness than any our lost birthright gave? Will not this idea account for the permitted existence of sin, as no other theory can? Matthiessen does not think Hawthorne held this to be true, for Miriam herself trembles at these thoughts and Kenyon "rightly felt" them to be perilous.

In his analysis of The Scarlet Letter, Darrel Abel presents Hawthorne as a critic of the Puritan society. He says that harsh legalism was a characteristic of the Puritan theocracy, and that Hester suffered "the whole dismal severity of the Puritanic code of law," in a "period when the forms of authority were felt to possess the sacredness of Divine institutions." Her punishment, Abel claims, shows how society had set aside the humane injunction that men should love one another to make a religion of the office of vengeance. Abel also finds a powerful irony in Hawthorne's picture of the harsh matrons who crowded around the pillory to demand that Hester be put to death: "Is there not law for it? Truly, there is, both in Scripture and the statute-book," for Abel thinks the author was surely mindful of the question which the scribes and Pharisees put to Jesus concerning the woman taken in adultery: "Now Moses in the law commanded us that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?" The harshness of this tirade, Abel concludes, reflects the perversion of womanliness which has been wrought among this people "amongst whom religion and law were almost identical." Abel also mentions the ostracism to which the Puritans condemned Hester as a transgression of the universal duty of "acknowledging brotherhood even with the guiltiest," which, as he concludes, was almost fatal to Hester's sanity and moral sense.

Thus Abel concludes: "A scheme of social justice supplants the essential law of love which is grounded in human hearts; any system of expedient regulations tends to become sacrosant eventually, so that instead of serving humanity it becomes a tyrannical instrument for coercing non-conformists."[1] Abel means that social regulations--however good they intend to be--make man feel repressed and frustrated by preventing him from exercising his natural feelings.

George E. Woodberry, another Twentieth Century critic, criticizes Hawthorne by saying that he has distorted the real meaning of Puritanism in The Scarlet Letter. He says that in the scheme of Puritan thought, the atonement of Christ is the miracle whereby salvation comes, but he can see no Christ, no prayer in the book. Evil, Woodberry goes on, is presented as a thing without remedy, and the characters are singularly free from self-pity and accept their fate as righteous; they never forgave themselves nor show any sign of having forgiven one another, and even God's forgiveness is left under a shadow in futurity. To illustrate all this, Woodberry quotes the minister's dying words:

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[1] Darrel Abel, "Hester, The Romantic," in A "Scarlet Letter" Handbook, ed. Seymour L. Gross (San Francisco: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1960), p. 53.

> "Hush, Hester, hush!" said he, with tremulous solemnity. "The law we broke!-the sin here so awfully revealed!-let these alone be in thy thoughts! I fear! I fear! It may be that, when we forgot our God,-when we violated our reverence each for the other's soul-it was thenceforth vain to hope that we could meet hereafter, in an everlasting and pure reunion."

Woodberry concludes that there is no sympathy with human nature in the book, for Hawthorne coldly condemns his characters after having dissected their souls thoroughly. Then Woodberry asks: "Is it too much to suggest that in ignoring prayer, the atonement of Christ, and the work of Spirit in men's hearts, the better part of Puritanism has been left out, and the whole life of the soul distorted?"[1]

F. I. Carpenter states that the dramatic perfection of The Scarlet Letter is flawed by the author's moralistic, subjective criticism of Hester Prynne. He explains this by saying that Hawthorne described Hester as admitting her "sin" of passion and as renouncing her "selfish ends" and as seeking to

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[1] George E. Woodberry, "The Dark Side of the Truth," in A "Scarlet Letter" Handbook, ed. Seymour L. Gross (San Francisco: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1960), p. 17.

"expiate" her crime, but actually, Carpenter asserts, Hester herself had never admitted to any sin other than deception and had never acted "selfishly" and had worn her scarlet letter triumphantly, rather than penitently. And, Carpenter goes on, because she dared to trust herself and to believe in the possibility of a new morality in the new world, Hester achieved spiritual greatness in spite of her own human weakness in spite of the prejudices of her Puritan society, and, finally, in spite of the prejudices of her creator himself. To the traditional moralists, the "forest" or "wilderness", or "uncivilized Nature" was the symbol-abode of evil--the very negation of moral law, but Carpenter mentions Emerson and Thoreau who had specifically described the "wilderness" as the precondition of the new morality of freedom and "Nature" as the very abode of "higher truth," and concludes that Hester envisions the transcendental ideal of positive freedom, instead of the romantic ideal of mere escape, when she urges her lover to create a new life with her in the wilderness: "Doth the universe lie within the compass of yonder town? Whither leads yonder forest track? ... Exchange this false life of thine for a true one!... Do anything save to lie down and die!"

Chester E. Eisinger, in his article "Pearl and the Puritan Heritage," presents a Calvinistic view of nature and children through an analysis of Pearl. He says that the girl, being as wild and as free as nature, owes allegiance to the domain of nature and is, as a consequence, beyond the reach of divine salvation and completely outside human society. To assert this, Eisinger based himself on the Puritan theory that to live by natural liberty is to deny the authority of God and the doctrine of original sin, and that the social covenant can be preserved only by adherence to the doctrine of civil liberty. Thus, Eisinger concludes, freedom and nature stand on one side, and on the other, the stability, security, and orderliness that are embodied in the divinely directed Puritan community.

And because Hawthorne looked askance at the uncontrollable realms of nature, and believed as the Puritans did that each individual soul is precious, Eisinger claims he is under obligation to release Pearl from her bondage to nature and to find her a place in human society, so that she can be susceptible to God's grace should it be offered her. This transformation happens, Eisinger tells us, through Dimmesdale's expiation, when he recognizes her as daughter and awakens through suffering all her human sympathies, thus sweeping her into the community of men. Eisinger concludes that Pearl has at last freed herself from nature and, by adapting herself to society through her marriage, she stands at the end as an apotheosis of Puritan morality.

Darrel Abel also deals with the theme of nature and children in his "Hawthorne's Pearl: Symbol and Character," but unlike Eisinger, his view of Pearl is transcendental, though in his comparison between Pearl and Wordsworth's Lucy he recognizes that human associations are for Hawthorne a *sine qua non* of full human development, and that nature could not have such an entire and effectual influence upon Pearl as it had upon Lucy.

In spite of this, however, Abel asserts that Pearl is in her most fundamental character a Child of Nature, for she discovers conscious and valuable affinities with the natural world and enjoys an active and formative relationship with that world. Abel is claiming that Hawthorne did not regard human nature and physical nature as distinct orders of being but rather as aspects of a single order of being which included and transcended them both.

Abel also remarks that the "wildness" which Hawthorne attributed to Pearl is not the wildness of savagery but of innocence, like that state of prelapsarian innocence in which Adam and Eve were instinctively gentle and sportive.

Though Pearl has thus enjoyed an unusually rich life in nature, Abel notices that Hawthorne represents the Child of Nature as being infrahuman, for her having only a nascent spiritual life. Abel remarks, however, that although Hawthorne regarded the Child of Nature as an imperfect being, he did not regard her as a corrupted or depraved being, as the Calvinists regarded all infants. Abel claims Hawthorne thought, as did the Puritans, that the only distinctively human reality was moral reality; but unlike the Puritans, he regarded infant humanity as being in a pre-moral or infra-moral condition. Abel means that Pearl was not a perverted creature but actually a beautiful half-human child who instinctively aspired to possession of a soul. Abel explains the striking variability of Pearl's temper as a result of her insistent yearning toward spiritualization. This aspiration toward moral life, however--Abel goes on--could not be assisted by the nature in Pearl, for Hawthorne thought that nature could only quicken the child's sensibilities, so that moral truths might more readily find entrance, but that the actual moral character of the child would be determined by the quality of the human influences which worked through awakened sensibilities. Abel concludes that

"Pearl's prospect of becoming humanized by such means was grievously beclouded by the irregularity of her birth and the persistent error of her adulterous parents."[1]

In his article "The Return into Time: Hawthorne," R. W. B. Lewis suggests an interesting approach to the way people shuttling between the city and the forest in Hawthorne's books. He says that most of Hawthorne's heroes and heroines are regularly led to a moment of crucial choice--whether to accept the world they have fallen into, or to flee it, taking their chances in the free wilderness. Lewis also says that Hawthorne never suggested that the choice is an easy one, for he acknowledged the dependence of the individual upon organized society (the city), but he also knew that the city could destroy as well as nourish and was apt to destroy the person most in need of nourishment. "The forest was," Lewis concludes, "the pivot in Hawthorne's grand recurring pattern of escape and return."[2] To prove this the critic mentions The Scarlet Letter, The Marble Faun and The House of the Seven Gables, in which the heroes and heroines try an escape into the forest but in the end return to the city.

Thus we have different views of Hawthorne's attitudes towards civilization and nature, attesting to the ambivalence of the author concerning the matter. I mostly agree with those critics who regard Hawthorne as a liberal, transcendental author who describes nature as a place of freedom in contrast with the repressive forces of society.

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[1] Darrel Abel, "Hawthorne's Pearl: Symbol and Character," in A "Scarlet Letter" Handbook, ed. Seymour L. Gross (San Francisco: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1960), p. 95.

[2] R. W. B. Lewis, "The Return into Time," in A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. A. N. Kaul (Printice-Hall), p. 75.

I do agree with Matthiessen that Hawthorne regarded social influence, both good and bad, as being necessary for man, but contrary to his opinion that Hawthorne deemed life in society better than the one within nature, I want to emphasize that Hawthorne's characters, though they feel necessity of human associations, are better and happier within nature than in the city. I also agree with Matthiessen that Hawthorne recognized man's fatal exposure to evil after Adam's Fall, but I would not say that Hawthorne thought evil *is* necessary for man's existence to become real. It is my opinion that Hawthorne favors man's innocence within nature whenever that is possible. This may also be said regarding some of Hawthorne's characters whose lives should have been happier if they had not had worldly experience which educated them about reality. In *The Marble Faun*, Donatello ceases to be a joyous creature after his tragic experience in the city, and Hilda--after witnessing her friend's crime--becomes critical of the Italian painters whom she used to admire in her saintly innocence. Robin, in "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," is another country-bred character who has contact with the city, and he suddenly becomes educated in a day's time. It is clear, however, that the boy gets weary and unhappy with the experiences of the city, and misses his father's household. Thus I entirely agree with Matthiessen that Donatello's fall does not suggest his spiritual ascension, for I think Hawthorne never regards sin as a means of regeneration, but rather as something to which people are exposed and which makes them lose their innocence and become unhappy.

Both Abel and Woodberry are concerned about the harsh legalism of the Puritan society and present the main characters as victims of that legalism, whereas Carpenter describes Hester as a transcendental heroine who believes in the new morality of freedom and achieves spiritual greatness in spite of the prejudices of her society. I would rather agree with Abel and Woodberry than with Carpenter, for I will likewise deal with the severity of the "Puritanic code of law," and, though I will present Hester yearning for freedom, I would never describe her as a heroine, but rather as a victim of Puritan repression.

While Eisinger regards nature as an evil influence upon Pearl, and emphasizes the necessity for her being released from her bondage to nature and given a place in the human society, Abel thinks nature exerts "valuable" influences upon Pearl, though he recognizes that Hawthorne has described her as infrahuman in virtue of the lack of sound human influences. Since my theme is nature's positive influences on man, my view of Hawthorne's children is very similar to Abel's. I also think that Hawthorne shows sympathy for the children's closeness to nature, but I wouldn't emphasize their need of human associations, for I am primarily concerned about their innocence, naturalness, simplicity and spontaneity, all due to their lack of contact with social corruption.

Lewis's view of the city and the forest is very similar to mine, for I likewise want to emphasize man's attachment to the city in spite of its degenerating power, but without overlooking the freedom which the forest offers man. Lewis's view differs from mine in that his main concern is with the characters' escape into the forest and their return to the world, whereas I am more concerned about nature's positive influence which contrasts with the degenerative force of civilization.

