

**CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES OF THE EXPATRIATE:
THREE EARLY AMERICAN NOVELISTS IN EUROPE**

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要約

国外生活者の異文化理解——ヨーロッパにおける三人の初期アメリカ小説家達

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文化は言語教育と言語習得にかかわる本質的な側面をなしている。国外生活者の異文化に対する見かたとその変わりゆく理解は、研究や教育実践に、これまで絶えることのない刺激を与え続けてきた。本論は三人の19世紀アメリカ小説家——James Fenimore Cooper, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Mark Twain——の異文化に対する見かたの変遷をたどり、彼らがヨーロッパに住むアメリカ人としての経験から、アメリカの社会的、道徳的な弱さを徐々に率直に表明するようになっていった様を探る。これは初期のアメリカ文学をアメリカ文化のひとつの側面として見るひとりの言語教師の観察記録である。

INTRODUCTION

With culture being an intrinsic aspect of language teaching and/or learning, cross-cultural perspectives and the changing views of the expatriate have been a continuing source of inspiration for ongoing research and classroom projects. This paper examines the developing perspectives of three 19th-century American novelists—James Fenimore Cooper, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Mark Twain—and how each of them becomes increasingly outspoken of American social and moral weaknesses from experiences as expatriates in Europe. This paper is the observations of a language teacher viewing early American literature as one aspect of American culture.

As cultural identity was evolving in 19th-century Americans, many were drawn to Europe, feeling the need for a reassessment of their Americanism. In this youthful period of the nation's history, they were in search of a cultural heritage. By seeking an understanding of the history and the many cultures from which their nation had derived, they hoped to enhance their own self-awareness. American visual artists had set the precedent of traveling to Europe for stimulation of the mind and the imagination. The tradition of travel among American writers grew along with the general movement of Americans touring Europe. The three novelists examined in this paper utilized their European experience for reassessment and gained a new perspective on their Americanism. Each writer's works reflect this new perspective as they deal with the moral perplexities facing them in Europe. Each of them had previously been social and moral critics, and they become increasingly so as a result of their travels abroad.

James Fenimore Cooper was the first American writer to apply his European experience extensively and enthusiastically to both fiction and non-fiction. In his several European novels, the conventional historical romance is represented, but with an unconventional, realistic purpose, functioning as a metaphor for a universal truth. There is a sense of discovery in the characters as they primarily concern themselves with moral problems. Although scenes are depicted realistically, they are endowed with symbolic values meant as commentary on contemporary social and political realities.

Nathaniel Hawthorne follows the Renaissance-Gothic literary tradition in *The Marble Faun*, but much of the novel is derived from actual experience. The Roman romance is an indication of the moral confusion and indecisiveness Hawthorne experienced while in Italy. His personal voice continually breaks through the surface, arguing with himself over conflicting American values. Heavy symbolism prevails throughout the novel.

Mark Twain's *The Innocents Abroad* is the adroit result of observation, facts, invented settings, and fanciful characters. It is an epistolary story, attempting not to appear too "well-made." Despite his artful artlessness and satirical wit, Twain raises serious moral questions.¹

All three novelists use American characters in a European setting. From this point

of view, they searchingly question the shaping idea of Americanism. With their new European perspective, they deal with American issues—issues that continue to be major themes throughout the development of American literary tradition and continue to the present as influences on the contemporary national psyche and cultural identity.

THE ROLE OF RELIGION

A theme of primary concern to Americans is religion. Many people had emigrated to the United States because of religious persecution in their native lands. The American individual's religious identity is important, and freedom of religion is basic to American democracy. A strong Protestant ethic, highly influenced by Calvinistic and Puritanical thinking, dominated the American religious scene.

Mark Twain becomes aware of the strictness and uncompromising nature possible in American religious tradition as he embarks on a "pleasure trip" designed for the most conservative of the nation's social and religious spectrum. All passengers had been interviewed by a special selection committee to ensure gravity of religious thought. The "pleasures" aboard consisted mainly of bible readings and religious discussions. Twain views some of the pilgrims as being fanatically religious to the point of ridiculousness. In one scene three uncompromising pilgrims insist upon reducing a three-day desert sojourn to just two days because they refuse to travel on Sunday and violate a Sabbath. The result is two long, miserable, agonizing days through the intense heat of the desert. This idea of what is "good" having been sacrificed for what is "right" as established by religious society is later further developed by Twain as Huckleberry Finn ponders turning in the runaway slave Jim. Huck's inner struggle to free himself of society's racial prejudice symbolizes the torment of a pure heart struggling to triumph over a deformed conscience, love being more important than a distorted concept of right and wrong. After much deliberation, Huck abides by his own morality of "good" and does not return Jim, but he is certain he'll go to Hell for his sin.

