

Fire and Circle in *The Marble Faun*⁽¹⁾

—The Most Insoluble Riddles Propounded to Mortal—

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On October 1, 1857, Nathaniel Hawthorne resigned from American consulship at Liverpool, where he had worked for four years, and left England with his family for the Continent on January 5, 1858.

Residing in Rome from January to May 1858, then during the summer from August to October, in order to avoid the heat and *malaria*, "he hired a picturesque old villa on the hill of Bellosguardo, near Florence, a curious structure with a crenelated tower"⁽²⁾ where he started to think out the plan of *The Marble Faun* (1860). This old villa is turned out to be the *castle* of Monte Beni. He went back to Rome in October and stayed there until May, 1859.

In the meantime, he resumed the study of painting, sculpture, architecture, which he had begun in England, and frequented the art galleries, museums, the studios of his friends,⁽³⁾ and the historical scenes in Rome and Florence.

Rome, however, that he had been adoring since his childhood, was not always a comfortable place to him; he complains in the work, especially about coldness in winter:

When we have once known Rome, and left her where she lies, like a long decaying corpse, retaining a trace of the noble shape it was, but with accumulated dust and a fungous growth overspreading all its more admirable features; —left her in utter weariness, no doubt, of her narrow, crooked, intricate streets, so uncomfortably paved with little squares of lava that to tread over them is penitential pilgrimage, so indescribably ugly, moreover, so cold, so alleylike, into which the sun never falls, and where a chill wind forces its deadly breath into our lungs;—left her, tired of the sight of those immense, seven-storied, yellow-washed hovels, or call them palaces, where *all that is dreary in domestic life seems magnified and multiplied*, and weary of climbing those staircases, which ascend from a groundfloor of cook-shops, cobblers' stalls, stables, and

regiments of cavalry, to a middle region of princes, cardinals, and ambassadours, and an upper tier of artists, just beneath the unattainable sky ; —left her, worn out with *shivering at the cheerless and smoky fireside*, by day, and feasting with our own substance the ravenous little populace of a Roman bed, at night;—left her, sick at heart of Italian trickery, which has uprooted whatever faith in man's integrity had endured till now, and sick at stomach of sour bread, sour wine, rancid butter, and bad cookery, needlessly bestowed on evil meats—left her, *disgusted with the pretence of Holiness and the reality of nastiness*, each equally omnipresent;—left her, half-lifeless from the languid atmosphere, the vital principle of which has been used up, long ago, or corrupted by myriads of slaughters;—left her, crushed down in spirit with the desolation of her ruin, and the hopelessness of her future;—left her, in short, *hating her with all our might, and adding our individual curse to the Infinite Anathema* which her old crime have unmistakeably brought down;—when we have left Rome in such mood as this, *we are astonished by the discovery, by-and-by, that our heart-strings have mysteriously attached themselves to the Eternal City, and are drawing us thitherward again, as if it were more familiar, more intimately our home, than even the spot where we were born!* (IV, 325—326)⁽⁴⁾ (The forgoing and subsequent italics in the quotation from *The Marble Faun* are mine.)

I

As the title indicates,⁽⁵⁾ beyond doubt this novel deals with the transformation of a young Italian Donatello, who has a strong resemblance to the Marble Faun of Praxiteles. Naturally a simple, carefree and cheerful creature becomes quite another man—a more mature, reticent, intelligent male—after he commits murder. But, as Merle E. Brown maintains about the theme of this novel:

The novel has been called Hawthorne's affirmation of the doctrine of the Fortunate Fall, but it has also described as an expression of his disapproval of that doctrine. Disagreeing almost as widely as these two voices, others have declared the novel to be the imaginative partner to Emerson's mystical essay "Circles," the optimistic moral counterpart to Darwin's theory of evolution,...⁽⁶⁾

This may be said to be "the story of the Fall of man," just as Miriam says, but when she goes on, "Was the crime a blessing?" or "Was it a means of education bringing a simple and imperfect nature to a point of feeling and intelligent...?", Hawthorne repudiates her, saying, "It is too dangerous," in the person of Kenyon. And later near the end of the story Kenyon, in his turn, offers the same question to Hilda, but soon withdraws it, being accused by her.

After all Hawthorne neither agrees nor disagrees with the conception of this Fortunate Fall. We cannot fathom his mind to the last of this romance so far as this is concerned.