CHAPTER III

NATURE: THE IDEAL PLACE FOR HAWTHORNE

Hawthorne's sympathetic view of nature is evident not only in his writings but in his own life as well. We have seen that he regarded the three years at Raymond as the happiest of his life. After getting married, he went to live at the Old Manse and fully enjoyed the natural elements. When he later moved to Lenox and then to Concord, he again chose the countryside. Even while in Europe, he once hired an old villa on the hill of Bellosguardo, near Florence, Italy, where he could have the olive-covered hills around him. All these places were very sympathetically, even enthusiastically, described by Hawthorne in his Notebooks and some of his letters. Thus it is comprehensible that Hawthorne presents nature as an ideal place in most of his writings, a place full of beauty which exerts a positive influence upon man.

I said "ideal place" for I think that Hawthorne romanticized his view of nature, describing it as he would have liked it to be, not as it really was. Hawthorne's view of nature and its influence on man seems too optimistic to me, and to such an extent that it sometimes altogether escapes reality. For example, in The Marble Faun Miriam plays with Donatello like the Faun and the Nymph of the Arcadian woods, forgetting her sad secret for a few moments:

> They ran races with each other, side by side, with shouts and laughter; they pelted one another with early flowers, and gathering them up twined them with green leaves into garlands for both their heads. So much had they flung aside the sombre habitudes of daily life, that they seemed born to be sportive forever, and endowed with eternal mirthfulness instead of any deeper joy. It was a glimpse far backward into Arcadian life, or, further still,

> into the Golden Age, before mankind was burdened with sin and sorrow, and before pleasure had been darkened with those shadows that bring it into high relief, and make it happiness.[1]

Here Hawthorne used a lot of pastoral images to show how happy and innocent the characters may look if they stand in the middle of the natural elements. Later, when Miriam and Donatello are ready to pay for their crime, they both appear disguised as peasant and contadina "on the wild Campagna," and Miriam implores Donatello to make those happy moments last a little longer:

> "Ah, Donatello! let us live a little longer the life of these last few days! It is so bright, so airy, so childlike, so without either past or future!... Our stern and black reality will come upon us speedily enough. But, first, a brief time more of this strange happiness."[2]

Nature is here presented as an ideal place where there is no crime, no punishment, no suffering, and Hawthorne allows Miriam to live some moments of an ideal life. Similarly Owen, the "Artist of the Beautiful," spends happy moments in the woods and fields, seeking for butterflies which will enable him to realize his dream of carving a spiritualized work. It is nature that enables him to lead "the pure, ideal life that had so etherealized him among men."[3] In "Roger Malvin's Burial," Hawthorne describes the ideal life within nature which he thinks every man would aspire to lead:

> Oh, who, in the enthusiasm of a day dream, has not wished that he were a wanderer in a world of summer wilderness, with one fair and gentle being hanging lightly on his arm? In youth his free and exulting step would know no

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[1] Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Complete Novels and Selected Tales of Nathaniel Hawthorne, ed. Norman Holmes Pearson, The Marble Faun (New York: Random House), p. 637.

[2] Hawthorne, The Marble Faun, p. 836.

[3] Hawthorne, "The Artist of the Beautiful," p. 1148.

> barrier but the rolling ocean or the snow-topped mountains; calmer manhood would choose a home where Nature had strewn a double wealth in the vale of some transparent stream...[1]

Thus Hawthorne has shown how good it should be to live within nature, enjoying all the beautiful things it offers man. Nevertheless Hawthorne does not always present nature as a calm, beautiful place. In some of his writings there are passages in which the forests are wild and arid. But I think this does not necessarily mean that they are evil, for, as we will see later, Hawthorne's works show that nature, even in its wildness, exerts a positive influence on man.

Hawthorne romanticized his view of nature to such an extent that he sometimes endowed nature with feeling and made "her" show sympathy for man. In the first chapter of The Scarlet Letter we find evidence of this when Hawthorne describes the rose-bush which had grown near the prison-door:

> ... on one side of the portal, and rooted almost at the threshold, was a wild rose-bush, covered, in this month of June, with its delicate gems, which might be imagined to offer their fragrance and fragile beauty to the prisoner as he went in, and to the condemned criminal as he came forth to his doom, in token that the deep heart of Nature could pity him and be kind to him.[2]

Later, when Hester and Dimmesdale are happy after the decision to leave New England in search for a better life, nature shares their happiness. The sunshine bursts forth, "gladdening each green leaf, transmuting the yellow fallen ones to gold, and gleaming adown the gray trunks of the solemn trees."[3] In The

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[1] Hawthorne, "Roger Malvin's Burial," p. 1134.

[2] Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter, p. 112.

[3] Ibid., p. 204.

House of the Seven Gables, the presence of "Alice's Posies"--the flower-shrubs growing aloft in the nook between two of the gables of the Pyncheons' house--has its importance in the story; the flowers appeared there to try to gladden the "desolate, decaying, gusty, rusty, old house." Nature is here personified again and shown to be kind to man:

> ... it was both sad and sweet to observe how Nature adopted to herself this desolate, decaying, gusty, rusty old house of the Pyncheon family; and how the ever-returning summer did her best to gladden it with tender beauty, and grew melancholy in the effort.[1]

Similarly, in The Marble Faun nature--here symbolized by doves--is sympathetic to Hilda in her solitary life at the top of a tower. The doves are her constant companions and they show sympathy for her whenever she is despondent, "uttering soft, tender and complaining sounds, deep in their bosoms, which soothed the girl more than a distincter utterance might."[2] They also share Kenyon's despondency when Hilda suddenly disappears and nobody can tell him where she might have gone. The doves "feel" their lives darkened and grown imperfect with the girl's absence. And when, some time later, Hilda comes back to the tower, a faithfull dove--the only one which had remained there--greets her rapturously and summons her companions, wherever they had flown, to renew their homage. "Roger Malvin's Burial" also presents a passage representative of nature's sympathy for man, after Reuben's sorrowful farewell to the dying Roger Malvin who had remained alone in the forest:

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[1] Hawthorne, The House of the Seven Gables, p. 259.

[2] Hawthorne, The Marble Faun, p. 781.

> The morning sun was unclouded, and the trees and shrubs imbibed the sweet air of the month of May; yet there seemed a gloom on Nature's face, as if she sympathized with mortal pain and sorrow.[1]

Thus Hawthorne personified nature as a sensitive and kind woman who shares the characters' happy and unhappy moments. This proves how romantic Hawthorne's view was concerning nature's influence on man.

Country-bred people in Hawthorne's works are presented as being natural, simple, spontaneous and innocent. Silas, the yeoman in The Blithedale Romance is a typical countryman in his authenticity, for while the communitarians--who were all from the city--are reluctant about accepting the wretched Priscilla within their group, Silas behaves as the most sensible person by saying that the girl should be given "a hot cup of tea, and thick slice of the first-rate bacon," and that she might stay with them as long as she liked and help them in their work. Silas' natural tendencies may also be realized through his differentiation among the masqueraders as the only one who wears no mask:

> But Silas Foster, who leaned against a tree near by, in his customary blue frock, and smoking a short pipe, did more to disenchant the scene, with his look of shrewd, acrid, Yankee observation, than twenty witches and necromancers could have done in the way of rendering it weird and fantastic.[2]

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[1] Hawthorne, "Roger Malvin's Burial," p. 1130.

[2] Hawthorne, The Blithedale Romance, p. 563.

Silas' "shrewd observation" is a kind of criticism towards the masqueraders, since masks apparently symbolize falseness, artificiality.

Robin, the country-bred boy in "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," has completely new experiences when he comes to the city. He is naive and at first he believes that the woman "in the scarlet petticoat" is his kinsman's housekeeper. But when he discovers what she really is, he resists temptation and flees. And later, when he is weary of the experiences in the city, he thinks of his father's household as if he were longing for its purity contrasting with the worldly city life he had just known. At the end, after having watched his kinsman's humiliating figure, Robin asks the way to the ferry, for he had begun to become weary of town life. And, even though the last lines leave the possibility for his stay in the city, we cannot tell for sure since we have no answer from Robin himself. But we may strongly believe that he will rather return to the woods, since evidence is enough in the story to prove that he became tired of city life and longs for his father's immaculate household.

Goodman Brown is another "simple husbandman" (as he calls himself) who suddenly learns about the truth of everybody in the town and feels deceived. In this story, however, Hawthorne deals with the Calvinist concept of Original Sin--as seen in his notebook: "There is evil in every human heart"--and shows how desperate Goodman Brown becomes as he encounters a vision of corruption in the forest, where he discovers that his family, the religious of Salem, and even his wife, have communion with evil. Thus the deeply distrustful and desperate man that emerges from the forest has been initiated not into experience but into despair, for his confrontation with evil is too overpowering. The forest and its awful elements are allegorically used in the story as a prologue to the terrible discovery Goodman Brown would make there about the sinful tendencies of people who live in town.

Another example of rustic simplicity is the young couple Hannah and Matthew in "The Great Carbuncle." They join the group which searches for the magnificent gem but, unlike their companions' worldly ambitions in regard to the stone, this couple's purpose is as modest as themselves:

> "Ye must know, friends, [Matthew says] that Hannah and I, being wedded the last week, have taken up the search of the Great Carbuncle, because we shall need its light in the long winter evenings; and it will be such a pretty thing to show the neighbours when they visit us. It will shine through the house so that we may pick up a pin in any corner, and will set the windows aglowing as if there were a great fire of pine knots in the chimney. And then how pleasant, when we awake in the night, to be able to see one another's faces!"[1]

When they at last find the carbuncle, they simply give it up, for they become horrified with its intense brilliance. Thus they return to their cottage where as Matthew says:

> The blessed sunshine and the quiet moonlight shall come through our window. We will kindle the cheerful glow of our hearth, at eventide, and be happy in its light. But never again will we desire more light than all the world may share with us.[2]

In their simplicity, Hannah and Matthew prefer the natural light to the artificial one which would prevent them even from sleeping at night!

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[1] Hawthorne, "The Great Carbuncle," p. 931.

[2] Ibid., p. 935.

Donatello, in The Marble Faun, was created out of a mythological character: Faun, the sylvan god. This deity is present in the novel under the form of a statue which is exposed at the sculpture gallery in the Capitol at Rome. Hawthorne's comment on the statue reveals his sympathy towards what it represents:

> ... if the spectator broods long over the statue, he will be conscious of its spell; all the pleasantness of sylvan life, all the genial and happy characteristics of creatures that dwell in woods and fields, will seem to be mingled and kneaded into one substance, along with the kindred qualities in the human soul. Trees, grass, flowers, woodland streamlets, cattle, dear, and unsophisticated man.[1]

Hawthorne is praising sylvan life, symbolized by the Faun, and he believes that the idea may have been no dream, but rather a poet's reminiscence of a period when man's affinity with nature was more strict and his fellowship with every living thing more intimate and dear. In short, Hawthorne misses that period when man was able to lead an ideal life within nature. Thus Hawthorne contrasted the past and the present and criticized the people of the "refined" era who are not able to be spontaneously happy, like those during the "childhood of their race":

> A simple and joyous character can find no place for itself among the sage and sombre figures that would put his unsophisticated cheerfulness to shame. The entire system of man's affairs, as at present established, is built up purposely to exclude the careless and happy soul.[2]

The present, Hawthorne goes on, makes us all parts of a complicated scheme of progress, "of which the only use will be to burden our posterity with even heavier thoughts and more inordinate labor than our own."[1] Hawthorne is saying that civilization is bad, for modern man is tortured by "sin, care, and self-consciousness," in contrast with the free, spontaneous man of the Arcadian age. Thus it seems to me that Donatello's presence in the novel is intended to remind us of that Prelapsarian happy time, since evidence is strong enough in the story--the striking resemblance to the statue, the accounts of his childhood and of his ancestors, his own characteristics--to make us believe that Donatello is one of the descendants of the sylvan god. As such, Donatello presents a very close relationship to nature, as we can observe in the following passage which describes his reaction towards nature, after his having spent some time in "the stony-hearted streets" of Rome:

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[1] Hawthorne, The Marble Faun, p. 596.