When Twain's pilgrims are confronted with the majesty of Roman Catholicism, it is the very splendor of the Vatican which causes suspicion. Their own Protestant ethic defines virtue in the context of good deeds, e.g., giving to the poor. The wealth of the church amid the extreme poverty of its followers seems a sacrilege. Twain's dissatisfaction with Rome stems mainly from his own ambivalence toward Catholicism and its dominance over the city—its "monstrous" churches and its "ubiquitous" priests.²

All three novelists measure their own religious spirituality in terms of the expatriate experience. Twain's voyage is indeed a pilgrim's progress for himself—it brings about many revelations in religious ideas concerning himself and the fellow pilgrims. He becomes thoroughly cognizant of America's variety of religious thought. It is at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre where Twain first entertains the idea of Christ as a "mysterious stranger." This concept of "mysterious stranger" had been a common American literary element. Both Cooper and Hawthorne had developed this element in their romances. By the end of the voyage, Twain's theological feelings have entirely

changed, and his greatest concern becomes the serious contemplation of the nature of man and society, and man and spirituality—ideas that later dominate his writing. All his irreverence in *The Innocents Abroad* and his later works is actually an act of reverence, an expression of his desire to believe.³

Because of Hawthorne's uncertainty of his native Puritanical morality (as exemplified in *The Scarlet Letter*), he is attracted to the Roman Catholic sense of spiritual peace. The Catholic church is superbly adapted to human needs, offering readily available spiritual solace to its followers, unlike the uncompromising, unrealistic Puritans. Nevertheless, Catholic priests are merely corruptible men, unworthy of spiritual trust. Faced with moral perplexities and indecisiveness, Hawthorne feels he must choose between the inhuman austerity of New England moralism and the all-too-human Italian aestheticism. Catholicism represents warmth, aesthetics, tradition; Protestantism represents coldness, moral simplicity, immediacy. Both desirable and undesirable qualities unfold: Catholicism offers convention, but is usually corrupt; aestheticism is enriching but pagan; tradition is profound, but carries with it the burden of sin.⁴

Hawthorne's need for spiritual communion is a central theme in his work. He had never found satisfaction in American churches. He often makes great studies of the Puritan mentality as he does with the character Hilda in *The Marble Faun*. Hilda exemplifies the doctrine that a mortal's first duty is to her own salvation, and in the pursuit of salvation she is to shut out all possible evil. Hilda is twice compared to a steel blade, slicing a clear distinction between good and evil. This daughter of the Puritans keeps a lamp burning at a shrine to the Blessed Virgin; in this manner she epitomizes the ideal woman in pursuit of salvation. Perhaps the pre-Rome Hawthorne would have stopped here with this image of righteousness. But Hawthorne's former narrow-mindedness is softened with the influence of Rome. He has observed the very human qualities of the priesthood. He is perplexed by the Italian artists' habit of infusing a warm humanity into their artwork, especially their Madonnas. As Hilda is afflicted by her overwhelming burden and needs to confide, her Puritan principle becomes more flexible. Hilda is influenced by the religion behind her beloved masterpieces. She envies the "convenience" of Catholicism, the escape from sin:

In the hottest fever-fit of life, they can always find, ready for their need, a cool, quiet, beautiful place of worship. They may enter its sacred precincts, at any hour, leaving the fret and trouble of the world behind them, and purifying themselves with a touch of holy-water at the threshold. In the calm interior, fragrant of rich and soothing incense, they may hold converse with some Saint, their awful, kindly friend. And, most precious privilege of all, whatever perplexity, sorrow, guilt, may weigh upon their souls, they can fling down the dark burthen at the foot of the Cross, and go forth—to sin no more, nor be any longer disquieted—but to live again in the freshness and elasticity of innocence!⁵

