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HEGELIAN SYNTHESIS IN THE WORKS OF NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

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Doctor of Philosophy

Degree

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John Charles Sutton

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Dedication

To June, the symbol of friendship

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ABSTRACT

F. O. Matthiessen suggested that the first half of the nineteenth century might be called the "age of Hegel," but, surprisingly, very few scholars have examined the American literature of that period for signs of Hegelian thought. This study explores the works of Nathaniel Hawthorne and demonstrates the correlation between the philosophical principles of Hawthorne and Hegel.

Although Nathaniel Hawthorne may not have studied Hegel directly, he would have been familiar with the principles of Hegelian philosophy through his association with New England intellectuals. A close examination of Hawthorne's fiction reveals a philosophical stance quite similar to that of Hegel. Hawthorne's works can be read as a dramatic treatment of many of the principles put forward by Hegel in The Phenomenology of Spirit.

Reading Hawthorne from this perspective explains some of the ambiguities that have led to disagreements among Hawthorne critics. Two chapters are dedicated to an examination of many of the short stories. Emphasis is placed upon Hawthorne's use of thesis and antithesis as the primary characteristic of the fallen world. The tales represent Hawthorne's struggle to come to grips with the problem of alienation, a problem which both Hawthorne and Hegel saw as the chief obstacle to mankind's happiness. Both writers maintain that a synthesis of mind and

substance is necessary to overcome the sense of alienation and to achieve a unified sense of self.

The following chapter deals with Hawthorne's four major novels. In the novels Hawthorne's emphasis shifts from the individual in isolation to relationships between people and to the relationship between the individual and society. An important factor in the novels is Hawthorne's concept of human progress, which follows the same sequence outlined by Hegel in The Phenomenology.

This critical approach reveals Hawthorne to be less Puritanical, less ambivalent, and more philosophically consistent than most previous studies have alleged. The study also indicates the degree to which Hegel's ideas were a part of the Zeitgeist of nineteenth-century America.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In The Blithedale Romance Hawthorne writes of the danger of analyzing another human being:

> If we take the freedom to put a friend under our microscope, we thereby insulate him from many of his true relations, magnify his particularities, inevitably tear him into parts, and, of course, patch him very clumsily together again. What wonder, then, should we be frightened of the aspect of a monster, which, after all--though we can point to every feature of his deformity in the real personage--may be said to have been created mainly by ourselves! (3: 69)

A similar phenomenon often occurs when we scrutinize the author of a work of literature. Under a cold, critical eye, a creative author might become a weak and indecisive thinker or, even worse, a raving lunatic. Hawthorne frequently expressed the opinion that an intellectual analysis of life and humanity may be the only Unpardonable Sin. In this study of Nathaniel Hawthorne, one of the most sensitive and perceptive writers in American literature, I try to keep his warning in mind and temper my analysis with a compassionate heart. My intent is not to expose his failures, but to applaud his success by demonstrating the consistency of his philosophical thought.

One of the primary streams of Hawthorne criticism deals with his intentional ambiguity. Critical opinion as

to the significance of this technique varies greatly. Fogle believes that the function of the ambiguity is two-fold: in a positive way, "it outlines the pure form of truth by dissolving irrelevancies. . . . Negatively, it marks the limit of eyeshot, beyond which is shadow" (11). This statement accounts for some forms of Hawthorne's ambiguity, but not others. It accounts for the ambiguity of whether Goodman Brown's experience is real or a dream by making that question irrelevant, since the result is the same either way. The latter negative function accounts for the ambiguity of Hawthorne's belief in the reality of heaven and hell: their reality is unknowable, "beyond eyeshot." But what Fogle's statement doesn't account for is the ambiguity of interpretation of many of his most important works. For example, is Hester to be revered for her independence and strength of character, or pitied for her weakness of lapsing into sin? Is Dimmesdale actually redeemed by his final repentance at the scaffold, or is he damned for his intellectual alienation from mankind? Is the ending of The House of Seven Gables merely a contrived fairy-tale finish, or has some serious artistic purpose brought about the apparently contrived marriage?

Hawthorne's ambiguity is more than just a literary trick, a way of getting the reader to stop and think about

something. It is not merely a device or technique of writing, but a mode of perception. Hawthorne recognized a bipolarity in the world, a continuous struggle between opposing forces. For this reason he was unable to accept Emerson's form of Transcendentalism which proposed that there was only one force in the universe, good, and that evil was merely the lack of good. On the other hand, Hawthorne did not believe, as his Puritan ancestors did, that the devil was at work daily in the world around him; his sense of evil was more sophisticated than that. He knew that life was more complex than the Puritan tendency to see in pure blacks and whites: God and Satan, Christians and savages, saints and sinners. Throughout his works, one fact stands out: in this earthly existence there is no such thing as pure good--or pure evil. Where there is good there is evil; where there is evil there is good. To make things even more complex, Hawthorne recognized that it is often difficult, or impossible, to separate, or even to distinguish between, what is "good" and what is "evil." Life itself is ambiguous, and Hawthorne's art reproduces life in its original ambiguity.

This "ambiguity of life" had, during the years of Hawthorne's youth, been the impetus behind one of the most intricate and complex philosophical systems of the post-Kantian era, the philosophy of Hegel. Many critics of

Hegel's system have noted its inherent ambiguity, but as Raymond Plant states, the "ambiguity . . . is also necessary, given the tension in Hegel's overall philosophical enterprise" (131). It is this ambiguity which Hegel attempted to account for in his philosophy, and many of the same concerns emerge in the works of Hawthorne. What is more noteworthy is that many of Hegel's answers seem to clarify Hawthorne's difficult texts. John Carlos Rowe has already noted some of the parallels between Hawthorne and Hegel and suggests that an "intertextual study" of the two writers can be most beneficial in defining general romantic concepts which pervade the literature of the nineteenth century ("Internal Conflict" 1205). His article "The Internal Conflict of Romantic Narrative: Hegel's Phenomenology and Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter" examines the progress of Hester Prynne in terms of Hegel's description of the path to human "self-consciousness." This article suggests some new insights into the romantic sensibility, but leaves unexplored the vast territory of Hegelian philosophy as it relates to Hawthorne and other American romantic writers.

Most scholars acknowledge the American romantics' debt to German Idealism, but very few have seriously examined the parallels between Hegel and American romanticism, and Rowe is the only scholar to have linked

Hawthorne and Hegel. According to F. O. Matthiessen:

> Emerson believed that "this is the age of Swedenborg's" because it had accepted the philosophy that "the soul makes its own world." It could be called more widely "the age of Hegel," and though Emerson did not read that philosopher until long after his thought was formed, he was attracted by Hegel's type of evolution, since its "unfolding" of nature was from the mind. (54)

Even though he calls the nineteenth century "the age of Hegel," Matthiessen does not really examine the influence of Hegel on the American romantic writers.

This study attempts to probe that uncharted territory by examining the similarities between the philosophical perspective in Hawthorne's works and the philosophy of Hegel. It does not assert that Hawthorne studied Hegel firsthand, nor does it allege that Hawthorne consciously emulated Hegel. Rather, the intent is to show that Hegel's philosophy was sufficiently diffused throughout the intellectual community of Hawthorne's New England to provide him with the basic structure of Hegel's thought.

The first half of chapter one discusses the prevalence of Hegelian thought among Hawthorne's contemporaries. So many of his associates were familiar with Hegel's philosophy that it would have been difficult for Hawthorne to remain ignorant of the basic precepts of The Phenomenology. And although he may not have consciously adopted these concepts, they found their way into his

thought and, subsequently, into his fiction, if only by way of the Zeitgeist of nineteenth-century New England, which was more directly influenced by Hegel's thought. The latter half of the chapter discusses some of the major similarities between Hegel's thought and that of Hawthorne, especially their attitudes toward alienation and human progress.

Hegel and Hawthorne were not, obviously, the only nineteenth-century writers concerned with the subject of alienation. But for both of them, alienation was at the heart of the human predicament. Hegel saw alienation as the most significant problem facing mankind and sought to alleviate it through his philosophy. The source of this alienation, in Hegel's opinion, was mankind's tendency to separate the physical being from the spiritual being. As a result, God appeared to be "other" and unreachable. Hegel sought to reunite the spiritual and physical aspects of existence so that the sense of alienation which haunted mankind might be eliminated. In the works of Hawthorne, alienation is a primary theme, and the result of the alienation is consistently negative: Goodman Brown is alienated from his fellow townspeople and is miserable for the rest of his life; Richard Digby segregates himself from society and actually turns to stone. Generally, Hawthorne's characters find happiness only to the degree

that they become enmeshed in the society of friends and family and achieve a sense of place in the physical world. The first step in this process of finding a place in nature and society is overcoming the alienation caused by the split between the spiritual being and the physical being. Neither can be denied without detrimentally affecting the person.

Another area in which Hegel and Hawthorne express similar beliefs is human progress, or the evolution of mankind. A belief that mankind is progressing toward a state of perfection was quite common in the nineteenth century, but there was a great diversity of opinion as to how this progress is brought about and what role human beings play in the process. Here is where Hawthorne and Hegel differed from their contemporaries. Mother Ann's Shakers sought to bring mankind to perfection by eliminating sex, and thereby putting an end to the physical existence of the human race. Other utopian communities sought to embrace sensuality and physical existence by permitting free sexual activity among all members of the group. Still other experimental communities, such as Brook Farm, were not so radical in their ideology, but strove to bring about the improvement of mankind through more conservative measures.

Hegel's version of progress is driven by conflict, or

"negation." The conflict arises from the incongruity between the current state of things and mankind's perception of the ideal state. As mankind's perception of the ideal changes, he alters the reality to conform to the ideal. In that sense, he "creates" his own reality; he molds nature and moral law to correspond to the perceived ideal. According to Hegel's dialectic, this process involves, necessarily, going down many blind alleys before the correct road is found. Like a rat in a maze, mankind must follow many dead-end paths in order to find the right one. And what is more, for Hegel, mankind's objective is not merely to get through the maze but to learn and understand it, to be able to map it out in its entirety. In Hegel's version of human progress, then, there is as much emphasis on the route as there is on the destination. For Hawthorne too the drama of the conflict is as important as the result of the conflict. In his fiction he recreates many of the situations and personality types outlined in Hegel's Phenomenology, resulting in a dramatization of Hegel's philosophical system.

That there are distinct parallels between the philosophy of Hegel and the works of Hawthorne is, I believe, evident to anyone who examines them thoughtfully. Whether this parallel reflects any sort of direct influence of Hegel's works on Nathaniel Hawthorne is quite

another question. According to Rowe, "only the most indirect historical relations can be drawn between Hawthorne and Hegel; little evidence can be offered for the immediate influence of Hegel's thought on Hawthorne's literary production" ("Internal Conflict" 1206). It is true that we have no evidence of Hawthorne's ever reading Hegel in the original; Hegel's works were not available in translation in America until after Hawthorne's major works were completed. Had the Phenomenology of Mind been available to Hawthorne, it is doubtful that he would have waded through the systematic exposition of the philosophy, since he cared little for "philosophical systems." He might even have seen Hegel as one of those "Grey-headed theorists--whose systems, at first air, had finally imprisoned them in an iron frame-work" (Hawthorne 10: 30). Hawthorne's interest in philosophy was warm and human, rather than coldly logical. And he was interested in philosophy; his journals are filled with references to conversations with various persons on philosophical subjects. He would have been interested in the basic points of Hegel's philosophy, but not the detailed working out of the system.

The basics of the Hegelian system were available to Hawthorne from a number of sources. In fact, so many potential sources were so close to him that it seems

almost a certainty that Hawthorne knew at least the outline of Hegel's philosophy. According to James Mellow, the Transcendental Club, of which Hawthorne was a member, often discussed Hegel and the other German idealists (177). Some awareness of Hegel must have been afforded through Hawthorne's experience at Brook Farm, of which Pochmann writes, "Nowhere on the American continent was there a more concentrated effort to absorb German art and thought" (213-14). It seems unlikely that a keen observer and listener, such as Hawthorne was, could have been so closely associated with these groups and remained ignorant of Hegel's thought.

Although Hegel was at the intellectual forefront in Germany during the 1830's and 40's, his works did not come under intense scrutiny in America until the St. Louis movement of the 1860's (Pochmann 257). But a number of Hawthorne's associates in New England knew Hegel's philosophy well enough to provide him with the rudiments of his system.

One of the most influential minds of the period in New England was Frederick Henry Hedge. He was educated in Germany, and, according to Pochmann, "was one of the few who could speak authoritatively on matters pertaining to German philosophy" (144). It was he as much as Emerson who was the moving force behind the Transcendental Club,

or Hedge Club as it was sometimes called, and for the founding of the famous transcendentalist periodical, The Dial (Pochmann 144). Although his philosophical sympathies were with Kant, Fichte, and Schelling, he knew Hegel's works well enough to debate their pros and cons at the meetings of the club. When he published his Prose Writers of Germany in the mid forties, he relied heavily upon another man for the description of Hegel: Henry B. Smith, a Unitarian minister, who had become a close friend of Hegel's widow while he was studying in Germany (Pochmann 662). Smith taught at Bowdoin College, Hawthorne's alma mater, and at Amherst, and was in close association with the Concord transcendentalists.

Other members of the Concord circle were familiar with Hegel to varying degrees. Emerson wrote in his journal of 1849 of a lecture he had attended in which a German immigrant named Emmanuel Scherb "attempted to unfold Hegel" (Journals 8: 69). Emerson saw some merit in Hegel, but did not become thoroughly involved in the philosophy until much later. Another transcendentalist and frequent associate of Hawthorne, Margaret Fuller, was well-read in German literature and philosophy, and her works show some familiarity with Hegel's system (Pochmann 440-44). Theodore Parker, another member of the Transcendentalist Club, had read Hegel before 1840 and

knew him well enough to argue on the implications of Hegel's philosophy concerning the divinity of Christ and the perfection of God (Pochmann 219-20).

Hawthorne probably heard something of Hegel while at Brook Farm since German culture was of such importance to many of the people there, including its founder, George Ripley. Ripley had studied German philosophy and knew at least something of Hegel. Another Brook Farmer who had studied Hegel and knew his works quite well was Isaac Hecker (Pochmann 240). In 1844 while Hawthorne was living in the Old Manse, Hecker lived with the Thoreau family and discussed religion and philosophy with the sages of Concord before he shocked them all by converting to Catholicism.

It is quite possible that Hawthorne discussed Hegel with Herman Melville. The two writers often "talked ontological heroics together" during their term as neighbors near Lenox (Julian Hawthorne, Hawthorne and Wife 1: 415). Hawthorne says that upon one occasion they discussed "time and eternity, things of this world and the next . . . and all possible and impossible matters . . . deep into the night" (8: 448). It was only the year before Hawthorne moved to Lenox that Melville had met George Adler and Franklin Taylor, both of whom were well versed in German philosophy, and during their voyage to

Europe aboard the Southampton, they spent many evenings involved in deep discussions. Writes Melville:

> Adler and Taylor came into my room, and it was proposed to have whiskey punches. . . . We had an extraordinary time and did not break up until two in the morning. We talked of metaphysics continually, and Hegel, Schlegel, Kant, etc., were discussed under the influence of the whiskey.
> (Leyda, Melville Log 1: 322)

It seems almost a certainty that Melville's moonlight discussions with Hawthorne in Lenox touched on these same topics. After ten years of association with Brook Farmers and Concord Transcendentalists Hawthorne must have had at least a nodding acquaintance with Hegel's philosophy upon which he could draw for these discussions with Melville.

What Hawthorne knew of Hegel must necessarily have been rather basic, but our concerns here are not with the fine points of Hegel's system or its ramifications in the philosophical world. What seems most germane to the issue of Hawthorne's world view and its expression in his fiction is the correlation between Hawthorne's style and Hegel's dialectical method of inquiry, and this involves Hegel at the most basic level. The two men were concerned with many of the same problems, and dealt with them in their own unique ways: Hawthorne in imaginative, romantic fiction, and Hegel in systematic, but insightful, philosophical inquiry.

Some definition of what Hawthorne might have known of Hegel's philosophy is called for. I will briefly discuss, from a literary standpoint, some of the primary points of Hegel's philosophy which appear to have bearing on Hawthorne's works.

Hegel is most famous for his "dialectical triad" composed of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. In one sense the triad represents the way the universe is ordered, and in another sense, it represents a method of philosophical inquiry. Let us examine the universal order first. In his Encyclopedia Hegel divides the universe into three parts: logic, nature, and spirit. Logic (thesis) is the realm of pure, abstract thought, very similar to the Platonic "ideal." The opposite of this realm (antithesis) is Nature, which includes all forms of material existence, pure existence, void of any purpose or logic. Thought and nature, then, are opposites and are thus in conflict. The conflict is resolved by "spirit" (the German term, Geist, can also be translated as "mind"). Spirit is the "synthesis" of thought and nature, the quality which unites all three into a coherent unity. In the words of H. B. Acton:

> Hegel himself regarded his whole work as a dialectical construction, with thought and nature as opposites united in mind and society, in the artistic

> and religious products of man, and, ultimately, in the activity of philosophical self-consciousness. (Acton 436)

The mind of man, "spirit," operates in the conflicting realms of "thought" and "nature" simultaneously and so is capable of molding, or altering, material existence according to the dictates of the world of thought. As such, "spirit" unifies, or brings together, the opposites, "thought" and "nature."

As a method of philosophical inquiry, Hegel's dialectic seeks to confront the contradictions encountered in rational explanations of existence and to encompass them, rather than trying to avoid them. According to Acton:

> Hegel, like Spinoza, held that error resides in incompleteness and abstraction, but, unlike Spinoza, he held that the incompleteness and abstraction can be recognized by the the contradictions they generate. It is the business of the philosopher, he held, to bring out the contradictions latent in partial or abstract views and to emphasize and elaborate them in such a way that less partial and less abstract views can be constructed that nevertheless retain in themselves what there was of truth in the original views. This method is to be brought to bear on the less partial and less abstract views in their turn and to be pressed as thoroughly as it can be. This method of pressing and accentuating contradictions is not to be used merely to discard error but also to preserve truth. (Acton 436)

To put it more simply, Hegel saw that contradictions contained not only error, but truth, and he sought to

devise a method of dealing with contradictions which would do away with the error contained therein, but retain the truth inherent in the contradiction. This same method appears today in the way we deal with the properties of light: we learn in high-school physics that light can be understood as a particle travelling through space, but for other purposes we treat light as a wave. This is a contradiction, since a photon cannot be both a wave and a particle, but although we recognize the contradiction we retain the view because of the truth contained in it. We merely "put aside" the contradiction in order to understand.

Hegel used the word "aufheben" to describe what happens to the contradictions encountered in his dialectical method. Literally, this means "to lift up," but in German aufheben means both "to discard" and "to preserve," much like the English expression "to put aside." So, Hegel's dialectical method allows him to meet contradictions and to extract the truth from them without having to discard completely a line of inquiry which contains a contradiction. Some may consider this method a type of philosophical legerdemain, but although it bends the rules of pure logic to some degree, the method has a consistency of its own and is better thought out than Emerson's intuitive philosophy.

Another important aspect of Hegel's philosophy is its concern with history. In Hegel's view, the mind of man is capable of seeing the logic behind the "ideal" and acting upon his environment to alter nature to his will. As a result, as man perceives more ideal truth and alters nature to conform to that truth the universe as a whole progresses toward perfection. History then, can be seen as a material as well as an intellectual progression. As man advances in his intellectual understanding he modifies his environment, including nature and social institutions, to correspond to his vision of the ideal. As a result, what is good and true for one period of history is not necessarily good and true for another. The ideal never changes, but man's perception of it does. Hegel felt that his philosophy did not overrule the ideas of previous philosophers, but encompassed all of them from Plato to Kant and brought them all together and enlarged upon them. In Hegel's opinion, man's knowledge is cumulative, and so the effects of this knowledge, alterations to nature and society, are also cumulative and progressive.

This brief explanation, although somewhat inadequate as a description of Hegel's philosophy, will suffice as a starting point for an examination of the parallels between the works of Hegel and Hawthorne's fiction. The parallels begin with the similarity in the two men's perceptions of

the world and the problems which face mankind. Raymond Plant states that Hegel's philosophy was "geared . . . to the solution of the problem of alienation" (88), or as Hegel termed it, "the unhappy consciousness." Hegel felt that this alienation was characteristic of both Judaism and Christianity because of their belief that God is separate and distinct from man. Says Acton, "The individual is divided within himself, conscious of his own isolation, attributing all that is good to the activity of God" (438). Alienation, of course, is one of Hawthorne's primary themes, and the fact that he was often concerned with Puritanism, a creed which stressed above all else the depravity of man and the glory of God, demonstrates at least some similarity in perception between Hawthorne and Hegel.

In one of his early works, "Der Geist des Christentums und sein Schicksal," Hegel discusses the history of the Jewish people. According to Hegel, Abraham broke the bonds of family and community and led his people into strange and hostile lands and avoided ties with nature and other human beings. Their relationship with God stressed His otherness: God was remote rather than immediate, and demanded blind obedience. This resulted in the Jewish people becoming alienated from God, nature, and their fellow man. Raymond Plant points out that "the

social experience of the Jews bore a considerable resemblance to the situation which Hegel had been concerned to describe in Germany" (60), and it was the resultant alienation that he sought to alleviate with his philosophy.

Since the New England Puritans thought of themselves as the "new Israel," it is not surprising that they have much in common with the followers of Abraham discussed by Hegel. The Puritans too were sojourners in a strange and hostile land and their writings demonstrate their belief that the wilderness around them was filled with evil forces and savage people. In spite of their belief in grace through Jesus Christ, they, like the Jews, stressed the omnipotence and otherness of a wrathful God. They were alienated from their fellow man and from their homeland, and placed precariously in a hostile wilderness under the ever-watchful eye of a wrathful and avenging God. Because of their sense of man's depravity, they could find little solace in their own community and so turned inward in isolation. It was this intense alienation that Hawthorne noted and brought out in many of his works. "The Man of Adamant" is perhaps the most direct treatment of the theme, but the concept of alienation in Puritan society shows up as well in The Scarlet Letter and other works dealing with the Puritans.

Just as Hegel saw the similarity between the Jews and his own society, Hawthorne saw the link between the Puritan colonies and his contemporary New England. The historical link, obviously, was much closer in his case, and he realized that many of the Puritan traits had been handed down to his own society. He speculates in "The Custom-House" what his Puritan ancestors would think of his profession as a "writer of story books," yet concedes that "strong traits of their nature have intertwined themselves with mine" (1: 10). Part of his Puritan legacy was the tendency toward alienation.

Both Hegel and Hawthorne saw alienation as one of the most pressing problems of mankind and sought for some way of alleviating it. Man's relationship with nature plays a vital role in his quest to overcome alienation: man can never feel at home in the world until he can see nature as an ally rather than a hostile force. Hegel believed that Kant and other philosophers had widened the gap between man and nature by sharply distinguishing between the subjective and objective world. The notion that man could obtain only a subjective understanding of the world around him, and that the objective world may indeed exist only within the subjective mind of the "man thinking" placed man irretrievably within his own mind, more alienated than ever. Hegel felt that what was needed was a philosophy

which would bring the mind of man back in touch with nature, or the concrete world around him. Says Plant, "His aim was the reconciliation of man to the world, to overcome alienation, to lead a man to find a home, as he puts it, in his environment" (129).

This notion concerned Hawthorne as well. But while Emerson, and to some degree, Thoreau, attempted to make nature the ultimate "mother figure," and the source of all good, Hawthorne maintained an attitude that nature is neutral; it is neither good nor bad--it simply "is." In his journal he observed:

> Nothing comes amiss to Nature--all is fish that comes to her net. If there be a living form of perfect beauty instinct with soul--why, it is all very well, and suits Nature well enough. But she would just as lief have that same beautiful, soul-illumined body, to make worm's meat of, and to manure the earth with. (8: 272)

Hawthorne makes a sharp distinction between "soul" and "nature," or material existence. In Hawthorne's view, Nature itself is not a thinking, loving entity, but pure existence, which sometimes appears beautiful, and at other times appears ugly.

"Soul" is necessary to distinguish beauty from ugliness, and man has the free will to choose what he wants from nature. In another journal entry, Hawthorne says:

> The same soil and circumstances may produce the

> good and beautiful, and the wicked and ugly;--some have the faculty of assimilating to themselves only what is evil, and so they become as noisome as the yellow water-lily. A few assimilate none but good influences; and their emblem is the spotless and fragrant pond-lily, whose very breath is a blessing to all the region roundabout. (8: 318-19)

For Hawthorne, nature is a raw material with which to work. This concept is very close to, if not identical with, Hegel's description of nature as the opposite of abstract thought, neutral existence which is modified by man according to his perception of the ideal.

But, it is important to note, this neutrality is not synonymous with the Puritan view of nature as completely exterior and hostile. It is mere "stuff," capable of being molded by man into an incarnation of the ideal. If it is hostile, it is so only because the soul or mind of man has made it that way. Man can overcome the alienation from nature by working with it and forming it to his desire.

While living at the Old Manse in Concord, Hawthorne took great delight in gardening, a purposeful manipulation of nature. It is evident from his journal entries that his interest in gardening had a philosophical basis, rather than a practical one. He writes:

> After all, the greatest interest of these vegetables does not seem to consist in their being articles of food;--it is rather that we love to see something born into the world; and when a great squash or melon

> is produced, it is a large and tangible existence, which the imagination can seize hold of and rejoice in. (8: 330)

His choice of the words "tangible existence" and "imagination" suggests that he is fascinated with the ability of man's thought to work through nature in order to produce physical objects with desired characteristics. His interest in the orchard behind the Old Manse reflects the same fascination for domestication of nature. The squash and melons represent a type of incarnation of thought, or a tangible link between the abstract and the concrete.

In order to make himself a home on the earth, man must actively participate in nature and society. The alternative is to turn within the mind (the realm of abstract thought) and become an objective observer of life. To Hawthorne, as I will discuss later, this act of turning inward away from society could be termed the "unpardonable sin." Acton summarizes Hegel's view of the same subject in this way:

> . . . there develops a taste for the hard, intellectual pursuits of disinterested scholarship, the concern for "objectivity," for facts, for "the thing itself." But these allegedly disinterested researchers actually go into a sort of intellectual jungle (<u>das geistige Thierreich</u>) where, deceiving one another and themselves, they tear one another to pieces in the service of truth. (439)

This brief passage could easily be the plan for a Hawthorne tale along the lines of "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment," "Ethan Brand," or "The Birthmark." The disinterested observer caught in an intellectual jungle is a consistent theme running through Hawthorne's works.

Hawthorne had firsthand experience with this intellectual jungle. During the years from 1825 to 1835 he struggled to establish himself as a writer while living in the Manning house with his mother and sisters, reading profusely in literature and philosophy, and carrying on little commerce with society. Although not a complete recluse, he spent much of his time writing and reading, and even during his trips through New England he was more of an observer of life than a participant in it.

The way out of the intellectual jungle is through active involvement in nature and society. According to Acton, Hegel believed that "there is no tranquillity to be had by withdrawal and isolation" (444). Hawthorne achieved no great tranquillity until he married Sophia and settled into the Old Manse. His happiness during this period is quite evident in his journals. Upon receiving his first house guests he wrote, "I felt that I was regarded as a man with a wife and a household--a man having a tangible existence and locality in the world" (8: 334). Apparently his marriage and move to Concord had

done much to lessen his alienation from society by giving him an active role in it.

Another passage from his journal during this period gives us some insight into his philosophy of life:

> It seems a greater pity that an accomplished worker with the hand should perish prematurely, than a person of great intellect; because intellectual arts may be cultivated in the next world, but not physical ones. (8: 227)

Here we can see Hawthorne's opinion of the type of activity appropriate for mankind: man should work with physical substance, or in other words, shape nature to conform to his will. The passage also shows Hawthorne's belief in a conscious intellectual afterlife, which is without physical attributes. The implication is that the purpose of earthly life is to operate within nature and society.

From the preceding discussion it is evident that Hawthorne and Hegel were basically in agreement as to the sources of alienation and to the means through which it may be alleviated. Hegel's overall triad, composed of (1) abstract thought, (2) concrete nature, and (3) the unification of the two, corresponds agreeably to Hawthorne's philosophy as well. Another Hegelian concept, the principle of "negation," creates a tighter bond between the two men. In his preface to the Phenomenology, Hegel writes:

> The life of God and divine intelligence, then, can, if we like, be spoken of as love disporting with itself; but this idea falls into edification, and even insipidity, if it lacks the seriousness, the suffering, the patience, and the labour of the negative. (81)

In Hegel's view, conflict is necessary in the world to bring about change and learning. The world would be stale and insipid if all were in harmony. He believed that evil was necessary for good. It is through the resolution of logical conflict that man learns, and it is through moral conflict that society progresses. Hawthorne's works contain the constant interplay of opposites in conflict, and, as later chapters of this study will show, this conflict results in some sort of resolution and progress. In "The May-Pole of Merry Mount," for example, the conflict between the "gloom" of the Puritans and the "jollity" of the Merry Mount community results in a kind of synthesis. Each group has its own merits and faults, and Hawthorne suggests that through the adoption of the young bride and groom, "the Lord and Lady of the May," the Puritan community will be rejuvenated.

The synthesis which results from the resolution of social conflict gives rise to progress. Hegel contended that society progresses as man's understanding of philosophical truth progresses. Acton asserts that, "Much as Hegel admired Plato's philosophy, he held that it

was impossible to be a Platonist in the nineteenth century, when the philosophical context varied so greatly from that of Plato's day" (436). In the preface to Mosses from an Old Manse, Hawthorne expresses the same sentiment, saying, "Thought grows mouldy. What was good and nourishing food for the spirits of one generation, affords no sustenance for the next" (10: 19).