[2] Ibid., p. 727.

> In a sudden rapture, he embraced the trunk of a sturdy tree, and seemed to imagine it a creature worthy of affection and capable of a tender response... Then, in order to bring himself closer to the genial earth, with which his kindred instincts linked him so strongly, he threw himself at full length on the turf, and pressed down his lips, kissing the violets and daisies, which kissed him back again, though shyly, in their maiden fashion.[2]

The accounts of Donatello's childhood are also evidence of his very intimate, Faun-like, relationship to the natural elements. The peasantry of the neighboring village tell Kenyon how he had played among the little rustics, and had been at once the wildest and the sweetest of all, and how, in his very infancy, he had plunged into the deep pools of the streamlets and never been drowned. "No such mischance," Hawthorne writes, "could happen to the sylvan child, because, handling all the elements of nature so fearlessly and freely, nothing had either the power or the will to do him harm."[1]

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[1] Hawthorne, The Marble Faun, p. 727.

[2] Ibid., p. 632.

Donatello himself once tells Kenyon that, from his earliest childhood, he was familiar with whatever creatures haunt the woods, which he used to call by "a voice, a murmur, a kind of chant," in a language that they all seemed to understand. Thus--before the transformation which occurs in him after the crime--Donatello presents all the sylvan characteristics which he must have inherited from his ancestors. He obeys no conventional rules in his animal-like naturalness; his usual modes of demonstration are the natural language of gesture, the instinctive movement of his agile frame, and the unconscious play of his features. He expresses all his feelings spontaneously; he is once even compared to a kindly animal "which has the faculty of bestowing its sympathies more completely than men or women can ever do."[2] Another characteristic in Donatello, which reminds us of the long-gone age, is his "simple and physically happy nature." He does not need much to be happy; once, in Miriam's company, "he appeared only to know that the present moment was very sweet, and himself most happy, with the sunshine, the sylvan scenery, and woman's kindly charm."[3] On the same occasion, Donatello himself tells Miriam that he was often happy in the woods, too, with hounds and horses, and very happy in watching all sorts of animals and birds which lived there.

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[1] Hawthorne, The Marble Faun, p. 726.

[2] Ibid., p. 614.

[3] Ibid., p. 634.

Hilda, also in The Marble Faun, was brought up in a New England village and, assuming that Hawthorne considered the village as countryside in contrast with the city, we can observe that she preserves her purity and innocence, even though she has come to live in a city like Rome:

> In all her wanderings about Rome, Hilda had gone and returned as securely as she had been accustomed to tread the familiar street of her New England village. With respect to whatever was evil, foul and ugly, in this populous and corrupt city, she trod as if invisible, and not only so, but blind... 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.[1]

Because of her innocence, Hilda is of pleasant deportment, endowed with "a mild cheerfulness of temper." She believes that "good thoughts and deeds" can overcome whatever evil may exist in the world. Like Goodman in the forest, the "hopeful and happy-natured" girl feels deeply deceived when she witnesses her closest friend committing a crime; the whole marvelous world which she had built around her out of her own pure view of the humanity falls down at once:

> Never before had this young, energetic, active spirit known what it is to be despondent. Her dearest friend, whose heart seemed the most solid and richest of Hilda's possessions, had no existence for her any more; and in that dreary void, out of which Miriam had disappeared, the substance, the truth, the integrity of life, the motives of effort, the joy of success, had departed along with her.[2]

Like Robin, who remembers his father's household when he becomes weary of the city, Hilda likewise brings vivid scenes of her native village to mind after having been deceived. She yearns for that native homeliness which entirely contrasts with the dreary streets, palaces, churches and imperial sepulchres of "hot and dusty Rome." Like Donatello, who used to be friendly to whatever creatures lived in the woods, Hilda has a very close relationship to the doves whose cote was in a ruinous chamber contiguous to her own. She caresses them and responds to their cooings with similar sounds from her own lips and with words of endearment. The girl herself is compared to a dove because of her white robe and her white, pure soul, and "while the other doves flew far and wide in quest of what was good for them, Hilda likewise spread her wings, and sought such ethereal and imaginative sustenance as God ordains for creatures of her kind."[1]

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[1] Hawthorne, The Marble Faun, p. 813.

[2] Ibid., p. 708.

Phoebe, in The House of the Seven Gables, is also a native of a rural part of New England. Though a Pyncheon, she has none of the characteristics of the aristocratic family--pride, ambition, vanity--which Hawthorne criticizes in the novel. She is a very natural person in her homeliness, cheerfulness, simplicity, activity and sympathy, with which she is able to change the gloom visage of the old, decaying house, and bring happiness into it: "Whatever health, comfort, and natural life exists in the house [said Holgrave to Phoebe] is embodied in your person."[2] Like Goodman and Hilda, Phoebe is also an innocent girl and she becomes perplexed when Hepzibah tells her that the apparently kind, respectable Judge Pyncheon has "a heart of iron," for she could never imagine that judges, clergymen, and other characters of that eminent stamp and respectability, could really, in any single instance, be otherwise than just and upright men. Phoebe's character exerts influence not only on her cousins, Hepzibah and Clifford, but also on another dweller of the house: Holgrave. Before the girl's coming to the house, the artist is only a cold observer of the poor old descendants of the decaying family. Phoebe's presence in the house, however, makes him change completely; he becomes affectionate and starts deeming the Pyncheons his family and the house his home. He tells Phoebe that he loves her, for "hope, warmth and joy" had come with her. In short, Phoebe's presence in the story, together with the terrible Judge Pyncheon's death at the end, allows it to have a happy ending which symbolizes the triumph of the natural over the intellectual and the artificial.

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[1] Hawthorne, The Marble Faun, p. 622.

[2] Hawthorne, The House of the Seven Gables, p. 372.

Ernest, a countryman in "The Great Stone Face," is an example of simplicity and humility. According to common belief, a child would be born at some future day, who was destined to become the greatest and noblest personage of his time, and whose countenace, in manhood, should bear an exact resemblance to the Great Stone Face--a mount of rocks which resembled human features. Ernest was told about the prophecy when he was a child and since then he has spent his whole life waiting for "the great and noble man" without even suspecting, in his humbleness, that the man is himself. It is thus, that, even after the people's discovery about the resemblance between himself and the Great Stone Face, Ernest still hopes that some wiser and better man than himself will by and by appear so that the prophecy may be fulfilled.

The family in "The Ambitious Guest" is another touching example of simplicity. They have lived in "the bleakest spot of all New England," at the base of a steep mountain, but their warmth and simplicity of feeling have made them very happy:

> The faces of the father and mother had a sober gladness; the children laughed; the eldest daughter was the image of Happiness at seventeen; and the aged grandmother, who sat knitting in the warmest place, was the image of Happiness grown old.[1]

Furthermore, they have kindly received many guests who used to pause in their house before resuming their journies, and this has allowed them to hold daily converse with the world. A "refined and educated" young guest, who was certainly from the city, tells the family about his ambition of being remembered by the world after his death for, in his opinion, "it is our nature to desire a monument, be it slate or marble, or a pillar of granite, or a glorious memory in the universal heart of man."[2] The family is not able to understand the youth's ambition, for they had learned, from the simple life they had always led, that it is better to be comfortable and contented by their fire, though nobody thinks about them. A few hours after their talk, however, the catastrophe happens: a slide comes suddenly and kills the whole family and the young guest. Interestingly enough, the family which had never been worried about being remembered after their death is recalled by the whole world:

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[1] Hawthorne, "The Ambitious Guest," p. 990.

[2] Ibid., p. 993.

> All had left separate tokens, by which those who had known the family were made to shed a tear for each. Who has not heard their name? The story has been told far and wide, and will forever be a legend of these mountains. Poets have sung their fate.[1]

As for the ambitious youth, his name and person remain utterly unknown. By this story Hawthorne means that simplicity is much more important than any worldly ambition.

Another example of Hawthorne's sympathy towards the natural elements is the presence of the children whose purity has not been corrupted by civilization, even though they have never lived in contact with nature. Ilbrahim, in "The Gentle Boy," is described as "a sweet infant of the skies" who suffers for being too innocent, as we can see in the following passage:

> Perhaps, among the many life-weary wretches then upon the earth, there was not one who combined inocence and misery like this poor, broken-hearted infant, so soon the victim of his own heavenly nature.[2]

Though surrounded by wild religious fanatics, Ilbrahim preserves his purity till his premature death. His gentleness seems to influence his own mother, who had been even aggressive in her fanaticism, for

> as if Ilbrahim's sweetness yet lingered round his ashes; as if his gentle spirit came down from heaven to teach his parent a true religion, her fierce and vindictive nature was softened by the same griefs which had once irritated it."[3]

Pearl, in The Scarlet Letter, seems to be the most natural child in all Hawthorne's works. Though she is described as a wild girl, we can observe the author's sympathy towards her. For instance, Pearl's "never-failing vivacity of spirits" which the Puritans deem evil, is sympathetically viewed by Hawthorne in contrast with the Puritan children's "disease of sadness":

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[1] Hawthorne, "The Ambitious Guest," p. 995.

[2] Hawthorne, "The Gentle Boy," p. 905.

[3] Ibid., p. 912.

> There was no other attribute that so much impressed Hester with a sense of new and untransmitted vigor in Pearl's nature, as this never-failing vivacity of spirits; she had not the disease of sadness, which almost all children, in these latter days, inherit, with the scrofula, from the troubles of their ancestors.[1]

Like Donatello, Pearl also presents a very close relationship with the natural elements which seem to recognize a kindred wildness in the human child. Hawthorne says that she was gentler in the forest than in the streets of the settlement, or in her mother's cottage, for nature has provided her with freedom. Thus she spends happy moments gathering

> the violets, anemones, and columbines, and some twigs of the freshest green, which the old trees held down before her eyes. With these she decorated her hair, and her young waist, and became a nymph-child or an infant dryad, or whatever else was in closest sympathy with the antique wood."[2]

Here Hawthorne again reminds us of the happy and innocent Arcadian scene already presented in The Marble Faun when Donatello and Miriam play like the Faun and the Nymph within nature.

Pearl's naturalness, then, is genuine, for the lack of contact with the stern Puritans has kept her free from their conventions. Thus for the girl there is no law, no reverence for authority, no regard for human ordinances or opinions. The only principle she has is "the freedom of a broken law," and in spite of the Puritans' detestation towards the "imp," Hawthorne's comment is favorable regarding her unconventional way of living:

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[1] Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter, p. 193.

[2] Ibid., p. 206.

> It was as if she had been made afresh, out of new elements, and must perforce be permitted to live her own life, and be a law unto herself, without her eccentricities being reckoned to her for a crime.[1]

As for Pearl's wildness and variability, evidence is strong enough in the novel to show us that the girl reflects her mother's inner troubles. From the opening scene of the book Hawthorne takes great care to show us that the infant's mother communicates her own turmoil to the child. With remarkable skill he presents this relationship through the mother's eyes and through the Puritan community's interpretation. The infant, clutched tightly by the mother during the ordeal on the scaffold, reflects "the warfare of Hester's spirit" by breaking into convulsions. Both the mother and other people in the community expect the child to show signs of her sinful origin, and so they interpret Pearl's violent temper and some of her wisely perceptive questions as evidence of her bondage to the Devil. What Hawthorne shows us through their interpretations, then, are the natural consequences of a childhood in which the community rejects mother and child, in which an anxious, confused, rebellious mother persists in asking, "Child, what art thou?" and then allows the child to be ruled not by discipline but by impulse. The impulsive child, however, is capable of a tender caress which is an evidence of her inner goodness, unknown by her own mother:

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[1] Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter, p. 163.

> Pearl, that wild and flighty little elf, stole softly towards him [the minister] and taking his hand in the grasp of both her own, laid her cheek against it; a caress so tender, and withal so unobtrusive, that her mother, who was looking on, asked herself, - "Is that my Pearl?"[1]

Thus we can conclude that Hawthorne's view of Pearl is sympathetic in spite of the child's apparent wildness. Her naturalness sharply contrasts with the Puritans' conventions which are criticized in the novel.

