HENRY JAMES AND GOTHIC ROMANCE

DISSENTATION

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By

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This study was inspired several years ago when I had become interested in Henry James's handling of what he called "the eternal time problem," the dilemma the artist always faces when he tries to create the semblance of the flux of human time. Like Poe, Melville, and Hawthorne, James overcame many of the difficulties of the time problem by relying upon the organic principle of composition and by adding emotional depth to his fiction with dramatic artifices and symbols, many of which are Gothic. Because this study is concerned only with Henry James, I have not attempted to draw elaborate comparisons among James, Poe, Melville, and Hawthorne; that in itself is a separate consideration. In attempting to point out the Gothic in James's fiction, I have relied primarily upon the classic Gothic models for definition and prototype.

As the work has progressed and crystallized, I have become indebted to particular people. I owe special gratitude to Professor Thomas Woodson, my adviser, for his reliable criticism and the many hours spent in my
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE ................................................................. ii

Chapter

I. THE GOTHIC TRADITION AND HENRY JAMES .... 1

II. GOTHIC SETTING IN THE FICTION OF
    HENRY JAMES .................................................... 32

III. JAMES'S GOTHIC CHARACTERS ...................... 87

IV. INHERENT GOTHIC PROPERTIES: THE
    SUPERNATURAL AND THE RESTRICTED
    VIEWPOINT ...................................................... 143

CONCLUSIONS ......................................................... 204

LIST OF WORKS CONSULTED ........................................ 211
CHAPTER I

THE GOTHIC TRADITION AND HENRY JAMES

The Gothic tradition in literature ripened and flowered during the early years of the Romantic movement,\(^1\) when excessive suspense and an exaggerated preference for violent, natural settings in times past manifested the first stages of the reaction against the objective realism of neoclassical literature. Whenever the term \textit{gothic} had appeared during the early eighteenth century, it generally had done so with reprobation, for Augustans used the term with disdain to describe those excessively ornamental and medieval things inspired by fancy rather than reason.\(^2\) It was synonymous with \textit{barbarous} and stood in direct contrast to \textit{civilized}. Gradually the term became less odious, however, and for a while it simply referred to the Middle Ages and then to the style of arched and vaulted architecture which had prevailed in western Europe from the twelfth through the sixteenth centuries. But in the eighteenth century, the Middle Ages were regarded as a dark period of English history, remembered
best for their superstitions, expressions of barbarism, and violent passions. Thus the term *gothic*, in addition to meaning medieval and fanciful, began to accrue the connotations of a darkly mysterious, supernatural, and emotional past.\(^3\)

Although Gothic fiction is said to have been born in the last half of the eighteenth century, there is evidence that its components had been in the air for a long time. Edith Birkhead traces the gothic spirit, which she describes as an interest in suspense and the supernatural, from the ancient myths, through the folk legends, through the works of the Elizabethan dramatists, and finally through the works of the graveyard poets before it appears in fiction after the middle of the eighteenth century.\(^4\)

Before the movement fully evolved, there had been a growing taste for the Gothic in all forms of art. Although W. P. Ker maintains that the initial appeal of the Gothic revival was architectural,\(^5\) there also had been an increased appreciation for landscape painters like Claude Lorrain, Salvator Rosa, and Nicolas Poussin, whose works are adorned with remains of ancient buildings. But it is, indeed, Gothic architecture which offered to literature its focal point, the Gothic castle.\(^6\) Kenneth
Clark observes that by itself the renewed interest in Gothic architecture would not have been sufficient to produce Gothic romance. That interest rather had to combine with a revived attention to the traditional lore of old, heathen Europe and to Italy with her dark history, and with the influence of Rousseau, who extolled pure, wild nature and deplored sterile, corrupt civilization; it combined also with a proliferation of German and French romances which reanimated chivalry, medievalism, and tyrannical barons and stressed dungeons, tortures, and shrieking spectres. All this then influenced the natural development of English literature and produced Gothic fiction.

Despite the evidence of earlier nurturing of Gothic romance, Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) must be credited with establishing both the form and the label "Gothic novel." It made way for a multitude of followers. Walpole's first edition of *The Castle of Otranto* pretended to be a translation "by William Marshall, Gent. From the original Italian of Onuphrio Muralto, Canon of the Church of St. Nicholas, at Otranto"; but when the novel became an immediate success, Walpole admitted authorship. Walpole's castle is the scene of marvelous and horrible events. The story begins with the
death of Manfred's only son, Conrad, Prince of Otranto, and ends with Manfred's killing by mistake his only daughter, Matilda. Between the two tragic events, Manfred futilely pursues Isabella through the subterranean passages of his castle, portraits step from their frames, statues bleed, ghosts appear, noble births are discovered, and wrongs are redressed. Walpole describes the setting only briefly, but he does attempt to define, superficially, the emotional states of the characters, particularly those of the angry, lustful Manfred and of the fearful Isabella. Although Walpole's psychology is elementary, he placed in currency a useful collection of devices and motifs.

The success of Walpole's Castle of Otranto revealed an audience ready for a new fiction of the fantastic rather than the ordinary. Clara Reeve, a writer of only minor importance, responded to the success of The Castle of Otranto with a romance which she declared was more credible than Walpole's preposterous tale. The Champion of Virtue appeared in 1777, but when it was reissued the following year it became The Old English Baron: a Gothic Story. It is of interest primarily because she added a mysterious empty room to the Gothic castle, because she began to refine the ghostly effects that were drawn so extravagantly by Walpole, and because she emphasized,
still more than Walpole, human behavior. Her strongest purpose obviously lay, however, in the moral lesson that her fable enforced.\textsuperscript{10}

Although writers like Clara Reeve, Sophia and Harriett Lee, Charlotte Smith, and others\textsuperscript{11} contributed to the development of the form, most critics believe that the vogue of the Gothic novel was mainly due to Ann Radcliffe’s popularity and success. Her first novels, The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne (1789), The Sicilian Romance (1790), and The Romance of the Forest (1792), reveal early the most memorable characteristic of her style, the exploitation of apparently supernatural phenomena which turn out to have natural causes. Her next novel, The Mysteries of Udolpho (1794), was an immense success; although it, too, is heavy with wonder and suspense, here she begins to be openly concerned with motive. But her last work, The Italian (1797), is more skillfully unified than any of the others.\textsuperscript{12} The landscape is described less frequently than it is in her earlier novels and is offered primarily to enhance the character of Schedoni, considered by many to be the triumph of her imagination. When Schedoni is first presented in the novel, Mrs. Radcliffe describes him as lacking "the melancholy of a sensible and wounded heart"
and later as being able to see "only evil" in human
nature. Pity emerges, however, in the paternal passion
he exhibits for Ellena, and the reader is forced to
admire his firmness, which Mrs. Radcliffe says "never
forsook him." Schedoni, a more complicated character than
any other she created, offers an interesting subject for
psychological analysis. But other characters, not so
finely executed as Schedoni, are memorable, too, and they,
as well as the scenes they people, have remained as
conventions of the Gothic school.

Matthew Gregory Lewis once asserted in a letter
that he was inspired to write The Monk after reading
The Mysteries of Udolpho; however, most students of
Gothic fiction believe that his dependence upon German
literature was greater than his inspiration from Mrs.
Radcliffe. Her vividly described natural settings and
her practical explanations for marvelous events are far
from his realm of surrealistic horror. Although he
wrote many plays and poems, The Monk (1795) is his best
remembered work and his most significant contribution to
the development of Gothic fiction. It has two separate
stories, that of the lovers Raymond and Agnes and that of
Ambrosio, the demonic monk. Although Edith Birkhead says
that all Lewis' characters "speak as if they were behind
the footlights, shouting to the gallery."\textsuperscript{15} Ambrosio is a particularly forceful character insofar as Lewis reveals psychological insight into the monk's struggle with religion and passion. The work is remarkable also for its descriptions of physical torture and its passages depicting grotesque gestures and emotions.

Two distinct currents of Gothic fiction, the sentimental suspense of Mrs. Radcliffe and the sensational terrors of Lewis, seem to have coalesced in the imagination of Charles Robert Maturin. His insight into character, his vivid descriptions, and his sensitive style lie close to the art of Mrs. Radcliffe, but in his reliance upon the supernatural he is more like Lewis.\textsuperscript{16} His first novel, The Fatal Revenge or The Family of Montorio (1807), anticipates the mental and physical agony of Melmoth the Wanderer (1820), which generally is considered the best of Gothic romances.\textsuperscript{17} Although Melmoth abounds in Gothic machinery—hidden manuscripts, mysterious portraits that come to life, ruins, storms, the Spanish Inquisition, and other examples—here the devices are used with greater intensity and greater skill. Maturin's style is lucid and especially expressive as he traces the alterations in the human mind that moves toward insanity.

In addition to Mrs. Radcliffe, Monk Lewis, and
Charles Robert Maturin, other writers are important for their various contributions to the Gothic form. William Beckford's *Vathek* (1786) is considered a Gothic novel because its air of mystery is accounted for by supernatural events and because a sense of horror is emphasized throughout. Vathek, a Faustian spirit seeking infinite knowledge, sets out with his paramour Nouronihar for the palace of subterranean fire, where he finds magnificent wealth and great power but, alas, eternal torture as well. The horror of the final scene placing it close to the artistry of Lewis, *Vathek* is recognized as the best imitation of a genuine eastern tale and as the channel through which the orient influenced the development of Gothic romance.18

William Godwin in his *Caleb Williams* (1794) and *St. Leon* (1799) creates an atmosphere of horror that is not predicated upon suspense; rather it is based credibly upon human pain and sickness with setting only incidental. Unlike that of his predecessors, his use of the supernatural is limited; he invokes it only as a means of showing the effects of fear upon the human mind. *Caleb Williams*, his most popular novel, is the story of a poor man's persecution by the powerful and rich. The psychological effect of guilt and the entanglement of human motives are studied
as the enigmatic Faulkland attempts to retain power over Caleb Williams, who has discovered the secret crime of his employer.

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) also falls within the realm of the Gothic. Although she did not invent the scientific romance, she was the first to blend it with the conventions of the Gothic school. Eino Railo says that "*Frankenstein* enriched the stage-setting of terror-romanticism by making its mysterious centre, hitherto the haunted room, the laboratory of a cabalistic seeker after knowledge...."19 However, in the whole development of Gothic romance, Mary Shelley is important not only for her contributions to setting but primarily for the emphasis she added to the psychological dimension of Gothic fiction. On the surface *Frankenstein* is a factual account of the scientific creation of a monster, initially benevolent but ultimately evil through social rejection. *Frankenstein* disowns his monster but cannot escape him, and thus the duality of human nature is suggested. The monster is both a projection of *Frankenstein*'s mind and an embodiment of his guilt for separating himself from his own kind and for Promethean over-reaching.

Gothic romance influenced English fiction for
many years, and this influence was felt in America as well as in England. Early accounts of public taste in America confirm that the interest in sentimental fiction had given way to an appreciation for the pleasant terrors of Mrs. Radcliffe. Thus, many American writers, as well as English, attempted to imitate her. Charles Brockden Brown was one of the earliest American novelists who prided himself on "calling forth the passions and engaging the sympathy of the reader by means not hitherto employed by preceding authors," and he spoke slightingly of the "puerile superstitions and exploded manners, Gothic castles and chimeras of Mrs. Radcliffe." But despite his aversion to Mrs. Radcliffe, Brown's technique unmistakably resembles hers; although he does not describe at length the gloomy landscape, he adopts her device of revealing natural causes for what seemed to be manifestations of the supernatural. Although his plots are often spoiled by inadequate conclusions, Brown's best known novels, Wieland (1798), Ormond (1799), Arthur Mervyn (1799), and Edgar Huntly (1801), reveal a deep interest in the dynamic potential of the human mind.

The severity and gloom of Brown's novels contrast greatly with the gentle fears of Washington Irving's tales of "Geoffrey Crayon," published twenty years later,
which offer only a small degree of dread. In "The Spectre Bridegroom," for example, the ghostly rider of the famous ballad is set in a new environment and affably ridiculed. Although the group of "Strange Stories by a Nervous Gentleman" in Tales of a Traveller (1824) contains elements of horror (for example, guillotined ladies reincarnated by evil spirits), Irving's terrors inevitably are abated by levity.24

Nathaniel Hawthorne was surely more personally melancholy than Washington Irving, and his tales and romances reveal a penchant for a mysterious atmosphere of foreboding and a fascination with death. Although his descriptions are subdued and allegorical and his art does not extend to the domain of physical horror, his tales and novels nevertheless are strongly Gothic.25

In his critical biography of Hawthorne, Mark Van Doren comments about Hawthorne's specific relationship to Gothic romance:

About the gothic romances he devoured there can be no surprise. John Neal and Charles Brockden Brown in America, and in England William Godwin, Mrs. Radcliffe, Horace Walpole, and Maturin's Melmoth the Wanderer—he went through them all, nor afterward was free of their controlling symbols: the mysterious portrait, the moldy parchment, the deformed villain, the secret crime, the illicit elixir, the
esoteric research, the devil's laugh, the gleaming eye, the portentous word. He was seldom free enough of these contraptions; at the end, indeed, when his powers were failing, he fell back into them as into a pit. But at his best he made them serve him willingly and well; he forced them, that is, to do moral and metaphysical work.26

Like Hawthorne, Edgar Allan Poe was fascinated both by the dark side of the human psyche and by death. He, too, exploited the Gothic power of suggestion, and his art at times seems nearly hypnotic. Poe's ability to avoid all impressions not relevant to his effect gives his tales an unusual unity and emphasizes the terrifying climax, usually reached after a gradual building up of emotion. From Gothic romance he may have derived scenes of remote castles and deserted abbeys, which he elaborated upon. But Poe's psychology went beyond that of most of his predecessors. He offers minute analyses of those personalities in which the blackness of human nature has gained pre-eminence, and his subtle artistry ensures an unforgettable impression.

Like Hawthorne, Poe might be said to have used the "contraptions" of Gothic romance.27 But as Robert Hume as pointed out, Gothicism constitutes much more than mummmery. Gothic fiction is based upon the explor-
tion of human reaction to fright and dread, whether the author's purpose is to shock and alarm his readers or to depict the psychology of human motive. Although various types of Gothic fiction emerged as the form began to crystallize, the characteristic that transcends all classification is the weighted and sinister atmosphere.\textsuperscript{28}

By the time that Henry James began writing fiction in the mid-nineteenth century, the Gothic romance \textit{per se} was no longer in vogue; it had given way to the fiction of Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, the Brontës, and others.\textsuperscript{29} But the tradition was not extinct. Its residue has been discovered in much of the fiction that followed,\textsuperscript{30} and there is good reason to believe that the tradition should have appealed strongly to Henry James. In his biography of Henry James, Dupee cites evidence of the appeal:

To James in his extreme youth Balzac could be no more than a rather remote ideal. And to be influenced by Hawthorne meant to imitate his very subjects and tone, as in "A Romance of Certain Old Clothes," which begins, "Towards the middle of the eighteenth century there lived in the Province of Massachusetts a widowed gentlewoman," etc. For the rest, he could at least reach back through Hawthorne, as well as Poe, to the Gothic romance and so to a common folklore stock of wonder and terror. This he did, and one group of his early tales is peopled with ghosts, alter-egos, and
vampires in human form. Not very remarkable stories, they do nevertheless sound some of his characteristic themes; and he was to return to the Gothic note in the more sophisticated wonder tales of his maturity.31

Leon Edel also affirms James's familiarity with the tradition of Gothic romance:

He knew the world of goblins and demons and haunted houses, and he knew, too, the history of witchcraft in America. Certain critics have emphasized his saturation with Hawthorne's fantasies and allegories, his admiration for such tales as Rappaccini's Daughter and Young Goodman Brown which he considered "little masterpieces." But if he had read Hawthorne closely he had also read Poe; at eighteen or nineteen he had translated Merimee's tale of terror, La Venus de l'île, and was acquainted with the works of Balzac, including the French master's tales of the supernatural; and from his earliest days he had known the ghost stories of Charles Dickens. He knew Wilkie Collins and he considered Sheridan le Fanu "ideal reading in a country house for the hours after midnight." He was a devoted reader of Blackwood's magazine and in its pages found some of the finest tales of terror of the time, by writers now long forgotten. He invokes in The Ghostly Rental the name of the German romance writer E. T. A. Hoffman, author of Phantasiestücke and Elixir des Teufels, whose tales inspired Offenbach's opera Les Contes d'Hoffmann. He had read the Gothic romances....32
James himself reveals something about his knowledge of the Gothic. In 1865 in a review of *Aurora Floyd*, he made the following significant comment:

She has been preceded in the same path by Mr. Wilkie Collins34 whose "Woman in White", with its diaries and letters and its general ponderosity, was a kind of nineteenth century version of "Clarissa Harlowe." To Mr. Collins belongs the credit of having introduced into fiction those most mysterious of mysteries, the mysteries which are at our own doors. This innovation gave a new impetus to the literature of horrors. It was fatal to the authority of Mrs. Radcliffe and her everlasting castle in the Apennines. What are the Apennines to us, or we to the Apennines? Instead of the terrors of "Udolpho", we were treated to the terrors of the cheerful countryhouse and the busy London lodgings. And there is no doubt that these were infinitely the more terrible. Mrs. Radcliffe's mysteries were romances pure and simple; while those of Mr. Wilkie Collins were stern reality.35

Although James may have objected to what Edel calls the "clanking-chain trap-door ghosts" of Mrs. Radcliffe, he obviously absorbed much of the tradition. Even the contrivances of Gothic romance appear often in his fiction; mansions with labyrinthine passages, mysterious crimes, old manuscripts, portraits and statuary that seem to be alive, European villains, convents and cathedrals, ghosts, and other Gothic devices abound in
James's stories and novels, although often on new grounds and under new circumstances. Like the early Gothic novelists, he was aware of the usefulness of suspense and terror, but he believed they could be heightened when they were removed from the realm of the fantastic and juxtaposed with the commonplace. In the same review of *Aurora Floyd*, James says that "a good ghost-story, to be half as terrible as a good murder-story, must be connected at a hundred points with the common objects of life. The best ghost-story probably ever written--a tale published some years ago in *Blackwood's Magazine*--was constructed with an admirable understanding of this principle. Half of its force was derived from its prosaic, commonplace, day light accessories."

James's own fiction ranges from the improbable to the mundane. However, a careful study of his writing does not place him solely among realists like Howells, where some critics would relegate him. Rather, he is a curious blend of both traditions, an amalgam that is easily understood when one recalls James's own distinction between reality and romance. He defines reality in "The Art of Fiction" (1884) when he comments upon Besant's injunctions that events and characters "must be real and such as might be met with in actual life." "The value,"
says James, "of these different injunctions—so beautiful and so vague—is wholly in the meaning one attaches to them. The characters, the situation, which strike one as real will be those that touch and interest one most, but the measure of reality is very difficult to fix."
James goes on to say that "it is equally excellent and inconclusive to say that one must write from experience.... What kind of experience is intended and where does it begin and end? Experience is never limited, and it is never complete.... It is the very atmosphere of the mind; and when the mind is imaginative...it takes to itself the faintest hints of life, it converts the very pulses of the air into revelations." 36 More to the point, in his Preface to the New York edition of The American (1907), James explains his concept of romance:

The only general attribute of projected romance that I can see, the only one that fits all its cases, is the fact of the kind of experience with which it deals—experience liberated, so to speak; experience disengaged, disembroiled, disencumbered, exempt from the conditions that we usually know to attach to it.... The greatest intensity may so be arrived at evidently—when the sacrifice of community, of the "related" sides of situations, has not been too rash. It must to this end not flagrantly betray itself; we must even be kept if possible, for our illusion, from suspecting any sacrifice at all. The balloon of expe-
rience is in fact of course tied to
the earth, and under that necessity
we swing, thanks to a rope of remark-
able length, in the more or less
commodious car of the imagination....
The art of the romancer is, "for the
fun of it," insidiously to cut the
cable, to cut it without our detecting
him. What I have recognized then in
"The American," much to my surprise
and after long years, is that the expe-
rience here represented is the dis-
connected and uncontrolled experience--
uncontrolled by our general sense of
"the way things happen"--which romance
alone more or less successfully palms
off on us.37

Upon those terms, it seems clear that, for James, the
boundaries of realism invade the domain of romance.

The distinctions between realism and romance
had concerned writers long before James began his own
critical contemplations. The eighteenth century had
begun with the rejection of the previously popular
heroic romance, and critics generally agreed that one
distinguished between the novel and the romance as one
distinguished between realistic and idealistic fiction.
In 1785 Clara Reeve wrote in The Progress of Romance,
"The Romance is an heroic fable, which treats of fabulous
persons and things. The novel is a picture of real
life and manners, and of the time in which it is written."
William Congreve in the Preface to his Incognita (1692)
had said essentially the same thing, and it was not until the rise of Romantic philosophy, perhaps with Coleridge's defense of the use of the supernatural in art, that the distinctions between the categories began to blur.38

James's own romantic sensibility would have been particularly receptive to the reality of the supernatural. The James family were strong believers in the supernatural, and both Henry James, Sr., and William recorded experiences with ghostly visitors.39 Although Alice recorded no such visitations, her journal describes her emotions as she struggled to overcome unconscious impulses that pushed horrible images into her mind.40 Such episodes must have been absorbed by Henry James's consciousness.

James was impressed also with the grand ruin, like the supernatural, an essential element of early Gothic fiction. In his travels he often was a guest at castles and country houses with their "haunted" rooms and traditional ghosts. He had gone to Bellosguardo, near Florence, and he had explored the ancient villa with its tradition of a ghostly monk who had been burned at the stake in a Florentine square. Edel concludes that "ancient houses, with their family histories, their monument rooms, and their ghostly memories stirred the imagination of Henry James."41
In addition to the James family's interest in the psychic and to his own affection for ancient castles, James was receptive to the Gothic tradition in still another important way. The psychological aspect of Gothic fiction has long been recognized, just as James has long been accepted as a psychological writer. The Gothic writer's concern with exploring human motive and reaction is explained well by Shelley in the 1818 Preface to Frankenstein; in his wife's name he defends her preposterous story:

I shall not be supposed as according the remotest degree of serious faith to such an imagination, yet in assuming it as a basis of a work of fancy, I have not considered myself as merely weaving a series of supernatural terrors. The event on which the interest of the story depends is exempt from the disadvantages of a mere tale of spectres or enchantment. It was recommended by the novelty of the situations which it develops, and however impossible as a physical fact, affords a point of view to the imagination for the delineating of human passions more comprehensive and commanding than any which the ordinary relations of existing events can yield.42

James emphasized his own interest in human passions when he wrote in "The Art of Fiction," "A psychological reason is, to my imagination, an object adorably pictorial; to catch the tint of its complexion--I feel as
if that idea might inspire one to Titianesque efforts. There are few things more exciting to me, in short, than a psychological reason...."

J. M. S. Tompkins maintains that "what came to light in the Gothic romances...were the suppressed neurotic and erotic impulses of educated society." And Robert Hume sees in the development of Gothic fiction an increasing interest in human psychology. He says that "as early as Walpole (1764) there is a considerable amount of concern for interior mental processes" and that "gradually the suspense of external circumstances is de-emphasized in favor of increasing psychological concern with moral ambiguity." Indeed, the same might be said of Henry James. Although many of his early stories are overtly terrifying with human motive only incidental, he gradually becomes more and more concerned with human reactions in a world fraught with anxiety.

To convey the subtle shades of human evil, fear, and awakening, James often draws upon the devices of Gothic romance. In fact, it sometimes seems as if James has borrowed a Gothic convention and simply embroidered upon it to suit his own purpose. The point is illustrated clearly in a comparison between an entry in James's notebook and a passage from Mrs. Radcliffe's
Mysteries of Udolpho, which James doubtless had read but perhaps had forgotten. In his notebook, dated January 22, 1888, James had written:

Imagine a door—either walled-up, or that has been long locked—at which there is an occasional knocking—a knocking which—as the other side of the door is inaccessible—can only be ghostly. The occupant of the house or room, containing the door, has long been familiar with the sound; and regarding it as ghostly, has ceased to heed it particularly—as the ghostly presence remains on the other side of the door, and never reveals itself in other ways. But this person may be imagined to have some great and constant trouble; and it may be observed by another person, relating the story, that the knocking increases with each fresh manifestation of the trouble. He breaks open the door and the trouble ceases—as if the spirit had desired to be admitted, that it might interpose, redeem and protect.45

In Udolpho the servant Annette is revealing to Emily the history of Signora Laurentini:

"Holy Virgin! what noise is that? Did not you hear a sound, ma'amselle?"
"It was only the wind," said Emily; "but do come to the end of your story...."
"There, again!" cried Annette suddenly—"I heard it again! it was not fancy, ma'amselle!"
"Hush!" said Emily, trembling. They listened, and continuing to sit quite still, Emily heard a slow knocking
against the wall. It came repeatedly. Annette then screamed loudly, and the chamber door slowly opened. 46

Although such a ghostly sound may be considered a contraption of the Gothic school, it does not remain that in James's hands. In Udolpho the sound is discovered to be the innocent knocking of a servant, a device useful only to stimulate fear in the reader; but one can see from James's outline that the ghostly knocking in his story would be important not to evoke fear but to enable James to explore the psychological causes and effects of fear.

Although James reveals a superficial use of Gothic devices in some of his early stories, he eventually begins to blend Gothic materials into a much more complex fabric. Noting this skillful blend, Richard Chase has said that "often one has difficulty in pinning down any one element of a James novel as belonging to romance because the author has so completely subdued and transmuted it to suit his exacting novelistic purposes." 47 A careful study shows, however, that not only the elements of romance, but, more specifically, the elements of Gothic romance, can be pointed out in James's settings, his characters, his use of the supernatural, and his themes. What
ultimately emerges from such a study is that James indeed took many of the props from the older Gothic school, but as they enhanced his art he gave them new meaning and anticipated a later fiction.
FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER I


2 Pope, for example, in his *Preface to Shakespeare*, deplores the irregularity of Gothic architecture.

3 W. P. Ker has pointed out some inconsistencies in usage as the term gothic began to change meanings. He recalls that Addison tried to show that the old English ballad *Chevy Chase* has some of the qualities of classical epic; Addison did not use the ballad, however, "as an alternative to the modern taste for correct writing, but on the contrary, as a reproof to the metaphysical school, an example of 'the essential and inherent perfection of simplicity of thought.' It is significant that the opposite manner, which is not simple, but broken up into epigram and points of wit, is called 'Gothick'; the medieval ballad, which many people would have reckoned

4The Tale of Terror (1921; rpt. New York: Russell and Russell, 1963). See Chapter I, pp. 1-15. Although most critics establish the birth of Gothic fiction proper with Walpole's Castle of Otranto, Miss Birkhead says that "while poetry was heralding the dawn of Romanticism, fiction, which had revealed signs of a tendency to become more rational, began itself to react" and that "despite the great success of the novels of Richardson and Fielding, the novels of Smollett marked a return towards the older idea of fiction: the novel of adventure." It was Smollett, for example, who anticipated the Gothic romance by special devices and moods and who vindicated the use of terror in his Preface to Ferdinand Count Fathom (1754).

5See Ker, "The Literary Influence of the Middle Ages," Cambridge History of English Literature, X. 245.