Rather, I am interested in the latter half of this quotation—the view that this novel is the "imaginative partner to Emerson's mystical essay 'Circles' " and the view that this is the "optimistic moral counterpart to Darwin's theory of evolution." For, in this novel not only a crime is perpetrated by Donatello, but also its effect successively influences Miriam, Hilda and Kenyon, and transforms them more or less, just as malaria spreads from person to person. Figuratively speaking, the crime of a murder is a stone which is thrown and causes rippling waves on the surface of a pond.

As for the theory of evolution, Donatello, half-witted youth like a faun who is "neither man nor animal," develops into an experienced man all of a sudden, in consequence of a crime. That is, the history of mankind is condensed in the life of Donatello.

Thus, at least we must admit that the design of *The Marble Faun* is so great as to be interpreted in various ways, though this is not to say that the author's intention is quite successful.⁽⁷⁾

Brown also writes about the structure of the novel, which is closely connected with the theme itself.

Hawthorne divided the novel into four overlapping parts each of which is primarily concerned with the change of the four characters.⁽⁸⁾

According to him, the first section (from Chapter I through XXIII), which also deals with the first transformation, is devoted to Miriam, the second one (Chapter XXIV through XXXV) to Donatello, the third (Chapter XXXVI through XLII) Hilda, and in the last one (Chapter XLIII through L) Kenyon is the central character.⁽⁹⁾ But, I think the contour of this novel is not a line but a *circle*, because Donatello (also Miriam and Kenyon) leaves Rome in summer for Monte Beni, in a part of Tuscany, and comes back in winter the same way Hawthorne and his

family themselves travelled.

On the other hand, Roy R. Male contends:

The simplest way of groping the book's structure is to envisage *a circle divided into four parts revolving about a center.*⁽¹⁰⁾ (My Italics)

Needless to say, *a center* corresponds to Rome and the murder of a Capuchin by Donatello, *a stone thrown on the surface of the water.*

II

I think it is most convenient for us to start with a comparison of the characters and their relations in order to interpret the works of Nathaniel Hawthorne. T. S. Eliot says, "the point is that Hawthorne was actually sensitive to the situation : that he did grasp character through the relation of two or more persons to each other;..."⁽¹¹⁾ If we look for the analogy to this novel from his past works, we can, first of all, think of "Rappaccini's Daughter" (1844) in terms of the situation and, then, *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) thematically. *The Marble Faun* seems to be a combination of these two.

In Rappaccini's artificial botanic garden, where the poisonous flowers are exuberant, Giovanni meets Beatrice, just like Donatello does Miriam in Rome, "evil, foul and ugly, this populous corrupt city." And in *The Scarlet Letter* the largest part is devoted the psychological metamorphoses of Hester and Dimmesdale after they erred—committed adultery.

Giovanni, watching Dr. Rappaccini tending the plant with gloves, thinks:

Was this garden, then, the Eden of the present world?—And this man, with such a perception of harm in what his own hands caused to grow, was he the Adam? (X, 96)

No doubt Hawthorne modelled "Rappaccini's daughter" on *Genesis* and Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1677), but if Rappaccini is Adam, then who is Eve? If Beatrice, the only woman in this garden, is Eve, is it incongruous that she is the daughter of Rappaccini?

Oliver Evans remarks on this point:

... it should be remembered that in the account of Creation in the second Chapter of *Genesis*, the one containing the story of Eden, it is stated that God created Eve from one of Adam's ribs and that in this sense, it is possible to consider her as Adam's offspring as well as his companion and future mate.⁽¹²⁾

This means that human beings are the products of incest between the Original man, Adam, and his daughter—wife, Eve. Evans continues, "this would explain the fact that in Hawthorne's story Beatrice is Rappaccini's daughter, and it could explain also certain suggestions of incest which appear in the story but which are never fully developed."⁽¹³⁾

At any rate their unnatural—or, rather, immoral,—relationship is suggested in this passage where the plants in this garden are depicted like this:

... there had been commixture, and as it were, adultery, of various vegetable species. (X, 10)

In *The Marble Faun* the portrait of Beatrice by Guido is closely connected to the theme of this novel. Here Miriam is another Dark Lady just like Beatrice in "Rappaccini's Daughter" and Hester in *The Scarlet Letter*. She is a painter, but her past and her origin are quite enigmatic. One of the rumors says that she was born in England to a rich Jewish banker. Miriam, Hilda, also a painter, and Kenyon, a sculptor, make a small *circle* of artists, which joins Donatello, who always dogs Miriam, being attracted by her.