Hilda is drawn to this faith that so marvelously adapts itself to every human need. In

the basilica of St. Peter, the vastness of its beauty and splendor causes her to dwell on the magnificence of the religion that reared this grand cathedral. She feels the cathedral beckoning, "gradually extending itself over the whole compass of your idea."⁶ St. Peter's seems to be everything that could be desired as a magnificent, comprehensive, majestic symbol of religious faith. Hilda feels torn as she instinctively touches the holy water, her mother's Puritan spirit weeping for her involvement in such "gaudy superstitions." But Hilda continues through the vast and hospitable cathedral and approaches the confessionals. As she reads the languages that are spoken in each confessional, she feels that this must be the religious heart of the entire world. There is access to salvation for every Christian soul, no matter what the native tongue. Desperately seeking relief to her overburdened heart, this daughter of the Puritans enters and passionately confesses her dark story.⁷

The extent of Hawthorne's modification of the Puritan principle is felt with Hilda's response to Kenyon's question, "Then, you are not a Catholic?"

Really, I do not quite know what I am. . . I have a great deal of faith, and Catholicism seems to have a great deal of good. Why should not I be a Catholic, if I find there what I need, and what I cannot find elsewhere? The more I see of this worship, the more I wonder at the exuberance with which it adapts itself to all the demands of human infirmity. If its ministers were but a little more than human, above all error, pure from all iniquity, what a religion would it be!⁸

Hilda is clearly changed. No longer able to copy artworks with her former perfection, she is now able to see the limitations of every piece of art—every mortal. In good Puritan fashion, she continues to insist upon "only one right and one wrong," but Kenyon's description of her position as "unworldly and impracticable theory"⁹ seems to be Hawthorne's final thoughts on the matter.¹⁰

Never finding satisfaction in an American church, Hawthorne is critical of all organized religion, but his native New England Puritanism is his favorite target. Of all Puritan doctrine, Hawthorne dislikes most the obsession with the idea of original sin: all mankind is mortal and sinful. Hawthorne believes this idea of sin is the greatest sin of all because it creates dissatisfaction with the human condition—man's moral imperfection and his mortality.¹¹ In *The Marble Faun*, Man is commissioned by Providence to perpetrate a sin and "Adam falls anew" and "Paradise. . . is lost again."¹² Hilda must endure the sin of others, her innocence tortured by guilt. In her distress, she now fully understands how the sins of past generations have created an atmosphere of sin for those that follow. Hawthorne comments, "Every crime destroys more Edens than our own!"¹³ The ruins, paintings, and sculpture of Rome become a testimonial to man's past sins; Roman artwork represents lost innocence. In *The Marble Faun*, Hawthorne raises the question—was the Fall unfortunate? Miriam believes so, Hilda is totally shocked by the notion, Kenyon vacillates. Hawthorne never gives a definite answer. Donatello's impeccable but amoral and unintellectual innocence is mourned, but his new moral con-

sciousness and intelligence gives him a fresh richness of character.¹⁴

Like Hawthorne, Cooper also is critical of organized religion. His anti-sectarian views are apparent in his early work, *The Pioneers*, where Grant appeals for a compromising, all-pleasing religion for the frontier town—one with the least doctrinairism and fewest rules. In Europe Cooper becomes critical of the Catholic church as a monied corporation with vested interests. Much of *The Heidenmauer* is a dramatization of the mundane splendor of the Catholic church and its deserved destruction. But Cooper is always careful to avoid any adverse criticism of Catholicism as a form of religion. As an idealistic democrat, he believes in free religious thought. *The Heidenmauer* portrays religious life with sympathetic interest and genuine respect. The heroine observes:

... whether we admit of this or that form of faith,—the fruit of the right tree is charity and self-abasement, and these teach us to think humbly of ourselves and kindly of others¹⁵

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Cooper is equally liberal regarding another vital American issue—racism. The institution of slavery was eminently controversial. Unlike other Americans, Negroes were not self-selected immigrants; they were deprived, alienated, with no sense of participation in American ideals. Similar to the European peasant, the American slave was held in bondage, exploited by a controlling class. From his European perspective, Cooper becomes painfully aware of the fact that slavery negated any claim to American superiority in democracy or economy. Slavery was far worse than any social abomination practiced in Europe. Cooper realizes the futility of blatant attack—the southern readers he wished to reach must be approached cautiously, and he must be wary of his harsh critics.