6In The Haunted Castle (1927; rpt. New York: The Humanities Press, 1964), Eino Raito says that "the entire stock-in-trade of horror romanticism in its oldest and purest form consists...chiefly of the properties and staff of this haunted castle, and as we proceed farther in time, of motives based in the first instance upon these..." (p. 7).

7The Gothic Revival (1950; rpt. London: Penguin Books, 1964), pp. 17-33. Sir Kenneth says that "it is impossible to show a smooth interaction, or even a close parallel, between eighteenth century Gothic novels and buildings. The Gothicness, so to speak, of the romances consisted in gloom, wildness, and fear; and the eighteenth century was far too sensible to admit these qualities into domestic architecture.... Gothic forms were used to create an atmosphere of lightness and variety, not of horror and mystery." Thus, it was the responsibility of the novelist to exploit the castle's potential for gloom and horror.
8 In *The Gothic Flame* (1957; rpt. New York: Russell and Russell, 1966), Devendra P. Varma observes that "within the main stream of the Gothic movement there flowed a dangerously complicated assembly of cross-currents" (p. 32). Goethe and Schiller are surely significant to the development of Gothic romance, and some believe that the Abbé Prévost and De Sade exerted an equal influence. See also Baker, pp. 175-177.


10 See Tompkins, p. 229.

11 See Baker, pp. 179-192.

12 Caston de Blondeville, written in 1802 and published posthumously, reveals some innovations in her style. Her hero is no longer pale and romantic but stolid and prosaic. And here for the first time she creates a real ghost. Her former disregard for historical accuracy is replaced by heavy documentation and elaborate descriptions of customs, which she had researched in ancient records.

13 See the *Life and Correspondence of M. G. Lewis* (London, 1839), I, 122.

14 During 1792 Lewis lived in Weimar, met Goethe, and no doubt read many of the plays and romances from what Carlyle describes as the "bowl and dagger department," in which "black forests and Lubberland, sensuality and horror, the spectre men and the charmed moonshine, shall not be wanting" ("State of German Literature," *The Complete Works of Thomas Carlyle* /New York: The Kelmscott Society (n.d.), I, 36).

15 Birkhead, p. 68.

Varma says that "with all his faults Maturin was the greatest as well as the last of the Goths" (p. 93).


The Haunted Castle, p. 310.

See Birkhead, pp. 157-184; Varma, pp. 173-205.

For example, see L. D. Loshe, The Early American Novel (New York, 1907).


See Birkhead, pp. 197-200.


In Nathaniel Hawthorne and the Tradition of Gothic Romance, Essays and Studies on American Language and Literature, No. 4 (Upsala, 1946), Jane Lundblad describes the principal traits of Gothic fiction; she then catalogs the appearance of the traits in each of Hawthorne's tales and romances.


Alice M. Killen in Le roman terrifiant ou roman noir de Walpole a Anne Radcliffe (Paris, 1924) and Helene Richter in Geschichte der englischen Romantik (Halle, 1911) first categorized the superficial elements of Gothic fiction: the manuscript, the castle, the mysterious crime, religious characters, Italian villains, deformed characters, ghosts, magic, natural phenomena, armoured knights, works of art, and blood, all to be found with varying frequency in Poe's fiction.
Robert Hume distinguishes between terror-Gothic and horror-Gothic, preferring that classification over sentimental-Gothic, historical-Gothic, and terror-Gothic, which is offered by Montague Summers. Edith Birkhead discusses the novel of suspense (Mrs. Radcliffe) and the novel of terror (Lewis and Maturin). Ernest Baker, however, says that "mystery and wonder, fear and suspense, sensation and terror, are some of the labels affixed by different historians to the romantic novels that traded in one or another, or in all these excitements, during the last few decades of the eighteenth century. The rather absurd term 'Gothic' is perhaps more convenient, and may be allowed to include both those that contented themselves with a discreet use of fear and suspense, and also those which sought the grosser sensations of terror and brutality aimed to make the flesh creep" (p. 175).

Robert D. Mayo in "How Long Was Gothic Fiction in Vogue?" Modern Language Notes, 68 (1943), 64, says that the popular vogue for romances of terror was over in 1814 but that their appeal was still fresh in the public mind.

The Gothic spirit recently has been traced in Dickens, the Brontës, Hardy, Conrad, Melville, and Faulkner, to name only a few.


Introduction, The Ghostly Tales of Henry James (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1948), p. x. James also makes a significant reference to Horace Walpole in the notes he left for his unfinished novel The Sense of the Past. In explaining his concept of a character who hovers about one of the sisters who figure in the life of the early Ralph Pendrel, James says, "Yes, the more I think of the little man (he must be little) who circles about the younger sister, and of whom she has an intimate horror—he rich, by the way, too, and thereby desired by the mother, and with a small sort of raffiné (of that time) Horace Walpole atmosphere about him...." James afterward refers to this character as the little Horace Walpole man. The Novels and Tales,

33 written by Mary Elizabeth Braddon (1837-1915).

34 Edith Birkhead places Collins firmly in the Gothic tradition, observing that "he revels in terror for its own sake" and "weaves elaborate plots of hair-raising events" (p. 255).

35 The Nation, 1 (November 9, 1865), 593.

36 "The Art of Fiction" first appeared in the September 1884 issue of Longman's Magazine. It reappeared in book form in a volume entitled The Art of Fiction (Boston, 1885), which also included Besant's essay.

37 The Novels and Tales, II (1907), xvii-xviii.


39 Edel, pp. vi-vii.

40 Edel, p. viii.

41 Edel, p. xi.


43 Introduction to Varma, The Gothic Flame, p. xiii.

44 p. 283.


CHAPTER II

GOTHIC SETTING IN THE FICTION OF HENRY JAMES

Sir Kenneth Clark has said of the Gothic that it was "exotic; if not remote in space, like Chinoisserie, it was remote in time."¹ Early examples of Gothic fiction are remote in both dimensions, a characteristic that coincides with the eighteenth century's awakening of the historical spirit and the growing fondness for the uncommon and the strange. Because part of the interest in Gothic fiction was predicated upon fear and suspense, unfamiliar lands and a dimly perceived past provided rich soil for the nurturing of terrifying events and characters. As the form developed, however, the original medieval setting began to fade away; what remained was a setting removed in space with the atmosphere of the past simply conjured up by the visible environment.

Like his Gothic and romantic predecessors, Henry James recognized the value of distance. In his Preface to the New York edition of The American (1907) he says, "I have ever, in general, found it difficult to write of
places under too immediate an impression—the impression that prevents standing off and allows neither space nor time for perspective."²

None of James's stories or novels is set in the far past, and only a few are set noticeably in the past by more than twenty or thirty years. Some of the exceptions are "The Romance of Certain Old Clothes,"³ "Gabrielle de Bergerac,"⁴ "The Turn of the Screw,"⁵ "The Aspern Papers,"⁶ and The Sense of the Past.⁷ Although James had a romantic's view of times gone by,⁸ as his themes began to crystallize it became increasingly clear that they could not be transposed effectively to a much earlier period. In the Preface to the New York edition of "The Aspern Papers" he explains, "I delight in a palpable imaginable visitable past."⁹

Like Maturin, Lewis, and others, James had discovered that romantic distance could be achieved without placing his stories in ancient times; the dark persistence of the past, with its incumbent attributes of suspense and fear, could be invoked by the extant relics of old civilizations. It is this quality of Europe that accounts for part of James's preoccupation with that continent and illuminates another aspect of what has been called the international theme in James's fiction.
Although James's fiction reveals various philosophic and aesthetic concerns, the dominant theme of all his fiction is that of a naïf making the arduous journey to self-knowledge. That knowledge depends upon one's widening his view of life, encompassing a larger perspective, confronting all aspects of life, including corruption and evil. Such is the theme of early Gothic stories, and the journey inevitably winds through suspense-filled lands and horrifying adventures before it ends—and not necessarily happily. The hero may be wiser at the end of his journey, but he probably is not unquestionably happy. Robert Hume has pointed out that, indeed, Gothic writing is distinguishable by the dark ambiguities of its conclusions. Likewise, few of James's stories offer reconciliations. Certainly Christopher Newman is wiser but hardly joyous as he returns to America after his journey, and an enlightened Isabel Archer seems only resigned as she ultimately decides to return to her villainous husband.

The United States is the setting for ten of the first eleven tales Henry James wrote between 1864 and 1868. Then early in 1869 he made his first adult journey to Europe, and the impression was indelible. Subsequent stories and novels began to reflect James's glimmering predilection for European setting and the embryo of his
major theme. Although his first novel, *Watch and Ward*,\(^\text{13}\) is set in America, the heroine is sent to Rome to be "educated," a process which sometimes consists only of recognizing potential dangers within human existence.

Just as the early writer of Gothic fiction understood the relationship of danger to his theme of initiation, he also understood Burkean aesthetics of the sublime, for the two concepts are related.\(^\text{14}\) First among the qualities which render an object terrible and hence a source of the sublime, is, according to Burke, "obscurity," because it is geared "to excite the ideas of pain and danger."

"To make anything very terrible, obscurity seems in general to be necessary." Burke wrote that "it is our ignorance of things that causes all our admiration and chiefly excites our passions. Knowledge and acquaintance make the most striking causes affect but little."\(^\text{15}\)

Mrs. Radcliffe took her stories away from English soil, as did others, for the sake of obscurity, and she chose settings that would be conducive to the development of her theme, the success of which depended upon her exploitation of fear and suspense. Henry James likewise chose to set his stories in Europe for perhaps the same reason. Because he was concerned with depicting the journey to self-awareness, he saw in Europe the climate
for the acquisition of that large perspective; Europe offered both culture and corruption, the latter essential in his innocents' confrontation with all of life. Moreover, because he wished to sustain his readers' interest by making the journey exciting, he saw that the old world, with its dark history, could evoke more fear, could suggest more danger and evil, than could the new. In The Wings of the Dove Milly Theale expresses the idea clearly when she says, "There were more dangers, clearly, round about Lancaster Gate than one suspected in New York or could dream of in Boston."}

That James regarded the historical depth of Europe important to his theme is obvious from his many references to the old world's past. For example, in Roderick Hudson (1875) Rowland Mallett rambles through Rome with significant impressions:

Rowland took his way through one of the quiet corners of the Trastevere. He was particularly fond of this part of Rome, though he could hardly have expressed the sinister charm of it. As you pass away from the dusky swarming purlieus of the Ghetto you emerge into a region of empty, soundless, grass-grown lanes and alleys, where the shabby houses seem mouldering away in disuse and yet your footstep brings figures of startling Roman type to the doorways. There are few monuments here, but no part of Rome seemed more
oppressively historic, more weighted with a ponderous past, more blighted with the melancholy of things that had had their day. 18

In The Portrait of a Lady (1881) Mrs. Touchett's villa in Rome has a particularly evocative effect on Isabel:

Mrs. Touchett inhabited an historic building in a narrow street whose very name recalled the strife of medieval factions; and found compensation for the darkness of her frontage in the modicity of the rent and the brightness of a garden where nature itself looked as archaic as the rugged architecture of the palace and which cleared and scented the rooms in regular use. To live in such a place was, for Isabel, to hold to her ear all day a shell of the sea of the past. 19

The dual aspects of Europe are suggested in "Travelling Companions" (1870) as young Brooke departs from the Evanses to go farther south, to Florence, where he, too, enlarges his vision of life:

The aspect of all this sunny solitude and haunted vacancy used to fill me with a mingled sense of exaltation and dread. There were moments when my fancy swept that vast funereal desert with passionate curiosity and desire, moments when it felt only its potent sweetness and its high historic charm. But there were other times when the air seemed so heavy with the exhalation of unburied death, so bright with
sheeted ghosts, that I turned short about
and galloped back to the city.20

The importance of a confrontation with the old
world in the journey from innocence to self-knowledge is
revealed especially well in one of James's novels that
generally is considered atypical of his art. In *The
Princess Casamassima* (1886), set in London, little
Hyacinth Robinson goes to the continent, and after he
arrives in Paris, he first is aware of only the surface
artistry of the place:

The boulevard was all alive, brilliant
with illuminations, with the variety and
gaiety of the crowd, the dazzle of shops
and cafes seen through uncovered fronts
or immense lucid plates, the flamboyant
porches of theatres and the flashing
lamps of carriages, the far-spreading
murmur of talkers and strollers, the
uproar of pleasure and prosperity, the
general magnificence of Paris on a per-
flect evening in June.21

While Hyacinth exhilarates in the beauty of the city,
he begins to understand its history, and likewise his
own:

The Place itself--the Place Louis Quinze,
the Place de la Revolution--had given him
a sensible emotion from the day of his
arrival; he had recognized so quickly its
tremendous historic character. He had
seen in a rapid vision the guillotine in
the middle, on the site of the inscrutable
obelisk, and the tumbrils, with waiting
victims, were stationed round the circle
now made majestic by the monuments of the
cities of France.22

Hyacinth then considers his relationship with the
revolutionaries in London, and the city that a few days
earlier had held only beauty for him begins to produce
other overtones that prefigure Hyacinth's future and
suggest his enlarged view of life:

The nightly emanation of Paris seemed to
rise more richly, to float and hang in the
air, to mingle with the universal light
and the many-voiced sound, to resolve it-
self into a thousand solicitations and
opportunities, addressed, however, mainly
to those in whose pockets the chink of a
little loose gold might respond. Hyacinth's
retrospections had not made him drowsy,
but quite the reverse; he grew restless and
excited and a kind of pleasant terror of
the place and hour entered into his blood.23

What is important, of course, is that in the Jamesian
handling of the initiation theme, it is necessary for
Hyacinth to visit Paris before he can gain self-knowledge,
just as it is necessary for Emily St. Aubert to make her
perilous journey to Udolpho before she can acquire her
final awareness.

James's attitude toward Europe was a typical
American attitude. In the Introduction to the second volume of *The Complete Tales of Henry James*, Leon Edel says that "Europe and evil, America and innocence" is the "simplest equation of the international tales."²⁴ What Edel is pointing out are the underlying assumptions of James's theme of the journey to self-knowledge. And suggested in the simple equation is a moral valuation of Europe which surely did not begin with Henry James. From the very beginning it had been implicit in the doctrine of the equality and the inalienable rights of men. Paine, for instance, speaks in *The Rights of Man* of the American government's foundation upon a "moral theory."²⁵ And in the Preface to the *Columbiad* Barlow says that his purpose in writing the poem was "moral" in that "the republican principle" is the foundation of "all good morals."²⁶ Later Cooper was to expound in *The Bravo* upon the theory of "natural nobility," the view that rule based upon heredity was corrupt.²⁷ And like the opposition to aristocratic rule, the conviction that America was morally healthier than Europe was strengthened by the presence of social stratification in Europe. Jefferson had noted in a letter from Paris in 1785 that the wealthy were involved in "intrigues" while the masses were physically and morally oppressed.²⁸
Records of the American attitude toward Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries show that Americans generally believed that the artistic culture of Europe was overshadowed by the lack of moral culture.

The tradition behind James's simple equation was substantial, and thus Europe, in general, was sufficient for him to explore his moral contrasts and to develop his initiation theme. But for the older Gothic writers southern Europe had provided a still richer setting. Eino Raito observes that a decided characteristic of Gothic fiction is its affinity for a southern setting. "The Castle of Otranto is in Italy, whither also Mrs. Radcliffe places her Udolpho and The Italian and her Sicilian Romance. The action of The Romance of the Forest takes place in France, and that of The Monk in Spain." He goes on to say that "the romantic longing of these writers apparently derived satisfaction from this exoticism, from the colours and luxuriance of the south, to which is joined a correspondingly greater majesty of mountain scenery, and from the fieriness and passionateness of the southerner. The transference of the setting to these countries, or in general as far from their own surroundings as possible, either geographically or historically, was no mere affectation,
but formed a kind of primary condition for the achievement of a truly romantic effect as they understood it."\textsuperscript{29} Sir Walter Scott said of Mrs. Radcliffe that she set her stories in the south of Europe because "human passions, like the weeds of the climate, are supposed to attain portentous growth under the fostering sun; which abounds with ruined monuments of antiquity, as well as the more massive remnants of the Middle Ages."\textsuperscript{30} Although many of James's characters confront old, southern Europe, others gain an equally important perspective in the damp English air.\textsuperscript{31}

Throughout Europe there especially are many dramatic examples of edifice, and edifice, whether castle, convent, mansion, church, or country house, contributes greatly to the atmosphere of Gothic fiction. Eino Railo discusses the importance of the castle to Gothic fiction:

The stage-setting with which before long the student of horror-romanticism is inevitably confronted is a species of old "Gothic" castle, the scene of innumerable horrors, capable of touching the imagination each time we see it, as when the curtain rises on ramparts and towers bathed in the spectral moonlight of Hamlet. The reader quickly observes that this "haunted castle" plays an exceedingly important part in these romances; so important, indeed, that were it eliminated the whole fabric of romance would
be bereft of its foundation and would lose its predominant atmosphere.\textsuperscript{32}

In \textit{The Gothic Flame} Devendra Yarma concurs. "The element of terror," he says, "is inseparably associated with the Gothic castle, which is an image of power, dark, isolated, and impenetrable. No light penetrating its impermeable walls, high and strengthened by bastions, it stands silent, lonely and sublime, frowning defiance on all who dare to invade its solitary reign."\textsuperscript{33}

Horace Walpole provided the first details of the castle when he described secret passages and trap doors; Clara Reeve added the ghost-inhabited suite; and Mrs. Radcliffe developed the intricacies of the passages within the castle--her castles have many doors and winding and narrow labyrinths. The importance of the castle can be seen in any example of Gothic fiction. In \textit{The Castle of Otranto}, for example, Isabella flees into the depths of the castle from the cunning and villainous Manfred:

The lower part of the castle was hollowed into several intricate cloisters; and it was not easy for one under so much anxiety to find the door that opened into the cavern. An awful silence reigned throughout those subterranean regions, except now and then some blasts of wind shook the doors she had passed, and which grating on the rusty hinges were re-echoed through that long
labyrinth of darkness. Every murmur struck her with new terror; -- yet more she dreaded to hear the wrathful voice of Manfred urging his domestics to pursue her. She trod as softly as impatience would give her leave, -- yet frequently stopped and listened to hear if she was followed. In one of those moments she thought she heard a sigh. She shuddered, and recoiled a few paces. In a moment she thought she heard the step of some person. Her blood curdled; she concluded it was Manfred. Every suggestion that horror could inspire rushed into her mind.34

The horror of Manfred's pursuit is abetted by the darkness and the intricacy of the subterraneous passages. The castle seems to be as much a cause of Isabella's fear as Manfred is, for in its decay and darkness and deep caverns the castle symbolizes Isabella's fear of the unknown--of her fate either as an eternal fugitive or as Manfred's captive.

In Mrs. Radcliffe's Mysteries of Udolpho, Emily, fearing her fate at the hands of Montoni, also makes many horrifying journeys through the bowels of a villain's castle. She often is accompanied by a domestic, whose superstitions and fearfulness play upon the nerves of both Emily and the reader; the following is an example:

When they had reached the top of the great staircase, Emily recollected that she might be seen by the count; and to avoid the great hall, Annette conducted
her through some private passages to a back staircase which led directly to that of the servants.

As she returned towards her chamber, Emily began to fear that she might again lose herself in the intricacies of the castle, and again be shocked by some mysterious spectacle; and though she was already perplexed by the numerous turnings, she feared to open one of the many doors that offered.35

Mrs. Radcliffe's use of edifice is different from that of Walpole. In Walpole's passage, it is difficult to separate Isabella's subjective view of the castle from its objective appearance; we view it constantly through her fear-clouded eyes. However, in The Mysteries of Udolpho the intricacies of the passageways suggest something of the complexities of Emily's predicament in Montoni's castle more than they depict her fear. Although Emily at times exhibits extreme fear, and even faints away, more often than not her actions are designed to illustrate her bravery and virtue rather than faint-heartedness, a characteristic of sentimental fiction.

Thus as early as Walpole, edifice as setting is important as a means of enhancing the psychological stance of characters, of foreshadowing events, and of providing a backdrop to delineate danger, villainy, and
corruption, upon which hinges the development of the major themes. James uses edifice in these ways also. In The American, for example, Christopher Newman, having lost the woman he loves and having left the death-bed of her brother Valentin, goes to the Bellegarde chateau at Fleurieres:

The building rose from an island in the circling stream, so that this formed a perfect moat, spanned by a two-arched bridge without a parapet. The dull brick walls, which here and there made a grand straight sweep, the ugly little cupolas of the wings, the deep-set windows, the long steep pinnacles of mossy slate, all mirrored themselves in the quiet water.... At the door of the house he waited for some moments, and this gave him a chance to observe that Fleurieres was not "kept up," and to reflect that it was a melancholy place of residence.

The physical facts of Fleurieres are filtered through the mind of Newman, and the reader identifies the impressions of isolation, quietness, height, and decay and then receives Newman's emotional judgment that the place is ugly, mysterious (the windows are "deep-set"), and "melancholy."

In The Portrait of a Lady Isabel Archer recalls her grandmother's house in Albany, the simple recollection of which reveals more about Isabel's psycho-
logical need for independence and her inability to see
the reality that lies beyond the façade than James ever
could have conveyed directly as an omniscient describer:

The foundation of her knowledge was really
laid in the idleness of her grandmother's
house, where, as most of the other inmates
were not reading people, she had uncontrolled
use of a library full of books with frontispieces, which she used to climb upon a chair
to take down. When she had found one to her
taste—she was guided in the selection
chiefly by the frontispiece—she carried
it into a mysterious apartment which lay
beyond the library and which was called,
traditionally, no one knew why, the office.
Whose office it had been and at what period
it had flourished, she never learned; it
was enough for her that it was a chamber
of disgrace for old pieces of furniture
whose infirmities were not always apparent
(so that the disgrace seemed unmerited and
rendered them victims of injustice) and
with which, in the manner of children, she
had established relations almost human,
certainly dramatic. There was an old
haircloth sofa in especial, to which she
had confided a hundred childish sorrows.
The place owed much of its mysterious
melancholy to the fact that it was prop-
erly entered from the second door of the
house, the door that had been condemned,
and that it was secured by bolts which
a particularly slender little girl found
it impossible to slide. She knew that this
silent, motionless portal opened into the
street; if the sidelights had not been
filled with green paper she might have
looked out upon the little brown stoop
and the well-worn brick pavement. But
she had no wish to look out, for this
would have interfered with her theory that
there was a strange, unseen place on the
other side—a place which became to the
child's imagination, according to its different moods, a region of delight or of terror. 38

Isabel's grandmother's house is presented here from two viewpoints, that of Isabel and that of the omniscient author. The reader is in the interesting position of being able to see the house both objectively and subjectively. It is, on the one hand, a now-useless room full of old furniture and books and can be entered from an ordinary street-door. But Isabel chooses to remain ignorant both of the room's history (she never learned "whose office it had been or at what period it had flourished") and of its relationship with the street, that is, with the outside world. She much prefers fantasy to reality, a characteristic that is to influence subsequent, more crucial, choices.

In "The Turn of the Screw" the house at Bly also is regarded subjectively. Young Flora takes the governess on a tour of the house, which holds additional meanings for the inexperienced daughter of a country clergyman:

Young as she was I was struck throughout our little tour, with her confidence and courage, with the way, in empty chambers and dull corridors, on crooked staircases that made me pause and even on the summit
of an old machicolated square tower
that made me dizzy, her morning music,
her disposition to tell me so many more
things than she asked, rang out and led
me on. I have not seen Bly since the
day I left it, and I dare say that to my
older and more informed eyes it would
now appear sufficiently contracted. But
as my little conductress, with her hair
of gold and her frock of blue, danced
before me round corners and down pas-
sages, I had the view of a castle of
romance inhabited by a rosy sprite, such
a place as would somehow, for diversion
of the young idea, take all colour out
of storybooks and fairy-tales. Wasn't
it just a storybook over which I had
fallen a-doze and a-dream? No; it was
a big, ugly, antique, but convenient
house, embodying a few features of
a building still older, half replaced
and half utilised, in which I had the
fancy of our being almost as lost as
a handful of passengers in a great
drifting ship.39

From the vantage point of history, the governess admits
that Bly probably would look different to her now. But
she remembers that her first impressions of the place
were those of emptiness, dullness, crookedness, ugliness,
and antiquity. She views the house metaphorically as a
"great drifting ship," an image that clearly reveals her
lack of control and her insecurity.

In James's last major novels external setting
largely has given way to internal mental process, but when
setting is described, it serves the same functions as
it does in the earlier works. In *The Wings of the Dove* Merton Densher goes to Mrs. Lowder's house for the first time:

It was the language of the house itself that spoke to him, writing out for him, with surpassing breadth and freedom, the associations and conceptions, the ideals and possibilities of the mistress. Never, he flattered himself, had he seen anything so gregariously ugly--operatively, ominously so cruel. He was glad to have found this last name for the whole character; "cruel" somehow played into the subject for an article--that his impression put straight into his mind. He would write about the heavy horrors that could still flourish, that lifted their undiminished heads in an age so proud of its short way with false gods; and it would be funny if what he should have got from Mrs. Lowder were to prove, after all, but a small amount of copy. Yet the great thing, really the dark thing, was that, even while he thought of the quick column he might add up, he felt it less easy to laugh at the heavy horrors than to quail before them.40

Mrs. Lowder's house is less a physical fact than an extension of the personality of the owner. Densher thinks first that the house is ugly, a subjective valuation, and then he perceives that it is "cruel," a strange impression for a house to emit because cruelty is a peculiarly human quality. The house thus symbolizes Densher's frustration and fear and foreshadows Mrs.
Lowder's ominous intervention in the lives of Densher and Kate.

It is a Freudian truism that edifice is a subconscious symbol for self. James surely recognized such psychological significance, for in *The Portrait of a Lady* he has Madame Merle offer the following important comment:

> When you've lived as long as I you'll see that every human being has his shell and that you must take the shell into account. By the shell I mean the whole envelope of circumstances. There's no such thing as an isolated man or woman; we're each of us made up of some cluster of appurtenances. What shall we call our 'self'? Where does it begin? where does it end? It overflows into everything that belongs to us--and then it flows back again. I know a large part of myself is in the clothes I choose to wear. I've a great respect for things! One's self—for other people—is one's expression of one's self; and one's house, one's furniture, one's garments, the books one reads, the company one keeps—these things are all expressive.41

We are told that "Isabel was fond of metaphysics, but was unable to accompany her friend into the bold analysis of the human personality." Isabel says, significantly, "I don't agree with you. I think just the other way." And of course she does. Isabel, who as a child chose
books by their frontispieces and refused to look behind shaded windows for fear of destroying the illusions she had created, has not progressed far enough in her journey to see the significance of physical surroundings; else she would have seen in Gilbert Osmond's villa, which has "heavy lids, but no eyes," and which has "jealous apertures" and a "cold anteroom," something of the deceptive evil of the man.  

In James's last completed novels, which are more allegorical and psychological than the earlier works, he develops further the edifice metaphor. In The Ambassadors as Strether is trying to untangle both Chad's affairs and his own morals, the narrative voice says that Strether "felt again the brush of his sense of moving in a maze of mystic closed allusions. Yet he kept hold of his thread." The mental labyrinth in which he moves is not so terrifying as that of the old Gothic castle, but the image conveys much of Strether's alarm as he becomes aware of the challenge his own sense of values is facing. Miss Barrace later assures him, "Oh I incline to believe too you'll come out...only the question's about where, isn't it?"