Another man who also follows Miriam like her *shadow* is her Model. He is a Capuchin called Father (or Brother) Antonio. As Hawthorne comments on him that "Miriam's Model has so important a connection with our story," (IV, 20) their relationship is among "the most insoluble riddles propounded to mortal comprehension," but in one sense served as one of the driving forces in this romance in terms of the plot.

Their *reunion* occurs in Chapter III, "Subterranean Reminiscences" and Chapter IV, "The Spectre of the Catacomb."

The intricate passage, along which they followed their guide, had been hewn, in some forgotten age, out of a dark-red, crumbly stone. On either side were horizontal niches where, if they had their torches closely, the shape of a human body was discernible in

white ashes, into which the entire mortality of a man or woman had resolved itself. (IV, 24)

According to the author, the scene of the dark Catacomb, into which the main characters descend by the aid of the torch-light, is in "a sort of dream," and forbodes the outcome of this romance. In other words, if the *diurnal* earth is our consciousness, then this *nocturnal* subterranean Catacomb, into which the sunshine never reaches, is our *un-consciousness*. We might say that when she goes deep into her darkness (unconsciousness), Miriam finds her Model there. I think we can give positive significance to this Catacomb, which is the core of Rome, the city of "old, musty, unwholesome, dreary, full of death-scents, ghosts, and murder-stains." (IV, 302) I wonder if it may be equivalent to the *Collective Unconsciousness* that C. G. Jung maintained is imbedded as the common heritage in our memory.⁽¹⁴⁾ Therefore it is that these four characters who are groping their ways in the world of *darkness*, *Hades*, are facing *death* in the midst of *life*. In this sense Miriam's Model is the Shadow of the world of death, Evil, or Sin itself. No wonder Donatello, who is the symbol of innocence or Youth, has an antipathy against him instinctively.

From the first, Donatello had shown little appetite for the expedition; for, like most Italians, and in special accordance with the law of his own principle and physically happy nature, the young man had an infinite repugnance to graves and skulls and to all that ghastliness which the Gothic mind loves to associate with the idea of death. He shuddered, and looked fearfully round, drawing nearer to Miriam, whose attractive influence alone had enticed him into that gloomy region. (IV, 25)

He is a natural man, not imbued with the evil of the city, but this passage also suggests his childishness. He needs to know the shadowy parts of life in order to get maturity.⁽¹⁵⁾ The romancer depicts Donatello and Miriam dancing wildly in *a circle* in the grove of the Villa Borghese as if they were realizing a Golden Age again.

Hilda, like Donatello, is exempt from the evil and sins. She lives in the high tower called the Virgin's shrine with doves. These white doves symbolize her innocence while the high tower, which is in the "midway towards Heaven" or "just below the unattainable sky," symbolizes her status as artist as well as her aloofness from others and her pride of maidenhood.

R. H. Fogle says that both Donatello and Hilda represent simplicity which is the characteristic of Eden (or the Golden Age), and Heaven.⁽¹⁶⁾ And the fact that at the starting point Donatello, like a faun, "standing betwixt man and animal" crawls on the earth, and that Hilda's residence, on the other hand, is in a high tower, means the former connotes *beginning* while the latter connotes *culmination*.⁽¹⁷⁾

This Hilda, who "undertake[s] to keep the lamp" of the Virgin's shrine is given the part of *Vesta*, the Roman Goddess of the hearth.

Connected with this old tower and its lofty shrine, there is a legend which we cannot here pause to tell; but, for centuries, a lamp has been burning before the Virgin's image, at noon, and midnight, and at all hours of the twenty-four and must be kept burning forever, as long as the tower shall stand. . . . (IV, 52)

According to George Dumézil, ancient Rome regarded itself as a vast *templum* consisting of several fires, among which only the shrine of Vesta was traditionally a circular building.

Envisaged as a vast unitary dwelling, Rome has on the one hand its own hearth, and on the other hand the altars of the places of Worship, scattered throughout the city and increasingly more numerous. . . .

The continuous fire of the *aedes Vestae*, the *ignis Vestae*, is indeed the Hearth of Rome, and hence one of the guarantees of the city's being rooted in earth, of its permanence in history. It is tended by women. It must not go out, and if that accident occurs, it must not be relighted from the fire of another hearth, but from a new fire, produced in the fire-hole: the Vestals, after having been scourged with rods by the grand pontiff, rub a piece of wood taken from an *arbor felix*, until one of them is able to carry into the *aedes*, on a bronze sieve, fire produced by this friction. Thus this primary fire is quite essential. It is not the offspring of any other fire; it is truly of this world; and its function is entirely earthly, assuring the Romans of stability and permanence in their place on earth. And consider this: alone among the ancient sanctuaries assigned to purely Roman divinities, Vesta's is round.⁽¹⁸⁾

From the earliest times Vesta is assured a prominent place in both family and state

worship. The private worship of Vesta, as deity of the family hearth, was observed in every household, and her image is sometimes encountered in the household shrine.⁽¹⁹⁾

We might say the *sacred* fire of the Virgin's shrine in Hilda's tower has sort of public meaning as the fire of the great Roman family, but it is extinguished for a time while Hilda is missing. And when she comes back and determines to marry Kenyon, she is to keep a *household* fire this time.