Hegel believed that this progression of history was the slow unfolding of absolute truth in the mind of man who then molded nature to conform to that truth. Eventually, we must assume, absolute truth will be fully revealed and evident in the world through man's work in nature, and the ideal will be made concrete. In other words, the final result of this progress is the incarnation of God. Hegel's notion of historical progression is similar to Hawthorne's belief in providence. As I will later argue, Hawthorne believed that mankind was progressing, according to God's plan, toward some as yet unknown end, some type of earthly perfection. Whether man determined this progression through his own intellect, as Hegel believed, or was directed by the hand of God, as Hawthorne would have argued, the result was the same.

This concept is apparent in Hawthorne's "The Sister Years." Although distressed with the lack of measurable

accomplishments during her reign, the personification of the outgoing year observes that:

> the wisest people and the best keep a steadfast faith that the progress of Mankind is onward and upward, and that the toil and anguish of the path serve to wear away the imperfections of the Immortal Pilgrim, and will be felt no more, when they have done their office. (9: 337)

In this passage Hawthorne expresses not only a belief in the progression of mankind, but also an assumption that the progress is caused by conflict, "the toil and anguish" which man must face on a daily basis. The implication is that man is not being tortured or driven to a reliance on God, but actually improved by hardship. When the conflicts have "done their office," man's imperfections will have been removed, he will have an understanding of absolute truth, and the "kingdom of God" will have concrete existence on earth. Although belief in the progress of mankind was quite commonplace in the nineteenth century, believers disagreed about the mechanism through which this progress was to be brought about. Hegel's dialectical movement of progress corresponds to the view of history expressed in Hawthorne's fiction.

Another interesting point of comparison is in the two men's attitudes toward social classes. According to Plant, Hegel recognized three distinct social classes: the agricultural class, the business class, and the universal

class. The agricultural class is composed of those people who are involved immediately with nature, producing raw products through toil with their own hands. The business class, however, deals in organization and manipulation of activity in order to provide for the needs of the community. The universal class does not concern itself with particular needs and interests, but sees to the welfare of the entire community; these are the civil servants, the administrators of the state (Plant 165). Hawthorne's experience at Brook Farm convinced him that a classless agricultural society in which everyone labored was impractical, or at least undesirable. He observed in his journal that the strenuous physical labor precluded him from pursuing any noteworthy intellectual activity. At the end of a twelve-hour day in the fields he was simply too tired to write (Frothingham 174). He concluded that he was not cut out for agricultural labor. Hegel's social classes were determined not by birth, but by individual talent and inclination (similar to the classes in Jefferson's concept of the natural aristocracy). Hawthorne too appears to have ascribed to this view of society. He observed in his journal:

> Some men have no right to perform great deeds, or think high thoughts--and when they do so, it is a kind of humbug. They had better keep within their own propriety. (8: 273)

This suggestion of intellectual conservatism contrasts sharply with Emerson's concept of unlimited individual potential. Hawthorne believed with Hegel that men differed in their talents and abilities, and that each man should find his place in society.

A similar issue is the relationship of "master and slave" for which Hegel's philosophy is famous. Acton describes Hegel's Master and Slave relationship in this way:

> No individual will rest satisfied with a conquest that fails to secure the conscious acknowledgement of other men. Hence there is a struggle for both power and recognition. In this struggle some will take greater risks than their competitors; those who risk the least will become the slaves or bondsmen of those who face death by risking their lives. . . . The slave is forced to work, whereas the master can enjoy leisure in the knowledge that the slave is reshaping the natural world to provide the products of his labor for the master to consume. Thus, the master's leisure protects him from experience of the negativity of nature, whereas the slave, in struggling with nature's recalcitrance, learns its secrets and puts mind into it. The master, in consuming, destroys; the slave, in working, creates. But the master's consumption depends upon the slave's work and is thus impermanent, whereas the slave's labor passes into things that have a permanent existence. (438)

Because of his work in nature, the slave learns and progresses while the master becomes a sort of non-participant in life and remains static.

Hawthorne too was of the opinion that mankind benefits from the "negativity," the hardship and strife,

of living. In "Chippings with a Chisel" he goes so far as to speculate that there might be a kind of tragic joy derived from the miseries of life:

> . . . I had grown the wiser for our companionship, and from my observations of nature and character, as displayed by those who came, with their old griefs or their new ones, to get them recorded upon his slabs of marble. And yet with my gain in wisdom, I had gained perplexity; for there was a strange doubt in my mind, whether the dark shadowing of this life, the sorrows and regrets, have not as much real comfort in them--leaving religious influences out of the question--as what we term life's joys. (9: 418)

The "master," according to this line of thinking, misses out on much of life because of his insulation from the negativity of nature. His life is easier, but he ceases to benefit from it. The subjugation of one man by another is a recurrent theme in Hawthorne's works, and it may be that this Hegelian concept of the master/slave relationship is what led Hawthorne to his statement on the reciprocity of slavery. In an idea for a short story he wrote:

> Sketch a person, who, by strength of character, or assistant circumstances, has reduced another to absolute slavery and dependence on him. Then show, that the person who appeared to be the master, must inevitably be at least as much a slave, if not more, than the other. All slavery is reciprocal. . . . (8: 253)

This attitude explains, at least to some degree, Hawthorne's reluctance to label the southern slaveholders

as despicable tyrants as did his abolitionist neighbors in Concord. Like Hegel, Hawthorne may have seen slavery as an unfortunate but necessary stage in the progress of mankind which results, ironically, in the advancement of the slave. It also demonstrates one more parallel between his philosophy and that of Hegel.

Slavery was not the only subject of disagreement between Hawthorne and his transcendentalist neighbors. He admired Emerson as a sympathetic human being, but saw him as "the mystic, stretching his hand out of cloud-land, in vain search for something real" (8: 336). Hegel's philosophy, which strove to link the real and the ideal, was infinitely more suited to Hawthorne than Emerson's vaporous, insubstantial form of transcendentalism. Hegel himself saw transcendentalism as a threat to the community, since it encouraged people to search inward through their own minds for absolute truth. According to the transcendentalists, and especially Emerson, the truth would be apparent to one who looked within his own heart. Hegel disagreed with this position:

> Since the man of common sense appeals to his feeling, to an oracle within his breast, he is done with any one who does not agree. He has just to explain that he has no more to say to any one who does not find and feel the same as himself. In other words, he tramples the roots of humanity underfoot. For the nature of humanity is to impel men to agree with one another, and its very existence lies simply in the explicit realization of a community of conscious

> life. What is anti-human, the condition of mere animals, consists in keeping within the sphere of feeling pure and simple, and in being able to communicate only by way of feeling states.
> (Phenomenology 127)

Although Hegel wrote this criticizing one of his contemporaries, it could just as easily be directed toward Emerson. Perhaps the most basic point of disagreement between Emerson and Hawthorne is that Emerson was primarily interested in the improvement of the individual consciousness, whereas Hawthorne was more concerned with the condition of the community, the "brotherhood of man." As a result, Emerson's highly personal and abstract philosophy did not appeal to Hawthorne since it was not practical enough to explain the workings of man in society. Hawthorne needed a practical philosophy which would link together the ideal and the actual, and account for the very real presence of evil, or "negativity." In Hegel we find just such a philosophy, and it is evident that Hawthorne had access to the basic principles of this philosophy and indeed, whether consciously or unconsciously, adopted them for his own.

Rowe argues in his article on The Scarlet Letter that Hester Prynne "dramatizes the 'stages' of self-consciousness that constitute Hegel's dramatis personae (or philosophical predicates): servant, master, 'Unhappy Consciousness,' Family, social custom, 'Conscience,'

historical Self-Consciousness" ("Internal Conflict" 1208). The movement is from internal awareness to awareness of others and finally to an awareness of one's relationship to all society and history.

Hawthorne's literary production can be seen as a representation of this same spiritual growth. In the early works, the tales, the emphasis is on self-awareness. Many of the tales are concerned with the relationship between nature and the imagination. Characters such as Ethan Brand, Goodman Brown, Parson Hooper, Richard Digby, and Owen Warland are prime examples of what Hegel termed "the unhappy consciousness," the man who is conscious of his own isolation but unable to comfortably fit into his social surroundings, or to feel at home in nature.

Chapter two deals with this initial phase of Hawthorne's development. Several of the short stories are examined in order to show how Hawthorne's conception of the "fallen world" coincides with Hegel's description of existence. Hawthorne's fallen world is a confusing mixture of good and evil, and it is often impossible for mankind to distinguish between the two. At times he uses good and evil almost interchangeably with abstract and concrete. The connection is easy enough to distinguish. The Puritans saw God and heaven as the wellspring of goodness--thus, the abstract becomes allied to good.

Evil, on the other hand, is associated with the corrupt physical existence of this earth; thus, the concrete becomes associated with evil. As one looks closer at many of the tales, it becomes apparent that Hawthorne thinks more in terms of abstract and concrete than in terms of the traditional Christian good and evil. Such characters as Rappaccini and the devil figure in "Young Goodman Brown" are far deeper and much more complex than traditional models of evil. Further examination of these characters makes one question whether they are intended as evil characters at all, since in some ways they appear to be more closely aligned with God than with Satan.

The latter part of chapter two is devoted to one of Hawthorne's recurring figures, the Wandering Jew. This figure too seems to have been stripped of his religious significance and transformed into a model of Hegel's Unhappy Consciousness. The reccurance of this figure in the tales suggests Hawthorne's continuing concern for the phenomenon.

While Chapter II deals with Hawthorne's conception of sin and the alienation that results from sin, Chapter III deals with the possible solutions to the problem of alienation. In several tales, he examines the effectiveness of religion in treating the problem. Such stories as "The Man of Adamant" and "The Minister's Black

Veil" demonstrate the inadequacy of traditional American Calvinism in coping with the problems of earthly life--especially the problem of alienation. In "The Celestial Railroad" Hawthorne criticizes contemporary, liberal religion and suggests that whatever positive effects these religions have on earthly life are at the expense of eternal damnation.

Chapter III continues with a discussion of two more possible solutions to the problem of alienation, intellectual pursuits and escapist fantasy. Hawthorne's "mad scientist" characters and the haunting Ethan Brand are included in the examination of intellectual pursuits. The main difficulty here is that the mind turns inward and the person is even further alienated from human beings. In "The Hall of Fantasy" Hawthorne examines those who depart the real world for one of pure imagination, and he decides that although much fantastic beauty may be discovered there, the world of fantasy is void of meaning.

The best solution to the problem of alienation is presented by the unification of mind and substance. Many of the tales discussed in this section deal with characters attempting to find a place in nature, in time, and in society. Those who are able to bring the physical world and the spiritual world into accord without denying either achieve the greatest happiness.

Chapter III closes with a discussion of Hawthorne's view of the role of the artist in the progress of mankind. The artist is both "seer" and "maker": he sees abstract beauty, gives it form in his imagination, and finally produces an artifact, raw substance molded into ideal form. In a sense, the artifact is a symbol of Hegel's "Geist," the synthesis of substance and idea. Similarly, the act of artistic creation is symbolic of man's function on earth as defined by Hegel: molding nature to conform to abstract (or divine) law.

Chapter IV deals with the four major novels. With The Scarlet Letter Hawthorne begins to shift his focus from individuals to relationships between people. The complex web of social ties among Hester, Dimmesdale, Pearl, and Chillingworth provides much of the conflict for this story. Central to the story is the evolution of moral law, a primary concern in Hegel's Phenomenology. Moral law, according to Hegel (and Hawthorne), is not an absolute; it is established by mankind and must change as mankind progresses. In The House of Seven Gables Hawthorne examines the relationship between two families and shows, rather optimistically, how negative traits can evolve into positive traits in the right circumstances. The Blithedale Romance explores complex social relationships outside of the family and also shows the

fallacy of zealous attempts to reform society. Neither Hawthorne nor Hegel believed in the efficacy of conscious social reform movements in spite of their firm belief in progress. In his final completed novel, The Marble Faun, Hawthorne broadened his scope to produce an allegorical treatment of the progress of the human race. Donatello and Miriam represent the fall of man, and Kenyon and Hilda suggest the future of the human race. This approach to Hawthorne's novels accounts for much of the ambiguity in the works and yields a new perspective on his interest in history.

This study follows a loose chronological pattern. The first phase consists of the short stories, the greatest majority of which were written between 1835 and 1850. The discussion of these tales in Chapter I and Chapter II is arranged topically rather than chronologically in order to show a number of Hawthorne's themes which recur throughout. During this phase, Hawthorne's philosophy was developing, and his tales demonstrate the complexity of his thought. Some of his early tales, such as "Young Goodman Brown" and "The Minister's Black Veil," contain a more mature philosophical insight than many of the later tales. Hawthorne himself accounts for this phenomenon in the preface to The Snow-Image:

> In youth, men are apt to write more wisely than they really know or feel; and the remainder of life may be not idly spent in realizing and convincing themselves of the wisdom which they uttered long ago. The truth that was only in the fancy then may have since become a substance in the mind and heart. (11: 6)

This attitude accounts for Hawthorne's inclusion of such mature early tales as "My Kinsman, Major Molineux" and "The Man of Adamant" in his final published collection of tales in 1852: the truth of those tales had become a substance in his mind and heart.

The second phase of development begins with The Scarlet Letter. By this time, Hawthorne's understanding of alienation had coalesced, and he had achieved the plateau which Hegel termed true "self-consciousness." The remaining steps in the process outlined in The Phenomenology are "family," "social custom," and "historical self-consciousness." Hawthorne's four major novels move chronologically in that same direction.

From the tales Hawthorne moves to The Scarlet Letter in which the "unhappy consciousness" attempts to reach out to another consciousness; the emphasis moves from the internal to the external world, and the conflict results in a kind of synthesis. In The House of Seven Gables he again enlarges the view to encompass the fusion of two families, the basic social unit. From there Hawthorne examines social customs in a larger, more diverse social

unit, the collection of people in a utopian community in The Blithedale Romance. Hawthorne's final completed novel, The Marble Faun, attempts to achieve "historical self-consciousness" by symbolically treating the history and progress of mankind from Arcadian simplicity to modern complexity. The following chapters will adhere to this organizational pattern by taking each level in turn and discussing in greater detail how Hawthorne uses the conflict/synthesis pattern to work out his increasingly complex philosophy.

CHAPTER II

MOONLIGHT AND SUNSHINE:
THOUGHT AND SUBSTANCE IN THE TALES

In 1853 while settled with his young family in the hills at Lenox, Hawthorne wrote the preface to the third edition of Twice-Told Tales. Reflecting upon his lonelier years and the literary productions of his early manhood, he wrote of himself:

> His pleasant pathway among realities seems to proceed out of the Dream-Land of his youth, and to be bordered with just enough of its shadowy foliage to shelter him from the heat of the day. He is therefore satisfied with what the TWICE-TOLD TALES have done for him, and feels it to be far better than fame. (9: 7)

Although he was not the recluse some early biographers claimed, Hawthorne spent the years from 1825 to 1835 in the solitary business of writing and reading. Many of the tales and sketches produced during this period, and even many of those written in the following years, demonstrate the movement from internal scrutiny, or man within his own mind, to external involvement. Viewed as a group, these tales represent Hawthorne's path from the "Dream-Land of his youth" to his "pleasant pathway among reality."

He describes his own early work as having "the pale tint of flowers that blossomed in too retired a shade" and

criticizes the lack of "flesh and blood" in his pictures of actual life. He adds that the book should be read "in the clear, brown, twilight atmosphere in which it was written; if opened in the sunshine, it is apt to look exceedingly like a volume of blank pages" (9: 5). Throughout his works, Hawthorne uses "sunshine" as a symbol for earthly reality and "moonlight" as a symbol for the world of imagination. This "clear twilight," then, lies somewhere between the two and partakes of both worlds. After admitting the lack of reality in the tales, he adds that they have "none of the abstruseness of idea, or obscurity of expression, which marks the written communications of a solitary mind with itself" (9: 6). Apparently he is referring to writers like Emerson who deal in abstractions rather than the drama of actual life. To sum up his evaluation of the tales he writes:

> This statement of apparently opposite peculiarities leads us to a perception of what the sketches truly are. They are not the talk of a secluded man with his own mind and heart . . . but his attempts, and very imperfectly successful ones, to an open intercourse with the world. (9: 6)

Hawthorne saw his own early works, at least in retrospect, as a synthesis of "apparent opposites." The tales can be seen as a mind aware of itself and its own isolation attempting, however "imperfectly," to open a line of communication with the actual world. As a result, many of

the tales are Hawthorne's musings upon the isolation of the mind within itself, through which means the author attempts to communicate with other minds.

This chapter examines several of Hawthorne's more ambiguous tales in order to demonstrate a consistency in Hawthorne's use of thesis and antithesis. In the tales, the juxtaposition of apparent opposites connotes the fallen world, in which good and evil are always intermixed. "Rappaccini's Daughter" and "Young Goodman Brown" are used here to show Hawthorne's use of a single character to represent both good and evil. This character split mirrors Hegel's splitting of the individual into an objective and subjective self. In Hegel's argument, this split results in what he calls "the Unhappy Consciousness." The last part of this chapter asserts that Hawthorne's recurring character the Wandering Jew is a perfect example of the Unhappy Consciousness.

Hawthorne's starting point in the tales is the concept of duality in fallen man: man has a natural tendency to sin and depravity, but he also has a spiritual nature which yearns for goodness and beauty. The spiritual side, with its longing for good, recognizes the depravity of the flesh, and so there is a constant internal conflict within every human being. This is the human predicament as Hawthorne sees it.

The conflict between soul and body is parallel to and often coincides with the conflict between the "real" and the "ideal," or the realm of pure thought and the realm of pure substance. Hegel's aim was to show the link between the abstract and the concrete (yet another set of terms for the two worlds), and Hawthorne's aim, as we may judge from his observations of Twice-Told Tales, was much the same.

Hawthorne's concern with sin, a major theme in all of his works, is not with the avoidance of it, since in his view that is an impossibility, but with the effects of it. He accepts without question the Puritan concept of depravity, but, unlike his ancestors, he recognizes the more noble aspirations of man, and is infinitely more sympathetic about man's sinful nature. Although he firmly believes in God, heaven, and Christian salvation, he does not dwell on these aspects of sin in his works, but concentrates on the psychological effects of sin on man's earthly life. As Melvin Askew has so aptly stated, "His vision, that is to say, both of man and his fall, stopped sharply on this side of eternity"(336).

Hawthorne's concept of the fallen world is perhaps best illustrated by the story "Rappaccini's Daughter." This tale is one of the most difficult and ambiguous allegories in Hawthorne's canon and has produced a

prodigious quantity of critical response with an extremely wide range of interpretations. Lea Newman reports that "Each of the four main characters has been seen alternately as admirable or reprehensible, heroic or villainous, or as fancifully ideal or ironically grotesque" (263). Hawthorne himself commented in a letter to Fields, concerning the publication of Mosses From an Old Manse, "Upon my honor, I am not quite sure that I entirely comprehend my own meaning in some of these blasted allegories" (CE 10: 550). This ambiguity coupled with the sense of "existential angst" which pervades the tale may account for its popularity with twentieth-century readers, but of primary interest here is the degree to which the story demonstrates Hawthorne's notion of the inseparability of good and evil in the fallen world.

What makes this allegory so difficult is that, like Spenser's Faerie Queene (a work greatly admired by Hawthorne), it is a "complex allegory." It operates on at least two allegorical levels simultaneously. On one level the tale can be seen as a theological allegory, and on another level, a philosophical allegory. On both levels the stress is on the mixture of apparent opposites.

William Shurr sees "Rappaccini's Daughter" as an allegorical treatment of Calvinism in America and points out that Giovanni and Beatrice are the Adam and Eve of a

fallen Eden (1). This "Eden of the present world" (10: 96) is, on this allegorical level, the theological milieu of Hawthorne's contemporary New England. In this fallen garden the exotic beauty of the plants, and of Beatrice, is irrevocably mixed with deadly poisons. Even the master of the "Garden," Rappaccini, is a mixture of good and evil: his medical potions occasionally produce "a marvelous cure," but are comprised of poisons "more horribly deleterious than Nature, without the assistance of this learned person, would ever have plagued the world withal" (10: 100). Shurr argues that Rappaccini "is both God and Satan," pointing to the fact that "Like the Calvinist deity, he gives his creatures no choice but preordains the poison which will take over the body of his daughter from the moment of her birth" (1-2).

This dual nature is apparent throughout the tale and applies to all four of the major characters as well as to the garden itself. Rappaccini's identification with Satan is fairly obvious; he slinks suspiciously through the garden, dressed in black, nurturing his poisonous plants, and plotting a way to tempt Giovanni into the garden. His links with the Calvinist God are more subtle, but numerous. In spite of his apparent evil, he is described by his rival, Baglioni, as "our worshipful Dr. Rappaccini" (10: 99), "a wonderful man!--a wonderful man indeed!"

(10: 119-20). At another point, Baglioni says of him:

> He cares infinitely more for science than for mankind. . . . He would sacrifice human life, his own among the rest, or whatever else was dearest to him, for the sake of adding so much as a grain of mustard-seed to the great heap of his accumulated knowledge. (10: 99-100)

In this passage we can see a rather twisted allusion to John 3: 16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son. . . ." Rappaccini represents the Calvinist God of judgment and vengeance without the sympathy and love embodied in Christ. Hawthorne describes him as having "a face singularly marked with intellect and cultivation, but which could never, even in his more youthful days, have expressed much warmth of heart" (10: 95). Although he appears heartless through most of the story, he justifies his intentions toward Beatrice and Giovanni at the end of the tale:

> "Miserable!" exclaimed Rappaccini. "What mean you foolish girl? Dost thou deem it misery to be endowed with marvelous gifts, against which no power nor strength could avail an enemy? Misery, to be able to quell the mightiest with a breath? Misery, to be as terrible as thou art beautiful? Wouldst thou, then, have preferred the condition of a weak woman, exposed to all evil, and capable of none?" (10: 127)

This passage suggests that Rappaccini, as the Calvinist God, has made Beatrice and Giovanni his "elect." As Shurr points out, the couple have no choice in the matter, but

are preordained. The response of Beatrice is, "I would fain have been loved, not feared." Here is one of Hawthorne's main objections to Puritanism; with its stress on depravity of man and absolute sovereignty of God, it de-emphasizes love and sympathy. This view of God is unacceptable to Hawthorne. Says Leonard Fick of Hawthorne:

> He diverges sharply from the true Puritan outlook, however, in his insistence upon the mercy of Almighty God, an attribute which New England Calvinism had buried beneath a weight of His awful and arbitrary sovereignty. (21)

Because Hawthorne is more concerned with the happiness of man than with the glory of God, Fick asserts that his theology is closer to the Arminians than to the Puritans (22).

The ambiguity of Dr. Rappaccini's role in the allegory reflects the deficiency of Calvinist doctrine as Hawthorne sees it. Rappaccini (the allegorical Calvinist God) provides for his daughter what he thinks is good, but what she really wants is love and sympathy. With the allegory, Hawthorne is demonstrating the inability of Calvinist doctrine to provide what mankind most wants and needs: love. The power Rappaccini provides Beatrice gives her a defense against the evils of the world, but at the same time, it takes away her ability to obtain human

sympathy and love, and results only in isolation. In the same way, the Calvinist doctrine of election, coupled with the doctrine of human depravity, isolated the Puritans from their fellow man and from their God.

In "Rappaccini's Daughter" fatherly love and sympathy are provided by Baglioni, who looks after Giovanni but, as Shurr points out, "can offer only his impotent tears, in the glass of 'Lachryma Christi'" (2). In this allegory, the "Father and Son" roles of the Godhead have been separated, and each is shown to possess both good and bad qualities. As a Christ figure, Baglioni has the qualities of human sympathy and compassion lacking in Rappaccini, but is ineffectual because of his lack of power. His magic potion, intended as an antidote to Rappaccini's poison, brings Beatrice no earthly solace, but only results in her death. As she dies she says that "I am going, father, where the evil, which thou hast striven to mingle with my being, will pass away like a dream" (10: 127). Baglioni's potion is, however ironically, an antidote to the poison. The allegorical parallel could be that, like Baglioni's potion, Christ's gift to mankind, eternal salvation, has little effect on man's earthly happiness, and, as such, is a mixed blessing.

Beatrice is an obvious mixture of good and evil, and she is important because she prefigures such typically

"Hawthornian" characters as Hester, Zenobia, and Miriam. The concept of woman as an ambivalent combination of the temptress Eve and the holy Mother Mary goes back as far as Christianity itself. Some recent critics, such as Gloria Chasson Erlich, have suggested that Hawthorne recognized this duality and his Puritanical theology would not allow him to accept women because of their inherent connection with sin (Erlich 164). But this view is an oversimplification of Hawthorne's ambivalence toward women.

On this level of allegory, Beatrice is both sexual temptress and spiritual lover. Hawthorne admits that her most alluring attributes "were bound down and compressed, as it were, and girdled tensely, in their luxuriance, by her virgin zone" (10: 96). But as she later says of herself, "though my body be nourished by poison, my spirit is God's creature" (10: 125). She is the fallen woman, possessing both sinfulness and spirituality.

Giovanni, the apparent Adam of the fallen garden, is also a mixture of good and bad qualities. On one hand, he is the medieval "white knight" figure in love with the maiden in distress. On the other hand, his bitter renunciation of Beatrice leads to her suicide and to her final words:

Farewell, Giovanni! Thy words of hatred are like

> lead within my heart--but they, too, will fall away as I ascend. Oh, was there not , from the first, more poison in thy nature than in mine? (10: 127)

Hawthorne suggests that Giovanni is far from being an innocent victim of a temptress: "Guasconti had not a deep heart . . . but he had a quick fancy, and an ardent southern temperament, which rose every instant to a higher fever-pitch" (10: 105). Giovanni's attraction to Beatrice is clearly sexual, but one would hardly condemn him as a lustful degenerate. What Hawthorne stresses above all else in this tale is the confusing mixture of qualities which pervade the fallen Eden. As narrator of the story, he writes:

> Whether or no Beatrice possessed those terrible attributes . . . which were indicated by what Giovanni had witnessed, she had at least instilled a fierce and subtle poison into his system. It was not love, although her rich beauty was a madness to him; nor horror, even while he fancied her spirit to be imbued with the same baneful essence that seemed to pervade her physical frame; but a wild offspring of both love and horror that had each parent in it, and burned like one and shivered like the other. . . . Blessed are the simple emotions, be they dark or bright! It is the lurid intermixture of the two that produces the illuminating blaze of the infernal regions. (10: 105)

Everything in this "Eden of the present world" (10: 96) is composed of a "lurid intermixture" of apparent opposites. This description of Giovanni's attraction to Beatrice might also serve as a description of the

Calvinist's relationship to God. The sermons of Jonathan Edwards and his predecessors are filled with the same mixture of love and horror toward a loving but vengeful Father. Hawthorne's ambivalent treatment of the Puritans and their religious faith in his other works indicates his awareness of this love/horror relationship, both with their God and with their fellow man.

The marble fountain in the center of the garden has led to much debate among critics. Its prominence in the story implies that it is an important symbol, but what, exactly, the fountain is intended to symbolize has been a matter of controversy. Some argue that the fountain symbolizes man's corrupted nature, while others prefer to see it as a symbol of Beatrice's heavenly nature (Newman 270). But if, as Shurr suggests, the story is an allegorical treatment of Calvinism, or of contemporary religion in general, it makes sense to see the fountain as a symbol of "the church." Describing the "Eden of the present world," Hawthorne says:

> . . . there was the ruin of a marble fountain in the center, sculptured with rare art, but so wofully shattered that it was impossible to trace the original design from the chaos of remaining fragments. (10: 94)

This corresponds to Hawthorne's opinion of the contemporary Christian church. In "The Celestial Rail-

road" he bitterly criticizes man's falling away from the original concepts of Christianity, and satirizes the current trend of making religion convenient and too easy. Hawthorne was quite aware that the original Church, "sculptured with rare art," had, especially during the preceding two centuries, "shattered" into many fragments. But because of his Christian faith, he believed that these fragments still contained enough of the original form to give evidence of the grandeur of the institution of Christianity. In depicting Hawthorne's eclectic brand of Protestantism, Fick stresses the author's his refusal to accept any specific denomination of the church:

> Hawthorne, unable to accept the "cloud-land" of transcendentalism, reluctant to embrace the "dismal severity of the Puritanic code of law" (SL, V, 72), unimpressed by Brownson's "extravagant assertiveness . . . and his acceptance of many theories in rapid succession," simply remained aloof. For him there was no place to go. (156)

As a result, Hawthorne remained a non-denominational protestant with a deep faith in God and Providence, but without formal ties to any established religious organization.

Although the fountain in the garden is shattered and has lost its original form, it still serves its purpose:

> The water, however, continued to gush and sparkle into the sunbeams as cheerfully as ever. A little gurgling sound ascended to the young man's window,

> and made him feel as if the fountain were an immortal spirit, that sung its song unceasingly, and without heeding the vicissitudes around it; while one century embodied it in marble, and another scattered the perishable garniture on the soil. (10: 94-95)

Since God and Christ are already represented in the tale, it is not surprising to find here a source of eternal nourishment which resembles the Holy Spirit in its function; the Trinity is complete. In the fallen world the Holy Spirit still issues from the church, even though the church has declined from its original glory. The medieval Catholics "embodied it in marble" and the protestant reformers "scattered the perishable garniture on the soil." But the Holy Spirit is still alive and healthy as it gurgles and bubbles into the garden; it is the church, the fragmented fountain, and the personalities of God and Christ as they are defined by the church that are old and decaying. The Calvinistic God, like Rappaccini, is dispassionate and harsh, but growing old and sickly. The Christ of the New England religions, especially the Unitarians, is reduced, like Baglioni, to a sympathetic but powerless being. The Adam and Eve of the present world, composites of spiritual purity and earthly sinfulness, are not aided by religion, but are, instead, victims of it.

On another level, "Rappaccini's Daughter" can be seen as a philosophical allegory which treats many of the

topics discussed by Hegel and other philosophical idealists. The pervading theme is still the mixture of opposites, but here the qualities mixed are "the real" and "the ideal" rather than the more judgmental qualities of good and evil.