In both *Notions of the Americas* and *The Headsman*, Cooper makes an appeal for emancipation. The theme of *The Headsman* is that power and privilege fail to bring happiness when based on the exploitation of others and denial of basic human rights. Cooper uses religious grounds in his argument on behalf of the “race” of the Headsman by deriving the names of the principal characters from two of the Magi associated with Christ’s birth. Melchior represents the people of Japhet (Europe); Cooper’s Melchior is a Swiss nobleman. Balthazar represents the people of Ham (Africa); Cooper’s Balthazar is the accursed Headsman. Like the later Uncle Tom of Harriet Beecher Stowe, Balthazar is wise, gentle, long-suffering, forgiving all.¹⁶ Balthazar’s deeply spiritual nature is continually affirmed as well as that of his “race”. His wife protests their treatment:

We come of proscribed races, I know, Balthazar, and I, but like thee, proud bailiff, and the privileged at thy side, we come too of God! The judgment and power of men have crushed us from the beginning, and we are used to the world’s scorn and to the world’s injustice! . . . I know naught of the subtleties of thy laws, but well do I know their cruelty and wrongs, as respects me and mine! All others come into

the world with hope, but we have been crushed from the beginning. That surely cannot be just which destroys hope. Even the sinner need not despair, through the mercy of the Son of God! but we, that have come into the world under thy laws, have little before us in life but shame and the scorn of men!¹⁷

Cooper believes the American slaveholders destroyed the slaves' identity as human beings and compromised the spiritual premise of democracy. The basis of Cooper's spirituality rests on the idea that it is each person's obligation to use moral sense and reason to produce a better life. He believes the use of reason, and the use of law as the instrument of reason, in obstructing the operation of one's moral sense of one's own nature is the work of the devil. The chief representative of the law in *The Headsman*, the Bailiff of Vevey, is Cooper's spokesman for prejudice. When he learns that mild, gentle Christine is the daughter of Balthazar, his former tenderness is changed to cruel contempt.¹⁸

In the scrambled complications and wondrous devices in *The Headsman* leading to the identity of the character of Sigismund, Cooper seems to have influenced Mark Twain's paradoxical tale of slavery in *Pudd'n'head Wilson*, where a similar set of complications appears. Like Twain, Cooper views American slaves as people debased by man-made laws, and both writers understand the racist mentality and the expected role of the Negro in American literature. Few of Cooper's American readers could have accepted as humanly possible that a family as wise and well-bred as that of the Headsman could be black, so he made them Moors. However, there is a remarkable resemblance to the heart-to-heart confidence shared by Jim with Huck Finn behind the refined words of Christine:

. . . the world believes us to be without feeling and without hope. We are what we seem in the eyes of others, because the law makes it so, but we are in our hearts like all around us. . . with this difference, that, feeling our abasement among men, we lean more closely and more affectionately on God. You may condemn us to do your offices and to bear your dislike, but you cannot rob us of our trust in the justice of Heaven.¹⁹

Mark Twain suggests the inherent American prejudices towards blacks in *The Innocents Abroad* when his guide in Venice is a Negro: "I could not bear to be ignorant before a cultivated negro, the offspring of a South Carolina slave." But his open attitude is apparent as he proceeds to praise the man's knowledge, devotion and polite manners, indicating the Negro's potential in a non-debasing society. He continues:

Negroes are deemed as good as white people, in Venice, and so this man feels no desire to go back to his native land. His judgment is correct.²⁰

Nathaniel Hawthorne very rarely expresses his views on racism. Because he had supported an anti-abolitionist presidential candidate, some of his friends mistakenly assumed he opposed abolition as well. However, Hawthorne was in no position to clarify

his views on the issue of slavery. If he had done so publicly, his friends might have been shocked at the extent of his dissatisfaction with American life. Regarding the formation of black troops in Massachusetts, from Europe he wrote to his friend Bridge in 1861:

... we should see the expediency of preparing our black brethren for future citizenship, by allowing them to fight for their own liberties and educating them through heroic influences. Whatever happens next, I must say that I rejoice that the old Union is smashed. We never were one people, and never really had a country since the Constitution was formed.²¹

CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS

The controversial issue of slavery had threatened to destroy America as a republic and democracy, and most novelists felt they could not express their views openly. The issue of class consciousness, on the other hand, appealed to Americans universally because they believed in the superiority of the democratic system. Americans in Europe such as Cooper, Hawthorne, and Twain were shocked by the suffering of the poor whites in European cities. They discovered the radical nature of their own democratic thinking, and found themselves in a culture that seemed positively medieval.