Like edifice, ruins also are important in Gothic setting. Burke notes that crumbling ruins, covered
with ivy are especially adapted to excite the sublime because "the effect of a rugged and broken surface seems stronger than where it is smooth and polished." Michael Sadleir explains the concept further. He says that the ruin, "in itself a thing of loveliness," symbolizes "the victory of nature over handiwork" and thus has power to move "to melancholy" minds which dwell "gladly on the impermanence of human life and effort." Ruin, says Sadleir, appeals to a taste that seeks freedom "from the controls of discipline." The Gothic ruin was translated into a mental attitude, and "the bristling silhouette, the flowing untidy lines of piled masonry or creeper-clad rocks became, in terms of emotion, sensibility and an elegant disequilibrium of the spirit." The ivied ruins of Minster Lovel Priory provided Clara Reeve the scene for her Old English Baron, and ruins are important in Mrs. Radcliffe's Romance of the Forest, A Sicilian Romance, and The Italian. Through Emily's eyes we see Udolpho as ruins; after a stout attack by the foe Emily "saw again the old walls and moon-lit towers, rising over the woods; the strong rays enabled her, also, to perceive the ravages which the siege had made--with the broken walls, and shattered battlements." Mrs. Radcliffe's last work, Gaston de
Blondeville, was directly inspired by a visit to Kenilworth Castle, about which she wrote in her travel journal, "This view of the ruin was very striking; the three chief masses, great and solemn, without being beautiful. They spoke at once to the imagination, with the force and simplicity of truth, the nothingness and brevity of this life."48 In the novel, the ruins speak for themselves:

Generations have beheld us and passed away, as you now behold us, and shall pass away. They have thought of the generations before their time, as you now think of them, and as future ones shall think of you. The voices, that revelled beneath us, the pomp of power, the magnificence of wealth, the grace of beauty, the joy of hope, the interests of high passion and of low pursuits have passed from this scene for ever; yet we remain, the spectres of departed years, and shall remain, feeble as we are, when you, who now gaze upon us, shall have ceased to be in this world.49

Scenes of ruins, which were capable of evoking a sensation of sublimity rising into terror, were dramatically useful for James, too, and although his sense of human psychology was much more acute, he clearly regarded ruins in much the same way as did his eighteenth century forerunners. For example, in The Portrait of a Lady, a wiser Isabel sees in Roman ruins something of her own life:
Isabel took a drive alone that afternoon; she wished to be far away, under the sky, where she could descend from her carriage and tread upon the daisies. She had long before this taken old Rome into her confidence, for in a world of ruins the ruin of her unhappiness seemed a less unnatural catastrophe. She rested her weariness upon things that had crumbled for centuries and yet still were upright; she dropped her secret sadness into the silence of lonely places, where its very modern quality detached itself and grew objective, so that as she sat in a sun-warmed angle on a winter's day, or stood in a mouldy church to which no one came, she could almost smile at it and think of its smallness. Small it was, in the large Roman record, and her haunting sense of the continuity of the human lot easily carried her from the less to the greater. She had become deeply, tenderly acquainted with Rome; it interfused and moderated her passion. But she had grown to think of it chiefly as the place where people had suffered. This was what came to her in the starved churches, where the marble columns, transferred from pagan ruins, seemed to offer her a companionship in endurance and the musty incense to be a compound of long-unanswered prayers. 50

Isabel herself sees the connection between the physical ruins of Rome and the spiritual ruins of her own life. In The American, however, the ruins exist as a part of the external setting and symbolize the moral ruin of the Bellegardes and perhaps of aristocratic Europe. Christopher Newman, his hopes shattered around him, goes to Fleurières to attend the funeral of Valentin de Belle-
He alighted at an hotel in respect to which he scarce knew whether the wealth of its provincial note more graced or compromised it, and the next morning drove in a couple of hours to the village of Fleurières. But here, for all his melancholy, he couldn't resist the intensity of an impression. The *petit bourg* lay at the base of a sort of huge mound, on the summit of which stood the crumbling ruins of a feudal castle, much of whose sturdy material, as well as that of the wall which dropped along the hill to enclose the clustered houses defensively, had been absorbed into the very substance of the village. 51

The ruins of the Coliseum figure in several of James's stories. In his early novel *Roderick Hudson* when Rowland Mallett goes to the Coliseum, the ancient ruins form a backdrop for the dismaying knowledge he receives, proof of the alliance between Roderick and Christina Light. He watches as Roderick risks his life to get a little blue flower for Christina:

Rowland had seen all this and he saw what followed. He saw Roderick clasp in his left arm the jagged corner of the vertical partition on which he proposed to try his experiment, then stretch out his leg and feel for a resting-place for his foot. Rowland had measured with a hard stare and a dry throat the possibility of his holding on, and pronounced
it uncommonly small. The wall was garnished with a series of narrow projections, the remains apparently of a brick cornice supporting the arch of a vault which had long since collapsed. It was by lodging his toes on these loose brackets, and grasping with his hands at certain mouldering protuberances on a level with his head, that Roderick intended to proceed. The relics of the cornice were utterly worthless as a support. Rowland's sharpened sense had made sure of this, and yet for a moment he had hesitated. If the thing were possible he felt a sudden high bold relish of his friend's attempting it. It would be finely done, it would be gallant, it would have a sort of ardent authority as an answer to Christina's sinister persiflage. But it was not possible.\[\text{52}\]

The ruins provide an impression of decayed antiquity, no longer useful ("the relics of the cornice were utterly worthless as a support"), and symbolize the weak foundation of Roderick's fascination with the beautiful and dangerous Christina. Roderick's position on the decayed partition is precarious, like his whole relationship with Christina.

Roderick is unaware of the dangers that surround him; only Rowland Mallett understands and saves him, for the moment, from catastrophe. Other characters, however, have more insight into their own relationships with the Coliseum. During the last stages of her journey
to awareness Isabel Archer goes often to the Coliseum, where she identifies with the wild flowers which have difficulty blooming in the oppressive crevices. And in *Daisy Miller* Winterbourne goes to the Coliseum, where he encounters Daisy and Giovanelli, indiscreetly ambling through the ruins. Before he sees them, however, he considers the ruins, and his impressions foreshadow both the horror he will feel at what seems damning proof of Daisy's immorality and the fatal chill she will receive that night:

Then he passed in among the cavernous shadows of the great structure and emerged upon the clear and silent arena. The place had never seemed to him more impressive. One half of the gigantic circus was in deep shade while the other slept in the luminous dusk. As he stood there he began to murmur Byron's famous lines out of "Manfred"; but before he had finished his quotation he remembered that if nocturnal meditation thereabouts was the fruit of a rich literary culture it was none the less deprecated by medical science. The air of other ages surrounded one; but the air of other ages, coldly analysed, was no better than a villainous miasma. 53

Winterbourne is caught up in the spell of the Coliseum, described in the dramatic terms of "deep shade" and "luminous dusk." He is inspired to quote from Byron's "Manfred" and then perceives that the air is damp and
potentially dangerous. It is the "air of other ages," which has survived even in modern Europe but which represents the decayed social and moral values that indirectly will kill Daisy Miller.

Akin to the ruins in Gothic fiction is cataclysmic landscape--mountain crags and abysses which serve the same function that edifice and ruin serve. One of the most dramatic scenes in all of Gothic fiction occurs at the end of Lewis's The Monk when the demon hurls Ambrosio into a mountain abyss:

Darting his talons into the monk's shaven crown, he sprang with him from the rock. The caves and mountains rang with Ambrosio's shrieks. The daemon continued to soar aloft, till reaching a dreadful height, he released the sufferer. Headlong fell the monk through the airy waste; the sharp point of a rock received him; and he rolled from precipice to precipice, till, bruised and mangled, he rested on the river's banks. 54

It is the same Gothic setting upon which James is dependent in order to create a strikingly similar mood in Roderick Hudson as he describes the events attending the death of Roderick. Rowland Mallett, fearing an ill-fate for his young friend, searches through the Alps:
Rowland climbed into the awkward places Roderick loved; he looked down into the ugly chasms from narrow steep-dropping ledges. But the sun, as I have said, was everywhere; it illumined the depths and heights in presence of which, not knowing where to turn next, he halted and lingered, and showed him nothing but the stony Alpine void—nothing so human even as a catastrophe or a trace.

James again exploits the potential for terror of the Alpine terrain when he takes Catherine Sloper and her father, in Washington Square (1881), to Switzerland before he allows them their confrontation:

One day, at the end of the summer, the two travellers found themselves in a lonely valley of the Alps. They were crossing one of the passes, and on the long ascent they had got out of the carriage and had wandered much in advance. After awhile the Doctor descried a foot-path which, leading through a transverse valley, would bring them out, as he justly supposed, at a much higher point of the ascent. They followed this devious way, and finally lost the path; the valley proved very wild and rough, and their walk became rather a scramble. They were good walkers, however, and they took their adventure easily; from time to time they stopped, that Catherine might rest; and then she sat upon a stone and looked about her at the hard-featured rocks and the glowing sky. It was late in the afternoon, in the last of August; night was coming on, and as they had reached a great
elevation, the air was cold and sharp. In the west there was a great suffusion of cold red light, which made the sides of the little valley look only the more rugged and dusky. During one of their pauses her father left her and wandered away to some high place, at a distance, to get a view. He was just out of sight; she sat there alone in the stillness, which was just touched by the vague murmur somewhere of a mountain brook. She thought of Morris Townsend, and the place was so desolate and lonely that he seemed very far away. Her father remained absent a long time; she began to wonder what had become of him. But at last he reappeared, coming toward her in the clear twilight, and she got up to go on. He made no motion to proceed, however, but came close to her, as if he had something to say. He stopped in front of her, and stood looking at her with eyes that had kept the light of the flushing snow-summits on which they had just been fixed. Then, abruptly, in a low tone, he asked her an unexpected question.

"Have you given him up?"

The question was unexpected, but Catherine was only superficially unprepared.

"No, father," she answered.

He looked at her again for some moments without speaking.

"Does he write to you?" he asked.

"Yes, about twice a month."

The Doctor looked up and down the valley, swinging his stick; then he said to her, in the same low tone, "I am very angry."

She wondered what he meant—whether he wished to frighten her. If he did, the place was well chosen; this hard, melancholy dell, abandoned by the summer light, made her feel her loneliness. She looked around her, and her heart grew cold; for a moment
her fear was great. But she could think of nothing to say, save to murmur, gently, "I am sorry." 56

It is in much the same way that the Alps are useful in The Wings of a Dove. An alarmed Susan Stringham, searching for Milly in the Alps, returns with more than she went for. She has perceived the horrifying knowledge that Milly is fatally ill:

The whole place, with the descent of the path and as a sequel to a sharp turn that was masked by rocks and shrubs, appeared to fall precipitously and to become a "view" pure and simple, a view of great extent and beauty, but thrown forward and vertiginous. Milly, with the promise of it from just above, had gone straight down to it, not stopping till it was all before her; and here, on what struck her friend as the dizzy edge of it, she was seated at her ease. The path somehow took care of itself and its final business, but the girl's seat was a slab of rock at the end of a short promontory or excrescence that merely pointed off to the right into gulfs of air and that was so placed by good fortune, if not by the worst, as to be at last completely visible. For Mrs. Stringham stifled a cry on taking in what she believed to be the danger of such a perch for a mere maiden; her liability to slip, to slide, to leap, to be precipitated by a single false movement, by a turn of the head—how could one tell? into whatever was beneath....

Mrs. Stringham was thus able to say to herself, even after another interval of some length, that if
her young friend still continued absent it wouldn't be because—whatever the opportunity—she had cut short the thread. She wouldn't have committed suicide; she knew herself unmistakably reserved for some more complicated passage, this was the very vision in which she had, with no little awe, been discovered.57

The physical features of the landscape—the steepness of the paths, the sharpness of the turns—enhance the drama of the scene, and as Mrs. Stringham takes in Milly's danger when she is seated on a slab of rock that protrudes into only "gulfs of air," she translates the sense of that danger into an awareness of some vague "complicated" danger, an interpretation that foreshadows both Milly's physical death and her terrifying rôie in the developing relationship between Kate Croy and Merton Densher. Thus, the fearful aspects of the landscape symbolize the fearful aspects of Milly's future.

In the old Gothic fiction, mountain abyss, edifice, and ruin are surrounded by natural properties which serve to heighten the impression of terror. Varma, who has pointed out that the love of natural objects constitutes a part of the Gothic spirit, observes that "the agitation of the elements is made to accord with the agitated life of man; never did a blast roar or a gleam of lightning
flash that was not connected in the imagination of someone with a calamity to be dreaded, with the fate of the living, or the destination of the dead." 58 The Monk, as a case in point, ends with a violent storm that arises the seventh agonizing day of the dying Ambrosio's suffering:

Blind, maimed, helpless, and despairing, venting his rage in blasphemy and curses, execrating his existence, yet dreading the arrival of death destined to yield him up to greater torments, six miserable days did the villain languish. On the seventh a violent storm arose; the winds in fury rent up rocks and forests; the sky was now black with clouds, now sheeted with fire; the rain fell in torrents; it swelled the stream; the waves overflowed their banks; they reached the spot where Ambrosio lay, and, when they abated, carried with them into the river, the corse of the despairing monk. 59

Mrs. Radcliffe makes rich use of the hum of wind in empty vaults, in forests, and in the grass growing over ruins and of the storm that shrieks around the castle set on a high mountain. James occasionally does the same. For example, in Roderick Hudson, it is a storm that isolates Roderick in the Alps and indirectly causes his death. Rowland Mallett is "startled by an extraordinary sound, which defined itself the next instant as a spontaneous growl of thunder. He got up and saw the
whole face of the sky had altered. The clouds that had hung motionless all day were moving from their stations and getting into position for a battle. The wind was rising, the turbid vapours growing dark and thick.... There came a huge white glare, under which, for thirty seconds, all nature stood still...."60

The moon also is important in Gothic setting. In The Castle of Otranto, for example, we read that "gliding softly between the aisles, and guided by an imperfect gleam of moonshine that shone faintly, Manfred steals forward."61 Eino Railo comments upon Walpole's use of moonlight:

At the very moment when the tyrant is engaged in blackest night on some deed of darkness, the moon emerges from behind a cloud, revealing a ghastly scene that alarms him and prevents the crime from being committed. Through the coloured windows of great churches it shines dim and mysterious illuminating to the tyrant's view the glassy eyes of his dead heir, a witness to the violent and tragic end of his line. The moon is intended to awaken a nocturnal atmosphere fraught with mystery and tinged with fantasy, fear and sadness. It lends an indistinct and weird shape to each feature; it is a theatrical searchlight cast from the wings at suitable moments to reveal to the terror-stricken audience visions and scenes of fear.62
A passage in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* also illustrates such a use of the moon. Frankenstein goes to the cemetery to vow the death of the monster, and "suddenly the broad disc of the moon arose, and shone upon his ghastly and distorted shape." 63

James occasionally uses the moon to enhance setting. In "The Last of the Valerii," the narrator, who is horrified at Count Marco's obsession with a statue, returns to the Count's garden to retrieve his eyeglass:

I easily found it, and lingered awhile to note the curious night-aspect of the spot I had been studying by daylight. The night was magnificent, and full-charged with the breath of the early Roman spring. The moon was rising fast and flinging her silver checkers into the heavy masses of shadow. Watching her at play, I strolled further and suddenly came in sight of the casino. Just then the moon, which for a moment had been concealed, touched with a white ray a small marble figure which adorned the pediment of this rather factitious little structure. The way it leaped into prominence suggested that a rarer spectacle was at hand, and that the same influence must be vastly becoming to the imprisoned Juno. The door of the casino was as usual, locked, but the moonlight flooded the high-placed windows so generously that my curiosity became obstinate and inventive. I dragged a garden-seat round from the portico, placed it on end, and succeeded in climbing to the
top of it and bringing myself abreast of one of the windows. The casement yielded to my pressure, turned on its hinges, and showed me what I had been looking for—a transfiguration. The beautiful image stood bathed in the cold radiance, shining with a purity that made her convincingly divine. If by day her rich paleness suggested faded gold, she now had a complexion like silver slightly dimmed. The effect was almost terrible..."64

The moon, however, is more useful to James as metaphor, and as such it often creates the same effect of melancholy or terror that it evokes in early Gothic fiction. In *The Bostonians*, for example, Basil Ransom thinks that Olive Chancellor’s smile "might have been likened to a thin ray of moonlight resting upon the wall of a prison."65 And in "Benvolio" the hero is a kind of split personality; there is "something grave and discreet" in the hero’s smile—it is "vague and ghostly, like the dim adumbration of the darker half of the lunar disk."66 But probably the most memorable image of the moon occurs in *The Portrait of a Lady*. Because of her own innocence and the deceit of others, Isabel has not been able to see the true nature of her husband, Gilbert Osmond. "She had seen only half his nature then, as one saw the disk of the moon when it was partly masked by the shadow of the earth. She saw the full moon now--
she saw the whole man." 67 Inexorable time and natural process inevitably reveal truth.

Although the evocation of the Gothic moon helps to define Isabel’s growing awareness, the moon usually adds merely atmospheric light to the setting, as it does in "The Last of the Valerii." It appears often as an attribute of the Gothic edifice and ruin, which are especially appropriate to the old-world setting of southern Europe. And equally appropriate to southern Europe are those scenes in monastery and convent, meant to evoke awe and dread. Eino Raito discusses eighteenth century England’s attitude toward southern, Catholic Europe:

The Roman Catholic religion still prevailed, with the same spiritual atmosphere of which the romanticists dreamed while reviewing in fancy in their own old churches the poetically illumined Middle Ages; there monasteries were still to be found and the reign of the Inquisition was no very distant matter. Amongst all the romantic horrors of the south, the latter were particularly adapted to awaken in Protestant countries a series of pleasing and excitingly torturing visions, that it is not surprising, therefore, that so many romanticists, among them Mrs. Radcliffe, Lewis, Godwin, Maturin and Coleridge, had recourse to it. 68
In her excellent study Catholicism in Gothic Fiction, Sister Mary Muriel Tarr explains further:

Catholicism, for eighteenth-century writers, had its roots in a vague past. The dogma underlying its practice was not generally understood by writers of Gothic fiction. Opportunity of becoming familiar even with details of its ceremonial was rare in eighteenth-century England. The solemnity of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the ritual for the administration of the Sacraments, then, since they were shrouded in "obscurity," were rendered terrible to the mind and became prolific sources of the sublime. Consideration of them as sources of sublime emotion led to an emphasis upon the aspects best calculated to arouse intense feeling.

Thus, Gothic writers often establish scenes in cathedrals, monasteries, and convents as a means of creating an atmosphere weighted with mystery, awe, and gloom. Varma explains the horror attendant upon the convent life:

There is a charm about the sweet seclusion of a Catholic monastery and pious convent life, but the tortures and atrocities behind its walls make the heroines resolute in rejecting the veil. They dread seclusion from the cheerful intercourse of society and pleasant views of nature, to be immured in silence to practice a life of rigid austerity, abstinence, and penance, condemned to forgo the delights of the world. The monastery has two visages:
sweet and comforting is the angelic
presence of the Abbess of St. Clair
to Emily St. Aubert when her father
is dead, but the face of Schedoni hidden
under a dark cowl inspires dread in
the heart of Ellena. 70

Varma then discusses the relationship of the convent
to the themes of Gothic fiction:

These novels portray their favorite
theme of the sufferings of the unwilling
nun in her convent prison, pining in
the mute anguish of despair. Common
knowledge of the existence of immoral
nuns began the fashion for the most
violent of the anti-Catholic novels,
so that the cloister and the convent
became symbols of horror and immorality.
In The Monk, Ambrosio dreams of his
mistress and awakens to find she has
the face of the Virgin Mary. The Monk
thus illustrates religious perversion
by the blasphemous associations of the
Holy Virgin with the Monk's mistress.
The Spaniard's tale in Melmoth the
Wanderer is fundamentally a treatise
against the omnipotence of the Catholic
Church, the fount of all evils and
misery--symbolizing all the sinister
potentiality of Evil. Maturin, with
an avowed atheism, hurls a wild and
fiend-like acrimony of satire. The
Inquisition remains one of the stock
sources of horror in the Gothic novel,
a tremendous monument to the power,
crime, and gloom of the human mind. 71

The convent described in The Mysteries of Udolpho
is typical of the convent or monastery as it appears in
Gothic fiction:
The boat soon after doubling a lofty head-land, the monastery of St. Clair appeared, seated near the margin of the sea, where the cliffs, suddenly sinking, formed a low shore within a small bay, almost encircled with woods, among which partial features of the edifice were seen; the great gate and gothic window of the hall, the cloisters, and the side of a chapel more remote; while a venerable arch, which had once led to a part of the fabric, now demolished, stood a majestic ruin detached from the main building, beyond which appeared a grand perspective of the woods. On the grey walls, the moss had fastened and round the pointed windows of the chapel, the ivy and the briony hung in many a fantastic wreath.

In Melmoth the Wanderer there are many vivid descriptions of what Maturin, an Anglican priest, imagined was monastic life in Spain and conventual life generally. Mongada, praying not to be made a monk, implores, "Let me embrace the meanest, but do not make me a monk.... Give me a sword,—send me into the armies of Spain to seek death,—death is all I ask, in preference to that life you doom me to." And later, "I have heard much of the terrors of convents,—of their punishments, often carried till the infliction of death would have been a blessing. Dungeons, chains, and scourges, swam before my eyes in a fiery mist...such is the sterility of humanity in a convent."
Convent scenes are plentiful also in James's fiction. In *The American* Christopher Newman sadly and bitterly goes to the convent whose walls have absorbed the woman he loves:

Newman watched their genuflections and gyrations with a grim, still enmity; they seemed promptors and abettors of the wrong he had suffered; they were mouthing and droning out their triumph. The priest's long, dismal intonings acted upon his nerves and deepened his wrath; there was something defiant in his unintelligible drawl; as if it had been meant for his very own swindled self. Suddenly there arose from the depths of the chapel, from behind the inexorable grating, a sound which drew his attention from the altar—the sound of a strange, lugubrious chant uttered by women's voices. It began softly, but it presently grew louder, and as it increased it became more of a wail and a dirge. It was the chant of the Carmelite nuns, their only human utterance. It was their dirge over their buried affections and over the vanity of earthly desires.... The chant kept on, mechanical and monotonous, with dismal repetitions and despairing cadences. It was hideous, it was horrible....

In *The Portrait of a Lady* before going to Ralph Touchett, who is dying, Isabel goes to see Pansy at the convent:

Isabel had been at this institution before; she had come with Pansy to see the sisters. She knew they were good women, and she saw
that the large rooms were clean and cheerful and that the well-used garden had sun for winter and shade for spring. But she disliked the place, which affronted and almost frightened her; not for the world would she have spent a night there.76

In The American and The Portrait of a Lady the frightening aspects of convents are emphasized. Both Christopher Newman and Isabel Archer respond with terror to the physical features of the convents they view, and their sensory impressions lead to negative evaluations. In both instances the convents seem to be horrible prisons useful to villainous tyrants who carry out selfish and proud ambitions.

Catholic churches, apart from convent and monastery, serve a similar function. Despite Horace Walpole's opinion that "a Gothic church...fills one with romantic dreams,"77 many eighteenth century visitors to cathedrals speak of being filled with "mingled dread and exaltation" instead.78 In The Italian Ellena's reaction to a cathedral is typical in Gothic fiction:

Intense fear filled the heart of Ellena as glimpses of the vast edifice she was approaching, appeared now and then between the trees; the tall west window of the
cathedral with the spires that overtopped it; the narrow pointed roofs of the cloisters; angles of the insurmountable walls, which fenced the garden from the precipices below, and the dark portal leading into the chief court; each of these, seen at intervals beneath the gloom of cypress and spreading cedar, seemed as if menacing the unhappy Ellena with hints of future suffering.79

Churches and cathedrals in James's fiction either call forth feelings like Ellena's or serve as backdrop for dramatic or terrifying confrontations. In "Travelling Companions" Brooke visits a cathedral:

An overwhelming sense of the sadness of man's spiritual history took possession of my heart. The clustering picturesque shadows about me seemed to represent the darkness of a past from which he had slowly and painfully struggled. The great mosaic images, hideous, grotesque, inhuman, glimmered like the cruel spectres of early superstitions and terrors.80

The cruelty that Brooke perceives and the sadness he feels are evidence that he is learning something of Europe, of history, of life—indeed, that he is working toward self-knowledge.

In Roderick Hudson, Christina Light, who later in The Princess Casamassima will say, "I am corrupt, corrupting, corruption," is regarded by Rowland Mallett as a threat to the fulfillment of Roderick's artistic
genius. A church provides the setting for Rowland's accidental meeting with Christina when he asks her in honor's name to give up Roderick. The church of Saint Cecilia, described as having a "strange fascination," is silent and dark; its suggestion of old-world superstitions and terrors dramatically displays Christina's mystery and power for corruption.81

James's use of convent, monastery, cathedral, and church is much like that of the early writers of Gothic fiction, and like them, James might be charged with exhibiting anti-Catholic feeling in his works. In "De Grey: A Romance," for example, what seems to be a negative view of Catholicism is expressed:

It is certain that there hung over Mrs. De Grey's history and circumstances a film, as it were, a shadow of mystery, which struck a chill upon imaginations which might easily have been kindled into envy of her good fortune. "She lives in the dark," someone had said of her. Close observers did her the honor to believe that there was a secret in her life, but of a wholly undefined character. Was she the victim of some lurking sorrow, or the mistress of some clandestine joy? These imputations, we may easily believe, are partially explained by the circumstance that she was a Catholic, and kept a priest in her house.82
A similar sentiment is found in "Travelling Companions" when Brooke and Charlotte Evans visit a cathedral:

My friend was silent a moment. "I'm glad I'm not a Catholic," she said at last. "Come, we must go down."

"Don't you wish you were a Catholic now?" I asked. "It would be so pleasant to wear one of those lovely mantillas."

"The mantillas are certainly becoming," she said. "But who knows what horrible old-world sorrows and fears and remorses they cover?" 83

There is not, however, a basic difference in James's attitudes toward Catholic oppression and the puritanism which he deplored. 84 And when one examines James's scenes in convent and cathedral and his presentation of religious characters, it seems clear that he is not arguing against the dogma of the Catholic Church, any more than were his Gothic predecessors. 85 "Catholic materials," wrote Charles Remusat, "furnish the medievalism of Gothic fiction with a decor that is 'une vraie decoration de theatre.'" 86 And Sister Mary Muriel Tarr says, "Catholic materials are used mainly for their effect upon the imagination. Catholicism functions chiefly as a source of melancholy pleasure, divine horror, and religious awe." 87 For James, too, Catholicism offers a wealth of dramatic conveniences.
James uses Catholic materials in the same way that he uses mansions, ruins, and mountain abysses--the connotation of such setting delineates potential human evil or foreshadows future suffering. In the early 1870's James wrote, "One of the responsibilities of being an American is fighting against a superstitious valuation of Europe." And yet in his conscious selection of European setting for most of his fiction, he would have to be said to be exploiting the very attitude he warns against. The importance of setting fades in James's later works, of course, as he gives more attention to human thoughts and less to external atmosphere.
FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER II


2The Novels and Tales of Henry James, New York edition, II (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1907), xi.