The fountain is, again, a central symbol. It seems to be the source of ideal purity in a world of particularity and imperfection. It does not heed the "vicissitudes around it," the transient world of substance, but continues its song unceasingly. The ideal is permanent and changeless, regardless of what generations of mankind attempt to do to it. Hawthorne says that the water from the fountain "continued to gush and sparkle into the sunbeams" (10: 94). His use of the word "sunbeams," by which he almost invariably refers to the material world, implies that the source of the water is the ideal world and that it brings some sort of abstract purity into the material world. This notion is reinforced by a later passage describing the meeting between Giovanni and Beatrice:

> Her spirit gushed out before him like a fresh rill, that was just catching its first glimpse of sunlight, and wondering at the reflections of earth and sky which were flung into its bosom. There came thoughts too, from a deep source, and fantasies of a gem-like brilliancy, as if diamonds and rubies sparkled upward among the bubbles of the fountain. (10: 113)

Beatrice and the fountain are linked here as sources of abstract spirit. Through the intellect of man, the neutral aspect of nature is suffused with the pure brilliancy of the ideal.

The link between the ideal and the real is the scientist, Rappaccini. On this level of allegory he represents intellect. He is dressed in "scholar's garb" and has a "face marked with intellect and cultivation" (10: 95). He looks into "the inmost secrets" of things and manipulates nature to make it conform to his ideas. It is in his garden that the abstract purity from the fountain becomes merged with the particularity of nature to form new and exotic shapes. But Rappaccini's home is the abstract world, the world of mind. When he works with the fusion of abstract and concrete, he must wear gloves and a mask. Hawthorne says of him:

> His face was all overspread with a most sickly and sallow hue, but yet so pervaded with an expression of piercing and active intellect, that an observer might easily have overlooked the merely physical attributes, and have seen only this wonderful energy. (10: 106)

His earthly substance is nearly withered away, but his intellect is extremely powerful.

Baglioni, his rival, represents "Nature's warmth of love" (10: 107), as Hawthorne calls it. Baglioni is of a "genial nature," and appreciates "a flask or two of Tuscan

wine" (10: 99). The conflict between the "real" and the "ideal," which dates back to Plato, is reflected in the "professional warfare of long continuance between him [Baglioni] and Doctor Rappaccini" (10: 100). Since Baglioni represents the "real," and Rappaccini the "ideal," the fact that Rappaccini is thought to have gained the advantage may refer to the contemporary philosophical trend of German Idealism and, on the local level, to Emerson and the Concord transcendentalists.

On this level of allegory, Giovanni represents a man caught between the abstract and the concrete. The first time Beatrice sees him looking into the garden, he is "like a being that hovered in mid-air" (10: 104). Throughout the tale he struggles to determine what is real and what is imaginary. After his first view into the garden, "Giovanni could not determine how much of the singularity which he attributed to both [Rappaccini and Beatrice], was due to their own qualities, and how much to his wonder-working fancy" (10: 98). He wonders if he should leave Padua since the sight of Beatrice gives "a kind of substance and reality to the wild vagaries which his imagination ran riot continually in producing" (10: 105). What he finds most alluring in Beatrice is the human mixture of spirit and substance.

Giovanni says that "Odors, being a sort of element

combined of the sensual and the spiritual, are apt to deceive us" (10: 117). He might have said the same of Beatrice, who represents the union of ideal beauty and sensuality. It is her combination of sensuality and spirituality that is so confusing to Giovanni. She is "arrayed with as much richness of taste as the most splendid of flowers, beautiful as the day, and with a bloom so deep and vivid that one shade more would have been too much" (10: 97). She is "redundant with life, health, and energy" (10: 97), and is as a sister to the plants in the garden: she tends the plant as "one sister performing the duties of affection to another" (10:98). Her relationship with the plant is overtly sensual:

> Approaching the shrub, she threw open her arms, as with a passionate ardor, and drew its branches into an intimate embrace; so intimate, that her features were hidden in its leafy bosom, and her glistening ringlets all intermingled with the flowers. (10: 102)

The writer's attitude toward Beatrice's sexuality is hardly Puritanical. Rather, it is reminiscent of Whitman's concept of the "procreant urge" of nature as it appears in Leaves of Grass. Beatrice represents the "life force," which includes birth, death, and regeneration. Hawthorne's ambivalence toward her could be due to his imperfect understanding of his own philosophy at this

early point in his career. In the tales we can see him working out this philosophical concept.

One of his best early tales, "Young Goodman Brown," provides another example of his recognition of thesis and antithesis. Fogle points out the importance of contrast in the story;

> In "Young Goodman Brown," then, Hawthorne has achieved that reconciliation of opposites which Coleridge considered the highest art. . . . The phantasmagoric light and shadow of the rising and falling fire, which obscures and softens the clear, hard outline of the witch-meeting, is an image which will stand for the essential effect of the story itself, an effect compacted of ambiguity and clarity harmoniously interfused. (32)

The "reconciliation of opposites" commented on here refers primarily to Hawthorne's style rather than his philosophy. Even in this early tale, Hawthorne was able to delineate these antithetical forces and to weave the light and the dark into superb fiction. But this tale, although it forcefully presents the problem, avoids a direct statement of the solution. There is clearly thesis and antithesis, but the synthesis is only suggested.

As in "Rappaccini's Daughter," there is great stress in this tale on the mixture of good and evil, and of real and imaginary, in a scene suggesting the fallen Eden. Bernard Cohen reads "Young Goodman Brown" as a combined version of the two separate falls of Adam and Eve (283),

and points out many of the parallels between this tale and Milton's version of the fall in Paradise Lost. Indeed, Hawthorne admired Milton greatly and may have inherited his view of the fallen world from him. Milton says in Areopagitica:

> Good and evill we know in the field of this World grow up together almost inseparably; and the knowledge of good is so involved and interwoven with the knowledge of evill, and in so many cunning resemblances hardly to be discern'd, that those confused seeds which impos'd upon Psyche a an incessant labour to cull out, and sort assunder, were not more intermixt. It was from out the rinde of one apple tasted, that the knowledge of good and evill as two twins cleaving together leapt forth into the World. (514)

Hawthorne takes this notion even further: instead of being "almost inseparable," good and evil become totally inseparable. And as Hawthorne matures as a writer "good" and "evil" are gradually displaced to some degree by "abstract" and "concrete."

In "Young Goodman Brown" this fusion of good and evil in a fallen world is quite apparent. Fogle discusses the color symbolism in the story and concludes that "red represents Sin or Evil, plain and unequivocal" (26). Faith's pink ribbons, then, rather blatantly suggest the mixture of evil and purity. As with Beatrice, Hawthorne assigns the dual role of Virgin Mary and temptress Eve to his main female character. Brown calls her "a blessed angel on earth," and promises that "after this one night,

I'll cling to her skirts and follow her to heaven" (10: 75). To the immature Brown she is clearly a divine mother figure, and he the weak child clinging to her skirts. Her earthly sexuality, however, is apparent in her only spoken words in the story:

> "Dearest heart," whispered she, softly and rather sadly, when her lips were close to his ear, "pr'y thee, put off your journey until sunrise, and sleep in your own bed to-night. . . ." (10: 74)

The central issue of the story is the effect of Brown's realization of this dual nature of the people he has idolized, and idealized, in his youth. It is significant that the incident takes place three months after the marriage of Brown and Faith, since this is the point at which the "honeymoon" may be said to end. Brown's conception of Faith as an idealized bride must give way to a more mature understanding of her as a real woman with bodily functions and desires. His lifelong gloom is the result of his unwillingness to relinquish his idealism, which classifies things as either good or evil, for a mature, realistic view of life which accepts the mixture of good and evil.

The required change in his perception applies not only to his wife, but to his family and the townspeople as well. At the ceremony in the forest, the devil reveals to Brown the error in his perception of his townspeople:

> There . . . are all whom ye have reverenced from youth. Ye deemed them holier than yourselves, and shrank from your own sin, contrasting it with their lives of righteousness, and prayerful aspirations heavenward. (10: 87)

Up to this point Brown has maintained an idealized and inaccurate opinion of his fellow man. He must develop a more mature understanding of people which will take into account their potential for evil.

This mature understanding is offered by "the sable form" during the ceremony in the forest. The devil of "Young Goodman Brown" is a fascinating and ambiguous character. Like Rappaccini, he is both Godlike and satanic. The most remarkable thing about him, says Hawthorne, is his staff, "which bore the likeness of a great black snake, so curiously wrought, that it might almost be seen to twist and wriggle itself, like a living serpent" (10: 76). Its primary purpose seems to be to provide a swift mode of transportation: it whisks Goody Cloyse off to the meeting so quickly that she seems to vanish, and with the its assistance Brown himself "seemed to fly along the forest path, rather than to walk or run" (10: 83). In "The Paradise of Children," one of the stories from A Wonder Book, Hawthorne describes a very similar staff:

> "Oh, the most curious staff you ever saw!" cried Epimetheus. "It was so like two serpents twisting

> around a stick, and was carved so naturally, that I at first thought the serpents were alive." (7: 68)

This is the staff of Mercury, or Quicksilver as he is called in the story, and like the staff in "Young Goodman Brown" it has the ability to transport its bearer with amazing speed.

If this were the only similarity between the two tales, the reappearance of the staff might be ignored as a mere coincidence. But there are more important parallels between the two stories. "Young Goodman Brown" and "The Paradise of Children" are both versions of the fall myth. Because "The Paradise of Children" was written for children, its allegory is much more transparent than that of "Young Goodman Brown," and it can aid in the interpretation of the more complex tale.

The staff is an important symbol in "Young Goodman Brown" because it links the "sable form" to God as well as Satan. The snake, of course, is linked with Satan in the Garden of Eden because of his appearance to Eve in that guise. But in "Young Goodman Brown" Hawthorne says that the staff is one "which its owner had formerly lent to the Egyptian Magi" (10: 79). In Exodus, however, Moses and Aaron possess a staff which through the power of God can turn into a serpent:

> The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "If Pharaoh demands some portent from you, then you, Moses, must

> say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and throw it down in front of Pharaoh, and it will turn into a serpent.'" When Moses and Aaron came to Pharaoh, they did as the Lord had told them. Aaron threw down his staff in front of Pharaoh and his courtiers, and it turned into a serpent. (7 Exod.: 8-10)

The Egyptian magicians then duplicate the feat with their own staffs. The ambiguity of the allusion is that the staff of the dark figure of "Young Goodman Brown" could be that of Aaron which was "lent" to the Egyptians by Aaron, or it could be one of the staffs thrown down by the magicians, lent to them by Satan. Through this allusion, the identity of the dark figure remains ambiguous. But the allusion does recall the major theme of the Biblical episode: the Pharaoh's refusal to listen to God's messengers. Like the Pharaoh, Goodman Brown "hardens his heart" and is thereby made miserable.

The owner of the staff (whom Hawthorne never calls Satan) may be, ironically, some type of messenger from God as were Moses and Aaron to the Egyptian Pharaoh. Mary Rohrberger makes a similar observation in Hawthorne and the Modern Short Story:

> The devil becomes not only Lucifer, the traditional tempter and seducer of mankind, but he is also God the Father and Christ the Son and, in Christian typology, Moses, the leader of his people. The rod he carries is not only the devil's staff and the embodiment of evil in the form of a serpent, but it is also by extension Moses' rod with its serpent entwined. . . . (41)

The question then becomes: how can one figure represent both God and Satan? And further, if he does represent these antithetical extremes, how can the allegory be anything but a meaningless jumble of confused symbols? One possible answer is suggested by a comparison of "Young Goodman Brown" and "The Paradise of Children." The staff-bearer in "The Paradise of Children" is Mercury--the messenger. In Exodus the staff serves as proof to the Pharaoh that Moses is the messenger of God. In "Young Goodman Brown" the "sable form" is also a messenger of a sort. What he offers the initiates at the ceremony is not an increased capacity for evil, but knowledge:

> This night it shall be granted you to know their secret deeds. . . . Far more than this! It shall be yours to penetrate, in every bosom, the deep mystery of sin. . . . And now, my children, look upon each other. (10: 87)

What is offered is the ability to see others as they really are rather than as they appear from outward manifestations. As a result of his refusal, Brown is never able to see others clearly, but suspects the worst.

In "The Paradise of Children" Mercury leaves the box containing the troubles of the world with Pandora and Epimetheus, the Adam and Eve of the story. He is the source of the temptation. After the children have yielded to temptation and let the swarm of troubles out of the box

they fall into despair and disagreement just as Adam and Eve do in Paradise Lost. But from within the same box that produced the troubles comes a voice with "a kind of cheerful witchery" (7: 79) begging them to open the box once more. Arguing that "one other Trouble, in such a swarm . . . can make no very great difference" (7: 79), they decide to open the box again, this time with a different result:

> Out flew a sunny and smiling little personage, and hovered about the room, throwing a light wherever she went. Have you ever made the sunshine dance into dark corners, by reflecting it from a bit of looking-glass? Well; so looked the winged cheerfulness of this fairylike stranger, amid the gloom of the cottage. She flew to Epimetheus, and laid the least touch of her finger on the inflamed spot where the Trouble had stung him; and immediately the anguish of it was gone. Then, she kissed Pandora on the forehead; and her hurt was cured likewise. (7: 80)

Mercury had brought them the temptation, but after they had yielded to it, Hope sprang from the same source and provided them comfort and a weapon against despair. So, Mercury is at once the messenger of trouble and of hope.

Goodman Brown yields to temptation when he goes into the forest and loses his Faith. After seeing the pink ribbon, he goes into despair as does Adam after the fall and Epimetheus after the box is opened for the first time. Brown's problem is that he refuses to go all the way--to open the box the second time. "The Paradise of Children"

demonstrates Hawthorne's belief that hope and evil come from the same source. This concept is reinforced by a passage from his journal:

> The human Heart to be allegorized as a cavern; at the entrance there is sunshine, and flowers growing about it. You step within, but a short distance, and begin to find yourself surrounded with a terrible gloom, and monsters of divers kinds; it seems like Hell itself. You are bewildered, and wander long without hope. At last a light strikes upon you. You press towards it yon, and find yourself in a region that seems, in some sort, to reproduce the flowers and sunny beauty of the entrance, but all perfect. These are the depths of the heart, or of human nature, bright and peaceful; the gloom and terror may lie deep; but deeper still is this eternal beauty. (8: 237)

Goodman Brown stops his progress at the point where "it seems like Hell itself" and is so repulsed by his fellow townspeople that he refuses to go farther. He goes far enough to become <u>aware</u> of the sinfulness of the human race, but not far enough to <u>understand</u> and sympathize with his fellow sinners. He is doomed to wander through his whole life without hope.

In this story, as in "Rappaccini's Daughter," there is a link between the poles of good and evil and the poles of the real and the imaginary. The forest is the "unreal," the moonlight, and the village is the "real," or sunlight. Brown's experience in the abstract world is framed by the scenes in the village, and it is his failure to synthesize these opposing poles that ruins his life.

He attempts to live in both worlds without reconciling the two: he stays with Faith, has a family, goes to church, and mechanically goes about his real life in the sunlight. But at "midnight" he "shrank from the bosom of Faith, and at morning or eventide [when the two worlds are in conflict] . . . he scowled, and muttered to himself, and gazed sternly at his wife, and turned away" (10: 89).

The most obvious result of the fall of man in these three versions of the myth is the inseparability of good and evil. The fallen man is a composite of spiritual being and physical substance with a propensity for evil and an awareness of good. Like the garden of Rappaccini, the fallen world is at once beautiful and deadly. Both Giovanni and Goodman Brown refuse to accept the mixture of qualities and as a result are lost.

This "lurid intermixture" of things is the most notable effect of <u>original</u> sin, but the effects of <u>personal</u> sin are guilt and isolation. Many of the short stories examine the psychological effect sinful acts or thoughts have upon the life of the sinner. In "The Hollow of the Three Hills," one of Hawthorne's earliest stories, the theme of guilt as a result of sin is most apparent. The "lady" of the tale is driven into exile and isolation by her sin and is obsessed with guilt:

"Whence I come it matters not;--but I have left those

> behind me with whom my fate was intimately bound, and from whom I am cut off forever. There is a weight in my bosom that I cannot away with, and I have come hither to inquire of their welfare." (9: 200)

Although this is not one of Hawthorne's greatest tales, it contains several points of interest. The setting for the story is "those strange old times, when fantastic dreams and madmen's reveries were realized among the actual circumstances of life" (9: 199). Even at this early stage of his career, possibly as early as 1824 (Newman 155), Hawthorne was concerned with the reification of imagination, or abstract thought. Evil and good are more clearly distinguishable in this tale than in "Rappaccini's Daughter" and "Young Goodman Brown." The witch is purely evil: she has no sympathy for her victim as does the dark figure in "Goodman Brown," or even Rappaccini. Whether the scenes she presents to the lady are true visions or false conjurations intended to destroy her soul, the fact remains that the witch is quite pleased with the "sweet hour's sport" and chuckles over the death of the lady.

Similarly, "Roger Malvin's Burial" deals with the effect of long-carried guilt. As with the lady of "The Hollow of the Three Hills," Rueben Bourne's sense of guilt results in isolation from God. It is not until "his sin is expiated" (10: 360) by the accidental killing of his

own son that he is able to pray. Guilt and isolation seem to go hand in hand. Unless the person can overcome the isolation and guilt to re-establish lines of communication with other human beings and with God, he or she is doomed to a life of misery.

The common denominator in all these tales is Hawthorne's unflagging concern for the confusing intermixture of good and evil present in the fallen world. The problem cannot be dealt with externally since it is inherent within man himself; man is aware of his dual nature and is unable to cope with the duality. As I have stated earlier, the effects of sin most concerning Hawthorne (at least in his writing) are those which have to do with man's mortal lifespan. The two primary effects discussed are guilt and withdrawal, and the two effects play on each other to increase their resultant harmfulness: guilt causes the person to retreat within himself for shame, and the isolation places him within himself and, thus, more conscious of his own guilt. In order to save himself, he must break the cycle by reaching outside in some way. For Hawthorne, this means attaching himself to the "magnetic chain of humanity." This process is the very heart of Hegel's philosophy.

In the Phenomenology Hegel outlines the process experienced by the individual consciousness as it moves

from initial consciousness of external objects to "universal self-consciousness." As the mind becomes aware of the realm of the abstract, of "truth" or "God," it reaches a state which Hegel terms "the Unhappy Consciousness." Because this state of self awareness is crucial to Hegel's system and is also descriptive of many characters in Hawthorne's fiction, some further elucidation of the term is called for. A full explanation would require a hundred pages or more, so in the interest of brevity, this definition of the term should be seen as an approximation of what Hegel intends by the term rather than a complete explication of a substantial section of The Phenomenology.

As the attention of consciousness turns toward itself, a duality is formed; the "self" is at one time both objective (the "thing" being examined) and subjective (the "thing" doing the examining). This duality leads to the eventual separation of the self into (1) a changeable, physical entity with appetites and desires, and (2) an immutable essence partaking of "universal law" and abstract right. A loose parallel is the division of self into "mortal body" and "immortal soul," but Hegel's distinction is more complicated than that, and it is philosophical rather than religious. The consciousness, which has now become a duality, begins to see the true

"self" as the mortal, physical half and sees the abstract portion of self as completely "other." As Quentin Lauer explains it, "The Unhappy Consciousness, faced with a universality in which it cannot see itself as having any part, negates itself, affirming only its own nothingness and the insignificance of its own action" (Lauer 123). In religious terms (or, more specifically, Calvinist terms), as Hawthorne would have seen it, the person sees himself as inconsequential compared to God (the "other") who is omnipotent and all-important. God is all goodness and right, and man is nothing but sin and depravity. The "Unhappy Consciousness" is that consciousness which is aware of its own dual nature (mortal flesh combined with immortal soul) but is unable to unify the two parts because it has "imaged" its immortal part as something particular and outside itself. As a result it feels incomplete and inconsequential and lacks the ability to heal the breach it has brought about in itself. Hegel used the ancient Jews as an example of the Unhappy Consciousness because of their understanding of their relationship to God: God was the omnipotent law-giver, a distinctly separate particular being, and they the alienated, obedient followers. The Puritans, in their relationship to God, were quite similar to these ancient Jews, and it is appropriate that Hawthorne sees in them

the same sense of isolation. For Hawthorne's Puritan ancestors, God was not an immediate presence around and within them, but a particular being apart from them who watched and judged. They were "insulated" from God by virtue of the difference between his nature and their own.

The concept of the Unhappy Consciousness is expressed quite neatly in the whimsical tale "Monsieur du Miroir," in which Hawthorne discusses his relationship with his own reflected image. He plays on the word "reflection" (10: 171), suggesting that his examination of his reflection in the mirror is, indeed, a form of intellectual reflection. The tale describes Hawthorne's process of self consciousness in the Hegelian sense. He writes:

> Still, there he sits, and returns my gaze with as much awe and curiosity, as if he, too, had spent a solitary evening in fantastic musings, and made me his theme. So inimitably does he counterfeit, that I could almost doubt which of us is the visionary form, or whether each be not the other's mystery, and both twin brethren of one fate, in mutually reflected spheres. (10: 171)

This is exactly the point Hegel makes in The Phenomenology: that there is a reciprocity between the two halves of the dual nature, and each needs the other to be complete. The abstract is nothing without concrete existence, and the substantial is meaningless without the abstract idea. The two must combine in order to produce form with meaning. Hawthorne speaks to his reflection,

saying:

> Oh, friend, canst thou not hear or answer me? Break down the barrier between us! Grasp my hand! Speak! Listen! A few words, perhaps, might satisfy the feverish yearning of my soul for some masterthought, that should guide me through this labyrinth of life, teaching wherefore I was born, and how to do my task on earth, and what is death. (10: 171)

The "feverish yearning" is the root of the unhappiness in the Unhappy Consciousness as it seeks to "break down the barrier." Hawthorne chastises himself for asking these "vain questions," the answers to which "Divine Intelligence has revealed so far as needful to our guidance, and hid the rest" (10: 171). At the time this tale was composed (prior to initial publication in 1837) Hawthorne was apparently unable, himself, to bring about the necessary unification, preferring to defer to "Divine Intelligence" for the solution to the problem. In later works, however, he does appear to work out an acceptable synthesis.

Many of the characters in Hawthorne's tales can be seen as representations of the Unhappy Consciousness, but there is one character who appears in several tales and is the quintessential Unhappy Consciousness: the Wandering Jew. Hawthorne makes use of the character specifically in three tales: "A Virtuoso's Collection," "A Select Party," and "Ethan Brand." The character "type," however, the

wizened old man who is alienated from all human beings and forced to wander through society as an observer, appears in numerous places throughout Hawthorne's works. In The Legend of the Wandering Jew, George Anderson defines the legendary figure in this way:

> In the main, the Wandering Jew continues to stand out as a brave representative of sin, one who may be considered, as a sinner, in either a sympathetic or unsympathetic light. If unsympathetic, we must accept the attitude toward him as a manifestation of moral or religious conservatism. If sympathetic, he soon becomes, in his sinfulness, a symbol of the rebellious aspirations of a thinking man--thus he may stand for the Weltschmerz [universal torment], which is by no means the special property of the end of the nineteenth century . . . but quite generally for all mankind, groaning and travailing together against the cruel force of things as they are. (212)

Characteristically, Hawthorne seems to see the figure in both a sympathetic and unsympathetic light. Hawthorne's religious conservatism causes him to see the Jew's punishment as somehow "just," but that doesn't prevent him from having sympathy and compassion for the character's suffering. Hawthorne does in fact use the figure as a symbol for the "alienated thinking man."

In "A Virtuoso's Collection," the Wandering Jew appears as the collector of a wide-ranging assortment of curiosities from history, both actual history and fictional history, from Cinderella's glass slipper to

Charles Lamb's pipe. The most interesting artifact in this bizarre museum, however, is its curator, and Hawthorne's treatment of him gives us a clue as to his importance in this and other tales. The narrator of the tale describes his initial impression of the host:

> It had not escaped me that, though the Virtuoso was evidently a man of high cultivation, yet he seemed to lack sympathy with the spiritual, the sublime, and the tender. Apart from the whim that had led him to devote so much time to the collection of this Museum, he impressed me as one of the hardest and coldest men of the world whom I had ever met. (10: 485)

When offered a drink of the "Elixir Vitae," the narrator turns down the temptation of immortal life claiming that, "Were man to live longer on the earth, the spiritual would die out of him. The spark of ethereal fire would be choked by the material, the sensual" (10: 489). He advises the host to keep it in a sepulchral urn, "for it would produce death, while bestowing the shadow of life" (10: 489). This, then, must be the problem with the Wandering Jew; his eternal self, "the spiritual," has died out of him leaving only the "material, the sensual." In Hegelian terms, he is only half of a consciousness, and has denied, or "negated," the other half. Hegel asserts that the Unhappy Consciousness, in its effort to achieve unity, will attempt to deny the validity of one or the other of its two parts. Thus, the Wandering Jew tells the

narrator, "Life,--earthly life,--is the only good" (10: 489). When the narrator offers to pray for him, he replies, "Your prayers will be in vain. . . . My destiny is linked with the realities of earth. You are welcome to your visions and shadows of a future state; but give me what I can see, and touch, and understand, and I ask no more" (10: 496). That the Wandering Jew is alienated from God is fairly obvious, but although he is forever a sojourner in earthly life among humans, he is also alienated from his fellow man. He has come to "despise all things," presumably including his fellow man, and his handshake, the narrator notes, is icy cold and "without a single heart-throb of human brotherhood" (10: 496).

Although the Wandering Jew figure is caught up in the earthly, he is not lacking in intellect and cultivation. The vast majority of the items in his collection are relics of mythology and imaginative literature. He seems to be concerned with the tangible relics of literature and mythology rather than their meaning; he is concerned with the symbol itself rather than the thing symbolized. A symbol is a duality in the same way that a person is a duality since it is a unification of tangible existence and abstract thought. In the same way that the Wandering Jew denies the "soul" of man, he denies the "soul" of the symbol and treats it only as a "thing." The narrator

notes that "though the Virtuoso was evidently a man of high cultivation, . . . he seemed to lack sympathy with the spiritual, the sublime, and the tender" (10: 485). As a result, the Virtuoso tends to treat all objects with the same respect, or lack of respect, lumping them together inappropriately:

> I examined Cinderella's little glass slipper, and compared it with one of Diana's sandals, and with Fanny Elssler's shoe, which bore testimony to the muscular character of her illustrious foot. On the same shelf were Thomas Rhymer's green velvet shoes, and the brazen shoe of Empedocles, which was thrown out of Mount Aetna. Anacreon's drinking cup was placed in apt juxtaposition with one of Tom Moore's wine-glasses and Circe's magic bowl. (10: 485)

Throughout the tale there is an incongruous grouping together of symbols from mythology, literature, and genuine history, which suggests a lack of distinction as to the symbolic value of the articles. Hawthorne uses the juxtaposition of certain articles for an often ironic effect, but points out that the irony is not the intention of the Virtuoso himself. For example, Hawthorne notes that, "Pandora's box, without the lid, stood next, containing nothing but the girdle of Venus, which had been carelessly flung into it" (10: 491). Hawthorne saw the appropriateness of the combination but implies that the Virtuoso did not. The Wandering Jew demands things which he can "see, touch, and understand." He is a pure

empiric; he does not lack intellectual ability, only "spirit." We can understand "spirit" here in the Hegelian sense of the synthesis of material and abstract. The Wandering Jew partakes of both material and abstract, but he has not synthesized the two into "spirit." He is the Unhappy Consciousness.

The Wandering Jew makes a brief appearance in another of Hawthorne's more whimsical tales, "A Select Party." In this rather playful treatment of man's imaginative ability, Hawthorne's "Man of Fancy" constructs a castle in the air for the purpose of entertaining a select group of idealized, imaginary characters such as The Oldest Inhabitant (a character with distinct similarities to the Wandering Jew), the Clerk of the Weather, the young man's Dream Woman, and the Master Genius of American literature. The Wandering Jew arrives at the gathering, but does not fit in. Hawthorne says of him:

> This personage, however, had latterly grown so common, by mingling in all sorts of society, and appearing at the beck of every entertainer, that he could hardly be deemed a proper guest in a very exclusive circle. (10: 62)

The other guests are ethereal forms of pure fancy, and since this character is "covered with dust from his continual wanderings along the highways of the world," he is too "real" for such company, and after a brief stay he

takes his departure "on a ramble towards Oregon" (10: 63). We might infer from this that, for Hawthorne, the creative intellectualism represented by the Wandering Jew differs from pure imagination. Imagination, or "fancy," involves a fusion of abstract idea and material existence. The "image" itself is abstract, or at least has no tangible existence, but it is an image <u>of</u> something tangible. In that sense it differs from intellectual thought (reason). Hegel makes the distinction between "conceptualization," pure thought, and "imagination," thought coupled with sensation. What Hegel sees as the importance of imagination is its ability to bring forth pictures of the "ideal" so that the mind can consider them and through volition and work give actual existence to the ideal (Stace 366). In that sense it is a function of "spirit," the quality lacking in the Wandering Jew. Hawthorne's understanding of imagination seems to be very much the same as Hegel's, and so he excludes the Wandering Jew from the rest of the company. The Wandering Jew himself would fall into the category of doubters whom Hawthorne castigates in the initial paragraph of the tale:

> And now, if the people of the lower world chanced to be looking upward, out of the turmoil of their petty perplexities, they probably mistook the castle in the air for a heap of sunset clouds, to which the magic of light and shade had imparted the aspect of a fantastically constructed mansion. To such beholders

> it was unreal, because they lacked the imaginative faith. (10: 58)

The castle would seem too insubstantial for the Wandering Jew of "A Virtuoso's Collection" who demands only things of substance which he can "see, and touch, and understand." But Hawthorne sees a different species of reality in this imaginative construction:

> Had they [the people of the lower world] been worthy to pass within its portal, they would have recognized the truth, that the dominions which the spirit conquers for itself among unrealities, become a thousand times more real than the earth whereon they stamp their feet, saying, "This is solid and substantial!--this may be called a fact!" (10: 58)

Hawthorne sees "reality" as something different from what the character of the Wandering Jew considers reality.