Priscilla, in The Blithedale Romance, though a teenager, can be considered a child since she completely ignores worldly life. With her "simple, careless, childish flow of spirits," she gains everybody's love and protection at Blithedale. There she finds her happiness by running free within nature:

> "What I find most singular in Priscilla," observed Zenobia, "is her wildness. Why, as we strolled the woods together, I could hardly keep her from scrambling up the trees, like a squirrel. She has never before known what it is to live in the free air, and so it intoxicates her as if she were sipping wine. And she thinks it such a paradise here..."[2]

Though she had once been used by a false wizard and exposed to the world as the "Veiled Lady"--believed by many to be a seeress and a prophetess, in the harsher judgment of others a mountebank--she remained pure, uncorrupted.

A similar case is Beatrice in "Rappacini's Daughter," who can also be considered a child for her total ignorance of the world. She is a victim of the scientific zeal of her father who had estranged his own daughter from the world by poisoning her body. But she is only poisonous outwardly, for her inner part remained pure just like Priscilla. Thus Beatrice cries to Giovanni as a defense against his cruel accusations:

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[1] Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter, p. 152.

[2] Hawthorne, The Blithedale Romance, p. 473.

> "... Giovanni, believe it, though my body be nourished with poison, my spirit is God's creature, and craves love as its daily food."[1]

Beatrice's inner purity, however, is due to her seclusion from the society which otherwise would have certainly corrupted her.

Hepzibah and Clifford Pyncheon (in The House of the Seven Gables), aged as they are, may also be considered children for their ignorance of the world. Hepzibah has spent more than a quarter of a century in strict seclusion in her old house, taking no part in the business of life, and just as little in its intercourse and pleasures. In her childish innocence, she becomes very frightened at the idea of coming into "sordid contact with the world," when she feels compelled to open a cent-shop to earn her own bread and her brother's. In comparison, Clifford's ignorance of the world is likewise due to his long seclusion in a prison, which has affected him emotionally and mentally, and made him an imbecile. Thus he is a "childlike man" who watches all every-day occurrences with deep interest and earnestness, who has no care about the future, who changes his mood very easily, and who is emotionally dependent, mainly on "bright young" Phoebe. The two "old children" once decide to go to church, but as they pull open the door and step across the threshold, they become frightened, "as if they were standing in the presence of the whole world, and with mankind's great and terrible eye on them alone."[2] Thus they give up the idea of going out, which is delayed until Judge Pyncheon's sudden death in the parlor of their house. Then they are compelled to flee from their old shelter and be exposed to "the broad, bleak and comfortless" world. Children in their inexperience, however, they at last come back to their house, the only place which is able to offer them security and protection.

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[1] Hawthorne, "Rappacini's Daughter," p. 1063.

[2] Hawthorne, The House of the Seven Gables, p. 344.

As a place free from conventions, Hawthorne uses nature as the place for revelations of the deepest secrets of his characters. In "Young Goodman Brown" we see all the important "good" persons of the city revealing their true selves in the woods. A similar event occurs in The Blithedale Romance when Zenobia and Hollingsworth expose all their secrets to each other in the forest. It must be noticed, however, that they both need to wear masks to make their confessions. This leads us to conclude that, as civilized people, they are not able to get rid of their artificiality even though they are in contact with nature. Miriam, in The Marble Faun, likewise reveals her deep secrets to Donatello and Kenyon within nature. It is significant that, on that occasion, Miriam and Donatello are disguised, just like Zenobia and Hollingsworth who wear masks in the forest because they are civilized people. Miriam and Donatello's disguise symbolizes their identity as corrupt, civilized people after their awful crime. In The Scarlet Letter, Hester and Dimmesdale are able to reveal their true selves to each other in the forest, far from the inquisitive eyes of the stern Puritans. There the "most miserable" minister vehemently utters all his long restrained emotions, all the despair which "the hollow mockery of his good name" had caused him. There Hester takes the scarlet letter from her bosom and throws it away. Thus she gets rid of "the burden of shame and anguish" which had always followed her up to that moment, and becomes a new woman, a woman who believes in man's freedom and assumes her own:

> There played around her mouth, and beamed out of her eyes, a radiant and tender smile, that seemed gushing from the very heart of womanhood. A crimson flush was glowing on her cheek, that had been long so pale. Her sex, her youth, and the whole richness of her beauty, came back from what men call the irrevocable past, and clustered themselves, with her maiden hope, and a happiness before unknown, within the magic circle of this hour.[1]

It is thus that Hester proposes to Dimmesdale to leave the community and go "deeper into the wilderness" where she thinks he could be free and exchange his false life for a true one.

Besides providing man with the possibility of being true, nature, in Hawthorne's works, also reveals truths through one of its elements: the sunshine. This we can realize through Holgrave's work in The House of the Seven Gables. He is a daguerreotypist and he says that he traces human features out of sunshine which "brings out the secret character with a truth that no painter would even venture upon, even could he detect it."[2] Then he shows Phoebe a picture of Judge Pyncheon and says that, though the original wears, to the world's eye, an exceedingly pleasant countenance--indicative of benevolence, openness of heart, sunny good-humor, "the sun" presents him in quite another image: sly, subtle, hard, imperious and cold. Evidence is strong enough in the novel to prove to us that the sun "told" the truth.

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[1] Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter, p. 204.

[2] Hawthorne, The House of the Seven Gables, p. 298.

Besides offering man opportunities to remain pure and innocent, nature also presents possibilities for him to improve himself spiritually, even though he has already been corrupted by civilization. Coverdale, in The Blithedale Romance, is a very typical example of this, and though his end is not very different from his beginning, we can realize some spiritual improvement in him throughout the novel. He joins the community out of boredom with an aimless life, expecting to find a "true, strong, natural, and sweet" one at Blithedale. But he goes there just for a temporary stay, aware that he can go back to the city whenever he wants. His illness, however, which is compared to death, works as a starting-place for a new existence. Thus he leaves a life of old conventionalisms behind and "gains admittance into a freer region," which makes him feel, "in literal and physical truth," another man. In his new enthusiasm, "man looked strong and stately, - and woman, how beautiful! - and the earth a green garden, blossoming with many-colored delights."[1] At times, however, he feels disillusioned with the enterprise for, while it lay all in theory, he had pleased himself with the idea that the toil in the country would bring him more wisdom, but practice presents him with another reality:

> The clods of earth, which we so constantly belabored and turned over and over, were never etherealized into thought. Our thoughts, on the contrary, were fast becoming cloddish. Our labor symbolized nothing, and left us mentally sluggish in the dusk of the evening. Intellectual activity is incompatible with any large amount of bodily exercise. The

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[1] Hawthorne, The Blithedale Romance, p. 474.

> yeoman and the scholar - the yeoman and the man of finest moral culture, though not the man of sturdiest sense and integrity - are two distinct individuals, and can never be melted or welded into one substance.[1]

Hawthorne seems to be saying that man should never expect to become wiser within nature since that is a place where he should seek for just the opposite: to become more natural and consequently less intellectual. Soon Coverdale becomes aware of that truth and feels that the trial has been a rich experience for him. If he later returns to Boston, it is only because of the break with Hollingsworth and the consequent feeling of expulsion. How much he still belongs inwardly to Blithedale, however, we see from the excitement with which he returns to it:

> In the sweat of my brow I had there earned bread and eaten it and so established my claim to be on earth, and my fellowship with all the sons of labor. I could have knelt down, and have laid my breast against that soil. The red clay of which my frame was moulded seemed nearer akin to those crumbling furrows than to any other portion of the world's dust. There was my home, and there might be my grave.[2]

From this enthusiasm we can realize Coverdale's deep inner change which he gained only through his contact with natural elements. He even feels that nature is part of his being, which proves his consequent withdrawal from the civilized values.

Ernest, in "The Great Stone Face," is another example of spiritual improvement through contact with nature symbolized by the Great Stone Face. Unlike Coverdale, Ernest was a country-bred boy, but with more intelligence than many lads who had been taught at famous schools. Yet Ernest had had no teacher except the Great Stone Face. When the toil of the day was over, he would gaze at it for hours, until he began to recognize that those vast features recognized him, and gave him a smile of kindness and encouragement. The boy's tender and confiding simplicity discerned what other people could not see, and thus he grew to be a young man whose heart had been enlarged by the sentiment which was expressed in the Great Stone Face, and filled with wider and deeper sympathies than other hearts. From those noble features would come to him a better wisdom than could be learned from books, and a better life than could be moulded on the defaced example of other human lives. Thus it is, that when he became a middle-aged man Ernest had thought and felt much, and given many of the best hours of his life to unworldly hopes for some great good to mankind. He had also become an unvoluntary preacher whose pure and high simplicity of thought exerted deep influences upon those who heard him. His name ceased to be obscure; the report had gone abroad that the simple husbandman had ideas unlike those of other men, not gained from books, but of a higher tone. Humble as he was, however, Ernest reached old age without even suspecting that he was more than an ordinary man, "whose untaught wisdom walked hand in hand with the noble simplicity of his life."[1] When he spoke, his throughts and feelings gushed up with a natural freedom, and he made great truths familiar by his simple utterance of them. His words were not "mere breath"; they were words of life, because a life of good deeds and holy love was melted into them. Ernest's contact with nature and the wisdom he acquires from it, may seem to contradict Coverdale's comment on the Blithedale experiment. Coverdale seems to be saying that man should try to become more natural and consequently less intellectual within nature. However, Coverdale is a civilized intellectual who gained his wisdom from books and is not able to apply it to his own life. Ernest, on the contrary, is a simple country-bred man whose wisdom came from nature which taught him to lead a "life of good deeds and holy love." The difference, then, is in the way the characters acquired their wisdom: Coverdale gained it within civilization, whereas Ernest's wisdom came from nature.

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[1] Hawthorne, The Blithedale Romance, p. 477.

[2] Ibid., p. 560.

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[1] Hawthorne, "The Great Stone Face," p. 1182.

Thus for Hawthorne nature exerts much positive influence on man, for his country-bred characters are described as being natural, simple, spontaneous and innocent. Nature also works as a place of freedom for those characters who feel repressed by society. Finally nature provides man with the possibilities to improve himself spiritually, even though he has already been corrupted by civilization.

CHAPTER IV

CIVILIZATION: CITY, ARISTOCRACY, SCIENCE, RELIGION AND ART

CITY

Unlike the positive influence which nature exerts on man, many negative qualities are attributed to civilization in Hawthorne's writings, for it causes man to lose his natural virtues and become attached to conventions, prejudices and material values. Thus the city is described as a place of "degenerated mortals," one which is full of temptations, where everybody speaks words of falsehood and worries only about artificial values. For example, in The Blithedale Romance Coverdale talks about "the false and cruel principles" of human society which have made him and others give up the city:

> We had left the rusty iron framework of society behind us; we had broken through many hindrances that are powerful enough to keep most people on the weary tread-mill of the established system, even while they feel its irksomeness almost as intolerable as we did. It was our purpose to give up whatever we had heretofore attained, for the sake of showing mankind the example of a life governed by other than the false and cruel principles on which human society has all along been based.[1]

He calls life in the city "artificial life," and after recovering from his illness, which is a symbolic death, Coverdale feels as if he had rid himself of "a thousand follies, fripperies, prejudices, habits" of his previous life. In "Young Goodman Brown" we realize that people, while they reveal their true selves in the forest, are false in the village. Civilized people's preoccupation with their appearances can be clearly seen through their description in "My Kinsman, Major Molineux":

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[1] Hawthorne, The Blithedale Romance, p. 449.

> Embroidered garments of showy colors, enormous periwigs, gold-laced hats, and silver-hilted swords glided past him and dazzled his optics. Travelled youths, imitators of the European fine gentlemen of the period, trod jauntily along, half dancing to the fashionable tunes which they hummed, and making poor Robin ashamed of his quiet and natural gait.[1]

In the same story, the woman in the scarlet petticoat symbolizes the temptation with which one is subject to meet only in the city, never in the country. And when the gentleman says at the end of the story that Robin could rise in the world if he remained in the city, the suggestion introduces another kind of temptation which can easily lead one to eventual corruption.