3This story, which first appeared in the February 1868 issue of Atlantic Monthly, begins, “Towards the middle of the eighteenth century there lived in the Province of Massachusetts a widowed gentlewoman, the mother of three children.” The Complete Tales of Henry James, ed. and introc. Leon Edel, I (Philadelphia and New York: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1961), 297.

4This story, which appeared in the July-September 1869 issues of Atlantic Monthly, is set during pre-revolutionary days in France. The Complete Tales, II (1962), 97-170.

5Manfred Mackenzie in "The Turn of the Screw: Jamesian Gothic," *Essays in Criticism*, 12 (January 1962), 34-38, points out that this story is set back at least fifty years by the time lapses between the stages of the story's narration. Ten years passed between the events at Bly and the governess' telling Douglas; Douglas hoarded his secret forty years before he read the story to the assembled group; some time passed between the present narrator's hearing the story and receiving the manuscript upon Douglas' death; the present narrator may have waited before he offered the story.

6The narrator of this story tries to excavate the past and bring to light a hidden segment of the life of the deceased poet Jeffrey Aspern.
In this unfinished novel the central character, Ralph Pendrel, enters the Past and re-lives the adventures of an ancestor.


The Novels and Tales, XII (1908), x.


cf. also Fleda Vetch at the end of The Spoils of Poynton, Maggie Verver at the end of The Golden Bowl, Lambert Strether at the end of The Ambassadors, Christina Light at the end of The Princess Casamassima, Rowland Mallett at the end of Roderick Hudson, among others.

See Leon Edel, Henry James: The Conquest of London (New York and Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1962), 19ff. James later explained to Howells something of the appeal Europe held for him. He wrote January 31, 1880, that an old civilization sets "a novelist in motion.... It is on manners, customs, usages, habits, forms, upon all these things matured and established, that a novelist lives--they are the very stuff his work is made of...." The Letters of Henry James, ed. Percy Lubbock (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), I, 24-25.

Watch and Ward was serialized in Atlantic Monthly from August to December, 1871, and published in book form in 1874.
14Christopher Hussey writes about Mrs. Radcliffe and the sublime, but what he says could apply as well to other writers of Gothic fiction: "Mrs. Radcliffe, one is sure, was working on a definite theory of sublimity, was never far removed from that lofty state of soul about which her century had said so much and had thought so constantly. If her scenes often aim at the sublime, no less do her novels as a whole. She had read Burke and in common with her age, she was convinced that intense terror can produce sublime emotion.... No idea that became attached to the sublime failed to become popular." See The Picturesque: Studies in a Point of View (London, 1927), p. 129.


Henry James discusses the same concept in a letter to Mrs. Humphrey Ward dated July, 1899: "I think your material suffers a little from the fact that the reader feels you approach your subject too immediately, show him its elements, the cards in your hand too bang off from the first page--so that a wait to guess what and whom the thing is going to be about doesn't impose itself; the ante-chamber or two and the crooked corridor before he is already in the Presence." Letters, I, 332.

16In a letter to William dated October, 1869, Henry James wrote, "At last--for the first time--I live!" and "In fine I've seen Rome and I shall go to bed a wiser man than I last rose--yesterday morning." Letters, I, 24-25.

17The Novels and Tales, XIX (1909), 182.

18The Novels and Tales, I (1907), 275.

19The Novels and Tales, III (1908), 189.

20The Complete Tales, II (1962), 221.
21 The Novels and Tales, VI (1908), 119.

22 Ibid., pp. 140-141.

23 Ibid., p. 140.


26 See The Columbiad, a Poem (Philadelphia, 1809), I, viii, xiii.


28 See Philip Rahv, Discovery of America (Boston, 1947), p. 54.


31 Isolating the very scene of a character's confrontation is often difficult because some persons understand Europe only through Europeans or through its impact upon Americans. Moreover, in some cases it is the narrator-observer who reaches awareness rather than the characters who are active in the drama; that is true of Winterbourne in "Daisy Miller" and of Rowland Mallett in Roderick Hudson, among others. But it seems reasonably clear that Italy provides the larger perspective for Isabel Archer; France for Lambert Strether, Christopher Newman, Euphemia de Maupes, and
Caroline Spencer ("Four Meetings"); and England for Ralph Pendrel, Fleda Vetch, and the narrator in "A Passionate Pilgrim." In most instances, however, the influence of Europe is widely dispersed through both places and personalities.

32Railo, p. 7.


37The Novels and Tales, II (1907), 406. The original version reads, "At the door of the chateau...."

38The Novels and Tales, III (1908), 32-33.

39The Novels and Tales, XII (1908), 163.

40The Novels and Tales, XIX (1909), 78

41The Novels and Tales, III (1908), 172-173.

42This same idea is offered in "Nona Vincent," first published in English Illustrated Magazine, February-March, 1892. Allan Wayworth thinks of Mrs. Alsager that "her charm was always great" as was "the whole air of her house, which was simply a sort of distillation of herself." See The Complete Tales, VIII (1963), 153.

43The Novels and Tales, XXI (1908), 279.
The Novels and Tales, XXII (1908), 175.

Burke, Book II, Section VII.


The Mysteries of Udolpho, II, 95.

Ann Radcliffe, A Journey Made in the Summer of 1794 Through Holland and the Western Frontier of Germany, with a Return Down the Rhine: To Which are Added Observations During a Tour to the Lakes of Lancashire, Westmoreland, and Cumberland (London, 1795), pp. 488-491.


The Novels and Tales, III (1908), 423.

The Novels and Tales, II (1907), 404. The 1877 edition of The American (Boston: Osgood) contains some differences in this passage. It reads: "He obtained lodging at an inn at Poitiers, and the next morning drove in a couple of hours to the village of Fleurieres. But here, preoccupied though he was, he could not fail to notice the picturesqueness of the place. It was what the French call a petit bourg; it lay at the base...." What is especially noticeable is that James changed preoccupied to melancholy ("preoccupied though he was" becomes "for all his melancholy"); melancholy is a particularly popular work in Gothic fiction. Cf. Emily St. Aubert's thoughts as she is separated from Valancourt: "But she tried to dismiss the dismal forebodings that crowded on her mind, and to restrain the sorrow which she could not subdue—efforts which diffused over the settled melancholy of her countenance an expression of tempered resignation..." (The Mysteries of Udolpho, I, 165).

The Novels and Tales, I (1907), 265.

The Novels and Tales, XVIII (1909), 85.

55 *The Novels and Tales*, I (1907), 522.


57 *The Novels and Tales*, XIX (1909), 123-125. cf. "The Private Life" (first published in *Atlantic Monthly*, April, 1892), in which the narrator responds to Lady Mellifont's distress at her husband's and Mrs. Adney's delay, "Do you mean his tumbling over precipices—that sort of thing?" See *The Complete Tales*, III (1962), 194; in "The Jolly Corner" Spencer Brydon has "the sense of a need to hold on to something, even after the manner of a man slipping and sliding on some awful incline." First published in the *English Review*, December, 1908. See *The Complete Tales*, XII (1964), 214.


59 quoted by Varma, p. 420.

60 *The Novels and Tales*, I (1907), 515.

61 p. 106.

62 Railo, p. 11.


64 *The Complete Tales*, III (1962), 113-114.


67 The Novels and Tales, IV (1907), 191.

68 Rainio, pp. 314-315.


70 Varma, p. 219.

71 Ibid., p. 220.

72 The Mysteries of Udolpho, II, 153. cf. The Monk, in which Agnes enacts the personation of the bleeding nun a minute too late, is captured, and is immured in St. Clair's convent.


74 Ibid., p. 141.

75 The Novels and Tales, II (1907), 480-481.

76 The Novels and Tales, IV (1907), 448.

77 Walpole goes on to say that "it is difficult for the noblest Grecian temple to convey half so many impressions to the mind as a cathedral does of the best Gothic taste--a proof of skill in the architects and of address in the priests who erected them. The latter exhausted their knowledge of the passions in composing edifices whose pomp, mechanism, vaults, tombs, painted windows, gloom, and perspectives infused such sensations of romantic devotion; and they were happy in finding artists capable of executing such machinery. One must have taste to be sensible of the beauties of Grecian architecture; one only wants passions to feel Gothic. In Westminster Abbey, one thinks not of the builder; the religion of the place makes the first impression.... Gothic churches infuse superstition; Grecian admiration." Anecdotes of Painting (London, 1879), p. 70.


80 The Complete Tales, II (1962), 220.

81 See The Novels and Tales, I (1907), 275.


83 The Complete Tales, II (1962), 219. A similar attitude is found in the story "At Isella" (1871). The narrator says, "I had watched the tumbling Reuss, blue from the melting pinnacles which know the blue of heaven, come rushing and swirling beneath those quaintly timbered bridges, vaulted with mystical paintings in the manner of Holbein, and through the severed mass of the white, compact town. I had frequented the great, bald, half-handsome, half-hideous church of the Jesuits, and listened in the twilight to the seraphic choir that breathes through its mighty organ-tubes. I had taken the most reckless pleasure in the fact that this was Catholic Switzerland." The Complete Tales, II (1962), 315.

84 Consider, for example, The Europeans, The Bostoni-ans, and "Four Meetings."

85 On the contrary, Robert M. Slabey in "Henry James and 'The Most Impressive Convention in All History,'" American Literature, 30 (March 1958), 99, demonstrates ably that James reveals in his writings an attraction to Catholicism.

86 quoted by Tarr, p. 122.

87 Ibid.

CHAPTER III
JAMES'S GOTHIC CHARACTERS

The characters inhabiting the castles, abysses, convents, and churches of Gothic fiction are members of a dramatic family established in the early days of the Gothic tradition. Their offspring, subtly varying, have retained resemblances to their prototypes. In fact, the similarities are so consistent that Gothic characters have become conventional, their actions and reactions, and often their conclusions, predictable. Among the stock characters who dwell in the Gothic landscape, the memorable types are the heroes and heroines, the villains and villainesses, the domestics, the religious, and the grotesques, each of whom exhibits dominant characteristics which distinguish him from surrounding characters.

It is an over-simplification, of course, to suggest that Henry James's characters are merely stock Gothic characters, for, indeed, they are much more. As many have noted, they are credible people with complex personalities. Nevertheless, a comparison between James's characters and
stock Gothic characters is a fruitful study because it surprisingly reveals that in many instances James's "super-subtle fry" are only sophisticated vestiges of the old Gothic cast.

Gothic heroes are secondary characters in the old tradition, most of the interest being placed upon the heroine and her flight from the forces of evil. The hero, the prototype of whom is Theodore in Walpole's Castle of Otranto, is a nobleman, disguised as a peasant, with a clear conscience and an open countenance. Drawn upon the disguised prince of fairy tales, he has black eyes, a smooth white forehead, and jet black hair; he eventually comes to a melancholy end, at least, or a premature death, at worst. Theodore resembles the portrait of his ancestor Alfonso, which depicts "a lovely young prince, with large black eyes, a smooth white forehead, and manly curling locks like jet." ² He is honest; he speaks boldly to Manfred "not from fear of... tortures," but because his "soul abhors a falsehood."³ He also is brave; he receives the bitter sentence "with a resignation that touched every heart but Manfred's."⁴ And he is noble. The concept of natural nobility is emphasized when Father Jerome, who is really the Count of Falconara, acknowledges that Theodore is his son.
"Yes," said the friar, interrupting him, "his blood is noble; nor is he that abject thing /a saint's bastard/, my lord, you speak him. He is my lawful son, and Sicily can boast of few houses more ancient than that of Falconara—But alas! my lord, what is blood? what is nobility? We are all reptiles, miserable sinful creatures. It is piety alone that can distinguish us from the dust whence we sprung, and whither we must return.5

Theodore's virtue and natural nobility, however, are not rewarded completely; he settles for a second-best marriage with Isabella, "with whom he could forever indulge the melancholy that had taken possession of his soul."6

Henry James's heroes often resemble their Gothic predecessors. Roderick Hudson, for example, has admirably "chiseled and finished" features, a forehead "high and brave," and "a generous dark grey eye, subject to an intermittent kindling glow which would have made a ruder visage striking" and which gives to his "harmonious face an altogether extraordinary beauty." His natural nobility is emphasized when Rowland observes the "slightly piti-ful disparity between the young sculptor's distinguished mask and the shabby gentility of his costume."7 His mother is "a widow, of a Massachusetts country family, a little timid, tremulous woman, always troubled, always
on pins and needles about her son." Roderick, though a peasant, has "the aristocratic temperament," and ranking low socially, he is morally aristocratic. Ultimately he is burdened with both chagrin and melancholy, and he meets an untimely death. Roderick's similarity to the early Gothic hero is reaffirmed in a comparison between his arrival at a sense of guilt and that of Valancourt, the hero of Mrs. Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho*. Valancourt is put in prison, where he has time to think:

In the solitude of his prison Valancourt had leisure for reflection and cause for repentance; here, too, the image of Emily, which amidst the dissipation of the city had been obscured but never obliterated from his heart, revived, with all the charms of innocence and beauty, to reproach him for having sacrificed his happiness and debased his talents by pursuits which his nobler faculties would formerly have taught him to consider were as tasteless as they were degrading. But though his passions had been seduced, his heart was not depraved, nor had habit riveted the chains that hung heavily on his conscience; and, as he retained that energy of will which was necessary to burst them, he at length emancipated himself from the bondage of vice, but not till after much effort and severe suffering.

Roderick, too, is filled with remorse when he discovers that Rowland has loved Mary Garland silently while he, Roderick, has been betraying her love for him.
At the tone, suddenly, he coloured; something had touched him somewhere. He gave, however, at first, under control the least possible sign. "How extraordinary! But I see. Heaven forgive us!"

Rowland took notice of the "us," while his companion, for further comment, simply fell back on the turf and lay for some time staring at the sky. At last he sprang to his feet, and Rowland rose also, conscious for the first time, with any sharpness, in all their intercourse, of having made an impression on him. He had driven in, as it were, a nail, and found in the tap of his hammer, for once in a way, a sensation.  

Roderick later laments, "I must have seemed hideous."  
The differences in the two passages point up the differences between Mrs. Radcliffe's art and that of James. Both Roderick and Valancourt prove that civilization is a corrupting influence--it is "the city" in Valancourt's case, Europe in Roderick's. But while Mrs. Radcliffe is showing that Valancourt's natural virtue, merely suppressed for a time, eventually rises above temptation, a sentimental attitude, James is suggesting that Roderick's passion for Christina Light is going to be burdened with chagrin but not abated. The difference is that James's attitude is not governed by a desire to moralize, as is that of Mrs. Radcliffe. In the old Gothic romance the hero is changed by events dependent upon his solitary
encounter with the unknown. In James's fiction the hero is changed by the knowledge he gains as a result of the psychological interaction of several people.

Rowland Mallett, through whose consciousness Roderick's story unfolds, is also a hero. Although he is never described, he reveals candor, nobility, and bravery. Like Theodore in The Castle of Otranto Mallett finally accepts an unfulfilled life of melancholy. He is last seen patiently visiting Mary Garland and his cousin Cecilia, to whom he talks of Roderick, "of whose history she never wearies and whom he never elsewhere names."12

In The American Christopher Newman, a self-made man from the American frontier, exhibits natural nobility also. His morality consistently is held superior to that of the frequently corrupt European titled nobility. He sleeps the "sleep of the just," we are told, is always forthright and honest, but like Theodore and Rowland Mallett, is destined to accept the grief of unfulfilled love. At the end of the novel he wanders into Notre Dame: "He sat a long time; he heard far-away bells chiming off, at long intervals, to the rest of the world. He was very tired; this was the best place he could be in. He said no prayers; he had no prayers to say. He
had nothing to be thankful for, and he had nothing to ask...."\(^{13}\) Christopher Newman also shares with Rowland Mallett and Theodore of Otranto a particular virtue of both the Gothic hero and the Jamesian hero—a generosity of spirit that is revealed in one's self-devotion to the happiness of others.\(^{14}\)

Valentin de Bellegarde is, in some respects, more of a Gothic hero than Newman. Valentin, whose smile is "very frank," is romantically and ironically killed in a duel, protecting the honor of a prostitute.\(^{15}\) His sense of honor is contrasted to the corruption of his mother, Madame de Bellegarde, and his brother, Urbain.

Basil Ransom of The Bostonians is in many ways a Gothic hero. His appearance, peasantry,\(^{16}\) natural nobility, and sense of honor are revealed in an early paragraph in which Mrs. Luna observes her kinsman:

Mrs. Luna glanced at him from head to foot, and gave a little smiling sigh, as if he had been a long sum in addition. And, indeed, he was very long, Basil Ransom, and he looked a little hard and discouraging, like a column of figures, in spite of the friendly face which he bent upon his hostess's deputy, and which, in its thinness, had a deep dry line, a sort of premature wrinkle, on either side of the mouth. He was tall and lean, and dressed throughout in black; his shirt collar was low and wide.
and the triangle of linen, a little crumpled, exhibited by the opening of his waistcoat, was adorned by a pin containing a small red stone. In spite of this decoration the young man looked poor—as poor as a young man could look who had such a fine head and such magnificent eyes. Those of Basil Ransom were dark, deep, and glowing; his head had a character of elevation which fairly added to his stature; it was a head to be seen above the level of a crowd, on some judicial bench or political platform, or even on a bronze medal. His forehead was high and broad, and his thick black hair, perfectly straight and glossy, and without any division, rolled back from it in a leonine manner.17

James defines Ransom's heroic function when he says, "This lean, pale sallow, shabby, striking young man, with his superior head, his sedentary shoulders, his expression of bright grimness and hard enthusiasm, his provincial, distinguished appearance, is, as a representative of his sex, the most important personage in my narrative...."18

Like Gothic heroes, Ransom contests with the forces of evil, embodied in Olive Chancellor and Selah Tarrant. True to the Gothic tradition, the denouement does not foretell unmitigated bliss. Although Ransom wins Verena, the narrative voice tells us that "though she was glad, he [Ransom] presently discovered that, beneath her hood, she was in tears. It is to be feared that with the
union, so far from brilliant, into which she was about to enter, these were not the last she was destined to shed."19

Gothic heroines are more plentiful than heroes in Gothic fiction and more nearly essential to its themes. Because the conflict between good and evil is important in Gothic fiction, and because the characters work toward self-knowledge and thus must confront evil, clear lines are drawn between the good and bad characters, even though some evil characters are pathetic or attractive in some way. Just as the villains and villainesses are very bad, the heroines are very good. Mario Praz, explaining the psychology of the delineation, says, "The existence of virtue comes to be a condition of sadistic pleasure, just as in orthodox morality, it is necessary to have some obstacle to overcome and some evil to conquer."20 Thus Gothic heroines are, first, extremely virtuous, and, second, unmercifully persecuted.

The early Gothic writers emphasized their heroines' virtue in various ways. The heroines of Mrs. Radcliffe owe a great deal no doubt to Richardson's Clarissa Harlowe.21 They weep and faint readily at what seems minor provocation, and yet, they exhibit extraordinary resolution in the most distressing circumstances. Above all, they have a super-human sense of duty. Emily de
St. Aubert, for example, says to her father, "Dear sir, I will show myself worthy of being your daughter." Moreover, it is only out of a sense of duty that Emily, orphaned, submits to the will of her aunt and the villain Montoni and, grief-stricken though she is, bows to their decision to take her away from her beloved Valancourt. The goodness of such heroines is implied in their superior birth (often discovered at the end of the novel) and in their beauty and genteel accomplishments. Emily, who avoids idleness by playing a lute, writing poetry, and painting with water colors, is said to resemble her mother, "having the same elegant symmetry of form, the same delicacy of features, and the same blue eyes full of tender sweetness." 22

Because the heroine is inordinately gentle and virtuous, her persecution by unscrupulous persons is easily carried out and is, likewise, dramatically effective. The persecution of Gothic heroines is usually effected by imprisonment of some kind or another or by banishment to a convent; sometimes their sufferings are preludes to premature deaths. In The Castle of Otranto Isabella and Manfred's pious and suffering wife, Hippolita, are examples of the persecuted and virtuous heroine. Mrs. Radcliffe provided further examples. In The Sicilian
Romance, the Marchesa di Mazzini is imprisoned in a horrible dungeon by a cruel husband; in The Mysteries of Udolpho Emily de St. Aubert is shut up by the cruel Montoni; in The Romance of the Forest, Adeline takes refuge among the ruins of the Abbey of St. Clair; and in The Italian Ellena is imprisoned in various convents and monasteries. Persecutions become even more horrifying in later Gothic fiction. In The Monk, for example, Antonia is imprisoned by Ambrosio and eventually murdered by him, and in Frankenstein the innocent Justine is tried and executed for the murder of a child.

Henry James's heroines consistently exhibit the sentimental Gothic attributes of virtue and gentility, and they, too, suffer at the hands of oppressive villains and villainesses. James emphasizes his heroines' virtue by investing them metaphorically with royalty or saintliness and by adding symbolic significance to their appearance. Just as Mrs. Radcliffe's heroines have "blue eyes full of tender sweetness," James's heroines are often fair, particularly if the villain is dark. In The American Claire de Cintré is astounding in her Gothic qualities. She is beautiful, saintly, dutiful, and persecuted. When Christopher Newman first meets her in Mrs. Tristram's drawing room, he becomes aware that
"this was the proud and beautiful Madame de Cintré, the loveliest woman in the world, the promised perfection, the proposed ideal...." He has "a sense of a long, fair face, and of two eyes that were both brilliant and mild."24 Later, in telling Newman that Claire de Cintré has returned from the country, Mrs. Tristram says, "She is a saint, and a persecution is all that she needs to bring out her saintliness and make her perfect."25 That she is persecuted is all too obvious. Mrs. Tristram tells Newman that she has seen Claire coming from confession with eyes red from weeping. She explains, "She suffers from her wicked old mother and her Grand Turk of a brother. They persecute her."26 Valentin de Bellegarde refers to Claire's sense of duty when he tells Newman, "Unhappiness is according as one takes things, and Claire takes them according to some receipt communicated to her by the Blessed Virgin in a vision."27 He later says, "Well-bred people always love their brothers."28 Claire had been forced into a distasteful marriage with a doddering nobleman, and at their final interview she tells Newman, "I was made to do gladly and gratefully what is expected of me. My mother has always been very good to me; that's all I can say. I must not judge her; I must not criticize her. If I did, it would come
back to me. I can't change!" 29 In addition to her virtue, her sense of duty, and her persecution, Claire de Cintré's saintliness is underscored in still another way. Her very name is clearly an allusion to Saint Clare. 30

Like many of her Gothic ancestresses, Claire de Cintré chooses the convent as an alternative to a more odious existence with her mother and brother or as the wife of Lord Deepmere. Sister Mary Muriel Tarr observes that "more than one Gothic heroine is sacrificed to the silent shade of monkish solitude and compelled to count her beads in the cheerless and solitary cell of a nunnery in order to augment the fortune of an ambitious brother or to provide a dowry for a more fortunate sister."

31 In A Sicilian Romance, for example, Cornelia assumes the veil in order for her brother to support the dignity of his family. Many other heroines, however, turn to the convent as a final refuge. 32 Claire's assumption of the veil symbolizes her physical death; she has given up all intercourse with the world. The horror and finality of her act is conveyed when Newman visits the house of the Carmelites for the last time. "The barren stillness of the place seemed to be his own release from ineffectual longing. It told him that the woman within was lost beyond recall, and that the days and years of the future
would pile themselves above her like the huge immovable slab of a tomb."33

Isabel Archer of The Portrait of a Lady has Gothic attributes only a little less obvious than those of Claire de Cintre. She is a beautiful heiress who is persecuted and the victim of duplicity. Before Isabel ever meets Gilbert Osmond, the reader is allowed to witness the meeting at Osmond's Florentine villa of "a small group that might have been described by a painter as composing well." The façade of the villa is described:

The windows of the ground-floor, as you saw them from the piazza, were, in their noble proportions, extremely architectural; but their function seemed less to offer communication with the world than to defy the world to look in. They were massively cross-barred, and placed at such a height that curiosity, even on tiptoe, expired before it reached them.34

The image here is that of a prison, and the careful reader will recognize a warning about the owner of the villa. Isabel does not interpret the meaning of the villa the first time she sees it, but when she has had time to learn first-hand of Osmond's tyranny, she understands that the villa, indeed, is a prison.
But when, as the months had elapsed, she had followed him further and he had led her into the mansion of his own habitation, then, then she had seen where she really was.

She could live it over again, the incredulous terror with which she had taken measure of her dwelling. Between those four walls she had lived ever since; they were to surround her for the rest of her life. It was the house of darkness, the house of dumbness, the house of suffocation. Osmond's beautiful mind gave it neither light nor air; Osmond's beautiful mind indeed seemed to peep down from a small high window and mock at her.35

The image of the jailer and the prisoner is clear. But there is a basic difference here between Isabel's predicament and that of purely Gothic heroines. Isabel's imprisonment is spiritual rather than physical. She assures us that "it had not been physical suffering; for physical suffering there might have been a remedy. She could come and go; she had her liberty...."36 Isabel reinforces her feeling of spiritual bondage when she goes to the Coliseum. "She had often ascended to those desolate ledges from which the Roman crowd used to bellow applause and where now the wild flowers (when they are allowed) bloom in the deep crevices...."37

Isabel's step-daughter, Pansy, is more than spiritually imprisoned by Osmond, although she is that,
too. Rather than permit her to make what he considers an inferior marriage he would contain her in a convent. Pansy, who is described both as "a little convent flower" and as "a princess," is fair and dutiful. When Isabel asks her why she is going to the convent, she replies, "Because Papa thinks it best." Isabel's figurative imprisonment compared with Pansy's literal banishment provides an important example of the subtle changes that were occurring in James's art. Just as he was placing more emphasis upon internal action, he also was depicting imagined imprisonment more horribly than literal imprisonment.

Verena Tarrant of The Bostonians is another Jamesian heroine who is essentially Gothic. Her beauty, virtue, sense of duty, and state of oppression are evident when she speaks before the group assembled in Miss Birdseye's parlor:

There was...something rich in the fairness of this young lady; she was strong and supple, there was color in her lips and eyes, and her tresses, gathered into a complicated coil, seemed to glow with the brightness of her nature. She had curious, radiant, liquid eyes (their smile was a sort of reflection, like the glisten of a gem), and though she was not tall, she appeared to spring up, and carried her head as if it reached rather high.
Later, Olive Chancellor becomes aware that "Verena was perfectly uncontaminated, and she would never be touched by evil." Indeed, her virtue is symbolized in a recurring image; three times she is compared with Saint Joan d'Arc. Although she is not corrupted, Verena is exploited by her father and oppressed by Olive Chancellor. She escapes the clutches of all the tyrants at the end of the novel, but she does not find unmitigated happiness. Like Mrs. Radcliffe's heroines, she has reached awareness battle-scarred; she is destined to shed tears more than once.

James's later heroines may feel the same terror as that felt by early Gothic heroines, but their fear is based less on physical dangers than on refined under-currents of threatened betrayal and duplicity. This is true particularly of Milly Theale in The Wings of the Dove. Milly is a beautiful heiress, and she is supremely virtuous. James defines her goodness by surrounding her with images of the dove and of saintliness. Some even have interpreted her symbolism as that of a traditional Christ figure. When Mrs. Stringham finds Milly in the Alps, for example, Milly is seated at the edge of a promontory "looking down on the kingdoms of the earth." Her death on Christmas Day symbolizes both her self-
sacrifice for the happiness of others and the moral victory she achieves. Milly's ordeal includes fear and suffering and finally awareness of the largeness of life; her death, however, is not brought about by the villains, only hastened by them. A part of Milly's destiny is her premature death, or so James implies when Susan Stringham concludes that Milly will never commit suicide, that she is "reserved for some more complicated passage." Here the Gothic elements are subdued and blended into a larger metaphor.