The Wandering Jew appears in another, more serious, tale which is one of the most frequently discussed in the Hawthorne canon--"Ethan Brand." This tale is also one of the most directly "philosophical" of Hawthorne's tales. In this story he deals specifically with the relationship between abstract thought and concrete action, between the "idea" and the "thing." At the beginning of the tale Hawthorne mentions "the portentous night when the IDEA was first developed" (11: 84). His use of capitals (or italics, in an earlier manuscript) for the word "idea" indicates that he is using the word in a special sense,

and judging from the subject matter of the story it seems fair to surmise that he is using the term in the Platonic sense. At least, he means more by the word than just "a notion" or a simple thought. Later he speaks of "the Idea" (initial letter capitalized) that possessed Brand's life. Again, the suggestion is that the "Idea" is a philosophical ideal of some sort or a philosophical viewpoint. In his description of Lawyer Giles, Hawthorne says that the old man's reputation for wit was due to "a certain flavor of brandy-toddy and tobacco-smoke, which impregnated all his ideas and expressions, as well as his person" (11: 91). Here we can see Hawthorne toying with the interrelation of the physical and the abstract by saying that the "flavor," a sensory quality, affects both the concrete substance (his person) and the abstract entities (ideas and expressions). In a similar way, he links the abstract "idea" with concrete "action." While Bartram and Brand are sitting alone in front of the kiln, Bartram imagines Brand's supposed meeting with the devil. When Brand rises to throw a log into the fire, Bartram is struck with horror:

> The action was in such accordance with the idea in Bartram's mind, that he almost expected to see the Evil One issue forth, red-hot from the raging furnace. (11: 89)

Of primary concern in the tale is this connection between

abstract ideas and moral action here on earth. The "Unpardonable Sin" itself seems to be inextricably tied to this relationship.

Besides using terms and concepts from idealist philosophy, Hawthorne uses images and expressions in this tale which are reminiscent of Hegel's Phenomenology. The perspective in the story is typically Hegelian. The two main characters, although they are both lime-burners, are presented as "thesis and antithesis." Bartram is a man of the earth, the concrete. Hawthorne describes him as "a rough, heavy-looking man, begrimed with charcoal" (11: 83). The description stresses his sheer mass and his close alliance to the earth with which he is "begrimed." He is certainly not a man of great intellect: Hawthorne calls him an "obtuse, middle-aged clown" (11: 83) and notes that he "troubled himself with no thoughts save the very few that were requisite to his business" (11: 85). Ethan Brand, on the other hand, becomes caught up in the abstract and is possessed by "the IDEA." It has elevated him from the physical labor of a lime-burner to a position as a great philosopher:

> The Idea that possessed his life had operated as a means of education; it had gone on cultivating his powers to the highest point of which they were susceptible; it had raised him from the level of an unlettered laborer, to stand on a starlight eminence, whither the philosophers of the earth, laden with the

> lore of universities, might vainly strive to clamber after him. (11: 99)

The antithetical relationship of the two characters is stressed throughout the tale, but Hawthorne also makes clear that their link goes beyond the fact that they are fellow "lime-burners." When the two men are alone together, Bartram contemplates the Unpardonable Sin in the breast of his cohort and becomes aware of his own sins:

> The lime-burner's own sins rose up within him, and made his memory riotous with a throng of evil shapes that asserted their kindred with the Master Sin, whatever it might be, which it was within the scope of man's corrupted nature to conceive and cherish. They were all of one family; they went to and fro between his breast and Ethan Brand's, and carried dark greetings from one to the other." (11: 88)

This reciprocity is characteristic of Hegel's notion of thesis and antithesis; some aspect of the two apparent opposites continuously reverberates between the two poles uniting them in a paradoxical unity until they seem to pass in and out of each other. In order to resolve the conflict, the "negativity" encountered by each, a synthesis is necessary to put aside (aufheben) the differences. In many of Hawthorne's earlier tales the synthesis is either lacking or merely suggested. Here, however, the synthesis is given a role in the tale.

Shortly after Brand's arrival, Bartram sends his son, Joe, to fetch the townspeople but soon begins to regret

his absence. He feels that "the little fellow's presence had been a barrier between his guest and himself" (11: 88). Joe, then, becomes the "mediator" (to borrow Hegel's term) between the two lime-burners. He is Bartram's son, but he is not heavy and sluggish. His footsteps are "light and swift" (11: 88), and he is a "timorous and imaginative child" (11: 97). While Bartram is "begrimed" with the earth (black charcoal), Joe sits before the fire playing at building houses with fragments of white marble. Besides the obvious color symbolism, there is a difference in the activities of the two: Bartram is involved in the destructive process of burning wood, and Joe is involved in "constructive" play. He participates in the material world, but through his imagination he combines it with the abstract. He is "sensitive," Hawthorne says, and feels some link with Ethan Brand even though it frightens him. In little Joe is the promise of the potential good in the spiritual human being. With his head in the diorama of the Wandering Jew (an instrument with which he shows the entire scope of human civilization) Joe becomes "an immense, Titanic child . . . overflowing with fun" (11: 95). He is the intermediary between the dull practicality of Bartram and the intense intellectualism of Brand. Hawthorne uses an image of nature to describe the relationship of these three main characters:

> Save for these three human beings, the open space on the hillside was a solitude, set in a vast gloom of forest. Beyond that darksome verge, the fire-light glimmered on the stately trunks and almost black foliage of pines, intermixed with the lighter verdure of sapling oaks, maples, and poplars, while, here and there, lay the gigantic corpses of dead trees, decaying on the leaf-strewn soil." (11: 97)

Here we have the three distinct personages isolated in their own "triad." In the background is the forest, described so as to accentuate two aspects: the interplay of light and dark in the "black foliage" and "lighter verdure," and the death and rebirth cycle reflected in the "gigantic corpses of dead trees" and the "sapling oaks, maples, and poplars." Here and in other of the later tales Hawthorne suggests a belief in a natural progress of mankind, which, although not identical with, is similar to Hegel's description of the progress of human self-consciousness. The teleological aspects of Hawthorne's writing will be discussed in a later chapter, but here it is sufficient to note that the synthesis is included in the tale, and it involves a new generation.

An important aspect of Hegel's philosophy is that it is dynamic rather than static. The two "moments" of the triad which are in conflict, the thesis and antithesis, are not completely stationary but involve each other in such a way that they seem to pass in and out of each other or to revolve around each other in their conflict. Hegel

begins his study by following a hypothetical consciousness through the process of gaining awareness of itself and the "reality" which surrounds it. Part of Hegel's purpose is to show that understanding of the world is gained only through the process of contemplating and knowing the self. When the hypothetical consciousness begins to contemplate the self it must necessarily split itself into objective and subjective halves; one half is the part being looked at and one half is the part looking. It is difficult to maintain this duality in a static form because of the circularity of the act: the observer is also the one being observed who is at the same time observing the observer of the observed. It is like looking into a mirror which is facing another mirror so that the reflected image appears to go on to infinity. The objective and subjective halves are opposites, but they pass in and out of each other continuously.

A very similar phenomenon appears in "Ethan Brand":

> The Jew's exhibition had scarcely concluded, when a great, elderly dog--who seemed to be his own master, as no person in the company laid claim to him--saw fit to render himself the object of public notice. (11: 96)

The placement within the tale and the degree of detail in its presentation attest to the importance of this incident. The fact that it follows the appearance of the

German Jew may possibly be a veiled allusion to German Philosophy. More substantial is the phrasing of the last line quoted above, which suggests that the old dog's making himself "objective" is an act of volition in the same way that Hegel's hypothetical consciousness makes itself "objective" through an act of will. The step preceding this stage of self-consciousness in The Phenomenology is the "master/slave relationship" in which the slave submits to the dominating will of the master. It is the mind of the slave that turns its attention inward and evolves into the higher stage of self-consciousness. In so doing it surpasses the master and nullifies the master/slave relationship. Hawthorne, here, takes pains to point out that the old dog apparently has no "master." The passage continues:

> Hitherto, he had shown himself a very quiet, well-disposed old dog, going round from one to another, and, by way of being sociable, offering his rough head to be patted by any kindly hand that would take so much trouble. But, now, all of a sudden, this grave and venerable quadruped, of his own mere notion, and without the slightest suggestion from anybody else, began to run round after his tail, which, to heighten the absurdity of the proceeding, was a great deal shorter than it should have been. Never was seen such headlong eagerness in pursuit of an object that could not possibly be attained; never was heard such a tremendous outbreak of growling, snarling, barking, and snapping--as if one end of the ridiculous brute's body were at deadly and most unforgivable enmity with the other. Faster and faster, roundabout went the cur; and faster and still faster fled the unapproachable brevity of his tail;

> and louder and fiercer grew his yells of rage and animosity. (11: 96)

Ethan Brand is moved to haunting laughter "by a perception of some remote analogy between his own case and that of this self-pursuing cur." The reader, of course, sees the analogy as somewhat less than "remote," since the old dog's actions clearly symbolize the condition and actions of Brand himself. But the image of the old dog is also an excellent representation of what Hegel meant by the movement of the consciousness into itself, by the opposing moments of subjectivity and objectivity. What brings about Brand's haunting laughter is his realization of the irony of his own situation: he set out on his quest looking for "objective truth," the Unpardonable Sin as "out there," but found that through his looking he had created "subjective truth," the Unpardonable Sin produced within himself by his own actions. Brand discovers, too late, what Hegel tries to prove in The Phenomenology: that to know truth, one must look within.

The inclusion of the Wandering Jew in "Ethan Brand" enlarges the presentation of the Unhappy Consciousness to include two distinct reactions to the phenomenon. Brand represents one reaction, and the Wandering Jew represents the other. Anderson notes that the two figures are closely related but are not the same:

> Ethan Brand, unpardonable sinner though he may be, has the privilege of throwing himself into the limekiln. His is an example, from a true literary artist, of an offender against the Deity who must wander in expiation. Yet, though his doom in life parallels that of the Wandering Jew, he is not Ahasuerus [the Wandering Jew's name in folklore]. (213)

Brand, as Anderson points out, has the option of death, but the Wandering Jew does not. In other words, Ethan Brand annihilates the self, and, as we see in "A Virtuoso's Collection," the Wandering Jew annihilates the "other world," the abstract, saying "give me what I can see, and touch, and understand, and I ask no more" (10: 496). According to Hegel, these are the two options which immediately present themselves to the Unhappy Consciousness as solutions to the problem of the split in the self. Since the self feels irreconcilably split into the earthly and the abstract and feels a need for unity, the most readily available means to achieve this goal is the denial of one of the parts.

The option taken by the Wandering Jew is the denial of the abstract. With his diorama he displays pictures of physical existence, but they lack substance. Hawthorne says, "the pictures were worn out, moreover, tattered, full of cracks and wrinkles, dingy with tobacco smoke, and otherwise in a most pitiable condition" (11: 95). Like the old Jew himself, they lack the "spark of ethereal fire"

spoken of by the narrator in "A Virtuoso's Collection." Hegel says that the Unhappy Consciousness which turns to this materialism rids itself of the duality only to empty life of all its meaning. When the Wandering Jew promises to show Ethan Brand "somewhat that is very fine" within his diorama, the only thing exposed, according to the "curious youth, who had peeped in, almost at the same moment," is "a vacant space of canvass" (11: 96). One might say, then, that Brand recognizes the Wandering Jew by what he has to offer spiritually--a blank canvass. Hawthorne suggests that what the Wandering Jew displays to Ethan Brand is the Unpardonable Sin, and he complains that it is a "heavy matter" which has wearied his shoulders in carrying it over the mountain. It is just that emptiness, the meaninglessness of his existence which has so wearied him.

For Ethan Brand the Unpardonable Sin is represented by this same emptiness--the blank canvass. According to Hawthorne, Ethan Brand became a "fiend" "the moment that his moral nature had ceased to keep the pace of improvement with his intellect" (11: 99). Brand has denied the human aspects of self, the material, and has become lost in what Hegel calls "<u>das geistige Thierreich</u>" (the intellectual jungle), where people tear one another to pieces in the service of objective truth (Acton 439).

But, Hegel says, this path leads ultimately to the same difficulty encountered by the materialist consciousness. Pure, abstract objectivity is empty without some material ground. It has no substance. It is like a set of governing rules for a community with no inhabitants. Ethan Brand's devotion to intellectual development has resulted in no more than "a blank canvass." As Hawthorne says, "So much for the intellect!" (11: 99)

CHAPTER III

THE BUBBLING FOUNTAIN: THE SOURCE OF DIVINE TRUTH

Throughout the tales Hawthorne displays his acute awareness of the tortured consciousness aware of its own duality but unable to cure itself. The Wandering Jew and Ethan Brand are prime examples of the "Unhappy Consciousness" described by Hegel in The Phenomenology. Not only was Hawthorne aware of the problem, but he examined possible solutions to it through his short fiction. This chapter discusses those potential solutions: religion, intellectual pursuits, and fantasy. The inadequacy of these solutions is evident from the stories examined. But a few of Hawthorne's characters do achieve a satisfactory level of unified self-consciousness. The important factor in attaining this unification is the ability to develop a "sense of place" in nature, in society, and in time. This chapter concludes with a discussion of Hawthorne's view of the artist as "synthesizer." Between 1844 and 1850, Hawthorne wrote several stories dealing with artists and artistic production. These stories, among the last short stories that he wrote, reveal Hawthorne's belief that the artist's function is to perceive abstract truth and give it material existence through his art.

One possible solution to the problem of the Unhappy Consciousness is pure intellectual effort. "Ethan Brand," as discussed in the preceding chapter, demonstrates the futility of this approach. Attempting to deny the human aspects of life in an effort to immerse the self in the abstract leads only to a blank life void of substance. A few other Hawthorne characters can be seen as making the same error that Ethan Brand makes. The "mad scientists" of the tales seem to fall into the same category as Brand. We have already discussed Rappaccini, who attempts to force a synthesis, in the person of his daughter, through the use of his superior intellect but fails because of his lack of human warmth and understanding. His answers to the problems of mankind (medical and otherwise) do not succeed because they are too theoretical. He tends to force the abstract upon the concrete world instead of bringing about a natural synthesis.

Aylmer, of "The Birthmark," is cut from the same mold as Rappaccini. Like "Ethan Brand," this tale is filled with the diction of idealistic philosophy. Hawthorne is here concerned with "intellect," "the spiritual," "substance," and "bodiless ideas." But of special concern is the problem caused by the duality of abstract and concrete. Hawthorne describes Aylmer's journal as:

the sad confession, and continual exemplification, of

> the shortcomings of the composite man--the spirit burthened with clay and working in matter--and of the despair that assails the higher nature, at finding itself so miserably thwarted by the earthly part. (10: 49)

What Hawthorne describes here is Hegel's concept of the Unhappy Consciousness. It is important to note, however, that Hawthorne uses the term "spirit" in a much different sense than Hegel: Hawthorne uses "spirit" to refer to the abstract, infinite portion of the self, whereas Hegel uses "spirit" (Geist) to refer to the unifying force between abstract mind and matter. In the Phenomenology spirit is the synthesis of the antitheses logic and nature. "Spirit," in the Hegelian sense, is what the Unhappy Consciousness has not yet developed; it is the quality found lacking in Aylmer, the Wandering Jew, Rappaccini, and Ethan Brand.

As in "Ethan Brand," the materialist and the intellectual are represented. Aylmer is "a man of science" and an expert in natural philosophy with a "strong and eager aspiration towards the infinite" (10: 49). Hawthorne states categorically that Aylmer is "a type of the spiritual element" in man. Aminadab, says Hawthorne, "with his vast strength, his shaggy hair, his smoky aspect, and the indescribable earthiness that encrusted him . . . seemed to represent man's physical nature" (10: 43). Like Bartram the lime-burner, Aminadab

is "incapable of comprehending a single principle" (10: 43).

Aylmer's purpose in removing the birthmark is to achieve abstract perfection in a material medium. Unfortunately, like the rest of the theoretical experiments described in his journal, his attempt ends in failure. The contrast between his ethereal ideals and the earthly medium is emphasized by Aylmer's attempt to soothe Georgiana before the experiment. He brings before her eyes "airy figures, absolutely bodiless ideas, and forms of unsubstantial beauty" (10: 44) and then directs her attention to "a vessel, containing a quantity of earth" (10: 45). Rather than aiming at the happy fusion of the abstract and concrete, Aylmer attempts to negate the earthly aspects of the duality. Ethan Brand delves into the realm of pure intellect and loses his humanity; Aylmer attempts to create the ideal union of abstract beauty and physical substance by "perfecting" nature's work but succeeds only in separating Georgiana's soul from her body.

It is interesting to note that in this tale Hawthorne makes his primary symbol, the birthmark in the shape of a hand, a link between the abstract and the concrete:

> The fatal Hand had grappled with the mystery of life, and was the bond by which an angelic spirit kept itself in union with a mortal frame. (10: 55)

The birthmark itself represents the force which unifies the permanent and impermanent, what Hegel calls spirit. Aylmer, then, should be seeking to understand the birthmark, not to destroy it.

At the end of the tale, Hawthorne says that Aylmer's failure is unnecessary:

> Yet, had Aylmer reached a profounder wisdom, he need not have flung away the happiness, which would have woven his mortal life of the self-same texture with the celestial. (10: 56)

The solution to the problem, according to Hawthorne, is "to find the perfect Future in the present" (10: 56). Unfortunately, he does not delineate at this point exactly how this feat is to be accomplished.

Another possible path to the solution of the "human predicament" is organized religion. Through his fiction, Hawthorne examines the ability of religion to alleviate the tension in the Unhappy Consciousness. Contemporary religion is fraught with danger and does not satisfactorily accomplish the goal. Fick asserts that Hawthorne was indeed a deeply "religious" person and a Christian, but maintained no ties with a specific church. His disappointment with many of the contemporary liberal churches is evident in "The Celestial Rail-road." The "mad scientists" discussed above attempt to artificially fuse the abstract and the concrete to create unity;

liberal religion, represented by "Mr. Smooth-it-away," attempts to deny that there is a split.

The supposed solution is really no solution at all; it is merely a denial of the problem. Mr. Smooth-it-away promises that the Celestial City can be attained without any effort whatsoever. The pilgrim need not stagger under the weight of the encumbrances of mortal life; he simply stows them in the baggage car and rides in luxury in the comfortable coach. The narrator is aware that in spite of the ingenious structure of the railroad, its foundations are not substantial. It is all surface appeal.

At Vanity Fair the narrator notes that it has changed drastically since Bunyan's time. Now "every street has its church" (10: 198), and ministers such as Mr. Shallow-deep, Mr. This-to-day, and Mr. That-to-morrow are held in high esteem. Things have been made so easy that "any man may acquire an omnigenous erudition, without the trouble of even learning to read" (10: 198). Throughout the tale, Hawthorne stresses the tendency of the people to solve problems with easy cover-ups. The business dealings at Vanity Fair are good examples:

> If a customer wished to renew his stock of youth, the dealers offered him a set of false teeth and an auburn wig; if he demanded peace of mind, they recommended opium or a brandy-bottle. (10: 200)

The narrator, being a gullible sort, is attracted to the

lifestyle at Vanity Fair and considers giving up his journey to the Celestial City as many others have done. After all, life is quite pleasant for the deluded dwellers of Vanity Fair. What troubles the narrator, but goes unnoticed by the local inhabitants, is the disturbing tendency for a person "suddenly to vanish like a soap bubble, and be never more seen of his fellows" (10: 202). This is one of the few tales in which Hawthorne's primary concern is with eternal salvation rather than life in this world. During the journey, Mr. Smooth-it-away takes "occasion to prove that Tophet has not even a metaphorical existence" (10: 194), but Hawthorne does not agree. He believes very strongly in at least its metaphorical existence. Emerson's denial of the existence of evil was for Hawthorne mere self delusion. The whole trouble with the Celestial Railroad, with religion made convenient, is that the traveller will never arrive at the Celestial City. And although the delusion may make life more comfortable, the life is without purpose. In terms of the Unhappy Consciousness, contemporary liberal religion is another form of materialism; it denies the abstract by pretending that the synthesis has already taken place and there is no need to strive for it. In order to maintain the illusion one must ignore the fact that others keep disappearing like soap bubbles. Hawthorne is unwilling to

make life more comfortable at the expense of spending eternity in Hell--even a metaphorical Hell.

Other contemporary religions such as the numerous Utopian communities which proliferated during the period held a distinct fascination for Hawthorne, as is evidenced by his participation in the Brook Farm community. Brook Farm was not particularly a religious community, but in its goal of "perfecting" human society it bore a resemblance to such experimental communities as the Shakers and the Oneida community. Hawthorne was attracted by the theory of Brook Farm, and at one point even considered joining the Shakers, but the actuality of these communities was not as attractive as the theory, and Hawthorne was disillusioned with them.

His objections to Mother Ann's community are evident in his short story "The Shaker Bridal." In the first paragraph, Hawthorne refers to the famous Shaker dance, "every step of which is believed to alienate the enthusiast from earth, and bear him onward to heavenly purity and bliss" (9: 419). For Hawthorne (and Hegel) alienation is a negative concept rather than positive. The Shakers are radical anti-materialists. They attempt to deal with man's duality by denying the material existence of the duality. Perhaps what Hawthorne finds most objectionable about the community is that their

movement toward the spiritual is not because of a strong attraction to the spiritual world, but by a repulsion of the earthly world. They are not led to bliss; they are driven by despair. Hawthorne says:

> The converts of this sect are oftener driven within its hospitable gates by worldly misfortune, than drawn by fanaticism, and are received without inquisition as to their motives. (9: 422)

Indeed, the atmosphere of the community in this tale seems to be one of despair and resignation rather than joy. The leaders of the sect, notes Hawthorne, "had overcome their natural sympathy with human frailties and affections" (9: 424). And Adam Colburn, the future leader of the settlement, had entered the gates only after "that calm despair, which . . . yields to no second spring of hope" (9: 422) had settled over his spirit. In fact, the goal of the community is the destruction of mankind. Father Ephraim blesses the new leaders, saying:

> Receive the weary ones, who have known the vanity of earth,--receive the little children, that they may never learn that miserable lesson. And a blessing be upon your labors; so that the time may hasten on, when the mission of Mother Ann shall have wrought its full effect,--when children shall no more be born and die, and the last survivor of the mortal race, some old and weary man like me, shall see the sun go down, never more to rise on a world of sin and sorrow! (9: 425)

Hawthorne finds this goal unacceptable since it implies

that life is meaningless, something that should be done away with. Hawthorne makes it clear that Martha dies not from the repression of carnal desires, but from the lack of natural human sympathy which is lacking in the community. She can no longer cope with the meaningless life of the Shaker community.

Contemporary religion, then, was not sufficient to eliminate the frustration of unresolved duality in the Unhappy Consciousness. Hawthorne believed that the liberal religions of his day merely deluded their followers into believing that the problems were solved, and in the process, they risked the loss of salvation. Radical sects like the Shakers denied the importance of the material world. Hawthorne's religious roots were in New England Puritanism, and many of his works examine the ability of this traditional, conservative religion to deal with the problem of the Unhappy Consciousness. "The Minister's Black Veil" and "The Man of Adamant" demonstrate the failure of Calvinism to resolve the duality.

In "The Minister's Black Veil" Reverend Hooper explains the presence of the veil to Elizabeth by saying it "is a type and a symbol" (9: 46). Either Hawthorne is being redundant here or he means "type" and "symbol" as two different, albeit closely related, things. Father

Hooper's last words attempt to clarify his intentions in wearing the veil:

> What, but the mystery which it obscurely typifies, has made this piece of crape so awful? When the friend shows his inmost heart to his friend; when the lover to his best-beloved; when man does not vainly shrink from the eye of his Creator, loathsomely treasuring up the secret of his sin; then deem me a monster, for the symbol beneath which I have lived, and die! I look around me, and, lo! on every visage a Black Veil! (9: 52)

The mystery which it "typifies" must be what is suggested by what follows; the veil typifies "secret sin," which every person tries to keep hidden from all other persons and from God. This concept is fairly clear in the story. As Edgar Allan Poe noted, there is a distinct suggestion in the tale that Hooper is hiding some dark sin, possibly connected with the death of the young girl, but that sin is never made explicit. It is fruitless to attempt to demonstrate Hooper's innocence (or guilt), since we simply do not have adequate knowledge of Hooper and his activities. In other words, the reader cannot go behind Hooper's black veil.

This brings us to the "symbolic" meaning of the veil. The word "symbol" suggests a deeper, more abstract signification than "type." The veil may "typify" secret sin, but it "symbolizes" something beyond that. If we take the word "veil" in its most abstract form, the notion

of "that which obscures," we come closer to what is being symbolized, or figured forth, by the veil. Looking at the story in this light, we see that it examines the inherent weakness in human perception. Kant believed that the human consciousness could never completely know anything outside itself since perception is imperfect at best. As a result, each consciousness is necessarily isolated within itself and alienated from all other consciousnesses and material things. It is this Kantian alienation that Hegel attempts to resolve in his philosophy.

Alienation is a major theme in Hawthorne's works and is, perhaps, the major theme in "The Minister's Black Veil." "Secret sin" does not appear to be an evil in itself; its real danger is its tendency to bring about the alienation of the sinner from his fellow men and from God. Such is the case with Reverend Hooper. A closer look at the veil and its effects reveals the appropriateness of seeing it as a symbol of inadequate perception. As a typification of secret sin, the function of the veil is to hide the wearer, but Hawthorne makes clear that the veil obscures in both directions. It may mask Hooper's secret sin from others, but it also alters his perception of the world, giving "a darkened aspect to all living and inanimate things" (9: 38). Simply put, the veil obscures perception. It is significant that the obscurity applies

not only to living, but to inanimate things, which have no relation to sin, secret or otherwise. The veil is a permanent part of mortal life and is lifted only in the spiritual afterlife. It must be, then, a necessity of physical existence. Presumably, when man attains a purely spiritual existence, the veil will be lifted and he will be able to see and understand all things clearly, since he will not have to rely on imperfect sensory perception.

Besides affecting the person's perception of the world, the veil brings about alienation and fear. After donning the veil, Hooper "walked continually in its shadow, groping darkly within his soul, or gazing through a medium that saddened the whole world" (9: 48). This particular passage describes the consciousness as Kant saw it, inextricably locked within itself and perceiving but a shadow of external things. Hooper expresses the fear induced by this dilemma in his plea to Elizabeth:

> Oh! You know not how lonely I am and how frightened to be alone behind my black veil. Do not leave me in this miserable obscurity for ever! (9: 47)

He does not, however, remove the veil as she desires. The veil is only a symbol of the real problem, and the removal of the symbol will not alleviate the problem symbolized. If Kant is correct, man is doomed to a mortal life of fear and isolation. Hegel attacked this problem by attempting

to show that through the process of self-awareness, the consciousness will eventually come to recognize that the self and the external world are, in fact, a unity, brought together by the synthesis of "spirit." Before that point can be reached, however, the consciousness must realize that the self it knows as particular and concrete (mortal), is the same self it knows as general and abstract (immortal). The Unhappy Consciousness still sees itself as a duality. Because of its insistence on the depravity of man and the goodness of God, traditional Calvinism did not solve this problem for Reverend Hooper, and, as a result, he spent his life enveloped in a cloud of obscurity "so that love or sympathy could never reach him" (9: 48).

Richard Digby, "The Man of Adamant," represents the tendency of the Puritans to lose themselves in gloom and intolerance. By labeling this tale "an apologue," Hawthorne calls attention to the symbolic significance of the characters and their actions. Rather than genuine characters, what we have here are character types, and Digby is described as "the gloomiest and most intolerant of a stern brotherhood" (11: 161). He is the extreme of Puritan severity and gloom. Instead of seeking refuge in spiritual communion with his fellow man in the sunlight of society, he seeks only to bury himself in the darkness of

his isolated cave. His physical malady is a gradual hardening, or calcifying, of the heart muscle, the obvious signification of which is the deterioration of human sympathy which Hawthorne saw in the second generation of Puritans in New England. Misreading his Bible in the darkness of the cave, Digby converts "all that was gracious and merciful, to denunciations of vengeance and unutterable woe" (11: 166).

Ironically, Digby's attempt to live a purely "spiritual" existence results in his becoming pure physical substance--he is literally turned to stone. He turns away from Mary Goffe, who Hawthorne says typifies "pure religion" (11: 168), and rejects "the only medicine that could have cured his stony heart" (11: 167). This magical substance is the water from the "bubbling fountain . . . at which Richard Digby hardly threw away a glance" (11: 163) as he approached his cave. Hawthorne uses the "bubbling fountain" as a symbol with similar intent in two other stories: "Rappaccini's Daughter" and "Endicott and the Red Cross." As I tried to show in the discussion of "Rappaccini's Daughter," the fountain in the garden represents the "Holy Spirit," or in other words, the spirit of God made manifest in the world. In more secular, philosophical terms, it represents the link

between abstract ideas and physical substance--what Hegel calls, appropriately enough, "spirit."

In "Endicott and the Red Cross," Hawthorne describes the Puritan hero as "a man of stern and resolute countenance" (9: 434), not unlike Richard Digby. Contrasted with this stern, military figure in his insulating armor is the figure of Roger Williams in his black cloak and band. "His aspect," writes Hawthorne, "was perfectly that of a pilgrim, heightened also by an apostolic dignity" (9: 436-7). In this tale it is Williams who scoops up a draught of water "at a bubbling fountain, which gushed into the sunshine about a score of yards from the corner of the meetinghouse" (9: 437). Rappaccini's fountain also "gush[ed] . . . into the sunbeams" (10: 94). This gushing and bubbling water is neither airy and ethereal nor solid and substantial but represents a synthesis of these qualities.

The problem with Puritanism, according to Hawthorne, is that its strenuousness and gloom, its separation of man and God, intensifies rather than attenuates the alienation of the Unhappy Consciousness. As a symbolic figure, Richard Digby demonstrates the logical result of the Puritan viewpoint: total isolation and loss of all spiritual qualities. Paradoxically, the rejection of the physical world results in the loss of the spiritual world.