In his early novel of an American frontier settlement, *The Pioneers*, Cooper mocks use of the aristocratic system in the appointment of officials on the basis of family breeding, not ability. Consequently, the most inefficient and incapable Richard Jones is patronized by his cousin "Duke." Cooper's anti-aristocracy views are expanded as a result of his European experience. All three of his European novels support the same general theme—that any government ruled by a minority is conducive to oppression of the weak and perversion of the good. In all three novels, European institutions are shown as decadent, yet offer a lesson to Americans. In *The Bravo* Cooper attributes the corruption of the Venetian republics to the lack of public influences. He wrote: "those countries in which public opinion has the most influence are always of the purest public practice." The palaces of Venice symbolize tyrannous and corrupt government.²² The rigid European class system is seen as assuming it natural and inevitable that the poor will suffer, that the rich must protect themselves from the poor in the best interests of both, and that benefiting the poor is impossible and unthinkable. The average American reader of the 1830s was totally naive of such political evil and could not fathom a resemblance to the contemporary American political situation. The burgeoning threat to a representative form of government was not easily perceived, as private interest groups sought privilege and power through the system, rather than openly opposing it.

Cooper was actively involved in European politics, serving as American consul in Lyon. As a government official, he was aware of his role of representing American political ideals and was a keen observer of political events back home. During his years in Europe, he became an exponent of the ideal democracy of America, urging radical

change in the European systems. He was against the aristocratic idea of a strong central elitist group governing for its own benefit. However, while Cooper was in Europe, a dramatic change was taking place in American politics. Eventually Cooper sees the American business organizations functioning like the very aristocratic groups he had been criticizing, both in their struggle for privileged position and in their departure from the common interests of the people as a whole. In attacking European problems through *The Bravo* and *The Heidenmauer*, Cooper is warning America of the problems to come.²³

The American novelists realized the vast differences in the European class structure when confronted with extreme poverty contrasted with the riches and majestic splendor of the Church. In *The Marble Faun* Hawthorne comments on the Roman poor being thoroughly at ease in churches described as gigantic jewel cases. Mark Twain observes in *The Innocents Abroad*:

As far as I can see, Italy, for fifteen hundred years, has turned all her energies, all her finances, and all her industry to the building up of a vast array of wonderful church edifices, and starving half her citizens to accomplish it. She is to-day one vast museum of magnificence and misery. All the churches in an ordinary American city put together could hardly buy the jewelled frippery in one of her hundred cathedrals. And for every beggar in America, Italy can show a hundred—and rags and vermin to match. It is the wretchedest, princeliest land on earth.²⁴

Later, speaking of America, Twain comments: "In that singular country if a rich man dies a sinner, he is damned; he cannot buy salvation with money for masses."²⁵

Mark Twain becomes aware of the deception involved in the American class system on the voyage of the Quaker City in *The Innocents Abroad*. The cost of the voyage assured that the passengers would be of the upper fixed social station. Twain observes the pilgrims as having no spontaneity or enjoyment of life, obsessed with duty, and having their own self-righteous American identity of themselves as separate, chosen people. Twain wonders about the pilgrims in much the same way Huck Finn and Jim wonder about the King and the Duke—they are frauds, but they can't help what they are; it is useless to hope for change.²⁶ In *The Innocents Abroad* a particularly fraudulent pilgrim embarrasses Twain in France when he demands wine, declaring loudly that he never dines without it. The fact that they are imposters is Twain's comment on the upper classes.