So Konyon won the gentle Hilda's shy affection and her consent to be his bride. Another hand must henceforth trim the lamp before the Virgin's shrine, for *Hilda was coming down from the old tower, to be herself enshrined and worshiped as a household Saint in the light of her husband's fireside.* (IV, 461)

This sacredness is one side of the ambivalence of fire and circle in this romance; the other side is in the relationship between Miriam and Model (or Shadew), however, which remains unsolved as a mystery through the Conclusion. Nevertheless Hawthorne drops hints for us ; for example, the following conversation between the two;

"Death" said her persecutor, "is not simple and opportune a thing as you imagine. You are strong and warm with life. Sensitive and irritable as your spirit is, these many months of trouble—this latter thralldom in which I hold you—have scarcely made your cheek paler than I saw it in your girlhood. Miriam, (for *I forebear to speak another name*, at which these leaves would shiver above our heads.) Miriam, you cannot die" (IV, 94)

Randal Stewart's inference that the name to be supplied would seem to be "daughter" or, perhaps, "sister"⁽²⁰⁾ will throw light on the next quotation:

That iron chain of which some of the massive links were round her feminine waist, and the others in his ruthless hand—or which perhaps bound the pair together by a bond equally tortures to each—*must have been forged in some such unhallowed furnace as is only kindled by evil passions and fed as evil deeds.* (IV, 93)

This "iron chain. . . forged in some such unhallowed furnace as is only kindled by evil

passion" is the antipode of the sacred fire and circle which we have found at Hilda's tower. The "evil deeds" which suggest *incest* is no other than "the monstrous offspring of man's depraved fancy glowing with only an evil mockery beauty." (X, 110) And one more example which helps to reinforce our doubt concerning their relationship is Miriam's strong resemblance to the effigy of Beatrice Cenci by Guido.

As Miriam gave utterance to these words, Hilda looked down from the picture into her face, and startled to observe that her friend's expression had become almost exactly that of the portrait; as if her passionate wish and struggle to penetrate poor Beatrice's mystery had been successful. (IV, 67)

Beatrice Cenci (1577-99), famous for her tragic history and for the fables to which it gave rise, was executed for killing her own father Francesco Cenci, a vicious and violent Roman nobleman, in retaliation for having been violated by him. But in this romance the reference to her sin is quite ambiguous and even her innocence is alluded to sometimes,⁽²¹⁾ which exactly corresponds to Miriam's case.

Model is thrown down from Tarpeian Rock near the Capitol by Donatello who got a sign by eye from Miriam. Using fire imagery Hawthorne describes Donatello right after the incident;

She [Miriam] . . . looked wildly at the young man, whose form seemed to have dilated, and whose eyes blazed with the fierce energy, that had suddenly inspired him. *It had kindled him into a man; it had developed within him an intelligence which was no native characteristic of the Donatello whom we have heretofore known.* But that simple and joyous creature was gone forever. (IV, 172)

Just as the fire of the kiln developed Ethan Brand, "simple and loving" lime-burner, into a distinguished but fiendlike scholar, the fire in the heart of Donatello transforms him into another man. Miriam is also expressed in fire image.

. . . she could not deny—she was not sure whether it might be so, or no—that *a wild joy had flamed up in her heart*, when she beheld her persecutor in his mortal peril. Was it horror?—or ecstasy—or both in me? Be the emotion what it might, *it had blazed up*

more madly, when Donatello flung his victim off the Cliff, and more and more, while his shriek went quivering downward. . . . (IV, 172-173)

However, Hawthorne naturally calls what they did a *crime* which will knot them "like a serpent in extricable links about their souls," and says that consequently "they were released from the chain of humanity."

As is expected they soon become apathetic after their momentary passion expired.