The solution to the problem, "the only medicine" (my emphasis), is the synthesis of the two poles symbolized here by the water of the bubbling fountain. The "profounder wisdom" which would have saved Aylmer from his tragedy is the knowledge of the bubbling fountain, but in the tales we have examined so far, this knowledge is not specifically worked out; Hawthorne has merely asserted its existence.

In yet another fountain with a "gush of water" which "sparkled in the lonely sunbeam" (9: 213), the narrator sees an image of a "fair young girl, with locks of paly gold" (9: 214). In "The Vision of the Fountain," Hawthorne links the bubbling fountain symbol with the human imagination:

> Deep were my musings, as to the race and attributes of that ethereal being. Had I created her? Was she the daughter of my fancy, akin to those strange shapes which peep under the lids of children's eyes? And did her beauty gladden me, for that one moment, and then die? (9: 215)

Hawthorne then says that this fair vision, brought into this world through the effort of the imagination, is the "emblem of Hope." It is through the imagination, or fancy, that Hawthorne arrives at some hope for the solution to the problem of the Unhappy Consciousness.

Fancy, however, holds its own dangers for the consciousness: the person who places too much emphasis on

imagination stands to lose his grasp on reality and his place in the world. In "The Hall of Fantasy" Hawthorne describes a number of inhabitants of the fantasy world, and, generally, he treats these people with a greater sympathy than he does his intellectual characters. As a writer he has a greater respect for imagination than for cold intellectualism. Fantasy, for Hawthorne, is a very positive, even necessary, thing, but two warnings are given in the tale: one must maintain a distinction between fantasy and reality, and one must only visit the Hall of Fantasy, not move into it.

Hawthorne points out a number of people in the hall who "would have deemed it an insult to be told that they stood in the Hall of Fantasy" (10: 176). These "trusted members of the Chamber of Commerce" invent wild schemes and fantastic projects for speculation in the business world. Inventors create machines to condense morning mist into blocks of granite or to make "sunshine out of a lady's smile" (10: 177). These people "mistake the Hall of Fantasy for actual brick and mortar" (10: 177).

While these men flail away at their fantastic projects believing they are firmly bound in reality, others deliberately adopt fantasy as a way of life. Hawthorne notes that:

Some unfortunates make their whole abode and business

> here, and contract habits which unfit them for all real employments of life. Others--but these are few--possess the faculty, in their occasional visits, of discovering a purer truth than the world can impart, among the lights and shadows of these pictured windows. (10: 178)

The implication here is that there are, in fact, "real employments of life" which should take precedence over purely imaginary activities. Furthermore, these real employments of life can be enhanced by the "purer truth" gathered through occasional visits to the Hall of Fantasy.

Not only is occasional fantasy a desirable thing, it is necessary in order to live a full, complete life. The Hall of Fantasy provides "a place of refuge from the gloom and chillness of actual life" (10: 178). It is a reviving force even if it is used only as a temporary escape from earthly care. Hawthorne says "there is but half a life--the meaner and earthlier half--for those who never find their way into the hall" (10: 179). Life without fantasy is mere materialism.

Fantasy provides the link between physical existence and higher truths. Within the Hall of Fantasy, there is, as one might anticipate, a fountain, "the water of which continually throws itself into new shapes, and snatches the most diversified hues from the stained atmosphere around" (10: 174). The water from the fountain is the "constant beverage" of the great poets who inhabit the

hall. The poet differs, however, from the schemers and inventors, since "the poet knows his whereabout, and therefore is less likely to make a fool of himself in real life" (10: 177). The poet, then, is important to society because of his ability to attain occasional glimpses of abstract truth and bring it into actuality through his writing.

Hawthorne's concept of the proper use of imagination is apparent in this tale, and is closely linked with the notion of "the progress of mankind." While he comes down hard on the "reformer" who "had got possession of some crystal fragment of truth" and goes about "brandishing his one idea like an iron flail" (10: 180), he is sympathetic with the intent. He says:

> Therefore may none, who believe and rejoice in the progress of mankind, be angry with me because I recognized their apostles and leaders, amid the fantastic radiance of those pictured windows. I love and honor such men as well as they. (10: 180)

Although he doubted the efficacy of the reformers' schemes for the improvement of mankind, he did believe in the notion of progress; it is the tunnel vision of the zealous reformers that he objects to. They do not distinguish between imagination and reality, and "test" their ideas with "the white sunshine of actual life" (10: 179). Hawthorne complains that they "not only use this

medium, but mistake it for whitest sunshine" (10: 181). It is evident from this statement that Hawthorne sees the imagination as a "medium" to be used for deriving truth which must then be tested in "the white sunshine of actual life." During the testing process, "what is good and true becomes gradually hardened into fact, while error melts away and vanishes among the shadows of the hall" (10: 180). As a result, "the fantasies of one day are the deepest realities of a future one" (10: 179).

Here is a rather clear statement of Hawthorne's belief in progress--or at least change. The source of this progress is what makes it so interesting: persons (especially poets) catch glimpses of abstract "higher truth" through the medium of imagination and test it in the "white sunshine" of actual life. If it is truth, it becomes reality; if it is error, it fades away. The result is the gradual alteration of reality to conform to abstract truth. To put it another way, abstract truth is gradually incarnated through the medium of imagination. This progress is what Hawthorne calls "Providence." From his Christian perspective, he sees it as the will of God being made manifest on earth. The process is the same as that described by Hegel in The Phenomenology, except the terminology differs slightly. Hegel places the imagination in the lower orders of functions of the mind,

but sees it as a valuable medium because of its ability to call up universal concepts and give them an image so that the mind can consider them and combine them with volition to bring about action which is in unison with abstract truth (Stace 366).

Both Hegel and Hawthorne are concerned with action because it is action which actually brings about the progress of mankind. For Hegel, this means the incarnation of the Idea. For Hawthorne it means the movement of Providence. In the final analysis, Providence and progress amount to the same thing. In a distant part of the Hall of Fantasy, the narrator and his companion run across Father Miller whose theory of imminent destruction "swallows up and annihilates all others" (10: 181). The narrator's friend compares Father Miller to the zealous reformers previously observed:

> They look for the earthly perfection of mankind, and are forming schemes, which imply that the immortal spirit will be connected with a physical nature, for innumerable ages of futurity. On the other hand, here comes good Father Miller, and, with one puff of his relentless theory, scatters all their dreams like so many withered leaves upon the blast. (10: 181-2)

If the narrator of this tale can be understood as Hawthorne himself (he has already stated his kindred feeling for fellow authors), then his response to this

speech is a clear demonstration of his belief in a kind of progress:

> It is, perhaps, the only method of getting mankind out of the various perplexities, into which they have fallen. . . . Yet I could wish that the world might be permitted to endure, until some great moral shall have been evolved. . . . Now, if it should be burnt to-morrow morning, I am at a loss to know what purpose will have been accomplished, or how the universe will be the wiser or better for our existence and destruction. (10: 182)

Hawthorne at least wants to believe that mankind and the world are evolving toward some moral goal known only by God. It is clear that Hawthorne, unlike the Shakers or Father Miller, sees value in the sheer existence of the earth. The narrator says, "What I should chiefly regret in her destruction would be that very earthliness, which no other sphere or state of existence can renew or compensate" (10: 183). "Purely moral enjoyments," he adds, can be found in "every state of being. But where the material and moral exist together, what is to happen then?" (10: 184) His concern is for the bringing together, the synthesis, of the abstract and the concrete. "Neither will it satisfy me," he says of Mother Earth, "to have her exist merely in idea. I want her great, round, solid self to endure interminably" (10: 185). But what Hawthorne values even more than pure earthiness is the synthesis of the material and the abstract; at one point, he looks from

a window of the Hall to see the external world "tinged with the dimly glorious aspect that is peculiar to the Hall of Fantasy" (10: 181). It is through the use of the imagination as a medium that this synthesis occurs.

The imagination, then, becomes a yoking force between the two halves of the Unhappy Consciousness and, if used properly as a medium, alleviates the sense of alienation which plagues the consciousness. This alienation is exhibited in many of Hawthorne's tales as a loss of the sense of place. The Wandering Jew is the classic example: although he is doomed to live forever in his earthly state, he has no real home nor any ties with other human beings. He has no "place" in nature, in society, or in time. Several of Hawthorne's characters are faced with the problem of finding their true place in relation to nature, society, and time.

A character closely related to the Wandering Jew figure is the rather bizarre Wakefield who steps out on an errand and separates himself from his wife and home for twenty years. Through his own volition he becomes what Hawthorne calls "the Outcast of the Universe." In order to disguise himself, he buys "a new wig, of reddish hair" (the standard of the "stock Jew" character popular in renaissance drama) and selects clothes "from a Jew's old-clothes bag" (9: 135). Symbolically, he turns himself

into the Wandering Jew and, like that figure, manages "to give up his place and privileges with living men, without being admitted among the dead" (9: 138). He also loses his place in nature by giving up his physical homeplace represented by "the hearth," and must be content with the substituted coal-fire of his temporary apartment. By stepping out of his role in life he loses his place in time as well. Hawthorne says, "These twenty years would appear, in retrospect, scarcely longer than the week to which Wakefield had at first limited his absence" (9: 138). Without action in the real world, time loses its meaning; since time is measured by a sequence of events, there is no sequence without events. In the abstract, the only sequence is logical sequence, which is independent of chronology, or time as we know it.

Hawthorne links this self-initiated alienation with Wakefield's intellectual make-up. Wakefield, he says, "is a man of habits" (9: 134). His actions are not planned to correspond to his vision of abstract morality, but are mechanical movements dictated by external forces or mere habit. He has an "inactive mind" (9: 132) which only imperfectly controls his actions. Hawthorne describes his state of mind in this way:

> Such are his loose and rambling modes of thought, that he has taken this very singular step, with the consciousness of a purpose, indeed, but without being

> able to define it sufficiently for his own contemplation. (9: 134)

Wakefield does "act," but not according to any defining principle. His problem is apparent from Hawthorne's description of his character: "Imagination, in the proper meaning of the term, made no part of Wakefield's gifts" (9: 131). Wakefield cannot use the medium of imagination to gain a glimpse of abstract truth, and so is reduced to reacting to outside forces, rather than acting according to an absolute system of morality. As a result, he loses his sense of place and becomes "the Outcast of the Universe." What is necessary in order to alleviate the alienation of the Unhappy Consciousness is maintaining a delicate balance of abstract and concrete so that one can feel a sense of place in a real world infused with the ideal.

This sense of place is connected in the tales with the image of "the hearth." Two of the tales, "Fire-Worship" and "Snow-Flakes," deal almost exclusively with this symbol. In "Fire-Worship" Hawthorne lightheartedly bemoans the replacement of the open-hearth fireplace by the more practical air-tight stove. But in spite of its light tone, the tale has serious implications. The hearth is a social center which provides a sense of unity to the family gathered around it, and Hawthorne wonders what

effect the lack of a hearth will have on future generations:

> There will be nothing to attract these poor children to one centre. They will never behold one another through that peculiar medium of vision--the ruddy gleam of blazing wood or bituminous coal--which gives the human spirit so deep an insight into its fellows, and melts all humanity into one cordial heart of hearts. Domestic life--if it may still be termed domestic--will seek its separate corners, and never gather itself into groups. (10: 146)

The value of the hearth for the family is its power of synthesis, its ability to link the family into one "heart of hearts." Hawthorne extends this unifying force to even larger social groups by saying that the hearth is "a beacon-light of humanity" (10: 143) and by asserting that the ancient battle cry to fight "for the altars and the hearths . . . was considered the strongest appeal that could be made to patriotism" (10: 146). The hearth provides the central focus for society and gives each member a sense of place.

The phrase "for the altars and the hearths" also links the hearth to religion, and Hawthorne sees that as most appropriate. In "Snow-Flakes" he writes that in the cold New England winters "each hearth becomes an altar" (9: 347). In "Fire-Worship" he goes even further by giving to fire the attributes of God: fire can be a powerful force, burning cities and forests (and one day,

the whole world), but it can also be benevolent and even inspirational. His description of fire makes it something sacred:

> While a man was true to the fireside, so long would he be true to country and law--to the God whom his fathers worshipped--to the wife of his youth--and to all things else which instinct or religion have taught us to consider sacred. (10: 140)

He sees the hearth not only as a source of family and social unity, but as a manifestation of divine goodness:

> Religion sat down beside it, not in priestly robes which decorated, and perhaps disguised, her at the altar, but arrayed in a simple matron's garb, and uttering her lessons with the tenderness of a mother's voice and heart. The holy Hearth! If any earthly and material thing--or rather, a divine idea, embodied in brick and mortar--might be supposed to possess the permanence of mortal truth, it was this. (10: 146)

The hearth is, for Hawthorne, not merely a "material thing," but the <u>synthesis</u> of the "divine idea" and material "brick and mortar."

In this respect, the hearth, as a symbol, is quite similar to the fountain; in fact, in "Fire-Worship" Hawthorne calls the hearth "a domestic fountain of gladsomeness" (10: 145). In "Snow-Flakes" he claims that the domestic hearth is the source for his poetic inspiration:

> My hour of inspiration--if that hour ever comes--is

> when the green log hisses upon the hearth, and the bright flame, brighter for the gloom of the chamber, rustles high up the chimney, and the coals drop tinkling down among the growing heaps of ashes. (9: 344)

The bubbling fountain and the glowing hearth are both sources of "divine truth," or "abstract morality" (to borrow a term from Hegel), truth which the poetic figure can inculcate into domestic, earthly life. While bubbling fountains are scarce, the hearth is the center of every home and available to all.

The ability of the domestic fire to synthesize abstract qualities and earthly material is apparent in this passage:

> The inventions of mankind are fast blotting the picturesque, the poetic, and the beautiful out of human life. The domestic fire was a type of all these attributes, and seemed to bring might and majesty, and wild Nature, and a spiritual essence, into our inmost home, and yet to dwell with us in such friendliness, that its mysteries and marvels excited no dismay. (10: 139)

It is apparently the ability of fire to join "spiritual essence" and "wild Nature" that Hawthorne finds most wonderful. He uses fire as the archetypal symbol for a life force, "the spark of ethereal fire" that had been choked out of the Wandering Jew in "A Virtuoso's Collection." It is not the force which keeps the body in motion (the Wandering Jew is alive in that sense), but the

synthesis of the living body and divine essence. The fire symbolizes what Hegel calls "spirit" (Geist). The domestic fire can simultaneously carry on "a varied communion with the human soul," be the "painter of magic pictures," and also "be causing the tea-kettle to boil" (10: 140-1). It belongs to both the abstract realm and the real world and brings the two into unison.

The notion that the open fire acts as a source of inspiration for proper action is evident by Hawthorne's comment that it provides "invaluable moral influences" (10: 145). In a passage quoted above, he speaks of being "true to the fireside." It seems logical to assume that Hawthorne means a person should be true to the "moral influences" received from the fireside. Hegel says that the moral person is one who acts according to ("remains true to") the dictates of "spirit." What Hegel works out in a complex philosophical system, Hawthorne expresses through his use of symbols.

The difference between the person with a sense of place and the Unhappy Consciousness is evident in "Snow-Flakes." Unsynthesized nature, "wild Nature," is represented by the cold New-England winter outside the home, while nature synthesized with "idea" is the comfortable hearth, "a divine idea, embodied in brick and mortar" (10: 146). The person with a sense of place, the

"Happy Consciousness" if you will, can find refuge in the comfort of the hearth, but the Unhappy Consciousness must face wild nature on his own:

> Wo to the homeless wanderer [the Wandering Jew figure?] whom he [Winter] finds upon his path! There he lies stark and stiff, a human shape of ice, on the spot where Winter overtook him. (10: 347)

Having a sense of place, or "being at home" in nature, involves a synthesis of the natural and the ideal of which the Unhappy Consciousness is incapable. The Unhappy Consciousness seeks to eliminate one or the other while the Happy Consciousness seeks to synthesize the two. In recognizing and unifying his dual nature, the Happy Consciousness feels at home in a real world of particularities which it can modify according to its vision of the ideal. The sense of home and human brotherhood typified by the family gathered around the hearth shows the triumph over alienation and isolation which has been brought about by the synthesis of nature and idea.

As Roy Male notes in Hawthorne's Tragic Vision, the search for a home is a recurrent theme in Hawthorne's works (38-53). But besides finding his place in nature, man must also, according to Hawthorne, find a sense of place in society and in time. These themes run through many of the tales, but two stand out as prime examples:

"My Kinsman, Major Molineux" shows Robin's search for a place in society, and "Main Street" demonstrates Hawthorne's sense of time.

Like "Rappaccini's Daughter," "My Kinsman, Major Molineux" is a complex allegory, in a manner similar to Spenser's Faerie Queene, with political, social, and personal levels. John Becker argues that "these are not the multiple levels . . . such as religious and political, appropriate to Spenser," but "are, rather, allegories within allegories" (175). The allegorical significance is not either social or political, but is both simultaneously. The tale is, on one level, about Robin's movement from idealistic innocence to realistic manhood. This movement is taking place within a society that is shifting from agrarian to urban. This society, in turn, is at the point of achieving political independence from its mother country. If we may go one step further into the general, mankind is in the process of "progressing" according to Divine Providence. Hawthorne's tale treats all of these "levels," or concentric circles, at least allegorically if not specifically, and may be read as a dramatization of the maturation of a boy, a society, a nation, and a species. The overall movement is from subjectivity to objectivity.

Robin's problem is that he has left his simple,

country world and must find his place in a new, more complex society. He carries with him his oak cudgel and his wallet--the remnants of his previous existence. Hawthorne mentions his "shrewdness" ironically on several occasions, usually preceding an incorrect deduction. Robin <u>is</u> "shrewd" in his observations; it is only his deductions which are wrong, and they are wrong because he uses assumptions based on his previous perspective, that of the innocent, country youth. He sees things subjectively. When he speaks to the innkeeper, for example, he assumes that the townspeople share his own opinion of Molineux's position. Rather than questioning their opinion of his kinsman, however, he assumes the townspeople are inhospitable and wishes he had them in the woods where his own subjective viewpoint could be pounded into them with his oak sapling.

By relating the political situation of the colony in the opening paragraph, Hawthorne not only sets up the allegorical framework, but distances the reader from Robin's subjective viewpoint. This aesthetic distance allows the reader to see <u>objectively</u> the situations which mislead Robin. With the help of the narrator, we see things which are not visible from Robin's restricted point of view. Likewise, because of the historical separation, we can see the relationship between England and colonial

America from a more objective viewpoint than do the townspeople of the story. Molineux is not simply a Tory puppet of a vicious king, but a man whose head "had grown grey in honor" (11: 229). But neither is he a hero. The townspeople are demonstrating against a tyrannical government, but they also seem to derive sadistic pleasure from their violent activities. It is a matter of perspective. It is characteristic of Hawthorne, especially in the early tales, to present situations objectively, in all their innate ambiguity, without giving subjective comments.

Robin observes, but not objectively. He tries to interpret observations in terms of his former position in the world and is frustrated when the reality he encounters does not conform to his expectations. On the steps of the church, he tries to observe his new surroundings, but the objects fade into "ghostly indistinctness, just as the eye appeared to grasp them" (11: 221). He tries to listen to sounds, but they blend into a "murmur" because they are "at too great a distance to be separately heard" (11: 221). He turns inward to imagine what must be happening at home where the world makes sense, but he is "excluded from his home" (11: 223). His imaginary excursion to his old home confuses him even more, and he wonders, "Am I

here, or there?" (11: 223) He has literally at this point lost his place in society.

It is only when he sees his situation objectively that he begins to find his place in the new society. It is this objective realization of his situation which results in the much-debated laugh. He is not laughing at his uncle's degradation, but at the situation. He is laughing at his own stupidity. He finally realizes the truth about the events of the evening and he understands his own errors in explaining them. He has suddenly gained an objectivity which allows him to see "the big picture." His laughter is not a form of derision, but cathartic release of intense emotion. Hawthorne describes Robin's state as "a mixture of pity and terror" (11: 229). This echo of Aristotle's description of the cathartic response to tragedy suggests that Robin is at this moment the audience of the tragedy rather than a participant. His view of the evening's activities has suddenly swung from that of participant (subjective) to observer (objective). Hawthorne emphasizes the notion of objectivity by extending the perspective to an even greater distance:

> The cloud-spirits peeped from their silvery islands, as the congregated mirth went roaring up the sky! The Man in the Moon heard the far bellow; 'Oho,' quoth he, 'the old Earth is frolicsome tonight!'
> (11: 230)

This distant perspective invites the reader to see the events from an objective viewpoint from which the parallel between Robin's situation and the situation of the colonies becomes more evident. The events are not only significant to Robin's maturation, but are politically and socially significant. As Robin must learn to see things differently in order to find his place in society, the colonists must learn something about freedom and independence in order to become a separate nation. Society must continually evaluate itself objectively in order to keep its place in the progress of Divine Providence. In order to see where one fits into the grand scheme of things, one must be able to stand back and see the whole scheme. After Robin attains the necessary objectivity, he is free to seek his true place in society rather than relying on his kinsman to supply him with an artificial place.

Finding a place in contemporary society also requires an objective view of time since society is constantly changing. Hawthorne's kaleidoscopic view of American history in "Main Street" demonstrates his concept of progress in society by showing the changes in a single location which are brought about by the passage of time. He muses over the thoughts of the "red chief" and the

"great Squaw Sachem" as they stroll through the land their people have occupied for centuries:

> They pass on, beneath the tangled shade, holding high talk on matters of state and religion, and imagine, doubtless, that their own system of affairs will endure for ever. (11: 51)

Hawthorne knows that things of a social nature do not remain unchanged. He sees history as a necessary progression of developments which are only marginally under the conscious control of mankind. Under normal circumstances, the people and events mesh and a logical sequence ensues, but there is the possibility of error. The showman prefaces his display with a warning:

> The little wheels and springs of my machinery have been well oiled; a multitude of puppets are dressed in character . . . and, in short, the exhibition is just ready to commence. Unless something should go wrong,--as, for instance, the misplacing of a picture, whereby the people and events of one century might be thrust into the middle of another; or the breaking of a wire, which would bring the course of time to a sudden period,--barring, I say, the casualties to which such a complicated piece of mechanism is liable, I flatter myself, ladies and gentlemen, that the performance will elicit your generous approbation. (11: 49-50)

So, there are possible "casualties" in the "complicated mechanism" of the universe. Hawthorne may be suggesting that some people and some events do, in fact, show up out of the natural time sequence. In the "Hall of Fantasy" he says that "if a man be in advance of his age, he must be

content to make his abode in this hall, until the lingering generations of his fellow-men come up with him" (10: 179). Such a person is alienated from others and, Hawthorne adds, "can find no other shelter in the universe" (10: 179).

It is, however, the person who is just slightly ahead of his time who brings about change. Without this negative force of persons disrupting the status quo, there would be no progress and the society would stagnate. The society of the American Indians was disrupted and supplanted by the Puritan settlement. But, Hawthorne points out, the Puritan society stagnated after a period of time, "especially when one generation had bequeathed its religious gloom, and the counterfeit of its religious ardor, to the next" (11: 67). The positive aspect of Puritanism, the "religious ardor," faded leaving only the gloom which degenerated into thinly disguised sadism. Hawthorne recounts the public whipping of Ann Coleman's naked torso by a "strong-armed fellow" with a "frown wrinkling and twisting his brow, and, at the same instant, a smile on his lips" (11: 70). Sardonically, Hawthorne adds, "He loves his business, faithful officer that he is, and puts his soul into every stroke" (11: 70).

The gloom of the Puritan society encountered the "negativity" (Hegel's term) of the settlement of Merry

Mount and of the Quakers. It is this sort of conflict which brings about change. The adoption of the "Lord and Lady of May" into the Puritan society brings with it the promise of revivification. In "Main Street" Hawthorne describes the effect of a Quaker woman's address to some second-generation Puritans:

> Many of her hearers are appalled; some weep; and others listen with a rapt attention, as if a living truth had now, for the first time, forced its way through the crust of habit, reached their hearts, and awakened them to life. (11: 69-70)

Some sort of conflict, or negativity as Hegel calls it, is necessary to keep life, and society, from stagnating into mere "crust of habit." "Living truth" or new ideas must be injected into the community in order for progress to take place.

The showman's critic objects sharply to the narrator's use of "poetic license" in his account of history. "These historic personages," the skeptic remonstrates, "could not possibly have met together in the Main-street. . . . You have fallen into anachronisms that I positively shudder to think of!" (11: 62) The showman's response is to ask the critic to attain a better perspective; he asks him to "sit further back" (11: 63). In one sense, Hawthorne is toying with the difficulties of artistic presentation, but in another

sense he is asking the critic to try to see the spiritual progress of history rather than the more restrictive, literal chronology.

Certain people, such as Roger Conant, seem to be able to influence the course of events through their own strength. Hawthorne says of Conant:

> His stalwart figure, clad in a leathern jerkin and breeches of the same, strides sturdily onward, with such an air of physical force and energy, that we might almost expect the very trees to stand aside, and give him room to pass. And so, indeed, they must; for, humble as is his name in history, Roger Conant still is of that class of men who do not merely find, but make, their place in the system of human affairs: a man of thoughtful strength, he has planted the germ of a city. (11: 52-3)

Conant represents, for Hawthorne, a force for the movement of progress. He does not merely <u>find</u>, but <u>makes</u> his place in "the system of human affairs" and forces nature and society to conform to his ideals. Hawthorne remarks, "How sweet it must be for those who have an Eden in their hearts, like Roger Conant and his wife, to find a new world to project it into" (11: 53). Hegel describes progress as the process of man acting within nature and society in an effort to bring about the manifestation of his own ideals (Lauer 151-64). In Roger Conant we find the typically Hegelian self-actualizing man. In his depiction of historical progress, Hawthorne is virtually

dramatizing Hegel's philosophical system of self-actualization.

The artist plays an important role in the incarnation of the Idea, and it is only natural that Hawthorne, as an artist, examined this role in several of the tales. His notion of the role of the artist is not far removed from that described by Philip Sidney in "An Apology for Poetry." Sidney distinguished between the Roman word "vates" (seer, or diviner) and the Greek word "poet," from poiein (to make). Hawthorne's notion of the artist involves both of these roles, "seer" and "maker." The conjunction of these two roles brings about synthesis: first, the artist must "see," or intuit, abstract truth and submit the concept to the imagination; then, he or she must work in the world of substance to "make" the object, which is the synthesis of idea and substance.

In "The Great Stone Face" Hawthorne reveals much about the poet's role in society. Although it is Ernest rather than the poet who becomes the prophesied hero, the poet serves a noble function. Hawthorne calls the poet "the last, best touch" of the creator's handiwork and adds that "Creation was not finished till the poet came to interpret, and so complete it" (11: 43). The poet's role, then, is one of interpretation which leads to the completion of the process of creation. In Hegel's system,

"progress" itself is the process of creation, a process continued by man's effort to make nature conform to his interpretation of the ideal.

Hawthorne points out that the people of the valley under the Stone Face were of "various backgrounds" and that "some possessed the gift of distinguishing this grand natural phenomenon more perfectly than their neighbors" (11: 26). Furthermore, if one approached too near the Stone Face, he lost the proper perspective "and could discern only a heap of ponderous and gigantic rocks, piled in chaotic ruin one upon the other" (11: 27). Hawthorne suggests with these details that people differ in their ability to perceive the abstract and that even one who is skilled at such perception must maintain the proper perspective. But under the right conditions, the perceptive person could see in the Stone Face the "sublimity and stateliness" that "etherealized its ponderous granite substance into spirit" (11: 41). The face itself is a symbol of the fusion of substance and idea.

The differences between Ernest and the poet are noteworthy. The poet left the valley early in life, but Ernest stayed and worked among the people. He "neglected no duty" (11: 33) to gaze upon the Stone Face and yet he was always aware of it. "Not a day passed by," says

Hawthorne, "that the world was not better because this man, humble as he was, had lived" (11: 38). Ernest is perceptive, but he is not an intellectual. Rather, he is an active participant in and an influence on his society. He not only perceives truth, but works it into the fabric of his life. The poet, on the other hand, has thoughts with "a strain of Divinity" (11: 46), but they are only thoughts. His life has not corresponded with his thoughts, and he has not been an active force in the world of reality. It is in this regard that he differs from Ernest whose "words had power, because they accorded with his thoughts" and whose "thoughts had reality and depth, because they harmonized with the life which he had always lived" (11: 47). Ernest and the poet of the tale combine their natural qualities to become the ultimate poet who is both "seer" and "maker":

> The sympathies of these two men instructed them with a profounder sense than either could have attained alone. Their minds accorded into one strain, and made delightful music which neither of them could have claimed as all his own, nor distinguished his own share from the other's. (11: 45)

Hawthorne describes here a synthesis of the two men, the result of which is more than the mere sum of their efforts. To be the true poet, one must be both seer and maker and must live according to the truth as it is

perceived. By doing these things the poet contributes to progress through incarnation of the ideal.

The incarnation of spirit is a common theme in several of Hawthorne's later tales. "The Snow-Image" (first published, 1850), "Drowne's Wooden Image" (1844), and "The Artist of the Beautiful" (1844) will serve as a demonstration. Aylmer, the scientist of "The Birthmark," attempts to create ideal, living beauty but, with his reliance on intellect, he fails. The main characters in these later tales, who possess a childlike faith in imagination, actually succeed in producing new forms of life.

The primary conflict, or negativity, in "The Snow-Image" is between the the "common-sense" attitude of the father and the childlike faith of Violet, Peony, and their mother. Hawthorne does not make Mr. Lindsey an evil man, but, rather, a "benevolent man," a "dealer in hardware" accustomed to taking "what is considered the common-sense view of all matters" (11: 7). He is warm-hearted but unimaginative. "With a heart about as tender as other people's, he had a head as hard and impenetrable, and therefore perhaps as empty, as one of the iron-pots which it was a part of his business to sell" (11: 7). Mrs. Lindsey, on the other hand, "had kept her childlike simplicity, and faith, which was pure and clear as

crystal" (11: 20). She and the children are imaginative "makers": while the children are busy with the creation of the living snow-image, Mrs. Lindsey, Hawthorne takes pains to point out, does decorative sewing. Her character "had a strain of poetry in it . . . that had survived out of her imaginative youth, and still kept itself alive amid the dusty realities of matrimony and motherhood" (11: 7). Hawthorne links poetry with the creative imagination of childhood. The children of the tale are rather clearly representative of artistic creation.