Milly Theale shares with James's other heroines and his heroes extraordinary virtue and intellect, characteristics of the heroines and heroes of both Gothic fiction and classical tragedy. In The Ordeal of Consciousness in Henry James Dorothea Krook explains the essence of the Jamesian heroine and hero:

And since, as the great tragic dramatists have always known, it is the rise and fall of great spirits, of personages endowed with gifts and graces, weaknesses and vices, far above the common level, that is the only proper material for tragedy, it is because the suffering of the Jamesian heroes and heroines is this kind--because it is suffering illuminated by understanding, or the passionate aspiration after understanding that it is redemptive, even when in the end it destroys them, and because redemptive in this way, therefore also truly tragic--truly
exemplary and instructive.43

Gothic heroines are a relatively consistent lot, and so are Gothic villainesses. The Gothic villainess is a woman of violent emotions and strong ambitions; acting upon motives of greed, avarice, and pride, she exhibits a horrifying lack of scruples and a facility for ingenious scheming.44 The Countess Mazzini in A Sicilian Romance and Carathis in Vathek are representatives of the type. The unscrupulous and faithless Countess, the second wife of the Marquis of Mazzini, eventually poisons the Marquis and stabs herself. Carathis, Vathek's mother, is said to be "so far from being influenced by scruples, that she was as wicked as woman could be."45

Henry James's villainesses are more memorable than are those of early Gothic fiction, and they are more plentiful. They share with their elder sisters a lack of scruples and an extraordinary deviousness. Because James's heroes and heroines are reaching toward self-knowledge and must understand evil, the demonic side of life is important to the development of his themes.46 What the villainess does, of course, is deny free will; that is, she shrewdly attempts to impose her will upon
another, generally by duplicity. In Jamesian morality, as, indeed, in traditional Christian ethics, such a denial of will constitutes evil.\textsuperscript{47}

Mrs. Light in \textit{Roderick Hudson} is an early example of the Jamesian villainess. Greedy for a position in Roman society, she literally offers her daughter to the highest bidder, denying Christina any choice at all.\textsuperscript{48} Madame Grandoni describes her to Rowland Mallett:

A month ago she knew no one but her washer-woman, and now I'm told that the cards of Roman princesses are to be seen on her table. Che vuole? She has opened her booth at the fair; she has her great natural wonder to show, and she beats her big drum outside. Her big drum is her piano nobile in a great palace, her brilliant equipage, her marvellous bonnets, her general bedizenment, and the phenomenon in the booth is her wonderful daughter. Christina's a better 'draw' than the two-headed calf or the learned pig. She's spending a lot of money, and you'll see that in two or three weeks she'll take upon herself to open the season by giving a magnificent ball. Of course it's Christina's beauty that floats her. People go to see her because they're curious.\textsuperscript{49}

Mrs. Light reveals more about herself when she describes to Rowland the history of Christina's beauty. She says, "She was a very ugly baby--I give you that for a remarkable fact; for the first two years I could hardly
bear to look at her, and I used to spoil my own looks
with crying about her.\(^{50}\) She then tells of walking in
the park one day and of seeing a child wander along the
path:

"She stopped in front of me, and I stared
at her queer little dress, which was a
cheap imitation of the costume of one of
these contadine. At last I looked up at
her face and said to myself: 'Bless me,
what a beautiful child! what a splendid
pair of eyes, what a magnificent head of
hair! If my poor little Christina were
only like that!' The child turned away
slowly, but looking back with its eyes
fixed on me. All of a sudden I gave a
cry, pounced on it, pressed it in my arms,
covered it with kisses. It was Christina,
my own precious child, so disguised by
the ridiculous dress which the nurse had
amused herself in making for her that
her own mother hadn't recognised her.
She knew me, but she said afterwards that
she had not spoken to me because I
looked so angry. Oh, of course, after
what I had seen, the poor face of me,
off my guard, must have told things!
I rushed with my child to the carriage,
drove home post haste, pulled off her
rags and, as I may say, wrapped her up
in velvet and ermine. I had been blind,
I had been insane; she was a creature
in ten millions, she was to be a beauty
of beauties, a priceless treasure.\(^{51}\)

She valuess her daughter only as a marketable art object,
and the lengths to which she will go to enforce her will
and gain her selfish goals are evident in Rowland's
surmising what prompted the hurried marriage of Christina
and Prince Casamassima. Mrs. Light's secret "crime" is her illicit love affair with the Cavaliere, who really is Christina's father. Rowland explains:

I only conceive that there was an odious, dangerous, desperate, a very possibly vain, but as it has turned out for her, quite successful scene. The poor Cavaliere stood outside, at the door, as livid as a corpse and as dumb. The mother and daughter had it out together. Mrs. Light burned her ships. When she came out she had three lines of writing in her daughter's hand, which the Cavaliere was dispatched with to the Prince. They overtook the young man in time, and when he reappeared he was delighted to dispense with further waiting. I don't know what he thought of the grand manner of his bride's amends to him, but that's how I roughly reconstruct history.52

Madame de Bellegarde of The American is also evil. Her odious crime is that she very possibly murdered her husband. Abetted by her elder son, the Marquis de Bellegarde, she once forced her daughter, Claire, into a formidable marriage with an aged nobleman, and it is her indomitable will that ultimately forces Claire to enter a convent. When Christopher Newman goes to the Bellegarde hôtel to be told that the marriage is called off, he observes Madame de Bellegarde sitting "buried in an armchair, and with her eyes immediately fixing themselves upon Newman. He felt, as soon as he entered
the room, that he was in the presence of something evil...."53

Madame Merle of The Portrait of a Lady is one of James's most memorable villainesses. She has carefully manipulated the future for Isabel Archer, capitalizing upon Isabel's naiveté and her desire to do something magnanimous for a person of fine intellect. When Isabel finally discovers Madame Merle's duplicity, the effect is chilling:

She asked herself, with an almost child-like horror of the supposition, whether to this intimate friend of seven years the great historical epithet of wicked were to be applied. She knew the idea only by the Bible and other literary works; to the best of her belief she had had no personal acquaintance with wickedness. She had desired a large acquaintance with human life, and in spite of her having flattered herself that she cultivated it with some success this elementary privilege had been denied her.54

The journey is complete; she has faced evil; Isabel has reached self-knowledge. Her journey has been only superficially less arduous than the journey of her persecuted sister Emily de St. Aubert. The horrors are equal, at least; only the milieu is different. Isabel's ultimate discovery is as relative to her world as Emily's is to hers. Madame Merle, as a demonic agent, has pro-
vided Isabel's larger perspective as Madame Cheron, Emily's aunt, provides hers.

Olive Chancellor of The Bostonians perhaps is James's most evil villainess. Throughout the novel her obsession with Verena Tarrant is depicted as an evil desire to possess the soul of another. James underscores Olive's evil by consistently linking her with demon images suggestive of Goethe's Faust. When Basil Ransom considers Olive early in the novel he thinks first that her smile is like a "thin ray of moonlight resting upon the wall of a prison." The image is well-chosen, because Olive is motivated by a desire to imprison the soul of Verena. A little later Ransom sees that Olive is a "woman without laughter; exhilaration, if it ever visited her, was dumb. Once only, in the course of his subsequent acquaintance with her, did it find a voice; and then the sound remained in Ransom's ear as one of the strangest he had heard." Olive's "strange" laughter suggests demon laughter, which occurs often in Gothic fiction. In The Monk, a Faust story itself, after Ambrosio signs the fatal document in blood, the demon's eyes glow with rapture; when Ambrosio reminds him of their contract, of the promise to save him from execution, the fiend answers with a gloating, malicious laugh.
But a scene in Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* is even more dramatic and pertinent. During a violent storm Melmoth and his servants hurry to the shore to attempt to rescue drowning seamen; in the midst of the concerned townspeople Melmoth descries, "standing a few yards above him on the rock, a figure that showed neither sympathy or terror--uttered no sound,--offered no help." A gigantic wave breaks over the hulk of the floundering ship and the spectators cry out in anguish at what seems the end of hope for the sailors. But "when the cry had ceased, Melmoth heard a laugh that chilled his blood. It was from the figure that stood above him." 56

Olive confirms her demonic existence when she says to Verena, "My dear child, you are so young--so strangely young. I am a thousand years old; I have lived through generations--through centuries." 57 And, indeed, so has Mephistopheles. The demon says to Faust as they sit atop high mountains and survey the earth, "Da ist für mich nichts Neues zu erfahren;/ Das kenn ich schon seit hundert-tausend Jahren" ("'T is nothing new whatever that one hears;/ I've known it many a hundred thousand years"). 58

Probably the most dramatic link between Olive and Mephistopheles and a confirmation of the part she
plays in the Faustian drama occurs at the end of the eleventh chapter. Olive has just extracted from Verena a promise to devote her imagination and her life to the women's liberation movement. Verena says, "Oh yes--I want to give my life!" And she adds, "I want to do something great!" Olive Chancellor cries rapturously, "You will, you will, we both will!" But she goes on to say, "I wonder if you know what it means, young and lovely as you are--giving your life!" The agreement between them and Olive's question point out that in Verena's relinquishing the world for the women's liberation movement she has indeed given herself up to the demonic impulse that resides in Olive Chancellor, for the women's liberation movement has offered to Olive an opportunity to sublimate her hatred for men; her participation in the movement, in effect, is a manifestation of her evil impulse. Her question sounds much like Ambrosio's question in The Monk when he asks, "What is the import of this writing?" and is told by the demon, "It makes your soul over to me for ever, and without reserve."

The Faustian significance is again confirmed when Olive asks Verena, "Do you understand German? Do you know 'Faust'?" And she quotes, "'Entsagen sollst
du, sollst entsagen!" While Olive envisions winter evenings filled with the sharing of Goethe with Verena, Verena asks the meaning of the German words. Olive tells her, "Thou shalt renounce, refrain, abstain!" The quotation is significant in several ways. Although the words are an exhortation as Olive uses them, Faust uses them to describe the natural life; he says that those words everlastingly ring on the earth, that earthly life is always one of renunciation and unfulfillment. He then accepts Mephistopheles' offer. But Faust has been deluded by Mephistopheles and the evil spirits, just as Olive has deluded both herself and Verena. Olive would urge Verena to utter Faust's words "renounce, refrain, abstain," but Faust's view of the world at the time he speaks is distorted because he already has succumbed to the temptor. In asking Verena to reject the natural life, which would include marriage to Basil Ransom, and to accept the life that she plans for them, Olive is placed clearly in the role of Mephistopheles.

James's villainesses are all similar in that they tamper with human souls; to some degree they deny another person the freedom to choose his fate. This is true of the older Gothic villainesses as well, and it is also true of the Gothic villain, who usually is more inter-
esting and more complex than his female counterpart. Although some Gothic villains have characteristics that border on the heroic, they are a lot sufficiently homogeneous to have distinctive features. They have mysterious origins, evidences of burnt-out passions, traces of ghastly guilts, melancholy habits, pale faces, and evil eyes. In *The Castle of Otranto*, for example, Manfred is fierce and morose; his hidden crime is that his family has usurped the rightful heir to Otranto. Mrs. Radcliffe's villains are modified versions of Manfred. In *The Mysteries of Udolpho* Montoni is married to a French noblewoman, Madam Cheron, whom he takes with her niece Emily to Udolpho; trying to acquire his wife's whole fortune, he mistreats her until she dies. In *The Sicilian Romance* the Marquis of Mazzini holds his wife prisoner in the dungeons of his castle and tries to marry off his daughter against her will. The villain Schedoni, considered Mrs. Radcliffe's masterpiece of characterization, is typical of Gothic villains:

His figure was striking, but not so from grace; it was tall, and though extremely thin, his limbs were large and uncouth, and as he stalked along, wrapt in the black garments of his order, there was something terrible in his air; something almost superhuman. His cowl, too, as it threw a shade over
the livid paleness of his face, encreased its severe character and gave an effect to his large melancholy eye, which approached to horror. His was not the melancholy of a sensible and wounded heart, but apparently that of a gloomy and ferocious disposition. There was something in his physiognomy extremely singular and that can not easily be defined. It bore the traces of many passions, which seemed to have fixed the features they no longer animated. An habitual gloom and severity prevailed over the deep lines of his countenance; and his eyes were so piercing that they seemed to penetrate, at a single glance into the hearts of men, and to read their most secret thoughts; few persons could support their scrutiny, or even endure to meet them twice.64

James's villains are like their more Romantic forerunners in some respects, and they share with James's villainesses the attempt to tamper with the soul of another person. Mystery surrounds the Jamesian villain, he is sullen and brooding, often a crime lies in his past, and his eyes reveal his evil. Urbain de Bellegarde, elder brother of Claire de Cintré of The American, is one of James's earliest villains. His evil is derived in part from his haughtiness and his association with his mother, with whom he forces Claire to give up Christopher Newman. But his aura of evil largely depends upon the mystery that surrounds his past and the speculation that he aided his mother in murdering his father.
One of James's shorter works, "Four Meetings," offers a sketch of a villain whose duplicity is exceeded only by his inhumanity. Caroline Spencer has saved her money for years in order to make a long-dreamed-of trip to Europe. She is met at the steamer by a cousin, who immediately relieves her of her money on the pretense of exchanging it for French currency. He returns with it only to receive it again, playing upon her sympathy and credulity; she gives him all she has for his "debts." Moreover, his "poor young wife," the vulgar Countess, comes to America and moves in with Miss Spencer, demanding servility from the naive New England spinster. What is particularly interesting is the way in which the cousin is described. After noting that he has "a pair of little red eyes," the narrator observes him more closely:

Miss Spencer's cousin was a queer fellow. Nature had not shaped him for a Raphaellesque or Byronic attire, and his velvet doublet and naked throat were not in harmony with his facial attributes. His hair was cropped close to his head; his ears were large and ill-adjusted to the same. He had a lackadaisical carriage and a sentimental droop which were peculiarly at variance with his keen, strange-coloured eyes. Perhaps I was prejudiced, but I thought his eyes were treacherous.

The cousin, in a sense, has the evil eye, but unperceptive
Miss Spencer does not recognize it as a sign of the demon. Selah Tarrant of The Bostonians also is presented in demon imagery. Like Olive Chancellor he would exploit his daughter Verena's goodness in order to achieve his own selfish ends. He, too, is guilty of tampering with a human soul, and thus in James's morality, he is evil. Basil Ransom regards Dr. Tarrant at the gathering of the reformers in Miss Birdseye's parlor:

There was nothing ambiguous, by the way, about her confederate; Ransom simply loathed him, from the moment he opened his mouth; he was intensely familiar—that is, his type was; he was simply the detested carpetbagger. He was false, cunning, vulgar, ignoble.

While Dr. Tarrant is urging the spirit to enter the body of his daughter, Ransom grows impatient with his "grotesque manipulations" which seem "a dishonor to the passive maiden"; he is aware that the doctor throws up "his arms at moments, to rid himself of the wings of the long waterproof," which has fallen "forward over his hands." The waterproof, undoubtedly black and described as "wings," creates an image of the demon who soars on wings of ignominy. In Paradise Lost Satan, who has "eyes that sparkling blazed," is described: "Then with expanded wings he steers his flight/ Aloft, incumbent on the dusky
air" (I, 225-226). And in *The Monk*, when the demon
claims Ambrosio, he grasps "one of Ambrosio's arms,"
spreads "his broad pinions," and springs "with him into
the air." Tarrant's demonic nature is again emphasized
when Olive visits the Tarrant home and thinks of it as
Dr. Tarrant's "temporary lair."

Gilbert Osmond in *The Portrait of a Lady* is Henry
James's arch villain. His oppression, haughtiness,
duplicity, and cunning manipulation of Isabel and Pansy
render him James's masterpiece of villainy. Although
his imprisonment of Isabel is largely symbolic, it is as
horrifying as the literal imprisonment of Gothic heroines
by darkly glancing demonic lords. When Isabel sits long
into the night and surveys her marriage with Osmond, she
remembers the time at which she began to be aware of his
fearsome evil. "The shadows had begun to gather," she
recalls; "it was as if Osmond deliberately, almost
malignantly, had put the lights out one by one." When
Osmond announces that he is sending Pansy to a convent
again, to remove her from Edward Rosier, Isabel gives
close attention to Osmond's speech:

It seemed to show her how far her husband's
desire to be effective was capable of going--
to the point of playing theoretic tricks
on the delicate organism of his daughter. She could not understand his purpose, not wholly. But she understood it better than he supposed or desired, inasmuch as she was convinced that the whole proceeding was an elaborate mystification, addressed to herself and destined to act upon her imagination. He had wanted to do something sudden and arbitrary, something unexpected and refined; to mark the difference between his sympathies and her own, and show that if he regarded his daughter as a precious work of art it was natural he should be more and more careful about the finishing touches. If he wished to be effective, he had succeeded; the incident struck a chill into Isabel's heart. 71

Osmond's possessiveness has led to cruel oppression, which continues to frighten Isabel. She becomes aware that the sight of her interest in her cousin stirs her husband's rage; it is "as if Osmond had locked her into her room—which she was sure was what he wanted to do." 72

Like his villainous predecessors, Osmond is surrounded by mystery, and he is guilty of an odious crime. Pansy is his illegitimate daughter, born to Madame Merle—a fact they not only have concealed from Isabel but which lies behind Madame Merle's bringing Isabel and Osmond together; she is offering Pansy, her unacknowledged daughter, the security of a wealthy step-mother. Osmond's own villainy is confirmed when Isabel thinks that "his egotism lay hidden like a serpent in a bank
of flowers," a passage that evokes Milton's Satan of 
Paradise Lost. His villainy is defined further when 
Isabel thinks to herself that Osmond has a facility for 
making everything wither that he touches. "It was as if 
he has the evil eye."73

Because James's themes require a conflict between 
good and evil people, his heroes and heroines, villains 
and villainesses are his more memorable and important 
characters. But minor characters surround the major 
ones, and among them are those who reflect the old Gothic 
stock. The most obvious are the domestics and the 
religious.

The domestic in early Gothic fiction is a 
functional character. Usually of limited intelligence, 
the servant is often talkative and merry. He is con-
trasted to the melancholy and virtuous heroines and 
heroes, and his superstitions and fearfulness heighten 
the terrifying predicament of the central characters. 
In the Preface to the first edition of The Castle of 
Otranto Walpole discusses the importance of the domestics. 
"Some persons," he says, "may perhaps think the character 
of the domestics too little serious for the general cast 
of the story; but besides their opposition to the prin-
cipal personages, the art of the author is very observable
in his conduct of the subalterns. They discover many passages essential to the story, which could not well be brought to light but to their naïveté and simplicity; in particular, the womanish terror and foibles of Bianca, in the last chapter, conduce essentially towards advancing the catastrophe." In the Preface to the second edition he amplifies the point:

The simplicity of their behaviour, almost tending to excite smiles, which at first seem not consonant to the superior cast of the work, appeared to me not only improper, but was marked designedly in that manner. My rule was nature. However grave, important, or melancholy, the sensations of princes and heroes may be, they do not stamp the same affections on their domestics; at least the latter do not, or should not be made to express their passions in the same dignified tone. In my humble opinion, the contrast between the sublime of one, and the naïveté of the other sets the pathetic of the former in a stronger light.

Clara Reeve's Joseph in The Old English Baron is a further development of the type, and he has acquired an important characteristic. He knows something of weight that bears upon the central conflict but talks only after much persuasion. Finally, he becomes the helper of the rightful heir of the castle.

Some of the servants who appear in James's fiction
are useful like Bianca and Joseph, but more often than not
they are merely additional characters who complete James's
panoramic view of the drawing room and the country house.
Mrs. Catherine Bread of The American is an exception
because she is a servant drawn upon the Gothic pattern.
A simple woman, she is completely devoted to the virtuous
members of the Bellegarde family, Claire and Valentin,
and she knows the family secret, that Urbain and his mother
killed Monsieur de Bellegarde. Complying with Valentin's
death-bed plea, she reveals the secret to Christopher
Newman in hopes that he can frighten Urbain and his
mother into releasing Claire to Newman. In the old Gothic
fiction this feat might have been possible; but James is
never concerned with sentimental resolution. His kind of
affirmation is based upon the acquisition of knowledge and
not the victory of virtue over evil; thus the plan does
not work. Urbain and Madame de Bellegarde are shaken,
but they do not fall—they know the society in which they
live much better than Newman knows it. When he finally
understands that his information would be meaningless to
the Bellegarde's social circle, he understands the ways
of a corrupt aristocratic European civilization. His
journey is complete; his victory is a moral one. Mrs.
Bread has served to dramatize his ultimate acceptance of
knowledge, but she has not effected a sentimental denouement, as Joseph does in *The Old English Baron*. The domestic of the old fiction was functional; he often was a foil to the hero, aided in the unraveling of the plot, and sometimes provided the relief of humor. Some of James's characters are useful in these ways, too, and he labelled them the *ficelle*, the *reflector*, and the *confidante*. The difference is that such characters were more credible and more useful to James if they were not confined in the rôle of the servant.

Like the domestic in Gothic fiction, the religious is also a minor character who may influence the outcome of the action. Although Father Jerome of *The Castle of Otranto* exhorts people to control their evil passions, preaches peace and harmony, and urges repentance, he also figures in the action of the story. He himself is a nobleman in disguise who recognizes his long-lost son, Theodore, the rightful heir to Otranto. Good religious, like Jerome, are plentiful in Gothic fiction; their features usually show the traces of sorrow and genuine piety.

On the other hand, some of the most fearsome characters in Gothic fiction are monks, abbesses, friars, and inquisitors. Two religious, Ambrosio of *The Monk* and
Schedoni of The Italian, are arch villains. It is the hypocrisy of vanity and avarice hidden under the air of humility and the veil of religion that renders evil ultimately terrible.

Henry James has not created any intensely evil religious characters; 77 some are unappealing, short-sighted men of the cloth, like the Reverend Mr. Babcock, Christopher Newman's traveling companion on the continent, but others are only figures in the landscape, adding a bit of gloom or solemnity to the action. In The American when Valentin de Bellegarde is dying, the ritual mechanically performed by the curé by contrast delineates the horror and pointlessness of Valentin's death. The curé, a cleric whose piety is as debased by an irreverent concern with physical comforts as that of his historical prototypes so severely criticized by Langland and Chaucer, is interested only superficially in Valentin's death. Newman observes him:

M. le Curé... carried in his hand an object unknown to Newman, and covered with a white napkin. M. le Curé was short, round, and red; he advanced, pulling off his little black cap to Newman, and deposited his burden on the table; and then he sat down in the best armchair, with his hands folded across his person. The other gentlemen had exchanged glances which expressed
unanimity as to the timeliness of their presence.78

In "De Grey: A Romance" Father Herbert does more than add to the atmosphere. He is an agent of revelation in that he knows the family curse. But characters like him are relatively few in James's fiction. James is much more likely to use clerical images to add metaphoric depth to characters. In "The Ghostly Rental" Captain Diamond bends solemnly and slowly in "mystic genuflections," as if he were performing an obeisance. Later, in explaining his life of penance, he says, "If I were a Catholic, I might have turned monk, and spent the rest of my life in fasting and praying."79 Captain Diamond is not a legitimate religious such as is found in Gothic fiction, but the imagery defines the sacredness of his penance and the eschatological meaning it holds for him. In the same way, Hyacinth Robinson's subservience to the revolutionaries in The Princess Casamassima involves him in "a vow of blind obedience, the vow as of the Jesuit fathers to the head of their order."80 And Milly Theale describes Sir Luke Strett as "half like a bishop."81 Later she tells Kate of her meeting with Sir Luke. "I feel," she says, "I can't otherwise describe it--as if I had been on my knees to the priest. I've confessed and
I've been absolved. It has been lifted off." Sir Luke has given Milly an injunction to live, a command that would have religious significance even in a context less symbolically religious than The Wings of the Dove, which has been called a religious allegory.

One more class of minor characters must be mentioned, and for want of a better term, they might be called simply grotesques, in the sense that Hoffman uses the term to refer to his "demonic" characters. The hag of folklore is an early example of the grotesque and represents what Railo describes as a " Dweller of the Threshold," a name derived from Lytton's Zanoni. Before the pilgrim traveling toward knowledge can reach the realm of the "Beyond," he has to struggle with the grotesque "Dweller," who is evil and horror personified. To withstand a confrontation with the grotesque Dweller, one has to be fearless and absolutely pure. The Giaour in Vathek is such a grotesque Dweller. He is "so abominably hideous that the very guards who arrested him were forced to shut their eyes as they led him along: the Caliph himself appeared startled at so horrible a visage.... The man, or rather monster, instead of making a reply, thrice rubbed his forehead, which, as well as his body, was blacker than ebony; four times clapped his paunch,
the projection of which was enormous; opened wide his huge eyes, which glowed like firebrands; began to laugh with a hideous noise, and discovered his long amber-colored teeth, bestreaked with green."86 Because the Caliph Vathek is not pure and because the Giaour deceives him, Vathek is not given the secrets of knowledge. Rather, "for the sake of empty pomp and forbidden power," he has "sullied himself with a thousand crimes," and has become "a prey to grief without end, and remorse without mitigation."87

Although the precursor of the grotesque lies in ancient folk literature, the grotesque himself is a late development of Gothic fiction. James occasionally uses the grotesque to foreshadow an important step in the hero's search for knowledge or to define a terrifying revelation. The grotesque functions here as the Dweller of the Threshold to Knowledge much as Sin guards the gateway to Hell in Paradise Lost. In Roderick Hudson, when Rowland Mallett searches for Roderick in the Alps, he meets a grotesque who is portentous of the horrifying knowledge he is going to receive. "He made his way to several far-perched huts, but most of them were empty and some of them closed. He thumped at their low foul doors with nervous savage anger; he challenged the stupid
silence to speak to him of his friend. Some of these places had evidently not been open for months. The silence everywhere was horrible; it mocked at his impatience, it was charged with cruelty and danger. In the midst of it, at the door of one of the cabins, sat a hideous cretin who grinned at him over a vast goitre...."88

Not so striking, but an obvious example of the same phenomenon is a passage that occurs in The Wings of the Dove. Susan Stringham is looking for Milly in the Alps; in due time she reaches the chalets and there receives "from a bewildered old woman, a very fearful person to behold, information that sufficiently guided her."89 The "hag" stands before the door to knowledge, in this instance Susan's perception of the premature death that was to be Milly's fate.

In "The Last of the Valerii" the excavator who unearthed the Juno is also a grotesque Dweller. The narrator says, "I especially objected to the personage who conducted the operations--a little ugly, dwarfish man, who seemed altogether a subterranean genius, an earthy gnome of the underworld, and went prying about the grounds with a malicious smile which suggested more delight in the money the Signor Conte was going to bury than in the expected marbles and bronzes."90 The excavator
is the agent of demonic mischief, of course, for the statue becomes the object of Count Marco's perverted obsession. Only the young Countess has the purity of spirit to confront the evil force, restore the Juno to its burial place, and redeem her husband.