How icy cold in the heart, when the fervour, the wild ecstasy of passion, has faded away and sunk down among *the dead ashes of the fire that blazed so fiercely*, and was fed by the very substance of its life ! (IV, 178)

III

Stricken by the guilty conscience, Donatello leaves Rome, and goes back to his old countryhouse of Monte Beni, a part of Tuscany, among the Apennines, where Kenyon visits and stays during the summer. He takes the role of a *mentor* and helps Donatello find the meaning in what the latter has done.

Donatello, who lives with his servants in this vast residence "which almost might be called a castle," is the last of the Monte Benis.

Therefore we cannot find in this house any reference concerning *fire*, which is the symbol of domestic life. Kenyon, wishing "a woman's face would brighten it [the house] ," asks why the Monte Benis are on the point of extinction:

"Then, you are aware of a more satisfactory reason?" suggested Kenyon. "I thought of one, the other night, while I was gazing at the stars," answered Donatello; "but, pardon me, I do not mean to tell it." (IV, 221-222)

We cannot know the exact cause of the collapse of the Monte Benis as well as the past of Miriam, but the clue is given. I think it is hidden in the origin of the Monte Benis.

According to the legend, the pedigree of Monte Beni, which is one of the oldest in Italy, traces to pre-Roman times, earlier even than Etrurian and Pelasgic people, to the era of Satyrs

and sylvan nymphs; that is, the race of Monte Beni sprang from the union of a sylvan creature with a mortal maiden. Kenyon is pleased to hear that, because he thought the riddle of Donatello—his marked resemblance to Marble Faun—was solved. But this gorgeous feast of gods and human beings in Greek-myth suggests the presence of the Golden Age when mankind was not yet separated from nature.

It is an established theory that the characteristics which differentiate man from animals are, first of all, the ability to speak, and the discovery of fire, then, the usage of tools. Therefore if speech is a diverging point between man and animals, the fact that Donatello and his race could communicate with animals presumes the presence of *the original language*.

Anon, his voice appeared to fill the air, yet not with an obtrusive clangour. The sound was of a murmurous character, soft, attractive, persuasive, friendly. The sculptor fancied that *such might have been the original voice and utterance of the natural man, before the sophisticative of the human intellect formed what we now call language*. (IV, 248)

So is the discovery of fire. When Gaston Bechelard says "fire is more a social reality than a natural reality," and that "fire is initially the object of a general prohibition; hence this conclusion; the social interdiction is our first general knowledge of fire,"⁽²²⁾ he means that sex is also the object of a general prohibition. The assimilation of fire to the sexual act corresponds to *incest taboo* at the social level. And it is also said that one more characteristic of human beings is the family system, which presupposes incest taboo.⁽²³⁾

My hypothesis that the fall of the house of Monte Beni was accelerated by their incestuous behaviour might be reinforced by the next quotation.

... there were deficiencies both of intellect and heart, and especially, as it seemed, in the development of the higher portion of man's nature. *These defects* were less perceptible in early youth, but showed themselves more strongly with advancing age, when, as the animal spirits settled down upon a lower level, the representative of the Monte Benis was apt to become sensual, addicted to gross pleasures. . . . (IV, 235)

I wonder if *these defects*—retrogression to the "animal spirits"—imply incestuous

tendencies. And to cite another interesting example about one of his family-myth:

The fountain-woman loved the youth, (a knight, as Donatello called him,) for according to the legend, *his race was akin to hers*. At least, whether kin or no, there had been friendship and sympathy, of old, betwixt an ancestor of his, with fury ears, and the long-lived lady of the fountain. (IV, 244)

It seems to me this legend is both the poetic and the animistic expression of inter-marriage.⁽²⁴⁾ However, the romance between the knight and the fountain lady ended when he was washing "a blood-stain" on his hands and on his brow. For he couldn't live in Paradise once he was found guilty. Paradise Lost repeats itself in Donatello. He cries when he finds that nothing, except a poisonous lizard, will respond to his call.

"Death, death!" sobbed Donatello. "They know it!"

"They know it!" was all that kenyon could yet distinguish.

"They know it!"

"Who know it?" asked the sculptor. "And what is it they know?"

"They know it?" repeated Donatello trembling. "They shun me! *All nature shrinks from me, and shudders at me! I live in the midst of a curse, that hems me round with a circle of fire! No innocent thing can come near me!*" (IV, 249)

Kenyon soothes him, saying that this is the trial every one of us must go through and that his forfeit of kinship to nature is no other than the price he must pay for experience.