The roles of the male and female in the production of the snow-image are characteristic of Hawthorne. Violet, the little girl, is the inspirational force. It is she who performs the delicate tasks and provides the idea for giving the spark of life to the figure. The same type of united effort represented by Ernest and the poet of "The Great Stone Face" is exhibited here in the collaboration of Violet and Peony:

> Now, for a few moments, there was a busy and earnest, but indistinct hum of the two children's voices, as Violet and Peony wrought together with one happy consent. Violet still seemed to be the guiding spirit; while Peony acted rather as a laborer, and brought her the snow from far and near. And yet the little urchin evidently had a proper understanding of the matter, too! (11: 12)

The union is between inspirational source from the ideal and physical labor in the concrete. As in "Drowne's

Wooden Image" and "The Artist of the Beautiful," the female's role is providing the inspiration, and the male's role is the physical labor of giving form and substance to the idea.

The artistic object produced in this tale is a living snow-image. The most noteworthy characteristic of a snow statue is its transience, and although all earthly things are subject to decay, a snow statue is sooner disintegrated than its sister in white marble. This snow image is given life through the simple fusion of thought and substance. Says Hawthorne, the children's "little imaginations had got mixed up with what they were doing" (11: 13). What destroys it is the father's lack of belief and insistence on common sense. Hawthorne says this is "one of the rare cases, which yet will occasionally happen, where common-sense finds itself at fault" (11: 25). Mrs. Lindsey retains enough childlike innocence to believe in the true nature of the snow-image, but Hawthorne points out that:

> her own view of the matter, however subtle and delicate, had given way, as it always did, to the stubborn materialism of her husband. (11: 24)

The stubborn materialists of the world do not recognize the synthesis of the ideal and the real because they lack imagination. Hawthorne complains:

> But, after all, there is no teaching anything to wise men of good Mr. Lindsey's stamp. They know everything--Oh, to be sure!--everything that has been, and everything that is, and everything that, by any future possibility, can be. And, should some phenomenon of Nature or Providence transcend their system, they will not recognize it, even if it come to pass under their very noses. (11: 25)

It is worthy of note that Hawthorne associates the idea of artistic production (represented by the snow-image) with a phenomenon of Providence. This passage intimates that, in Hawthorne's view, artistic production is connected to the movement of Providence.

In "The Snow-Image" Hawthorne treats artistic production symbolically, but in "Drowne's Wooden Image" and "The Artist of the Beautiful" he deals directly with artists and their works. "Drowne's Wooden Image" opens with the young wood-carver "contemplating a large oaken log" (10: 306), the raw substance of his craft, when the captain of the Cynosure (the pole-star, or guide) approaches him with a commission for a ship's figure-head. To this point in his career Drowne has exhibited a great mechanical skill in his medium, and has produced many accurate replications of human figures. But all of these pieces have "a wooden aspect" and lack "that deep quality, be it of soul or intellect, which bestows life upon the lifeless" (10: 309). He is a "maker," but not a "seer."

He becomes "seer" only when he is inspired by the

beautiful Portuguese lady. The difference in his work is immediately apparent to Mr. Copely, the painter, who sees real genius in Drowne's latest work. While guided by the inspiration of the lady, Drowne sees the difference too. He tells Copely:

> But there has come a light into my mind. I know, as you know as well, that the one touch, which you speak of [the life-giving touch] . . . is the only one that would be truly valuable, and that, without it, these works of mine are no better than worthless abortions. There is the same difference between them [his previous works] and the works of an inspired artist, as between a sign post daub and one of your best pictures. (10: 311)

Under the inspiring influence of the lady, Drowne's technique changes from mechanical manipulation to actually seeing the work take its own form. He says, "The figure lies within that block of oak, and it is my business to find it" (10: 311).

The lady herself is described in images which correspond to Hawthorne's other sources of communication from the ideal or divine:

> The face, with its brilliant depth of complexion, had the same piquancy of mirthful mischief that was fixed upon the countenance of the image, but here varied and continually shifting, yet always the same, like the sunny gleam upon a bubbling fountain. (10: 317)

Whether the lady walking with Captain Hunnewell is the carving come to life, as the townspeople believe, or the

Portuguese lady of rank in exile, Hawthorne leaves typically veiled in ambiguity. The lady and the carving are never seen simultaneously, and the delicate fan she breaks before entering the shop is also broken in the hand of the carved image a few moments later. As in "Young Goodman Brown," Hawthorne provides the reader with a plausible explanation for apparently supernatural events, but leaves ajar the portal to the unreal. The implication here is that regardless of which explanation the reader chooses to accept, Drowne has actually created a form of life. The carved figure, with its metaphorical spark of life, may not be the same as, but is equated with the actual, living being. Unfortunately, with his source of inspiration removed, his "bubbling fountain," Drowne goes on making lifeless wooden images for the rest of his career.

Hawthorne's most successful artist character is Owen Warland, "The Artist of the Beautiful." Like Drowne, Owen is skilled with his hands but, unlike Drowne, cares much more for the concept of abstract beauty than for utilitarian things. He is not content to work mechanically with clocks and watches. His efforts are "completely refined from all utilitarian courseness" and are dedicated to "the Beautiful Idea" (10: 450). Contrasted with Owen Warland is old Peter Hovenden, who represents pure

materiality and utility. He is a "maker" too, a watchmaker, but his labor does not partake of the abstract in any way; he lacks the poetic function of "seer." Hawthorne says of him:

> There was nothing so antipodal to his [Owen's] nature as this man's cold, unimaginative sagacity, by contrast with which everything was converted into a dream, except the densest matter of the physical world. (10: 456)

Hovenden is the quintessential realist, or materialist. Hawthorne is quite clear about this aspect of the old man:

> Of all the world, he was most terrible, by reason of a keen understanding, which saw distinctly what it did see, and disbelieved so uncompromisingly in what it could not see. (10: 463)

He is a "seer" in the sense that he is a shrewd observer of reality, but he is no "seer" in the prophetic sense because he thoroughly disbelieves in anything beyond mere material existence.

The relationship between Owen and Hovenden resembles the master/slave relationship described by Hegel in The Phenomenology. Hegel describes the master as one who has superior physical power and is thus able to dominate the slave. This relationship is explained by Lauer:

> The master is a consumer; the slave, a producer. The master becomes the representative of a consumer culture, which is no culture at all since it promotes no development. The slave becomes the representative

> of a producer culture, which is culture precisely because it cultivates. The master has condemned himself to simply taking what is given, himself included; he has turned over to the slave the task of negating what is merely given, which is the task of creativity. The master merely negates; the slave negates by transforming. . . . The master has no future. (Lauer 107-8)

This master/slave relationship is a step in Hegel's process of individual self-consciousness, the purpose of which is to unite the material and ideal halves of the individual's being. The master's route is a dead end. The slave, on the other hand, puts mind into the transformation of material and produces a type of symbolic "Geist." He progresses toward the desired end, true self-consciousness.

It is significant that Owen was once apprenticed to Hovenden, and Hawthorne often refers to the old man as Owen's "master." Like Hegel's master, Hovenden is a materialist and a non-working consumer. He dominates Owen through physical superiority:

> Owen's lack of sturdiness made it possible, by strict injunctions and sharp oversight, to restrain his creative eccentricity within bounds. (10: 451)

But, like Hegel's slave, Owen works to transform material according to the ideas in his mind. As a result of his efforts, he achieves true Hegelian self-consciousness.

Danforth, the blacksmith, transforms material, but he

does so for a utilitarian purpose rather than as an attempt to achieve the fusion of an idea with material. He puts no imagination into his work, but relies instead on strength. He tells Owen, "I put more main strength into one blow of my sledge-hammer, than all that you have expended since you were a 'prentice" (10: 453). Owen's reply demonstrates the difference in perspective: "Very probably. . . . Strength is an earthly monster. I make no pretensions to it. My force, whatever there may be of it, is altogether spiritual" (10: 453).

Hawthorne stresses that Owen's purpose is to give form to abstract concepts. He says that the artist is "compelled to shape out his thoughts" (10: 458). In another line he says, "Owen Warland felt the impulse to give external reality to his ideas" (10: 458). Owen himself says, "I strive to put the very spirit of beauty into form" (10: 452). The impulse behind this artistic urge has to do with Annie Hovenden. Again, the female serves as a source of inspiration for the creative male. He connects all his artistic endeavor with Annie's image:

> She was the visible shape in which the spiritual power that he worshipped, and on whose altar he hoped to lay a not unworthy offering, was made manifest to him. (10: 464)

It is not Annie Hovenden that he worships, but a "spiritual power." She is merely the form through which

that power is made manifest. In a sense, she is only a symbol to Owen.

Hawthorne suggests that in order to achieve his goal Owen must realize that Annie is only a symbol of his ideal and not the reality of it. When she marries Danforth, Owen goes through a spiritual death and rebirth:

> He had lost his faith in the invisible, and now prided himself, as such unfortunates invariably do, in the wisdom which rejected much that even his eye could see, and trusted confidently in nothing but what his hand could touch. This is the calamity of men whose spiritual part dies out of them. (10: 466)

In this state he resembles old Hovenden himself, the pure materialist. The description here is much the same as that which Hawthorne uses for his Wandering Jew figure and suggests the predicament of the Unhappy Consciousness. But in Owen Warland the spirit was not dead--"it only slept" (10: 466).

Once re-inspired (through what agency Hawthorne does not say), Owen is able to accomplish his goal. As an artist he is an example of Hegel's unified self-consciousness: he blends his physical being with his abstract consciousness, without denying either, and works with the intermixture of ideal essence and pure material. His "ethereal portion" and his "earthly part" have regained "the balance to which Providence had so nicely adjusted it" (10: 461).

The object produced by Owen's labor is the delicate, mechanical butterfly, which, like the Snow-Image, is subject to disintegration. As the Snow-Image meets its demise through the agency of a "dealer in hardware," the butterfly is destroyed in a flash by the "Child of Strength." But the destruction of the object is not destructive to Owen Warland, who "had caught a far other butterfly than this" (10: 475). He had learned that Annie Hovenden was not the true inspiration, nor the reward, but only a symbol:

> He knew that the world, and Annie as a representative of the world, whatever praise might be bestowed, could never say the fitting word, nor feel the fitting sentiment which should be the perfect recompense of an artist who, symbolizing a lofty moral by a material trifle--converting what was earthly, to spiritual gold--had won the Beautiful into his handiwork. Not at this latest moment, was he to learn that the reward of all high performance must be sought within itself, or sought in vain. (10: 473)

The destruction of the butterfly does not bother him because the object itself is only "a material trifle." It is not important. What is important is what Gerard Manley Hopkins calls "the achieve of, the mastery of the thing!" It is the artist's "high performance" which deserves reward, and that reward is, and must be, provided by the experience of the performance itself. The object produced is only a symbol of the achievement.

This story is perhaps Hawthorne's greatest and clearest statement about art--his own profession. He concludes the tale with this statement:

> When the artist rose high enough to achieve the Beautiful, the symbol by which he made it perceptible to mortal senses became of little value in his eyes, while his spirit possessed itself in the enjoyment of the Reality. (10: 475)

This concept expresses the point of view of the truly unified Hegelian self-consciousness. The referent of the pronoun "itself" is ambiguous: "itself" could refer to "the Beautiful" or to "his spirit." If the ambiguity is intentional, and Hawthorne is well-known for his intentional ambiguity, "itself" could refer to both. In any case, the abstract "Beautiful" and the artist's divine "spirit" are merged with the "enjoyment of the Reality." Here is a consciousness which is aware of its universality and its material particularity, and, most importantly, it is enjoying the union of the two. Like Drowne "finding" the image of the beautiful lady in the oak, Owen Warland is the agency through which the ideal makes itself manifest in the material world. The concern of the artist, as Hawthorne states is the "incarnation of his idea" (10: 472). In that sense, the artist is an agency of Providence, or, as Hegel calls it, progress. The object of art is a symbol of the more important fusion of

idea and substance which is brought about by people like Ernest of "The Great Stone Face" who, through living according to these perceived and symbolized truths, weave the ideal into the fabric of the society.

CHAPTER IV

THE BLACK FLOWER AND THE WILD ROSE: MORAL LAW IN THE MAJOR NOVELS

The tales of Hawthorne are concerned primarily with the individual and his relation to the universe. For the most part they deal with the synthesis of the physical and spiritual parts of human existence into what Hawthorne calls "heart" and Hegel calls "Geist," or "Spirit." In the later tales, such as "The Snow Image," "The Great Stone Face," and "Main Street," the relationship between ideal truth and earthly existence is fairly consistent: the truly perceptive person perceives abstract truth, visualizes it with his imagination, and then acts to bring it about in the real world; the process results in "progress," and the individual works to unify the his dual nature.

With The Scarlet Letter Hawthorne begins to expand his philosophy to include the complex interrelationships of people in a social group. The novels are concerned not only with the psychological aspects of life, but with the sociological aspects as well. The emphasis of the novels shifts from the subject of "the human consciousness," the focus of the tales, to "the relationship between consciousnesses," the focus of the novels. This movement

from individual to collective consciousness is central to the logic of Hegel's Phenomenology. Lauer cites Hegel's conclusion that "'things' are characterized essentially only in relation to other 'things,' i.e., all essential characteristics are relationships" (Lauer 138). With the greater leisure and scope available in the novel, Hawthorne was able to fully develop multiple characters in order to focus attention on the characteristics that are truly essential--relationships.

In The Scarlet Letter Hawthorne develops Hester and Dimmesdale and treats the nature of their relationship with each other and their individual relationships with the Puritan society. At the center of The House of the Seven Gables is the relationship between two families: the Maules and the Pycheons. Phoebe and Holgrave represent the current state of the two families, but Hawthorne traces the family relationship through preceding generations in order to demonstrate the effects of the relationship over a period of time. With The Blithedale Romance Hawthorne treats the complex relationships of the diverse members of the Blithedale community. Hawthorne's final completed novel, The Marble Faun, is more ambitious in scope: here Hawthorne attempts, through the relationships of the four main characters, to represent symbolically the

progress of mankind from Arcadian simplicity to modern complexity.

All four of the novels involve negation and synthesis of consciousnesses relating to each other. The cold, rigid theological framework of Dimmesdale and the Puritan clergy is negated by the organic freedom of Hester. The Scarlet Letter works out a synthesis of these two perspectives. Seen in relation to the Hegelian dialectic, the ambiguities of the novels become less disturbing. The reader is not pressed to determine Hester's moral goodness but can see her as the negation of the rigid framework of the Puritan religion which is in need of change. The reader of The Marble Faun does not have to judge the fortuity of "the fall" or decide whether Miriam or Hilda is the more admirable woman. The emphasis of the novel is on the relationships between the characters rather than on the characters themselves. Miriam and Hilda then become opposing poles, neither good nor evil, in a process of negation and synthesis, and it is the process that is important. This chapter will deal with each of the four major novels and will attempt to show how reading from the perspective of the Hegelian dialectic resolves some of the ambiguities which have resulted in storms of critical debate over Hawthorne's intent.

It is appropriate that Hawthorne begins The Scarlet

Letter with his essay "The Custom-House." With this introductory essay Hawthorne presents the major themes of the book and some insight into his method of writing. As Frank MacShane has pointed out, "The major themes of isolation, guilt, decadence and the sinister power that one person or institution can exercise over another all appear in this short piece" (94). The overall impression which Hawthorne gives of the Custom House is of decay and inaction:

> On ascending the steps, you would discern--in the entry, if it were summer time, or in their appropriate rooms, if wintry or inclement weather--a row of venerable figures, sitting in old-fashioned chairs, which were tipped on their hind legs back against the wall. Oftentimes they were asleep, but occasionally might be heard talking together, in voices between speech and a snore, and with that lack of energy that distinguishes the occupants of alms-houses, and all other human beings who depend for subsistence on charity, on monopolized labor, or anything else but their own independent exertions. These old gentlemen . . . were Custom-House officers. (1: 7)

Hawthorne complains that the atmosphere of the place sapped his intellectual powers: "I cared not, at this period, for books," he says; "they were apart from me" (1: 26). In the environment of the Custom House, the only reason a man would ever "put himself into voluntary motion--was to get an appetite for dinner" (1: 34). Everything and everyone in the Custom House is in a static state; there is no intellectual activity and very little

physical activity. All is stillness and decay. The "old Inspector" of the sketch is a modification of the Wandering Jew figure so prevalent in the short stories: like the Wandering Jew, the Inspector is a being whom "age and infirmity had no business to touch" (1: 17), and he lacks the spark of intellect. Hawthorne says that his "moral and spiritual ingredients" are "in barely enough measure to keep the old gentleman from walking on all-fours" (1: 17). The only spark of spiritual life among the Custom-House cronies comes from the Old General, whose fondness for flowers and former strength of character have now given way to the infirmity of age. Says Hawthorne, "It was only with the assistance of a servant . . . that he could slowly and painfully ascend the Custom-House steps, and, with a toilsome progress across the floor, attain his customary chair beside the fireplace" (1: 21).

Hawthorne suggests, through the Old General, that at some time in the past New England abounded with spirit and hardihood, but now the society is decadent and lifeless. The image of the "bubbling fountain," which appears frequently in the tales, occurs in this sketch in a perverted form. Instead of the typical reference to divine inspiration bubbling into the sunshine, we find only the observation that "frozen witticisms of past generations were thawed out, and came bubbling with

laughter from their lips" (1: 15). There is no original inspiration to be found here, only stale thoughts of past generations. The sunshine too lacks authenticity: Hawthorne says that "it more resembles the phosphorescent glow of decaying wood" (1: 16). With this variation on the fountain image, Hawthorne demonstrates symbolically the deficiency in his contemporary society. What is lacking in the Custom House is what Hegel calls "negation," some force to move things off dead center and restart the wheels of progress. For Hawthorne the impetus was supplied by the termination of his political appointment as Inspector of Customs.

The Custom-House experience provided Hawthorne with a new insight into his own art, and this insight finds expression in the sketch. He sees that literary art is a valuable tool in society because of its unique ability to give life to formless ideas and to instigate change. Art can be, in Hegel's terminology, a form of negation, a way of rebelling against the status quo to force social change. In this regard Hawthorne, as writer, is firmly linked with the character of Hester Prynne. They are both artists; Hester's medium is needlework, and Hawthorne's is fiction. In the sketch he describes his sensation upon placing the scarlet letter on his own breast:

It seemed to me,--the reader may smile, but must not

> doubt my word,--it seemed to me, then, that I experienced a sensation not altogether physical, yet almost so, as of burning heat; and as if the letter were not of red cloth, but of red-hot iron. I shuddered, and involuntarily let it fall upon the floor. (1: 32)

Besides Adultress, Able, and Angel, the scarlet letter may also stand for Artist. Hawthorne, like Hester, feels the scorn of the Puritans: "No aim, that I have ever cherished," he says, "would they recognize as laudable; no success of mine . . . would they deem otherwise than worthless, if not positively disgraceful" (1: 10). But Hawthorne realizes after his Custom-House experience, that his function, like that of Hester, lies outside the accepted activities of the structured, conservative society represented, in "The Custom-House," by the lifeless Custom-House officers and, in The Scarlet Letter, by the "iron framework" of Puritan society. Hawthorne and Hester serve as negative forces to move stale, lifeless social groups into a new era by instigating dissension and discord which must be dealt with. They create antithesis which leads to synthesis.

In the Old General, Hawthorne sees a decaying remnant of the vigorous New England of the past and in order to renew that vigor in his contemporary society, he strives to revitalize that past through his fiction. In "The Custom-House" he tells of burrowing through the musty

papers in the attic on an "idle and rainy day" and finding the package of historical notes written by Surveyor Pue. As he sorts through the papers "with the saddened, weary, half-reluctant interest which we bestow on the corpse of dead activity," he exerts his sluggish fancy "to raise up from these dry bones an image of the old town's brighter aspect, when India was a new region, and only Salem knew the way thither" (1: 29). Two things rouse his sluggish fancy: Pue's written account of Hester, and the embroidered letter. Hawthorne compares the written document to the disinterred remains of Surveyor Pue and concludes that there is more spiritual life in the writings than in the physical remnants. It is the revitalizing effect of language and symbol which interests Hawthorne:

> This incident recalled my mind, in some degree, to its old track. There seemed to be here the groundwork of a tale. It impressed me as if the ancient Surveyor, in his garb of a hundred years gone by . . . had met me in the deserted chamber of the Custom-House. . . . With his own ghostly hand, the obscurely seen, but majestic, figure had imparted to me the scarlet symbol, and the roll of explanatory manuscript. (1: 33)

The lethargy of the Custom-House has infected the writer/narrator of the sketch, but the combination of language and symbol revives his spirit.

Hawthorne says that the embroidered letter itself is

a "mystic symbol, subtly communicating itself to my sensibilities, but evading the analysis of my mind" (1: 31). This phrase can be used to describe Hawthorne's own use of symbols in his fiction; they subtly suggest without yeilding to exact, logical analysis. Wallace Stevens' comment on poetry comes to mind: "The poem must resist the intelligence / Almost successfully." As Stevens does with his poetry, Hawthorne presents his inexpressible abstract vision as a cluster of artistic symbols. Here again, the scarlet letter "A," the central artistic symbol in the story, suggests "art." The symbolic mode of writing is particularly suited to the Hegelian perspective because the symbol <u>is</u> the synthesis of physical substance, a thing, and of an abstract concept, the thing symbolized. In that sense the symbol is <u>Geist</u>, a unity of abstract and concrete.

In this sketch Hawthorne returns to the "moonlight and sunshine" metaphor which appears so frequently in the tales. Before the hearth in the moonlight, "the Actual and the Imaginary may meet," he says, "and each imbue itself with the nature of the other" (1: 36). This is the world of "romance" and of symbols. It is where actual things take on the attributes of the ideal. In such an atmosphere, Hawthorne says, "if a man, sitting all alone,

cannot dream strange things, and make them look like truth, he need never try to write romances" (1: 36).

The Scarlet Letter sprang from Hawthorne's experience in the Custom-House, and for that reason the experience was not totally negative. The sketch demonstrates the movement of thesis and antithesis through a positive synthesis. The poles are represented by Hawthorne, the young, sensitive, romantic author and by the Old Inspector, the stagnated, materialistic realist. In his position of Inspector of Customs, Hawthorne is able to experience first-hand the stagnating effect of the lifestyle. The conflict, or negation, does not result merely in the triumph of creative imagination over dull practicality, but in a synthesis. The Hawthorne of the novels is more knowledgeable of worldly affairs and is perhaps more grounded in the dull reality of human existence than is the dreamy writer of the tales. Before his Custom-House experience he could not have felt so intensely the dilemma of a vibrant, emotional Hester being stifled by the suffocating expectations of a decaying Puritan society.

Frank McShane has pointed out that, like "The Custom-House," The Scarlet Letter opens with a description of social stagnation and decay. A central symbol for the Puritan society of old Salem is the jail:

> Certain it is, that, some fifteen or twenty years after the settlement of the town, the wooden jail was already marked with weather-stains and other indications of age, which gave yet a darker aspect to its beetle-browed and gloomy front. The rust on the ponderous iron-work of its oaken door looked more antique than anything else in the new world. Like all that pertains to crime, it seemed never to have known a youthful era. (1: 47-8)

By opening with the description of the jail, Hawthorne introduces one of the primary themes of the book: the nature of man's laws--civil and moral, which in the case of Puritan society are inseparable. The "iron-work" of Puritan moral law is shown in the tale to be rusted and antique. It lacks the flexibility to handle genuine human affairs and rather than giving focus and purpose, acts only as a restricting yoke on the moral life of the characters.

Hawthorne says in this introduction that the two practical necessities of the early Puritans were a cemetery and a prison. Evidently, in the early days of America (before the establishment of the Internal Revenue Service), the only two certainties in life were death and punishment. The inflexibility of the Puritans' moral code is suggested by Hawthorne's description of the prison door as "heavily timbered with oak and studded with iron spikes" (1: 47). Several times in the story he refers to "the iron framework" of Puritan religion. The story demonstrates Hawthorne's view that this rigid framework of

moral law leads only to stagnation of the progress of Providence.

Hawthorne calls the prison "the black flower of civilized society" (1: 48). Chillingworth later uses this same symbol when he tells Hester that from her "first step awry . . . it has all been a dark necessity" (1: 174). He adds, "It is our fate. Let the black flower blossom as it may!" (1: 174) The suggestion here is that the black flower is connected with the concept of predetermination. In front of the prison in the opening scene ("the black flower of civilized society") grows a wild rose. The juxtaposition of these two apparently symbolic images may indicate that they are important points of thesis and antithesis. It makes sense, then, to see the black flower as a symbol for inflexible, abstract moral law requiring swift and harsh punishment and the wild rose as a symbol for an organic, naturally developing form of moral law subject to revision according to man's changing perception of the universe. The central conflict of the novel lies in the confrontation of these two interpretations of the nature of moral truth. The Puritans saw moral truth as an unchangeable, absolute scale. Right was right, wrong was wrong, and the two were easily distinguishable. Hawthorne, on the other hand, followed Hegel's view (either consciously or unconsciously) that moral law is an

organic set of rules based on man's developing sense of right and wrong. "What was good and nourishing food for the spirits of one generation," he wrote in the preface to Mosses, "affords no sustenance to the next."

Chillingworth and Dimmesdale represent different rigid systems. While Dimmesdale is caught up in the iron frame-work of Puritanism, Chillingworth is held fast by his dedication to scientific knowledge--another system of knowing. He describes himself as "a man of thought . . . the bookworm of great libraries" (1: 74). His similarity to Ethan Brand is apparent: he studies Dimmesdale scientifically and objectively. Hawthorne says that Chillingworth "strove to go deep into the patient's bosom, delving among his principles, prying into his recollections, and probing everything with a cautious touch, like a treasure-seeker in a dark cavern" (1: 124). Chillingworth also resembles Rappaccini in his knowledge of rare medicinal herbs and in the fact that both men use this knowledge in a morally questionable manner. He begins his study of Dimmesdale, as he tells himself, "with the severe and equal integrity of a judge, desirous only of truth, even as if the question involved no more than the air-drawn lines and figures of a geometrical problem, instead of human passions, and wrongs inflicted on himself" (1: 129). Like Ethan Brand he believes he is

searching for objective, abstract truth. Although he is no Puritan, his iron frame-work of reason is just as rigid as their religion.

Dimmesdale is impaled on the point of Puritan moral law and cannot justify his sensual attraction to Hester since for the Puritans there is no bending; the law is the law. Throughout the book are references to the rigidity of the Puritan society. Hawthorne describes Dimmesdale's fellow ministers as having "shrewd, hard, iron or granite understanding" (1: 141). Hester tells Dimmesdale that they have nothing to do with "these iron men, and their opinions" (1: 197). Hawthorne says that the prejudices of the "wise and learned men of the community . . . were fortified in themselves by an iron framework of reasoning" (1: 162). With this concept of rigid moral truth in his mind and his illicit love for Hester in his heart, Dimmesdale is wracked by his inability to integrate the two worlds. He is yet another of Hawthorne's examples of the Unhappy Consciousness. His duality of self becomes so separated that he nearly becomes classically schizophrenic dual personality. Upon his return from the meeting in the forest with Hester, his own study seems alien to him:

> There on the table, with the inky pen beside it, was an unfinished sermon, with a sentence broken in the midst, where his thoughts had ceased to gush out upon the page two days before. He knew that it was himself, the thin and white-cheeked minister, who had

> done and suffered these things, and written thus far into the Election Sermon! But he seemed to stand apart, and eye this former self with scornful, pitying, but half-envious curiosity. That self was gone! Another man had returned out of the forest; a wiser one; with a knowledge of hidden mysteries which the simplicity of the former never could have reached. (1: 223)

The problem with the rigid Puritan ideology is that it cannot accommodate this second self, the sensuous self awakened by Hester in the forest; it can only suppress or deny it. This suppression of sensuous vitality has led to the stagnation of the Puritan community, and in order for the society to be revitalized the system of moral law must be replaced by a more flexible one.

Throughout The Scarlet Letter Hawthorne refers to "circles" of various kinds. In "The Custom-House" he mentions the writer's "circle of existence" (1: 4) and the "narrow circle" of a person's friends and associates (1: 27). In The Scarlet Letter he says that Hester's shame had separated her from the community and set her in a "sphere by herself" (1: 54) and that destiny had drawn an "inviolable circle round about her" (1: 93), a "magic circle of ignominy" (1: 246). Hester and Pearl exist in the "same circle of seclusion" (1: 94). Pearl, he says, lacks a wide "circle of acquaintance" (1: 95), but around her is a "circle of radiance" (1: 90). Around Chillingworth is "a circle of ominous shadow" (1: 175) which

disturbs "the magnetic sphere of a being so sensitive as Arthur Dimmesdale" (1: 193). All of these circles, and spheres, have to do with the range of perception of individual consciousnesses, and in that regard Hawthorne's "circles" are related to Kant's idea that every consciousness is isolated within its own range of perception. In Kant's system a consciousness can never really know anything outside itself. Hegel, on the other hand, believed that individual consciousnesses in a society become linked as mutually dependent entities and eventually establish a group consciousness. The group consciousness then becomes the basis for moral law (Lauer 177-229). It is this interdependency of circles which is stressed in The Scarlet Letter. In the conclusion Hawthorne speculates:

> It is a curious subject of observation and inquiry, whether hatred and love be not the same thing at bottom. Each, in its utmost development, supposes a high degree of intimacy and heart-knowledge; each renders one individual dependent for the food of his affections and spiritual life upon another, each leaves the passionate lover, or the no less passionate hater, forlorn and desolate by the withdrawal of his object. Philosophically considered, therefore, the two passions seem essentially the same, except that one happens to be seen in a celestial radiance, and the other in a dusky and lurid glow. (1: 260)

Hawthorne's subject in the novel is not so much the operation of "love" or of "hate" considered separately, but the bonding between human beings, whatever form that bonding

takes. The interrelation of "magic circles" must evolve into new combinations in order for any real progress to take place. A new, more vital group consciousness must be formed through the bonding process just as the circles of Hester, Pearl, and Dimmesdale form "an electric chain" (1: 153).