"The Jolly Corner" represents James's most psychological treatment of the grotesque Dweller of the Threshold, and indeed seems to have paved the way for modern visions like Kafka's "The Metamorphosis." In James's story Spencer Brydon stalks his alter ego and finally confronts him at the threshold of consciousness. The passage, although long, is important enough to quote entirely:

The penumbra, dense and dark, was the virtual screen of a figure which stood in it as still as some image erect in a niche or as some black-vizored sentinel guarding a treasure. Brydon was to know afterwards, was to recall and make out, the particular thing he had believed during the rest of his descent. He saw, in its great grey glimmering margin, the central vagueness diminish, and he felt it to be taking the very form toward which, for so many days, the passion of his curiosity had yearned. It gloomed, it loomed, it was something, it was somebody, the prodigy of a personal presence.

Rigid and conscious, spectral yet human, a man of his own substance and stature waited there to measure himself with his power to dismay. This only could it be--this only till he recognised, with his
advance, that what made the face dim
was the pair of raised hands that
covered it and in which, so far from
being offered in defiance, it was buried
as for dark depreciation. So Brydon,
before him, took him in; with every face
of him now, in the higher light, hard and
acute--his planted stillness, his vivid
truth, his grizzled bent head and white
masking hands, his queer actuality of
evening-dress, of dangling double eye-glass,
of gleaming silk lappet and white linen,
of pearl button and gold watch-guard and
polished show. No portrait by a great
modern master could have presented him
with more intensity, thrust him out of
his frame with more art, as if there had
been "treatment," of the consummate sort,
in his every shade and salience. The
revulsion, for our friend, had become,
before he knew it, immense--this drop,
in the act of apprehension, to the sense
of his adversary's inscrutable manoeuvre.
That meaning at least, while he gaped,
it offered him; for he could but gape at
his other self in this other anguish,
gape as a proof that he, standing there
for the achieved, the enjoyed, the
triumphant life, couldn't be faced in
his triumph. Wasn't the proof in the
splendid covering hands, strong and
completely spread.... The hands, as he
looked, began to move, to open; then,
as if deciding in a flash, dropped from
the face and left it uncovered and pre-
sented. Horror, with the sight had
leaped into Brydon's throat, gasping there
in a sound he couldn't utter; for the
bared identity was too hideous as his,
and his glare was the passion of his
protest. The face, that face, Spencer
Brydon's?--he searched it still, but
looking away from it in dismay and denial,
falling straight from his height of sub-
limity. It was unknown, inconceivable,
awful, disconnected from any possibility--
He had been "sold," he inwardly moaned,
stalking such game as this; the presence before him was a presence, the horror within him a horror, but the waste of his nights had been only grotesque and the success of his adventure an irony. Such an identity fitted his at no point, made its alternative monstrous. A thousand times yes, as it came upon him nearer now—the face was the face of a stranger. It came upon him nearer now, quite as one of those fantastic expanding images projected by the magic lantern of childhood; for the stranger, whoever, he might be, evil, odious, blatant, vulgar, had advanced as for aggression, and he knew himself give ground. Then harder pressed still, sick with the force of his shock, and falling back as under the hot breath and the roused passion of a life larger than his own, a rage of personality before which his own collapsed, he felt the whole vision turn to darkness and his very feet give way. His head went round; he was going; he had gone. 

In order to show the degree to which James has moved away from the early Gothic fiction, while still using some of the Gothic motifs, this passage can be compared fruitfully with the famous passage in The Mysteries of Udolpho in which Emily confronts the odious "veiled picture," and like Spencer Brydon, faints away:

To withdraw her thoughts... from the subject of her misfortunes, she attempted to read; but her attention wandered from the page, and at length she threw aside the book, and determined to explore the adjoining chambers of the castle. Her imagination was pleased with the view of ancient grandeur; and an emotion of melancholy
awe awakened all its powers, as she walked through rooms obscure and desolate, where no footsteps had passed probably for many years, and remembered the strange history of the former possessor of the edifice. This brought to her recollection the veiled picture which had attracted her curiosity on the preceding night, and she resolved to examine it. As she passed through the chambers that led to this, she found herself somewhat agitated; its connexion with the late lady of the castle, and the conversation of Annette, together with the circumstances of the veil, throwing a mystery over the object that excited a faint degree of terror. But a terror of this nature, as it occupies and expands the mind, and elevates it to high expectation, is purely sublime, and leads us, by a kind of fascination, to seek even the object from which we appear to shrink.

Emily passed on with faltering steps; and having paused a moment at the door before she attempted to open it, she then hastily entered the chamber, and went towards the picture, which appeared to be enclosed in a frame of uncommon size, that hung in a dark part of the room. She paused again, and then with a timid hand lifted the veil; but instantly let it fall—perceiving that what it had concealed was no picture; and before she could leave the chamber she dropped senseless on the floor.92

There is much in the two passages that is similar; both scenes are wrapped in darkness and stillness, both phenomena are covered, and both "explorers" reject that which they confront to the point of losing consciousness. But what is strikingly different in the two
passages is that Ann Radcliffe clearly has created her scene as a means of horrifying the reader and of exhibiting Emily's courage and gentility. She later explains the horrible "picture" as an enactment by a monk performing a penance. Spencer Brydon's confrontation is different. The grotesque he confronts is not a physical one but a psychological manifestation of his insecurity and fears. It is no more and no less. His ability to survive the confrontation permits him a new range of understanding. The grotesque Dweller of the Threshold has become a psychological phenomenon, as much of the Gothic was to become as it was shaped and re-shaped by the profoundly sensitive hands of Henry James.
FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER III

1For example, Joseph Warren Beach in The Method of Henry James (1918; rpt. Philadelphia: Albert Saifer, 1954) says that he would be the last to pronounce James's characters "not true to life" (p. 121). He describes James's delineation of character as "a thick-piled carpet--an effect of depth, richness, luxuriance of detail" (p. xciv).


3Ibid., pp. 60–61.

4Ibid., p. 89.

5Ibid., p. 63.

6Ibid., p. 112. cf. Valancourt in Mrs. Radcliffe's Mysteries of Udolpho; also Shakespeare's Valentine (Two Gentlemen of Verona) and Romeo.


8Ibid., I, 27.


10The Novels and Tales, I (1907), 510.

11Ibid., I, 512. In the original version this line reads, "I've been grotesque!"

12Ibid., I, 527.

134
13 The Novels and Tales, II (1907), 364.


15 Manfred's son, Conrad, in The Castle of Otranto, dies as a result of his father's corruption; Valentin dies as a result of society's corruption.

16 cf. Edward Rosier in The Portrait of a Lady; he is gentle, honest, and sincere and "looks like a nobleman" to Pansy, although to Osmond he is a mere peasant who in no way meets the standards he has established for Pansy's future husband. What once was a social description becomes useful to James as a subjective valuation.


18 Ibid., p. 5.

19 Ibid., p. 464.


22 The Mysteries of Udolpho, I, 5-6.

The Novels and Tales, II (1907), 40-41.

Tbid., II, 50.

Tbid., II, 77.

Tbid., II, 106.

Tbid., II, 107.

Tbid., II, 283-284.

"Clare of Assisi, foundress. B. at Assisi c. 1194; d. there, 1253; cd. 1255; f.d. 12 August. She came of a noble family. In her youth she refused two proffered marriages, but did not finally make up her mind to 'leave the world' until she came under the influence of St Francis in her native town. Then, when she was eighteen, she left home secretly and Francis put her in the care of Benedictine nuns at Bastia. Her family tried to induce her to return home, but in vain...

From Pope Innocent III St Clare obtained, c. 1215, the 'privilege of poverty', that is, permission for her nuns to live wholly on alms, without possessing any property whatever, either personal or communal. From time to time throughout her life St Clare had to fight for maintenance of this privilege, and for the nuns' rule of life as designed by St Francis, against the modifications desired by popes and other prudent church authorities. The Poor Clares' mode of life was harder than that of any other nuns at that time. Clare herself was in the front rank of medieval contemplatives, and she has been called 'the most authentic expression of evangelical perfection as understood by St Francis of Assisi'."

It is particularly significant, too, that the monastery of St. Clair is described in detail in The Mysteries of Udolpho and that much of the action of The Monk takes place in the convent of St. Clare, where Agnes is immured.


33 The Novels and Tales, II (1907), 363.

34 The Novels and Tales, III (1908), 325.

35 Ibid., IV (1908), 196.

36 Ibid., IV, 197.

37 Ibid., IV, 340.

38 Ibid., IV, 345.

39 The Bostonians, p. 59.

40 Ibid., p. 85, cf. Maggie Verver in The Golden Bowl, about whom the same is said. Maggie is a princess both literally and figuratively.


42 The Novels and Tales, XIX (1909), 124.


44 The Gothic villainess may be the immediate inspiration for the fatal women in Romantic poetry; she strongly resembles the Shakespearean villainess exemplified by the Duchess of Gloucester, Lady Macbeth, Regan, and Goneril, among others.


Walter Wright says that "although James did not explicitly present the religious aspect of life in his novels, his interpretations of evil accord with religious motifs and with Christian ethics" (p. 92).

cf. Mrs. Brook in The Awkward Age who feels threatened by her daughter, Nanda, and strives to keep her out of society.

The Novels and Tales, I (1907), 195-196.

Ibid., I, 249.

Ibid., I, 250-251.

Ibid., I, 418-419.

The Novels and Tales, II (1907), 246.

The Novels and Tales, IV (1908), 329.

The Bostonians, p. 19. Later Olive exhibits the strange laughter again. When Ransom, after Miss Birdseye's death, inquires about Verena, Olive tells him that he will not be able to find her: "I am sure of it!" And her enjoyment of the situation becoming acute there broke from her lips a shrill, unfamiliar, troubled sound, which performed the office of a laugh, a laugh of triumph, but which, at a distance, might have passed almost as well for a wail of despair. It rang in Ransom's ears as he quickly turned away" (p. 427).


The Bostonians, p. 138.

known to me," Part I, Scene iv, trans. Taylor, p. 54); and a little later, "O glaube mir, der manche tausend Jahre/ An dieser harten Speise kaut" ("Believe me, who for many a thousand year/ The same tough meat have chewed and tested," trans. Taylor, p. 60).

59 The Bostonians, p. 87.

60 The Monk (1795; rpt. New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1959), p. 415. cf. Bayard Taylor's translation of the following lines from Faust. Faust says, "And what shall my counter service be therefore?" Mephistopheles evades the question then answers, "Here, an unwearied slave, I'll wear thy tether,/ And to thine every nod obedient be:/ When There again we come together,/ Then shalt thou do the same for me," pp. 56-57.

61 The German text reads, "Entbehren sollst du! sollst entbehren!"

62 It is ironic that Olive, trying to keep Verena in the convention hall to speak, finally asks Basil Ransom, "Haven't you any pity; do you want me to be hooted? It's only for an hour. Haven't you any soul?" (p. 457). Ransom, of course, still has his soul, and so does Verena. But Olive has been thwarted. Her evil is revealed in her eye, a characteristic of demons. She finally sees that Ransom is leaving the convention hall with Verena and "her pale, glittering eyes" strain forward, "as if they were looking for death" (p. 462).

63 The villain-hero, or the Byronic hero, grew out of the Romantic fascination with evil and the confusion of good and evil in the denouement of Gothic fiction. The villain-hero is a villain who becomes pathetic or attractive in some way and to some degree, perhaps because of the sincerity of his suffering. Milton's Satan is an early example. It must be remembered, however, that the evil and cruelty of the villain-hero are not negated by his pathos.

64 The Italian, I, 35.

The red eye is a characteristic of demonic fairies in folk literature. Such an example is provided also by the medieval Green Knight (Sir Gawain and the Green Knight) who terrifies King Arthur and his assembled knights with his horrifying personage, one aspect of which is his rolling red eye.

The Bostonians, p. 58.

Ibid., p. 60.

Ibid., p. 416.

The Novels and Tales, IV (1908), 190.

Ibid., IV, 348.

Ibid., IV, 202.

Ibid., IV, 188.

The Castle of Otranto, p. 16.

Ibid., p. 20.


A possibly evil religious is presented, but not developed, in "At Isella." The narrator says, "The Prior himself...especially interested me, so every inch was he a Prior--a priest dominant and militant. He was still young, and familiar, I should say, with the passions of youth; tall and powerful in frame, stout-necked and small-headed, with a brave beak of a nose and closely placed, fine, but sinister eyes.... Was it a mere fancy of a romantic Yankee tourist that he was more evil than gentle?" The Complete Tales, II (1962), 316.
78 The Novels and Tales, II (1907), 272.


80 The Novels and Tales, VI (1908), 54.

81 The Novels and Tales, XIX (1908), 166.

82 Ibid., p. 168.


84 See Wolfgang Kayser, The Grotesque in Art and Literature (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1957), p. 106. Kayser explains that "even where they do not themselves interfere with the action or bring their supernatural powers into play, their mere presence usually spells death and destruction. They tend to possess uncanny mechanical skills of a kind that enables them to establish contact with the most secret mysteries of nature and thus to produce effects which must remain inexplicable," as Hoffman says through one of his characters.

85 Eino Railo, The Haunted Castle (1927; rpt. New York: The Humanities Press, 1964), pp. 263-264. Also relevant to the evolution of the "hag" is a discussion in Appendix Seven of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1970), p. 139. Brian Stone discusses the magical attributes of Morgan the Fay. "Morgan, being a powerful enchantress, could naturally change her shape. A sinister aspect of her, which presumably underlies the many references to her appearing, as in Sir Gawain, as an ugly old woman, is the Welsh Gwrach y Rhïbyn, a hideous hag dressed in black, who might be seen by water, splashing herself, or dipping and raising herself in a pool. But Morgan's extreme ugliness and great age are seen by the Christian romancers Platonically, as a direct result of her dealings with the devil." The hag, of whom Morgan the Fay is a prototype, is a variation of the grotesque Dweller.
86 *Vathek*, p. 124.


88 *The Novels and Tales*, I (1907), 521-522.

89 *The Novels and Tales*, XIX (1909), 122.


92 *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, I, 252.
CHAPTER IV

INHERENT GOTHIC PROPERTIES:

THE SUPERNATURAL AND THE RESTRICTED VIEWPOINT

More fundamental to Gothic fiction than even the ruin or the mansion is the element of the supernatural, and as consistently characteristic of Gothic fiction as the persecuted maiden and the tyrannical villain is that point of view which is restricted to a single narrator. It is, indeed, the combination of the supernatural and the limiting narrative technique that accounts for the larger part of the intense psychological interest in Gothic fiction.

Certainly both the supernatural constituent and the narrative technique flourished long before the rise of Gothic fiction; the limited point of view carried over from the epistolary novels, and the supernatural, as Edith Birkhead points out, had always persisted in "legends handed down from one generation to another on the lips of living people" and had not lost their "power to thrill and alarm."¹

143
The supernatural, revived in the eighteenth century with extraordinary enthusiasm, is represented in Gothic fiction by devils, witches, ghosts, works of art that come to life, and manifestations of supernatural powers, like giant swords and curses. In the fiction of Horace Walpole and Mrs. Radcliffe witches and devils are not present; the villains and villainesses have some demonic characteristics, such as the evil eye, but they remain human beings. Real devils and witches began to appear in Gothic fiction during its Schauer-romantik phase, a period distinguishable by the explicit detail afforded to physical agony and by a more pronounced emphasis upon the grotesque and fantastic. In *Vathek* (1786), for example, the caliph's mother, Carathis, is a witch, an indefatigably evil practitioner of black magic, and the spectral Giaour, horrible to look upon, has the demonic power to foretell Vathek's future. In Lewis's *The Monk*, the witch Matilda seduces Ambrosio, who finally seals his fate with a pact made with the devil himself. In Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* the Wanderer also has made a pact with the devil, having exchanged his soul for endless power and sustained youth; Melmoth, however, finally wishes to be freed from the agreement, and he wanders over the earth searching for a person who is willing to trade fates with him.
A combination of both Faust and Mephistopheles, the Wanderer himself has acquired supernatural powers and is hampered by neither space nor time.

Henry James has created only a few characters who might be construed to be real devils or witches. In his early tale "The Romance of Certain Old Clothes" (1864) Rosalind WIng rave is a witch; described as "a devilish fine woman," she places a curse on his sister, Perdita, giving her only a year to live with her bridegroom, whom Rosalind loves. Peter Quint and Miss Jessel of "The Turn of the Screw" are demon and witch, whether they exist at large or only in the mind of the governess. Without attempting to prove the "reality" of the evil pair, one nevertheless can see that James has characterized the dead valet and governess as demons. In his Preface to Volume XII of the New York edition, which includes "The Turn of the Screw," James says that "Peter Quint and Miss Jessel are not 'ghosts' at all, as we now know the ghost, but goblins, elves, imps, demons as loosely constructed as those of the old trials for witchcraft." 3 In his excellent article "'The Turn of the Screw' as Poem," Robert Heilman explains why Peter Quint and Miss Jessel have to be demons; he says, "Beneath the strange and startling action-surface, we have the oldest of themes--
the struggle of evil to possess the human soul"; thus
"the battle between the governess and the demons becomes
the old struggle of the morality play in new dress."⁴
Many authorities have pointed out that Peter Quint, as the
embodiment of evil, has all the physical attributes of the
legendary devil, red hair, strangely pointed eyebrows, and
the evil eye.⁵ Miss Jessel, too, is a figure of "unmis-
takable horror and evil...in black, pale and dreadful."
She is a "horror of horrors," with "awful eyes"; she
later is called "a pale and ravenous demon." She and
Quint are "those fiends" and the "temptors," and in the
last scene Quint presents "his white face of damnation."
If Miss Jessel and Peter Quint were not demons the story
would lose that intensity of unspecified evil that James
was seeking.

Although James rarely depicts real demons, he
often presents "bad" characters in demon imagery. In
addition to the serpentine villains who have the evil eye
and to Olive Chancellor who is imaged as Mephistopheles,
other characters are metaphorically witches. In "Europe"
(1899), for example, Mrs. Rimmle, who is "immensely old,"
perches over her daughters "like a vulture" and is said
by the narrator to have "the conscious mischief of a
subtle old witch."
Like the demon, the ghost follows an ancient literary tradition, having appeared in the Greek and French classical drama, in English drama, and in folklore. Like all facets of the ancient world, the ghost is admired by the romanticist, who uses the spectre primarily for any of three reasons: to create an atmosphere of fear, to reveal information, or to make a moral statement that could not be made without the help of a deus ex machina.6

Real ghosts do not appear in Mrs. Radcliffe's best-known works,7 but they do appear in Walpole's Castle of Otranto, Clara Reeve's Old English Baron, and Lewis's The Monk, in addition to some lesser known Gothic works.8 In The Castle of Otranto Marquis Frederic finds a "hermit" at prayer in the princess's oratory:

Pushing open the door gently, he saw a person kneeling before the altar. As he approached nearer, it seemed not a woman, but one in a long woollen weed, whose back was toward him. The person seemed absorbed in prayer. The marquis was about to return, when the figure rising, stood some moments fixed in meditation, without regarding him... then the figure, turning slowly round, discovered to Frederic the fleshless jaws and empty sockets of a skeleton, wrapt in a hermit's cowl.9

The apparition of the holy hermit of Joppa adjures Frederic to "forget Matilda," Manfred's daughter, whom Manfred had
offered to Frederic in return for Isabella. The hermit's ghost here teaches morality, even though he is dramatically startling also. "Wast thou delivered from bondage," says the spectre, "to pursue carnal delights?" Frederic is touched. "For some minutes he remained motionless. Then falling prostrate on his face before the altar, he besought the intercession of every saint for pardon."

Clara Reeve's *The Old English Baron* was written in objection to the free use of the supernatural in *The Castle of Otranto*. Although *The Old English Baron* contains a ghost, it is, according to Clara Reeve, within the realm of probability. Sir Philip Harclay, returning to England after serving for thirty years in French and Mohammedan wars, finds his own family deceased and himself a stranger in the castle of his best friend, now dead. He is warned by the ghost of this friend that only he can avenge the wrongs imposed on his house. Thus, armed with this knowledge, and with occasional help from the ghost, who is largely informative, Harclay is able to restore order.

The ghost in *The Monk* does not come necessarily to edify or to inform. Essentially a vengeful ghost, the so-called "bleeding nun" enacts one of the most horrifying scenes in Lewis's novel, which was considered
by contemporary critics to be the zenith of debauchery and vulgarity. The ghost appears in the sub-plot of the novel, the story of the unhappy nun Agnes and her lover, Raymond. The narrative begins with Raymond's being sheltered in a bandits' cottage near Strasbourg; guessing his jailers' murderous plans, he avoids the goblet of poison, pretends to be asleep, and escapes. During this adventure he rescues the Baroness Lindenberg from the robbers, and when he visits her castle he falls in love with her niece Agnes, who has been promised to the convent by her parents.

For more than a century a tower of the castle has been haunted by the ghost of "the bleeding nun," who married and murdered an ancestor of the Lindenberg's. Every fifth year, on the night of May fifth, blood-spattered, she could be seen descending the tower stairs, carrying a lamp and dagger, on her way to the cavern in which she had murdered her husband and was herself later murdered. For a long time it had been customary to leave the gates open for her exit and return. Agnes sees her only chance to escape in impersonating the bleeding nun. As the clock strikes one, from the gloomy castle emerges the spectre of the bleeding nun. Raymond embraces her and carries her to a waiting carriage, which is pulled
away swiftly by horses, so swiftly, in fact, that the
postillions cannot control them. "Nothing could inter-
rupt their career; they dragged the carriage through
hedges and ditches, dashed down the most dangerous prec-
ipices, and seemed to vie in swiftness with the rapidity
of the winds."¹⁰ The carriage crashes, and Raymond is
knocked senseless. When he regains consciousness, he is
far, far away in the German town of Ratisbon, and his
companion has disappeared. While Raymond convalesces in
the care of peasants, the nun who he believes is Agnes
comes to him:

Restless in my mind, in spite of the
fatigue of my body, I continued to toss
about from side to side, till the clock
in a neighbouring steeple struck "one."
As I listened to the mournful hollow
sound, and heard it die away in the wind,
I felt a sudden chillness spread itself
over my body. I shuddered without knowing
wherefore; cold dews poured down by fore-
head, and my hair stood bristling with
alarm. Suddenly I heard slow and heavy
steps ascending the stair-case. By an
involuntary movement I started up in my
bed, and drew back the curtain. A single
rush-light, which glimmered upon the
hearth, shed a faint gleam through the
apartment, which was hung with tapestry.
The door was thrown open with violence.
A figure entered, and drew near by bed
with solemn measured steps. With
trembling apprehension I examined this
midnight visitor. God Almighty! it
was the bleeding nun! It was my lost
companion! Her face was still veiled,
but she no longer held her lamp and dagger. She lifted up her veil slowly. What a sight presented itself to my startled eyes! I beheld before me an animated corpse. Her countenance was long and haggard; her cheeks and lips were bloodless; the paleness of death was spread over her features; and her eye-balls, fixed stedfastly upon me, were lustreless and hollow.\textsuperscript{11}

Raymond's response is predictable. He recalls, "I gazed upon the spectre with horror too great to be described. My blood was frozen in my veins." His reaction to the ghost is similar to that of Frederic in Otranto, about whom we are told that his "blood froze in his veins" and that "for some minutes he remained motionless."\textsuperscript{12} But there are distinct differences in the two scenes which point up the differences that were occurring in the treatment of ghosts in fiction. The ghost of the hermit is primarily a tool of the author; it is a means of reforming Frederic and thus of teaching a moral lesson. Frederic's reformation upon the admonition of a ghost is more credible than a conversion based upon another character's plea or upon timely insight into self-weakness. Almost anyone would agree that after seeing a fearful spectre he, too, would mend his ways.

But the ghost of the bleeding nun does not appear to Raymond for any didactic reason. The explicit detail
of the wild midnight ride and of the ghost's reappearance to Raymond makes it a much more horrifying event. Even though Raymond's initial reaction to his discovery is identical to that of Frederic, what follows is not at all similar. The ghost continues to haunt Raymond, until a mysterious stranger with a burning cross blazing on his forehead (the Wandering Jew) calls her forth once again to tell Raymond that she will release him if he finds her decaying bones and buries them. Thus the ghost of the bleeding nun is an instrument of horror rather than didacticism; the psychological interest lies not especially in Raymond's reaction but rather in the intensity of the horror that many believe appeals to the reader's primordial fears.

Henry James's ghosts are only occasionally didactic or merely terrifying, but they often provide the means for the exploration of human behavior. In his early stories the ghosts are of the vengeful sort, restlessly stalking their human prey for retribution or pacification. In "The Romance of Certain Old Clothes" two sisters vie for the love of young, elegant Arthur Lloyd. When he chooses the younger sister, Perdita, the dismayed Rosalind wishes her sister "every happiness, and a very long life," a wish which sounds like a curse to the
chosen sister. Perdita says, "I would rather you would curse me outright." She adds, "Will you give me a year to live at least?" And thus a year is all she lives. As she dies, she has fears of her sister's taking her place, and she makes Arthur promise that her clothes will be put away until their infant daughter is old enough to wear them; he promises. Rosalind does marry her sister's widower, and she in time broaches the subject of her sister's finery. The weak-willed Arthur finally flings to Rosalind the key to the clothes chest. When his wife does not appear at supper, Arthur goes to the attic:

Before the window stood the great chest.
Before the chest, on her knees, the young man saw with amazement and horror the figure of his wife. In an instant he crossed the interval between them, bereft of utterance. The lid of the chest stood open, exposing, amid their perfumed napkins, its treasure of stuffs and jewels. Rosalind had fallen backward from a kneeling posture, with one hand supporting her on the floor and the other pressed to her heart. On her limbs was the stiffness of death, and on her face, in the fading light of the sun, the terror of something worse than death. Her lips were parted in entreaty, in dismay, in agony; and on her blanched brow and cheeks there glowed the marks of ten hideous wounds from two vengeful ghostly hands.13

The ghost of this gruesome story is a real ghost. The
narrative is told by an omniscient reporter, and the evidence of the ghost, the hideous wounds, is reported as fact, in much the same way that Frederic's discovery of the hermit's ghost is reported in *Otranto*. But the vengeful ghost, the unquiet spirit that seeks retribution or pacification, is reminiscent of the ghost of the bleeding nun and thus of the ghosts of Germanic folklore.¹⁴

In James's subsequent ghost stories the veracity of the ghost is not so clearly established as it is in "The Romance of Certain Old Clothes" because thereafter the reality of the ghost depends upon the credibility of the character who sees the ghost. In "The Ghostly Rental" (1875) the narrator is a theology student who meets Captain Diamond, who once disowned his daughter and denounced her lover; the suitor left a note for the Captain telling him that he killed his daughter and committed her remains to earth. Captain Diamond believes the words only when his daughter's ghost appears to him; it haunts him the rest of his days. The doubting student asks permission to enter Captain Diamond's old home, which the ghost now "rents," in order to see the ghost. He goes in:

>I came back into the hall, and walked to the foot of the staircase, holding up my candles; to ascend required a fresh effort, and I was scanning the gloom above. Sud-
denly, with an inexpressible sensation, I became aware that this gloom was animated; it seemed to move and gather itself together. Slowly—I say slowly, for to my tense expectancy the instants appeared ages—it took the shape of a large, definite figure, and this figure advanced and stood at the top of the stairs. I frankly confess that by this time I was conscious of a feeling to which I am in duty bound to apply the vulgar name of fear.... I had got what I wanted; I was seeing the ghost.... Two white hands appeared in the dark perpendicular mass and were slowly raised to what seemed to be the level of the head. Here they were pressed together over the region of the face, and then they were removed, and the face was disclosed. It was dim, white, strange, in every way ghostly. It looked down at me for an instant, after which one of the hands was raised again, slowly, and waved to and fro before it. There was something very singular in this gesture; it seemed to denote resentment and dismissal, and yet it had a sort of trivial, familiar motion. Familiarity on the part of the haunting Presence had not entered into my calculations, and did not strike me pleasantly. I agreed with Captain Diamond that it was "damned disagreeable." I was pervaded by an intense desire to make an orderly, and, if possible, a graceful retreat. I wished to do it gallantly, and it seemed to me that it would be gallant to blow out my candles. I turned and did so, punctiliously, and then I made my way to the door, groped a moment and opened it. The outer light, almost extinct as it was, entered for a moment, played over the dusty depths of the house and showed me the solid shadow.15

The narrator is dependable, not hysterical, and if he says that the ghost is real, the reader must accept
his word. But when the narrator replaces the dying Captain to go to the haunted house to accept the ghostly rent, the ghost becomes a rationally explainable phenomenon, like those "ghosts" in Mrs. Radcliffe's fiction:

"Is my father dangerously ill?" said the apparition.
At the sound of its voice--gentle, tremulous, and perfectly human--I started forward; I felt a rebound of excitement.
I drew a long breath, I gave a sort of cry, for what I saw before me was not a disembodied spirit, but a beautiful woman, an audacious actress.16

At this point James's "ghost story" seems a sham, an extravagant joke meted out by the vindictive daughter.
But it immediately becomes something else. When the deposed "ghost" haughtily flings the "rent" to the narrator, he stands there, "waver[ing] between amazement and shame" and sees her pass out into the hall. The next moment he hears a loud shriek, and she staggers back into the room:

"My father--my father!" she cried; and with parted lips and dilated eyes, she rushed toward me.
"Your father--where?" I demanded.
"In the hall, at the foot of the stairs."
I stepped forward to go out, but she seized my arm,
"He is in white," she cried, "in his shirt. It's not he!"
"Why, your father is in his house, in his bed, extremely ill," I answered. She looked at me fixedly, with searching eyes. "Dying?" "I hope not," I stuttered. She gave a long moan and covered her face with her hands. "Oh, heavens, I have seen his ghost!" she cried.17

Whether Captain Diamond's daughter actually sees his ghost or only imagines that she does is not determined. She reports that she does, and we must either accept her word or not. But we have every reason to doubt her ability to distinguish fantasy from reality. She has been sufficiently vindictive to persecute her father for many years and to perpetrate the myth of the haunted house. Finally remorseful, she cries, "It's the punishment of my long folly." Such a guilt can be displaced with hallucination, certainly, and the reader must decide whether the would-be haunter has become indeed the truly haunted.