In The Marble Faun, Rome is described as a corrupt, wicked and miserable city. People of all ranks who inhabit the city are criticized by Hawthorne: the pampered, sensual priesthood; the indolent nobility who are cultivating a vicious way of life with no high aims or opportunities; the population, high and low, that has no genuine belief in virtue; and the licentious soldiery who feel Rome to be their conquered city. "The Celestial Railroad" is a satire which tries to show the corruption of a city through an imaginary pilgrimage of a group on a railroad which should take them to the Celestial City. The narrator, who is one of the passengers, says that the pilgrims are all eminent gentlemen--magistrates, politicians, and men of wealth--and beautiful ladies who were "flowers of fashionable society." The train stops at Vanity Fair, the city of Vanity, which symbolizes a city corrupted by progress. Hawthorne is ironical about the clergy of the place, mentioning the names of the "wise" and "virtuous" representatives of the Church: Rev.

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[1] Hawthorne, "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," p. 1213.

Mr. Shallw-deep, Rev. Mr. Stumble-at-truth, Rev. Mr. Clog-the-spirit, and "the greatest" Rev. Dr. Wind-of-doctrine. Another irony is the "market of virtues" in which everybody in the city participates:

> There is another species of machine for the wholesale manufacture of individual morality. This excellent result is effected by societies for all manner of virtuous purposes, with which a man has merely to connect himself, throwing, as it were, his quota of virtue into the common stock, and the president and directors will take care that the aggregate amount be well applied.[1]

Capitalism, then, seems to be the deepest evil of the city, for it makes people sell even their virtues. But the city presents many other temptations and many passengers stop to take their pleasure or make their profit instead of going onward to the Celestial City. There are two pilgrims, however, who had arrived there on foot and who repudiate all the pleasures of Vanity Fair. They tell the narrator that those who travel on the railroad will never enter the "blessed city," due to their attachment to worldly things. It is significant that the Celestial City, which is very pleasantly described, is nature itself:

> The sweet breezes of this happy clime came refreshingly to our nostrils; we beheld the glimmering gush of silver fountains, overhung by trees of beautiful foliage and delicious fruit, which were propagated by grafts from the celestial gardens.[2]

As the two poor pilgrims had foreseen, no passengers of the train are able to reach that blessed place, for they are all from the city. Those who are attached to civilization in this story will never be able to reach nature and enlightenment.

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[1] Hawthorne, "The Celestial Railroad," p. 1078.

[2] Ibid., p. 1081.

The two pilgrims who in their simplicity and innocence repudiated all worldly comforts and pleasures, are the only ones who are welcomed into the "blessed land."

"Feathertop: a Moralized Legend" is another story which criticizes civilized people's artificiality. Feathertop is an ugly scarecrow which is transformed into a noble gentleman through a witch's power. The terrible Mother Rigby decides to send him to "the great world, where not one man in a hundred, she affirmed, was gifted with more real substance than itself."[1] She means that civilized people, though apparently endowed with noble manners and speech, are actually as empty as a scarecrow. Feathertop's task in a neighboring metropolis would be to visit a certain Master Gookin--who stood at the head of society--and win his pretty daughter's heart, a task which the old witch deems very easy:

> "Put but a bold face on the matter [said Mother Rigby], sigh, smile, flourish thy hat, thrust forth thy leg like a dancing-master, put thy right hand to the left side of thy waist-coat, and pretty Polly Gookin is thine own."[2]

Accordingly, Feathertop comes to the city and the townspeople immediately notice his rich garment and noble port, and take him for a "great nobleman." Master Gookin and his daughter Polly are also deceived by Feathertop's external nobility. All this confirms old Mother Rigby's words regarding civilized people's attachment to empty, artificial values. Thus the girl prepares herself for the interview with the "glistening stranger," by

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[1] Hawthorne, "Feathertop: a Moralized Legend," p. 1097.

[2] Ibid., p. 1098.

> viewing herself in the large looking-glass and practising pretty airs-now a smile, now a ceremonious dignity of aspect, and now a softer smile than the former, kissing her hand likewise, tossing her hand, and managing her fan.[1]

But the full-length looking-glass discloses the true image of Feathertop, and thus, very despondent, he comes back to his "mother." He tells her that he will exist no longer, after having seen himself for "the wretched, ragged, empty thing" he actually is. Then Mother Rigby sadly compares the poor scarecrow to many people in the world, who "never see themselves for what they are":

> "My poor, dear, pretty Feathertop! There are thousands upon thousands of coxombs and charlatans in the world, made up of such a jumble of wornout, forgotten, and good-for-nothing trash as he was! Yet they live in fair repute, and never see themselves for what they are. And why should my poor puppet be the only one to know himself and perish for it?"[2]

Thus she decides not to send Feathertop forth again, for "he seems to have too much heart to bustle for his own advantage in such an empty and heartless world."[3] In this story civilized people turn out to be falser and emptier than a mere scarecrow in their blind attachment to artificial values.

In "Egotism; or the Bosom Serpent," Roderick Elliston reveals the townspeople's deep secrets--their ambition, envy, spite--which they all had tried to hide from each other. Hawthorne is criticizing the townspeople's falsehood, the lack of a real intercourse between man and man which is caused by their futile effort to look perfect in each other's eyes.

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[1] Hawthorne, "Feathertop: a Moralized Legend," p. 1102.

[2] Ibid., p. 1106.

[3] Ibid.

Man also runs the risk of losing his individuality if he lives in a big city, as happens to Wakefield. He leaves his house just for a foolish vanity, expecting that his whole household will go in pursuit of him. But he is not aware of his own insignificance in the big city and is swept up by the crowd of "busy and selfish" London without being noticed. Thus he ceases to exist--although he is still alive--for twenty years!

Even when he is aware of the degenerating power of civilization, civilized man is not able to get rid of its influences. Although Coverdale in The Blithedale Romance had felt "another man" at Blithedale, he expresses a sort of satisfaction when he returns to Boston, as if he had come back home from a long journey. The turbulence of the city has the same value for him as the peaceful breeze at Blithedale:

> Whatever had been my taste for solitude and natural scenery, yet the thick, foggy, stifled element of cities, the entangled life of many men together, sordid as it was, and empty of the beautiful, took quite as strenuous a hold upon my mind... All this was just as valuable, in its way, as the sighing of the breeze among the birch-trees that overshadowed Eliot's pulpit.[1]

After a few weeks he very promptly returns to his old habits and even ridicules the enterprise at Blithedale when he meets his old friends. Zenobia, in the same novel, is another civilized character who, though she joins the group at Blithedale, has always been connected with the world. Thus she wants to take the place of a "maiden aunt" and transmit her "worldly wisdom" to Priscilla. We cannot see in Zenobia the same hopes towards the experiment as are visible in Coverdale. The reasons why she decided to offer her aid to the enterprise have very little to do with its actual aims:

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[1] Hawthorne, The Blithedale Romance, p. 526.

> Partly in earnest,-and, I imagine, as was her disposition, half in a proud jest, or in a kind of recklesness that had grown upon her, out of some hidden grief,-she had given her countenance, and promised liberal pecuniary aid, to our experiment of a better social state.[1]

This perhaps explains her complete change at the time Coverdale meets her in Boston. Then in her rich dress and flaming jewels--unlike the simple dress she used to wear at Blithedale--she treats him coldly and expresses her attachment to city life:

> "Why should we be content with our homely life of a few months past, to the exclusion of all other modes? It was good; but there are other lives as good, or better."[2]

Hester, in The Scarlet Letter, also reveals her attachment to civilization by establishing herself on the outskirts of the town whose people had outlawed her. She could seek freedom in the forest if she wanted, but she is not able to get rid of the town, though she is aware of the people's everlasting condemnation of her sin. In the woman's devotion to the troubled people, we can perceive her deep necessity to be connected with the world:

> In all seasons of calamity, indeed, whether general or of individuals, the outcast of society at once found her place. She came, not as a guest, but as a rightful inmate, into the household that was darkened by trouble; as if its gloomy twilight were a medium in which she was entitled to hold intercourse with her fellow-creatures.[3]

Dimmesdale is another character who could never live far from the city, for "his native gifts, his culture, and his entire development would secure him a home only in the midst of civilization and refinement."[1]

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[1] Hawthorne, The Blithedale Romance, p. 551.

[2] Ibid., p. 536.

[3] Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter, p. 179.

Thus we have seen that the city exerts deep influences upon civilized man, making him incapable of leaving it difinitively. This influence, however, does not seem so decisive upon country-bred people. It is true that they all reveal a certain degree of change after being in contact with the city, that is, they become somewhat educated by their experience but never actually become corrupted. Phoebe, in The House of the Seven Gables, reveals a visible change after coming to the Pyncheons' house. She ceases to be so constantly gay as she used to be before being in contact with the wretched Hepzibah and Clifford. She becomes more thoughtful and starts analysing and better understanding her cousins' troubles which were caused by the wicked world:

> "I shall never be so merry as before I knew Cousin Hepzibah and poor Cousin Clifford [said Phoebe]. I have grown a great deal older, in this little time. Older, and I hope, wiser, and,-not exactly sadder,-but, certainly, with not half so much lightness in my spirits![2]

Though her experiences had made her "graver, more womanly, and deep-eyed," she still preserves her cheerfulness and purity at the end of the novel.

Donatello, in The Marble Faun, is likewise transformed into a sad person after few months' contact with Rome. Miriam tells him that he is getting spoilt in that dreary city and, unless he goes back to his home among the hills, he will be as wise and as wretched as all the rest of mankind. This actually happens after Donatello's involuntary crime; that simple and joyous creature ceases to exist, and an intelligent and melancholy man takes his place. There is strong evidence in the story to prove that the wisdom he acquired out of his sad experience makes him improve spiritually. He ceases to be a "thing of sportive, animal nature" and is now a human being with deep feelings and thoughts:

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[1] Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter, p. 211.

[2] Hawthorne, The House of the Seven Gables, p. 372.

> That tone [Donatello's] too, 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.[1]

Yet Donatello's transformation saddens Kenyon, for it had taken away much of the simple grace that he thought was the best of Donatello's peculiarities. Nothing else affected Kenyon so sadly in Donatello as his newly acquired power of repressing his emotions, as he had never done before. Thus Hawthorne is regretting, through Kenyon, the loss of the sylvan characteristics in Donatello, though the latter had gained spiritually after his transformation. At the end of the novel Donatello is again a playful Faun, with the same sweet and delightful sylvan peculiarities.

Hilda, in the same story, also changes noticeably after witnessing her friend's crime. From this sad experience, she acquires wisdom which enables her to see beauty less vividly, but to feel the truth, or the lack of it, more profoundly. Thus she becomes critical of the Italian pictures and condemns almost everything which she was wont to admire, for she begins to suspect that many of her venerated painters have been just "playing off a tremendous jest" by substituting a marvelous knack of external arrangement, instead of live sympathy for their subject which should have been their inspiration. The girl had known such a reality and had been taught by it to distinguish the large portion that is unreal in every work of art. Hilda's partial loss of innocence, then, has nothing to do with corruption; it is the result of a tragic experience which had awakened in her the sense of criticism towards the pictures.

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[1] Hawthorne, The Marble Faun, p. 775.

Robin, in "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," is another country-bred character who has contact with the city and, as we have already seen, he suddenly becomes educated in a day's time. But it is also clear, in the story, that the boy gets weary of the experiences of the city and misses his father's household. At the end he asks for the way to the ferry, for he had decided to get rid of the corrupt town life and go back to his immaculate household.

The city, then, is for Hawthorne a place full of corruption, falsehood, temptations, and he seems to lament civilized man's attachment to it. Country-people's contact with the city, however, hardly corrupts them, and by this Hawthorne means that nature's positive influence on man is powerful enough to keep him free from degeneration.