Donatello keeps a vigil, shutting himself up on the battlement of his tower, which means his rise both physically and morally. He muses morosely, touching the "albaster skull," but this is the contact with death which he once felt so repugnant. Now, he recognizes the significance he should have when he descended into the catacomb—the existence of death in life.

It was perceptible that he had already glimpse of strange and subtle matters in those dark caverns, into which all men must descend, if they would know anything beneath the surface and illusive pleasures of existence. And when they emerge, though dazzled and blinded by the first glare or daylight, they take truer and sadder views of life, forever

afterwards. (IV, 262)

IV

Miriam is impressed with the great transformation of Donatello, who has just finished his pilgrimage from Tuscany to Rome, and reveals her thought to Kenyon, which epitomizes the conception of Fortunate Fall:

... *He has travelled in a circle as all things heavenly and earthly do*, and now comes back to his original self, with an inestimable treasure of improvement won from an experience of pain. . . Was the crime—in which he and I were wedded—was it a blessing in that strange disguise? Was it a means of education bringing a simple and imperfect nature to a point of feeling and intelligence, which it could have reached under no other discipline? (IV, 434)

Kenyon rebuffs it as "it was too dangerous," because both Donatello and Miriam should have understood the nature of their future, when they accepted kenyon's advice: "Take heed; for you love one another, and yet your bond is twined with such black threads, that you must never look upon it as identical with the ties that unite other loving souls. It is for mutual support; it is for another's final good; it is for effort, for sacrifice, but not for earthly happiness!" (IV, 322) We cannot help but remember Hawthorne's tragic vision in *The Scarlet Letter*; "And be stern and sad truth spoken, that the breach which guilt has once made into the human soul is never, in this moral state, repaired." (I, 200-201)

The salvation of Donatello and Miriam is in a life to come; just as the earthly happiness of Dimmesdale and Hester was succeeded by Pearl, theirs is to be by Kenyon and Hilda.⁽²⁵⁾

But, to Hilda, when she witnessed Miriam's *crime*, says the author, "the effect was almost the same as if she herself had participated in the guilt."

It was that dismal certainty of the existence of evil in the world, which. . . never becomes portion of our practical belief until it takes substance and reality from the sin of some guide, whom we have deeply trusted and revered, or some friend whom we have deeply loved. (IV, 328)

We will see how the effect of a crime is contagious. It spreads from person to person as malaria pollutes the atmosphere that we breathe. Thus Hilda, overburdened with the ponderousness of the secrecy, confesses it to a venerable priest at Saint Peters, which relieves her of her pain just for a while. But she disappears after she took Miriam's packet to the Palazzo Cenci, remembering a promise to Miriam.

Kenyon, in his turn, watching the light of Virgin's shrine go out, also recognizes his cold, cheerless artistic life as well as his detachment from this incident as an onlooker or expositor.

He says to himself;

The idea of this girl had been like a taper of Virgin wax, *burning with a pure and steady flame, and chasing away the evil spirit out of the magic circle of its beam.* (IV, 409)

However, in the "tumult" and "uproar" of Carnival, which symbolizes the beginning of the new year and the rebirth of nature after long dismal winter,⁽²⁶⁾ Kenyon reunites with Hilda.

It was Carnival time. The merriment of this famous festival was in full progress; and the stately avenue of the Corso was peopled with hundreds of fantastic shapes, some of which probably represented the mirth of ancient times, surviving through all manner of calamity, ever since the days of the Roman Empire. *For a few afternoons of early Spring, this mouldy gaiety strays into sunshines; all the remainder of the year, it seems to be shut up in the catacombs, or some other sepulchral store-house of the past.* (IV, 436)

As we have seen, this novel consists of four dimensions; in term of space the Grove of the Borghese is the antipode to the Catacomb; the former represents the earth, daytime, consciousness, and life, whereas the latter underground, night, unconsciousness, and death. But, if we consider the element of time, Carnival is the opposite of the Catacomb, because the one symbolizes sunlight, spring, and present, whereas the other darkness, winter, and past.

That night Hilda's lamp is tended again,⁽²⁷⁾ and soon the doves begin to return to her window-sill. Hilda and Kenyon get engaged and go back to their country. Their future is suggested in "the Etruscan bracelet," composed of seven gems, which is the bridal gift from Miriam.