"The Ghostly Rental" is important for several reasons. First, James has removed the ghost from the external world of circumstance and placed it in the internal world of the human mind. The ghost has become less an external fact and more an ambiguous phenomenon; James is concerned not with proving that external super-
natural agents come to right wrongs but rather with show-
ing that human passions conceivably can design an appar-
tion. If the ghost were explicitly real, it would have
to be taken as an external agent independent of the mind's
nurturing; if the ghost were clearly a figment of the
daughter's imagination, the interest of the story would
remain as that of a psychiatric case study. But the
ghost is ambiguous. Thus James has been able both to
preserve the gruesomeness attendant upon the appearance
of ghosts and also to explore the hallucinatory power
of the human mind under duress. The story is a departure
not only from James's own "The Romance of Certain Old
Clothes" but from Gothic fiction in general.18 The old
fiction had emphasized the horror of a ghost's appearance;
James subdued that horror and emphasized instead the
psychological stance of the discoverer of the ghost.

Like that of "The Ghostly Rental" the ghost of
"Sir Edmund Orme" (1891) is ambiguous. The story is
set in the sea resort of Brighton, where Mrs. Marden and
her pretty daughter, Charlotte, meet the narrator, who
soon learns that Mrs. Marden has "intuitions," that she
sees the ghost of a rejected suitor who committed suicide.
The ghost of Sir Edmund Orme appears at the side of
Charlotte periodically and unbeknown to her as a means
of frightening and persecuting the mother. But the problem is not only that a guilt-ridden, hysterical, lonely woman reports that she sees a ghost; the narrator says that he sees it, too. There is no explicit evidence in the story that renders Mrs. Marden's vision hallucinatory or absolutely proves that the narrator's is not. The ghost, supposedly a vengeful and un pacified spirit, remains an unsolved mystery. We might dismiss the mother's vision as the manifestation of a hysterical mind, but explaining two reports is more difficult. There are, however, some hints throughout the story that at least cast doubt on the narrator's dependability as an objective recorder. The narrator describes the apparition when he sees him take a seat beside Charlotte in church: "He was a pale young man in black and with the air of a gentleman."19 Although Mrs. Marden confirms that she sees him, too, the reader never sees him through her consciousness and does not really know whether the apparitions are the same. But more important, the narrator has a peculiar bent for ghosts and would undoubtedly be receptive to the appearance of one. We recall that on an earlier visit to the Marden home he sees "the white face of Mrs. Marden" at one of the upper windows. He says, "She stood long enough to show it was she and not the apparition I had
come near taking it for." And when Mrs. Marden later explains to the young narrator the history of the ghost's appearance, he is delighted to be a part of the strange event. He says, "I see, I see" and remembers, "I was more thrilled than I could say." He says, "It's an apparition like another." Mrs. Marden's reply is significant: "Like another? Have you ever seen another?" He answers, "No, I mean the sort of thing one has heard of. It's tremendously interesting to encounter a case." 20

That a young man who mistakes Mrs. Marden for a ghost and who is extraordinarily thrilled to be a part of a "case" and who reveals insecurity in the face of his beloved's indifference and doubt should see a ghost is not so strange at all. And one must remember that the narrator has recorded his story long after the death of his young wife when grief or senility may have distorted his memory. Thus several possibilities are present: the narrator might have recorded the events with an addled mind; the narrator might have named his spectre "Sir Edmund Orme" on the assumption that he sees the same ghost that Mrs. Marden sees, whereas his vision might be the manifestation of his own insecurity just as Mrs. Marden's vision might be the manifestation of her guilt; and finally, there might really exist the vengeful ghost of Sir Edmund Orme, seen
by both the narrator and Mrs. Marden and pacified only upon Mrs. Marden's death and the betrothal of her daughter. The point is, of course, that the reader can only conjecture; Henry James does not provide an answer. Thus, the story can be read on two levels. The aura of horror remains because the reader cannot be certain that the ghost is not an external agent of the supernatural come for pacification, just as the ghost of the bleeding nun is a real ghost come to be appeased in order to rest eternally. But the psychological interest remains, too, because neither can the reader be sure that Sir Edmund Orme is not merely the creation of two hysterical minds, in which case the story is a dramatization of the effects of guilt and self-consciousness upon the human mind. The psychological perspective that James offers somewhat gently in "The Ghostly Rental" is developed more fully in "Sir Edmund Orme."

"The Real Right Thing" (1899) retains the possible psychological explanation for the "ghost," but the spectre here is of another kind. It is not a vengeful spirit, if taken at face value, but rather a spirit that comes to chide and to moralize. When Ashton Doyne dies, his widow asks young George Withermore to do a biography of her deceased husband, a well-known writer whom he revered and
idealized. When Withermore moves into the Doyne home and begins perusing the late writer's documents, he begins to feel that "his master and he were really for the first time together."\textsuperscript{21} But the widow feels the presence, too, and what begins as a mere awareness that the personality of the dead author has survived in his possessions soon grows into a belief that the ghost of Ashton Doyne walks through the house and oversees the writing of his "Life." The "ghost" finally prevents Withermore from re-entering the study to complete the work. On a literal level, the ghost comes as a moral force, teaching that it is evil to excavate a life and that one's privacy is sacred. On a psychological level, Withermore's suspicion that what he is doing is wrong foments a guilt out of which crystallizes Doyne's ghost. Once again the reader has the difficulty of explaining two reports: both Withermore and Mrs. Doyne see the ghost. But she has reasons, apparently, to feel even more guilt than Withermore, and for more transgressions than invasion of privacy. Again the ghost is ambiguous. The psychological effect of guilt is superimposed over the horror of a supernatural spectre. But this story differs from James's early ghost stories insofar as the psychology and the supernatural are subordinated to a larger idea--an admonition, as Ashton
Doyne once stated, that "the artist was what he did" and nothing else and that the literary career might "best content itself to be represented." The same ethic is dramatized in "The Aspern Papers," "John Delavoy," and "Sir Dominick Ferrand."

"The Third Person," written a year after "The Real Right Thing," provides an apparition of a still different complexion. Susan Frush and her younger cousin, Amy Frush, meet for the first time at Marr in southern England, where they jointly have been bequeathed property. Feeling a spiritual bond, they decide to live in the house together. After finding a chest full of old papers which they relinquish to the vicar to decipher, they retire one night only for Susan to run shrieking from her room, claiming to have seen the ghost of a young man with his head twisted to one side. Later they learn from the vicar that according to the papers they gave him, one of their ancestors, Cuthbert Frush, was hanged for smuggling. Amy then reports seeing the ghost, and the two cousins first vie for the ghost's attention and then express a desire to be rid of the troublesome spectre. The two interpret the ghost's presence differently. Susan, thinking the ghost is restless because of guilt, sends twenty pounds to the government in expiation. But Amy, guessing
that the ghost is not remorseful but only wishes his
descendants to do something bold, to take a risk for his
sake, goes to Paris and in returning smuggles into Eng-
land a forbidden Tauchnitz. The ghost leaves.

It is a simple, light-hearted tale on the surface,
but here again the ghost is not a proved ghost. We know
about him only by the reports of the two spinsters, and
their motives and possible neuroses must be taken into
account. The cousins never have tasted life fully and
boldly, and the desire to do so, if intensified and
coupled with a spinster's timidity, easily could conjure
a ghost who is not only handsome and debonair but also
exciting. It also is possible that each is lying to im-
press the other, and that Amy carries out the fantasy to
the extent at which she can justify a trip to the conti-
nent, for Susan muses ruefully at the end of the story,
"You got at last your week in Paris!" The ghost that
comes to say "Live life as much as you can" foreshadows
the theme of James's late novels The Ambassadors and The
Wings of the Dove and his shorter piece "The Beast in
the Jungle." And whether the ghost really appears with
its strange plea or whether the spectre is created in the
minds of neurotic spinsters is irrelevant--the theme remains
the same.
Although James's fiction contains many references to ghosts and apparitions, of his completed major novels only *The Portrait of a Lady* offers a possibly real ghost. It speaks for James's artistry that one often passes over the ghostly passage without being arrested by the occurrence of a supernatural event. The ghost of Ralph Touchett appears to Isabel at the moment of his dying. The appearance is not reported second hand; the reader is with Isabel at the moment of her vision:

In the cold, faint dawn, she knew that a spirit was standing by her bed. She had lain down without undressing, it being her belief that Ralph would not outlast the night. She had no inclination to sleep; she was waiting, and such waiting was wakeful. But she closed her eyes; she believed that as the night wore on she would hear a knock at her door. She heard no knock, but at the time the darkness began vaguely to grow grey she started up from her pillow as abruptly as if she had received a summons. It seemed to her for an instant that he was standing there—a vague, hovering figure in the vagueness of the room. She stared a moment; she saw his white face—his kind eyes; then she saw there was nothing. She was not afraid; she was only sure.23

Isabel "believes," she "sees," she is "sure." The "ghost" appears at the moment at which Ralph Touchett dies, a common occurrence in psychic reports.

Edel says that James would have had the opportunity
of becoming acquainted with the "scientific" ghost through his brother's interest is spiritualism. William James began early in his career to investigate spiritualistic events, documenting the testimony of spiritualists and reports of seances, hypnotic trances, and spirit-writing. He founded the American Society for Psychical Research and for two years was president of the British Society, in which one of the most active figures was W. H. Myers, co-author of a classic work in psychical research, *Phantasms of the Living*. Myers, who became a friend of Henry, asked the novelist to read one of his brother's papers before the British Society when William was unable to make the trip to England. Henry read the paper at a meeting in Westminster Town Hall on October 31, 1890.²⁴ He later decided that psychical research had little to offer in the way of imaginative material. In the Preface to Volume XII of the New York edition he wrote, "Recorded and attested 'ghosts' are in other words as little expressive, as little dramatic, above all as little continuous and conscious and responsive, as is consistent with their taking the trouble--and an immense trouble they find it, we gather--to appear at all."²⁵

Thus, despite the air of reality that surrounds Ralph Touchett's ghost as it appears to Isabel, one can
infer only that although it comes not to chide or to avenge it nevertheless must serve a dramatic purpose. And indeed it does. The ghost is introduced with a reminder of Ralph's early words to Isabel soon after she had arrived at Gardencourt. "He had told her, the first evening she ever spent at Gardencourt, that if she should live to suffer enough she might some day see the ghost with which the old house was duly provided. She apparently had fulfilled the necessary condition; for the next morning, in the cold, faint dawn, she knew that a spirit was standing by her bed."26 If one looks at that early passage in which Isabel and Ralph discuss ghosts, and if one compares that Isabel with the older Isabel, the change is evidently one of more than years. After Ralph has shown Isabel the paintings in Gardencourt, she says, "Well now I know more than I did when I began!" And in order to change the subject she soon says, "Please tell me—isn't there a ghost?" Ralph tells her that there's no romance there but what she may have brought with her. Only temporarily mollified, she tells him that she likes him but that "the way to cinch the matter will be to show me the ghost." Ralph's reply is important in view of the events that follow. He shakes his head sadly and says, "I might show it to you, but you'd never see it. The privilege isn't given to
everyone; it's not enviable. It has never been seen by a young, happy, innocent person like you. You must have suffered first, have suffered greatly, have gained some miserable knowledge. In that way your eyes are opened to it. I saw it long ago."27

Isabel and Ralph's discussion of ghosts is important because it displays Isabel's "superstitious valuation" of Europe and, despite her protests that she has a passion for knowledge, both her innocence and ignorance. Her journey has just begun. But by the time that Ralph Touchett dies and his ghost appears to her, Isabel has gained a world of knowledge with its incumbent suffering. That she sees the new ghost of Cardencourt, Ralph Touchett, goes to prove that she is finally aware. Thus, the ghost here is not meant to chastize or avenge. It appears as a symbolic gesture of the completion of Isabel's transition from ignorance to knowledge. The ghost of Ralph Touchett serves a purpose very different from that of the ghosts in the old Gothic fiction.

Akin to Gothic ghosts and apparently motivated by a supernatural agency are portraits and statues that come alive, acting as ghosts do, to inform, to avenge, or to teach. In The Castle of Otranto there are both a bleeding statue and a portrait that steps from its frame.
When Manfred confronts Isabella with the knowledge that he is offering himself to her as a replacement for his dead son, her intended bridegroom, the portrait of Manfred's grandfather utters a deep sigh, heaves its breast, and steps from its frame "with a grave and melancholy air." A little later when Manfred tells his good wife Hippolita that Frederic has agreed to his plan for each to marry the other's daughter, three drops of blood fall from the statue of Alfonso, the first ruler of Otranto. The friar interprets the meaning of the occurrence. "Behold!" says the friar, "mark this miraculous indication that the blood of Alfonso will never mix with that of Manfred!" Thus, in this early Gothic work, the ghostly portrait and the bleeding statue serve as moral instructors; both renounce the villainous intentions of Manfred and, by implication, uphold virtue and justice.

Mrs. Radcliffe alters the use of the portrait, and she chooses to ignore bleeding statues. In her fiction the portrait usually becomes a miniature that inspires melancholy and holds secrets. In one instance she approaches the device of the portrait that comes to life, but she backs off and later explains it as a rational event. In The Mysteries of Udolpho Emily, curious about a mysterious black-veiled picture, finally musters suf-
icient courage to go to the room that encloses it:

Emily passed on with faltering steps; and having paused a moment at the door before she attempted to open it, she then hastily entered the chamber, and went towards the picture, which appeared to be enclosed in a frame of uncommon size, that hung in a dark part of the room. She paused again, and then with a timid hand lifted the veil; but instantly let it fall—perceiving that what it had concealed was no picture; and before she could leave the chamber she dropped senseless on the floor.30

Rather than a portrait, Emily sees a waxen image of a decayed body. Its raison d'être is the terror it induces in the reader, and it is not explained until the final pages of the novel.

Lewis and Maturin used the living portrait more fully than did Mrs. Radcliffe. In The Monk Matilda's portrait, adored by Ambrosio, seems to be alive with a strange beauty that foreshadows his terrible temptation.31 In Maturin's Melmoth the Wanderer the portrait is used much as it was in The Castle of Otranto. When young John Melmoth, a student in Trinity College, Dublin, is called to the bedside of a dying uncle, he discovers in a closet a portrait of an ancestor:

John's eyes were in a moment, and as if by magic, rivetted on a portrait that
hung on the wall, and appeared, even to his untaught eye far superior to the tribe of family pictures that are left to moulder on the walls of a family mansion. It represented a man of middle age. There was nothing remarkable in the costume, or in the countenance, but the eyes, John felt, were such as one feels they can never forget. Had he been acquainted with the poetry of Southey, he might have often exclaimed in his after life,

"Only the eyes had life, They gleamed with demon light."

THALABA

A little later, John Melmoth is drawn to the room again. While in the closet, he hears his uncle groan in his death throes, and he starts and turns away. "But as he turned away, he thought he saw the eyes of the portrait, on which his own was fixed, move, and hurried back to his uncle's bedside." The portrait with the fearsome, moving eyes portends the curse upon the house of Melmoth and establishes in the early pages the feeling of doom and mystery that pervades the whole novel.

The romantics saw in the portrait a new supernatural theme, and Edgar Allan Poe also revealed a fascination for the device. In "The Oval Portrait" he ponders the relationship between the portrait and its maker; an artist paints the portrait of a favorite model, and wholly absorbed in his task, he seems to transfer with
each stroke of the brush something of the soul and life of the sitter. As the picture gains in vitality the model wastes away. When the picture is completed, she dies, living on only in the picture. A picture is created that is, indeed, "living." The romantic power of Poe's story lies in the suggestion that a supernatural power is responsible for the transference of the model's life to canvas. Poe's story offers one way of accounting for the origin of the mysterious portrait; the subject may have been transferred to canvas by supernal agents, motivated by great sorrow or extraordinary love.33

Henry James was aware of the imaginative possibilities of the "living" portrait or statue, and as his fiction is full of allusions to the works of painters and sculptors, one can expect him to draw upon the "living portrait" for dramatic effect. His works are full of simple allusions to the phenomenon. In The Portrait of a Lady, for example, after Isabel has discovered the wickedness of Madame Merle, she encounters her at the convent when she goes to see Pansy. "The effect was strange," the narrative voice says, "for Madame Merle was already so present to her vision that her appearance in the flesh was like suddenly, and rather awfully, seeing a painted picture move."34 There is nothing supernatural
here, of course, for Madame Merle is not a portrait but a person; but James surrounds her with a sinister aura by evoking the fear-inspiring Gothic portrait. The potential dread of the living portrait or statue is exploited also in "The Jolly Corner" when Spencer Brydon confronts his alter ego, in itself a frightening occurrence, although the reader can never misread its psychological significance. James emphasizes the terror that Brydon feels by comparing the event to the discovery of a living portrait or statue. First, the penumbra seems like "some image erect in a niche"; then Brydon concludes that "no portrait by a great modern master could have presented him with more intensity, thrust him out of his frame with more art, as if there had been 'treatment,' of the consummate sort, in his every shade and salience."35

In several of James's stories living art works carry a larger burden than that of mere imagery. In "The Last of the Valerii" young Count Marco becomes obsessed with a statue of Juno that is unearthed in his garden; the narrator, who is the Countess's godfather, sees the Count as a "dark efflorescence of the evil germs which history had implanted in his line" and declares that the Countess had married him because he is "like a statue of the Decadence." The narrator describes also the Count's
villa with significant detail: "It was filled with disinterred fragments of sculpture--nameless statues and noseless heads and rough-hewn sarcophagi, which made it deliciously solemn. The statues used to stand in the perpetual twilight like conscious things, brooding on their long observations. I used to linger near them, half expecting they would speak and tell me their stony secrets--whisper hoarsely the whereabouts of their mouldering fellows, still unrecovered from the soil."[36]

Because Martha, the young Countess, wishes to devote a portion of her dowry to bringing to light "the mouldy honours" of the ancient house of which she has become the mistress, she proposes that excavations be made. The Count is opposed to the undertaking. He says, "Let them lie, the poor disinherited gods, the Minerva, the Apollo, the Ceres you are so sure of finding, and don't break their rest."[37] He later admits, "I am superstitious! Too much so, perhaps! But I'm an old Italian, and you must take me as you find me. There have been things seen and done here which leave strange influences behind! They don't touch you, doubtless, who come of another race. But me they touch often, in the whisper of the leaves and the odour of the mouldy soil and the blank eyes of the old statues. I can't bear to
look the statues in the face. I seem to see other strange eyes in the empty sockets, and I hardly know what they say to me. I call the poor old statues ghosts."38

The Countess insists, however, and the excavations are begun. When the Juno is discovered, Count Marco offers the statue all his devotion and rejects his wife. Only when the statue is replaced in the earth is he able to return spiritually to his wife. The personification of the statues is not intended to horrify for horror's sake, and they do not come alive to moralize. The eeriness attendant upon their seeming to be alive serves to underscore the horror of the surfacing of the Count's pagan nature. The grotesque excavator explains, "There is a pagan element in all of us...and the old gods have still their worshippers."39 While obsessed, Count Marco denounces his Catholic faith, clearly having embraced paganism. In the beginning of the story the Count says to Martha's godfather, "Don't you agree with me, dear friend, that before I marry so pure and sweet a creature as this, I ought to go into one of those places and confess every sin I ever was guilty of--every evil thought and impulse and desire of my grossly evil nature?" But later, when the godfather fears that the Count's senses have left him and suggests that he see either a
priest or a physician, the Count bursts into uproarious laughter and says of St. Peter's, "I should like to pull down their pictures, over-turn their candlesticks, and poison their holy-water." The theme of the story lies in the conflict between the past and the present, between the pagan and the Christian. The point seems to be that the past can be recaptured only with the sacrifice of one's soul. The old, bleeding Gothic statue that once inspired terror and reform here delineates a much more complex moral problem, the horror of giving up one's soul.

"Owen Wingrave," written some seventeen years after "The Last of the Valerii," presents a less sophisticated use of the arts. Owen descends from a long line of soldiers; his is a military family, and he has spent a number of years preparing for a military career. He comes to the conclusion, however, that he does not believe in war. The announcement that he no longer aspires to a military profession is met with disbelief and anger by his family, and he calls upon his instructor, Spencer Coyle, to visit the family home with him on his behalf. "I've started up all the old ghosts," says Owen. "The very portraits glower at me on the walls. There's one of my great-great-grandfather (the one the
extraordinary story you know is about--the old fellow who hangs on the second landing of the big staircase) that fairly stirs on the canvas, just heaves a little, when I come near it." 40 Owen is not the only person who thinks the portraits are alive. Mr. Coyle later says that "Miss Wingrave marshalled the three ladies--her little procession of twinkling tapers--up the wide oaken stairs and past the watching portrait of her ill-fated ancestor." 41 Whether the portraits come alive or not is immaterial; they, along with other sinister aspects of the Wingrave home, "shabby and remarkably creepy," coalesce to underscore the evil and oppressiveness of the surviving Wingraves as they deny Owen free choice; such aspects also define the sorrow and melancholy that Owen feels in having to flout family tradition.

The portrait is used with a great deal more subtlety in The Wings of the Dove. Kate Croy is seen by Mrs. Stringham as if she is "a figure in a picture stepping by magic out of its frame." But Milly, too, is a kind of portrait, and the point is made in the episode with the Bronzino which Milly so resembles. Lord Mark is taking Milly to see the Bronzino in an upper gallery of Mrs. Lowder's house, and his gestures and countenance seem to be saying that he wishes to take care of her.
Milly recalls that others have conveyed the same sentiment, and those thoughts melt into "the beauty and the history and the facility and the splendid midsummer glow; it was a sort of magnificent maximum, the pink dawn of an apotheosis." Thus, she looks through tears at the Bronzino portrait, at a face "handsome in sadness and crowned with a mass of hair rolled back and high, that must, before fading with time, have had a family resemblance to her own. The lady in question, at all events, with her slightly Michaelangelesque squareness, her eyes of other days, her full lips, her long neck, her recorded jewels, her brocaded and wasted reds, was a very great personage--only unaccompanied by a joy. And she was dead, dead, dead. Milly recognised her exactly in words that had nothing to do with her. 'I shall never be better than this.' The portrait has impressed dramatically upon Milly the fact that she will die young. "Thus it was that, aloft there in the great gilded historic chamber and the presence of the pale personage on the wall, whose eyes all the while seemed engaged with her own, she found herself suddenly sunk in something quite intimate and humble and to which these grandeurs were strange enough witnesses." The eyes of the portrait are not sinister, as are those of John Melmoth's ancestor, but their
vitality portends something fatal, just as Melmoth finds
a haunting premonition in the eyes of his ancestor. The
allusion to the romantic portrait from Gothic fiction
illuminates the fear that Milly feels for herself.

The Sense of the Past, Henry James's last novel,
represents his most elaborate use of the portrait that
springs to life. Ralph Pendrel, who has been willed an
eighteenth-century house in London, proposes to the
rich widow Aurora Coyne, but she rejects him, saying that
she wants him to be intellectually great and suggesting
that he go and sample the Old World. Thus Ralph goes
to London, where he especially delights in his inherited
Mansfield Square house, crossing the threshold of which
is like stepping back in time. One night as he is
wandering freely in the house, a portrait on the wall,
that of an ancestor named Ralph Pendrel also, young like
himself but with an averted face, turns in its frame and
steps out, and the two communicate:

He received in those instants an amazing
impression—knew himself convinced that
in his absence the thing he had thought of
and put away had taken place. Somebody
was in the room more prodigiously still
than he had dreamed—on his level, on the
floor itself and but ten yards off, and
now, all intelligence and response, vividly
aware of him, fixed him across the space
with eyes of life. It was like the miracle prayed for in the church—the figure in the picture had turned; but from the moment it had done so this tremendous action, this descent, this advance, an advance, and as for recognition, upon his solitary self, had almost the effect at first of crushing recognition, in other words of crushing presumption, by their immeasurable weight. The huge strangeness, that of a gentleman there, a gentleman from head to foot, to meet him and share his disconnection, stopped everything; yet it was in nothing stranger than in the association that they already, they unmistakably felt they had enjoyed. With this last apprehension at any rate the full prodigy was there, for what he most sharply knew while he turned colder still was that what he had taken for a reflection of his light was only another candle. He knew, though out of his eye’s range any assurance, that the second of the pair on the shelf below the portrait was now not in its place. He raised his own still higher to be sure, and the young man in the doorway made a movement that answered; but so, while almost as with brandished weapons they faced each other, he saw what was indeed beyond sense.45

Wanting to share his extraordinary secret with someone, Ralph goes to the urbane American ambassador and futilely tries to explain. Ralph then apparently becomes his nineteenth-century alter ego, returns to his house, and re-lives history. According to the notes James left for this unfinished work, the life of the 1820 Ralph Pendrel is a complication of human relationships, and the 1910
Ralph Pendrel finally begins to feel a horror of being imprisoned in the Past and of not being able to return to his own time and place. He does return, however, and through uncanny coincidence is to be united with Aurora Coyne. In many ways it is the house itself that symbolizes the Past, and Ralph's entering it after his first meeting with the ambassador symbolizes his re-entry into the Past, just as his emerging from it at the end symbolizes his re-entry into the Present. The portrait provides an interesting device by which the modern Pendrel becomes acutely fascinated with his ancestor. The portrait's communication with Pendrel and its stepping out of its frame promote the feeling of supernatural terror that must accompany the awesome decision to enter the Past. Again, James leaves ambiguous the reality of the event. All is unfolded through Ralph Pendrel's consciousness, and the reader knows only what Pendrel thinks and what he infers that others are thinking. He interprets the ambassador's words and actions to mean that the diplomat thinks that Pendrel has a "mania" and has lost his senses. But aside from that, we have no evaluation of the event. The effect of amazement, and sometimes of fear, is sustained throughout whether Pendrel is dreaming or not. And it all is
subordinated to James's larger theme: that one is unable to completely recapture the Past, and it is horrifying to try to do so; rather one can transfer to the Present only the lessons of history.