Like the other novelists, Hawthorne discovered in Europe what poverty could be. When he first encountered poor children in Liverpool and London, he found a degree of poverty unimagined in America, and wondered what it signified to be human. In "Glimpses of English Poverty," he asks how such pitiful, deformed little wretches could have immortality—and if not, what claim could he have for his own? The same question was being asked in America by the Abolitionists about the slaves. Race had made the slaves invisible as humans to many Americans, and class distinctions had made the poor invisible as humans to many Europeans. But Americans such as Cooper and Hawthorne

were shocked by the distress of the poor whites in European cities, and couldn't help but wonder: either all humanity shared equally in the fulfillment of the human potentiality, or there was no salvation possible for anyone. Hawthorne concludes "Glimpses of English Poverty" with the demand:

Is, or is not, the system wrong that gives one married pair so immense a superfluity of luxurious home, and shuts out a million others from any home whatever?²⁷

Hawthorne's encounters with European poverty stirred him profoundly, and lead him to question the value of an individual life.

THE INDIVIDUAL VS. SOCIETY

Another inherent theme in American democratic thought is the importance of individual freedom. The earliest Americans had been self-selected European emigrants; they held an attitude of self-righteousness, of having been deprived of what was deserved. The significance of the individual is the basis of democratic doctrine, and as such it is an important literary theme in the American novel.

The American novelists in Europe were compelled to reassess the importance of the individual. In America, the individual had seemed to Hawthorne to be of supreme importance. In England he reaffirmed his faith in the individual, but with hesitancy. In Rome the individual seemed to be of minor consideration. Hawthorne raises the question in *The Marble Faun* in many ways, as when the principal characters are interrupted in their contemplation of churches and shrines by beggars, or when extremes of wealth and poverty are juxtaposed, or when the old stone ruins evoke a sense of endless generations pursuing the same mundane errands.²⁸ Indeed the individual seems insignificant. The character of Kenyon may reflect Hawthorne's own depression while in Rome due to his daughter's grave illness. The ubiquitous reminders of a gloomy past in the Roman ruins bear heavily upon the individual sorrow. The significance of the individual is questioned:

Your own life is as nothing, when compared with that immeasurable distance; but still you demand, none the less earnestly, a gleam of sunshine, instead of a speck of shadow, on the step or two that will bring you to your quiet rest.

How exceedingly absurd!²⁹

In this manner Hawthorne measures the importance of the individual against the Eternal City.

Nathaniel Hawthorne had previously addressed the issue of the individual vs. restraints of society. In his early novel *The Scarlet Letter*, the prevailing theme is the need to live within the bounds of society. Society is too harsh, but no individual has the right to disregard constraints. However, the very insignificance of the individual felt by Hawthorne in Rome could possibly result in fewer restraints by society. In *The Marble Faun*, as Kenyon questions Hilda about Miriam's mysterious past, he observes that unlike

their native New England villages, Rome does not require the permission of each individual neighbor for every act that is done. This society where the individual is of little consideration actually results in a less confining environment and more individual freedom than the rigid New England social system.

James Fenimore Cooper had perpetual faith in the importance of the individual and believed the individual's identity was lost in the European political systems. In *The Bravo* the Venetian rulers justify destroying enemies and keeping the masses in ignorance by saying such practices are divinely and politically ordered, and the interests of the church and state must be served. In other words, the aristocratic governments declare any economic threat an enemy of the state, and the entire machinery of the church and state is employed to destroy the threatening force. Under such a system, Cooper feels that individual identity and responsibility are lost to the state. He is hinting of a parallel between the emerging power of American business organizations and the European system of aristocracy. In *The Heidenmauer* Cooper hopes to refresh American political idealism to the point of recreating a sense of state as an expression of the will of all the people, based upon the sacredness of the individual. Cooper's unfaltering belief in the individual continued; upon his return to the United States, his insistence upon intelligence, taste and respect for the individual was unfortunately mistaken to be aristocratic influences acquired in Europe.³⁰

Mark Twain addresses the issue of individual freedom in his later *Huckleberry Finn*, exemplifying the American disdain for authority and view of the government as an enemy of individual freedom. Yet, many Americans quickly turn to the government for help, protection and support, even if they have little desire to abide by or respect it. Huck's lawless, irresponsible father blames the government for his suffering of injustices, but still expects its protection. In this character we witness the tension between a desire for law and order and a contempt for authority, a tension indigenous to American culture.