ARISTOCRACY

We have seen Hawthorne's criticism of the city which deeply contrasts with his sympathetic view of nature. Among the corrupt inhabitants of the city, the aristocrats are pointed out as the worst ones for their pride, ambition and falseness. Aristocracy is an old product of civilization which has given greater importance to a man's family inheritance than his individual values, and Hawthorne criticizes and even ridicules this snobbishness in his books. The House of the Seven Gables is the most significant in demonstrating this attitude, since it describes the decay of an old aristocratic family. Hawthorne starts by recounting the time when the first Pyncheon--"the prominent and powerful" Colonel Pyncheon--dwelled in the house, and when there was a total discrimination between high and low ranks. This we can clearly see in a passage which describes the discriminate treatment the aristocracy and the plebeian classes received at the entrance of the seven-gabled house on the day the owner gave all the town a big party to inaugurate it:

> Just within the entrance, however, stood two serving-men, pointing some of the guests to the neighborhood of the kitchen, and ushering others into the statelier rooms,-hospitable alike to all, but still with a scrutinizing regard to the high or low degree of each.[1]

That was the time when the aristocracy could venture to be proud, and the low were content to be abased, for "there was something so massive, stable and almost irresistibly imposing in the exterior presentment of established rank and great possessions, that their very existence seemed to give them a right to exist."[2] But for Hawthorne, rank is "the grosser substance of wealth and a splendid establishment," and has no spiritual existence after the death of these. Thus it is, that our author presents Hepzibah Pyncheon a hundred and sixty years later as "the immemorial lady" with her antique portraits, pedigrees, coats of arms, records and traditions, reduced now to the hucksteress of a cent-shop. At sixty years old, she is compelled by poverty to step down from her pedestal of imaginary rank, and this makes her feel deeply humiliated:

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[1] Hawthorne, The House of the Seven Gables, p. 249.

[2] Ibid., p. 257.

> The new shopkeeper dropped the first solid result of her commercial enterprise into the till. It was done! The sordid stain of that copper coin could never be washed away from her palm... Now let Hepzibah turn the old Pyncheon portraits with their faces to the wall, and take the map of her Eastern territory to kindle the kitchen fire, and blow up the flame with the empty breath of her ancestral traditions! What had she to do with ancestry? Nothing; no more than with posterity! No lady, now, but simply Hepzibah Pyncheon, a forlorn old maid, and keeper of a cent-shop![1]

Hepzibah's pride is absurdly hurt, moreover, by the familiar, sometimes rude, tone with which people address her, for she had unconsciously flattered herself with the idea that there would be a gleam or halo about her person which would insure an obeisance to her "sterling gentility." Hawthorne seems to take an almost proletarian delight in the abasement of aristocratic pretensions, for he thinks the inordinate family pride of the Pyncheons has been a source of evil for many generations.

Phoebe's presence in the novel--with her simplicity and availability--then symbolizes the beginning of a new generation:

> Instead of discussing her claim to rank among ladies, it would be preferable to regard Phoebe as the example of feminine grace and availability combined, in a state of society, if there were any such, where ladies did not exist. There it should be woman's office to move in the midst of practical affairs, and to gild them all, the very homeliest, with an atmosphere of loveliness and joy.[2]

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[1] Hawthorne, The House of the Seven Gables, p. 273.

[2] Ibid., p. 291.

This entirely contrasts with Hepzibah's ridiculous consciousness of long descent and her inability to put herself to any useful purpose, which she regards as a precious hereditary trait. Yet Hawthorne's treatment of this "born lady" is sympathetic; he does not present her as a villain, but rather as a victim of an old consciousness of nobility which led her to live in complete seclusion throughout her life, and now makes her feel deeply humiliated at the idea of having to earn her own bread. Her pride, however, does not compel her to do any evil, for she is a naturally tender and sensitive creature.

The villain of the story is another Pyncheon, namely Judge Jaffrey Pyncheon, who had won higher eminence in the world than any of his race since the time of his first ancestor. He is introduced in the story as a man of respectable appearance:

> No better model need be sought, nor could have been found, of a very high order of respectability, which, by some indescribable magic, not merely expressed itself in his looks and gestures, but even governed the fashion of his garments, and rendered them all proper and essential to the man [Judge Pyncheon].[1]

He is also known at large as a man of "the sunniest complacency and benevolence." But this "goodly aspect" is only a mask which the Judge wears to deceive the world, for he is actually a cold-hearted, selfish, ambitious, proud, and even cruel man who is capable of pursuing his selfish ends through evil means. After having failed to gain Hepzibah's confidence through his usual kindness, he threatens to confine his own cousin, Clifford, in a public asylum if he does not help him to find a fortune which he imagines their dead uncle to have left hidden in some secret place. This strategy puts the Judge in that class of men whose course of action lies only among the external phenomena of life, for these "possess vast ability in grasping, and arranging, and appropriating to themselves, the big, heavy, solid unrealities such as gold, landed estate, offices of trust, and emolument, and public honors."[1] The Judge's good deeds are limited to those which can make him publicly known:

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[1] Hawthorne, The House of the Seven Gables, p. 276.

> Next he [Judge Pyncheon] might attend the meeting of a charitable society; the very name of which, however, in the multiplicity of his benevolence, is quite forgotten; so that this engagement may pass unfulfilled, and no great harm done.[2]

Hawthorne could not allow this false and wicked aristocrat to have a happy end, full of gold and glory; instead, he makes the Judge die suddenly in the parlor of his ancestors' house and be left there alone for the whole night. And even after the world learns of his death, "the honorable Judge Pyncheon was beginning to be a stale subject before half the county newspapers had found time to put their columns in mourning, and publish his exceedingly eulogistic obituary."[3] All the worldly possessions the Judge had accumulated with such a zeal, left no substance after his death, for they were actually as empty as the owner.

Esther Dudley, in "Old Esther Dudley," is, like Hepzibah, a victim of the feeling of superiority which every aristocrat inherits from his ancestors. She is the daughter of an ancient and eminent family which had fallen into poverty and decay, leaving its last descendant no resource save the bounty of the King, nor any shelter except the Province House. Thus she has lived there alone for many years, receiving a small pension the greater part of which she expended in adorning herself with magnificent garments. Esther's complete seclusion, her age, her apparent partial craziness, have made her the object both of fear and pity. Her "thousand rocky prejudices" derived from a ridiculous consciousness of noble descent have made this "born lady" lead a solitary and unhappy life.

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[1] Hawthorne, The House of the Seven Gables, p. 381.

[2] Ibid., p. 406.

[3] Ibid., p. 430.

In "Lady Eleanor's Mantle," Hawthorne punishes Lady Eleanor for her "harsh, unyelding pride, a haughty consciousness of her hereditary advantages." Thus she had always abased all the low-rank people, until the fatal pestilence caught her and made her realize that it was punishment for her pride:

> "The curse of Heaven hath stricken me, because I would not call man my brother, nor woman sister. I wrapped myself in pride as in a mantle, and scorned the sympathies of nature; and therefore has nature made this wretched body the medium of a dreadful sympathy."[1]

In all these examples Hawthorne has shown us his antipathy towards a class full of foolish prejudices which overvalues man's mere descent and ignores his real individual values. Aristocracy, then, as one of the worst products of civilization, deeply contrasts with the simple, innocent, spontaneous people from the countryside, whose contact with nature has kept them free from any conventions or prejudices.

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[1] Hawthorne, "Lady Eleanor's Mantle," p. 980.

SCIENCE

Hawthorne considers science--which is also a product of civilization--as a powerful degenerating force, for it has made man lose his natural feelings and become a cold-hearted intellectual. This is evident in many of his works. In The Scarlet Letter, for instance, Hawthorne criticizes the physicians whose scientific researches have made them lose "the spiritual view of existence":

> In their researches into the human frame, it may be that the higher and more subtle faculties of such men were materialized, and that they lost the spiritual view of existence amid the intricacies of that woundrous mechanims, which seemed to involve art enough to comprise all of life within itself.[1]

Thus Roger Chillingworth is presented in the novel as a cold physician "whose eyes had a strange, penetrating power, when it was their owner's purpose to read the human soul."[2] For science's sake, he is capable of going pitilessly into the depths of the human heart, desirous only of truth, as if he were dealing with "geometrical problems, instead of human passions." His poor patient, then, is actually a mere subject for his scientific experiments:

> "A rare case!" he muttered. "I must needs look deeper into it. A strange sympathy betwixt soul and body! Were it only for the art's sake, I must search this matter to the bottom!"[3]

When he finds out that his own patient is the very man who had caused his unhappiness, Chillingworth is still capable of planning revenge in cold blood. He lets his victim live for seven more years and derives his enjoyment from the constant analysis of the poor minister's tormented heart:

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[1] Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter, p. 154.

[2] Ibid., p. 119.

[3] Ibid., p. 165.

> "Never did mortal suffer what this man has suffered [said Chillingwirth]. And all, all, in the sight of his worst enemy! He has been conscious of me. He has felt an influence dwelling always upon him like a curse. He knew, by some spiritual sense, that no friendly hand was pulling at his heart-strings and that an eye was looking curiously into him, which sought only evil, and found it. But he knew not that the eye and hand were mine!"[1]

Thus Chillingworth has completely lost his feelings and lived solely for the analysis of his poor patient's sufferings.

Such is the dehumanizing power of science that it at times sacrifices even human life in some of Hawthorne's writings. "Rappacini's Daughter" is a typical example. Rappacini is also a cold scientist with "a face singularly marked with intellect and cultivation, but which could never, even in his more youthful days, have expressed much warmth of heart."[2] In his lust for knowledge, he sacrifices his own daughter who at last perishes as "the poor victim of man's ingenuity and of thwarted nature, and of the fatality that attends all such efforts of perverted wisdom."[3] The nature which Rappacini has created is artificial, "the monstrous offspring of man's depraved fancy" which is poisonous and thus as dangerous as its creator. Anyone who breathed its perfume, would be contaminated forever.

Aylmer, another experimenter, (in "The Birthmark"), kills his wife, though unintentionally, in an attempt to produce flawless beauty. As a man of science, Aylmer wanted his beloved Georgiana to be physically perfect, for her spiritual perfection was not enough for him. He became so obsessed by the idea of removing the birthmark from his wife's face, that he once dreamed that he was trying to do it through an operation:

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[1] Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter, p. 185.

[2] Hawthorne, "Rappacini's Daughter," p. 1045.

[3] Ibid., p. 1065.

> He had fancied himself with his servant Aminadab, attempting an operation for the removal of the birthmark; but the deeper went the knife, the deeper sank the hand, until at length its tiny grasp appeared to have caught hold of Georgiana's heart; whence, however, her husband was inexorably resolved to cut or wrench it away.[1]

Aylmer would not hesitate to kill his own wife in his eager pursuit of a scientific end. This actually happens at the end, but until the fatal failure, Aylmer was full of the pride of scientific achievement, "confident in his science." He believed that the scientist "would ascend from one step of powerful intelligence to another, until he should lay his hand on the secret of creative force and perhaps make new worlds for himself."[2] His love for science triumphs over his love for his wife, and his grief at the end of story, we must believe, is not so much over the death of Georgiana as the failure of the experiment. This excessive zeal for science may also be proved by Aylmer's reaction towards the effects of the liquid upon Georgiana:

> Aylmer sat by her side, watching her aspect with the emotions proper to a man the whole value of whose existence was involved in the process now to be tested. Mingled with this mood, however, was the philosophic investigation characteristic of the man of science. Not the minutest symptom escaped him. A heightened flush of the cheek, a slight irregularity of breath, a quiver of the eyelid, a hardly perceptible tremor through the frame,-such were the details which, as the moments passed, he wrote down in his folio volume.[3]

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[1] Hawthorne, "The Birthmark," p, 1023.

[2] Ibid., p. 1021.

[3] Ibid., p. 1031.

Throughout the story Aylmer has tried to justify his course by regarding it as the noble pursuit of perfection, and his dying wife tells him the same: "You have aimed loftily; you have done nobly."[1] But such is not Hawthorne's meaning; Aylmer tragically missed a profounder wisdom.