In order to use living portraits and other manifestations of the supernatural to their fullest dramatic effect, the Gothic writers narrowed the point of view. Early Gothic writers gained an immediacy of view by pretending that the story they offered was based upon an old manuscript miraculously discovered. Walpole, for example, signed the title page of The Castle of Otranto "W. Marshall, Gent." and declared that the story was a translation of an Italian manuscript by Onuphrio Muraltto (his own name in Italian) discovered in northern England. Clara Reeve's The Old English Baron supposedly is founded on an old manuscript accidently discovered, as is Mrs. Radcliffe's The Sicilian Romance. Although The Monk does not purport to be based entirely upon a discovered manuscript, various sections are long letters or histories supposedly written by Raymond and Agnes and comprise at least one third of the entire narrative. Melmoth the Wanderer begins as a simple story told in the third person, but at the end of the second chapter John Melmoth discovers an old manuscript "discoloured, obliterated and
mutilated beyond any that had ever before exercised the patience of a reader." The manuscript was written by an Englishman named Stanton and contains a description of his encounter with the wandering Melmoth. Then a Spaniard is saved from a shipwreck and brought to John Melmoth's home, whereupon he offers his narrative about his encounter with the wandering Melmoth; the Spaniard's story contains also the story of the Indians, which he had found in an ancient manuscript.

The basing of a story upon a mysterious document is an artifice which authors have used for centuries. The medieval romances, for example, are filled with references to ancient manuscripts that contain the story being told, and Cervantes pretended that Don Quixote had been written by the Arabian historian Cid Hamed ben Engeli. Gulliver's Travels, too, was supposed to be based on the discovery of the traveller's notes, and Samuel Johnson published in 1749 The Vision of Theodore, which professed to be the work of the hermit himself and was said to have been found in his cell. Writers of romances accepted the device with pleasure because it provided them an excellent means of making their stories more believable and of bringing contemporary readers face to face with historical figures.46 The same effect was achieved with
the epistolary form as Richardson used it in *Clarissa* Harlowe. The manuscript or letters enable the author to sustain a lyrical viewpoint, whereby the speaker attempts to describe his impressions and emotions. What the early writers had discovered, whether or not they articulated it, was that by limiting the viewpoint they could achieve unity and render emotions more plausible. They knew that the intrusion by an author never ceases to destroy some of the immediacy between character and reader.

Henry James was aware of the need to restrict the viewpoint, and he experimented with the tried techniques. In his very early pieces such as "A Tragedy of Error" (1864) and "The Story of a Year" (1865) he begins in the traditional pose of a storyteller: "My story begins...." In both those early works, however, the narrator is not a part of the tale. In "A Landscape Painter" (1866) the narrative voice is that of a cordial friend of one Locksley, whose diary is then offered to the reader as the essence of the tale. "A Light Man" (1869) is likewise based upon a diary, and for the next ten or eleven years James's short fiction, with one exception, is told exclusively in the first person by one means or another, a diary, a manuscript, or a recalled narrative.47
Out of his experimentation with the secret manuscript and the bequeathed diary, James developed a new technique for restricting point of view. After "The Light Man" the viewpoint of his short fiction varies, but when the view is that of the third person, the interest centers upon the consciousness of a single character, making up what James has called the "central intelligence." In his Preface to The Princess Casamassima he explains the need to limit the intelligence:

I recognise at the same time, and in planning "The Princess Casamassima" felt it highly important to recognise, the danger of filling too full any supposed and above all any obviously limited vessel of consciousness. If persons either tragically or comically embroiled with life allow us the comic or tragic value of their embroilment in proportion as their struggle is a measured and directed one, it is strangely true, none the less, that beyond a certain point they are spoiled for us by this carrying of a due light. They may carry too much of it for our credence, for our compassion, for our derision.

James obviously preferred the third-person voice because it enabled him to create a dramatic scene more effectively and avoided what he called "the terrible fluidity of self-revelation." In his Preface to The Ambassadors James explains his preference for the
central intelligence:

Had I...made him Strether at once hero and historian, endowed him with the romantic privilege of the "first person"--the darkest abyss of romance this, inveterately, when enjoyed on the grand scale--variety, and many other queer matters as well, might have been smuggled in by a back door. Suffice it, to be brief, that the first person, in the long piece, is a form foredoomed to looseness, and that looseness, never much my affair, had never been so little so as on this particular occasion. All of which reflexions flocked to the standard from the moment--a very early one--the question of how to keep my form amusing while sticking so close to my central figure and constantly taking its pattern from him had to be faced.51

In his introduction to The Art of the Novel, R. P. Blackmur points out that the injury to unity and composition which James specifies may well be observed in Proust's long novel "where every dodge is unavailingly resorted to in an attempt to get around the freedom of the method."52 To see just how well James has succeeded in developing his central intelligence, which in some important ways is related to the first-person narrative artifices of Gothic fiction, one has only to look at one of the long passages in one of his major novels in which the central character arrests time and ponders; with his development of the central intelligence James anticipated,
in many respects, the modern stream-of-consciousness technique. Both James's fiction and that of later psychological writers are built upon an organic principle of composition that regards as subjective what James called "the eternal time problem." That is, time is viewed not as an external entity to be measured by ticks of a clock but rather as a phenomenon of the human mind, which moves rapidly back and forth, perceiving, remembering, and anticipating. The extent to which James developed, more fully than anyone before him, the mental fluctuations of a single narrator can be seen in the significant Chapter XLII of The Portrait of a Lady. The narrative is an interior monologue which twists and turns, moving back and forth between past and present. An analysis of the first two paragraphs of that chapter illustrates James's technique; the chart that follows is a scheme of the movement within Isabel's mind. One should keep in mind as he follows the chart that "present" represents a present progressive action seen from Isabel's point of view, an action represented by James's consistent use of the simple past tense. Past action from Isabel's point of view, on the other hand, is represented, with but few exceptions, by the past perfect tense.53
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relative Time</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Past</strong></td>
<td>She had answered nothing because his words had put the situation before her and she was absorbed in looking at it. There was something in them that suddenly made vibrations deep, so that she had been afraid to trust herself to speak.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Present</strong></td>
<td>After he had gone she leaned back in her chair and closed her eyes; and for a long time, far into the night and still further, she sat in the still drawing-room, given up to her meditation. A servant came in to attend the fire, and she bade him bring fresh candles and then go to bed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Past</strong></td>
<td>Osmond had told her to think of what he had said;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Present</strong></td>
<td>and she did so indeed, and of many other things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Past</strong></td>
<td>The suggestion from another that she had a definite influence on Lord Warburton--this had given her the start that accompanies unexpected recognition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Present</strong></td>
<td>Was it true that there was something still between them that might be a handle to make him declare himself to Pansy--a susceptibility, on his part, to approval, a desire to do what would please her?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Past</strong></td>
<td>Isabel had hitherto not asked herself the question, because</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
she had not been forced;

Present

but now that it was directly presented to her she saw the answer, and the answer frightened her. Yes, there was something—something on Lord Warburton's part.

Past

When he had first come to Rome she believed the link that united them to be completely snapped; but little by little she had been reminded that it had yet a palpable existence.

Present

It was as thin as a hair, but there were moments when she seemed to hear it vibrate. For herself nothing was changed;

Past

what she once thought of him

Present

she always thought; it was needless this feeling should change; it seemed to her in fact a better feeling than ever. But he? had he still the idea that she might be more to him than other women? Had he the wish to profit by the memory of the few moments of intimacy

Past

through which they had once passed?

Present

Isabel knew

Past

she had read some of the signs of such a disposition.

Present

But what were his hopes, his pretensions, and in what strange way were they mingled with his evidently very sincere appreciation of poor Pansy? Was he in love with Gilbert Osmond's
wife, and if so what comfort did he expect to derive from it? If he was in love with Pansy he was not in love with her stepmother, and if he was in love with her stepmother he was not in love with Pansy.

**Hypothetical future**

Was she to cultivate the advantage she possessed in order to make him commit himself to Pansy, knowing he would do so for her sake and not for the small creature's own—was this the service her husband had asked of her?

**Past**

This at any rate was the duty with which she found herself confronted—from the moment she admitted to herself that her old friend had still an uneradicated predilection for her society. It was not an agreeable task; it was in fact a repulsive one. She asked herself with dismay whether Lord Warburton were pretending to be in love with Pansy in order to cultivate another satisfaction and what might be called other chances. Of this refinement of duplicity she presently acquitted him; she preferred to believe him in perfect good faith. But if his admiration for Pansy were a delusion this was scarcely better than its being an affectation. Isabel wandered among these ugly possibilities until she had completely lost her way; some of them, as she suddenly encountered them, seemed ugly enough. Then she broke out of the labyrinth, rubbing her eyes, and declared that her imagination surely did her little honor and that her husband's did him even
less. Lord Warburton was as disinterested as he need be, and she was no more to him than she need wish.

Hypothetical future

She would rest upon this till the contrary should be proved; proved more effectually than by a cynical intimation of Osmond's.

Paragraph Two

Present

Such a resolution, however, brought her this evening but little peace, for her soul was haunted with terrors which crowded to the foreground of thought as quickly as a place was made for them.

Past

What had suddenly set them into livelier motion she hardly knew, unless it were the strange impression she had received in the afternoon of her husband's being in more direct communication with Madame Merle than she suspected.

More immediate past

That impression came back to her from time to time,

Present

and now she wondered it had never come before.

Immediate past

Besides this, her short interview with Osmond half an hour ago was a striking example of his faculty for making everything wither that he touched, spoiling everything for her that he looked at. It was very well to undertake to give him a proof of loyalty; the real fact was that the knowledge of his expecting a thing raised a presumption against it. It was as if he had had the evil eye; as if his presence were a blight
and his favour a misfortune. Was the fault in himself, or only in the deep mistrust she had conceived for him?

Present

This mistrust was not the clearest result of their married life; Past

a gulf had opened between them over which they looked at each other with eyes that were on either side a declaration of the deception suffered.

Present

It was a strange opposition, of the like of which she had never dreamed—an opposition in which the vital principle of the one was a thing of contempt to the other. It was not her fault—

Past

She had practiced no deception; she had only admired and believed. She had taken all the first steps in the purest confidence, and then she had suddenly found the infinite vista of a multiplied life to be a dark narrow alley with a dead wall at the end. Instead of leading to the high places of happiness, from which the world would seem to lie below one, so that one could look down with a sense of exaltation and advantage, and judge and choose and pity, it led rather downward and earthward, into realms of restriction and depression where the sound of other lives, easier and freer, was heard as from above, and where it served to deepen the feeling of failure.

Present

It was her deep distrust of her husband—this was what darkened the world. That is a sentiment
easily indicated, but not so easily explained, and so composite in its character that much time and still more suffering had been needed to bring it to its actual perfection. Suffering, with Isabel, was an active condition; it was not a chill, a stupor, a despair; it was a passion of thought, of speculation, of response to every pressure. She flattered herself

Past

that she had kept her failing faith to herself, however,—

Present

that no one suspected it but Osmond. Oh, he knew it,

Past

and there were times when she thought he enjoyed it. It had come gradually—it was not till the first year of their life together, so admirably intimate at first, had closed that she had taken the alarm. Then the shadows had begun to gather; it was as if Osmond deliberately, almost malignantly, had put the lights out one by one. The dusk at first was vague and thin, and she could still see her way in it. But it steadily deepened, and if now and again it had occasionally lifted there were certain corners of her prospect that were impenetrable black.

Present

These shadows were not an emanation from her own mind; she was very sure of that;

Past

she had done her best to be just and temperate, to see only the truth.

Present

They were a part, they were a
kind of creation and consequence, of her husband's very presence. They were not his misdeeds, his turpitudes; she accused him of nothing—that is but of one thing, which was not a crime. She knew of no wrong he had done; he was not violent, he was not cruel; she simply believed he hated her. That was all she accused him of, and the miserable part of it was precisely that it was not a crime, for against a crime she might have found redress.

**Past**

He had discovered that she was so different, that she was not what he had believed she would prove to be. He had thought at first he could change her, and she had done her best to be what he would like.

**Present**

But she was, after all, herself—she couldn't help that; and now there was no use pretending, wearing a mask or a dress, for he knew her and had made up his mind. She was not afraid of him; she had no apprehension he would hurt her; for the ill-will he bore her was not of that sort.

**Hypothetical future**

He would if possible never give her a pretext, never put himself in the wrong. Isabel, scanning the future with dry, fixed eyes, saw that he would have the better of her there. She would give him many pretexts, she would often put herself in the wrong.

**Present**

There were times when she almost pitied him;

**Past**

for if she had not deceived him in intention.
Present
she understood now completely

Past
she must have done so in fact.
She had effaced herself when he first knew her; she had made herself small, pretending there was less of her than there really was. It was because she had been under the extraordinary charm that he, on his side, had taken pains to put forth.

Present
He was not changed;

Past
he had not disguised himself, during the year of his courtship, any more than she. But she had seen only half his nature then, as one saw the disk of the moon when it was partly masked by the shadow of the earth.

Present
She saw the full moon now--she saw the whole man.

Past
She had kept still, as it were, so that he should have a free field, and yet in spite of this she had mistaken a part for the whole. 54

From the analysis of these paragraphs the extent to which James moves backward and forward in time is clear, as are the ways in which he indicates that movement; he uses simple syntactical signposts, a time adverb or the past perfect tense. But the bridges that James provides for the brief journeys to the past and back to the present are especially illuminating and pertinent to a study of his artistic representation of human consciousness. In
nearly every case the motivation for the movement backward or forward is the identification of a present perception, whether it be a visual image or a feeling, with a perception in the past (or a hypothetical perception of the future). For example, as Isabel thinks about her marriage with Osmond, she recognizes that mistrust has been the most obvious fruit of their union, and the reader recognizes that the essence of mistrust is "distance between" or "disparity." In the next moment her thoughts move back in time to the point at which "a gulf had opened between them" the essence of gulf being also "distance between." Thus James has made concrete the abstraction mistrust and has used the visually perceivable image of gulf to provide the associating link between the present and the past. Furthermore, thinking of the past somewhat later, Isabel remembers the time at which the infinite vista of her life became a "dark, narrow alley with a dead wall at the end." This image of darkness provides the bridge back to the present, and Isabel is seen thinking that the distrust of her husband continues to darken her world. And finally, Isabel reminds herself that Osmond will never put himself in the wrong. The idea of deception, therefore, provides a transition for Isabel's mental movement to the past when she remembers, "He had not
disguised himself during the year of courtship \( \text{that is,} \) he had not deceived her\( \text{7} \); she had seen only the half of his nature then." The idea of partial vision becomes concrete as the image of the moon (with the potential quality of being visible in gradual degrees of fullness) provides a transition to the present: "She saw the full moon now—she saw the whole man." What is even more interesting in these two paragraphs is that the images which are pivots for temporal fluctuations are peculiarly Gothic images: the abyss, the darkness, and the moon. It is as if James has chosen deliberately those images that inspire strong emotion, in this instance fear, in order to force Isabel's thoughts to turn toward another dimension in time.

Some of the first-person narration in Gothic fiction approaches the stream-of-consciousness style. For example, the account written by the Englishman Stanton in \( \text{Melmoth the Wanderer} \) is intensely emotional and immediate like Isabel's thoughts. But because Henry James discovered what he regarded as the weakness in first-person narration, he transferred it to the viewpoint of the third person and yet was able to retain the illusion that he was presenting the strange workings of the human mind. Indeed, it is the perspective of the central intelligence combined with the elements of the supernatural and the suspenseful
that often accounts for the psychological dimension of James's fiction. With his use of the supernatural, or the suggestion of it, James has appealed to the basic fears and instincts of his audience, and by allowing his narrative to unravel through the mind of a single character, he has given his fiction an immediacy that speaks directly to the reader's understanding. He has taken the materials and the artifices of Gothic romance and transformed them into sensitive instruments for the subtle exploration of human behavior, an achievement that fulfills one of the avowed goals of the modern realistic novel.
FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER IV


2The fiction of Walpole and Mrs. Radcliffe generally is set apart from the later period because the interest in their work depends partly upon suspense and the human instinct of curiosity; Mrs. Radcliffe's habit of accounting rationally for the apparently supernatural removes her even further from the phase than Walpole.


4The Kansas City Review, 14 (Summer 1948), 277.


7A bona fide ghost is present in her posthumously published work Gaston de Blondeville (1802).

8Sister Mary Muriel Tarr cites seven more works that include "real" ghosts: Mrs. Anne Ker, Adeline St. Julian; James Norris Brewer, A Winter's Tale; Richard


11 Ibid., p. 170.

12 Walpole, p. 104.


14 See Railo, pp. 244, 249.

15 The Complete Tales, IV (1962), 75.

16 Ibid., IV, 83.

17 Ibid., IV, 84.

18 In his prefatory remarks to "The Ghostly Rental" as it appears in The Ghostly Tales of Henry James (New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers University Press, 1948), Leon Edel says that "in this comparatively early tale James had already ventured beyond the Gothic romance in his critical view of the ghost, the 'merely apparitional'" (p. 104).

19 The Complete Tales, VIII (1963), 128.

20 Ibid., VIII, 144.

21 The Complete Tales, X (1964), 475.
22Ibid.

23The Novels and Tales, IV (1908), 418.

24The Ghostly Tales of Henry James, pp. xi-xii.

25The Novels and Tales, XII (1908), xix.

26The Novels and Tales, IV (1908), 418.

27The Novels and Tales, III (1908), 64.

28Walpole, p. 35.

29Ibid., p. 96.


31See Railo, p. 305.


33See Railo, pp. 305-306.

34The Novels and Tales, IV (1908), 375.

35The Complete Tales, XII (1964), 225.

36The Complete Tales, III (1962), 94.

37Ibid., III, 98.

38Ibid.


40The Complete Tales, IX (1964), 34.
41Ibid., IX, 45.

42The Novels and Tales, XIX (1909), 220.

43Ibid., XIX, 220-221.

44Ibid., XIX, 225.

45The Novels and Tales, XXVI (1909), 86-87.

46See Railo, p. 338, 58n.

47In "Gabrielle de Bergerac," for example, the narrator says essentially that his friend Bergerac told him this story which he is passing on to the reader; the subsequent voice is that of Bergerac.


49The Novels and Tales, V (1908), ix.

50The Novels and Tales, XXI (1909), xix.

51Ibid., XXI, xvii-xviii.


53Misayoshi Watanabe, who studied James's use of the past perfect tense in his late fiction, observes that James uses the past perfect "precisely to explore the reminiscences of his characters." See "Past Perfect Retrospect in the Style of Henry James," American Literature, 34 (May 1962), 165-181.

54The Novels and Tales, IV (1908), 186-191.
John Melmoth extracts from Stanton's manuscript the following account of the Englishman's discovery that he was imprisoned in a madhouse: "It was after a long interval that he looked around, and perceived that his companion was gone. Bells were unusual then. He proceeded to the door,--it was fastened. He called aloud,--his voice was echoed in a moment by many others, but in tones so wild and discordant, that he desisted in involuntary terror. As the day advanced, and no one approached, he tried the window, and then perceived for the first time it was grated. It looked out on the narrow flagged yard, in which no human being was; and if there had, from such a being no human feeling could have been extracted.

"Sickening with unspeakable horror, he sunk rather than sat down beside the miserable window, and 'wished for day.'

"At midnight he started from a doze, half a swoon, half a sleep, which probably the hardness of his seat, and of the deal table on which he leaned, had not contributed to prolong.

"He was in complete darkness; the horror of his situation struck him at once, and for a moment he was indeed almost qualified for an inmate of that dreadful mansion. He felt his way to the door, shook it with desperate strength, and uttered the most frightful cries, mixed with expostulations and commands. His cries were in a moment echoed by a hundred voices. In maniacs there is a peculiar malignity, accompanied by an extraordinary acuteness of some of the senses, particularly in distinguishing the voice of a stranger. The cries that he heard on every side seemed like a wild and infernal yell of joy, that their mansion of misery had obtained another tenant."

Melmoth the Wanderer, p. 36.
CONCLUSIONS

Although it is true, as T. S. Eliot has said, that Henry James owes very little to anyone,\textsuperscript{1} it is equally true that James was influenced in small ways by various writers and various traditions. His critical studies of Hawthorne, Balzac, Turgenev, and others define what he admired in their work and what he regretted, what he might have imitated, and what he would have ignored. As he admired the poetic quality of Hawthorne but deplored the allegory and as he extolled the realism and range of Balzac and Turgenev, his own fiction became a curious blend of romance and realism. Richard Chase has observed that James's fiction is "romance reconstituted on new grounds,"\textsuperscript{2} and F. R. Leavis describes James as a "poet-novelist."\textsuperscript{3} To make either statement about an English or American writer is to say that the Gothic is almost certain to be an ingredient of his fiction.\textsuperscript{4}

Henry James obviously was influenced by the Gothic tradition, first, because he was thoroughly acquainted with it, and, second, because it offered much

204
that attracted him. The supernatural, an essential ingredient of the Gothic, was very much a part of the James family's experience; the grand ruin, a dominant Gothic image, stirred his imagination even as he recorded his impressions of European travel; and the psychology inbred in Gothic fiction appealed strongly to the man who once said, "There are few things more exciting to me than a psychological reason." 5

And, indeed, it is not difficult to uncover the Gothic artifices and motifs in James's fiction. There are mansions, moonlight, convents, ruins, Alpine abysses, ghosts, demons, witches, villains and villainesses, heroes and heroines, secret documents, hidden crimes, curses, portraits that move, and statues that bleed. Like his Gothic predecessors, James deals only fleetingly with humor but often with irreconciliations; and although he, too, recognized the value of romantic distance, he achieves it with the extant relics of old civilizations rather than with exotic settings in ancient times. Perhaps most important among similarities is that both Gothic fiction and that of Henry James are concerned with the acquisition of knowledge, with the journey from innocence to experience. In fact, the Gothic novels and those of James easily can be labelled Bildungsromane with little qualification.
But there are differences, too, and it is such deviation that accounts for the uniqueness of Henry James. The Gothic is dispersed in his fiction so that it is never overpowering; on the contrary it is so blended and tempered and interwoven into the whole texture of his art that it does not intrude into the air of realism that James consistently maintained he was seeking. One has only to regard closely one of James's novels in order to see the way in which he has bent the Gothic to a new use. James surely considered *The American* his nearest approach to romance, and in some ways it stands close to the old Gothic tradition. For although *The American* has no abysses, demons, witches, moving portraits, or bleeding statues, it does have gloomy mansions, convents, ruins, villainy, heroism, a secret document, and a hidden crime. But when *The American* is compared with one of Mrs. Radcliffe's novels, for example, the difference between James's fiction and that of the old Gothic school is apparent.

Mrs. Radcliffe spends much of her narrative in description of the sublime landscape and of the frightening aspects of edifice. James defines the setting sparingly, and such description is never offered for its own sake. It is usually mingled with a character's
thoughts and feelings, as it is, for example, when Christopher Newman looks at the decayed Bellegarde mansion at Fleurières and sees in the physical ruin something of the moral ruin of the Bellegarde line.

More important, though, is the difference in characterization. Mrs. Radcliffe's characters exhibit pure and strong emotions and act upon simple motives. Her heroes and heroines love intensely, persevere unfailingly, are terrified horribly, and are mistreated cruelly; her villains pursue lust and avarice without the slightest distraction. James's characters may be evil, good, persecuted, or oppressive, and they may love profoundly or hate passionately, but such motives and feelings often are understated and consistently are blended into a more complex personality; and James is concerned equally with guilt, jealousy, insecurity, and timidity and their effects upon human behavior, none of which concerned the old Gothic writers to any significant degree. One has the feeling that James's characters are real, that they have the usual human variety of virtues and weaknesses, both moral and psychological, whereas the stock Gothic characters flatly become symbols for virtues and sins. James may deal with a wide range of events and emotions, but he never does so to the melodramatic extremes of his Gothic
James's other works vary in their degree of Gothic intensity. "The Turn of the Screw," for example, is strongly Gothic in its setting, point of view, and presentation of demons. But although The Portrait of a Lady offers convents, mansions, ruins, an arch villain, and a ghost, one would have to agree that the air of reality prevails rather than that of fantasy or melodrama. Other works like "The Jolly Corner" and The Sense of the Past are only inconsequentially Gothic, with the interest of the story being centered upon the development of a character rather than upon the involutions of a plot. And occasionally James is more concerned with displaying an aesthetic principle than he is with characterization; in such cases the Gothic element is slight, if existent at all, and like setting, character, and plot, is subordinated to an abstract idea. "The Real Thing," for example, could not be construed to be a Gothic tale in any sense, for the narrator, the models, and the events all are subservient to the larger notion that art is an imitation of life and thus, according to Aristotelian poetics, is twice removed from reality.

As one kind of expression in a larger body of romantic writing, Gothic fiction generally is considered
to be irreconcilable with the realism of the novel as it was conceived by Richardson, Fielding, and Defoe. But Francis R. Hart has said that "rather than representing a flight from novel to romance, the Gothic represents a naturalizing of myth and romance into novel." 7 And it is this concept of the Gothic that one discovers in James's fiction. It is indeed interesting that the primary symbols of Gothic art, the abyss, cataclysmic terrain, the ruin, the mansion, darkness, the moon, and the demonic, are all archetypal symbols for man's unconscious, for his secret selves, and for his fears.8 It is entirely possible that even without Gothic fiction to draw upon James would have reached the same symbols by a different route, for Gothic symbols represent the basic drives and fears that James was to refine so exquisitely. If he adopted the same motifs, he did so not merely in imitation but because they were ultimately fundamental to the psychology that became his lifelong artistic concern.
FOOTNOTES FOR THE CONCLUSIONS


5The Art of Fiction (Boston, 1885).


8Lowry Nelson, Jr., says, "Surprisingly perhaps we may well be convinced that the gothicists for all their outlandish oddities were in effect among the most fruitful literary explorers of the psyche." "Night Thoughts on the Gothic Novel," Yale Review, 52 (December 1962), 257.
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