And now, happy as Hilda was, the bracelet brought the tears into her eyes, as being, *in its entire circle*, the symbol of as sad a mystery as any that Miriam had attached to the separate gems. For, what was Miriam's life to be? And where was Donatello? But Hilda had a hopeful soul, and saw sunlight on the mountain-tops. (IV, 462)

This conclusion is in the middle of *The Scarlet Letter* and *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851) from the viewpoint of tone and color. Hawthorne is neither so pessimistic as the former, nor so optimistic as the latter. For one thing, Hawthorne's view of the world as well as his view of the family might have changed a bit; the situation around him got worse since he wrote *Seven Gables*. As I mentioned before, his daughter Una was close to death, and he himself suffered from colds and lamented the bad weather in Italy. In reality, when he got home, like Kenyon and Hilda after an absence of seven years, on the eve of the Civil War, he found that his health, along with his creative energy, had begun to fail rapidly. But he did not yet realize that *The Marble Faun* was to be the last novel he could complete.

To sum up, the whole structure of *The Marble Faun* is a giant circle,⁽²⁸⁾ in the plenitude of which, a large number of fires and circles as well as our life and death are embraced. Above all the most distinctive are the magic circle of the beam we saw at Hilda's tower⁽²⁹⁾ and the "iron chain. . . forged in an unhallowed furnace" or fire of Miriam and Model. However, the circle which we will see around the fireside of Kenyon and Hilda in their home country may not be so strong as the one we saw in *The Seven Gables*, reflecting the deterioration of the circumstances around Hawthorne and his *Weltanschauung*.

Notes

- (1) This is the fourth paper in a series of my papers dealing with fire and circle imagery in Hawthorne's works. The preceding ones are:

"Fire and Circle in Hawthorne's Short Stories, especially on 'Ethan Brand,' "*The Collected Papers of English Literature and Linguistics in Commemoration of Prof. Hiroshige Yoshida* (Shinosaki Shorin, 1980), pp. 301-310

"Fire and Circle : Hope for Purification, in *The House of the Seven Gables*, "*Chushikoku Studies in American Literature* No. 17, March 1981), pp. 38-48

"Fire and Circle in *The Blithedale Romance* : The Meaning of Masquerade, "*The Journal of the Faculty of General Education, Tottori University* No. 16, Sep., 1982) pp. 73-82

- (2) Henry James, *Hawthorne*, with Introduction and Notes by Tony Tanner, London : Macmillan : New York : St. Martin, 1967, pp. 149-150
- (3) He was associated with a number of artists, especially William Wetmore Story, Hiram Powers, and Maria Louisa Lander, who made a bust of him, and other Americal artists. (In the work Kenyon makes a bust of Donatello.)
- (4) Numbers following all quotations from Hawthorne indicate volume and page in The Centenary Edition of *The Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne*, ed., William Chavat et al. (Columbus, Ohio State University Press, 1962-)
- (5) *The Marble Faun, or The Romance of Monte Beni*. But the title of the English edition was "Transformation," "which was in fact one of the titles he himself suggested." (Cf. Arlin Turner, *Nathaniel Hawthorne*, New York, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1980, P. 346)
- (6) Merle E. Brown, "The Structure of *The Marble Faun*," *American Literature*, XXVIII (1956-7), p. 302
- (7) Against his will this novel has been often called a guide book to Rome and Florence or an artistic novel, because it so abounds in descriptions of the art galleries and historic sites.

Henry James criticizes, saying "It has a great deal of beauty, of interest and grace; but it has to my sense a slighter value than its companions, and I am far from regarding it as the masterpiece of the author. . . The story straggles and wanders, is dropped and taken up again, and towards the close lapses into an almost fatal vagueness." (Henry James, op. cit., p. 152 & p. 155)

- (8) Merle E. Brown, op. cit., p. 303
- (9) Ibid., pp. 303-309
- (10) Roy R. Male, *Hawthorne's Tragic Vision*, The Norton Library, New York, W. W. Norton & Company, 1957, p. 159
- (11) T. S. Eliot, "Henry James," from *The Shock of Recognition*, (ed.) Edmund Wilson. Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, New York, 1955, P. 862
- (12) Oliver Evans, "Allegory and Incest in 'Rappaccini's Daughter,'" *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, Vol. 19 (Sep., 1964), p. 187
- (13) Ibid., p. 187
- (14) C. G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconsciousness*, *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, Translated by R. F. G. Hull, Bollingen Series XX, Princeton University Press, Vol. 9, Part 1, pp. 42-72
- (15) C. G. Jung, *Aion, Research into Phenomenology of the Self*, *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, Vol. 9, Part II, pp. 266-267

According to Jung, "The Shadow personifies everything that the subject refuses to acknowledge about himself and yet is always thrusting itself upon him directly or indirectly—for instance, inferior traits of character and other incompatible tendencies." And also he says, "The Shadow is that hidden, repressed, for the most part inferior and guilt-laden personality whose ultimate ramifications reach back into realm of our animal ancestors and so comprise the whole historical aspect of the unconsciousness. . . If it has been believed hitherto that the human shadow was the source of all evil, it can now be ascertained on closer investigation that unconscious man, that is, his shadow, does not consist only of morally reprehensible tendencies, but

also displays a number of good qualities, such as normal instincts, appropriate reaction, realistic insights, creative impulses, etc."