CIVILIZATION VS. THE PRIMITIVE

The three American novelists are concerned with another prominent theme in their writings—the conflict of civilization vs. the primitive, the savage. Europeans arriving in North America had come from a period of renaissance, a resurgence of the grandeur of Rome, the age of Shakespeare. Upon arrival, they were confronted by a culture that was extremely primitive by European standards, no more advanced than the late Stone Age.

The image of the "noble savage" intrigued many writers. As early as 1611 Shakespeare had heard accounts of the American Indian in stories from the New World, and utilized the idea in the character of Caliban in his last major work, "The Tempest." The images of the savage raised by Shakespeare foreshadow the American Indian's reaction to confrontation with civilization, including ruin by "fire water" and revolt of the oppressed.³¹

The European settlers in North America considered it their moral duty to eradicate this savage culture. Unlike Spanish settlers farther south, co-existence was not possi-

ble; differences were too great. There was a tremendous fear of atavism and miscegenation. The theme of civilization overwhelming the savage appears in the American novel portraying the cultural issues of the time—the moral sanction to eradicate the primitive, the obsession with speed and change at any cost.

James Fenimore Cooper's earliest works depict civilization in opposition to the wilderness, as being less idyllic but morally superior. In *The Pioneers* a sympathetic view is given of the Indians, but the new settlers' "right" is affirmed in a conflict of the laws of nature vs. white man's justice. Fear of miscegenation manifests in the character of Edwards—he is thought to be a half-breed. The issue of miscegenation also occurs later in his European novel, *The Headsman*. The dread of atavism appears in *The Pioneers* in Judge Temple's insistence on upholding the law—it is the only thing that keeps white man above savagery. The frontier society is improvised, professionals are created (Dr. Todd, Judge Temple) because of the need for expediency in settling the wilderness. One of the basic maxims of the American puritan ethic appears in the novel—Ben Franklin's "time is money."

After his European experience, Cooper's works convey civilization as more relaxed and enjoyable, more in concurrence with nature. Civilization is endowed with as many esthetic values as the wilderness, and even more intellectual ones. Cooper's attitude changes to the point of both the instinctual and the civilized worlds being seen as beautiful and pleasing. He believed his contemporary America was caught between these two worlds, resulting in a materialistic society. In *The Deerslayer*, written after his return to America, Cooper's European influences are completely developed. The character of Leatherstocking is idealized as representing the best qualities of the frontier united with the moral values of civilization.³²

Nathaniel Hawthorne, on the other hand, questions the superiority of civilization more profoundly as a result of his European experience. In *The Marble Faun*, the character of Donatello as the "faun" symbolizes the delightful early stage of human development. Donatello's corruption is due to his exposure to civilization; he loses the power of sympathy that had bound him to the natural world and suffers from the guilt of civilization. The fact that his natural spirit has gained a conscience is clearly shown when he is no longer able to communicate with the innocent creatures of nature. His changed state is similar to that of Adam and Eve after the original sin. Civilization represents lost innocence.

Hawthorne perceived that England and Italy were the twin centers of the civilized world, symbolized by their artwork, and America was an isolated outpost. Because of his association with American artists in Rome, he became conscious of American lack of interest in the arts. Like Cooper, he considered that Europeans, particularly the Italians, were superior in the areas of love and appreciation for the arts, as civilization was superior to barbarism. In *The Marble Faun* a conflict develops between art (symbolizing civilization) and nature. Donatello represents external nature; Kenyon, Hilda, and Miriam have the general conception of art as an expression of inner life and experience; the mysterious model, because of his viciousness and mysterious identity, represents the

basically untruthful art of a decadent society. Nature ultimately triumphs over that art which disregards natural and moral truth, as Donatello overpowers the model, and as the water in the baroque fountain maintains its flow in spite of impediments. As Miriam shuts the sunlight from her studio, she tells Donatello that artists must put themselves at odds with nature before trying to imitate it. Hawthorne suggests that artists must go beyond external nature if they hope to produce works of value. He now sees art as primarily a means for projection of experience and the greatest artists as recorders of history. In Hawthorne's earlier work, artistic efforts are limited and mechanical. The work of the artists in *The Marble Faun* is emotional and intellectual. The artworks of the past represent universal concepts of humanity. These new conceptions of art reflect Hawthorne's broader sense of the scope of painting and sculpture, and his realization of art representing the triumphs of western civilization.³³