John Carlos Rowe asserts that Hester progresses through the seven stages of self-consciousness listed by Hegel in The Phenomenology, and points out the importance of interdependence among characters (1221). But Hester's most valuable accomplishment is not simply the attainment of personal self-consciousness; she also serves as the source of vitality to the spiritually dead community. She is the lady at the bubbling fountain seen in the tales. When she throws off her scarlet letter beside the brook in the forest, she becomes a type of gushing fountain:

> O exquisite relief! She had not known the weight, until she felt the freedom! By another impulse, she took off the formal cap that confined her hair; and down it fell upon her shoulders, dark and rich, with at once a shadow and a light in its abundance, and imparting the charm of softness to her features. There played about her mouth, and beamed out of her eyes, a radiant and tender smile, that seemed gushing from the very heart of womanhood. (1: 202)

She is neither pure spirit nor pure earthliness but is both "shadow" and "light" in a synthesized form. Her

spirit "gushes" into the sunlight which appears immediately after she lets down her hair.

In The Phenomenology Hegel demonstrates the problem of conflicting hierarchies of moral law by examining the classical Greek drama Antigone. Antigone represents "divine law" which governs familial concerns, and Creon represents "human law" which governs civil affairs. Neither Creon nor Antigone is at fault in the conflict since, according to their own system of justice, each is doing what duty demands. Hester is in a situation similar to that of Antigone: her own instinctual understanding of right and wrong conflicts with the dictates of the civil and religious authorities. She firmly believes that her love for Dimmesdale is right. "What we did had a consecration of its own" (1: 195), she tells her lover. She is right and the Puritans are right. As Hegel says of Antigone, "The situation is intolerable, but it is inevitable where human beings have nothing to say as to what the law is, where only an impersonal, alien 'substance' dictates what is to be done" (Lauer 186). Hegel argues that the conflict is an unfortunate but necessary result of the evolution of society. The conflict is a step toward its own solution: the negation causes instability in the rigid system, which, in turn, allows for positive change.

It is also interesting to note that Hegel assigns the function of intuitive knowing to the female and the function of rational law-making to the male. Lauer describes Hegel's position:

> Because it is the brother [in Antigone] who moves more and more in the direction of involvement uniquely with the "human law," the sister must become the unique guardian of the "divine law," of family ties (both within the framework of an accepted ethic). Thus comes about the division of roles between sexes, which characterizes the world of Sophocles and which, it would seem, Hegel finds quite appropriate in his own day. The place of man is in the public forum; of woman, in the family circle. (183)

This same attitude toward sex roles is quite prevalent in the works of Hawthorne. The link with divine truth, in Hawthorne's writing, is usually through the female, who also represents home and hearth. And it is usually the male who works in the world to bring this "truth" into physical existence. Dimmesdale thinks and Hester feels. Dimmesdale is the great preacher and a highly respected church official, but it is Hester who becomes the trusted advisor in "affairs of the heart."

The conflict between systems of moral law in The Scarlet Letter is synthesized by and in the character of Pearl: she serves as a mediating force but also symbolizes the resulting synthesis. In the early part of the story Pearl represents the objectification of the union between

Hester and Dimmesdale; for Hester she is merely an extension of self. It is not until the scene in which Pearl forms her own letter "A" from eel-grass that Hester "recognizes Pearl for the first time as an active, reciprocal self-consciousness" (Rowe 1220). When Hester casts off her scarlet letter in the forest and persuades Dimmesdale to likewise cast off the past and begin anew, it is Pearl who demands that she take up the letter and replace it on her breast. Rowe explains:

> Hester presents the mere illusion of freedom, which is contradicted in her appeal to Dimmesdale: "Thou must know Pearl!" As the figure that represents the spiritual necessity governing history, Pearl recalls her mother to the symbols by which they have both been defined. Yet, the tokens of social exile that Hester takes up again no longer have the simple allegorical significance of Puritan law, but now symbolize the complex history of Hester's self-consciousness. (1221-2)

Hester and Dimmesdale cannot simply escape the conflict; they must accept both past and present in order to face the future.

Pearl is a perfect synthesis of the physical and the spiritual. Hawthorne dramatizes her unique ability to unify substance and idea by describing her clothing as something which "always impressed the beholder as if it were the very garb that precisely became it best" (1: 90). "Her garb," he says, "was all of one idea with her nature" (1: 228). When the shipmaster tosses her a gold chain,

"Pearl immediately twined it around her neck and waist, with such happy skill, that, once seen there, it became a part of her, and it was difficult to imagine her without it" (1: 245). The gold chain is symbolic of Pearl's ability to adapt physical substance to her spiritual essence and also of her linking function.

This mediating function is made explicit in the chapter "The Child at the Brook-Side." Hawthorne says simply, "And Pearl was the oneness of their being" (1: 207). She is much more than the symbol of past sin; she is the symbol of their spiritual and physical unity. Looking upon the child, Hester and Dimmesdale "beheld at once the material union, and the spiritual idea, in whom they met" (1: 207). Hawthorne places her beside a still pool in the brook so that her image is reflected in the water: "In the brook beneath stood another child,--another and the same," but which is "more refined and spiritualized than the reality" (1: 208). The phrase "another and the same" strongly suggests the paradoxical unity of Hegelian synthesis. Both images of Pearl, the real and the reflected, point to Hester's breast and demand that the scarlet letter be replaced. Pearl, the symbol of unification, requires Hester to synthesize her duality rather than to cast off half of what she is.

Pearl may also be seen as an example of the new

life injected into society by Hester's vitality. In this sense she represents the promise of the future, especially the future of womanhood. In the opening pages Hawthorne paints a grim portrait of Puritan women:

> Morally, as well as materially, there was a coarser fibre in those wives and maidens of old English birth and breeding, than in their fair descendants, separated from them by a series of six or seven generations; for, throughout that chain of ancestry, every mother has transmitted to her child a fainter bloom, a more delicate and briefer beauty, and a slighter physical frame, if not a character of less force and solidity, than her own. (1: 50)

This passage is more than simple flattery of Hawthorne's contemporary female readers; it shows his belief in the evolutionary progress of human beings, or, in religious terms, the movement of divine providence. Describing Hester he says, "She was lady-like, too, after the manner of the feminine gentility of those days; characterized by a certain state and dignity, rather than by the delicate, evanescent, and indescribable grace, which is now recognized as its indication" (1: 53). Pearl, on the other hand, is described as the essence of spiritual evanescence and grace. Even as an infant she is described as having "a native grace" (1: 90). Invariably, she "danced and sparkled, and prattled airily along her course" (1: 187), and her "activity of spirit never flagged" (1: 177).

Pearl prefigures the movement toward the refinement and grace which Hawthorne so prized in women.

Hawthorne's belief in teleological development is evidenced by a passage from the concluding chapter:

> [Hester held] a firm belief, that, at some brighter period, when the world should have grown ripe for it, in Heaven's own time, a new truth would be revealed, in order to establish the whole relation between man and woman on a surer ground of mutual happiness. Earlier in life, Hester had vainly imagined that she herself might be the destined prophetess, but had long since recognized the impossibility that any mission of divine and mysterious truth should be confided to a woman stained with sin, bowed down with shame, or even burdened with a life-long sorrow. (1: 263)

The final irony of the story is that in spite of her protestations Hester has been the instrument of change. Hawthorne subscribed to Sophia's belief that "Man's accidents are God's purposes," and in The Scarlet Letter he shows how the negation of Hester brings about a positive movement toward a new perception of moral truth.

In the famous preface to The House of the Seven Gables Hawthorne distinguishes between the novel and the romance, declaring that his book belongs to the latter category by virtue of "the attempt to connect a by-gone time with the very Present that is flitting away from us" (2: 2). The primary theme of the book is time and the complex relationship of past, present, and future. "Not to be deficient" in moral purpose, he says, he relates the

rather simple-minded moral of inherited wrong-doing and ill-gotten gold. But this moral (if it is one at all) is contradicted by the conclusion of the book since, as Philip Young notes, Phoebe, Clifford, and Hepzibah inherit the Pyncheon estate and apparently live happily ever after (Young 124-5). This apparent contradiction has led critics to condemn the book as having a contrived, fairy-tale ending (Von Abele 66-7). But in the preface, Hawthorne himself diminishes the importance of this moral by saying:

> When romances do really teach anything, or produce any effective operation, it is usually through a far more subtile process than the ostensible one. (2: 2)

The ending of the book is not only appropriate, but necessary given the philosophical assumptions made throughout the book with regard to time and the movement of human progress. Hawthorne takes pains to label the story a romance "having a great deal more to do with the clouds overhead, than with any portion of the actual soil of the County of Essex" (2: 3). He wants the reader to know that the events of the story do not necessarily fall within "the probable and ordinary course of man's experience" (2: 1). It is Hawthorne's purpose here to dramatize the process through which man and society are moved toward perfection, and the process described is much

the same as that delineated by Hegel in The Phenomenology. The operation of providence (or progress) is the "high truth" spoken of in the preface, "fairly, finely, and skillfully wrought out, brightening at every step, and crowning the final development" (2: 2-3).

Progress is brought about as the natural result of the synthesis of opposites which takes place over a period of time. According to Hegel the goal of progress is to bring physical reality into alignment with ideal truth. In The House of the Seven Gables the primary conflict is between the Pyncheon family, who represent the world of physical sensuality, and the Maules, who represent spirituality or "other-worldliness." In order to achieve the goal of progress, these two families must be synthesized into a new unity, which is precisely what happens with the union of Phoebe and Holgrave in marriage. The romance form gives Hawthorne the latitude to use Phoebe and Holgrave symbolically as the representatives of their respective family traits, and in a larger sense as symbols of American society.

That Hawthorne believed in the perfectability of mankind is evident by his participation in the experiment at Brook Farm and by the fact that at one time he even considered joining the Shakers. His disillusionment with these and other social movements was not caused by a

change in his ideals, but by a recognition that sweeping social change was not likely to occur immediately through man's conscious effort. He believed in social progress, but he also believed that it was more often brought about in spite of man's conscious efforts than because of them. He believed that change is brought about indirectly through a complex process. Clifford expresses Hawthorne's sentiment when he states:

> All human progress is in a circle; or, to use a more accurate and beautiful figure, in an ascending spiral curve. While we fancy ourselves going straight forward, and attaining, at every step, an entirely new position of affairs, we do actually return to something long ago tried and abandoned, but which we now find etherealized, refined, and perfected to its ideal. The past is but a coarse and sensual prophecy of the present and the future. (2: 260-1)

Hegel describes the dialectical movement of progress in very similar terms, saying it proceeds in oscillations or opposing "moments" rather than linearly. The movement of The Phenomenology itself is circular since, as Hegel says, the true "is its own becoming, the circle which presupposes its end as its purpose and has this as its beginning, which is actual only by being carried through to its end" (Lauer 277).

At one point in the book Hawthorne considers the notion that the movement of human society is random, without any direction whatsoever. In his description of the

organ grinder's mechanical pantomime he speculates that:

> "some cynic . . . had desired to signify . . . that we mortals, whatever our business or amusement--however serious, however trifling--all dance to one identical tune, and, in spite of our ridiculous activity, bring nothing finally to pass. For the most remarkable aspect of the affair was, that, at the cessation of the music, everybody was petrified at once, from the most extravagant life into a dead torpor. . . . All were precisely in the same condition as before they made themselves so ridiculous by their haste to toil, to enjoy, to accumulate gold, and to become wise. Saddest of all, moreover, the lover was none the happier for the maiden's granted kiss! (2: 163)

The most repulsive aspect of this cynical display to Hawthorne is the failure of love to bring about any sort of transformation in the lovers. "But, rather than swallow this last too acrid ingredient," he adds, "we reject the whole moral of the show" (2: 163). For Hawthorne, love (rather than conscious effort) is the moving force of progress. It is love which finally unites the Pyncheons and the Maules. He subscribes to Hegel's description of existence as "the self-creating 'play' of love" (Lauer 277). For both Hegel and Hawthorne, the "play" is directed toward the goal of human perfection.

Several passages in the book suggest a belief in the perfectability of mankind. Hawthorne speculates that the process of genetic mutation which made Judge Pyncheon lighter in weight and more mobile than his Puritan ancestor "may belong to the great system of human

progress, which, with every ascending footstep, as it diminishes the necessity for animal force, may be destined gradually to spiritualize us by refining away our grosser attributes of body" (2: 121). In his youth Holgrave believed the world to be capable of improvement "into all that it ought to be" and that "there are harbingers abroad of a golden era" (2: 179). Hawthorne as narrator provides this comment:

> As to the main point--may we never live to doubt it!--as to the better centuries that are coming, the artist was surely right. His error lay, in supposing that this age, more than any past or future one, is destined to see the tattered garments of Antiquity exchanged for a new suit, instead of gradually renewing themselves by patchwork. (2: 180)

Human progress for Hawthorne is clearly a process which proceeds gradually and by piecemeal. This "faith in man's brightening destiny" (2: 180) is the same "high truth . . . brightening at every step" which he writes of in the preface.

The union of the Pyncheons and the Maules through the marriage of Phoebe and Holgrave is symbolic of the synthesis of spirit and matter through the agency of love. Holgrave represents the Maule family and exhibits both the positive and negative traits of spiritual being. Hawthorne refers to him as the "artist" and gives him the occupation of making "pictures out of sunshine" (2: 91).

He has "a literary turn" (2: 145) and has been "a public lecturer on Mesmerism, for which science . . . he [has] remarkable endowments" (2: 176-7). He is an idealist and a zealot for social reform who operates, as Hepzibah notes, according to "a law of his own" (2: 85). His sphere of existence is the abstract. He tells Hepzibah, "I find nothing so singular in life, as that everything appears to lose its substance, the instant one actually grapples with it" (2: 44). He plants beans in the garden not through of any love of nature, but "by way of testing whether there was still a germ in such ancient seeds" (2: 148). He is more interested in scientific experimentation than in husbandry. His initial association with Phoebe seems to be a part of the same experiment: he wants to know if there is still a germ of life in the ancient Pyncheon family. "In his relations with [the Pyncheons]," Hawthorne says, "he seemed to be in quest of mental food; not heart-sustenance" (2: 178).

On the positive side, the Maules are artistic, prophetic, and intelligent, and they are concerned with abstract principles such as social justice. On the negative side, they tend to be emotionally cold and objective (recalling Ethan Brand). But Holgrave feels incomplete and restless. His intellectual inquisitiveness has not provided him with the answers he has sought. He

tells Phoebe, "I begin to suspect that a man's bewilderment is the measure of his wisdom" (2: 178). Because of the Pyncheons' greed for land, the Maule family has been literally and figuratively displaced from "home and hearth," and Holgrave seems to be wandering through what Hegel calls the intellectual jungle in an aimless flurry of activity:

> His present phase, as a Daguerreotypist, was of no more importance in his own view, nor more likely to be permanent, than any of the preceding ones. It had been taken up with the careless alacrity of an adventurer, who had his bread to earn; it would be thrown aside as carelessly, whenever he should choose to earn his bread by some other equally digressive means. (2: 177)

Hawthorne points out that throughout his wanderings Holgrave has never "lost his identity," but he has no place in the world and no true function. He tells Phoebe, "Men and women, and children, too, are such strange creatures, that one never can be certain that he really knows them" (2: 178-9). He is locked within his own sphere of perception, and in spite of his natural "animal magnetism" has no ties with humanity.

The Pyncheons, on the other hand, are firmly entrenched in the sensual world. Says Judge Pyncheon, "I do not belong to the dreaming class of men" (2: 235). Hawthorne consistently stresses the sensual nature of the Pyncheon family through references to age, decay, and

vegetable growth. The rose bush in the garden, for example, is "now unctuous with nearly two hundred years of vegetable decay" (2: 71). Judge Pyncheon is described as "seldom or never looking inward" (2: 232), "eschewing all airy matter, and never mistaking a shadow for a substance" (2: 118). Even his physical appearance is excessively physical with a "somewhat massive accumulation of animal substance about the lower region of his face" which makes his benevolent expression appear "unctuous, rather than spiritual," with "a kind of fleshly effulgence" (2: 116). The house itself is used as a symbol for the aging Pyncheon family in much the same way that Poe uses the House of Usher as a family symbol.

Phoebe may have inherited much of her personality from her mother, as Hepzibah suggests (2: 79), but she is still very much a Pyncheon. She and Holgrave are "as unlike, in their respective interiors, as if their native climes had been at world-wide distance" (2: 175). She is home-bound and non-intellectual. Impressed with her home-making abilities, Hepzibah asks, "Are you as good at your book as you are at washing tea-cups?" Phoebe responds, "Not quite, I am afraid," but she adds that she has been a "schoolmistress for the little children" (2: 77). Her name and her personality link her with "sunshine" which in Hawthorne's works is generally symbolic of the positive

aspects of physical existence. Before falling in love with Holgrave, she "never cared much about moonlight" (2: 214), Hawthorne's symbol for the imaginative or spiritual world. Her realm is the physical world and her "proper gift," says Hawthorne, is "making things look real, rather than fantastic, within her sphere" (2: 297). Her fondness for gardening and domestic work demonstrates her Pyncheon attachment to home and property. Hawthorne stresses her ability to manipulate her physical environment to achieve a comfortable sense of place:

> Little Phoebe was one of those persons who possess, as their exclusive patrimony, the gift of practical arrangement. It is a kind of natural magic, that enables these favored ones to bring out the hidden capabilities of things around them; and particularly to give a look of comfort and habitableness to any place which, for however brief a period, may happen to be their home. (2: 72)

The Pyncheon family's orientation in the sensual world has its negative aspects, but in Phoebe we find the positive attributes, primarily, a wholesome joy in sensual beauty and a comfortable domesticity.

But even Phoebe, Hawthorne implies, would eventually succumb to the decay of Pyncheon sensuality, "grow thin, and put on a bleached unwholesome aspect, and assume strange, shy ways, prophetic of old-maidenhood and a cheerless future" (2: 175) if not for the influence of Holgrave. The two families must be merged in order to

achieve a synthesis of the antithetical characteristics. Holgrave needs a stable base, a sense of home in the physical world, and it is Phoebe who is capable of supplying it. Phoebe needs the spiritual lift from the physical world which Holgrave can supply. In addition, the past must be merged with the present and not merely erased. During the hundred years covered in the tale the Maule characteristic of mystical power has evolved into Holgrave's keen psychological insight and "animal magnetism," and the Pyncheon desire for land has evolved into Phoebe's love of home. Finally, the two families can be unified.

Early in the story Holgrave wants to wipe out the past completely and give society a fresh start. He complains that "we live in Dead Men's houses," and Phoebe retorts, "And why not . . . so long as we can be comfortable in them?" (2: 183). By the end of the story he wishes that the country estate had been made of stone instead of wood:

> Then every generation of the family might have altered the interior, to suit its own taste and convenience; while the exterior, through the lapse of years, might have been adding venerableness to its original beauty, and thus giving that impression of permanence, which I consider essential to the happiness of any one moment. (2: 314-15)

This abrupt change in attitude may be considered a

literary fault because of the lack of motivation for alteration of Holgrave's character, but since Hawthorne intended the story to be an allegorical romance and not a realistic novel, the change is appropriate and even necessary. In the concluding chapter the synthesis has already taken place and Holgrave's statement is an expression of the new point of view which includes the past as an integral and necessary part of the present rather than attempting to deny it. That Hawthorne intended the book, at least in part, as an allegorical treatment of his contemporary society is given credence by his description of Phoebe as the symbol of New England womanhood and his assertion that Holgrave "might fitly enough stand forth as the representative of many compeers in his native land" (2: 181). In this allegorical sense the book optimistically describes the progress of New England society from the time of Hester Prynne to Hawthorne's own period.

In The Blithedale Romance Hawthorne again treats the subject of human progress, but this time from a different perspective: here the progress is the intentional effort of idealistic young people like those lawless reformers associated with Holgrave in The House of the Seven Gables, and the outcome is much less positive than the natural progress brought about by the union of the Pyncheons and

the Maules. The major theme of the work is the dichotomy between acts and intentions, between the idealistic goals of the characters and the actual results of their labors.

In The Phenomenology Hegel states that "what really matters" in life is doing, and, more precisely, that the doing corresponds to the will of the doer (Lauer 170). "If we are to find the true self of self-consciousness, we must look to its activity" (Lauer 147). In order for true progress to occur, this activity must originate within the individual, but also must be of common interest to all individuals taken collectively. It must be an "activity of each and all, the essence which is the essence of all essences, spiritual essence" (Lauer 172). The inhabitants of Blithedale profess, at least, to have a common goal, but their individual activities pull them in different directions, and beneath the surface each major character in the story has a personal goal which runs counter to that of the community. In other words, their actions do not correspond to their expressed will.

One of the problems brought out in the book is the failure of the Blithedale reformers to agree on the purpose and methods of their effort. Each character appears to have developed a concept of the project from within his or her own heart. Hegel warns against the romantic reliance on the heart as a guide to moral

consciousness arguing that "the law of anyone's heart is as good as that of anyone else's, and any agreement between them would be purely accidental, not having reason to guarantee the agreement" (Lauer 159). Hegel believed that through reason the perceptions of truth held by individuals could be molded into a community understanding of truth. Without reason, "the only universality achievable on the level of heart is universal opposition of each law to each other" (Lauer 159-60).

Coverdale attempts to discuss the attributes of Fourier's social system with Hollingsworth, but because the system was devised through "individual intellect" rather than "divine inspiration," Hollingsworth cries, "Take the book out of my sight! . . . or, I tell you fairly, I shall fling it in the fire!" (3: 54). As narrator Coverdale comments:

> There is but little profit to be expected in attempting to argue with a man who allows himself to declaim in this manner; so I dropt the subject, and never took it up again. (3: 54)

As Hegel predicts, the man who feels truth only in his heart has no use for any ideas outside of his own limited system.

It seems almost blasphemous to assert that Hawthorne would favor a philosophy, such as Hegel's, which maintains the supremacy of reason over "the heart," but in some

respects the assertion makes sense, especially if we think of "reason" in the sense in which Hegel uses it:

> Since Hegel's concept of reason is a far cry from that of the rationalist, it would be a mistake to think that in reason he finds no place for the heart or that the kind of universal law the heart seeks to establish has no significance as a moment along the path to adequate rationality. (Lauer 158)

Hegel's concept of "reason" does not exclude heartfelt intuition, but uses it as a basis for truth, subjecting it to rational criticism in order to attain a minimal level of objectivity. Hawthorne himself criticized Emerson and other romanticists for their reliance on unexamined intuition. In this book he uses Hollingsworth as an example of a person blindly following the dictates of his own heart and through him shows the deception involved in such philanthropic enterprises. In fact, Hawthorne's use of "heart" is very close to Hegel's use of the word "Geist," including both ideal and sensual aspects.

In The Blithedale Romance Hawthorne sets up a complex matrix of characters representing antitheses of the spiritual and sensual, and the active and inactive. Coverdale and Hollingsworth are opposing poles on the scale of human activity: Hollingsworth is the epitome of activity and Coverdale is a mere observer of action. The relationship between Zenobia and Priscilla is clearly antithetical: when Zenobia fills with passion Priscilla

suddenly droops (3: 125). Zenobia is physically vibrant, and Priscilla is the essence of fragility.

Coverdale's purpose in going to Blithedale is ostensibly to help establish a new and better system of society, but he doesn't really believe in the project. Soon after the establishment of the community he tells Priscilla:

> I would rather look backward ten times than forward once. For, little as we know of our life to come, we may be very sure, for one thing, that the good we aim at will not be attained. People never do get just the good they seek. (3: 75-6)

Since he sees from the start no hope of the community accomplishing its goal, his motive seems to be to observe the people involved in the project. His interest is in theory rather than practice: he reads Fourier and tries to discuss the theories with Hollingsworth, but his friend wants no part of it. He likes the idea of working close to the earth, but he finds the actual labor unpleasant. Even his love for Priscilla is theoretical rather than actual. He loves her, he admits, "not for her realities . . . but for the fancy-work with which I have idly decked her out!" (3: 100)

As a poet, his vocation lies in feelings and ideas rather than in physical labor, but Hollingsworth says that "Miles Coverdale is not in earnest, either as a poet or a

laborer" (3: 68). This accusation seems to be correct since by the end of the book Coverdale has given up both poetry and farm labor. At one point Coverdale alludes to Hamlet and during his stay at the hotel in the city actually takes on the characteristics of the thoughtful prince. He sees himself as an outsider in the affairs of his friends and cannot decide whether to act or to remain a passive observer. He sees his friends as "actors in a drama," and he begins "to long for a catastrophe" (3: 157). He sees visions in his dreams and he worries about the situation constantly--but does nothing.

In spite of his professed compassion for humanity, Coverdale is spiteful and cruel to his friends. At Eliot's Pulpit he rather sadistically points out to Priscilla how beautiful Zenobia is and how Hollingsworth is lucky to have won the love of "so magnificent a woman" (3: 126). He then admits that "there may have been some petty malice in what I said" (3: 126). In his visit to Zenobia's rooms in the city he speaks disparagingly of Hollingsworth in order to test her reaction and then taunts her repeatedly with references to Priscilla's gentle beauty and Hollingsworth's attraction to her. When she flames into a rage he remarks with satisfaction, "My experiment had fully succeeded" (3: 166). When he sees Hollingsworth once again after Zenobia's death, he disre-

gards Priscilla's protective gestures and by asking satirically how many criminals he has reformed in his "grand edifice" goads the defeated philanthropist into expressing his guilt. Coverdale's remarks are spoken with vicious intent, "as if flinging a poisoned arrow at Hollingsworth's heart" (3: 243). Coverdale exhibits his similarity to Ethan Brand when he says, "That cold tendency, between instinct and intellect, which made me pry with a speculative interest into people's passions and impulses, appeared to have gone far towards unhumanizing my heart" (3: 154). Coverdale becomes a pure observer, and his lack of participation in the activities of life ruins him.

But Hollingsworth's energetic activity stands him in no better stead. Coverdale speculates that Hollingsworth "was ruined, morally, by an overplus of the very same ingredient, the want of which, I occasionally suspect, has rendered my own life all an emptiness" (3: 246). The problem with Hollingsworth is that his activity is entirely self-oriented; his philanthropic dream is all that matters to him, and he manipulates others for the purpose of bringing his "grand edifice" into existence. Outwardly he expresses an interest in the Blithedale experiment, but inwardly he desires only to turn the community into his own vision of social reform. His

singleness of purpose isolates him from any real joint effort with his fellows at Blithedale.

During their first night at the farm, the Blithedale reformers discuss their future with great optimism, but Hollingsworth remains caught up in his own mind:

> Hollingsworth hardly said a word, unless when repeatedly and pertinaciously addressed. Then, indeed, he would glare upon us from the thick shrubbery of his meditations, like a tiger out of a jungle, make the briefest reply possible, and betake himself back into the solitude of his heart and mind. The poor fellow had contracted this ungracious habit from the intensity with which he contemplated his own ideas, and the infrequent sympathy which they met with from his auditors; a circumstance that seemed only to strengthen the implicit confidence that he awarded them. (3: 36)

In his discussion of social reformers Hegel asserts that problems arise when the reformer's intuited vision of universal truth fails to correspond to the community's vision of universal truth:

> The experience of contradiction between the universality <u>in</u> the consciousness of the community and the universality <u>imposed on</u> his own heart's product drives the sentimental reformer insane. (Lauer 159)

Hegel goes on to say that because of this conflict "the beating of his heart for the welfare of mankind turns into the tumult . . . of insane self-conceit" (Lauer 159). With Hollingsworth Hawthorne gives a dramatization of Hegel's point. It is this "insane self-conceit" that

allows Hollingsworth to plot the takeover of Blithedale for his own purposes, to cruelly manipulate Zenobia in the hope of obtaining her money, and to ask Coverdale, "How can you be my life-long friend, except you strive with me towards the great object of my life?" (3: 57) Because he is locked within his own dream, Hollingsworth is incapable of participating in the community effort of Blithedale.

Priscilla and Zenobia have their own personal reasons for joining the reformers. Initially Zenobia is concerned with women's rights, but her revolutionary ideas fall prey to her love for Hollingsworth, and her motive in participating in the community swings from advocating women's rights to supporting his dream. Priscilla's dream is to find her sister, and it is for this reason only that she becomes a member of the Blithedale community. She, at least, never claims any intentions of social reform; she is simply there.

It is quite obvious here that Zenobia represents the woman of the sensual world. Her native grace (like that of Phoebe) inspires Coverdale to say that "not one woman in a thousand could move so admirably as Zenobia" (3: 155). When the reformers arrive at their new Eden of Blithedale, Zenobia greets them with the words, "I am the first comer" (3: 16). She is, as Gloria Chasson Erlich points out, the "Mother Eve" of this version of the fall

myth (164). But Hawthorne emphasizes her association with the physical: she apologizes for the lack of "figs and pine-apples" for the first meal in Paradise, and serves "ham and tongue" (3: 17-18). She is not only physical; she is "material perfection" which Coverdale thinks should be sculpted in white marble (3: 44). Her overt sexuality is clearly given in some of the most erotic lines ever written by Hawthorne:

> Zenobia has lived and loved! There is no folded petal, no latent dew-drop, in this perfectly developed rose. (3: 47)

Coverdale envisions her "in Eve's earliest garment" (3: 17) and is enthralled by her sensuous beauty.