- (16) R. H. Fogle, *Hawthorne's Fiction : The Light and the Dark*, (Norman, 1964), P. 196
- (17) Ibid., P. 196. But this contrast will be reversed after Chapter XXVIII. That is, Donatello will ascend gradually while Hilda will descend.
- (18) Georges Dumézil, *Archaic Roman Religion* translated by Philip Krapp, Vol. 1, The University of Chicago Press, 1970. pp. 311-326
- (19) As for Vesta, the following book also goes into details ;
Sir T. Cato Worsford, *The History of the Vestal Virgins of Rome*, London : Rider & Co. Paternoster House, E. C. 1934
- (20) Randal Stewart, in the Introduction to his edition of *The American Notebooks by Nathaniel Hawthorne*, (New Haven, 1932), n. 381
- (21) "She is a fallen angel, fallen, and yet sinless; and it is only this depth of sorrow, with its weight and darkness, that keeps her down upon earth, and brings her within our view even while it sets her beyond our reach." (IV, 66)
- (22) Gaston Bachelard, *The Psychoanalysis of fire*, translated by A. C. M. Ross, Beacon Press, Boston, 1964, pp. 10-11
- (23) According to Lévi-Straus, "It [prohibition of incest] constitutes a rule, but a rule which, alone among all the social rules, possesses at the same time a universal character. That the prohibition of incest constitutes a rule need scarcely be shown." (Claude Lévi-Straus, *The Elementary Structure of Kinship*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1969, pp. 8-9) And G. P. Murdock says, "The nuclear family is a universal human social grouping. Either as the sole prevailing form of the family or basic unit from which more complex familial forms are compounded it exists as a distinct and strongly functional group in every known society." And as for incest taboo he expounds as follows : "Perhaps the most striking effects of family structure upon individual behaviour is to be observed in the phenomenon of incest taboos. . . . Despite an extraordinary variability and seeming arbitrariness in the incidence of incest taboo in different societies, they invariably apply to every cross-sex relationship within nuclear family save that between married spouses. In no known society is it conventional or even permissible for father and daughter, mother and son, or brother and sister to have sexual intercourse or to marry. (George Peter Murdock, *Social Structure*, The Free Press, A Division of Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York, Collier Macmillan Publishers, London, 1949, p. 2 & p. 12)
- (24) Both these two books, which were published after I had finished my manuscript, deal with Hawthorne's incest problem; especially the second one grapples with the theme directly:
Gloria C. Erlich, *Family Themes and Hawthorne's Fiction*,
Philip Young, *Hawthorne's Secret; An Un-told Tale*.
(See *Selected Bibliography* at the end of this paper.)
- (25) In a sense Kenyon and Hilda do vicariously what Donatello and Miriam leave undone—to have a happy home on the earth.
- (26) According to Mircea Eliade, Carnivals "always suppose a death and a resurrection, a new birth, and a new

man." (Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return or Cosmos and History*, translated from the French by Willard R. Trask, Princeton University Press, 1954, p. 69)

- (27) "We may also mention the researches of Otto Huth and J. Hertel, who, applying themselves to Rome and Vedic data, have especially insisted upon their motifs of renewal of the world through rekindling of the fire at the winter solstice, a renewal that is equivalent to a new creation." (Ibid., p. 67)
- (28) This *great circle* may be the same one that we can find in the following quotation:
- . . . Yet the ways of Providence are inscrutable; and many a murder has been done, and many an innocent virgin has lifted her white arms, beseeching its aid in her extremity, and all in vain, so that, though Providence is infinitely good and wise, (and perhaps for that very reason,) it may be half an eternity before *the great circle of its scheme* shall bring us the superabundant recompense for all these sorrows! (IV, 413)
- (29) The title for the American edition Hawthorne had in mind at first was 'Saint Hilda's Shrine.' (IV, Introduction to *Marble Faun*, XXVI) It is well-known that Hilda was modelled after Sophia Hawthorne, who was also copyist; we can see her drawing for "The Gentle Boy." (1842)

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