In The Blithedale Romance we have Westervelt who, while being a charlatan scientist, exerts a powerful influence on the people. He affirms faith in a golden future and speaks publicly of the dawning era "that could link soul to soul" in "mutually conscious brotherhood," but he speaks of it "as if it were a matter of chemical discovery." As against the brotherhood of voluntary love, which is based on human sympathy, Westervelt's mesmeric union is a product of technology, an enforced bondage, destructive of true individuality as well as of true community. He is a representative of "worldly society," whose gold band around his false teeth reveals him as a "moral and physical humbug":

> He was altogether earthy, worldly, made for time and its gross objects, and incapable-except by a sort of dim reflection caught from other minds-of so much as one spiritual idea.[2]

Ethan Brand was a "simple and loving" lime-burner who, by assiduous self-cultivation, attains eminence as a scientific philosopher. His intellect, however, destroys his feelings, and "Where was the heart?" Hawthorne asks:

> That, indeed, had withered,-had contracted,-had hardened,-had perished! He had lost his hold of the magnetic chain

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[1] Hawthorne, "The Birthmark," p. 1032.

[2] Hawthorne, Blithedale Romance, p. 581.

> 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, looking on mankind as the subject of his experiment, and at length converting man and woman to be his puppets...[1]

Brand's intellect makes him commit "the unpardonable sin" which Hawthorne defines as "the sin of an intellect that triumphed over the sense of brotherhood with man and reverence for God, and sacrificed everything to its own mighty claims."[2] As an experimental psychologist, Brand had used a young girl as the subject of an experiment and had "wasted, absorbed, and perhaps annihilated" her soul in the process. Brand at last finds out that he is an "unpardonable sinner" and perishes at the end. It is very significant that little Joe, the lime-burner's son, tells his father in the morning after Brand's death: "Dear father, that strange man is gone, and the sky and the mountains all seem glad of it!"[3] In Hawthorne's world nature is against intellect and rejoices at its destruction.

All this leads us to conclude that Hawthorne deems science a dangerous product of civilization which dehumanizes man to such an extent that the scientist at times sacrifices even human life in his pursuit of a scientific end. Thus once more Hawthorne is saying that man should keep his natural feelings by remaining in contact with nature, for civilization has made him lose them and even cease to respect human life.

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[1] Hawthorne, "Ethan Brand," p. 1194.

[2] Ibid., p. 1189.

[3] Ibid., p. 1196.

RELIGION

Religion has both positive and negative sides in Hawthorne's writings. It is a positive influence on man while he professes his faith in God and derives spiritual enjoyment from it. Phoebe (in The House of the Seven Gables) and Hilda (in The Marble Faun) are the most representative examples of this. However, when people intellectualize religion by making their own laws and compelling everybody to follow them, religion ceases to be a positive influence, for, as we have seen, intellect is for Hawthorne an evil product of civilization. This intellectualization leads man to fanaticism, and hate instead of love results from his religious convictions. The Scarlet Letter is the most representative instance of this, for it presents a Puritan community

> amongst whom religion and law were almost identical, and in whose character both were so thoroughly interfused, that the mildest and the severest acts of public discipline were alike made venerable and awful."[1]

Thus we see the women of the community--who regard themselves as "church-members in good repute"--pronounce their cruel sentences on Hester's sin, and one of them even says that the sinner should die, for such law is "both in the Scripture and the statute-book." But the magistracy, "in their great mercy and tenderness of heart," decide that the culprit will not have inflicted the penalty of death; they "only" doom her to be exposed to the public for three hours on the scaffold, and to wear the scarlet letter as a mark of shame for the rest of her life. Thus about those "good, just, sage" clergymen who composed the jury, Hawthorne says that,

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[1] Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter, p. 113.

> out of the whole human family, it would not have been easy to select the same number of wise and virtuous persons, who should be less capable of sitting in judgment on an erring woman's heart, and disentangling its mesh of good and evil, than the sages of rigid aspect towards whom Hester Prynne now turned her face."[1]

Hawthorne describes one of them and his comments let us perceive his antipathy towards "intellectual gifts":

> That voice which had called her [Hester's] attention was that of the reverend and famous John Wilson, the eldest clergyman of Boston, a great scholar, like most of his contemporaries in the profession, and withal a man of kind and genial spirit. This last attribute, however, had been less carefully developed than his intellectual gifts, and was, in truth, rather a matter of shame than self-congratulation with him... He looked like the darkly engraved portraits which we see prefixed to old volume of sermons; and had no more right than one of those portraits would have to step forth, as he now did, and meddle with a question of human guilt, passion and anguish.[2]

Hawthorne suggests that intellectual people are the least capable of dealing with "human guilt, passion and anguish" because studies have made them lose their natural feelings. Yet scholarly clergymen are the most influential members of Puritan community, and whatever they speak is promptly accepted by everybody as a sacred truth. Therefore, because of their ideas, Hester is forced to give up her individuality and become "the general symbol at which the preacher and moralist might point, and in which they might vivify and embody their images of woman's frailty and sinful passion."[3] The whole town, even the children, start treating her as an outcast sinner:

> In all her intercourse with society, however, there was nothing that made her feel as if she belonged to it. Every

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[1] Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter, p. 122.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid., p. 130.

> word, every gesture, and even the silence of those with whom she came in contact, implied, and often expressed, that she was banished, and as much alone as if she inhabited another sphere, or communicated with the common nature by other organs and senses than the rest of human kind.[1]

The shame, despair, and solitude which she was condemned to endure makes Hester criticize the human institutions with "hardly more reverence than the Indian would feel for the clerical band, the judicial robe, the pillory, the gallows, the fireside, the church."[2] Yet the end of the story presents Hester back in New England, desirous of continuing her penitence, for that would be a "more real life" for her than the comfortable one which Pearl could offer her in another land. This means that Hester was not able to get rid of the severe and repressing Puritan principles and thus her conscience compelled her to spend her whole life in an unhappy seclusion. Hester is not, however, the only victim of the repression exerted by the Puritans. Dimmesdale, the sensitive minister, inflicts severe self-punishment as a penitence for his sin:

> In Mr. Dimmesdale's secret closet, under lock and key, there was a bloody scourge. Oftentimes, this Protestant and Puritan divine had plied it on his own shoulders; laughing bitterly at himself the while, and smiting so much the more pitilessly because of that bitter laugh. It was his custom, too, as it has been that of many other pious Puritans, to fast,-not, however, like them, in order to purify the body and render it the fitter medium of celestial illumination, but rigorously, and until his knees trembled beneath him, as an act of penance. He kept vigils, likewise, night after night, sometimes in utter darkness; sometimes with a glimmering lamp;...[3]

Minute self-examination was a fostered Puritan practice, and at the head of the social system--as the clergymen at that day stood--Dimmesdale was still more influenced by its regulations, its principles, and even its prejudices than the laymen. Thus he spends the rest of his life in deep torments, without being able to reveal his sin until death, together with his final confession, brings him relief and peace. Hooper, in "The Minister's Black Veil," is also tormented by a feeling of guilt which leads him to wear an awful black veil as an act of penitence. He never casts the veil away even though he himself is horrified by it, as he confesses to Elizabeth: "O! You know not how lonely I am, and how frightened, to be alone behind my black veil!"[1] And whatever reason he had to wear the veil, a man would never experience greater suffering than being rejected by everybody like he is:

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[1] Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter, p. 133.

[2] Ibid., p. 202.

[3] Ibid., p. 169.

> ...it had separated him from cheerful brotherhood and woman's love, and kept him in that saddest of all prisons, his own heart.[2]

Thus Hooper leads a solitary and unhappy existence as a Puritan who has repressed his natural feelings through his obsessive concern with his own guilt. In "Roger Malvin's Burial," Reuben experiences similar feelings of remorse towards an unfulfilled vow. He had vowed that he would return to the wild forest to bury the body of Roger Malvin, whom he had left to die alone many years before. There was an almost superstitious regard paid by the frontier inhabitants to the rites of sepulture, and Reuben, as one of them, is year after year tortured by remorse:

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[1] Hawthorne, "The Minister's Black Veil," p. 878.

[2] Ibid., p. 880.

> His one secret thought became like a chain binding down his spirit and like a serpent gnawing into his heart; and he was transformed into a sad and downcast yet irritable man.[1]

Eighteen years after the vow, Reuben comes back to the place where he had left his companion, and there he accidentally kills his only son. The father's heart is stricken, but Reuben feels that his sin was at last expiated through his little Cyrus's death. Thus Reuben's religious convictions make him deem it good that his only son is dead:

> The vow that the wounded youth had made the blighted man had come to redeem. His sin was expiated,-the curse was gone from him; and in the hour when he had shed blood dearer to him than his own, a prayer, the first for years, went up to Heaven from the lips of Reuben Bourne.[2]

Many are the examples of the repression encouraged by religion in Hawthorne's writings. In "The Gentle Boy" he again criticizes the Puritans for their fanaticism, intolerance and cruelty, this time in the account of an old Quaker who is persecuted by the Puritans just because he belongs to another sect:

> "Even of late was the light obscured within me, when the men of blood had banished me on pain of death, and the constables led me onward from village to village towards wilderness. A strong and cruel hand was wielding the knotted cords; they sunk deep into the flesh, and thou mighst have tracked every reel and totter of my footsteps by the blood that followed.[3]

More evidence for Hawthorne's antipathy towards the Puritans can be found in "The Maypole of Merry Mount" through his description of nature as the reflection of their moral darkness:

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[1] Hawthorne, "Roger Malvin's Burial," p. 1132.

[2] Ibid., p. 1139.

[3] Hawthorne, "The Gentle Boy," p. 907.

> Should the grizzly saints establish their jurisdiction over the gay sinners, then would their spirits darken all the clime, and make it a land of clouded visages.[1]

The opposite occurs regarding the people of Merry Mount; instead of the dark, gloomy nature, a bright, glad one is presented as reflecting their gaiety:

> Garden flowers, and blossoms of the wilderness, laughed gladly forth amid the verdure, so fresh and dewy that they must have grown by magic on that happy pine-tree. Where this green and glowery splendor terminated, the shaft of the Maypole was stained with the seven brilliant hues of the banner at its top. On the lowest green bough hung an abundant wreath of roses, some that had been gathered in the sunniest spots of the forest, and others, of still richer blush which the colonists had reared from English seed.[2]

We can easily notice the enthusiasm with which Hawthorne presents those joyous people who, unlike the Puritans who live attached to their own restrictive moral laws, give a full outlet to their natural feelings.

Hawthorne's criticism of repressive religious principles is not, however, limited to Puritanism. He also condemns the celibacy of the Shakers as being an unnatural way of life. Thus Martha Pierson, who loves Adam Colburn (in "The Shaker Bridal"), is restrained from marriage by the laws of the sect. The eldest Shakers, in their fanaticism, had overcome their natural sympathy with human frailties and affections, and thus they bid Martha and Adam to join their hands "not in earthly affection," but as "brother and sister in spiritual love." This is too much for Martha who dies of frustration and despair, for "her heart could endure the weight of its desolate agony no longer."[3]

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[1] Hawthorne, "The Maypole of Merry Mount," p. 887.

[2] Ibid., p. 883.

[3] Hawthorne, "The Shaker Bridal," p. 1014.

In "The Canterbury Pilgrims," the Shakers likewise exert repression towards what they call "the iniquities of flesh," and this makes the young couple, Miriam and Josiah, leave the community so that they can freely love each other. Soon after their stepping forth into the world, however, they meet a group of people who had become desillusioned with the world and thus decided to try a better life in the Shaker village. They all vehemently warn the couple to turn back to their previous life, for the world would likewise disappoint them. Martha and Josiah, however, do not change their minds: "We will not go back [said they]. The world never can be dark to us, for we will always love one another."[1] Thus Hawthorne makes natural feelings triumph over the "cold and passionless security" of the Shaker community. Hawthorne likewise feared that the rule of celibacy for Catholic priests could produce no good result. As Kenyon saw the matter, in The Marble Faun, the priests of Rome

> were placed in an unnatural relation with woman, and thereby lost the healthy, human conscience that pertains to other human beings, who own the sweet household ties connecting them with wife and daughter."[2]

Thus we have seen Hawthorne's hostility towards the intellectualization of something which should be spiritual, and consequently towards the repression caused by that intellectualization. In Hawthorne's books religious principles make people repress their natural feelings and be exclusively concerned about keeping up their appearances of purity. Once more he tried to prove that human conventions are in an unnatural relation with man's inner nature, but nature can offer him the freedom of giving outlet to his natural feelings.