In contrast, Priscilla exudes a purely spiritual nature:

> There was a lack of human substance in her; it seemed as if, were she to stand up in a sunbeam, it would pass right through her, and trace out the cracked and dusty window-panes upon the naked floor. (3: 185-6)

The silvery veil she wears in the stage performance is supposed "to insulate her from the material world, from time and space" (3: 6). She becomes an inhabitant of Blithedale, but a "mist of uncertainty" keeps her from "taking a very decided place among creatures of flesh and blood" (3: 49). She also lacks the natural grace of Zenobia; Coverdale notes that in her childish play at the

farm, "she ran falteringly, and often tumbled on the grass" (3: 73). Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of Priscilla's character is her almost total passivity; she is thoroughly compliant and does whatever she is told to do. "I am blown like a leaf," she tells Coverdale; "I never have any free-will" (3: 171). Although she is the cause of much of the activity in the story, she takes no actions herself. She is, as Coverdale terms her, a "gentle parasite" (3: 123), depending on the more powerful Zenobia and Hollingsworth for her physical existence.

These four main characters represent abstract antitheses rather than actual human beings with a "lurid intermixture" of spiritual and material qualities. The emphasis in this story is not so much on the individuals involved (as it is with Hester and Dimmesdale), but with the relationships between them. The major symbol in the book is the veil which apparently symbolizes the division between individual self-consciousnesses. In Zenobia's legend, "The Silvery Veil," the act of lifting the veil bonds Theodore and the lady inextricably together. If Theodore prefaces the act with an expression of love (the kiss through the veil), the bond is one of great felicity, but if the veil is lifted with "skepticism and curiosity" (3: 113), the two are linked in an evil fate. This little allegory is central to the story. Human relationships

which go behind the veil, Hawthorne implies, must be approached with love and compassion rather than with intellectual curiosity if they are to develop into felicitous bonds. Hollingsworth courts Zenobia's friendship seeking financial support for his project, and she does, in fact, become his "evil fate," leaving him a broken man. Coverdale enters his relationships with the others because of his "intellectual curiosity," and he too is left broken.

According to Coverdale the Blithedale experiment fails because of "infidelity to its own higher spirit" (3: 246). This infidelity is demonstrated by the failure of the individual relationships, without which no community consciousness can be developed. For true progress to take place a universal self-consciousness must be developed within the community. According to Hegel's philosophy this universal self-consciousness springs from the truly self-conscious individual. Says Hegel:

> The individual who comes to be all that it is to be an individual is universal--truly spirit--but not by looking only for individually subjective satisfaction. (Lauer 164)

In other words, the ideal community which the Blithedale reformers are trying to produce must be achieved through the improvement of the individuals rather than strictly through alterations in their community life-style. The

inhabitants of Blithedale form false, parasitic relationships seeking fulfillment through another being instead of working toward true self-consciousness. Even in personal relationships, each is looking for "individually subjective satisfaction" through the fulfillment of his or her own subjective dream.

The Blithedale Romance demonstrates the impossibility of social progress without the prerequisite, true individual self-consciousness. Hawthorne would argue that progress (or Providence) moves of its own accord (or by the will of God) and that the movement is more frequently in spite of human effort rather than because of it. The Hegelian dialectical movement entails necessarily "going down every possible dead-end street. . . . Forward movement seems to be accomplished by way of a series of attempts to go all the way in the wrong direction" (Lauer 150). The community of Blithedale seems to be one of those attempts. It is an idea which Coverdale describes in reflection as something that "ought to be a truth" (3: 246). The problem with the project was never "the spirit" or the idea, but the inability of the human participants to actualize the idea. At the time of the narration, Coverdale says that his life "has come to rather an idle pass," but admits with a shred of optimism that "frostier hearts have imbibed new warmth, and been newly happy" (3:

247). He may yet arrive at that point which Hawthorne predicted for Holgrave:

> And when, with the years settling down more weightily upon him, his early faith should be modified by inevitable experience, it would be with no harsh and sudden revolution of his sentiments. He would still have faith in man's brightening destiny, and perhaps love him all the better, as he should recognize his helplessness on his own behalf; and the haughty faith, with which he began life, would be well bartered for a far humbler one, at its close, in discerning that man's best directed effort accomplishes a kind of dream, while God is the soul worker of realities. (2: 180)

The failure of the Blithedale community (or of Brook Farm) does not imply a lack of belief in human progress on Hawthorne's part; it does show, however, that he believed the movement of progress to be beyond man's ability to control.

In The Marble Faun Hawthorne revives the theme of human progress, but here he treats allegorically the entire movement of progress from Arcadian simplicity, through the fall of man, to the final stage of human development. He uses the Italian setting to establish an atmosphere in which the ancient and modern can coexist, allowing him to telescope the symbolic history of mankind into a single story. Soon after the initial publication of The Marble Faun the Westminster Review declared that the four main characters were simply those of The Blithedale Romance reintroduced in a new setting (Simpson

xxxiv). There are indeed many similarities, but the differences are important. Miriam and Zenobia are quite similar in their exotic, sensual beauty, but Miriam carries a heavier burden of guilt. Priscilla lacks the social grace and vigor of her counterpart, Hilda. Kenyon and Donatello bear such little resemblance to Coverdale and Hollingsworth that it is difficult to match them with specific counterparts. In spite of the fact that The Marble Faun is nearly twice the length of The Blithedale Romance, the characters of the latter book are not developed to any greater degree than the reformers at Blithedale; they remain somewhat flat character types. Hawthorne wants them to stand out as representatives rather than individual human beings. More specifically, Miriam and Donatello represent the past, and Hilda and Kenyon represent the future. Together they demonstrate the alteration of human character brought about by human progress.

It is fairly obvious that Hawthorne intends Donatello as a representation of ancient man. He is a holdover from a race of beings who were half man and half animal, and until he is stained by his crime he retains the ability to command the animals of the forest. Hawthorne removes him further from reality by suggesting that he has the furry ears of a Faun. He is no artist; nor does he have a great

intellectual capability. "I have no head for argument," he tells Kenyon, "but only a sense, an impulse, an instinct, I believe, which sometimes leads me right" (4: 433). He is more than just another Adam figure reenacting the fall myth, he is man in his earliest state of development: simple, passionate, vigorous, and innocent.

Like her literary precursor Zenobia, Miriam is exotic and sensual, exuding an aura of seductiveness. At the carnival preceding the events of the story, she had been dressed, appropriately, as "a lady of the antique regime" (4: 438). She is European, like Donatello, and has a strain of Jewish blood. In her self portrait, Hawthorne says, one can see "what Rachel might have been, when Jacob deemed her worth the wooing of seven years, and seven more" or "what Judith was, when she vanquished Holofernes with her beauty" (4: 48). Always she is linked with great women of the past. Hawthorne leaves her past veiled in suggestive mystery in order to make her an abstract "type" rather than a specific personality. She is the Eve of the fall myth, but she is also Beatrice and the pagan nymph of the fountain. She feels a strong sympathy with Kenyon's sculpture of Cleopatra, "the fossil woman of an age that produced statelier, stronger, and more passionate creatures, than our own" (4: 377). Hawthorne also calls Kenyon's bust of Donatello a "fossil countenance" (4:

380). Donatello and Miriam are simply "fossils" of the past brought to life in this allegorical romance and juxtaposed with Kenyon and Hilda, the precursors of future humanity.

Kenyon and Hilda, the Americans visiting "the old country," bear a strong resemblance to Hawthorne's "New Adam and Eve." Like the new Adam, Kenyon is analytical and intellectual, and has a stronger tendency to the material world than does the female. He is a sculptor, an art which Hawthorne says in "The New Adam and Eve" is "more genuine than painting, and might seem to be evolved from the same law as a leaf or a flower" (10: 257). In The Marble Faun Hawthorne uses sculpture as a metaphor for progress. Kenyon, the sculptor, conceives the "Idea" (note Hawthorne's capitalization) and molds it with his hands in the raw clay (pure substance, earth). This form has its own beauty since it is "nearest to [the artist's] imagination and heart" (4: 114). The process resembles Hegel's dialectical movement in that the following step, the plaster cast, seems to be "going all the way in the wrong direction" (Lauer's description of Hegel's dialectic; see above). In this stage, "the beauty of the statue strangely disappears," but eventually it will "shine forth again, with pure, white radiance, in the precious marble of Carrara" (4: 114-15). Human

cooperation is necessary in the latter stages of the process since workmen shape the actual marble according to the sculptor's instructions. He tells them that "the figure is imbedded in the stone, and must be freed from its encumbering superfluities" (4: 115). Here in metaphor is Hegel's concept of progress as truth in the process of bringing itself into material existence through the medium of the human mind and hand. To emphasize the intended metaphor, Hawthorne follows his description of the process with a less than subtle hint:

> "As these busts in the block of marble," thought Miriam, "so does our individual fate exist in the limestone of Time. We fancy that we carve it out; but its ultimate shape is prior to all our action." (4: 116)

In religious terms Miriam's speech expresses Calvinist predestination; in philosophical terms it reflects the notion that the "ideal" prefigures the "actual" but relies on natural forces to bring it into material existence. Since Kenyon represents man in the latter stages of human development, it is no surprise that he tells Miriam "it is good to work with all time before our view" (4: 119). He produces not only Cleopatra, the symbol of the strong, passionate woman of the past, but a marble replica of Hilda's hand, "so small and slender, so perfectly

symmetrical, and yet with a character of delicate energy" (4: 120).

Much of the abuse which the character of Hilda has suffered at the hands of the critics is attributable to her function in the story. Most readers find her excessively pure, and even prudish and cold. But the reader must keep in mind that The Marble Faun is not a realistic novel and the character of Hilda is not intended to be a fully-developed, realistic character, but the idealized woman of the future. Like Hawthorne's Eve in "The New Adam and Eve" she is a combination of "tenderness and moral sense" (10: 253). She is "a partly ideal creature . . . not overflowing with animal spirits" (4: 63). Her grosser animal nature has apparently been refined away through the ages of human progress, making her a physical vessel for spiritual qualities. She has a great human sympathy for others but will not deviate from the spiritual truth which she feels within her. Miriam tells her, "Your judgments are often terribly severe, though you seem all made up of gentleness and mercy" (4: 66). Like the Calvinist God, she is unyielding in her adherence to divine law, but she is also Christ-like in her compassion. The most emphatic characteristic of the lady of the doves is her spiritual virginity and

innocence. She may well be the prophetess foreseen by Hester in The Scarlet Letter:

> She assured them, too, of her firm belief, that, at some brighter period, when the world should have grown ripe for it, in Heaven's own time, a new truth would be revealed, in order to establish the whole relation between man and woman on a surer ground of mutual happiness. Earlier in life, Hester had vainly imagined that she herself might be the destined prophetess, but had long since recognized the impossibility that any mission of divine and mysterious truth should be confided to a woman stained with sin, bowed down with shame, or even burdened with a lifelong sorrow. The angel and apostle of the coming revelation must be a woman, indeed, but lofty, pure, and beautiful; and wise, moreover, not through dusky grief, but the ethereal medium of joy; showing how sacred love should make us happy, by the truest test of a life successful to such an end! (1: 263)

Hilda is like Hester in her insistence on self determination; she likes the personal freedom she is allowed in Italy and resents the social restrictions of American life. Unlike Hester, however, she maintains adherence to "divine law" and so remains free of the heavy burden of guilt.

The burden of guilt, or original sin, if you will, is overwhelming in Miriam and Donatello, the couple of the past, but hardly exists in Kenyon and Hilda, the couple of the future. In her "dove tower" Hilda tells Miriam that "sometimes I feel half-inclined to attempt a flight from the top of my tower, in the faith that I should float upward" (4: 54). Miriam sees only the fall and reminds

her that "the stones of the Roman pavement [are] very hard" (4: 54). Likewise, at Donatello's "owl tower" Kenyon speaks of his urge to fling himself from the battlements, and it is Donatello who reminds him that "a fall from a precipice is such an awful death" (4: 260). Kenyon is, as he says, "one of those persons who have a natural tendency to climb heights" (4: 260), and Hilda's natural movement, like that of her sister doves, is also upward. The natural tendency of Miriam and Donatello is, appropriately, to fall.

Much criticism of The Marble Faun has dealt with the doctrine of the fortunate fall, or felix culpa. Peter Beidler sorts out the various critical opinions on the issue in his essay "Theme of the Fortunate Fall in The Marble Faun" and gives some valuable insight into the problem. He points out the significant difference between the assertion that Donatello is educated through his sin and suffering and the assertion that Adam's fall was part of a divine plan for the elevation of mankind (59). Hawthorne definitely shows that Donatello advances intellectually as a result of his fall, but Beidler argues that the second assertion is voiced only by Miriam and should not be taken as Hawthorne's opinion (61).

But The Marble Faun is more than another version of the fall myth, and to accept it as such is to ignore a

large portion of the text. Only the first half of the book deals directly with the conflict faced by Miriam and Donatello. The story shifts then to Hilda and Kenyon and how they deal with the situation. The central issue of the book is the progress of man rather than the fall of man exclusively, but the two issues are closely allied. The fall is the initial step, and it results in the elevation of Donatello:

> That tone, 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 nature, the sylvan Faun--here was now the man of feeling and intelligence. (4: 320)

But if we stop here it is questionable at best whether Donatello's education is worth the suffering and loss of innocence.

Miriam's role is crucial to the story. Her association with Beatrice Cenci emphasizes the fact that she does not actually perform the sinful act that brings about the fall. She is not even aware that she causes Donatello to kill the model (4: 210). Her sin is not an intentional act, but a function of her passionate nature. As Hilda says of Beatrice, "She is a fallen angel, fallen, and yet sinless" (4: 66). Erlich's evaluation of Hawthorne's "dark women" is that they reflect his ambivalence toward the female, that Hawthorne could never decide whether

women were evil temptresses or spotless virgins (168). In The Marble Faun it is apparent that Hawthorne saw the nature of woman changing with the progress of humanity from the Eve figure of Miriam to the Virgin Mother figure of Hilda. Whether the latter is an "improvement" is as questionable as whether Kenyon's intellectual coolness is an improvement over Donatello's boyish enthusiasm and passion. Each has its place in the span of time, and it is the whole span, the process, that is important; not simply the final product. Kenyon points out that Miriam's nature not only begins the process (through the fall), but is crucial to its continuation after the fall:

> And, here, Donatello, is one whom Providence marks out as intimately connected with your destiny. The mysterious process, by which our earthly life instructs us for another state of being, was begun for you by her. She has rich gifts of heart and mind, a suggestive power, a magnetic influence, a sympathetic knowledge, which, wisely and religiously exercised, are what your condition needs. (4: 321)

She is not simply an evil temptress; the same female characteristics which lead Donatello to the fall will be his balm and his salvation.

The middle portion of the book is taken up by Kenyon's "romantic quest" through ancient Italy, the purpose of which is to unite Donatello and Miriam. When this quest is accomplished the story turns toward the bond between Kenyon and Hilda. Miriam and Donatello grasp at

what fleeting happiness they can during their wondering on the Campagna, but Miriam makes it clear that the beginning for Hilda and Kenyon will be the end for her and Donatello. "Ah, surely he might endure his pangs a little longer!" Miriam says of Kenyon. "You love us both, I think, and will be content to suffer for our sakes one other day" (4: 429). It is almost as if a new dispensation is at hand; the couple of the past, heavy with the burden of original sin, is yielding to the couple of the future, hopeful and innocent.

While Kenyon is on his romantic quest with Donatello, Hilda is left to deal with her new-found awareness of original sin. She tells Miriam, "Ah, now I understand how sins of generations past have created an atmosphere of sin for those that follow!" (4: 212) Her rejection of Miriam seems cold and heartless to many modern readers but, it is necessary to the allegorical sense of the story; innocence must reject sin in order to remain pure. Of the gulf between them Hawthorne says:

> They might gaze at one another from the opposite sides, but without the possibility of ever meeting more; or, at least, since the chasm could never be bridged over, they must tread the whole round of Eternity to meet on the other side. (4: 207)

Because they represent opposite ends of the continuum of human progress, they may meet only after "Eternity."

Hawthorne says that they "could no longer hold intercourse without violating a spiritual law" (4: 207), and since Hilda adheres unfailingly to spiritual law rather than human law, she must reject Miriam in spite of her natural human sympathy for Miriam's condition. Hilda admits that her affection for Miriam is unchanged:

> Were you to touch my hand, you would find it as warm to your grasp as ever. If you were sick or suffering, I would watch night and day for you. (4: 207)

As the woman of the future, she has been purified by ages of human progress, but she is human still, and she knows that to align herself with Miriam would be to repeat the fall and give continuance to original sin. She tells Miriam:

> If I were one of God's angels, with a nature incapable of stain, and garments that never could be spotted, I would keep ever at your side, and try to lead you upward. But I am a poor, lonely girl, whom God has sent here in an evil world, and given her only a white robe, and bid her wear it back to Him, as white as when she put it on. Your powerful magnetism would be too much for me. The pure, white atmosphere, in which I try to discern what things are good and true, would be discolored. (4: 208)

In a realistic novel this speech would reek of self-righteousness and insincerity, but the reader must remember that Hawthorne is writing an allegorical romance and not a realistic novel. Hilda's rejection of Miriam causes her great remorse, but it breaks the cycle of original

sin. Miriam falls because it is her nature, and Hilda resists the fall because it is her nature. The difference in the two women is that they represent opposite ends of the continuum of human progress.

The reunion of Kenyon and Hilda takes place appropriately in the midst of a symbolic human procession of festal figures "in such fantastic variety that it had taken centuries to contrive them" (4: 439). As Kenyon waits for Hilda's appearance, "the mad, merry stream of human life" passes by him in a "never-ending procession" (4: 439). In Kenyon's absence Hilda has succeeded in synthesizing the practical, earthly qualities of the Catholic Church (with its comforting Virgin Mother) and her own more severe and abstract Puritan upbringing. After confessing Miriam's sin at the "World's Cathedral" (perhaps symbolic of shedding the burden of original sin), she became "a new creature" (4: 365). Now she and Kenyon plan to leave the old country, with its "magnified hovels, piled story upon story, and squalid with the grime of successive ages" (4: 293), and return to America, the land of the future. Hilda has already noted that "In Rome, there is something dreary and awful, which we can never quite escape" (4: 371). Kenyon's declining interest in art is predictable from a statement he had made earlier to Donatello: "When I go back to my dear native land, the

clouds along the horizon will be my only gallery of art" (4: 265). Hawthorne may have felt that as progress nears its culmination, the importance of art diminishes. As material existence itself approaches total correspondence with the ideal, there is a lesser need for art to give a physical representation of the same ideal. The artist's function shifts from producing beauty to appreciating beauty. Hawthorne has said early in the book that the goal of the artist should be to produce work which embodies "the delicate evolution of spiritual, through material beauty" (4: 136). When one evolutionary process is completed, perhaps the other is as well.

Most of the weaknesses pointed out by readers of The Marble Faun result from a misunderstanding of Hawthorne's style. Too many readers--intelligent ones, at that--attempt to read the book as a Jamesian novel about contemporary Americans in Europe. They complain that Hilda is too good to be true and that Kenyon is as cold as the marble he works with. When the book was first published in England, readers were dissatisfied with the inconclusive finish and wanted to know more details about the background of Miriam and the fate of Donatello (Simpson xxx). They wanted to know what was in the packet which Miriam entrusted to Hilda. Simpson quotes Hawthorne's comment written to historian John Lothrop

Motley: "These beer-sodden English beefeaters do not know how to read a Romance" (xxxii). Hawthorne must have felt that asking for this kind of detail was like asking Spenser about Acrasia's childhood or what became of Grille, the knight turned into a hog. The mystery of Miriam's past keeps her from becoming a single, historical personage and promotes her image as the type of ancient womanhood. It is pointless to ask Donatello's fate; his is the fate of all mankind after the fall. Shrouded in mystery, the packet which Miriam entrusted to Hilda becomes a legacy of the past. It is the trust expressed by Miriam and the keeping of that trust on Hilda's part that are important, not the actual contents of the package. It is Hawthorne's unique blend of romantic allegory and realistic detail which confuses many readers.

But in Hawthorne's writing, even the detailed description of setting contributes to the allegorical significance of the work and should not be confused with pure literary realism. In the opening scene of The Marble Faun, for example, he describes the scene:

> Farther on, the eye skirts along the edge of the desolate Forum . . . passing over a shapeless confusion of modern edifices, piled rudely up with ancient brick and stone, and over the domes of Christian churches, built on the old pavements of heathen temples, and supported by the very pillars that once upheld them. (4: 6)

This is not documentary travel literature, but a picture representing the history of western man. Throughout the book Hawthorne gives descriptions such as this, but always with some underlying significance. His style reflects his philosophy, which conforms with Hegel's insistence on synthesis of the abstract and concrete. Throughout his works, and especially in the novels, Hawthorne creates a blend of "airy and insubstantial threads, intermixed with others, twisted out of the commonest stuff of human existence" (4: 6). If read from the right perspective, these works produce a magical spirit all their own.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This study does not purport to prove that Hawthorne consciously emulated the doctrines of Hegel, nor does it claim that Hawthorne studied Hegel's philosophy. Rather, my intent here is to delineate some of the parallels between the philosophy of Hegel and the philosophy of Hawthorne and to show how reading Hawthorne from this perspective helps to explain many of the ambiguities and apparent inconsistencies in his works. This is obviously not the only way to read and interpret Hawthorne, but it is, I believe, a valid approach which yields some fruit.

In spite of Matthiessen's assertion that the American Renaissance should rightly be called "the age of Hegel" (54), Hegel's importance to nineteenth-century American culture has been largely overlooked. John Carlos Rowe has shown how Hester's journey to self-consciousness follows the sequence outlined in Hegel's Phenomenology. In the same article he calls for "a method of reading that might follow more closely the interplay of "philosophic" and "poetic" impulses in romanticism in hopes of clarifying the fundamental duplicity of the romantic sign" (1205). My purpose here has been to show the interrelationship of Hegel's philosophic expression and Hawthorne's poetic

expression with the goal of achieving a deeper understanding of Hawthorne's romantic world view. One advantage of this intertextual method is that Hegel provides expository, prose explication of the same concepts expressed in Hawthorne's works as ambiguous symbols (ie. bubbling fountains, moonlight, sunshine, etc.). The primary obstacle in this particular case is that because of his obscure writing style, Hegel's expository prose is frequently more cryptic than Hawthorne's symbols. Even so, the intertextual study results in a better understanding of Hawthorne's mindset and his literary technique.

This study does not produce any completely new readings of Hawthorne's literature. In Rediscovering Hawthorne Kenneth Dauber describes the current state of literary research:

> There are no longer any large dark areas in the literary landscape, nor any very great mysteries about the messages the classic American works convey. There is no new territory to explore, or, at any rate, if there is, the old canon still retains its fascination. Rather, there are new maps to draw of the old landscape, new lines to define, relations to establish among material now fully visible. (227)

The function of the current study is that suggested here by Dauber. I do not intend to assert that we have wrongly interpreted Hawthorne for the past two hundred years; rather, I attempt to extend and clarify some existing critical positions and to demonstrate that Hawthorne's

works do present a consistent philosophical perspective which expands through his writing career from an internal search for self to an external examination of mankind's social history.

What this intertextual study provides is a center, a locus from which to examine the divergent ambiguities of Hawthorne's fiction. Dauber complains that traditional views of Hawthorne, specifically those of Male, Fogle, and Waggoner, do not sufficiently account for the self-contradictory nature of Hawthorne's stories (27). Since the basis of the Hegelian dialectic is the unification of thesis and antithesis, it provides a justification for Hawthorne's juxtaposition of apparently contradictory notions. Within this dialectical system Rappaccini can be both God and Satan. Hester can be both right and wrong, adultress and angel. Donatello can represent both a decline and an advance in the state of man. In addition this study demonstrates a consistency in Hawthorne's use of symbols. The fountains, light and dark images, moon-light and sunshine are consistently used to signify Hegelian concepts of the dialectical nature of truth. Furthermore, the study reveals that Hawthorne's thought was at the cutting edge of contemporary philosophy; he was not the frustrated Puritan some have supposed, nor was he the noncommital agnostic Dauber describes (15). His con-

cern with history is explained by his belief in the natural and inevitable human progress described in Hegel's philosophy. In short, many of the points of contention in Hawthorne criticism are alleviated by this intertextual reading.

One of the major critical concerns in Hawthorne studies is his mixture of two genres: romanticism and realism. His major works contain a substantial quantity of realistic detail which seems occasionally to conflict with the romantic framework surrounding it. The Marble Faun, for example, contains many pages of rich, realistic description of the Italian setting, but the characters are merely types lacking realistic development. Rowe assigns a two-part structure to The Scarlet Letter: "The first twelve chapters constitute an allegorical romance; the last twelve chapters present a drama of psychological realism" (1209). Some readers may consider this blend a flaw in Hawthorne's technique and blame it on the fact that he produced these works during the transition of American fiction from romanticism to realism. But if we look at Hawthorne's writing style as a function of his philosophy, the mixture of genres makes sense. Hawthorne's function as a writer is to synthesize the abstract and concrete to produce "spirit," the third member of the triad. The romantic aspects of his works are

aligned with the abstract; they appear in the moonlight. The realistic aspects represent the material world, the concrete, and appear in the dazzling sunshine. The works themselves are the synthesis of these opposites, and, as such, they give material existence to the author's conception of abstract truth. Here we have a literary counterpart to Hegel's basic triad.

In addition to matters of writing style, Hawthorne's major themes and his treatment of them correspond to the Hegelian perspective. The fall myth runs throughout his works from "Young Goodman Brown" to The Marble Faun. The emphasis in these treatments of the fall myth is on the ability of the fallen person to be regenerated, to progress to a more advanced state of understanding. Whether or not the fallen person actually progresses is often in doubt, but Hawthorne generally accompanies the tendency to fall with, at least, the opportunity to rise. Most characteristic of this pattern is his story "The Paradise of Children," in which man's troubles and man's hopes both spring from Pandora's box. This double movement of the "fortunate fall" is characteristic of the Hegelian dialectic: progress, according to Hegel, is frequently achieved only through an initial movement in a direction opposite to that desired. Hawthorne's various treatments of the fall myth reflect his Hegelian belief

that in spite of temporary movements in a wrong direction, mankind is progressing toward some ultimate goal according to the design established by abstract truth, what Hawthorne calls Providence.

Much of the richness of Hawthorne's fiction, as Fogle has shown, is due in part to the continuous interplay of light and dark elements. This same characteristic has also led to great disagreements over interpretation because of the ambiguity of many of these elements. Is the "dark figure" in "Young Goodman Brown" good, or is he evil? The same question can be asked of Rappaccini, The Wandering Jew, Endicott, Hester, Miriam, and many others. Is Reverend Hooper's veil a symbol of evil or of purity? The problem with these questions is that they are too simple. Looking at Hawthorne's works from the perspective of Hegelian philosophy requires us to face the complexity of these issues. The Puritan legacy of classifying everything as either "right or wrong," "good or evil," does not suffice for Hawthorne. "Dark" does not necessarily mean evil; "light" does not necessarily mean good. Hawthorne's works display a concept of life involving a constant struggle between opposites (neither of which is good or bad) corresponding to Hegel's dialectic of thesis and antithesis. When synthesis is

achieved, life makes one step forward and reaches a new plane of conflict.

Fogle asserts that "there is no synthesis in Hawthorne's thinking, only thesis and antithesis in balance" (220). He goes on to admit, however, that "some tales and sketches objectify earth as a procession and heaven as its plan or organizing principle" (224). This procession of life according to the dictates of heaven, or abstract truth, is the synthesis, and it parallels Hegel's concept of human progression through synthesis. The synthesis is not immediate; it takes years, even generations, for the progress to become recognizable. Thus, Hawthorne's interest in history follows as a logical consequence. In order to demonstrate the synthesis he sees, he must present a significant period of time in his works, as he does in The Marble Faun, or present a past era as a comparison to the present, as he does in The Scarlet Letter.

Generally, Hawthorne's works follow the sequence of development outlined in Hegel's Phenomenology. Many of the tales and sketches examine the human quest for self-consciousness. Characters look inward and attempt in some way to justify their dual nature. One tendency, as Hegel predicts, is to deny the spiritual and seek to live in the material world, as do the inhabitants of Merry Mount, the

Wandering Jew, and Peter Hovenden. This path leads only to a brutish, mechanical existence. The opposite tendency is to deny the physical and attempt to live in the spiritual realm or in abstract thought as do Richard Digby, the Shakers, and other religious purists. This path eliminates the joys of sensual existence and makes life merely a waiting period for the "real" existence which follows.

Characters who bring about a synthesis of abstract and concrete through natural means achieve the greatest happiness, even if the physical manifestation of that synthesis is destroyed. Owen Warland achieves a satisfaction from the act of creating the mechanical butterfly which remains with him even after the destruction of the artifact. Ernest, of "The Great Stone Face," successfully blends his intuitive thoughts with practical action in the material world to become the wise man prophesied by the legend of the mountain.

According to Hegel, once the duality of self has been resolved, the self-conscious person can interact with others to work toward the achievement of a communal self-consciousness. In the tales Hawthorne's primary subject was the mind attempting to understand itself and its relationship to nature. In the novels the emphasis shifts to the interaction of characters attempting to live and

work together. In other words, these works move from psychological concerns toward sociological concerns. Hester's conflict is more external than internal. She sorts out the problem of her own identity, but the real difficulty lies in trying to determine her proper relationship to Dimmesdale, to Chillingworth, and to the Puritan society. In the novels Hawthorne demonstrates Hegel's assertion that moral law must be organic; it must be continuously examined and revised according to man's changing perception of truth. Hegel systematically describes the logic and mechanics of this progression. Hawthorne presents to the reader the drama, the conflict, and the resolution of this progress of human life.

I have tried in this study to proceed like the artist Drowne and to reveal the latent figure in the oak of Hawthorne's works rather than to impose my own concepts upon them. The figure is there. If its presentation here is misshapen or unclear, it is because of my own inaccuracy in chipping away the extraneous material, and not because of something lacking in the figure itself.

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