Mark Twain, as an "innocent abroad," observes culture over nature, Europe over the wilderness, and ambivalent feelings surface as he questions and attacks the institutions of civilization. When his thoughts drift longingly to travel in America "among antelopes and buffaloes, and painted Indians on the war-path," he must remind himself that he is now in "elegant France."³⁴ While abroad, in contact with civilization's protracted past, Twain unexpectedly attacks what he knows as most savage—the American Indian:

It isn't worth while, in these practical times, for people to talk about Indian poetry—there never was any in them—except in the Fennimore Cooper Indians. But *they* are an extinct tribe that never existed. I know the Noble Red Man. I have camped with the Indians; I have been on the war-path with them, taken part in the chase with them—for grasshoppers; helped them steal cattle; I have roamed with them, scalped them, had them for breakfast. I would gladly eat the whole race if I had a chance.³⁵

Later, he sarcastically calls himself "savage" when he suggests the Florentine beggars should rob their church, the most magnificent Italian institution of civilization. When speaking of the horrors of the Inquisition, Twain suggests the Christians were less than "civilized" in their treatment of the "savage" pagans. Twain's ambivalent feelings toward civilization continue in his later works, as he relates the horrors of society in *Huckleberry Finn*, extorts the virtues of practicality and pragmatism, and questions if natural man is not more civilized than civilized man.

CONCLUSION

Cooper, Hawthorne, and Twain were profoundly influenced by their European discoveries, gaining new perspectives on how American culture had evolved differently from that of the parent countries. This new perspective is evident as they deal with the issues that had been, and continue to be, the major themes of American culture and literary tradition. All three novelists had been social and moral critics, and each was now able to view his native country with critical objectivity, measuring its success by

what the earliest promises had been. Often it becomes necessary to acknowledge the differences between the realities of American life and the romanticized shaping idea that generations of Americans had kept alive in the belief in their country as the "Promised Land." Cooper had originally been an exponent of the American democratic system, but the political romances he wrote while in Europe indicate a gradual disillusionment in the wholesomeness of the American system. Hawthorne finds in Europe abundant confirmation of the moral weakness and limited abilities of man, but he develops a more hopeful view of human nature—man's disasters are survived by his spirit, as recorded by beautiful artworks of the imagination. As a result of his voyage, Mark Twain awakens to a new trust in his native self; his European adventure gives cultural context to his highly ambivalent attitude toward American culture. All three novelists create an image of the American as the product of ages of civilization, yet still of the wilderness, questioning the validity of any social claim upon this newborn nature. From a European perspective comes a reassessment of the idea of America. The works of the three novelists are evidence of a unique American sensibility in literary expression coming to maturity.

NOTES

1. Harold T. McCarthy, *The Expatriate Perspective* (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1974), p. 12.
2. Dewey Ganzel, *Mark Twain Abroad* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 160.
3. McCarthy, p. 106.
4. Murray Krieger, *The Play and Place of Criticism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1967), p. 86-7.
5. Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Marble Faun: or, The Romance of Monte Beni* (Ohio State University Press, 1968), p. 355.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 350.
7. McCarthy, p. 74-5.
8. Hawthorne, p. 368.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 384.
10. McCarthy, p. 75.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 66.
12. Hawthorne, p. 204.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 212.
14. Krieger, p. 89.
15. McCarthy, p. 13.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 39-40.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 43-4.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 45-6.
20. Mark Twain, *The Innocents Abroad or The New Pilgrim's Progress* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1928), p. 211-2.
21. McCarthy, p. 67.

22. Nathalia Wright, *American Novelists in Italy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1965), p. 129.
23. McCarthy, p. 30-1.
24. Twain, p. 227-8.
25. Ibid., p. 237.
26. McCarthy, p. 98.
27. Ibid., p. 69.
28. Ibid., p. 70.
29. Hawthorne, p. 410.
30. McCarthy, p. 33, 41-2.
31. Michael Smuin, "Observations on the Themes and Techniques of William Shakespeare's 'The Tempest,'" *San Francisco Ballet Magazine*, vol. 4, no. 5 (May 1980), p. 23.
32. Wright, p. 137.
33. Ibid., p. 162-3.
34. Twain, p. 84-7.
35. Ibid., p. 180.

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