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[1] Hawthorne, "The Canterbury Pilgrims," p. 1203.

[2] Hawthorne, The Marble Faun, p. 827.

ART

We have seen that Hawthorne disapproved of intellectuality for its dehumanizing power, that is, Hawthorne thought intellectual people lose their natural feelings and become cold-hearted, even cruel, like scientists and the religious people in his books. Artists, however, escape this condemnation. Some of them are described as highly civilized and intellectual people, like Kenyon, Miriam (in The Marble Faun), and Coverdale (in The Blithedale Romance), but they escape Hawthorne's harsh criticism because of their deep sensitivity, even if this very sensitivity has separated them from humanity, as we can see in the following passage from The Marble Faun:

> Artists, indeed, are lifted by the ideality of their pursuits a little way off the earth, and are therefore able to catch the evanescent fragrance that floats in the atmosphere of life above the heads of the ordinary crowd. ... there is a property, a gift, a talisman, common to their class, entitling them to partake more bountifully than other people in the thin delights of moonshine and romance.[1]

Owen Warland (in "The Artist of the Beautiful") is the most representative example of the artist's delicate feelings in his search for the beautiful as opposed to the criteria of utility and self-interest assumed by his society. He has been "remarkable for a delicate ingenuity... But it was always for purposes of grace, and never with any mockery of the useful."[2]

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[1] Hawthorne, The Marble Faun, p. 679.

[2] Hawthorne, "The Artist of the Beautiful," p. 1140.

Peter Hovenden represents society's materialism whose mere presence blights Owen's imagination:

> There was nothing so antipodal to his nature as this man's cold, unimaginative sagacity, by contact with which everything was converted into a dream except the densest matter of the physical world.[1]

Peter's "keen understanding" makes him believe only in what he can see and touch. This skepticism, this lack of spiritual elements, is the criticism Hawthorne makes of the world, of which Peter is presented as the worst representative in the story. For the world art is just nonsensical trash, and Hawthorne shows us in the following passage how hard it is for one to be an artist and at the same time to live within civilization:

> It is requisite for the ideal artist to possess a force of character that seems hardly compatible with its delicacy; he must keep his faith in himself while the incredulous world assails him with its utter disbelief...[2]

The sensitive Owen is often deeply hurt by worldly criticism, and once he violently answers Peter's bitter comments on his creation: "You are my evil spirit; you and the hard, coarse world! The leaden thoughts and the despondency that you fling upon me are my clogs, else I should long ago have achieved the task that I was created for."[3] Amid the various tribulations, however, Owen for a time lowers himself into the mental state of Peter. He loses "his faith in the invisible" and falls so far as to pride himself on his skepticism. "Poor, poor and fallen Owen Warland!", Hawthorne laments, "this is the calamity of men whose spiritual part dies out of them and leaves the grosser understanding to assimilate them more to the things of which alone it can take cognizance...[1] In Owen, however, this state is only a sleep from which he awakens to become once more a "being of thought, imagination, and keenest sensibility." Hawthorne is saying that the artist is saved from falling into the material world by his innate necessity of pursuing spiritual fulfillment,for, as already indicated, he is endowed with deeper sensitivity than common people are.

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[1] Hawthorne, "The Artist of the Beautiful," p. 1144.

[2] Ibid., p. 1143.

[3] Ibid., p. 1145.

This sensitivity accounts for the artists' Platonic love in Hawthorne's books. They love so loftly that this sentiment saves some of them from becoming cold intellectuals. In The Marble Faun Kenyon loves Hilda more than sculpture, and so he "could hardly be reckoned a consummate artist, because there was something dearer to him than art."[2] The sculptor discovers this truth when Hilda disappears from her tower and leaves him with deep feelings of abandonment:

> Along with the lamp on Hilda's tower, the sculptor now felt that a light had gone out, or, at least, was ominously obscured, to which he owed whatever cheerfulness had heretofore illuminated his cold, artistic life.[3]

Coverdale, in The Blithedale Romance, is another intellectual who, though coldly devoted to the study of his associates at Blithedale, proves not to be as aloof as he seems when at the end he confesses his love for Priscilla. Holgrave, a daguerreotypist in The House of the Seven Gables, is likewise a cold, even sarcastic, observer of the Pyncheons in the beginning:

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[1] Hawthorne, "The Artist of the Beautiful," p. 1150.

[2] Hawthorne, The Marble Faun, p. 834.

[3] Ibid., p. 825.

> "Undoubtedly", said the daguerreotypist, "I do feel an interest in this antiquated, poverty-stricken old maiden lady, and this degraded and shattered gentleman... It is not my impulse, as regards these two individuals, either to help or hinder; but to look on, to analyze, to explain matters to myself, and to comprehend the drama which, for almost two hundred years, has been dragging its slow length over the ground where you and I now tread. If permitted to witness the close, I doubt not to derive a moral satisfaction from it, go matters how they may..."[1]

Holgrave's love for Phoebe, however, humanizes him and makes him deem the Pyncheons' house his home and the old Hepzibah and Clifford--his previous subjects for analysis--his family. For Owen (in "The Artist of the Beautiful") and Drowne (in "Drowne's Wooden Image"), love is an inspiring force which stimulates their artistic sensibility. This force exerts such power upon Drowne that it is only under its influence that he is able to carve a wooden image with "the life-giving touch," unlike the lifeless works which he had created before and which he is condemned to create after his muse's departure:

> To our friend Drowne there came a brief season of excitement, kindled by love. It rendered him a genius for that one occasion, but, quenched in disappointment, left him again the mechanical carver in wood...[2]

Though temporarily, Drowne achieves the end which Hawthorne considers as the artistic ideal: the spiritualization of work. Art for him must possess life or else it is worthless. In The Marble Faun Kenyon shows his disappointment:

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[1] Hawthorne, The House of the Seven Gables, p. 373.

[2] Hawthorne, "Drowne's Wooden Image," p. 1124.

> "When I look at what I fancied to be a statue, lacking only breath to make it live, and find it a mere lump of senseless stone, into which I have not really succeeded in moulding the spiritual part of my idea."[1]

The sculptor means that the artist can achieve his ideal end only if he succeeds in "warming the marble with an ethereal life."[2] Owen's creation (in "The Artist of the Beautiful") is a "spiritualized mechanism"; that is, it transcends the merely mechanical to become a living organism. Thus its beauty is not only outward, for "in the secret of that butterfly and its beauty... is represented the intellect, the imagination, the sensibility, the soul of an Artist of the Beautiful."[3] Here is a great contrast between artists and scientists, though they are both considered intellectuals. Whereas the scientists destroy human lives in their attempt to achieve scientific ends, the artists' aim is to give life to their creations out of their extraordinary sensitivity.

This sensitivity, which prevents the artists from losing their natural feelings, accounts for their close relationship to nature. Kenyon (in The Marble Faun) feels a "spiritual delight" during his walk on the wild Campagna, in spite of a heart full of doleful thoughts caused by Hilda's disappearance:

> In this natural intercourse with a rude and healthy form of animal life, there was something that wonderfully revived Kenyon's spirits. The warm rays of the sun, too, were wholesome for him in body and soul; and so was a breeze that bestirred itself occasionally, as if for the sole purpose

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[1] Hawthorne, The Marble Faun, p. 808.

[2] Ibid., p. 667.

[3] Hawthorne, "The Artist of the Beautiful," p. 1154.

> of breathing upon his cheek...[1]

Coverdale (in The Blithedale Romance) is another artist who enjoys his contact with nature at Blithedale, for he finds the earth "a green garden, blossoming with many colored delights," and the following passage (already quoted) proves that he would have remained there for the rest of his life if the enterprise had not been a failure:

> I could have knelt down, and have laid my breast against that soil. The red clay of which my frame was moulded seemed nearer akin to those crumbling furrows than to any other portion of the world's dust. There was my home, and there might be my grave.[2]

Owen, the "Artist of the Beautiful," likewise fully enjoys nature while he seeks for the ideal artistic subject:

> He wasted the sunshine, as people said, in wandering through the woods and fields and along the banks of streams. There, like a child, he found amusement in chasing butterflies or watching the motions of water insects... The chase of butterflies was an apt emblem of the ideal pursuit in which he had spent so many golden hours... Sweet, doubtless, were these days, and congenial to the artist's soul.[3]

In this passage we easily notice that Owen feels much at home within nature, to such an extent that his artistic achievement is possible only when he creates a work of art out of an element of nature: a butterfly.

Hawthorne's artists, then, are treated more favorably than his scientists and religious people because of their sensitivity and closeness to nature, in spite of their alienation caused by their deep self-consciousness that they are superior to ordinary people.

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[1] Hawthorne, The Marble Faun, p. 832.

[2] Hawthorne, The Blithedale Romance, p. 560.

[3] Hawthorne, "The Artist of the Beautiful," p. 1145.

In short, Hawthorne's fiction consistently demonstrates us his negative view of civilization through his criticism of the city, aristocracy, science and religion. Hawthorne considered civilization to have caused man to lose his natural tendencies of innocence, spontaneity, and simplicity, and instead to have become attached to artificial values such as materialism, external appearance, tradition, and intellectuality. All this sharply contrasts with Hawthorne's optimistic view of nature as seen in the previous chapter.

CONCLUSION

Though the ambivalence and complexity of Hawthorne's attitudes have led critics to differ regarding the author's view of nature and civilization, I think there is enough evidence in his works to prove that he favors nature's influence on man which contrasts with the degenerating force of civilized values.

Nature is described as an ideal place, full of beauty which exerts a positive influence upon man. As a consequence, the country-bred characters are natural, simple, spontaneous and innocent in Hawthorne's books. Another example for Hawthorne's sympathy towards the natural elements is the immaculate presence of the children whose purity has not been corrupted by civilization yet. Even adults, like Beatrice, Hepzibah and Clifford, are presented as innocent children for their total ignorance of the world. Nature is also a place of freedom for those who feel repressed by society. Then some of Hawthorne's characters escape, even for a few moments, from the repressive forces of the city and enjoy their real selves within nature. Finally nature provides man with the possibilities to improve himself spiritually, even though he has already been corrupted by civilization.

As opposed to these positive qualities attributed to nature, civilized values--like artificiality, tradition, materialism, intellectuality, conventions--are pointed by Hawthorne as being in unnatural relation with man's nature, for they prevent him from giving a full outlet to his natural feelings. Thus the aristocrats represent a class full of foolish prejudices which at times cause them to lead a solitary and unhappy life. Intellectuality is also criticized by Hawthorne as an evil product of civilization which makes man lose his natural feelings and even become cruel, as happens to the scientists and the religious people. Consequently, many characters are shown to be victims of the repressive religious principles.

In spite of all this, Hawthorne's characters are dominated by human associations--especially those from the city who are never able to rid themselves of its influences even though opportunities within nature are offered to them. But we have also seen that Hawthorne shows the country-bred characters to be much better than the civilized ones, to such an extent that the rural people's contact with the city has never actually corrupted them though it has taught them something about reality. Hawthorne seems to be lamenting the result of these people's experience in the city, for he has shown, through much evidence, that they would have been happier if they had remained within nature.

Hawthorne seems to be preaching in his books that man should become more natural by trying free himself from the conventions, scientific developments, and religious prejudices which civilization has imposed upon him. The "Golden Age" for him implies an abundance of natural elements and not of material ones : "O, people of the Golden Age, the chief of your husbandry was to raise flowers!"[1]

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[1] Hawthorne, "The Maypole of Merry Mount," p. 883.

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